

Col. Mansfield

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THE
EXPLOITS OF OUR FATHERS,
OR
A CONCISE HISTORY
OF THE
MILITARY EVENTS
OF OUR
REVOLUTIONARY WAR.
AN ORATION

BELIVERED AT CINCINNATI (OHIO)

July 3d, 1813 (the 4th being Sunday)

IN CELEBRATION OF THE

THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY STANLEY GRISWOLD, ESQ.

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Cincinnati, July 5, 1813.

SIR, THE Committee of Arrangements desirous of affording their fellow citizens, who had not an opportunity of hearing your eloquent and patriotic Oration in honor of American Independence, an opportunity of reading it, beg leave to solicit that you will furnish them with a copy of the manuscript for publication.

Signed in behalf of the

Committee,

JOHN S. WALLACE.

HON. STANLEY GRISWOLD,

AN ORATION.

THE path of glory, fellow citizens, has been once trod by our nation. The hour cannot perhaps be better employed than in contemplating that splendid path.— I purpose, therefore, to call your attention to a concise history of the military events of our revolutionary war.

The *causes* of that war will not enter into my plan; although these usually form a fruitful topic on occasions of this kind, and are calculated to excite much patriotic ardor. These you had spread before you in a concise and masterly form in the Declaration of Independence which has been read with such interesting propriety.* The history I propose will be merely of the *military* events as they occurred in the course of the contest.

Events of this sort used in ancient times, to be recited at their festivals in exalted poetry. Such was the work of Homer, such the songs of Ossian. But humble prose and true history, will be all I shall attempt. I shall class the events distinctly according to the *years* in which they occurred; and in most instances shall assign the minor dates:

An interest, besides that of the honor of our fathers, may be derived to this undertaking from the circumstance of our being in the commencement of another struggle with the same power. The *past* may throw a light upon the momentous *future*, to animate us in any turn the war may take, to inspire confidence even in the gloomiest circumstances, and urge us on to as glorious a termination of this conflict as that which consigned our fathers to immortal fame.

This audience, coming originally from all parts of the wide extended scene of the revolutionary war, will recollect as more or less familiar the events as they pass

* The Declaration of Independence was read by JOSIAH MEIGS, Esq. in a most impressive manner, accompanied with important prefatory remarks.

in review : and of every one of them, some will be able to say—'this took place in my vicinity, or the vicinity of my father;'—or, 'of that I was an eye witness,' perhaps 'an actor in it;'—or, 'it was told me from my infancy, and I have seen the ground and the marks where the exploit was performed.'—Perhaps some of you have seen the very bones of the slain.

Here I beg leave to offer an apology if any thing should be observed to be incorrect, or if any thing should be wholly omitted. The theatre of that war was so extensive, the occurrences were so numerous, & our time is so short to review them, that some things must necessarily be passed in silence, nor ought it to be wondered if immaterial errors may have crept into the minutes which have been collected.

I will detain you but with one further remark,—that my minutes have been drawn as much from British accounts as American, and therefore cannot justly be suspected of exaggeration on either side.

To begin then with the recital.

Reconing from the first gun that was fired, the war which terminated in our Independence, commenced in 1770. Then, on the 5th of March, the British regulars fired on the people of Boston, killing and wounding several in cold blood.

But this has been called a *massacre*, (the famous *Boston massacre*) because the Americans were not in arms to resist, no war having been declared, nor even then threatened. They were slaughtered like defenceless sheep by the butcher.

The commencement of the war, strictly speaking, because both sides then came into hostile preparation and array, was five years afterwards.

We shall therefore first consider

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1775.

The first blood that was spilt this year was on the memorable 19th of April, at the town of *Lexington*, not far from Boston. This might in a sense be called a *massacre*, although the Americans had by that time com-

mitted some acts savoring of hostility, as seizing on the King's stores and depositing them in certain places against the day of their own necessity,—but all without blood. It was on their way to destroy the stores thus deposited at *Concord*, that the British regulars in passing through *Lexington*, found the militia of the place assembled on the parade for muster, and at that moment engaged in exercising their arms. The British commanding officer, Major *Pitcairn*, called out to them, "Disperse you rebels! throw down your arms and disperse!" As they did not instantly obey, he discharged his pistol and ordered his soldiers to fire. Some were killed, some wounded, and the rest dispersed.

Proceeding to *Concord*, they destroyed the stores, and again fired on the Americans there. Like a flame the report of these things flew into the country round, and the farmers, dropping their implements of husbandry and seizing their firelocks, hastened to the scene, and a sharp conflict ensued, in which numbers fell on both sides. They closely pursued the British in their retreat to Boston, harassing them extremely and killing many. In the whole of this affair, the British lost about 270 men:—the Americans nearly 100.

Hostilities being thus fully commenced, the British Gen. *Gage* strongly fortified the town of *Boston*;—and not long afterwards a large American force invested it, forming an extensive cordon of 30 miles around the town, from *Roxbury* to *Mystic river*. *Gage* dared not attack them;—but in the close of May a reinforcement arrived to his aid, under Generals *Howe*, *Burgoyne* and *Clinton*.

The 17th of June was destined to be a day of one of the most bloody battles that occurred in the revolution—*The battle of Bunkershill*. Generals *Howe* and *Pigot* led the first attack, but the Americans gave them so warm a reception, that those Generals were on the point of being repulsed, when *Clinton* came to their aid with fresh troops. He set fire to *Charlestown* in his way, and renewed the battle of the hill with incredible fury. This force, together with an incessant

volume tightly bound

fire from the ships and floating batteries compelled the Americans to give way, after performing prodigies of valor. Much blood drenched the hill on that occasion. The British lost no less than 1000 men, among whom were many officers. The loss on our part was about half that number.—Here the gallant GEN. WARREN fell, a patriot of inflexible firmness, an eminent scholar and orator, who had done much to excite the country to a just resistance of oppression, and whom the country deeply mourned.

About this time, Col. Ethan Allen went with 250 men and took by surprize the fortress of Ticonderoga, at the head of lake George. Col. Seth Warner took that of Crownpoint on lake Champlain,—which were very gallant actions. Two hundred cannon fell into our hands, with large stores and two armed vessels. When Allen was asked by the commandant who was surprized in his bed, by what authority he demanded the fort—"I demand it" replied the green-mountain hero "in the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress."—This was new language to a British ear at that time.

A Generalissimo was now appointed by Congress to command the American armies, and every ballot was given for GEORGE WASHINGTON. Other General officers appointed at that time were—HORATIO GATES Adjutant General ;—CHARLES LEE, ARTEMAS WARD, PHILIP SCHUYLER, ISRAEL PUTNAM, Major Generals : Brigadiers, *Seth Pomeroy, Richard Montgomery, David Wooster, William Heath, Joseph Spencer, John Thomas, John Sullivan, Nathaniel Green*. I mention these merely because they were the first appointments in that great contest. I shall not observe the same rule in future.

Gen. Washington repaired to the army near Boston and took the command in July.

An American force of 3000 men was sent to Canada, under Generals Schuyler and Montgomery. The British Gen. Carlton had there a small army of regulars, and altho unable at first to raise the militia & Indians, yet he

eventually succeeded in getting a considerable force from them.

Col. Ethan Allen, encouraged by his late success, without waiting for orders, went with a handful of men, and attacked Montreal,—but was defeated, taken prisoner and sent to England in irons.

Gen. Montgomery took Chamblee and laid siege to St. Johns, positions near the north end of lake Champlain, and commanding at that time the entrance into Canada. General Carlton, coming to the relief of St. Johns was defeated, and the garrison surrendered consisting of 500 regulars and 200 Canadians.

Gen. Montgomery then advanced to Montreal and took it with ease, together with all the shipping in the river.

It was now the middle of November when our Gen. proceeded towards Quebec. To co-operate in the object of taking that place, Col. Arnold, with a body of 1100 men, undertook to penetrate the then unsettled wilderness between it and the Province of Maine. The hardships they suffered are indescribable : they were 31 days in a perfect desert, in an inclement season : their dogs and leather-works were eaten for food ! One whole division turned back, and many were sent back sick. A considerable number however continued thro' and the purpose of a junction was effected. Much were the enemy surprized to see a force issue out of the wilderness from the south !

It is stated, that our army after the junction was but 800 men. Of the 3000 who marched into Canada under Gen. Montgomery, some were left behind in garrisons, but the greater part became so home-sick and were so loth to proceed, that the Gen. discharged them and sent them back. The enemy's garrison was 1500. The siege was prosecuted thro' the month of December, and it was determined to storm the place on the last day of that year. The onset was made with the greatest gallantry ; they passed the outer barriers and victory seemed to smile ; a part indeed got into the town ; but unhappy events dashed the whole,—a part retreat-

ed, and those who were past retreat were made prisoners. The fall of Montgomery and the severe wound of Arnold, produced this reverse, but for which it is thought the place would have been carried.

The fall of GEN. MONTGOMERY was a subject of universal regret, not only to his country, but even to the enemy. He was brave, and he was benevolent, beloved and admired by all.

Perhaps there was never a greater exhibition of truly heroic virtues than in that inhospitable clime on that occasion. *Bravery and humanity* appeared to vie with each other. The former as displayed by the Generals on both sides, and by Arnold, Campbell, Meigs, Morgan, M'Pherson, was like the rigid rocks on which they fought;—while, unlike the frosty region, their manly souls melted with human kindness, to a degree rarely known among warriors in any clime.—When the acts of prowess had ceased, Carlton took the hand of the dying Montgomery and consoled him like a brother:—he gave him an honorable interment, and he treated the prisoners and wounded with paternal kindness. Montgomery had shewed similar lenity at Montreal, and wherever he had passed.

Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, retired this year on board the British shipping, with many blacks to whom he proclaimed freedom, and carried on a predatory warfare against the people he had governed. He burnt Norfolk under cover of the British fleet.

The Governors of North and South Carolina behaved much in the same manner, and were expelled by their people.

At the end of the year 1775, Britain beheld the whole of her 13 colonies united among themselves and engaged against her in open hostility.—We shall now consider

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1776.

Gen. Washington, on the 2d of March, opened formidable batteries upon the British in Boston. Upon this they evacuated the town and sailed to Halifax, car-

rying with them 2000 of the inhabitants who were Tories.

As the British government had now outlawed the Americans, declaring us *rebels* and had engaged foreign mercenaries (the Hessians) to fight against us, Congress proceeded on the 4th day of July—(tomorrow 37 years)—in a solemn and formal manner to declare the 13 united colonies, **FREE & INDEPENDENT STATES.**

A large force came over from England to Canada, making their strength in that quarter now about 12,000 regulars.—They set out in pursuit of the flying Americans and overtook them at Sorel, 150 miles on this side of Quebec. A party of 200 of our troops under Gen. Thompson, having missed their way, were made prisoners, with their general. The rest made good their retreat with the cannon. The British found Chamblee and St. Johns in ruins.—Thus was Canada evacuated by the American forces. Gen. Sullivan acted a distinguished part in conducting this retreat.

In N. Carolina, by the influence of the late governor, a banditti in the back settlements was raised, who called themselves Regulators and declared for the British.—About 2000 embodied under a Col M Donald, but were miserably cut in pieces by Gen. Moore with a force of 8000 militia.

The British, under Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, attempted the taking of Charleston S. C. with about 3000 land forces. Their attack on Sullivan's Island in Charleston harbor was met by a garrison of 400 men, under Col. Moultrie, with incredible vigor and the most signal success. Their land forces were compelled to re-ship, and they slipped their cables in the night and sailed for N. York, without effecting any thing.

New York, from its peculiar situation, as well as great wealth and commercial importance, was now made a principal object of the enemy. Their grand fleet under lord Howe, with the land forces under his brother Gen. Howe, came up about the middle of July, & first made a landing on Staten Island. In August they landed a large force on Long Island, where a considerable army.

of Americans were stationed, under Generals Putnam, Sullivan and Lord Sterling. A very fierce and bloody conflict took place, in which the Americans lost upwards of 1000 men. Sullivan and Sterling were made prisoners, and the greatest generalship was necessary to save the army from complete destruction. But Washington was not far off, and Providence interfered by casting a thick mist between our retreating army and the enemy.—This memorable *battle of Long Island* took place on the 27th of August, in the night of which our exhausted forces, silently crossed upon York Island, without further loss, except of some cannon, which it was necessary to abandon.

The British now set about reducing the city of New-York. Our batteries near it were silenced by the fire from the shipping, and the enemy effected a landing about three miles above, from the east river side. A part of that great city was laid in ashes. Our main force was at the north end of the Island, but some had remained in and near the city, who in marching up had very sharp skirmishing with the enemy. The whole of our force was at length concentrated, and the British wished to bring on a general engagement; but General Washington, from proper motives, resolved to avoid it at that time. He only undertook occasional fighting. *Haerlem Heights* was the scene of one of these actions.

The enemy, finding he could not be drawn out, left a strong force at N. York, and sailing up East river, landed at Westchester. Gen. Washington extended his army so as to keep opposite to them in their progress. A part of the two armies came in contact at the *White plains*, where an irregular, but severe action was fought, in which the enemy got the advantage. No improvement, however, was made of the victory; and General Howe returned to reduce some fortresses near N. York. Fort Washington on York Island was taken, with 2000 prisoners: and Fort Lee on the Jersey shore fell into their hands, but the garrison escaped.

New Jersey was now overrun, and the British made it their main quarters. The inhabitants suffered great-

ly. Many bold deeds were performed by the militia of that state,—such as would not have been a disgrace to the Greeks in their best days.

Sir H. Clinton sailed to Rhode Island and made himself master of it. The little American fleet under Commodore Hopkins, was obliged to run up Providence river and lie there useless.

At the northward, Gen. Burgoyne crossed lake Champlain in October, and the Americans retreated from Crown-point to Ticonderoga. Our naval force on that lake, after a great deal of skilful manœuvring and some bold fighting, chiefly under Col. Arnold, was wholly destroyed. But the British thought proper to go back into Canada for winter-quarters.

Gen. Lee, having imprudently taken up his lodgings at a private house in N. Jersey, was made a prisoner.

The American army was at this time reduced extremely low. Epidemic sickness, captures by the enemy, some desertion, but chiefly the expiring of enlistments, produced this effect. Out of 25,000, who took the field at the opening of the campaign this year, scarcely 3000 now remained.—This was one of the dark periods of America.

But towards the close of the year, Gen. Washington, who was now in Pennsylvania, weak as he was, conceived the bold design of attacking the British in their winter-quarters in N. Jersey. He commenced with a body of Hessians at Trenton, whom, on the 25th of December, he surprized in a most masterly manner, and took more than 900 prisoners.

When the British marched to Trenton, he took a circuitous route to Princeton, where he engaged and routed three regiments of the enemy, killing 60, and making prisoners of 300. He lost but few men,—among them, however, was the brave GEN. MERCER, whose fall detracted from the joy of the achievements, and was a subject of national regret.—These exploits of our General raised the drooping hopes of his country, and probably saved the American cause.

The British abandoned Trenton and retired to Brunswick. Gen. Washington retired to Morristown.—Thus closed that important year.—We are next to pass in review

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1777.

In the spring of this year the British concentrated their forces again at N. York, and commenced a predatory warfare, making excursions to destroy magazines, burn towns, and gather provisions and plunder. The stores at Peekskill, 50 miles above New-York, were destroyed. A beautiful Dutch settlement at Kingston was burnt.—The stores at Danbury in Connecticut were demolished and the town laid in ashes.

The latter place being from 30 to 40 miles in the country, in their retreat to their shipping, the British were extremely harrassed by the Americans under Generals Wooster and Arnold, losing in killed more than 200 men. and numbers were captured. Among the slain on our part was the intrepid GEN. WOOSTER, an experienced officer, much valued and whose death excited general regret.

In our turn a party of about 100 men, under the enterprising Col. Meigs (the same who distinguished himself at Quebec*) crossed suddenly in whale-boats to Sag-harbor, Long Island, and destroyed the British stores there, burning 13 of their vessels and capturing or killing all who defended the place.

About this time, the British Gen. Prescott was surprized and made a prisoner at Rhode Island, much in the same manner as our Gen. Lee had been last year in N. Jersey.

Philadelphia now became an object to the enemy.—But not daring to pass through Jersey, they took their army on board of shipping and sailed, on the 12th of July, around to Chesapeake bay. They had 36 batalions of foot, a regiment of cavalry, and a body of N. York Tories, in all about 16,000 men. These were landed at the Head of Elk.

* He is the father of the present governor of Ohio.

Gen. Washington hastened to meet them, and on the 11th of September came on the bloody battle of Brandywine. This was a strenuous conflict; it was fought to save the then capital of the U. States and to keep the enemy from gaining another important foothold in the country. But the British won the day, losing however, 600 of their troops; our loss was near 1200. The enemy gained Philadelphia, and Gen. Washington retired towards Lancaster.

Soon afterwards, the battle of Germantown took place near Philadelphia. This also was a hard fought action, and in the commencement victory seemed to incline in our favor, but some unlucky accidents turned the scale, and our forces were obliged to retreat, which they did in good order. Our loss was 200 killed, 500 wounded, and 400 prisoners. Among our slain was GEN. NASH. The enemy lost 70 killed (among whom was their Gen. Agnew) and they had 450 wounded and prisoners.

These, my friends, were times which tried men's souls;—and what, after losing two such battles in quick succession, must the feelings of the soul of Washington have been, on whom so much responsibility rested!

The British now brought round their shipping into the Delaware river. They landed Count Donop with 2000 men on the Jersey side, to attack the redoubt at Redbank. They were gallantly repulsed and defeated by Col. Greene, and the Count mortally wounded was made prisoner.

Mud Island was bravely defended under Col. Smith, but was evacuated.—Fort Mifflin too was as vigorously defended, but could not be held.—The garrison at Redbank was withdrawn.—And thus the British remained in quiet possession of Philadelphia and the Delaware.

In the north, things began to wear a more cheering aspect, altho' for a considerable time, they had added to the gloom of the disasters in the south, and struck dismay into the country.

Gen. Burgoyne, at the head of 7000 choice troops, came down from Canada, with the intention of cutting the continent in two, by separating the eastern states from

those below the Hudson.—Col. St. Leger, assisted by Sir John Johnson, was to descend by the Mohawk river and join Burgoyne about Albany. With these many Indians were engaged. The British were eventually to sail up the Hudson to favor the enterprize.

Gen. Burgoyne after crossing lake Champlain, besieged Ticanderoga, where our garrison was 6000 strong under Gen. St. Clair. This was on the 5th of July.—The Americans, probably with a view to draw on the enemy to his ruin, made a retreat across lake George to Skenesborough. The British pursued, and an action was fought at that place, in which the loss was considerable on both sides.

At the end of July, Gen Burgoyne, after incredible labor in constructing roads and bridges for his army, arrived before Fort Edward. Here he found General Schuyler, joined by Gen. St. Clair.—But the Americans continued their policy of retreating, left Fort Edward and made head-quarters at Saratoga. Thither the militia poured in from all quarters.—Gen. Arnold, hearing of St. Leger's movements, stationed himself at Stillwater.

Col. St. Leger besieged Fort Stanwix,* high up on the Mohawk, at the communication with the waters of Ontario.—On the 6th of August, as a supply of provisions, with 900 men under Gen. Herkimer, were proceeding to the relief of that garrison and had arrived within a few miles of it, Sir John Johnson, with a strong detachment of British and Indians, attacked and wholly defeated them. This was a most sanguinary conflict. To use the words of a writer in speaking of it,—“The strife of the warriors was cruel! they rushed upon each other as the streams from the mountains!—their countenances were dark and gloomy as the clouds from the south in the heat of summer, when the earth is parched with heat!”—GEN. HERKIMER was slain, with one half of his men,—200 were made prisoners,—the small remainder dispersed.

Gen. Arnold, however, found means of terrifying the Indians with reports of his advancing, which caused

* *New Rome in the state of New York.*

their desertion;—and this ruined St. Leger,—he broke up the siege and retired.

In the mean time, Gen. Burgoyne hastened on to take the Americans between two fires (as he supposed) expecting to unite with St Leger at Albany.

To supply himself with provisions, he detached a party of 500 men under Col. Baum to take the American stores at Bennington. A second detachment was immediately dispatched, who joined him. Col. Breyman, with a third detachment, was sent to support them.—But before their junction, Gen. Starke, with 800 militia, attacked Col. Baum, and killed or took all his party. Breyman arrived the same day, and was attacked and defeated. In this celebrated *battle of Bennington* the Americans took 4 brass field pieces, 12 brass drums, 250 dragoon swords, 4 ammunition waggons, and 700 prisoners.—Our loss, including wounded, was but 100 men.

Gen. Burgoyne crossed the Hudson on a bridge of boats about the middle of September. On the 19th, he advanced and attacked the Americans at Stillwater, now under Gen. Gates: The *battle of Stillwater* was a well fought action and terminated in our favor,—the enemy lost 500 men—we 320. The Indians, who were with Burgoyne, now deserted him.

His situation having become evidently critical, great care was taken to prevent his retreat into Canada. The Americans attacked his left wing, and did much execution, killing his second in command, Gen. Frazer.—The impetuous Arnold assaulted his very camp, but was severely wounded, and his men retired.—An attack was then made on his right wing, where the Hessians were posted, who were sorely handled and their artillery and baggage taken.—By this time the slain and wounded of the enemy were about 1200.

On the 13th of October, finding he had but three days provisions, Gen. Burgoyne proposed a treaty for capitulation. This was signed by Gen. Gates on the 16th.—The prisoners amounted to 5800. The train of artillery was a great acquisition to our service, consisting

of 42 pieces. The muskets were 4647,—cartridges 6000 dozens.—The number of Americans who assisted on that occasion, were various at different periods, but never more than 13000.

Sir H. Clinton sailed up the Hudson and destroyed Forts. Montgomery, Clinton and Constitution. He ruined a *Cheveaux-de-frise*, stretched across the river, which had cost our government 70,000 pounds sterling. Esopus was burnt by him. But these successes were of no avail, after the surrender of Burgoyne.

This year, dark as some parts of it had been, closed with great promise of success to our cause.—We proceed to

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1778.

The treaty of alliance with France was signed this year on the 6th of February.

On the 10th of June, Sir H. Clinton thought proper to evacuate Philadelphia. At Monmouth in N. Jersey, a battle was fought on the 27th of June, between a part of the forces of each army. The *battle of Monmouth*, tho' partial, was exceedingly severe. It was fought amidst clouds of dust, and extreme heat, by which many perished. They furiously sought the streams to quench their thirst, and lying down to them many never rose again. The greatest emulation was inspired under the immediate eye of Washington, whose talents and exertions were all required, and the more so for the misbehaviour of his principal Gen. Lee. It was thought this General who had been a competitor with Washington for the chief command, intended to bring disgrace on his rival, by a defeat, similar to what had happened in the recent affairs of Brandywine and Germantown. It has been remarked, that this was the only occasion when a *profane oath* was heard from the mouth of Washington. In the heat, on meeting with Lee, he charged him by his *Maker*, that he was a traitor,—and instantly ordered him into arrest.—Lee was never again restored.—But the battle issued prosperously, and the enemy were defeated with the loss of 300 men. The British went to N. York, and Gen. Washington moved towards the Hudson.

Count d'Estaing, with a French fleet, arrived on the coasts of Virginia in the beginning of July. He brought 6000 troops. They were ordered to Rhode Island to co-operate by sea in its re-capture, but a heavy gale obliged them to put into Boston.—Gen. Sullivan made a descent on the Island with 10,000 men, but disappointed of the French co-operation, he came off and without much loss.

The British made several minor expeditions;—one to Buzzard's bay in New England, where they destroyed vessels and stores;—one to Martha's Vineyard, from whence they carried off 2000 sheep and 300 head of cattle;—one up the Hudson, where they cut in pieces a regiment of cavalry, called Washington's light horse;—one to Little Egg harbor in N. Jersey, where they burnt many vessels and the place itself.

In December, an armament from N. York proceeded to the coast of Georgia, and took Savannah. That state was reduced by the enemy in 10 days.—The conquest of the Carolinas was next projected. The tories in that quarter, flushed with the success in Georgia, openly turned out and embodied. But they were attacked by their own countrymen, and half of them destroyed. They were hunted and shot like beasts in their dens. The residue fled into Georgia and joined the British.

The operations of this year were not very considerable.—We pass to

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1779.

A warm engagement took place, on the 30th of March, at Briar's creek, up the Savannah river,—in which 300 Americans were killed or taken, and many drowned.

The British, under Gen. Prevost, made another attempt to take Charleston S. C. but were prevented by Generals Lincoln and Moultrie, who compelled them to retire to the neighbouring islands. The progress of the enemy on this occasion was marked by the most indecent conduct to the inhabitants.

They then proceeded to the aid of Savannah, which was threatened by the French at sea & the Americans by land. An united assault of the Americans and French was made on the place, but failed and 1200 were killed

and wounded on our side: A celebrated Polander in our service, COUNT PULASKI, fell on this occasion. The French retreated to their shipping, and the Americans into Carolina.

Sir George Collier led an expedition by sea against Portsmouth in Virginia, where he burnt 120 vessels, and carried off 20 with great quantity of stores.—An other expedition was made up the Hudson, and the new fortress at Stoney-point fell into the enemy's hands. One on Verplanks neck was also taken.

And now a *burning* expedition was made under gov. Tryon, through the sound into Connecticut. A force was landed at New-Haven, which destroyed the batteries, and burnt part of the town. They then sailed to the pleasant town of Fairfield, which they laid in ashes. The beautiful town of Norwalk shared the same fate.

Gen. Washington resolved to re-take Stoney point.—The gallant Gen. Wayne was selected for this service. With a chosen band he advanced without seige or battery, and stormed & took the fortress in a few minutes, killing many and making 500 prisoners. Danger on that occasion was regarded as nothing. The opposing weapons of war were accounted as straws. Never perhaps was there a greater display of heroism. An Ajax or a Hector, never performed a more courageous feat.

The Indians, joined by some royalists, made an irruption upon the back settlements of Pennsylvania, and destroyed Wyoming. Brandt and Butler headed this attack, and the greatest cruelties were committed. The men generally were butchered or burnt alive, with most of the women and children.

Gen. Sullivan was sent into the Indian country to punish their barbarity. He killed many—the rest fled before him. Their villages he desolated and reduced them to great distress by destroying their provisions.

Near the end of this year, Sir H. Clinton sailed from N. York with a large force, determined on taking Charleston S. C.—Bad weather crippled his ships, and he was obliged to put into Savannah to refit.

Thus ended the operations of that year, which, like those of the past, were not many.

We shall now advert to

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1780.

Sir H. Clinton, having refitted his ships, sailed into Charleston harbor on the 20th of March, and on 29th landed his troops upon the neck. By the 8th of April their guns were mounted for the siege, within 800 yards of the American works.

The town was summoned to surrender. Gen. Lincoln declared his intention to defend it. His troops were few: many he had expected were intercepted by lord Cornwallis and Col. Tarleton who had been landed in other places.

On the 18th of April the town was again summoned to surrender. Gen. Lincoln now thought proper to offer articles,—but they were rejected. When the assault was on the point of being made other articles were offered, which were accepted on the 4th of May, and the enemy took possession of the town. Only about 200 continental troops were captured, with 5 or 6000 militia.

Early in this year the British evacuated Rhode-Island, and on the 10th of July another French fleet arrived there, with 6000 troops under General Rochambeau. The British at New-York were about sailing to attack them, when General Washington rapidly crossed the Hudson with 12,000 men, and the enemy thought proper to lay aside the design.

Gen. Knyphausen with 7000 of the enemy, entered New Jersey and much vigorous skirmishing took place, greatly to the credit of the militia of that state. At Springfield bridge, 170 Americans withstood the enemy's whole force—but were obliged to retire at last, after losing 37 men. This noble stand would have done honor to Leonidas and his 300 Spartans. After burning Springfield, the enemy returned to New York.

In South Carolina, Lord Cornwallis, on the 16th of August, obtained a victory over Gen. Gates at Camden. The battle of Camden was hard fought, tho' it was thought

our Gen. did not display his former talents. We lost many men besides one thousand taken prisoners; and 7 brass cannon and the ammunition waggons fell into the enemy's hands. A Prussian officer of merit in our service the **BARON DE KALB**, was mortally wounded and made prisoner.

The next day, Col. Tarleton, an enterprising British officer, attacked Gen. Sumpter at the Catawba Springs, and defeated him, tho' the General behaved with great gallantry and obtained much credit. Our loss was 150 killed and 300 made prisoners; and 2 brass pieces and 44 waggons fell to the enemy.

Gen. Arnold now became a traitor, and concerted with the British to deliver up the important fortress of Westpoint.—Major Andre of the British army, who was dispatched on this business in disguise to Arnold, was intercepted by three citizens of the state of N. York, who, to their immortal honor, refused great bribes to let him go.—Arnold made his escape:—Major Andre was condemned and executed as a spy at Tappan;—and the world wished the *traitor* had been in the place of the *spy*.—Time does not permit me to do justice to the feelings of Gen. Washington on this occasion. Suffice it to say, *tears* for the unfortunate victim (who was a worthy man) moistened the paper which contained the order for his death, and proved, that our gen. had the sensibility of a man, while he had the necessary firmness of a warrior. If the laws of war could have spared a *spy*, Andre had been spared.

The *battle of King's mountain*, in S. Carolina, was fought on the 7th of October, when 1400 British under Col. Ferguson, were defeated, with 150 killed, and more than 800 prisoners. Col. Shelby (now governor of Kentucky) had a conspicuous part in this action.

We must necessarily pass over some of the other operations in the south, and come to

THE MILITARY EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1781.

On the 11th of January, lord Cornwallis advanced with his army towards N. Carolina. Col. Tarleton went forward with upwards of 1100 men, and attacked Gen. Morgan at the Cowpens. Various success atten-

ded each side at the *battle of the Cowpens*, till at last the British were defeated, with the loss of many officers and 100 rank and file killed, 500 prisoners, and 2 field pieces, 2 standards, 800 muskets, 35 baggage waggons, and 100 dragoon horses fell into our hands. Such was the skill of Riflemen under the intrepid Morgan, that he had only 12 men killed and 60 wounded. The uncommon loss of officers in proportion to privates on the part of the enemy was probably owing to our force consisting of *Riflemen*.

A game now began to be played in the south somewhat similar to that in the north in the case of Burgoyne. Gen. Morgan retreated towards Virginia, and lord Cornwallis followed. In N. Carolina much skirmishing with the militia took place. A party of 200 Tories, who were coming from the country to join Cornwallis, were cut in pieces. GEN. DAVIDSON of our militia fell at M'Gowans' ford on the Catawba.

In the mean time Gen. Green marched with great expedition to the southward to meet lord Cornwallis.

He reached Guildford on the 14th of March and sharp skirmishes took place between the advanced parties of the two armies, with various success, till on the 15th a general engagement came on. The *battle of Guildford* was fought with uncommon valor and obstinacy,—but the Americans retreated at last, and lost their artillery. The British lost 530 men—the Americans 330.

Other affairs of a good deal of consequence took place in the Carolinas and Virginia,—as the *second battle of Camden*—the *storming of Ninety-Six*—the *battle at the Greensprings*—the irruption of Arnold and Philips into Virginia and their depredations and burnings at Petersburg, Richmond, and other places—the *battle of the Eutaw Springs* &c. but the time does not admit of their particular notice, and we hasten back to lord Cornwallis and his army.

Before, however, we attend to the catastrophe of this army, which closed the war, let us dart a hasty glance at the track of the wretched Arnold, and see him flying from the south to the north, like a malignant meteor and putting fire to the town of his nativity (or at least

of his early residence) *New-London*, and reducing it to ashes.

Not content with this species of destruction, he thirsts for the blood of his old neighbors, and puts to the sword the brave defenders of the Fort* which protected the harbor, even when surrendered after a most heroic, a most valiant resistance.—The garrison consisted chiefly of the inhabitants of the little town of Groton, which in one hour lost almost all its heads of families. The brave Col. Ledyard was thrust through with his own sword after he had surrendered it!

But we turn from the hateful traitor, to the concluding scene of the war.

Lord Cornwallis, with his army; was at Yorktown and Gloucester in Virginia, and he began to feel himself in a critical situation. Sir H. Clinton feared to send him reinforcements from N. York. as Gen. Washington kept up a strong menace against him there. This was a political manoeuvre of our general, and it succeeded to admiration. While he held out this threat at New-York, the American and French forces passed rapidly to the south.

On reaching the head of Chesapeake bay, they were informed of the arrival of Count de Grasse within the bay with a considerable naval force from France. This was the more fortunate as it was without any previous concert. The army and the fleet soon came to an understanding.

The army arrived before Yorktown on the 28th of September. On the 30th, lord Cornwallis was closely invested by land. Count de Grasse occupied the bay and the mouth of York river with his fleet, which cut off both relief and retreat by water.

Gen. Washington now hastened to the important scene. The American trenches were opened on the 6th of October within 600 yards of the British works; and another line was opened on the night of the 10th within 200 yards. Two redoubts were stormed and taken on the 14th, one by the French, and the other by the Americans under gen. Fayette. Vast bravery was exhibited in these affairs. The enemy

* Fort Griswold on the east (or Groton) side of N. London harbor, now in being and chiefly relied on for the defense of that city.

made a sortie on the 16th under col. Abercrombie, and succeeded in spiking 11 pieces of our cannon. Many feats worthy of detail were performed on both sides with distinguished valor, but I must omit them.

Lord Cornwallis, on the morning of the 17th, sent a flag to request a cessation of arms, and the appointment of commissioners to agree on a capitulation. The articles were signed and a surrender made on the 19th of October.—About 7000 soldiers and 1500 seamen composed his force. A frigate and some transports fell into our hands. The ordnance were 75 brass pieces and 69 of iron.

Gen. Washington ordered a solemn thanksgiving in the army on the next day.

This may be considered the conclusion of the war, as it certainly was of its military operations of any great moment.—And here my purpose ends, as I promised to limit myself to those operations.

It may not be unacceptable, however, to mention very summarily one or two things more of a general nature.

Sir Guy Carlton, who had now superceded Sir H. Clinton at N. York, with Admiral Digby, made known to Congress the willingness of G. Britain to treat for peace on the basis of acknowledging our Independence, which we had always insisted on since its declaration in 1776—Negotiations were opened at Paris; and the Provisional articles were signed on the 30th of November 1782.

The Independence of these states was declared first by ourselves

July 4th 1776.

Acknowledged by France

January 30th, 1778.

Next by Holland

April 19th 1782.

Next by Sweden

February 5th 1783.

Next by Denmark

February 25th same year.

Then by Spain

in March of the same year.

Then by Russia

in July of the same year.

And last of all by G. Britain's signing the definitive treaty on the 3d of September of the same year, viz, 1783.

The war cost the U. States, in foreign debt, near 8 millions of dollars,—and in domestic debt more than 34 millions. By assuming the debts of the several states afterwards, incurred on its amount, the amount was about doubled.

The cost of the war to G. Britain was rising of 115 millions of pounds sterling.

In men, the Americans lost in killed and perished in prisons, about 80,000.

The British lost between 40 and 50,000. None however of theirs perished in our prisons.

Such, fellow citizens, is a sketch of the struggle our fathers went through to obtain our Independence—such were their exploits—such their sufferings—such their eventual success.

This history is fraught with important instruction. We see it is no light thing to go to war. When the aggregate of its evils is considered, it is enough almost to appal the stoutest heart. The loss of 80,000 lives is no trifle. The sum of 80 millions of dollars is not contemptible:—nor does this include the innumerable private losses, by burning of towns, abandoning homes, the depreciation of money, and other things by far too many to particularize. I suppose it would not be beyond the truth to say, the total loss of money and property on our side to individuals and the public, was 200,000,000 of dollars.—But on the other hand,

We see, that after war is commenced in a just cause, there is no occasion to despond even under the greatest disasters. The history we have attended to seems little else than a history of defeats and calamities, except now and then a great achievement, brought about by singular prudence and valor, under the benignant smiles of providence. A few such achievements determined the scale in our favor and saved our country.—The *dark times* of the revolutionary crisis can only be appreciated by those who saw them. The common phrase of '*times that tried men's souls*' can be fully understood only by such.—Yet, out of all our difficulties the Lord delivered us, and brought us off conquerors.

We see the importance of having a great and good Commander in chief. A WASHINGTON is not to be expected again; but may we not hope the times will presently develop a character fit to command our armies? A *Fabian* General is perhaps not so necessary now as in our former contest; but a *Scipio* or *Marius*, may be equally difficult to be found. We are, however, to remember our country has been 30 years without war; the great chiefs are gone, and new military characters are to spring into being.

We see the importance of selecting men of *principle*, as well as *valor*, to fill inferior grades. A greater *desperado* in point of courage never existed than *Benedict Arnold*.—A greater *villain* surely was never seen!—But *treachery* and *cowardice* united, form a character beneath all contempt.

May the American cause not be disgraced hereafter by such a character in any grade!

The history we have attended to has taught us, that powerful as our foe is, he has once been compelled to loosen his grasp upon our rights. He is not at this time stronger than formerly. We are threefold more so. We need no French alliance now. The aid of Divine Providence is all we want out of ourselves.

In saying, *we are threefold stronger than we were in the former war*, I have particular reference to our population, which is about three times as large. But in point of warlike preparation, of arms, artillery, ammunition, fortifications &c. I may safely say, *we are sixfold stronger*. Pursuing these proportions, we ought not now to be any more disheartened, for instance, on losing 3000 men, and 60 pieces of artillery, with other corresponding means of war, than the people of that day were on losing 1000 men, 10 pieces of artillery and a corresponding quantity of warlike means.—A still better proportion exists in our favor on the ocean, and our navy has already done immortal honor to itself and country. Ah! nothing but union among ourselves is wanting, under Providence to ensure success.

Two of the most conspicuous fruits of our INDEPENDENCE were, the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT and the perpetual UNION OF THE STATES. Our wise fathers, and among them the great Washington, considered *these* equal in importance to *Independence* itself. Indeed it was a question, and a most serious question, whether the *latter* would prove a blessing, unless the *former* were maintained.

It was to your everlasting credit, people of the west! when a project to sacrifice *these* was brought to you by gigantic ambition, it was necessary to *conceal* it from your view; and so soon as it was discovered, or even suspected, it met your perfect abhorrence.

If a project, bearing features in any measure similar, has been started in another part of the Union by any individuals, I am confident there is virtue enough in the people there to ensure its rejection. Certainly *Americans* cannot any where be so changed, as to justify a different expectation.—Still I must own, it would have been more pleasing if as prompt and general a disapprobation had been manifested on its open avowal there, as was witnessed in the western country on a former occasion.

I beg leave here to suggest an idea, which might be useful both for the *north* and the *south* to ponder on, if they should be mad enough to produce a separation between themselves on the Atlantic board. **THE WEST WOULD MOST PROBABLY WITHDRAW FROM BOTH.** Of what use could either of those *fractions* be to us *singly*? And should we not be fools to let the avails of the immense domains in this quarter go to enrich the coffers of *either*, when it could return us no adequate benefit whatever? The lands now belong to the *Union*; let the *Union* continue, and the people of this country will be far from wishing to deprive it of its lands. But if that *Union* must be destroyed, if it must become defunct, who can have a claim to the property? Those who have the **POWER** will undoubtedly possess the lands, nor will either of the *Atlantic fractions* be able to prevent it. If either should make the attempt, their *defeat* would be among the first fruits of their folly in weakening themselves by division.

But I quit the odious subject, and turn with pleasure to what I believe will be found a fact, viz that the people at large, in every quarter, will yet act right. They will maintain their **INDEPENDENCE**—they will maintain their **GOVERNMENT**—they will maintain their **NATIONAL UNION**.

Sons of the revolutionary heroes! you will not prove that degenerate posterity, predicted by the foes of the Revolution, who, said they, will give back the country to its rightful sovereign, when the heat and fumes of the contest shall be past and reason resume its dominion. You will neither give back your *country* to a crazy monarch, nor your *Government* and *Union* to a crazy system. The spirit of your fathers is in you: it has been proven, and it is proving more and more every day. The principles of the Revolution exist at this moment in greater vigor and purity, than even its warmest friends could anticipate would be the case nearly 40 years from that period. It was not then known *who* you would be, nor *what* you would be, and I assure you many fears were entertained for you, principally thro' the known influence of prosperity, speculation and wealth. But you have disappointed such fears;—*the spirit of your fathers is in you*;—That venerable race seem to live again in their sons;—they breathe again at the present day. At the bare suggestion of abandoning your country's cause, the cause in which they bled,—at the bare suggestion of tamely resign-

ing the boon acquired by *their* valor, at the bare suggestion of yielding up their rights, I see a noble scorn swell in your bosoms, I see the fire of patriotism lighten in your eyes.

Go on in this spirit;—vindicate the rights of your country;—humble its foes. Carry your arms to every spot where the enemy can be touched. Drive him from your borders,—drive him from the continent. Break that baleful connexion he has so long had with the ruthless savages. Let the blood, the massacres, the tortures of our unfortunate brethren, and in numerous instances of helpless women and children, rouse you—I will not say to *revenge*—but to put an effectual, an eternal stop to the repetition of those infernal scenes, those works of hell upon earth. Punish the incarnate devils themselves till they cry *enough*, and drive them far off;—but cease not, till by levelling your strokes at the root of the evil, you banish their *abettors* to where they can never see nor hear from them again.

Sons of the revolutionary heroes! may future historians have as glorious deeds to record of you, and as glorious a result of the present conflict, as those which adorn the annals of the last war.

“Ah! let no proud Briton the idea cherish,
That our fathers are gone and they may ravage our shore,
OUR FATHERS LEFT SONS, who will gloriously perish;
Or conquer the foe, as their sires did before.”