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The Battle of Bennington.

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AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE

Vermont Historical Society

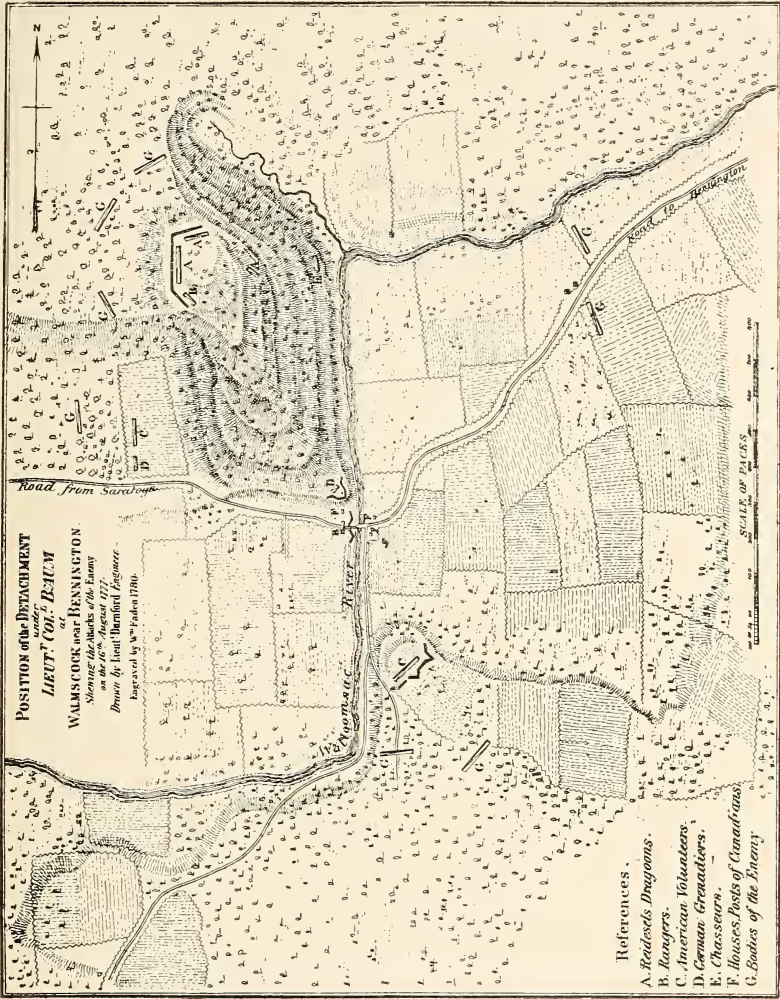
BY

HENRY D. HALL.

Delivered in the Representatives' Hall, Montpelier.

NOVEMBER 5, 1896.

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MAP OF BENNINGTON BATTLE.

See pp. 33-70.

The river was by mistake called Hosack and there was no indication of the points of the compass, otherwise the above is an exact copy, reduced, of the map in Burgoyne's State of the Expedition. The letter press is, of course, British. For "American Volunteers" read Tories. The expression, "Bodies of the Enemy" means Forces of Gen. Stark. The word "Walmscock" means Walloomsac.

Mr. President and members of the Vermont Historical Society, and Ladies and Gentlemen :

The attempt of Hon. S. D. Locke in the April, 1892, number of the "National Magazine of American History," to change the long established and accepted facts connected with the Battle of Bennington, is a marked specimen of perseverance in the perversion of history. That those unacquainted with all the facts, who may not have easy access to the history made and noted at the time, or shortly after its happening, may fully understand it, a review of the article at some length may not be inappropriate. While sometimes it may appear to the conservative mind to be too aggressive, considering the long quiet which has reigned between the "Grants and the Yorkers," the excuse is, that the provocation has been given and can only be fairly met by considering some things, that by common consent have for many years been left to rest, and it has been hoped might remain forever in repose. And, though matters may be treated which had better not be, except for the challenge offered and in the interest of a proper understanding of all the facts in their several bearings, still will it be in a spirit of fairness, and with a desire to allay rather than to foster division and prejudice. The endeavor will be before closing, to leave nothing about the story of the battle, but truth relieved of theory and imagination.

The paper begins with stating, that, "much that has been written as history, even by our best equipped writers, is confused with error or quite false." And, as illustrating his meaning by conspicuous examples, he quotes from Bryant's History, and the American Cy-

clopedia. The vital error among the so styled, "medley of errors," in the opinion of Mr. Locke, must be the typographical one, where "at" is put for "near," thus changing the locality, as it should read *near* Bennington. For surely he cannot think it much of an error for the victors to be called "New Hampshire militia," when Gen. Stark's brigade must have been nearly two-thirds of the army under him, and as he seems very willing at all times to have it understood, that few Vermont or Bennington men had a share in the Battle of Bennington, so-called in history for one hundred fifteen years. That "no trace now remains to indicate the precise locality of the engagement" is substantially correct, for there is nothing of the entrenchments or marks of any excavations to show where they were located. It is true the hill in its position and the stream running at its base, are as they were at the time of the battle, but in order to locate as nearly as possible the camp and breastworks of Baum, and the site of the Tory breastworks, to place markers upon them, a survey was made some ten years ago, "by some enterprising citizens of Bennington," of whom the writer was one, carrying the surveyor's chain up the steep embankment from the river. Fighting was done over ground covering a distance of two or three miles, and all marks of the "precise locality of any engagement," have long since disappeared.

Mr. Locke says, with reference to history being "confused with error," it "seems particularly true of the accounts that come to us as the accepted history of 'Burgoyne's expedition to the left,' including 'the two battles, one with Baum and one with Breyman,'" and, "the story is plain how Baum's five or six hundred men,

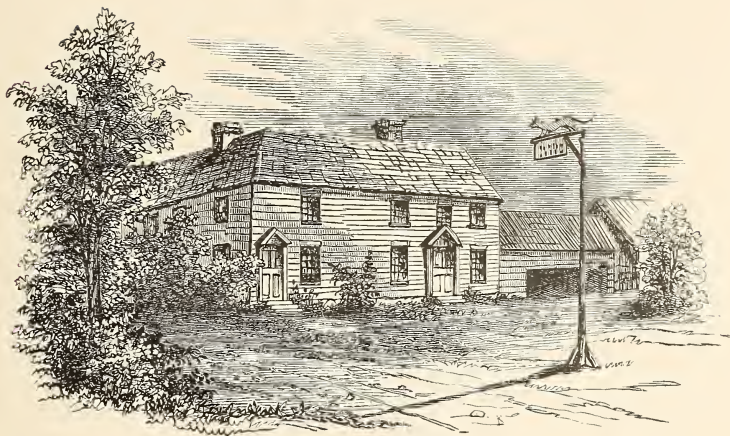
(reliable history makes them seven or eight hundred), *taken in the rear so that their redoubts counted for nothing*, after a desperate conflict, lasting from three to five o'clock, were beaten by Stark's eighteen to twenty-two hundred militia." It certainly is strange, that the situation of the contending forces is not better understood by those who write about it, and from these intimations, it is not so very wonderful that errors do creep into history, and wrong impressions are often given. Baum was located on a hill with a steep embankment three or four hundred feet high looking to the east, up the road which Stark was expected to advance upon, at the foot of which was the Walloomsac river, making it quite impossible for an attack on his front. Having little or no fear of the enemy from that direction, he stationed some Chasseurs at the foot of the hill on the left, where the river turns to the south at nearly a right angle, to guard the approach from the north side if the foe should cross the stream near that point. The "Tory breastwork" had been erected on his right, sixty or eighty rods to the south-east, on rising ground in the direction of Stark's encampment, manned by Peter's Corps of Provincials. *On both sides of the road at the bridge at the foot of the hill on the right, between his camp and the Tory breastworks, had been built lesser fortifications occupied by Canadian Rangers and German Grenadiers, while west on the Sancoick road had been located bodies of men with cannon, as though Stark would advance only from the east, and if he forced these different positions would be met and put to rout before getting to his rear. To make all secure, Baum took

*(See Durnford's map).

another precaution, and built "breastworks of earth and timber" during the rainy day and night of the 15th, looking west or in the rear of his camp, and which would only be of use in case the Americans out-flanked him, and then the works would be in his *front*, for protection. The skillful Stark out-generaled him and before there had been any movements, observable, but marching and counter marching in his front, "to amuse Baum as Stark said," Colonels Nichols and Herrick, by long marches around either flank, had come up in his rear at three P. M., and joining their forces made the attack. Then, "the redoubts" did count for all that could be expected, but the discipline and the valor of Baum's men could not withstand the courage and impetuosity of the Americans, and they were overpowered.

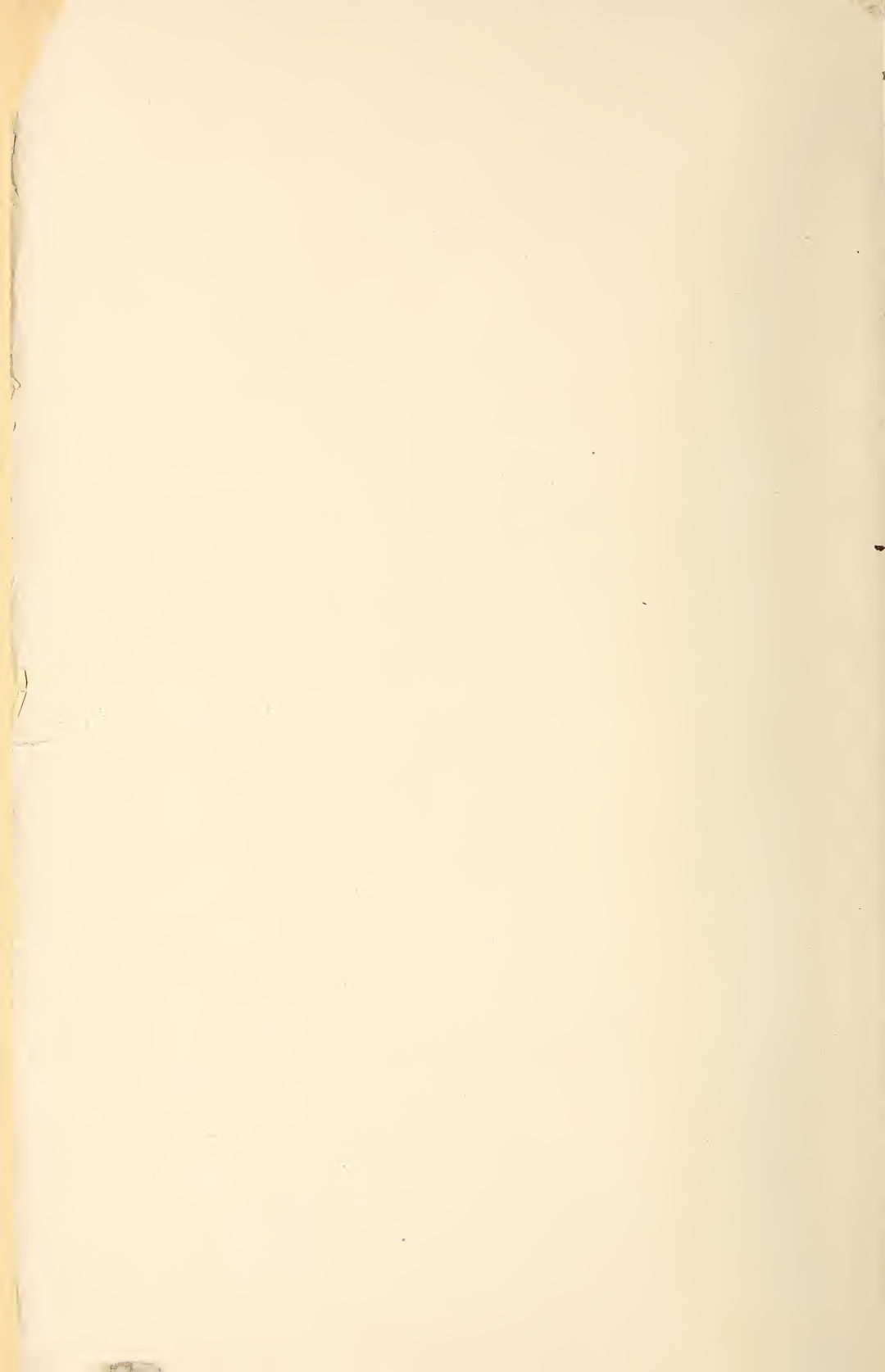
It should not be forgotten in treating this subject that a feeling had grown out of the difficulties arising from the tenure in which the lands of many of the inhabitants of the "grants" had been held, and that the stand taken by New York in regard to them did engender such a spirit as made them jealous of Vermont's prestige, and indifferent to, or against defending, what she felt interested in sustaining. This bias was shown more particularly in the frontier towns previously and up to the time when Burgoyne made his "diversion to the left," sending Baum under a command to take Bennington.

It is not the intention to launch out upon imagination and theory, throwing aside established history, as an examination of the "Battle of Walloomsac" will evidence has been done in reference to many incidents of the battle, but to see if Gen. Stark and Bennington should really be taken into account in the transactions



THE CATAMOUNT TAVERN.

Here were the headquarters of the "Green Mountain Boys" when they met to devise plans for the protection of their families and their once paid for homes from the rapacity of the land jobbers and speculators of New York, known to them as "Yorkers." In this tavern, also, was the room which was occupied for years by the Vermont Council of Safety. The sign was a stuffed catamount skin, upon a high pole, with jaws grinning towards New York. The tavern was built about 1765 and destroyed by fire March 30, 1871.



of the memorable 16th of August, 1777. Mr. Locke says "there was no engagement in Bennington." No well informed person claims there was. It is not supposed there were any of Baum's men in Bennington except as prisoners of war, as Stark did not intend there should be, and he succeeded in keeping them "at bay," unless in skirmishing on the 14th or 15th some might have crossed the line separating New York from Vermont. He further says, "there was no retreat of Baum's detachment after his defeat, but it was annihilated." This is only an assertion made to sustain a theory. What say those who were engaged in the affair, and would be likely to know more about it? Gen. Stark says, in a letter to the Committee of Safety of New Hampshire, two days after the battle, "at sunset we obliged them to retreat a second time." There is no other meaning to this assertion than that there had been a retreat of the first detachment under Baum. Jesse Field, whom the writer remembers, says in a manuscript statement given Gov. Hiland Hall, author of the "Early History of Vermont," and for years President of the Vermont Historical Society, with reference to the retreat after the first engagement, "I should think I did not continue in the pursuit over half a mile, though some parties went farther." Secretary Fay, of the Council of Safety, says in a letter written August 16th at six o'clock P. M., "Stark is now in an action. . . . The enemy were driven about a mile, but being reinforced made a second stand, and still continue the conflict." Thomas Mellen, a soldier in the battle, to James Davie Butler says, "We pursued till we met Breyman with eight hundred fresh troops and larger cannon, which

opened a fire of grape shot." Breyman, in his letter to Lord George Germain, August 20th, 1777, says, "The Indians made good their retreat from the first affair, as did Capt. Frazer with part of his company, and many of the provincials and Canadians."

Mr. Locke says, "he resides less than one and a half miles from where Breyman was defeated, and has been critically over both fields many times." Others had been over the whole ground scores of years before he contemplated visiting it, or before his birth, to obtain all the facts connected with the movements of the men on both sides, and by them the history of the battle was written years ago. Among these was the before mentioned Gov. Hiland Hall, who was born in 1795, but eighteen years after the battle was fought, and within less than three miles of the field, and who often visited the memorable ground in company with those who were in the battle and did not leave the field until the last of Breyman's reinforcements were on their way to the camp of Burgoyne, on the Hudson. Mr. Hall, who made history a study from his childhood, was greatly interested in the war of the revolution, and especially in the trials of the early settlers of the New Hampshire grants, and no less in the Battle of Bennington, which turned so effectually the tide of British victories. In personal conversation on the battlefield with surviving soldiers he learned, as none others could without such opportunities, the positions of the enemy, and preserved in writing the most important facts of both engagements as reported by the men who took part in them. His understanding and account, though differing much from that of Mr. Locke in reference to these engagements, has been received

and quoted for years as worthy of confidence, and in a measure authoritative. A remarkable occasion, and as showing his interest in the revolutionary soldier, he had as guests to dinner, on the 14th of August, 1840, sixty-three years after the battle, at his home, at that time in Bennington Centre, sixteen of the surviving heroes, several of whom were in the Battle of Bennington, the eldest being ninety years old, and the average of all reaching eighty years.

It will not, perhaps, add weight to these thoughts to say the writer of this article lives within a mile of the encampment of Gen. Stark, which he left on the 16th at the head of the New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont troops, mostly militia, including Colonels Warner, Herrick and Brush as officers, each of Bennington, with many undisciplined men, 'tis true, and with reference to whom Mr. Locke says: "Bennington collected two companies of unorganized militia of about one hundred men in both,* but without a man whose name has appeared in the history of the action." Does he mean to cast a sneer on the fidelity, fame or patriotism of the unnamed in history of the rank and file of Bennington militia, who risked their lives on that eventful day, and some of whom were carried to their homes after the battle, cold and silent in death? It might not seem generous to think it of him, though the insinuation may, perhaps, warrant such a rendering. But history *does record* the names of "four of Bennington's most respected Citizens, who fell on that field of battle: John Fay (son of Stephen), Henry Walbridge (brother of Ebenezer), Daniel Warner (cousin of the Colonel),

* The rolls of the two companies show over one hundred fifty men.

and Nathan Clark (son of Nathan and brother of Isaac). They were all in the prime of life and all heads of families, leaving widows and children to mourn their sudden bereavement." If the proportion of Bennington men to the whole force under Gen. Stark, was as Mr. Locke seems constrained to make it, then the deaths on the American side would proportionally have been between eighty and ninety, instead of thirty as it is recorded in history. What better praise could be bestowed on the Bennington heroes than Gen. Stark gave them when he wrote to Gen. Gates August 22nd, 1777, saying, "I then marched in company with Colonels Warner, . . . Herrick and Brush, . . . I also sent Colonel Herrick with three hundred men in the rear of their right, . . . in a few minutes the action began in general, it lasted two hours, the hottest I ever saw in my life, . . . the enemy were obliged to give way. I gave orders to rally again, but in a few moments was informed that there was a large reinforcement, on their march, within two miles. Luckily for us, that moment Col. Warner's regiment (under Lieut.-Col. Samuel Safford of Bennington) came up fresh, who marched on and began the attack afresh. . . . I cannot particularize any officers, as they all behaved with the greatest spirit and bravery. Col. Warner's superior skill in the action was of extraordinary service to me. I would be glad if he (a Bennington man) and his men (some of whom were Bennington men) could be recommended to Congress."

Mr. Locke says, "These engagements at Walloomsac known in the current history as the Battle of Bennington, should be called the battle of Walloomsac," and

gives his own views as to what should determine the name for a battle, and the precise place where a monument to perpetuate a victory should be erected to be most appropriate, and hand down to posterity the gallant deeds of the actors, and inspire the noblest impulses for liberty, valor and patriotism. In his voluminous endeavor to answer Hon. B. H. Hall and others, in the "Troy Times" of December 9th, 1891, he makes the statement nearly a score of times, adducing proof which would warrant calling it "the battle of Sancoik," "Baum's defeat," "Breyman's disaster" or "battle of Hoosick," quite as much as the "battle of Walloomsac," but being partial to "Walloomsac," he can see no good reason why it should have been called for over a century, "the Battle of Bennington." Gordon, in his "History of the American Revolution" contemporaneous with the events narrated, published in London in 1788, in his comments upon and description of this battle, never so much as mentions the name "Walloomsac," but speaks of Bennington at least eight times in such ways as follows: "According to information, the Americans had a great deposit of corn, flour and store cattle at Bennington, which were guarded only by militia;" "he therefore entertained the design of surprising the stores at Bennington." "And signal victory over the enemy in their lines at Bennington;" "the severe check the enemy have met with at Bennington;" "especially as the disaster at Bennington added to their delay;" "but the Bennington affair put them in better spirits;" "after the affair at Bennington," etc. All this, as though the distinguished historian had never heard of the river or farm Mr. Locke would now have the battle named after, and who we have no reason to sup-

pose was biased in favor of or against New York or Vermont. It will be seen by referring to the map* that Mr. Locke speaks of as "calling the battlefield Walmscoik or Walloomsac," that in order to have it known in what part of North America it was located, "*near Bennington*" was wisely added, though it was suppressed in his reference to it. Gov. Clinton wrote within a week after Baum and Breyman were discomfited, "Since the *affair at Bennington* not an Indian has been heard of; the scalping has ceased."

Mr. Locke adopts a theory "that the name of the place where a battle is fought should be the name of the battle." Does he forget, when he is claiming so much, that he also says, "the last or decisive engagement when the largest number of the enemy were fighting was at Sancoik." and Breyman, he further says, "went no farther than Sancoik when he was defeated." He also says in this connection, "Sancoik was then a little hamlet nearly as large as Bennington." The last quotation is made that the reader may judge of the candor and ingenuousness exhibited in the efforts to *make* history after so long a lapse of time, by changing well authenticated and established facts. But the number of houses and size of the hamlet has far less to do with its importance and connection with the battle, in giving it a name, than the influence its stalwart men of brain, nerve and muscle had, who were engaged for years in making the history of the embryo State of Vermont during the revolutionary period, and the difficulties of the early settlers with the State of New York, in its endeavor to eject them from their once paid for lands and homes. The

*See Durnford's map.

heroism, the self-sacrifice, and clear-headed common sense shown in their counsels, made them a power, and their conduct on the field, in which capacity they were so often called to act, not only for themselves and neighbors, but in the interest of the colonies, added greatly to their prowess, and gave them a name through all the land.

But what does give the name to a battle, or has from time immemorial? There has been no fixed rule for their naming, but like the naming of children, circumstances and surroundings govern, and a name suggested by its adaptation to the event, meets the views of those concerned, and acquiescence determines it, and then David or Jonathan, Patience or Dorothy, battle of Bennington or Walloomsac, is the proper one, and becomes unchangeable after a period of one hundred and fifteen years. And the location of a monument depends upon the connection of what is to be perpetuated with the circumstances which brought about the event or battle, or whatever may have taken place. Such ever has been the rule, and such undoubtedly always will be, although it does not meet with entire approbation in this case.

In looking at the names given some of the fifteen "Battles," which Prof. Cressey pronounces, "as having had the most decisive influence," what has given them their names? Not always the field or ground upon which they were fought, but other circumstances or reasons have determined many of them. Arbela has given the name "Battle of Arbela," to a battle fought (301 B. C.) between Alexander the Great and Darius, though in fact "the scene of the conflict was 'Gaugamela,' and it was only in the subsequent pursuit, that the conqueror arrived

at Arbela, where Darius had left his baggage and treasure, forty to fifty miles distant." "Varu's defeat by the Germans, A. D. 9, in a battle near Kreutzberg, rolled back the tide of Roman conquest, and the battle was called 'Herman-Schlacht,' that is Herman's fight." The "battle of Blenheim did not actually take place here, but at a village in the vicinity called Hochstadt." This important battle was fought August 13th, 1704, when "France and Bavaria on the one hand with 56,000 men, stood opposed to Holland, England, Austria, Savoy, Portugal and the German Empire on the other with 52,000 men commanded by Marlborough and Prince Eugene." The "battle of Poltova" was fought in 1709, "Poltova being famous as the scene of the defeat of Charles 12th, by Peter the Great, and a monument commemorating the victory of the Czar stands in the principal square; while three miles from the town, a mound surmounted by a cross still known as the 'Swedish tomb' marks the battle field." The battle fought at Freehold, New Jersey, County of Monmouth, June 28th, 1778, was styled, "The battle of Monmouth," and the name has since been acquiesced in, though it took the name of the county in which it was fought, rather than that of the town, or eminence or morass that figure so prominently in the history of the battle. The battle of Waterloo and the Bunker Hill Monument have been sufficiently commented upon by others, showing that the battle ground of Waterloo is not located by the name, neither does the location of the monument on Breed's Hill determine the name of the battle fought on Breed's Hill. It would be equally pertinent and historically correct, to say, the battle of Bunker Hill fought on

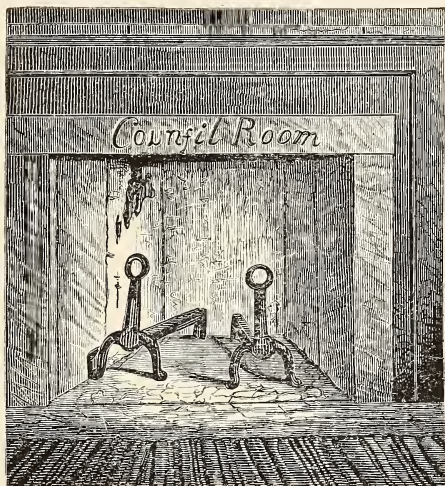
Breed's Hill, Charlestown, or the battle of Bennington fought on the heights of the Walloomsac in Hoosick. Thus by these instances, which are only a few of those which might be cited, it is shown that many things enter into the giving of a name to a battle, or the location of a monument.

Mr. Locke further says, in order to show that "Wal-loomsac" should be the name, "The people of Bennington, a third of a century thereafter, reapproved the earlier naming," and quotes the invitation to Gen. Stark to be present at a celebration, remarking "this invitation emphasizes two facts, first—That celebrations were held annually and on the battle field," "second—This invitation emphasizes also the fact that annual celebrations were not then state or town institutions." History, which is reliable, says the first anniversary of the battle was held in Bennington, August 16th, 1778, with an oration by Noah Smith, Esq., of Bennington, in which he spoke of the fight as "the Battle of Bennington," and yearly the eventful day was celebrated here until in 1802 there was a gathering on the battle ground and a sham-fight was had by the soldiery. Afterwards, until 1810, it was celebrated in Bennington. This celebration was a Republican gathering, as will be seen by the call as published in the newspaper of the time, which reads "The committee solicit a general attendance of their Republican fellow citizens on the 16th of August next, at ten o'clock A. M., at the former headquarters of Gen. Stark near the dwelling house of Mr. David Henry,* in a field near the boundary line of Bennington and Hoosick, after which an oration will be pronounced and a repast pro-

* A citizen of Bennington.

vided for the citizens assembled." The committee, Jonathan Robinson, Eleaser Hawks and David Fay, who sent the invitation to Gen. Stark, were all Bennington men, and the "toasts" given at the "repass provided" give something of an idea of the feeling of satisfaction in the name which had been given the conflict, as entertained by the then living veterans, and those who came out on "that auspicious day." Gen. David Robinson, of Bennington, who was in the battle, and was now equipped with the broad-sword taken from Col. Baum on the bloody field, was the marshal of the day, Rev. Daniel Marsh, of Bennington, offered the prayer, and among the toasts were, "Gen. John Stark, the Leonidas of America," another "the surviving heroes of Bennington battle, though their locks are whitened with many winters, yet their hearts are still warm in their country's cause," and the heading of another, "the heroes of liberty who fell in Bennington battle."

In 1812 the anniversary of the Battle of Bennington was celebrated in Arlington, Vt., by the "Washington Benevolent Society," with others from the county. In 1828 a celebration was held near Judge Draper's in Shaftsbury, Vt. In 1832, a celebration was held at North Bennington, Gen. David Robinson, president; Col. J. M. Potter and Maj. Norman Blackmer, marshals, and Hon. Hiland Hall, orator. In 1833 the day was celebrated in White Creek, with committees to cooperate from White Creek, Shaftsbury, Bennington and Hoosick. All other celebrations with one exception, that of 1834, were held in Bennington unto this day, unless it might be political or party conventions of different kinds. Thus we have three on the battle ground



THE "COUNCIL ROOM"

The engraving, cut in the stone mantel one hundred and twenty years ago, shows this to be the "Fire Place" of the Council Room where Cols. Seth Warner, Ethan Allen and their associates met for consultation before Vermont was recognized as a state.

or near it, one in White Creek, N. Y., one each in Arlington, Pownal and Shaftsbury, and nearly one hundred in the town of Bennington, and for the first twenty or thirty years after with a procession from the court house, near the site of the battle monument, to the old "meeting house," which was located near the present First church, in their march passing the famous "Catamount Tavern" and the "Vermont Council of Safety room."* Does this look like establishing the "facts," as stated in the paper under consideration, which would not only intimate, but maintain, there was in early times a community of feeling in the two states of New York and Vermont as to the battle? Such was not the case, and there never has been a disposition on the part of New York generally, or counties adjacent to Bennington in that direction, except that which was drawn or forced out for perpetuating the glorious event of August 16th, 1777. This is said with all due deference to our neighbors, among whom there has ever been many conspicuous examples to the contrary, and we each would have agreed to have gone along in "the even tenor of our way," with no jealousies or prejudices to parade before the world had not the attempt been made to change many established facts with reference to the battle and the spirit of its celebrations. It has always needed Bennington and Vermont men, although the battlefield was in Hoosick, to start, carry forward, and complete the celebration of the battle, when it has been done *solely* on patriotic grounds. The people of New York who took so little interest in fighting the battle, have since

*See plates "Catamount Tavern" and "Council Room."

taken comparatively but little interest in commemorating the victory.

*In connection with the location of the Bennington Battle Monument, Mr. Locke endeavors to make little of the fact of a supply of stores and provisions at Bennington, carrying the idea that the matter of provisions has been trumped up and more made of it than is warranted from the situation at the time, and that it may be doubted if there really was a large quantity at Bennington. In addition to what has been presented by B. H. Hall, Esq., and others, and the risk of repeating something that may have been offered, an extract bearing upon the matter from a letter by Gen. Arthur St. Clair, to the President of the Vermont Convention, at Windsor, Vt., dated "Otter Creek, July 7th, 1777," the day of the battle of Hubbardton, reads, "I am now on my march to Bennington, which place I am obliged to make, on account of provisions, the enemy having last night possessed themselves of Skeensborough." Also, an extract from a "circular for aid," "to the commanding officers of militia and committees of safety in the State of Massachusetts Bay—Connecticut," dated "Bennington, July 8th, 1777." After saying news had come of an engagement, "the particulars of which we have not yet obtained," (the Battle of Hubbardton), it is said, "unless the enemy be soon stopped and repelled the whole country will fall into their hands, which will prove the ruin of the whole country as we have large stores deposited in this place which we shall of necessity be obliged to leave to the enemy and retreat down into the New England States, which will soon reduce the country

*Monument plate.

to 'cleanness of teeth.'” Signed, “Moses Robinson, Col.; Nath’l Brush, Lt. Col.; Joseph Farnsworth, Dep’ty Commissary; Elijah Dewey, Captain; John Fay, Chairman.” Also, Gen. St. Clair to Gen. Schuyler, dated, “Dorset, July 8th, 1777.” “I am in great distress for provisions. If I can be supplied at Manchester I shall proceed directly for Fort Edward, or Saratoga, as circumstances may direct; if not, I shall be obliged to go to Bennington.” Ira Allen, Secretary of the Vermont Council of Safety, in a circular to military officers “whom it may concern,” dated, “Manchester, July 15th, 1777,” says, after asking for all immediate assistance in their power to check the enemy in their advance, “the Continental Stores in Bennington seem to be their present aim.” The letter of Gen. Burgoyne to Col. Baum, dated, “near Saratoga, August 14th, 1777, seven at night,” does not appear to have received the attention it should, touching the matter of provisions. He says to Col. Baum, “you will please send off to my camp, as soon as you can, wagons, and draft cattle, and likewise, such other cattle as are not necessary for your subsistence. Let the wagons and carts bring off all the *flour and wheat* they can that you do not retain for the same purpose. This transport must be under the charge of a commission officer.” If he refers, as is supposed, to the *flour and wheat* mentioned in Col. Baum’s letter to him written from Sancoik, at 9 o’clock A. M., of the same day, then Mr. Locke is in error when he says that “Baum could make no disposition of these articles,” the flour and wheat, etc., “but to destroy them.” We have further from Burgoyne’s orderly book, August 17th, 1777, in speaking of the “expedition which marched to

the left," "the flour taken from the enemy to be delivered into the hands of the commissary here," which must have referred to that captured at Sancoik. The reference to the destroying of flour and wheat looks like an effort to make it appear that Burgoyne's army was not in much need of provisions, when in fact, a supply was one of the things uppermost in his mind. In the same letter Burgoyne says, "I will write you in full to-morrow in regard to getting the horses out of the hands of the savages," which shows that provisions were of greater consequence at this critical time than even the horses, which were so much needed, especially as the letter of Baum, inquiring as to getting horses from the savages, had been written to him the day before.

In speaking of the name of the battle, and endeavoring to have everything appear fair in the presentation of the subject, he says, "No single instance is recalled other than this under consideration, when a battlefield has taken the name of a 'hamlet of a dozen houses' nine miles away." What are the facts in regard to this hamlet, and the town which did give the name to the battle fought on the 16th of August, 1777, between Gen. Stark and Colonels Baum and Breyman? The "Vermont Historical Magazine," page 136, says, "The population of Bennington in 1775 was about 1,500," so it might be expected in 1777 to be at least 1,600. In 1800, twenty-three years after the battle, "the territory now included in the present village of Bennington contained but twenty buildings exclusive of barns and sheds," so that by far the greater part of the inhabitants, at the time of the battle, lived in the vicinity of Bennington Centre, where was standing the Continental store house, the remainder

being located principally in the western and northwestern parts of the town, on the border of the town of Hoosick and state of New York. Thus we see the hamlet, so contemptuously spoken of as one of a "dozen houses," must have contained over one hundred houses, as that and the vicinity must have had dwellings to the number of nearly, or quite, three hundred, to be in proportion to the inhabitants. That there may be a correct understanding as to the population and dwellings, it may be said "the first census was taken in 1791, when the number of inhabitants was 2,377," which up to this period would be the natural growth of this most important town in this part of the state. Manchester, the largest town in the northern part of the county, had a population of 1,276 in 1791, or at the time of the battle about 800. This comparison of the population of the two towns will furnish the reader with a clue to the animus of Mr. Locke, and the fairness exhibited in the effort to change history, when in speaking of the men furnished in the battle he says, "*Probably* Manchester furnished more troops than Bennington." He may have had his sensibilities affected by reading Glick's* account of the "promised land," which he, in common with Baum, was anxious to enter, in the slip which he made in speaking of Bennington as a "hamlet of a dozen houses," when he says, "About twenty miles to the eastward of the Hudson lies the obscure village of Bennington, a cluster of poor cottages situated in a wild country between the forks of the Hoosac." But more than the

*Thorough research of records in several large libraries of the country does not reveal that there was an officer *Glick* in the British army; therefore, it is thought with others, the narrative attributed to him is taken from the story by Rev. George Robert Gleig, of England, styled "*Saratoga*," in which the hero, *Macdirk*, gives nearly *verbatim* the same account of *his experience* in the battle.

furnishing of the greatest number of men of any town in the state during the revolution, and the officers who figured so largely in the invasion of Canada, and the resisting of Burgoyne, Warner, the Allens, the Robinsons, the Saffords, the Scotts, the Fays and Herrick, and others too numerous to mention, the town was the seat of the Council of Safety, supplying a majority of the active members, whose counsel and influence were felt all through the northern department, and the wisdom and sagacity of whom planned most of the operations of the Green Mountain boys up to the time of, and which culminated in, the grand result of the Battle of Bennington. Bancroft, in referring to a letter of Gov. Hutchinson to Gov. Pownal, of July 10th, 1765, says :

“Men of New England, ‘of a superior sort,’ had obtained of the government of New Hampshire a warrant for land down the western slope of the Green Mountains, on a branch of the Hoosick, twenty miles east of the Hudson river; formed already a community of sixty-seven families in as many houses, with an ordained minister; had elected their own municipal officers; formed three several public schools; set their meeting-house among their primeval forests of beech and maple, and in a word enjoyed a flourishing state which springs from rural industry, intelligence, and unaffected piety. They called their village Bennington.”

This was twelve years before Burgoyne attempted to enter this “coveted” hamlet, the first settlement of which had been made but four years before, and which had increased to the number of one hundred and fifty families at the time Mr. Locke speaks of it as “a hamlet of a dozen houses.”

Thus far the investigation has been pursued with reference to topics with which the general reader is conversant, and which needed only to be carefully examined and have historical light thrown upon them, to give

them their deserved standing in history. Mr. Locke says, "It has been thought that Warner's regiment held Breyman in check and saved Stark's army from defeat, but its numbers, only one hundred and fifty, were too small to be effective. It now appears that Col. John Williams, of White Creek, a New Yorker at the head of New York troops, saved the day. This is history: Gen. Stark with twenty-two hundred of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and New York troops defeated Baum's six hundred; and Col. Williams' New York troops, with Warner's one hundred and fifty and a portion of Stark's army that he succeeded in rallying, defeated Breyman's eight hundred." It appears Mr. Locke has been a citizen of Hoosick about twenty years, coming from a distance and possessing none of the bias which largely affected the early inhabitants. It is not strange that he should wish to find something in history, showing that New York was really "heart and hand," in sympathy with those engaged in the Battle of Bennington, and in fact did take part with an organized body of troops. He bases his argument upon material furnished by B. H. Hall, Esq., in the History of Rensselaer County, N. Y., published in 1880, and endeavors to produce historical facts to establish it, although he discards many of the facts and conclusions on other points, stated in the same paper. The quotation reads thus, "It is '*probable*' that the second battle was begun and 'fought in part' by a body of New Yorkers under the command of Col. John Williams, of White Creek, now Salem." It must be as great a wonder to Mr. Hall as anyone else, that such a myth could grow out of his undisguised statement, and no doubt a just and practi-

cal solution of the Col. Williams episode will be as satisfactory to him as to other readers, who desire inferences drawn from trustworthy premises, or reliable history. The position of Mr. Locke being new, and the attention of the earlier writers on the events of the battle never having been called to it with a claim of like importance and with such assurance, it should be examined with care and an endeavor to solve with all reasonableness, the question as to the part, if any, taken by Col. Williams in the Battle of Bennington. There have been, heretofore, no prejudices of Vermont or the town of Bennington, and there should be none now, to interfere with a reasonable claim made by a sister state to any deserved honor in the battle fought in the town of Hoosick. There has been a mutual understanding as to the forces employed at the time, and New York has made no claim heretofore as having taken an active part, and the order to Col. Williams has not been understood by the best informed historians, to be a military one, but one of discovery, or a passport to give him and those with him recognition in passing the lines and beyond, to a place of comparative safety in Massachusetts. This order from the Council of Safety has always had given it, it has been supposed, the importance it merited, till the remark made by Mr. Hall, in 1880, expressed in problematical language, has been taken up and the effort made to make it appear a tremendous reality. "Possibly," "probable," "doubtless," "probably," "beyond a doubt," "it appears to be true," and "undoubtedly," are qualifying terms used in making up the case, by Mr. Locke, and if they are not allowed to signify more than in their common use, his whole theory falls

to the ground. The order to Col. Williams reads thus :

STATE OF VERMONT.

IN COUNCIL OF SAFETY. }

August 16th, 1777.

To Col. John Williams,—Sir: You will proceed with your party toward the lines, and if the enemy should retreat, you will repair to the road leading from St. Cork to Hoosack, and if you make any discovery, report to this council; at the same time, you are to pay proper attention to the road leading from Hoosack to Pownal.

By Order of Council,

PAUL SPOONER, D. Secretary.

The wording of the paper is such that no one acquainted with military tactics, especially of Revolutionary times, would consider it given to soldiers under arms, hurrying to the battle field. Neither would the council have given a military order, on the day Gen. Stark was to attack the enemy, and it knew his intentions so to do, for they had been in consultation that very morning,—much less a military order which might conflict with Gen. Stark's plans, "if the enemy should retreat." Again, if it had been a military order Col. Williams would have been told to report to Gen. Stark. The council were too well acquainted with the "stuff" Gen. Stark was made of, to tamper with him in the way of giving counter orders, or even orders which might be construed to coincide with his ideas of the military disposition of his forces. The order reads, "if the enemy should retreat, you will repair to the road leading from St. Cork to Hoosack, and if you make any 'discovery' report to this council." Was Col. Williams at the head of a regiment, company or squad of armed men, militia or continental troops, under orders from the council to take part in any fighting, and, "if he made

any discovery" to report to this council? The inference is too absurd to be entertained and was only grasped by Mr. Locke in his desperation, to get hold of something to make it appear, that the state of New York was prominent in the defeat of Col. Breyman. Col. Williams with his party, was not necessarily within a dozen miles of the council room from which the order of procedure or permit emanated, as it may have been forwarded by an express or courier in answer to advice asked relative to his approaching the lines from the north, the direction of his home, which is the most rational conclusion. That it was not a military order is shown by comparison with other customary orders given by the Council of Safety about the same time, which are couched in nearly the same language, as follows:

IN COUNCIL OF SAFETY.

August 28th, 1777.

To David Fassett,—Sir, You will proceed to Mr.——, and make strict examination of his improvements or lands adjoining; and if you find any stock or other effects, which you have reason to suspect belongs to any enemical person within the state you may seize the same, and cause it to be brought to this council, as soon as may be.

By Order of the Council,

IRA ALLEN, Secretary.

Another order dated,

August 29th, 1777.

You are to proceed to the house of Mr.——, of Shaftsbury, and seize all his lands and effects, of whatsoever name or nature, and bring all his writings, together with all his movable effects, to this council, excepting two cows, and such other effects as are wanted for the support of said family, which you are to leave with the woman, taking a proper account of them.

By Order of Council,

IRA ALLEN, Secretary.

Also,

IN COUNCIL OF SAFETY.

August 29th, 1777.

To Mr. Benj. Fassett—Sir, You are hereby directed to proceed to Pownal, and bring from some of the Tories that are gone to the enemy,

or otherwise proved themselves to be enemies to their country, a load of sauce, for the use of the wounded prisoners here ; and make returns to this council of what you bring, and from whom. You will leave sufficient for their families.

Per Order,
THOMAS CHITTENDEN, President.

And,

IN COUNCIL OF SAFETY, }
BENNINGTON. }

29th of September, 1777.

To Mr. Wright, and other teams in company—You are to repair from this to Paulet, there to apply to the commanding officer, or Lt. Hyde, to be loaded with plunder, belonging to Col. Brown, and return the same, and deliver it safe, to this council.

By Order of Council,
JOSEPH FAY, Secretary.

One has only to compare the "Williams order" with the above four to see that it was an order or permit for him and his party, to pass the lines, not with a command "to do, to dare and to die," but as a conductor or leader. Col. Williams was something of a military man, though not much of a fighting one as appears from history, but a statesman of considerable experience in his state, in the Provincial Congress of which he was a member, and an eminent physician, surgeon and patriot. On July 2d, 1777, six weeks before the Battle of Bennington, he, with Cols. Robinson and Warner, of Bennington, were addressed in a letter by Gen. St. Clair, to come with their regiments, to his aid at Ticonderoga against Gen. Burgoyne, and of the result it is said "in the war of the revolution," in the History of Rensselaer County, "Cols. Warner and Robinson reached Ticonderoga in time to take part in its evacuation. It is also 'believed' that Col. Williams reached the fort, but whether with or without a command is not positively known." That he

did not reach the battle field, on the 16th of August, 1777, in command of New York troops and take part in it, appears to be as certain as other historical events connected with it.

The history of Washington County, N. Y., was published in 1878, two years before that of Rensselaer, the "Revolutionary Period" being prepared by Chrisfield Johnson, Esq., showing much study and research. He treats largely of the part taken by Charlotte County in the revolutionary struggle, and of the town of Newperth or Salem where Col. Williams resided, but has failed to furnish anything from the large collection of papers left by him, or any reliable data from other sources, to sustain the theory that he was engaged in the Battle of Bennington. He refers to the letter of Gen. St. Clair to Cols. Williams, Warner and Robinson, before mentioned, and also speaks of the battle of Bennington, claiming all he could for the County of Washington, in these words, in speaking of Gen. Stark as "the old indian fighter, grim John Stark," "his men were principally from New Hampshire, though there was a considerable number from Vermont and Massachusetts, and some also from the towns of Cambridge, White Creek, Jackson, and Salem, in this County." It is often far easier for the historian to make an assertion, than to present trustworthy reasons for making the declaration, as in this instance, investigation discloses that very few from these towns were in the battle, and no facts have been obtained to show that an organized body of soldiers or military company took part in the fight. On April 22d, 1778, Col. Williams wrote to Gov. Clinton, who had informed him that Charlotte County would be exempt from a draft

which was ordered to fill up the Continental army, "on condition of its furnishing the designated number, seventy, for the defense of the frontier, that he had called his battalion together and could obtain only seventeen volunteers. He expected to get as many more, but could not possibly raise seventy. Enough to make three companies had moved down the river and others were preparing to go. Of those who remain, the Colonel said, about one-half are disaffected to the American cause, and most of these he feared would join the enemy." If at this time, several months after the victories of Bennington and Saratoga, and with the surrender of Burgoyne, the feeling in Charlotte County where Col. Williams lived and did so much to sustain what little patriotism, comparatively, could be aroused, what must have been the coldness of the inhabitants six months previous, at the time of the battle, which occurred a little more than a month after the defeat of Warner at Hubbardton? It certainly is worth while to candidly weigh the question, when an endeavor is made to so add to accepted history without proof to justify it, and a reasonable regard to surrounding circumstances taken into consideration. There must have been a poor showing for Gen. Stark, at the time in this locality, and without something to bolster the *conjecture* that "Col. Williams with his New York troops," was present at the Battle of Bennington, the theory should be repudiated.

In the county history, speaking of the town of White Creek, the home of Col. Williams, it says, "Austin Wells, a son of Edmund Wells, the latter a pioneer of Cambridge, went in 1777, to assist an older brother in Cambridge to remove his family to a place of safety,

information having been received that a detachment of Burgoyne's army might be expected through the Cambridge valley. Having taken the family to Williamstown, the brothers hastened back, and reached Bennington in time to join in the closing scenes of the battle." With reference to Cambridge, it says, of Mrs. Sarah Hall, "She was first married to Thomas Comstock, a descendant of the Puritans, who heroically fell in the Battle of Bennington, August 16th, 1777," and in another place it says, "some of the settlers left their homes through fear of the enemy and their Indian allies," and mentions nine, who "are known to have served in the American cause." And of Jackson's part, "The citizens of this town shared, *no doubt*, in the great events occurring around them and in their midst during the War of the Revolution. *Doubtless* several from this town were in service, but no records are found in the town upon this point, and the memory of the older people does not recall them."

It will be necessary to further examine the order to Col. Williams, to learn its full import, in order to judge of the weight to be given it in its relation to the battle of Bennington. It purports to be an order of observation, or a permit as leader or conductor of a "party" to give attention to the roads spoken of, as he journeyed, and see if he could make discovery of anything that might affect the situation "if the enemy should retreat," but otherwise he was not expected to learn or do anything, as he proceeded on his way. Or, he may have been guide or escort to a "party" of refugees, which would likely be composed largely of women and children, fleeing from Salem, then Newperth, or White Creek, and

the country contiguous, to towns in Massachusetts for safety. A meeting was held in "Newperth,* 25th, July, 1777, John Rowan, Chairman," at which, men were appointed from four different parts of the town, "to appraise and value all the crops and buildings in said district," and the inhabitants were counseled "to evacuate their places of residence and move into the interior of the state." But, Lieut. Col. St. Leger was sent just at this time, by Burgoyne, into the interior with an army, so it was unsafe to flee in that direction, and we find many from Salem and vicinity in Massachusetts, having fled on horseback, and among them Mrs. Williams, the wife of Col. Williams, in Williamstown the day after the battle. This is history by tradition as well as written, in relation to her and others who had gone at this time. A receipt of which the following is a copy, is now on file among the papers of Col. Williams, in Salem, N. Y. :

Williamstown, August ye 17, 1777.

Received of Mrs. Williams, the whole of Doct. Williams' amputating instruments.

I say received by me.

SAM'L PORTER.

Furthermore it is shown by a receipt, which was given by one Hopkins, for a horse impressed into the service, to Captain Barnes, who was acting for Col. Williams, dated Newperth, August 20th, 1777, that the Colonel was still absent from home, and being a physician and skilful surgeon was most likely in Williamstown with his wife and rest of the party he had escorted thither, attending to the wounded and suffering, and if need be using the surgical instruments he had brought

* The home of Col. Williams.

with him. It would also appear that his duties were many, as a surgeon, for it was necessary he should have the assistance of his efficient wife in the multitude of his engagements, as in the delivery of the instruments mentioned in the receipt of Sam'l Porter, M. D. It is said of him, "He was a surgeon in the Continental line, acting as such in several of the heaviest battles of the war, and especially in the battle of Monmouth," which took place June 28, 1778. So, here in Williamstown we find Col. Williams, whom Mr. Locke makes the hero of the second action between Gen. Stark and Col. Breyman; Col. Williams who lived an active life in Salem, twenty-nine years after the Battle of Bennington took place, never claiming or intimating he had anything to do in fighting it, and of whom it was never claimed he took any part, until Mr. Locke moved into Hoosick and had lived several years near the battle ground and had "gone over it critically." Then his eye falling upon this hint, before quoted, "It is 'probable' that the second battle was begun and fought in part by a body of New Yorkers under the command of Col. John Williams, of White Creek, now Salem," he invents a theory and with his characteristic energy starts it on its cometic course. Nor did Col. Williams make a report of the attention he gave the roads "leading from St. Cork to Hoosick," and "from Hoosick to Pownal." Nothing of consequence was discovered, as he made his way at the head of his party, over these roads which was the shortest route to Williamstown and towns beyond, though they ran through a section peopled with Tories, and passed the home of Col. Phister, of Hoosick, who was that day in the battle in command of the Tories, at the Tory breastwork, and

whose prestige influenced many of the faint hearted in his neighborhood, to withhold their allegiance to the American cause. The following letter shows the feeling of one of Bennington's noble sons, at the time of which we are considering:

Bennington, Aug. the 20th, 1777.

Honored Father:—After my duty I take this opportunity to write to you, hoping these few lines will find you well, as through the goodness of God they leave me and my family. We met with a great deal of trouble on the 16th instant. Myself and brother John was preserved through a very hot battle. We killed and took according to the best account we can get, about one thousand of the enemy. Our loss was about thirty or forty. We marched right against their breastworks with our small arms, where they fired upon us every half minute, yet they never touched a man. We drove them out of their breastworks and took their field pieces and pursued and killed great numbers of them. We took four or five of our neighbors—two Sniders and two Hornbecks. The bigger part of Dutch Hoosick was in the battle against us. They went to the Reglers a day or two before the fight. Samuel Anderson, was a captain amongst the Reglers, and was in the battle against us. Whilst I was gone my wife and children went off and got down to Williamstown. After I got home I went after them and found them to Landlord Simons.* I have got them home again. My wife was very much tired out. She had four children with her. Belindy was forced to run on foot. We soon expect the enemy will come upon us again and what shall I do with my family I know not.

JOSEPH RUDD.

It should not, perhaps, seem so very strange that so few of those in the state of New York, on the line of Vermont, took part in the defence of Bennington, as their sympathies had been for years with their own state in the "Hampshire Grant controversies," and the influential men, especially of the town of Hoosick, were casting their influence against us. There was an organization among the Tories, and none in the interest of Vermont, or the American Colonies.

We see the magnanimity and generosity of Mr. Locke, for the town of his adoption, in the filling up of the ranks

* Col. Simonds.

of Gen. Stark, by multiplying those who "probably" joined his command, as the number is far greater than is warranted by the facts of history or tradition; and by his zeal for the glory of his town and state, in cherishing everything that has a semblance of show as a thing of reality.

In his account of the battle, he says: "the accounts agree that the Baum action closed at five o'clock in the afternoon," "that soon after intelligence was received that there was a large reinforcement within two miles on the march, and that Warner's regiment came up at the time. So much is beyond question, but of the Breyman engagement most of the best writers have been unsatisfactorily brief, or entirely in error. At this point some of the later writers, copying from Breyman's, Glick's, and Reidsell's accounts, are enabled to throw some light on the second engagement, and these accounts, supplemented by some facts *published, it is believed, for the first time in the History of Rensselaer County*, dispel almost entirely the obscurity that has been over the Breyman defeat." This reference to "Breyman's; Glick's and Reidsell's accounts," is thrown in, it would seem, as a blind or ruse, as is sometimes done by writers to uphold a weak proposition, for in the account of neither is there anything relating to the battle but what has heretofore been presented and properly dwelt upon in history, and the "light" of which, if permitted to cast its radiance "on this second engagement," shows conclusively that Col. Williams was not with New York troops in the second battle, and that the material for sustaining such a "theory" will have to come from other sources. To support and strengthen his cherished the-

ory he quotes "Stone," saying, "Breyman reached the bridge at three o'clock in the afternoon." He comments on it, saying "this time three o'clock is to be noted," as Stark in his official report to the New Hampshire Council says Col. Nichols "commenced the attack precisely at three o'clock in the afternoon" on Baum. Breyman arrived at the bridge (over the White Creek stream) at Sancoik precisely at the opening of the attack on Baum. It would seem that the time, three or five o'clock, for the commencement of the second battle is used in making up the case, just as either one is thought best suited for the argument or point to be gained. Upon this cornerstone, that "Breyman arrived at Sancoik at three o'clock, P. M.," he goes on to build his theory, while all that is reliable in history makes the time later. He adopts this time for his own convenience instead of "half past four in the afternoon," the time stated by Col. Breyman himself in his account of the part he took in the battle, and whose accuracy is established by another reference to the time in the same report, when he says in speaking of his halt near Cambridge, "Toward two o'clock in the afternoon Col. Skeene sent two men to me with the request that I would detach one officer and twenty men to occupy the mill of St. Coyk, as the rebels showed signs of advancing on it." These men were to be sent forward in advance of Breyman's main body, and he did send, as he says, "sixty grenadiers and Chasseurs and twenty Yagers. I followed as quickly as possible with the rest. Some of the ammunition carts again broke down on the road. I reached the mill at half past four." Nothing can well be more certain than that this is the correct time of Breyman's arrival at Sancoik, which is

further corroborated by Gen. Burgoyne's orderly book of date August 26th, when there had been opportunity to fix the time most accurately, when he says, "The next cause (of failure) was the slow movement of Lieut.-Col. Breyman's corps, which from bad weather, bad roads, tired horses, and other impediments stated by Lieut.-Col. Breyman, could not reach 24 miles from eight in the morning of the 15th to four in the afternoon of the 16th." But the theory has been adopted, and now circumstances and events must be made to fit together or bend, so as to clothe the skeleton and make it a thing to be admired as a model of symmetry, beauty and truth. The position taken, is, "scarcely had Breyman advanced fifteen hundred paces from the bridge when he descried a strongly armed force on an eminence towards the west," and "sent ahead some scouts." As he was marching almost directly east, he could not have "descried a strongly armed force on an eminence *towards the west*," and sent ahead, which would have been toward the east, some scouts, who were received "with a volley of musketry," but the account of Breyman who knew of what he affirmed, is the correct one, viz., "that he had not gone far from the bridge, when I noticed through the woods a considerable number of armed men (some of whom wore blouses and some jackets), hastening towards an eminence on my left flank." In both letters of Gen. Stark to the New Hampshire Council and Gen. Gates, one of August 18th, and the other August 22nd, 1777, he says, "I received intelligence that there was a large reinforcement within two miles of us, on their march, which occasioned us to renew our attack." Mr. Locke asks, relying on three o'clock as be-

ing the time, "What 'strongly armed force' was this that at this time, was on 'an eminence' west of Breyman and of the only road leading to Baum's camp?" It is easily answered and without any perversion of history, but in accordance with what actually occurred. There was no force "on an eminence 'west' of Breyman," when he came upon the field, near five o'clock, P. M., but "a considerable number" of Stark's men in shirt sleeves and frocks, were "hastening towards an eminence on Breyman's left flank," sufficient opportunity having been given after the intelligence of his approach was received, for the hurrying together of those who had pursued the flying Hessians, meaning to capture or kill them all. They had gone, as the old soldiers in their manuscript accounts have stated, far beyond the general battle field, and were in a situation to collect together on Breyman's approach. As they could not expect to withstand his army in front, they fired down upon him volleys from the hill whither many had collected, doing good execution in their "blouses and jackets," "and poured a deadly fire into his ranks." Others on Breyman's approach had collected in the old log house near which were posted his cannon, and made as best they could a stand against the best soldiers Burgoyne could send to reinforce Baum, but all in vain. Breyman further says, "The cannon were posted on a road where there was a log house. This we fired upon, as it was occupied by the rebels." With regard to this, from a manuscript statement of Benjamin G. Arnold of Pownal, now eighty-two years old, we copy, "I have often heard my grandfather, Ebenezer Arnold, who said he lived at the time of the Battle of Bennington west of

the Baum encampment, on the north side of the road leading to St. Coik or North Hoosick, in a log house. He often told of a cannon ball going through the roof, and that the firing took off the roof. He said Stark's men were in the house when Breyman came up, and went out and fired on his troops and that they fired down into the British as they came along." We learn from Thompson's Vermont, "They opened an incessant fire from their artillery and small arms, which was for a while, returned by the Americans with much spirit, but, exhausted and overpowered by numbers, we at length began slowly, but in good order, to retreat before the enemy, disputing the ground inch by inch." Breyman continued advancing up the road with cannon in front clearing the way, supported by wings of infantry on either side. At this critical time, as Gen. Stark says, "Col. Warner's regiment came up fresh, who marched on and began the attack afresh, which put a stop to their career. We soon rallied, and in a few minutes the action was very warm and desperate, which lasted until night. We used their cannon against them, which proved of great service to us. At sunset we obliged them to retreat a second time, we pursued them till dark, when I was obliged to halt for fear of killing our men."

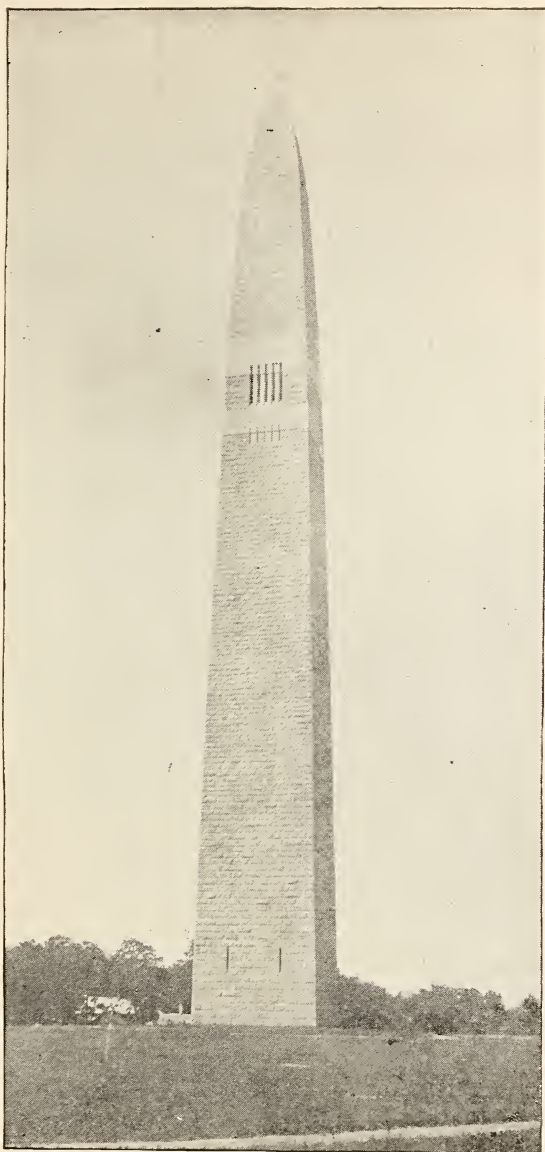
This language of Gen. Stark, when he speaks of obliging them to retreat at sunset, the second time, and then pursuing them till dark does not tally well with the theory that Breyman went little or "no farther than Sancoik." The ground from the hill beyond the present Walloomsac station and east for at least a half mile was fought over and over again, and the ending of the fight was some distance east of North Hoosick accord-

ing to Breyman's report, which agrees with that of Gen. Stark, when he says, "I retreated on the approach of darkness, destroyed the bridge, had as many of the wounded as possible brought thither that they might not be captured, and after a lapse of half an hour, in company with Col. Skeene, pursued my march and reached Cambridge towards twelve o'clock at night." It must be that every soldier of the "party" under Col. Williams that fought so bravely was killed, or it would have been noted in Salem, and the roll of honor of those who died on "that eminence towards the west" would have been recorded or been handed down by tradition, but there is not an iota of evidence to substantiate such a fiction. And further, Col. Williams, if anything of the kind did take place, not only failed to report it to the council, but so far forgot the valor of his noble men as ever to mention the matter in a public or private way, or even claim that he himself was in the battle. He was a man of excellent ability, "his legislative career lasted nearly twenty years," and he filled, with high credit, offices of judicial trust. He lived nearly thirty years after the battle not twenty miles from the battlefield, dying in 1806, and yet there is nothing among his papers, or anything authentically known, that he was aware of the important part ascribed to him and his "party" in the theory presented by Mr. Locke. Had Col. Williams, with an armed company, been in the battle, and done the execution here claimed for them, they would no more have escaped the notice of Gen. Stark or those who early wrote of the engagement than did the reinforcement of Col. Warner's troops, without which the day would have been lost, or even that of Blucher at the

battle of Waterloo, and the service would have received all the praise and glory which a grateful people could bestow. Is it reasonable to expect that any number or manipulation of conjectures can make a mere theory a real transaction, or should they give an imaginary company of New York troops immortal glory?

The endeavor has been to make this review with all due consideration to the feelings of those most nearly interested, and for the sake of history and its vindication, and it is now submitted to the public with a desire that it may receive, only, that regard which its merit demands.

In conclusion, it may be said the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont, have heretofore amicably understood their relative positions and importance in the glorious defeat of the enemy on the 16th of August, 1777, and in accordance with such an understanding have co-operated at all times, but more especially of late have their longings and aspirations been realized in the construction of the grand and imposing battle monument, standing upon the territory coveted by Burgoyne, towards which each state munificently contributed, and the erection of which was so nobly and generously endorsed by this great nation in the gift of over fifty thousand dollars towards its completion.



THE BENNINGTON BATTLE MONUMENT.

This monument is located near the site of the Continental store house, at Bennington Centre, Vt., two hundred and eighty-five feet above the valley below. It was the objective point of the detachment sent by Gen. Burgoyne for provisions, cattle, carriages, etc., which resulted in the "Battle of Bennington." It is thirty-seven feet square at the base, is built of blue gray magnesian lime stone (Dolomite) and rock faced. The height of the stone work is 301 feet 10½ inches. It is surmounted by a bronze-rodded head and gilt star, measuring four feet six inches, making the entire altitude 306 feet 4½ inches. The grand look-out floor is gained by rising 417 steps of easy ascent, the stairway being of wrought and cast iron. It was designed by J. Ph. Rinn of Boston. The corner stone was laid August 16, 1887. The cap stone was placed November 25, 1889. The monument was dedicated August 19, 1891.

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