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AN  
ORATION

UPON

THE LIFE AND SERVICES

OF

Gen. David Wooster.

DELIVERED AT

DANBURY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>, 1854,

WHEN A MONUMENT WAS ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY.

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BY

HENRY CHAMPION DEMING.

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Hartford:

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NEW HAVEN, May 8th, 1854.

HON. HENRY C. DEMING :

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:

The M. W. Grand Lodge of Connecticut, at a special session held on the evening of the 27th of April last, appointed the undersigned a committee, to solicit a copy of the oration, delivered by you, upon the occasion of the completion of the Wooster Monument, for publication.

The important services rendered by General Wooster in the great cause of American liberty, have never before been fully understood. The deep research exhibited by you in this matter; the able and eloquent manner in which those services were presented in your address, and the desire that knowledge upon this subject may be widely disseminated, induce us to urge upon you a compliance with the vote of the Grand Lodge.

We are fraternally yours,

D. B. BOOTH, }  
E. G. STORER, } *Committee.*  
CHAS. BALL, }

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HARTFORD, May 14th, 1854.

D. B. BOOTH, E. G. STORER, AND CHAS. BALL:

GENTLEMEN:

I am in the receipt to-day of your letter, communicating the request of the Grand Lodge of the State, for a copy of my oration, on the life and services of Gen. David Wooster, for publication. I regret that the task, of investigating the claims of Wooster, upon the gratitude of his countrymen, had not been imposed upon me at an earlier day. His career was marked by none of those brilliant exploits, transmitted to us by the annalist and historian. Devotion to Liberty in the hour of her adversity—a magnanimous forgetfulness of self in the cause of his country—unfaltering patriotism and a self-sacrificing spirit, were Wooster's *life*, and the uniform, but undazzling illustration of these qualities, for more than thirty years, of severe and disheartening warfare, was his career. Such men live in the memories of their contemporaries, rather than on the page of history. But the contemporaries of Wooster were all dead when my investigations commenced.

I have resorted to all the published memorials, and to every traditionary source, for information respecting him, and yet I feel sensibly, that my outline of his story, is but meagre and unsatisfactory. Such, however, as it is, I offer to you for publication, because this tribute, however feeble, is the fullest that has yet been paid to his memory, and because it may serve, to stimulate the inquiries, of some more diligent and successful biographer.

I am very truly, and fraternally yours,

HENRY C. DEMING.



## ORATION.

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I RISE to encounter no forbidding glances, to discern in no hostile or averted look the bias of sect or the bigotry of party. Divided sentiments and conflicting opinions are not to be harmonized here. One in gratitude, we are one in thought and feeling. In unreserved fellowship, every mind, heart and hand, have united in placing a stone upon the spot, where for more than three-quarters of a century, courage and patriotism have slept unhonored.

The grave of **WOOSTER** is no longer unmarked. No longer do his ashes slumber among a thankless people. The State to its child, its bulwark and martyr, Masonry to the master-builder of its oldest temple, and Danbury to its self-sacrificing avenger, have at length yielded the slow tribute of a monument. High in its commanding position, it now overlooks the commonwealth he served and the field on which he fell; it proclaims to the South his devotion as a patriot, to the East his fidelity as a brother: the arms of the State with its God-trusting motto, and the emblems of military heroism, appropriately

honor and embellish it: it stretches far up toward that heaven to which his faith aspired, and it is fittingly surmounted by the glorious bird which he helped to make the symbol of victory, and the invincible standard-bearer of the Republic.

“Long in its shade shall children’s children come,  
And earth’s poor traveler find a welcome home;  
Long shall it stand and every blast defy,  
Till heaven’s last whirlwind rends the sky.”<sup>1</sup>

Amidst war and havoc, through these streets that were then only marked by the blackened and still smoking ruins of what once were dwellings, while most of the inhabitants of this village were homeless wanderers upon the surrounding hills, a few weeping followers slowly and silently bore the ashes of **WOOSTER** to their obscure rest. We stand where our afflicted fathers stood, but graceful habitations have risen from the ruins, happiness and prosperity smile upon this scene of their desolation, peace has revisited the land, and with none to molest or make us afraid, beneath a benignant sky, and with every auspicious omen, we are here to recelebrate the funeral and restore the grave. Soldiers! let the escort, the dirge and the volley be such as are due to the chiefest among you. Grand Master! accord your amplest honors; for seventy-seven years not even a sprig of cassia has marked the silent mound where rested the

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<sup>1</sup> This poetical waif was picked up by my friend W. W. Eaton; we are both ignorant to whom it rightfully belongs.

ashes of your eldest brother. Citizens! welcome the day that wipes a stain from the character of the State: our chief magistrate attends to invest all that is mortal, of Washington's companion and Trumbull's friend, with the distinctions of the tomb. Recalled as we are to-day, after such long forgetfulness, to the heroic devotion of one, who though bowed with the infirmities of age, wooed death in his country's cause with more than youthful daring, I should be false to the occasion, to the living and the dead, if even for a moment, I beguiled your thoughts from any other theme, than the character and career of **GEN. DAVID WOOSTER**. Let the hours of this day—let, certainly, the flying moments of the present hour, be sacred to his memory alone!

When we look for the origin of his military services to the commonwealth, we must go back to the period when an infant colony, not yet "hardened into the bone of manhood," against a rugged soil, a rude climate, and civilized and savage foes, was struggling for existence; when Crown Point and Williamstown and Schenectady were the frontiers of civilization, and only Indian pathways traversed the scene of warlike operations; when cultivation had, as it were, only dotted the wilderness, and provisions were to be brought from widely separated fields, and munitions of war from beyond the seas, and time and space, as yet unvanquished by electricity and steam, had both to be conquered by the

soldier and the commissary, ere the enemy could be reached. We must go back to the period when flying artillery, revolvers and repeating rifles were unknown, and the cumbrous queen's arm, almost as fatal at the breech as at the muzzle, was the most efficient weapon of the soldier.

In following up these military services we must accompany him for nearly forty years, through four wars, with Spain, with France, with France again, and finally with England. We shall see, incidentally, as we pass along, a part of the grand procession of causes which heralded Freedom and Independence to this Western World; the habit of co-operation taught by the early colonial wars; the military education of our fathers; the conquest of Canada; the expulsion of the French, and the insane revenue policy of the parent state. In the Revolutionary struggle, WOOSTER'S path, unfortunately, only penetrated the clouds and darkness of the opening night; it ends just as the morning of victory broke in auroral splendor. If he had been permitted to live one half-year longer, if he had been more thoughtful for himself and less faithful to you, the great heart which was then moldering in yonder grave-yard, would have leaped in exultation, at the surrender of Burgoyne.

DAVID WOOSTER was born at Stratford, on the second of March, 1710-11, old style, the son of Abraham and Mary Wooster, and the youngest of

six children.<sup>1</sup> Reared in the Puritan principles and training of that era, the discipline of his early years was severe and sober. He graduated at Yale College, in 1738. He had but just reached his twenty-seventh year, when England, in violation of treaty, and for the shameful purpose of monopolizing the slave-trade to the Spanish colonies, declared war against Spain. Innumerable pirates and smugglers had been invited to the American seas, by the protection which the British flag extended to an infamous traffic. Disturbed, however, in their adventures, by the unexpected war, and by the vigilance of the numerous Spanish cruisers employed in the preventive service, these reckless sea-robbers did not hesitate to levy contributions along the whole American coast, and on a people under whose flag they professed to sail. To provide against a descent upon our exposed seaports, not only by the Spanish coast-guards, but by the buccaneering enemies of the human race, the General Assembly of Connecticut, at its May session in 1740, ordered a sloop of war to be built and equipped. Within the year

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1 Ruth, daughter of Abraham and Mary, born September 26th, 1700.			
Joseph, son	"	"	" January 16th, 1702.
Sarah, daughter	"	"	" April 2d, 1705.
Mary, "	"	"	" " 3d, 1707.
Hannah, "	"	"	" February 23d, 1709.
David, son	"	"	" March 2d, 1710-11.

For the genealogy of the Wooster family, as well as for many valuable suggestions and references respecting the life of Gen. WOOSTER, I am indebted to Mr. E. C. Herrick, Librarian of Yale College.

the sloop was launched at Middletown, and appropriately named the *Defense*. Here, in the first war-vessel ever built by his native colony, we first meet **DAVID WOOSTER**; here was the commencement of his long career of public service. Of the sloop *Defense*,<sup>1</sup> he was appointed lieutenant, and afterward captain. In this vessel we find him from 1741 to 1743, young, ambitious, and (if we may trust his portrait) handsome, cruising between Cape Cod and the capes of Virginia, (for such were the limits assigned by the resolution of the General Assembly,) taking the inner passage through the Sound; as he passes the rock-bound shores of old Connecti-

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<sup>1</sup> At the May session, 1741, Capt. George Phillipse was appointed captain of the sloop *Defense*, and David Wooster her lieutenant. The wages of the captain were fixed at seven shillings per day; those of the lieutenant at four shillings, sixpence; the warrant officers at two shillings, sixpence, and all others at one shilling, sixpence.

October, 1741. Capt. Phillipse ordered to discharge the men and lay up the sloop in New London.

May, 1742. At this session ordered that the sloop be refitted, manned, and to cruise from the capes of Virginia to Cape Cod.

October, 1742. Capt. David Wooster, commander of the sloop *Defense*, ordered to discharge the men and lay up the sloop at New London.

May, 1743. The entire control and management of the sloop committed to the Governor and Council.

May, 1744. Sloop ordered to be manned again, the officers and men to be instructed, and to be ready for a cruise.

October, 1744. New spars, sails and cables ordered.

May, 1746. A memorial from John Roberts, showing that the sloop *Defense*, on the expedition to Louisburg, landed men at a place called Cape Ann, on the island of Cape Breton, and captured plunder.

Also a petition from David Wooster, late commander of *Defense*, asking for remuneration for also acting as purser.



cut, running into New London for stores and supplies from the ship's commissary, Gurdon Saltonstall; running into New Haven on a stolen visit to Mary, who was yet to be his bride; looking into the bays of Long Island, and the inlets of the Jerseys, in search for pirates, and then standing away for the capes of Virginia. He hopes all the time that some Spanish argosy with doubloons, from Havana to Cadiz, would be driven so far northward of her course. He searches the horizon for some Spanish cruiser, not more than double the Defense in metal and men, and when, without any adventure, the headlands of Virginia heave in sight, he changes his course and returns to New London, to discharge his crew, or to drill and discipline them, as the General Assembly shall order. During this alarm, so faithfully did he execute the duties of guardian of the coast, that although neighboring colonies were frequently ravaged, the shores of Connecticut were unpolluted by any piratical invasion.

While WOOSTER was employed in this humble service, the war that originated in a mere question of colonial commerce, and which at the outset, was confined to these distant colonies, grew into a general struggle of Europe, involving all the principles on which her states are founded, and desolating the four quarters of the globe. The Pragmatic Sanction, which settled the throne of Austria on Maria Theresa, was solemnly guaranteed by all the

principal sovereigns of Europe. But the crown was hardly placed on her brow, before Frederick of Prussia and Louis of France conspired to despoil of her hereditary dominions, one whose sex, youth and beauty presented the strongest claims to their protection, even if they had not been bound to her, by the sanctity of treaties, and the oaths of kings. England remained true to the house of Hapsburg. Both hemispheres are plunged in war. And as one of the direct results of royal perjury, thousands in the remote valleys of Connecticut, who would have otherwise descended in green old age to where—

“The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,”

shed their young life-blood on battle fields from Detroit to Louisburg, and found early graves in the snows of Canada, and the tropical sands of the West Indies.

On this side of the Atlantic the lightning struck before the thunder was heard. Louisburg, on the island of Cape Breton, was the camp and arsenal of French dominion in America, and the scourge of the English. From it issued the French and Canadians, on their errands of massacre and pillage; from it sped those cruisers that swept our coasters from the seas, and annihilated our fisheries; from it now burst the war-storm upon one of our frontier settlements. At this time, Massachusetts was governed by the resolute and adventurous Shirley.

He conceived the bold idea of striking a blow at this terror and wonder of our primitive forefathers, of uniting the seven Northern colonies in an expedition that should drive the plowshare over the strongest fortress north of the Gulf of Mexico. It was an enterprise more formidable then, and more unequal to the comparative resources of the two periods, than would be now, an armament from the same states for the capture of Gibraltar, or the emancipation of Hungary. The colonies embraced this plan with unexampled unanimity and zeal. It even assumed the character of an Anti-Catholic crusade. Louisburg was not only the head-quarters of a hostile race, but of a hated religion. A Romish priest had marshaled and led her Indians against our Protestant brethren on the frontiers. The celebrated Whitfield, then on his third tour through New England, blew these sparks into a flame. He inscribed on a banner, "*Nil desperandum Christo duce,*" and presented it to a New Hampshire regiment. One of the chaplains carried a hatchet, which he had consecrated to the purpose of hewing down the images in the enemy's churches. Under such powerful stimulants, the colonists taxed their strength to the utmost, and exhausted their resources. New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey contributed lavishly, money and munitions of war; New England as lavishly, men. Connecticut, never backward in such emergencies, sent an entire regi-

ment to Louisburg, under the command of Roger Wolcott, one of those massive characters hewn out by nature for the foundation of states, a man who without one day's schooling, rose from a weaver's shuttle, to the highest civil, military and judicial honors.

Into this scheme, having for its object the present and permanent safety of all the Northern colonies, WOOSTER entered with all the affluent zeal of an ardent and unselfish nature. He was among the first to volunteer in the cause; he was among the first to receive a captain's commission. He was the first to recruit and arm his company, and report it ready for service. The month which immediately preceded his departure upon this expedition, was perhaps the one of all others to which his mind reverted with the tenderest emotion, while he lay here at the gates of death, in the fatal spring of 1777. For on the 6th of March, 1745, he was married to Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Clap, President of Yale College, a wife who from the date of her nuptials till she followed him to the grave, clove to his fortunes with all a woman's unfaltering constancy and devotion. About the same period also, he purchased the old homestead in New Haven,<sup>1</sup> on the street which now bears his honored

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred H. Terry, Esq., of New Haven, was kind enough to examine the New Haven records, and found that the deed conveying the old Wooster place to David Wooster, was dated January 18th, 1744-5; consideration, £800.

name, and there established his household gods for the remainder of his days.

The Connecticut troops sailed from New London on the 11th of April, 1745,<sup>1</sup> in eight transports, under the convoy of the colony's sloop of war *Defense*,<sup>2</sup> and on the last day of the same month the united armament of the Northern colonies, consisting of one hundred vessels, rounded the point of Chapeaurouge Bay, and anchored in sight of Louisburg. They were here, most fortunately, joined by his majesty's squadron, under Admiral Warren. William Pepperell, of Maine, an opulent merchant, but with no aptitude for martial exploits, save uniform good luck, was the commander-in-chief of the combined forces. Roger Wolcott, of Connecticut, was second in command. Neither officers nor soldiers were at all skilled in that splendid science of modern times which has blotted out the word "impregnable" from our tongue, and reduced the capture of the strongest fortresses to a mere question of time. But if Pepperell could not rely upon military art, he had a

<sup>1</sup> Wolcott papers.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Dwight, in his statistical account of the city of New Haven, states in his short notice of Gen. Wooster, that in the year 1745, "he commanded the Connecticut sloop of war, and was employed to convey the Connecticut troops to Louisburg, and in company with a sloop of war from Rhode Island, engaged the *Renouance*, a French frigate of 36 guns," &c.

Prof. Kingsley, in his *Historical Discourse*, repeats the same statement.

This is incorrect. Wooster was not captain of the *Defense*, the only Connecticut sloop of war that went to Louisburg, as late as 1745. Capt. John Prentiss commanded the *Defense* on the Louisburg expedition. *War Papers*, 11.

tower of strength in the courage and hardihood of his troops. His artillery was dragged by human strength, over morasses and up rocky hills, impassable to wheels. Shanties of bush and turf were the only tents of the men; the earth their only bed, and disease was more fatal than the enemy's fire. The royal battery on shore was abandoned at the approach of the New Hampshire regiment. Five unsuccessful attempts were made to carry an island battery, which, far in advance of the main defenses, held the squadron at bay. It still frowned defiance at the fleet, while back of it the cannon thundered from the shore, and back of all, surrounded by its moat of twenty yards, towered forty feet high, the walls of the stronghold, all enfiladed by the guns of the bastions. Hope was rapidly yielding to despair. Fortunately the garrison was feeble and mutinous, provisions scarce, and the only ship relied upon for supplies, had been captured by Warren, and more than all, Duchambeau, its governor, was weak, irresolute, cowardly. While the colonists were at the very point of hazarding the fate of the expedition on the desperate chance of carrying these formidable works by storm, the French governor, more desponding than the besiegers, sent out a flag of truce with an offer to surrender. The terms proposed were speedily accepted. On the 19th of June, the forty-eighth day of the siege, the fortress and city capitulated; and the next Sunday, a Puritan chaplain (it

might have been the very one that bore the hatchet) preached against the real presence, before the high altar of a Catholic cathedral. The heart of Roger Wolcott sunk within him as he entered the stronghold and viewed "the great guns, the moat and the batteries." "Why speak of men?" says he, in a strain of pious gratitude; "it is God that has done it, and the praise belongs to him alone; God, hearing the prayers of his people, by many signal instances of mercy, has led us on, from step to step to victory."<sup>1</sup>

I can not pass from this siege without calling your attention to the auspicious coincidence that this citadel of the French surrendered to a league of the colonies on the 17th of June, and that on the same day, just thirty years after, was fought the battle of Bunker's Hill. Col. Gridley, who planted the mortar, which on the third trial dropped a shell into the citadel of Louisburg, marked out the lines of the famous redoubt on Bunker's Hill. Seth Pomeroy, the oldest brigadier in the Continental service, who walked over Charlestown Neck, through the cross fire of the enemy's ships and floating batteries, to the same blood-stained heights, and Col. Fry, afterward a brigadier in the same service, who plunged into the fight, cheered by this omen, were both at Louisburg.<sup>2</sup> WOOSTER and Whiting, from Con-

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<sup>1</sup> Wolcott Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Everett's Oration at Worcester, 4th of July, 1833.

necticut, were there. So early was Providence marshaling the causes and forging the thunderbolts of the Revolution.

WOOSTER seems to have won all the laurels at this famous siege, which could be plucked from such a demoralized and panic-stricken foe. No subaltern was more conspicuous for courage, resolution and martial bearing, while the following incident secured him an unequaled reputation for spirit and chivalry. A British captain had ventured to apply his ratan quite freely to the shoulders of one of Captain WOOSTER's men, a respectable freeholder and church-member from Connecticut. WOOSTER remonstrated with the regular for so grossly abusing official superiority. The Briton resented this advice in unmeasured terms, and finally drew his sword to chastise the adviser upon the spot. WOOSTER successfully parried his thrusts and speedily disarmed him. Applying his own sword to his adversary's breast, he told him that the life he had justly forfeited, could only be redeemed by asking pardon, and promising that he would never again disgrace with a blow, any soldier in the service. The terms were accepted without a parley. The jeers of his companions soon drove the officer from the army, while WOOSTER won the title of the soldier's protector and friend.<sup>1</sup> In consideration of the gallantry and gentlemanly deportment of Capt. WOOSTER, he was intrusted with the command

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<sup>1</sup> Am. Hist. Mag., p. 57; communicated by Deac. Nathan Beers.



of a cartel ship that was to convey the trophies and prisoners to England.<sup>1</sup> The year had been a disastrous one to the British arms. The fall of Louisburg was the only event which redeemed its misfortunes. The ministry were amazingly in want of victories and heroes. Capt. WOOSTER was received in London with extraordinary exultation. His portrait adorned the walls of the coffee houses, and the pages of the magazines.<sup>2</sup> He was followed, *feted*, presented to court, and gladdened with the sunshine of the royal smile. He was more substantially rewarded. A captain's commission in his majesty's service was graciously given to the future commander-in-chief of the Connecticut rebels.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the author and the lieutenant-general of the expedition, he was the only individual engaged in it that received any marks of ministerial condescension. WOOSTER returned to this country by packet to Boston. Impressed while abroad with the necessity of some tie that should unite all mankind in a universal brotherhood, he now procured from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, a charter, which first introduced into this colony that LIGHT which has since warmed so many widows' hearts, and illumined so many orphans' pathway. Under this charter, Hiram Lodge was organized, in 1750, and WOOSTER appointed its first master.

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1 Conn. Journal, May 14th, 1777.

2 Lossing's Field-book.

3 Conn. Journal, May 14th, 1777; Doc. Hist. of New York, vol. 4, p. 824.

The fourth intercolonial war, generally called the French and Indian War, now approached—the war which, by finally sweeping the French from this continent, removed the first great barrier to the independence of the states. It grew out of the hollow peace patched up at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. The boundaries defined by that treaty were so uncertain and equivocal, that they only served as pretexts and provocations to fresh hostilities. Each party encroached upon territory which, under its provisions, the other claimed. The settlements thus planted by Saxon and Gaul, were backed up by both with military force. Hard words, blows, bloodshed, followed. The parent countries were dragged into the conflict, and thus all-seeing Destiny opened the school in which Washington, Gates, Putnam, Stark, WOOSTER, Prescott, Montgomery, Lee, Mercer, and a host of others, were educated and disciplined for the fiery ordeal of the Revolution. During the seven years of this final and decisive struggle with France, our feeble colony—Lacedæmon of the West—in various expeditions, sent forth upward of 13,000 men, more than one-tenth of her entire population, more than one-fifth of her male adults. When I reflect that to every call from the crown in this war, Connecticut responded with more than her quota in money and men; when I reflect that she again decimated her population, and exhausted her means and her credit, in the Revolutionary conflict; I am proud to feel that

she has fairly earned the discriminating commendation of Mr. Bancroft, when he says: "No state in the world has such motives for publishing its historical records; partly because none in the world has run a fairer or happier or more unsullied career than Connecticut, partly because the modesty of those who have gone before you has left unclaimed much of the glory due to her, and partly that it is only in the past that you find the Connecticut people an undivided whole; since then, her increase in numbers has been so disproportioned to her original territory, that her citizens, or their descendants, are scattered all the way from Wyoming to the mouth of the Oregon."<sup>1</sup>

The first expedition under Gen. Lyman, of Suffield, commanding provincials, and provincials only, from Connecticut and Massachusetts, on the 8th of September, 1755, near the transparent waters of the Horicon, fought one of the bloodiest and most hardly contested battles of the whole war, in which Dieskau, the flower of French chivalry, was cut to pieces with his entire army. I regret exceedingly that I can not place Wooster's name on this splendid page of our colonial history. I can not discover that he served in this campaign; and can only account for it on the supposition that he was upon active duty elsewhere, with Col. Pepperell's regiment, to which the captain's commission from the king attached him.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from George Bancroft to J. Hammond Trumbull, compiler of Colonial Records of Connecticut, dated February, 1851.

But after the most careful research into cotemporary chronicles, I have been unable to verify the hypothesis.

In 1756, as colonel of the third regiment of Connecticut, WOOSTER joined at Albany ten thousand regulars and provincials—the finest army yet seen in America—designed, under the guidance of the Earl of Loudon, to capture Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and drive the French beyond the St. Lawrence. But at Albany, from early spring until August, the Connecticut troops waited for their sluggish commander, who was loitering away in New York, the precious moments of action; waited idle, half-starved and decimated by the small-pox, until his lordship arrived, too late in the season for a northern campaign. Nothing remained but for such of our men as disease had spared to return to their homes.

The next year a third levy of five thousand troops was drawn from Connecticut, for the reduction of the same posts, which the inefficiency of the British generals had spared in the preceding campaign. Col. WOOSTER again marched his regiment from New Haven to the head-waters of the Hudson.<sup>1</sup> Aber-

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<sup>1</sup> No resolution of the General Assembly can be found appointing Colonel WOOSTER as colonel in the expedition of 1758. On the contrary, it appears that a resolution introduced into the Senate, appointing the field-officers, contains among other names, that of Eleazer Fitch, as colonel of the third regiment. It went into the House, and was amended by striking out Eleazer Fitch and inserting DAVID WOOSTER. Council refused to concur, and a committee of conference raised; no account of their report. In the War Papers, I find also a resolution appointing Eliphalet Dyer as colonel of the third regiment. But there

crombie, whom they afterward described as "one a child could outwit, and a popgun terrify," was the imbecile dispatched by the ministry to conduct this campaign. Reckless of everything but his own per-

is no indorsement upon it to show that it was passed by either House or Senate. (8 *War Papers*, 159.) The records show also that Col. Dyer was appointed colonel of the third.

It is probable that for some reason or other Dyer declined to go, and WOOSTER was commissioned by the governor after the adjournment of the General Assembly; power being always given to him to fill vacancies. That WOOSTER was there, and participated in the battle of the 8th of July, 1758, I think the following evidence will establish :

1st. DAVID WOOSTER presents his account for services in the campaign of 1758. Among the credits in this account is one for cash received from General Abercrombie, for guns lost by men killed in the action of the 8th of July, 1758, and items, charging services from May to November, 1758. *War Papers*, vol. 8, p. 41.

2d. I find also a hospital account, by which Col. WOOSTER's regiment is made debtor to his Majesty's Hospital at Lake George, for one man in hospital, August 24th, 1758. *War Papers*, vol. 8, p. 128.

3d. In an abstract of stoppages of Connecticut troops at hospitals, I find this item: "Col. WOOSTER's regiment, Lake George, to 24th August, 1758." *War Papers*, vol. 8, p. 128.

4th. The petition of Samuel Hait, Jr., of Stamford, shows the Assembly "that his son was a volunteer soldier in David Waterbury's company, Col. WOOSTER's regiment, and at the battle of Ticonderoga, said son received a wound in his hand and was discharged and sent home the 27th of July last past." The petition is dated 8th of April, 1759. *War Papers*, vol. 8, p. 175.

5th. In a manuscript journal of this campaign, kept by the great-grandfather of the author, who as a captain of the Connecticut troops, led his company from Colchester, in this state, and who was afterward Col. *Henry Champion*, and somewhat known in the Revolutionary History of Connecticut, as the "*Old Commissary*," I find the following entry: "Oct. 18th, 1758, Col. WOOSTER's regiment went home."

6th. Miss Polly Ogden, grand-daughter of Gen. WOOSTER, remembers that Madam Wooster said that her husband was in the battle near Ticonderoga, and barely escaped with his life.

sonal safety, without waiting for his artillery, he pushed forward the flower of his troops, over brushwood, stumps of trees, and all sorts of rubbish, to storm a breastwork of logs, bristling with swivels, and flanked by cannon, behind which Montcalm, the bravest of the brave, lay, with thirty-six hundred French and Canadians. The result can be readily foreseen; swivels and small arms mowed down officers and men. Courage and intrepidity only rendered the carnage more terrible. WOOSTER led his regiment into the thickest of this storm. They stood up to the butchery with unfaltering pluck, and his own escape was one of the miracles of the battle-field. After this prodigal sacrifice of life to his incompetency, Abercrombie emerged from a saw-mill, two miles from the field, where he had been safely ensconced during the action, and in the extremest fright and consternation, hurried his army back to the foot of Lake George. With an abundant force at his disposal, to accomplish all the objects of the campaign, he merely wearied his troops there with laborious idleness, until the approach of winter permitted WOOSTER to return from the battle-field and the barracks, to where, in the mellow light of an October sun, curled the blue smoke of the old homestead; to the fields where his children gambled; to the pious wife who daily and nightly, in the church and the closet, had wrestled with Israel's God for his safe return.

Before the next campaign opened, fortunately for

the English dominion in America, and for the great interests of human freedom, the ministry which had sent ignorance and cowardice to lead our armies, was hurled from power, and a man placed at the helm so born to command that he breathed into every servant of the state, the might of his own thoughts and the enthusiasm of his soul. William Pitt now made himself the heart of the British empire, and through her stagnant and decaying veins, sent in a vitalizing current, health, strength and energy. Under his auspices, the aspect of affairs upon this continent, was speedily changed. In the month of May, 1759, Col. WOOSTER led his regiment to Fort George, to join the memorable expedition under Gen. Amherst, which completed the conquest of Canada.

I have before me a sermon which was preached to Col. WOOSTER and his regiment, in the North Church of New Haven, just prior to their departure.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The sermon is by the Rev. Samuel Bird, V. D. M. The subject—"The importance of the divine presence with our host." Text, Exodus xxxiii. 15. "And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." The sermon closes with an address to Col. WOOSTER, the officers and soldiers. In the address to the Colonel, the following paragraph occurs :

"You will always imagine as though you heard your dear yoke-fellow, whom Providence has made your second self, to whom it must needs be a great Piece of Self-Denial to part with you upon such an Enterprise, I say you will ever imagine, as tho' you heard her entreating you saying, 'My true and loving Guide, and Protector, keep, O! keep not back your sword from Blood: The Success of your Sword with others, under God, is all the Hope left me, of being happy in the enjoyment of those privileges we have mutually shared; to prevent my becoming a Sacrifice to the merciless Rage of tawny Savages who delight in

The "drum ecclesiastic," in those days, played the same inspiriting airs which had kindled the enthusiasm of Scottish Covenanters, and led from victory to victory the old Ironsides of Cromwell. In these early colonial struggles, no company marched from a Connecticut village, without the holiest benedictions of the church. They were conjured to fight bravely for church and altar. They were told that God himself hated the coward; that while "they were engaged in the field, many would repair to the closet, many to the sanctuary; that the faithful of every name would employ that prayer which has power with God; that the feeble hands which were unequal to any other weapon, would grasp the sword of the spirit, and that from myriads of humble, contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication and weeping would mingle in its ascent to heaven, with the shout of battle and the shock of arms."<sup>1</sup>

Upon the advance of Gen. Amherst's forces, Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the objects of so many fruitless campaigns, were abandoned by their garrisons. But to guard against every contingency, this over-cautious commander detained his troops to repair and strengthen these important conquests.

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Blood, or being enslaved to a popish Master. I cannot travel into the Field with you, but my Heart will be with you, and by the Help of divine Grace, I shall continually pray for you.'"

In the same volume which contains this sermon (283 Pamphlets of Conn. Hist. Soc.) is another on the "curse of cowardice."

<sup>1</sup> Robert Hall to the volunteers of Bristol.



Meantime Wolfe fell in the arms of victory on the heights of Abraham. The meteor flag streamed from the battlements of Quebec. Montreal was the last foothold of the French in the Canadas. Early in the spring, Gen. Amherst, dividing his forces into two columns, directed them by different routes, against this distant post. Gen. Haviland led five thousand men by the way of Lake Champlain and the river Sorel, but the main army, ten thousand strong, to which Col. WOOSTER's regiment was attached, went by one of the longest and most laborious marches recorded in our military annals.<sup>1</sup> The state of New York, between Schenectady and the waters of Ontario, swarming now with millions of people, the great track of commerce, and the home of industry, was then a wilderness, unbroken save by one military post. Over this immense stretch of forest and marsh, Col. WOOSTER and his regiment toiled along from June till August, by such roads as are now known in the heart of Nebraska and Oregon. Arrived at Oswego, the army crossed Ontario in open galleys,

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<sup>1</sup> I was for some time at a loss to determine whether WOOSTER went with Haviland or by way of Lake Ontario. No published account throws any light upon the point. But after a long search in the War Papers in the office of the Secretary of State, I found a "Hospital Bill," rendered against Col. WOOSTER's regiment, as Dr. to his Majesty's Hospital at Fort Ontario, (Oswego,) for men in hospital from July 24th to October 24th.

There is another bill against him and his regiment for hospital services at Fort Oswegatchie, (near Ogdensburg.) These seem to settle the question that he went by the St. Lawrence.

There is abundant proof from distinct sources that Putnam and the other Connecticut regiments went by the same route.

to the point where the waters of our great inland seas first find an outlet to the ocean. From thence they thread their way, doubtful as to the channel, through those thousand islands, where for many a league the Naiad of the stream and the Dryad of the woods flow on together, in joyful honeymoon. The troops capture and garrison all the military posts; they attack and take a French vessel of war; they lose men and batteaux and artillery in descending the great falls; but on, on, they go, whirling through the rapids, and plunging down the cascades of this magnificent river, to the last retreat of the vanquished Gaul. Gen. Amherst arrived at Montreal early in September. Haviland's column soon reached it by Lake Champlain. Murray had ascended with the English army from Quebec. Twenty thousand Britons were concentrated before a town unprotected by either walls or fortifications. Resistance would have been a wanton waste of life; without a battle Montreal capitulated, and the French, with the exception of a small and feeble settlement at the mouth of the Mississippi, were driven from the continent of North America.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some five years prior to this event, John Adams, then a musing student at Worcester, gave utterance to the following remarkable language: "All creation is liable to change. Mighty states are not exempted. Soon after the Reformation a few people came over into this new world for conscience sake. This apparently trivial incident may transfer the great seat of empire into America. If we can remove the *turbulent Gallies*, our people, according to the exactest calculation, will become more numerous, within a century, than England itself. All Europe will not be able to subdue us. The only way to keep us from setting

So confident was Choiseul, the keen-eyed premier of Louis XV., that the conquest of Canada would result in the speedy emancipation of these colonies, that after signing the treaty, surrendering New France to the English, he exclaimed exultingly, "We have caught them at last."<sup>1</sup>

The twelve years which followed the peace of 1763,<sup>2</sup> embrace the longest period in his life, that

up for ourselves is to disunite us." "Within twenty-one years from this prediction," says Baneroft, in citing it, "this dreamer shall assist in declaring his country's independence; in less than thirty years, after a career of danger and effort, he shall stand before the king of Great Britain, the acknowledged envoy of the free United States of America."

<sup>1</sup> Baneroft.

<sup>2</sup> I find in the fourth volume of Doc. Hist. of New York, a deposition from DAVID WOOSTER, of New Haven, "being a Captain on Half-pay, reduced from his Majesty's 51st Reg. of Foot," in which the deponent goes on to state, that pursuant to his Majesty's Proclamation for that purpose, he obtained a grant, under the Great Seal of New York, for 3,000 acres of land on the East Bank of Lake Champlain; that he went on to the land and found intruders upon it; that he proceeded to serve writs of Ejectment upon two principal Ring-leaders, "and thereupon some of their party presented their Firelocks at the Deponent, declaring that it should be Death for any man that served a declaration of Ejectment there, but the Deponent, being well armed, with Pistols, proceeded to serve the said Ejectments, notwithstanding they continued their Firelocks presented against him during the whole time," &c. It was, doubtless, the object of the Deposition to show, that the courts of New York had exercised jurisdiction over the tract which was then in dispute between New York and New Hampshire. Upon the adjustment of that controversy, Gen. WOOSTER probably lost his land. The deposition is dated 20th day of February, 1773.

In the 12th volume of Col. of Mass. Hist. Society, page 217, I find an answer from Col. WOOSTER to the queries issued by the Board of Trade, relative to the present state and condition of the Colony of Connecticut. It is addressed to Gov. Trumbull, and dated New Haven, May 16th, 1774, and describes with much particularity, the trade, commerce and manufactures of that place.

WOOSTER was permitted to enjoy the happiness and the repose of the fireside. At this time he was rich. His family were afterward poor. Upon his return to New Haven from Canada, he had engaged in mercantile pursuits, which yielded quick returns and large profits. He had himself inherited an ample patrimony, and his bride, in addition to her other claims upon his admiration, possessed also those solid charms, which were not entirely despised even in the heroic age of our ancestors. A salary was attached to the office of collector, which he then held, and he continued to draw his half-pay as captain in his majesty's service. From these various sources he derived an income which enabled him to surround himself with all the comforts and luxuries of wealth. A nature amiable, affable, kindly, rejoicing in the sweets of friendship and the prattle of children, found now some recompense for the privations and dangers of a seven years' war. His style of living was in the highest elegance of the olden time. He spread a bountiful table, kept his horses, his phaeton, and a troop of black domestics. The old family mansion in Wooster street, then fairly isolated in the country, with an unobstructed prospect of the Sound, opened wide its doors in genuine hospitality. It was the resort of the learning, the talent, and the polish

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It appears from the New Haven Records, that Col. WOOSTER commanded the troops that paraded to celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act, in 1766.

Barlow, in the Columbiad, has this line :

“And fearless WOOSTER aids the sacred cause.”

of that era—the dawn of the Revolution. In the winter, the grateful heat of hickory blazed in its ample fire-places. In the summer, the gentle breezes from the Sound fanned the feverish brow, and at all seasons, the long side-board, loaded with the emblems of cheer and good fellowship, welcomed every guest. Madam<sup>1</sup> Wooster was herself a heroine of the Revolutionary type, strong in mind, bold and earnest in character, and with a presence and manners so dignified and imposing as to awe into reverence the drunken Tories, who subsequently sacked her dwelling. The only drawback upon her felicity during the earlier years of her marriage, seems to have been that she could not personally share her husband's dangers in the field, and having now recovered him, safe from war's alarms, she exerted her rare accomplishments to enhance the charms of peace. An only daughter,<sup>2</sup> just budding into womanhood, warmed the father's heart by her filial devotion, and lighted his dwelling with the social radiance which youth and beauty dispense. An only son,<sup>3</sup> not yet faithless to the virtues of his sire, was comfortably settled in life, and promised fair to gratify paternal pride, and transmit an unblemished name. A retinue of faithful dependents, sailors who had cruised with him in the *Defense*, orderlies who had

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1 I use this title because it was uniformly applied to her by her cotemporaries.

2 Mary Wooster, born 1755, married Rev. John Cosius Ogdén.

3 Thomas Wooster, born 1752, married Lydia Sheton.

been attached to his person in some of his numerous expeditions, old soldiers who had followed him to the wars, surround him in his moments of leisure,<sup>1</sup> appeal to him in their embarrassments, feed at his lavish board, and adore him as their benefactor and friend.<sup>2</sup> From these tranquil enjoyments, he was now summoned to that final struggle, of which the previous wars had been the faint and feeble harbinger. When the blood that was spilled in the streets of Lexington, closed forever the door of reconciliation, he turned his back upon this domestic Eden, abandoned the prospect of commanding opulence, abjured his income from the crown, and accepted in their stead, toil, persecution, danger, and as the event proved, death. He even spurned the temptation of a high commission in the British army, which was earnestly pressed upon his acceptance,<sup>3</sup> and to a feeble colony, with hardly cash enough in its treasury to equip him for the war, to a penniless Congress, which must issue bills of credit ere it could set a battalion in the field, gratuitously proffered his services, to encounter the disciplined hosts and the exhaustless resources of a mighty empire. When it became apparent that war was inevitable, he did not even wait for official posi-

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1 These domestic details are from the reminiscences of Miss Polly Ogden, grand-daughter of Gen. WOOSTER, and from those of a venerable lady of Hartford, now deceased, a niece of Madam Wooster, and an inmate of her family from 1771 to 1778.

2 Doratus Wooster, of Vermont, a relative of Gen. WOOSTER, has communicated many important facts to the author.

3 From the reminiscences of Miss Ogden.

tion. He was one of that party of private Connecticut gentlemen, who, without committing the Legislature to any open act of hostility, planned the seizure of Fort Ticonderoga, and pledged their own personal securities to the state treasury, for the loan which defrayed the expenses of the expedition.<sup>1</sup> He thus participated in the first aggressive act against the crown.

It was not till its May session in 1775, that our General Assembly threw off the guarded and equivocal language in which they had hitherto masked their warlike preparations, and in plain terms ordered one-fourth part of our militia to be armed and equipped for immediate service. The force thus organized, was divided into six regiments, and DAVID WOOSTER appointed major-general and commander-in-chief, with Joseph Spencer and Israel Putnam as his brigadiers. Active service immediately followed this appointment. At the solicitation of the Committee of Safety of New York, WOOSTER was ordered, with the troops under his command, to defend its metropolis against a threatened demonstration from the enemy.

He was now sixty-five years of age. He was not unprepared for the casualties of battle. He had not postponed till this advanced period of life, the settlement of those momentous questions which

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<sup>1</sup> I believe that Gen. WOOSTER was not one of the signers of the notes given to the state treasurer, but he was an active and influential participator in the project for the capture of Ticonderoga.

the soul's immortality suggests. But in early youth, before the mind is distracted with the cares and vexations of manhood, he had brought his reason and faith to accord the inspired claims of divine revelation. He accepted the Holy Scriptures as the only safe rule in this life, and the only sure guide to the next. He reposed his hope for a happy eternity upon the merits of an atoning Emmanuel. In 1732, when but twenty-two years of age, in the church of his birthplace, by a profession of Christianity, he publicly assumed its vows and acknowledged its hopes.<sup>1</sup> I have alluded to the religious phase of Gen. WOOSTER's character, not only because a portraiture of him would be imperfect without it, but as an appropriate introduction to the following incident. It reveals most significantly, whose blessing he invoked when he first unsheathed his sword in a civil war; upon whose arm he leaned, and whose guidance he implored, when about to breast the dark and portentous cloud that lowered before him. It is from the lips of an eye-witness, a venerable citizen of New Haven, now no more, himself an officer of the Revolution.<sup>2</sup> "The last time I saw Gen. WOOSTER was in

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. William B. Weed, of Stratford, examined the records of the church in Stratford, at my request, and communicated the fact in the text.

The records of the church of White Haven, (one of the churches that formed the United Society of New Haven,) show that Gen. WOOSTER was transferred to its communion in 1768, by a commendatory letter from the church in Stratford.

<sup>2</sup> Am. Hist. Mag., p. 58, communicated by Deacon Nathan Beers. I have varied slightly the phraseology.



June, 1755. He was at the head of his regiment, which was then embodied on the Green, in front of where the Center Church now stands. They were ready for a march, with their arms glistening, and their knapsacks on their backs. Col. WOOSTER had already dispatched a messenger for his minister, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, with a request that he would meet the regiment and pray with them before their departure. He then conducted his men in military order into the meeting-house, and seated himself in his own pew, awaiting the return of the messenger. He was speedily informed that the clergyman was absent from home. Col. WOOSTER immediately stepped into the deacon's seat, in front of the pulpit, and calling his men to attend to prayers, offered up a humble petition for his beloved country, for himself, the men under his immediate command, and for the success of the cause in which they were engaged. His prayers were offered with the fervent zeal of an apostle, and in such pathetic language that it drew tears from many an eye and affected many a heart. When he had closed, he left the house with his men, in the same order they had entered it, and the regiment took up its line of march for New York. With such a prayer on his lips he entered the Revolution.

We now find WOOSTER, during July and August of 1775, encamped at Harlem. The threatened attack upon New York had not yet been executed,

but the summer, notwithstanding, was a busy one for him. The British blockaded in Boston, and distressed for provisions, laid under contribution Long Island and the islands in the Sound, contiguous thereto. Upon WOOSTER devolved the hard task, of guarding these exposed positions from the enemy's cruisers, and of assisting the defenseless inhabitants, to remove their cattle and crops, to a place of security. He is at Brooklyn, or Oyster Ponds, at Montauk, at Plumb Island, everywhere, hovering over the whole coast with his protecting wings.

While engaged in these useful but inglorious employments, his enthusiasm met with an unexpected rebuff. The regiments which the states had separately raised, were now received into the pay, and adopted as the army of the United Colonies. Under this new organization, Connecticut was entitled to one major-general, and to this grade, Gen. Putnam, WOOSTER's inferior in the colonial service, was promoted, while the commander-in-chief of the Connecticut troops, was merely raised to the subordinate rank of brigadier. The slight was the more marked, because WOOSTER was the only colonial officer, thus overslaughed by the continental commissions. The blow was a severe one. It was the first wound to a soldier's keen sensibility to honor, that he had received in a military career of more than a quarter of a century. I have been so fortunate as to find the precise language, in which he expressed, the first bitterness of disappointed ambition—the earliest

grief of unrequited patriotism. Roger Sherman, at that time our delegate to Congress, had communicated this information to him in a letter, which contained the following paragraph: "I am sensible that according to your colonial rank, you were entitled to the place of major-general; and as one was to be appointed from Connecticut, I heartily recommended you to the Congress. I informed them of the arrangements made by our Assembly, which I thought would be satisfactory to have them continue in the same order. But as Gen. Putnam's fame was spread abroad, and especially his successful enterprise at Noddle's Island, the account of which had just arrived, it gave him a preference in the opinion of the delegates in general, so that his appointment was unanimous among the colonies; but from your known ability and firm attachment to the American cause, we were very desirous of your continuance in the army, and hope you will accept the appointment made by Congress."<sup>1</sup> To which Gen. WOOSTER thus replied: "No man feels more sensibly for his distressed country, nor would more readily exert his utmost effort for its defense than myself. My life has been ever devoted to her service, from my youth up, though never before in a cause like this, a cause for which I would most cheerfully risk, nay, lay down my life. Thirty years I have served as a

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<sup>1</sup> The letter can be found in the second volume of Davis's *Life of Aaron Burr*, p. 6. It is dated the 23d of June, 1775.

soldier; my character was never impeached, nor called in question before. The Congress have seen fit, for what reason I know not, to point me out as the only officer among all that have been commissioned in the different colonies, who is unfit for the post assigned him. The subject is a very delicate one."<sup>1</sup>

His misgivings, however, were but momentary; he did not look back to the home he had left, to the position he had abandoned, to the British commission he had scorned. With true magnanimity he overlooked the personal affront, and forgot himself for his country. In the month of October, in this same year, we find WOOSTER, (having accepted the Continental commission,) with the troops of the Connecticut line at Ticonderoga, as a part of the ill-fated expedition against the Canadas. And we here enter upon the most painful and trying period of his whole history. To command an army in a hostile country, demoralized by defeat, ill-armed, ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-paid, ill-disciplined, entirely unequal to the enterprise in hand; to be the one individual to whom its prayers and complaints are ultimately addressed, with no power to answer and relieve—the one too, upon whom an anxious and excited nation, imposes the odium of every misfortune and failure—are all

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<sup>1</sup> Am. Hist. Mag., p. 6, dated "Camp near New York, July 17th, 1775." He alludes in this letter to one which he has written upon the same subject to Col. Eliphalet Dyer. It is very desirable to find this letter to Col. Dyer.

that kind of trial, which stretches to its extremest tension every emotion of the soul. And this was **WOOSTER'S** position for eighteen months. The disasters and suffering of that memorable campaign, the disappointment of the high-raised expectations of the country, the blow that the cause of independence received through its most decisive miscarriage, would singly have been sufficient to break down the strongest spirit. But in addition to his manifold anxieties as commander of the invading army, and his full proportion of the general sorrow, upon **WOOSTER** was heaped another burthen, more difficult for a high-spirited and generous nature to bear; the thanklessness, the arrogance and the insolence of his superior officer, Gen. Schuyler—the commander of the Northern department—indignities which could not be adequately resented, without jeopardizing the great interests which depended on their cordial co-operation.

Upon his arrival at Ticonderoga, **WOOSTER** found that he had provoked the decided enmity of his immediate chief. Upon his march thither, he had permitted a few of his men to return home on furlough, and when he reached Fort George, he had ordered a general court-martial for the trial of all offenses that had occurred during the advance of the brigade. These two acts were regarded by Gen. Schuyler as flagrant violations of his prerogative, and he addressed a letter to **WOOSTER**, couched

in the sharp language of rebuke. "In spite of my earnest persuasions," was WOOSTER'S conclusive reply, "the troops under my command have refused to sign the continental articles of war, and if governed at all, they must be governed by the law martial of Connecticut, under which they were raised. If there has been any infringement upon etiquette, it was forced upon me by the imperious exigencies of the case, without intentional disrespect." But no answer could be satisfactory to Schuyler. He would neither forget nor forgive this fancied affront, but professed to see in it conclusive proof of a design on WOOSTER'S part, by virtue of his colonial commission, to supersede Montgomery, who was his senior brigadier in the continental line. He even ventured peremptorily to demand of WOOSTER, as a condition precedent to his further advance, that he should give a direct answer to the question, whether he considered himself above or below Gen. Montgomery, in rank? "I have the cause of my country too much at heart," was Gen. WOOSTER'S patriotic and unruffled reply, "to attempt to make any difficulties and uncasiness in the army, upon which an enterprise of almost infinite importance is now depending. I shall consider my rank in the army, what my commission from the Continental Congress makes it, and shall not attempt to dispute the command with Gen. Montgomery."<sup>1</sup> He was

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<sup>1</sup> Third Am. Arch., fourth series, 1107.

now graciously permitted to proceed, but he had hardly arrived at St. John's, before Schuyler followed him with the following extraordinary note:

"TICONDEROGA, Oct. 23d, 1775.

"SIR: Being well informed that you have declared on your way to this place, that if you were at St. John's, you would march into the fort at the head of your regiment, and as it is just that you should have an opportunity of showing your prowess and that of your regiment, I have desired Gen. Montgomery to give you leave to make the attempt if you choose. I do not wish, however, that you should be too lavish of your men's lives, unless you have a prospect of gaining the fortress.

"I am sir, your most humble servant,

"PHILIP SCHUYLER."<sup>1</sup>

No notice was taken of this surly and offensive missive, until some months afterward, when Gen. Schuyler had foolishly complained to Congress of the unbecoming language which WOOSTER used in his dispatches. Provoked at such a charge, from such a source, WOOSTER then says: "You will remember your letter to me while I was at St. John's, founded in falsehood, and which you could have no other motive in writing but to insult me. I thought

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<sup>1</sup> IV. Am. Arch., fourth series, 1008.

it at the time, not worth answering, and shall at present take no further notice of it."<sup>21</sup>

As if effectually to belie the ungenerous suspicions of Gen. Schuyler, harmony, which had left the army, was recalled to it when **WOOSTER** joined. He cooperated heartily with Montgomery in the execution of all his plans. To their joint exertions, the capitulation of St. John's was due; they jointly attacked and dispersed the force under Sir Guy Carlton, which was hastening to its relief; they were joined in the resolution of Congress, which thanked them for these meritorious achievements. Together they marched upon Montreal. **WOOSTER** was left in command of its garrison, while Montgomery advanced upon Quebec, and fell, never to rise again, in the desperate assault of the 31st of December.

The death of his superior in the field, left **WOOSTER** in command of a defeated, dispirited, impoverished army. With two thousand men he was called upon to achieve all the impossibilities demanded by the nation. He was to hold in subjection all the Canadas that had been overrun. With nothing but uncurrent continental bills, he was to clothe and equip his troops. He was to extort supplies from a people he was also directed to conciliate; and without an artillery company, a battering train, a mortar, or an engineer, he was to reduce the strongest fortified city upon the globe. Eight hundred men



were all that could be spared for the operations against Quebec, and the madness of attempting to storm it with such a feeble remnant, did not require the failure of the recent experiment to demonstrate. For the approaches of a regular siege, the number, the character, and the equipments of the troops, were entirely inadequate. Nothing remained, but the third alternative, so distasteful and odious to every soldier, in which neither honor nor applause, nothing but reproaches, odium and misrepresentation were to be won; the slow, inglorious, wearying process of a blockade. In the fruitless attempt to starve out the garrison, before supplies could reach them, the tedious months of that long winter finally wore away.

WOOSTER had hardly entered upon the command before the ulcer in Schuyler's bosom opened afresh, and the fire in the rear re-commenced. Remaining himself safely at Albany, and sluggishly forwarding the supplies and provisions at his disposal, he pursued the officer who commanded in the enemy's country, with angry complaints, imperious mandates and insulting letters. He issued orders, and then, in a most peremptory tone, commanded WOOSTER to obey them, as if every previous order had been disregarded. He interfered with the internal regulation of the army and the police administration of the captured towns, and in other matters which exclusively pertain to the general in the field. Because WOOSTER intimated that some of the prisoners

taken at St. John's, who had been permitted to return, by permits from the commander of the northern army, were guilty of open acts of hostility to the American cause, Schuyler, with a total blindness to his own infirmity, accused him to Congress of writing "subacid" letters.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the whole correspondence, in courtesy, in forbearance, in generosity, in patriotism, in everything becoming the gentleman and the officer, WOOSTER leaves his assailant immeasurably behind. Uniformly temperate and conciliatory in his language, when goaded to a point where forbearance ceases to be a virtue, he contents himself with informing his superior that "he too claims the right to be treated with the respect due to a gentleman, and an officer of the thirteen colonies." He challenges him to mention a command which has not been cheerfully obeyed; an order which has not been promptly fulfilled; to specify wherein he has failed to pay all proper respect to superior rank, or to exert every faculty for union, harmony, and the success of the cause. "No personal ill-treatment," says he, "will ever prevent my steadily and invariably pursuing those measures most conducive to the public good." The controversy had now reached such a point, that the two officers could no longer continue in their relative

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<sup>1</sup> The reader can examine the entire correspondence scattered through IV. Am. Arch., fourth series. The letters can be found by consulting titles "Wooster" and "Schuyler," in the Index.

positions without serious detriment to the public service. Both united in referring their grievances to Congress; a committee was raised, and to the great joy of WOOSTER, he was recalled from a field where valor, self-denial and resolution, were only repaid with ingratitude and odium. Within one month from his departure, the American army were driven out of Canada, not only defeated but disgraced. WOOSTER immediately repaired to Philadelphia, and addressed to the President of Congress a letter to the following purport: "The unjust severity, and unmerited abuse, with which I have been assailed in the colonies, by those who would remove every obstacle to their own advancement, and the harsh treatment I have received from some members of the body over which you preside, renders it necessary that I should vindicate my administration of the army in Canada.<sup>1</sup> The honor of a soldier being the first thing he should defend, and his honesty the last he should give up, his character is always entitled to the protection of the virtuous and the good. I have therefore to request, that a committee may be appointed to examine thoroughly into my conduct in Canada, that I may be acquitted or condemned, on just grounds, and sufficient proof." A committee was accordingly raised, and it is unnecessary to say that the result of a most thorough

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<sup>1</sup> I am obliged to abbreviate this letter; the whole of it may be found VI. Am. Arch., 1081.

investigation, was an unconditional acquittal of all blame. Impartial history has ratified the verdict, and charged our misfortunes in Canada, not to the officers in command, but to the absolute and entire inadequacy of the means placed at their disposal.<sup>1</sup> WOOSTER returned to Connecticut, with the undiminished respect and confidence of his fellow-citizens, and as the Assembly had recently raised six brigades for home defense, he was again appointed by it major-general and commander-in-chief. With zeal unchilled either by age or misfortune, he again entered the service of our commonwealth. Madam Wooster was frequently heard to repeat, that when her husband was called upon to lead the Connecticut troops against the enemy, he would say, "I can not go with these men without money," and would draw from his

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<sup>1</sup> Hildreth states that in consequence of dissatisfaction with WOOSTER's conduct in Canada, he resigned, not however, until he had obtained an inquiry and a favorable report. I can find no proof that he resigned his commission as brigadier-general, unless such a presumption is raised by his accepting that of major-general from the General Assembly of Connecticut.

The committee of inquiry reported favorably, August 17th, 1776. On August 19th, 1776, he addressed the following letter to the Continental Congress, which shows that up to that day he had no intention of resigning.

" August 19th, 1776.

" GENT. : Having the pleasure and satisfaction of your approbation of my past conduct in the army, I beg leave to acquaint your Honors that I am still ready and willing to serve in my proper rank in the army, and attend your further orders.

" To Hon. the Continental Congress."

*II. Am. Arch., fifth series.*

The resolution which directs the inscription for his monument, speaks of him as if he was " brigadier-general in the army of the United States," at the time of his death.

own funds, and pay both officers and men, taking their receipts for the same. The papers and vouchers for these disbursements were all destroyed when the British pillaged her house, in 1779, and this venerable and accomplished woman was, in her declining years, actually imprisoned for debt, and the key of the jail turned upon her, from the impossibility of recovering the money her husband had advanced to his suffering country.<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of the 25th of April, 1777, twenty-six vessels, with the cross of St. George at their respective peaks, were seen under full headway, steering up the Sound. By noon they are standing in toward Norwalk islands, and by four o'clock they had dropped anchor in what is now known as the harbor of Westport. Two thousand men, infantry, cavalry and artillery, were immediately landed on Cedar Point, the eastern jaw of the Saugatuck's mouth. As the different companies land, they rendezvous on the beautiful hill that overlooks the Sound. Having here formed into close column, they pass through the little hamlet called Compo, until they reach the old county road, and follow it to the east, until it meets the road to this place, when they wheel off toward the north, guided by two imps, Stephen Jarvis and Eli Benedict, by name, born in Danbury, under a malignant star. The enemy

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<sup>1</sup> I state this fact upon the authority of Col. James Ward, of Hartford, who remembers it.

establish their quarters for the night about eight miles from their landing place, within the limits of the town of Weston. When it was known that William Tryon commanded the expedition, its destination and objects were readily divined. He was the tory governor of New York, and having a natural genius for such pursuits, was armed by his masters, with a firebrand instead of a sword, and employed as incendiary-general, in a predatory war. Connecticut was the chosen field of his glory. In 1777, he burnt Danbury; in 1778, Fairfield and Norwalk, and used the torch freely in a piratical inroad against New Haven, in 1779. We had fairly earned this enviable distinction. It was not from his own colony, but from Connecticut rebels, that the repose of his administration was most disquieted. Before his own constituents had spirit enough to drive him from the government, WOOSTER marched our militia into his capital and flaunted, "*Qui transtulit sustinet*," in his face. From aboard the *Asia*, to which he finally fled, he could see the "Sons of Liberty," from Connecticut, that broke up the infamous press of his favorite Rivington, and for the first time inoculated New York with patriotism.<sup>1</sup> He threatened a bombardment of the city if the troops from Fairfield county, under Gen. David Waterbury, that went

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<sup>1</sup> I have found among the papers of Silas Deane, one of our delegates to Congress, the original letter of the patriot Sears, giving an account of this expedition, which he organized in Connecticut.

down to welcome Lord Howe, upon his flight from Boston, were permitted to enter, and the lukewarm provincial Congress of New York, echoed the threat. It was these timely visits that first introduced to his Excellency our humble State, and drew upon us afterward, such frequent tokens of his remembrance. His present advent was the first return visit with which he had honored us, and was the more marked, because it was the first time that a foreign invader had trod upon our soil.

On the morning of the 26th, the quiet denizens of Reading on the Ridge, open their eyes in wild astonishment, at the unusual spectacle of red-coats filing through their streets, saluting the church as they pass, with a volley of canister and grape, from musketry and cannon. Tryon meets with no serious opposition thus far. The grisly visages of age, and woman's frightened face, are all that gaze from the windows, as his proud array passes along. Every fencible man had early taken the old queen's arm, from the pegs on which it hung, and hastened away to where a more formal reception was in preparation. But as Tryon ascends Hoyt's Hill, a few miles from hence, a serious obstacle presents itself in his path. A solitary horseman appears upon the brow, directly in the line of march, and waving his sword, and turning his head, as if backed up by a mighty army, exclaims in a voice of thunder, "Halt, the whole Universe! wheel into kingdoms!" The British come

to a stand ; flanking parties are sent out to investigate the precise position into which the “kingdoms have wheeled ;” the two pieces of artillery are brought to bear upon “the Universe,” when the solitary horseman, outflanked by these manœuvres, slowly turns about and disappears. It was now about two o’clock in the afternoon ; the enemy had passed through Bethel’s peaceful hamlet, and were now entering the south end of Danbury, when the solemnity of the occasion was disturbed by another incident, serving to show, that the comic and the tragic thread, are wove together in all human experience. A man by the name of Hamilton, had on deposit at a clothier’s, in the lower part of the village, a piece of cloth, which he was determined at all hazards to rescue from sequestration. He accordingly rode to the shop, and having secured one end of the cloth to the pommel of his saddle, galloped rapidly away. But he was seen by the enemy’s light-horsemen, who followed hard upon him, exclaiming, “We’ll have you, old daddy ; we’ll have you.” “Not yet,” said Hamilton, as he redoubled his speed. The troops gain upon their intended victim ; the nearest one raises his sabre to strike, when fortunately the cloth unrolls, and fluttering like a streamer, far behind, so frightens the pursuing horses that they can not be brought within striking distance of the pursued. The chase continues through the whole extent of the village, to the bridge, where, finally, the old



gentleman and the cloth make good their escape.<sup>1</sup> Tryon established his head-quarters with a tory by the name of Dibble, whose residence was at the south end of Main Street, and in close proximity to the public stores. As the light troops were escorting Erskine and Agnew, the brigadiers of the commanding general, to a house near the bridge, at the upper end of this street, four young men fired upon them, from the dwelling of Major Starr, situated about forty rods above the present court-house. The British pursued, slew them and a peaceable negro who was in their company, threw their bodies into the house and set it on fire.

The destruction of the public stores now commenced. The Episcopal church was filled to the galleries with barrels of beef, pork, rice, wine and rum. In order to save the building, these were removed into the street and consumed, and a white cross conspicuously marked upon the church, to protect it against the general conflagration, which Tryon had already foreordained. The gutters run with the melting pork. The air is thick with the fumes of burning beef. The liquids are only spared from the flames, to be appropriated by the soldiers, to their own immediate refreshment. The commissioner of the army had, against his will, placed part of the provisions in the barn of Dibble, the tory. These are also carefully removed to the

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<sup>1</sup> This story is told by Barber, Hinman, Lossing, and other chroniclers.

street, the safety of the building insured by a cross, and the provisions spared, probably to be transferred to the loyalist, as rent for the forced occupation of his premises. But short work is made of another barn, used for the same purpose, but owned by a patriot. It was immediately set on fire and consumed, with all that it contained.<sup>1</sup> The soldiers now begin to feel the effects of their free indulgence in rebel rum. They lurch as they walk, they lie sprawling in the streets and the door-yards; but three hundred are fit for duty, as the curtain of night falls upon the indecencies of a general debauch. The firebrand had not yet been generally used, but the white cross, now seen distinctly on every tory's dwelling, indicates clearly enough that those unprotected by it, are already doomed. These faithful allies had intimated to Tryon, that the foe is gathering in the neighborhood. His sleep is far from tranquil. Early on the Sabbath morning, while it was yet dark, the signal is given, and on a sudden, a lurid and unnatural glare chases night from the sky. The torch is carried from house to house, and from store to store. From the sacred recesses of home, from the roofs that guard the hard-earned savings of this frugal people, the fire breaks upon the surrounding darkness, and joins in the general

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1 "From the best information which can be obtained, there were about 3,000 barrels of pork, more than 1,000 barrels of flour, several hundred barrels of beef, 1,600 tents, 2,000 bushels of grain, besides many other *valuable* articles, such as rum, wine, rice, army-carriages, &c."—*Robbins's Century Sermon*.

havoc of the element. The aspiring tongues of flame climb and curl round the spire of the Congregational church, until it totters and falls into the burning mass. The sun, as it rises, looks only upon the flickering embers of a once smiling village, save where here and there, a solitary house stood unscathed, but branded with the indelible stigma, of harboring only traitors to freedom. By the cold light of early dawn, is seen, not the stealthy savage, but the disciplined army of a Christian king, stealing away from the desolation they had caused, and from the avenger on their heels, while the aged and the young, the sick, the helpless, and the infirm, gather round the smoldering ashes, for that warmth, which is all that is left of the comforts of home.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nineteen dwelling-houses, the meeting-house of the New Danbury Society, and twenty-two stores and barns, with all their contents, were consumed.—*Robbins's Century Sermon*.

John McLeon, Eli Mygatt, and others, selectmen of Danbury, stated to the General Assembly, convened at Hartford, on the 8th of May, 1777, that the enemy, in their incursion into Danbury, burned and destroyed the public records of said town, and they apprehended great damage might arise to the inhabitants, unless some timely remedy should be provided. The Assembly appointed Daniel Sherman, Col. Nehemiah Beardsley, Increase Moseley, Lemuel Sanford, Col. S. Canfield, and Caleb Baldwin, to repair to Danbury, as soon as might be, and notify the inhabitants of said town, and by all lawful ways, inquire into and ascertain every man's right, and report to the next General Assembly.

This committee reported to the Assembly that the British troops had made a hostile invasion into said town, and under a pretense of destroying the public stores, had consumed with fire about twenty dwelling-houses, with many stores, barns, and other buildings, and that the enemy, on their retreat, collected and drove off all the live stock, viz., cattle, horses and sheep, which they could find; and that the destruction of said property had reduced many of the wealthy

The intelligence of the enemy's landing was communicated to WOOSTER, at New Haven, on the morning of the 26th. Arnold was fortunately there on furlough, who though finally a Judas, was, in mere bravery, second to no man in whom the breath of

inhabitants to poverty. Having notified the inhabitants, they from day to day examined the losses of each sufferer, on oath, and by other evidence, and allowed to each his damage at the time said property was destroyed; they found that by reason of the price of articles, the inhabitants had been obliged to pay large sums over and above the value, in procuring the necessaries for their families; that many of them had their teams forced from them to remove the public stores, &c. They gave the name of each sufferer, with his loss allowed, annexed to his name, which amounted to the sum of £16,181 1 4—which report was accepted by the Assembly, and ordered to be lodged on file, to perpetuate the evidence of the loss of each person, that when Congress should order a compensation, to make out the claims of sufferers.

On the receipt of this communication, the pay table were directed to draw an order on the treasurer for the sum of £500 in favor of the selectmen of Danbury, to relieve the immediate distresses of such persons who were sufferers in Danbury, as aforesaid, who could not subsist without such relief.

The Assembly also provided, that all persons who had been wounded in any action during the late incursion, should be paid out of the state treasury, all their reasonable expenditures for surgeons, medicines, boarding, and nurses.

In 1787, the sufferers in Danbury, having received no further relief, again petitioned the General Assembly of Connecticut, upon which petition Hon. Andrew Adams, and others, were appointed a committee.

The chairman of said committee reported, that for want of exhibits and documents, they were unable methodically and correctly to state the facts or losses and estimate of damages; and also for the want of proper certificates from the treasurer and secretary of state, to report what had already been done for their relief; but were of opinion that the houses and buildings and necessary household furniture, destroyed by the enemy, ought to be paid for by the state, at their just value; and that the only manner in the power of the state, at that time, was to pay the same in *Western lands*—which report was, in October, 1787, accepted by the House, but rejected by the Upper House.

Upon a memorial in 1791, of the inhabitants of the towns of Fairfield and Norwalk, in Fairfield county, the great losses occasioned by the devastations of the

life was ever breathed. Both generals immediately proceed to the scene of operations. At Fairfield, they learn that Gen. Silliman had ordered all the militia that could be raised, to rendezvous at Reading. They follow on, spreading the alarm as they go, and soon arrived at Silliman's head-quarters. With the forces there assembled, they pursue the

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British during the war, were shown to the General Assembly; on which they prayed for remuneration from the state. The Assembly, in May, 1792, by a resolution, released and quit-claimed to the sufferers named on the state record, or to their legal representatives, if deceased, and to their heirs and assigns forever, 500,000 acres of land, owned by Connecticut, situated west of Pennsylvania, bounded north on Lake Erie, beginning on the west line of said lands, and extending eastward to a line running northerly and southerly parallel to the east line of said tract of land owned by this state, and extending the whole width of the said lands, and easterly as far as to comprise said quantity of 500,000 acres, (exclusive of former grants to sufferers, if any,) to be divided among said sufferers and their legal representatives, in proportion to the several sums annexed to their names on record, (which land is located in Huron county, in the state of Ohio.) An additional sum of £8,303 17 10 was added to that previously named for the sufferers in Danbury, making the whole amount £24,484 19 2.—*Hinman's War of American Revolution.*

The following is a list of the sufferers, with the loss allowed by the committee, annexed to his name :

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mr. John McLean, .	2,492	11	7	David Wood, . . .	433	1	0
Capt. Ezra Starr, .	2,296	0	0	Joseph Wildman, . . .	417	8	4
Capt. Daniel Taylor,	984	0	2	Dr. John Wood, . . .	394	3	4
Col. John P. Cook, .	953	9	6	Matthew Benedict, Jr.,	334	11	0
Major Ely Maggatt, .	116	2	2	Rev. Ebenezer White,	327	11	0
Capt. James Clark, .	822	10	6	Jonah Benedict, . . .	309	9	8
Major Taylor, . . .	700	16	2	Matthew Benedict, . . .	205	4	8
Comfort Hoyt, Jr., .	651	15	1	Jabez Rockwell, . . .	237	16	2
Thaddeus Benedict, Esq.,	521	19	6	Zadock Benedict, . . .	169	17	0
Benjamin Sperry, . . .	169	16	3				

Which with a number of smaller losses, ascertained by said committee, amount in the whole to £16,181 1 4.

enemy as far as Bethel, which they reach at eleven o'clock at night. Seven hundred undisciplined militia constitute their entire force. On the morning of the 27th, Arnold and Silliman are directed to take five hundred men and intercept Tryon in front, while WOOSTER, with the two hundred left, follows the enemy's track to worry and harass the rear. He soon comes up with them, and aided by the broken and hilly ground, falls upon one of their regiments, and captures forty prisoners. He again attacks them a few miles from Ridgefield. The British rear-guard, supported by two field-pieces, wheel to receive him. A sharp encounter ensues. WOOSTER'S troops deliver and receive several volleys, but the undisciplined handful, soon stagger and fall back, before the grape-shot that the enemy's artillery scatter. The old veteran, more familiar with this iron hail, infuses his own steadfastness into his untried band, and as he is inciting them to a renewed onset, with the cheering words, "Come on, my boys, never mind such random shots," a ball deliberately fired, as it is said, by a malignant tory who recognized his person, struck him obliquely in the back, breaking the bone as it passed, and burying itself in his body. He falls fainting from his horse. He is carried from the field on this<sup>1</sup> sash,

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<sup>1</sup> The sash is the property of Yale College, and with the sword of WOOSTER, and his portrait, was presented in a letter from Admiral Wooster, of which the following is a copy:

which he wore in the battle. When the surgeon<sup>1</sup> examined the wound, he did not disguise from WOOSTER that there was no hope for him this side of the grave. The tidings are received with the serene composure of one who had so recently shown, by a signal contempt for this life, how confidently he expected one more blessed and glorious. He is removed to this place with the tenderest care. His wife, who had been summoned, arrives, but not until the inflammation had extended through the spinal column to the brain, and he could only look on the face he knew the best, and loved the most, with the wild, unrecognizing glare of delirium. Her tearful and impassioned appeals can extort no sign of welcome. For three days he lies here in extreme agony, aggravated by the fruitless search of the surgeon's probe, for the fatal bullet. On the morning

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"Rev. J. Day,

"President of Yale University,

"Rev. Sir,

"As I shall soon leave this my native place, and there is much uncertainty as to my ever returning to it again, I beg you to receive, in behalf of the College, these three relics of my much respected grandfather, whose memory, I believe, is still cherished by every American patriot. His portrait, I found by mere chance, in the city of Santa Yago, the capital of Chili, in the year 1822. The sword is the same which he had drawn at the time when he fell in repelling the inroads of the enemy of our country; and the sash is that on which he was carried from the field, after receiving the wound which caused his death.

"With feelings of high respect and esteem,

"I remain, reverend Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"A. D. 1837.

CHARLES W. WOOSTER."

<sup>1</sup> The surgeon's name was Turner.

of the first of May, the sudden cessation of pain indicates the commencement of that frightful process, which destroys sensation while life still lingers—the unmistakable precursor of death. It was noted by her, who, faithful to the last, unremittingly watches his pillow, that during this and the following day, (as is frequently the case, in the closing scene of an active life,) his mind was busied in exciting reminiscence. By the feeble light of flickering reason, he was tracing the long and weary pilgrimage, the cruises, sieges, battles, marches, through which he had passed, only to reach the grave. The home of his childhood, the cabin of his ship, the old mansion by the Sound, pass in a blended image before his fading vision. The dash of waves, the rattle of musketry, the roar of cannon, ring confusedly in his deafened ear. His hand can not respond to the gentle pressure of affection. His breathing grows shorter and shorter, while the icy chill advances nearer and nearer to the heart. As his wife wipes the death damps from his brow, his eyes, hitherto closed, open once more, and in their clear depths, for one glad moment, she discovers the dear, the old, the familiar expression of returned consciousness; his lips gasp in vain to utter one precious word of final adieu, and the last effort of his departing soul, is to throw on her, one farewell glance of unutterable tenderness and love. Thus on the 2d of May, 1777, in the service of the state to which his youth, his manhood and his age had been devo-



ted, DAVID WOOSTER died. Of the thirteen thousand sons which Connecticut gave to the French war, and of the thirty-one thousand which she gave to the Revolution, he was among the foremost. Equal to any in courage, in patriotism, in generosity, in zeal for liberty, in that true magnanimity which can forget all personal slights and affronts in her great cause; second to Putnam, and to Putnam alone, in the length, variety and hardship of his martial labors; superior even to him, in the glory of his final exit, and the obscurity of his grave. Exhausting his means in the public service, he only bequeathed poverty to his family, and oblivion to his remains. Unrewarded, unrequited in life, in death he received a monument that was never built, and an inscription that was never engraved.<sup>1</sup>

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*Monday, May 19th, 1777.*

*Resolved,* That a committee of three be appointed to consider what honors are due to the memory of late Brigadier WOOSTER, who died on the 2d of May, of the wounds he received on the 27th of April, in fighting against the enemies of American liberty."

The members chosen were Mr. Heyward, Mr. S. Adams, and Mr. Sage.

*Tuesday, June 17th, 1777.*

"The committee appointed to consider what honors are due to the memory of General WOOSTER, brought forward their report, which was taken into consideration, whereupon,

*Resolved,* That a monument be erected to the memory of Gen. WOOSTER, with the following inscription: 'In honor of DAVID WOOSTER, brigadier-general in the army of the United States. In defending the liberties of America, and bravely repelling an inroad of the British forces to Danbury, in Connecticut, he received a mortal wound on the 27th day of April, 1777, and died on the 2d day of May following. The Congress of the United States, as an acknowledgment of his merit and services, have caused this monument to be erected.'

We can not follow such a career, we can not stand by such a grave, without renewing our consecration vows to freedom. By what a long century of conflict; by what death struggles with earth's master-races, the Celt, the Gaul and the Saxon; by what weariness of spirit, what agony of soul, what squandering of blood, has her fair inheritance been purchased!

“Freedom, thy brow

Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred  
 With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs  
 Are strong with struggling. Power at thee  
 Has launched his bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee:  
 They could not quench the light thou hast from heaven.

Oh! not yet

May'st thou unbrace thy corselet, nor lay by  
 Thy sword; not yet, O Freedom, close thy lids  
 In slumber, for thine enemy never sleeps,  
 And thou must watch and combat till the day  
 Of the new earth and heaven.”

If in the dangers that threaten her for the future, aught for her welfare is intrusted to us; if upon our

“Resolved, That the executive power of the state of Connecticut, be requested to carry the foregoing resolution into execution; and that \$500 be allowed for that purpose.”—*Journals of Congress*, Vol. III., pp. 156, 197.

It has been said that the appropriation made for the erection of Gen. Wooster's monument, “was entrusted to the charge of his son, but never used for the purpose.” I can find no proof of this statement, and it has always been strenuously denied by the relatives of Thomas Wooster, and by others who have investigated the matter.

council she ever relies, in those moments that mold her destiny, upon us to defend any of those solemn compacts that secure to her an illimitable domain for the immeasurable future; if upon our arm she is to lean in the impending crisis of her decisive battle, let us repair to the graves of those who have shielded her in the past, as to altars ever lighted with the sacred fire of heroism. Let us there implore wisdom, self-denial, patience, courage, strength; let us there forget all pride of opinion, ambition, selfishness, the bubbles we crave, the vanities we pursue, everything but self-immolating devotion to her holy cause. We need not wander to poetry or fable, to other times, to other lands, or to sister states, for that past renown which nurtures this heroic element of character. We have it nearer home, in our own neighborhood, beneath our own feet. We tread on soil ransomed by blood; the young flowers our children sow, may take their root in the holy clay of unknown martyrs. If we but turn to the silent halls of death, we can find in almost every graveyard of Connecticut, immortal examples of patriotic virtue, imperishable models of every exalted worth; while no chronicle of wild romance, breathes such inspiriting strains to deeds of sacrifice and daring, as the story of Connecticut's struggle for liberty and religion. The living seed of future heroes and patriots is in our fathers' dust. We will treasure up every council which they meditated in perplexity, every stirring word they uttered

in peril and despair, all that they achieved for liberty, with the halter round their necks, and the scaffold before them. We will sacredly guard the graves, that hold such precious inspiration for the future; we will mark them with memorials that shall endure, to the last syllable of recorded time. We will lead the first thoughts of aspiring youth, and the last of desponding age, to the monumental shafts, which tell how Hale, and Ledyard, and **WOOSTER** died. Glorious martyr! over whose ashes we have this day performed the last solemn rites of gratitude, touch our hearts with a spark from that flame which burned in thy own; inspire us with thy unfaltering love for country; teach us nobly to suffer, bravely to die!













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