

F

104

F4G28

FARMINGTON SOLDIERS
IN THE COLONIAL WARS

AN
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

September 8, 1897



By JULIUS GAY



HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

1897





Class F 104

Book F 4 G 28

FARMINGTON SOLDIERS
IN THE COLONIAL WARS

AN
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

September 8, 1897



By JULIUS GAY

THE
LIBRARY

OF
FARMINGTON
HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

1897

81993
'01

YRABILL INT
2280800 70

ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :

I propose this evening to give some account of Farmington soldiers in the wars preceding the Revolution, while the colony was still under the crown. In so doing I shall consider the men of this village only, leaving out of sight the vastly more numerous residents of the ancient town, which once extended from Simsbury on the north to Cheshire on the south, and from Wethersfield westward to what is now the town of Plymouth.

The first serious conflict in which the settlers of Connecticut were engaged was the Pequot War. This occurred before our village had any existence, but several of the men who afterward settled Farmington, and who here lived and died, were in the fight. That we may realize the necessity and the justifiableness of the war, let us briefly recall the situation. In the river towns of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield were only about 250 adult men, and in the fort at Saybrook twenty more, under the command of Lion Gardiner. In the south-eastern corner of the colony was the powerful tribe of the Pequots, under their sachem, Sassacus; further east the Narragansetts, under Miantonimo; and to the north the Mohegans, under the friendly Uncas; while to the west were the dreaded Mohawks. An attempt by the Pequots to unite all the tribes and wipe out the whites at one blow failed. The Narragansetts hated the Pequots more fiercely than they did the Englishmen, and Uncas was always the friend of the whites.

In 1633 two traders of Virginia, Stone and Norton, with six other men, were murdered in their vessel as they were sailing up the river to the Dutch fort at Hartford. Three years later occurred the murder of John Oldham at Block Island, and the ill-advised attempt of Endicott from the Bay Colony to chastise without destroying the offenders called out the indignant protest of Gardiner: "You come hither to raise these wasps about my ears, and then you take wing and flee away." After the killing and torture of numerous men at Saybrook, and the roasting alive of a Wethersfield man, the savages proceeded to the latter place, killed seven men, a woman, and child, and carried away two girls. This was bringing the war too near home, and so, in May, 1637, the General Court at Hartford "ordered that there shall be an offensive war against the Pequot." A levy of ninety men was ordered, to be under the command of Capt. John Mason, who had learned the art of war with Fairfax in the Netherlands. For the captain, the minister, and the sick were to be provided one hogshead of good beer, three or four gallons of strong water, and two gallons of sack, and for the army a vast supply of stores. On the 10th of May, 1637, the expedition sailed down the river in three vessels, with their friend Uncas and seventy of his men. The graphic account of the expedition written by Capt. Mason is quite as entertaining as any commentary of Cæsar, but we have time only to recall what every school boy has read — the burning of the Pequot fort and the destruction of their power. Mason says: "Thus in little more than one hour's space was this impregnable fort, with themselves, utterly destroyed, to the number of six or seven hundred." Whatever we may think of this style of warfare, the Indians surely had no right to complain of any barbarity. No half-way measures were possible. One nation or the other must

be exterminated. The valiant Capt. Mason closed his account with the pious exhortation: "Let us, therefore, praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men." And then, by way of postscript, says: "I shall add a word or two by way of comment. . . . Our commons were very short. . . . We had but one pint of strong liquors among us in our whole march. . . . (the bottle of liquor being in my hand), and when it was empty, the very smelling to the bottle would presently recover such as fainted away, which happened by the extremity of the heat. . . . I shall mention two or three special providences that God was pleased to vouchsafe to particular men. . . . John Dier and Thomas Steel were both of them shot in the knots of their handkerchiefs, being about their necks, and received no hurt. Lieutenant Seely was shot in the eyebrow with a flat-headed arrow, the point turning downward; I pulled it out myself. Lieutenant Bull [ancestor of our Deacon Bull] had an arrow shot into a hard piece of cheese, having no other defense; which may verify the old saying, 'A little armor would serve if a man knew where to place it.'" On their return the soldiers from Hartford were granted a lot known as the Soldier's Field, and it is largely from the record of this land that we learn the names of the soldiers in the fight. One of those who soon helped settle Farmington was Thomas Barnes, whose house stood on the east side of the main street on land now occupied by the old burying-ground, or possibly just south of it. Another Pequot soldier was John Bronson, whose house stood near what is sometimes called Diamond Glen Brook, having the mountain to the south, and highways on all other sides. A third was Deacon Stephen Hart, a man of note in all public matters, whether pertaining to the town or the church. His house was on the west side of the main street, opposite

the meeting-house. The fourth, and, so far as I know, the only remaining soldier, was John Warner, who lived in a house nearly opposite the savings bank, which he sold about 1665 to Matthew Woodruff, and bought another of Reinold Marvin on the west side of the main street, near the house of T. H. and L. C. Root. To Thomas Barnes and John Warner each, the General Court in October, 1671, granted fifty acres of land for their services as Pequot soldiers.

The Pequot war ended, the settlers were able to cultivate in security the rich lands bought by them of Sequasson, the sachem of the Indians of Hartford and vicinity. In 1650 they obtained a new deed from the Indians of Tunxis Sepus with new agreements "to settle peace in a way of truth and righteousness betwixt the English and them." For fourteen years they lived in much peace and contentment undisturbed by the distant wars of savage tribes. At length the Commissioners of the United Colonies resolved to assist the Long Island Indians in a war against the Narragansetts. Twenty men were to go from Connecticut, of whom Farmington was to send one man. The expedition was under the command of Major Willard of Massachusetts, who found the Indians had deserted their village and taken refuge in a swamp fifteen miles away. Leaving them unmolested, he marched home again and disbanded his forces. The next General Court at Hartford voted the soldiers sixpence a day for their valuable services, and thus ended the Narragansett war. Who the one soldier was from Farmington does not appear.

Leaving unconsidered the constant warfare of hostile tribes and the complex diplomacy by which the colonies sought to keep the peace, we must confine ourselves to what especially concerns our village. On the 9th of April, 1657, the General Court takes cognizance of "a

most horrid murder committed by some Indians at Farmington." Fourteen days afterward John Hull of Boston records in his diary: "We also heard, that at a town called Farmington, near Hartford, an Indian was so bold as to kill an English woman great with child, and likewise her maid, and also sorely wounded a little child — all within their house,— and then fired the house, which also fired some other barns or houses. The Indians, being apprehended, delivered up the murderer, who was brought to Hartford, and (after he had his right hand cut off) was with an axe knocked on the head by the executioner. The Lord teach us what such sad providences speak unto us all!" I speak more particularly of this occurrence because careless writers persist in confounding this affair with the burning of the house of Sergeant John Hart in 1666, with which the Indians had nothing whatever to do.

The situation was becoming so serious that the commissioners in September forbade Indians traveling armed from village to village. Here is an examination, by the magistrates, of a body of Deerfield Indians who came through Farmington in a threatening manner on April 28th of the following year. The combined shrewdness and insolence of the Indian replies are interesting.

Q. Whence come you?

A. We are Pocumtocoos.

Q. Why come you so many of you armed with guns?

A. Why may one not carry guns as well as the Mohegans or other Indians. And why do you carry arms?

Q. What did you do at Hockanum?

A. We were on our way.

Q. What did you do at the English houses?

A. Nothing.

Q. We asked whether they were at Robert [illegible]

house yesterday and whether they did not take away a basket of corn and a pewter bottle.

A. They returned and asked us whether we came to look after an old Indian basket, and thereupon heaved unto us an old Indian basket and a bunch of flax. This they did with laughter and derision.

Q. We asked whither they were going.

A. They told us that we are here. The chief of this company was one Wonoepikum to whom we directed our speech and desired them that they would give us a reason why they came through the English plantations in such manner contrary to the law made by the commissioners last September Anno 1657. Unto this they made us no return.

No more serious disturbances with the Indians occurred until in 1675, Philip's War called a new generation of soldiers to the field. Massasoit, sachem of the Pokanokets, was dead. His oldest son, Wamsutta, did not long survive him, and Metacomet, his second son, known as Philip, became chief sachem of the tribe. You have all read of this savage hero, whose proud nature could not endure the arrogance of the Plymouth people, and who for two years devastated the country with fire and slaughter. The war, beginning in June, 1675, at Swansea, spread northward through Massachusetts, destroying the towns on the Connecticut River, and came as near to us as Simsbury, which was burned on the 26th of March, 1676. On the 6th of August, two days after the attack on Brookfield, Massachusetts, the Council at Hartford ordered one hundred dragoons raised, fifteen from Farmington. Again, September 2d, Farmington was ordered to furnish seven of the 100 soldiers who marched under Major Treat and rescued the survivors of the Bloody Brook fight at Deerfield on the 18th. Again, November 25th, the Council ordered fifteen soldiers from Farming-

ton which were probably in the great Narragansett Swamp Fight of December 19th. On the 4th of January following seven more were called for, and on the 21st of February ten more. Driven from Rhode Island, the savages assaulted the Massachusetts towns, Lancaster, Medford, Northampton, Rehoboth, and Sudbury, and on March 26th burned Simsbury in this colony. On May 1st Sergeant Anthony Howkins of this town was ordered to raise as many volunteers as possible. Twenty days later, "upon the intelligence of the last engagement up the river," five more were ordered from this village. The engagement referred to was the famous "Falls Fight" on the morning of May 19th at Turner's Falls above Greenfield, where Jobanna Smith of this town was killed and Roger Orvis wounded. Philip now returned to his old haunts at Pokanoket, and finally, with a few remaining followers, was driven into a swamp and killed. The General Court ordered the first day of November, 1676, to be solemnly kept a day of public thanksgiving, and Rev. Samuel Hooker of the Farmington church, preaching the next election sermon, lamented "how many villages are already forsaken of their inhabitants, their highways unoccupied, how many chosen young men are fallen upon the high places of the field, how many widows left solitary among us, with tears on their cheeks, how many mothers in Israel weeping for their children, and refuse to be comforted because they are not."

Peace having returned, the town granted land called "soldier lots" to those who fought in the war, and from the record of these we learn the names of some of the soldiers. Care, however, must be used not to confound the names of the subsequent purchasers with those of the soldiers, the original record having been worn out and lost, and only a portion of the grants having been transcribed into the "new book," so called, which opens with

the year 1682. I will give a brief account of twenty soldiers, being all I can positively identify.

Joseph Andrews, son of John, was born in 1651, and removed, after the war, to that part of Wethersfield now known as Newington, where he died in 1706. Benjamin Barnes, son of Thomas, the Pequot soldier, was born in 1653, and removed to Waterbury, where he became a townsman — that is, selectman, and a grave-digger. There he died in 1712. Joseph Barnes, brother of Benjamin, was born in 1655, married Abigail Gibbs, and died in 1741. His house was next south of the old burying-ground. Samuel Gridley was a constable, and for five years a selectman. His house was on the west side of the main street, on or near the site of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. Anthony Howkins was one of the patentees named in the charter of Charles II, and an assistant in the years 1666 to 1673, inclusive. He was ordered to raise a company of soldiers at Farmington, and march them to Hadley in May, 1676. His house was on the east side of the road to Hartford, nearly opposite where the North schoolhouse now stands. John Judd, son of Deacon Thomas, was a son-in-law of Anthony Howkins, was a deputy to the General Court many times, and held the offices of ensign and lieutenant. His house was on the west side of the main street, where Major Hooker afterward lived, and after him the late Deacon William Gay. Samuel Judd, brother of the last-named soldier, married after the war, and removed to Northampton, where he lived and died. William Lewis was the son of Capt. William Lewis, and grandson of William the immigrant. He was selectman in 1696 and 1713. He owned several houses, one of which was fortified by the town — very likely the one on the site of the Elm Tree Inn. John and Thomas Newell, sons of Thomas the immigrant, were born in a house which stood on or near the

site of that of Mrs. Dr. Brown, opposite the Catholic Church. They removed to Waterbury. James and Nathaniel North, sons of John the immigrant, who lived near where now stands the house of the late Dr. Asahel Thomson, were born in Farmington in 1647 and 1656, respectively, and removed from the town soon after the war. Roger Orvis, son of George the immigrant, was in the party which marched from Hadley for the relief of Hatfield, May 20, 1676, and was wounded. His house was at "ye southerly end of the town plat," near where the late James W. Cowles lived. Dr. Daniel Porter was a son of the first Dr. Daniel, who lived on the west side of the main street, not far from the South schoolhouse, and who was paid a salary of twelve pounds by the General Court for setting all the broken bones in the colony, and was allowed six shillings extra for traveling expenses for each journey to the river towns. Dr. Daniel, the younger, who assumed the practice of surgery on the death of his father, removed to Waterbury, and was the second of five generations of Drs. Daniel Porter—father, son, grandson, great-grandson, and nephew of great-grandson. His medical library consisted of "a bone set book," appraised at two shillings. Thomas Porter, son of the first Robert, was the great-grandfather of Dr. Noah Porter. Jobanna Smith was born at Wethersfield before his father removed to this town, in or about the year 1656. He was killed May 30, 1676, in the expedition for the relief of Hatfield. His soldier lot was laid out to his heirs, "a top of ye mountain against Rocke Chayr." This singular rock formation, or what is left of it, stands on the north side of the road to Hartford, a little west of the stone crusher. With an attempt to emphasize the unusual, it was long known as the Devil's Rocking Chair. Deacon John Stanley received a grant of a soldier lot from the town, and was pretty certainly a soldier in King Philip's

War, rather than his father, Captain John, to whom has sometimes been ascribed that honor. He removed to Waterbury, but subsequently returned to Farmington. Much interesting information about him can be found in the recent history of Waterbury. Timothy Stanly, brother of John, also removed to Waterbury, and was a prominent man. John Woodruff, son of the first Matthew, filled a number of town offices — townsman, fence-viewer, chimney-viewer, etc. Simon Wrotham, the last on the list, was known as Mr., but I have been unable to learn the source of a title then accorded only to ministers and men high in official position. He was certainly conspicuous in the church, which excommunicated him. Before a council he fared no better, whereupon he appealed to the General Court to cite both the church and council before them, which body declined "to give the church or council any trouble to appear before them . . . but advised said Wrotham to a serious consideration of his former ways." His house stood near the site of the residence of Mr. H. H. Mason.

In addition to these, six Farmington friendly Indians went up to Springfield on the 6th of October, 1675. Trusting you will excuse any error in my pronunciation of Algonquin which you may detect, I give you the names of the warriors as recorded. Nesehegan, Wanawesse, Woewassa, Sepoose, Uckchepassun, and Unckcawott.

But we must hurry on. There is still much fighting before us. With the death of Philip the scene of strife was removed to the Province of Maine, and Connecticut had rest until England, on the accession of William and Mary, declared war with France in May, 1689. Then began a new series of fiendish massacres, planned no longer by the savage Philip, but by the polite French rulers of Quebec, and continued until the Peace of Rys-

wick in September, 1697. Connecticut repeatedly sent soldiers to Albany, a force under Winthrop in the expedition of Sir William Phipps against Montreal in 1690, and in 1695 to the river towns of Massachusetts. The peace was of short duration. After a rest of five years Queen Anne declared war against France and Spain, and the savages, led by French generals, recommenced their midnight massacres. In 1704, seven houses in Farmington were ordered fortified, viz., those of Thomas Orton, William Lewis, Howkins Hart, James Wadsworth, John Hart, John Wadsworth, and Samuel Wadsworth. In the expedition against Quebec under Nicholson in 1709, which failed for want of the promised assistance of English ships, Farmington furnished eleven men. How many of the 300 Connecticut soldiers who went under Col. Whiting in the successful Port Royal Expedition of 1710, is not recorded, or of the 360 who marched under Whiting the next year against Quebec and failed, owing to the utter incompetency of the English Admiral Walker. The peace of Utrecht was signed March, 1713, and the colony had rest. The only Farmington soldier in the Canada Expedition of 1711, whose name I find recorded, was John Scott. Capt. John Hart marched a company in February, 1712, into the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts, but the names of his soldiers have not been preserved on any known record. From the peace of Utrecht in 1713, to the declaration of war against Spain in 1739, the colony had peace broken only by fears of invasion from Canada, which did not take place, but which kept the colony in constant alarm. On the destruction of Rutland, Vermont, in 1723, a company of 200 men was formed from the trainbands of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield to hold themselves in readiness. Hunting parties of friendly Indians were forbidden north of the roads from Farmington to Waterbury

and from Farmington to Hartford, and scouting parties of whites were ordered to range the woods continuously north of Simsbury. In May, 1724, thirty-two men, of whom ten were from Farmington, were ordered for the defense of Litchfield against a party of hostile Indians discovered lurking about that town. One of the ten was Matthew Woodruff, the fourth in direct descent of that name, who, in his memorial to the General Assembly in May, 1725, says: "Your memorialist in the summer last past at Litchfield, being a soldier there, killed an Indian (one of the common enemy) by the help of God." The Assembly voted him thirty pounds, whereupon one Nathaniel Watson of Windsor, encouraged by his success, represented to the Assembly that he too made a shot at an Indian at the same time as Mr. Woodruff, and thought he hit him, but the General Assembly thought otherwise. The following year the New Milford Indians held dances in war-paint and barbarously murdered a child, whereupon the Governor and Council ordered all painted Indians to be treated as enemies. John Hooker, William Wadsworth, and Isaac Cowles, or any two of them, were ordered to "inspect the Indians of Farmington . . . every day about sunset" who were required to give "an account of their rambles and business the preceding day." Submission to such an infringement of their personal liberty, shows the peaceful character of the Tunxis Indians. In October following they were allowed their former liberty, provided they abstained from war-paint and wore a white cloth on their heads while in the woods. The danger was soon over, and no Connecticut town suffered actual violence.

In October 23, 1739, England declared war against Spain, and Connecticut was called upon for two companies of 100 men each which sailed in September of the following year under Captains Roger Newberry and John

Silliman to join the disastrous expedition of Admiral Vernon against Carthage. Of the 1,000 men from New England, scarcely 100 returned. What was the quota of Farmington does not appear or the names of the men. The folly and rashness of Vernon, bringing sorrow to a thousand homes, did not prevent the poet Thomson from singing his praises or Lawrence Washington from naming Mount Vernon in his honor. Five years of comparative quiet pass. On the 4th of March, 1745, France declares war and once more lets loose her savage allies upon the English frontiers. Her stronghold was the fortress of Louisbourg on the island of Cape Breton, and no lasting peace seemed possible until Canada, and, first of all, this fortress, was wrested from her. An expedition of New England troops, under the direction of Gov. Shirley of Massachusetts, defended from molestation seaward by British men of war, was sent for its reduction and captured it June 17th, a day subsequently memorable as the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill. Connecticut sent 500 men besides 100 in the colony's sloop, *Defence*, and 200 more during the siege. Of the company from this vicinity Timothy Root of Farmington was lieutenant, and died at Cape Breton in April after the surrender. He was the great-great-grandfather of T. H. and L. C. Root. I know of no list of the soldiers of his company. Dr. Samuel Richards, who practiced as a physician in numerous towns in this vicinity and died in Plainville, learned the rudiments of his professional knowledge in the hospital established for the New England troops. Another soldier in this campaign, as appears from his memorial to the General Court, was Ebenezer Smith, son of Jonathan, who lived on the south side of the road to Hartford, near where Mr. Martin O'Meara now lives. He removed to New Britain, and his gravestone describes him as late of Farmington. Ebenezer Lee and Gershom

Orvis, in the company of Adonijah Fitch, were probably identical with Farmington men of that name. In May, 1746, twenty men were ordered as scouts to the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts, and forty more for a similar service "between the enemy's borders and the borders of the British plantation." By request of his Majesty's government a new expedition against Canada was organized. In May the General Court ordered 600 men raised, and in June increased the number to 1,000, but the ships for their support were sent elsewhere and the colonies given over to destruction by the formidable French fleet under d'Anville, which proposed to wipe out every vestige of Englishmen and their hated religion from the western continent. Pestilence and the war of the elements came to their relief, and the New England divines thanked the Almighty for a repetition of the story of Sennacherib the Assyrian. The war ended with the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, April 30, 1748.

For seven years the colony had a respite from war, but in 1754, without any declaration of war, the French began to extend their line of forts around the English settlements, which led to four expeditions to break their line in 1755. One against the Ohio, resulting in Braddock's defeat and Washington's first lesson in war; one against Nova Scotia, familiar to the readers of Longfellow's *Evangeline*; one against Niagara, and one against Crown Point. For the latter service Connecticut raised 1,500 men in four companies of 750 men each, who participated in the bloody but indecisive battle of September 6th at Lake George. As a result of the Nova Scotia expedition, some of the Acadians were sent to Connecticut, and more, to the number of 400, being expected, the General Court ordered fourteen sent to Farmington as its proper proportion. So ended the year 1755. Of Farmington soldiers, we can identify Ezekiel Lewis, sergeant ;

Ebenezer Orvis, ensign; and privates Bela Lewis, Samuel Bird, and Noah Porter, father of the late Dr. Noah Porter and grandfather of President Porter. Deacon Noah Porter, who served in this expedition, lived in his boyhood in the house of his father Robert which stood where now stands the brick house built by the late Francis W. Cowles, next north of Miss Adgate's pharmacy. The house was given him by his father on his marriage in 1764, and was occupied by him until about 1781, when, after the birth of Dr. Porter, he removed to what is now the town farm on the road to Avon. This he sold in 1809 and returned to village life at the house of his son, then the pastor of the church of which the father had been for thirty-four years a deacon.

For the campaign of 1756 against Crown Point the Connecticut Colony ordered 2,500 men raised and formed into four regiments, and in October, in response to the urgent call of the Earl of Loudon for reinforcements, eight additional companies of 100 men each were ordered raised out of the town train-bands, Josiah Lee of Farmington to be captain of one of the companies. They were no sooner raised than Loudon concluded to go into winter quarters three months before the usual time and do nothing. The troops were accordingly dismissed, and so ended the inglorious campaign of 1756. In this campaign were Ezekiel Lewis, lieutenant, Ebenezer Orvis, second lieutenant, Samuel Gridley and David Andrus, sergeants, and Samuel Bird, Abraham Hills, and Bela Lewis, privates. Dr. Elisha Lord, then of this village, was in March, 1756, appointed physician and surgeon for this expedition. On the 2d of October Dr. Timothy Collins of Litchfield, the chief surgeon, returned home sick, and Dr. Lord took his place. He soon afterward removed to Norwich.

In the campaign of 1757 Connecticut raised 1,400 men

to act under the Earl of Loudon. There followed the surrender of Fort William Henry at the southern end of Lake George to the French general, Montcalm, and the butchery of the garrison by the Indians in violation of the terms of the surrender, and this was all the result of great preparations, vast expense, and brilliant hopes. The Farmington soldiers were Ezekiel Lewis, ensign, privates Samuel Bird, Sylvanus Curtis, Gershom Orvis, and Bethuel Norton. Immediately upon the capture of Fort William Henry, the colony was called on in hot haste for reinforcements, and sent about 5,000 men. They were no sooner on their way than orders came from General Webb for their return. This campaign was known as the Alarm of 1757. The soldiers from this village were in service sixteen days, and were Captain William Wadsworth, sergeant Judah Woodruff, clerk James Wadsworth, corporal Hezekiah Wadsworth, and privates Amos Cowles, Phinehas Cowles, Rezin Gridley, Elisha Hart, Noadiah Hooker, John Judd, Elihu Newell, Joseph Root, Timothy Woodruff, Solomon Woodruff, and an Indian, Elijah Wimpey. Probably there were others.

England, now thoroughly tired of its incompetent generals and ministers, compelled King George to accept the administration of William Pitt, the great commoner, as the only man to save the country from ruin. Pitt recalled the weak Loudon and sent over Generals Wolf and Amherst, and Admiral Boscawen, and a new era began. In response to an appeal by Pitt stating that his majesty has "nothing more at heart than to repair the losses and disappointments of the last inactive and unhappy campaign, and, by the blessing of God on his arms, the damages impending on North America," the General Assembly raised five thousand men for the campaign of 1758. The capture of Louisburg, the strongest fortress

of the French, followed by that of Fort Frontenac on the north bank of the St. Lawrence where it flows out of Lake Ontario, and of Fort Duquesne where now stands the city of Pittsburg, revived the spirits of the nation. The loss of Lord Howe in the march against Fort Ticonderoga and the subsequent ill-advised attack on that fort by Bradstreet, alone marred the success of the campaign. The Farmington soldiers, so far as known, were Judah Woodruff, lieutenant, Samuel Bird and Eleazer Curtis, sergeants, and Ashbel Norton, David Orvis, Daniel Owen, and Bela Lewis, privates, and probably Matthew Norton and Thomas Norton.

For the memorable campaign of 1759 Connecticut raised 3,600 men. The capture of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Niagara, and finally of Quebec itself followed, with the glorious victory of Wolf over Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham. We know very few of the soldiers who took part in this series of victories. The imperfect muster rolls here fail us altogether. We know that Judah Woodruff was first and Samuel Gridley was second lieutenant during the years 1759 and 1760, and that is about all. The journal of a single private soldier has been preserved,—a boyish, illiterate performance, it nevertheless gives us quite as vivid a picture of what happened around him as do the more formal accounts of his superiors. It was written by Reuben Smith, son of Thomas and Mary Smith, well-known citizens of our village, who owned and lived in the south two-thirds of the long house opposite the savings bank. I will give you the greater part of the journal.

“April the 18, 1759. We marched from Farmington. The 20th we entered Greenbush. The next day we sailed over the river and encamped on the hill. May 29, 1759. We marched from Albany to Schenectady, and the same day Horres [Horace?] was shot at Albany before we marched. We set out very late and got

there before night, and pitched our tents and lay very well. As I have thought it proper to write all that is strange, now this thing it seems more strange than anything that I have seen since I came from home. June the 3d day in Schenectady there were two old women got one of the old Leather Hats drunk, and took him to the guard house and put him under guard. . . . God save the King and all the Leather Hat men. June the 6th. There was a woman riding the road from Schenectady to Sir William Johnson's. There came a number of Indians and pulled her off her horse and scalped her, but left her alive. Oh! it grieves me to take my pen to write these ways of an Indian. This poor woman had a child about one year and a half old, which she begged that she might embrace it once more with a kiss before they killed it. But these cruel, barbarous, cruel creatures . . . stripped her and left her in her blood, and they killed her poor child or carried it into captivity, and another lad that was with them. This woman was brought into Schenectady, and she lived about two days and died. I saw her buried myself, Reuben Smith. June the 12th day, 1759. One of Major Rogers' captains, Captain Redfield, caught three Frenchmen and brought two of them into Schenectady, and from there to Albany. The other they carried to Sir William Johnson's. I saw these captives myself. Reuben Smith. Schenectady, June 20. Died William Ellsworth of Harrington [Harwinton?] in a fit. Belonged to Capt. Paterson's Co., the first that died after we left home. June the 24, 1759. Died Samuel Wright, son to Emersine [Emerson?] Wright of New Britain. He died at Schenectady with sickness in the barracks. He was about 18 years of age. July the 1st, 1759. I was pleased to take a walk to the Dutch Church, and all that I learnt was the 148th Psalm, which they sang. I understood the psalm which the clerk mentioned, and that was all. July 4, 1759. Returned one Stevens who had been in captivity the space of one year. He belonged to Canterbury. He was sold to an Indian squaw. She told him that she would return him to his own land in a few days, but kept him almost one year, and he ran away, and his first post was Swago [Oswego?], and from thence to Fort Stanwix, and there came a guard from thence with a French lieutenant. They carried him from Schenectady to Albany blindfolded. July 20, 1759. Died Samuel Woodford of Farmington at Schenectady. July 10, 1759. I set out a batteauxing for my pleasure. I went to

the Little Carrying Place and returned the 19th to Schenectady again. . . . 2 of August I had news that Niagara was ours at the loss of [illegible] notwithstanding. Kept a day of rejoicing and eating and drinking. Came night we built a large fire almost extended to the clouds, and shot our guns briskly. August the 10. Came an old bush-headed man crying good limes, good limes, good limes, with such open throat and horrid mouth that some took him to be the devil. . . . October the 14th. I am sorry to think that I have omitted writing so long. Now one thing prompts me to write. There were two men killed by Negroes in a garden. November the 7th, 1759. Died Capt. Daniel Owen of Farmington, belonging to Major John Patterson's company."

The subsequent year our journalist came again to Schenectady, but died on the 26th of May.

To strengthen and defend the places captured, and for the reduction of Montreal, Connecticut raised 5,000 men in 1760, and 2,300 more during each of the years 1761 and 1762. Martinique was captured in February, 1762, and Havana in the succeeding August. From the latter expedition scarcely a man returned. From the memorial of his widow to the General Assembly, it appears that Lieut. David Andrus, who lived where the East Farms district schoolhouse now stands, was taken sick before the embarkation of the troops on their return from Havana, and died about eight days after his arrival in New York.

The treaty of Paris, February 10, 1763, ended the war. With the exception of 265 men sent in 1764 to put down the Indian uprising at Detroit, the colony was not called upon for more soldiers until the War of the Revolution.

Such is the account of the soldiers of this village, so far as I have been able to gather it from contemporaneous records. A much more entertaining narrative might have been constructed from family traditions, which sometimes contain a grain of truth, but not always. The

stories of Indian warfare compiled by the father of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., for the history of this town by Governor Treadwell, might have been drawn on, or the stories heard in my own childhood to the droning accompaniment of the spinning-wheel, in the long winter evenings, when the labors of the day were over — blood-curdling tales of Indian massacres, interspersed with stories of New England witchcraft, of Captain Kidd and the satanic hosts who guarded his buried treasure — all devoutly believed in by the aged narrator. If, instead, I have given you but a bare list of names, it is, so far as it goes, a reliable one and an honorable one.

L. of C.

INDEX OF SOLDIERS' NAMES.

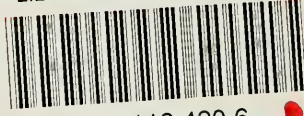
	Page.		Page.
Andrews, David	17	Norton, Ashbel	19
Andrews, Joseph	10	Norton, Bethuel	18
Barnes, Benjamin	10	Norton, Matthew	19
Barnes, Joseph	10	Norton, Thomas	19
Barnes, Thomas	5	Orvis, David	19
Bird, Samuel	17, 18, 19	Orvis, Ebenezer	17
Bronson, John	5	Orvis, Gershom	16, 18
Cowles, Amos	18	Orvis, Roger	9, 11
Cowles, Phinehas	18	Owen, Daniel	19, 21
Curtis, Eleazer	19	Porter, Daniel	11
Curtis, Sylvanus	18	Porter, Noah	17
Gridley, Rezin	18	Porter, Thomas	11
Gridley, Samuel	10, 17, 19	Richards, Samuel	13
Hart, Elisha	18	Root, Joseph	18
Hart, John	13	Root, Timothy	15
Hart, Stephen	5	Scott, John	13
Hills, Abraham	17	Smith, Ebenezer	15
Hooker, Noadiah	18	Smith, Jobanna	9
Howkins, Anthony	9, 10	Smith, Reuben	19
Judd, John	10, 18	Stanley, John	11
Judd, Samuel	10	Stanley, Timothy	10
Lee, Ebenezer	15	Wadsworth, Hezekiah	18
Lee, Josiah	17	Wadsworth, James	18
Lewis, Bela	17, 19	Wadsworth, William	18
Lewis, Ezekiel	16, 17, 18	Warner, John	6
Lewis, William	10	Wimpey, Elijah	18
Lord, Elisha	17	Woodruff, John	12
Newell, Elihu	18	Woodruff, Judah	18, 19
Newell, John	10	Woodruff, Matthew	14
Newell, Thomas	10	Woodruff, Solomon	18
North, James	11	Woodruff, Timothy	18
North, Nathaniel	11	Wrotham, Simon	12

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

Instead of the statement on page 6 concerning the residence of John Warner, the following is fuller and possibly more correct. John Warner in January 1653 owned a five acre lot extending on both sides of the Main Street, and probably including the present site of the Farmington Savings Bank. In February of the same year he sold the land on the east side of the street to Matthew Woodruff, and before January 1655 he sold an old house, so called, on the west side of the street to Samuel Steele.

On the 14th of August 1762 the following men, recorded as born in Farmington, were mustered into the Company of Capt. Timothy Northam, in the 1st Regiment of New York troops under Col. Michael Thody. Ezekiel Scott, Sergeant, aged 24, occupation a farmer, stature 5 feet 3 inches. Obadiah Andrews aged 21, occupation a joiner, stature 5 feet, 10 inches. He was the son of Joseph Andrews of Southington, born May 4, 1741 and died August 1811. In 1769 he bought of Major Peter Curtiss the house in which the latter then lived on the east side of High Street just north of the house of the late Augustus Bodwell, now owned by Miss Pope. Thomas Gould, aged 21, occupation cordwainer, stature 5 feet, 11 inches. Andrew Messenger, aged 21, occupation cordwainer, stature 5 feet, 9 inches. Zophar Andrews aged 35, occupation cordwainer, stature 5 feet 6 inches. There were also two Indians from Farmington, Samuel Adams and James Wawas.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 113 420 6

