

Royal



Yorkers

With the latest Advices, Foreign and Domeftick

SCHOHARIE

October 6 & 7, 1780

There are many reasons why you should be there.

Schoharie is one of those *spiritual* events that every Yorker should plan to attend. And there are many good reasons why:

- The Schoharie Valley is always ablaze with Fall colours on the first weekend in October. It's hard to find a more picturesque sight than the tree covered slopes that are seen from the streets of our camp. Warm sunny days, cool crisp nights.
- The valley was "ablaze" for other reasons in 1780. Schoharie is an original Rev War battlefield. If you don't know the history of Schoharie, read pages 157-190 of Gavin's book, *Burning of the Valley*. This is important ground for us.
- The old stone church that gives the weekend its name, *Stone Fort Days*, has a wonderful collection of artifacts that are well worth seeing. Their gift shop is pretty good for a small museum, and they have an excellent selection of historical books for sale that relate to the Revolutionary War in the Mohawk. When you walk behind the museum you can look up at the roof line of the building and see the hole left by a Yorker cannon ball during the battle. And as you turn and look out from the building you can see the spot where the Yorker grasshopper sat when it fired that shot.
- The local sutlers have some interesting things that you don't find at bigger events. There's the guy

that sells the rough cow horns for making powder horns; the fellow that has fire irons and cooking gear for sale; the seller of pewter buttons, coins and toy soldiers; the Book Lady; and many others. Several years ago I picked up a pewter spoon that was cast from one found on the Stone Fort site.

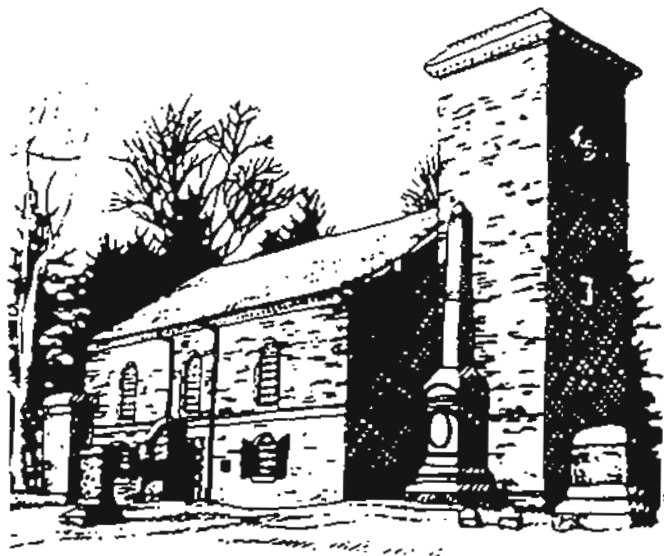
- The battle scenarios are fun! Where else do they stack stocks of corn in the field so we can go out with torches and set them on fire. And then as the stocks burn, with the Fall smell of burning leaves, we do battle through the smoke. Usually there is a Sunday morning tactical, which takes place on a piece of high ground overlooking the valley. From this elevation you can see the scene that is shown on the cover of Gavin's book (artwork by Drum Major Gavin Watt).
- There are always a number of interesting things to see and do. Last year on the Saturday evening, all the artillery pieces were formed in line and blazed away in the darkness. A very impressive sight. There was a street dance in

front of the Stone Fort. An army surgeon did a demonstration of 18th century medicine and surgical procedures. Kady Gibson and Michelle Beenen hosted a tavern in the Yorker fly, which drew participants from throughout the British camp.

- Schoharie has become famous for the fine Thanksgiving Dinner on Saturday night. Some years ago, two mess groups combined to put on a meal that included roast turkey, pork roast, potatoes, glazed carrots, pie and coffee, all prepared over the open fires. Eric Fernberg has suggested that we really should do something just as memorable this year.
- And, rumour has it that this year one of the *world famous* Yorker Taverns will take place at Schoharie: live music, tavern bowls, brawls and many other festive activities.

The event is over by mid-Sunday afternoon, which means a comfortable evening drive home. And of course you are home on Monday for Thanksgiving with the family.

Hope to see you there.





Coming Events

~ October 6 & 7 ~

**Stone Fort Days
Schoharie, NY**

~ Oct 27 & 28 ~

**Battle of White Plains
Ward Pound Ridge, NY**

Fall Pastimes in the Rebellious Colonies

~ BATTLE OF WHITE PLAINS ~

Cross River, N.Y. ~ October 27 & 28

There is a great deal of talk these days about the *Battle of White Plains*, which will take place on October 27 and 28. This 225th anniversary event will be jointly run by the Brigade of the American Revolution (BAR), the British Brigade and the Continental Line, and by all accounts will be well supported by all three organizations. This is expected to be "THE BIG EVENT OF THE YEAR". At this point there are about 700 Brits registered, and over 900 rebels. General Don Beale reckons that if the rebels can find a few hundred more troops, it could be a fair fight.

If you think the rebels aren't up for this one, take note of this comment from one of our arch-rivals in the 3rd New York.

"Speaking of 'real Yorkers' (ptooey!)... if those green-coated vermin of George the Brute show their faces at the White Plains, a force from three companies of the 3rd New York will be there to drill their car-

casses with buck and ball. We are expecting 42 (Ah, yes!!) splendid gray/green uniformed bodies to have fine sport peppering you rascally Tories. (Same goes for next year at Fort Stanwix). It ought to be a challenging experience working with that many, and we will need concentrated practice, but everyone is already pumped for it."

Despite the distance, this event is also generating a lot of interest in the Yorker ranks. Wouldn't it be nice to match or exceed the force fielded by the "misguided" Yorkers. Major Reg James has been given command of the British Army's 3rd (Provincial) Brigade for this event.

The weekend will include both Crown Forces and Allied camps, two public tactical war demonstrations, and the opportunity for a wide variety of tactical exercises. Each of the three British Brigades will be put to the test, and rewarded with interesting roles based on their merit. The fastest Brigade can

expect to be given the guns. Many sutlers have already committed to this event, and will setup very near the British camp.

The Battle of White Plains will be held at the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, which is the largest park in the Westchester County Park System. Its extensive acreage of both open space and wooded areas, plus its 35 mile network of trails is well suited to the Yorker style of warfare. The park also features a collection of historic buildings, which were constructed over 250 years ago.

The British Brigade website provides some General Orders for this event, including:

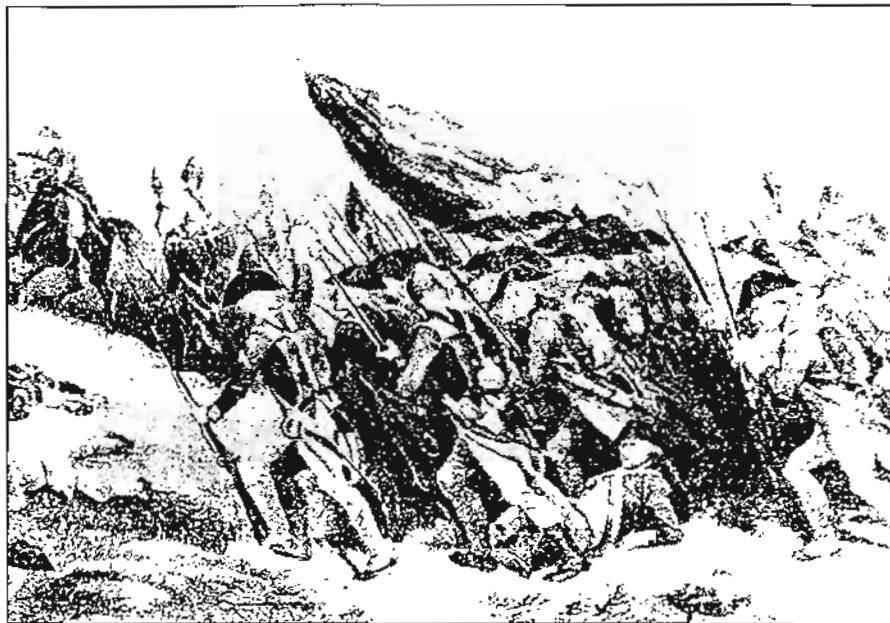
1. 18th century attire must be worn from Saturday morning until the end of the Sunday battle. This applies to men, women and children.
2. Space in the Officers Streets will be limited to company grade officers and higher. Marquees and wall tents that do not belong to

the above will be assigned to the civilian area beyond the cook line.

3. It may be a cold weekend. Participants are encouraged to only use fire wood for cooking and an evening fire, so there is enough to go around

This should be an exceptional way to end the 2001 campaign season, and well worth the drive.

Directions: Travelling south from Albany on Hwy 87, exit at Newburgh. Take Hwy 84 east and then Hwy 684 south. Turn off Hwy 684 at exit 6 (Katonah - Cross River). Follow Rt 35 east to Cross River, where you turn south onto Rt 121. The gate to Ward Pound Ridge Reservation is on the left, not far from the junction of Rt 35 and 121.



The First Battle of White Plains, 1776

The summer of 1776 had been a rough one for Washington's rebel army. They had been pushed from pillar to post and now, on October 28, his force of 14,500 sat on a series of hills overlooking the town of White Plains, with Howe's army deployed for battle to his front.

It must have been a impressive, though formidable, sight. One rebel officer wrote in his memoirs, "The sun shone bright, their arms glittered, and perhaps troops never were shewn to more advantage than those now appeared." Another wrote, "Its appearance was truly magnificent. A bright autumnal sun shed its lustre on the polished arms; and the rich array of dress and military equipage gave an imposing grandeur to the scene as they advanced in all the pomp and circumstances of war."

The rebel army had thrown up two lines of defensive works between the Bronx River on the right and a mill-pond on the left. Israel Putnam's (Editor's 1st cousin 7 times removed) division was posted at the right on Purdy Hill, George Washington himself held the centre at White Plains village, and Heath was positioned on the left flank on Hatfield Hill. Across the Bronx River to the east, was Chatterton's Hill, which rose 180 feet above the

river. Recognizing that this position dominated the whole rebel line, Colonel Rufus Putnam (Editor's 1st cousin 6 times removed) was sent to fortify these heights as the British army came onto the scene. British artillery opened fire on Chatterton's Hill and hit one of Col. Putnam's militiamen. As a result, "the whole regiment broke and fled immediately and were not rallied without much difficulty." (He may have been a Putnam, but he was still a rebel). Alexander McDougall's brigade was brought up to fill the gap, which was composed of his own Massachusetts regiment, the 1st New York, 3rd New York, Smallwood's regiment of Marylanders, Webb's regiment from Connecticut and two field pieces.

The British general officers gathered in the wheat field before the rebel army to formulate their plan of attack. It was determined that 4,000 men and a dozen guns would be drawn from the main body to assault Chatterton's Hill. Apparently, the rest of the army "all sat down in the same order in which they stood, no one appearing to move out of his place."

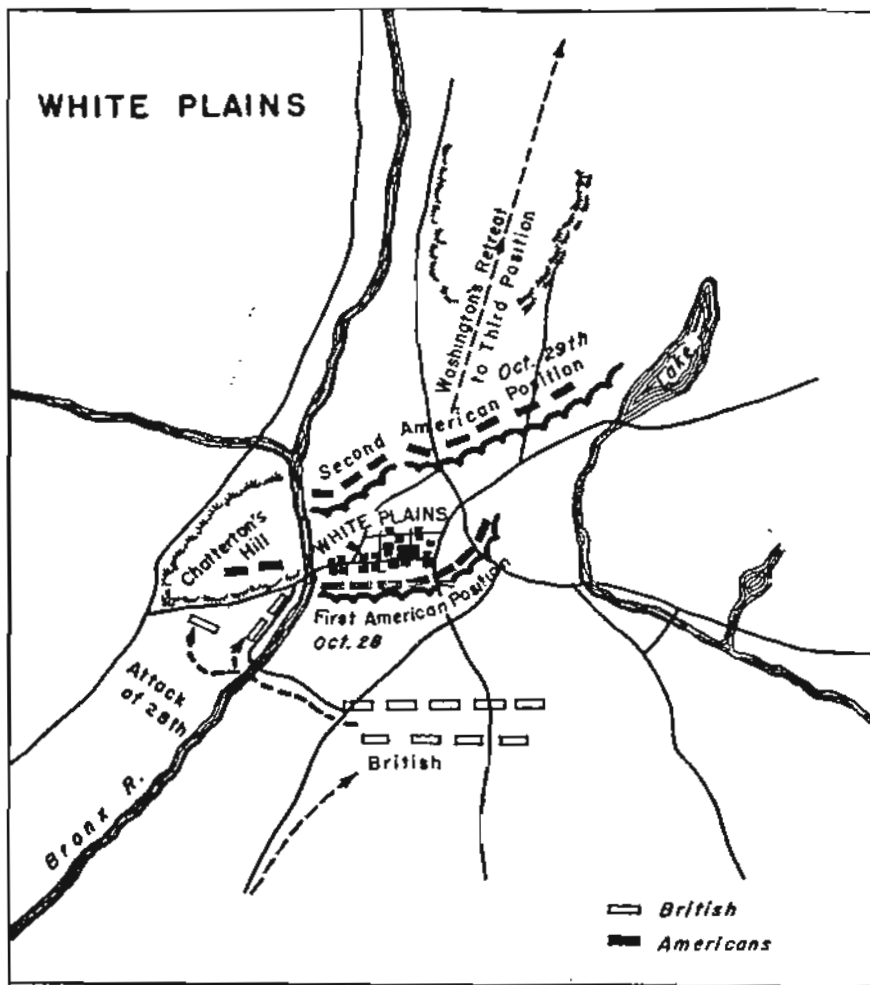
The British artillery, positioned on high ground facing Chatterton's Hill, began a furious cannonade against the American force. One account said that these guns made such a thunderstorm

that one could neither see nor hear. The two rebel fieldpieces were dragged up into position to reply. As they did so, "a cannon-ball struck the carriage and scattered the shot about, a wad of blazing tow in the middle. The artillerymen fled. The few that returned made not more than two discharges when they retreated with the field-piece."

As soon as the British line was formed, the 28th and 35th regiments forded the Bronx River and started up Chatterton's Hill. The hill was steep, the trees thick and the rebel fire was heavy. The attackers were soon thrown back onto the 5th, 49th and von Donop's Hessians hurrying to their support. This combined force now formed a column, and marched along the base of the hill, parallel to the American line. They then wheeled-up into line and again started up the hill. At the same time a detachment of light infantry were sent off to threaten the rebel left flank.

As this two pronged attack unfolded, a third and fourth assault came on the rebel right flank. Rall's Hessian regiment swept up the hill against the New York and Massachusetts militia. Moments later Birch's British light dragoons came into view, kettledrums beating and trumpets sounding. The militia broke and fled in utter disorder. The horsemen pursued them and cut

(Continued on page 4)



on them with full force. Three Delaware companies broke and were driven from the field, while the remainder of the Delaware troops continued to resist the repeated attacks on their flank.

Meanwhile the main frontal attack against the New York and Maryland regiments became overwhelming. McDougall saw that further resistance was hopeless. He retreated with the New York and Maryland troops to a road leading to the American camp and held there to protect the withdrawal of the Delawares, the last of the rebel units to leave Chatterton's Hill.

The British force reformed at the top of the hill, began digging in, but did not attempt to pursue the defeated defenders.

Washington, anticipating further attacks, particularly on his threatened right flank, began the process of moving his baggage, equipment and wounded to a stronger position to the north. Three days later, on October 31, the rebel army slipped away in the night to North Castle Heights.

Although Howe moved to occupy the vacated American entrenchments, he made no further attempts to pursue Washington's army. On November 4, he pulled up stakes and returned south toward his next target, Fort Washington.

DWP

(Continued from page 3)

off their retreat to the main camp. For half a mile this rout continued. One hundred of the fleeing men rallied and tried to resist, but in vain. Some es-

caped into the woods, the rest surrendered.

The collapse of the right flank exposed the centre of the rebel force on Chatterton's Hill. Rall's Hessians fell

James Gray Cup Winner

The excellent event at Penetang was the venue for awarding this year's Gray Cup. As most folks know, the award is made to soldiers of any rank who best portray the regiment. A recipient can be the epitome of a soldier, well turned out, knowledgeable, well-drilled, prompt, cooperative, the soul of discretion - ie. ideal in every characteristic. Or, the recipient can be a slug, a defaulter, a n'er-do-well, a lunatic, sloppily dressed, and co-operative only when his delicate parts are firmly squeezed.

As I had fallen into a steel-lined ditch on Friday night and went home to bed the next morning to moan and whine. I didn't have the joy of hearing Major James dissertation on this award, but... This year's man is Grenadier Glenn Arnott. Oh boy! Now, just which category does Arnott fit into?? Well, this is the guy who proposed to his ladylove in the middle of the Yorker tent streets. Well, if I have to guess...

Himself



~ BUYER BEWARE ~

Cathy Johnson, a reenactor friend of Nancy Watt, discovered this account of a gun deal that turned sour. As they say, buyer beware.

In Charles J. Hoadly's, *Records Of The Colony And Plantation Of New Haven, From 1638 To 1649* (Hartford, Conn., Case, Tiffany, 1857, 176-78), he described what I believe to be America's first firearm product liability suit. It is an interesting story of a dishonest seller, and a community where that dishonesty rebounded to his disadvantage. The plaintiff in this 1645 suit, a Stephen Medcalfe, was seriously injured by an explosive breech failure. He had bought the gun from a Francis Linley. The account of how Medcalfe bought the gun from Linley suggests that it was a spur of the moment decision, and unremarkable.

"Stephen Medcalfe complained that he was going into the howse of John Linley. Francis Linley, his brother, being in the howse told him he would sell him a gunne.... Stephen asked him if it were a good one, he answered yea, as any was in the towne, whereupon they bargained, and Stephen was to give him 17 [shillings]. As Stephen was going out of dores he questioned the sufficiency of the locke. Francis told him indeed John Nash told him she was not worth 3 [pence]"

John Nash, was the son of the colony's armorer, and Thomas Nash, one of my ancestors. At trial, Nash testified that the gun was defective. "He told Francis it was a very naughty [meaning, worth nothing] peece, not worth the mendinge, & yet he prest him to mend it as well as he could..."

Nash testified that he warned Francis that, "the barrel was as thin as a shilling, crackt from the [breech] to the touch-hole. He told him he would not discharge it for all New-haven, for it would doe some mischiefe"

A Richard Myles testified that he had heard Nash speak of "her [the gun's] badnes & unserviceableness to Francis Linley." The gun was indeed "naughty" and when Medcalfe fired "said gunne, the [breech] flew out & struck into his eye and wounded him deepe and dangerously into the head." Evidence was provided that when Medcalfe prepared to fire the gun, the seller's brother was taken with a "quakeinge and trembling" and that John Nash had told the seller of "her badnes & unserviceableness .."

Linley was ordered to pay 20 pounds to Medcalfe.

FOLLOWING THE ARMY



Lady Acland was delivered to the rebel camp where she could care for her wounded husband who was captured at Saratoga

Sjt Eric Lorenson came across this article during a recent visit to the University of Michigan. It was written by Brian Dummigan, formerly the Director of Fort Niagara, now the Head of Research & Publications at the William L. Clements Library.

...Although women would not become "official" members of the armed forces for many years, considerable numbers of them had already chosen to "follow the drum" by marrying a soldier. Those permitted to accompany British, German, or French troops overseas or American soldiers on campaign resigned themselves to a life of discomfort, hard labor, child-rearing in difficult conditions, crowded camps and barracks, violence, abuse, and the hazards of war. Carrying a soldier-husband's wallet (knapsack) was one of the easier tasks an army wife might be called upon to perform.

Like so many aspects of women's history, documentation of their roles in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century armies is scattered and fragmentary. The wives of officers left the most literate accounts such as the classic journal and correspondence of Friederike Charlotte Louise von Riedesel, wife of the Brunswick general

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who commanded John Burgoyne's German auxiliaries in the 1777 Saratoga campaign. Officers' wives made up only a small percentage of the women with armies, however, and few of the largely illiterate spouses of enlisted men were able to record their own experiences. Sarah Osborn's story of marching with her husband during the American Revolution, for example, survives only because she filed a deposition in 1837 seeking a pension. Much of the evidence about soldier's wives is thus confined to dry lists or entries in manuals, regulations, or order books addressing the problems created by mixing women and children with large numbers of soldiers.

...Women had been a part of military forces in America from the earliest days, but the influx of British and French regular troops during the 1750's greatly increased their numbers. Officers in the British army tended to discourage marriage by their soldiers, but small numbers were permitted to wed with the promise of good behavior and a willingness of the wife to work. A few wives and children were allowed to go "over the Water with Charley" when British regiments were sent to America. Once ashore, soldiers of both sides often found spouses locally. Many French regulars deserted in the closing months of the French and Indian War to remain with their Canadian wives. British forces of the late eighteenth century generally permitted three to six wives per company, for an official total of up to sixty women for a regiment, but the numbers varied greatly according to station and the attitudes of commanding officers. Units in garrison tended to have more wives, and military documents occasionally reveal their numbers. Twenty-seven women and children joined the six hundred British troops occupying Fort Niagara in the autumn of 1759, with even more expected to arrive. Thirty women and fifty-one children were with the eighty-eight British officers and men of the Chambly garrison taken by the American rebels in 1775. Returns in the Clinton Papers list an enormous number of women (3,551) and children

(3,259) with the nearly 29,000 British, Loyalist, and German troops occupying New York in September 1779 - 19% of the total number of people being fed there by the army.



...Women and children who were granted the indulgence of being allowed to follow the army were invariably expected to work for the privilege - and the proportion of rations that sometimes, though not always, came with it. The most common task was to launder for the soldiers, for which women were paid and which provided an essential logistical service in camp and garrison. Some worked in hospital or for officers and officers' wives, while others performed labor for civilians in garrison towns. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, U. S. regulations authorized female hospital matrons to cook and clean, for which they were paid and fed, and laundresses, who were provided rations and paid by their patrons at established rates. This pursuit of some "scheme of industry", as one British writer put it, made it possible to support a family and maintain a military marriage.

The presence of women was often considered inconvenient, particularly when they consumed scarce supplies. Colonel Henry Bouquet's orders in the fall of 1764 prohibited women from following the troops as his army marched into the Pennsylvania wilderness because the regulations allowed "no Provisions for Women, & their being none to be procured beyond the Settlements." He relented only for those assigned to the hospital. The papers of General Thomas Gage contain references to the difficulties of

feeding and transporting women of various regiments during the 1760s and 70s, especially in the isolated back posts of North America. British regiments nonetheless took their women with them; otherwise, so far from home, they and their children would certainly have starved.

Even with these meager perks, women were subject to difficult circumstances. Many post commandants attempted to provide separate housing for families, but they were just as likely to find themselves crowded into a barracks room with a dozen other men and only a blanket-draped bunk for privacy. Alcohol-related violence and abuse were common. Incidents of sexual harassment by officers and soldiers were certainly frequent judging by examples from Ticonderoga in 1764, detailed in the Gage Papers, and at the American cantonment of Greenbush near Albany in 1813 recorded in the order book of the 29th U.S. Infantry.

Women who remained close to their husbands during wartime also ran the risk of becoming casualties. Many of the "Articles of capitulation" from eighteenth-century sieges recorded in the notebooks of Frederick Mackenzie include clauses relating to the safety of army women and children trapped within fortresses. French and Canadian females were in Fort Niagara when it was besieged in 1759, where they actively assisted in the defense by sewing sandbags and tending the wounded. British and colonial women and children were surrendered at Oswego in 1756 and at Fort William Henry in 1757. The same could be said for sieges of the Revolution and the War of 1812. Women with troops in the field were particularly vulnerable. A number were among the casualties of Braddock's defeat in 1755 and the surrender of Fort William Henry in 1757. Arthur St. Clair's 1791 debacle on the Wabash cost the lives of as many as fifty-six U.S. Army women.

Documentation about women who followed the drum is scattered, but the sources that survive offer a tantalizing perspective in colonial and early national military practices in America.



Brown Bess



In the days of lace-ruffles, perukes and brocade
Brown Bess was a partner whom none could despise.
An out-spoken, flinty-lipped, brazen-faced jade,
With a habit of looking men straight in the eyes.
At Blenheim and Ramillies fops would confess
They were pierced to the heart by the charms of Brown
Bess.

Though her sight was not long and her weight was not
small
Yet her actions were winning, her language was clear;
And everyone bowed as she opened the ball
On the arm of some high-gaitered, grim grenadier.
Half Europe admitted the striking success
Of the dances and routs that were given by Brown
Bess,



When ruffles were turned into stiff leather stocks
And people wore pigtails instead of perukes
Brown Bess never altered her iron-grey locks,
She knew she was valued for more than her looks.
"Oh, powder and patches was always my dress,
And I think I am killing enough," said Brown Bess.

So she followed her red-coats, whatever they did,
From the heights of Quebec to the plains of Assaye,
From Gibraltar to Acre, Cape Town and Madrid,
And nothing about her was changed on the way;
(But most of the Empire which now we possess
Was won through those years by old-fashioned Brown
Bess.)

In stubborn retreat or in stately advance,
From the Portugal coast to the cork-woods of Spain
She had puzzled some excellent Marshals of France
Till none of them wanted to meet her again:
But later, near Brussels, Napoleon, no less,
Arranged for a Waterloo ball with Brown Bess.

She had danced till the dawn of that terrible day,
She danced on till dusk of more terrible night,
And before her linked squares his battalions gave way
And her long fierce quadrilles put his lancers to flight:
And when his gilt carriage drove off in the press,
"I have danced my last dance for the world!" said Brown
Bess.

If you go to Museums - there's one in Whitehall
Where old weapons are shown with their names writ be-
neath,
You will find her, upstanding, her back to the wall,
As stiff as a ramrod, the flint in her teeth.
And if ever we English had reason to bless
Any arm save our mothers', that arm is Brown Bess!

By Rudyard Kipling

Why Was The Musket So Inaccurate?

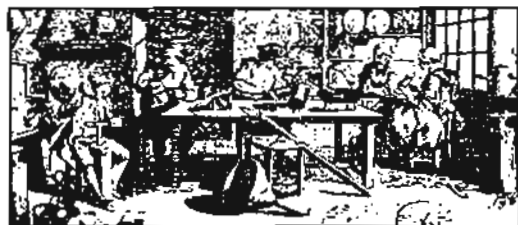
For those of you who participated in the live-ball shoot in July, you may be wondering why you didn't hit the target more frequently. Brent Nosworthy, in his book "Battle Tactics of Napoleon and His Enemies" explains:

Modern re-enactors have frequently encountered a phenomenon sometimes referred to as 'flintlock flinch'. When an untrained person fires a smoothbore musket, there is a decided tendency to flinch, either while pulling the trigger or as the powder flashes up in the musket's flashpan. In a modern handgun or rifle any motion of the hand after the trigger is pulled does not meaningfully affect the bullet's trajectory. The bullet simply clears the barrel too quickly for any secondary motion of the gun to have much influence. Flintlocks were much more susceptible to hand motion, however. The reason

did not arise because of the speed of the ball hurled out of the flintlock, but rather because of the nature of the apparatus used to ignite the powder in the barrel. A musket ball actually had a higher initial velocity than a modern standard issue .38 calibre handgun. Travelling about 1,000 feet per second, a musket ball would clear a 42" barrel in less than 3/1000 of a second. This meant that once the charge in the barrel had exploded, just like modern weapons, secondary motions of the hands did not influence the ball's trajectory. However, there was a much greater interval between the time the trigger was pulled, the flash ignited, and the main charge in the barrel exploded. William Greener, a prominent London gunmaker in the 1820's and 1830's estimated that there was approximately a half second delay. Dur-

ing this delay, it was common for the forward hand to be raised a small amount. It must be remembered that the soldier's forward hand would act like a fulcrum so that whatever amount it was raised would elevate the mouth of the barrel several times this amount. An experienced marksman such as a hunter could avoid this problem by looking down the barrel, learning to pull the trigger without jerking the gun, and keeping their eyes open during the flash. This same talent could have been inculcated into new troops by allowing them to shoot the gun a few times with only powder in the flash pan, and then a few more times firing a blank charge. However, given the doctrine of volley fire and the realities of military economy during this period, this was rarely done. It was possible for even veteran soldiers who had survived a number of campaigns, never to learn to fire their firearms accurately.

Having a Non-Military Persona



There has been some recent discussion on the 18c Woman List Digests about dual roles (military and civilian) for Revolutionary War reenactors. While I know that we portray Johnson's tenant farmers, in general (my chosen persona is "a farmer's wife"), it would certainly

enhance the camp image if a handful of interested and so-motivated men were to contribute to the war effort on campaign by engaging in civilian activities, in addition to their military roles, for the communal benefit of brothers-in-arms and refugees; for instance, could one or two be blacksmiths, another a tailor, another a carpenter, another a bootmaker, another a school master or clerk who writes letters for those who cannot? The scope of professional or trade activity could be determined by what would have been present in the Mohawk Valley in the five to ten years previous to the outbreak of hostilities.

I took a quick look at some of David's (*Kathleen's husband*) work in vol. 2 of *The Historical Atlas of Canada*, plate 7. According to the pie graphs, approximately 70% to 75% of men in the Province of New York engaged in farming. The remaining 25% to 30% were involved primarily in commerce, but three small and equally proportioned groups also practiced in the professions (medical, legal, etc.), the civil service (taxation, surveying, government services, etc.) and the "unknown". Whether the professions, commerce or the "unknown" represent artisans and trades people is not indicated.

A cursory check of back issues of the *Distaff Bulletin* revealed a list of 24 Yorkers, some with occupation: farmers (10), weaver (1), shoemaker (1). What else from the Colonel's research would broaden this picture?

Would it be all that far-fetched to encourage a few men to interpret themselves as having a "civilian mentality". Serving King, but eager to return to peaceful same? After all, the military life for these men was, they hoped, a temporary situation.

Kathleen Manakee

Attendance at Colonial Kensington

Although it has been more than 500 years since Columbus discovered that you *won't* fall off the edge if you travel too far west, we still cling to the belief that any event in the unexplored territories on the other side of London could be extremely risky. So, when Brock challenged the regiment to field a force at the Colonial Kensington event last August, it was misguided optimism that caused some to believe that a sizeable contingent could be expected. With three muskets and a drill cane in attendance, plus a small group of Followers, all I can say is, "I told you so".

Karen Dittrick

(Actually, all Karen told me to write was, "I told you so", but I couldn't resist adding all these other words. Sometimes you just have to vent. ~ Editor)

Contributors to this issue:

LtCol Gavin Watt

Sjt Eric Lorenson

Nancy Watt

Kathleen Manakee

Sjt. Dave Putnam, Editor

Yorker@interlynx.net