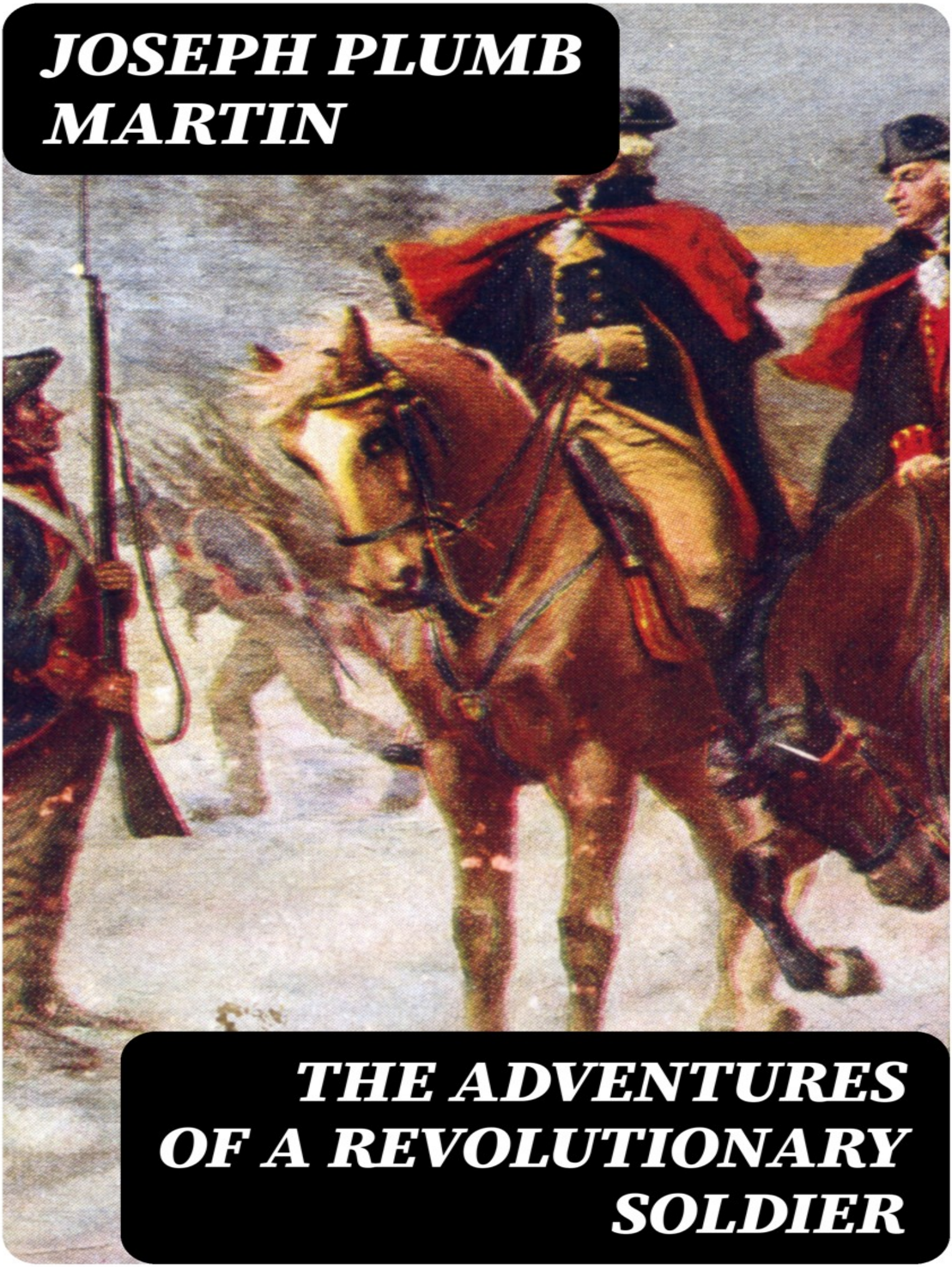
JOSEPH PLUMB MARTIN



THE ADVENTURES OF A REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER

Joseph Plumb Martin

The Adventures of a Revolutionary Soldier

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"Long sleepless nights in heavy arms I've stood;
"And spent laborious days in dust and blood."

Pope's Homer.

Preface

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I have somewhere read of a Limner, who, when he had daubed a representation of some animal, was always compelled, for the information of the observer, to write under it what he intended it to represent: as, 'this is a goose,' 'this is a dog,' &c. So, many books, and mine in particular, amongst the rest, would perhaps be quite unintelligible as to the drift of them, unless the reader was informed beforehand what the author intended.

I shall, therefore, by way of preface, inform the reader that my intention is to give a succinct account of some of my adventures, dangers and sufferings during my several campaigns in the revolutionary army. My readers, (who, by the by, will, I hope, none of them be beyond the pale of my own neighbourhood,) must not expect any great transactions to be exhibited to their notice, "No alpine wonders thunder through my tale," but they are here, once for all, requested to bear it in mind, that they are not the achievements of an officer of high grade which they are perusing, but the common transactions of one of the lowest in station in an army, a private soldier.

Should the reader chance to ask himself this question, (and I think it very natural for him to do so,) how could any man of common sense ever spend his precious time in writing such a rhapsody of nonsense?—to satisfy his inquiring mind, I would inform him, that, as the adage says, "every crow thinks her own young the whitest," so every private soldier in an army thinks his particular services as essential to carry on the war he is engaged in, as the

services of the most influential general; and why not? what could officers do without such men? Nothing at all. Alexander never could have conquered the world without private soldiers.

But, says the reader, this is low, the author gives us nothing but everyday occurrences; I could tell as good a story myself. Very true, Mr. Reader, every one can tell what he has done in his lifetime, but every one has not been a soldier, and consequently can know but little or nothing of the sufferings and fatigues incident to an army. All know everyday occurrences, but few know the hardships of the "tented field." I wish to have a better opinion of my readers, whoever they may be, than even to think that any of them would wish me to stretch the truth to furnish them with wonders that I never saw, or acts and deeds I never performed. I can give them no more than I have to give, and if they are dissatisfied after all, I must say I am sorry for them and myself too; for them, that they expect more than I can do, and myself, that I am so unlucky as not to have it in my power to please them.

But after all I have said, the real cause of my ever undertaking to rake up circumstances and actions that have so long rested in my own mind, and to spread them upon paper, was this:—my friends, and especially my juvenile friends have often urged me so to do; to oblige such, I undertook it, hoping it might save me often the trouble of verbally relating them.

The critical grammarian may find enough to feed his spleen upon, if he peruses the following pages; but I can inform him beforehand, I do not regard his sneers; if I cannot write grammatically, I can think, talk and feel like other men. Besides, if the common readers can understand it, it is all I desire; and to give them an idea, though but a

faint one, of what the army suffered that gained and secured our independence, is all I wish. I never studied grammar an hour in my life, when I ought to have been doing that, I was forced to be studying the rules and articles of war.

As to punctuation, my narrative is in the same predicament as it is in respect to the other parts of grammar. I never learned the rules of punctuation any farther than just to assist in fixing a comma to the British depredations in the State of New-York; a semicolon in New-Jersey; a colon in Pennsylvania, and a final period in Virginia; —a note of interrogation, why we were made to suffer so much in so good and just a cause; and a note of admiration to all the world, that an army voluntarily engaged to serve their country, when starved, and naked, and suffering every thing short of death, (and thousands even that,) should be able to persevere through an eight years war, and come off conquerors at last!

But lest I should make my preface longer than my story, I will here bring it to a close.

Chapter I.
Introductory

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Have patience just to hear me out;
And I'll tell you what I've been about.

The heroes of all Histories, Narratives, Adventures, Novels and Romances, have, or are supposed to have ancestors, or some root from which they sprang. I conclude, then, that it is not altogether inconsistent to suppose that I had parents too. I shall not undertake to trace my pedigree (like the Welsh) some thousand years beyond the creation; but just observe, that my father was the son of a "substantial New England farmer," (as we Yankees say,) in the then Colony, but now State of Connecticut, and county of Windham. When my father arrived at puberty he found his constitution too feeble to endure manual labor, he therefore directed his views to gaining a livelihood by some other means. He, accordingly, fitted himself for, and entered as a student in Yale College, sometime between the years 1750 and '55. My mother was likewise a "farmer's daughter;" her native place was in the county of New-Haven, in the same State. She had a sister, married and settled in the vicinity of the College, who often boarded the students when sick. My father being once in that condition, and being at board at this aunt's, my mother happened to be there on a visit: my father seeing her, it seems, like a great many others in like circumstances, took a fancy to her, followed up his courtship, and very possibly obtained her consent as well as her parents—married her a year and a half before his collegial studies

were ended, which, (if known at the time,) would have been cause of his expulsion from College; but it seems it never was known there, and he, of course, escaped a keelhaling.

After my father left College, he studied divinity, had "a call," accepted it, and was settled in the county of Berkshire, in the (now) Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as a gospel minister of the Congregational order; in which county of Berkshire, I, the redoubtable hero of this Narrative, first made my appearance in this crooked, fretful world, upon the twenty-first day of November, in the year 1760. I have been told that the day on which I was born was a thanksgiving day, which day is, generally, celebrated with good cheer. One might have thought it a little ominous being born upon such a day, but I can assure the reader it was no omen of good to me, especially for the seven or eight years I was in the army—nor, indeed ever since.

My grandsire, on my mother's side, having at this time no other daughter but my mother, (my aunt, mentioned above, being dead,) she of course became the darling, for which reason, I suppose, I was his favourite grandson, and received his christian and surnames as my given name.

I lived with my parents until I was upwards of seven years old, when I went to live with this good old grandsire; for good he was, particularly to me. He was wealthy, and I had every thing that was necessary for life, and as many superfluities as was consistent with my age and station. There were none belonging to the family, as constant residents, except the old gentleman, lady and myself. It is true my grandsire kept me pretty busily employed, but he was kind to me in every respect; always gave me a playday when convenient, and was indulgent to me almost to a fault. Ah! I ought not to have left him while he lived; I fouled my

own nest most sadly when I did it; but children "are full of notions."

I remember the stir in the country occasioned by the stamp act, but I was so young that I did not understand the meaning of it; I likewise remember the disturbances that followed the repeal of the stamp act, until the destruction of the tea at Boston and elsewhere; I was then thirteen or fourteen years old, and began to understand something of the works going on. I used, about this time, to inquire a deal about the French war, as it was called, which had not been long ended, my grandsire would talk with me about it while working in the fields, perhaps as much to beguile his own time as to gratify my curiosity. I thought then, nothing should induce me to get caught in the toils of an army—"I am well, so I'll keep," was my motto then, and it would have been well for me if I had ever retained it.

Time passed smoothly on with me till the year 1774 arrived, the smell of war began to be pretty strong, but I was determined to have no hand in it, happen when it might; I felt myself to be a real coward. What—venture my carcass where bullets fly! that will never do for me. Stay at home out of harm's way, thought I, it will be as much to your health as credit to do so. But the pinch of the game had not arrived yet; I had seen nothing of war affairs, and consequently was but a poor judge in such matters.

One little circumstance that happened in the autumn of this year, will exhibit my military prowess, at this time, in a high point of view. In the afternoon, one Sabbath day, while the people were assembled at meeting, word was brought that the British (regulars, as the good people then called them) were advancing from Boston, spreading death and desolation in their route in every direction. What was the intent of spreading this rumour, I know not, unless it was to

see how the people would stand affected; be it what it would, it caused me a terrible fright. I went out of the house in the dusk of the evening, when I heard the sound of a carriage on the road, in the direction of Boston; I thought they were coming as sure as a gun; I shall be dead or a captive before to-morrow morning; however, I went to bed late in the evening, dreamed of "fire and sword," I suppose; waked in the morning, found myself alive, and the house standing just where it did the evening before.

The winter of this year passed off without any very frightening alarms, and the spring of 1775 arrived. Expectation of some fatal event seemed to fill the minds of most of the considerate people throughout the country. I was ploughing in the field about half a mile from home, about the twenty-first day of April, when all of a sudden the bells fell to ringing, and three guns were repeatedly fired in succession down in the village; what the cause was we could not conjecture. I had some fearful forebodings that something more than the sound of a carriage wheel was in the wind. The regulars are coming in good earnest, thought I. My grandsire sighed, he "smelt the rat." He immediately turned out the team and repaired homeward. I sat off to see what the cause of the commotion was. I found most of the male kind of the people together; soldiers for Boston were in requisition. A dollar deposited upon the drum head was taken up by some one as soon as placed there, and the holder's name taken, and he enrolled, with orders to equip himself as quick as possible. My spirits began to revive at the sight of the money offered; the seeds of courage began to sprout; for, contrary to my knowledge, there was a scattering of them sowed, but they had not as yet germinated; I felt a strong inclination, when I found I had them, to cultivate them. O, thought I, if I were but old

enough to put myself forward, I would be the possessor of one dollar, the dangers of war to the contrary notwithstanding; but I durst not put myself up for a soldier for fear of being refused, and that would have quite upset all the courage I had drawn forth.

The men that had engaged "to go to war" went as far as the next town, where they received orders to return, as there was a sufficiency of men already engaged, so that I should have had but a short campaign had I have gone.

This year there were troops raised both for Boston and New-York. Some from the back towns were billeted at my grandsire's; their company and conversation began to warm my courage to such a degree, that I resolved at all events to "go a sogering." Accordingly I used to pump my grandsire, in a roundabout manner, to know how he stood affected respecting it. For a long time he appeared to take but little notice of it. At length, one day, I pushed the matter so hard upon him, he was compelled to give me a direct answer, which was, that he should never give his consent for me to go into the army unless I had the previous consent of my parents. And now I was completely gravelled; my parents were too far off to obtain their consent before it would be too late for the present campaign. What was I to do? why, I must give up the idea, and that was hard; for I was as earnest now to call myself, and be called a soldier, as I had been a year before *not* to be called one. I thought over many things, and formed many plans, but they all fell through, and poor disconsolate I was forced to set down and gnaw my finger nails in silence.

I said but little more about "soldiering," until the troops raised in and near the town in which I resided, came to march off for New-York, then I felt bitterly again; I accompanied them as far as the town line, and it was hard

parting with them then. Many of my young associates were with them, my heart and soul went with them, but my mortal part must stay behind. By and by they will come swaggering back, thought I, and tell me of all their exploits, all their "hairbreadth 'scapes," and poor Huff will not have a single sentence to advance. O, that was too much to be borne with by me.

The thoughts of the service still haunted me after the troops were gone, and the town clear of them; but what plan to form to get the consent of all, parents and grandparents, that I might procure thereby to myself, the (to me then) bewitching name of a soldier, I could not devise. Sometimes I thought I would enlist at all hazards, let the consequences be what they would; then again I would think how kind my grandparents were to me, and ever had been, my grandsire in particular: I could not bear to hurt their feelings so much. I did sincerely love my grandsire, my grandma'am I did not love so well, and I feared her less. At length a thought struck my mind: should they affront me grossly, I would make that a plea with my conscience to settle the controversy with. Accordingly, I wished nothing more than to have them, or either of them, give "His Honour" a high affront, that I might thereby form an excuse to engage in the service *without* their consent, leave or approbation.

It happened that in the early part of the autumn of this year, I was gratified in my wishes; for I thought I received provocation enough to justify me in engaging in the army during life; little thinking that I was inflicting the punishment on myself that I fancied I was laying on my grandparents for their (as I thought) wilful obstinacy. And as this affair was one, and the chief cause of my leaving those kind people

and their hospitable house, and precipitating myself into an ocean of distress, I will minutely describe the affair.

My grandsire, as I have before observed, often gave me playdays, especially after the spring and fall sowing, when I went where I pleased, a gunning, or fishing, or to whatever recreation took my fancy. "This fall," said the old gentleman to me, one day,—"come, spring to it, and let us get the winter grain in as soon as possible, and you shall have a playday after the work is done." Accordingly, I did do the best I could to forward the business, and I believe I gave him satisfaction, for he repeated his promise to me often. Just before we had done sowing, I told him that all my young associates were going to New-Haven to commencement this season. "Well"—said he, "you shall go too, if you chuse, and you shall have one of the horses, you shall have your choice of them, and I will give you some pocket money." Mighty well, thought I, I hope it will not prove delusive, I shall be happy indeed. Our young club often met in "caucus" to settle the mighty business of going to commencement, formed a thousand and one plans how we should enjoy ourselves—dropped them all successively, and formed as many more, until the time arrived for the consummation of our felicity. My grandsire had a piece of salt marsh about three miles from home, which he had mowed three or four days before the day arrived which was to make me completely happy, at least for a time. Two days previous he sent me to rake up the hay; I buffetted heat and mosquetoes, and got the hay all up; and as that sort of hay is not easily injured by the weather, I thought there was nothing to prevent my promised happiness.

Well, the day arrived; I got up early, did all the little jobs about the place, that my grandsire might have nothing to accuse me of. He had gone out during the morning and did

not return till breakfast time. I was waiting with impatience for his coming in, that I might prepare for my excursion,—when, lo, he did come,—much to my sorrow; for the first words I heard, were, 'come, get up the team, I have gotten such a one,' naming a neighbour's boy, somewhat older than myself, 'to go with us and cart home the salt hay.' Had thunder and lightning fallen upon the four corners of the house, it would not have struck me with worse feelings than these words of his did. Shame, grief, spite, revenge, all took immediate possession of me. What could I do; go I must, that was certain, there was no remedy; and go I did, but with a full determination that the old gentleman should know that I had feelings of some sort or other, let him think of me as he would. I, according to his orders, prepared the team, he undertook to act teamster, and I sat off before them for the marsh, alone, that I might indulge myself in my grief, without molestation. The way to the marsh lay about a mile and a half on the highway to the college. I had hardly got into the highway, before I was overtaken by a troop of my young mates, all rigged off for commencement, swaggering like nabobs. The first compliment was, "Hallo, where are you going; we thought you was one of the foremost in the party; your grandsire never intended to let you go, and you was a fool to believe him." I did not believe *them*; my grandsire had never deceived me, in such circumstances before, and I was willing, even then, vexed as I was, to attribute it to forgetfulness or to any thing but wilfulness.—However, I was baulked, no commencement for me; I considered myself as much injured as though it had been done ever so designedly.

I, however, went to the marsh; my grandsire, team and boy arrived soon after me; we put a load of hay upon the cart, and, as it was getting rather late in the day, the old

gentleman concluded to go home with the team, and left the other youngster and me to pole the rest of the hay off the marsh to the upland, as it was dangerous going upon the lower part of it, being in many places soft and miry. He told us to go to some of the fences and cut a pair of sassafras poles, those being light, and have the remainder of the hay in readiness by his return.

And now comes the catastrophe of the play. I concluded, now was the time for me to show my spunk; we went up to the upland, where was plenty of fruit; I lay down under an apple tree and fell to eating, the other boy eat too, but still urged me to obey my orders; I was resolved to disobey, let the consequences be what they would. However, he, by his importunity, at length got me down upon the marsh, we poled one cock of hay off the marsh, when we saw the old gentleman coming, full drive, Jehu-like; down he came, when, lo and behold, we had gotten one cock of hay only, in a condition to be taken upon the cart; what was to be done —to go on to the marsh was dangerous in the extreme, to stop then to pole it off would not do, the time would not allow it. O, my grandsire was in a woful passion. I stood aloof. Whose fault was it, he inquired; the blame was quickly laid to my account, and justly too, for I was the only culprit. The old gentleman came at me, hammer and tongs, with his six feet cartwhip. Ah, thought I to myself, good legs, do your duty now, if ever; I houghed the gravel, or rather the marsh, in good earnest. There were twenty people, or more, near us at work; they all suspended their labour to see the race. But I was too light-footed for the old gentleman, and the people on the marsh setting up a laugh, it rather disconcerted him; he, however, chased me about thirty or forty rods when he gave over the pursuit and returned, I ran as much further before I dared to look back; but hearing no sound of

footsteps behind me, I at last ventured to look over my shoulder and saw him almost back to his team; I followed him in my turn, but not quite so nimble as I went from him. He endeavoured to spit a little of his spite upon the other youngster, but he stept close up to him, so that he could not use his whip; and then plead his own cause so well that the old gentleman said no more to him.

He then had to venture upon the marsh at all events. I took a rake and raked after the cart, but took especial care to keep out of harm's way, till the hay was all upon the cart; I was then called upon to help bind the load; I complied, but I kept on tiptoe all the time, ready to start in case I saw any symptoms of war; but all passed off—we got off the marsh safe and without any hindrance; and it was well for me, after all, that we met with no disaster.

And here ends my Introductory Chapter. If the reader thinks that some passages in it record incidents not altogether to my credit as a boy, I can tell him, that I thought at the time I did right, and, to tell the truth, I have not materially altered my opinion respecting them since. One thing I am certain of, and that is, reader, if you had been me you would have done just as I did. What reason have you then to cavil?

Chapter II.
Campaign of 1776

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> At Uncle Joe's I liv'd at ease;
> Had cider, and good bread and cheese;
> But while I stay'd at Uncle Sam's
> I'd nought to eat but—"faith and clams."

During the winter of 1775—6, by hearing the conversation and disputes of the good old farmer politicians of the times, I collected pretty correct ideas of the contest between this country and the mother country, (as it was then called.) I thought I was as warm a patriot as the best of them; the war was waged; we had joined issue, and it would not do to "put the hand to the plough and look back." I felt more anxious than ever, if possible, to be called a defender of my country. I had not forgot the commencement affair, that still stuck in my crop; and it would not do for me to forget it, for that affront was to be my passport to the army.

One evening, very early in the spring of this year, I chanced to overhear my grandma'am telling my grandsire that I had threatened to engage on board a man-of-war. I had told her that I would enter on board a privateer then fitting out in our neighbourhood; the good old lady thought it a man-of-war, that and privateer being synonymous terms with her. She said she could not bear the thought of my being on board of a man-of-war; my grandsire told her, that he supposed I was resolved to go into the service in some way or other, and he had rather I would engage in the land service if I must engage in any. This I thought to be a sort of

tacit consent for me to go, and I determined to take advantage of it as quick as possible. Soldiers were at this time enlisting for a year's service; I did not like that, it was too long a time for me at the first trial; I wished only to take a priming before I took upon me the whole coat of paint for a soldier. However, the time soon arrived that gratified all my wishes. In the month of June, this year, orders came out for enlisting men for six months from the twenty-fifth of this month. The troops were stiled new levies, they were to go to New-York; and, notwithstanding I was told that the British army at that place was reinforced by fifteen thousand men, it made no alteration in my mind; I did not care if there had been fifteen times fifteen thousand, I should have gone just as soon as if there had been but fifteen hundred. I never spent a thought about numbers, the Americans were invincible, in my opinion. If any thing affected me, it was a stronger desire to see them.

Well, as I have said, enlisting orders were out; I used frequently to go to the rendezvous, where I saw many of my young associates enlist, had repeated banterings to engage with them, but still, when it came "case in hand," I had my misgivings. If I once undertake, thought I, I must stick to it, there will be no receding. Thoughts like these would, at times, almost overset my resolutions.

But maugre all these "doleful ideas," I one evening went off with a full determination to enlist at all hazards. When I arrived at the place of rendezvous I found a number of young men of my acquaintance there; the old bantering began—come, if you will enlist I will, says one, you have long been talking about it, says another—come, now is the time. "Thinks I to myself," I will not be laughed into it or out of it, at any rate; I will act my own pleasure after all. But what did I come here for to-night? why, to enlist; then enlist

I will. So seating myself at the table, enlisting orders were immediately presented to me; I took up the pen, loaded it with the fatal charge, made several mimic imitations of writing my name, but took especial care not to touch the paper with the pen until an unlucky wight who was leaning over my shoulder gave my hand a stroke, which caused the pen to make a woful scratch on the paper. "O, he has enlisted," said he, "he has made his mark, he is fast enough now." Well, thought I, I may as well go through with the business now as not; so I wrote my name fairly upon the indentures. And now I was a *soldier,* in name at least, if not in practice;—but I had now to go home, after performing this, my heroic action. How shall I be received there?—but the report of my adventure had reached there before I did. In the morning when I first saw my grandparents, I felt considerably of the sheepish order. The old gentleman first accosted me with, "Well, you are going a soldiering then, are you?" I had nothing to answer; I would much rather he had not asked me the question. I saw that the circumstance hurt him and the old lady too; but it was too late now to repent. The old gentleman proceeded,—"I suppose you must be fitted out for the expedition, since it is so."—Accordingly, they did "fit me out" in order, with arms and accoutrements, clothing, and cake, and cheese in plenty, not forgetting to put my pocket Bible into my knapsack.—Good old people! they wished me well, soul and body; I sincerely thank them for their kindness and love to me, from the time I first came to live with them to the last parting hour. I hope, nay, I believe, that their spirits now rest in the realms of bliss;—may it be my happy lot to meet them there.

I was now, what I had long wished to be, a soldier; I had obtained my heart's desire; it was now my business to prove myself equal to my profession. Well, to be short, I went, with

several others of the company, on board a sloop, bound to New-York; had a pleasant, though protracted passage; passed through the straight called Hellgate, where all who had not before passed it, had to pay a treat, (I had been through it before;) arrived at New-York; marched up into the city, and joined the rest of the regiment that were already there.

And now I had left my good old grandsire's house, as a constant resident, forever, and had to commence exercising my function; I was called out every morning at reveille beating, which was at daybreak, to go to our regimental parade, in Broad-street, and there practice the manual exercise, which was the most that was known in our new levies, if they knew even that. I was brought to an allowance of provisions, which, while we lay in New-York was not bad: if there was any deficiency it could in some measure be supplied by procuring some kind of sauce; but I was a stranger to such living; I began soon to miss grandsire's table and cellar. However, I reconciled myself to my condition as well as I could; it was my own seeking, I had had no compulsion.

Soon after my arrival at New-York, a forty-four gun ship (the Phœnix,) and a small frigate (the Rose, I think) came down the North or Hudson River, (they had been sometime in the river,) and passed the city in fine stile, amidst a cannonade from all our fortifications, in and near the city. I went into what was then called the grand battery, where I had a complete view of the whole affair. Here I first heard the muttering of cannon shot, but they did not disturb my feelings so much as I apprehended they would before I had heard them; I rather thought the sound was musical, or at least grand. I heard enough of them afterwards to form what ideas I pleased of them, whether musical, grand, or doleful,

and perhaps I have formed each of those ideas upon different occasions.

I would here, once for all, remark; that as I write altogether from memory, the reader must not expect to have an exact account of dates, I mean of days and weeks; as to years and months I shall not be wide from the mark.

And as I have entitled my book, "The adventures, &c. of a Revolutionary soldier," it is possible the reader may expect to have a minute detail of all my adventures. I have not *promised* any such thing, it was what belonged to me, and what transpired in my line of duty that I proposed to narrate. But when some mischievous incident occurred, I am willing to give a short detail of it. I never wished to do any one an injury, through malice, in my life; nor did I ever do any one an intentional injury while I was in the army, unless it was when sheer necessity drove me to it, and my conscience bears me witness, that innumerable times I have suffered rather than take from any one what belonged of right to them, even to satisfy the cravings of nature. But I cannot say so much in favour of my levity, that would often get the upper hand of me, do what I would; and sometimes it would run riot with me; but still I did not mean to do harm, only recreation, reader, recreation; I wanted often to recreate myself, to keep the blood from stagnating.

The soldiers at New-York had an idea that the enemy, when they took possession of the town, would make a general seizure of all property that could be of use to them as military or commissary stores, hence they imagined that it was no injury to supply themselves when they thought they could do so with impunity, which was the cause of my having any hand in the transaction I am going to relate. Whether the reader will attribute it to levity, necessity or

roguery, I am not able to say; perhaps to one or the other of them; it may be, to all.

I was stationed in Stone-street, near the southwest angle of the city; directly opposite to my quarters was a wine cellar, there were in the cellar at this time, several pipes of Madeira wine. By some means the soldiers had "smelt it out." Some of them had, at mid-day, taken the iron grating from a window in the back yard, and one had entered the cellar, and by means of a powder-horn divested of its bottom, had supplied himself, with wine, and was helping his comrades, through the window, with a "delicious draught," when the owner of the wine, having discovered what they were about, very wisely, as it seemed, came into the street and opened an outer door to the cellar in open view of every passenger; the soldiers quickly filled the cellar, when he, to save his property, proposed to sell it, at what he called a cheap rate, I think a dollar a gallon. In one corner of the cellar lay a large pile of oil flasks, holding from half a gallon to a gallon each, they were empty and not very savory neither, as they had lain there till the oil which adhered to the sides and bottoms had become quite rancid. While the owner was drawing for his purchasers on one side of the cellar, behind him on the other side, another set of purchasers were drawing for themselves, filling those flasks. As it appeared to have a brisk sale, especially in the latter case, I concluded I would take a flask amongst the rest, which, I accordingly did, and conveyed it in safety to my room, and went back into the street to see the end. The owner of the wine soon found out what was going forward on his premises, and began remonstrating, but he preached to the wind; finding that he could effect nothing, with them, he went to Gen. Putnam's quarters, which was not more than three or four rods off; the General immediately

repaired in person to the field of action; the soldiers getting wind of his approach hurried out into the street, when he, mounting himself upon the doorsteps of my quarters, began "harangueing the multitude," threatening to hang every mother's son of them. Whether he was to be the hangman or not, he did not say; but I took every word he said for gospel, and expected nothing else but to be hanged before the morrow night. I sincerely wished him hanged and out of the way, for fixing himself upon the steps of our door; but he soon ended his discourse, and came down from his rostrum, and the soldiers dispersed, no doubt much edified. I got home as soon as the General had left the coast clear, took a draught of the wine, and then flung the flask and the remainder of the wine out of my window, from the third story, into the water cistern in the back yard, where it remains to this day for aught I know. However, I might have kept it, if I had not been in too much haste to free myself from being hanged by General Putnam, or by his order. I never heard any thing further about the wine or being hanged about it; he doubtless forgot it.

I remained in New-York two or three months, in which time several things occurred, but so trifling that I shall not mention them; when, sometime in the latter part of the month of August, I was ordered upon a fatigue party; we had scarcely reached the grand parade, when I saw our sergeant-major directing his course up Broadway, towards us, in rather an unusual step for him; he soon arrived and informed us, and then the commanding officer of the party, that he had orders to take off all belonging to our regiment and march us to our quarters, as the regiment was ordered to Long-Island, the British having landed in force there. Although this was not unexpected to me, yet it gave me rather a disagreeable feeling, as I was pretty well assured I

should have to snuff a little gunpowder. However, I kept my cogitations to myself, went to my quarters, packed up my clothes, and got myself in readiness for the expedition as soon as possible. I then went to the top of the house where I had a full view of that part of the Island; I distinctly saw the smoke of the field-artillery, but the distance and the unfavourableness of the wind prevented my hearing their report, at least but faintly. The horrors of battle then presented themselves to my mind in all their hideousness; I must come to it now, thought I,—well, I will endeavour to do my duty as well as I am able and leave the event with Providence. We were soon ordered to our regimental parade, from which, as soon as the regiment was formed, we were marched off for the ferry. At the lower end of the street were placed several casks of sea-bread, made, I believe, of canel and peas-meal, nearly hard enough for musket flints; the casks were unheaded and each man was allowed to take as many as he could, as he marched by. As my good luck would have it, there was a momentary halt made; I improved the opportunity thus offered me, as every good soldier should upon all important occasions, to get as many of the biscuit as I possibly could; no one said any thing to me, and I filled my bosom, and took as many as I could hold in my hand, a dozen or more in all, and when we arrived at the ferry-stairs I stowed them away in my knapsack. We quickly embarked on board the boats; as each boat started, three cheers were given by those on board, which was returned by the numerous spectators who thronged the wharves; they all wished us good luck, apparently; although it was with most of them, perhaps, nothing more than ceremony. We soon landed at Brooklyn, upon the Island, marched up the ascent from the ferry, to the plain. We now began to meet the wounded men,

another sight I was unacquainted with, some with broken arms, some with broken legs, and some with broken heads. The sight of these a little daunted me, and made me think of home, but the sight and thought vanished together. We marched a short distance, when we halted to refresh ourselves. Whether we had any other victuals besides the hard bread I do not remember, but I remember my gnawing at them; they were hard enough to break the teeth of a rat. One of the soldiers complaining of thirst to his officer; look at that man, said he, pointing to me, he is not thirsty, I will warrant it. I felt a little elevated to be stiled a man. While resting here, which was not more than twenty minutes or half an hour, the Americans and British were warmly engaged within sight of us. What were the feelings of most or all the young soldiers at this time, I know not, but I know what were mine;—but let mine or theirs be what they might, I saw a Lieutenant who appeared to have feelings not very enviable; whether he was actuated by fear or the canteen I cannot determine now; I thought it fear at the time; for he ran round among the men of his company, snivelling and blubbering, praying each one if he had aught against him, or if *he* had injured any one that they would forgive him, declaring at the same time that he, from his heart, forgave them if they had offended him, and I gave him full credit for his assertion; for had he been at the gallows with a halter about his neck, he could not have shown more fear or penitence. A fine soldier you are, I thought, a fine officer, an exemplary man for young soldiers! I would have then suffered any thing short of death rather than have made such an exhibition of myself; but, as the poet says,

"Fear does things so like a witch,
"'Tis hard to distinguish which is which"