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Ebenzer Fletcher's

Ebenzer Fletcher's Narrative
in the Revolution.

A NARRATIVE.

I, EBENEZER FLETCHER, listed into the Continental Army, in Capt. Carr's Company, in Col. Nathan Hale's Regiment, as a fifer, and joined the Army at Ticonderoga, under the command of General St. Clair, in the Spring of 1777, at which place I was stationed till the retreat of the Army on the 6th of July following.

Early on the morning of the same day, orders came to strike our tents and swing our packs. It was generally conjectured that we were going to battle; but orders came immediately to march. We marched some distance before light. By sunrise the enemy had landed from their boats, & pursued us so closely as to fire on our rear. A large body of the enemy followed us all day, but kept so far behind as not to be wholly discovered. Their aim was to attack us suddenly the next morning, as they did.

Having just recovered from the measles, and not being able to march with the main body, I fell in the rear. The morning after our retreat, orders came very early for the troops to refresh and be ready for marching. Some were eating, some were cooking, and all in a very unfit posture for battle. Just as the sun rose, there was a cry "*the enemy are upon us.*"—Looking round, I saw the enemy in line of battle. Orders came to lay down our packs and be ready for action. The fire instantly began. We were but few in number compared to the enemy. At the commencement of the battle, many of our party retreated back into the woods. Capt. Carr came up and says, "My lads, advance, we shall beat them yet." A few of

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us followed him in view of the enemy. Every man was trying to secure himself behind girdled trees, which were standing on the place of action. I made shelter for myself and discharged my piece. Having loaded again and taken aim, my piece missed fire. I brought the same a second time to my face; but before I had time to discharge it, I received a musket ball in the small of my back and fell with my gun cocked. My uncle Daniel Foster standing but little distance from me, I made out to crawl to him and spoke to him. He and another man lifted me and carried me back some distance and laid me down behind a large tree, where was another man crying out most bitterly with a grievous wound. By this time I had bled so freely, I was very weak and faint. I observed the enemy were likely to gain the ground. Our men began to retreat and the enemy to advance. Having no friend to afford me any relief, every one taking care of himself, all things looked very shocking to me; to remain where I was and fall into the hands of the enemy, especially in the condition I was in, expecting to receive no mercy. It came into my mind to conceal myself from them if possible. I made use of my hands and knees, as well as I could, and crawled about two rods among some small brush and got under a log. Here I lay concealed from the enemy, who came instantly to the place I lay wounded at. What became of my distressed partner I know not. The enemy pursued our men in great haste. Some of them came over the log where I lay. Some came so near I could almost touch them. I was not discovered by the enemy till the battle was over. When they were picking up the dead and wounded among the brush and

logs, I heard them coming towards me. I began to be much terrified, lest I should be found. I flattered myself that our men would come back after the battle was over and take me off; but to my great surprise, two of the enemy came so nigh, I heard one of them say, "Here is one of the rebels." I lay flat on my face across my hands, rolled in my blood. I dared not stir, being afraid they meant me by saying, "Here is one of the rebels." They soon came to me and pulled off my shoes, supposing me to be dead. I looked up and spoke, telling them I was their prisoner, and begged to be used well. "Damn you, says one, you deserve to be used well, don't you? What's such a young rebel as you fighting for?" One of these men was an officer, who appeared to be a pretty sort of a man. He spoke to the soldier, who had taken my shoes, and says, "Give back the shoes and help the man into camp." My shoes were given back by the soldier according to order. The soldier then raised me upon my feet, and conducted me to the British camp. Here I found a number of my brother soldiers in the same situation as myself. I was laid on the ground and remained in this posture till the afternoon, before my wound was dressed. Two Doctors came to my assistance. They raised me up and examined my back. One of them said, "My lad, you stood a narrow chance; had the ball gone in or out half its bigness, you must have been killed instantly." I asked him if he thought there was any prospect of my getting well again. He answered, "There is some prospect." I concluded by his reply, he considered my case hazardous. The Doctors appeared to be very kind and faithful. They pulled several pieces of my

clothes from my wound, which were forced in by the ball I received.

Some of the enemy were very kind ; while others were very spiteful and malicious. One of them came and took my silver shoe-buckles and left me an old pair of brass ones, and said, *exchange was no robbery* ; but I thought it robbery at a high rate. Another came and took off my neck handkerchief. An old negro came and took my sife, which I considered as the greatest insult I had received while with the enemy. The Indians often came and abused me with their language ; calling us Yankees and rebels ; but they were not allowed to injure us. I was stripped of every thing valuable about me.

The enemy soon marched back to Ticonderoga, and left only a few to take care of the wounded. I was treated as well as I could expect. Doctor Haze was the head Doctor, and he took true care that the prisoners were well treated. Doctor Blocksom, an under surgeon, appeared to be very kind indeed : he was the one, who had the care of me : he never gave me any insulting or abusive language ; he sometimes would say, " Well, my lad, think you'll be willing to list in the King's service, if you should get well ? " My answer was always *no*. The officers would flatter me to list in their service ; telling me they were very sure to conquer the country, since they had got our strongest post. I told them I should not list.

But among all the troubles I met with, I received particular favors from two of the British. This conduct appeared to me very remarkable ; why or wherefore it should be, I knew not ; but He who hath the hearts of all men in his hands,

gave me favor in their sight. They would often visit me, and ask me if I wanted any thing to eat or drink. If I did, I had it. The first time one of these friends came to me, was soon after I was brought to the camp. As I lay on the ground, he asked me if I did not want a bed to lie on : I told him I did : he went and got a large hemlock bark, and finding many old coats and overalls, taken from the dead and wounded, he put them in the bark, made me a bed, and laid me into it. He built a shelter over me with barks, to keep the rain from me, which was a great kindness, as it rained exceedingly hard the next night. He went to a spring and brought me water as often as I wanted, which was very often, being very dry ; my loss of blood occasioning much thirst. He asked me, also, if I wanted to eat. I answered yes : for having eat but little that day, I was very faint and hungry. He told me he did not know as it was in his power to procure any thing for me, but would go and try. After an absence of considerable time (certainly the time seemed long) he returned with a piece of boiled pork and broiled liver, telling me this was all the food he could get : I thanked him, and told him it was very good.

The next day he came and told me he had orders to march and must therefore leave me : was very sorry he could stay no longer with me, but hoped somebody would take care of me ; taking me by the hand he wished me well and left me.

The loss of so good a friend grieved me extremely ; but I soon heard that my other friend was ordered to stay behind to help take care of the wounded. My spirits, which before were very much depressed, when I heard of this, were much

exhilarated; and once more I felt tolerably happy. The difference in mankind never struck me more sensibly than while a prisoner. Some would do every thing in their power to make me comfortable and cheerful; while others abused me with the vilest of language; telling me that the prisoners would all be hanged; that they would drive all the damned rebels into the sea, and that their next winter quarters would be in Boston. They certainly wintered in Boston; but to their great disappointment and chagrin, as *prisoners of war*.

But to return. My wound being now a little better, I began to think of escaping from the enemy. Two of my fellow prisoners agreed to accompany me; one of them being well acquainted with the way to Ottercreek. This plan, however, failed; for before we had an opportunity for making our escape, Doctor Haze called upon my companions to be ready to march for Ticonderoga; telling them that the next morning they must leave this place. Thus I found, that as soon as the prisoners were able to rise, they were ordered to Ticonderoga. Being thus disappointed I begged of the Doctor to let me go with them. Says he, "You are very dangerously wounded, and it is improper for you to ride so far yet; but as soon as you are able you shall go." Being thus defeated I again resolved to run away, even if I went alone, and it was not long before I had an opportunity. As all the prisoners were sent off except such as were badly wounded, they thought it unnecessary to guard us very closely. I soon was able to go to the spring, which was at a little distance from the camp. Thither I often went for water for myself and the Hessians, who, by the way,

appeared to be pleased with me I often waited upon them, brought them water, made their beds, &c. and I found my fare the better for it. I often walked out into the woods where the battle was fought; went to the tree where I was shot down; observed the trees which were very much marked with the balls. Looking around one day, I found some leaves of a bible; these I carried into the camp, & diverted myself by reading them; for I felt much more contented when I had something to read. My friend, whom I have before mentioned, one day brought me a very good book, which he told me to keep as a present from him. This I heartily thanked him for, and whenever I was tired by walking would lay down and read.

On the 22d of July, a number of men came down from Ticonderoga, with horses and litters sufficient to carry off the remainder of the wounded. Doctor Haze came to us and told us, that tomorrow we should all be carried where we should have better care taken of us. Says he, "I will send the orderly sergeant, who will see that your bloody clothes are well washed." This he thought would be very agreeable news to us. I pretended to be very much pleased, though I was determined never to go. I told the person, who lay next to me that I intended to run away; desired him to make them believe I had taken the north road, if they inclined to pursue me, for I should take the south. Says he, "I will do all in my power to assist you, and wish it was possible for me to go with you."

I made it my business that day to procure provisions sufficient for my journey. I had spared a little bread from my daily allowance, and although dry and mouldy, yet it was the best to be had. I

had a large jack-knife left of which the enemy had not robbed me ; I sold this for a pint of wine, thinking it would do me more good on my march than the knife ; as the event proved. The wine I put in a bottle, and carefully stowed it in my pocket. I was hard put to it to get my shirt washed and dried before evening. However, agreeing with some to make their beds if they would dry my shirt, it was ready to put on by dark. I then went to my tent, took off my coat and jacket, and put on my clean shirt over my dirty one, and having filled my pockets with the little provision I had saved, I began to march homeward shoeless ; reflecting what I should do for so material part of my clothing. It came into my mind that one Jonathan Lambart had died of his wounds a day or two before and left a good pair of shoes. Supposing my right to them equal to any other person, I took them and put them on, thereby reversing the old proverb, *he that waits for dead men's shoes will go barefoot.*

It being dark I went out undiscovered and steered into the woods. After going a little way, I turned into the road and made a halt. Now was the trying scene ! The night being very dark, every thing before me appeared gloomy and discouraging ; my wound was far from being healed ; my strength much reduced by the loss of blood, pain, and poor living ; thus situated, to travel alone, I knew not where, having no knowledge of the way, I thought would be highly presumptuous. How far I should have to travel before I could reach any inhabitants, I could not tell : Indians, I supposed, were lurking about, and probably I might be beset by them and murdered or

carried back : and if I avoided them, perhaps I might perish in the wilderness. Reflecting upon these things, my resolution began to flag, and I thought it most prudent to return and take my fate. I turned about and went back a few rods, when the following words struck me as if whispered in my ear : *Put not your hands to the plough and look back.* I immediately turned about again, fully resolved to pursue my journey through the woods ; but before morning, had I been possessed of millions of gold, I would freely have given the whole to have been once more with the enemy. The road which I had to travel, was newly opened, leading from Hubbardston to Otter-creek. The night being dark and the road very crooked, I found it very difficult to keep it ; often running against trees and rocks, before I knew I was out of it ; and then it was with much trouble that I found it again, which sometimes I was obliged to do upon my hands and knees, and often up to my knees in mire.

About 12 o'clock I heard something coming towards me ; what it could be I knew not, I halted and looked back ; it was so dark I was at a loss to determine what it was : but thought it looked like a dog. That a dog should be so far from inhabitants, I thought very strange. I at once concluded that he belonged to the Indians, and that they were not far off. I however ventured to speak to him, and he immediately came to me ; I gave him a piece of my mouldy bread, which he eat and soon appeared fond of me. At first I was afraid he would betray me to the Indians ; but soon found him of much service ; for I had not gone far before I heard the noise of some wild beast. I had

just set down to rest me, with my back against a tree, my wound being very painful. As the beast approached, my dog appeared very much frightened; laid close down by me and trembled, as if he expected to be torn in pieces. I now began to be much terrified; I however set very still, knowing it would do no good to run. He came within two rods of me, and stopped. I was unable to determine what it was, but supposed it was a wolf. I soon found I was not mistaken. After looking at me sometime, he turned about and went off; but before long returned with a large reinforcement. In his absence I exerted myself to the utmost to get forward, fearing he would be after me again. After travelling about half an hour, I was alarmed with a most horrible howling, which I supposed to be near the tree which I rested by. Judge what my feelings were, when I found these beasts of prey were pursuing me, and expected every minute to be devoured by them. But in the midst of this trouble, to my infinite joy, I discovered fires but a little way before me, which, from several circumstances, I was sure were not built by Indians; I therefore at once concluded they were fires of some scouting party of Americans, & I made great haste to get to them, lest I should be overtaken by the wolves, which were now but a little behind. I approached so near the fires as to hear men talk, when I immediately discovered them to be enemies. Thus disappointed I knew not what course to take; if I continued in the woods, I should be devoured by wild beasts; for having eat of the bodies which were left on the field of battle, they continued lurking for more. If I gave myself up to the enemy, I should certainly

be carried back to Ticonderoga, and to Canada, and probably fare no better for attempting to run away. Which way to escape I knew not; I turned a little out of the path and lay down on the ground to hear what was said by the enemy, expecting every moment they would discover me; the darkness of the night however prevented. These howling beasts approached as near the fires as they dared, when they halted and continued their horrid yell for some time, being afraid to come so nigh as I was. After the howling had ceased, I began to think of getting round the enemy's camp; being pretty certain that as yet, I was not discovered. I arose from the ground and took a course, which I thought would carry me round the enemy's camp. After travelling a little way, I came to the foot of a high mountain; to go round it I thought would carry me too much out of my course; I resolved therefore to ascend it; with much difficulty I arrived at the top, then took a tack to the right; travelling that course sometime I found I was bewildered and lost, and which way to go to find the road again I knew not, having neither moon nor stars to direct me; so I wandered about in this wilderness till almost day, when I became so fatigued and worried, that I was obliged to lay down again; Judge what a person's feelings must be in such a situation.

I now repented of my ever leaving the enemy. Here I was lost in the woods, with but very little provision, my wounds extremely painful, and little or no prospect of ever seeing human beings again. Thus I lay and reflected, my dog walking round me like a faithful sentinel, till I fell asleep; but was soon alarmed with the noise of cannon,

which I concluded by the direction must be at Ticonderoga. Never was sound more grateful to my ears than this cannon. I thought I might possibly live to reach the place, and though an enemy's camp, I would have given any thing to be with them again.

Soon after the morning gun was fired, I heard the drums beat in the camp which I had visited in the night : this noise was still more grateful, for I was sure they were not at a great distance. With much difficulty I got upon my legs again, with a determination to go to their camp. I found, however, that I could scarcely stand ; for having laid down when I was very sweaty, I had taken cold, and was so stiff and sore, that I could hardly move. I now had recourse to my little bottle of wine, which relieved me very much, and then began to march towards the drums, which still continued beating.

After travelling a little way, I heard a cock crow, which appeared near the drums. I thought it of little consequence which object to pursue, both being nearly in the same direction. But the noise of the drums soon ceased, and I steered for the other object, which soon brought me into open land and in sight of a house. I got to the door just as the man arose from his bed. After the usual compliments, I asked him how far it was to the British encampments ? He answered about fifty rods. " Do you want to go to them," says he. I never was more at a stand what reply to make. As none of the enemy appeared about the house, I thought if I could persuade this man to befriend me, I possibly might avoid them ; but if he should prove to be a tory, and know from whence I came,

he would certainly betray me. I stood perhaps a minute without saying a word. He seeing my confusion spoke again to me ; " Come, said he, come into the house." I went in and sat down. I will tell you said I, what I want, if you promise not to hurt me. He replied, " I will not injure you, if you do no injury to us." This answer did not satisfy me, for as yet I could not tell whether he would be a friend or foe. I sat and viewed him for some minutes, and at last resolved to tell him from whence I came and where I wished to go, let the event be what it would. I was a soldier, said I, in the continental army, was dangerously wounded and taken prisoner, had made my escape from the enemy, and after much fatigue and peril, had got through the woods, being directed to this house by the crowing of a cock. He smiled and said, " You have been rightly directed, for had you gone to either of my neighbors, you undoubtedly would have been carried to the enemy again ; you have now found a friend who will if possible protect you. It is true they have forced me to take the oath of allegiance to the king : but I sincerely hope the Americans will finally prevail, for I believe their cause to be just and equitable ; should they know of my harboring rebels, as they call us, I certainly should suffer for it. Any thing I can do for you without exposing my own life, I will do." I thanked him for his kindness, and desired him not to expose himself on my account.

After giving me something to eat and drink, he concealed me in a chamber, where he said I might stay till the dew was off, and then must go out into some secret place in the bushes, there to continue till night ; this he said was necessary as the

enemy were often plundering about his house, and if I continued in it, I should probably be discovered, which would ruin him. A little boy was set as a sentinel at the door, who was to give notice if any of the enemy came near. I had not been in the house half an hour, before a number of them came in, but with no other design than to buy some rum & milk, & to borrow a pot for cooking.

As soon as they were gone, the woman came into the chamber to dress my wound. She washed it with rum, applied dressings, and bound it up as well as she could. She showed every mark of kindness to me; but her husband, whose name was Moulton, in a day or two after I got to his house, was pressed by the enemy to bring stores from Skeensborough with his team, and I never saw the good old man any more. His wife was in much trouble, lest the enemy should find me in the house and be so enraged as to kill all the family. She permitted her little boy to guide me to the bushes, where I might secrete myself; she gave me a blanket to lie on. The boy went with me to my lurking place, that I might be easily found, so as to receive refreshment. When night came on, I was called by the boy to the house again, and took my old stand in the chamber; the woman feared I should receive injury by lodging out of doors. She informed me that a man would lodge there that night, who was brother-in-law to her husband; and who had actually taken up arms against his country. I told her, I apprehended danger from tarrying in the house; she said there would not be any; I then lay snug in my straw.

In a short time the tory came for some drink; the indiscreet woman told him she had an Ameri-

can in her chamber, who had been taken prisoner by the British and had escaped. He asked her what kind of a man I was: She told him I was a young fellow and wanted much to get home, and begged that I might not be taken back to the enemy or betrayed. His answer was very rough, and I began to think I was gone for it. I expected to be forced back; but the woman interceding so hard for me, softened the ferocity of my tory enemy. Knowing I was discovered, I crawled from my hiding place and began a conversation with the man. He asked me if I belonged to the rebel service? I told him I belonged to the continental service. "What is that, says he, but the rebel service." He addressed me in very insolent language, and said he was very sorry to have me leave the king's troops in the manner I had done, and he would have me to know I was in his hands. I was patient and mild in my situation, telling him I was at his disposal. My good mistress often put in a word on my behalf.

After some time spent in this way, the man asked me if he should chance to be taken, and in my power as I was in his, whether I should let him escape? I told him I should. "Then says he, if you will promise this, I will not detain you; also, that if you are retaken before you reach home, you will not inform, that you have seen me, or been at my brothers." I gave him my promise. His advice to me was immediate; to set out, for if I should stay long I might be picked up by some person: "And, says he, I advise you to travel in the night and hide in the day, for many volunteers are reconnoitring up and down the country." I concluded to travel; but my feeling

landlady thought it best to stay a few days longer. My friend tory said it was best for me to travel as soon as possible. "If you are determined to go to night, said the woman, I will dress your wound and give you food for your journey." I told her I would go as soon as possible. She then dressed my wound for the last time, and filled my pockets with good provision. After thanking her for her kindness, it being all the compensation I could make, and I believe all that she desired, I left her.

But before I proceed on my journey, I must tell you, that my dog; who had accompanied me thro' many dangers, I was obliged to drive from me; when in the chamber he would commonly lay at the foot of the stairs. Mrs. Moulton often told me, she was afraid he would betray me, for as the enemy were often in, should they see the dog, might suspect that somebody was in the chamber. I told her, with much regret, to drive him away; she with her little boy tried all in their power to get rid of him, but in vain; the dog would stay about the house; at length she called me to drive him away; I came down, and after much difficulty effected it.

But to return. After being told the course I must take, I began my journey in the night, which was dark and cloudy, through the woods. I had not travelled more than two hours, before I got lost. I concluded I had missed the road, and having reached the end of the one I was then in, I began to think of going back. My wound began to be very painful, and I was so sore, I could scarcely go. While I was seeking for the road again, there came up a thunder shower, and rained extremely fast. I crawled into an old forsaken hovel, which was near, and lay till the shower was

over; then went back about half a mile and found the road once more. The road being newly opened through the woods was very bad, and it was with much difficulty I could get along, often tumbling over roots and stones, and sometimes up to my knees in mire. I once fell and was obliged to lay several minutes, before I could recover myself.

About 12 o'clock at night, as I was walking in this wilderness, I was surprised by two large, wild animals, which lay close by the road, and started up as soon as they saw me, ran a few rods and turned about towards me; whether they were bears or wolves, I could not tell; I was however exceedingly terrified and would have given any thing for my dog again. One of them followed me for a long time; sometimes would come close to me, and at others, kept at a considerable distance. At last he got discouraged and left me, and certainly I did not regret his absence.

At day light, I came into open land, and discovered a house belonging to Col. Meads. I was not a little rejoiced to see his house, as I knew he would be a friend to me; but my joy was of short continuance, for as soon as I looked into the door, I saw marks of the enemy; every thing belonging to the house being carried off or destroyed. I tho't it not prudent to go into the house lest some of the enemy might be within; so I passed on as fast as possible; it now began to grow light, and what to do with myself I could not tell. My friends had advised me to lay concealed in the day time and travel in the night.

When I viewed the depredations the enemy had made on the inhabitants, and many of whom had fled; not knowing how far I must travel to find

friends, and my wound being very troublesome, I reflected long; whether to tarry and be made prisoner, or push forward through a dreary wilderness; death seemed to threaten me on all sides; however, I collected resolution sufficient to make to the east; I conceived myself exposed by my uniform and bloody clothes; to prevent a discovery by any who should be an enemy, I took off my shirt and put it over my coat, by which my uniform was covered; in this line I marched; it being the orders of the British for all tories, who came to join them, to appear in this dress, I considered myself protected. I travelled till the middle of the day, before I saw any person; I then met a man driving cattle, as I supposed to the enemy. He examined me closely, and enquired if I was furnished with a pass? I gave him plausible answers to all his questions, and so far satisfied him as to proceed unmolested. I enquired of him, if he knew one Joshua Priest; he told me he did, and very readily directed me to the place where he lived. Leaving this man, I had not travelled far, before I met a number more, armed; being within about fifty rods of them, I thought to hide myself; but found I could not: I then made towards them, without any apparent fear. Coming up to them, I expected a strict examination; but they only asked me how far it was to such a town: I informed them as well as I could, and pushed on my way.

Being within a mile and a half of said Priest's, I saw two men making towards me; They came to a fence and stopped: I heard them say, "Let's examine this fellow, and know what his business is." One of them asked me where I was going: I told him to Joshua Priest's; He asked me my

business there: I answered him upon no bad errand: He says, you are a spy: I told him I was no spy: I did not like the fellow's looks, therefore dropped the conversation with him, believing he was one of the enemy. I resolved not to converse with any one, till I had arrived at Priest's, unless compelled to. Being almost overcome with fatigue, I wished for rest, however, these men seemed determined to stop me or do me some mischief, for when I walked on, they followed me upon the run, and in great rage told me, I should go no farther, until I had made known to them who and what I was; saying, they had asked me a civil question, and they required a civil answer. I told them if they would go to Priest's, I would tell them all the truth, and satisfy them entirely; repeating to them I was no spy. They said they did not mean to leave me till they were satisfied respecting me. I then, in short, told them what I had before in the whole, and added, that I was well acquainted with Priest, and intended to tarry with him some time.

We all arrived at Priest's, who at first did not recollect me. After some pause, he told me he was surprised to see me, as my father had informed him I was slain at Hubbardston. I told him, I was yet alive; but had received a bad wound. His family soon dressed my wound and made me comfortable. I then in the presence and hearing of my tory followers, told Priest the story of my captivity and escape, also repeated the insolent language used by the tories towards our people, when prisoners with the enemy; finding Priest my friend, I said many severe things against the tories, and fixed my countenance sternly on those fellows,

who had pretended to lord it over me and stop me on the way. They bore all without saying a word; but looked as *surlly as bulls*.

I soon found these tory gentry had premeditated carrying me back, and were seeking help to prosecute their design. My friend Priest loaded his gun, and said he would give them a grist, if they dared come after me; but failing of getting any persons to join them, I was not molested.

I could often hear my tory followers' threatenings against me, to take me back, saying, I should be able to fight again, and do injury to the enemy. I feared these tories would do hurt, but my fears were quieted by finding the neighbors were my friends, and would afford me their protection. But I will write no more of tory plans.

After being at Priest's about ten days, there came, one morning, a number of persons to see me, and appeared very friendly and much concerned, lest I should be taken by the enemy. They informed me a man had arrived from Burgoyne's army, and a party of Indians was to be sent forward to guard the town where I was, and protect the tories and their property; our people coming twice while I was at Priest's to take tory property. These people told me an honest story, and advised me to travel immediately. Being desirous to get home, I told my friend Priest I would not stay any longer. He says, "Don't be scared, I apprehend no danger from the Indians, tarry yet awhile for your wound is not healed: you are not able to travel through the woods; but do as you think best." These men cried out, "Escape, escape, for your life: Indians will be upon you before tomorrow night."

Having resolved to go on, my friends furnished me with provision sufficient for my journey. Without doubts and fears I went on my way, and after travelling all day I arrived at a place called Ludlow. From this town the people all fled and left their habitations: Great was my disappointment! I spent the night in a melancholy manner: having neither fire nor bed to comfort my shivering and impaired body.

About day I set out from the dreary house, which had sheltered me in the night. By travelling, I found I had taken cold, and my wound was very painful. Desponding, I thought it best to go back about seven miles to some inhabitants, rather than to proceed homeward: Just before night I arrived at the place of the inhabitants, seven miles back, who received me kindly, and took special care of my wound.

Just before sunset of the third day after my departure I came to my old friend Priest's again, who appeared very glad to see me. Now it was not any friendship in my tory visitors, who advised me to escape, but for fear I should betray them; their reports afterwards proving a lie.

At my old friends, I remained six weeks: in the mean time my wound was almost healed. I was hospitably entertained by him.

Having heard that one Mr. Atwell, who belonged to New-Marlborough, was in the neighborhood with a team to move a family, I agreed with him for a horse to ride. After a journey of a few days, I safely arrived at New-Ipswich, and once more participated the pleasure of seeing and enjoying my friends, and *no enemy to make me afraid*.

Not long afterwards, an officer from the army

hearing of my return ordered me to be arrested and returned to the main body of the American army, although my wound was scarcely healed. In a few weeks, I joined my corps, then stationed in Pennsylvania; having yet two years to serve my country in the tented field.

We afterwards went on an expedition against the Indians, to the Genesee country, where we burnt the houses & destroyed the corn of the Savages—but found them little disposed to meet us in the open field. Finding few enemies in that quarter to contend with we received, and gladly obeyed orders to return to New-England, where we remained the ensuing autumn. Nothing more of importance, to me or the reader, occurred; until the three long years rolled away, except when in Pennsylvania, I had the honor of being acquainted with Gen. Washington and Gen. Lafayette, and then I received my discharge.

And now, kind reader, wishing that you may forever remain ignorant of the real sufferings of the veteran soldier, from hunger and cold, from sickness and captivity, I bid you a cordial adieu.

F BENTZER FLETCHER.

New-Ipswich, Jan. 1813.

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