

## CHAPTER VI.

THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE – BOSTON TEA PARTY – THOMPSON MAXWELL A MEMBER – MAXWELL AT CONCORD BRIDGE – COMMITTEE OF SAFETY – MILFORD MEN AT BUNKER HILL – NEW HAMPSHIRE MEN AT BUNKER HILL -- PATRIOTIC ROLL – DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE – SOLDIERS IN SERVICE – MILFORD MEN AT BENNINGTON – ROLL OF REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS.

The causes which led to the Revolution have been so often commented upon that they are omitted here, and allusion to the famous Boston Tea Party would not be made were it not for the fact that a citizen of Milford was one of the company.

In the year 1764, there came to reside in the town of Monson (now Milford) a man whose whole life was a romance, Thompson Maxwell by name.<sup>1</sup>

He had served in the French and Indian War while a resident of Massachusetts, but at the date of the Tea Party was engaged in farming and teaming country produce to Boston, and West India goods and groceries to the country traders to Amherst and vicinity. In an interview had with him in the year 1821, a few years before his decease and while a resident of the West, he says, --

“In 1773, December 16, I was in Boston when the tea was thrown overboard. Seventy-three men in the costume of Indians accomplished the daring exploit. John Hancock was then a merchant. My team was loaded at his store, near Faneuil Hall, for New Hampshire. At his request I put up my team to meet in consultation at his house at 2 o’clock p.m. The business was soon planned and executed.”

December 27, 1774, the town of Amherst voted “to approve of the results of the Grand Congress and strictly adhere to them,” and choose a committee to carry into effect the association agreement in the town. If any broke over the agreement, the committee were to publish their names in the newspapers. Upon the committee were Colonel John Shepherd, Thomas Burns, and Joseph Gould, representing that part of Amherst now Milford.

During the winter and spring of 1775, a company of minute men had been formed and drilled, in anticipation of the coming conflict. The collision at Lexington, April 19, aroused the country, and the Amherst company in command of Captain Josiah Crosby, at once started for Cambridge. His first lieutenant was Daniel Wilkins, Jr., son of Pastor Wilkins. His second lieutenant was Thompson Maxwell, already alluded to.

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<sup>1</sup> Major Thompson Maxwell was born in Bedford, Mass., entered the service of his country when but fourteen years of age, in 1757, and served in various campaigns as a ranger until 1763, traversing the whole northern frontier to the Mississippi river and enduring innumerable hardships in constant border warfare; in 1764 settled in Monson (now Milford), N.H., and for ten years was engaged in conveying country produce to Boston with an ox team, and on his return trips supplying the traders with West India goods and groceries; took part in the destruction of tea in Boston harbor, December 16, 1773.

April 18, on his return from Boston, spent the night with his brother-in-law, Captain Wilson, at Bedford. Took part with Captain Wilson’s company in the engagement at Concord bridge. Captain Wilson was mortally wounded.

After the fight was over, Maxwell returned to Bedford and hired a man to take his team home, while he repaired to Cambridge, where Captain Josiah Crosby’s company, of which he was second lieutenant, soon after arrived. Was in most of the engagements of the war, in which New Hampshire troops took part, from Bunker Hill to Yorktown.

At the close of the war became a resident of Massachusetts. In 1787, was captain of a militia company under General Shepard, and in service at the time Shay’s rebellion was quelled.

In 1800, moved to Ohio, and in 1811 was in the Battle of Tippecanoe under General W.H. Harrison. Served through the war of 1812, with the rank of major a portion of the time; wounded severely at one time, a prisoner at another. Remained in service until 1820, in different positions, and at an advanced age died, a hero of three wars.

Colonel John Shepard, who was in his seventieth year, and too old to take the field, went to Cambridge with the men, and received from Captain Crosby the following, at a later day:

“This certifies that Esq. Shepard, in April 1775, went with a detachment of Militia of about one hundred men from Amherst to Cambridge, aided, assisted, and comforted them and at Cambridge left with them two Spanish milled dollars.

“Josiah Crosby.”

On the back of this certificate is a list of other articles left, as follows:

“Pork 57 ½ lbs., ½ bushel beans, 1 ½ bushel to Sargent, some bread and 1 ½ bushel meal.”

Captain Crosby’s company at first served under the orders of the province of Massachusetts, but upon the organization of the New Hampshire regiments in May, 1775, it took its place in the Third New Hampshire regiment, commanded by Colonel James Reed of Fitzwilliam, and made a part of his regiment at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

In Reed’s regiment there were Milford men in at least four companies, all of whom took part in the battle of June 17, 1775, --

Josiah Crosby, captain; Thompson Maxwell, second lieutenant; Jonathan Burnham, Joshua Burnham, Stephen Crosby, Joseph Wallace, Jonathan Taylor, Jabez Holt, privates.

In Captain William Walker’s company; Stephen Blanchard, Stephen Blanchard, Jr., privates.

In Captain Levi Spalding’s company: Timothy McIntire, private.

In Captain Benjamin Mann’s company: Asa Lewis, Benjamin Bevins, privates.

David Wallingford was at first a private in Captain Dow’s company made up of Hollis men, but on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1775, he became second lieutenant in Captain Archelaus Towne’s company, which afterwards became a part of Stark’s regiment and was engaged at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Bartholomew Towne joined the same company May 6.

It has been questioned whether Captain Towne’s company formed a part of Stark’s regiment on the day of the battle, from the fact that Stark had ten companies (the usual number in a regiment) without counting Towne’s, and the further fact that our state authorities, June 3, 1775, in issuing orders for making up three regiments out of soldiers then at or near Cambridge and at home, directed that Stark should command the First regiment, to consist of ten companies. (See Vol. I, Revolutionary Rolls.)

In the rosters which I have examined in the adjutant-general’s reports of Stark’s regiment at this time, I do not find more than ten companies enrolled, and the names of the ten captains do not include that of Captain Towne, and the pay-rolls are limited to ten companies. But in a letter to the committee of safety, dated June 23, 1775, General Folsom speaks of Stark’s regiment as consisting of thirteen companies, and I think there can be no doubt that Captain Towne’s company was one of the thirteen.

Among the wounded on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, was Peter Robertson, of Amherst, who was one of Captain Towne’s men. The following affidavit, on file at Concord, would seem to make it clear that Towne fought in Stark’s regiment, and that Stark had at least eleven companies in his command at Bunker Hill, and if eleven, probably thirteen:

AFFIDAVIT.

“I Archelaus Town Cap’t of a Company in Col John Star’s Regiment Certify that on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June A.D. 1775, Peter Robertson, a soldier in my company Lost his Right Hand, in the Battle of Bunkers Hill by a Cannon shott from the enemy whereby he is Disabled from gaining his Living, and has received pay no further than the last of Dec’r 1775.

Witness my Hand at Amherst this 8<sup>th</sup> Day of March A.D. 1877.

“Archelus Towne.”

We therefore add from Captain Towne’s company, Stark’s regiment, the names of David Wallingford, second lieutenant; Bartholomew Towne, private.

MILFORD MEN AT BUNKER HILL.

Josiah Crosby, captain; Thompson Maxwell, David Wallingford, lieutenants; Jonathan Burnham, Joshua Burnham, Stephen Crosby, Joseph Wallace, Jonathan Taylor, Jabez Holt, Stephen Blanchard, Stephen Blanchard, Jr., Timothy McIntire, Benjamin Bevins, Bartholomew Towne, Asa Lewis, privates; none of whom were killed or seriously wounded.

The appearance of the men as they went into the battle must have surprised the trained and well equipped soldiers to whom they were opposed. They were not dressed with any degree of uniformity, and in this respect were a motley-looking set. Some had fowling-pieces, others rifles, and not a few, muskets without bayonets.

The number of New Hampshire men at Bunker Hill (more than half the American force), after much research, is fixed at 1,230.

The casualties were, --

	Killed.	Wounded.
Stark’s Regiment . . . . .	15	45
Reed’s Regiment . . . . .	17	15
New Hampshire men in Massachusetts Companies . . . . .	9	7
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Total,	41	67

After the battle, Captain Crosby made a return of losses sustained by members of his company. Crosby’s loss consisted of “one pistol” and “one pair worsted stockings.” Lieutenant Maxwell lost “one fine shirt” and one “powder horn;” Stephen Crosby “on great coat” and “one shirt;” Joseph Wallace, “one pair shoes.”

Our New Hampshire men were present when Washington took command of the army, July 2, 1775, and had their first view of the commander-in-chief on that day as he reviewed the army, mounted on a black horse of unusual size and power. He made an address, closing with a repetition of Psalm CI.

Enlistments in early regiments were for a term of eight months. The rations consisted of bread, pork, beef, rice, and beer. In addition, our state furnished 554 gallons New England rum and 1,729 ½ gallons West India rum for its soldiers during the time they were engaged in the vicinity of Boston in the year 1775.

John Bradford served as lieutenant in Captain Taylor’s company, sent for the defence of Boston in December, 1775, at the request of General Sullivan. David Burnham, William Crosby, Benjamin Hutchinson, William Jones, and John Wallace served in the same company.

Captain Augustus Blanchard, then of Merrimack, but afterwards a prominent citizen of Milford, was captain of another company sent at the same time. These, and other companies from New Hampshire, took the place of Connecticut troops whose term of enlistment had expired.

““In Congress, March 14, 1776.

““Resolved That it be recommended to the several assemblies Conventions, and councils, or committees of safety, of the United States, immediately to cause all persons to be disarmed within their Respective Colonies, who are notoriously disaffected to the cause of America, or who have not associated, and refused to associate, to defend by arms the United Colonies against the hostile attempts of the British fleers and Armies.

“Charles Thompson, Secretary.”

“In consequence of the above resolution of the Hon. Continental Congress, and to show our determination in joining our American brethren, in defending the Lives, Liberties and Properties, of the inhabitants of the United Colonies, -- We the subscribers do hereby engage and promise that we will to the utmost of our power, at the risk of our Lives and Fortunes, with arms, oppose the Hostile proceedings of the British fleets and armies against the United colonies.

“Darius Abbott, Andrew Bradford, John Bradford, Stephen Burnham, George Burns, John Burns, John Burns, Jr., John Burns, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Thomas Burns, Henry Codman, Josiah Crosby, Samson Crosby, Joseph Gould, John Grimes, Jonathan Grimes, Benjamin Hopkins, Benjamin Hopkins, Jr., Ebenezer Hopkins, Isaac Howe, Joel Howe, Abner Hutchinson, Eben Hutchinson, Elisha Hutchinson, Nathan Hutchinson, Nathan Hutchinson, 2<sup>nd</sup>, William Peabody, William Peabody, Jr., John Shepard, Jr., William Small, Jonathan Taylor, Joseph Wallace, William Wallace.”

The above names represented, in part, the sentiment of Milford people in 1776. Some residents were in the army at the time and did not sign, their works indicating their faith. For some reason Colonel John Shepherd declined to sign the paper.

A regiment was raised in July, 1776, to reinforce the army in Canada. Stephen Peabody was major, and William Small, Jr., a private, in Captain Bowen's company. In September, of the same year, a regiment was raised for services in New York. It was in the Battle of White Plains, October 28, 1776. In Captain Putnam's company were John Grimes and Joseph Wallace. The same year, in December, Abial Holt, Daniel Barker, and Benjamin Wright enlisted in Captain Walker's company, and Colonel Gilman's regiment, for service in New York.

July 18, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was received, and publicly proclaimed from the pulpits the next Sunday.

For the first two years, or until the close of 1776, enlistments had been for short periods of time, and soldiers were constantly returning to their homes, depleting the army and adding gloom to the otherwise discouraging situation, no substantial victories having been achieved. To remedy this state of things Congress determined to establish a permanent army, in which the enlistments should be for three years or during the war. New Hampshire's quota was three regiments, which were at first put under John Stark, James Reed, and Enoch Poor. Poor was promoted, Stark resigned, and Reed, becoming blind, was obliged to leave the service, and the regiments were afterwards under command of Joseph Cilley, Nathan Hale, and Alexander Seammel.

Inducements in the way of remission of the poll tax, and other bounties, were offered for enlistments in these regiments. In the rolls the following names were recognized as those of men living at that time within the present limits of Milford: Benjamin Bevins, Andrew McIntire, Calvin Hovey, Joseph Lewis, Jacob Blanchard, Ezekiel Crosby, Caleb Brown.

When Burgoyne moved on Ticonderoga in the summer of 1777, volunteers were not wanting for a shorter and more exciting service. Two companies, under Major Abial Abbott of Wilton, marched for Lake Champlain, June 30, 1777. At Charlestown, they were ordered home. On their return, at Dublin they received orders to resume their march on Ticonderoga. This was done, but at Otter Creek they had word of the evacuation of Ticonderoga, and turned back the second time. Captain Stephen Peabody commanded one of these companies. John Bradford was first lieutenant. In the ranks were Josiah Crosby, Jr., Stephen Crosby, William Crosby, Caleb Jones, John Wallace, and Ebenezer Hutchinson. Captain Nathan Ballard, of Wilton, commanded another company, with Nathan Hutchinson as sergeant and Asa Lewis, Stephen Blanchard, Daniel Barker, Israel Burnham, David Burnham, Jonathan Burnham, in the ranks.

Subsequently a call was made by the people of Vermont (not then a state) upon New Hampshire for help in resisting the progress of the English through their territory. The New Hampshire legislature met at Exeter, and at once organized an expedition under John Stark.

At the battle of Bennington, August, 1777, Captain John Bradford commanded a company in Colonel Nichols's regiment. David Wallingford was lieutenant in Captain John Goss's company in the same regiment.

## MILFORD MEN AT BENNINGTON.

John Bradford, captain; David Wallingford, lieutenant; Simeon Blanchard, David Burnham, Israel Burnham, Jonathan Burnham, Stephen Crosby, William Crosby, Caleb Jones, Asa Lewis, John Wallace, privates.

Francis Grimes joined the army at Saratoga a month later.

The victory at Bennington was the turning point in the war. Phelps, in his oration at the dedication of the monument in August, 1891, characterized it as one of the great battles in the world's history, although fought with a handful of men; and John Stark as a great general.

All the Milford soldiers, except Lieutenant Wallingford, were in Captain Bradford's company, and all accounts agree that they behaved with the greatest coolness and bravery at the most critical moment of the fight. Asa Lewis was killed August 16, 1777. No Milford men were seriously wounded. John Mills, the grandfather of John Mills recently deceased, was first lieutenant in Captain Bradford's company, and Stephen Peabody was an aid to General Stark with the rank of major. Three fourths of all the men in this memorable battle were New Hampshire soldiers.

In 1778 a brigade in command of General William Whipple was sent to Rhode Island to take part in the attack upon the English forces in that locality. Colonel Moses Nichols commanded one of the regiments, and Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Peabody another. Captain John Bradford was adjutant of Nichols's regiment, and Captain Josiah Crosby was in command of a company. Josiah Crosby, Jr., was one of his sergeants, and in the ranks were Stephen Crosby, Jonathan Taylor, Bartholomew Towne. In Captain Reynolds's company the name of John Wallace is found.

In 1779, Calvin Hovey enlisted for one year in the Continental army, and Alpheus Crosby in captain Daniel Emerson's company in Mooney's regiment, sent to the relief of Rhode Island.

A regiment under command of Colonel Moses Nichols served three months at West Point in the autumn of 1780. Dr. Henry Codman was surgeon.

In the company commanded by William Barron, we find the following names: Andrew Bradford, William Wallace.

In the summer of 1781, Paul Crosby enlisted in Captain John Mill's company, Colonel Reynolds's regiment, on the Vermont frontier, and served three months.

In 1782, there was a call for three-years men to recruit the Continental army, and Andrew Bradford responded to the call. The same year Timothy McIntire enlisted in the company of rangers, commanded by Captain Ebenezer Webster, for the protection of our northern frontier, and served three months.

This was the last enlistment for service in the War of the Revolution. No attempt has been made to state here all the service performed by each soldier.

Although our town was not known among the municipalities of the state during this eventful period, we present the following list of patriotic soldiers who had their homes upon the soil now known as the town of Milford. We do not offer it as a perfect roll of Milford men in that war, but as the best we have been able to make after the lapse of so much time.

## SOLDIERS IN THE REVOLUTION.

*Captain, Josiah Crosby,*  
*Captain, John Bradford*  
*Lieutenant, David Wallingford*  
*Lieutenant, Thompson Maxwell*  
*Sergeant, Nathan Hutchinson*  
*Surgeon, Henry Codman*

*Privates,*

Barker, Daniel,  
Bevins, Benjamin,  
Blanchard, Jacob,  
Blanchard, Stephen,  
Blanchard, Stephen, Jr.,  
Bradford, Andrew,  
Brown, Caleb,  
Burnham, David,  
Burnham, Israel,  
Burnham, Jonathan,  
Burnham, Joshua,  
Crosby, Ezekiel,  
Crosby, Alepheus,  
Crosby, Ezekiel,  
Crosby, Joseph,  
Crosby, Josiah, Jr.,  
Crosby, Nathaniel,  
Crosby, Paul,  
Crosby, Stephen,  
Crosby, William,  
Grimes, William,  
Grimes, Francis,  
Grimes, John,  
Holt, Abiel,  
Holt, Jabez,  
Honey, Calvin,  
Hutchinson, Benjamin,  
Hutchinson, Ebenezer,  
Jones, Caleb,  
Jones, William,  
Lewis, Asa,  
Lewis, Joseph,  
McIntire, Andrew,  
McIntire, Timothy,  
Small, William, Jr.,  
Taylor, Jonathan,  
Towne, Bartholomew,  
Towne, Jonathan,  
Wallace, John,  
Wallace, Joseph,  
Wallace, William,  
Wright, Benjamin.