

the use of firearms and were armed with muskets. The bow and arrow was an obsolete weapon with them. They had developed agriculture to a degree that surprises us when we read the old chronicles. Appreciating the fact that most of you here to-day are engaged in farming or in business closely allied with it, I am going to digress slightly at this point and call your attention to some important facts about Indian agriculture in North America. We are accustomed to believe that nearly all the staple food crops which we use to-day were brought originally to this country by the white man. In that belief, we are very much mistaken. Here is a list of crops which the white man never heard of until he came to this continent and found the Indians producing them. The list includes potatoes, corn, beans, peppers, pumpkins, squash, and tomatoes. These vegetables were unknown in Europe until they were brought back from America. So it should be understood that we American farmers are heavily in debt to the Indian for the original development of pretty nearly half of our staple food crops. Most of these vegetables were produced by the Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy. Their farming methods were crude. They had nothing in the way of farm machinery, but nevertheless they cultivated their lands in such fashion as to produce quantities sufficient to feed themselves. Sullivan's reports and the diaries of his officers contain many descriptions of the corn, beans, pumpkins and squash which they found growing in the neighborhood of the Indian villages through which they passed. More than that, the Indians had absorbed from the whites a knowledge of fruit culture. For example, they had extensive apple orchards; one orchard containing as many as fifteen hundred apple trees is mentioned in the diaries. Smaller orchards of peaches and plums were found by Sullivan's men.

So we see that the Indians with their corn, vegetables and fruit, added to the game with which the region abounded, were a pretty well-fed people. Several years before the Revolution, the Indians had ceased to live in shelters composed of skins stretched over poles, and had

built for themselves log houses. In some of these houses there were chimneys and glass windows. In a few instances Sullivan's men found the more prosperous Indian living in a crudely constructed frame house. Thus the Indians, well fed and well housed, were firmly settled all through this central and western New York country. They were not a roving people. They were a settled people. Here were their homes, and they loved their homes and this beautiful country just as we do to-day.

Sullivan's army was gathered at Easton in northeastern Pennsylvania in the spring of 1779. General John Sullivan, selected by Washington as its commander, was a native of New Hampshire. Although only thirty-nine years of age at the time, he was a veteran soldier and had taken part in many of the battles of the Revolution. Contrary to a conception which I, and I have no doubt many others, have had, Sullivan's force was not composed of hastily gathered militiamen, little disciplined, ill equipped. On the contrary, Washington saw to it that the force should be composed of the very best in the American army. In the main, it consisted of four infantry brigades of veteran troops—men who had fought at Bunker Hill, Princeton, Trenton, Germantown, and in other Revolutionary battles. One brigade was composed of New Hampshire troops, one of Pennsylvania troops, one of New Jersey troops and one of New York troops—all of them line organizations. The force also included a battalion of the famous Morgan riflemen, as well as a battalion of field artillery. The records show that General Sullivan, as Commander-in-chief, had an adequate staff and in each brigade and regiment there was a corresponding staff, all of them organized according to the best military thought of the day.

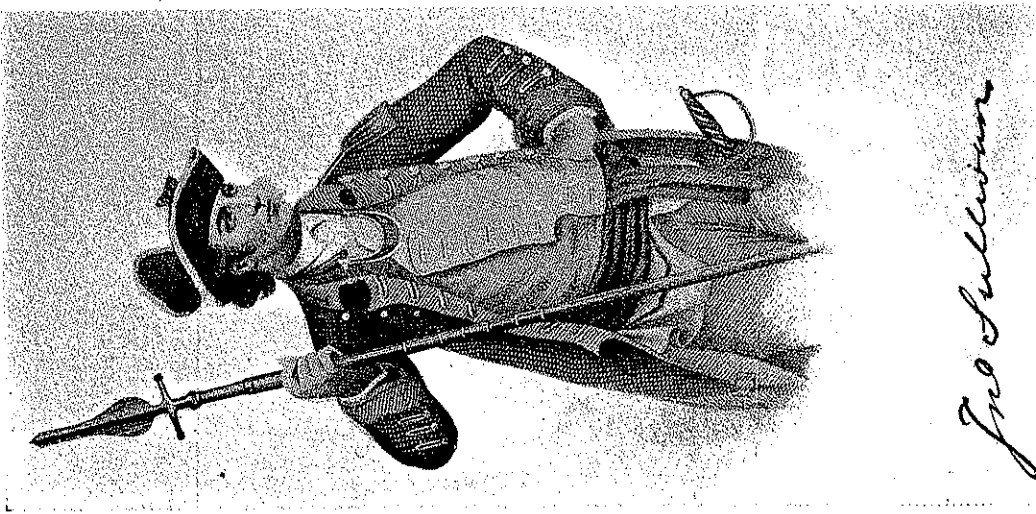
Sullivan's brigadiers were Generals Hand, Poor, Maxwell, and Clinton,—the latter a brother of the then governor of New York, George Clinton. These four brigadiers had had a long and creditable experience in the handling of troops. Colonel Proctor, an accomplished officer, commanded the artillery. As I have already said, the main body was concentrated at Easton, Pennsylvania, and on

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the last day of July, 1779, started on its march into the so-called Southern Tier of New York. A few days later, at a point known as Tioga, Clinton's brigade coming from the Mohawk Valley by way of Otsego Lake joined the main body and this completed the concentration. At that time the expedition numbered close to five thousand men. About one thousand of these were boatmen and packers. These civilians were needed especially in the earlier stages of the march which carried the expedition through a particularly rough country and along the Susquehanna and Chemung rivers. To get a further idea of the completeness of the preparations and the size of the undertaking, we should note that the expedition included in its equipment twelve hundred pack horses and seven hundred beef cattle.

The rigors of the march were extraordinary. The accounts contained in the diaries of the men indicated the hardships they suffered. In their journey westward along the Southern Tier, they were constantly wading in the streams, dragging their boats and heavy equipment with them. On many occasions, the men worked up to their waists in swamps, day and night. The Indian trails were narrow. The country was heavily timbered. Hundreds of men were kept at work with axes clearing a way for the artillery and supplies. The Indians were thoroughly aware of the organization and general purpose of the expedition. They watched every step of its progress and gathered their forces to resist it. Occasionally they fired upon the advance guard or the flankers, but they offered no organized resistance until the army reached a point near which the city of Elmira now stands. There the Indians, reinforced by several hundred Tories, prepared an entrenched position, determined, if possible, to repulse General Sullivan or at least to inflict upon him such losses as to deter him from proceeding further. The conflict which ensued has gone down in history as the Battle of New Town. Sullivan had left behind him a garrison at Tioga and his force of combat troops was thus reduced to something below four thousand. The most reliable accounts indicate that the Indians and Tories mustered about twelve hundred men. The fight

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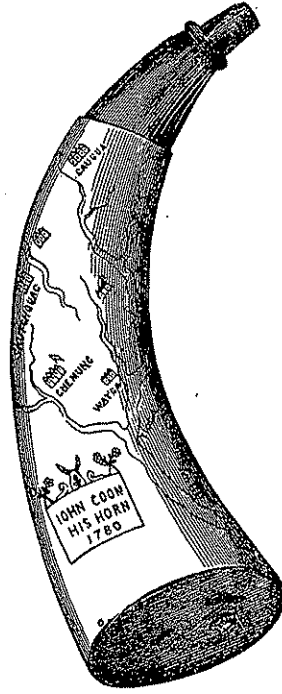


General John Sullivan.

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was short and sharp. One of Sullivan's brigades succeeded in outflanking the Indian position and with comparatively small losses (three killed, sixteen wounded) the Americans turned the Indian position and drove them back. Their flight was precipitate and accompanied by considerable losses. This defeat was inflicted upon the Indians and the Tories on August 29th. It brought great discouragement to them. The news of it spread over the Indian country and the red man began to realize that he could not hope to resist Sullivan's well-organized and powerful force.



Route of Sullivan's army as traced on a soldier's powder horn.

Sullivan's supplies of beef, flour, coffee and other articles which the white soldier needs, were running short at this time. He was desirous of proceeding much further westward but in order to do so he had to ask his men to live on half-rations. The problem was explained to the soldiers by their officers, and with one accord and without a murmur they expressed their willingness to go ahead with their daily rations cut in two. From New Town the expedition turned northward toward the head of Seneca Lake and reached that point after passing through the valley of the inlet of that lake—an exceedingly difficult march. Then, instead of turning westward, Sullivan proceeded further northward along the east side of Seneca Lake following the high ground. At this stage of their advance the march was easier because, although they were passing through a timbered country, they did not encounter the swamps and streams which had plagued them in the earlier stages.

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Reaching the foot of Seneca Lake, they turned west, passing the site first of the present city of Geneva and then of the present city of Canandaigua. From that point, they proceeded westward to the neighborhood of the modern Honeoye Falls.

In this part of the country, modern Ontario County, the expedition encountered larger villages and more extensive agriculture. Carrying out his orders, Sullivan destroyed the villages and crops. The Indians, having retired further westward, offered no resistance. Leaving a small garrison fortified in log huts and behind barricades at Honeoye, the column turned toward the southwest, passed the foot of Hemlock Lake, and proceeded southwesterly along the divide separating Hemlock and Conesus lakes, through that country now comprising the towns of Livonia and Conesus. Reaching the head of Conesus Lake, the men gazed across the valley through which the Conesus inlet flows, and saw before them the hills of Groveland. On the eastern edge of the inlet valley they found an Indian village. The chief of that village went by the name of Big Tree. Like the others, the village was deserted.

Sullivan reached this point on September 12th. He knew he was getting into the neighborhood of the Genesee River, but had no accurate conception of the country in front of him or the exact location of the river. He had been told that the Senecas, the most numerous and most warlike of the five tribes, had established their largest village and their most extensive agricultural activities on the Genesee. His best guess was that the big village was on the east side of the river. He did not know whether he had eight or twenty-eight miles to travel through the forest before reaching it. The autumn season was advancing and his supplies were running short. If he were to succeed in delivering the last final blow, he must hurry, for it must be remembered that his army would have to find its way back to Easton, on very meager supplies, before the cold weather set in.

The inlet of Conesus Lake runs, as you all know, through a swampy lowland. Sullivan's army encamped on the east-

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ern slopes of the little valley on September 12th. In order to get the artillery across the inlet, it was necessary for Sullivan's men to build a bridge. Sullivan, realizing this, determined to make the best use of the time consumed in the building, so he sent for young Lieutenant Thomas Boyd, one of the most gallant officers in his army, a veteran of many battles and of proven initiative, enterprise, and courage. Conversing with Boyd on the evening of the twelfth, Sullivan instructed him to select four or five men and to start out that night on a scouting expedition up over the Groveland hills, in an effort to find out something of the whereabouts of the Genesee River and the great village of the Senecas. [See map inside front and back covers.]

Thus was Thomas Boyd brought into the picture which we are trying to visualize here to-day. The records show that Lieutenant Boyd disobeyed his orders to a certain extent, though no doubt with the best of intentions. Instead of selecting four or five, he selected twenty-six men to accompany him on this dangerous mission. Those versed in Indian warfare expressed the opinion later, that a group of twenty-six was too large to escape detection by the Indians and at the same time too small to put up an effective fight, should they encounter the enemy in force. It might have been better for Boyd's purposes, had he taken but four or five men with him.

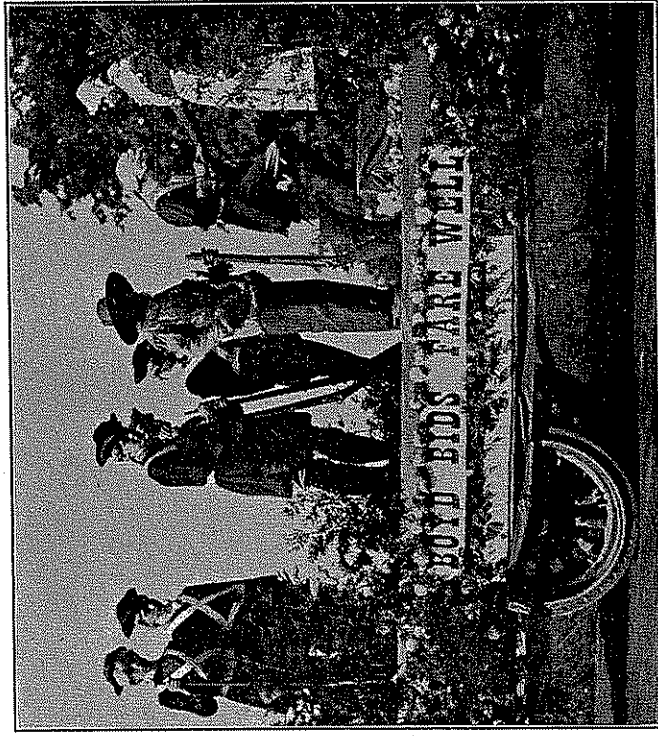
In any event, he started that night, the twelfth, up that hillside, following the narrow Indian trail. The hillside was steep, cut with ravines and heavily timbered. In fact, all of Boyd's journey across what is now the town of Groveland was made through a thick forest. After he had covered about half the distance between the headwaters of Conesus Lake and the Genesee Valley proper, he came to a fork in the trail, one path turning to the right and leading in a northwesterly direction. Had Boyd turned to the right at the fork, he would have reached finally an Indian village on what is now known as the Williamsburg farm situated on the modern highway between Mount Morris and Geneseo. He turned to the left, however, and after further travel through the forest, found himself in the early hours of the

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morning at a deserted Indian village standing on a table of land overlooking Canaseraga Creek. I can identify this spot to you by stating that in later years there was built upon it a residence known as the Hermitage owned by the Carroll and Fitzhugh families who came to this Valley about 1800. There were between twenty and thirty Indian log houses in this village. Like the others, it was deserted. Boyd felt that he could go no further and promptly sent two of his men back to Sullivan, to report his situation. These two men made the return journey safely. Boyd and his party remained in the deserted village at the Hermitage site until about daylight of the morning of September 13th.

Now let us get an understanding of the curious combination of events that occurred during the night and early



Courtesy Livonia Gazette

"Boyd Bids Farewell" on leaving home. Float of Harrison-Lee Post No. 283, American Legion, Livonia.

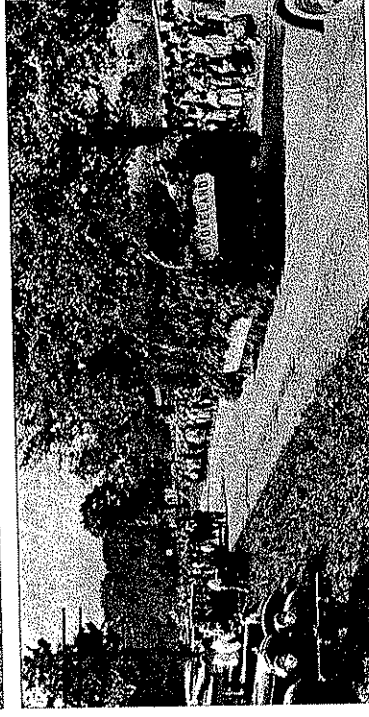
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morning hours of September 12th-13th. As I have said, the Indians had made no spirited resistance since the Battle of New Town. However, when Sullivan reached the head of Conesus Lake and was thus within striking distance of their greatest stronghold, they determined to attempt to defend this Valley or at least to make Sullivan pay heavily for any further advance. They selected for their position of resistance that same Groveland Hill which overlooked the Conesus inlet. They reached this decision sometime during the day of September 12th. That night five or six hundred Indians under the leadership of Colonel Butler, the Tory, left their villages here in the Valley proper and moved eastward over the trail to take position on the hill overlooking Sullivan's army, a detachment of which was at work building the bridge over the inlet. They traveled over the same trail covered by Boyd and his twenty-six men that same night—but Boyd had made the trip westward to the village on the Hermitage site a little earlier in the night, and consequently the two forces did not meet.

In the early morning hours of the 13th, the Indians took up their position overlooking Conesus Inlet, and had no idea that Boyd, with twenty-four men, was behind them; Boyd's party, lying quiet at the Hermitage site, had no idea that hundreds of Indians had taken station between him and Sullivan's army. As the sun rose that morning, some Indians were seen by Boyd's men prowling in the neighborhood of the deserted village, whereupon a serious mistake was made by one of Boyd's soldiers. He fired on one of the Indians and killed him. The reverberation of that shot echoed through the forest and the Indians instantly knew that there were some Americans in that neighborhood, far in advance of the main body and, incidentally, cut off from the main body. Thus, the Indians knew about Boyd before Boyd knew about them.

The young lieutenant started with his men at about day-break to return to the main army. As he traveled back along that trail through the forest, he saw Indians from time to time trotting along ahead of his little column, en-



On the road between Cuylerville and the Wayside Shrine as the Boyd and Parker floats passed by. *Top*: "Sullivan and His Staff Discuss Campaign Plans" (Joseph Gallipeau Post No. 294, American Legion, Avon) and "Boyd Bids Farewell" (Harrison-Lee Post No. 283, Livonia); *Center*: "Boyd and Parker Ambushed" (arranged by citizens of Groveland); *Bottom*: "Assembly of the Victorious Patriots" (Rollo Noble Post No. 955, Retsof).

ticing them onward. The Indians knew exactly what they were doing. Finally, after allowing Boyd and his party to reach a favorable spot over toward the lake, they threw themselves upon the Americans in overwhelming numbers. Completely surrounded, the American soldiers put up a desperate fight on that fatal morning of September 13th. They fought with their rifles until their ammunition ran out, then with clubbed muskets, and finally with their fists. The Indians, too, were ferocious in their attack, the more so as they knew that Boyd's party would have to be destroyed before Sullivan's forces, hearing the firing, could come to its rescue. In spite of their extraordinary gallantry, the Americans were doomed. Accounts conflict as to how many escaped. We know, however, that fourteen were killed at that place and that Boyd and Sergeant Parker were captured. This would indicate that about eight men broke through the cordon of Indians and reached their comrades at the head of Conesus.

Then this curious thing happened. The force of Indians, disturbed and puzzled by the uproar behind them caused by Boyd's fight, abandoned their position overlooking Sullivan's army and retreated hurriedly to the westward, toward their village on the Genesee. Thus, when Sullivan's army advanced up that hill later in the day on the 13th, it met no resistance. The soldiers came upon the bodies, fourteen of them, lying where they fell, and thus learned the fate of Boyd's scouting party. But Boyd himself and Sergeant Parker were nowhere to be seen. The Indians had carried them off as prisoners. At this late day we can only surmise what might have happened, had events taken a different course, but it is permissible for us to entertain the belief that had Boyd's party not been caught as it was, and had it not put up that terrific fight against annihilation, the main body of Indians would have remained in their defensive position and would have offered stout resistance to Sullivan's army as it climbed the hill. Indeed, Sullivan might well have lost a considerable number of men at that point, probably many more than were lost with Boyd. So we may believe that while Boyd was unaware

of the service he was rendering, his fate and that of his men actually saved lives.

The army advanced westward across what is now the town of Groveland on the 13th and that night bivouacked in and around the village at the Hermitage site in which Boyd and his party had spent the latter portion of the preceding night. The next morning, the 14th, the expedition dropped down into the valley of the Canaseraga, forded that stream at a point just below its confluence with Keshequa Creek, emerged upon the Canaseraga-Genesee flats and marched across them in a northwesterly direction. I know you will pardon my especial interest in the march of that day, for it is apparent, judging from the records, and diaries, that Sullivan's soldiers crossed what are sometimes known as the Kemp farm flats, a part of the farm upon which I have lived for twenty-five years. I don't know how you feel about it, but I wish I could have been there to see them.

The diaries of the officers describing this day's march are very interesting. They described the great level open spaces, dotted here and there with groves of beautiful trees. No longer were they in a forest. They could see far ahead of them over fields covered with waving grass. The diaries go on to say that the whole force proceeded across that beautiful stretch of country in perfect order. A line of skirmishers was thrown out in advance. Along each flank were additional skirmishers. The main body was disposed in three columns, with the artillery and supplies in the center. The front of the force covered a distance of half a mile and, according to the diaries, the intervals between the columns and the various units were maintained with military precision. One mounted officer states in his diary that the grass was from six to eight feet high and that at times all that could be seen were the bayonets of the troops glistening in the sun. As to that grass, I venture the guess that there were no thistles or wild carrots in it! Proceeding northwesterly, the army crossed the Genesee River out on the flats not far from the mouth of the High Banks and finally, by following the beaten trails, reached the great

village of the Senecas, which stood here where we are gathered to-day, not more than half a mile from the modern village of Cuylerville.

The village was known as Little-Beardstown, and proved to be by far the largest of any Indian villages encountered up to that time. It contained 128 houses, all built of logs and some of them with glass windows and chimneys. Here had been the headquarters of Butler, the Tory, and Brant, the Iroquois chief. With this village as a center, the farming operations of the Indians spread up and down the Valley and collectively constituted their greatest granary. In this immediate neighborhood, Sullivan's men found 200 acres of corn and great quantities of vegetables, growing luxuriantly. Moreover, a large quantity of corn was found in storage. The reports state that 20,000 bushels were destroyed, besides the growing crops and the village itself.

Mary Jemison, the famous White Woman of the Genesee, lived at this village. In later years, when the whites settled this country, she related this incident from the Indian standpoint. She described the feelings of the Indians as Sullivan's irresistible force approached,—how they hoped against hope that it could be frustrated; how, on the day before its arrival, the women and children, she among them, were withdrawn from the village and placed in hiding in the forest overlooking the village and the flats from the westward. Their idea was that, thus placed, they could return to their village in the event that Sullivan was repulsed at Conesus Inlet or, if the village were captured, they could escape westward toward Fort Niagara. It will be remembered that Mary Jemison, a white woman, had been captured by the Indians in a raid some years before and while still a little child had been brought by them into the Genesee Country. Here she grew to womanhood and lived the life of a squaw, ignorant of the ways of white people. Her superior intelligence showed itself as she grew up and in later years she wielded a very important influence among the Indians and was most effective in helping them to adjust their relations with the whites.

Just across the road from where we are sitting, stands a

great tree known as the Torture Tree. Under it, on September 14th, the day the village was captured, Sullivan's men found the bodies of Lieutenant Boyd and Sergeant Parker. The sergeant apparently had been killed with comparatively little torture. Lieutenant Boyd, however, had been subjected to terrible treatment—so terrible, so ghastly, that I think I shall not attempt to describe it. We shall never know just what happened when Boyd and Parker were brought to the Indian headquarters on the 13th. Legend has it that Colonel John Butler, the Tory, attempted to compel Boyd to divulge information about Sullivan's army and that Boyd refused to do it, in spite of the fact that he knew death was staring him in the face. Legend goes on to say that Butler, enraged at Boyd's refusal to betray his people, turned him over to the Indians to be tortured and killed.

There is no background of historical fact to support the legend. It is more probable that Butler and his Tories, anxious to escape before Sullivan's arrival, took no formal action with regard to Boyd and Parker and that the Indians, free to work their vengeance, inflicted these terrible cruelties upon Boyd before killing him and Parker. Judging from what we know of the character of these two men, we can be perfectly certain that they met death unafraid. The bodies were buried here by Sullivan's men. They lay undisturbed until 1841 when, for some unaccountable reason (at least, it seems unaccountable to me), they were exhumed, taken to Rochester and buried there in Mount Hope. I think this a pity. They should be lying under that tree yonder where they made their great sacrifice.

The Indians having retreated precipitately toward Fort Niagara, Sullivan's army, after spending the better part of two days at this spot, destroying the village and the crops surrounding it, started back on its homeward march to the eastward. In some quarters, Sullivan has been criticized for not pursuing the Indians to Fort Niagara and, indeed, for not capturing that British-Indian stronghold at the mouth of the Niagara River. The criticism is unfair in the extreme. Fort Niagara lay another hundred miles

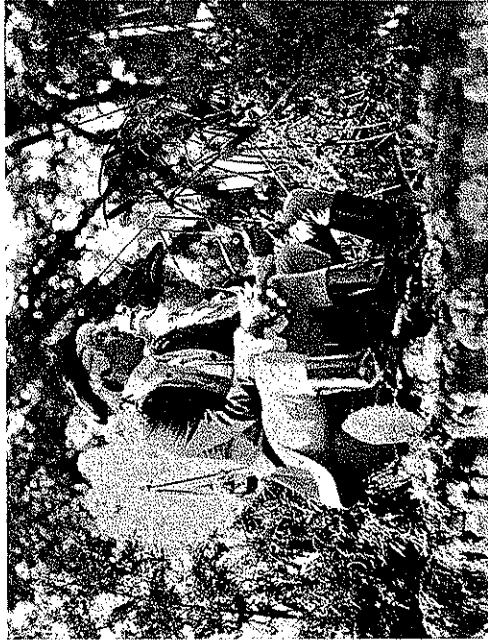
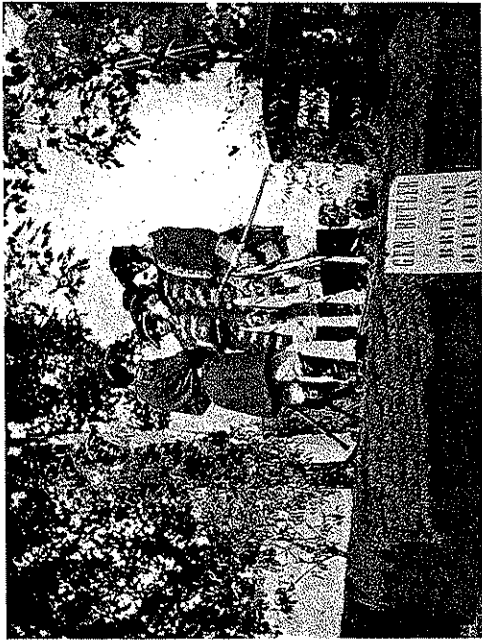
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to the westward, with an untracked and unexplored, heavily timbered country intervening. As I have already stated, Sullivan's men were living on half-rations. The season was growing late. Had Sullivan attempted to lead his expedition through an additional hundred miles of forest, he would have courted disaster. He knew he had brought discouragement and punishment to the Indians of the Confederacy, that he had destroyed by far the major portion of their resources, and that for the coming winter they must live upon the bounty of the British at Niagara—and having accomplished this it was far more important that he should bring his force back to the eastern settlements in fact and ready to continue as an important element in the Continental Army.

His men as they returned eastward followed approximately the same route they had traversed on their westward march. The return march was uneventful except that, upon several occasions, Sullivan sent out detachments which destroyed some Indian villages which had been overlooked on the westward march. Arriving at Easton, Pennsylvania, toward the end of October, Sullivan made his final report to his Commander-in-chief and the Continental Congress. His achievement was hailed with applause and every sign of gratification. The summer and autumn of 1779 had not been a very happy season for the American arms in the contest against the British, and Sullivan's Expedition, successful as it was, greatly relieved the gloom which had spread throughout the thirteen struggling Colonies.

Two or three things impress the student of this expedition. First, the splendid discipline and physical condition of the men. The march was a terribly difficult one, involving hard labor in the forests, streams and swamps, to say nothing of the great distances covered. There was no straggling. Only a few score men were footsore. There was very little sickness. Only forty men died, of the entire number engaged in the march. This is the more remarkable when we remember that these men covered, all told, 560 miles through the wilderness. From all this, it is per-

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British and American soldiers of the Revolution as depicted in the Boyd and Parker floats. *Upper*: "Butler in Conference with British Officers" (Harvey L. Brady Post No. 354, American Legion, Mt. Morris); *Lower*: "Finding of the Bodies of Boyd and Parker" (citizens of Conesus).

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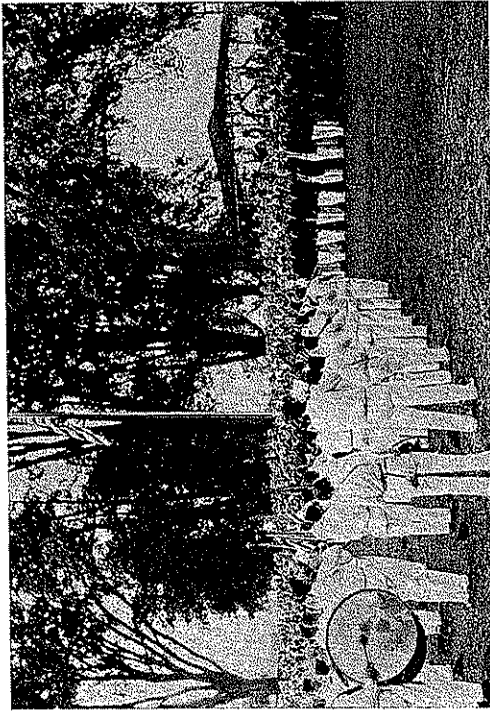
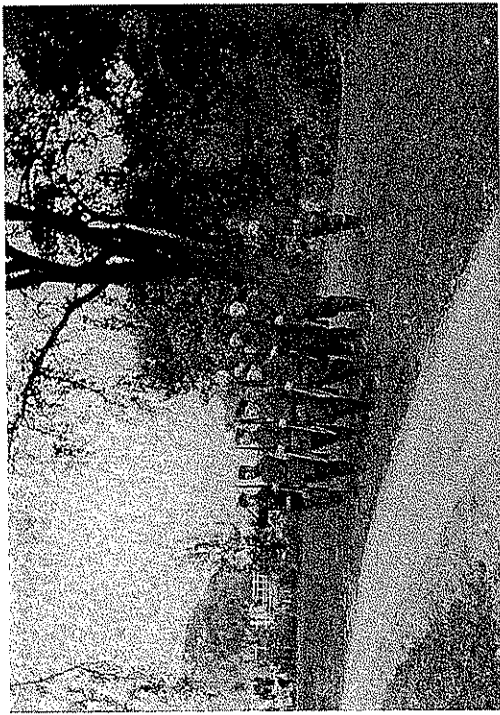
BOYD AND PARKER

fectly apparent that Sullivan's men were hardened, disciplined veterans, ready to tackle anything, confident of their strength and the justness of their cause.

Second, we are impressed with what might be called the after-effects of this expedition. Remember, if you please, that this great stretch of Indian country in central and western New York was quite unknown to the whites. Sullivan's soldiers traversed it, and noted its fertility with ever-increasing astonishment. Returning to the settlements, they spread the fame of this region far and wide, with the result that, shortly after the Revolution was brought to a successful termination, great numbers of people in New England, New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania took the first opportunity of coming into this country as permanent settlers.

Many of Sullivan's veterans were in the vanguard of that later invasion. They had seen this country—and having seen it, they wanted to come and live here. With them, they brought that love of independence, that initiative, that enterprise, which has characterized American frontiersmen from the beginning of our history and which enabled them in an astonishingly short time to build up here in western New York thriving communities, typically American. Thus did these men contribute to the cause of independence. Thus did they establish institutions idealizing liberty under the law. Thus did they blaze the way for us, their descendants. We are gathered here to-day to remind each other of the hardships these men went through, to acknowledge the debt we owe them, and to rededicate ourselves to the ideals for which they fought.

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Veterans of the World War honor the memory of Lieutenant Boyd and Sergeant Parker of the Revolutionary Army. *Upper:* American Legion Firing Squad from Daniel Goho Post No. 87, American Legion, Dausville, which fired the salute to the dead; *Lower:* American Legion Community Band of Mt. Morris playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" as the flag is raised and the Legionnaires stand at attention.

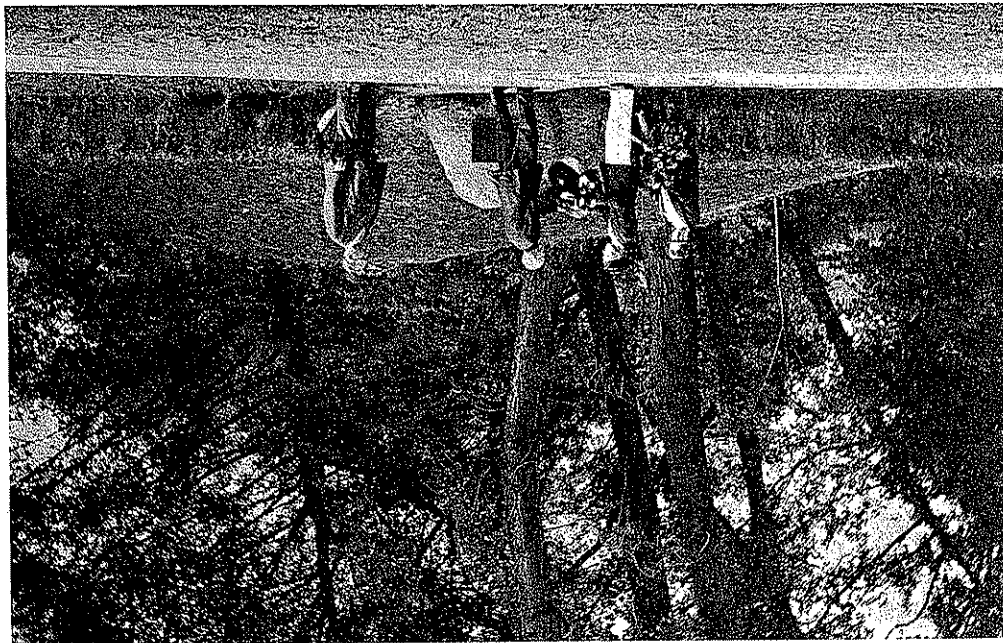
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INTRODUCTION OF MR. FOREMAN AND OTHERS

By CHAIRMAN FETHERSTON: We have next on our program the dedication of the Shrine. I want you to meet Mr. William P. Boyd, a representative of the original Boyd family of which Lieutenant Thomas Boyd was a member. He will unveil the boulder and bronze tablet. Here is Miss Ruth Barber, representing the Daughters of the American Revolution, who will place a wreath on the burial mound. I also wish to introduce to you our good friend, John White Johnston, of the Memorial Pipe Band, who will accompany the unveiling party to the boulder.

Before proceeding with the remainder of our program, on behalf of the Society I desire to express appreciation of the efforts of all who contributed, in money, time or energy, to make this occasion successful and memorable. We have had the hearty co-operation of the American Legion veterans of the World War, in organizing and managing the historical parade and now, in combination with our own local Troop M of Geneseo, we shall witness the soldiers honoring a fellow hero. Mr. Edward E. Brogan, County Commander of the Legion, will have charge of these ceremonies.

The formal dedication to the service of the public of a plot of ground, a monument and a celebrated tree, requires something more than a mere man—it needs the services of a historian-poet who can visualize and idealize the object of the donation and the means of successfully achieving the purpose of the gift. One of the staunch backers of this whole project is a member of the Council of the Livingston County Historical Society. He is also Historian of the City of Rochester—Mr. Edward R. Foreman will formally dedicate the Shrine and conduct the ceremonies in connection with the unveiling of the boulder.



Unveiling of the tablet by Mr. William P. Boyd. Mr. Boyd is handing the flag to Mr. William T. Larkin of Mt. Morris, former County Commander, American Legion. At the left is Miss Ruth Barber of Livonia, representing the D. A. R.; at the right Mr. Victor H. Boyd. The burial mound erected in 1841 is directly back of the boulder.