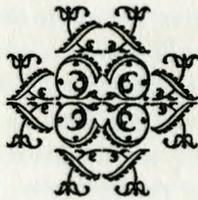


Proceedings
of the
VERMONT
Historical Society



Montpelier Vermont

1937

P V H S
Proceedings of the
Vermont Historical Society
1937

NEW SERIES

Issued Quarterly

VOL. V No. 1

ETHAN ALLEN—THE SOLDIER.
AN ADDRESS

By COLONEL LEONARD F. WING

Colonel Leonard F. Wing and President John Spargo of the Society were the principal speakers at the joint session of the Vermont Senate and House of Representatives held at the State House, January 21, 1937. The exercises were arranged by President Spargo in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ethan Allen on January 10, 1737. Details of the program are given on page 34. Editor.

Mr. President, Your Excellency, Members of the General Assembly, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I AM not unmindful of the honor which you have conferred upon me by the invitation to address you this evening upon the subject of Ethan Allen, the soldier. Within the short time allotted, those of you who have made a study of his military career can readily appreciate that it will be impossible to deal extensively or in detail with his various military activities. There are, however, some incidents in his life concerning which I wish to refresh your recollection, that to my mind indicate his military ability, and establish without question or doubt his right to a high place among the military leaders of this Republic.

First, we must have in mind the fact that Ethan Allen was not a professional soldier trained in the calling of arms; that his military knowledge, strategy and tactics were obtained in the hard school of

experience and under conditions that at all times were most hazardous and trying.

For more than a century and a half there has been that which would seem to the unprejudiced reader, a studied attempt to detract from his achievements, to disparage his accomplishments, his character and reputation as a soldier and a man. Although his contemporary enemies and those prejudiced writers who have followed them, have attempted to portray him as a demagogue, mountebank, adventurer and land-grabber, his deeds have survived all attacks, and his fame outshines them who are sleeping in forgotten graves.

I think that to appreciate the true character and the underlying reason for the success of Ethan Allen in his unparalleled conflict, first, with the great province of New York, and then with the Mother Country, we must have in mind that trait in his character which describes the man as I conceive him, and was the actuating motive behind everything that he did in life.

He says in his "Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity," published upon his return to his native heath,

Ever since I arrived at a state of manhood and acquainted myself with the general history of mankind, I have felt a sincere passion for liberty.

All of the strength of body and intellect in this man as revealed by the history of his life and accomplishments, even his bitterest enemies and critics must admit, was always used in support of "a passion for liberty."

Allen's first military service was during the French and Indian Wars. In the summer of 1757 Fort William Henry was in danger, and Allen, together with other men and boys—Allen was then only nineteen—from northwestern Connecticut, answered the call for volunteers. He saw no fighting and was in the service only fourteen days. However, it is probable that during this campaign, Allen first gazed upon the Green Mountains, those mountains that to future generations were to be synonymous with his name.

With the Peace of Paris, that territory between Lake Champlain and Connecticut was opened to settlement, and Benning Wentworth, the Governor of the Royal Province of New Hampshire, chartered several towns therein. The dispute, engendered as a result of settlers coming into this territory, over the title to the lands thus granted, was the motivating cause which started Allen upon his military career.

Ethan Allen, now in the full vigor of young manhood, already well and favorably known among the inhabitants of the New Hampshire Grant, was about to step forth as the leader and champion in the struggle for that which every freeborn American has always held most dear—home and individual liberty.

After trying one lawsuit in the courts of New York, involving title to a portion of the disputed lands, and as a result of the judge's decision, being made to realize that no redress could be obtained from that source, at a meeting held in Bennington in the spring of 1770 of those principally interested in the lands then known as the "New Hampshire Grants," it was resolved to resort to force if necessary to defend their homes and firesides against the unjust claims of the Yorkers; and, thereafter, until received into the sisterhood of these United States, they demonstrated pretty clearly the axiom that "possession is nine points of the law."

Immediately they formed a military organization to give strength to their decision—an organization of citizen-soldiers that had so large a part in the history of our state and nation, "The Green Mountain Boys," who chose as their Colonel with the unanimity of thought that was unusual among those rugged individualists, Ethan Allen.

Thenceforth, until the battle-clouds of the American Revolution had dissolved in the distant horizon, Ethan Allen was the leader in fact of those hardy pioneers who founded this state and created for it its part within the nation. Sometimes he did not hold the title, but always in the hearts of his men he was their leader, their idol, and their ideal of a citizen-soldier.

The methods that he used in meeting the attempted invasions by the various agents and emissaries of the New York grantees are so well known to every Vermonter that a repetition in detail would be entirely out of place. That as the result of their activities under his leadership it was both unhealthy and dangerous for those holding title under the Great Seal of the Province of New York, to attempt to take possession under their alleged titles in the Grants, is borne out by the fact that, whereas it was almost impossible for the grantees under New York to make sale of their lands, there was a constantly increasing demand for land granted by Governor Wentworth.

The summary punishments meted out to those who attempted to take possession of their lands unlawfully, as the Green Mountain Boys claimed; the administering of the Beech Seal, in a few cases; the tearing down of houses in other instances, and the forcible eject-

ment in many cases, soon made Ethan Allen and his principal lieutenants marked men, marked by the Government of New York for punishment. Governor Tryon of that Province outlawed Ethan, as well as eight of his fellow officers, and offered a reward of twenty pounds each for their arrest. The Green Mountain Boys celebrated the news of this action by the Royal Governor by holding a review on New Year's Day in 1772 at Bennington.

Somebody read, in Allen's presence, the Proclamation of the Governor, offering the reward, whereupon Ethan remarked, turning his face toward Albany—"So your name is Tryon! Try on and be damned!" This message was doubtless carried to the Royal Governor, and only made his wrath blaze stronger.

At about this time the Green Mountain Boys also received another title, probably on account of their free use of the Beech Seal—that of "Twigs of the Wilderness." There is a well-founded story that has come down through the centuries that following the capture of Ticonderoga there was among their number a man who was skilled in the art of drawing. Upon the powder-horns of most of the Green Mountain Boys, that have survived the years, there is a drawing of a five-pointed star and superimposed thereon the letters "T.O.T.W."—"Twigs of the Wilderness," and upon many of them a thumbnail drawing of the fortifications at Ticonderoga. This superscription on the powder horns was on that portion of it which was carried next to the body, and it is said that when they came upon a party unknown to them, that one called upon the other to show their passport which was the inscription upon the horn.

The Yorkers were his enemies, but among his friends was Colonel Skene who lived at Skenesboro, now Whitehall, N. Y. Allen had been entertained at his home. In due course, Skene was appointed a Justice of the Peace by New York, and it became his duty to arrest Ethan. Skene, however, really admiring the young Colonel, sent him a message by Ebenezer Allen, begging Ethan to "repair to Connecticut," and stay there until things quieted down, or else he, Skene, would be obliged to arrest him. In reply Ethan wrote him a long letter. The following extract is pertinent:

Sir: You have heard many Accounts of my Conduct called by the name of Riatous Disorderly, etc., and it is probable before next campaign is out You may hear more such sort of news. I am informed Governor Tryon has advertised me and some others and offered considerable reward to have us delivered

at New York, but a late account from there informs me that by virtue of a late law in Province they are not allowed to hand any man before they have ketched him.

Needless to say, the Yorkers did not "ketch" Allen, and so were unable to "hand" him.

There were many instances of Ethan's bravery that frequently amounted to rashness in his activities during this period of his life. However, perhaps that which characterizes his fearlessness best is the incident wherein Allen, when some of his cronies at Landlord Fay's Tavern in Bennington bet him that he dare not go to Landlord Benedict's in Albany and leave one of his posters, which contained matter extremely inflammatory against the Government of New York, he accepted without hesitation, rode to Albany a few days later, hitched his horse before Benedict's Tavern, entered the taproom and called for a bowl of punch. His face and figure were so well known that a crowd gathered at once, but he finished his punch, handed the poster to his host, left the house, mounted his horse and galloped away unscathed.

During the winter of 1757 Allen was in close touch with the situation of the citizens of Boston and the other colonies as regards the coming Revolution with the Mother Country. There is no doubt that during this time he conceived the plan, which he later executed, of seizing Fort Ticonderoga as the most strategic point between Canada and northern New York and New England.

"Ticonderoga Fort," as it was then called, had been built by the French in 1756. When constructed it was an impregnable fortress, defended on three sides by water, and on the fourth surrounded by rocks and breastwork nine feet in height. It was truly the Gibraltar of America.

Assessing its military value, we must have in mind that the swiftest mode of transportation at that time was over waterways, and that Ticonderoga commanded the gateway from Canada to the colonies in the south.

During the French and Indian Wars, it withstood an attack by the English and the Colonials under General Abercrombie in 1758, but was captured by the English General Amherst in 1759, and under the Treaty of Paris, the English were confirmed in possession of this military outpost.

Allen was at Westminster when he received the news of the bat-

ties at Concord and Lexington. We have his own words describing the effect that this news had upon him:

The history of nations, doomed to perpetual slavery, in consequence of yielding up to tyrants their natural born liberty, I read with a sort of philosophical horror; so that the first systematical and bloody attempt, at Lexington, to enslave America, thoroughly electrified my mind and fully determined me to take my part with my country.

Putting action to words, he immediately rode to Bennington where there were assembled most of the officers of the Green Mountain Boys and some of the men. It was decided that he should lead the Green Mountain Boys against Ticonderoga.

Just as they were about to move northward, Heman Allen, a brother of Ethan, arrived from Hartford with instructions from the Committee of Correspondence in Connecticut, to mobilize the Green Mountain Boys and move forward and capture Ticonderoga.

Colonel Easton of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, arrived at about the same time with 50 men. Allen had sent out the call and the Green Mountain Boys were gathering. Guards were placed on all roads leading to Fort Edward, Lake George, Skenesboro, Ticonderoga and Crown Point. A Council of War was assembled at Richard Bentley's house in Castleton on Monday morning, the 8th of May. A plan of campaign was evolved, which undoubtedly had its inception in the brain of Ethan, whereby thirty men under Samuel Herrick were sent to Skenesboro to take possession of Colonel Skene's menage and boats, one of which was to be rowed down the Lake during the night to meet the main body of the Green Mountain Boys at Hands Cove in Shoreham, so as to transport them across the Lake to Willow Point. A messenger was sent to Crown Point for the purpose of hiring boats and having them at Hands Cove to assist in transporting the men.

The Council, of course, gave command of the attacking party to Allen. In fact, we can assume without question that the Green Mountain Boys had chosen him to lead them and they would have, in all reasonable probability, been satisfied to follow no one else.

The rallying point of the Green Mountain Boys had been designated as Hands Cove, located on the eastern shore of Champlain about a mile north of Ticonderoga, hidden from the Fort across the Lake by the contour of the land, an ideal place to launch the attack from the Vermont side.

All during the night of May the 9th, the Green Mountain Boys, answered the call and alarm. Allen's scouts reported that there were less than fifty men as a garrison at the Fort. However, in spite of the small strength of the garrison, it was evident that an attack would be unsuccessful by the number of men under Allen's command unless it was a surprise. As they waited on the shore for the arrival of the boats to transport them across the Lake, there arrived the man whose name will always be synonymous with that of treason in our history, to question the right of Allen to command the expedition.

Captain Benedict Arnold, who had been commissioned by the Cambridge Committee of Safety to enlist 400 men and take Ticonderoga, had pushed on ahead of his troops upon learning of the plans of the Green Mountain Boys under Ethan Allen. Although he had already been denied command of the troops by the Council of War at Castleton, having arrived there after Allen had left for Shoreham, he seemed to be perfectly confident that the backwoods' officers would hand over the command of their forces to him.

The men, upon learning of this possibility, threatened to go home if they could not continue under their own officers. Finally, a compromise was effected whereby Arnold was to march at the head of the column with Allen, Allen to retain command of the expedition.

As dawn approached, the boats had not arrived from Skenesboro, but shortly a large scow came down the Lake from the north, which proved to be one belonging to Colonel Skene that was lying off the shore at Bridport.

At this time there were gathered 230 men on the shores of the cove, 70 were from Connecticut and Massachusetts, the balance being Green Mountain Boys. The scow, and another boat would accommodate 85 men. It was too near daylight to think of making more than one trip across the Lake. Allen's decision was to take 83 men, himself and Arnold, to the other shore, leaving Seth Warner in command of the balance. Loading the boats to capacity, they set out across the Lake now swept with squalls blowing up from the north. Landing just north of Willow Point, he formed his men for the attack. The hour was about three o'clock, still dark, but the dawn was appearing in the east, that hour of the twenty-four when most men's spirit and courage are at the lowest ebb. Perhaps to arouse, if necessary, his Green Mountain Boys to the highest pitch of patriotism and courage, he decided to say a few words before launching the attack, and no finer sentiment, no greater expression of fear-

lessness and courage in face of the enemy have been recorded in our history, I dare say in all the history of the world, than those which came from him at this time, when he said:

Friends and fellow soldiers, you have, for a number of years past, been a scourge and terror to arbitrary power. Your valor has been famed abroad and acknowledged as appears by the advice and orders to me, from the General Assembly of Connecticut, to surprise and take the garrison now before us. I now propose to advance before you, and in person, conduct you through the wicket gate; for we must this morning either quit our pretensions to valor, or possess ourselves of this fortress in a few minutes; and, inasmuch as it is a desperate attempt, which none but the bravest men dare undertake, I do not urge it on any contrary to his will. You that will undertake voluntarily, raise your firelocks.

Every man raised his gun, whereupon Allen gave the command to march toward the Fort. They approached the south wall of the main fort where there was a gate and a wicket. A sentry was posted there who undoubtedly was dozing and did not hear or see their approach. When he came to his senses, he saw in the pale gray light of the dawn, an enormous man, with sword drawn, rushing toward him. He cocked his musket and pulled the trigger, but the flint flashed in the pan and the gun did not fire. He turned and ran into the Fort, sounding the alarm. Allen, followed closely by his men, crowded through the wicket gate and gained the inside of the Fort. The first soldier to emerge from the Guard Room made a pass at one of the men with a charged bayonet. Allen, coming up just in time, hit the man over the head with the flat of his sword. He begged for quarter which was granted by Allen on condition that he show him the quarters of the Commandant. The soldier led the way to the staircase leading to the Commandant's quarters; as Allen with some of his men approached, the door opened and a lieutenant, who proved to be the second in command, stepped forth. Allen demanded the surrender of the Fort. The lieutenant asked by whose authority, to which Allen replied: "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." Brandishing his sword, he added he "must have immediate possession of the Fort and all the effects of George the Third, and if not complied with, or if there was a single gun fired in the Fort, neither man, woman or child would be left alive in the Fort."

Finding that the officer whom he addressed was not the Commandant, Allen attempted to break the door. The door opened

without his aid, however, and Captain Delaplace, the Commandant, stepped out.

There being apparently nothing else to do, he surrendered his sword to Allen and ordered his men to lay down their arms. Allen told Delaplace that his orders were from the Province of Connecticut. Arnold said his came from the Cambridge Committee of Correspondence.

Meanwhile, the Green Mountain Boys had broken into the barracks and captured the soldiers in their beds. On Allen's orders they were dragged out, lined up, their arms taken from them and placed in one room under a guard. Daylight was now breaking and the rear guard, under Warner, arrived. Someone apparently discovered the Captain's liquor supply because Ethan, writing afterward, said: "The sun seemed to rise that morning with a superior lustre; and Ticonderoga and its dependencies smiled on its conquerors, who tossed about the flowing bowl, and wished success to Congress and the liberty of America."

Warner demanded the honor of taking Crown Point, and he, together with Peleg Sunderland, Levi Allen, and a hundred men, immediately started out to accomplish that feat. Allen dispatched a messenger at once to ride post haste to Philadelphia with the captured colors and present them, together with a report of the conquest of the Green Mountain Boys, to the Congress then in session. He even dispatched a messenger to report to the Albany Committee of Correspondence, this in spite of the rather unpleasant experiences and feelings that must have existed between Allen and his now new-found allies on the west.

Shortly a messenger arrived with information of the capture of Colonel Skene's estate by Herrick, and later in the day, word was received from Warner that Crown Point, with its garrison consisting of one sergeant and eight privates, had surrendered.

Thus, due almost exclusively to the well-conceived strategy of Ethan Allen and the indomitable courage of the Green Mountain Boys under his command, the strongest fortress in America, together with all other strategic points on the south end of the Lake had capitulated to the colonies.

As the news spread throughout the colonies and across the sea to the Mother Country, the effect of this victory was most heartening to the colonies and must have made the King's ministers realize that they were faced with a real war among their rebellious brethren.

One hundred pieces of cannon, mortars, small arms and ammunition had come into the possession of the colonies by the capture of Ticonderoga, and upwards of one hundred pieces of cannon were captured at Crown Point. History records the service which this armament performed in the colonial cause in raising the siege at Boston.

That Allen was alive to the strategic position of Ticonderoga and the necessity of controlling the Lake to advance the colonists' cause, is reflected in his report of the capture to the Congress, wherein he says: "I humbly implore your assistance in immediately assisting the government of Connecticut in establishing a garrison in the reduced premises"; and as soon as the question of prisoners and immediate disposition of captured material had been disposed of, Allen turned his attention to the Lake.

At St. Johns, at the north end of the Lake, was a garrison of regulars. The English had a sloop of war stationed at that point. At Skenesboro, Herrick had captured a schooner, and after a council of war, Arnold was given command of the schooner, with the intention of going forward if possible, to surprise the sloop before its commander was appraised of the capture of the garrison at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. Allen was to follow with the batteaux and other transportation from Ticonderoga. In due course, Arnold captured the sloop and the garrison at St. Johns, consisting of a sergeant and twelve men. He destroyed all the other boats in the harbor and thereby obtained possession and control of the Lake.

Allen decided and announced that he was going to hold St. Johns against the English. Arnold frowned upon this plan, feeling that it could not be held against reinforcements that would surely be sent from Montreal. Allen was not to be deterred in his decision, however, and moved on to St. Johns. Learning that a detachment of 200 regulars were marching on St. Johns from Montreal, Allen prepared to ambush the enemy. However, before coming in contact with the English, he changed his plan and ordered his party to re-embark on their boats and cross the Sorriol River to St. Johns. They were attacked early the next morning and being outnumbered, they sailed to Crown Point, arriving at that point on Monday, May the 21st.

A council of war was held, and apparently upon Allen's insistence, it was decided to advance to Isle aux Noix, located about 10 miles south of St. Johns and use that as an advance outpost. This plan was

changed however, so that Point au Fer was chosen. However, the day after this decision was reached, a messenger arrived from Philadelphia with an order from Congress to remove the cannon and stores from Ticonderoga to the south end of Lake George so that they might be returned to His Majesty when the former harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so ardently wished for by the latter, rendered it consistent with the over-ruling law of self-preservation.

The reaction of Congress to his exploits did not set very well with Ethan. He did not think that there was any question but that things had reached such a pass between the colonies and the Mother Country, that there was no turning back and that it was too late for reconciliation.

Allen's conception of the military situation, insofar as it related to the north country, was much clearer than that of the Congress at this time, at least. His plan as expressed in letters to the Congress, of organizing a strong expedition, pushing vigorously on to capture Montreal and thereby cut off the possibility of the British using that city as a base from which to operate through New England and western New York, is sound, both from the strategical and tactical standpoint. Had Congress acted vigorously, instead of vacillating over the proposition as to whether or not they should take up a vigorous offensive against Great Britain at this time or rest on the laurels from the first skirmishes with the hope that King George would come to his senses and make a favorable peace, it is more than probable that the length of the Revolutionary War would have been appreciably shortened. If the course recommended by Allen had been adopted, history would not have recorded the expedition and defeat at Saratoga of "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne; the Battle of Hubbardton and the Battle of Bennington, where Allen's Green Mountain Boys wrote their names upon the pages of history with imperishable glory, would probably never have been fought.

The exploits of the Green Mountain Boys and their intrepid commanders gained favorable consideration from the Continental Congress and in June, 1775, a resolution, authorizing the organization of a regiment of Green Mountain Boys under such officers as they themselves might choose, was adopted. Allen and Warner, during the early part of the next month, appeared before the Congress of New York, who voted to authorize the organization of a regiment of Green Mountain Boys. They returned to Bennington on July 12th.

From there Allen went forward to Ticonderoga, recruiting and making ready to organize the regiment, and looking forward hopefully to being permitted to carry out his contemplated plan of capturing Montreal.

About the first of August, there assembled at Cephas Kent's Tavern in Dorset, a meeting of the Committees of Safety of the various towns on the west side of the mountain. This convention consisted of the older men of the Grants and few, if any, of the fighting Green Mountain Boys were in attendance.

The meeting being called to order, an election of officers of the regiment was had. Warner was chosen Lieutenant Colonel and Commander. History does not reveal that Allen received any votes for that office.

The politicians and non-combatants of Vermont had attempted to shelve the hero of Ticonderoga. There seems to be no explanation for this action except that the elders of the council were suspicious of the radical tendencies, the rashness, and the well-known views of Allen upon religious matters that were not in accord with the majority at that time. Perhaps, too, they were fearful of his popularity with the people of the Grants and thought that he might displace them and take charge of the civil as well as the military arm of the government.

The authority for the formation of the regiment had specifically provided that the men should choose their own officers, and there can be no doubt but that if the Green Mountain Boys had voted on the question, Allen would have been elected.

His strength of character and the depth of his patriotism never was more convincingly demonstrated than in his action following this rebuff. He received the news at Ticonderoga and immediately offered his services to General Schuyler who had been sent there to organize a force for the purpose of invading Canada and to carry out the plan that Allen had conceived to conquer that portion of America for the Congress.

The proffer of service was gladly accepted, and shortly Allen set forth on the last expedition that he was to undertake outside the borders of his beloved state in the American cause.

Due to his knowledge of the country and the inhabitants, he was sent forward with a small party to obtain information of the enemy and to prepare the way for the invading army. The second of these forays found him in command of a company of about 80 men at La-

Prairie across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal. There he met another reconnaissance party under Colonel John Brown. A Council of War was held, and Brown suggested the plan of a surprise attack on the City of Montreal, Allen promptly agreeing to the proposal. Brown, with his party, was to cross the river at LaPrairie and approach the city from the south. Allen was to return to Longueuil, procure canoes, and cross the river at that point so as to approach Montreal from the north. These movements to be under the cover of darkness. In the morning in response to a pre-arranged signal each was to advance and together seize the city.

The plan, as viewed in retrospect, seems to be extremely foolhardy and with the means at hand could have had slight promise of success. It required, however, great courage and daring, both qualities that were never lacking in Allen. Then, too, if successful, the prize was great.

Allen with his force now composed of about 110 men, at least 80 of whom were Canadians enlisted *en route*, was in position for the attack as agreed and awaited the signal that Brown and his party were ready for the attack. The signal never came and with the daylight Allen's force was discovered by the garrison at Montreal. At first thrown into a panic by the approach of the rebel force, General Carleton, the British commander, considered abandoning the town, but as the size of the attacking party became apparent, he took courage and assembled about 500 men, including regulars, English, Canadians and Indians, and marched forward to give battle.

Allen selected the best position possible to meet the attack. Apparently he gave no serious thought to retreating before the overwhelmingly superior force. In fact, he did not have transportation to recross the river with his whole force at one time, and he was not a man who abandoned his men in the face of danger.

As the enemy forces drew near, he sent out a detachment of Canadians to protect both his right and left flanks. They immediately deserted to the enemy. Surrounded, his cause hopeless, upon being assured by the British command treatment for himself and his men such as was accorded to prisoners of war, he capitulated.

It is perhaps idle to conjecture what the result of this effort might have been had Allen been in command of his regiment of Green Mountain Boys instead of the motley crew that he was forced to use at this time. It is safe to assume that under different circumstances he would have been successful and would have accomplished his

dream of preventing the British from reaching the colonies through Canada.

The story of his captivity and the cruel treatment received at the hands of his captors has no place in these remarks. On May 3, 1878, after an imprisonment of more than two years and seven months, he was exchanged, proceeding at once to Valley Forge to report to General Washington. He was received by the Commander-in-Chief and accorded the honors due his rank and achievements. In writing to the President of the Congress respecting this matter, Washington said in part:

I have been happy in the exchange, and a visit from Lt. Col. Allen. His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of the reach of misfortune. There is an original something in him that commands admiration; and his long captivity and sufferings have only served to increase, if possible, his enthusiastic zeal. He appears very desirous to rendering his services to the States, and of being employed; and at the same time he does not discover any ambition for high rank. Congress will herewith receive a letter from him; and I doubt not they will make such provision for him as they may think proper and suitable.

Allen's letter to Congress mentioned above reflects his then physical condition and his undying attachment to the Revolutionary cause.

I fancy you have more Officers than soldiers proportionally and being so Infebled Can Patiently recruit my Constitution Except some great and finishing Stroke is Projected in which Case I would gladly attend the British with the Bayonet to their Inbarcation or Burgoyne their army at Philadelphia. I am Jealous that the English will be recalled from America in Two months Time. Their Officers affected to Treat me Very Politely the Last Two Days I was with them (a poor amends), they Talked of Old Friendships and Affections which formerly subsisted.

Their Ill Success last Campayn and our Alliance with France has Turned their Haughty Tone of Conquest to that of Love.

Allen now returned to the mountains that he loved to complete the last chapter of his military career. During his absence many of the events so important to the founding of our state had occurred. Early in 1777, at Westminster in convention assembled, the inhabitants had declared the New Hampshire Grants to be a free and independent state and petitioned the Congress for admission as a member with other states. Shortly after at Windsor they had gathered to adopt a constitution and during that convention received the news of Burgoyne's invasion threatening their western border. The battles of Hubbardton and Bennington had been fought, and many of

Allen's comrades-in-arms had fallen martyrs to the cause of American liberty.

He returned to his home, being enthusiastically received, and in spite of the suffering and rigors of his captivity was ready and willing to do his part in establishing the infant state and republic.

From this time until the close of the War of the Revolution, he was a leader of the military forces of the newborn state; a grateful Congress commissioned him Brevet Colonel in recognition of his service. The State Assembly elected him Brigadier General and Commander of its military forces. For more than five years he protected the inhabitants of the state from encroachments by New Yorkers on the west and invasion by the British from the north. Time does not permit extended discussion of the various activities wherein he engaged the forces both military and political of New York in upholding the rights of Vermont nor can I discuss in detail the strategy whereby he held the powerful English army at bay to the north, thereby protecting his fellow citizens and the other colonies from an invasion. Much has been written upon the subject of his activities with the British during this period of time. He was and has been accused of treason to the American cause. Some writers claim that he intended to so shape events in Vermont that it would become an English province regardless of the outcome of the War of Independence. The answer that he made to his critics at that time was and is sound in that in answer to all the criticism he replied that a hostile army had not set foot upon Vermont soil, that the lives of no Americans had been sacrificed in battle upon the frontier over which he had command, and that he had kept idle and impotent a British army that, if permitted to pass beyond the frontiers of Vermont, would have been a serious threat to the cause of American liberty and perhaps indefinitely postponed the successful struggle for independence by the American colonies.

The pages of history are brighter because of the career of the man whom we honor to-night. No Vermonter, none who owes allegiance to the soil of this state, in recalling his character, his enthusiasm, his courage and his faults, can be but proud of the fact that here in the seat of government and upon the portico of the front entrance of the building wherein the laws of the state are made and administered, there stands to-day and I trust there will always stand, the statue of but one man, the one man who best typifies the spirit of courage and independence that made the establishment of this commonwealth pos-

sible and who by the same spirit and the same courage performed a service for this budding republic that no other man surpassed and few, if any, equalled. As we, during this year celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth, may I suggest to you, the inhabitants of Vermont, and especially the members of the regiment that he formed and so ably led, that we can well refresh our memories as to the things which he did and the events in which he had so large a part, and pondering upon these things rededicate our minds, our bodies and our every effort to the principles of government and human liberty for which his life and his work will always be a monument.

I like to think that down through the centuries, his spirit has lived and been a guiding force among Vermonters, both in civil and military life. I cannot help but believe that the founding fathers gained from the large store of his enthusiasm and courage the inspiration with which they builded for us, their descendants, the government and the blessings of liberty under which we live. Vermont troops, whenever engaged in conflict, cannot help but receive an inspiration from those early Green Mountain Boys and their intrepid leader. As we look back over those periods in American history when the men-at-arms of Vermont at crucial times had so large a part, we cannot help but believe that they were sustained by his precept and example.

Upon a hundred battlefields of the great Civil War, wherein Vermont troops did their part, upon the bloody, slippery slopes of Gettysburg, in that turning point of the crucial struggle of the great War, the spirit of Ethan Allen must have been present in that Vermont brigade that stopped the charge, the success of which might have meant disunion and separation of the nation that Allen fought to establish. Perhaps during that early spring morning on the Bay at Manila when another great Vermonter, faced with the tremendous task of destroying the powerful Spanish fleet which meant so much to the ultimate outcome of the conflict that had just commenced between his Country and that of Spain, as he stood there on the bridge of his flagship and awaited the time when he must give the order to open battle, may well have raised his eyes to the heavens and sought inspiration from the Great First Soldier of Vermont, and perhaps running through his mind when Dewey gave the order "You may fire when you are ready Gridley," was the picture of that courageous assault upon the Gibraltar of America as made by his great predecessor in the profession of arms.

Upon the battlefields of the World War in which so many of you participated, during the moments of great danger which require the utmost of every man, I doubt not that each may have felt the inspiration of his example and of what he did to make Vermont the state we love.

Ethan Allen! May his soul rest in peace, and may his spirit ever live in the hearts of every Vermonter!

