

Colonels Hathorn and Seward

By G. W. Seward

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At about the close of the battle of Minisink, Colonels Hathorn and Tusten met. Both were wounded—the former by a flesh wound in the leg, the latter very badly; and while engaged in binding up the wound of his friend and compatriot, told him that he could not get away, and expected to be massacred by the Indians with the dying and wounded about him. He urged Col. Hathorn to try by flight to save a life which had already been of great service to his country, and might be of still greater in the future. Noble and self-sacrificing men; and who may now imagine their emotions as they clasped each other's hand in painful and enduring farewell.

Col. Hathorn did not reach his home until three days after the news had spread of the result of the pursuit and battle, and found his family and friends mourning their anticipated loss.

Col. Hathorn was also annoyed by Tories, as were many Whigs to a greater or less extent. His son-in-law, Dr. Hinchman, residing at Vernon, while on his way on a dark night to visit a patient, overhead a voice, which he recognized as that of a slave belonging to the Colonel, bargaining to deliver up a Tory (*sic*) a valuable horse, owned and rode on parade by his Master. Measures were taken for the safe-keeping of the animal, and the arrest and punishment of the parties concerned in the secret and therefore, nefarious traffic, practiced extensively by other in the country—in some cases, neighbors, if not relatives, especially on officers prominent in the Militia.

If I have been correctly informed, Col. Hathorn was born in Wilmington, Delaware; that he had the advantage of a liberal education for those days; and with the influence, one may well suppose, arising from a people who were imbued with the principles of civil and religious liberty, as the emigrants from Sweden were. Years before the Revolutionary War, he established himself in the Mercantile business near Warwick, and also had a large landed property.

He and Col. John Seward were neighbors and friends, and as such sympathized in their views as to the principles and rights of man, and were thus prepared to engage heartily in the discussion which preceded, and in the protracted contest between England and the American Colonies.

Col. Hathorn acted mostly in a civil capacity, but had probably seen some service in the field as a militia officer, to repel the advance of British troops on the Hudson river. He evinced prudence, skill and bravery at Minisink.

Col. Seward, on the other hand, testified to his principles on the field of battle. He enlisted in 1775 as a private, under the first establishment for raising troops in New Jersey. His captain being killed,

he was made Lieutenant; and on the 10th of July, 1776, in New York, standing in the ranks of the brigade, and in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief, heard the Declaration of Independence read for the first time, and with his companions in arms, gave to it his entire approval, and maintained it with whatever ability he possessed to its final triumph.

He was in Gen. Lord Stirling's Division at the battle of Long Island, escaped capture, and was in the battle of White Plains, and in the struggle with the British for the possession; was constantly in the "*illegible word*) round?" (so facetiously termed by the soldiers) between camp at Morristown and tide water. While thus employed, he took the small-pox, and lay in a house near Hackensack—pointed out to me over fifty years ago by my father. The bravery and service of Jersey men deserve our recognition and gratitude. On this Centennial year, I quote from Mr. Edsall's Address:

"Among the officers who commanded in this region, and who by their efficiency protected our State so well, that the Savages confined their atrocities almost exclusively to those portions of Minisink, in New York, and Pennsylvania were Colonels Hawkinson and Seward, Majors Meeker and Westbrook, and Captains Cortwright, Harker, Shafer, Beckwith and Rosencrantz. Maj. Meeker and Capt. Harker, of the Sussex Militia, were prompt to meet Col. Tusten at Minisink with a number of men under their command. Stephen Mead, Daniel Talmadge, and Nathan Wade, whose names are on the Monument in Goshen, were killed at Lackawaxen, July 22th, 1779; Major Meeker, and Capt. Joseph Harker were wounded."

Isaac Jennings resided on the farm located two and a quarter miles from Florida, on the road to Chester, on which his father, Richard Jennings, settled. He was a man of small stature; and rather slender constitution was, in his day, a good farmer, and very precise in his business—a quiet and excellent man. He was known as a firm friend and defender of his country. From the delicacy of his health, and the/probity of character, he was often engaged in the service of his country rather of care than of active duty, and was occasionally called upon by the Militia. He was at the defence of Fort Montgomery, and escaped being taken prisoner in company with Gen. Clinton.

He accompanied Col. Tusten to Minisink and was left in charge with others of the horse when the men dismounted to pursue and attack the enemy. When the defeat and flight were announced, they coupled the horses together in pairs by their bridles, and returned to Goshen. Mrs. Samuel S. Seward* was his only daughter. She was born at her father's farm, and always retained a singular attachment for her birth-place and a vivid impression was made on her mind on hearing the heart-rending story of Minisink. From her lips, as also from my aged grandmother, I have heard much of the Revolutionary times and its patriots. I have heard them sing of Washington, and of victory, and of liberty, and of Auld Lang Syne.

[G.W. Seward]

* Mother of Gov. Seward