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The 3rd New York Regiments 1775-1783 A Brief Service History

The following material was authored by [Marvin Rasch](#), who reenacts in the 3rd New York Regiment.

28 June-August 1775:

The regiment is authorized under Colonel James Clinton for five month's service Canadian service; ten companies, 760 men strong. Officer commissions are issued and recruiting begins. Companies are raised within each county, and the regiment is composed of a mixture of southern New York counties. Th regiment is assigned to Major General Philip Schuyler's Northern Army.

August-November 1775:

7/10ths of the regiment participates in the invasion of Canada and the siege of Fort St Johns in the Lake Champlain region. The fort is captured, as is the city of Montreal. the remaining 3/10ths of the troops serve as Long Island coastline guards; they later assist in the construction of Fort Constitution adjacent to West Point, and in manning Fort George. At least 2/3rds of the New York troops with Brigadier General Richard Montgomery at Montreal reenlist to serve until mid-April 1776.

November 1775 - May 1776:

Winter siege of Quebec. A two-pronged storming assault on city by General Montgomery and Colonel Benedict Arnold's forces during a blizzard on 31 December fails, but the siege is maintained into spring.

February 1776 - May 1776:

The 3rd Regiment is re-raised, re-officered and rearmed by New York Province for nine month's service; it contains eight companies, 807 men strong, and is commanded by Colonel Rudolphus Ritzema (who had commanded the First New York in Canada in McDougall's absence). This version of the 3rd Regiment, composed of companies raised in the New York city area and to the northward, is intended to spend its existence in barracks in New York City area. Officers and soldiers of the original 3rd Regiment, isolated in winter duty in the Lake Champlain/Canada region, are forgotten during the shuffle, and are discharged after 15 April, and allowed to enlist in any of the six Continental regiments raised by New York. Some enlist with other states.

Summer 1776:

The 3rd Regiment continues garrison and guard duties with Brigadier General Alexander McDougall's brigade, in General George Washington's Main Army in New York City. Shortages of muskets plague all four New York regiments, and many companies are detached to fort and barrack construction duties in the Hudson Highlands. The regiment misses the battle on Long Island. The British soon control New York City and Long Island,

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Maryland Regiment, and Charles Webb's 19th Continental Regiment from Connecticut (all of McDougall's Brigade) -stationed on Chatterton's Hill, repel the main British and Hessian assault, but are outflanked and forced to retreat. This is the 3rd New York's first real stand-up fight.

December 1776:

A small detachment of the 3rd New York remains with the Main Army and fights at Trenton, 26 December. The remainder are either discharged or recruited for the third (and final time); this term to extend for three years, or the duration of the war. This third version of the 3rd New York is commanded by Colonel Peter Gansevoort; Marinus Willett is his second in command. Still eight companies, 807 men strong.

22-23 March 1777:

A British detachment raids the Continental supply depot at Peekskill, NY. Part of the 3rd New York Regiment under Willett aids in repulsing the invaders, but not before some serious damage is inflicted.

May 1777:

The 3rd New York Regiment mans the western New York State frontier post of Fort Schuyler (formerly Stanwix).

July-December 1777:

With the assistance of Colonel James Wesson's 9th Massachusetts Regiment, the 3rd New York turns back an enemy invasion by holding out through August during a 21-day siege against British, Loyalist, Brunswick, and Indian forces. The nearby Battle of Oriskany provides the 3rd New York with an opportunity to raid the enemy camp and steal supplies. Relief force of General Benedict Arnold finally drive off the invaders, and the regiment remains at the fort through the end of the year.

1778:

Continued garrison duty at Fort Schuyler and in scattered detachments along the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers in New York State. At White Plains, during July, a New York Brigade is finally formed, containing the other four New York regiments, under Brigadier General James Clinton, the 3rd's original regimental commander. 3rd New York is relieved by the 1st New York Regiment at Fort Schuyler, and remains in the Northern Department.

Summer 1779:

The 3rd Regiment, now with the New York Brigade, and now containing nine companies and a paper strength of 582 officers and men, invades Iroquois Indian territory with Major General John Sullivan's expedition, devastates the western frontier area of New York near today's Finger Lakes, and withdraws.

Winter 1779-1780:

The regiment endures record-setting cold and snowfall while encamped with the New York Brigade in Washington's Main Army at Morristown, NJ.

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1 January 1781:

The under strength 3rd, 4th, and 5th New York Regiments are disbanded, and the men remaining in service transferred to the weak 1st and 2nd Regiments (becoming the two largest regiments in the entire Continental Army, each with a total of over 550 men). The enlisted men of the 3rd transfer to the 1st New York, commanded by Colonel Goose Van Schaick. Some officers transfer to surviving regiments, others (notably Willett and Weissenfels) accept positions in two new state regiments for frontier protection, and still others retire permanently.

August 1781:

New York's two regiments reform the New York Brigade, and are ordered to join the Main Army and march for Virginia for the siege of Yorktown in which they play an important part.

Winter 1781-1782:

The New York Brigade spends the winter with the Main Army at Pompton Lakes, NJ.

Summer 1782:

Occupation and observation duty with the New York Brigade in the Main Army along the Hudson River.

Winter 1782-1783:

Winter with the New York Brigade in the Main Army cantonment at New Windsor, NY.

April-June 1783:

Preliminary Articles of Peace announced; all New Yorkers furloughed home to await the final signing of a treaty.

November 1783:

1st New York Regiment's officers and men are formally discharged upon news of the final treaty of peace granting full independence.

Postwar:

Bankrupt New York State struggles to pay back debts owed to soldiers; payment attempts are made using western state lands, IOU's depreciated pay vouchers, and state bonds. Many men never receive their rightful reward from their government. New York State's unpaid debt is eventually absorbed by the national government in the 1790's. The last surviving New York Continental Army soldier from the American Revolution is a former drummer boy of the 1st New York, Alexander Maroney, who dies in 1864.

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