

5th Conn., Continental Line Background & History

Philip Burr Bradley graduated from Yale College in 1758, and with his parents came to Ridgefield in 1759. In 1770, King George the Third appointed him a Justice of the Peace. In 1769, he was elected to the State Legislature, in which position he served for nineteen years, his last term being in 1791. January 18th, 1777, he was commissioned a Colonel by John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress. Previous to his appointment as Colonel, he was Lieutenant-Colonel in Colonel Waterbury's regiment, and in the latter part of 1776 was Colonel of a Battalion (probably the 7th) in the Brigade commanded by General James Wadsworth of Durham, Connecticut.

The battalion under Colonel Bradley's command saw much service, and was stationed the greater part of the summer and early fall of 1776 at Bergen and Paulus Hook (now Jersey City). In October, the battalion moved up the Hudson to the vicinity of Fort Lee, which at that time was under the command of General Nathaniel Greene. The greater part of the battalion assisted in defending Fort Washington, and, with the entire garrison, was captured November 16th. Colonel Bradley was absent on sick leave at this time, and thus escaped.

Colonel Bradley, with a portion of his men, was at the Battle of Ridgefield during Tryon's raid. The Fifth Regiment of which he was colonel until January 1st, 1781, had its rendezvous early in 1777 at Danbury, and in the spring of 1777 went into Camp at Peekskill. This regiment fought at the battle of Germantown, October 4th, 1777, and suffered considerable loss in this engagement. The Regiment was then assigned to General Huntington's Brigade and wintered at the memorable camp at Valley Forge. On June 28th, 1778, the Fifth Regiment was present at the Battle of Monmouth, and later went into camp with the main army at White Plains. In the winter of 1778 to 1779 it wintered at Redding at General Putnam's headquarters, now the state park known as Putnam Park. In the spring of 1779, it served in General Heath's Army, which was stationed on the east side of the Hudson. A Light Company, under the command of Captain John St. John of Ridgefield, was detached from the regiment to the storming of Stony Point. The assault was at midnight, July 15th, and four hundred Connecticut men formed a part of General Anthony Wayne's right column. Colonel Bradley's regiment wintered at Morristown, 1779-1780. They suffered intensely from the cold, huts being their only shelter.

In the Spring of 1780, it served on both sides of the Hudson and in the winter of 1780 to 1781 wintered at "Connecticut Village," opposite West Point.

Recruitment for the 5th of Conn. was mainly from Fairfield and Litchfield communities.