

GOVERNOR'S HORSE GUARDS

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There lives in the memory of the older inhabitants of the state a fascinating story of this famous military corps. Its remarkable personnel, its attractive uniforms, its striking parades its regal hospitality, its brilliant fetes, its patriotic public spirit, are a tradition preserved only in the recollections, now dim, of the few survivors and their contemporaries. Yet as a corporation it still exists, and could its last and living commander summon the spirits of the departed to one more reunion, he would assemble such a company as a state seldom marshals of her distinguished sons in one organization. A president of the United States would be there, and, keeping him company would be United States senators, congressmen, governors, judges, leaders at the bar, clergymen of mark, college professors, eminent physicians, captains of industry, bankers, business men, and many whose names have since become household words in the history of New Hampshire. Looking at its roster one is struck by the prominent men who composed its rank and file, its staff, and its honorary members. They were or became leaders of public opinion, makers of laws, eminent in statecraft, scholars of rank, financiers, orators, and for more than a generation leading men of the state. Yet the active life of the organization was little more than six years, but such years! They sufficed for many a tale of military splendor, of royal entertainment, and of captivating pageants. Concord was the scene of their social functions, and the governor's annual inauguration the event of martial display. Other places welcomed their appearance, but the capitol city knew them best and furnished the ranking company of the corps. The preamble of their constitution, promulgated at their first annual meeting at Concord, January 11, 1860, gives the inspiration which called the organization into being. It reads as follows:

We, whose names are hereunto annexed, being deeply impressed with the advantages to be derived from the formation of a military organization which shall embrace among its members gentlemen from every section of the state, and which, while promoting social intercourse, and extending the bonds of friendship among us, shall, by the excellence of its discipline as a company, and the honorable conduct of its members, strengthen the government under which we live, hereby associate ourselves as a corps of cavalry, and establish and declare this constitution.

The motto of the corps was "*Pro Duce et Republica.*" [for the leader and the State]

The annual parade was in June, and the occasion the inauguration of the governor of the state. The corps was also to parade at such other times as were demanded by the laws of the state, the vote of the corps, or the bidding of the commanding officer.

Ex-President Franklin Pierce was honorary colonel, and the officers of the corps at its first parade were: George Stark, Nashua, colonel commanding; A Herbert Bellows, Concord, lieutenant-colonel; Henry O. Kent, Lancaster, major; Thomas J. Whipple, Laconia, adjutant; Frank Fuller, Portsmouth, paymaster; Joseph Wentworth, Sandwich, quartermaster; George A. Pillsbury, Concord, assistant quartermaster; Charles P. Gage, Concord, surgeon; J.C. Eastman, Hampstead, assistant surgeon; M.W. Willis, Nashua, chaplain; Henry E. Parker, Concord, assistant chaplain; Frank S. Fiske, Keene, sergeant-major; Charles A Tufts, Dover, quartermaster sergeant; S.H. Dumas, Concord, commissary; Natt Head, Hooksett, chief bugler; Gilbert Bullock, Concord, armorer; True Garland, Pittsfield, standard bearer; R.P.J. Tenney, Pittsfield, and J.C. Bean, Enfield, standard guards. J.C.A. Hill, Concord was treasurer, and J.E. Lang, Concord, clerk.

The first officers of Company A, which was the Concord company, were John H. George, captain; Edward H. Rollins, first lieutenant; Benjamin Grover, second lieutenant; Josiah B. Sanborn, first sergeant; Calvin C. Webster, second sergeant; Eleazer Jackson, third sergeant; Calvin Gage, fourth sergeant; Charles H. Norton, first corporal; George H. Hutchins, second corporal; Warren Clark, third corporal; Peter Dudley, fourth corporal.

Colonel Bellows was the originator of the Horse Guards, and gave much time and money to preliminary effort in behalf of the corps. He was exceedingly patient and thoughtful as to the equipment and uniform, and for the latter chose that of the French Imperial Hussars. The arms were a cavalry sabre and two pistols.

Of the first officers of the corps Colonel Henry O. Kent of Lancaster alone is living. At the time of its organization he was clerk of the New Hampshire House of Representatives, a position he had held for five years, giving him a wide acquaintance in the state. In 1854 he graduated from Norwich University, then a famous military academy. His personal popularity and technical knowledge of military tactics led the active promoters of the organization to propose him for major of the corps, to which he was unanimously elected. During the last three years of the activities of the corps he was in command, in 1863 with the rank of major, and in 1864 and 1865 with the rank of colonel. To his interest and pride in the corps is due the preservation of such data of its organization and work as are now available.

The uniform of the field was a white dolman, green body jacket and trousers, shako and pompon, gray astrachan fur and gold lace trimmings; that of the line, staff and members, blue jackets and trousers, red dolman, and worsted lace trimmings. The entire outfit of the chief bugler was brilliant scarlet. The housings of the field were scarlet and gold; of the corps, blue and yellow. The late Peter Sanborn wore his cloak on the streets of Concord for years afterwards.

The parade on "Election Day" in June was one of the events of the year. At this the governor-elect was received in line, with the governor in a barouche drawn by four or six horses, either near the residence of Joseph B. Walker at the North end or at some point at the South end of the city, accompanied by a few distinguished guests. The column paraded Main and State streets, leaving the dignitaries at the state house, the field officers accompanying the governor into the hall of the house of representatives, the Guards lining the walk from Main street to the state house. After the inauguration there were dress-parade and review in front of the state house, then the corps with its guests repaired to the Eagle or Phenix hall, where an elegant banquet was served by some Boston caterer, followed by speeches. The music of twenty or thirty pieces was also mounted, and was generally Hall's band of Boston. Only a few bands were drilled to play horseback, for the guiding of the horses had to be by the feet. Major Lewis Downing, Jr., was musical director, engaging and directing the music, and Natt Head, afterwards governor, was the gorgeous chief bugler, riding ahead and sounding the calls. At the inauguration of 1861 the Fisherville Cornet band was engaged by the Guards. John C. Lineham, who was a member of this band, thus described the reception of the proposition made to the band by the Horse Guards to furnish music: It was received with solemn silence. There was good reason for the solemnity. Not half a dozen members had ever mounted a horse, and now, men grown, to be expected to ride and play too, it was too much, and the proposition too sudden. However, an answer had to be given, and opinions were called for. Mr. Currier, the director, said he would vote to accept the offer on one condition, namely, that if a horse could be found large enough to move the whole band, giving him a place in the centre, he would vote yes, otherwise no. Other suggestions were made, among them one from John Mitchell to have wooden horses made mounted on trucks and drawn by one section of the real article. He thought it would be an improvement on the original, as the files would be straighter and the hoofs of the horses would be always near the ground. The temptation was too strong nevertheless. It was a great incentive, that of playing at the head of such a body of men. The offer was accepted, horses procured, and the band went into training. The plain near the academy on the Boscawen side of Fisherville was selected as the drill ground, and the boys went at it. It was a moving spectacle. The moving, however, for a time was from the horses to the ground. It seemed like a premonition of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, but they persevered and succeeded.

At the last parade in 1865 the music was by the Concord Brigade band, mounted on white horses. The other function was social. At the annual meeting in January, filling out the day, reports were received and officers chosen for the year ensuing. A grand military ball occupied the evening, graced by the governor and by the state dignitaries with notable guests, and anticipated by all the society women and grand dames of the state. Phenix hall was profusely decorated. A superb supper was served at the Phenix or Eagle hotel, and the occasion was the social event of the year.

The first ball of the Guards was at its first anniversary. The *Manchester Mirror* in describing it says: "It was by far the most brilliant entertainment of the kind ever witnessed in New Hampshire. In the magnificence of its preparations and decorations it was a pattern of the Tigers' ball in the Boston theater, or the one given to the Prince of Wales. It stepped out into a new line of action for this state, not equaled in New England by anything we had known except in Boston. The decorations were superb beyond description, and the music of Hall's band ravished all ears. Such a galaxy of charming, elegantly dressed, beautiful ladies never before assembled in the city of Concord."

Of the Guards in their brilliant uniforms it can only be said they were simply irresistible partners. Mrs. Goodwin, the wife of the governor, called them "gorgeous creatures." One fair dame said of the handsome Major of the corps that he was "the belle of Concord."

Many were the occasions to which the Horse Guards were invited. The fame of their appearance on "Election Day" spread over the state, and some of the many invitations were accepted. The Rockingham Fair association invited them to Portsmouth in the year 1860, an invitation which was accepted. The weather, however, was unpropitious, rain falling all the day set for the parade. One of the survivors writing of this says: "I think we did not mount." However, the reception given the Guards at Portsmouth was such as to be always remembered. There was a muster at Manchester and a gathering at Nashua which were prominent events in the life of the Guards. The parade of the full corps at Nashua in October 1861, was at a muster of all the regular and extempore commands of the state. The Guards were three days in camp, two miles north of the city hall. They did escort duty when the First New Hampshire Regiment went to the front in April, 1861. Three months later, on the return of the Regiment, another great day, the Horse Guards performed similar duty.

The guests of the corps at their fetes were the Amoskeag Veterans of Manchester, with whom they were always on amiable terms, the Ancient and Honorable Artillery of Boston, and the Putnam Phalanx of Hartford, Conn., by their officers, and Governor John A. Andrew and staff of Massachusetts. It was the late Colonel B.P. Cilley of the Veterans who at a banquet of the Guards to that corps gave this witty toast: "The Governor's Horse Guards and Amoskeag Veterans; invincible in peace, invisible in war."

In justice to the guards it must be said that at the outbreak of the Civil War their services were tendered to the governor, but he did not see his way clear to accept cavalry at that time. Colonel Bellows then went to Washington by vote of the corps and offered their services to the president, who referred him to General Scott. The latter declined to accept them, because, he said, the war would be so brief that cavalry would not be needed. Individuals of the Guards afterwards enlisted and did valiant service for their country, as a perusal of the roster will show. Of these the following are recalled:

Joseph C. Abbott, Adjt.-Genl. of N.H., Col. 7th N.H. Vols., Brig-Genl. U.S.V.

George Bowers (Mexican veteran), Lieut-Col. 13th N.H. Vols.

Stillman S. Davis, Paymaster U.S. Navy

Josiah C. Eastman, Surgeon 4th N.H. Vols.

George W. Everett, Major 9th N.H. Vols.

Frank Fuller, Paymaster U.S. Vols.

Frank S. Fiske, Lieut.-Col. 2d N.H.V., Brt. Brig.-Gen. U.S.V.

Simon G. Griffin, Col. 6th N.H.V., Major-Gen. U.S. Vols.

George H. Gillis, Adjutant 13th N.H. Vols.

James B. Greeley, Surgeon 1st N.E. Cavalry

George B. Greeley, Surgeon 4th N.H. Vols.

Natt Head, Adjutant and Quartermaster 9th N.H. Vols.

Henry O. Kent, Assistant Adj.-Gen. N.H., Col. 17th N.H. Vols.

Nathaniel Low, Captain 12th N.H. Vols.

Thomas P. Pierce (Mexican veteran), Col. 2d N.H. Vols.

Henry E. Parker, Chaplain 2d N.H. Vols.

Ichabod Pearl, Captain 2d N.H. Vols.

Augustus W. Rollins, Colonel 7th N.H. Vols.

George Stark, Brig.-Gen. commanding Camp Goodwin and Defences of Portsmouth

Mason W. Tappan, Colonel 1st N.H. Vols.

Martin W. Willis, Chaplain 4th N.H. Vols.

Charles W. Woodman, Major U.S. Vols., Paymaster

Thomas J. Whipple (Mexican veteran), Adj. 1st and Col. 4th N.H. Vols.

Pierce L. Wiggin, Captain 3d N.H. Vols.

Andrew H. Young, Paymaster U.S. Vols.

[William P. Ainsworth, Captain 1st N.E. Cavalry a/k/a First R.I. Volunteer Cavalry]

Companies A and B of the Guards, the Colonel and Nashua companies, were always active. Company C of Portsmouth, though not so active, always paraded. Company D, from the northern part of the state, existed largely on paper, and finally was authorized to merge on parade with the other companies.

The war made inroads in the ranks of the Guards, and at the last parade, at the inauguration of Governor Smyth in 1865, not over half of the corps were in line. But it was the expense incident to their entertainment's and the failure of the state to contribute to their services which led to the discontinuance of their parades. For six years the Guards had borne all expenses incident to the reception and entertainment of the governor and invited guests at inauguration, and at a meeting after the inauguration of Governor Smyth

it was voted to suspend parades except by special order of the commander-in-chief, and to give no further levees until such time as suitable measures were taken guaranteeing payment for military services.

In 1879 an attempt was made to muster the Guards for escort duty at the inauguration of Governor-elect Natt Head, and for the purpose of consultation a general order assembling the members at the Eagle Hotel at Concord, Thursday, April 24, was issued by the commander, Colonel Henry O. Kent.

This was the last official act of the corps commander. A few of the members met according to call at the Eagle Hotel. The record closes with these words: That the corps approve the action of the colonel in calling this meeting. That in view of the present condition of the corps, lack of uniforms, and the short time intervening between this date and election day, it is inexpedient to order a parade the present year. Adjourned to call of the commanding officer.

Thus, after the last call, was the curtain rung down on as brilliant a pageant as was ever witnessed in New Hampshire. Few of the distinguished company now survive. To them and to their contemporaries now living, who enjoyed the festive occasions of which the Governor's Horse Guards were the inspiration, this brief story may recall pleasant memories.

The following is the roster of members, as shown by the records of the corps:

ANTRIM	Lemuel N. Pattee
BATH	Carleton B. Hutchins
BRADFORD	Mason W. Tappan
BOSCAWEN	Calvin Gage
CANTERBURY	Jed L. Clough, Henry L. Clough
CHICHESTER	Charles H. Carpenter
CONCORD	Edward A. Abbot, Joseph H. Abbot, J. Stephens Abbot, J.S. Appleton, Richard H. Ayer, John V. Barron, A. Herbert Bellows, John Brown, Gilbert Bullock, Charles H. Butters, Dexter Chase, N.W. Churchill, Warren Clark, Isaac Clement, B.B. Clifford, Moses H. Clough, Robert N. Corning, Lewis Downing Jr., Albert H. Drown, Peter Dudley, S.H. Dumas, B.F. Dunklee, Frank Eastman, George W. Ela, Isaac N. Elwell, F.A. Fiske, George T. Fogg, T.H. Ford, Charles P. Gage, John H. George, Joseph A. Gilmore, W.G. Gould, S.G. Griffin, Benjamin Grover, George Grover, Carr B. Haynes, Charles B. Herbert, Cyrus Hill, J.C.A. Hill, James R. Hill, J.T. Hoit, Sewell Hoit, A.B. Holt, Moses Humphrey, Ephraim Hutchins, George H. Hutchins, Eleazer Jackson, Frank Jones, J.D. Kelly, John Kimball, John A. Kilburn, J.E. Lang, C.J. Lang, J.W. Little, Anson S. Marshall, Asa McFarland, J.S. McFarland, George Mellen, George Minot, Ezekiel Morrill, Charles H. Norton, Nehemiah G. Ordway, Henry E. Parker, William M. Parker, Charles H. Peaslee, R.E. Pecker, Hamilton E. Perkins, R.N. Philbrick, George A. Pillsbury, C.S. Piper, A.J. Prescott, Harvey Rice, J.W. Robinson, Abiel Rolfe, Edward H. Rollins, Charles P. Sanborn, Heman Sanborn, Josiah B. Sanborn, Peter Sanborn, Ezekiel Sawyer, George A. Sawyer, W.G. Shaw, H.S. Shattuck, Jonas D. Sleeper, Richmond Smith, Onslow Stearns, Sylvester Stevens, J.H. Stewart, Joseph P. Stickney, S.G. Sylvester, J.P. Tucker, Gust Walker, William Walker, David A. Warde, C.C. Webster, J.A. West, Richard West, Nathaniel White, B. Plummer Whipple, Moses T. Willard, R.G. Wyman, William C. Wyman.
DOVER	Charles A. Tufts, John P. Hale, Nathaniel Lowe, C.W. Woodman, A.W. Rollins, George F. Rollins, Andrew H. Young, Albert Blaisdell, Marcus Marx, George H. Pierce, Russell Wiggin, Samuel M. Wheeler.
ENFIELD	Jacob C. Bean
EPPING	Nathaniel Batchelder

EXETER	James M. Lovering, John P.P. Kelly, Joseph Hilliard
FRANKLIN	Daniel Barnard, Warren F. Daniell, George W. Nesmith, James L. Peabody.
GREENLAND	William A. Pierce
HAMPSTEAD	Josiah C. Eastman
HILLSBOROUGH	Henry D. Pierce, Chandler E. Potter
HOLLIS	John H. Cutter, George P. Greeley, W.N. Tenney
HOOKSETT	Natt Head
HOPKINTON	Paul R. George, James M. Burnham, Herman W. Greene, Harvey Chandler.
KEENE	Frank S. Fiske, William Dinsmore
LANCASTER	Henry O. Kent, Enoch L. Colby
LACONIA	Thomas J. Whipple, J.S. Thompson. Charles Lane, Charles J. Appleton.
LEBANON	Aaron H. Cragin
LITTLETON	L.A. Russell, Joseph L. Gibb, Cyrus Eastman, Cephas Brackett.
MADBURY	Henry Austin
MANCHESTER	Joseph C. Abbot, Thomas P. Pierce, Samuel Webber, Ezekiel A. Straw, Phineas Adams, Waterman Smith, J.T.P. Hunt, J.A. Haines, G.H. Kimball, William Stark.
MASON	George Taft, James L. Chamberlain, Fred A. Brooks, G.E. Wyman, Lewis T. Sampson.
MEREDITH	D.S. Beede
MILFORD	Bainbridge Wadleigh, George H. Gillis, William Lane.
NASHUA	George Stark, John H. Gage, William P. Ainsworth, William F. Greeley, James B. Greeley, M.W. Willis, Virgil C. Gilman, John H. Andrews, George W. Underhill, Charles P. Gage, H.T. Morrill, Norman Fuller, S.C. Crombia, J.N. Ball, Samuel Chase, S.F. Wright, Gilman Scripture, George Bowers, Charles Williams, C.E. Page, L.H. Clement, W.M. Barrett, T.G. Banks, Isaac Marshall, Isaac Eaton, David Gillis, S.S. Davis, Frank A. McKean, O.H. Woodbury, William Barrett, H.D.F Young, James D. Folsom, Julius F. Gage, Edward Parker.
NEW LONDON	G.W. Everett, J.C. Greenwood.
NEWMARKET	Samuel P. Dow, S.A. Haley

NOTTINGHAM	James H. Butler, Joseph Cilley.
OSSIPEE	Pierce L. Wiggin
PEMBROKE	Aaron Whittemore
PETERBOROUGH	John B. Dane, Samuel J. Vose.
PITTSFIELD	True Garland, R.P.J. Tenney, Lewis W. Clark, R.L. French, John Wheeler.
PLYMOUTH	C.J. Stone
PORTSMOUTH	Frank Fuller, F.W. Miller, Clement March, Daniel Marcy, John E. Ryder, William Sawyer, M. Holmes, A.L. Bennett, N.F. Mathes, James A. Blaisdell, William Rand, Marcellus Eldredge, Heman Eldredge, Josiah E. Eldredge, Joseph Parry, Henry Peyser, Michael Fisher, Frank Jones, G.V. Rowe, T.B. Hoit, W.E. Hadley.
RAYMOND	J.S. James, William B. Blake.
RUMNEY	Josiah Quincy
SOMERSWORTH	M.C. Burleigh, George W. Burleigh, Benjamin Haley, Thomas G. Jameson, Jacob Morrill, Rufus W. Stevens, Stephen S. Chick, Ebeb A. Tibbetts, Ichabod Pearle, George W. Hanson, Charles S. Jones, H.B. Davis, S.B.

Cole, William N. Nason, Edward A. Rollins, John S. Haynes, S.A. Collins, Joseph Hanson, Jonathan Bliss, Otis A. Frost, John Bates, Charles S. Dinsmore.

SOUTH HAMPTON	Rufus Dow, Moses Eaton, Jr.
SUNCOOK	James Osgood
SANDWICH	Joseph Wentworth, William M. Weed.
TAMWORTH	Natt Hubbard
TEMPLE	D.L. Barton
WHITEFIELD	Aurin M. Chase

HONORARY MEMBERS - Franklin Pierce, Matthew Harvey, John Page, John H. Steele, Jared W. Williams, Anthony Colby, Samuel Dinsmore, Noah Martin, Nathaniel B. Baker, William Haile, Ichabod Goodwin.

MASSACHUSETTS MEMBERS - Charles W. Webster, Boston; Seth E. Pecker, Boston; Christopher Roby, Chelmsford; E.A. Larkin; Townsend.

Master George Washington Nutt of Manchester was made an honorary member and a uniform provided for him at the expense of the Guards.

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Thus ends the history of the Governor's Horse Guards as written in the *History of Concord, NH Vol. 1*. From other sources there is additional information indicating that the history of the Governor's Horse Guards began on June 24, 1859 when they were first incorporated by an act of the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court. The constitution and by-laws were adopted at the first annual meeting of the corps, held at Concord, on Wednesday January 11, 1860. They were attached to the fourth brigade of the second division of the militia of this State with their duties being that of escorting the Governor on public occasions. Their arms and equipments were drawn from the State arsenals and approved by the Adjutant-General. Their pay was the same as the men of corresponding rank in the army of the United States, eleven dollars per month for privates. Former President, Franklin Pierce was honorary Colonel. There were three companies A, B and C, and within the by-laws was a provision for honorary members. From the *History of New Hampshire*, Vol. IV by Stackpole: "the Governor's Horse Guards, a regiment of cavalry organized in 1860 more for show than for service, whose only duty was to escort the Governor on public occasions." The "Guards" were suspended on December 20, 1865, mainly on account of their enormous expense [many members had also gone off to war]. The state did not contribute to their services. In the Adjutant-General's Report of 1871, he stated that "the Horse Guards are [now] merely an organization upon paper." In the 1872 Report he states "they are now defunct and lifeless." In 1879 an attempt was made to muster the "Guards" for escort duty at the inauguration of Governor Head who was himself a former member of the "Guards." The attempt was unsuccessful and was the last official act of the corps. The Horse Guards were officially dissolved on January 2, 1986. A copy of the Constitution and by-laws along with portions of the uniforms of the Governor's Horse Guards are kept at the NH

Historical Society along with a drawing of the "Guards" at the inauguration of Governor Goodwin in 1860.

HARTFORD TIMES

February 27, 1860

SADDLES FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE-A company of Horse Guards, numbering about two hundred has just been organized at Concord, N.H. and gentlemen from different parts of the State belong to it. The contract for the saddles has been given to Messrs. Smith, Bourne & Co., of this city. We understand that the company is to have a handsome uniform and that it will be altogether a substantial and spirited troop