

NEW YORK

BATTLE OF THE NORMANSKILL

Fought North of the Creek
Schenectady Militia with
40 Rhode Island Troops
Dispersed Large Group of
Tories on August 11, 1777

STATE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT 1932

Marker #15

"On a gentle rise of earth hard by Route 146, which cuts towards Altamont from the Western Turnpike, lies a hallowed plot of land. Beyond the Vale of Tawasentha and labelled by a blue and gold historic marker is the site of the Battle of the Normanskill, a skirmish of the Revolutionary War, small in size, great in importance" wrote former Guilderland historian Arthur Gregg.

The battle, won by the hard-pressed colonists over the Tories, lifted the sinking morale of the colonists. The victory on the banks of the Normanskill set the stage for the British defeat at Saratoga five weeks later.

On August 11, 1777, a band of 300 Tories and Indians descended upon this spot at the base of the Hellebergs, planning to burn Schenectady and then Albany. When word of the imminent attack spread among the colonists, Lt. Col. Joseph Schermerhorn gathered 100 men to meet the enemy.

The small band of colonists routed the onslaught, resulting in only one casualty. The greatly-feared Tory leader and suspected Burgoyne spy David Springer was killed.

When news reached Albany of the successful Normanskill Battle with many Tories imprisoned, the colonists rejoiced and renewed their vigor for the fray and the eventual successful capture of General Burgoyne at Saratoga.

And once, in the days that history
retains,
When Revolution's echoes waked
the woods,
And men were patriots called, or
tories bad,
There had been deep life struggles,
social throes,
And treacherous excitements
foul and mad,
Though which, heaven willing,
freedom balked its foes.
— From *Helderbergia*, by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft.