

CHAPTER VII.

Lodge 155, from 1768 to 1784.

The Period in History. From 1769 to 1785 in the history of the world, the great outstanding events were the American Revolution, and the beginnings of the revolution in France. Both of these events are reflected in the history of Nova Scotia and of Halifax, though the former by the coming of the Loyalists has left the greater mark on our development. The years from 1770 to 1776 were ones of great public excitement, emissaries from the American colonies were numerous and the Governor and Council deemed it expedient as early as 1770, to prohibit all public meetings of a political nature. As an evidence of the feeling prevailing at this time a gallows was erected on the Common with a boot suspended from it as a sign of disapprobation of Lord Bute's government. The public authorities were kept in a constant state of apprehension of invasion, while a continued suspicion of many of the leading inhabitants being favorable to the revolt, seemed to take possession of the mind of Gov. Legge, who on differences of opinion arising with some of his officials, attributed their disagreement with him on such subjects as finance, taxation, etc., as evidence of their disloyalty. The officers of the Town Regiment of Militia were called upon to subscribe the oath of allegiance before going on duty. Nearly all of these officers curiously enough, were members of the Craft. The names of Capt. James Browne and John Finney, Lieut. John George Pyke, Lewis Piers, John Solomon, and Robert Fletcher have already been mentioned.

A more intimate connection with the events of the Revolution was the formation of the second battalion of the Royal Highland Emigrants, known as the 84th Regiment, at Halifax in 1775, under Major John Small. Part of this Nova Scotian battalion served under Sir Henry Clinton at New York in 1779. A portion also served under Lord Cornwallis at Yorkton, being interned along with the rest of his army after the surrender. The regiment was disbanded at Halifax in 1783, and the men granted 81,000 acres of land in the Township of Douglas, Hants County.