

Addressing the assembly, he said:

"At our feet lie the remains of William Johnson Kerr, of his wife and his children. They have rested peacefully here for many years, but no memorial stone has till now been erected to tell the passer-by whose graves these are, nor what they did who occupy them. Recently the members of the Barton lodge, No. 6, of Freemasons decided to mark the spot, because Captain Kerr was a member and past master of their lodge, and because he rendered important service, not only to Mamoury, but to his king and his country.

"William Johnson Kerr was a relative of Sir John Johnson, who took a very prominent part on the royal side in the war of the American revolution. He married a sister of Joseph Brant, and was, by lineage and by marriage, drawn to the defense of his country in her hour of danger. At the breaking out of the war of 1812 he was given command of the warriors of the Six Nations Indians; and with them he participated in many of the conflicts of that war down to the battle of Chippewa. In that battle he was taken prisoner, and remained in captivity till the end of the war.

"The Barton lodge of Freemasons was formed in 1795. In 1812, on the breaking out of the war, many of its members offered their services to their country, and owing to their absence and to the unsettled condition of the country, the meetings of the lodge were interrupted. When the war was over conditions had changed. The grand body from which the lodge had received its warrant had formed a union with the original grand lodge of England, and it was uncertain whether or not the body had a legal existence as a Masonic lodge. The brethren met; they elected officers; they exercised all the powers of a Masonic lodge, except that they refrained from making Masons. They endeavored to get a new warrant from the grand lodge of England, but there was delay and seeming neglect on the part of grand lodge officers. In this emergency Worshipful Brother Kerr took up the matter with his accustomed energy and perseverance, with the result that, in 1844, the new warrant was issued, and the Barton lodge was numbered 733 on the grand registry of England.

"But while the members of the Barton lodge are deeply interested in the service of Captain Kerr to their lodge, Canadians generally are more deeply interested in his military service, and particularly with the conflict at

Beaver Dam, at which he commanded the Indians who alone fought the battle and won the victory.

"In 1782 the United States declared war against Great Britain. Undoubtedly the republic had some cause for complaint; but the real object of the war, openly avowed in the press, on the platform, and in congress, was the conquest of Canada. Great Britain was engaged in a death struggle with Napoleon, and it was believed that she would be quite unable to defend her American possessions against the armies, numbering half a million men, aided by the republic, and hurled against the thin and scattered populations of these provinces. But the few regular troops in Canada acquitted themselves nobly; the men of Canada sprang to arms in defence of their homes and their liberties; and the Indians gallantly marched to the aid of their white brethren. At Mackinaw, at Detroit, at Queenston, at Chateaugay, at Lacolle, at Stoney Creek, at Beaver Dam, at Lundy's Lane, and on many another hard-fought field, the invaders were hurled back, and when, at the intercession of the emperor of Russia, Great Britain granted peace to the republic, there was not a soldier of the United States in Canada, save those who languished in its prisons or clumbered beneath its soil. The armies of the republic were baffled and beaten back, its treasury was bankrupt, and its national flag had ceased to wave on the ocean.

"Among the first to take up arms was William Johnson Kerr. He took command of the Indians of the Six Nations, and was engaged in nearly all the battles along the Niagara frontier. His chief exploit, however, was the defeat of Col. Boerstler at Beaver Dam, which led to the surrender of that officer and his whole command.

"On the 23rd of June, 1813, Lieut. Fitzgibbon, with fifty regular troops, was stationed at DeCew's house, near the spot at present occupied by the power house of the Cataract Power company; Major DeHuren was at St. Catharines, with several hundred men; Col. Bishop was at or near Jordan, and General Vincent was in command of the district, with headquarters at Hamilton, then known as 'The Head of the Lake.' Captain Kerr and his force of Indians was at the Beaver Dam, about two miles east of the position of Lieut. Fitzgibbon. United States troops, in strong force, occupied the whole of the Niagara frontier, their headquarters being the town of Newark, now Niagara-on-the-Lake. This army was too strong to be openly assailed by the meager forces of Gen. Vincent, but detached parties watched

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