

**AN ADDRESS BY MRS. JOHN CASE
PHELPS: DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION
OF THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT AT
LAUREL RUN, LUZERNE COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA; SEPTEMBER 12, 1896**

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An Address by Mrs. John Case Phelps: Delivered on the Occasion of the Erection of a Monument at Laurel run, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania; September 12, 1896 by Horace Edwin Hayden

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HORACE EDWIN HAYDEN

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LAUREL RUN, LUZERNE COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA; SEPTEMBER 12, 1896**



AN ADDRESS

BY

MRS. JOHN CASE PHELPS,

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT
AT LAUREL RUN, LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1896,

TO MARK THE SPOT WHERE

CAPTAIN JOSEPH DAVIS AND LIEUTENANT WILLIAM JONES,
OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE,

WERE SLAIN BY THE INDIANS APRIL 21, 1779.

WITH A SKETCH OF THESE TWO OFFICERS

BY

REV. HORACE EDWIN HAYDEN, M. A.,

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE WYOMING HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.



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ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT
AT LAUREL RUN, LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1896,

TO MARK THE SPOT WHERE

CAPTAIN JOSEPH DAVIS AND LIEUTENANT WILLIAM JONES

OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE,

WERE SLAIN BY THE INDIANS APRIL 23, 1779.

BY

MRS. JOHN CASE PHELPS.

167781

"WYNDCLIFFE,"

Laurel Run, Pa., Sept. 12, 1896.

ORDER OF EXERCISES

AT THE DEDICATION OF A
MEMORIAL STONE

TO THE

OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF GEN. SULLIVAN'S ARMY,

MURDERED BY THE INDIANS, NEAR INDIAN SPRING,

APRIL 23, 1779.

MUSIC, ALEXANDER'S BAND.
SONG—Hail Columbia, —
INVOCATION, BY REV. F. B. HODGE, D. D.
SONG—Star Spangled Banner, —
HISTORICAL PAPER, READ BY MR. FRANCIS A. PHELPS.
SONG—My Country 'Tis of Thee, —
PRESENTATION, BY MR. ZIBA BENNETT PHELPS.
SONG—Columbia, —
BENEDICTION, BY REV. H. H. WELLES, D. D.
MUSIC, ALEXANDER'S BAND.

Officers and Members of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society; Gentlemen of the Wyoming Valley Section of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution; Ladies of the Wyoming Valley Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution; Colonial Dames; Neighbors and Friends:

We have met this day to dedicate a memorial stone to the memory of Capt. Joseph Davis of the Eleventh Pennsylvania regiment, Lieut. William Jones of a Delaware regiment, and, as some accounts state it, Corporal Butler and three privates, belonging to a detachment of soldiers of the Revolutionary army under the command of Major-General John Sullivan. Generally in the records we find it stated thus,—Captain Davis, Lieutenant Jones and three privates; so whether the bodies of three or four soldiers lie here will always be a mooted question—like that of the number of his children who followed John Rogers to the stake. Perhaps some of you will ask—“are you sure any bones of Revolutionary soldiers lie near this place? Is this the spring near the Laurel Run where the savages waited in ambush for the gallant little band?” In order to answer the question, and prove our right to erect the memorial on this spot, we must ask you to bear with us as we bring the testimony of many witnesses. We have searched the “Records,” and from “The Journals of the Military Expedition of Major-General John Sullivan against the Six Nations,” edited by Mr. Frederick Cook, at that time Secretary of the State of New York, we can bring several interesting accounts to prove our case.

It is a matter of history that General Washington had determined to send a force into the Indian country sufficient, at one blow, to break up the savage haunts where these great barbarities were planned, and the depredators were harbored.

He wrote to General Gates, March 6, 1779, offering him the command of the army of invasion, with a letter enclosed and directed to General Sullivan, giving him the appointment if Gates should decline it, with directions to the latter to forward the letter to Sullivan. Gates declined the command in these words :

"Last night I had the honour of your Excellency's letter. The man who undertakes the Indian service should enjoy youth and strength ; requisites I do not possess. It therefore grieves me that your Excellency should offer me the only command to which I am entirely unequal. In obedience to your command I have forwarded your letter to General Sullivan."

Washington's letter to Sullivan was as follows :

"HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLE BROOK, MARCH 6, 1779.

Dear Sir : Congress having determined upon an expedition, of an extensive nature, against the hostile tribes of the Indians of the Six Nations, the command is offered to Major General Gates as senior officer, but should he decline, it is my wish it should devolve upon you. That no time may be lost by General Gates' non-acceptance, I have put this letter under cover to him, and have desired him to forward it to you, should that be his determination. Should it therefore be sent to you, I must request you to set out as speedily as possible after the receipt of it to Head Quarters, as the season is already far advanced. Upon your arrival the whole plan of the expedition shall be communicated to you, and measures concerted for carrying it into execution.

Nothing will contribute more to our success in the quarter where we really intend to strike than alarming the enemy in a contrary one, and drawing their attention that way. To do this you may drop hints of an expedition to Canada by way of Coos. This will be more readily believed, as a thing of that kind was really once in agitation, and some magazines formed in consequence, which the enemy are acquainted with. You may also speak of the probability of a French fleet making its appearance in the Spring, in the River St. Lawrence, to co-operate with us. It will be a great point gained, if we can, by false claims, keep the force ready in

Canada from affording any timely assistance to the Savages, Refugees and these people against whom the blow is levelled. * * * * * I wish you to keep the motive of your journey to Head Quarters a secret, because if it is known that an officer of your rank is to take command to the westward, it will be immediately concluded that the object must be considerable. I am with great Regard, Dear Sir,
 Your Most Obedient Servant,
 GEORGE WASHINGTON."

General Sullivan's conduct in the expedition against the Indians was, by some, characterized as vandal and unmilitary. Sullivan bore the criticism in patience, and for the most part in silence; and such was his love for Washington that he never alluded to the fact that he was acting under the express directions of the Commander-in-Chief. These were his instructions: "The immediate object is the Six Nations total destruction and devastation of their settlements, and the capture of as many persons as possible."—(Ford's Writings of Washington, Volume 7, 356.)

To carry out Washington's plan Colonel Brodhead, with seven hundred men, the left division of the army, was sent into western Pennsylvania; General Clinton, with one thousand men, the right division of the army, was ordered to advance from the Hudson to Tioga. General Sullivan was ordered to rendezvous at Easton, which place he reached May 7, 1779, and there prepare his command for their march through the wilderness. He had sent, from Easton, April, 1779, a German regiment of two hundred to three hundred men to Wyoming, under Major Powell, following a few weeks later with the division under his own command.

The state of affairs in the Valley of Wyoming was better than it had been any time since the battle of July third, 1778. A small force consisting of the Wyoming militia under Capt. John Franklin, the Wyoming Company under Capt. Simon Spalding, with two companies of Colonel Hartley's regiment (Eleventh Pennsylvania), all under the com-