

governor, was inducted into that office on July 30, at Kingston. Colonel Jacobus Swartwout was one of the seven assemblymen elected in Dutchess County; his six colleagues being Egbert Benson, Dirck Brinckerhoff, Anthony Hoffman, Gilbert Livingston, Andrew Morehouse, and John Schenck. Until the organization of the legislature at Kingston, on Wednesday, September 10, the governor and council of safety administered the government.

The importance of having forts at suitable points along the Hudson River was early considered by the continental congress, and, on August 18, 1775, commissioners were appointed to erect immediately those reported as proper to be built. Bernard Romans, an engineer, on October 16, that year, made the following suggestion concerning the eligibility of the rocky knolls on the north and south sides of the mouth of the Pollepel Kill, on the west side of the river, the northern knoll being now in the town of Cornwall, in Orange County, and the southern in the town of Haverstraw, in Rockland County: "At Pooploop's Kill, opposite to Anthony's Nose, is a very important pass. [See map, page 157.] The river is narrow, commanded a great way up and down, full of counter-currents, and subject to almost constant fall winds; nor is there any anchorage at all, except close under the works to be erected, etc. I understand it will be an easy matter to obstruct the navigation of the river so as to confine it to twelve or fourteen feet, and in that case it remains large enough for our use, etc."

The construction of Fort Montgomery, on the north side of the mouth of the creek, was shortly afterward begun, and later the obstruction of the river between it and the mountain called Anthony's Nose, on the east side of the river, about four miles north of Peekskill. Fort Clinton, on the opposite side of the Pollepel Kill, a much smaller work, had an elevation of one hundred and twenty-three feet above the Hudson.

At the time that the British Lieutenant-General, Sir Henry Clinton, then occupying the city of New York, undertook the reduction of the two forts, in order to gain possession of the entire river, and afford Lieutenant-General John Burgoyne such assistance as would permit him to reach Albany with his army, Major-General Israel Putnam, who had the general command of the Highlands, had his head-quarters at Peekskill, where he had a force of fifteen hundred men.

The garrison of Fort Montgomery, under the command of Colonel John Lamb, consisted, on Monday, October 6, "of militia from the surrounding country, many of whom were unarmed, with one company of artillery and a few regulars" of the continental line. That of Fort Clinton, commanded by Brigadier-General James Clinton, was "similar in character with that which occupied Fort Montgomery."

"On the third of October, eleven hundred British troops were transported