The garrison, commanded at that time by Major Richard Ingoldsby, was represented by one hundred and seventy-six soldiers, not including officers. The lieutenant-governor was surprised to find the soldiers so scantily clothed that many of them had nothing "wherewithal to cover their nakedness" and they were "eight weeks in arrears of subsistence. * * * * As for the militia that is in as bad a condition as the rest, for they have never been once muster'd since Colonel Fletcher went from here [in 1698]. Indeed, by Colonel [Peter] Schuyler's care, the regiment of the militia of the county of Albany is in pretty good condition but that is perfectly owning to his care."

The preceding lieutenant-governor, the Earl of Bellamont, in a letter addressed to the Lords of Trades, dated July 26, 1700, wrote from New York in similar tenor, saying:

"Some of the inhabitants of Albany, who are now here, tell me the soldiers there in garrison are in that shameful and miserable condition for the want of clothes that the like was never seen. * * * * This sad condition of the soldiers does us great hurt with the Indians, whose chiefest resort being to that town, and they being a very observing people, measure the greatness of our king and the conduct of affairs, by the shameful plight of the soldiers. These persons assure me that some of the old crafty sachems of the five nations have asked them whether they thought them such fools as to believe our king could protect them from the French, when he was not able to keep his soldiers in a condition as those in Canada are kept."

The lieutenant-governor, in another letter to the Lords of Trade, when speaking of his visit to Albany, in August, that year, says:

"I had the two companies at Albany, viz.: Major Ingoldesby's and Captain Weemes's muster'd before me there. * * * * I never in my life saw so moving a sight as that of the companies at Albany, half the men were without breeches, shoes and stockings when they muster'd. I thought it shameful to the last degree to see English soldiers so abus'd. They had like to have mutinied. * * * *

"I was in great hopes your lordships would have directed me to fall immediately upon fortifying at Albany and Schenectady; those forts are not only scandalously weak, but do us unspeakable mischief with our Indians, who conceive a proportionable idea of the king's power and greatness. The inhabitants came all about me at my leaving Albany, and told me in plain terms that if the king would not build a fort there to protect them, they would on the very first news of a war between England and France desert that place and fly to New York rather than stay there to have their throats cut."[1]

[1] Documentary history of the state of New York, 8vo ed., vol. i., p. 690. Documents relating to the colonial history of New York, vol. iv., pp. 337, 338; 967–971; 1128; 687; 714–718; 726.