Albany, Schenectady, Ulster, Sullivan, Rensselaer, Columbia, Dutchess, and Delaware, with so many only of their officers as may be in proportion to the number of men in each, will immediately assemble and repair to New York, and report themselves to the commanding officer of the third military district."

The menaced condition of the country incited men, in a greater or less degree, in the seaboard cities, to organize themselves into independent military bodies in order that should they be called upon to take part in the defence of their homes they would be better qualified to perform such service by being previously exercised in the use of arms and experienced in field manœuvres. In some instances considerable painstaking was manifested in the selection of the persons to compose such companies, particularly when the organizers of them desired that the members should be men of marked social standing and intelligence. Upon a basis such as this the organization in the city of New York of the corps of light infantry called "the Iron Grays" was effected in the spring of 1814. The name by which it was distinguished was derived from the color of the uniform worn by the one hundred and twelve officers and men enrolled under that popular title. The first officers of this body of highly-reputable young men were: Samuel Swartwout, captain;[1] Henry Brevoort, jr., first lieutenant; Henry Carey, second; Philip Rhinelander, third, and Gouverneur S. Bibby, fourth.

At no time during the war were the people of the city of New York and its vicinity more alarmed by the movements of the British than they were during the summer and autumn of 1814. The appearance of a fleet of English vessels in Chesapeake Bay, on the twelfth of July, attracted the attention of the country to the exposed condition of the seat of the national government. Little effort, however, was made to put the city of Washington in a defensible position. On the sixteenth of August, the British squadron in the Chesapeake was reinforced by a fleet of twenty-one vessels. The collection of so great a number of the enemy's war-ships there spread the liveliest apprehensions of an impending calamity over the land. The citizens of Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston saw in it indications of peril, and their forebodings quickened their efforts to render their ports secure against the invasive marine of the enemy.

"The mayor of the city of New York, the Honorable De Witt Clinton," issued, through the medium of the city council, a stirring address to the people on the second of August, in which he set forth the importance of New York to the enemy on account of its wealth and geographical position, which increased its liability to attack. He recommended the militia to hold themselves

[1] Captain Samuel Swartwout had previously been a first lieutenant in the second regiment in the first brigade of artillery of the city and county of New York, having been appointed to that position on June 8, 1808.