

Freedom's Gateway

**1777 – How the Empire State Built America
and Delivered Upon the Promise of Liberty**

By Robert T. Farley

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Acknowledgements

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By Robert T. Farley

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December 31, 2020

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December 31, 2018

Preface

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By Robert T. Farley

December 2018

This book is essentially a story about two things. Remarkable people, and how their efforts created both America, and the freedom we enjoy today.

According to a 2012 Gallup Poll, freedom is the most important virtue that America has to offer. In that poll, over 92 percent of American respondents believe that the United States offers greater or equal personal freedom than any other industrialized nation. These respondents also declared that America offers more individual opportunity than any other place in the world.

The freedom so heralded in this poll, and which has become the essential hallmark of American life, is a gift given to us by the people of 1777 New York. Their efforts, and the events they shaped in that time and place, transformed the entire world. By so doing, it delivered upon the promise of liberty that we all enjoy today.

The principles of freedom, liberty and rights form the ultimate triangle of human empowerment. This collection of principles, to which the people of 1777 New York were so devoted, were inherent to their every day thinking. It was an undetachable part of their belief system. Each principle represented the way that those special people looked at the world, from a perspective of their own, personal life experience. At their base, these principles were each founded upon a respect for the value of every individual human being. The New Yorkers of 1777 held such a respect, and firmly believed in the vast possibilities and opportunity that any free person could potentially achieve.

When viewed in the abstract, outside of the experience of these special people of 1777 New York, this ultimate triangle of freedom, liberty and rights, are each represented by somewhat complex legal concepts. Each such principle evolved from Anglo-American Law. Each were unrealized in Europe. Each were not readily available to the average person in the 18th century non-American world. Sadly, even today, these critical principles of human empowerment, are still neither universal, nor are they universally valued by all cultures.

What the people of 1777 New York understood, and what a legal review of these principles clearly shows, is that at its very essence, real freedom is built

upon a foundation of respect for the individual. Where there is no respect for the individual, no true freedom can exist.

Freedom is fundamentally the status of not being hampered by outside restraints or interference. Such restraints or interference are most often imposed by government. But they can also emanate from religious, social or cultural institutions as well.

From a legal perspective, “freedom” is defined as the state of being free. An essential element of freedom’s legal status is “liberty”, which is defined as freedom from arbitrary or undue external restraint, especially from government, and/or a right, privilege or immunity enjoyed in the absence of a legal duty imposed upon a person.

Both freedom and liberty are founded in individual rights. A “right” is a legally recognized ability to exercise power or control over an action or an object. Rights are the legal justification upon which freedom and liberty are enjoyed. They are what keeps the restraint or interference upon an individual person at bay.

Our Declaration of Independence is one of the finest explanations of these factors that constitute freedom. As the people of 1777 New York held an inherent understanding and respect for freedom, It is not surprising that Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Declaration, described it as an expression of the American mind.

Freedom’s quintessential element of respect for the individual is characterized in the Declaration by the phrase that “all men are created equal.” It should be noted, that this description is not by accident. It does not say that all men are equal. Clearly, everyone knows that different people enjoy different talents and attributes. Instead the Declaration claims something far more important.

In saying that “all men are created equal”, it asserts that every individual person has inherent and equal value in the eyes of God. It contends that if God views us all as equal and valuable, than no man, no government, no institution, can dispute that equal standing.

The Declaration further states that every individual person is “endowed” (given by God) with certain “unalienable” (meaning they cannot be taken away) rights, including “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” These rights, straight from a natural law viewpoint, are an expression of the legal justification for every individual’s endowment of the blessing of freedom.

In its text, the Declaration expressly contends that to secure these rights (and thereby guarantee individual freedom) that governments are instituted among

men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. This is one of its most critical points contained within this inspired document.

For this provision asserts that freedom cannot exist without the protection of the rights of the individual, and that the entire purpose of government is to protect such rights.

The Declaration adopts the logic of Sir Edward Coke, arguing that freedom can only be guaranteed by means of the consent of the governed. This assertion is further expressed in the Constitution when it is held that the people are actually sovereign to the government (when that document's preamble begins from the start with the words "We The People").

Coke, the great British legal scholar of the Common Law, held that to protect rights, the law must be above all men, no matter how powerful or important such men might be. No man is above the law, Coke argued, and as government makes the law, it can only do so effectively with the consent of the governed. Oppression and tyranny are thereby the antithesis of freedom.

The people of New York in 1777 believed, as did the founders, that a government operating with the consent of the governed is freedom's best protector. One operating without it is freedom's biggest enemy.

Now nearly a quarter of a millenarian old, the Declaration, as the expression of the American mind, has truly stood the test of time. Its assertion that freedom is all about the rights of the individual, became a pillar upon which our American way of life stands. That every person is entitled to the respect and value he holds in the sight of God, allowed for the greatest empowerment for individuals that the world has ever seen.

The Declaration of Independence was a product of its time. The classical world before it was written had no clear understanding of the concept of individual rights. Even in the Roman Republic, upon which our founders based our form of American government, such individual rights had yet to evolve.

Indeed, what we think of as "rights" today did not even begin to germinate as an idea until after the Norman Conquest of England in 1066.

Although the Viking-Germanic cultures of the Anglo Saxons did hold a belief in the consent of the governed, such belief was never extended under their rule to form the principles of what we would consider today as individual rights. The development of that principle would have to wait for the arrival of William the Conqueror. For it was only under the Norman Conquest, and their transported economic structure of feudalism, that individual rights began to lay a formation for recognition..

For its was only under feudalism, where barons (landlords) and serfs (tenants) were morally deemed to owe each other reciprocal duties. This economic system required the landlord to provide the tenant with land, shelter and the means to grow crops. The tenant, accordingly, would reciprocally be required to provide the landlord with labor and a portion of the crops the tenant would grow. After 1066, for the first time, English law would begin to recognize that an otherwise powerless individual (a tenant farmer) was now owed a duty from a powerful person (a wealthy landlord).

It was also at this time that the common law, where cases in controversy would produce decisions based upon precedent and custom (*stare decisis*), began to truly develop throughout England. Under the leadership of Henry the Second, and his promotion of legal system reforms, common law courts and cases began to be formed to establish a body of law. It was also at this time that the reciprocal duties between landlords and tenants began to be firmly recognized.

A quarter century later, in 1215, the cause of freedom, liberty and individual rights took one of its greatest leaps forward.

Fearing the loss of their lands from a possible invasion by the ambitious King Philip of France, the landlord barons revolted against Henry's son, King John Lackland. Cornering him at a small creek known as Runnymede, these rebels forced King John to sign the Magna Carta, known at the time as the Charter of Liberties. This royal charter outlined, for the first time in history, the duties a King owed to his subjects. This critically important document became the foundation of what would become the British Constitution.

A half century later, in 1265, St. Thomas Aquinas, an Italian, Dominican priest, began to pioneer his famous work, the *Summa Theologica*. In the *Summa*, St. Thomas advanced the philosophical concept of "grace." This concept argued that all people have an individual relationship with God. This relationship, St. Thomas asserted, meant that God could reward each and every person for their good works and intentions. This new concept of grace, therefore, had the effect of elevating the individual to a new, and historic status.

At a time when the separation of church and state was at best illusory, the ground breaking work of St. Thomas, meant that civil governments would soon also have to begin to elevate the status of the individual. Building upon St. Thomas' work, other philosophers, clerics and legal scholars, such as William Ockham, John Wycliffe, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, then began to argue that every human being is indeed an individual instrument of God. In this light, they would assert, and advocate in law, that every person, should be theoretically vested with fundamental, individual, natural rights.

Locke's historic book, *Two Treatises of Government*, published in 1689, was especially meaningful and compelling. In this important work, this brilliant English lawyer and philosopher, advocated that every individual should be allowed by government to live in freedom. He further asserted that each and every person, as an instrument of God, possessed three fundamental rights of natural law. These rights, the foundation of freedom, included life, liberty and the pursuit of property. Such rights, Locke argued, were inherent to our humanity. They were, Locke continued, given to each person by God, and no government, therefore, should ever infringe upon them, without just cause.

This Lockean philosophy was well known by the people of America in 1777. Indeed, they found his arguments so persuasive, that the American Declaration of Independence, adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, even paraphrased his words from the *Two Treatises of Government*, stating:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."*

There is little question that without the aforementioned evolution of individual rights under English Law, that the people of New York in 1777 could not have transformed these important philosophical concepts into the guarantees of freedom we enjoy today.

The flip side of this is equally true, however. For history is littered with concepts that never become reality. And without the people and events of 1777 New York, there is a serious question of whether that reality of freedom, that we enjoy today, and that they delivered to both America and to the world, would have ever come to fruition.

For real freedom is much more than a philosophical or legal concept. It's a way of life. It was the people of New York in 1777, that helped to transform that concept into an actual reality. It was their sacrifice, their gift, that now allows each of us, the average person, to live a life of individual freedom.

The people of New York, in 1777 had, to a person, a direct, personal and full understanding of freedom. They believed in it. They promoted it. And as this book will show, they would fight and die for its preservation.

That is why their story is so captivating.

Theirs is a truly American story. It is a story shaped by the time and place of 1777 New York. It is a story of remarkable and courageous people. It is the story of the value, and the empowerment, of every individual person. It is the story of freedom.

And what exactly is this meaning of this freedom, that the people of 1777 New York delivered? All of us should reflect upon the gift, and these incredible people who gave it to us.

Freedom is the ultimate state of human existence.

As aforementioned, it is fundamentally a product of respect for the individual and their rights. Moreover, it is also opportunity. For true freedom empowers every person with the chance to rise as far as their talents will take them.

By its very nature, freedom allows each of us to fulfill and unlock our greatest potential.

It spawns creativity, fuels opportunity, and opens up new horizons.

Most importantly, freedom brings us closest to God, and His vision for our lives.

Ultimately, freedom unleashes all that we are, and all that we can be, as human beings.

But freedom can also be a very scary thing.

By its very nature, it does not guarantee outcome or success. Accordingly, the freedom to succeed, is also the freedom to fail.

That is why freedom is not without its opponents.

Because freedom is not just about the ability to do what everyone universally agrees is the right thing to do. It also allows us do things that some might think risky, unwise, or that is the wrong thing to do. It's about the ability to do things that some people simply do not want to have done.

As a result, by its very nature, freedom is the absence of control of the individual. That is why it is individual empowerment.

This lack of control over the individual is why there are those who are not always in support of freedom.

There have always been, and there will always be, those who crave power and control over others. Those who do not deem individuals worthy of the free exercise of their rights. Those who think the equality or guarantee of outcome is far more important than the uncertain chance of a greater success.

Some of freedom's opponents are evil. They simply want to control the actions of others for the sole purpose of benefiting themselves.

Other opponents are mistakenly well intentioned, believing they simply know better than the people to whom the freedom would be afforded. These opponents believe they are merely acting in a paternalistic manner, to protect individuals from themselves.

But both these opponents to freedom are wrong. They should not be allowed to stunt the opportunity of any person for a warped lust for power over others or for a mistaken belief that only they know what is best.

True freedom is not life with no regulation, it's life with self regulation. It's being allowed to make choices to get the outcome one wants, and then accepting the consequences that can result. For good and for bad. Its full accountability, but to oneself.

That is why our founders, who really understood the meaning of freedom, almost always advocated, that it must be coupled with personal responsibility. They knew that completely unrestrained freedom, without self control, and absent personal responsibility, can equally lead to tyranny and danger. That is why true freedom requires that the free actions not be hurtful to others. The excesses of the French Revolution are but one example of why our founders were right.

The people of 1777 New York, who delivered the freedom we enjoy today, made freedom their way of life. They saw and experienced it first hand. They lived both its blessings and its challenges. They understood freedom on the deepest level, and were dedicated not to lose it, and to pass it along to future generations.

New York, in 1777, was almost uniformly a forbidding wilderness. One hundred and fifty years of European colonization did not remake it into the Europe that these colonists' ancestors had left behind. And as New Yorkers worked to change the landscape of their new home, that landscape was also changing them.

Despite the elegant and meaningful writings of Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau, true freedom in Europe was still a myth in 1777. Centuries of

monarchical based political systems, religious battles for control of the faithful, and landed money interests dependent upon uneducated, subservient labor, left little room for liberty or even less respect for individual rights.

Back in Europe, people lived and worked their whole lives on tiny plots of leased land. The small town or village they called home, was connected by a millennia of well used roads, social networks, and religious and political rules. People led relatively safe, sustainable and ordered lives. But they were also impoverished, stagnate, and absent any hope of upward mobility.

The new world of 1777 New York could not have been more different. It was dangerous, harsh, uncertain, scary and filled with almost unlimited opportunity.

Land was plentiful, and most people owned their own property. But as the Founders would recognize, with that opportunity came responsibility. Those New York Colonists who owned land had to transform that property out of the brutal wildness that was North America. They did it with their own two hands, felling huge trees, tearing out countless roots and rocks from the soil, digging wells, and making everything they had, from their house and barn, to their furniture, clothes, and tools. They made every decision, without rules, regulations or direction from a government, church or cultural oligarchy. They succeeded or failed, exclusively upon their own labor, guile and ingenuity.

These people of colonial New York had to face every challenge that a harsh wilderness could present. But as if the perils offered by their natural environment were not enough, they also had to face the hostile Native Americans upon whose historical lands they encroached.

Protection and self preservation was their own, individual responsibility of these New Yorkers. There was no government entity upon which they could depend. This environment built tough, independent, self-reliant and self confident people. They were the product of their own success, and what tipped the balance and allowed them to build a life far more successful and prosperous than the Europe their ancestors had left behind, was one principle attribute. Freedom.

Because of the conditions in which they lived, the people of the wilderness frontier that was New York in 1777, were circumspect of any rules or regulations that any government, or any other authority, might proscribe upon them.

After the French and Indian War, the rulers of Great Britain, burdened by a crushing war debt, decided that the colonies needed to share in the cost of the protection that being a part of the mother country offered.

Accordingly, King George the Third and Parliament started to impose new taxes, new laws, new rules and new regulations that colonists had never before had to deal with. The people of New York, who had lived in freedom for 150 years, without these taxes or interference in their lives, seriously objected.

Some of these colonists even objected by means of taking up arms against their perceived oppressor. They wanted their freedom, and they would die to preserve it.

Englishmen, which despite their multicultural heritage, New Yorkers considered themselves, had a long and proud tradition of armed resistance against the government. From the time of the Magna Carta, to the English Revolution, and then the Glorious Revolution, the freedoms and rights of Englishmen were viewed by the average man as sacrosanct. Such freedoms were simply not to be trampled upon without consequence. New Yorkers thereby believed that any resistance in defense of their freedom, was both justifiable and based upon strong precedent.

In the age of the enlightenment and Lockean natural rights, the New York quest to maintain and preserve freedom, had never had more import or meaning than it did in 1777. This devotion to this ideal, led to earth shattering achievements.

These New Yorkers, who came together from all backgrounds and classes, left an enormous, positive, and meaningful legacy for all of us who are their posterity. In that time and place, these special, committed people risked everything for an ideal. An ideal of freedom.

Through their efforts, the people of 1777 New York, by putting the principle of freedom above everything else, including their very lives, delivered on its promise for all of us today. It is because of their efforts, their sacrifice, their commitment, that we live our lives today in unparalleled liberty.

But what exactly were they thinking? Why would they do this?

Perhaps the best perspective of this colonial mindset, that was so prevalent in New York in 1777, actually was told in 1843, when at the age of 90, Levi Preston, a Captain in a Massachusetts regiment, who had fought throughout the Revolutionary war, was asked to tell his posterity what the average man was thinking in 1777.

What, he was asked, was the true reason behind the conflict that became known as the American Revolution, and why did the average soldier join the fight in what was almost exclusively a volunteer army. His answer was as simple as his cause. Freedom.

Preston replied directly, that "what we meant in going for those Redcoats was this: we had always governed ourselves and we always meant to."

Just like Preston, the average person in New York, male or female, understood that they had controlled their own life before the Revolution, and had no intention of allowing Parliament, King George, or the British military, to ever change that status.

The people of 1777 New York had lived in freedom, they understood freedom, and had experienced both its blessings and perils, first hand. They feared its loss, and would give their very lives for its preservation.

The colonists of 1777 were thereby presented with a stark choice. As their fellow New Hampshire citizens had phrased it: Live Free or Die.

This was not a choice not sought by New Yorkers themselves, but rather one thrust upon them by the actions of the British government.

At that time and place, every person in the colonies needed to stand up and fight for their rights, or stand apathetically by and lose them. In an age of enlightenment, even the average person took the concept of rights and freedom very seriously. They lived it and it was engraved in their very being.

Today's Americans have received a great gift from those brave colonial New Yorkers that risked it all, and often died, for this philosophical cause, in which they deeply believed.

This was the first war fought truly for ideology, not for conquest, land or for power. It was over an ideal. And that ideal was freedom.

The freedom we enjoy today, that was so overwhelmingly supported in the 2012 Gallup poll, is a direct and unquestioned result of the sacrifice and commitment of the brave people of 1777.

One of the reasons I wrote this book is that I believe we must remember this sacrifice and commitment. We need to tell this story.

So that we many never lose its blessings, we need to remember what this cause of freedom means to us today, and what it meant to the people of 1777.

For the cause of freedom, which these 18th century New Yorkers held so deeply in their hearts, is often today, sadly taken for granted. We fail to remember the enormous cost these remarkable people of 1777 New York paid to give us that gift, or how really fragile that gift actually is.

In this modern age, far too many Americans, view freedom as just the way things are, and the way they will always be. People, far too often, look at freedom as a human guarantee, that will never be eroded, or taken from us. But such is really not the case.

There are so many ways that a people can lose their freedom. It is not, sadly, the universal condition of all mankind. It never really existed for people, with a guarantee for its continuance, before the Revolution. Indeed, all over the globe, still today, one can see that people who did not enjoy the legacy of 1777, still live in tyranny, falling victim to others who desire power or control over their lives.

Freedom is very fragile. It can be lost at any time, and all too quickly.

It can be taken by a powerful, tyrannical government, as was the threat in 1777.

It can also be willingly ceded, by the people who enjoy its blessings. Handed over willingly, by apathy or neglect, to an unrecognized evil, or to a misguided or well meaning power, that seeks to control the actions of others.

Sometimes those who wish this control merely seek the pursuit of power.

Sometimes, thinking that they know far better than the average person, these control seekers think that the average person simply can't be trusted with freedom, which could allow people to do the wrong thing. These control seekers advocate that this ceding of control is for the achievement of the overall "public benefit".

This last threat, is the peril I fear we most often face today.

We all know that we clearly must live in the modern world.

We do not reside in the unbridled wilderness that was 1777.

There is no question that we share the challenges presented by 21st century life, and reasonable people do recognize that there is undoubtedly some

need, for a certain level of rules and regulations, in order to protect society as a whole.

We all want clean potable water, electricity that works when we flip the light switch, and highways which are not some version of a demolition derby.

But just as our Founders linked freedom with the balancing test of personal responsibility, we too must follow their lead, and balance it against the needs of modern society. We must keep the perspective that freedom, because it empowers the human condition, should be our overriding concern, and not allow it to fall victim to the expediencies of governmental overreach. Reasonableness must be the rule. Responsibility and accountability must be the means.

Conversely, there will always be others who want, for power, wealth, or twisted or misguided ideology, to control us.

That is the lesson that 1777 teaches us.

It is not that we should never have rules in our society. Rules developed by the consent of the governed are fine. Rules of responsibility and accountability are not inconsistent with freedom. Oppression is not.

We should always, vigorously resist the efforts of those who seek to deny us freedom without our consent. We should err on the side of freedom and not control. We should keep in mind that freedom can easily be lost along the road of good intentions.

Yes, freedom can be a scary thing. But it is the best way to live our lives.

Inherently, because freedom allows us the opportunity to succeed. It also offers us the possibility to fail. We cannot be paralyzed by that chance of failure. We cannot fail victim to those who preach that equalized outcomes mean more than freedom. It simply isn't true.

True success most often comes from overcoming failure. The New Yorkers of 1777 understood this. They would many times fail until they succeeded. That is why we must preserve our freedom with the same vigor and commitment as those brave New Yorkers did during the Revolution.

In the end, now in our third century since that time, we have learned, that freedom is the essential element that truly empowers the human condition.

If we truly want ourselves, and our posterity, to have the ability to rise as far as our talents will take us, then we need the level playing field of freedom, to get us where our hopes and aspirations wish to take us.

Our Founders clearly understood this. The legacy of freedom they have given us, is perhaps the greatest gift ever given to all mankind.

That is not to say that the Founders were perfect people. We should not get lost nor misled by that silly notion. There is no such thing. There are not now, and there were not then, any perfect people.

People then, and people today, can be hurtful, selfish, mean and sometimes evil. They can also be good, aspirational, empowering and helpful.

Bad people can do good things, and good people can do bad things. If we expect all people to be perfect, and be good and altruistic all the time, in every action throughout their entire life, we are bound to be nothing but disappointed.

What is so beautiful about the Founders, wasn't that they lived perfect lives, but that they held some transformational, beautiful, perfect ideas and aspirations.

Thomas Jefferson, was a flawed man in so many respects, as a slave owner, a manipulative politician, a man who would turn against those who had always supported and befriended him, and a spend thrift who died deeply in debt.

When he wrote those beautiful, aspirational phrases contained within the Declaration of Independence, however, he penned perhaps the most meaningful words in human history. They were words that elevated the value of every individual person. Words that conveyed the best attributes of humanity. Words that offered the promise of freedom, and liberty and prosperity to anyone who would seek to achieve it.

The fact that these magnificent ideals came from an imperfect man, does not diminish their power. It magnifies them.

All in all, I wrote this book for two principle reasons.

First, the story of 1777 in New York, is one of the greatest stories in human history.

Every element of the human condition exists within this period that make up a good story. The triumph of good over evil, the winning of the underdog against long odds, just when times appear to be at their darkest.

This story contains interesting characters, with all different talents, and numerous personal flaws and quirks, who all pull together to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Working toward a common goal of delivering freedom, these amazing people, from diverse and unique backgrounds, achieved an historic victory, when nobody, including sometimes not even themselves, believed it possible.

Secondly, it is my heart felt belief that this book should be written to tell the story of freedom.

The central overriding theme of those brave men and women who gave their lives during 1777, was that they were offering themselves up for the cause of freedom.

They understood that some things are larger than themselves. They believed that freedom is a gift from God, that no man should be allowed to take away.

They knew in their hearts, that people who are blessed to live under freedom's liberties, can accomplish anything, and are only limited by their own drive, individual talent, hard work and desire.

The freedom that resulted from the story of 1777 made New York and the United States the land of unlimited possibilities.

This incredible gift, that the people of 1777 New York gave to us, is not, however, assured, without our continued commitment to keep it alive.

We cannot afford to trade that gift for the expedencies of the present, when false solutions are offered by those who wish to control our actions for what they myopically deem to be the overall public benefit.

For freedom is a gift that was purchased by the people of 1777 at high cost. We dare not waste their sacrifice.

In their name, and we need to preserve it, both for ourselves and for our future generations.

Table of Maps

Chapter One

General Schuyler – The Albany New Year’s Eve

December 31, 1776

New Year’s Eve has traditionally been a time for reflection. It is a time to think of the mistakes of the past, and for aspirations of the future. 1776 had been a very dynamic year. It was a year of dramatic change, of novel firsts, of great victories, and of disappointing losses. As Major General Philip Schuyler gazed out upon the Hudson River from the northeast corner window of his splendid mansion in Albany, all these thoughts, hopes and fears swirled through his ample mind.

Just after midnight, he decided to take a few moments for quiet reflection. Politely excusing himself from his many guests, he threw on a cape, and slipped outside his back door. As he walked past the outbuilding, which housed his office, he strolled along the side of his grand home, and onto his front lawn.¹

Built in 1761, while Schuyler was in England on a business venture for Colonel John Bradstreet, his commanding officer during the French and Indian War, the large, stately brick home, stood on a slope high above the river bank, about a half mile south of the city of Albany.²

On this relatively mild winter night, the stars shone bright down upon a sky with scattered clouds. The moon, which had been full a week before, was now at three quarters, with its silver light glistening off the still flowing river, and its scattered chunks of forming ice and snow.³

As the Commanding General of the Continental Army’s Northern Department, Schuyler looked down at the river, and his pastureland that spanned toward its edge, and began to think about past events and future possibilities.

The year had started out with such promise. After the opening of the war in Lexington and Concord Massachusetts in April 1775, America had seen the surprise, and nearly bloodless, capture of Fort Ticonderoga and Fort Crown Point, in Northern New York, in May of 1775.⁴ These events had allowed Schuyler’s Northern Department, to be the toast of America.⁵

It had also made household names and heroes of Captain Benedict Arnold and Lt. Colonel Ethan Allen, who had commanded the conquests.⁶

With the help and ingenuity of Henry Knox, a great number of the artillery salvaged from these captured forts, had been transported on sleds overland to Boston.⁷

Placed atop Dorchester Heights, overlooking the city of Boston, this new artillery, had further allowed Schuyler's friend, General George Washington, the new Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, to seriously threaten British troops, their naval escorts, and their supply lines.⁸

As a result, because of the heroic actions taken by the soldiers in his Department, by March 17, 1776, British commander William Howe saw the British position at Boston, as indefensible, and withdrew the British forces in Boston, to the British stronghold, hundreds of miles away, at Halifax, Nova Scotia.⁹

Thus, by March 1776, not only could General Schuyler claim credit for having American forces now control the "Gibraltar" of North America (with their capture and occupation of Ticonderoga), but also (because of the artillery gained from the captured forts) also now claim to have been instrumental in helping America's first major victory in the War, when the British forces abandoned Boston.¹⁰

But 1776 would prove to be one fluctuating ride of a swinging pedulum.

For prior to General Howe's withdrawal, with a belief that British controlled Canada was both under defended and sympathetic to Patriot America, the Continental Congress advanced a new strategy, proposing to attack into the heart of Quebec, using Ticonderoga and Crown Point as a staging grounds, in an effort to liberate and add a new 14th Colony to the American cause.¹¹

This military action, to become known as the Canadian Campaign, would be conducted under Schuyler's direction, with forces from the Northern Department, under his command.

It would be a two-tiered attack.

One prong would be led by Schuyler's second in command, General Richard Montgomery, with orders to take Fort St. John, Fort Chambly and Montreal.¹²

The other force, would be led by newly promoted Colonel Benedict Arnold, who would travel up the Kennebec River, through the Maine wilderness, and then into Quebec to the St. Lawrence River.¹³

The two forces were ordered to conjoin at the outskirts of Quebec City, and then to capture the walled fortress, with their combined armies.¹⁴

But, by last New Year's Eve, this grand strategy would collapse upon itself.

Due to disputes in Congress, what was supposed to be a summer campaign, was delayed from commencement, for both Montgomery and Arnold, until September.¹⁵

Once finally allowed to move, things got still more difficult.

Slowed by a brutal battle and siege at Fort St. John, just south of Montreal on the Richelieu River, General Montgomery was unable to arrive at Montreal until November, 1775.¹⁶

After an initial repulse of American Forces was driven back, which saw the capture of Colonel Ethan Allen and many of his men, Montgomery took Montreal on November 13, 1775.¹⁷

This capture of Montreal was only made possible after American Forces were able to overrun Fort Chambly, a British stronghold further north of Fort John, and also on the Richelieu River.¹⁸

Seeing the inevitable, after the loss of this Fort Chambly, British Commander and Governor General of Canada, Major General Guy Carlton, who was in command of the forces at Montreal, decided to abandon the city completely, fleeing with most of his troops by ship, up the St. Lawrence River, to Quebec City.¹⁹

Carlton's actions thus allowed Montgomery to take Montreal, on this second assault, virtually unmolested.²⁰

After securing Montreal, General Montgomery then marched his remaining forces of 300 men, east along the St. Lawrence River, to the outskirts of Quebec City, arriving there on December 1, 1775.

Colonel Arnold's expedition, despite not sustaining combat, was even far more harrowing.

Traveling through the Maine wilderness along the Kennebec River, and into Quebec until the St. Lawrence River, Arnold with his initial force of over 1000 men and 200 bateaux (canoe like river boats) ventured into uncharted territory.²¹

Enduring epic, historic hardship, from cold, downpouring rain, freezing temperatures, wrecked boats, lost and insufficient supplies, and starvation, this force dwindled from death and desertion to become 600 men, finally arriving at the St. Lawrence River, across from Quebec City, on November 9, 1775.²²

Heralded for their courage, accomplishment and perseverance, Americans would compare this trek of Arnold and his brave men to that of the renowned Hannibal crossing the Alps.²³ A journey that was estimated to be 180 miles and take 20 days, actually was over 300 miles and took 63 days.²⁴

Upon their arrival at the St. Lawrence River, Colonel Arnold and his men could see the walls of Quebec City.²⁵ But, with only 600 men remaining, and with only five cartridges remaining for each man, and with no artillery whatsoever, they knew they could not successfully assault a walled city defended by a British Garrison of over 1100 men.²⁶

Consequently, Arnold's army was forced to wait for General Montgomery and his forces and supplies.²⁷

Ten days after Arnold arrived, the Americans' strategic position would get worse.

For on November 19, 1775, British General Carlton arrived at Quebec City, adding his forces to the walled city, together with adding his experience as a combat commander.²⁸

Weeks later, when Montgomery's and Arnold's forces were able to be conjoin, they understood, that their mission had grown much harder. With enlistments of many of their men ending on January 1, and with the onset of winter causing havoc on their food and supplies, as well as on the health of their men, they would have to select the perfect time to attack, and would be forced to do so quickly.²⁹

Thus, on last New Year's Eve, December 31, 1775, Colonel Arnold and General Montgomery, in the midst of a blinding snow storm, commenced an attack on the City of Quebec.³⁰

But this time, the British, having been tipped off from a deserter from Arnold's army, were ready for it.³¹

This attack would sadly prove a virtual disaster.

It would begin with the death of General Montgomery, one of the most promising and experienced commanders in the Continental Army.³²

It would then see the serious wounding of Colonel Arnold, who would suffer a gunshot wound to the leg, requiring him to be carried from the field.³³

Then the capture of the fiery Captain Daniel Morgan, who took command of combat operations in progress, from the wounded Arnold, together with the capture and imprisonment of Captain Henry Dearborn, and many of the American Forces.³⁴

After this disastrous assault was repulsed by the British, the Americans still continued to fire artillery at the city in a form of a siege. With few supplies and food remaining, however, and with substantial battle casualties and a massive small pox epidemic breaking out in the American camps, these factors led to the effective end of the Canada Campaign.³⁵

As a result, on May 3, 1776, when American General John Thomas arrived outside of Quebec City to relieve the troops, upon seeing their condition, he concluded there was no point in continuing the siege, and ordered the retreat of all the remaining American forces back to Fort Ticonderoga.³⁶

Upon the American's retreat, Sir Guy Carlton, would leave the protection of the walled city, and proceed with newly obtained forces sent from England, to retake Montreal, St. John and Crown Point.³⁷

And after his string of reconquests, Carlton would next sail south on Lake Champlain, with a powerful fleet, and force of men, with a determined mission to retake Fort Ticonderoga.³⁸

But the swinging pendulum that would be 1776 was soon to swing in the other direction.

For just when all seemed lost, on October 11, 1776, Carlton would be surprised and repulsed by a herculean effort of the now recovering Benedict Arnold.³⁹

Exhibiting the charisma and leadership that would become his trademark, Arnold, now a Brigadier General, would in just a few days, arrange for the building of a small armada of armed lake craft, and push back the British Invasion fleet, in America's first naval battle, at Lake Champlain's Valcour Island.⁴⁰

But as Schuyler remembered the events of the last year, he recalled that Northern New York and Canada were not the only areas to see meaningful activity in 1776.

Perhaps greatest of all was in Philadelphia, when on July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution declaring Independence for the American Colonies from Great Britain and King George.⁴¹

This formal act of separation was earth shattering. It would prove the act that every true Patriot, like General Schuyler, needed, to start the creation of their new nation, the United States of America.

The fundamental transformation that the Declaration would bring, would not just resonate in all the other American Colonies, but also have deep meaning in Schuyler's New York.

For just weeks after Congress acted, influential leaders in New York would begin to organize in convention to draft a new state constitution.⁴²

The creation of this historic first, would be accomplished under the guidance of such mental giants as John Jay, Robert Livingston and Gouvenor Morris.⁴³

As a former member of both the New York Colonial Assembly, and the Continental Congress, General Schuyler had followed the progress of this critically important effort with great interest.⁴⁴

As General Schuyler breathed in the cool night air, and considered the events of the past year as he overlooked his grand estate, the vision of the pendulum reappeared in his mind.

For as he recalled, that just as the euphoria of the Declaration had taken place, and the new state constitutional efforts had begun to take hold, they were all marred by a huge British military victory in New York City.

For on June 9, 1776, General William Howe, the Commander in Chief of all British Forces in America, and his army, set sail from Halifax, Nova Scotia, with an enormous armada of 130 ships and nearly 30,000 men, appearing in New York waters on June 29, and landing on Staten Island on July 2.⁴⁵

Although General Schuyler could not know this, such British invasion would prove to be the largest military troop movement in world history until the D-Day invasion, 168 years later.⁴⁶

What Schuyler did remember from a few months before, however, was that with General Washington and his 19,000 troops, poised for their first major general engagement of the war, on August 22, 1776, the British commenced the Battle for New York City, landing nearly 20,000 troops unopposed on Long Island.⁴⁷ This was in addition to the powerful guns of the British Naval vessels patrolling the shorelines of this combat theater, and firing artillery on his troops and positions.⁴⁸

Then, on August 26, 1776, the British began attacking and overrunning Colonial positions on Brooklyn Heights.⁴⁹

But just when all appeared lost, Schuyler thought, came the pendulum again.

For in another story of Providential luck, that his friend General Washington always seemed to be able to summon, just at the time when all hope seemed lost, and just when his troops faced the prospect of being thoroughly routed, and possibly annihilated, a fortuitous fog rolled in, enabling American forces to silently retreat from certain disaster.⁵⁰

This retreat, conducted on August 28, across the river from Long Island to Manhattan, was performed with the skillful help of Colonel John Glover, the commander of a Massachusetts corps of experienced ferrymen.⁵¹

But just as Washington was able to mastermind an escape, he would then suffer another series of defeats, from the relentless British, at Kip's Bay, Harlem Heights and White Plains.⁵²

He would then lose both Forts Washington and Mifflin on the Hudson, before finally being able to escape this British offensive, by moving his forces to a position along the Delaware River in Pennsylvania.⁵³

As he recalled these events, General Schuyler just shook his head. For soon would reappear that pendulum.

Despite these horrible losses, General Washington and the patriot movement still survived.

And just at a time when things looked as dark as could be imagined, my good friend General Washington, Schuyler thought with pride, had been able to transform public despair into hope.

For staring on Christmas Eve, just a few short days ago, again using Colonel Glover to ferry him, General Washington and his troops crossed the Delaware River into New Jersey.⁵⁴

Upon that crossing Washington was able to end the year with an historic and dramatic victory over British Forces at Trenton.⁵⁵

What Schuyler could not know, was that in just two days, on January 3, 1777, Washington would pull off another stunning victory over the British at Princeton.⁵⁶

This amazing campaign, which pulled victory from the jaws of defeat, raised the spirit of every Patriot, and sent shockwaves throughout the British high command.⁵⁷

Indeed, the highly respected and experienced military commander, the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, remarked that the “achievements of Washington and his little band of compatriots between the 25th of December and the 4th of January, a space of 10 days, were the most brilliant of any recorded in the annals of military achievements.”⁵⁸

And so, as General Schuyler gazed upon the frozen landscape of his estate, down to the Hudson River, and across to the hills of Rensselaer, the ups and downs, and the pendulum swings of the past year, filled his thoughts.

The patriot cause to which he was devoted, had seen some stunning victories, and some horrific defeats.

What would this new year 1777 bring?

What would be the British response to their victories in Canada and New York City?

What would be their response to their loses at Valcour Island, and New Jersey?

Would the cause of liberty survive?

These were the contemplations he made, standing by himself on his front yard, watching the river flow by in the moon light.

Major General Philip Schuyler, who stood that night on his front lawn, was in so many ways, one of the most remarkable men, in an age that produced so many.⁵⁹

Now at age forty-two, he was tall, slender, well muscled, erect, intelligent, energetic, well written, and well spoken, with a commanding presence.⁶⁰

He had an unusually expressive face, with dark brown hair, and keen, amber, piercing eyes.⁶¹

Born in Albany, New York, on November 20, 1733, he was part of a third generation, wealthy, Dutch family.⁶² His father John (Johannes) Schuyler, Jr., was a highly respected and prominent Albany scion, who died when Philip was just eight years of age. His mother, Cornelia Van Cortlandt, who died in 1762, came from one of the wealthiest and most respected families in all of New York.⁶³

Prior to his father's death, young Philip had attended the public school at Albany.

At age 15, he was sent by his mother to New Rochelle, to study with a Huguenot pastor Reverend Stoupe, remaining there for three years, learning French and excelling in mathematics.⁶⁴

The diet provided by Mrs. Stoupe, however, was so extremely meager, that it caused those in her care to go hungry to bed, in a room so ill protected from the elements that the winter snow would drift upon the floor.⁶⁵

It is therefore not surprising that while studying at New Rochelle, General Schuyler first developed what would become one of the most significant impediments in his life, namely attacks of rheumatic gout.⁶⁶

This terribly painful disease never ceased to be an incapacitating, albeit, intermittent infliction.⁶⁷

Despite this, Schuyler was a true American, and a child of the frontier.⁶⁸

Independent, self reliant, and devoted to freedom and hard work, he became proficient in carpentry, construction, boat-building and farming.⁶⁹ He learned the skills of merchandising grain and timber.⁷⁰ He acquired hands on experience from managing two huge estates that composed virtually self-sufficient communities.⁷¹

Expert with a canoe, he personally had explored the rivers of upstate New York, learning the value of navigating, hunting, trapping and trading.⁷²

Like his father before him, he knew the Indians, gained their confidence and respect, had considerable influence with them, and was fluent in the Mohawk tongue.⁷³

A renowned family man, attentive father and caring husband, he was known for his perfect command of temper and indolent good humor.⁷⁴

Although unceasingly courteous to his equals, he didn't suffer fools well, and to those of doubtful integrity, he was known to show disdain.⁷⁵

Also, because of his overly expressive face, and the jealousies incumbent with wealth, he was also often tagged by his enemies, as a man who could display both arrogance and an aristocratic temperament.⁷⁶ Moreover, his polished, urbane manner, reflective of his high intelligence and quality education, was also sometimes mistaken to be haughty or snobbish.⁷⁷

In 1755, at the age of 22, Schuyler joined the British forces during the French and Indian War, raising a company, earning a commission as its Captain, and later serving with distinction as a quartermaster, purchasing supplies and organizing equipment.⁷⁸

Now in adulthood, the owner of two large estates, with one in Albany and one in Saratoga (today known as Schuylerville), he was both energetic and enterprising.⁷⁹

He developed and earned reputation for diversity in agricultural production, and mastering the technology of the day, produced wheat, corn, flax, vegetables, timber, and livestock, and operated well renowned wheat, flax and saw mills.⁸⁰

By 1777, he had built a life filled with activity and responsibility.⁸¹

A man of the enlightenment age, Schuyler began his political career as a member of the New York Assembly in 1768, and served as an outspoken member of that body until 1775.⁸² He was an unceasing, devoted patriot.⁸³

In 1775, he was also elected to the Continental Congress, and served until he was appointed a Major General of the Continental Army in June of that year.⁸⁴

It was at that time, in Philadelphia, as a member of Congress, where he first met George Washington, serving with him on a committee to design a continental army.⁸⁵

Schuyler was to form a firm bond of friendship with the Virginian.⁸⁶

Upon his appointment by Congress as a Major General (one of only four in the entire Continental Army at the time, with Artemus Ward, Charles Lee, and Israel Putnam) Schuyler took command of the Northern Department.⁸⁷

The Northern Department established by Congress included that portion of the colony of New York north of the Hudson Highlands, as well as the present state of Vermont (then known as the Hampshire Grants), and was also extended during the Canadian Campaign to include Canada as well.⁸⁸ The field army associated with the Northern Department, under the command of Schuyler, was known as the Northern Army.⁸⁹

Although most of the success of Washington's most recent campaign in New Jersey had yet to reach Schuyler's upstate New York Command by New Year's Eve, General Schuyler had enormous confidence in, and hope for, George Washington's success.

These two remarkable men were not just fellow compatriots and commanders, they were also contemporaries and friends, who shared strikingly similar backgrounds.

Each was born within months of the other, Washington on February 22, 1732 and Schuyler on November 20, 1733, to prominent, respected, multi generational, American families.⁹⁰

They had both built substantial fortunes, served their communities, states and new nation, in elected civil office.⁹¹

Each believed deeply in the patriot cause, in American independence, and most of all, in freedom.⁹²

They each knew that freedom was rooted in the inherent respect for the individual, and in each person's God given right to govern themselves and make those personal choices that are best for themselves and their families.⁹³

They each knew that freedom was both fragile and illusive, but they were also both each willing to die to see that the people of America could enjoy its blessings.⁹⁴

George Washington gave the same impression, for no one could deport himself with more ostensible coolness than he.

They were cast from similar molds.

He built several schooners on the Hudson River, and named the first *Saratoga*.

Major General Philip Schuyler was a representative of the best Dutch blood in New York, and one of its wealthiest landed proprietors.

Moreover, he had not the physical vigor nor the ruggedness needed to cope with the hardships and deprivations of a wilderness campaign. This want showed itself in the outbursts of temper and exasperation which often succeeded an exhibition of uncomplaining patience on his part. He was a highminded, public-spirited gentleman and above all a patriot, wholly devoted rather singularly among the men of his own class in New York—to the American cause.

He was wrongly placed as a chief military officer; his proper place was at the council table.

In certain respects, Schuyler resembled General George Washington, with whom he had struck up a warm friendship after they met in 1775 and to whom he was indebted for his present command.

Like Washington, he was wealthy, with large landholdings.

He was a member of one of the oldest and most prominent families in the Hudson Valley and related to many of the others—the Van Schaicks, Livingstons, and Van Rensselaers, one of whom was his wife, Catherine.

He was about the same age as Washington, and like him had the executive experience and hands-on knowledge that came from managing a huge estate that composed a virtually self-sufficient community.

But in two important respects, he differed from the commander in chief.

Lacking the physical strength and toughness demanded by wilderness fighting, he was often sickly, and because he was frequently absent from his military duties on that account his enemies unjustly accused him of cowardice.

A more important contrast between the two was that Schuyler lacked Washington's steely determination, his utter will to win, his resolve never to give up.

It was Schuyler's misfortune, despite his considerable abilities and experience and what seemed unflagging devotion to the patriot cause, to be intensely disliked by New Englanders.

Some of the animosity was ethnic: his eastern neighbors of predominantly English descent considered him a Dutchman and thought that reason enough to hate him.

Another factor was a

A Connecticut chaplain, writing to his wife, described the general as haughty and overbearing, noting that "he has never been accustomed to seeing men that are reasonably well taught and able to give a clear opinion and to state their grounds for it, who were not also persons of some wealth and rank."

But resentment was rife among the Yankees because he had sided (naturally enough, it would seem) with the New Yorkers in their fierce boundary dispute with settlers of the New Hampshire Grants, which was to become Vermont.

Although it was none of Schuyler's doing, New York's royal governors approved deeds to 328,000 acres of land in the New Hampshire Grants during 1775 and 1776, two-thirds of which went to prominent loyalists.

Much of the opposition to Schuyler was familiar to Franklin and Chase, since it took but a mention of his name to set off a furor in Congress, where he had powerful detractors as well as determined supporters.

Yet the civility Carroll had noted at the landing came as no revelation to his guests: Schuyler was known for the generous hospitality evident in the courtesies he and his family showed them after their arrival, entertaining them, John Carroll reported to his mother, "with great politeness and very genteely."

On the carriage ride to the general's Albany residence Charles Carroll quietly indulged in his useful habit of observation.

He was not only keeping a detailed journal of the trip but also writing long, newsy letters to his father, each addressed "Dear Papa" and signed "Ch. Carroll

of Carrollton,” and he noted meticulously that Albany’s old fort was in ruinous condition without a single cannon in evidence, that the town was larger than Annapolis, and that most residents spoke Dutch (though the English “language and manners” were apparently gaining).

The linguistic residue was hardly surprising, since Dutch control of the place had lasted more than half a century, until the British took it over, changed its name from Willemstadt to Albany (in honor of James, Duke of York and Albany), and immediately capitalized on the town’s strategic location as an outpost against intruders from Canada and a depot for the seemingly boundless supply of furs coming in from the north and west.

The commissioners spent two pleasant days with the Schuylers before they, their host, and his family climbed aboard a wagon and set out for the general’s summer home at Saratoga.

The trip was a nightmare: jouncing around in their conveyance over execrable roads, crossing two rivers by ferry, they managed to travel thirty-two miles between early morning and sunset.

Schuyler took them on a tour of his estate, whose bottomland and mills for grain, lumber, hemp, and flax were of particular interest to Charles Carroll, as was the prevailing system of rental agreements that proved so advantageous to the lord of the manor (which provided that the lease was to run “while water runs and grass grows,” with the landlord to receive the tenth sheaf of all grain produced).

Next day Schuyler bade farewell to his guests and he and Baron de Woedtke departed for Lake George with Brigadier General John Thomas, a fifty-year-old veteran of the French and Indian wars and a practicing physician, who had just been named commander of rebel forces in Canada.

Thomas and de Woedtke were heading to Quebec; Schuyler would remain at Fort George to supervise and expedite the transport of military stores and supplies for Thomas’s troops.

On the morning of April 12 the weather turned cold, the commissioners were told that ice still made the lakes impassable, and when six inches of snow fell, Franklin began to fear that each day might be his last.

He took advantage of the layover to write a few friends and say farewell, indicating that the exhausting trip was proving too much for him.

But four days later he and the others were under way again, leaving behind Catherine Schuyler, her daughters, and the comforts of Saratoga for the harsh realities of a northern odyssey in wintry conditions.

From Saratoga to Lake George their route took them overland past a series of forts, most of which had been key sites during the French wars but were now crumbling piles of rubble, their only occupants mice and bats and the ghosts of yesteryear—those thousands of English, French, provincials, and Indians who had passed this way as pawns of Europe’s warring empires.

Philip Schuyler had only Dutch blood in his veins.

Fourth in descent from Philip Pieterse Schuyler, he was grandson of Captain Johannes Schuyler and son of Johannes Schuyler, Jr., Indian Commissioner and Mayor of Albany.

Born on November 11, 1733, he lost his father when he was eight years of age and was brought up by his mother, Cornelia Van Cortlandt, partly at her house in Albany and partly at The Flatts, where Aunt Schuyler’s model household was a second home to him.

The surroundings of his boyhood were such as to develop the practical and hardy qualities necessary for success at a time when there was no specialization of activity and when a leading man had to be an adept not only in one, but in various employments.

Shooting and fishing were the natural amusements of the boy.

To handle a horse or a canoe, to sail a sloop, to tread alone without fear the forest paths, became matters of course.

Of moral training he had the best kind in the example of the simple and high minded lives which were lived about him in the family circle at The Flatts; and the religious impressions then made upon his youthful character were strong enough to endure as guides of conduct throughout a long life.

Of the education to be derived from books, young Schuyler received a share unusual at that time, and equaled only by the advantages of the few graduates of Yale College in the province.

The property which he inherited and upon which must be based his future fortune, consisted chiefly of lands, only a portion of which was redeemed from

the forest.

He had to familiarize himself with these lands, find tenants to clear and plant them, mark out the best sites for saw-mills, superintend their erection, and arrange for the marketing of the lumber.

His business interests required visits to Oswego, the distant outpost on Lake Ontario, where the Dutch trader and the Indian hunter met to exchange peltry for guns, hatchets and whiskey.

He had to know that watery highway, so often to be followed in peace and in war-up to Mohawk River, past the fortress dwelling of William Johnson, through the country of the Iroquois, over the Great Carrying Place to Oneida Lake and down the Oneida River to the fort.

Rough settlers and lawless traders were necessary associates among whom safety required the cultivation of firmness and tact.

It was part of Schuyler's life to become familiar with the Indians, to learn their ways, how to influence and control them.

The warlike confederacy of the Six Nations was still established in the Long House as in the days of Peter Schuyler, and had still to be cajoled or over rated.

The strong hand of Montcalm held the destinies of Canada and threatened those of the English colonies.

The blackened ruins of the house at Saratoga, where lay the ashes of his murdered Uncle Philip, spoke strongly enough to the youthful Schuyler of dangers to be faced.

This free and varied life of the frontier, in which civilized man was brought so close to nature in its wilder forms, was full of pleasures of its own and of stimulating contrasts.

After the westward journeys through forest trails or in birch bark canoe amidst a wilderness whose human inhabitants were little less wild than the bear and the elk, the home life at Albany, with its solid comforts, its simple but lively social pleasures, acquired a peculiar zest.

The winter's day passed on snowshoes or skates found a happy end with book or games before the roaring logs of a Dutch fire-place.

The visits to each other of the Hudson River families, in winter on sledges skimming over the frozen surface, in summer by the leisurely sloop, tacking lazily between the wooded shores, yielded the more enjoyment that they were not of everyday occurrence.

Many and delightful were the house parties and river frolics among Livingstons, Van Rensselaers, Van Brughs, de Peysters, Ten Broecks, Ten Eycks, Bleeckers, Beeckmans, Lansings, Van Cortlandts and Cuylers.

And the sledge or the sloop of young Philip Schuyler often took him down the river to Claverack, where Catherine, the daughter of John Van Rensselaer, was the magnet of greatest attraction.

Before he had attained his majority, Schuyler paid several visits to New York, mingled with society there and formed intimacies with young men who were to be his allies or adversaries in the exciting scenes of future years.

As a relative of the principal proprietary families of the province, and as a young stranger who was committed to none of the political or religious parties of the city, all doors stood open to him.

Both Livingstons and de Lanceys were friendly.

Young Schuyler could be intimate at the same time with Rev. Henry Barclay, rector of Trinity Church, and the arch-dissenter, John Morin Scott.

In the houses of Bayards, Van Cortlandts, Beeckmans, Watts, de Peysters, he met a circle of the chief families of the town all more or less connected with his own.

New York was a royal province, differing radically in political and social ideas from the independent and democratic New England.

In these years preceding the French and Indian War, English prejudices in favor of aristocratic forms and a state church were very strong.

The Governor's council, the officials, the officers and the little court of provincial magnates who gathered at Government House gave the tone to a loyal and submissive community.

But there was a party of opposition, republican in sentiment and opposed to episcopacy.

In this party the leaders were yet chiefly Presbyterians, because the causes of division were mainly religious.

The clergy and laity of other denominations were forced to contribute to the salary of the rector of Trinity Church.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was known to have a plan on foot, approved by the ministry, for increasing the power of episcopacy in the province.

Many men, distinctly aristocratic in their feelings, were driven by a dread of Church predominance and tyranny into an opposition which became inevitably the party of democracy.

In 1752, was formed the Whig Club, which met once a week at the King's Arms. Chief among the members were William Livingston, William Smith, Jr., John Morin Scott, Peter Van Brugh Livingston, Robert R. Livingston, David Van Horne, William Alexander, William Peartree Smith and Dr. John Jones.

These men discussed politics and government in a manner quite independent and radical, and scandalized loyal churchmen by drinking to the health of Oliver Cromwell, John Hampden and Hugh Peters.

Three members of the Whig Club took the lead. William Livingston, William Smith, Jr., and John Morin Scott, the "wicked triumvirate," to whom the loyalist Judge Jones ascribed the later troubles of the province.

They were all graduates of Yale College, an institution remarkable for "its republican principles, its intolerance in religion and its utter aversion to Bishops and all earthly Kings."

Of these men, William Livingston was destined to become the distinguished revolutionary patriot and governor of New Jersey; John Morin Scott, the leader of the "Liberty Boys" and a powerful factor in the resistance of New York to ministerial tyranny; William Smith, Jr., the amiable and witty companion, the cultivated author of the History of New York, was to go far with the friends of his youth, but to become at last a loyalist and an exile and end his days as Chief Justice of Canada.

These three young lawyers carried the war into Africa and earned the undying hatred of all churchmen by prosecuting at their own expense the great suit of the heirs of Anneke Jans against Trinity Church.

With Livingston and Smith, Philip Schuyler formed a friendship destined to be intimate.

The establishment of King's, now Columbia College, was then proposed, and the vestry of Trinity Church offered the land for a building on condition that the head of the college should always be a member of the Church of England and that the Episcopal ritual should always be used.

This proposition at once became the subject of heated controversy and political division.

William Livingston had lately founded a weekly publication called the Independent Reflector, in which the social and political interests of the province were discussed chiefly by himself.

In the columns of this paper he continued a series of articles attacking the establishment of the college on the terms proposed, taking the ground that the money for its support was to be raised by a general tax, while the Episcopalians were only a minority in the province.

He was replied to in Gaine's Mercury by the churchmen, Barclay, Johnson and Auchmuty.

Regarding this controversy, Schuyler wrote to a friend in Albany.

"I send you the forty-sixth number of the Independent Reflector, which is making a notable stir here."

"The clergy and all churchmen are in arms against it, and our friend, Will Livingston, who is the principal writer, is thought by some to be one of the most promising men in the province."

"I esteem the Church and its liturgy, but I believe he is right in opposing the ridiculous pretensions of the clergy, who would make it as infallible as the Popish church claims to be."

During one of Schuyler's visits to New York, the first theatrical company arrived in the town.

It was warmly welcomed by the Government House circle, but a number of the more staid gentlemen met and agreed not to countenance the theatre by their presence.

Apparently they had not consulted their wives and daughters, who were otherwise minded, and one by one they fell away from grace and were seen at the theatre, except William Livingston, who was not the man to yield a question of principle.

Young Schuyler had no scruples in the matter.

In September, 1753, he wrote to his friend "Brom," Abram Ten Broeck of Albany, afterwards an important personage, one of those familiar and illustrative letters of which we wish we had more.

"The schooner arrived at Ten Eyck's wharf on Wednesday at one o'clock, and the same evening I went to the play with Phil (Livingston)."

"You know I told you before I left home that if the players should be here I should see them, for a player is a new thing under the sun in our good province."

"Phil's sweetheart went with us. She is a handsome brunette from Barbados, Who has an eye like that of a Mohawk beauty and appears to possess a good understanding."

"Phil and I went to see the grand battery in the afternoon, and to pay my respects to the governor, whose lady spent a week with us last spring, and we bought our play tickets for eight shillings apiece, at Parker and Weyman's printing office in Beaver Street on our return."

"We had tea at five o'clock, and before sundown we were in the theatre, for the players commenced at six."

"The room was quite full already."

"Among the company was your cousin Tom and Kitty Livingston, and also Jack Watts, Sir Peter Warren's brother-in law."

"I would like to tell you all about the play, but I can't now, for Billy must take this to the wharf for Captain Wynkoop in half an hour."

"He sails this afternoon."

"A large green curtain hung before the players until they were ready to begin, when, on the blast of a whistle, it was raised, and some of them appeared and commenced acting."

"The play was called 'The Conscious Lovers,' written you know by Sir Richard Steele, Addison's help in writing the Spectator."

“Hallam, and his wife and sister all performed, and a sprightly young man named Hulett played the violin and danced merrily.”

“But I said I could not tell you about the play, so I will forbear, only adding that I was not better pleased than I should have been at the club, where last year I went with cousin Stephen, and heard many wise sayings which I hope profited me something.”

“Tomorrow I expect to go into New Jersey to visit Colonel Schuyler, who was at our house four or five years ago, when he returned from Oswego.”

“He is a kinsman and good soldier, and as I believe we shall have war again with the French quite as soon as we could wish, I expect he will lead his Jerseymen to the field.”

“I wish you and I, Brom, could go with him.”

“But I must say farewell, with love to Peggy and sweet Kitty, very respectfully, if you see her.”

In the autumn of 1754, Schuyler came of age.

The English law of primogeniture gave to him, as eldest son, all the real estate which had belonged to his father, which meant substantially the whole family property.

The justice of this law was no more questioned in the province of New York than in England, nor had its privileges been refused by the eldest son in the circle of land-holding families with which he was connected.

But Dutch tradition and the generosity of Schuyler's character caused him to disregard the law.

The estate was divided by him equally among his mother's children, and the considerable fortune which he afterwards possessed was due to his own enterprise and industry.

It was in this year that the first shots were fired in the forests of Virginia by command of Colonel George Washington in that bloody and decisive struggle which in Europe was called the Seven Years' War and in America the French and Indian War.

The importance of this great conflict is somewhat obscured by the grandeur of those other events, the American and the French revolutions, which soon followed and were in considerable measure its sequence.

But it largely determined the future of the world.

Its results in Europe were to make England supreme on the seas, commercially and in war, to make her the great colonial nation of the world, to give her control in America and in India.

Its results in America were to abolish the French power, and thus to make possible the United States, both as to extent of territory and as to political independence.

All the region between the Alleghany and the Rocky Mountains, from the Gulf of Mexico to the St. Lawrence River, was claimed by France by right of exploration and occupation; the natural highways of that vast domain, the rivers Ohio, Mississippi, St. Lawrence and the great lakes, were jealously guarded by forts, under the command of officers from Versailles, above which, in the endless expanse of leafy wilderness, floated the fleur-de-lis of the old monarchy, a flag which represented everything opposed to human progress.

The prize grasped by the wisdom of Pitt and the valor of Wolfe became the inheritance of the men who were to build up the American nation.

The perspective of time allows us to see the ultimate meaning of this great conflict, to view it as a necessary step in the world's advance from the absolutism of the past to the enlightenment of the present.

But even to the more limited contemporary view the advantages to accrue to the English colonists were visible enough.

Philip Schuyler could see that with Canada under British rule, he might rebuild the house at Saratoga without fear of midnight raids and conflagration; the tomahawk of the savage might be buried deep when a Frontenac or a Montcalm ceased to incite to the warpath; every year might be pushed further to the westward the tide of colonization and enterprise.

The youthful Schuyler played no such important part in the war as to make it appropriate to follow the course of military operations in any detail.

But in this school he, like Washington, Putnam, Stark and many others afterwards distinguished in the Revolution, obtained such military experience as they had, and displayed the qualities which, in the later struggle, induced their fellow citizens to confide to their courage and abilities the safety of their country.

Early in 1755, Schuyler had raised a company in the neighborhood of Albany and had received his commission as captain from Governor James de Lancey.

Two of the young captain's friends, Henry Van Schaack and Philip Lansing, enlisted as lieutenants in his company.

In that year, two great expeditions took place against New France.

In the south, the English general, Braddock, despising provincial advice, clinging obstinately to European methods of warfare, led his regular troops into the Indian ambushade before Fort Duquesne.

After that awful slaughter in the forests of the western wilderness, while his own life was ebbing away, he realized that Colonel Washington of Virginia knew something about fighting French and Indians.

In the north, this crushing defeat was redeemed by a victory won by provincials, fighting in provincial style.

The object of the northern expedition was Crown Point, a fort on a peninsula projecting into Lake Champlain, which commanded the passage of the lake and for many years had threatened the English colonies.

The commander chosen was William Johnson, an Irishman, nephew of Sir Peter Warren, who acquired extensive lands on the Mohawk River through his marriage with Miss Watts of New York, and who had sent out this nephew to manage them.

About nine years before this time Johnson was living obscurely among the Indians on the Mohawk, when an event occurred which opened a path to his ambition which he trod thenceforward to wealth and distinction.

Governor Clinton of New York and James de Lancey, the Chief Justice of the province, were intimate friends and together controlled public affairs at their will.

One night at Government House, when the two friends had been drinking together, a violent quarrel arose between them, and de Lancey left with revengeful threats which he did not fail to execute.

The ensuing enmity between the Governor and the Chief Justice became a source of great divisions in the province.

Clinton had his official power, and de Lancey his influence with the Assembly to use in the conflict.

Each dealt severe blows at the interests and the friends of his opponent.

Peter Schuyler, Philip's cousin, was then the Indian Commissioner for the Six Nations, an office almost hereditary in that family.

But he was known as de Lancey's friend.

Clinton put in his place William Johnson, who was to show himself wonderfully adapted for it.

Johnson lived a wild and adventurous life in his fortified house on the Mohawk, wielding undisputed sway over his white tenantry and exerting the power of a sachem among the Six Nations.

His house was always thronged with Indians whose sleeping forms encumbered the lower rooms and hall-ways at night.

Fort Johnson, as it was called, was the chief stopping place on the route between the Hudson River and the fort on Lake Ontario.

The fur trader and the land prospector received its hospitalities and protection as they came and went.

Philip Schuyler knew it and its owner well.

Over this semi-civilized household presided for a time a Dutch wife who had two daughters.

When she died her place was taken by a succession of squaws, among whom was a sister of the celebrated Brant.

The two daughters were kept on an upper floor, isolated as much as possible from the wild life about them, under the charge of a governess, who formed their only society.

They both grew up and married.

Johnson himself was powerfully built, with a good intelligence, rough but jovial, accustomed to adapt himself to any surroundings, painting and dressing like a savage when it suited his purpose, disputing with the Indian orators the palm of prolixity and imagery, yet keeping up his relations with civilization and always on good terms with Government House.

He had no knowledge of military affairs, but he brought to his work his forest experience.

He was the very opposite of Braddock and met with an opposite fortune. The rendezvous of the forces intended to attack Crown Point was at The Flatts, above Albany, near the Schuyler house.

They numbered in all about three thousand, the New England men under General Lyman, the New York regiment under Johnson, while the wise old chief Hendrick commanded the Indians.

Among the New Englanders was Colonel Ephraim Williams, whose will, then made at The Flatts, founded Williams College, Lieutenant John Stark and Israel Putnam, beginning brilliant careers.

Johnson was very slow about starting.

The New England men, then, as afterwards in the Revolution, were ready to leave their homes to fight; but to remain inactive in camp under military discipline was intolerable to them.

To hold together his independent soldiers, Lyman started out in advance, and through the hot July days slowly made his way northward to a point on the upper Hudson where began the long "carry" through the woods to Lake George.

There he began the construction of a fort, called Fort Lyman, but afterwards known as Fort Edward.

In August, Johnson moved at last, with his New York companies and his Indians, stopping in the woods in the heat of the day, and in his jovial manner gathering his officers around a punch bowl.

Arrived at Fort Lyman, he left five hundred men there to finish and garrison the fort, and then with the rest of the troops he moved northward over the "great carrying place," a band of men with axes going ahead to clear a rough road through the forest.

At length the little army arrived at the southern extremity of the beautiful lake, of which the quiet solitude was soon to be rudely broken.

"I found," said Johnson, "a mere wilderness; never was house or fort erected here before."

The waters which the French called Lac St. Sacrement, Johnson named Lake George, "not in simple honor of his Majesty, but to assert his undoubted dominion here."

The army then went into camp, a motley and ill-disciplined assemblage, the New England ministers exhorting against "cursing and swearing," and preaching their sermons to soldiers and savages.

Meanwhile the French had no idea of waiting to be attacked.

Baron Dieskau, with three thousand regulars, Canadians and Indians, had moved southward to Crown Point.

He was not only a trained soldier, but far surpassed Johnson in energy and judgment.

Finding no indications of an enemy at Crown Point, he continued southward to Ticonderoga.

There his scouts brought in a prisoner who gave him information of Fort Lyman.

The bold Dieskau pushed on, making a circuit to the east of Lake George by way of the South Bay, and at length found himself on the rough forest road which connected Fort Lyman with Johnson's Camp.

He had hardly arrived there when a man came galloping down the road. Dieskau's Indians shot and scalped him.

Upon him was found a letter from Johnson to the officer in command of Fort Lyman, warning him of Dieskau's approach.

Johnson's scouts to the eastward had come in reporting the woods to be swarming with French and Indians heading toward Fort Lyman, and Johnson had sent off the ill-fated messenger.

This was the first that Dieskau knew of Johnson's Camp.

Soon afterwards some mutinous waggoners who had deserted from the camp came down the road.

Two were shot, two were made prisoners and gave Dieskau full information of the forces at Fort Lyman and the camp at Lake George.

Others escaped and hastening backward, told Johnson of Dieskau's position. Each commander now understood the position of his enemy.

Dieskau was anxious to continue southward and take Fort Lyman first.

But his savage allies had a great dread of cannon which they supposed would be in action at the fort.

They refused to follow the French there, but consented to attack the camp at Lake George, although it contained the main body of the enemy.

Early the next morning Dieskau set out along the road to the north and had got within three miles of Johnson's Camp when his scouts brought in a prisoner who gave the information that an attacking force had left the camp.

The news was true.

Johnson had sent out a thousand men under Colonel Williams and Chief Hendrick.

Dieskau immediately disposed his Canadians and Indians on both sides of the road in ambush. Into the fatal ambuscade Williams and Hendrick marched at the head of their column and fell at the first fire.

A panic seized the English force taken by surprise and a retreat to the camp began.

But the vanguard, now become the rear, fought so obstinately from behind the trees, that the retreat soon became orderly and Dieskau's force was by no means in a triumphant mood as it advanced.

This engagement was long talked of at Dutch and New England firesides as "the bloody morning scout."

In the camp, the sound of musketry was distinctly heard.

It grew louder and louder, and then: the English knew that their comrades were retreating.

At the eleventh hour, when almost too late, Johnson attempted to fortify his position.

Trees were hastily felled and a rough obstruction raised.

The ambushed column began to arrive, first frightened stragglers, then men carrying the wounded, then the main body in good order, firing to the last.

Every man was placed in position.

Some cannon were dragged up a bank in the rear of the camp and breastworks hastily thrown up about them.

Dieskau's white-coated regulars soon appeared in serried rank, their bayonets flashing among the trees.

The Canadians and Indians approached on either flank uttering frightful yells. It was the critical moment.

The provincial troops within the camp had never been under fire before. So many were seen to shrink.

But the officers with drawn swords threatened and exhorted.

The enemy was in front and the lake behind.

The gallant French commander had hastened on in front, planning to enter the camp on the heels of the retreating column.

Could he have done this, his success was assured.

But the Canadians and Indians, at sight of the cannon, scattered widely among the trees, beyond the reach of orders.

The French regulars received the full fire of cannon and musketry as they stood exposed and they too sought the shelter of the trees.

Then for five hours raged the forest conflict.

Five thousand muskets discharged as fast as they could be loaded, with the cannon booming and the balls crashing among the branches.

Dieskau had a poor opinion of the English provincials, and when he heard their numbers, said there were only so many more to kill.

But after this battle his opinion changed.

"They fought in the morning like good boys, at noon like men, and in the afternoon like devils."

Johnson retired early to his tent with a shot through his hip.

Lyman conducted the defense with the greatest intrepidity, and its success was mainly owing to him.

The French officer, St. Pierre, in command of the Indians, the same to whom Washington had carried Governor Dinwiddie's letter in the western forest, was killed.

Dieskau, shot through the leg, sat on a log for hours giving his orders.

The French fire slackened at last, and the English, leaping over the breastwork of logs, dashed upon their enemy hatchet in hand.

Too exhausted to resist, the French fled through the woods and the day was won.

The unfortunate Dieskau, as he sat wounded on a fallen tree, attended only by his aide-de-camp, Bernier, was shot twice again in this final onslaught.

Carried into the camp, he was received into Johnson's tent, where his generous captor spared no effort to relieve his sufferings.

The two commanders lay side by side, receiving the same medical attention, such as it was, and discussing in a friendly manner the past events.

Schuyler's knowledge of the French language was now useful.

He was assiduous in his attention to Dieskau and Bernier and became intimate with both.

Johnson's Indians, when they returned from the woods with the scalps of the dead, were incensed that the prisoners were not delivered over to their vengeance.

Dieskau, especially, was the object of their bloodthirsty anger, and they demanded his life in return for that of their fallen chiefs.

Johnson was firm in defense of his prisoner and took every precaution to protect him.

"What do they want of me?" asked Dieskau, observing the threatening concourse of savages around the tent.

"They want to kill and eat you, and put you in their pipes and smoke you," answered Johnson, "but they shall not while I live."

It became imperative to send the prisoners away, and Captain Schuyler was ordered to convey them to Albany.

Johnson lent Dieskau fifty pounds on his departure.

The wounded man was borne on a litter over the rough "carry" to the Hudson, and there Schuyler had him placed in a batteau.

With the other prisoners, Schuyler hastened in advance and when Dieskau arrived, comfortable quarters were ready for him and Bernier, who was also wounded.

The battle and its result were known in Albany, and the rejoicing was naturally great.

Had Johnson's camp been defended with less valor, had the chances of war been less favorable to him, Dieskau, with his white-coated Frenchmen, his rough Canadians and his painted savages, would have entered the town as a conqueror instead of a shattered prisoner.

The imagination of the inhabitants did not need to be vivid to portray to them the inevitable consequences.

Hence, the young Schuyler, fresh from the bloody field where he had performed his part, met with a cordial reception.

Nine days after the fight, on the 17th of September, he was married to the "sweet Kitty very respectfully," mentioned in the letter to "Brom," the daughter of John Van Rensselaer of Claverack, and like himself a descendant of Philip Pieterse Schuyler.

For a week after the wedding he remained in Albany, his attention divided between his bride and his French friends.

How much the wounded officers owed to him, and after his departure, to the kindness of his wife and mother, is shown by the following letter written to him in French by Bernier, October 5th.

"I have received, sir, and dear friend, the letter which you have done me the honor to write to me from your camp."

"It is full of politeness and sentiment."

"As to the portion intended particularly for me, I am truly sensible, and I should esteem myself infinitely happy to be able to give you some marks of my gratitude, and of the esteem and friendship which are due to you."

"I have read the letter to the Baron Dieskau."

"It has confirmed him in the good opinion of you, which, you know, he has reason to entertain."

"He is still as when you left him-still suffering, and uncertain how his wounds will end at last."

"He charges me to pray you, in his behalf, to present his compliments to M. de Johnson, and to assure him of the extent of his gratitude to him."

"His greatest desire is to be able to write to him himself."

"I pray you add to the Baron's wishes my very humble respects."

"One can add nothing to the politeness of Madame, your mother, and Madame, your wife."

"Every day there come from them to the Baron, fruits and other rare sweets which are of great service to him."

"He orders me, on this subject, to express to you all that he owes to the attentions of these ladies."

"If it was permitted me to go out, I should already have been often to present to them his respects and mine."

"The Baron has been much pleased to learn by your letter that General de Johnson esteems you and gives you marks of his consideration and kindness."

"If he shall have the happiness to be restored to health, and to see your general again, he will himself be the proclaimer of all the good words which should be said of you, and which in justice he owes you, for the trouble and care you have had for him."

Johnson showed his incapacity as a general by not following up his advantage and taking Crown Point when he could.

Lyman would gladly have led his New England men to a second and decisive victory, but that Johnson's jealousy would not permit, and Crown Point remained as hitherto a constant menace.

But the victory won at the camp at Lake George was the solitary success in a year of disaster.

The King of England marked his appreciation by a gift to Johnson of five thousand pounds and by creating him a baronet.

Hereafter he is known as Sir William Johnson of Johnson Hall.

Philip Schuyler remained in camp until it broke up late in the autumn, and during the winter, although able to be much in Albany with his family, he was employed in making Fort Edward a depot of military stores.

There was stationed in Albany that winter an English officer named Colonel John Bradstreet, who had already rendered good services to his government and was destined to be much employed in the future course of the war.

Although Bradstreet was much the senior of Philip Schuyler, the two men formed an intimate friendship which had important results for both.

In the spring of 1756, Bradstreet was sent at the head of an expedition to Oswego on Lake Ontario, with the double purpose of keeping open the communications with that western post and of supplying it with military stores. Schuyler received orders to accompany him.

The expedition, which consisted of about two thousand boatmen and provincial soldiers, followed in safety the western route of river and lake and forest "carry" already familiar to Captain Schuyler.

The stores were deposited at the Oswego fort, where Peter Schuyler was in command with his "Jersey Blues," and where he was soon to be attacked and captured by Montcalm.

In the beginning of July, Bradstreet's force started on its homeward journey.

The long line of canoes was paddled slowly against the current of the Oswego River, between the shores of virgin forest.

The van, consisting of about three hundred men, with Bradstreet and Captain Schuyler at their head, had proceeded about nine miles, the silence of nature hardly broken by the sound of voice or paddle, when suddenly from the forest on the east bank came the rattle of musketry and a shower of bullets.

The volley had been fired by a force of about seven hundred men under Coulon de Villiers, whom Governor Vaudreuil had sent to close the communications between Oswego and Albany.

In the canoes, many men had been struck.

The rest, knowing themselves to be a shining mark for an enemy they could not see, paddled hastily for the west bank and sought shelter among the trees. Elated by their success, the French started to cross the river by means of an island a little further upstream, with the intention of attacking the English before they could recover themselves.

Bradstreet saw the movement and acted instantly.

He, with Philip Schuyler and six boatmen, paddled quickly to the island, reached it before the French, jumped from their canoes, posted themselves behind trees and fired at the Frenchmen in the water as fast as they could load. For a few moments, but all important moments, they held the French in check. Then they were joined by twenty more boatmen.

Three times the French attempted to cross, but they were no sooner in the river and exposed to fire than a well-aimed volley drove them back to cover.

Repelled at this point, Coulon de Villiers led his men up the east bank, with the intention of crossing by an upper ford.

Meanwhile the English had recovered themselves and reinforcements had arrived.

Bradstreet took two hundred and fifty men and marched up the west bank.

But the French had crossed before he arrived and for some time an indecisive exchange of shots took place from behind trees.

At last Bradstreet passed along an order for a charge.

His men made a rush, drove the French across the river and shot many as they passed.

Another party of French who had crossed further up and now sought to join their comrades were in turn attacked and driven off.

Thus, the day, which had opened so inauspiciously for Bradstreet's command, was, by coolness and vigor, victoriously ended.

The expedition continued its journey to Albany with some prisoners and a goodly collection of French muskets and knapsacks.

Bradstreet's action in this engagement afterwards received the praise of Wolfe.

Captain Philip Schuyler's humanity and generosity are illustrated by an occurrence which took place on the day of this fight.

When Bradstreet and his little company on the island had repelled the French and saw them moving up the river, they entered their canoes to join the force on the west bank.

A Canadian had fallen just as he reached the shore of the island and as his enemies were departing begged them not to leave him there to a lingering death.

The canoes were already full and his request was refused.

But Schuyler jumped ashore, took the man on his back, waded across the stream and placed the wounded Canadian in the care of Dr. Kirkland, the army surgeon.

In 1775, when Schuyler, in command of the northern department, was in camp at Isle aux Noix in Canada, this man enlisted in the continental army and appeared at the general's tent to thank him.

In the Spring of 1758, Albany was the scene of unprecedented military preparations.

The inhabitants of the quiet frontier town were almost lost in the crowd of soldiers and boatmen who were camped in its neighborhood and who thronged its streets with little regard to discipline.

The great and ill-fated expedition against Ticonderoga was on foot, bringing together such a military assemblage as had never been seen in the province. For months there was a camp about Mrs. Schuyler's house at The Flatts, and there sat at her hospitable board many officers whose names were to be familiar in American history.

There was Abercrombie, the incompetent general in command, who stupidly sacrificed his brave men before the breastworks of Ticonderoga.

There was the gallant Lord Howe, elder brother of the Richard and William Howe, who afterwards were sent to subdue the colonies.

Lord Howe, then second in command under Wolfe, and the soul of the army, suffered a painful death, as he led the van through the forest.

There was General Gage, later to command the British troops against rebellious Boston.

And there was Charles Lee, later to play so contemptible a part in the continental army.

Among the provincials were Stark of New Hampshire, then a captain, and Putnam of Connecticut, then a major.

At this interesting and exciting time, Philip Schuyler was living at The Flatts with his aunt.

He was now deputy commissary with the rank of major.

Constant association with the British officers was teaching him much of the principles of regular warfare, of the discipline necessary to control large bodies of men, and of the measures to be taken to keep an army in supplies.

It was for this latter service that he was especially employed, his knowledge of the country and its resources and his business ability being found valuable.

The contempt felt or affected by the British officers for the provincials alienated many who might have been useful.

It was only the more determined among the Americans who would endure the slights put upon them for the sake of remaining in the service.

Lord Howe's mind was of too high an order to entertain such prejudices.

A truly great soldier, he recognized that European methods of warfare were not to be rigidly followed in American forests.

He made a friend of young, Philip Schuyler, who could tell him much of the geographical and natural conditions of the coming campaign.

He was also in frequent consultation with Stark, Rogers and Putnam, who knew the woods and the waterways and had experience of Indian and Canadian fighting.

But the noble nature which made him beloved at The Flatts and its most welcome visitor, the military genius, which attracted the universal confidence of the army, were not destined to fulfil their mission.

"For, A few days after Lord Howe's departure, in the afternoon," says Mrs. Grant, "a man was seen coming on horseback from the north, galloping violently without his hat."

"Pedrom, as he was familiarly called, the Colonel's only surviving brother, was with Aunt Schuyler, and ran instantly to inquire, well knowing he rode express."

"The man galloped on, crying out that Lord Howe was killed."

"The mind of our good aunt had been so engrossed by her anxiety for the event impending, and so impressed by the merit of her favorite hero, that her wonted firmness sunk under the stroke, and she broke out into bitter lamentations."

"This had such an effect on her friends and domestics that shrieks and sobs of anguish echoed through every part of the house."

Philip Schuyler brought back the body of the lamented soldier and placed it in the family vault, where it remained until permanently interred under the Chancel of St. Peter's Church in Albany.

Massachusetts erected a monument in Westminster Abbey which commemorates the universal grief of the colonies.

When that army of fifteen thousand men, which had floated in grand procession over the waters of Lake George, with flags flying and bands playing, had been repulsed with terrible slaughter by Montcalm at Ticonderoga; when the incompetent Abercrombie remained in supine inactivity, unable to take measures to retrieve the disaster, there was great indignation among the lesser officers and the troops.

None felt more strongly than Schuyler's friend, the enterprising Bradstreet. After urgent entreaties, he obtained permission to lead an expedition against Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario.

Fort Frontenac was situated on the north shore of the lake, and since the destruction of the rival English fort, Oswego, on the south shore, it commanded the passage of the western lakes.

When Montcalm had forced Peter Schuyler of New Jersey to surrender at Oswego and had burned the fort, he considered that a great triumph had been achieved for Canada.

No English military post then interfered with the French possession of that vast western domain.

Bradstreet, with a true military instinct, saw the importance of taking Fort Frontenac and thus shutting off the western trade of Canada.

And he gave Abercrombie no time to withdraw his permission.

A contemporary says that "he flew rather than marched" over the route to the lake.

He had been allowed three thousand men, nearly all provincials.

Philip Schuyler, who understood boat building, pushed on in advance with a large party of carpenters and boatmen.

He found Oswego a charred and desolate ruin, with no sign of human occupation but the huge wooden cross which the French had planted as a sign of their possession.

He lost no time in setting about his work, and in three weeks had built a sloop which he called the Mohawk and which was capable of carrying the cannon of the expedition to Frontenac.

With the Mohawk and a fleet of boats, Bradstreet appeared before Fort Frontenac on the evening of August 25th, to the astonishment of Noyau, its commander.

He despatched couriers to M. de Vaudreuil at Montreal, begging for reinforcements.

The French Governor, realizing the importance of the emergency, gathered fifteen hundred men from the harvest fields and sent them off in haste.

But it was too late. Bradstreet's cannon, unloaded from the Mohawk, and advantageously posted, swept the interior of the fort.

The Indians fled and the garrison soon surrendered.

Noyau, the commander, was allowed to go to Montreal on condition that he would effect an exchange between himself and Colonel Peter Schuyler, made prisoner at Oswego.

The capture of Frontenac was felt as a very serious blow by Montcalm.

It did much to retrieve the disgraceful defeat of Abercrombie and enhanced the reputation of Bradstreet.

Again, the real work of the war was done by provincials.

The active service of Philip Schuyler terminated with the expedition against Frontenac.

During the campaign of Wolfe and Amherst, in 1759, he was employed at Albany in collecting and forwarding supplies for the army.

Considering the duties which were to be laid upon him in the future, his military experience had been of great value.

In Johnson's camp at Lake George, by Bradstreet's side on the Oswego river, he had fought the close and desperate fight characteristic of American forests, where man was pitted against man, where dauntless courage was essential, where the scalping knife of the savage awaited the wavering or the disabled soldier.

He had learned the methods of moving large bodies of men in a country of rivers and forests, the precautions against ambuscade, the building and management of boats.

The collection and distribution of military stores had been entrusted largely to him, and at the conclusion of the war there was no young man in the province who understood the duty better.

His natural mental gifts and the constant association during five years with military officers had taught him what a soldier's life involved: the importance of discipline, the provision for the future, the necessity of meeting varying conditions with new expedients.

The trained and enterprising Bradstreet was a good teacher, the noble Howe, an example, the narrow and poor spirited Abercrombie a warning.

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Chapter Two

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Timothy Murphy – The Original Frontier

January 1, 1777

New Year's Eve has traditionally been a time for reflection. It is a time to think of the mistakes of the past, and for the expression of aspirations for the future. 1776 had been a very dynamic year. It was a year of dramatic change, of novel firsts, of great victories, and of disappointing losses. As Major General Philip Schuyler gazed out upon the Hudson River from the northeast corner window of his splendid mansion in Albany, all these thoughts, hopes and fears swirled through his ample mind.

The year had started out with such promise. The surprise capture of Fort Ticonderoga in May of 1775, had allowed Schuyler's Northern Department to advance into the heart of British controlled Canada.¹ The campaign had started with such promise, with a two-tiered attack, led by Schuyler's second in command, General Richard Montgomery, taking Crown Point, Fort St. John and Montreal, meeting a second force, led by General Benedict Arnold, travelling through Maine, at the outskirts of Quebec City.² With their efforts, last New Year's Eve had presented the promise of a sweeping victory, with the hopes of adding a 14th Colony to join the new American Revolutionary cause.

But 1776 would prove a roller coaster ride. It would begin with the death of Montgomery, the wounding of Arnold, and the end of the Canada Campaign.³ After the failed New Year's Eve assault on Quebec City, the beginning of 1776 would see a retreating Colonial Army, devastated by battle casualties and small pox, being chased back into New York, by Sir Guy Carlton, Governor General of Canada and Major General of His Majesty's Army.⁴ Carlton would retake Montreal, St. John and Crown Point, only to be repulsed by a herculean effort

of Benedict Arnold, who in days built a small armada, and pushed back the British Invasion fleet, in America's first naval battle at Valcour Island on Lake Champlain.⁵

March 1776 would see a huge victory for American Forces, when Continental Commanding Lieutenant General George Washington, through the ingenious plan of General Henry Knox of Maine, fortified Dorchester Heights outside Boston, with artillery Knox had delivered from Ticonderoga, over the Berkshire Mountains by sleds in the heart of winter.⁶ This new artillery platform gave Washington the first victory of the war, freeing previously occupied Boston for the Patriot cause, when British Commanding General William Howe evacuated his untenable position, and sailed his entire Boston Garrison to Halifax, Nova Scotia.⁷

July 4, 1776 would bring even more exciting news, when the Continental Congress passed a resolution Declaring Independence for the American Colonies from Great Britain and King George.⁸ This formal act of separation was the measure that every true Patriot, like General Schuyler, needed to start the creation of their new nation, the United States of America.

The fundamental transformation that the Declaration would bring, would also have deep meaning in New York. Just weeks after Congress acted, influential leaders in New York would begin to organize in convention to draft a new state constitution.⁹ The creation of this historic first, would be accomplished under the guidance of such mental giants as John Jay, Robert Livingston and Gouverneur Morris.¹⁰ As a former member of both the New York Colonial Assembly, and the Continental Congress, General Schuyler would follow the progress of this critically important effort with great interest.¹¹

But just as the euphoria of the Declaration, and the new state constitutional efforts, had begun to take hold, they were disparaged by a huge British victory in New York City.

On June 9, 1776, General Howe and his army set sail from Halifax, appearing in New York waters on June 29, and landing on Staten Island on July 2.¹² Just weeks later, on August 22, 1776, the British commenced the Battle for New York City, landing unopposed on Long Island, and then on August 26, attacking and overrunning Colonial positions on Brooklyn Heights.¹³

In another story of Providential luck, despite being thoroughly routed, General Washington, under the cover of a fortuitous fog, was able to retreat, two days later on August 28, across the river to Manhattan, with the skillful help of Colonel John Glover, the commander of a Massachusetts corps of experienced ferrymen.¹⁴

After suffering another series of defeats at Kip’s Bay, Harlem and White Plains, and losing both Forts Washington and Lee on the Hudson, General Washington was able to finally escape this British offensive, by moving his forces to a position along the Delaware River in Pennsylvania.¹⁵

Just when times looked as dark as could be imagined, General Washington was able to transform public despair into hope. Staring on Christmas Eve, and using Colonel Glover to once again to ferry him and his troops across the Delaware River into New Jersey, Washington was able to end the year with two historic and dramatic victories at Trenton and Princeton.¹⁶ This amazing campaign, which pulled victory from the jaws of defeat, raised the spirit of every Patriot, and sent shockwaves throughout the British high command.¹⁷ Indeed the highly respected and experienced military commander, the King of Prussia Frederick the Great, remarked that the “achievements of Washington and his little band of compatriots between the 25th of December and the 4th of January, a space of 10 days, were the most brilliant of any recorded in the annals of military achievements.”¹⁸

And so, as General Schuyler gazed upon the frozen landscape of his estate, down to the Hudson River, and across to the hills of Rensselaer, the ups and downs of the past year filled his thoughts. What would 1777 bring? What would be the British response to their victories in Canada and New York City? What would be their response to their losses at Valcour Island, and New Jersey? Would the cause of liberty survive?

Although most of the success of Washington’s most recent campaign in New Jersey had yet to reach Schuyler’s upstate New York Command by New Year’s Eve, General Schuyler had enormous confidence in, and hope for, George Washington’s success. These two remarkable men were not just fellow compatriots and commanders, they were also contemporaries and friends, who shared strikingly similar backgrounds.

Each was born within months of the other, Washington on February 22, 1732 and Schuyler on November 20, 1733, to prominent, respected, multi generational, American families.¹⁹

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Outline

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General Outline

Freedom's Gateway:

1777 - How the Empire State Built America and Delivered Upon the Promise of Liberty

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00-02. Table of Contents

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- Hudson River
- Two Homes - Description
- Who He Was – Who Is Family Was
- The Wealth of Land
- Schuyler's Background

- Directly Appointed to Northern Dept
- Devoted to the Cause of Liberty
- Similarities to Washington
 - Born within Months
 - Both Gentleman Farmers
 - Directly Appointed by Congress
 - Both Members of Congress
 - Both Slave Holders
 - Both Not Formerly Educated
 - Both Surveyors
 - Both Understood How to Win
- Scared of British Advance
- Protective / Paternalistic of His Army

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- 1754: Franklin's Albany Plan
- 1754 to 1763: French and Indian War
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- 1765: Stamp Act and Quartering Act
- 1765: Patrick Henry Speech
- 1767: Townsend Acts
- 1768: Occupation of Boston
- 1770: Boston Massacre
- 1773: Boston Tea Party
- 1774: Intolerable Acts
- 1774: First Continental Congress
- 1775 (March): Second Patrick Henry Speech

The Characters on the Stage

● **British**

Political

1. George III – King of England
2. Fredrick North – Prime Minister
3. Lord George Germain – Secretary of State for the American Colonies
4. John Montagu – First Lord of the Admiralty
5. Charles James Fox – Opponent of Revolutionary War
6. William Tryon – Lieutenant General and Colonial Governor of New York

Military

1. John Dyke Acland – Major, Commander of the Grenadiers
2. Lady Harriet Acland – Wife of John Acland
3. John Burgoyne – Lieutenant General and Commander of Upstate New York Invasion Forces
4. Joseph Brant – Native American Commander, Oriskany and St. Ledger Campaign
5. Friedrich Baum – General (Hessian Commander), Battle of Bennington
6. John Butler – Lieutenant Colonel, Loyalist Commander of Butler’s Rangers – Upstate NY Campaign
7. John Campbell – Brigadier General, New York – Hudson Highlands Campaign
8. Guy Carleton – Major General, Military Governor of Quebec
9. Henry Clinton – Commander of British Forces - New York City
10. Charles Cornwallis – Lieutenant General, Staff Officer to William Howe in New York City
11. Luc de la Corne – Indian Commander and Native Language Interpreter
12. William Erskine – Brigadier General, Commander 80th Foot Connecticut Campaign
13. Alexander Fraser – Captain, Commander of Select Marksmen, Upstate New York Campaign
14. Simon Fraser – Brigadier General, Upstate New York Campaign, Commander of Advance Forces
15. James Inglis Hamilton – Brigadier General, Upstate NY Campaign, Commander Center Forces
16. Richard Howe – Chief of North American Naval Forces
17. William Howe – Commander in Chief of North America
18. David Jones – Staff Officer to Simon Frasier, Finance to Jane McCrea
19. Roger Lamb – Sergeant, Burgoyne’s Upstate New York Campaign
20. Alexander Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres, Major – Commander Light Infantry, Upstate NY Campaign

21. William Phillips – Major General (Artillery) – Upstate New York Campaign
22. Philip Skene – Colonial, Loyalist Commander – Upstate New York Campaign
23. Barry St. Leger – Brigadier General, Upstate NY Campaign, Commander Mohawk Valley Forces
24. Friedrich Adolph Riedesel - General (German Force Commander) in New York Campaign
25. Frederika Charlotte Reidesel – Wife of German Force Commander

● **American**

Political

1. John Adams – Member, Continental Congress
2. Benjamin Franklin – American Representative to the French Court
3. John Hancock – President, Continental Congress
4. John Jay – NYS Constitution Drafter
5. Robert R. Livingston – NYS Constitution Drafter
6. Gouverneur Morris – NYS Constitution Drafter

Military

1. Ethan Allen – Brigadier General – First Commander of the Green Mountain Boys
2. Benedict Arnold – Major General – Northern Department, Wing Commander
3. George Clinton – Brigadier General, First Governor of New York
4. James Clinton – Colonial, Brother of George Clinton, Commander Fort Clinton on Hudson Highlands
5. Henry Dearborn – Major, Continental Army, Regimental Commander at Saratoga
6. Peter Gansevoort – Brigadier General, Commander of Fort Stanwix
7. Horatio Gates – Major General, Second Commander of the Northern Department
8. John Glover – Brigadier Gen, Marine Transport Specialist, Continental Army, Brigade Commander
8. Nicholas Herkimer – Brigadier General of Tryon County Militia, Commander at Oriskany
9. Henry Knox – Brigadier General and Commander of Artillery for the Continental Army
10. Ebenezer Learned - Brigadier General, Continental Army, Brigade Commander at Saratoga
11. Charles Lee – Major General, Court Marshalled by George Washington
12. Henry Brockholst Livingston – Staff Officer to both General Schuyler and General Gates

13. James Livingston – Colonial, Northern Department, Regimental Commander Saratoga/Ft. Stanwix
14. Benjamin Lincoln – Major General – Northern Department, Wing Commander
15. Richard Montgomery – Major General, Continental Army, Second in Command to Schuyler
16. Daniel Morgan – Colonial (Later Brigadier General), Commander Colonial Rifle Company
17. Timothy Murphy – Colonial Sharpshooter (New York) – Morgan’s Rifle Company
18. John Nixon - Brigadier General, Continental Army, Brigade Commander at Saratoga
19. John Paterson – Brigadier General, Continental Army, Brigade Commander at Saratoga
20. Enoch Poor – Brigadier General, Continental Army, Brigade Commander at Saratoga
21. Israel Putnam – Brigadier General, Continental Army, Hudson Highlands
22. John Stark - Brigadier General –Commander of the New Hampshire State Militia
23. Arthur St. Clair – Major General, Commander of American Forces at Ticonderoga
24. Philip Schuyler – Major General, First Commander of the Northern Department
25. John Sullivan – Brigadier General, Continental Army
26. Seth Warner - Brigadier General – Second Commander of the Green Mountain Boys
27. George Washington – Commanding General, Continental Army

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- 1775 (May): Fort Ticonderoga Captured
- 1775 (May): Second Continental Congress
- 1775 (June): George Washington named Commander in Chief
- 1775 (June): Battle of Bunker Hill
- 1775 (July): George Washington Takes Command of Continental Army
- 1775 (Nov-Dec): The Great Knox Artillery Adventure
- 1776 (January): Thomas Paine prints Common Sense
- 1776 (March): British evacuate Boston

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- 1775 (Sept-Dec): Montgomery’s Campaign

- 1775 (Oct-Dec): Arnold's March Through Maine
- 1775 (Dec): Battle for Quebec
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- 1776 (Oct): Battle of Lake Champlain
- 1776 (Oct-Dec): The Tide Rolls Back

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- 1776 (July): Declaration of Independence
- 1776 (July): White Plains Convention opens for NYS Constitution

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- 1776 (August): Battle of Long Island
- 1776 (Sept): British begin Occupation of NYC
- 1776 (Sept): Battle of Harlem Heights
- 1776 (Oct): Battle of White Plains
- 1776 (Nov): British capture Forts Washington and Mifflin
- 1776 (December): Washington Crosses Delaware
- 1776 (December): Battle of Red Bank
- 1777 (January): Battle of Red Bank
- 1777 (January): Washington retreats to winter quarters in Lancaster and then Morristown

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