Preface

This book is not a history of the American Revolution. It is a history of the war that was caused by the Revolution. As John Adams well said: "A history of the first war of the United States is a very different thing from a history of the American Revolution. . . . The revolution was in the minds of the people and in the union of the colonies, both of which were accomplished before hostilities commenced. This revolution and union were gradually forming from the years 1760 to 1776."

With the Revolution as thus properly described, this book is not concerned, except in the brief résumé of the causes of the war in the first chapter. Its aim is to tell the story of the war on land, the campaigns, battles, sieges, marches, encampments, bivouacs, the strategy and tactics, the hardships, and the endurance of hardship. It is purely military in its intention and scope.

The war, from the first shot at Lexington in 1775 to the cessation of hostilities in 1782, lasted nearly eight years. It was fought in a territory extending from Quebec southward to Georgia and from the Atlantic seaboard westward to the frontier settlements. Many of its campaigns, in the various regions in which they were fought, were simultaneous.

In the spring of 1776, while the American army under Arnold was still struggling to keep a foothold in Canada, a British army under Henry Clinton was on its way south to attack Charleston in South Carolina. On September 11, 1777, while Washington was fighting the Battle of the Brandywine, Burgoyne was on his way down the Hudson to Saratoga.

It will be seen, then, that an attempt to tell the tale of the various cam-

paigns and battles in strict chronological order would involve leaping, chapter by chapter, from one campaign to another, from the North to the South and from the East to the West, and would result in hopeless confusion. Fortunately for the sake of clarity in this chronicle, the whole territory involved was fought over, by different armies, in well defined sections, in the North from Canada down to the Mason and Dixon line, in the South from Virginia down to Georgia, with practically no overlapping. It has therefore been thought best to treat the campaigns separately in the two sections, thus enabling the reader to follow the movements of the armies and the progress of the various campaigns with a minimum of confusion.

While making no pretensions to the role of a military expert, the author has ventured to express opinions as to the strategy and tactics employed in some of the operations herein recorded. In doing so, he relies upon the dictum of Baron Jomini in that eminently authoritative military treatise, *Précis de l'art de la guerre*, "The theory of the great speculative combinations of war is simple enough in itself; it only requires intelligence and attentive reflection," and upon von Moltke's statement that "strategy is the application of common sense to the conduct of war."

CHRISTOPHER WARD

CHAPTER 1

The Causes of the War

Tuesday, the 17th of May, 1774, was an unpleasant day in Boston. A pelting rain, driven by a strong east wind, poured upon the town. Gutters ran full; hollows in the cobbled streets became puddles. The few of its citizens who owned umbrellas found some shelter under those newfangled, cumbrous contrivances of oiled silk or linen spread on clumsy ribs of whalebone.[1] The thousands of others who were abroad that day could only turn the brims of their hats down, the collars of their coats up, wrap their cloaks around them, and take the storm as it came, with a philosophical endurance born of habit.

But the provincial troop of horse, the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company, the Boston Grenadier Corps, fine, tall fellows in notably handsome uniforms, and more companies of militia, drawn up in line along King Street, could not even flap their hats or turn up their collars. They had to stand stiffly at attention in their ordered ranks, while the rain beat upon their faces and dripped from their noses and chins.

The Boston Cadets, the "Governor's Own," were equally defenseless as they marched against the blast down King Street. So were "a number of His Majesty's Council, several Members of the Commons House of Assembly [and] many principal Gentlemen of the town" who followed the soldiers, in dripping discomfort.

At the Long Wharf the procession halted. The military formed its ranks, and the gentlemen following grouped themselves in proper disposition as a reception committee. All eyes, not only those of the official party but those also of the thronging multitude of common people gathered around and

behind them, were turned upon one of His Britannic Majesty's ships of war lying at the wharf.

There was a ruffle of drums aboard the ship; the guns on the other war vessels in the harbor and in the batteries in the town began a thunderous salute and the bells in all the steeples rang out as the expected guests, brave in scarlet coats and white breeches that glittered with gold braid, descended the gangplank and were welcomed with all due form and ceremony and with more or less sincerity according to the political principles of the individual greeters. Whether Boston liked it or not, it was indeed an occasion of moment, for these impressively arrayed military personages were none other than Lieutenant General the Honorable Thomas Gage, commander in chief of all His Majesty's forces in the American colonies and Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, and his staff—his "family," in the language of the period.

The official greetings over, a procession was formed. Led by the guard of honor, the great man with his entourage and the official civilians, followed by thousands of unofficial sight-seers, proceeded up King Street. The rain, on their backs now, was no doubt less discomforting.

The troop of horse, the artillerymen, the grenadiers, and the embodied militia, all amateur soldier boys, stood stiffly at attention while their officers gave these awe-inspiring professionals their very best in the way of a military salute, which the general politely returned. They then fell in behind the procession in its march up King Street to the Town House.

In the Council Chamber, His Excellency presented his commission and was sworn in by the President of the Council. From the balcony of the State House, the High Sheriff read the new Governor's proclamation "continuing all Officers &c in their places till further orders." It was answered by "three huzzas from the concourse of the people," three volleys of musketry from the soldiers of Boston, and the discharge of the Ancient and Honourables' three three-pounder brass fieldpieces.[2]

After the Governor had "received the compliments of civil and military officers and other gentry" and reviewed the militia he was escorted to Faneuil Hall, "where an elegant entertainment was provided at the expence of the province. . . . Many loyal toasts were drank, and the strictest harmony and decorum observed." He then rode in a carriage to the Province House, his official residence.[3]

From all these sights and sounds one might have supposed that it was a day of rejoicing in Boston, that the coming of the new governor was hailed by the people as a fortunate event. But no, the flapping flags, the pealing bells, the saluting guns, all the parade and circumstance of welcome were

mere matters of form; the huzzas of the populace were no more than throat-deep. The people of Boston knew what his coming meant and what his orders were; they dreaded what he had come to do. Against him and what he represented, Boston harbored strong feelings of antagonism.

Gage was no stranger in America. After about seventeen years of military service in Britain and on the continent of Europe, he had come to America in 1755 and had taken part in Braddock's disastrous expedition against the French and Indians. He had fought bravely under Braddock, and also under Abercromby in the ill-fated British attack upon Ticonderoga in 1758. Serving as governor of Montreal after the conquest of Canada, he had become commander in chief of the British army in America late in 1763, succeeding his good friend Sir Jeffrey Amherst. His wife, born Margaret Kemble, was an American and a member of a prominent New Jersey family, a cousin of Philip Schuyler and a relative of colonial Van Cortlandts and Bayards. He was a good soldier and was devoted to his duty. He was handsome and dignified, his manners were pleasing; and he was described by the historian William Smith as "a good-natured, peaceable, sociable man." With these qualities, and replacing at least temporarily the hated Governor Thomas Hutchinson, he might have been received with pleasure—would have been so received ten years earlier.

On the other hand, Bostonians had known of him as the commander of the British forces in America who had directed the activities of the four regiments sent to town in 1768, and they had not forgotten the consequent bloody affair in their streets in 1770. To be sure, the regulars had been ordered to Boston by the British cabinet, and Gage had merely executed its orders; but the memory of the "Boston Massacre" would have diminished his welcome now, even if he had come with the most amicable intentions. But he had, in fact, come under orders from his government to deprive the town and the whole province of much of their liberty, and also to close the port of Boston to commerce, which could paralyze the town's chief industries, impoverish its substantial citizens, beggar its working people, and bring them near to starvation. The whole affair of his reception, although many Bostonians sincerely welcomed him, was a triumph of good manners over deep-seated, implacable, and not unjustified resentment.[4]

To appreciate the situation, to understand the causes that gradually developed from mere muttered discontent an animosity that led to violent resistance and finally to the War which it is the purpose of this book to chronicle, one must go back a matter of a decade, to the year 1763.

For a much longer time than that the American colonies had been subject to certain restrictions imposed by the government of Great Britain. The

Navigation Acts, which restrained or rather canalized their sea-borne commerce for the benefit of the shipping interests of the mother country, the Molasses Act, which penalized the importation of molasses and sugar from other than British sources, the various acts which forbade the development of manufactures in the colonies, might seem to have been sufficient to arouse rebellious sentiments in the minds of the colonists long before the year 1763. But in fact there were certain advantages to the Americans in their operation. There were also certain extralegal methods of evasion, which served to lighten their burdensome features. So that, on the whole, there was little opposition to them on the part of the inhabitants of the colonies, and their relations with the home government were not strained. Indeed, the era preceding 1763 came in after days to be regarded by them as a golden age to which they would fain return.

In that year the Peace of Paris ended the Seven Years' War in Europe, a part of which was the French and Indian War in America. That war and three other great conflicts in the preceding seventy years had drained Great Britain's treasury and piled up a public debt of £136,000,000. To sustain this burden and to meet heavy current expenses—heavy in part because it had been decided to keep a regular army of about 6,000 men in America after 1763—she felt obliged to find new sources of income outside the kingdom; and the prosperous American colonies seemed to be the best available source. The consequence was a series of British financial measures to which the Americans strongly objected. Additional causes for American discontent lay in new restrictions placed upon their paper currency, upon westward migration, and upon their trade, and in demands that the colonists give quarters and supplies to the regular army upon certain occasions. Indeed, the very presence of the regulars in America caused great dissatisfaction when the army was stationed in the settled areas.

The Sugar Act of 1764, a successor to the Molasses Act, which had lapsed, clearly displayed the intention of the British government to secure substantial revenue from the mainland American colonies. It cut the duty on molasses in half, while raising that on sugar; and it imposed other new, though less important, duties. It did not differ greatly in form from the old act, except for one startling assertion. While the Molasses Act had been regarded as only a regulation of commerce, such small revenue as it provided being merely incidental, this new law baldly stated in its preamble that one of its purposes was to raise a revenue; in other words, it was in great part a taxing measure.[5] The British government proposed to collect threepence upon every gallon of molasses entering the colonies from the foreign West Indian islands, and shook up its collecting agencies to make certain that the

colonists would pay. They had rather effectively avoided paying the duties set up in 1733.

No one had objected on principle to the Molasses Act, although the colonial merchants had flouted it. However, to the relatively new principle of the Sugar Act there was immediate and, in the minds of the Americans, well founded objection; and nowhere in the colonies was it stronger or more vocal than in this same town of Boston, where Samuel Adams became the leader of resistance. The Americans were all the more unhappy because Britain was determined not only to pass the act but to enforce it, and also to enforce the long disobeyed Acts of Navigation.

Adams declared that taxes imposed on the colonists, "without their having a legal representative where they are laid," reduced them "from the character of free subjects to the miserable condition of tributary slaves." [6] This was the answer in principle. The practical answer was a development of the technique of smuggling to such a degree that the new measures were partly nullified.

But the mother country had another rod in pickle for her refractory children, guaranteed to be proof against the tricks of the wiliest smuggler. This was the famous Stamp Act of 1765 requiring that revenue stamps be affixed to all papers in lawsuits, all commercial paper, bills of lading, ship charters, probates of wills, surveys and conveyances of land, leases, bills of sale, and a host of other legal documents, as well as newspapers, pamphlets, playing cards, and so on. The cost of the stamps ranged from a halfpenny on a small newspaper to £6 on a grant of franchise. Heavy penalties were imposed on violators of the act, and, worst of all, unstamped documents were declared void in law.[7]

As a taxing measure it was fair enough, the taxes being widely and rather equally distributed and easily collected. Nor was it a novel method of taxation, for such stamps had long been in use in England. But it could not in any sense be regarded as a regulation of commerce; it was a taxing act pure and simple, without disguise, palliation, or apology. Against it the colonists reacted even more strongly than against the Sugar Act.

In Virginia, Patrick Henry is said to have suggested to George III that he should profit by the examples of Tarquin, Caesar, and Charles I, and the House of Burgesses declared against tax laws not emanating from its own legislature. Pennsylvania and the other middle colonies passed similar resolutions. Massachusetts called for a congress of colonial representatives to take steps in the matter. The Stamp Act Congress met in New York in October, 1765, with members from nine of the thirteen colonies present.

The Congress proceeded to declare, in substance, the colonies' loyalty to

the Crown and "all due subordination" to the Parliament, but asserted that it was essential to the freedom of a people that no taxes should be imposed without its consent; that the colonists were not and could not be represented in Parliament; that only their own legislatures could tax them. The Congress added the practical argument that the stamp taxes were so heavy as to prevent them from buying English goods and so were inimical to the prosperity of England, as well as of the colonies. An address to the King, a Memorial to the House of Lords, and a Petition to the Commons all expressed the unhappiness of the colonists.

Meanwhile, intense excitement prevailed throughout the colonies. The Virginia resolutions were broadcast. Associations called Sons of Liberty were formed in the northern provinces to resist the execution of the law. They acted with vigor, indeed with violence. In Boston they hanged Oliver, the stamp officer, in effigy and smashed the windows of his house. He resigned his office, but the Sons of Liberty were not appeased. They burned the records of the vice-admiralty courts, newly empowered to enforce the customs laws; they sacked the office of the Comptroller of Customs, and they climaxed their vandalism by wrecking the fine mansion of Governor Hutchinson, destroying his furniture, defacing his paintings, and casting into the street and burning his books, historical documents and manuscripts, the finest collection of the sort in America. Terrified stamp officers almost universally resigned their posts or refused to do their duty. When the stamps arrived there was hardly anyone willing to receive and issue them. And when they arrived the colonists destroyed them or secured promises from officials that they would not be sold.

November 1, 1765, the day the act was to go into effect, was observed throughout the colonies as a day of mourning; muffled bells were tolled, minute guns were fired, and flags were set at half-staff. How could business go on? How could the courts function, newspapers be issued, ships chartered or cleared, land conveyed, goods sold, without stamps? The solution was simple. Unstamped newspapers appeared, and though for a time business was suspended it was soon largely resumed. The law was simply disregarded, and the act nullified.

But it still stood on the statute books, a menace to every American interest. To enforce its repeal, a general boycott of English goods was organized, and a movement to encourage manufactures despite their unlawfulness was inaugurated. The effect of these measures was impressive. Factories in England were closed; thousands were thrown out of work; and manufacturers and merchants faced bankruptcy. When Parliament met in December, it had to reconsider its action. The addresses of the Stamp Act Congress

might have been disregarded, but not the flood of petitions for repeal of the act that came from the commercial classes of Englishmen. William Pitt, the idol of the English people, declared that Parliament had no right to levy the stamp tax, and after a long and heated debate the obnoxious act was repealed.

The news of the repeal was received in America "in a transport of mingled surprise, exultation, and gratitude." Fireworks, festivities, resolutions, and addresses of thanks were evidences of the joy of the people. Moreover, there was a great outburst of loyalty to England. Statues of the King were voted in New York and Virginia. Pitt, Barré, and Conway, leaders of the movement for repeal, were honored by effigies or portraits displayed in public places. The Sons of Liberty faded away. John Adams said that the repeal "hushed into silence almost every popular clamor." Yet this was in fact but an armistice, a temporary truce and not a permanent peace between the government of Great Britain and the self-assertive colonists.

In July, 1766, there was a change in the ministry. Pitt, though disabled by physical and perhaps even mental infirmities, accepted the responsibility of leading it and then betook himself to the House of Lords as Earl of Chatham. The Duke of Grafton became prime minister in form, but exercised little influence. Leadership of the Commons was assumed by Charles Townshend, no friend of America. Unfortunately for the empire, no doubt, Pitt was too sick to control affairs, and Townshend had an opportunity to shine.

Townshend was a brash young man, whose "wonderful endowments [were] dashed with follies and indiscretions." [8] Early in 1767 he boasted that he knew the mode by which a revenue could be drawn from America without offense to the Americans.[9] His scheme was based on a distinction which had been suggested or implied by some colonists and by some Englishmen between "external taxes," that is, duties on imports, to which they did not object, and "internal taxes" such as those imposed by the Stamp Act, which they denounced. He brought in a bill to impose duties on colonial importations from Britain of glass, certain painters' materals, and tea. The proceeds were to be used to pay the salaries of the colonial governors and judges, thus freeing crown officers in America from dependence upon colonial legislatures. He coupled with this a bill to legalize writs of assistance—general search warrants to be used by the revenue officers in enforcing the new revenue law; a bill establishing new courts of vice-admiralty; and a bill creating a special Board of Commissioners of the Customs in Boston, responsible directly to the British Treasury and controlling completely a reorganized American customs service.

But, in relying on the external-internal tax distinction to procure the acquiescence of the Americans, he failed to realize that most Americans were actually opposed to external as well as internal taxes for revenue. The colonists had tasted blood in their fight against the Stamp Act. They considered that they themselves had in effect repealed that law before Parliament did. What they had once done, they felt able to do again. Moreover, there was a growing discontent with the older statutes, the Navigation Acts and those forbidding manufactures. Though long accepted without objection and, in practice, to a considerable degree nullified by simple disobedience of their provisions, these were now felt to be oppressive.

In this state of mind, the colonists cheerfully threw overboard whatever distinction between the two kinds of taxes they had formerly offered. All taxes for revenue, of whatever sort, were now equally hateful. Since 1765 they had been objecting to the standing army as an instrument of tyranny. Now they denounced the new Board of Customs, which would inconveniently interfere with the custom of smuggling. Also they wanted to pay their own governors and judges, basing the desire upon the feeling that their hold on the purse strings was a safeguard against oppression by these officers.

On more justifiable grounds, they were opposed to the writs of assistance, which would enable any customs officer to search not only any ship, but also "any House Shop Cellar Warehouse or Room or other place," [10] without showing cause for such intrusion.

With the passage of the Townshend acts, the short-lived era of good feeling among the colonists toward the mother country came to a sudden end. Massachusetts made the first move toward effective opposition to the new laws by sending a Circular Letter to the other colonies urging concerted action. The British ministry ordered the colonial governors to compel the various colonial legislatures to rescind all resolutions directed against those laws, and to dissolve the assemblies if they refused. Such steps were taken in half a dozen of the colonies, but they only poured oil on the flames of discontent.

Practical measures were taken by the Americans. The general boycott of English goods was gradually revived by new Nonimportation Agreements. The Sons of Liberty became active in their enforcement. When John Hancock's sloop *Liberty* was seized by royal officials at a wharf in Boston in June, 1768, on a charge of smuggling, a mob attacked them. The Commissioners of Customs fled in terror to Castle William, a fortress on an island in Boston harbor.

These and other acts of violent resistance could not be overlooked by the British government. General Gage was instructed to move two regiments of

foot to Boston for police duty. When these regulars landed at the beginning of October, 1768, Boston declined to furnish free quarters in town and certain supplies for them, as seemingly required by an act of Parliament. Colonel Dalrymple, commander of the troops, had to rent any available lodgings for his men and for two more regiments of infantry that joined them in following months. Instead of being concentrated in barracks under firm control of their officers, the soldiers were scattered throughout the town, with unfortunate results.

Bostonians regarded them as foreign troops and accordingly hated them, ostracized them, insulted them in the streets and called them opprobrious names. They responded by swaggering, insolent, contemptuous conduct. The natural result was frequent brawls and rough encounters between the citizens and the soldiers.

On March 5, 1770, this mutual ill-feeling culminated in a serious affair. A mob of citizens pelted some of the intruders with snowballs and stones and reviled them with scurrilous language. There was a close encounter, so close that some of the mob struck at their opponents' muskets with clubs, daring them to fire, and knocked one of them down. The soldiers fired into the crowd. Eleven of the citizens fell, three of them dead, two mortally wounded. This was the famous "Boston Massacre."

Quite naturally, it caused great excitement throughout the town. Bells were rung to summon the populace. The whole town poured out into the streets. Drums were beaten to call out the militia. Several companies formed around the Town House. It looked as if the war was to begin then and there. But Governor Hutchinson succeeding in quieting the people and in obtaining Dalrymple's promise to withdraw the troops to Castle William in Boston harbor.

Meanwhile the continued boycott of British goods was seriously affecting the English economy. Exports to America shrank to half their former value, and there was nothing that the army could do about it. Confronted with this situation, several members of the ministry urged a policy of conciliation and proposed entire repeal of the Townshend taxes; but the King was firm in his demand that "there must always be one tax to keep up the right" to tax. When the others were abolished, in April, 1770, the tax on tea was retained.

At the time of the "massacre" war, at least a local civil war, had been a very near thing; but after the alteration in the tax law and after the excitement in Boston had subsided, there ensued a long period of quiet throughout the colonies. The Americans were back in the golden age of 1763, except for the tea tax. This fact, coupled with a growing weariness of the

prolonged conflict, induced a spirit of nonresistance, which degenerated into apathy. The Nonimportation Agreements were violated with increasing frequency. Complaints of such violations by this colony were made by that. Such charges were met by countercharges of the same sort. Intercolonial enmities arose out of these recriminations. The partly built, ill cemented union of the colonies was falling apart. Another shock was needed to revive the fainting spirit of liberty. It came in June, 1772.

The British armed schooner *Gaspée*, while pursuing a suspected smuggling vessel, ran aground in the waters of Rhode Island. Drums beat in Providence. Eight boats full of volunteers put off, surrounded the schooner, seized it, and burned it. In the fracas the British commander was wounded. America hailed the deed as a blow against oppression; England was outraged. British investigators could not discover the names of the culprits, known to many citizens. Finally, the British authorities, perhaps loath to excite renewed animosity in the presently quiescent colonies, dropped the matter.

Distrust of the colonial courts as impartial tribunals now impelled the ministry to revive the project of paying the judges out of the royal treasury, beginning in Massachusetts. That colony astutely countered the move by offering the judges higher salaries than were to be paid by Britain, and the judges accepted the offer. Samuel Adams, who had been almost in despair over the decline of the spirit of resistance and the relaxation of the bonds of unity, saw his chance. In April, 1773, he proposed the organization of Committees of Correspondence to act as connecting links between the various Massachusetts towns. Within a few months, many such bodies appeared, some of them acting for towns, others for colonies. Soon they formed a network throughout the colonies.

Still quietude prevailed throughout America. Only a general abstention from English tea indicated the underlying spirit of opposition to Parliamentary taxation. With characteristic ineptitude the British government seized on that minor element in the contest and erected it into a major dispute.

The East India Company had been hit by the refusal of the Americans to import its tea. In the port of Philadelphia, for example, only one chest of English tea had been entered in the customhouse in five years, while an ample supply had been smuggled in from other sources. Seventeen million pounds had accumulated in the Company's English warehouses, and it was nearing bankruptcy. Government officials were largely interested in the Company. To relieve its embarrassment, an arrangement was made to reimburse the Company for the import duties it paid in England, and to allow it to export directly to its own agents in America instead of through English

merchants to American merchants as theretofore. It could then sell tea in the colonies at prices less than those at which smuggled tea was sold, even though its agents paid the threepence a pound American duty to the English government; and the cantankerous colonials would get their tea, tax and all, cheaper than ever before, and even cheaper than it was being sold in England. So why should they worry about the tax? They would surely buy the Company's tea.

But they did worry. News of the scheme was like a bellows blast to the smoldering embers of resistance to "tyranny." After years of quiescence, "the whole country was in a blaze from Maine to Georgia." [11] It is said that "the transition from apathy to agitation was sudden" [12] and widespread. It was an amazing phenomenon. The duties had been legally in force for six years, and for half of that time they had been either quietly paid or tranquilly disregarded. No one was now to be forced to buy the Company's tea. So why should the colonials excite themselves about it?

It has been said that they were aroused by an attempt, at once injurious and insulting, to bribe them to surrender their rights "not to be taxed, by offering them cheaper tea." [13] A more cynical, probably less truthful, statement is that the blaze was not sudden; that it took two full months to work it up; that it was, in fact, ignited by certain Philadelphia merchants who had profited by dealing in the smuggled tea and now saw their business in peril. Be the truth as to this what it may, Philadelphia did take the lead in arousing enmity to the scheme by a series of resolutions denouncing it as "a violent attack upon the liberties of America." Committees pressed the Company's agents, consignees of the expected tea, to resign. Boston followed suit, and so did New York and Charleston. "The cry of endangered liberty once more excited an alarm from New Hampshire to Georgia." [14] Boston was "as furious as it was in the time of the Stamp Act." [15] Whatever the incitement, the resulting conflagration was genuine enough.

The announced intention of the Americans was to prevent the landing of the tea, and it was carried out. At Charleston, no consignee having appeared to pay the duty, a cargo was seized by the customs officers, stored in damp cellars, and left to rot. The captains of the tea ships bound to Philadelphia and New York saw that they could not land their cargoes and carried them back to England. But it was reserved for Boston to climax the opposition in the most spectacular manner. In December, 1773, it held a "tea party," in which an organized mob tossed overboard tea valued at £15,000.

George III, who for a long time had had Boston "on the brain," now saw red. A message from the cabinet to Parliament resulted in quick and drastic

action. Four new measures to punish that hotbed of treason were enacted.

The first, known as the Boston Port Act, closed the port of Boston to all commerce and ordered it blockaded. Marblehead and Salem were to be the only Massachusetts ports. The second annulled several parts of the province's charter. Its Assembly was left to function, but the upper chamber, the Council, was to be appointed by the King. The inferior judges, the sheriffs, and other executive officers were to be appointed by the Governor. Juries were to be chosen by the sheriffs, who owed their appointments to the royal chief executive. Town meetings, the very core of self-government in Massachusetts, were to be held only with the Governor's permission, except one each year to choose assemblymen, selectmen, and constables. The third act provided for the removal to England or to another colony for trial of anyone indicted for a capital offense committed in the course of a riot or of enforcement of the revenue laws. The fourth legalized the quartering of troops on the town.

To enforce these laws, General Gage was appointed governor of the province. Which brings us around, at last, to the point where this introductory chapter began.

CHAPTER 7

Ticonderoga

Fort Ticonderoga was called "the Key to the gateway to the continent," by which was meant the way from Canada to the English colonies. In a wilderness the best route is by water; from Canada southward this was furnished by the St. Lawrence River, the Richelieu, Lake Champlain, and the Hudson. At the point where Lake George discharges its waters into Champlain, the larger lake narrows to a width of half a mile, and at one point two opposite headlands leave a passage between them of less than a quarter of a mile. There on the western side, on an eminence rising a hundred feet above the water, stood the fort.[1]

The French first occupied this position in 1755. After plans by Vauban, the great military engineer, they built a fort with stone bastions surrounded by a star-shaped outer wall, the whole complete with glacis, counterscarps, covered ways, and demilunes. They called it Fort Carillon. In 1758 with a garrison of 4,000, under Montcalm, they held it against 6,000 British regulars and 10,000 provincial troops under Lieutenant General James Abercromby. In the next year, Sir Jeffrey Amherst invested it with 11,000 men; the French commander, Bourlamaque, had but 3,500. He blew up the works and retreated. The British rebuilt it in less substantial fashion and named it Ticonderoga. After the Peace of Paris in 1763, ending the French and Indian War, there was no frontier between Canada and the colonies to be guarded; the fort was manned by a skeleton garrison, used only as a supply post on the route, and allowed to fall into decay.[2]

When the relations between Britain and her American colonies became strained to the point of breaking, the New Englanders had cause to fear that

Guy Carleton, in command at Montreal, might enlarge his small force of regulars with French Canadians and Indians and attack them in the rear. To discover the inclinations of the Canadians in the contest with Britain, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in February, 1775, sent John Brown of Pittsfield to Montreal and Quebec. His report was discouraging, and to it he added: "One thing I must mention to be kept as a profound Secret, the Fort at Tyconderogo must be seised as soon as possible should hostilities be committed by the King's Troops. The people on N. Hampshire Grants have ingaged to do this business and in my opinion they are the most proper Persons for the Jobb." Brown's information as to the New Hampshire Grants people taking on the job had been derived from one Ethan Allen whom he had met in Pittsfield.[3]

Ethan Allen was a true son of the backwoods, born in a log cabin in Litchfield, Connecticut, the eldest son of a substantial farmer. He had begun his schooling under a clergyman with a view to entering Yale College; but on his father's death he had to care for a family of a widow and seven other orphans. After a short tour of duty with a Connecticut regiment in the French and Indian War, he set up an iron furnace, tried lead mining, and, in 1768, removed to the New Hampshire Grants, now Vermont.

In the conflict between the settlers there and the government of New York, which claimed ownership of the Grants, Allen was a colonel of the Green Mountain Boys, defenders of their rights to land under grant of the Governor of New Hampshire. The contest was violent and tumultuous, just the sort of fight to suit such a man as he.

In 1775 he was thirty-seven years old. He was tall (he is often described as "gigantic"), broad-shouldered, lean, and straight; his bodily strength was enormous. He has been credited with "boldness, adroitness, toughness, pride, fortitude, cheerfulness and a terrific volubility in invective . . . an amplitude and appalling humor of profane swearing," also with "rough and ready humor, boundless self-confidence and a shrewdness in thought and action equal to almost any emergency." Although his schooling was brief and scanty, he was a great reader and was later to produce several pamphlets on the rights of the Green Mountain Boys, as well as a narrative of his captivity by the British, composed of "staunch, blunt, boastful, blundering, fearless words," and, rather surprisingly, a tract entitled *Reason the Only Oracle of Man,* a very cogent deistic argument.[4]

Another man had thought about Ticonderoga. When the news of Lexington and Concord came to New Haven on the 20th of April, Captain Benedict Arnold summoned his company of militia to march to Cambridge and applied to the authorities of the town for ammunition; he was thought too

nasty, and his request was refused. His answer to that was that he would break in the magazine and take what he wanted. "None but Almighty God shall prevent my marching," said he. They gave him the ammunition.[5]

Arnold was familiar with the Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence country. Happening to meet Colonel Samuel Holden Parsons on the way to Cambridge and hearing him lament the lack of cannon in Ward's army, he told him that a plentiful supply could be had at Ticonderoga. Parsons went on to Hartford with this suggestion in mind.[6]

At Cambridge, Arnold broached the matter to the Committee of Safety, giving it "certain information" that there were eighty pieces of heavy cannon, twenty brass pieces, and a dozen large mortars, besides small arms and stores, at Ticonderoga, three or four more brass guns at Skenesboro near by, and that the fort was "in a ruinous condition and has not more than fifty men at the most." [7] The committeemen were interested indeed. On May 3 they gave him a colonel's commission and authorized him to enlist "not exceeding 400" men, to march to Ticonderoga and "reduce the same," taking possession of "the cannon, mortars, stores &ca." This was to be a special commission for a "secret service," and the committee reserved the right to dismiss the force to be raised "whenever they shall think proper." [8]

Benedict Arnold was at this time thirty-four years old. Though only of middle height, his appearance was commanding. He was well formed, muscular, capable of great endurance, active, graceful in his movements, and exceptionally adept in athletic exercises, such as running, fencing, boxing and skating; he was also an expert marksman with gun and pistol, and an accomplished horseman. His salient facial features were clear cut and hand-some; his hair was black, his skin swarthy, his clear, bright eyes light in color.

He came of a substantial family; a collateral ancestor of the same name had been governor of Rhode Island. He had a fair common-school education, which included some Latin. As an apprenticeship to a druggist he ran away at the age of seventeen to fight in the French and Indian War. He was advertised in the newspapers in 1759 as a deserter. In any case, he returned to finish out his term. At twenty-one he set up his own drugstore and bookshop in New Haven. His business flourished, and he branched out into the West Indies, sometimes sailing his own ships. He is also said to have shipped horses between Canada and the West Indies, which gave the British a chance to belittle him as a mere "horse-jockey." By the year 1775 he was a well-to-do merchant, the "possessor of an elegant house, storehouses, wharves, and vessels."

In the Revolutionary War he had an adventurous and, as was inevitable

with his disposition, a stormy career, but proved himself to be a soldier of outstanding merit. He was original in his ideas, audacious in action, quick to form his plans, and swift to execute them. Though imperious of will, arrogant, restive under orders, and possessed of a passionate belief in his own judgment and in his own superior ability as a soldier, he was a most capable commander of men. He did not merely order his troops forward, he led them; he was a fighting man, and he had, as he deserved to have, the devotion of his troops. An old soldier of his command at Saratoga said of him: "He was our fighting general, and a bloody fellow he was. He didn't care for nothing, he'd ride right on. It was 'Come on boys!' 'twarn't 'Go, boys!' He was as brave a man as ever lived."

His treason has become almost the only popularly known element of his career, overshadowing and blotting out the memory of his expedition against Quebec, his exploits on Lake Champlain, his relief of Fort Stanwix, and his services in the fighting which led to Saratoga. But for his betrayal of his charge at West Point, he would have stood out in American history as one of the great soldiers in the Revolution.[9]

Parsons, arriving at Hartford after his roadside conversation with Arnold, "undertook and projected" with four or five others the taking of Ticonderoga. They sent an express to Ethan Allen at Bennington, asking him to gather a force of Green Mountain Boys and hold them in readiness for the proposed adventure; they appointed Major Halsted, Captain Edward Mott, Captain Noah Phelps, and Bernard Romans as a committee to conduct their part of the affair, and provided them with a war chest of £300. Phelps and Romans went on in advance on the 28th, and were followed by Epaphras Bull, Captain Mott and sixteen associates the next day. At Pittsfield, Massachusetts, they met James Easton and John Brown. Easton raised between forty and fifty men, and the whole party set out for Bennington, where they met Allen with about a hundred of his Boys.[10]

A Committee of War was chosen, consisting of Easton, Phelps, and Bull, with Mott as chairman; Allen was given command by a "universal" vote, with Easton and Seth Warner as his first and second lieutenants. It was decided to send Samuel Herrick with thirty men to surprise and capture Major Philip Skene at his settlement, Skenesboro—now Whitehall—and take his boats.[11] Captain Asa Douglass was sent to Panton, also to procure boats. Other small parties were directed to secure the roads to the north, to prevent warning of the attack from reaching the fort. Gershom Beach, a backwoods blacksmith, was detailed to rouse more Green Mountain Boys; he is said to have covered sixty miles of wilderness in twenty-four hours.[12]

These proceedings in the evening of May 9 were hardly over when a very impressive gentleman in a brave uniform with a scarlet coat arrived and informed the gathering that he had come to take command of them by virtue of a commission and orders from the Massachusetts Committee of Safety. It was Benedict Arnold, who, having heard of the expedition from Pittsfield, had left recruiting officers at Stockbridge and, with one manservant, had hurried on to Castleton.[13]

The men of the little army were "extremely rejoiced" to learn that the Committee of Safety endorsed the project, but "shockingly surprised when Colonel Arnold presumed to contend for the command of those forces that we had raised, who we had assured should go under the command of their own officers." Although the leaders "generously told him our whole plan, he strenuously contended and insisted that he had a right to command them and all their officers."

But Arnold had met more than his match. His demand had "bred such a mutiny among the soldiers which had nearly frustrated our whole design, as our men were for clubbing their fire-locks and marching home." [14]

Allen was not present at this discussion; he had gone forward to Shoreham —now Orwell—two miles below the fort, where, in Hand's Cove, the forces were to assemble. The next morning, all those at Castleton followed him. Arnold renewed his contention as to the command and finally got, as he says, joint command with Allen, until he could "raise a sufficient number of men to relieve his [Allen's] people." It is doubtful, however, that he got more than the right to march beside Allen at the head of the men in the attack on the fort.[15]

Early in the morning of May 10, about two hundred men had assembled at Hand's Cove—Easton's and Allen's forces, augmented by others from the country roundabout. Between them and the fort stretched two miles of water. The moon had set, the sun not yet risen; it was dark, and squalls of wind and rain were blowing up to make the crossing more hazardous. There were no boats; those expected from Skenesboro had not come. It was near dawn when a scow appeared; it had been commandeered by two boys who had heard of the proposed attack. Soon after, Asa Douglass brought another, with a few recruits.[16]

Allen and Arnold, with eighty-three men, crowded into the two boats and landed about half a mile below the fort at daybreak. The boats were sent back for the rest, but there was no time to wait if there was to be a surprise. Allen drew the men up in three ranks and addressed them. He reminded them that, for a long time past, they had been "a scourge and a terror to

arbitrary power," and that their "valor has been famed abroad." He now proposed to lead them upon "a desperate attempt, which none but the bravest of men dare undertake. . . . You that will undertake voluntarily, poise your firelocks!" Every firelock was poised.[17]

Allen and Arnold, side by side, led the advance, Arnold in his fine uniform, Allen in one of his own devising—a green coat, with large gold epaulets, and yellow breeches. Behind them went a straggling column of men in every sort of garb—buckskin, linsey-woolsey, or what not, beaver hats, felt hats, coonskin caps, buckled shoes or moccasins—armed with firelocks, pistols, swords, knives, or simple clubs, not a bayonet among them all.[18]

The main entrance in the south wall of the fort was in a ruinous condition. The leaders and their men swarmed through and over the ruins and came upon a single sentry, guarding a wicket in the curtain of the main fort. He pointed his musket at the intruders and pulled the trigger; it flashed in the pan. He turned and fled through a covered way into the middle of the fort, shouting an alarm, the attackers close behind him, yelling like Indians. Another sentry slightly wounded one of the officers with a bayonet. Allen hit him on the head with the flat of his sword and ordered him to show the way to the officers' quarters. Leaving their men drawn up in two lines, back to back, Allen and Arnold followed the sentry to a staircase in the west barracks.[19]

A door at the head of the stairs opened and disclosed an officer, Lieutenant Jocelyn Feltham, wearing coat and waistcoat, but carrying his breeches in his hand. Allen shouted at him, "Come out of there, you damned old rat," (or "skunk," or "bastard," according to different accounts), and dashed up the stairs along with Arnold and followed by others. The astonished officer asked by what authority they intruded. Allen, according to his own later account, rose to the occasion with a deathless utterance:

"In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" he shouted.

It has been remarked that the officer had about as much respect for the Continental Congress as Allen had for the Great Jehovah.[20] But this astounding speech and the demands that followed for immediate surrender of "the Fort and all the effects of George the Third," with the alternative of a massacre of every man, woman, and child in the place, brought the commander, Captain William Delaplace, to terms; he handed his sword to Allen and ordered the garrison paraded without arms.

The entire force consisted of the two officers, two artillerymen, a couple

of sergeants, and forty-four privates, many of them invalids; but there were also twenty-four women and children. In fact Ticonderoga, with its ruined walls, its meager garrison, its flock of women and children, was more like a backwoods village than a fort. Allen's report to the Continental Congress characteristically tells of the taking of "the Fortress of Ticonderoga by storm" and of "the resistless fury . . . of the Soldiery [who] behaved with uncommon ranker when they Leaped Into the fourt." [21]

They certainly did behave with "uncommon ranker" after the surrender. "There is here at present," Arnold reported the next day, "near one hundred men, who are in the greatest confusion and anarchy, destroying and plundering private property, committing every enormity and paying no attention to publick service." He had forbidden them to behave so riotously, but Allen had "positively insisted" that he should have no command, and he was powerless to control them.[22]

It was necessary now to dispose of the prisoners. Allen wrote to Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut of the 12th, "I make you a present of a Major, a Captain and two Lieutenants of the regular Establishment of George the Third." The major was Skene, whom, with his daughter and various dependents, Herrick had captured at Skenesboro. These prisoners were dispatched to Hartford. Lieutenant Colonel Seth Warner took a party to Crown Point, another disabled British post, and, without resistance, captured the garrison, one sergeant, eight privates, and ten women and children, also a number of cannon.[23]

Arnold's discontent with his anomalous position in the fort, where he had no recognized command and very little good-fellowship, was relieved on the 13th, when Captain John Brown and Captain Eleazer Oswald arrived in a small schooner and several bateaux, captured at Skenesboro, with fifty recruits "enlisted on the road." Arnold was a sailor; Allen was not. So there was no objection to Arnold's having command of a naval expedition against St. Johns, a frontier Canadian post on the Richelieu River, some miles beyond Lake Champlain. When he had yet thirty miles to go, the schooner was becalmed. Arnold and thirty-five men in two bateaux rowed all night and, early in the morning of the 17th, surprised the unresisting garrison, a sergeant and fourteen men, and took the post, along with a 70-ton sloop, armed with two brass 6-pounders, and its crew of seven. There were others of the King's forces at Chambly, twelve miles away, and reinforcements for St. Johns, to the number of two hundred, were hourly expected. Arnold's men took all the more valuable stores, destroyed five bateaux, and set sail with four others, the sloop, and the schooner, for Crown Point.[24]

But Allen had his ambitions for further conquest, too. He had embarked with ninety men in four bateaux and followed Arnold. The two expeditions, Allen's going, Arnold's returning, met about six miles south of St. Johns and saluted each other with three volleys apiece. Allen boarded Arnold's sloop and learned that he was too late, that St. Johns had been taken, and that its garrison was now in irons in the hold. But, though it had been taken, it had been abandoned. That did not suit Allen; he would occupy it and hold it. However, at the moment, he was in straits, "his men being in a starving condition," as Arnold put it. In fact, Allen, in his enthusiasm for conquest, had neglected the purely incidental matter of feeding his men *en route*. Arnold supplied him, and he went on in spite of warnings as to the impracticability of his venture. At St. Johns, Allen learned that the expected reinforcements were near at hand. He first decided to ambush them, placed his men accordingly, and sent out scouts. But cooler thoughts supervened; his men were tired after three days and nights with little sleep and little food. When the new forces were within two miles of him, he withdrew across the river, where his wornout men lay down to sleep. They were surprised by a volley of grapeshot from six fieldpieces ranged on the other side; the relief for the garrison had come up. They swarmed into their boats with such celerity as to leave three of their number behind, and rowed lustily away, exchanging harmless shots with the enemy as they pulled out of range.[25]

Arnold, now at Crown Point, reported to the Massachusetts Committee of Safety that he had one hundred fifty men of his own—"Colonel Allen's men are in general gone home"—and that he had determined to hold the fort at the Point until the arrival of wheels and of draught animals should enable him to remove the cannon.[26] He had armed his sloop and his schooner with "carriage guns" and swivels in anticipation of an attempt by the British to recapture the place. But the ambitions of the two leaders were not yet satisfied. They decided to send a force to Pointe au Fer and fortify it. Allen's designs went far beyond that; he was going to conquer all Canada. "I will lay my life on it," he wrote to the New York Congress, "that, with 1500 men and a proper train of artillery, I will take Montreal . . . it would be no insuperable difficulty to take Quebeck." [27] But they were stopped in their tracks by word from the Continental Congress.

The Congress had news of the taking of Ticonderoga on May 18. It at once resolved that the fort should be abandoned and all the guns and stores removed to the south end of Lake George, with a provision that an exact inventory of them be taken, "in order that they may be safely returned when

the restoration of the former harmony between Great Britain and these colonies so ardently wished for by the latter shall render it prudent." [28]

But Arnold, even if he could not go any farther, had no intention of giving up the ground he had gained. On May 29 he wrote to the Continental Congress and to the Massachusetts Provincial Congress stating his surprise and alarm at the proposal, which would leave "our very extensive frontiers open to the ravages of the enemy." The same day he wrote to the Provincial Congress of New York, giving full details as to the number of men and the amount of supplies needed to hold the posts on the lake. Allen was equally averse to giving them up and even more eloquent in expressing his views to the New York Congress.[29]

These two were not alone; New England wanted the forts held; so did northern New York. Alarmed by reports that an expedition to retake the Champlain posts was contemplated in Canada, and that Guy Carleton was soliciting the Six Nations of Indians to join in such an effort, the northern colonies protested against the abandonment of Ticonderoga, the strongest position on the lake, and persuaded the Continental Congress to change its mind. On May 31 it resolved that Connecticut be requested to send strong reinforcements to Crown Point and "Ticonderogo" and that New York be requested to furnish supplies. Connecticut had already ordered four hundred men to march to the forts, with 500 pounds of its "pittance of powder," fol-lowed by a thousand more men under Colonel Benjamin Hinman. The forts were to be retained, but not with Colonel Benedict Arnold in com-mand.[30]

A committee from Massachusetts, sent up to ascertain the needs of the forts, brought Arnold the news that he was to be second in command under Hinman. To the colonel, who had been signing his name as "Commander-in-Chief," and had just sent a long letter to the Continental Congress out-lining an elaborate plan for the conquest of Canada which he was willing to undertake, and in which Hinman's regiment was to play a subordinate part, this demotion was displeasing. It was more than that, it was humiliating and altogether disgusting; "he would not be second in command to any person whomsoever." He immediately left the service under a double impul-sion, his discharge by the committee and his own resignation.[31]

No exercise of military genius was involved in the taking of the Champlain posts, nor was there needed any display of valor. They fell like ripe apples from a shaken limb. Nevertheless, their capture was of vast impor-tance to the colonies. Leaving out of consideration their subsequent value in the operations in that territory, the guns which they yielded were of in-

estimable value to the Americans. Many of them were found to be in such bad condition as to be useless, but no fewer than seventy-eight were serviceable, ranging from 4-pounders to 24-pounders. There were also six mortars, three howitzers, thousands of cannon balls of various sizes, nine tons of musket bullets, thirty thousand flints, and a large quantity of miscellaneous apparatus. The guns were what the army besieging Boston most needed. They were not at once removed, for lack of transport, but in the coming winter a way was found to carry them to the army.[32]

CHAPTER 11

The Question of Canada

Canada had long been a word of ill omen to the American colonists, particularly to those of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and northern New York. Time and again, the Canadian French and their Indian allies had ravaged and devastated the settlements of those colonies. Deerfield and Northampton, Saratoga and Schenectady, Keene, Exeter, Brunswick, and many another village, and countless isolated settlers' homes had succumbed to the bullet, the tomahawk, the scalping knife, and the incendiary torch. In one year alone, 1746, thirty-five bands of these marauders had ravaged the borders of the northern American provinces. When Montreal capitulated in 1760, and Canada fell into the hands of the English by the treaty of 1763, the dread of their northern neighbors departed from the minds of the colonists, only to be revived in a different form fourteen years later, when Parliament passed the Quebec Act.

To an understanding of that act in its effects upon Canada and upon the American colonies, a brief review of the character and conditions of the Canadian people may be helpful.

The inhabitants of Canada fell into four well defined classes. The habitants, who formed the first class, were the basic population. They were descendants of the first settlers, and were French in origin, Roman Catholic in religion, tenant-farmers in occupation, numbering perhaps 60,000 or more. These tractable, hard-working agriculturists held their farms under a sort of feudal tenure from the great landholders, who constituted another class, the aristocrats, seigneurs, and had been well-to-do, largely through the emoluments of office, civil or military, until the English conquest de-

prived them of official employment and ended the various feudal obligations due from the habitants except the payment of rents, which were of small value. Most of them, including practically all the civil and military officers, had gone back to France after the conquest; no more than 130 heads of families remained. Reduced in wealth even to comparative poverty, their political and social influence lost, these few seigneurs were of little importance in the affairs of the province.

Few in numbers, not more than 2,000, but having, as they thought, great potential political importance, were the people of British origin, many of them immigrants from the American colonies. They were commonly called "Old Subjects" to distinguish them from the lately acquired French subjects. The majority of them were in Montreal, engaged in the fur trade. They were a troublesome lot. They quarreled with the military, were at odds with the seigneurs, and contemned the habitants. As the only true-born British subjects, they claimed privileges above the other classes, even to the extent of demanding self-government by elective bodies of which only they would be electors and members. They would even deny the right of the Catholic French to sit on grand juries, an exclusion based on the then prevailing English law, which excluded Catholics from the elective franchise and from all political offices. James Murray, the first British governor of the province, described them as "chiefly adventurers of mean education," all having "their Fortunes to make and little Sollicitous ab[t] the means." [1] Guy Carleton, his successor, had much the same opinion of them.

The fourth class was composed of the Catholic priests. Formerly of great importance in the government, wielding an almost unlimited and almost unrestrained power, even over the French governors and their councils, the English conquest had brought them so low that they asked only for tolerance in their priestly offices. They had been used to requiring the habitants to pay legal dues to the Church. But there was no longer any basis of legality for such requirement, and the habitants paid or did not pay, as they pleased. The clergy, therefore, existed on sufferance only.

Thus Canada was split into incompatible parties: the seigneurs despised both the habitants and the Old Subjects; the habitants disliked the British, no longer respected the seigneurs, and refused to be subservient to the clergy; the Old Subjects held the seigneurs in contempt, scorned the habitants, and were at odds with the government; the poor priests were in good repute with none of the others. Besides all that, the historic ill feeling between Catholics and Protestants was in full force and vigor.

In 1763 a royal proclamation had made Canada a crown colony without an elective assembly, promising one "as soon as the state and circumstances

of the said Colonies will admit thereof." Political power had been placed in the hands of a governor and a royally appointed council. It was the promise of an assembly in the future that gave the Old Subjects their hope of political domination, for surely, as in England, the Catholics would be excluded from voting and from sitting in the assembly.

But they were disappointed. Guy Carleton, who succeeded Murray in 1766, was an English aristocrat, a military man with all the qualities of the professional soldier of high rank. He was reserved, stern, remote from civilians, fearless, and inflexible; but he was also high-minded, incorruptible, and, at bottom, magnanimous. He looked upon the humble habitants as the real Canadian people, the solid foundation of the province, and he was emancipated from the English dread of Catholic "Popery." Partly as a result of his efforts the Parliament passed the Quebec Act in 1774.

That act put an end for the time being to any hope of an elective assembly, definitely annulling the vague promise of the proclamation of 1763. It provided for a governor and a council as lawmakers appointed by the crown. It recognized the Catholic Church, with a proper bishop, and restored its right to collect tithes and other dues. It abolished the religious "test oaths," which had disqualified all non-Protestants from holding civil office. It retained the English criminal law, but restored the French law in civil matters. It extended the boundaries of the province to include Labrador on the east and, on the west, all the land north of the Ohio River between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi.

In many of its provisions the Quebec Act was an excellent law and was in advance of the philosophy of its time; but it was not well received by the Old Subjects. They wanted that promised assembly. They also wanted exclusive right to the offices of honor and emolument, and they objected strongly to the "establishment" of the Catholic Church. The Catholic priests objected to the provision requiring them to be licensed by the King only, and the Catholic laity were incensed by the compulsion to pay tithes. The French did not like the retention of English criminal law. The English disliked the restoration of the French civil law. So the cleavages in Canada's population were deepened.[2]

To the Americans the Quebec Act was anathema for several reasons, the first and most objectionable being the extension of the boundaries of Canada. Some of the colonies, notably Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Virginia, had pretensions to some parts of the western lands now given to their northern neighbor. They had seen them taken from the French by the Treaty of Paris in 1763 and, as they thought, reserved for their own settlement. Citizens of the Old Thirteen Colonies had been peering over the

crest of the Alleghenies at the new lands beyond. They had even passed over the mountains and had made new settlements in the Ohio valley. They looked forward to unimpeded occupation quite to the Mississippi. This sudden reversal of conditions, by which the conquered territory was restored to Quebec, and perhaps to their old enemies, the French Canadians, was a shock to all the American colonists. Moreover, they saw themselves surrounded on the north and west by an undemocratic government whose legislature was appointed by the crown, not elected by the people, a despotic government whose power might be exerted against them at the will of the King. Also, the American colonists were Protestants in an overwhelming majority and, especially in New England, fiercely jealous of the prevalence of their religion. They had inherited fear and hatred of Catholicism from old England. Now they saw dreaded Popery practically established in all that great territory enclosing them.

There was, too, for those thinking in terms of a war of rebellion, the fact that the St. Lawrence River was a broad waterway by which troops could be carried to Montreal, where they would have access to that other waterway, Lake Champlain, Lake George, and the Hudson, which would, if held by the British, separate the New England colonies from those to the southward.

All these considerations made it desirable that Canada should be joined with the American colonies in the common cause against Britain. The Second Continental Congress in May had, rather ineptly, tried to induce the Canadians to unite "with us in the defence of our common liberty." [3]

In a letter dated May 29, 1775, and addressed "To the oppressed Inhabitants of Canada," the Congress declared that "the fate of the catholic and protestant colonies [was] strongly linked together." It was urged that "the enjoyment of your very religion . . . depends on a legislature in which you have no share and over which you have no control." [4] "The decent manner in which the religious matters were touched" [5] was received with pleasure by the Canadians. But on October 21, 1774, the First Continental Congress had addressed an appeal to the people of Great Britain, setting forth the grievances of the colonies, among which were the Quebec Act establishing in Canada "a religion fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets . . . a religion that has deluged your island in blood and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder and rebellion through every part of the world." [6]

Unfortunately the Canadians read that appeal after they had digested the later one addressed to them, and they were not pleased with it. "They could not contain their resentment, nor express it but in broken curses." "Oh! the

perfidious, double-faced Congress!" they cried. "Let us bless and obey our benevolent Prince, whose humanity is consistent, and extends to all Religions; let us abhor all who would seduce us from our loyalty, by acts that would dishonour a Jesuit; and whose Addresses, like their Resolves, are destructive of their own objects." [7]

Well then, if Canada would not willingly join, what about compulsion? What about conquest? The Second Continental Congress was at first unwilling to go so far as that. On the 1st day of June, 1775, it resolved "that no expedition or incursion ought to be undertaken or made, by any colony, or body of colonists, against or into Canada." [8]

But that vigorous and ambitious warrior Benedict Arnold was of a different opinion. On June 13 he reported to the Congress that the Indians would not assist the King's troops against the Americans; that Carleton had been unable to raise more than twenty Canadians to help him; that there were only 550 British regulars in all Canada, scattered among five posts. He proposed an attack on Montreal with 1,700 men, through St. John's and Chambly, Quebec being ripe to fall when those places had been taken. He added that "if no person appears who will undertake to carry the plan into execution . . . I will undertake it and . . . answer for the success of it." [9]

And that other vigorous and restless soul Ethan Allen was of the same opinion. When he heard of the resolution of the Congress, adopted on May 18, recommending the removal of the cannon and military stores taken at Ticonderoga to the south end of Lake George and the abandonment of the captured fort,[10] he wrote to the Congress on May 29 a letter of protest, in which he also urged an expedition against Canada: "The more vigorous the Colonies push the war against the King's Troops in Canada, the more friends we shall find in that country. . . . Should the Colonies forthwith send an army of two or three thousand men, and attack Montreal, we . . . would easily make a conquest of that place." [11] On June 2 he even more eloquently adjured the New York Provincial Congress to favor such an attack. "I wish to God," he fervently wrote, "America would, at this critical juncture, exert herself. . . . She might rise on eagles' wings and mount up to glory, freedom and immortal honour, if she did but know and exert her strength. Fame is now hovering over her head. A vast continent must now sink to slavery, poverty, horrour and bondage, or rise to unconquerable freedom, immense wealth, inexpressible felicity and immortal fame." [12]

Allen wanted his Green Mountain Boys enrolled in the Continental service. To that end, he and his lieutenant colonel, Seth Warner, presented themselves on June 23 at the door of the Congress in Philadelphia, and were admitted to the floor of the house. What he said to the Congress, whether

he repeated his advice as to Canada, does not appear in the records. He did attain his chief object; his Boys were to be enlisted in a regiment of their own, under officers of their own choice.[13] It may well be that what he told the Congress then influenced it, within the next four days, to reverse its policy as to Canada, and to direct General Schuyler to proceed to Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and "if [he] finds it practicable and that it will not be disagreeable to the Canadians, he do immediately take possession of St. Johns, Montreal and any other parts of the country." [14] At all events, Ethan Allen may be credited with some of the impetus behind that resolution.

Major General Philip Schuyler was a representative of the best Dutch blood in New York, and one of its wealthiest landed proprietors. He was at this time in his forty-third year, slender yet well muscled, erect and commanding in figure, quick and energetic in movement. His face was noticeably florid and unusually expressive of his emotions, its features rather large, but not distinguished. His hair was dark brown, as were his keen, piercing eyes. His voice was clear, inclining to sharpness. His dress was always in accord with the prevailing mode. The manner of life in his mansion in Albany and his country seat at Saratoga was generous and hospitable, elegant indeed, with numerous servants, an ample stable, and a full cellar to care for his guests.

He was not lacking in intelligence, nor in kindliness, nor in courtesy to his equals, though to those of pronounced inferiority of station or of doubtful integrity he was apt to show his sense of his own superiority. In depth and breadth of mind, in stability of intention, in firm decisiveness to plan and to execute, in the ability to meet a confused situation, discern its essentials, and expend his energies upon them only, Schuyler was somewhat deficient. Thus he lacked the executive power needed to make him an effective and successful general officer; nor had his slight martial experience as a captain in the French and Indian War been sufficient to induce a habit of command. 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 high-minded, 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.[15]

Brigadier General Richard Montgomery was Schuyler's second in command. Born in northern Ireland, the son of a baronet and member of

Parliament, he was well educated, and from his seventeenth year had been a soldier in the British army. He had fought under Amherst at Ticonderoga and Crown Point in 1759. At the age of twenty-six he was a captain. For ten years, he held that rank. In 1772 he resigned from the army and returned to America. In the next year he married one of the Livingstons, a family of wealth and high social position. Two years later he was commissioned a brigadier general in the Continental army. Although of studious habit, preferring the library and domestic life to the camp and the field, he was ardent for the cause of the colonies and responded to the call to arms.

He was tall, slender, of graceful address, yet strong, active, and capable of long endurance of fatigue and hardship. Forceful in command, aggressive in action, patient in adversity, cool in judgment, never negligent of duty, never avoiding danger, he was the complete soldier.[16]

With those two as aide-de-camp was Captain John Macpherson, Jr., the twenty-one-year-old son of a well-to-do Philadelphian. His portrait shows a notably handsome and refined face, and his character was in keeping with it. Bancroft has described him as a "pure-minded, youthful enthusiast for liberty . . . full of promise for war, lovely in temper, dear to the army, honored by the affection and confidence of his chief." [17]

Schuyler's instructions, when he was detached by Washington at New York City on June 25, gave him command of the New York Department. He was to occupy the several posts in the Champlain region, put them "in a fit posture to answer the End designed," and, besides keeping an eye on Governor Tryon, "watch the Movements of the Indian Agent," Colonel Guy Johnson "and prevent, as far as you can, the Effect of his Influence to our Prejudice with the Indians." "The Temper and Disposition" of the Canadians were to be investigated "that a proper line may be mark'd out to conciliate their good Opinion, or facilitate any future Operation." [18]

It will be noted that this was a cautious approach to the possible invasion of Canada, there being no definite orders or directions on the point. The Congress, however, as has been related, gave orders on June 27 for an aggressive movement if Schuyler should find it practicable and not disagreeable to the Canadians.

The Colonel Guy Johnson whom Schuyler was to watch was son-in-law and successor in office to Sir William Johnson, who had been appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the northern department in 1755 and, with a rare talent for dealing with red men reinforced by his "marriage" with the sister of the Mohawk chief, had exercised a strong and generally prevailing influence over the Iroquois League, of Mohawks, Oneidas,

Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras, or Six Nations.[19] Besides these, there were in Canada the Seven Nations, allies of the League, not so numerous nor in general so warlike, yet including the Abenakis on the St. Francis River—formerly most savage of all and most dreaded by the colonists—and the Caughnawagas, whose chiefs were all "of English extraction Captivated in their infancy." Their superior intelligence made the Caughnawagas important, although the tribe could not muster two hundred braves. Beyond these to the north and west were unnumbered other, unrelated tribes, a great reservoir of potential savagery.[20] Guy Johnson as Superintendent of Indian Affairs since 1774 could cause infinite trouble to the Americans.

There was another influence which prevailed in Canada. Louis St. Luc de La Corne, a Frenchman, had been Superintendent of the Canadian Indians under the French régime, and his son-in-law, Major Campbell, now held a similar office. La Corne was hated and dreaded by the colonists as a "fiend incarnate" and was believed to have been responsible for the massacre of the prisoners taken at the capture of Fort William Henry in 1757.[21] He was now on the side of the British. It was evident to the colonists that the Indian question was one of the most important with which they had to deal in the contemplated invasion of Canada.

Johnson, La Corne and Campbell, Joseph Brant, otherwise called Thayendanegea, a Mohawk chief, and Colonel John Butler, Johnson's assistant, worked assiduously to enlist the Indians under the British standard in 1775. La Corne was especially busy, giving them powder and brandy. At a price of two johannes (about $16) a piece, he got some of the young Caughnawagas to engage; but the older men took the money from them and returned it to him.[22] To help Carleton break down the sales resistance of the Indians, the home government sent a cargo of inducements, "hundreds of proved fowling-pieces, with blue barrels, walnut stocks, trimmings of wrought brass and silver sights . . . neat, bright Indian hatchets," brass kettles, gold laced hats, ruffled shirts, pipes, greatcoats, barrels and barrels of gunpowder and of bullets, pots of paint for facial adornment, blue, rose, yellow, vermilion, all to the value of £2,500.[23] Johnson had the effrontery to deny that he was inciting the red men to fight the Americans. The charge, he said, was manifestly absurd. It was true that he had fortified his house in the Mohawk valley, and that it was guarded by Mohawks; but that was only because he had heard that the New Englanders or the people from Albany were coming in "a considerable number to seize and imprison me."[24] But there were witnesses against him. Samuel Kirkland, missionary among the Iroquois, testified to the contrary. Thirty Indian chiefs, on a

mission to the Congress, corroborated Kirkland's testimony. By the middle of July, it was said that Johnson was ready, with 800 or more Indians, to invade Tryon County in the province of New York.[25]

Reports as to the ultimate intentions of the Indians varied. In March, John Brown said he had word from reliable sources that the Caughnawagas, although "repeatedly applied to and requested to join the King's troops," had "peremptorily refused and still intend to refuse." [26] In June, Ethan Allen thought the Indians as a whole were attached "to our interest." He was cynical enough to believe that they acted "upon political principles and consequently are inclined to fall in with the strongest side. At present ours has the appearance of it." [27] This was immediately after Ticonderoga had been taken. But a man who had been in Montreal in the same month reported that the Caughnawagas had actually "taken up the hatchet." [28] In July another, similarly experienced, said they had refused to join Carleton though threatened with dispossession of their lands, and that the Indians were "pretty generally determined to take no part in the quarrel." [29] This was confirmed, also in July, by Captain Remember Baker, a Green Mountain Boy who had been scouting on his own hook. He said the "Seven Nations had agreed not to fight the Yankees." [30] But in August "two persons who have lately come from St. Johns" stated that Johnson had 500 Indians at Montreal "just going to join the English." [31] It was all very confusing and very disconcerting to the Americans, and it was clearly time that something was done about it.

The Continental Congress, in July, had formulated "A Speech to the Six Confederate Nations" telling them at great length about the King's oppression of the colonies and the contest to relieve it. It was couched in the language of parables. "This is a family quarrel between us and Old England," the speech said. "You Indians are not concerned in it. We don't wish you to take up the hatchet against the King's Troops. We desire you to remain at home and not join on either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep." [32]

A "council fire" was held at Albany, commencing August 23 and carried on, with great deliberation, by 700 Indians for more than a week. When they were "weary from having sat long in council," they thought it was "time for a little drink." General Schuyler, Colonel Turbott Francis, and Volkert P. Douw represented the Congress. Samuel Kirkland and James Dean, missionaries among the Indians, were also there to exert their influence. The peace pipe was passed around, which must have been a slow proceeding among 700, and then the Speech was delivered. It was a long speech, and the simple savages took three days to digest it. On the third day Little Abraham, a sachem of the Mohawks, made an elaborate reply. The essen-

tial paragraph was heralded by an injunction, "Now, therefore attend and apply your ears closely." It went on to say: "We have fully considered this matter. . . . This, then, is the determination of the Six Nations: Not to take any part, but, as it is a family affair, to sit still and see you fight it out." [33] It should be noted, however, that the Indians at the council fire were chiefly Oneidas and Mohawks of a certain canton of that nation. Most of the Mohawks, with the chief men of the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas had gone to Montreal with Brant and Johnson. Therefore this compact was not so reassuring as it seemed on its face to be.[34] In October, however, the Caughnawagas undertook to promise for all the Seven Nations of Canadian Indians that they would not "in the least molest" the colonists.[35]

It must not be supposed that the colonists were averse to having the Indians in the war at all. Massachusetts enlisted the Stockbridge Indians in its forces immediately after the outbreak of the war. There was some excuse for that; they were at least semicivilized.[36] But its Provincial Congress sent a commissioner to the Maine Indians to enlist them and lent a willing ear to a proposal of the Abenakis to take up the hatchet for the colonists, "for which we have no immediate occasion," the Congress said.[37] Ethan Allen had had no compunctions about soliciting four tribes of the Canadian Indians "to help me fight the King's troops," offering them "money, blankets, tomahawks, knives, paint and anything there is in the army, just like brothers." [38] Some seventy or eighty of the red men joined Arnold in Canada; but otherwise very few were, in fact, employed by the colonists early in the war except as scouts, messengers, or guides.[39]

Schuyler and his companions left New York on July 4. After certain necessary delays at Albany and Saratoga, they arrived at Ticonderoga on the 18th and found a sad state of affairs.[40] At the landing place, held by a captain and a hundred men, a sentinel "quitted his post to go and awake the guard, consisting of three men, in which he had no success. I walked up and came to another, a sergeant's guard. Here the sentinel challenged, but suffered me to come up to him, the whole guard, like the first, in profoundest sleep. With a pen-knife only I could have cut off both guards and then have set fire to the block-house, destroyed the stores and starved the people there." So Schuyler reported to Washington on the night of his arrival.

This was his introduction to a post, which he soon found was "in a perfectly defenceless state," not only because "not one earthly thing has been done for offence or defence," but also because the garrison was in a wretched physical and mental condition.[41]

There were about 1,300 men in the posts on the lakes, 600 at Ticonderoga, 400 at Crown Point, 300 at Fort George. They were composed of Colonel Benjamin Hillman's Connecticut regiment, 1,000 men, part of a Massachusetts regiment under Colonel James Easton, numbering a little more than 100, 200 New Yorkers, and a few Green Mountain Boys.[42] At Ti, as the principal post was currently called, the men were "crowded in very bad barracks," insanitary to a degree; many were ill. They were largely without discipline. Those from Connecticut, especially, feeling themselves in Yankee fashion quite the equals of their officers, were insubordinate. Food was scarce: "sometimes we have no flour." The "constant cry for rum" went unappeased.[43] Schuyler found that there had been "a very considerable waste or embezzlement" of the stores.[44] Ammunition was wanting, and when it came to building boats, as the Congress had directed him to do, for an attack on St. John's, he had "not a nail, no pitch, no oakum," and no boards until he could set up a sawmill.[45]

The helpless, defenseless condition of these posts was largely due to the inefficiency of Colonel Hinman. He had come to Ti, as he said, merely to reinforce its garrison and, although he had accepted the chief command of a wilderness post far removed from any superior officer, his idea of his duty was "to wait for orders" and to do nothing until he got them.[46] He had welcomed the news that a superior was on the way to direct him. "I wait, Sir, with impatience for your arrival, as I find myself very unable to steer in this stormy situation," he plaintively wrote to Schuyler, on July 7.[47] He did not last long in the Continental army, not longer than December 20, 1775. After that, he returned to the militia.[48]

Schuyler had recognized the difficulties of his task before he came to Ticonderoga. There were under his command in the whole New York Department, present and fit for duty, no more than 2,500 men.[49] The Congress expected him to add to these the regiment of Green Mountain Boys, 500 in number, which Ethan Allen had been authorized to raise. But Allen had lost favor with the Boys. When some of "the old farmers on the New Hampshire Grants" met at Cephas Kent's tavern in Dorset, on July 27, to nominate the officers of the proposed regiment, they ignored him and elected Seth Warner lieutenant colonel, leaving the colonelcy vacant.[50] Allen came to Ticonderoga alone and solicited a place in Schuyler's force. Schuyler was "apprehensive of disagreeable consequences arising from Mr. Allen's imprudence . . . his impatience of subordination." But after he had made "a solemn promise . . . that he would demean himself properly," he was admitted as a volunteer.[51] The other 499 Boys failed to arrive.

If and when Schuyler attacked Canada with the force then in hand, he would have to use at least 200 of his men to guard the posts he already held, marching with not much more than 1,000 to take Carleton's fortified positions. The British had at least 700 regular troops, to which they might perhaps add as many Indians and a number of whites which he could not even guess at, because Hinman had obtained no information as to the probable attitude of the Canadians toward the proposed invasion.[52] Even without regard for the lack of matériel of every kind, the lack of man power was discouraging. So "with a strange and almost fatal patience," inherent in his Dutch blood perhaps, or resulting from "his patrician habit to order and not to do" or his lack of physical stamina, he lingered at Ti for more than two months, waiting for reinforcements.[53]

Not that he was idle; he got out planks for bateaux and built them, enough finally to carry 1,300 men with twenty days' provisions; he even had, on July 31, "a boat on the stocks (and nearly finished) sixty feet in length," large enough to carry "between two and three hundred men," and had started another. Also he called and called again on New York for more troops, for tents, and for equipment of all sorts from field artillery to bullet molds.[54]

In June, New York had voted to raise four regiments. On July 21 Schuyler asked for them. A week later he did "most earnestly entreat" that they should be sent up to Albany.[55] On August 14 Hinman caustically observed, "The Province of New York abounds with officers, but I have not had my curiosity gratified by the sight of one private." [56] But New York had its reasons for the delay. Its Committee of Safety had written on July 15, "Our troops can be of no service to you; they have no arms, clothes, blankets, or ammunition, the officers no commissions, our treasury no money, ourselves in debt. It is in vain to complain; we will send you soldiers, whenever the men we have raised are entitled to that name." [57]

They started at last. Colonel James Clinton arrived in Albany near the end of August with six companies. Three of these had serviceable muskets, two had guns needing repairs, the sixth had none. Lieutenant Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt got there about the same time, with four companies, "many of the men wanting shirts, shoes, stockings, underclothes," having, that is to say, no uniforms at all except coats and breeches. Three-fourths of them had no blankets, and they had no tents; but thirty men did have muskets. No barracks being available, they were kept penned up in their boats, to their great disgust. "Give us guns, blankets, tents . . . and we will fight the devil himself," they cried. "But don't keep us here in market-boats, as though we were a parcel of sheep or calves." The first of them, four com-

panies under Lieutenant Colonel Rudolphus Ritzema, reached Ticonderoga on August 22.[58]

In his search for more men, Schuyler cast his eyes on Brigadier General Wooster's Connecticut troops sent down to help out in the defense of New York City. On July 17 the Continental Congress directed Wooster to send 1,000 men to Schuyler.[59] Colonel David Waterbury brought his full regiment. New Hampshire offered Schuyler three companies of Rangers, not part of the Continental army, under command of Colonel Timothy Bedel. They were to join him on his march to St. Johns. So, in one way and another, Schuyler gathered a little army.[60]

But, although Schuyler labored to improve the discipline of his men, they were for a long time "much inclined to a seditious and mutinous temper," partly because of their lack of good food, supplies, and equipment, and partly because of intercolonial jealousies. Major John Brown of Massachusetts thought "New York have acted a droll part, and are determined to defeat us, if in their power." [61] A Connecticut man wrote to Governor Trumbull complaining that "all the places of profit" were "filled up with men of the York Government," while Connecticut men were "obliged to do all the drudgery. . . . Commissaries' places are profitable. . . . Why should they have all the places of profit? . . . The advantage of their situation is such that it will make them rich. Are we to be wholly ruled by the Committee of New York?" [62] General Wooster, commanding the Connecticut men sent down to New York, thought it was dishonorable to his province to be subjected to the direction of a body of men—to wit, the New York Congress—when he could have "no faith in their honesty in the cause." "You know not, Sir, half their tricks," he wrote to Trumbull.[63] This distrust of New York permeated the New Englanders, and affected their relationship with their commander, Schuyler, a New Yorker himself.

In July, Schuyler had sent John Brown north to secure information about Carleton's post at St. Johns, the magazines of arms and ammunition in Montreal, and the inclinations of the Indians and Canadians in the contest. This man Brown was one of those remarkable characters that one finds hidden in the crannies of history, almost unknown even to historians. He was an educated man, a graduate of Yale and a lawyer, who had held the office of King's attorney in New York province, whence he had removed to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, to practice his profession. But he was not satisfied with such a sedentary life. He was "a strong, bold, active, fearless man . . . of noble personal appearance, genial air and chivalric manner," the best type of the gentleman adventurer.[64]

We have had a glimpse of him in February, 1775, when the Massachusetts Provincial Congress sent him on a mission to Canada, and have seen that his report recommended the seizure of Ticonderoga, in which he had afterward had a part. That journey was a severe test of his ability as a woodsman, his physical strength, and his pertinacity. It was made in the dead of winter, through deep snows, in intense cold, and over a most difficult country. On Lake Champlain amid broken ice he and his two companions, an old hunter and one who had been an Indian's captive for years, had been frozen in for two days. Thence they had gone on foot through a flooded country. It was a fortnight's journey of "almost inconceivable hardships," he said. At Montreal he talked with all sorts of people while his companions discussed matters of interest with the Caughnawagas. His report did not encourage the hope that the Canadians in general would join the colonists, but he did succeed in establishing friendly relations with some of the Old Subjects, notably one Thomas Waller, and in providing "a channel of correspondence" with them.[65]

He left Crown Point on this second errand, under Schuyler's orders, on July 24, with four companions, a Canadian and three soldiers. The journey could not be made openly as the first had been, for since the taking of Ticonderoga Canada was enemy country. Danger of captivity was now added to the difficulties of travel. After arriving in Canadian territory by boat, they "had a tedious and fatiguing march" of three days "through a vast tract of swamp." In one house where they lodged for the night, they were "surrounded by a large party of the enemy . . . escaping out of a back window,"and on their return trip they were "pursued two days." Nevertheless, they remained in Canada four days, protected by friendly inhabitants, and brought back a full and convincing report, dated August 14.

The French, he said, would not fight against the colonists. The Indians were minded to be neutral, except that they might scout for the British. St. Johns was being fortified. It was supported by two bateaux mounting nine guns each; and two sixty-foot vessels to mount twelve guns each were on the stocks. There were 700 of the King's troops in Canada, 300 of whom were at St. Johns, only 50 at Quebec, and the rest at Montreal, Chambly, and elsewhere. "Now, Sir, is the time to carry Canada. It may be done with great ease and little cost, and I have no doubt but the Canadians will join us. There is a great defection amongst them." [66] By Canadians he meant the Old Subjects.

Information from another source, coming on August 3, confirmed Brown's report except in the disposition of the King's troops, of which there were said to be 470 at St. Johns, 110 at Chambly, 80 at Quebec, and about

20 at Montreal. Samuel Mott, who got this news, urged that "we go forward now with 1500 men [rather] than with 3000 one month hence." [67]

But Schuyler lingered. There were reasons why he did, sufficient in his mind at least. He had no tents, no carriages for his fieldpieces. Many of his men were sickly—194 of them on August 14—and his expected reinforcements had not come. He was fully determined to go on, "unless your Excellency or Congress should direct otherwise," he advised Washington on August 6. As late as August 27 he wrote again to Washington, "To do it has been my determination, unless prevented by my superiours." [68] It may be unfair to Schuyler to suggest it, but that recurrent conditional clause seems to suggest a hope that he might be prevented.

On August 17 he went to Albany to attend the council fire with the Indians, leaving Montgomery in command on the lakes. That active soldier had, it seems, been tugging at the leash. On the 19th he wrote that "every intelligence from Canada evinces the necessity of a vigorous and speedy effort to crush their naval armament before it gets abroad." Now, in Schuyler's absence, he slipped the leash.

Montgomery had received a letter from John Brown, whom he had sent north on another scouting expedition, telling him of the near completion of Carleton's two vessels: "Their hulls seem to be finished . . . their masts are preparing . . . they appear of large size." He apologized for "writing in a dictatorial style," and would not have done so if it were not certain that the two vessels and their attendant bateaux "can easily sweep the lake. . . . I therefore humbly beseech that some effectual measures may be immediately entered into to keep the command of this lake." That was enough for Montgomery.[69]

He at once wrote to Schuyler that he was so much of Brown's opinion that he thought it "absolutely necessary to move down the lake with the utmost dispatch." He had therefore, without waiting for Schuyler's approval, given orders for an advance to Ile aux Noix in the Richelieu River beyond the foot of the lake, which, with the aid of two 12-pounders and a log boom, he intended to hold and so prevent Carleton's vessels from entering Champlain. He hoped Schuyler would follow him in a whaleboat, "leaving somebody to bring on the troops and artillery." He apologized for taking this step without orders, but felt that to hold back the enemy was of the utmost importance. "If I must err, let it be on the right side." [70] Schuyler was usually very touchy about his superiority in command, but he now learned "with pleasure" that Montgomery had acted in such an important matter without even consulting him. He seemed, indeed, to be glad that he had been relieved of responsibility for the venture.[71]

CHAPTER 12

Montreal

Montgomery was now about to begin the attempt against Montreal so long considered. From Ticonderoga his course lay north by way of Lake Champlain to Crown Point. Beyond that the lake widened between shores of almost unbroken wilderness, narrowed again, and emptied at the 45th parallel of latitude into a river, indifferently called the Richelieu or the Sorel, flowing nearly due north. At that point it was almost blocked by an island, the Ile aux Noix. Twenty miles farther north was St. Johns, a small settlement. Ten miles beyond that was Chambly, still smaller. At the mouth of the river, where it emptied into the St. Lawrence, was another little village, Sorel. But, at Chambly, a road led northwest to La Prairie and Longueuil, directly opposite Montreal, the main objective.[1]

In the evening of Monday August 28 the greater part of Waterbury's Connecticut Regiment, four companies of Ritzema's 4th New York, and Mott's small section of artillery, about twelve hundred men in all, embarked in the schooner *Liberty,* the sloop *Enterprise,* and a fleet of gondolas, bateaux, row-galleys, piraguas, and canoes. In the bow of each sailing vessel a 12-pounder was mounted. With a fair wind and a sufficiency of fresh and lusty oarsmen, the excursion began auspiciously, the men evincing "great cheerfulness." [2]

But at ten o'clock it began to rain heavily. They went ashore and bivouacked damply under the trees. On Tuesday they worked their way up to Crown Point. "A barbarous north wind" held them there one day, but the next morning a fair southerly breeze set in. So day by day they went on, going ashore at night to sleep, until, just beyond Isle La Motte, on a "fine, sandy beach" they disembarked to wait for Schuyler.[3]

Returning from the Albany council fire, Schuyler reached Ticonderoga on August 30, "very much indisposed . . . with a bilious fever and violent rheumatick pains"; but the next morning, after ordering forward five hundred of Hinman's regiment, three hundred of Colonel Goose Van Schaick's, and some artillery, he set out in a whaleboat to catch up with his ambitious lieutenant. In the morning of Monday September 4 he found Montgomery awaiting him and at once gave orders to move on. That evening they pitched their tents on Ile aux Noix. Hopefully, they fired three cannon shots, the signal agreed upon with their Canadian friends, who were to gather and join them. There was no response.[4]

The next day found Schuyler in rather worse condition, but he drafted an address to the Canadians telling them that "the Grand Congress" had ordered him to expel the British troops, who wished "to enslave their countrymen." The Congress, he said, "could not conceive that anything but the force of necessity could induce you tamely to bear the insult and ignominy that is daily imposed on you, or that you could calmly sit by and see those chains forging which are intended to bind you, your posterity, and ours, in one common and eternal slavery." Therefore it had ordered him "to cherish every Canadian . . . and sacredly to guard their property." [5] This document he directed Ethan Allen and John Brown to take to James Livingston, a merchant at Chambly who was well affected toward the colonists, and with whom he had been in correspondence.

On September 5 the troops embarked again, with three days' cooked provisions and their arms "in good firing Order"; their tents, baggage, and supplies were left behind under a guard. They were sailing now, all stripped for action, down the broad Richelieu between its heavily wooded shores. At three in the afternoon, they were in sight of the fort at St. Johns, two miles away. As they gazed at it, they saw white puffs of smoke break from its walls, heard the boom of its guns, and realized that they were being "kindly saluted" with round shots and bombs, though none of the missiles reached them.[6]

Half a mile farther on they went ashore "in a close, deep swamp" and started "in grounds marshy and covered with woods" towards the fort. Major Thomas Hobby and Captain Matthew Mead of the 5th Connecticut led a flanking party on the left and a little ahead of the others. They were crossing Bernier's Brook, a deep, muddy, winding stream, when they were met by a surprising blast of close fire. A hundred Indians led by Captain Tice, a New York Tory, had ambushed them. Several of the Americans fell, but the rest fired on the unseen enemy, then wheeled smartly to the left into dense thickets and for half an hour or so there was irregular bush fighting

before the Indians retreated. Eight of Schuyler's men were killed or fatally wounded, and eight, including Hobby and Mead, injured less severely.[7]

They advanced no farther. As night fell, they dug "a small intrenchment" where they stood. But the enemy "kept continually throwing their bombshells" at this place, so, without tarrying long, they retreated a mile and entrenched again out of reach of the British guns.

That night there came to Schuyler "a gentleman, Mr. ———," whose name he disclosed only to Washington, begging him to erase it from his letter. This person had more effect upon the expedition than all the bombs and Indians. He told the general that the fortification at St. Johns was "complete and strong and plentifully furnished with cannon"; that the vessel there would be ready to sail in three or four days and was to carry sixteen guns; that no Canadians would join the Americans; that they had better not attack St. Johns, but rather return to Ile aux Noix.[8] Such resolution as Schuyler had was not proof against this kind of advice. He told a council of war the next morning that he considered it "absolutely necessary" to retire. The rest of its members agreed "to take measures for preventing her [the ship's] entrance into the lake," measures which, because of "the weak state of our artillery" could be effected only at Ile aux Noix, where an already prepared boom could be thrown across the channel. There they would await "intelligence touching the intentions of the Canadians" and, when reinforced, march by land against Montreal, "should the Canadians favour such a design." [9] So, instead of "expelling" the King's troops from all Canada, or even from the little fort at St. Johns, they all withdrew "without noise." If Major Preston's force at St. Johns had not been so weak that he feared to venture out of his fort, there might have been noise enough at this retirement.[10]

The news was spread abroad in Canada of their fight and flight, in which, so the tale went, 60 Indians had defeated 1,500 Americans in entrenchments, killing 40, wounding 30 more, and sending them back to their refuge at Ile aux Noix; and the victory was celebrated in Montreal by "a grand mass with a *Te Deum*." If anything were needed to ensure the abstention of the Canadians from joining Schuyler, this retreat provided it.[11]

The river was boomed, the island fortified. Now the colonials were in an excellent defensive position, very satisfactory if defense was all that was wanted. And there they received reinforcements, 300 of Hinman's Connecticut troops, 400 of the 2nd New York under Colonel Goose Van Schaick, with three pieces of cannon. Counting certain detachments sent out before that, Schuyler had altogether 1,700 men, more than twice the British regulars in all Canada. And he had five guns and three mortars.[12]

At this juncture (September 9) Schuyler received a reply to the letter he had sent by Ethan Allen and John Brown to James Livingston, the well affected merchant living at Chambly. Livingston urged him to interpose a force between St. Johns and Chambly so as to prevent Preston and his vessel from escaping to the St. Lawrence. If Schuyler would do that, Livingston promised to help him with "a considerable party of Canadians." They might even capture the vessel, loaded with "provisions and warlike supplies" and "slenderly manned." [13]

Schuyler fell in with this suggestion. He made elaborate plans. Two row-galleys, each carrying a 12-pounder, the sloop, the schooner, and ten bateaux "with 350 picked men" were to lie in the river to prevent Preston's vessel, the *Royal Savage*, from going south to the lake; and 700 men were to go again to a point near St. Johns, 200 of them to act as a covering party, protecting the boats, while 500 circumvented the fort and invested it on the north.[14]

On the 10th of September 800 men set out and landed at about ten o'clock in the evening near the first breastwork erected in the former attempt. The covering party of 300, under Montgomery, held that position, while Colonel Ritzema with 500 New Yorkers started along the shore to march around the fort. Flankers were thrown out in the woods on their left. It was dark in that forest, and the flankers, remembering the ambush on the former expedition, were nervous and apprehensive. There might be an Indian behind every tree. They drew toward the right, toward the open beach and, suddenly in the darkness, collided with the head of the main column. An instant and overpowering panic set in. They were ambushed again! They were certain of it, though only one chance shot from one of their own men had been heard. The covering party heard a noise as of many men coming in a hurry. Back they came, the whole 500, scrambling through the woods, through swamps as hard as they could go, for the boats. Ritzema was the last to come, all by himself.[15]

Montgomery took them in hand, rallied them, exhorted them "to act like men," formed them, and started them off again. They had gone a quarter of a mile, when some small shells and grapeshot from one of Preston's bateaux crashed and rattled through the trees. Half of them turned tail and ran again for the boats. But Ritzema, with the rest in a straggling band, went on to the second entrenchment of the previous excursion. A few of the enemy were holding a small house there. Ritzema had only 50 men with him. A few shots were exchanged, and two of the enemy were killed. Though 200 more of his men came up, he decided to retire. It was then three o'clock in the morning. The whole expedition spent the night at the

landing place, their only satisfaction being that one of their 12-pounders had gone through that bateau of Preston's from stem to stern, torn it apart, and perhaps destroyed its crew of 35 men, or, at least had given them a ducking.[16]

In the morning another council of war decided to try again. But the officers were uncertain of the obedience of the men. They felt it necessary to call a sort of town meeting and let the privates vote on the question. The men agreed to go on. But just then Lieutenant Samuel Lockwood, who had been scouting down the river, returned and told them that the *Royal Savage* lay a little below "completely equipped." Part of Waterbury's New Yorkers at once ran to the boats, intending to get away as quickly as possible. Faced by such demoralization, fearing, too, that the schooner might come up and destroy their bateaux, the officers gave up the attempt. They embarked again for Ile aux Noix.[17]

Montgomery was not satisfied to retreat so ignominiously. After they had gone a few miles he stopped the fleet, went ashore with his officers, and called on the men to follow him on a march against St. Johns. But one of them called out that the schooner was coming. That finished it. "The Troops were hardly restrained from pushing off without their officers." So back to their haven of safety they all went, an expedition defeated by imagination.[18]

At the main camp the returning heroes were received with such jeers and upbraidings by those who had stayed safe at home, that they were "unable to bear the reproach of their late unbecoming behaviour." Schuyler, who was so ill that he could not leave his tent, concerted with Montgomery to take advantage of this state of mind. On September 13 they ordered the artillery into the boats, with the intention of carrying the whole force down the river again. The main party was to land as before, against St. Johns. The schooner and the row-galleys, manned by "determined volunteer crews and good rowers," were boldly to attack and board the *Royal Savage*. But the next day it rained, and on the next after that Ethan Allen came in to report his findings as to the disposition of the Canadians, which necessitated further consideration. That night Schuyler's "disorder reattacked . . . [him] with double violence." The 15th was again rainy, and Schuyler was so ill that "every prospect of a speedy recovery vanished." On September 16 he "was put into a covered boat and left Isle aux Noix."[19] Montgomery, of course, assumed command.

It would have been useless to call for volunteers in any event. Six hundred of the men were on the sick list, including half of Waterbury's contingent of Connecticut paladins. Sulkiness was prevalent throughout the camp, and mutiny was in the offing. One man cocked his gun and threatened to shoot

an officer. Unauthorized parties wandered about the island, plundering its few inhabitants. Frequent false alarms of enemy approaches kept the camp in a turmoil. Courts-martial were of no avail, for no witnesses could be found to testify against the culprits. The officers were about ready to give up the whole expedition as a hopeless job when things took a turn for the better.[20]

Allen had helped by reporting that all the Caughnawagas had deserted Preston at St. Johns, and on the 16th the expected reinforcements began to arrive: Seth Warner and 170 of his Green Mountain Boys, "able bodied, stout, active fellows, used to the woods"; Colonel Timothy Bedel and 100 New Hampshire Rangers; and an Independent Company of Volunteers, including some Dartmouth students. These were soon followed by Captain John Lamb's Independent Company of New York Artillery—in all, something more than 400 men. Montgomery had now about 2,000 in his camp. Besides these, Easton's 200 men and the 1st New York Battalion, 125 strong, were coming from Ti.[21]

At the time Schuyler took over the command of Ticonderoga, the post at St. Johns was but a barracks, some brick buildings, and a stone house; but plans had been made to strengthen it. Two redoubts about a hundred feet square and six hundred feet apart were built of earth. One surrounded the brick buildings; the other, the stone house. A strong stockade, defended by a seven-foot ditch and fraised with pointed pickets in part and in part abatised, was drawn around the redoubts on three sides; and a moat was dug on the fourth, the river side. Cannon were mounted on the redoubts. Altogether, it was a sturdy little fort, offering a chance for a stubborn defense.[22]

Carleton's whole force of regulars was composed of 376 of the 7th Regiment, the Royal Fusiliers, and 263 of the 26th, the Cameronians.[23] Fewer than 200 men drawn from these regiments, with a few artillerymen and Indians, had garrisoned St. Johns fort at the time of Schuyler's first abortive attempt upon it. Carleton might have abandoned it and the whole Richelieu River and concentrated his forces for the defense of Montreal; but the Canadians and the Indians would have interpreted that as evidence of weakness and of fear, and would have been moved to withhold the help he so sorely needed. He had therefore decided to make a strong stand at St. Johns. To its garrison were added enough regulars to make up 500. His dire need for more men and the curiously amphibious character of the river operation appear in his withdrawing, in August, a midshipman and 12 sailors from the newly arrived armed brigantine, *Gaspé,* and sending them to the fort.

Earlier in the year, he had helped Lieutenant Colonel Allan Maclean, an old campaigner, to raise troops among the veteran Scottish soldiers who had emigrated to Canada. Maclean enlisted 70 in a company called the Royal Highland Emigrants. These went to St. Johns, and 100 Canadian volunteers with 40 artillerists and a few artificers increased the garrison to about 725 men all told. But Carleton felt he must have more.[24]

He tried the Canadians. Among the Old Subjects "damn'd rascals of Merchants, [he] met with little or no success." [25] They mostly favored the Americans. The seigneurs and the clergy used their influence among the French Canadians, but the sturdy habitants answered with armed opposition to enlistment, and with oaths on the Cross never to fight the Americans. The Indians had failed him. He had to do with what he had.[26]

On September 16 Montgomery organized his naval force, his schooner and sloop, ten bateaux, and two row-galleys (each with a 12-pounder), and 350 men, and sent them to lie in the river to prevent the *Royal Savage* from running upstream and cutting his communications with his base, Ticonderoga. He then embarked the rest of his troops and landed them at St. Johns.

He had already sent Major John Brown with 100 Americans and 30 or 40 Canadians to Chambly. Brown heard that a British supply train was on the way to the fort. He waylaid it in the night of the 17th about two miles north of its destination and captured the supplies. Expecting prompt aid from Montgomery, he entrenched. But before any help came, 100 British regulars and as many of the volunteers with two fieldpieces sallied out of the fort to attack him. Brown withdrew into the woods with his booty. There was a considerable exchange of fire until Colonel Bedel came up with 500 men and drove the enemy back to their stronghold. This new force was then posted in an entrenched camp about a mile north of St. Johns, while Brown went on with his foraging, which was quite successful. He gathered in twenty wagons laden with clothing, "rum, pork, wine &c." Montgomery sent other parties to take posts at Longueuil and La Prairie and hold those two approaches to Montreal. The rest were encamped about the fort. On the south side entrenchments were erected, and batteries of two guns and some small mortars were put in place. The siege of St. Johns was properly begun.[27]

Montgomery had promptly sent Ethan Allen on to Chambly to gather and take command of a body of Canadian volunteers. John Brown had gone to La Prairie on a similar errand. The very next day after he was dispatched, the energetic Allen wrote to his chief that he was at St. Ours, within twelve

miles of Sorel, that he had 250 Canadians under arms, that, "as I march, they gather fast," and that he might be expected at St. Johns with 500 men in about three days. In a week's time, he could raise one or two thousand, he said. "I swear by the Lord I can raise three times the number of our army in Canada, provided you continue the siege; all depends on that. . . . God grant you wisdom, fortitude and every accomplishment of a victorious General . . . to fail of victory will be an eternal disgrace, but to obtain it will elevate us on the wings of fame." So wrote optimistic and eloquent Ethan to the general upon whom he was never to lay eyes again.[28]

At Longueuil, looking across the river at the twinkling lights of Montreal, Allen had a vision. He had told Trumbull in July that, if he had been given command of the Green Mountain Boys regiment, he would have advanced into Canada and invested Montreal. He was in Canada now, and there, just across the river, lay Montreal, practically defenseless. He could see victory before him and hear the rustle of the "wings of fame." Opportunity was knocking at his door.

But his Canadian recruits proved unstable; all but 80 of them drifted away. So he forgot his dream and turned back for St. Johns with his diminished force. He had gone but a little way on the road, when he met Brown, who had about 200 men. These two ambitious and daring souls agreed upon a scheme not merely to invest, but to take Montreal. Allen was to cross below the town, Brown above. Each would, as silently as possible, approach the town gate at his end. Brown's party was to give three huzzas as a signal of his arrival on the Montreal side and his readiness to attack.

Allen, having added 30 "English Americans" to his force, attempted a crossing in the night of October 24. There were so few canoes available that only one-third of his men could go at a time. They were all across before daylight, approached the town, and waited for Brown's signal. It never came. It was too late to retreat and make those three crossings again. At daybreak he would be discovered. Two-thirds of his men, left on the Montreal shore, while the first contingent crossed, would be too weak even to defend themselves. He took a good position two or three miles from the town, and waited for an attack.

News that "Ethan Allen, the Notorious New Hampshire Incendiary," was at hand threw the town "into the utmost Confusion." Carleton ordered the drums beaten. "The better sort of Citizens English & Canadian turned out under Arms." Thirty or forty soldiers, followed by about two hundred volunteers and a few Indians, issued from the Quebec Gate and advanced upon the intruders. Allen had posted his men behind trees and buildings and behind a small stream, and a smart little fight ensued. But two parties of

English and Canadians, constituting Allen's flanks, soon fled into the woods. Allen saw that he was to be surrounded. He retreated, keeping up a running fight, but was so hard pressed that he had to surrender himself and his forty remaining men.[29]

Allen's impetuosity was definitely harmful to the American cause. The complete failure of his attack heartened the loyal Canadians and disheartened those who might have joined Montgomery. The Indians now favored the winning side. "Thank God, that day's Action turned the minds of the Canadians," wrote one of them. Seth Warner wrote, "His defeat hath put the french people in to grate Constarnation." Schuyler, at Ticonderoga, reported to the President of Congress that he was "very apprehensive of disagreeable consequences arising from Mr. *Allen's* imprudence," and recalled for Hancock's benefit that he had "always dreaded" Allen's "impatience of subordination"—which was of course quite true. Carleton seized upon this turn of affairs and sent word through the province that 15 out of every 100 men must take up arms. Though the habitants in general refused to obey, Carleton did gather 900 new men to add to his force, but they began to desert "thirty or forty of a night"; he was approaching "as forlorn a State as before." [30]

The siege of St. Johns was continued, but under great difficulties. It was growing colder, and heavy rains set in. "Whenever we attempt to raise batteries, the water follows in the ditch when only two feet deep." [31] The camp was in low, swampy ground, and nothing could be kept dry. "Our men Sometimes have been Wet near Twenty Days together," said Jonathan Trumbull. "We have been like half-drowned rats crawling through a swamp," wrote Montgomery.[32] There was a vast amount of illness among the troops. Supplies of all kinds were short. Late in September the men were on a half-allowance of pork, and the flour was giving out. Powder, as always, was scanty.[33]

All this sowed seeds of dissatisfaction among the men, and they had favorable ground to grow upon. The Yorkers disliked the Yankees, and the Yankees distrusted the Yorkers. Besides, there was that ineradicable "leveling spirit" among the New Englanders, "such an equality among them, that the officers have no authority. . . . The privates are all generals," said Montgomery. He disliked, too, some of the men from his own province: "The first reg[t] of Yorkers is the sweeping of the York streets." [34] The whole army was unruly, frequently near to mutiny. The men had to be coddled, their permission obtained before this or that could be done. At one time, when Montgomery wanted to erect a battery in a certain position, his field officers absolutely refused to do so. "I cannot help observing to how little

purpose I am here," he wrote. "Were I not afraid the example would be too generally followed, and that the publick service might suffer, I would not stay an hour at the head of troops whose operations I cannot direct." He complained to Schuyler that it was impossible to command men "who carry the spirit of freedom into the field, and think for themselves." [35]

Schuyler, down at Ticonderoga, had found a similar condition, "a scandalous want of subordination and inattention to my orders," which had been chiefly responsible for the lack of supplies at St. Johns. He took hold, however, and in six days sent as much in the way of provisions as had before been shipped in three weeks. Conditions at the siege were immediately bettered. But he met with that same intercolonial jealousy, that disinclination of the troops from the various provinces to merge their identities so as to make a united army.[36]

It prevailed even among some of the higher officers. General David Wooster's distaste for submission to commands emanating from New York has been already mentioned. When the Continental mustermaster wanted to enroll Wooster's troops in the Continental army, he demurred "not thinking himself a Continental officer," and his men refused to sign.[37] They were sent up to Ticonderoga. Two hundred and fifty arrived in October, in advance, and Schuyler ordered them on to St. Johns. They answered that they did not "choose to move" until Wooster arrived. "Do not Choose to move! Strange language for an Army," the disgusted major general wrote to the Continental Congress. "But the irresistible force of necessity obliges me to put up with it." One of their lieutenant colonels demurred when he was directed to send a small detachment with powder and rum up to St. Johns, fearing he would be blamed by Wooster for obeying Schuyler's order. But Schuyler believed that ultimately they would "condescend to go." [38] When Wooster came, however, Schuyler found him tractable. He agreed not to dispute Montgomery's superior command at St. Johns.[39] So a regiment of the Connecticut men, 335 all told, sailed on October 22 for St. Johns, though "with the greatest reluctance," [40] and arrived on October 26. With them were 225 men of the 4th New York under Major Barnabas Tuthill.

Meanwhile, the siege had continued; and the fact that so many of the King's troops were bottled up had made some impression on the Canadians. St. Luc de La Corne found that the Indians were inclining to the Americans. He sent some Caughnawagas to Montgomery "with a string of wampum" and indefinite "proposals of an accommodation." Montgomery distrusted him but would not overlook any chance for aid. "He is a great villain and as cunning as the devil, but I have sent a *New Englander* to negotiate with

him"—a left-handed compliment to the Yankee whom he sent, the ubiquitous Major John Brown. The conference came to nothing.[41]

At Chambly, down the river from St. Johns, there was a fort, an impressive, castlelike stone structure, with walls sixteen feet high and higher bastions at its corners. However, the walls were very thin and were pierced only for muskets. It was held by Major Stopford with a garrison of 88 officers and men. In the nighttime, two American bateaux carrying a few 9-pounders slipped past the guns of St. Johns and of the *Royal Savage* and landed at Chambly. James Livingston brought up 300 Canadians; Brown and Bedel brought down 50 Americans. They established batteries, and opened fire. The guns shot a couple of holes in the thin masonry and knocked down a chimney. Stopford surrendered the fort, with 10 officers, 78 privates of the Royal Fusiliers, 30 women, 51 children, 6 tons of gunpowder, 3 mortars, 150 muskets, 6,500 musket cartridges, 500 hand grenades, 300 swivel-shot, and 138 barrels of edible provisions.[42]

The investment of St. Johns was now tight above and below, but there was one thing left to bother the Americans, that armed schooner of Preston's anchored close to the fort. At last they concentrated their fire on her and on her mate, the floating battery. The *Royal Savage* and her companion both went down.[43]

Carleton had long considered a rescue. Allan Maclean had gathered a force of his countrymen. These, with 60 of the Royal Fusiliers from Montreal and a large number of Caughnawaga Indians, nearly 800 in all, assembled on an island in the St. Lawrence. On October 30, Carleton and La Corne leading part of them, they started across to Longueuil. But Seth Warner with his Green Mountain Boys and the 2nd New York was on the opposite bank. They opened fire with grapeshot from a little 4-pounder and with musketry. The boats were thrown into confusion, and the expedition turned back. Another party, led by Maclean, tried for a landing farther up the river. At the sight of a detachment of Americans posted there, they also retreated.[44]

There was by this time a strong battery on the west side of the Richelieu, with only the river and the moat, no walls, between it and the interior of St. Johns fort. Its bombardment was effective. The stone house was wrecked, the brick houses were shot through and through. There was no safe refuge anywhere in the enclosure, but still the garrison held on. It seemed evident that nothing less than an assault through a breach in its walls would take the fort.

To effect that, the position that Montgomery had before been prevented

from taking by "the general dissatisfaction" of his troops, was occupied on the 25th. It was a hill on the northwest side of the fort. A battery of 12-pounders, some lighter guns, and several mortars was erected there. For about six hours all the artillery played on Preston's hold, but even this concentrated fire made no breach in the fort's earthen walls.

Then Montgomery tried other tactics. He sent one of the prisoners taken from Carleton's rescue force to tell Preston his case was hopeless, and Preston saw the point. On November 2, after holding out for fifty-five days, and with only three days' provision left in his magazines, he capitulated.[45]

The next day Montgomery drew up his troops before the fort. A motley array they were. The Yorkers were in uniform, as were Lamb's artillerymen, theirs being blue with buff facings. The Green Mountain Boys wore great-coats of green turned up with red. But the Connecticut men, though admired for "Strength, Stature, Youth & Agility," wore any sort of clothes they happened to have. There marched out of the fort first the Royal Fusiliers in red coats faced with pale yellow, then the handful of the Royal Artillery in dark blue coats, red facings and sashes, white waistcoats and breeches, gold-laced cocked hats, and jack boots. The marines from the *Gaspé* in their short petticoats followed, with the Royal Highland Emigrants in kilts and the assorted mob of Canadians, artificers and workmen bringing up the rear. They were paraded, and Captain Lamb's artillerymen with a detachment from every regiment of the Americans marched past them and into the fort. Then Preston's men laid down their arms. One of the officers taken that day was the unfortunate John André.[46]

Montgomery treated his captives well. The officers were allowed to retain their side arms and private effects. The men were given the reserve store of clothing.[47] When this became known, "the officers of the First Regiment of Yorkers and [of Lamb's] Artillery Company were very near a mutiny . . . there was no driving it into their noddles, that the clothing was really the property of the soldier, that he had paid for it," wrote Montgomery. "I wish some method could be fallen upon of engaging *gentlemen* to serve." [48] The Canadians were allowed to go home. The regulars were to proceed to some port where they could embark for Great Britain.

Now it was necessary to proceed promptly to Montreal and to possess it. The Connecticut men were unwilling to go farther. Montgomery had "to coax them" by promising their dismissal as soon as Montreal was occupied.[49]

The march was begun on November 5, and it was most difficult. The old corduroy road had disintegrated into a succession of rotten logs and half-frozen mudholes. It snowed and rained. In places the mire was knee-deep.

The men were badly clothed and ill shod, but they pulled through to La Prairie. On the 11th, the first of them crossed to an island in the river and, on the next day, in a gale of wind, landed above Montreal.

Carleton, with something like 150 regulars and a few militia, remained in the town until the 11th; but its walls were so thin that they "could only turn Musketry," and in part had fallen down. The place was not defensible against even light artillery. He therefore put on shipboard the most valuable military stores and destroyed the rest as soon as he heard that the Americans were at La Prairie. He sailed on the 11th under fire from the American shore batteries. Montgomery spoke fairly to a deputation of Montreal citizens, and they surrendered on the 13th. At Sorel another battery threatened Carleton's little fleet. The wind was adverse. The ships turned back a few miles. Then Major Brown boarded one, under a flag, and told its commander that he had two 32-pounders in his "grand battery" at Sorel—a gross exaggeration. The *Gaspé*, two other armed vessels, and eight smaller craft were surrendered, with not only their cargoes and their crews, but also the soldiers formerly garrisoning Montreal.[50]

Carleton himself remained in the *Gaspé* until shortly before its capture. Then, "dressed like a man of the people" and accompanied by one or two of his officers, he was rowed with muffled oars down the river and by an obscure channel through the islands opposite Sorel, escaping finally to Quebec.[51]

CHAPTER 13

Arnold's March to Quebec

If one's antagonist can be forced to fight on two fronts at once, he is always at a disadvantage. While Schuyler's forces were still lingering at Ticonderoga, preparing for the advance toward Montreal, Washington in Cambridge had been pondering this strategic axiom. There was another front which might be developed: Quebec, 150 miles down the St. Lawrence from Montreal. If those two towns were attacked at the same time Carleton would be at a serious disadvantage and would be easy to overcome at one or the other, probably at both. Quebec, then, should be the object of an expedition simultaneous with that against Montreal.

The road seemed to be open—a waterway. The best, often the only possible route through a wilderness was a waterway, which permitted men to travel in boats with their provisions and supplies, escaping the hardship of a struggle through dense forests. This route had been considered in reverse by the French more than once as affording a means of attacking Boston. It had been repeatedly mapped and described, with varying degrees of correctness. It had been discussed during the French and Indian War "as a Rout by which an Army might pass, the best and shortest way, to attack Canada and Quebec." [1] In the spring of 1775 Colonel Jonathan Brewer of Massachusetts had offered to lead 500 volunteers against Quebec by this route, a project which he believed "he Could Execute With all the feility [felicity] Imaginable." [2] It is possible that Washington was made aware of this proposal.

The way led up the Kennebec River to the Great Carrying Place, where the Indians bound to Canada from New England used to leave the Kennebec

and take their canoes across a twelve-mile stretch of land to the Dead River. The stretch was broken into four portages by three ponds, across which boats could float, so that they had to be carried only about eight miles. After paddling about thirty miles up the Dead River, the Indians would proceed across the Height of Land about four miles to a stream emptying into Lake Megantic, from which the Chaudière River flows into the St. Lawrence within four miles of Quebec. Various portages were to be expected wherever falls or rapids on the rivers interfered with passage by water. The map of Captain John Montresor, a British army engineer, and his description made this rout seem to be quite feasible. Montresor had not told the whole tale of its difficulties and dangers; Washington, however, accepted at more than its face value the scanty information concerning it which had been conveyed to him.

On August 20, 1775, he wrote to Schuyler: "The Design of this Express is to communicate to you a Plan of an Expedition which has engaged my Thoughts for several Days. It is to penetrate into Canada by Way of Kennebeck River, and so to Quebeck. . . . I can very well spare a Detachment for this Purpose of one Thousand or twelve Hundred men, and the Land Carriage of the Rout proposed is too inconsiderable to make an objection." [3] That last sentence clearly shows how little he knew of the proposed "Rout." His thoughts about such an expedition soon crystallized into a decision to send it, and he looked about for someone to lead it. His choice of a com mander could hardly have been bettered.

After resigning on June 24 his command at Ticonderoga, Arnold went to Cambridge to settle his accounts with the Provincial Congress and secure from it the sums of money due him. He was at loose ends while this business dragged to a long deferred conclusion, because he had no office in the Continental army nor any connection with it. When Washington offered him command, as colonel, of an expedition against Quebec, he offered it to a man who still cherished the desire to invade Canada—a desire which had been frustrated at Ticonderoga. Arnold accepted with avidity.

It appears, indeed, that matters were far advanced before Washington wrote that letter to Schuyler, for on August 21 Arnold was writing to Reuben Colburn, a Kennebec boatbuilder who happened to be in Cambridge, making certain inquiries on behalf of the commander in chief. How soon could 200 light "Battoos" be procured or built at Kennebec, capable of carrying six or seven men each with their provisions, "say 100 wt. to each man," each boat to be furnished with four oars, two paddles, and two setting-poles? What would they cost? Could a quantity of fresh beef be pro-

cured at Kennebec? He also wanted information as to "the Difficulty attending an Expedition that way, in particular the Number, & length, of the Carrying Places, wheather Low, Dry land, Hills or Swamp, Also the Depth of Water in the River at this Season, wheather an easy Stream or Rapid." [4] This inquiry discloses Washington's ignorance, and Arnold's, of the nature and condition of the river they proposed to use as a road to Canada.

Colburn's reply was satisfactory as to the boats and their cost—40 shillings each with their equipment—for on September 3 Washington gave him an order for them. He also directed him to engage a company of twenty men, "Artificers, Carpenters and Guides," to go along under Colburn's command, "to bespeak all The Pork and Flour you can from the Inhabitants upon the River Kennebeck," and to notify the public there that the commissary would be in the market for sixty barrels of salted beef.[5] To get the desired information as to the route, Colburn sent Dennis Getchell and Samuel Berry to examine it and report to him.

On September 5 notice of the expedition appeared in General Orders. The detachment was to consist of two battalions of five companies each, comprising in all, with the usual battalion and company officers and musicians, 742 men; also Captain Daniel Morgan's company of Virginia riflemen and two companies of Colonel William Thompson's rifle regiment from Pennsylvania, under Captains Matthew Smith and William Hendricks, about 250 in all. To these should be added the surgeon, his mate and two assistants, two adjutants, two quartermasters, the chaplain, and six unattached volunteers, a total of 1,051. Service in the expedition was to be voluntary, and it was desired that none but "active Woodsmen" "well acquainted with batteaus" should present themselves. They were all to parade on Cambridge Common in the morning of September 6. The desire for woodsmen acquainted with bateaux was, unfortunately, not met in fact; nor does it appear that any effort was made to comply with that suggestion in the order. The men other than the riflemen were drawn chiefly from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire Regiments, and were mostly farmers, few of them having had any experience in the wild woods or in the management of bateaux.[6]

The unattached volunteers were an interesting lot. Matthias Ogden of New Jersey, Eleazer Oswald of Connecticut, Charles Porterfield and John McGuire of Virginia, and Matthew Duncan of Pennsylvania were five, all of whom afterward became officers in the Continental army. But the sixth deserves more particular notice, because of his subsequent career.

Aaron Burr was a youth of distinguished lineage, the grandson of the

great Jonathan Edwards, the son of the Reverend Aaron Burr, second president of the College of New Jersey at Princeton. Young Aaron had been ready to enter the college at the age of eleven, "a strikingly pretty boy, very fair, with beautiful black eyes and such graceful engaging ways as to render him a favorite." For want of age his admission was postponed for two years, and then he entered as a sophomore. After his graduation in 1772 at the age of sixteen he continued his residence in the college and for a while read theology. Skepticism soon undermined his hereditary beliefs, and he turned to the law. Lexington and Concord inflamed his naturally aggressive spirit. After Bunker's Hill, he called a college mate, Matthias Ogden, to the colors, and together they joined the army as independent volunteers immediately after Washington took command. Idleness fretted Burr's restless soul, actually worried him into an intermittent fever. When he heard of the proposed expedition to Quebec he got up from a bed of sickness and, despite the remonstrances of his friends, insisted on being allowed to go along.

He was nineteen years old, no more than five feet six inches tall, of slight figure and boyish countenance, but with a surprising capacity for enduring fatigue and privation. It was his indomitable will rather than his physical strength that sustained him. His intelligence was abnormally keen, his spirit unbreakable, his ambition unbounded. His subsequent career in the army was brilliant. He was in command of a regiment at the age of twenty-one, and in command of a brigade in the Battle of Monmouth at twenty-two.

He had the defects of his qualities. His overleaping ambition, his keen perception of the readiest means of bringing to pass what he desired, and his habit of ignoring conscientious scruples, resulted in the errors of conduct in civil affairs that ruined his life and blotted out the fame he won as a soldier.[7]

In the list of officers one name stands out above all the rest—Daniel Morgan of Morgan's Rifles. Although born in New Jersey to a Welsh immigrant family, Morgan was a true son of the backwoods. He ran away from home at the age of seventeen and went on foot through Pennsylvania into the wilder parts of Virginia, now West Virginia. There his character was formed and he acquired his fame as a backwoodsman.

He was first employed to run a sawmill and then became a teamster. Within two years he had set up in business with his own wagon and horse, hauling supplies to the remoter settlements. In this capacity he was employed in Braddock's expedition against Fort Duquesne. He served with distinction first as a private and then as an officer of the Virginia militia

throughout the French and Indian War, in the war against Pontiac, and in "Lord Dunmore's War" with the Indians. That he was commissioned to raise a company of Virginia riflemen to join Washington's army at Cambridge has already been told.

He was a tall man, well over six feet, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and stout of limb, weighing over two hundred pounds, all bone and muscle, yet active, even graceful, in movement. His physical and mental hardihood in endurance of fatigue under the most severe conditions matched his powerful frame. Although his usual manner of speaking was abrupt and severe and he was prone to swift angers and stern judgments, his open countenance indicated the good-humored, kindly character that lay beneath the surface and was displayed to his friends and to his men when they merited his approval. His schooling had been of the scantiest; he read with difficulty, wrote almost illegibly, and was puzzled by the simplest problems in arithmetic. But his natural genius and acquired knowledge of men and affairs, his keen intelligence, and his sound reasoning served him well in all his enterprises. His courage, daring, and resourcefulness in military affairs, added to his other characteristics, made him a great leader of men in the war upon which he was now entering.[8]

Washington's orders to Arnold were full and comprehensive, impressing upon him the necessity of discovering "the real Sentiments of the Canadians towards our Cause." If they were "averse to it and will not co-operate or at least willingly acquiesce . . . you are by no Means to prosecute the Attempt." Arnold was to restrain his men from the "Imprudence and Folly" of showing "Contempt of the Religion" of the Canadians "by ridiculing any of its Ceremonies or affronting its Ministers or Votaries . . . and to punish every Instance of it." There was to be no plundering of either friend or foe; all provisions and supplies were to be purchased and paid for. Although the expedition was to be pushed with vigor, yet, "if unforeseen Difficulties should arise or if the Weather shou'd become so severe as to render it hazardous to proceed in your own Judgment and that of your principal Officers (whom you are to consult) In that case you are to return." To the last injunction, it would seem Arnold paid little attention.[9]

In the expeditionary force the riflemen made up one corps. The musketmen were in two battalions, the first under Lieutenant Colonel Roger Enos and Major Return Jonathan Meigs, both from Connecticut, with five companies commanded by Captains Thomas Williams of Massachusetts, Henry Dearborn of New Hampshire, Oliver Hanchet of Connecticut, William Goodrich of Massachusetts, and Scott, whose first name and province of

origin are unknown. The second battalion was led by Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Greene of Rhode Island and Major Timothy Bigelow of Massachusetts, with five companies under Captains Samuel Ward, Jr., of Rhode Island, Simeon Thayer, John Topham, Jonas Hubbard, and Samuel McCobb, all of Massachusetts. Isaac Senter of Rhode Island was the surgeon, Samuel Spring the chaplain. Christian Febiger was brigade major.

On September 11 the riflemen set out for Newburyport; but the musketmen, when paraded on Cambridge Common, "refused to march till we had a month's pay," says the journal of Ephraim Squier, a private. Whether it was back pay or pay in advance does not appear; but the matter seems to have been promptly adjusted, for by the 13th all had marched.[10]

By the 16th the expeditionary force had arrived in Newbury or the adjacent Newburyport, where a fleet of eleven sloops and schooners had been assembled. Three scouting vessels had been sent out to see if there were any British ships in the way. No news of such dangers having been received by the 19th, the fleet sailed, "drums beating, fifes playing and colours flying," [11] Arnold's topsail schooner in the lead. With no untoward incident on the way, except the extreme seasickness of most of these landsmen—"such a sickness, making me feel so lifeless, so indifferent whether I lived or died!" wrote Simon Fobes in his diary—the fleet made the voyage of a hundred miles to the mouth of the Kennebec in eleven hours. Sailing up the river, it reached Gardinerstown by the 22nd. There Arnold went ashore, a spruce figure in a scarlet coat, with collar, lapels, and cuffs of buff, silver-plated buttons, ruffled shirt, white linen waistcoat, breeches and stockings and black half-garters, the whole topped by a plumed cocked hat.

He inspected the bateaux provided for the expedition and found that there were 200 of them as ordered, but many were "smaller than the directions given and very badly built." [12] It was hardly Colburn's fault that they were not first-class. He had had only eighteen days to go home from Cambridge, assemble the workmen, and put through such a building program as he had never before been called upon to undertake, even with a sufficient time allowance. There was not nearly enough seasoned timber available, and so he had, perforce, used green stuff. It was unfortunate but unavoidable. Arnold could not reject them; he had to content himself with ordering twenty more.

These bateaux were of a type in common use on the Kennebec, with narrow, flat bottoms, widely flaring sides and long, pointed stems and sterns, capable of carrying heavy loads and not easily capsized. They were to be propelled by oars or paddles in still or flowing water and to be poled up rapids. They answered well on the lower Kennebec, but no one had ever

tried to take them all the way up, past waterfalls, through the most difficult portages, across high, rough country, all the way to the St. Lawrence. Canoes, yes, but such heavy boats, especially when so ill built, emphat-ically no.

Besides the bateaux Colburn had to furnish information as to the route. The two men, Getchell and Berry, whom he had sent out had returned. Their report was not reassuring. They had gone as far as the Dead River, had met an Indian, Natanis by name, who told them he was employed by Carleton "to Watch the Motions of an Army or Spies that was daily expected from New England," and that a British officer with six men was posted on the Chaudière to look out for the Americans. Natanis declared that if the two scouts were any farther he would inform Carleton. By another Indian they had been told that a great number of Mohawks in Johnson's pay were at Sartigan, the uppermost settlement on the Chaudière. Otherwise, they said, the way was fair and was marked by blazed trees, the portages "pretty passible," the water shoal. Arnold read this report, but paid little attention to the threats of Natanis: "a noted villain," he called him in a letter to Washington, "and very little credit, I am told, is to be given his information." [13]

More helpful were a map of the route and a description of "the quick water and carrying places to and from Quebeck," furnished him by Samuel Goodwin.

By the 24th Arnold's force had reached Fort Western—now Augusta-thirty miles up the river, some in the sailing vessels, the rest in the bateaux. This "fort" was a couple of blockhouses and a magazine surrounded by a palisade, useful in the French and Indian War but no longer held as a military post. It was the real starting point for the expedition. Here Arnold detached and sent off two advance parties.

Lieutenant Archibald Steele of Smith's company of riflemen, "a man of an active, courageous, sprightly and hardy disposition," with seven men selected from the rifle companies, was ordered to reconnoiter the way to Lake Megantic, the source of the Chaudière. Steele had orders to capture or kill that "noted villain" Natanis.[14] Lieutenant Church, with a similar party and a surveyor, was to note "the exact courses and distances to the Dead River." These parties set out in canoes with guides.

The main force was then split into four divisions. The first was composed of the riflemen under command of Morgan,[15] who were to go forward as quickly as they could to clear the road, especially over the Great Carrying Place between the Kennebec and the Dead River. They departed four

or five men in each bateau, the rest marching beside the river and taking turns in the boats.

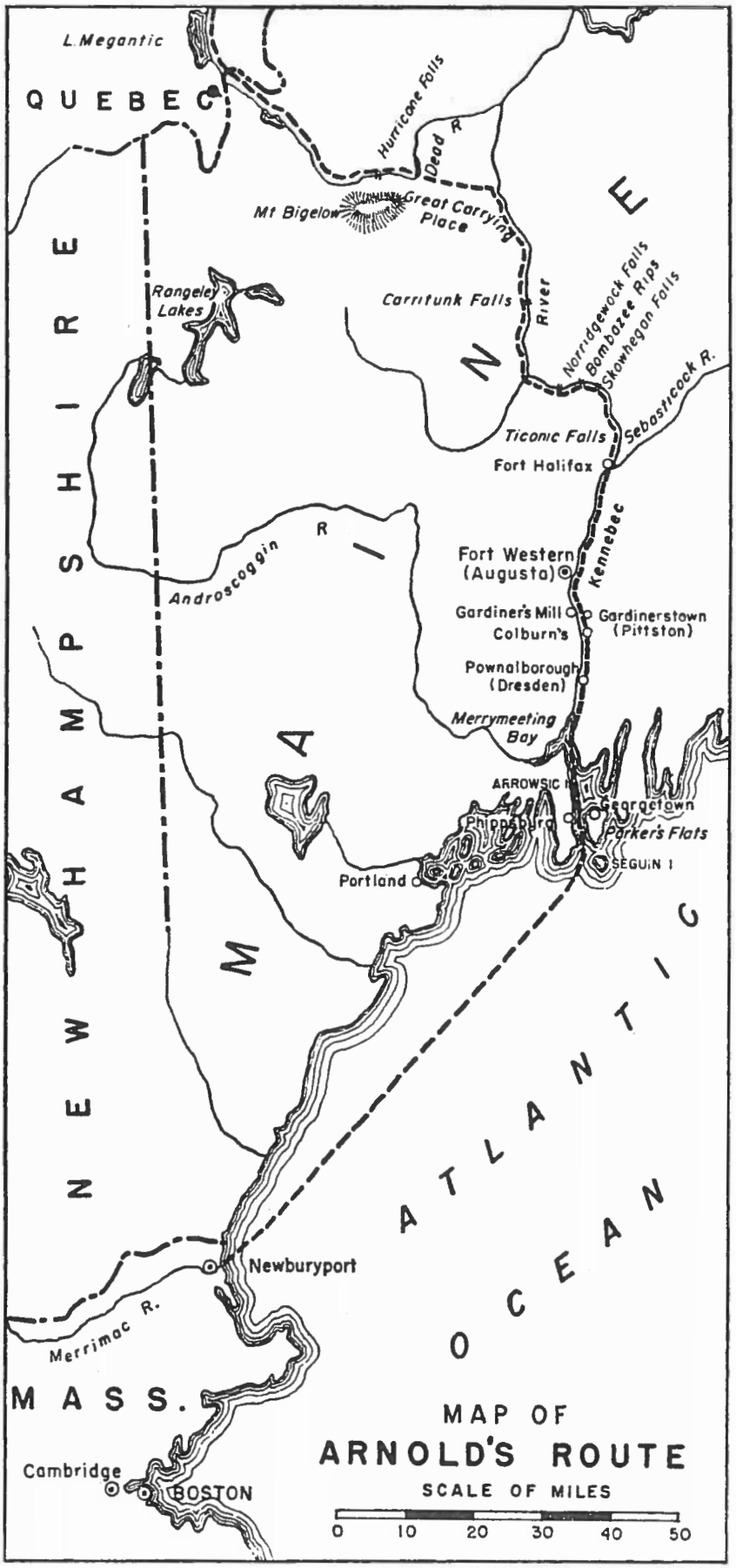
The second division of three companies of musketmen left the next day, led by Lieutenant Colonel Greene and Major Bigelow. Major Meigs led the third division of four companies on the following day, and Lieutenant Colonel Enos with the fourth, three companies and Colburn's artificers, got away two days later. Arnold then started in a canoe to get to the head of the column. The bateaux of each division carried provisions estimated to be sufficient for forty-five days, although Arnold expected "to perform the march," which he figured at 180 miles, in twenty days.[16]

As the river for half a mile beyond Fort Western came against them in impassable rapids, the boats and supplies were presumably hauled by the neighboring inhabitants in wagons or on sleds to a point whence they could go by water. But even then the water was so swift that it was hard to propel the boats by oar and pole. It took them two days to make the eighteen miles to Fort Halifax, another abandoned military post. Above that, they came to Ticonic Falls, which no boat could ascend; here was their first real portage. The bulk of the cargoes was unloaded and carried to the next point of embarkation, each barrel of flour, pork, and so on being slung on two ropes, through which two poles were thrust, so that four men could take the ends on their shoulders. The bateaux were similarly carried by four men on two poles. The boats weighed 400 pounds each, and there were about 65 tons of provisions, ammunition, and general supplies, say in all 100 tons weight of the most unhandy material, to be carried in this instance a half-mile. It was a case of going back and forth until all was got over.

Not far above they came to Five Mile Falls, a series of tumultuous rapids, "very dangerous and difficult to pass." [17] They had "a scene of trouble to go through." The boatmen had often to leap overboard and struggle with their clumsy craft to keep them straight or drag them over shoals. They would be in the icy cold water to their waists, to their chins, even over their heads when they plunged into an unexpected "deep bason." "After much fatigue and a Bondance of difficulty," [18] they got through, but not without damage.

The rocky river bottom, sunken logs, tree roots had scraped and torn the bottoms of the boats and opened their seams. They "began to leak profusely." Indeed, at least one of them, Dr. Senter's, was "in such a shattered condition" that he had to buy another from a near-by settler [19] the day before they came to Skowhegan Falls.

Even the approach to Skowhegan was difficult. The river made a sharp turn between two ledges no more than twenty-five feet apart, forming a


L. Megantic
QUEBEC
Hurricane Falls
Dead R
Mt Bigelow
Great Carrying Place
Rangeley Lakes
Carritunk Falls
River
Norridgewock Falls
Bombazee Rips
Skowhegan Falls
Sebasticook R.
Ticonic Falls
Fort Halifax
Fort Western (Augusta)
Kennebec
Androscoggin R
Gardiner's Mill
Colburn's
Gardinerstown (Pittston)
Pownalborough (Dresden)
Merrymeeting Bay
ARROWSIC
Georgetown
Phippsburg
Parker's Flats
SEGUIN I
Portland
NEW HAMPSHIRE
MAINE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Newburyport
Merrimac R.
MASS.
Cambridge
BOSTON
MAP OF
ARNOLD'S ROUTE
SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50

chute through which the whole force of the water drove against them. There was a half-mile of this and then the falls themselves, divided by a towering mass of rock split in the middle by a narrow cleft. There was no going ashore for a carry on either side; the river banks were not banks but vertical rock walls. The boats and their cargoes had to be carried through that cleft, narrow, steep, and rough underfoot, and pushed through five miles of "small falls and quick water" above it.[20] The men lay that night, as often they did, in wet clothes that froze upon them.

So they went on, through Bombazee Rips, where again the banks closed in and the water came down in a torrent, until they came "face to face with the roar and foam of the great Norridgewock Falls." [21] These were three falls, a half-mile apart, and the carry around them was a mile and a half long. Some settlers appeared with two sleds drawn by oxen, and helped with the supplies, but the bateaux had to be carried by the men.

Those boats were in bad shape now, "nothing but wrecks, some stove to pieces." [22] Colburn's carpenters set to work to repair their bottoms and caulk their seams. But nothing could be done regarding supplies spoiled in the leaky boats. Quantities of dry salted codfish had been loaded loose in them. The water had washed away the salt, and the fish had spoiled. The salt beef had also gone bad. Casks of bread and of dried peas had absorbed water, swelled, and burst. All this provender had to be thrown away. Arnold's men had nothing now but salt pork and flour.

Three days were consumed in getting around Norridgewock and in repairing the boats. On October 9 they were again under way. Eleven of Arnold's estimated twenty days for the whole journey were past, and they had gone but one-third of the distance. Up to this time they had been within reach of civilization of a sort, occasional settlements and isolated farms from which they had sometimes been able to buy beef cattle. Now all that was left behind. The rest was sheer wilderness.

They made fourteen miles in the next two days with one portage around Currítunk Falls. The river was shallower and swifter, harder to work the boats through. The weather grew colder, and continuous, heavy rains fell. On the 11th they came to the Great Carrying Place between the Kennebec and the Dead River. That is, Arnold himself came to it on October 11. It must be understood that the itinerary given here is only approximately correct. The four divisions of the troops had not kept the intervals first allotted to them. This one would get ahead faster than its follower, or that one would overtake the one before it. Arnold himself was backward and forward, now with one division or another, now alone with his own canoemen.

When he reached the Great Carrying Place, Morgan's men and the second division under Greene were already there.

The first portage of the Great Carrying Place was a mere Indian trail, Morgan's men had had little time to do anything with it; the rest of the army was close upon them. It had rained so hard on the 8th that no work could be done. The ground was soaked; there was no dry place to sleep. The army had to sit up all night close to their fires.

The bateau men had to carry their unwieldy burdens, and the rest their cargoes "through a most terrible piece of woods conceivable," [23] through bogs where they sank "half-leg deep," and over rocky ledges, three and a quarter miles to the first pond. Though the pork had been removed from the barrels and strung on poles for easier carriage, seven or eight trips were necessary to get everything across. The weather was exceedingly bad, with heavy winds and snow squalls. "A prodigious number of trout" caught in the pond made a welcome addition to their narrow diet. A moose someone killed also helped out. They were three days on this carry and in crossing the pond, a distance of five miles.

The first pond having been crossed in the crazy boats, the second carry was found to be little more than half a mile, and the footing was fair. But the second pond was disappointing. "The water was quite yellow," and it was all they had to drink. They were greatly worn down by fatigue and hardship. Many of them—"a very formidable number" [24]—were ill, some of them desperately ill. This bad water sickened them so much more that a log blockhouse was built for a hospital. It was "no sooner finished than filled."

The way to the third pond was longer, about a mile and a half. It was "extremely bad, being choaked with roots which we could not clear away." [25] But there were more trout in that pond.

The fourth portage was three miles long, and it was difficult. A mile up and a mile down brought them to what looked like "a beautiful plat of firm ground, covered by an elegant green moss," interspersed with groves of spruce and cedar. In fact, it was a treacherous bog. At nearly every step they sank halfway to their knees and found at the bottom sharp snags and roots that tore their shoes and bruised their feet. There was a mile and a half of this. So, stumbling along, falling now and again, dropping their burdens and recovering them again, they at last emerged, "plastered with mud from neck to heel," [26] at Bog Brook, which led into the Dead River.

While the main body was crossing the Great Carrying Place, it was met by Lieutenant Church's party of pioneers returning to report to Arnold.

Lieutenant Steele also, with two of his men but not the other five, came back to report. Steele's party had reached the Chaudière River without unusual difficulty, but their return march was another matter.

It had started in "a most severe storm of rain," which lasted a day and a night. Their provisions had run out. On the first day of the return trip on the Dead River, John Henry, one of the party, had only "a solitary biscuit and an inch of pork." He ate half his store that day. They shot a duck and divided it. His portion was one leg, another man got the head and feet. The next day Henry ate the other half of his biscuit and pork, and they made fifty miles. The day after that one of the two canoes struck a submerged snag and was ripped through its whole length, its ribs torn from its gunwales. They sewed them in place with cedar roots and patched the skin with birch bark and pitch made out of turpentine and the grease in their pork bag. They had gone five hundred yards when another snag broke the canoe in two pieces held together only by the gunwales. They mended it as before. They shot a moose, smoked its flesh, and ate it raw. They were so weak that they could not carry their canoes across the Great Carrying Place, so they abandoned them and set out on foot. Steele and two others pushed ahead to get help.

The five remaining lived wretchedly on the moose meat for four days. Half cured and without salt or bread, it sickened them. They "staggered along . . . falling every now and then, if our toes but touched a twig or tuft of grass." [27] On October 17 Morgan's pioneers sighted five scarecrows, gaunt, haggard, ghastly creatures, so weak they could scarcely stumble along. The rest of Steele's party had returned.

After Steele had reported the results of his exploration Arnold sent him and Church forward again, with twenty axmen and a surveyor, "to clear the portages and take a survey of the country." [28] He also wrote a letter to a friend in Quebec, John Mercier, telling of his approach with 2,000 men "to frustrate the arbitrary and unjust measures of the ministry and restore liberty to our brethren of Canada," [29] and dispatched it by two Indians, Eneas and Sabatis, and one John Hall, who could speak French. That letter in some way got into Carleton's hands and resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of Mercier.

Now began the trip up the Dead River, a deceptive stream that belied its name. Its black waters were deep, and so smooth that they seemed to be standing still. "A most gentle and leisurely stream" [30] it was, to all appearances. But, though it flowed like oil, its current was swift beyond all expec-

tations. The few oars and paddles were not enough to make headway against it. The boatmen had to grasp the bushes on its precipitous banks and pull themselves along. And it meandered in such great bends and windings that, after two hours' hard work, they "seemed to have gained nothing in our course." [31] But they made thirteen miles before they camped that night. They also made a most discouraging discovery. Their food was on the point of giving out.

Although Arnold had written only a day or two before to Enos, commander of the fourth division, that the first three had provender enough for more than three weeks, Greene's division, which had got ahead, now found itself out of bread and almost out of flour. While it had been passing Morgan's riflemen they had helped themselves to Greene's supply of food without his knowledge.[32] Arnold sent Major Bigelow with three lieutenants and 100 men in twelve bateaux back to get flour from Enos, in whose division there was supposed to be a surplus. Morgan's and Meigs's divisions, somewhat better supplied, pushed ahead; but Greene had to lie in his camp for five days, awaiting Bigelow's return.

Bigelow came back with two barrels of flour, all Enos would let him have. It was a desperate situation for Greene's men. There was nothing to do but send back the least able men; the rest had to tighten belts and push on after the other divisions.

Rain began to fall gently on the 19th. It increased in volume on the next day, and by the 21st it developed into a raging tempest, driven by winds of hurricane force. Trees crashed into the river, "tumbling on all quarters" [33] and blocking the way. Floods of water drenched the men and their few supplies. Tents were few. In camp most of the men had no protection except such as could be had from hemlock boughs. The river rose and flooded the country. It overflowed its eight- or ten-foot-high banks and poured into the camp of Morgan's men during the night of the 21st. Where a campfire had burned at evening, the morning saw a lake four feet deep. Barrels of pork were swept away, and bateaux filled and sank.

About midnight the rain had ceased and stars had come out; but the wind still blew, and it grew very cold. Wet through, chilled to the bone, and hungry, the men looked out upon a strange scene that morning. The whole country was under water. The river, which had been but sixty yards wide, was now two hundred, and it was a torrent of "terrifying rapidity" and overwhelming force. "None but the most strong and active boatmen" tried to breast it. The rest started on foot, "making large circuits" to avoid the drowned land. "This was one of the most fatiguing marches we had as

yet performed . . . having no path and being necessitated to climb the steepest hills and that without food." [34] But they had to go on or starve to death.

Those who took to the boats had an almost impossible task. The swift current tossed the clumsy bateaux here and there, upset them, and threw the boatmen and the precious provisions into the ungovernable flood. At last it seemed that the expedition must break down completely. A council of war was held. Arnold's unwavering determination so inspired officers and men that the council voted to go on. The men responded with more than courage. When any of them, exhausted by fatigue and hunger, were told by their comrades that they "would not be able to advance much further, they would raise up their half-bent bodies and force an animated look into their ghastly countenances, observing at the same time that they would soon be well enough." [35] But twenty-six hopeless cases were sent back to the hospital; forty-eight more soon followed them. Captain Hanchet of Meigs's division, with fifty men, undertook to hasten forward to get food in the Chaudière valley. Arnold went ahead of him with a small party. The supply in Greene's division was so low that the men were reduced to boiling some tallow candles in a gruel made of water and a little flour.

The rear division had now, October 25, come up with the second, Meigs having gone on. Arnold had ordered Greene and Enos to send back "as many of the Poorest men of their Detachment as would leave 15 days provision for the remainder." [36] Greene, Enos, and the officers of their respective companies met for a conference. Although not covered by Arnold's orders, the question was put whether the two whole divisions should go on or go back. Greene, his major, Bigelow, his three captains, and Enos voted to go on. Enos's captains, Williams, McCobb, and Scott, his adjutant, Hide, and Lieutenant Peters voted to abandon the expedition. It was six to five in favor of going on. Enos, "though [he] voted for proceeding, yet had undoubtedly pre-engaged" with his officers "to the contrary, as every action demonstrated." [37] He decided to abandon the enterprise. Greene's party then asked for a division of the food. Their "expostulations and entreaties" were in vain. Being "the weakest party," they could not compel the others "to a just division." Enos said that "his men were out of his power" and he could not enforce an order to divide. At last two and a half barrels of flour were given up, and Greene's men went back to the foremost divisions, "with a determined resolution to go through or die." Enos led his party down to Fort Western in eleven days of comparatively easy travel.

So the remains of the little army, now fewer than seven hundred men, struggled on. The boatmen in the few surviving bateaux fought the swift

current through rapid after rapid. Those on shore found the country rougher than ever, full of hills and hollows, rocky ledges and bogs, ravines and dense forests. At last the expedition came to a point where it could leave the river and enter on a chain of ponds that extended to the edge of the Height of Land.

Their provisions were now virtually at an end. In all, there were only four or five pounds of flour for each man. "The riflemen were wholly destitute of meat before this for eight days." They took rawhide intended for mending their moccasins, chopped it into bits, and tried to make soup of it; but it remained only rawhide. Some of the officers, on the night of the 27th, had nothing but "the jawbone of a swine destitute of any covering."[38] They boiled it, with a little thickening of flour, and that constituted their "sumptuous eating." On such fare, after so long a period of starvation, they had to try the longest portage yet encountered, four miles and a quarter over the Height of Land, the watershed between the streams flowing north to the St. Lawrence and those flowing south to the Kennebec.

It was not, however, a portage for most of them; they had nothing to carry. The bateaux had been wrecked and lost until few were left. Morgan kept seven, the other companies only one each. The rest were abandoned. There was a trail of sorts, but it was interrupted by blowdowns, tangled heaps of fallen trees acres in extent which no man could penetrate. Several inches of snow had fallen, covering whatever trail should have been visible. There were mountains, ravines, bogs, and trackless woods to be got over or through. A broken leg, even a sprained ankle, meant death, for no man was strong enough to carry another. Perishing for want of food, worn down almost to the breaking point, they stumbled on and at last got over the divide and down into a beautiful meadow by the side of a brook known as Seven Mile Stream, that being its length from the meadow to Lake Megantic. But Seven Mile Stream was more than a hundred miles from Quebec, and it afforded no relief from marching, except to the few in the remaining bateaux. They had divided the rest of the provisions, five pints of flour and two ounces or less of pork to each man.

On they went, following the stream. The land fell away into a swamp, and the stream divided and divided again into false mouths, as the Mississippi divides and redivides in its water-logged delta. The marching men, struggling through the swamp in different companies, strayed from the stream at its first false mouth. They strayed again at its second. They were now deep in the swamps, far off the right track, hopelessly lost, but still floundering onward, desperately trying to reach Lake Megantic. "We went astray over mountains and through swamps, which could scarcely be passed by wild

beasts," says one account, "waded a small river up to our waists, then marched on until night in our wet clothes. At night found ourselves within five miles of the place we started from. We marched fifteen miles in vain."

That night each man made himself a thin gruel of a gill of flour in water, or baked a little cake in the ashes, and nibbled a tiny scrap of pork. The country was the same as before, bogs and thickets and forests. At last the rest came on the tracks of the one company that had found Seven Mile Stream, and not long after they saw Lake Megantic, at which sight they gave "three huzzas." [39]

The Chaudière, a swift running stream, drops 1,100 feet in 75 miles and is broken by dangerous rapids and falls. Arnold and Morgan tried it in their bateaux. In one rapid six of them crashed against rocks. The baggage, arms, and food in them were lost, and one man was drowned. There was a piece of good fortune in this disaster, however, for just below that rapid there was a waterfall unknown to them. "Had we been carried over [it, we] must inevitably have been dashed to pieces & all lost." [40] The two boats of Smith's and Goodrich's companies were wrecked and everything in them was lost.

"November the first dawned upon a famishing army," [41] lying in camps stretching over a distance of twenty-one miles. A few had a little food; many, having eaten their shares without care for the morrow, "set out weak and faint having nothing at all to eat; the ground covered with snow." They ate soap and hair grease. They boiled and roasted moccasins, shot pouches and old leather breeches, and chewed on them. "No one," says Morison, "can imagine, who has not experienced it, the sweetness of a roasted shot-pouch to the famished appetite." Goodrich's men "had been out of provisions for two days," without "a mouthful." They killed the captain's Newfoundland dog and ate all but the bones, which they kept for soup.

The next day many were so weak they could hardly get up from their beds. Some of them could not, and lay there waiting for death. The strongest "stumbled on . . . mile after mile," staggering "like drunken men," their heads hanging, eyes half closed, their brains in a stupor, dully wondering whether they could go one step farther. Men were dropping out of the straggling ranks and falling down, unable to get on their feet again.

"Never perhaps was there a more forlorn set of human beings collected together in one place," wrote Morison, "every one of us shivering from head to foot, as hungry as wolves and nothing to eat save the little flour we had left. . . . It was a dispiriting, heart-rending sight to see these men whose weakness was reduced to the lowest degree, struggling among rocks

and in swamps and falling over the logs . . . falling down upon one another in the act of mutually assisting each other. . . . We had all along aided our weaker brethren. . . . These friendly offices could no longer be performed. Many of the men began to fall behind. . . . It was impossible to bring them along. . . . It was therefore given out . . . by our officers for every man to shift for himself and save his own life if possible." The "haggard looks" of those left behind, "their ghastly countenances, their emaciated bodies and their struggles to proceed with us . . . we saw with the bitterest anguish."

And then, at the very verge of their endurance, at the very last moment, the foremost party saw what they could not believe they really saw, horned cattle, driven by men on horses, coming to meet them. The glad cry "Provisions ahead!" was passed back from one group to another and so to those that had been left behind in the camps. "Echoes of gladness resounded from front to rear." [42] Two canoeloads of mutton and flour followed the beasts.

There was little ceremony about the slaughter of the first animal, or its division. The men grabbed the first bits they could lay their hands on, the entrails, and tore at them "as a hungry dog would tear a haunch of meat." [43] The rescue party took joints of the beef and rode on to those in the rear, the last stragglers being many miles behind. At the place of slaughter, two hundred of them, "an assembly of spectres rather than of men," [44] built fires, "laid our meat on the embers and for the first time for more than three weeks past were regaled with the incense of a sumptuous banquet." [45] "We sat down, eat up our rations, blessed our stars, and thought it luxury," says Dr. Senter.

On a pound of meat a day and a little oatmeal they pushed on with renewed spirits, although in sad physical condition. On moccasins worn through and broken shoes—Ogden had tied up his bursted shoes in a flour bag—they had yet sixty or seventy miles to march to the St. Lawrence.

But the wilderness was behind them. They were approaching civilization, or at least, Indian settlements, Sartigan the first. Arnold was there and had laid in a stock of provisions. "The men were furious, voracious and insatiable." In spite of the advice of the officers "to insure moderation, the men were outrageous upon the subject. . . . Boiled beef . . . potatoes, boiled and roasted, were gormandized without stint." Many of them fell ill; three of them died "by their imprudence." [46]

At this place they met that "noted villain," Natanis, whom Arnold had directed Steele to capture or kill, and found him to be a rather agreeable person. It appeared that he had hovered about the army all the way from the

Great Carrying Place, afraid to join it for fear he would be killed. Now, after Arnold had made a pacific address to a large group of Indians, Natanis and about fifty others joined the expedition and started with it down the Chaudière in their canoes.

The straggling force was brought together at the village of St. Mary, about halfway between Sartigan and the St. Lawrence. At this point they left the Chaudière and marched through snow, mud, and water knee-deep due north across the plains of Canada toward the great river.

On the 9th of November the habitants on the bank of the St. Lawrence saw, emerging from the woods, a band of scarecrows, their clothing "torn in pieces . . . hung in strings—few had any shoes but moggasons made of raw skins—many without hats, beards long and visages thin and meager. . . . So at last came to Point Levi 600, much resembling the animals which inhabit New Spain called the Ourang-Outang,"—600 out of 1,100 men who had started. Their journey had taken forty-five days, instead of twenty, as Arnold had predicted. They had traveled 350 miles, instead of 180, from Fort Western.[47]

Arnold's journey to Quebec is one of the most famous military marches recorded in history. If it had resulted in the capture of that stronghold it would have been celebrated as a great triumph. That it failed, by so little as it did, should not obscure its fame as a magnificent exploit. For sustained courage, undaunted resolution, and uncomplaining endurance of almost incredible hardships, those men who grimly persisted to the end deserved high honor and unstinted praise.[48]

CHAPTER 14

Quebec

The city of Quebec stands on a bold promontory between the St. Lawrence, which bends around it, and an affluent, the St. Charles. The blunt nose of the promontory points northeast, and its highest point, on the southeastern or St. Lawrence side, is Cape Diamond, a precipitous, rocky cliff that rises more than three hundred feet above the water. Toward the northwest, the St. Charles side, and toward the southwest the ground declines to somewhat lower levels. Along the base of the great cliff and around the point of the promontory a narrow band or fringe of lowland slopes gently to the water's edge and widens on the St. Charles side. Part of this, around the promontory's nose, was built up and was known as the Lower Town. It was defended in 1775 at its southern end by a blockhouse behind a double row of palisades just below the height of Cape Diamond. There were also timber barriers through which one might penetrate to Sault au Matelot, a narrow, crooked street, slanting upward from the base of the cliffs to an equally narrow, ladderlike passage into the Upper Town, the real city.

This Upper Town occupied the whole end of the higher level of the promontory and contained all the important buildings, including the citadel situated on the height of Cape Diamond. It was defended on the landward side by a strong wall thirty feet high and three-quarters of a mile long drawn across from one river to the other, from which six bold bastions projected, whereon were mounted heavy cannon. It was pierced by three gates, St. Louis Gate in the center, St. Johns near the northern part, and Palace Gate at the northerly approach to the Lower Town. Outside the main wall were certain built-up suburbs, the Palais toward the St. Charles River, St.

Roche in front of the north end of the wall, and St. Johns opposite its middle section. Beyond St. Roche and St. Johns to the west stretched the Plains of Abraham, where Wolfe had fought the great fight by which he took Quebec from the French in 1759.

Such was the fortress at which that little band of gaunt, ragged, starved Americans, shivering in the cold autumn wind, gazed with hope born of determination on the morning of November 9, 1775.[1]

They had come a long way and a hard way. They had reached the end of their march; yet a mile of water rolled between them and their grand objective. It was not an unguarded river that they had to cross. The frigate *Lizard* with twenty-six guns, the sloop-of-war *Hunter* with sixteen guns, four smaller armed vessels, and two transports lay at anchor, and small boats were constantly on patrol.

The shore on which Arnold's army stood had been cleared of every sort of craft by which a crossing might be made. It is not surprising that Matthias Ogden thought the "situation now seem'd somewhat ticklish. . . . We determined, however," he wrote in his journal, to "make a bold push for Quebec at all events." [2]

The first necessity was boats. They scoured the country for them. One party found twenty birch-bark canoes and carried them on their shoulders twenty-five miles to the camp. The Indian Natanis and his friends offered others. A dozen dugouts were discovered elsewhere and brought by night to the mouth of the Chaudière, where the little fleet was hid. Iron heads for pikes were forged in a near-by smithy and scaling ladders prepared. A supply of flour was procured from a neighboring mill. By Friday November 10 they were ready to attempt the crossing.[3]

But that night a storm arose, rain and a gale of wind which whipped the river into waves that would have swamped their canoes. In the evening of the 13th it blew itself out; and at nine o'clock, in black darkness, Arnold with as many of his men as could crowd into the boats started across. Midway in the river one of the canoes collapsed. Its crew was picked up by another, except Lieutenant Steele, who could find no room in the rescue boat. He clung to its stern and was towed the rest of the way, arriving nearly dead from the cold. They landed in a cove, the one in which Wolfe had landed to capture the city sixteen years before. In a deserted house a fire was kindled, and Steele was "restored . . . to his usual animation." The boats went back and brought another detachment, but when it had landed, at three in the morning, the tide was running so strong, and the moon was shining so brightly that it was deemed unsafe for the remaining 150 men to cross. They stayed on the opposite shore until the next night.[4]

The journal of one of the participants in the expedition asserts that Arnold, even with so few men, might have taken the city by attacking at once, as he had originally planned to do, because the keys of St. Johns Gate had been lost and it was unfastened. Others have denied that the gate was open. At all events, Arnold could not have known of this defect in the defenses that night. With only a part of his force at hand and no scaling ladders (there had not been room for them in the boats), he wisely did not attempt an assault.[5]

When all the men had been brought over they assembled and climbed to the level above, not by the goat-path that Wolfe had found, but by a slanting road since cut. They were now on the Plains of Abraham within a mile and a half of the city, near a large house that belonged to Major Caldwell, commandant of the Quebec militia. At the approach of Arnold's men, its occupants fled. The Americans crowded in and slept there.

The coming of the Americans was neither unexpected nor unobserved. A patrol boat had sighted the fire in the house in Wolfe's Cove and had been fired upon at Arnold's order. News of their actual arrival on the Quebec side of the river had been conveyed into the town, where there was considerable perturbation, with good reason. Carleton's command had originally consisted of two regiments of British regulars, the 7th and 26th. But at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, St. Johns, Chambly, and Sorel nearly all of them had been killed or captured. Remaining to him in Quebec were about seventy men of the 7th and a few artillerists.

During the storm that had delayed Arnold at the river side, the active and energetic Allan Maclean had slipped into the city with a force of Royal Highland Emigrants he had raised—Scottish veterans of former wars, brave in scarlet jackets faced with blue and laced with white, tartan kilts and hose, and blue bonnets edged with checkered white, red, and green; but they were few, not more than 80. Hector Cramahé, the governor of the city, had raised 200 British and 300 French Canadian militia. There were also 37 marines from the warships, 271 sailors from the armed ships in the harbor, and 74 from the transports. Maclean figured the total to be about 1,200.[6] But there were long walls to defend, and some of the militia were thought to be unreliable, inclined to desert. On the whole, Quebec, though well provided with munitions and food, was not strongly held. Cramahé felt that way about it. He wrote to General Howe, "There is too much Reason to apprehend the Affair will be soon over." [7]

But in Arnold's opinion 2,000 men would be needed "to carry the Town," [8] and he had not much more than a quarter of that number: nor had

he cannon to breach the walls. Moreover, he was short of ammunition and even of small arms. So many cartridges had been spoiled by water that there were only five rounds for each man. Over a hundred muskets were found to be unserviceable. He had no artillery and no bayonets. All he could do at the time was to blockade the town on the land side, and that at the respectful distance of a mile and a half from its walls, where his men were quartered in houses.

There were occasional diversions. A small party of the garrison sallied out and captured an incautious rifleman on sentry duty. Arnold immediately paraded his troops and marched them "bravado-like" [9] "within 80 rods of the wall . . . in such a manner that they could not discover of what number we consisted of," [10] which must have been a difficult job of deception. Cannon were fired upon them, with no hurt. They "gave 3 huzzas" and returned to their lodgings.

In the afternoon following their arrival, Arnold had sent Matthias Ogden, with a white flag and a drum, to deliver to Cramahé a demand for surrender. Ogden was within a hundred feet of St. Johns Gate when a gun thundered and an 18-pound shot hit the ground near him. He "retreated in quick time." [11] Assuming a misunderstanding of his intentions, Arnold sent another letter the next day, with a similar result. The only course was to continue the blockade.

It was no hardship. For the first time since they set out from Newburyport, two months before, the troops had clean, warm, comfortable lodgings and plenty of good food. They would doubtless have been glad to fight it out on that line—in that manner—if it took all winter. That was also quite evidently the intention of Maclean, who had taken over the command of the city from Cramahé. He burned a part of the suburb of St. Johns and certain other houses near the walls, to prevent the Americans from using them as cover, and settled down to hold out against the siege.

But the Americans were soon routed out of their comfortable quarters. On the 18th they had news that Maclean was about to make a sortie and to attack them with 800 men. Also it was reported that a ship with 200 men was coming up the river, and that the *Lizard* had taken a station above the camp to cut off their retreat. A council of war decided to withdraw. So, at four o'clock in the morning of the 19th, "a severely dark and cold night," [12] the entire force started on a march to Pointe aux Trembles—now Neuville—twenty miles up the river. "Most of the soldiers were in constant misery during this march, as they were bare footed, and the ground was frozen and very uneven." [13] In a village at the point they were again quartered in houses. There they remained for nearly two weeks, recuperating their wasted

bodies and availing themselves of an opportunity to make shoes out of the hides of the beeves they had killed for food.

It was a gloomy time. For all the effort they had made, all the hardships they had endured to get to Quebec, this period of inactivity was their only reward. The coveted city seemed as far away as when they left Fort Western. They were not even blockading it. Provisions and fuel were being smuggled into it without hindrance. On their march up the river, they had seen an armed schooner go past them, and a little later the sound of a salvo of artillery was heard. Carleton had come to take command, as they soon learned. That was bad news.

But at last good news did come. On December 2 a topsail schooner and several other craft were sighted coming down the river. In the evening a boat put off from the schooner, and, in the light of lanterns and flaring torches, there stepped ashore into a foot of snow "a gentle, polite Man, tall and slender . . . resolute, mild and of a fine Temper," [14] "well limbed, tall and handsome, though his face was much pock-marked," with "an air and manner that designated the real soldier." [15] Richard Montgomery had come from Montreal.

He had brought 300 men and, what was even more important, artillery and "a good supply of ammunition, clothing and provisions." [16] To the troops paraded in front of the little church he made an "energetic and elegant speech, the burden of which was an applause for our spirit in passing the wilderness, a hope for perseverance . . . and a promise of warm clothing. . . . A few huzzas from our freezing bodies were returned to this address of the gallant hero. Now new life was infused into the whole of the corps." [17]

The men liked Montgomery, and he liked them. He wrote to Schuyler: "I find Colonel Arnold's corps an exceeding fine one, inured to fatigue. . . . There is a style of discipline among them much superior to what I have been used to see in this campaign. He himself is active, intelligent and enterprising. . . . I must say he has brought with him many pretty young men." [18]

Montgomery had captured a year's supply of clothing of the 7th and 26th British regiments. Their winter uniforms were Canadian capotes, long, white, full-skirted overcoats of a heavy blanket material, trimmed and bound with blue, and with cape-hoods. The underjackets were of similar material, with corduroy sleeves. Leggings of heavy blue cloth, really overalls, were strapped over sealskin moccasins and reached to the waist. The caps were of red cloth, with a band of brown fur around the base, and were ornamented at the back with a fur tail.[19] These garments were now distributed in part.

Supplementary distributions were made later to the whole force. On the 5th, they marched back to Quebec, the artillery and stores following in bateaux.

The two American forces took up positions before the town: Arnold on the left, the northern side, in half-burned St. Roche, taking over the General Hospital in that suburb; Montgomery on the Plains midway between St. Roche and Cape Diamond. Now again Quebec was blockaded, but it was not Montgomery's intention to rely upon siege tactics. He well knew that they would not suffice to fulfill the desires of his superiors and of the American colonies in general. They wanted the town taken, and they expected him to take it. Schuyler wrote on November 18 that "in all probability the entire possession of Canada . . . will be [ours] soon." [20] Knox had "very little doubt" of Montgomery's success.[21] Washington on December 5 wrote to Schuyler, "I flatter myself that it will be effected when General Montgomery joins him [Arnold] and our Conquest of Canada be compleat." [22] Indeed, the commander in chief was relying on the spoils of Canada for his own troops, as he wrote to Montgomery: "I must beg . . . your attention to the Wants of the Army here, which are not few, and if they cannot in some Parts be supplied by you, I do not Know where else I can apply." Powder he wanted and arms, blankets, and clothing, of all which he understood there was "an Abundance in Canada." [23] The Congress was urgent for the possession of the town and vocal in its urgency. Clearly, Quebec must be taken by one means or another.

But a siege, without great battering guns to breach the wall, must needs be a slow, long drawn-out affair, and of time Montgomery had little to spare. He could not dig trenches to approach the town in the classic manner. He had no engineer to plan them, and they could not be dug in frozen soil. The term of enlistment of all Arnold's New England troops would expire with the year, and Montgomery had no hope of retaining them after that. It would be most difficult, if not impossible, to obtain fresh supplies of ammunition, and even of food, for Montgomery had no money except Continental paper, which would not pass in Canada. And by April, when the ice in the river broke up, British reinforcements could certainly come. A siege would not do.

Montgomery had been fully aware of all that even before he came, and had no intention of relying on a siege. He had written to Robert Livingston from Montreal giving his reasons why "to storming the place . . . we must come at last." [24] He wrote to Schuyler on the day of his arrival before Quebec that he meant "to assault the works, I believe towards the lower town, which is the weakest part." Meanwhile, he proposed "amusing Mr.

Carleton with a formal attack, erecting batteries, &c." He was sorry to have to assault, because he knew "the melancholy consequences," but saw no escape from it.[25]

First, however, he must go through the customary formality of summoning the garrison. He wrote a letter to Carleton in the usual terms. Being mindful of the manner in which Arnold's similar letters had been treated, he had recourse to a ruse. A woman carried the summons to the Palace Gate and said to the guard she had an important communication for the General. Being admitted, she told him she had a letter for him from the American General. Carleton called a drummer boy and bade him take the paper with the tongs and thrust it into the fire. He sent her back to tell Montgomery that he would receive no communication from a rebel.

Ten days later Montgomery tried again. He wrote a fierce letter, calling Carleton's attention to the weakness of his situation in the town, the great extent of his works manned only by "a motley crew of sailors, most of them our friends . . . citizens, who wish to see us within the walls, a few of the worst troops, that call themselves soldiers." He boasted of his own men "accustomed to success, confident of the righteousness of the cause they are engaged in, inured to danger and fatigue, and so highly incensed at your inhumanity . . . that it is with difficulty I restrain them, until my batteries are ready, from assaulting your works, which would give them a fair opportunity of ample vengeance and just retaliation." If Carleton persisted "in an unwarrantable defence," the consequences were to be on his head.[26] In a word, he tried to scare Carleton. But Carleton refused to take fright. When another woman smuggled this demand into the city, she was first imprisoned and then drummed out of town. As a last resort and in an effort to alarm the citizens, a flight of arrows, each bearing a copy of the letter, was shot over the walls with as little result.

Meanwhile, Montgomery was at work on those threatened batteries. Arnold's force advanced to within 150 yards of the wall, and planted five small mortars. On the heights, 700 yards from the town, in the fiercely cold night of December 10, in a heavy snowstorm driven by a northeast gale, a more formidable American battery was begun. Night by night after that gabions were set up there, filled with snow, and then drenched with water, which froze them into solid blocks of ice. In this battery five 6- and 12-pounders and a howitzer were emplaced. From these two positions a heavy fire was poured upon the walls and into the town, "with very little effect," as Montgomery admitted.[27] But Carleton's response with 13-inch shells and 32-pound balls was too much of an answer. Several men were killed, the ice-battery was shattered, and the guns were dismounted.

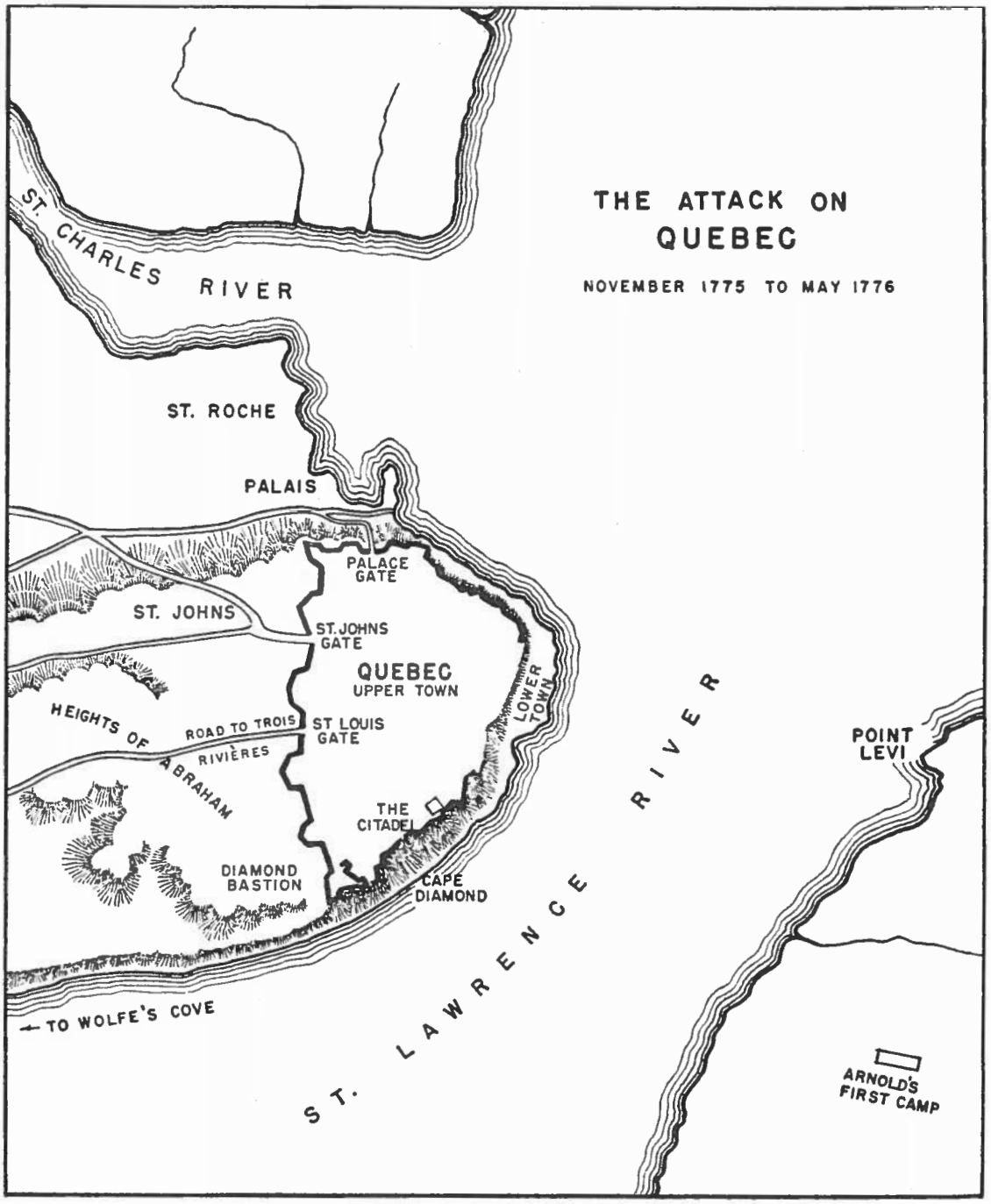
One more effort was made to induce Carleton to surrender. Arnold and Macpherson, with flag and drum, approached the walls. To a messenger sent to meet them they announced a desire to speak with Carleton. The reply was decisive. He would not see them. Would he receive a letter, then? He would not. They could make the best of their way off, for he would receive nothing from Mr. Montgomery.

Within the town Carleton had organized his men. The fusiliers of the 7th, the marines and Royal Scottish, 425 in all, were commanded by Maclean. Major Caldwell commanded 330 British militia. Colonel Voyer led 543 French Canadian militiamen, and Captain Hamilton the sailors and artificers from the ships, 570 of them. Thus there were over 1,800 to defend the town against Montgomery's force, no more than 800 in all. But *Audaces fortuna juvat* was Montgomery's motto.[28]

He was preparing for the attack, but he met with obstacles. The town-meeting spirit became prevalent, especially among Arnold's New Englanders —so much so that it was recognized as necessary "to have the approbation of all the officers and soldiers." That was hard to get. Everybody wanted the town taken, but not everybody wanted to take it. Many of them "appeared unwilling to attempt so daring an enterprise." [29]

The trouble seems to have originated in three of Arnold's officers, Captain Oliver Hanchet of Connecticut and Captains William Goodrich and Jonas Hubbard of Massachusetts. Hanchet, who had "incurred Colonel Arnold's displeasure by some misconduct and thereby given room for harsh language, is at the bottom of it," [30] wrote Montgomery to Schuyler on December 26. These three proposed to organize a separate corps under command of Major John Brown, who had disliked and distrusted Arnold from the time of their first meeting. Montgomery would not allow this. The three companies then appeared to be "very averse from" the proposed assault. "This dangerous party threatens the ruin of our officers," said Montgomery. But he met Arnold's officers "to compose some matters, which were happily settled." [31] He then paraded Arnold's troops, and addressed them "in a very sensible Spirited manner, which greatly animated" them.[32] "The fire of patriotism kindled in our breasts," wrote one of the Connecticut recalcitrants, "and we resolved to follow wherever he should lead." [33]

The attack was to be made in a dark and stormy night, "in the first northwester." [34] The Lower Town, the weakest in its defenses, was to be the primary objective. While a third of the troops, with ladders, feinted an escalade of the Cape Diamond bastion, another third was to attack the


THE ATTACK ON
QUEBEC
NOVEMBER 1775 TO MAY 1776
ST. CHARLES RIVER
ST. ROCHE
PALAIS
PALACE GATE
ST. JOHNS
ST. JOHNS GATE
QUEBEC
UPPER TOWN
LOWER TOWN
HEIGHTS OF ABRAHAM
ROAD TO TROIS RIVIÈRES
ST LOUIS GATE
THE CITADEL
DIAMOND BASTION
CAPE DIAMOND
TO WOLFE'S COVE
ST. LAWRENCE RIVER
POINT LEVI
ARNOLD'S FIRST CAMP

Lower Town. Weather conditions seemed suitable on the night of the 27th. It was cloudy, and snow was falling heavily. The troops were assembled, but "the storm abated—the moon shone and we retired to repose." [35] Then Stephen Singleton, a sergeant from Rhode Island, deserted and carried word of Montgomery's plan to Carleton. So it was abandoned, and another was made.

This time two feints were to distract the attention of the garrison, one "with a shew of firing the gate of St. John," [36] the other against the Cape Diamond bastion. There were also to be two real attacks. Arnold's corps, strengthened by forty men of Captain John Lamb's artillery company, was to descend to the lower level from the suburb of St. Roche and force the barriers at the north end of the Lower Town, with the intention of getting into the Sault au Matelot, the narrow, crooked street that led into the heart of the Lower Town. Montgomery was to lead the 1st New York along the low ground at the foot of Cape Diamond, strike the southern end of the Lower Town, and meet Arnold, the combined forces then to drive into the Upper Town.

The essence of the plan was the selection of the Lower Town for the real assault, it being the least fortified part of Quebec. But, for that very reason, the plan was defective. Carleton well knew that it was his Achilles heel and had taken precautions accordingly. Houses that might afford shelter to the attackers had been torn down; windows and doors of others had been covered with heavy planks. The Sault au Matelot was blocked and covered with guns at every turn. As against an assault by men with small arms only, the Lower Town and the way of access from it to the Upper Town were now the most strongly defended; but it was the only possible road to victory. It was that way, or not at all.

Montgomery and his officers realized the desperate nature of the attack. Macpherson wrote a letter to his father, "the last this hand will ever write you." In preparation for it Captain Jacob Cheesman of the 1st New York "dressed himself . . . extremely neat, and, putting five gold pieces in his pocket, said that would be sufficient to bury him with decency." [37] But there was no flinching from the attempt.

The plan made and all the parts in it assigned, the Americans waited for a dark and stormy night. But the weather on Thursday the 29th and on Friday was "clear and mild." Saturday morning was fair; but in the afternoon the sky was clouded, the wind rose and brought a spit of snow. Heavy darkness came at sunset. As the night wore on the snow fell more and more heavily, "a thick small Snow" driven by an "outrageous" [38] wind into great

drifts heaped and piled upon that which had fallen before, and which had already covered the earth to a depth of two to three feet. The time had come.

At two o'clock in the morning the men were assembled at their respective stations. Soon after four o'clock signal rockets were fired, and the advance began. The storm, a terrific blizzard, was at its height. The wind from the northwest drove snow mixed with hail into the faces of the men as they stumbled through six-foot drifts in the blackest darkness.

The rockets were a signal to the Americans, but they were also a signal to the town. Drums beat to arms. The great bell of the cathedral, the lesser bells of the Jesuit College, of the Recollet monastery, and of the Hôtel Dieu clanged the alarm. Officers ran through the streets shouting, "Turn out! Turn out!" The city's troops rushed to their posts. Lanterns on poles were thrust out over the top of the walls. Flaming fire balls were thrown from the ramparts to light up the ground outside. The little American mortar battery at St. Roche went into action, throwing shells into the town to divert the enemy's attention from the real points of attack. The guns on the walls roared in reply.

Amid this tumult the two feinting parties made their way toward the walls. Livingston's corps of Canadians was near St. Johns Gate, when they broke and ran. The other party, a hundred Massachusetts men led by Captain Jacob Brown, John's brother, kept up a rattling fire against the Cape Diamond bastion. Some militia were sent to reinforce the defenders there, but otherwise little attention was paid to Brown's efforts. Carleton's mind was not distracted from the Lower Town.

Meanwhile, Montgomery and Arnold had marched. Montgomery at the head of the 1st New York, about 300 men in single file, set out on the long circuit around the Diamond bastion, down the slanting road to the fringe of lowland along the river. The way down to Wolfe's Cove was a mile long, steep, narrow, and heaped with drifted snow; and the storm still raged. That part was bad almost beyond bearing. The rest was worse. On the narrow strip of land below the heights the high tides had piled "enormous and rugged masses of ice," [39] creating such obstacles that the men had to clamber up the steep slope of the cliff to get around them. They slipped, slid, and fell. Those that carried the unwieldy scaling ladders, which had been brought across the river, could hardly make way at all. There were two miles of this before they reached the first defenses of the Lower Town.

Arnold had formed his own corps of 600 men, with a forlorn hope of

twenty-five men in advance led by himself and Eleazer Oswald, a volunteer. A hundred yards behind these Captain John Lamb and his forty artillerists dragged a 6-pounder on a sled. Behind them again came the riflemen, Morgan's company, followed by Smith's under command of Lieutenant Steele, and Hendricks's company. The New Englanders (except Dearborn's men, who had been late in assembling) with about forty Canadians and Indians, brought up the rear. They set out from St. Roche in Indian file and passed a two-gun battery without discovery. Hurrying on through deep snow, "deeper than in the fields" above, the van got by the Palace Gate unassailed. The main body, "covering the locks of our guns with the lappets of our coats, holding down our heads" against the driving storm, had also safely passed the Gate, when it "received a tremendous fire of musketry from the ramparts above." For a third of a mile, men falling here and there, they ran that gantlet without a possibility of a reply. "We could see nothing but the blaze from the muzzles of their muskets." [40]

At the waterside ships were moored with cables stretched to the houses. In the darkness some of the men ran into these and were thrown down violently. At last they came into a narrow street blocked by a barricade, mounting two guns.

Arnold's plan was to separate his force, right and left, and let Lamb's gun batter the barrier, while Morgan went around its end on the river ice and took it in the rear. But the 6-pounder had been abandoned in a snowdrift sometime before this. One of the guns of the barrier was fired at them with little effect. The other failed to go off. Arnold called on his men to rush the barricade. They responded, ran to it, and fired through the portholes. A bullet from one of the near-by houses hit a rock, ricocheted and hit Arnold in the leg below the knee. He still shouted encouragement to his men; but his wound was bleeding freely, and he had to be supported by two men to the rear and so to the hospital.

By general acclaim Morgan was called upon to take command instead of Lieutenant Colonel Greene. A ladder was set against the barrier, and Morgan mounted it, calling on his men to follow. As his head topped the barricade, a blaze of fire met him. Stunned, he fell backward and lay in the snow, with one bullet through his cap, another through his beard, and grains of burnt powder embedded in his face. In a moment he was on his feet. Up the ladder again he went, and over the top of the fence. His knee hit one of the cannon, and he rolled beneath it. Before any of the defenders could get at him, Charles Porterfield was over, and then the rest. The enemy, followed by the riflemen's bullets, fled into a house and out the back way. But Morgan had run around it, and he shouted to them to sur-

render if they wanted quarter. They all surrendered. The way into the Lower Town was open.

The Sault au Matelot lay ahead. They entered it. Two or three hundred yards up that street there was another barrier. Behind it was a platform with cannon. The gate in the barrier was open. Now was the time to break through, for the garrison was offering no resistance. Some of them, Canadians, seemed ready to welcome the Americans, shouted, *"Vive la liberté!"* and held out welcoming hands. The whole town appeared to be panic-stricken. Morgan urged his officers to push on through the gate. But there were few men with him. The rest of that long straggling line had not yet come up. He actually had more prisoners than he had of his own men. It was pitch-dark. The storm was still raging. None of the men knew the way through the crooked street and its alleyways, and they had no guide. This was the place appointed to meet Montgomery. The officers decided to stay there until their whole force came up and Montgomery joined them.

After a time the rest of the troops began to arrive, Hendricks and his riflemen, Greene, Meigs, and Bigelow with the Yankees. It was about daybreak when the major part of the American force was again assembled and formed for another attack. But the town had recovered its senses. Troops had been sent to meet the Americans. A party of them sallied out through the gate in the barrier. Lieutenant Anderson, leading them, called on Morgan to surrender. Morgan shot him through the head. Anderson's men retreated, and for a while there was a pause. The spirit of fraternization again prevailed. Men from either side called to the others by name. But that was soon over, and the Americans went at the high barrier.

Mounds of snow were heaped up, ladders set on them. Morgan climbed one, Porterfield another. Humphreys, Lamb, Greene, Meigs, and yet more went up, but the houses in the street beyond were filled with fighting men. Muskets blazed from the windows. A little way up the street a double line of fusiliers presented their bayonets. No one could dare that defense. And upon the Americans and among them fell a shower of bullets. Humphreys fell, and Hendricks, and many another. Lamb and Steele, and more and more, were wounded, while their assailants were safe in the houses.

Yet, though their pieces were wet and most of them failed to fire, the Americans fought on. They tried to outflank the barricade, but it stretched from the bluff to the river. They dared the ladders again and again, even thrust one over the fence to climb down on; but to go over the top would have been sheer suicide. There was a stone house at the end of the barricade, whose gable-end windows looked down beyond the barrier. Riflemen there could shoot down on the defenders, perhaps drive them back. The Amer-

icans broke in, but the enemy had perceived the threat of the house. The ladder the Americans had left inside the barrier was set against the house, and a party of the defenders climbed it, entered through a window, came down the stairs, bayonets fixed. There was a fierce fight, in the house, but the Americans were driven out.

In the street again they were under fire of a 9-pounder hastily brought up, and of musketry as before. They retreated for a space, and the officers consulted. Some of them still looked for Montgomery and wanted to hold their position until night. The majority saw the hopelessness of the situation. It was decided to give up the attempt and withdraw.

But Carleton had moved to prevent that. He had sent Captain Laws out of the Palace Gate, with 200 men and two fieldpieces to follow the Americans' tracks down to the lower level and take them in the rear. Laws came running up the Sault au Matelot, and shouted to the Americans to surrender. They jeered at him, cried out that he was their prisoner. He looked around and saw that he was quite alone. His men had not followed as fast as he had run. Expecting them to come on at once, the Americans threw themselves into the houses along the street.

Laws's delayed party arrived, and for a while a desultory fire was maintained. But the Americans' situation was desperate. Hemmed in, front and back, the officers hastily consulted again. Morgan proposed cutting through the force in their rear. Others were for holding on until Montgomery came. But their plight was beyond hope. They were, in Carleton's words, "compleatly ruined . . . caught, as it were, in a Trap." They began to throw down their arms.

Morgan had disdained the shelter offered by the houses. He stood in the street facing his enemies. When he saw that surrender was inevitable, he set his back against a wall, and, with tears of rage and disappointment streaming down his face, defied the enemy to take his sword. They threatened to shoot him. His men implored him not to sacrifice his life. He saw a man in clerical dress in the crowd confronting him and called to him, "Are you a priest?" He was. "Then I give my sword to you. But not a scoundrel of these cowards shall take it out of my hands." [41] So ended that fight, three hours long, in the Sault au Matelot.

But where was Montgomery? His tale of disaster is soon told.

He and some of his men, having overcome the obstacles in their way, came to a barricade. Saws went to work on it. Montgomery himself took a hand, tearing down the half-sawed posts. With Macpherson and Captain Cheesman at his side, he led the forlorn hope through and was confronted by a blockhouse. No more than fifty or sixty of his men followed him. The

rest were still struggling with the difficulties of their road. Montgomery and his little band advanced against the blockhouse. No shot was fired from it. They passed it, went on for a hundred yards, came to another barrier, cut through it, rounded Point Diamond, entered on a narrow road, and saw another building before them, a dwelling house. It was loopholed, armed with four small guns, 3-pounders, and held by a corporal with eight British militiamen, a captain and thirty French Canadians, a ship captain, Adam Barnsfair, and nine sailors. John Coffin, a Boston Tory, was with them. Montgomery "called to his men to Come on; they did not advance as quick as he thought they might, he Spoke to them again in the following moving Terms, saying Come on my good soldiers, your General calls you to Come on." [42]

Coffin encouraged the men in the house to withhold their fire until the Americans, indistinctly seen in the darkness and snow, should come closer. Barnsfair and his men stood by their guns with lighted matches ready. Montgomery, Macpherson, and Cheesman, with Aaron Burr, Edward Antil, a sergeant, and a dozen men pushed forward. They were within a few paces of the house, when there came from it a burst of gunfire, grapeshot and bullets. Another burst and another raked the narrow street, until not one of that forlorn hope was left standing. In the snow lay a dozen men. Montgomery was dead, shot through the head. Macpherson and Cheesman lay beside him. Burr, Antil, and one or two others got away unhurt.

That was the end of the attack on the Cape Diamond end of the Lower Town. Colonel Donald Campbell took command and ordered a retreat. What was left of Montgomery's corps struggled back through the storm. Dearborn's belated company, trying to come up with Arnold's division, was caught on the road between two fires and surrendered. Carleton sent out a small force which seized the little battery at St. Roche, picking up Lamb's 6-pounder on the way.

Carleton captured 426 men, sound or wounded, including 30 officers and 5 gentlemen volunteers. The number killed or wounded and not captured may have been 60. The British loss was 5 killed and 13 wounded.[43] There were left to Arnold perhaps 600 men, including such Canadians and Indians as had joined him. Of these, more than 100 time-expired men soon left him, and there were other defections.

Arnold withdrew his little force about a mile, erected defences of frozen snow, and sent Edward Antil to Montreal for reinforcements. But General Wooster, in command there, had only five or six hundred men with whom to hold that town, as well as Chambly and St. Johns. No help could be had from him. Antil went on to Schuyler at Albany. But everything there was

in confusion and alarm, because of Tory uprisings along the Mohawk and in Tryon County. There were no reinforcements available for Arnold. Antil went on to Philadelphia, to the Congress, bearing a letter from Schuyler. The Congress, on January 19, voted to reinforce the army in Canada "with all possible despatch," called on New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey for troops for that purpose, and asked Washington to detach one battalion and send it north. It also authorized Moses Hazen to raise a regiment in Canada, Antil to be lieutenant colonel.[44]

From Montreal, Wooster sent 120 men near the end of January, and himself followed later with 60 more. In February, 25 came from Massachusetts. Hard money, some $28,000, was sent to encourage Arnold, now a brigadier general by grace of the Congress. Troops were coming from here and there, but slowly. In the middle of March, Arnold had 617 rank and file, besides Livingston's not very trustworthy Canadians. But smallpox had put 400 of Arnold's men in hospital, and every sort of supplies, food as well as military equipment, was lacking in Montreal and in Arnold's camp. Yet, all this while, Carleton made no move to attack those few hundreds who were still, with some success, blockading his town. He may have had in mind the fate of Montcalm's army, when it sallied out to meet Wolfe on those same Plains of Abraham. At all events he made no hostile move, but busied himself with strengthening his defensive works.

At last, on April 2, Wooster came to the camp with troops that made up the American force to 2,000 men. He took command. Arnold, injured by a fall from his horse, withdrew to Montreal. Wooster mounted batteries on the Heights and on Pointe Lévis and bombarded the town, to which it replied vigorously and with heavier metal. He also made an unsuccessful attempt to burn the vessels in the harbor by means of a fireship.

Early in May, Wooster was superseded by General John Thomas, a more capable, more energetic officer. He found the army, which had been built up to 2,500 men, now reduced by discharges, death, and desertions to 1,900, of whom no more than 1,000, including officers, were fit for duty. The time of 300 had already expired, and 200 more were under inoculation. No more than 500 could be relied upon. A mere ghost of an army was besieging a strongly fortified town of 5,000 inhabitants, mounting 148 cannon, with a garrison of 1,600 fit to fight, besides a frigate, a sloop of war, and several smaller armed vessels as auxiliaries. It was an absurd situation, yet Carleton remained within the walls.

More men were on their way to Thomas, the 2nd New Jersey Regiment and six companies of the 2nd Pennsylvania. Some of them had already arrived when, on May 2, there came bad news from the opposite quarter. A

British fleet, fifteen ships, had entered the mouth of the St. Lawrence. On the 7th, their masts and spars could be descried. General John Burgoyne was coming, with seven Irish regiments, one English, and 2,000 hired German mercenaries. That was the end of the siege of Quebec.

A force of 900 of the garrison, with four fieldpieces, issued from the town. Thomas, with difficulty, gathered a force of 250 to oppose it; his stand was but momentary. His whole army began to retreat, and in no orderly fashion. In a panic the gunners abandoned their pieces. The men under inoculation threw away their muskets and fled. The invalids in the hospital left their beds and stumbled and staggered toward the woods. The Canadian teamsters employed in the service of the army threw up their jobs and left. Clothing, provisions, and stores, even the orderly books and records in headquarters, had to be abandoned. Bateaux loaded with invalids and such stores as could be hastily gathered pushed up the St. Lawrence. Two tons of precious gunpowder, a hundred barrels of flour, and all the hospital stores were seized by the enemy, as they were about to be loaded into boats. One of the American regiments, across the river at Pointe Lévis, was intercepted and had to scatter into the woods. The main body marching on the road by the river, deep with mud, was divided for lack of food. Parties went here and there to levy on the inhabitants, took food by force. It was a mob of muddy, hungry, tired men, wounded men, men sick with smallpox, rather than an army, that streamed westward, leaving the dead and dying in its wake. Enemy ships passed them. Marines landed to cut them off, were driven back, and the struggle westward went on.

At Deschambault, forty miles up the river, Thomas halted his shattered forces and held a council of war. A stand at that point was voted down, and the retreat was resumed, to end at last on the 17th at Sorel, at the mouth of the Richelieu, where certain troops on their way to Quebec were met. Colonel William Maxwell's 2nd New Jersey, which had been left at Trois Rivières as a rear guard, was called in. The regiment which had fled from Pointe Lévis had made its way to the main force. So now all that was left of Thomas's army was gathered together in a disorganized mass, with hardly a trace of military system, "without order or regularity, eating up provisions as fast as they were brought in,"[45] a mere mob.

Thomas described it: "A retreating army, disheartened by unavoidable misfortunes, destitute of almost every necessary to render their lives comfortable or even tolerable, sick and (as they think) wholly neglected and [with] no prospect of speedy relief." He himself was ill with the smallpox. There was nothing to do except to continue to retreat. On the 2nd of June, while his men were on the march up the Richelieu to Chambly, he died.

Moses Hazen, temporarily in command at Montreal in the absence of Arnold (who had gone down to Sorel and up the Richelieu with Thomas's force) directed Colonel Timothy Bedel, with 400 men, to hold a small, fortified post at the Cedars, about thirty miles above Montreal. With 150 English and Canadians and 500 Indians, Captain Forster marched against it. Bedel, suffering with the smallpox, went back to Montreal, leaving Major Isaac Butterfield in charge. On the arrival of Forster's troops, Butterfield surrendered without any real contest. A reinforcing American regiment under Major Henry Sherburne was waylaid and, after a gallant fight, overpowered and captured. Arnold, indignant at Butterfield's cowardice, took the field, met Forster, demanded and obtained the return of the captives by promising an exchange, and returned to Montreal.

But reinforcements for Thomas's sadly battered troops were on the way. Brigadier General William Thompson, formerly colonel of one of the Pennsylvania rifle regiments at Cambridge, was coming with a brigade of four regiments dispatched by Washington, comprising 2,000 musketmen, a company of riflemen, and one of artificers. Brigadier John Sullivan led a brigade of 3,300 from New York. He had been directed to take over Thomas's command. On June 1 he arrived at St. Johns, where Thompson's troops had been lying for two weeks. With the fresh and full supplies of food, ammunition, small arms, and cannon brought by these new troops, the prospects for a reinstatement of American fortunes in Canada seemed bright. Everybody was on tiptoe for a second march against Quebec.

The primary objective was to be Trois Rivières, about halfway between Montreal and Quebec, and the coveted stronghold. It was supposed to be held by no more than 800 regulars and Canadians under Maclean. Sullivan ordered Thompson to take it with 2,000 of the best of the Americans. On June 6 they embarked in bateaux and dropped down the river to a point ten miles above Trois Rivières. In the evening of the next day they embarked again for a night attack. William Maxwell, Anthony Wayne, Arthur St. Clair, William Irvine, all men of mettle, led their respective regiments. Thompson himself was a notable fighting man.

At three in the morning of June 8 they landed about three miles above the town. Leaving 250 men to guard the boats, they marched in silence, intending to attack at four points with St. Clair, Maxwell, Irvine, and Wayne leading the several detachments. They had for a guide a habitant, one Antoine Gautier. Whether intentionally or not, he misled them. They tried to recover the right road by going across country, got into a great swamp, and were completely mired. They floundered about in the slimy mud. Shoes and even boots were sucked off their feet. It was near daybreak

when they got out and found the road along the shore and close to the river.

Two or three armed vessels fired on them as they came up. For three-quarters of a mile they were under a fire that, having no artillery, they could not return. They swung away into the woods, intending to make a circuit and to return to the road. But they got into "the most Horrid swamp that ever man set foot in," [46] sank in it up to their middles.

Warning of their approach had been brought to the town. A surprise was no longer possible. But they had been told by the Congress that it was "of the highest importance that a post be taken at De Chambeaux." [47] Washington had said to Thomas, "The lower down [the river] you can maintain a stand the more advantageous it will be." He had said, too, that the Quebec "misfortune must be repaired," [48] and Trois Rivières was the first step to that end. They kept on.

For two or three hours they fought their way through the swamp and the tangled forest. At eight o'clock they saw a clearing a quarter of a mile ahead, firm ground. They had been divided, even scattered, in the swampy jungle. Wayne, with 200 men, got out first and saw a body of regulars bearing down upon him.

He threw forward a company of light infantry and one of riflemen, formed the rest, and opened fire. The enemy, twice as many as they, gave back, broke, and fled. Thompson and the rest of his force came out and saw the village lying between them and the river. But between it and themselves they also saw a line of entrenchments. Burgoyne with more than 8,000 men was on his way up the St. Lawrence, and perhaps three-quarters of them had arrived at Trois Rivières.

The Americans attacked, probably not aware of the odds they faced. A heavy fire from the ships and from the trenches converged upon them. It was impossible to advance against it. They fell back into the woods. Thompson tried to rally them for another effort, but they were scattered and disorganized. An irregular fire was kept up for a time. Then the inevitable retreat began.

A British force was landed from the ships above them to cut them off. They could not escape by the road, and another column was coming against their rear. Broken up into larger or smaller parties, each acting for itself, now making a stand and now retreating, they left the road, took to the woods. They were stalked by Indians, ambushed by Canadian irregulars. Through endless swamps and a wilderness of forest, they fled northward for two days. Major Grant held against them their only gateway of escape, the bridge across the Rivière du Loup. Carleton might have captured them

all, but he did not want them. What would he do with them? He had no provisions to spare, nor were there any in Quebec. Let them go and tell of his mercy to the people at home. He recalled Grant from the bridge, and on the third day after the battle, the remains of that proud little army, 1,100 men "almost worn out with fatigue, Hunger & Difficulties scarcely to be paralleled," [49] their faces and hands swollen by the stings of "Musketoes of a Monstrous size and innumerable numbers" reached Sorel.

Their losses are not ascertainable. In spite of his prudent leniency Carleton found that he had 236 prisoners on his hands, men who had given themselves up rather than attempt a seemingly impossible escape. The guards of the Americans' bateaux had escaped in their boats. About 400 in all were killed, captured, or lost in the woods and swamps. The British lost in killed and wounded about a dozen.

There were supposed to be 8,000 American troops in all the Champlain and St. Lawrence regions; but, because of the inroads of the smallpox and the results of fatigue and deprivation, not 5,000 could have been counted as effectives, even by straining that term to the limit, before the affair at Trois Rivières. After it, nearly half of that number, six of the freshest regiments, had been routed, cut to pieces, and completely demoralized. Supplies of every kind, including food, were lacking, as usual. To get them up from New York would take weeks at best. There was no money to buy provisions in Canada. And over 8,000 hearty, well furnished British regulars were gathering at Trois Rivières. They might march around Sorel to Chambly and bottle up Sullivan's army on the Richelieu below, then cut off Arnold's force at Chambly. They were, in fact, on June 13, on their way up the river by land and in transports.

A letter from Sullivan to Schuyler describes the plight of his army. He wanted to hold Sorel, he said, but he had only 2,500 men there and 1,000 at other posts, "most of the latter being under inoculation, and those regiments, which had not the small-pox, expecting every day to be taken down with it." The enemy's force was reported to be "exceedingly superior to ours," which was certainly true. "I found myself at the head of a dispirited Army, filled with horror at the thought of seeing their enemy. . . . Small-pox, famine and disorder had rendered them almost lifeless. . . . I found a great panick . . . among both officers and soldiers . . . no less than 40 officers begged leave to resign. . . . However strongly I might fortify Sorel, my men would in general leave me." [50]

Even the aggressive Arnold thought there was "more honour in making a safe retreat than in hazarding a battle against such superiority." "The junction of the Canadas is now at an end," he wrote to Schuyler. "Let us quit

them and secure our own country before it is too late." [51] There was no doubt in anyone's mind that the game was up.

It was by a close margin that the Americans got away at all. The British fleet was at Sorel within an hour after the last of Sullivan's bateaux pulled away up the Richelieu. Arnold, back at Montreal, held on to that town to the last moment. Then, with the remains of its garrison, no more than 300 men, he crossed the river to Longueuil and set out for St. Johns, with the enemy close at his heels.[52]

The two forces having been joined, the whole army, if that mob of hungry, ragged, beaten men, discouraged, disorganized, and rotten with small-pox, could still be called an "army," crowded into boats sent up by Schuyler and pushed off for Ile aux Noix. They were hardly out of musket shot when the van of their pursuers arrived on the shore.[53]

Ile aux Noix is a low, flat island, about a mile long and a quarter-mile wide. A single farm occupied a slight elevation in the middle of it. The rest was a brush-covered waste, with swamps here and there. On this unwholesome desert the 8,000 wretched fugitives disembarked. Two thousand of them were hospital cases already, smallpox cases. Within two days after they landed, a quarter of the rest were stricken with malarial fever or dysentery.

There were not tents enough to shelter even the desperately sick men. Frequent thunderstorms drenched those that lay under rude shelters thatched with brush and grass. Mosquitoes and black flies swarmed in millions, tormenting and torturing sick and well alike. There was no food except salt pork and flour, and not enough wood for fires to cook even that. Medicines gave out. The few surgeons were exhausted. The moans and groans of the sick, of the dying men tortured by the itching and burning of that most loathsome disease, smallpox, could be heard everywhere. And they died like flies. Common grave pits were opened and filled day after day with corpses wrapped in their filthy blankets.

The sights and sounds of that pest-ridden camp were unbearable. Officers, unable longer to stand them, gathered in groups and deliberately drank themselves into insensibility. To stay there was to invite complete destruction. The helplessly sick were bundled into the boats. The half-sick took to the oars. Humiliated by defeat, enfeebled by fatigue, hunger, hardship, and disease, utterly demoralized in every respect, the wreck of a once proud little army rowed away from that island of death.

In the first days of July, Crown Point saw them again, what was left of them. So they came back to that place whence Montgomery had set out, just ten months before, to conquer Canada.

CHAPTER 35

Valcour Island

"Our Army at Crown Point is an object of wretchedness to fill a humane mind with horrour; disgraced, defeated, discontented, diseased, naked, undisciplined, eaten up with vermin; no clothes, beds, blankets, no medicines; no victuals, but salt pork and flour." [1] In those words, which for clearness, force, and accuracy could not be bettered, John Adams described the condition of the American troops who, after the disasters at Quebec and Trois Rivières, retreated from Canada in June, 1776.

Three thousand of them, afflicted with smallpox, dysentery, malarial fevers, and all sorts of camp diseases, were in hospital; that is to say, they were lying in tents and huts with no proper care or treatment. Surgeons were few, medicines almost entirely lacking. For food they had almost rancid salt pork and flour, nothing else.[2] "I can truly say," wrote Colonel Trumbull, "that I did not look into a tent that did not contain a dead or dying man." [3] Five thousand were supposed to be fit for duty, but they seemed mere "walking apparitions." Five thousand men had been lost in the whole Canadian venture.[4]

Schuyler at Albany was in command. Sullivan, his second, was with the troops. But on June 17 the Congress, having news of the disaster at Trois Rivières and of the retreat, had resolved that "an experienced general be immediately sent into Canada" and directed Washington to order Major General Horatio Gates "to take command of the forces in that province." [5]

Washington sent Gates his orders, with the comment, "The Command is important." John Adams wrote him, "We have ordered you to the Post of Honour and made you Dictator in Canada for Six Months or at least until

the first of October." [6] To Gates this naturally meant that he was to takeover the chief command from Schuyler. But Schuyler thought that only Sullivan was displaced, and that he himself still held the dominant position, pointing out, with some logic, that, while the order gave Gates chief command of the troops in Canada, there were, in fact, no longer any troops whatever in Canada. On July 8 the Congress gave Schuyler support by declaring that its intention was to give Gates "command of the troops whilst in Canada," with no purpose of giving him "a superior command to General Schuyler, whilst the troops should be on this side Canada." It also recommended to both generals that they "carry on the military operations with harmony." [7] So Gates had to accept the inferior position, which, to give him due credit, he did with good grace.

Gates arrived at Crown Point along with Schuyler on July 5. A council of war was held, in which Schuyler, Gates, Sullivan, Arnold, and the Prussian general Baron de Woedtke took part. They unanimously agreed that Crown Point was not tenable, that they should retire to Ticonderoga, sending all the sick to Fort George, and that "a naval armament of gondolas, bow-galleys, armed batteaus &c" should be provided.[8]

Some of the field officers were not content with this intention to retreat further. Twenty-one of them signed a remonstrance and delivered it to Schuyler. There was discontent also in higher quarters. Washington was inclined to the view of the malcontents. He wrote to Schuyler that, while he did not wish to encourage inferior officers in setting up their opinions against their superiors' decisions, yet he felt as they did and stated his reasons at length. Indeed, he said, nothing but a belief that, by the time he had news of the intended move, the works had been demolished and the withdrawal already made, plus a fear of encouraging such remonstrances, had prevented him from ordering the retention of the post at Crown Point.[9]

Schuyler defended the decision to withdraw with reasons that were cogent,[10] but not so briefly and briskly stated as were Gates's. "Your Excellency Speaks of Works to be Destroyed at Crown Point," Gates wrote to Washington on July 29. "Time & the Bad Construction of those Works had Compleatly Effected that business before General Schuyler came with me to Crown Point. The Ramparts are Tumbled down, the casements are fallen in, the Barracks Burnt, and the whole so perfect a Ruin that it would take Five times the Number of Our Army for several Summers to put Those Works in Defensible [*sic*] Repair." [11]

Under these conditions, no other course was possible, and so the sick were sent on to Fort George, and the rest of the army moved to Ticon-deroga. The remnant of their salt pork had become utterly rancid and was

thrown away. They had nothing to eat but flour, boiled to a gruel or baked into thin cakes on flat stones. They had no attention except what less than a dozen surgeons could give to 2,000 desperately sick men. Nature and Death took care of them. Some recovered, some did not. By the middle of August, they were down to a thousand.[12]

Three thousand "effectives" were now at Ticonderoga. The 6th Pennsylvania, under Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Hartley, had been left to establish an outpost at Crown Point—one not to be held against the enemy appearing in force.[13] A reenforcement, consisting of the 1st and 2nd Pennsylvania and three companies of the 4th, arrived at Ticonderoga on July 9, without shoes or stockings and almost in rags, "in miserable plight from the fatigue and sickness they had undergone," but, compared with the rest, "robust and healthy." [14]

The army was now divided into four brigades. The 1st, commanded by Arnold, comprised Bond's, Greaton's, and Porter's Massachusetts Continentals, and Burrell's Connecticut. The 2nd, under Colonel James Reed, was composed of his own, Poor's, and Bedel's from New Hampshire and Patterson's from Massachusetts. The 3rd commanded by Colonel John Stark, was made up of his own New Hampshires, Wind's and Maxwell's New Jerseymen, and Wynkoop's New Yorkers. The 4th, General Arthur St. Clair's, had his own, De Haas's, Wayne's, and Hartley's commands, all Pennsylvanians.[15]

The first three brigades were encamped on Mount Independence, on the east side of the lake, to keep them away from St. Clair's Pennsylvanians, encamped on the Ticonderoga side. The intense jealousy and ill feeling between the "southern" troops and those of New England and the consequent disorder had made this separation necessary.[16]

When Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold took Ticonderoga from the British in May, 1775, it was well supplied with ordnance and ordnance stores; but Knox took most of the heavy cannon to the army at Boston. There were left, however, 120 guns of various sizes from 3-pounders to one 32. But there were not enough carriages to mount more than 43 of them, and there was a great lack of all their equipment, sponges, rammers, and so on. Powder was, as always, deficient, also lead, flints, and cartridge paper, for all which Gates now called on the Congress. He got them at last, on October 6.[17]

More men were needed to man these extensive works. Two emotions, prevalent throughout the northern states, affected the supply of such reenforcements. One was fear of the British invasion, which prompted the militia to come forward. The other was dread of the smallpox in the camp,

which deterred them. The first was, however, the stronger. Militiamen from the neighborhood and from the New England states began to come late in July. By August they were coming in considerable numbers, though for he most part they were so ill provided and so worn down by the fatigue and hardships of their march that they were more of a burden to the garrison than a help. But three Continental regiments from Massachusetts really strengthened the army in July.[18]

By August 24 the returns showed twenty regiments in five brigades, a total of 9,157 rank and file, but only 4,899 present and fit for duty, besides 1,500 effectives at Crown Point, Fort George, and Skenesboro.[19]

The Americans had a flotilla on the lake, the schooner *Royal Savage,* captured the year before by Montgomery at St. Johns, the sloop *Enterprise,* which Arnold had taken when Ticonderoga fell, the schooner *Liberty,* taken at Skenesboro by Herrick at the same time, and the schooner *Revenge,* built at Ticonderoga. Arnold, whom Gates adjudged to be "perfectly skilled in naval affairs," had "most nobly undertaken to command" this fleet.[20] But Carleton was building boats at the other end of the lake, and Arnold wanted more than those four. He wanted auxiliary craft, gondolas, row-galleys, gunboats. They had to be built. But how could they be built?

There was plenty of standing timber, but it must first be felled, then shewn into keels and ribs and sawn into planks. Felling axes were scarce. Of broadaxes, adzes, crosscut saws, hammers, grindstones, chisels, augers, and all sorts of necessary hand tools, there were none. There were, to be sure, three sawmills in the neighborhood—one at Ticonderoga, another at Crown Point, a third near Skenesboro. Though disuse and neglect had left them in bad shape, they could be repaired. Planks could be got out in them. But how could those necessary tools be had in that wilderness? Where were bolts and nails, oakum and other naval stores, hawsers and anchors, paint, iron, ropes and blocks for rigging, canvas for sails, and all the hun-dred and one necessary articles and things for equipment to be procured? [21]

And, if you had all those, who was to use them? Who was to build and rig the vessels? Ship carpenters, sailmakers, and riggers were few in that army. The shipyards and sail lofts along the seacoast were humming with work for shipmasters and privateersmen. Few mechanics were fools enough to join a naked, starved, diseased army, when plenty of work with good pay was to be had at home. Nevertheless, those boats had to be built, and they were built.

Felling axes came first, in quantity, 1,500 from Schuyler at Albany, a thousand more from Governor Trumbull of Connecticut.[22] The soldiers

were put to work in the forest. A few ship carpenters, so improvident as to have enlisted, were combed out of the army, a few house carpenters also. These were sent to Skenesboro, where the boatyard was established; Schuyler sent thirty more from Albany.[23] But these were not enough, not nearly enough. The coastal towns were called on.

In four companies of fifty each, bringing their own tools, ship carpenters came on from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and even from far-off Philadelphia. Not for nothing, however, and not for soldiers' pay. They demanded and they got "prodegious wages," as much as five dollars a day, hard money, it was rumored. Blacksmiths also came and oarmakers and riggers and sailmakers, on similar terms.[24] Brigadier General David Waterbury, Jr., of Connecticut took charge of the work. Arnold came to Skenesboro from time to time, "to give Life & Spirit to Our Dock Yards," as Gates put it.[25] His energy and drive were contagious among the workers, and Waterbury's constant attention kept things going. Hard as it was to get them, spikes and nails being especially scarce, the necessary supplies and equipment came in.

Two types of craft were built—row-galleys and gondolas. The row-galleys were the larger, 70 to 80 feet long and 18 feet beam. They had round bottoms with keels, quarterdecks, and cabins, and were of "Spanish construction" as to their rigging; that is to say, they had two short masts, equipped with lateen sails that gave them an exotic appearance on that lake but made them easy even for landlubbers to handle.[26] Their armament was a 12- and an 18-pounder in the bow, two 9-pounders in the stern, and from four to six 6-pounders in broadside. Their complement was eighty men each.

The gondolas were flat-bottomed, but had keels. They were about forty-five feet long, rigged with one mast and two square sails and carried forty-five men each. They were slower and less handy than the galleys and could sail only before the wind while the galleys could beat to windward. Their armament was one 12-pounder and two 9-pounders.[27]

The schooner and the sloop were not so heavily armed as the galleys. The *Royal Savage* carried four 6-pounders and eight 4-pounders; the *Enterprise*, twelve 4-pounders; the *Revenge*, four 4-pounders and two 2-pounders; the *Liberty*, the same. All the craft also mounted on their bulwarks several light swivel guns. Both galleys and gondolas were equipped with oars, the galley with thirty-six.[28]

While the boats were building, the army was cheered and refreshed by the arrival of beef on the hoof, twenty head a week, and plenty of bread. To those who could afford to pay, sutlers offered vegetables, sugar, butter,

cheese, chocolate, rum, and wine. The condition of the troops was much improved.[29] On July 28 General St. Clair read the Declaration of Independence to the troops. They "manifested their joy with three cheers." "It was remarkably pleasing to see the spirits of the soldiers so raised after all heir calamities; the language of every man's countenance was, Now we are people; we have a name among the States of the world." [30]

Carleton had halted his pursuit of Sullivan's retreating army at St. Johns. But he had no intention of remaining there long. He was receiving large re-enforcements from Britain, and he intended, if possible, to march to Albany and cooperate with Howe. The plan to isolate New England by occupying the Lake Champlain and Hudson River passageway, attempted n 1777, was to be executed, if feasible. As indicated above, the Americans were alarmed because of the threat of Carleton's army. At St. Johns, Carleton proceeded to assemble and construct a fleet of vessels for the lake, because he could not advance without commanding its waters. There were on the St. Lawrence a three-masted ship, the *Inflexible*, and two schooners, he *Maria* and the *Carleton*; but, because of the ten-mile-long rapids between Chambly and St. Johns, they could not be brought up the Richelieu. He tried to bring them around the falls on rollers, but the ground was too soft to bear their weight; he had to take them apart and carry them up in pieces. From England a frigate had brought him ten gunboats knocked down. These were brought to St. Johns to be reconstructed. A thirty-on gondola, thirty longboats, and four hundred bateaux were also brought up, either overland or by dragging them through the rapids. The longboats and bateaux were to transport troops and baggage up the lake.[31]

Carleton had little difficulty in securing workmen, materials, tools, and supplies. There were the fleet in the St. Lawrence and the towns along that river to furnish them to his full requirement. The work was swiftly carried on. For instance, the *Inflexible* was rebuilt and equipped within twenty-eight days of the time the keel was laid. With equal dispatch, he rebuilt the others and constructed ten more gunboats and an extraordinary thing called a *radeau*. It was a huge, flat-bottomed affair, with two masts carrying square sails, but it was more like a raft than any other sort of vessel, having very low bulwarks. It was to be manned by three hundred men, and was armed with the heaviest ordnance, six 24-pounders, six 12-pounders, and two howitzers. It was, indeed, a sort of floating fortress. Its name was *Thunderer*.[32]

By October 4 Carleton's fighting fleet was complete and ready to sail. In it were the *Inflexible*, armed with eighteen 12-pounders, the *Maria*, with

fourteen 6-pounders, the *Carleton* with twelve of the same, the gondola *Loyal Convert* with seven 9-pounders, the giant *Thunderer*, and twenty gunboats having bow-guns ranging from 9-pounders to 24-pounders.[33]

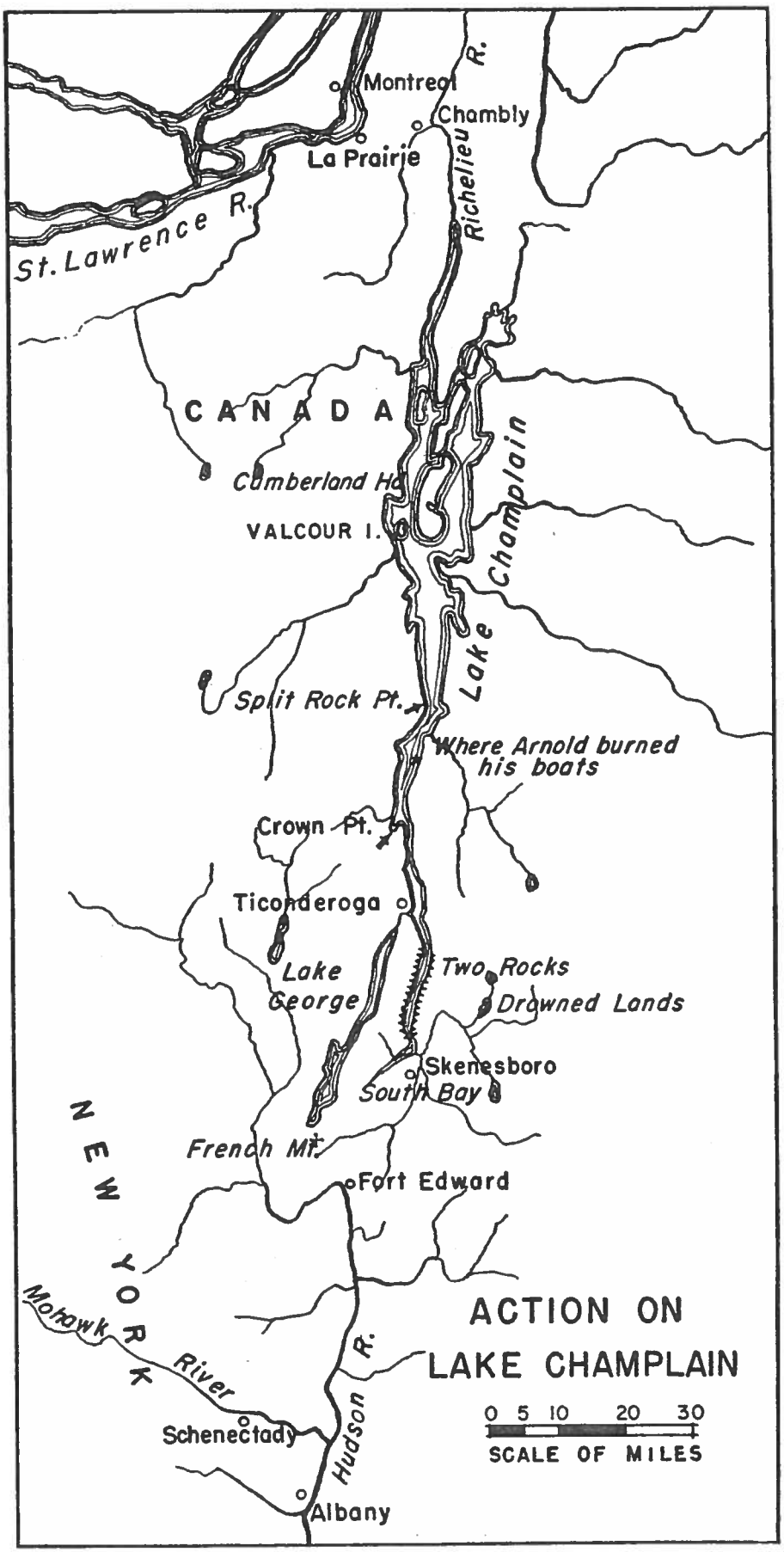
The British army in Canada had been reenforced by the arrival, in June, of the Regiment Hesse Hanau, 660 in number, and in September by a second installment of Hessians and Brunswickers, making up a total force of 5,000 German mercenaries under command of Major General Baron von Riedesel. Carleton's whole army now numbered about 13,000 rank and file.[34]

On September 10 operations against the Americans on the lake began. General William Philips with two regiments, part of a third, and some artillery was posted at St. Johns. Another regiment held Chambly. Lieutenant Colonel Carleton, a younger brother of the general, started up the Richelieu with 400 Indians in canoes, to be strengthened shortly afterwards by the addition of 100 Canadian volunteers under Captain Fraser. And 1,300 German troops embarked in eighty-two boats and moved up the river.[35]

General Simon Fraser with the light infantry, the grenadiers, and the 24th British regiment took post on the river about five miles above the New York State line. Burgoyne with the 9th, 21st, 31st, and 47th British regiments, the Hessian Regiment Riedesel, and the Hanau Regiment, moved up to Ile aux Noix, which had been possessed by the British in August and had been fortified and equipped as a base of supplies with magazines, blockhouses, and barracks.[36]

But it was not until October 14 that Burgoyne and Fraser, having left the 20th and 61st to hold Ile aux Noix, embarked for the final advance against the Americans. All the German troops were left in Canada, except the Hanau artillery, which was with Carleton's fleet on board the *Thunderer*.[37]

Arnold's preparations to meet the enemy had been pushed with such success that, by August 20, the schooners *Royal Savage* and *Revenge*, the sloop *Enterprise* and the gondolas *Boston, New Haven, Providence, New York, Connecticut,* and *Spitfire,* the cutter *Lee,* and the sloop *Liberty* were ready. On the 24th he set sail at Crown Point. At Willsborough, halfway down the lake, a hard storm, with heavy rain, overtook him and nearly foundered the *Spitfire*. The whole fleet had to weigh anchor and run before the wind up to Buttonmould Bay, where, for three days without intermission, it was lashed by the gale. On September 1 the anchors were again


Montreal
Chambly
La Prairie
Richelieu R.
St. Lawrence R.
CANADA
Cumberland Hd
VALCOUR I.
Lake Champlain
Split Rock Pt.
Where Arnold burned his boats
Crown Pt.
Ticonderoga
Lake George
Two Rocks
Drowned Lands
Skenesboro
South Bay
French Mt.
Fort Edward
NEW YORK
Mohawk River
Hudson R.
Schenectady
Albany
ACTION ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN
0 5 10 20 30
SCALE OF MILES

lifted, and a fresh southerly breeze carried the fleet down to Schuyler's Island and then to Windmill Point at the northern end of the lake and within two or three miles of the Canadian border.[38]

At Windmill Point the fleet was joined by the *Lee*, which, sloop-rigged but with oars, might be called either a cutter or a row-galley, and the gondola *Jersey*. Arnold moored his vessels in a line across the lake and sent men ashore to fell spruce trees and make fascines for lining the sides of his galleys and gondolas "to prevent the enemy's boarding and to keep off small shot." [39] They were attacked by some of Carleton's Indians, who were now in the woods along the shore; three of the Americans were killed and six wounded before a few shot from the fleet drove off the assailants.

The lake is narrow at this point, and Arnold feared the erection of batteries on both sides to rake the line of his boats. He therefore retired to good anchorage in a broader part beside Ile la Motte. On the 19th he again shifted his position to a point farther south, Bay St. Amand above Cumberland Head, a long, curved promontory on the New York side of the lake about ten miles north of Valcour Island. While there he took soundings of the channel between that island and the shore. Finding it "an exceeding fine and secure harbour," he retired to it on the 23rd and remained there until the day of battle.[40]

He had been calling and continued to call on Gates to send him 200 sailors. His force was made up almost entirely of landsmen, "very indifferent men in general," he said. "Great part of those who shipped for seamen know very little of the matter." [41] "We have a wretched, motley crew in the fleet," he wrote to Gates, "the marines, the refuse of every regiment and the seamen few of them ever wet with salt water." [42] He also wanted gunners, for few of his men knew anything about laying a gun. And he wanted clothing for his men, watch coats, breeches, blankets, caps, and shoes. It was cold at night in October on Lake Champlain, and the men were scantily clad. But he got none, neither seamen nor clothing. Indeed, his last call was made on October 10, the very day before battle. He did, however, get the rest of his boats: the *Washington, Trumbull,* and *Congress,* galleys, and the *Jersey* and *Success*, gondolas, came on as they were finished.[43]

Valcour Island lies about half a mile off the New York shore. It is two miles long and half as wide, and rises steeply to heights of 120 to 180 feet. It was then heavily wooded. The vessels lying behind it were concealed from the north by a small promontory projecting from the island on its west side, and could not be discovered by a southbound fleet in the main channel until it had passed the island and opened a view of the water behind it.[44]

Arnold moored his fleet—two schooners, one sloop, eight gondolas, and four row-galleys—in a curved line, a "half-moon," between the island and the mainland, keeping the vessels as near together as practicable. He made the galley *Congress* his flagship, taking a position in the middle of the line. General Waterbury on the *Washington* galley commanded the right wing, and Colonel Edward Wigglesworth of Massachusetts on the *Trumbull* galley, the left. The entire force on the fleet was about 800 men.

Carleton sailed from St. Johns on October 4. His fleet consisted of the square-rigged ship *Inflexible*, the schooners *Maria* and *Carleton*, the great radeau *Thunderer*, the gondola *Loyal Convert*, twenty gunboats, four longboats with fieldpieces in their bows, and twenty-four longboats for provisions and stores. The fleet was manned by 670 seamen from the British transports on the St. Lawrence, and each of the four larger vessels carried a company of the 29th Regiment acting as marines. Captain Thomas Pringle was in command.[45]

The fire power which this fleet could bring into action at one time was fifty-three guns, though in the approaching battle it was only forty-two, because neither the *Thunderer* nor the *Loyal Convert* was engaged. On the American side, the number was thirty-two.[46] The weight of metal which the British could throw in one complete discharge was perhaps 500 pounds, not counting the swivels, against the American 265.

The British fleet proceeded up the lake slowly and with apparent caution, yet really, at the last, incautiously. It first came to anchor below Ile la Motte and lay there until the 9th, while scouts went ahead looking for the Americans, without success. On the 10th it went on to an anchorage between Grand and Long islands. Here Carleton got news that the American fleet had been seen in the vicinity.

Getting under way the next morning, it stood up the lake before a strong northerly wind, rounded Cumberland Head, and passed Valcour Island. It was in mid-channel, about two miles beyond the southern end of Valcour, when the American fleet opened to its view.

Then the incaution of its proceeding was made plain. No scout boats had been sent ahead, which might have found the Americans before it had put itself to the disadvantage of having to attack from the leeward, that is to say, against the wind.

The Americans had been on the alert. The *Revenge* had been scouting to the north and had seen the British ships coming around Cumberland Head. On receiving this news Waterbury had urged Arnold "to come to sail and fight them on a retreat in [the] main lake as they were so much

superior to us in number and strength and we being in such a disadvantageous harbour." But Arnold persisted in his plan to fight where he was.[47]

When the British discovered the American vessels, they hauled up for them. Arnold ordered the *Royal Savage* and the four galleys to get under way and commence the attack. He himself was on board the *Congress* galley. But when he got out into open water and saw the full strength of the enemy he signaled for a return to the line behind the island. The enemy, who by this time had made some headway in beating against the wind, opened fire at long range on the schooner and the galleys, to which the Americans replied with all the guns they could bring to bear.

The *Royal Savage*, either by misadventure or, as Arnold claimed, by mismanagement, fell to leeward while drawing under the lee of the island. Three shots in quick succession hit her, damaging one of her masts and cutting her rigging. She came up into the wind, but failed to go about on the other tack, hung in the eye of the wind for a long moment, fell off on the same tack as before, and grounded on the island shore. But her crew continued to fire her guns.

Neither the *Inflexible* nor the *Maria* had been able to beat back into close range. They anchored at long gunshot distance, and the *Inflexible* brought her heavy guns to bear on her enemy. Neither the *Thunderer* nor the *Loyal Convert* was engaged.

The schooner *Carleton*, boring into the fight, was caught by a flaw of wind and brought up opposite the middle of the American line. Lieutenant Dacres, her commander, anchored her, with a spring on her cable, broadside to the American fleet. Seventeen of the British gunboats came up into line with her. With no more than 350 yards distance between the two lines, the real battle began about noon.

"A tremendous cannonade was opened on both sides," wrote Baron von Riedesel. To the storm of shot and shell that fell upon the American fleet was added musketry from Captain Fraser's Indians and Canadians, who had landed from their canoes on the island and on the mainland west of the vessels. The crew of the *Royal Savage* was forced to abandon her. She was boarded by a boat's crew from the *Thunderer*, who turned her guns on her former friends. But they were soon driven off by the American fire. Another boat's crew, from the *Maria*, set her afire, and she blew up.

Meanwhile, the Americans' guns converged on the *Carleton*, Arnold himself sighting the guns of the *Congress*. She was hit time and again. Dacres was knocked senseless; another officer lost an arm. Edward Pellew, only a midshipman, a lad of nineteen, assumed command. After hours of fighting, the spring on her cable was shot away. Under the wind, she swung

at her anchor, bows on to the enemy and, having no bow guns, hung there silenced, to be raked by every shot. Pringle on the *Maria* signaled her to withdraw, but she could not catch the wind so as to pay off on the right tack. Pellew climbed out on her bowsprit, under heavy musket fire, and tried to throw the jib over to make it draw, but without success. Two boats came to her assistance. Pellew, holding his position on the bowsprit in spite of a rain of musket-bullets, threw them a line, and the *Carleton* was towed away. She had been hulled several times, there was two feet of water in her hold, and half of her crew had been killed or wounded. Pellew further distinguished himself in later years, rising to the rank of admiral, and was honored with the title Viscount Exmouth.

Towards evening the *Inflexible* got within point-blank range and discharged five heavy broadsides against the American line, completely silencing its fire. But about five o'clock she dropped back to a distance of 700 yards from the Americans. The gunboats withdrew, and the whole British fleet anchored in a line across the southern end of the passage between Valcour and the mainland, keeping up a desultory fire until darkness fell.

The Americans took account of their injuries. The *Congress* had been hulled twelve times. She had two holes in her side between wind and water. Her mainmast was hit in two places. The *Washington* had also been severely punished and had one shot through her mainmast. The hull of the *Philadelphia* had been so damaged that she sank about an hour after the battle. All the sails of the fleet had been torn to tatters, and the rigging hung in tangles. The loss among the personnel was grievous; 60 had been either killed or wounded. Their store of ammunition was three-fourths gone. It was not possible to contemplate a renewal of the conflict on the morrow. It seemed that they were trapped and must surrender. But Arnold had another thought—to attempt an escape under the cover of night.

The night was dark. A heavy fog enshrouded the two fleets. A lantern, so hooded as to show a light only directly behind, was fixed in the stern of each vessel. At seven o'clock, the *Trumbull* galley got under way before a light northerly wind. The others fell in line at practicable intervals. The *Congress* and the *Washington* brought up the rear. And so, noiselessly, the whole line crept past the left of the British fleet, the fog so thick that none of the enemy's vessels could be seen. When they were beyond hearing distance the oars were got out, and the crews labored at them and at the pumps all through the night.

By dawn the *Trumbull* galley, with the *Revenge* and *Enterprise,* the *Lee* galley, and the gondolas *Boston, New Haven, Connecticut, Spitfire,* and *Success* had got ahead of the rest. The *Congress* and *Washington* galleys,

the gondolas *Providence, New York,* and *Jersey,* which had made only eight miles, put in at Schuyler's Island. There the *New York* and *Providence* were found to be so badly damaged that their equipment was removed and they were sunk. The *Jersey* had run aground and, with the weight of water in her, could not be moved. The other two set out again early in the afternoon.

On discovering the escape of the Americans the next morning, Carleton immediately started after them. But, so upset was he by his surprise and rage, he forgot to give orders to his land forces. When within sight of Schuyler's Island he had to turn back to remedy his oversight.

The wind had shifted to the south, and, although Arnold put his men to the oars again, his battered galleys made little progress. By morning, after sixteen hours rowing, they had covered only six miles, and the pursuing British fleet, favored by a fresh northerly wind, which had not reached the Americans, was in sight in the rear. Also in sight, in front, were four American gondolas, which had been unable to keep up with the *Trumbull* and the others.

The *Inflexible,* the *Carleton,* and the *Maria* came on rapidly, the *Maria* ahead. At eleven o'clock, Arnold opened fire on her from his stern 9- and 12-pounders. But at Split Rock the pursuers caught up, and poured broadsides of grape and round shot upon the fleeing vessels. The *Washington* was overwhelmed by this fire. Waterbury struck her flag. In the course of the retreat, the *Lee,* like the *Jersey,* ran ashore and was abandoned; both were taken by the British.

But the *Congress* and the four gondolas kept on under the favoring wind, which had now caught up with them. For five glasses, two hours and a half, this unequal combat raged. The three British vessels, one on her broadside and two astern of her, concentrated their fire on the *Congress.* Her hull was shattered, her sails and rigging shot to rags, but there was no hint of surrender. Instead, Arnold signaled to the galleys to turn to windward so that the British sailing vessels could not follow, and to run for the east shore.

In Buttonmould Bay he beached his wrecks and set fire to them. He drew his men up on the shore and held them there until he was sure that his boats would blow up with their flags still flying, while the enemy stood off, keeping up a constant cannonade. The remains of his men, 200 in number—46 only of the *Congress* out of a crew of 73—started on a bridle path for Crown Point, ten miles away. They escaped an Indian ambush and reached the Point after dark, finding what was left of their fleet, the *Trumbull,* the *Enterprise,* the *Revenge,* the *Liberty,* and one gondola.

There was no stopping at Crown Point. Lieutenant Colonel Hartley and

his garrison of the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment, together with Arnold's survivors, could not attempt to hold it. They burned all the buildings and retreated to Ticonderoga.[48]

A singular occurrence took place immediately upon their reaching that fort. A number of British rowboats came up under a flag of truce and delivered up General Waterbury and the entire crew of the *Washington*, 110 in number. Carleton had paroled them. This generous treatment made such an impression on the captives, and they were so loud in their praise of him, that it was thought dangerous to allow them to mingle with the others. They were immediately sent off on their way home.

Arnold had been utterly defeated, losing eleven of his sixteen vessels and 80 of his men; but his gallantry and theirs was not unrewarded. Indeed, the greatest American victories in the war thereafter were made possible by that desperate fight. The sequence of events is closely connected.

Carleton had been so delayed by the necessity of building a fleet to meet Arnold's, by his subsequent necessarily cautious maneuvering, and by the battle that he reconsidered his decision to attack Ticonderoga and withdrew all his army and his fleet from the lake to St. Johns. He felt that Ticonderoga was too strong to be carried by storm, and the season was too far advanced to allow siege operations. If he should be held up in the attack even for a short time he could not follow through to the Hudson in the winter and of course could not establish communication with Howe. If he could have reached Albany, the effect upon the American cause might have been disastrous. If he could have wintered at Ticonderoga and made it his base of supplies so as to start for the Hudson in the early spring, the British campaign might not have met with disaster in the next year at Saratoga. It was Saratoga that gave the needed encouragement to the French to send land and naval forces to aid the Americans. And those forces ensured the surrender at Yorktown and finished the war. Valcour Island was no defeat, therefore. "It was the American cause that was saved that day." [49]

Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, the distinguished authority on naval affairs, has endorsed this view: "That the Americans were strong enough to impose the capitulation of Saratoga was due to the invaluable year of delay secured to them in 1776 by their little navy on Lake Champlain, created by the indomitable energy, and handled with the indomitable courage of the traitor, Benedict Arnold." [50]

CHAPTER 36

Burgoyne's Expedition

Canada in the winter of 1776–1777 had no attractions for Major General John Burgoyne. After the retirement of the British army in October, 1776, following the battle with Arnold at Valcour, there would be no more military operations in the North until the spring, which was not to be expected before May. A prospect of six months of idleness in Quebec or Montreal had little appeal to such a restless and ambitious spirit. He could look forward to active service at the end of that period; but the plans for that would not be made in Quebec, nor would commands be allotted there. London was headquarters.

This was his second visit to America. His first had been to Boston in 1775. There he had been subordinate to Gage, Howe, and Clinton and he had not relished that position. He wrote to Lord Rochford after Bunker Hill: "The inferiority of my station as youngest Major-General upon the staff left me almost a useless spectator. . . . My rank only serves to place me in a motionless, drowsy, irksome medium, or rather vacuum, too low for the honour of command, too high for that of execution." So he had gone home in December of that year.[1]

He came back in the spring of 1776, but again as a subordinate, second in command to Carleton. It was Carleton, not he, that had won the victory at Valcour. It might be Carleton that would lead the King's forces in Canada in the coming campaign of 1777. Plainly, something should be done about it. So he went home again.[2]

In London he found conditions favorable to his ambition. Carleton was definitely out of favor. The King had been disappointed and vexed at his

failure to press on after Valcour and take Ticonderoga. So had the country in general, including Lord George Germain, colonial secretary, responsible for the conduct of the war in America.

At first Germain was inclined to couple Burgoyne with Carleton as blameworthy for that failure. But there was another element in Germain's feelings toward Carleton, a bitter personal animosity antedating Valcour. He was glad to put all the blame on him, eager, indeed, when he observed the King's attitude towards Burgoyne.[3]

The King had shown a friendly face to the general. "Yesterday morning," announced the *Morning Chronicle* early in January, "his Majesty took an outing on horseback in Hyde Park upwards of an hour, attended by General Burgoyne." [4] Indeed, his Majesty had already indicated to Lord North his pleasure that Burgoyne should command operations from Canada in the spring.

So everything was going smoothly, and Burgoyne did nothing to cause friction. He did not intrigue against Carleton, criticized him not at all—indeed he defended him—and so aroused no opposition among that general's friends. To aid his own cause, he wrote and submitted to the King a paper entitled "Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada," which, because of its results, was a very important document of the Revolution.

Burgoyne's plan assumed a strong American force at Ticonderoga, perhaps as many as 12,000 men. It called for a British army of 8,000 regulars, with a sufficient equipment of artillery, supplemented by "a corps of watermen," 2,000 Canadians, and "1000 or more savages." Of this force, he would leave 3,000 to hold Canada. He proposed, after establishing magazines at Crown Point, to embark the rest upon Lake Champlain. Ticonderoga was to be attacked and reduced "early in the summer."

After that, the advance should proceed, preferably by way of Lake George and the Hudson, to Albany. Or, if the enemy should be found on that route in too great force, it should go to Albany by the lower end of Champlain, through Skenesboro and the Hudson. In either case, a chain of posts should be established along the route of the expedition to secure its communications. From Albany, after the end of the campaign, Burgoyne was to establish contact with Howe. He did not expect Howe to send forces northward during the campaign to support him. He would have sufficient strength to reach Albany and to maintain himself there.

Burgoyne also proposed an auxiliary expedition to the same objective, but by way of Lake Ontario, Oswego, and the Mohawk River, which empties into the Hudson near Albany. He did not enlarge upon the advan-

tages of his scheme, nor even specifically suggest its strategic purpose; but an already prevailing idea among the British high command was that holding the Hudson, and thus separating the New England colonies from the rest, was a matter of the first importance to the success of the King's arms in America.

Burgoyne was tactfully silent as to the command of the expedition, except by an indirect reference to it. This business, he said, would depend for its success upon the cooperation of the governor of Canada; to wit, Carleton. His "peremptory powers, warm zeal and consonant opinion" must be had, else "plausible obstructions . . . will be sufficient to crush such exertions as an officer of a sanguine temper, entrusted with the future conduct of the campaign and whose personal interest and fame therefore consequently depend upon a timely out-set, would be led to make." Clearly, Carleton was not suggested for the leadership.[5]

The King liked the plan. Its outlines, he said, seemed to be "on a proper foundation." The Mohawk River diversion, he also approved. Germain issued the necessary orders in a letter to Carleton. He was to remain in Canada and guard that province with 3,770 men of specified British and German regiments, including McLean's Royal Highland Emigrants, and detach Burgoyne with the remainder of the troops, 7,173 in number, "to proceed with all possible expedition to join General Howe and put himself under his command." He was also to furnish Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger with 675 men, "together with a sufficient number of Canadians and Indians," for the Mohawk expedition.[6]

"I shall write to Sir William Howe," Germain went on, "from hence by the first packet." But Carleton, Burgoyne, and St. Leger were also to inform Howe of the plan, so that they might receive instructions from him.[7]

Germain's letter to Carleton was long and insultingly specific in its details. Not only so, but it also charged Carleton with "supineness" in his failure to attack Ticonderoga, and even blamed him for the defeat of the Hessians at Trenton, because that failure had set free American troops to act with Washington against the Jersey outpost.[8]

Such a letter was enough to anger Carleton, and it did. He wrote a spirited reply, defending his actions in forcible language. But, magnanimous man that he was, he added that, in spite of the "Slight, Disregard and Censure" visited upon him, he would give Burgoyne all possible assistance.[9] And he did.

Looking backward, one observes the weaknesses, indeed the stupidity, of Burgoyne's plan. There was little to be gained by a march from Canada to Albany. The cutting of communications between New England and the

other colonies, if it had been possible, could have had important results only after the passage of time. And it was necessary that the war be won before Britain's financial resources should be overstrained, and before France should take advantage of the American situation to win revenge for the many defeats Britain had inflicted upon her. The troops set aside for Burgoyne's expedition could have given Howe useful added strength, even strength perhaps sufficient for a final destruction of Washington's army. Further, Burgoyne's army under the plan was to cooperate with Howe's only *after* the end of the campaign. It was to reach Albany unsupported from the south; and Howe was authorized by Lord Germain to move against Philadelphia by sea, leaving only a garrison force in New York. Burgoyne was to travel through the woods to Albany, with an ever lengthening line of communications and with no assurance of help even at Albany, should he need it. Germain finally saw this defect in the plan, perhaps not too clearly, and got off a letter to Howe suggesting that he cooperate with Burgoyne during the campaign. But Howe received Germain's letter in August while he was en route by sea to Chesapeake Bay, and he could hardly act to help Burgoyne at such a late time—at least he could not without completely dis-rupting his own plan of operation. He did make a gesture toward assisting Burgoyne by asking Clinton, who was in command of the garrison at New York, to do what he could to help his fellow general.[10]

Burgoyne arrived at Quebec on May 6, 1777. Spring had just come; the ice in the river had broken up, "with a most astonishing noise," one week before. He found the troops, after a mild winter, in good condition, except their clothing. New uniforms to replace those worn in last year's campaign had not come from England. To patch the old ones, the tails of the coats of the British regiments had been cut off. They all now wore short jackets, like the regulation coats of the light infantry. Their cocked hats had been cut down into caps. But these alterations were all for the better in forest warfare.[11]

The Brunswickers, too, were far from smart in their appearance. Their duke, in his prudent care for his own purse, had sent them out in worn uniforms and old shoes, and Canada had not afforded complete replacements. But all such matters were merely surface. The substance was sound.

There was one difference in uniforms, however, between the British and German contingents that was important. While the British uniforms had been modeled after those of the army of Germany and were too heavy, too awkward, too tight, and too elaborate for rough campaigning in America, those of these Brunswickers were far worse in all of these respects. Their dragoons, who had come without horses and were to serve dismounted to

the end of the campaign, were most preposterously equipped for such service. Their great cocked hats, ornamented with a long plume, their hair worn in a long, stiff queue, their tight, thick coats, their stiff leather breeches, their huge leather gauntlets almost elbow-length, their great jack boots reaching to mid-thigh, weighing twelve pounds a pair without the long brass spurs always worn even on the march, made up as unsuitable an outfit for marching and fighting in a forested wilderness in an American midsummer as could have been devised by the most ingenious. Add to that a long, straight broadsword to trail at the thigh and a short heavy carbine, and one could have no feeling but pity for a Brunswick dragoon.[12]

So much for the main force of British and German regulars; they were fit and ready to go. The same could not be said for the irregular auxiliaries included in the plan. After all, they were French; and, however willing they had been in Montcalm's time to fight for their flag, this war meant little or nothing to them. Instead of the desired 2,000, Burgoyne could round up only 150. The Tories were also backward; only 100 enlisted. With the Indians he had somewhat better luck. He got 400 of the 1,000 he wanted. They were collected and led by La Corne St. Luc and Charles de Langlade.[13]

For his navy, he had the *Inflexible,* the *Maria,* the *Carleton,* the *Loyal Convert,* and the *Thunderer* of last year's fleet. To these were added the *Washington*, the *Jersey*, and the *Lee*, taken from Arnold after Valcour, another ship-rigged vessel, built that winter at St. Johns, the *Royal George,* and twenty-eight of last year's gunboats. Of bateaux for the transport of troops, there was an ample number.[14]

In his artillery section there were 138 guns, ranging from little 4.4-inch mortars and light 3-pounders to heavy 24-pounders. But many of these were mounted in the vessels, others were to be left at St. Johns, others at Ticonderoga and Fort George after they were taken. His field train for the whole expedition was to consist of 42 guns, large and small.[15]

The British advance corps was composed of the 24th regiment, the light infantry, and the grenadiers, including not only those of the expeditionary regiments, but also the flank companies of the 29th, 31st, and 24th, whose "battalion companies" remained in Canada.[16] This corps was under Brigadier General Simon Fraser. The 1st Brigade, the 9th, 47th, and 53rd regiments, was under Brigadier General Powell; the 2nd brigade, the 20th, 21st, and 62nd regiments, under Brigadier General Hamilton. This division constituted the right wing of the army and was under command of Major General William Phillips.

The German advance corps consisted of grenadiers and light infantry, including a company of forty jägers and forty "marksmen" selected from the

different British regiments. This whole corps was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Breymann. The 1st brigade, the Riedesel, Specht, and Rhetz regiments, was under Brigadier Specht; the 2nd brigade, the Prince Frederick and Hesse Hanau regiments, was under Brigadier Gall. This division was the left wing, commanded by Major General von Riedesel.[17]

The British infantry division numbered 3,724 rank and file, the German 3,016. The guns were to be divided between the two and served by 245 regular British artillerymen, 150 men drawn from the infantry, and 78 of the Hesse Hanau artillery company. The Canadian and Tory volunteers were to cover the British right wing, the Indians to cover the German left wing. The Brunswick dismounted dragoons were to act as reserves. In all the army numbered 7,213 rank and file.[18]

It was not a large army, but it was, for its size, a strong fighting force composed of trained, disciplined, and experienced men, under capable officers. Burgoyne, though not a military leader of the first or even second class, was an active, resolute, courageous soldier, well versed in the arts of war and, what is very important in such an extensive expedition as was about to be undertaken, he had the trust and confidence of his men. General Phillips, second in command, had served for twenty years in the British army. He was a distinguished artillerist and an exceptionally able strategist. Fraser was a scion of the noble Scotch house of Lovat. He, too, had had long experience as a soldier, had served with Wolfe at Louisburg and Quebec, and had acquired a high reputation for energy, activity, and good judgment coupled with cool daring. Hamilton had attained his command solely because of his professional merits and accomplishments. Kingston, the adjutant general, had served with distinction under Burgoyne in Portugal. Major the Earl of Balcarres, commanding the light infantry, and Major Acland of the grenadiers were officers of high professional attainments and undoubted courage.[19]

Of the Germans, Baron von Riedesel was the most distinguished. He had been a soldier in the Hessian and Brunswick armies for more than twenty years. At the outbreak of the Seven Years' War he was attached to the staff of the Duke of Brunswick and was employed by him in special duties which called for the use of delicate tact, good judgment, and personal courage. His reputation for intrepidity thus established was later confirmed by his conduct in many dangerous enterprises. He possessed the essential qualities of a good soldier; he was cool and discreet in danger, swift in action. His clear understanding had been studiously applied to the principles of his profession, and now, at the age of thirty-eight, he was at the height of his mental and physical powers. He was of medium height, strongly built, vigor-

ous and hardy. His florid face was full and round, his features regular, his blue eyes notably large and clear. His amiable disposition was displayed in his care for the comfort and well-being of his men.[20] Under his leadership, backed by such experienced professional soldiers as his subordinate officers, the German contingent in Burgoyne's army was bound to give a good account of itself.

Burgoyne's troops were first assembled at St. Johns. There, on June 13, was enacted a bit of pageantry strange to that wilderness. On the *Thunderer,* moored in the river, there was erected the royal standard of Britain, bravely displaying on its embroidered silken fabric the golden lions of England, the red lion of Scotland, the harp of Ireland and, somewhat reminiscently, the fleur-de-lis of France. This symbol of Britain's might was then saluted by a discharge of all the guns of the fleet and in the fort.[21]

Still further to impress the Americans with the majesty of the laws they flouted, Burgoyne a week later issued a proclamation, in language which, according to a contemporary pamphleteer, was characterized by "the tinsel splendor of enlightened absurdity." It was Burgoyne the dramatist at his worst, at his almost unbelievable worst. It is difficult for one reading it now to realize that it is not a parody of some less bombastic manifesto.

Among other emotional appeals, it called upon "the suffering thousands," that is to say, the Tories, in the colonies to declare whether they were not subject to "the completest system of Tyranny that ever God in his displeasure suffer'd for a time to be exercised over a froward and stubborn Generation." It declared that "persecution and torture, unprecedented in the inquisitions of the Romish Church, are among the palpable enormities that verify the affirmative." To consummate this tyranny, it said, "the profanation of Religion is added to the most profligate prostitution of common sense." And so it went on to offer encouragement and protection to all who would take part in "the glorious task of redeeming their Countrymen from dungeons" and reestablishing the rule of the King.

The writer gave warning to those who persisted in this "unnatural Rebellion," that he had but "to give stretch" to his Indian auxiliaries, "and they amount to thousands," to overtake such recalcitrants "wherever they may lurk," for which vengeance upon those persisting in "the phrenzy of hostility" he would "stand acquitted in the Eyes of God and Men." There was a final warning uttered in "Consciousness of Christianity," that "devastation, famine and every concomitant horror that a reluctant but indispensable prosecution of military duty must occasion" awaited the impenitent.[22]

Instead of frightening the rebellious Americans, it first made them angry,

then made them laugh. Parodies by the dozen appeared, notably an excellent one by Francis Hopkinson.[23] In England, there was a similar reaction. Horace Walpole called its author "the vaporing Burgoyne," "Pomposo," and "Hurlothrumbo," and remarked upon one who with "consciousness of Christianity" could "reconcile the scalping knife with the Gospel." [24]

A few days after the issuance of that rodomontade, Burgoyne addressed a council of his Indian auxiliaries in equally high-flown language. "Warriors, you are free—go forth in might and valor of your cause—strike at the common enemies of Great Britain and America—disturbers of public order, peace and happiness, destroyers of commerce, parricides of state," and so on at length, an incitement to the usual methods of savage warfare, if ever there was one, it seemed. But no, not that. "I positively forbid bloodshed, when you are not opposed in arms. Aged men, women, children and prisoners must be held sacred from the knife or hatchet, even in actual conflict." After that speech, the savage instincts of the Indians were tamed and subdued, their excitable natures sobered by a distribution of rum and by a "war-dance, in which they threw themselves in various postures, every now and then making most hideous yells." [25]

Again Burgoyne, a good soldier afflicted with a mania for the pen, exposed himself to ridicule. Walpole called it "still more supernatural" than his proclamation. Edmund Burke blasted it in the House of Commons. He supposed a riot on Tower Hill, where the royal menagerie was kept. "What would the Keeper of His Majesty's lions do? Would he not fling open the dens of the wild beasts and then address them thus? 'My gentle lions—my humane bears—my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth! But I exhort you, as you are Christians and members of civilized society, to take care not to hurt any man, woman or child!' " And Lord North, who had sanctioned the employment of the Indians, laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks.[26]

Ticonderoga, familiar name to British and Americans alike by 1777, is a bold, squarish, blunt-nosed promontory a mile long and three-quarters of a mile wide, that juts out from the western side of Lake Champlain, whose waters wash its base on the north, east, and south. At the foot of its southwest shoulder a very narrow gorge extends westward a mile or more, through which the waters of Lake George are poured into Champlain. The highest elevation on the promontory is about seventy feet above the lake.

From the east side of Champlain, another headland, a rocky bluff thirty to fifty feet high called Mount Independence, is thrust out towards the southeast corner of Ticonderoga. The points of the two narrow the lake to a width of about a quarter of a mile. This is the gateway from the upper lake

to the lower, also to Lake George. Having passed through it one may go on by water directly south into the narrow, upper end of Champlain, and from its extremity up Wood Creek to within a few miles of the upper reaches of the Hudson. Or one may turn aside at Ticonderoga into Lake George and follow it to a point as near the Hudson.

About two miles to the northwest of the nose of Ticonderoga, Mount Hope commands the road to Lake George. A mile to the southwest, another hill, called Sugar Loaf from its conical appearance as seen from the east—but renamed Mount Defiance by the British after its capture—rises 750 feet above the water. At this time both shores of the lake and all the mentioned heights, except where Ticonderoga had been cleared for its fortification, were densely forested.

As has been hereinbefore stated, the French had built a star-shaped stone fort, with five bastions, on Ticonderoga in 1755. When it was attacked by Jeffrey Amherst in 1759 its retreating garrison blew up a large part of it. The British rebuilt it in less substantial fashion; but after the Peace of Paris, in 1763, it was allowed to fall into decay, though a considerable part of it, facing the lake, was still in serviceable condition in 1777.

While the French held it, they had constructed lines, extending in a curve across the promontory, about three-quarters of a mile behind the fort. These were built of logs heaped upon one another to a height of eight feet, covered with earth and faced with an abatis.

After the evacuation of Crown Point in July, 1776, and the concentration of the American troops at Ticonderoga, vigorous efforts were made to strengthen its defenses. The remains of the old fort were to some extent repaired. Blockhouses were built to protect the flanks and rear of the old French lines, which had been enlarged. Other blockhouses, also breastworks and small redoubts, defended the lower slopes on the north and south and various other points.

On Mount Hope a new barbette battery was built in a position covering the slope down to the outlet of Lake George and the road which ran south along its shore.

Across the lake Mount Independence showed a high, rugged, precipitous face. Its rear was protected naturally by a creek and a wide and deep morass, artificially by batteries and a strong, stone breastwork cleverly designed to take advantage of the irregularities of the ground. On its summit, an eight-pointed star redoubt, enclosing barracks, was the citadel of that position.

To close the water gateway, a boom of heavy logs, strung together on a massive iron chain, was stretched across from the northern point of Inde-

pendence to the southern corner of Ticonderoga. Behind it, for communication between the two, was a bridge.

The plan of these works was suggested by Colonel John Trumbull; they were designed by the Polish engineer, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko. Trumbull had proposed fortifying Sugar Loaf, but Gates had declared that it was an entirely inaccessible height and could therefore neither be fortified by him, nor be possessed by the enemy. Although Trumbull, Wayne, and game-legged Arnold climbed its steepest face, the eastern side, to the top, and although the northwest side was much less steep and difficult, Gates adhered to his decision not to try to fortify it.

A return of the troops at this post, dated June 28, 1777, showed ten Continental and two militia regiments, but they were slim regiments, ranging in number from 45 rank and file, present and fit, to 265, the average being 160. There were also Benjamin Whitcomb's little corps of 19 scouts, Thomas Lee's Rangers numbering 23, 124 artificers, and 250 in the artillery section. In all, including officers, the garrison might be estimated at 2,500.[27] The outside lines around Mount Independence plus the old French lines behind Ticonderoga were over 2,000 yards long. Even distributed along them in one thin line, with no reserves, no allowance for a force to hold Mount Hope, the blockhouses, and other works, there would have been one man for each yard, a mere skeleton defense. To man the works properly, at least five times the number of that garrison were necessary.

In chief command was Major General Arthur St. Clair. Born in Scotland, he had served in the British army in the French and Indian War, earning distinction at the siege of Louisburg and the capture of Quebec. Having married an American lady of wealth, he left the British service and established a home in Pennsylvania. He took the side of the rebels and was commissioned colonel of the 2nd Pennsylvania battalion in January, 1776. He was creditably concerned in the retreat across the Jerseys and the battles of Trenton and Princeton, as well as in the disaster at Trois Rivières. In February, 1777, the Congress appointed him a major general. He had been selected by Gates to command at Ticonderoga and had arrived at that post on June 12, 1777.

He was now past his fortieth year, tall, well built, and handsome in figure. His features were regular, his blue-gray eyes clear and intelligent, his hair reddish brown.[28] His manners were easy and graceful. Though his service during the war was competent to a degree, it cannot be said that he showed the capacity, the military ability, that would have justified his appointment as major general. A brigadier's rank would have been more suitable to his qualifications.

Serving under St. Clair at that post were three brigadier generals, the Frenchman Matthias Alexis Roche de Fermoy, John Paterson of Massachusetts, and Enoch Poor of New Hampshire, none of whom achieved distinction in the war.

The condition of internal affairs at Ticonderoga was far from satisfactory. There were not only too few men, there was too little of everything—arms, equipment, ammunition, supplies, and even food and clothing.[29] Schuyler came up from Albany and held a council of war with the four Ticonderoga generals on June 20. They agreed that there were too few troops to hold the whole works; that, nevertheless, they should hold on as long as possible and then concentrate all their force on Independence, which they might be able to hold as long as their food lasted; that bateaux should be kept ready for a final retreat.[30]

How they expected to get the troops safely across to Independence in the face of an enemy force that had beaten them out of Ticonderoga, how they expected to preserve that fleet of bateaux and to make that retreat, after the enemy held Ticonderoga and possessed the water gate, seem not to have been considered. But those questions are, after all, merely academic. They never had to be answered.

Two days before that council was held Burgoyne's entire force had assembled at Cumberland Head. It was there that he issued his great manifesto. From that point, the progress of the fleet and army was smooth and deliberate at the rate of eighteen to twenty miles a day.

Twenty or more great canoes, each holding twenty Indians, with another fleet bearing the Canadians and Tories dressed—or undressed—like Indians, formed the vanguard. Then came the gunboats and the bateaux of the British advance, the 24th regiment, the light infantry, and the grenadiers. The fleet was next in line, the tall-masted, square-sailed *Inflexible* and *Royal George*; the two schooners *Carleton* and *Maria*; the gondola *Loyal Convert*; the huge, unwieldy, absurd radeau *Thunderer*, that would "neither row nor sail" [31] but had to be got along somehow; the captives of last year's encounter, the galley *Washington*, the cutter *Lee*, and the gondola *Jersey*; and the gunboats, twenty-four of them.

After the fleet came the bateaux of the 1st British brigade "in the greatest order and regularity," [32] and then Burgoyne and his two major generals, Riedesel and Phillips, each in his own pinnace. The British 2nd brigade was followed by the two German brigades. Ignominiously, the tail of the procession was a motley fleet of boats of all kinds carrying the sutlers, the

women, and all the raggle-taggle of camp followers that hung on the rear of the armies of that day.[33]

Against a setting of the blue waters of the lake and the dark green background of its forested shores, the painted faces and bodies of hundreds of Indians and their make-believe savage companions, the masses of British scarlet and of German dark blue, the green of the jägers and the light blue of the dragoons, with their regimental facings of every hue, the shining brass of the tall hats of the Hessian grenadiers, the glinting of the sunlight upon polished musket barrels and bayonets, the flashing of thousands of wet paddles and oars made up a spectacular pageant, brilliant in its color, light, and motion, thrilling in its purpose and intention.

On the 26th General Fraser's advance corps left Crown Point, where the army had by that time been concentrated, and pushed on ahead with the Indians, Canadians, and Tories. On July 1, "the weather being fine," the main army divided, the British taking the west side of the lake, the Germans the east side. The whole expanse of the lake, a mile wide, was "cover'd with Boats or Batteaux's"; as Lieutenant Hadden wrote, "some of the Armed Vessels accompanied us, the Music and Drums of the different Regiments were continually playing and contributed to make the Scene and passage extremely pleasant."[34] Three miles above Ticonderoga, the British landed and encamped on their side, the Germans opposite them. Fraser was a mile in advance. Early the next day the operations against the forts began.[35]

General Phillips, commanding Fraser's advance strengthened by one British brigade, started for Mount Hope. Its garrison set the works on fire, ran down the steep, rear slope and fled to the old French lines, a sensible proceeding proving the folly of the occupation of that outpost so far from the main defenses. A quick movement by the British might have cut off the retreating Americans; but not until one o'clock did they occupy the abandoned position and send Captain Fraser with his Indians and British marksmen on a circuit around the hill for that purpose. Finding no one to cut off, they went on towards the old French lines, drove in a picket of sixty men, approached within less than a hundred yards of the lines, took cover in the woods, and opened fire. St. Clair, thinking that this was a prelude to an assault at that point, ordered its defenders to sit down on the fire steps, keep under cover, and hold their fire. But, when tempted by the very near approach of one of the British marksmen, Lieutenant Colonel James Wilkinson ordered a sergeant to take a shot at him.

At the sound of that single discharge, the entire force within the old

French lines jumped to their feet, mounted the fire steps, and loosed a volley, then another and another. The artillery joined in the fusillade. When at last the officers had succeeded in stopping these unauthorized pyrotechnics and the smoke had cleared away, it was seen that the enemy had retreated to 300 yards' distance, leaving but one man lying on the field, the man Wilkinson had ordered shot. But when a corporal's guard went on to fetch him in and bury him, he was found to be unhurt. He was merely drunk. At least 3,000 musket shots had been fired and eight pieces of artillery had been discharged; yet only one man of 500—all within 80 to 100 yards—had been killed and two wounded.[36]

In the meantime, Riedesel's division had advanced close to the creek behind Independence and had been fired on. But darkness fell before any nearer hostile move could be made. The next day, Mount Hope was occupied in force by the British, and there was a certain amount of cannonading of little avail to either side. But something less noisy, that was to prove immediately decisive of the contest, was on foot.

Burgyone sent Lieutenant Twiss, his chief engineer, to take a look at that neglected Sugar Loaf. Twiss climbed its northwest flank, came back, and reported that it commanded Ticonderoga at 1,400 yards and Independence at 1,500. He could open a road and have guns up there within twenty-four hours. Burgoyne gave the orders. Phillips took charge. "Where a goat can go," said he, "a man can go and where a man can go he can drag a gun." [37] On July 4 the engineers were at work on the road.

St. Clair had been strengthened by the arrival of 900 fresh militiamen. He was looking for an assault on some part of his works, but there seemed to be little enemy activity. Yet there were movements. Burgoyne took Gall's brigade from Riedesel and moved it to the Ticonderoga side, giving him in exchange Fraser's Indians, Canadians, Tories, and British "marksmen." Riedesel was to move to the south around Independence and close the way of retreat by the road on that side of the lake, the guns on Sugar Loaf being expected to prevent any embarkation for retreat by water. But Riedesel had not yet begun his circuitous move.[38]

On the morning of July 5, St. Clair took a good look at something moving on the top of Sugar Loaf. Were there men up there? There were and something else, two guns, 12-pounders, not yet mounted, but on the way to be. He turned to his adjutant, Wilkinson. "We must away from this," said he, "for our situation has become a desperate one." [39] At least, that is the way Wilkinson reports his speech. Doubtless St. Clair was more brief and less stilted.

A council of war, immediately held, promptly and unanimously voted to give up the forts and retreat. But the withdrawal could not be begun by day, in full sight of the enemy. The night promised concealment. There would be a new moon, setting early and leaving comforting darkness.[40]

The relics of Arnold's Valcour fleet, the *Trumbull* and *Gates* galleys, the schooners *Liberty* and *Revenge,* and the sloop *Enterprise*, had been anchored in line across the narrow water behind the bridge. More than two hundred bateaux and other small craft lay beyond these. It was decided to use all these vessels to transport, up the lake to Skenesboro, the invalids and as much of the artillery and stores as could be got away. The main force would march from the east side by a road that ran from behind Independence southeast to Hubbardton, thence around Lake Bomoseen to Castleton and thence west to Skenesboro.

To drown the noise of the preparations for departure and divert the enemy's attention, the heavy guns in the forts and the various batteries opened fire as darkness fell. When it was quite dark, the embarkation of the invalids and stores began. Colonel Pierce Long of New Hampshire, with four or five hundred effectives, was in charge of the boats. The work of loading them was toilsome, and its progress slow, because everything that was got away had to be carried on men's backs from the forts to the spot where the boats were moored.

The cannonade was continuous and thunderous throughout the evening. What the enemy thought of this apparently senseless waste of powder does not appear. One might have supposed that it would lead them to suspect just what was actually in progress. Another signal was a fierce burst of flame from the Independence fort. General Roche de Fermoy had adopted the "scorched earth" policy by setting his headquarters ablaze rather inopportunely. Indeed, some of the enemy were moved to speculate whether the Americans "were meditating an attack or . . . were retreating."[41] But it was not until about daybreak that General Fraser had definite information of the retreat, from three American deserters.

Fraser's headquarters were on the Ticonderoga side, a mile and a half from the bridge. Hurrying to it with his troops, he found that it was partially destroyed, also that several fieldpieces at the farther end were trained down its length. Four men had been left there to fire one blast at the enemy attempting to cross, and then to retire.

But when Fraser's men made a tentative approach nothing happened. They pushed on to find all four gunners lying dead drunk beside a cask of

Madeira. Only one of the guns was fired, by an Indian who picked up a lighted slow match and carelessly dropped a spark upon its priming. Fortunately for those on the bridge, the gun was elevated to such a degree that it fired over their heads.[42]

Burgoyne ordered Fraser's light infantry and grenadiers to pursue the main force of the Americans retreating by land, and directed Riedesel, with his own regiment and Breymann's grenadiers and light troops, to follow in support. The 62nd British regiment was put in charge of Ticonderoga, and Prince Frederick's Brunswickers of Independence. The British fleet was to go on up the lake after the American boats.[43]

It was along but a pretense of a road that St. Clair led his troops towards Hubbardton, a mere wagon track, new, rough, rutted, and spotted with stumps of trees. It ran up hill and down across a broken country, "a continuous succession of steep and woody hills," [44] interspersed with ponds, swamps, and streams. The day, July 6, became hotter and hotter as it wore on. Over that road, shut in on both sides by dense forest walls, there were no cooling breezes, and the men sweltered in the overpowering heat. But there was no stopping until they had gone twenty-four miles and, through a high notch in a line of hills, had come down into Hubbardton, a hamlet of two houses. Even then they did not rest long. Six miles more would bring them to Castleton, where they would be within thirteen or fourteen miles of Skenesboro. St. Clair pushed his men on to that point before night.

Colonel Seth Warner of Vermont was left at Hubbardton with 150 men, under orders to wait until the rear guard came up and then follow closely after the main body. But Colonel Warner, brave and patriotic though he was, lacked discipline. He had been a Green Mountain Boy, accustomed to acting on his own and taking orders from nobody. Instead of bringing on the rear guard, he and Colonel Francis, its commander, agreed to spend the night at Hubbardton. So three regiments, Warner's Vermonters, Francis's 11th Massachusetts, Colonel Hale's 2nd New Hampshires, and a number of stragglers from the main body bivouacked there.[45]

Fraser lost no more time than St. Clair. Starting at four o'clock in the morning, his men marched along the same road until one in the afternoon. Riedesel, behind them, was equally vigorous. When Fraser paused for breath at one o'clock Riedesel himself, with a company of jägers and about 80 grenadiers, came up. He and Fraser decided to go a few miles farther, rest for the night, and go on at three the next morning. They camped within a short distance at Hubbardton.[46]

The careless Americans had thrown out no pickets. They were all together around their campfires cooking breakfast when Fraser and Riedesel,

whose Indians had scouted the American camp the night before, marched unobserved through the notch north of the camp. Close to the camp, they deployed their 750 men and charged upon the nearest body, Hale's New Hampshires.

The surprise was complete. Hale and his men fled in disorder, each man for himself. Warner and Francis had but a few minutes to get into fighting order, but they stood their ground and gave the enemy a volley that struck down 21 men. Major Grant of the 24th was killed, the Earl of Balcarres wounded. This was the opening of a bitter fight.[47]

The ground was all forest, covered with standing trees, fallen trees, and underbrush. For the Americans, it was the best of cover. For the British and Germans it was a tangle in which there could be no orderly fighting. Warner's men held the left of an irregular American line, with an extremely steep hill, called Zion, on their left. Francis had the right upon a smaller rise of ground. The whole line extended about half a mile.

Fraser moved to turn the American left, drawing men from his own left to strengthen his right. When he was ready he ordered his grenadiers to go over Zion Hill. It was an almost precipitous ascent. The grenadiers had to sling their muskets, grasp tree branches, bushes, and rocks, and scramble up on all fours. They made it and took a position behind Francis and astride the road to Castleton.[48]

But Francis had adopted Fraser's tactics in reverse. He edged towards the weakened British left. Some of Hale's men were now coming back to fight. The firing was heavy. Major Acland commanding the British grenadiers had been wounded. That movement of the grenadiers around Francis had yielded no good results. The situation for the British was worse than unpromising. In his desperation Fraser was about to order a bayonet charge when there broke on the ears of all the combatants a surprising sound of fifes and hautboys, trumpets and drums playing a German hymn, and of hundreds of lusty German voices singing it. It was the equivalent of the Scottish pipes at Lucknow. The Brunswicks were coming! [49]

Riedesel had heard the firing and had come on with the same advance guard as on the day before. The rest of his troops were following. At Castleton, St. Clair also had heard it. Two of his militia regiments, with their customary freedom from restraint, had dropped away from his marching men the night before and had encamped only two miles from Hubbardton. He sent them orders to go to the aid of Warner and Francis. They refused and hurried on to Castleton.[50]

Without waiting for the rest of his men, Riedesel sent his jägers straight against the American right. The grenadiers, he ordered to try to turn that

flank. The jägers, with a band ahead playing as if on parade, marched boldly forward. Francis's troops held their ground for ten minutes, firing as fast as they could in reply to the Brunswickers' volleys. But the turning movement had begun to envelop their right. Francis was shot down, and when Fraser's bayonet charge developed, the Massachusetts men broke and disappeared in the woods. Warner and his Vermonters had been doing well, but when their companions retreated, they could hold out no longer. Warner gave the order, "Scatter and meet me at Manchester." His force at once evaporated. Twelve guns were taken by the enemy.[51]

There had been sharp fighting in that little forty-minute battle. The enemy lost 15 officers and 183 men, killed or wounded.[52] The American casualties, including those captured, were 12 officers and 312 men, out of a force which after Hale's defection did not much exceed 600 fighting men. Hale and about 70 of his men were captured in their retreat. Though of miniature dimensions, that battle was, in proportion to the numbers engaged, as bloody as Waterloo.

In the meantime, the American fleet was pursuing a leisurely course up the lake for Skenesboro. There was no hurry. There was behind them that boom of great logs strung along a massive chain made of inch-and-a-half iron bars. This was backed by a bridge supported by twenty-two piers of timber. Between these piers were floats fifty feet long and thirteen feet wide made of logs "fastened together by rivetted bolts and double chains." It would take some time to cut through that. Colonel Long, in command of the boats, was sure he had a day's start, so he wasted no effort on trying to block the extremely narrow and, in places, tortuous channel.[53]

But he was mistaken in his confidence in the boom. Immediately on the discovery of the retreat from Ticonderoga, British gunboats were brought up, "a few well directed cannon-shots broke in two the collossal chain upon which so many hopes had hung."[54] The bridge piers were cut through. Within a few hours after Long's boats had started, the British fleet was running before a northerly wind up the lake after them. Long's men had landed at Skenesboro at one o'clock. At three o'clock Burgoyne was within three miles of them.

He landed three regiments with orders to get across Wood Creek, a small stream on which Skenesboro was situated and a part of the water road to the south, flowing into the extreme upper end of Champlain just above the mouth of South Bay. They were also to occupy the road to Fort Ann, the only other avenue of retreat to the south. After waiting awhile to give time for this operation, Burgoyne went on with his fleet to attack Skenesboro.

Long, however, had wisely decided that the weak stockaded fort at that place was not tenable against the strong force of the enemy and had sent his invalids and women up the creek, with enough sound men to row the boats. With the rest, he set about destroying the fort. The stockade, the barracks, and other buildings were set on fire. Burgoyne arrived in time to capture the *Trumbull* galley and the schooner *Revenge*, but the *Enterprise*, the *Liberty*, and the *Gates* and everything else combustible that had been brought from Ticonderoga went up in flames. What would not burn was abandoned, and Long, with the remains of his soldiers, about 150, hurried away down the Fort Ann road.[55]

Assuming that the three regiments already sent forward had gained their desired positions to intercept Long's retreat, Burgoyne dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Hill with the 9th Regiment after him early the next morning. But the three regiments were so delayed in getting over a thickly forested ridge that Long got to Fort Ann without interruption. Hill, however, pushed on after him.[56]

The road was in dreadful condition, and its bridges had been broken down. Hill made only ten miles that day. He lay that night within a mile of the fort. Early the next morning an American came to the camp, announced himself as a deserter, and told Hill there was a garrison of a thousand in the fort. Hill had but 190 of all ranks. He sent to Burgoyne for reinforcements.

The "deserter" got away secretly and told Long of Hill's weakness. Long had, indeed, received an addition, 400 New York militiamen under Colonel Henry Van Rensselaer. He now turned on Hill, whose force lay in a narrow, heavily wooded space between Wood Creek and a steep, almost precipitous, rugged ridge.

There was no possibility of regular battle formation on either side. Parties of the Americans crossed the creek and fired on Hill's left, crossed it again, and gained his rear. Although their voices were audible, they were invisible. All he knew was that he seemed to be surrounded. He ordered his men up the steep slope that hemmed them in. With great difficulty they got up, faced about, and held the ridge for about two hours of fairly heavy fire on both sides. Hill's ammunition was running low. Nothing had been heard from Burgoyne. He was about at the end of his tether, when from the woods to the north he heard an Indian war whoop.[57]

The Americans heard it too. It meant to them the arrival of British reinforcements from Skenesboro, and they started for Fort Edward. But they were deceived: there were no Indians behind that war whoop, and only one Englishman, Captain Money. He had been sent ahead with a party of

Indians, who "either stood still or advanced very slow." He had therefore run ahead and tried his luck with that one wild outcry.[58]

When St. Clair, with his main force at Castleton, got word of the disasters at Skenesboro and Hubbardton, there was nothing to do but try to save the remains of his army. He turned to the east and, unmolested, took a straight road to Rutland. Thence, by a circuitous route, he got to Fort Edward on the 12th.[59]

CHAPTER 37

Bennington

While his advance troops under Fraser, Riedesel, and Hill were engaged with the Americans at Hubbardton and near Fort Ann, Burgoyne at Skenesboro was preparing to continue his southward march. He had the choice of two routes. He could return to Ticonderoga, get his boats over into Lake George, and march his army to Fort George at the head of that lake. Thence he could march by a tolerable road ten miles to the Hudson at a point a little above Fort Edward. This way, in his "Thoughts" on the war delivered to the King in February, he had declared to be "the most expeditious and commodious route to Albany."

The other way was up Wood Creek from Skenesboro to Fort Ann, thence by road sixteen miles to Edward. This route he had predicted would offer "considerable difficulties, the narrow parts of the river may be easily choked up and rendered impassable; and, at best, there will be necessity for a great deal of land-carriage for the artillery, provisions &c." [1] Yet he now chose that route.

The principal reason he gave for this choice was his fear of the harmful impression which "a retrograde motion is apt to make upon the minds both of enemies and friends." [2] But it is thought that his decision may have been the result of the advice of Philip Skene.

Skene, formerly an officer in the British army, had obtained grants of 34,000 acres of land at the head of Lake Champlain, had founded a colony there, Skenesboro, and engaged in divers industries, operating limekilns, forges, sawmills, and a shipyard, with much success. In 1775, when Ticonderoga was taken by Allen and Arnold and he was dispossessed, he man-

aged to get to Canada. Now with Burgoyne, he acted as a general adviser on the state of the country, with which he was so well acquainted. Under such conditions, coupled with his personal characteristics—he was "a large, fine-looking person, with a pleasant countenance and affable deportment" [3] —he had much influence with the general. His reason for using his influence in favor of the Skenesboro route is believed to have been the fact that it would require the cutting of a road from his colony to the Hudson, which would be of very great value in the event of the recovery of his property after the war. At all events, for this reason or another, Burgoyne so decided.

He did, however, also decide to send his gunboats, his artillery, and his heavy stores in boats by way of Lake George to its head.[4] That lake being more than 200 feet higher than Champlain, its waters descended through the narrow gorge that connected the two in a series of falls and rapids against which boats could hardly be propelled. It was necessary to carry his bateaux and barges around by land about three miles, a difficult and slow operation.

From the 9th of July until the 25th, Burgoyne's right wing, his British troops, lay on the heights at Skenesboro; his left, the Germans under Riedesel, about ten miles away at Castleton, with Fraser's corps between.[5] The disposition of the German troops was intended to confuse the Americans as to the next move, whether down the Hudson or east to the Connecticut River country. The long delay at this time was caused by the activities of the Americans on the road to Fort Ann and so to Fort Edward.

Schuyler, in general command of the American northern army, had come up from Albany to Fort Edward; and thence on the 8th, as has been said, he had sent Van Rensselaer and his 400 New York volunteers to reinforce Long at Fort Ann. He had at his own post six or seven hundred Continentals and about 1,400 militia. With this puny force, he could not hope to cope with Burgoyne's army, more than three times as large and many more times as strong in fighting quality, equipment, and supplies.

The fort itself was a miserable affair, a dilapidated relic of the French and Indian War.[6] Schuyler wrote to Washington that he had often jumped his horse over the remains of its ramparts. It had some guns, but they lay about on the ground; there were no carriages to mount them. Its garrison, 100 men, was in a sad condition. Not only small, but discouraged by defeat, it was out of hand that its members committed "the most scandalous depredations" [7] on the countryside. It was so short of ammunition that there were but five musket cartridges for each man. If Burgoyne had sent

Fraser's light troops forward, without the encumbrance of artillery or wagon trains, he could easily have taken that pretense of a fort. The Americans had only one circumstance in their favor, the character of the country through which Burgoyne had to march, between Skenesboro and Fort Edward, and through which the British supplies and stores had to be carried, between Fort George, at the head of Lake George, and Fort Edward.

The roads connecting those points were mere traces cut through a primeval forest of enormous pines and hemlocks. They seldom ran straight for any considerable distance. Innumerable huge, fallen trees, "as plenty as lamp-posts upon a highway about London," [8] interrupted their course, and the roads swung around them in a succession of zigzags. The way from Skenesboro to Fort Edward ran in the valley of Wood Creek and, for the most part, close beside the stream. It crossed no fewer than forty deep ravines over which high and long bridges had been built. There were also numerous bogs and swamps. The spring had been unusually wet, and the rains still fell, so that the soil was saturated and the morasses were deep and wide. At one place, if the artillery and wagons were to be got through, it would be necessary to build a causeway or corduroy road two miles long. Such a country afforded opportunity for the creation of almost insurmountable impediments, and Schuyler started to create them.

He put a thousand axmen to work. They destroyed every bridge and dug ditches to carry water from the bogs so as to create new swamps. They felled trees along the Skenesboro road and the creek so that the trunks crossed them both from each side, the tops coming together in a stiff entanglement. The creek itself was choked by great rocks rolled down from its bordering hillsides.[9] He sent out other men to warn the few inhabitants to drive their cattle out of reach of the invaders, to remove or conceal their foodstuffs. They were even induced to burn their unharvested grain. The whole country within reach of the roads was reduced to desolation.

Even without this extraordinary destruction, the passage of the British army, its guns, and its wagons over the roads would have been most difficult. It was sadly short of draught cattle. Of the 1,500 horses Burgoyne had asked for in Canada, no more than 500 had been furnished. On his way, he had managed to commandeer 50 teams of oxen, an insufficient supplement.[10] And the Canadian country carts which he had were ramshackle affairs built of green wood and likely to fall apart under any heavy strain. Under these conditions, the roads in their usual state, and the frail bridges, would have been bad enough to daunt an invader. Now, and until all Schuyler's work had been undone, progress was impossible. But Burgoyne was not stopped.

Into that jungle of obstructions he sent hundreds of his men, expert Canadian axmen among them. Working under the most difficult conditions, tormented by millions of "moschetoes" and gnats—"punkies," the natives call them—in the stifling, sultry heat of the close woods, they hacked away at the trees, drained the bogs, rebuilt the bridges, and made that two-mile causeway. By July 25 he was able to leave Skenesboro and advance to Fort Ann. Four days he lay there while his men worked on the road ahead of him. At last on the 29th, three weeks from the day he landed at Skenesboro twenty-three miles away, he came to Fort Edward.[11]

In the meantime, Schuyler had been reinforced. The remains of St. Clair's force had come in on July 12, as has been stated. Long's detachment, from Ticonderoga, had arrived. Brigadier General John Nixon with 600 Continentals had come on from Peekskill. There were now nearly 2,900 Continental rank and file and more than 1,600 militia, present and fit, in and about the fort.[12] To support the general, who was disliked and distrusted by the New England troops, Washington had sent two Yankee major generals, Benedict Arnold of Connecticut and Benjamin Lincoln of Massachusetts. But even with these acquisitions Schuyler and his generals knew they could not hold that dilapidated fort. Leaving a small rear guard to take care of it until the enemy came, he fell back down the Hudson, first about five miles to Moses Creek, then to Saratoga; at last, on August 3, he reached Stillwater, twelve miles farther. Here Kosciuszko laid out the works of a defensive position, and entrenchment was begun. But within a few days Schuyler again withdrew twelve miles down the river to the mouth of the Mohawk.

The morale of the Connecticut troops was now at its lowest ebb. Continued retreats in the face of a continually advancing enemy, and their sad physical condition, were enough to undermine their confidence in themselves as well as in their leaders; but more active causes of discouragement were working among them. There was a growing belief, now really a full-grown belief, that both Schuyler and St. Clair were not merely incompetent, but actually traitorous.

The most ridiculous of the stories bandied about in the camp was that Burgoyne had bought both generals by firing into Ticonderoga "silver balls," which had been gathered up by St. Clair and sent down to Schuyler: that explained the surrender of Ticonderoga and the subsequent evacuations and retreats. Absurd as the story was, the New Englanders, in their dislike of Schuyler as a New York aristocrat, seem to have believed it, or at least affected to do so. The plague of desertion, to which the American troops,

specially the militia, were so subject throughout the war, became an epidemic. Two hundred men were missing between the 20th and 24th of July. By the 4th of August as many more had gone. Of the remaining 4,000, fully third were Negroes, boys, or old men. And at that time Burgoyne was only a long day's march, twenty-four miles, from Stillwater.

After their slow and enormously difficult march from Skenesboro, the British troops were in high spirits. That terrible wilderness was behind them. Before them the Hudson, a sweetly flowing river, led to their grand objective, Albany. "They considered their toils to be nearly at an end; Albany to be so within their grasp, and the adjacent provinces certainly reduced."[13] That they had to wait at Fort Edward for the big guns, the munitions and supplies, and the boats to be brought down from the head of Lake George meant nothing. For the rank and file the delay was a welcome vacation. For Burgoyne, however, this was a period of some anxiety. He was not so certain that his troubles were over. And he knew by August 3 that he could expect no help from Howe, unless Washington attempted to help Schuyler. Howe had written to him on July 17: "My intention is for Pennsylvania, where I expect to meet Washington, but if he goes to the northward contrary to my expectations, and you can keep him at bay, be assured I shall soon be after him to relieve you. . . . Success be ever with you."[14] The day that letter was written, Howe's troops were already aboard their transports bound for the Chesapeake. By the time Burgoyne received it, the fleet was south of the Delaware capes.

Burgoyne did not know that, of course; but one thing he did know—that Howe was carrying out the original plan and that Howe was not coming up the Hudson. There would be no meeting of the two forces at Albany during the campaign. In view of the obstacles still to be faced, might it not be wise to abandon the advance, turn about, and march back to Ticonderoga? It might be done safely enough, no doubt. But no. His orders were to march to Albany, and march he would. He put Howe's letter away, told no one about it, not even Riedesel.[15]

Major General Baron von Riedesel had for a long time been worrying about his horseless dragoons.[16] They were not proper foot soldiers. Their costume was sufficient evidence of that. Yet here they were in their stiff leather breeches,[17] their enormous cocked hats, clumping along day after day in their great, clumsy boots over the miscalled roads of this God-forsaken wilderness in a hell of heat, their spurs catching in the underbrush, the

ends of their long broadswords clattering over the stones, their heavy carbines, that might have been slung on their saddles, borne on their shoulders. Something had to be done about it.

All along he had been urging Burgoyne to find mounts for them. He was sure horses were to be had over in the Connecticut River valley. At Skenesboro he had proposed an expedition into that country by the dragoons and the Tories of the army. Burgoyne had approved the plan, but had been too busy with his arrangements for pushing on southward to do anything about it. Now, at Fort Edward, the matter came up again, and Burgoyne and Riedesel drew up the orders for the expedition. These were very specific and very elaborate.

Lieutenant Colonel Baum, who could not "utter one word of English," was to lead the foray—a most unsuitable leader of an enterprise that was to penetrate enemy country and enlist the services of English-speaking people. Its objects and purposes were manifold. Baum was "to try the affections of the people, to disconcert the councils of the enemy, to mount Riedesel's dragoons, to compleat Peters's corps [of Tories] and to obtain large supplies of cattle, horses and carriages," specifically 1,300 horses, besides those for the dragoons. They were to be "tied together by strings of ten each, in order that one man may lead ten horses." To get this loot, he was to impose taxes in kind upon the several districts and to hold "the most respectable people" as hostages for their delivery. He was also to make prisoners of "all persons acting in committees, or any officers acting under the directions of Congress, whether civil or military." [18]

The country to be subjected to this drastic treatment extended from Manchester in the north through Arlington to Bennington in the south, and as far east as the Connecticut River. The whole process was to be effected by a force of 650 rank and file, made up of 170 dismounted Brunswick dragoons, 100 German grenadiers and light infantry, 300 Tories, Canadians, and Indians, 50 of Fraser's British "marksmen," and a few artillerymen with two small fieldpieces.[19] In the orders, it was called "a secret expedition." To help to preserve its secrecy, a German band of musicians was included in the outfit. It seems not to have occurred to Burgoyne that sending such a force upon such an expedition was likely to result in another retreat from Concord.

To assist Baum with advice and to help him "distinguish the good subjects from the bad," [20] Burgoyne added Colonel Philip Skene to the party. His advice, given at a crucial moment, had much to do with the outcome of the excursion.

Burgoyne knew that the remains of Colonel Seth Warner's regiment had

gathered at Manchester in obedience to their commander's last order at Hubbardton; but he thought it "highly probable" that they would retreat before Baum. If they did not, he left it to Baum's discretion whether he should fight them or not, "always bearing in mind that your corps is too valuable to let any considerable loss be hazarded." But, besides Warner's men, there were others of whom the British and German generals were ignorant.

The country lying west of New Hampshire had long been claimed by that colony and by New York. It had been settled under grants of land made by the governor of New Hampshire and was therefore called the New Hampshire Grants. Its settlers, the Green Mountain Boys, had long defended their land titles against New York's pretensions. Now, in 1777, it had declared itself the independent State of Vermont and organized a Council of Safety as a preliminary to establishing a regular government. Threatened with invasion by Burgoyne, its council called on New Hampshire and Massachusetts for help.[21]

New Hampshire had already taken notice of the impending danger to itself and had proposed to raise troops for its own defense; but it was thinly settled and poor, so that the problem of the expense of an armed force seemed difficult of solution. It was solved by John Langdon, the speaker of the General Court. "I have," said he, "three thousand dollars in hard money. I will pledge my plate for three thousand more. I have seventy hogsheads of Tobago rum, which shall be sold for the most it will bring. These are at the service of the State. If we succeed in defending our homes, I may be remunerated; if we do not, the property will be of no value to me. Our old friend Stark, who so nobly sustained the honour of our State at Bunker's Hill, may be safely entrusted with the conduct of the enterprise, and we will check the progress of Burgoyne." [22] So goes an old, if not true, story.

John Stark had served in the French and Indian War as a captain in the famous Rogers' Rangers. He had instantly responded to the Lexington alarm, raising a regiment with which he gallantly and successfully defended the American left wing at Bunker's Hill. He had led a regiment to Canada in May, 1776, as a part of the force sent by Washington to succor the defeated American army. In the battles of Trenton and Princeton, he had fought courageously and effectively. He was a brave, a gallant soldier, experienced in warfare, and a great leader of men, with a colonel's commission dated January 1, 1776. Yet, when the politicians in the Congress, in April, 1777, appointed new brigadier generals, they jumped certain junior colonels over his head, as over Arnold's. A proud man, tenacious of his rights and

jealous of his honor as a soldier, Stark then resigned his commission and retired to his farm in New Hampshire. But now, at the call of his state, he came forward.

Tall, straight, and sinewy as an Indian, his figure was that of a fighting man. His strong nose, high cheekbones, weathered countenance lit up by steady and piercing light blue eyes, the straight, set line of his thin lips all indicated a character in keeping with his figure. They indicated also that unyielding spirit which in his New England is sometimes characterized as "cantankerous." [23]

Yes, he would take command of the proposed new brigade, but on one condition; it was to be a New Hampshire brigade pure and simple, independent of the Congress and of the Continental army, accountable only to the General Court of the state. The Congress he heartily disliked. Schuyler, he both disliked and distrusted. He would have nothing to do with either. Those were his terms. It was a case of take him or leave him. They took him, commissioned him a brigadier general, and gave him power to direct his operations according to his own judgment.

The response of his fellow citizens to his call was immediate and beyond expectation. On July 18, the day after his commission was signed, 221 men enlisted; the next day, although it was Sunday, the rolls bore the names of 419. Within less than a week, the brigade numbered 1,492 officers and men, 10 per cent of all the enrolled voters in the state, old and young. They had no uniforms and brought their own muskets or fowling pieces.[24]

By July 30, Stark had his command sufficiently organized and equipped to march it to Charleston on the east side of the Connecticut River. In the first week of August, he crossed the river and took post at Manchester, Vermont, where Seth Warner's scattered Vermonters had come together again. Here he had his first and his decisive clash with Schuyler, that disliked and distrusted New York general.

Schuyler was willing that Warner's regiment should remain in Vermont while it was uncertain whether Burgoyne would go south by the Hudson or turn east into the Connecticut valley. He even reinforced Warner with some New England militia and sent Major General Lincoln over there to command them, but he wanted this new brigade of Stark's to strengthen his own weak army. Through Lincoln, he directed Stark to join him.[25]

Stark's reply was prompt and definite. He was, he said, a New Hampshire brigadier, responsible only to its General Court, and by it he had been given a free hand in the conduct of his brigade. No, he would not go to the Hudson on order of Schuyler or anyone else except the General Court of New Hampshire.[26] Lincoln reported this insubordination to the Congress,

and it resolved to inform New Hampshire that its orders to Stark were "'destructive of military subordination" and to request it to instruct Stark 'to conform himself to the same rules which other general officers of the militia are subject to, whenever they are called out at the expence of the United States." [27] But, before that resolution reached New Hampshire, certain events had occurred that caused the Congress to pass other resolutions of a different tone.

On August 8, Stark marched his men twenty miles south to Bennington, where an important depot of American military supplies was situated, leaving Warner at Manchester with the remains of his regiment and 200 rangers whom he had gathered in since Hubbardton.

Three days later Baum's expedition started from Fort Miller, seven miles down the Hudson from Fort Edward.[28] Just as he was leaving, Burgoyne changed his orders. Instead of Manchester, his first objective was to be Bennington, of whose treasures in the way of supplies, cattle, and horses, Burgoyne had just received an exaggerated report. [29] He had also heard that the place was held only by three or four hundred militia. All this was very promising for the success of the enterprise.

After a march of four miles Baum camped on the Batten Kill, a little tributary of the Hudson. There 50 Brunswick jägers came up to be added to his force. On the 13th he marched through a notch in the ridge between Batten Kill and the Hoosic River and down to the village of Cambridge on the Owl Kill.

He had much trouble with his Indians. Preceding the main body, they ran wild, looting and destroying property, killing cows for the sake of their bells and so alarming the country that the inhabitants drove off their horses and cattle instead of leaving them where Baum might have picked them up. There were several light skirmishes with small parties of the local militia, but at Sancoick's—or Van Schaick's—mill on Owl Kill he had his first contact with the American organized troops.

Stark, hearing of the Indian depredations, had sent Colonel Gregg, with 200 men, against them. Gregg was now in posession of the mill.[30] At Baum's approach, the Americans fired one volley and retreated. Baum pursued them. They broke down a bridge, delaying the Germans and ensuring their own escape. Baum had learned that a force stronger than a few militia was at Bennington. He sent a letter back to Burgoyne, announcing the capture of flour, wheat, and potash at the mill, and telling him that fifteen to eighteen hundred rebels were in Bennington, but were "supposed to leave at our approach." He would "fall on the enemy to-morrow early." [31]

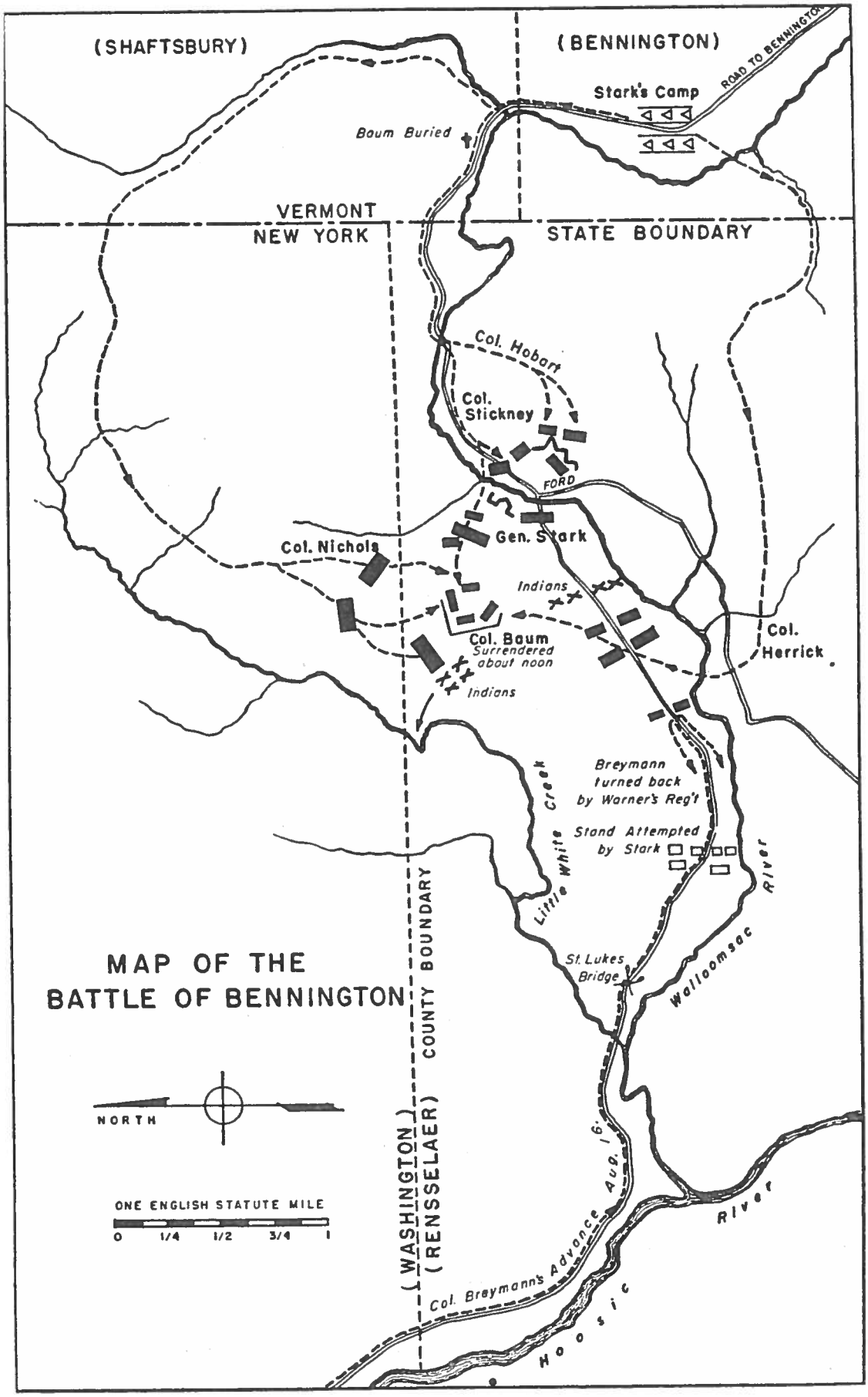
Stark, in the meantime, had heard that a strong enemy force was following the Indians, and had set out to rescue Gregg, having first called on Warner at Manchester to join him. About four miles west of Bennington, the opposing forces sighted each other and halted. Between them were the Walloomsac River and a bridge.[32] Baum did not seem disposed to attack, and so Stark withdrew two or three miles towards Bennington. Baum took a position on a height above the river.[33] Both forces bivouacked on the night of the 14th.

The 15th was rainy, and no move was made by either side, except that Baum disposed his troops to meet an expected attack. Stark, however, was reinforced by 400 Vermont militia, also a party from Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and some Stockbridge Indians. He had then about 2,000 men. Baum was strengthened by the arrival of 90 Tories under "Colonel" Pfister, a retired British lieutenant.[34] His force then numbered about 800.

The German dragoons and half of Fraser's contingent were posted on the steep hill where they had encamped, which looked down from a height of 300 feet upon the bridge half a mile away. Trees were felled to make breastworks and one of the two 3-pounders was mounted there. In some log cabins on both sides of the bridge the Canadians were stationed. On the hither side of the bridge the other half of Fraser's force and about 50 German infantrymen, with the other gun, took their stand. In a field southwest of the principal position 50 German foot soldiers and some Tories were supposed to guard the rear of that group. About 250 yards to the south and beyond the bridge 150 Tories were posted and threw up a breastwork. Southeast of the hilltop the 50 jägers were placed. The Indians were grouped on a plateau behind the main position. Having thus scattered his men as effectively as possible all over the landscape—some of the little detachments more than a half-mile from the others—Baum awaited Stark's move.

That move was concerted between Stark and Warner, who had come from Manchester in advance of his regiment. They made a rather elaborate plan. It involved complete encirclement of Baum's main position and simultaneous attacks on his front, rear, and flanks. It was carried out without a flaw.

About noon on the 16th, the rain having ceased, Colonel Moses Nichols with 200 New Hampshire men started on a long circuit to get around Baum's left. Colonel Samuel Herrick led 300 men, Vermont Rangers and Bennington militia, similarly to turn the German right. Colonel David Hobart and Colonel Thomas Stickney, with 200 men, were to go against the Tory position south of the bridge. A hundred more were to demonstrate against the front of the main position to divert Baum's attention. Stark was to hold the remaining twelve or thirteen hundred for the principal frontal attack, the signal for which was to be the first fire by Nichols and Herrick.[35]


(SHAFTSBURY)
(BENNINGTON)
ROAD TO BENNINGTON
Stark's Camp
Baum Buried
VERMONT
NEW YORK
STATE BOUNDARY
Col. Hobart
Col. Stickney
FORD
Gen. Stark
Col. Nichols
Indians
Col. Baum
Surrendered about noon
Indians
Col. Herrick
Breymann turned back by Warner's Reg't
Stand Attempted by Stark
Little White Creek
Walloomsac River
St. Lukes Bridge
MAP OF THE BATTLE OF BENNINGTON
(WASHINGTON) COUNTY BOUNDARY (RENSSELAER)
NORTH
ONE ENGLISH STATUTE MILE
0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1
Col. Breymann's Advance Aug. 16
Hoosic River

The two encircling detachments made their way through the thick woods without discovery until they had nearly reached Baum's rear. Then the Germans saw several small, irregular bodies of shirt-sleeved farmers, with muskets or fowling pieces on their shoulders, but with no other military appearance, coming up behind them. At once, Baum bethought himself of the valuable advice which Skene, now absent from the camp, had been delegated to give him and had given him. The inhabitants of that countryside, Skene had said, were Tories five to one. On the march to Bennington, small groups dressed like these newcomers, had sifted in among Baum's men, protesting their loyalty to the King, and had been kindly received.[36] These others now approaching must also be friends, either seeking protection in his rear or prepared to assist him. He made no effort to keep them off. On the contrary he drew in his pickets so that they should not be molested.

By three o'clock Nichols and Herrick had gained satisfactory positions. Nichols opened fire, followed by Herrick. On hearing this signal Hobart and Stickney went into action against the Tories beyond the bridge. Stark mounted his horse and gave the order for the principal frontal attack. "See there, men!" he cried. "There they are! We'll beat them before night, or Molly Stark will be a widow." [37]

The Tories beyond the river put up a fight for a few minutes. The Americans waited until one volley had been fired against them and then, before the Tories could reload, rushed the breastworks. Its defenders retreated pellmell down into the little river and across it. The Canadians in the log cabins and the Indians on the plateau, yelling and jangling their stolen cowbells, simply fled at the first sound of the musketry. St. Luc La Corne, in command of the Indians, and Charles de Lanaudière, his son-in-law, in command of the Canadians led their contingents in headlong retreat. There was nothing left but the main position on that steep and high hill.

The attack on that position was fiercely made and stoutly met. The defenders, those Brunswick dragoons with their heavy rifles, the British marksmen, and such of the fugitives from the other posts as had joined them, stood off the encircling foes in the open ground in their rear with a steady fire. In front, the assailants scrambled up that high, steep hill, taking cover behind rocks and trees and firing at will so fast that their gun barrels burned their hands. Some of the New Hampshire militia crept up to within a dozen yards of the artillery and shot down the gunners. For two hours this hot fight went on—"the hottest I ever saw in my life" said Stark, and he had been through many. Then Baum's fire began to slacken; his ammunition was running low. When what was left of it, in a wagon, took fire and blew up, the fight seemed to be over. But it was not quite ended.

Though the rest of his command broke and fled, Baum's dragoons still stood by him. He called for their swords. They drew those fearful weapons to cut their way through their enemies. The Americans had no bayonets to oppose them. The dragoons made a steady, if lumbering, progress through the swarming Americans, the shirt-sleeved farmers who circled around, closed in, fell back, and closed in again; but when Baum fell, fatally wounded, his men gave up the fight.[38]

Now it seemed that nothing remained but to comb the woods for more prisoners and loot the German camp. But there was yet other work to be done. Baum had sent Burgoyne a second note on the evening of the 14th asking for reinforcements,[39] and Burgoyne had ordered Lieutenant Colonel Breymann, with 642 men and two fieldpieces, to march to Baum's support. They set out at eight o'clock in the morning of the 15th. The roads were deep with mud, and a hard rain was falling. The heavily uniformed and equipped Germans were notoriously slow in movement. They had twenty-five miles to go. In rigid, regular formation, halting frequently to re-dress their ranks, they progressed at the rate of half a mile an hour,[40] making only eight miles that day. A courier was sent forward to tell Baum that they were coming, and they bivouacked for the night.

The next day, the day of the battle, they crawled on at the same rate, to reach Sancoick's mill at half-past four, with six miles yet to go. There Breymann received vague and confused reports of the fight. A little later, Stark had word of Breymann's coming.

He had promised his men the spoils of victory, and they were scattered widely among the various enemy positions gathering up their plunder. He rallied as many as he could and sent them back along the road to delay Breymann.

Breymann, pushing on from Sancoick's mill, met the first party of Americans within a mile. It was merely a disorganized body of shirt-sleeved men carrying guns. Skene, who had gone back to meet Breymann, assured him that they were friendly Tories. But when they took a position behind a rail fence on a height by the road and fired a ragged volley, killing Breymann's horse, he had his doubts. He sent a detachment to dislodge them.[41]

From that time on, there was a series of such skirmishes. Three times the Americans took positions on the high ground north of the road, fired into the solid German column, and retreated when hard-pushed. But the Germans moved steadily, if slowly, forward.

Stark was in a bad way. His men were still scattered, still busy looting, and he could assemble only a small part of them. It seemed that he would have to give way and leave the field to the enemy. But Warner encouraged

him to hold on.[42] Help was coming from Manchester. Before sunset it arrived.

The rest of Warner's regiment, 130 men led by Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Safford, and 200 rangers, had made a long day's march until midnight. They came on the next day, but slowly, halting to dry their muskets when the rain stopped, again to draw ammunition at Bennington, again to put aside their coats and knapsacks, again to receive a ration of rum, again to quench their thirst with water. But they came to the battlefield at last and went on to meet Breymann a mile or so beyond it.

By this time Stark had collected a good number of his men. He joined Warner. At first they took an unfortunate position in low, swampy ground devoid of cover; but after a few shots they withdrew to a wooded hill north of the road. Breymann attacked. He tried a flanking movement to turn the American right and began to gain ground. But half of Warner's men outflanked and checked the flankers. Meanwhile the rest of Warner's men, with Stark's troops, stretched out to threaten the Germans' right. The fight then went on face to face.

Breymann's two 6-pounders were active. The musketry was continuous and heavy. About sunset his men, who had carried forty rounds,[43] had almost exhausted their ammunition; but the American fire was still sustained. Breymann gave up, ordered a retreat. Many of the artillery horses had been shot. The rest were exhausted. The Germans abandoned their guns, and started west along the road in good order. Those that still had cartridges answered the shots of pursuing Americans. But their pace was slow. The enemy was on their flanks and at their heels, still relentlessly firing. The ordered ranks became confused in the haste to get away, broke up into a pushing, shoving disorder. In the gathering dusk, the retreat became a rout.

Some of the Germans threw down their muskets and ran. Others held them out, as if to surrender them. They dropped out, kneeled down, and cried for mercy. Breymann's drums beat a parley, a call to a conference for a surrender. But the untutored Americans did not know its meaning. To them it was just drums beating. They kept on shooting.

Breymann had been hit in a leg, and there were five bullet holes in his coat, but he held together a small rear guard, himself the last man, and so kept his men going in the increasing darkness. When it was quite dark, Stark called off the pursuit. Breymann, with less than two-thirds of his men, got away. "Had day lasted an hour longer," said Stark, "we should have taken the whole body of them." [44]

It was a notable little battle in that a body of farmers, for the most part entirely inexperienced in warfare, had so decisively beaten two forces of

trained, professional soldiers. It is true that in the first fight Stark outnumbered Baum more than two to one; but that was not an overwhelming advantage when the experience and training of the Germans is considered. In the second the preponderance of the Americans in number was much less. Their lack of organization and their fatigue after hours of fighting reduced their advantage practically to zero.

Of the Germans, 207 were left dead on the field; about 700, including 30 officers, were captured. The spoils were rich: four brass fieldpieces, twelve drums, two hundred fifty broadswords, four ammunition wagons, and several hundred muskets and rifles. The Americans lost about 30 killed and 40 wounded.[45]

On October 4 the Congress unanimously voted its thanks to Stark and his men, and appointed him a brigadier general in the Continental army.[46]

CHAPTER 38

Stanwix and Oriskany

It will be remembered that there was a third element in Burgoyne's plan for the conquest of the Hudson: an expedition from Canada by way of Lake Ontario, Oswego, and the Mohawk River to meet Burgoyne at Albany. Its purpose was also the occupation of the extensive and important Mohawk valley, the gateway to the great western country and to the territory of the powerful Six Nations of Indians, whose support in the war Great Britain was seeking. We must now turn to that valley.

The American border settlements in the West were not left undisturbed during the War of Independence. Rather the war was waged there with the ferocity and cruelty characteristic of the chief components of the British forces in that section, that is to say the Indians enlisted with them, not to mention their Tory allies. A ruthlessness, one regrets to say, that was matched at last by the great American punitive expedition finally sent against the Indian towns in that section.

Tryon County in New York was one of the chief seats of the conflict in the West. It was a vast tract, comprising the land west and northwest of Schenectady and extending to Lake Ontario. Through it ran the Mohawk River in a beautiful and fertile valley. Its great area was sparsely settled, harboring perhaps 5,000 people. They were of diverse nationalities. A numerous element of Germans from the Rhenish Palatinate, indicated by the name of one of the chief settlements, German Flats, lived chiefly along the upper reaches of the river. In its lower reaches the population was largely of Dutch extraction. Everywhere there were people of English descent. The Irish were well represented, also the Scotch-Irish. Scottish Highlanders were numerous, particularly in the neighborhood of Johnstown.

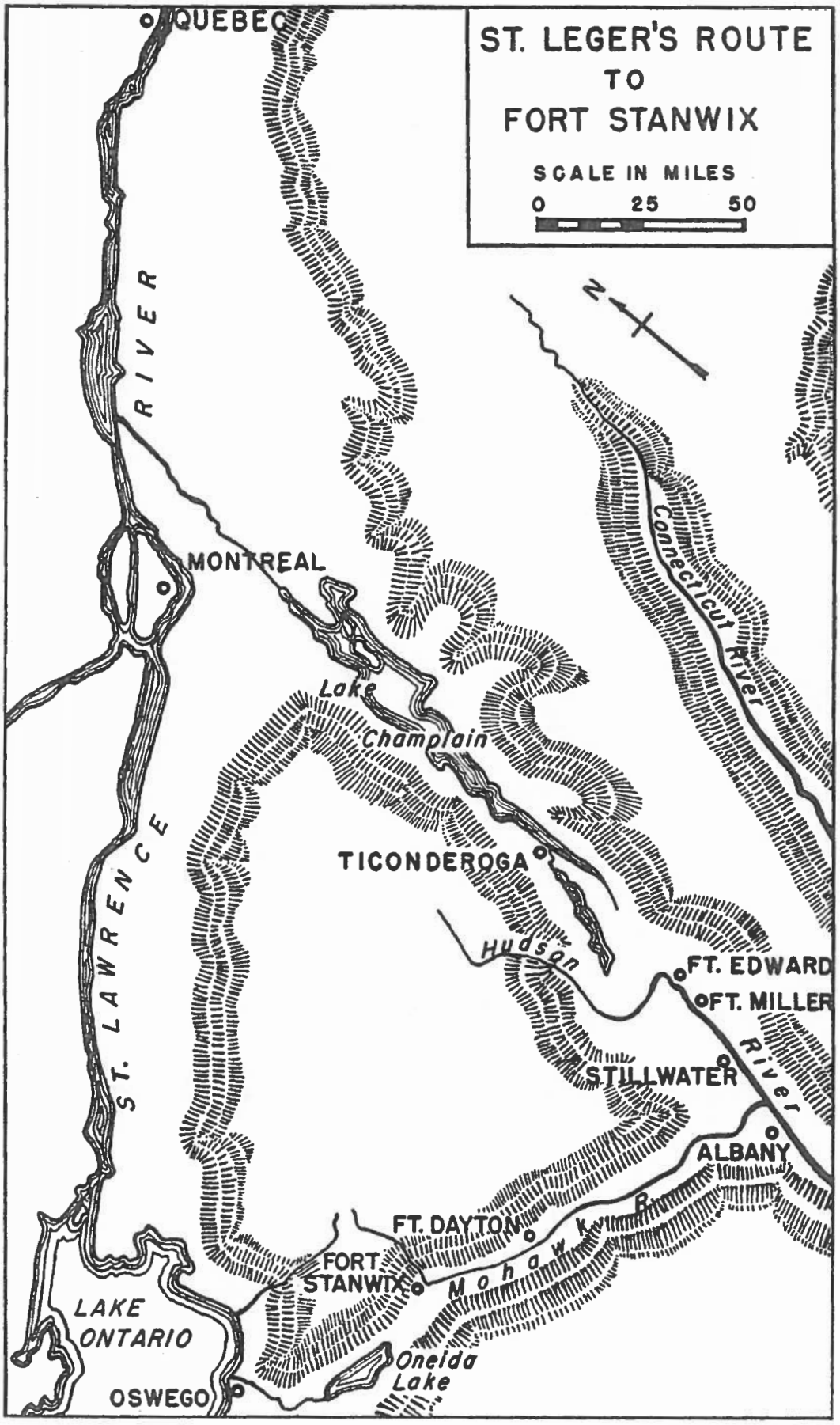
As in the South under similar conditions, the political sentiments of the people were divided, in part along lines of nationality, in part by individual or family preferences. The Germans and many of the Dutch were inclined to favor the royal government; the Highlanders were as loyal to the King as their kinsmen in the Carolinas. The whole county was generally regarded as a Tory stronghold. One historian says that "the loyalists in that [Mohawk] valley were probably more numerous, in proportion to the whole . . . population, than in almost any other section of the northern states." [1] And yet the fact that the course of the war forced so many of them, including the most powerful and influential, to flee to Canada would seem to prove the existence of a majority of patriots, unless as elsewhere they were merely better organized and more vigorous in their activities.

To the west of Tryon County was the seat of the great Iroquois League, the Six Nations, the Mohawks, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, Oneidas, and Tuscaroras. Their towns and their "castles," the headquarters of the various tribes or of their component clans, were numerous over a wide extent of country.

The ruling family in the county were the Johnsons, headed by Sir William, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, until his death in 1774 and after that by his son, Sir John, and his son-in-law, Colonel Guy Johnson, who was his successor in office. The Johnsons were strongly and unitedly Tory. Sir William had been the greatest landholder and the wealthiest man in the county. His handsome mansion house at Johnstown was the center of governmental relations with the Indians, the symbol of the wealth and power of the great nation he officially represented. While his influence was strong in determining the attitude of many of the whites toward the conflict between Britain and the colonists, it was predominant among the Indians.

This influence over the Indians was based not only on his official position, but also on a lifelong, sympathetic study of their ways, habits, and dispositions. It was also powerfully backed by his left-handed family relationship with two of their great chieftains. After the death of his first wife, a German, he took to himself, successively, two Indian mistresses, Caroline, the daughter of Hendrick, the famous Mohawk "King," and Molly, sister of Joseph Brant, also called Thayendanegea, chief war leader of the Mohawks and as such of the whole Iroquois League. Molly, indeed, may have been actually married to Sir William in Indian fashion; at all events she had a recognized position as the head of his household. She was a woman of considerable mental ability and great shrewdness, and her influence among the Indians was freely exerted and very potent.

Her brother, Joseph Brant, was a figure of distinction, a remarkable man.


ST. LEGER'S ROUTE
TO
FORT STANWIX
SCALE IN MILES
0 25 50
N
QUEBEC
RIVER
MONTREAL
Lake
Champlain
Connecticut River
ST. LAWRENCE
TICONDEROGA
Hudson
FT. EDWARD
FT. MILLER
STILLWATER
River
ALBANY
FT. DAYTON
Mohawk R.
FORT
STANWIX
LAKE
ONTARIO
Oneida
Lake
OSWEGO

A full-blooded Mohawk, he had been educated in English at a school in Lebanon, Connecticut, under the tutelage of Dr. Eleazar Wheelock (founder of Dartmouth College), where he is said to have assisted in the translation of religious books into the Indian tongue. He had visited England, had been entertained by James Boswell, and had had his portrait painted by Romney. On his return to America he became secretary to Superintendent Guy Johnson. Yet he remained an Indian. He went back to live with his own people and distinguished himself as one of their most courageous warriors and undoubtedly their ablest strategist.

Both sides in the war solicited the aid of the Six Nations or, on the American side, sought at least their neutrality. The great "council-fire" at Albany in August, 1775, at which the Indians agreed "not to take any part" in the war because they deemed it "a family affair," has already been mentioned. But the spirit of that agreement was observed by the Oneidas and Tuscaroras alone. The other four Indian nations yielded to the powerful influence of the Johnsons and of Daniel Claus, also a son-in-law of Sir William and deputy superintendent under Colonel Guy. This influence was backed by the munificent gifts to the Indians of arms, clothing, and other desirable things by Sir Guy Carleton on behalf of the British government, which the Congress was possibly unwilling and certainly unable to match.

It must be said, however, that the alliance was not unnatural on the part of the Indians. For more than a hundred years the Iroquois League had been assisted by the British forces in their long conflict with their enemies, the Algonquins. This new alliance was, in effect, but the continuance of a long-standing cooperation. It is rather to be wondered at that the Oneidas and Tuscaroras should decide to adhere, at least passively, to the American side; for this much credit must be given to Samuel Kirkland, a missionary in their midst, much respected and indeed loved by them.

Colonel Guy Johnson left his home with Colonel John Butler, an outstanding Tory leader, Butler's son Walter, and Joseph Brant shortly after the news of Bunker's Hill reached him. At Oswego he held a great council with the Indians. Thence he departed for Canada, taking with him the Butlers, Brant, and a numerous delegation of his Indian friends. At Montreal an interview with Sir Guy Carleton strengthened the determination of the Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas to join in the war on the side of the King. Sir John Johnson, however, remained at Johnson Hall, his father's mansion, which he fortified. He was guarded by 150 armed Highlanders and a strong party of Mohawks.

These preparations seemed to indicate "designs of the most dangerous

tendency to the rights, liberties, property and even lives" of the patriots, as General Schuyler wrote to Sir John in January, 1776. He ordered out the county militia under General Herkimer, to the number of more than 3,000, and marched to a point near Johnson Hall, where he met Sir John. At the meeting Sir John agreed to surrender all his armament and submitted to being taken prisoner. He was soon thereafter liberated upon his parole not to engage in hostilities against the Americans. Within four months from the time of his agreement, he broke his parole and, with a large number of his tenants and other Tories, took to the woods on his way to Montreal, where he arrived after a journey of great hardship lasting nearly three weeks.

By the departure of the Johnsons, the Butlers, Brant, and their adherents, Tryon County was relieved of the most powerful members of its Tory element; but the dangers to its peace and the welfare of its patriot inhabitants were thereby increased rather than lessened. Their Tory enemies were now in touch with the British forces in Canada and thus able to concert measures for hostile operations with more facility and greater effectiveness than if they had remained in the midst of their former neighbors, where they could have been observed and more readily suppressed. This was soon made evident when Sir John received a commission as colonel in the British service and raised a Tory regiment of two battalions, entitled the Royal Greens from the color of their coats, which conformed to the customary uniforms of the Loyalist troops attached to the British army. Colonel John Butler also raised a corps of Tory Rangers, similarly clad.[2]

Hostile invasion of the county was not, however, immediately begun. Two years were to elapse before Johnson and Butler appeared in arms against their former neighbors. That was in August, 1777, when their troops formed a part of the British expedition auxiliary to Burgoyne's plan for the conquest of the Hudson.

The principal defensive post in the Mohawk valley was Fort Stanwix, built in 1758 to hold the portage, the Great Carrying Place, between the river and Wood Creek, which runs into Lake Ontario. Originally a strong fortification with bomb-proof bastions, a glacis, a covered way, and a well picketed ditch, it had, as usual, been allowed to decay. When in April, 1777, Colonel Peter Gansevoort with the 3rd New York Continental regiment took over its command, he found it "not only indefensible, but untenable." [3] Gansevoort, energetic and resolute, a competent soldier, was a young officer, no more than twenty-eight years old. He was ably seconded by his courageous, enterprising lieutenant colonel, Marinus Willett, spirited and active. They put their men to work on the old fort, and before its day of supreme trial it was restored to a defensible condition. Standing athwart the way

from Oswego to Albany, it must first be reduced before invaders from the west could proceed to the Hudson. The task of reducing it fell to Barry St. Leger, who was appointed by Burgoyne to lead the auxiliary expedition forward from Oswego.

Barry St. Leger was an experienced soldier; more than half of his forty years had been spent in the King's service. He had taken part in the siege of Louisburg and in the capture of Quebec. His regular and permanent rank was lieutenant colonel of the 34th Foot; but temporarily and locally he had the title of brigadier general.

The force allotted to St. Leger was made up of detachments of 100 men each from the 8th and the 34th regiments, a regiment of 133 Tories of Sir John Johnson's "Royal Greens," a company of Tory Rangers under Colonel John Butler, and about 350 Hanau jägers. Forty artillerists were equipped with two 6-pounders, two 3-pounders, and four very small mortars, called "cohorns" or "royals." Some Canadian irregulars, a large number of axmen, and other noncombatants were added.[4] As he started with only one company of the jägers, about 100 men, the rest being delayed, his force of white men numbered about 875 of all ranks. The Indian contingent, under Joseph Brant, between 800 and 1,000 strong, met him at Oswego on his arrival July 25. The next day he started for Fort Stanwix, which he had been led to believe was in a ruinous condition and garrisoned by only 60 men.

Thomas Spencer, a half-breed chief of the Oneidas, was present at a council of the Six Nations where Daniel Claus urged the Indians to join St. Leger, and he brought word of this to the inhabitants of the valley. The result was unfortunate for the American cause: the Tories became bolder and more active. The less courageous and the uncertain patriots either professed neutrality or secretly allied themselves with the Tories. There was a general paralysis of the patriot effort throughout the valley.

To counteract this sad effect was the task of Nicholas Herkimer, brigadier general of the county militia. The son of a Palatine German immigrant named Ergheimer who had secured large grants of land along the river, he was now, in his fiftieth year, a moderately wealthy man. He had fought in the French and Indian War. He has been described as "short, slender, of dark complexion, with black hair and bright eyes." [5] Like many of the people of the valley, he was better acquainted with the tongue of his ancestors than with the English language.

On July 17 Herkimer issued a brief but vigorous and stirring proclamation calling on all able-bodied men between the ages of sixteen and sixty to prepare for mobilization; all invalids and old men were to be ready to

defend their homes, and all Tories and slackers were to be arrested and confined. This appeal, powerfully backed by the dread prospect of an Indian invasion, had the desired effect. The fighting spirit of the rebels of Tryon County was fully aroused.

St. Leger's march was conducted with much caution, with great regularity, and in excellent formation. Five single-file columns of Indians, widely paced, preceded the advance guard of soldiers by about a quarter of a mile. A middle single file, its members ten paces apart, followed these soldiers, o to ensure communication with the main body. The regulars' advance guard, 50 marksmen of the Royal Greens, marched in two columns a hundred yards ahead of the British regulars, whose two detachments marched side by side. Indian flankers covered both sides of the main body, and a guard of regulars brought up the rear. All the columns were in single file. Though St. Leger moved cautiously, he moved swiftly. His force marched ten miles a day, excellent progress in a wilderness of forests, streams, and swamps.

But he wished for an even swifter movement to surprise the fort and cut off its communications with the lower country, and especially to intercept a convoy of provisions and supplies on the way to it. Accordingly, he pushed forward a detachment of 30 regulars of the 8th Regiment under Lieutenant Bird, and 200 Indians led by Brant. They reached Stanwix on the 2nd, just too late to cut off the convoy of five bateaux and a reenforcement of 200 men, which got safely into the fort, although one of several bateaumen lingering about the boats was killed. Two others were wounded, and the captain of the boats was captured. The next day St. Leger and his full force arrived.

His first move was an attempt to intimidate the garrison by a review of his troops in plain sight of the palisaded earthwork. The varied uniforms, scarlet for the British, blue for the Germans, green for the jägers, the rangers, and Johnson's Tories, made a gay display; but the naked bodies of a thousand savages were more impressive. Impressive, however, in a way contrary to St. Leger's intentions. They were visible indications of the cruel fate of the men of the garrison and of their families in the settlements behind them, if the fort were not held against the invaders. And so that parade stiffened the determination of the 750 defenders not to let the savages and their allies pass.

St. Leger's second move was to send a proclamation, under a flag, into the fort. It rivaled Burgoyne's similar effort in pomposity. Indeed, most of it was a copy of that sample of "enlightened absurdity." It received no answer.

Perceiving that the fort was too strong and too strongly held to yield to

an assault, St. Leger disposed his force to besiege it. It stood on a slight elevation on the north side of the river and close to the road from Wood Creek to the Lower Landing on the Hudson, being the important portage or Great Carrying Place. Behind it there was a somewhat higher elevation on which he established the camp of his regular troops. At the Lower Landing, most of the Canadians, Tories, and Indians were posted. Another detachment of Tories held a position on Wood Creek to the west of the fort. Little groups of Indians were strung along from that place to the Lower Landing. Thus the fort was surrounded. But it was not closely invested, for the circuit of the investment was nearly three miles long and there was heavily wooded and swampy ground on the southwest, which could not be tightly held.

St. Leger's next thought was for his communications with Lake Ontario. A road sixteen miles long through the forest had to be cut before he could bring up his artillery and heavy supplies. Also Wood Creek had to be cleared of the trees that Gansevoort had felled to obstruct it. Besides his Canadian axmen and other noncombatants, he put so many of his men to work at that job that on August 5, when he had news of a relieving force on its way to the fort, he had in camp fewer than 250 regular troops to oppose it.

In the meantime, the Indians along with their friends, the German jägers, had been enjoying a safe kind of warfare. Taking cover as near the fort as possible, they fired at the Americans who were piling sods on the parapet to increase its height, and wounded several of them. To reply, marksmen were posted at different parts of the works; and a brisk, though desultory, fire was kept up throughout the 4th and 5th.

On July 30 Herkimer, having news of St. Leger's advance, summoned his militia to rendezvous at Fort Dayton on the Mohawk about thirty miles below Stanwix. They turned out in satisfactory numbers, about 800 of them, and marched on August 4. Although encumbered by a train of oxcarts,[6] they made good progress, about twenty-two miles in two days. On the way, they were joined by 60 Oneida Indians, who were to act as scouts.

Herkimer sent forward four runners to inform Gansevoort of his approach. In reply Gansevoort was to fire three cannon shots, acknowledging receipt of the news and signaling his readiness to make a sortie when the relief column was near, then to engage the enemy about the fort and prevent them from concentrating on Herkimer's troops.

On the morning of the 6th Herkimer held a council of war. No gunshots from the fort had been heard. The question was whether the relieving force should, nevertheless, immediately advance or await the expected signal. Herkimer was for waiting; but in that opinion he stood almost alone. His

subordinate officers were for going on, regardless of the lack of reply by Gansevoort.

The matter was debated with acerbity which developed into hot anger on the part of those urging an immediate advance. Herkimer seems to have kept his temper, but stubbornly held to his opinion. The others charged him with cowardice, called him a Tory at heart, brought up the fact that one of his brothers was an officer in a Tory company under St. Leger. At last he could no longer withstand their urgency, coupled with accusations of polroonery. He yielded and gave the order.

The Oneida scouts went ahead. Herkimer, conspicuously mounted on a white horse, showed that he was no coward by taking the lead of his men. After him, 600 marched in double file. Then came the wagon train, followed by a rear guard of 200.

At the news of the advance of Herkimer's men St. Leger prepared to receive them before they got to the fort. Six miles short of Stanwix, and near Oriskany village, the road crossed a wide ravine, fifty feet deep with steep sides. Through it ran a small stream bordered by a morass. Across that bottom, the road was corduroyed with loose logs, offering a difficult and a narrow passage. Here St. Leger proposed to check, indeed to annihilate, Herkimer's force. To this work he detailed a part of his Royal Greens, a detachment of Butler's Rangers, and the whole force of Indians under Joseph Brant.

The plan was to post the white men on the west of the ravine and the savages in hiding along its western margin in a curve almost encircling it, out leave the eastern side open for Herkimer's troops to enter the trap. When the middle of the column was deep in the ravine, the Tories and Rangers were to check its head, and the Indians were to close the circle around the rear on the east. Thus Herkimer would be completely surrounded by enemies under cover of rocks and trees, their fire converging on his trapped column. It was a well conceived scheme, admirably fitted to the character of those who were to execute it and likely to be successful.

It is difficult to understand why the Oneida scouts did not discover some signs of that ambuscade; but they did not. If the Americans had thrown out any flankers, they must have stumbled upon some of the ambushed Indians and given the alarm. It seems probable that no such precautions were taken, that the long thin column was confined to the narrow road.

The main body, led by Herkimer, had made its way down into the ravine and up the other side, and the groaning, creaking supply train of oxcarts

was negotiating the difficult passage when the trap was sprung. The Indians east of the ravine leaped from their cover, delivered their fire, and rushed in with whoops and yells to close the circle—rushed in a little too soon for complete encirclement, for they closed upon the rear of the wagon train, between it and the rear guard. Cut off from the main body, the guard fled along the road, pursued by some of the savages.

Herkimer, at the head of the column, heard the firing in the rear, turned his horse, and hurried to investigate the situation. As he did so, the Tories and Indians on the west of the ravine pushed forward and began shooting. On the western slope of the ravine, his horse fell dead; his own leg was wounded.

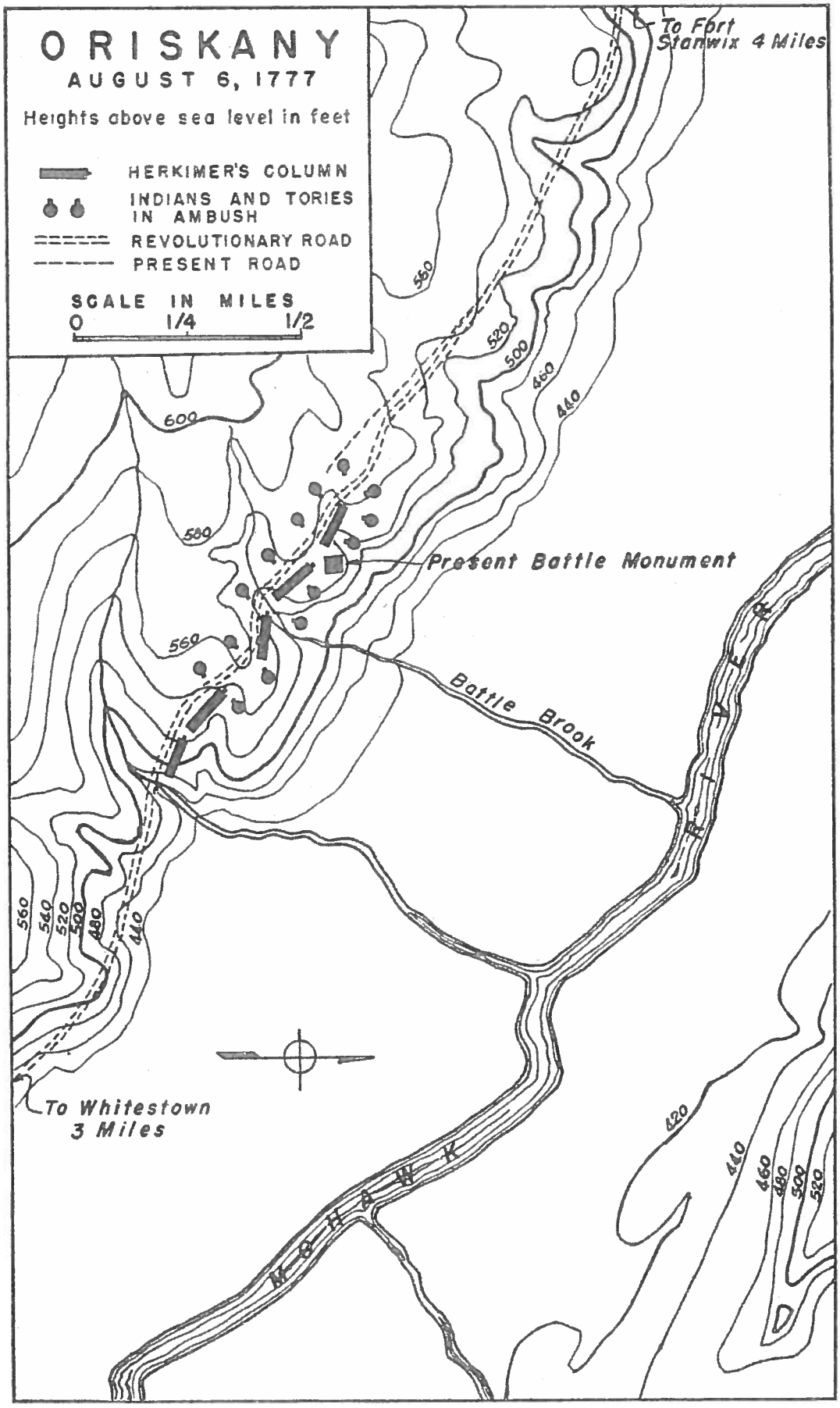
The circle was now complete. Hemmed in on every side, the Americans broke from their ordered line. Singly or in groups they took cover behind trees. There was no front to this fight. Behind a tree, a man was not covered from the bullets of the enemy in his rear. And the Indians were coming closer on every side, ready to charge upon the disorganized mass with tomahawk and knife.

To protect their rear, groups of the Americans formed little circles, facing out from behind trees. Herkimer was carried into their midst. His saddle was brought. Astride it, his back against a tree, he lit his pipe and with great coolness directed his men to form one great circle and thus oppose their fire to all those around them.

But it was not a compact circle after the manner of a British square. It was irregular and widely spaced. The attack was irregular, too, and there was much hand-to-hand fighting, Indian tomahawks and knives and Tory bayonets against clubbed muskets. At this work, the Indians were experts. As soon as an American had fired, an Indian would rush in upon him and cut him down with a tomahawk before he could reload.

But after three-quarters of an hour of this desperate conflict there was a sudden and complete cessation of fire on both sides. The lowering clouds of that hot, sultry day had broken and discharged a downpour that wet the priming of the flintlocks. No gun could be discharged. For a full hour, this armistice lasted. Then the sun came out and the fight began again, but with a slight difference. Herkimer had ordered his men to take cover by twos, so that, when one had fired and was reloading, the other would be ready to shoot any of the savages that attempted their favorite trick.

The Indians had been suffering severely and had begun to lose interest in such a well contested struggle. Their fire slackened; they showed signs of uneasiness. At this juncture Major Watts came up with a second detachment of Royal Greens. He had them turn their coats inside out, so that their uni-


ORISKANY
AUGUST 6, 1777
Heights above sea level in feet
HERKIMER'S COLUMN
INDIANS AND TORIES IN AMBUSH
REVOLUTIONARY ROAD
PRESENT ROAD
SCALE IN MILES
0 1/4 1/2
To Fort Stanwix 4 Miles
Present Battle Monument
Battle Brook
MOHAWK RIVER
To Whitestown 3 Miles
600
580
560
540
520
500
480
460
440
420

form color was concealed. So they advanced in the guise of a friendly sortie from the fort. But when they were near the ruse was discovered; they were boldly attacked, and a terrific hand-to-hand fight ensued, with bayonets, gun butts, and knives doing their deadly work.

But by this time the Indians had had enough. The cry of retreat, *"Oonah! Oonah!"* was raised. They drew back and disappeared into the woods. The Tories gave up the fight and followed them. The Tryon County men could not pursue them. Besides their general, they had some fifty wounded men to care for. On rude litters they bore them away in a march back to Fort Dayton.

While the fight at Oriskany was going on, there had been activity at Stanwix. Herkimer's messengers had been unable to get into the fort until late in the morning of that same day. The three guns were then promptly fired, but seem to have been unheard amid the noise of the battle. Marinus Willett with 250 men and a fieldpiece issued from the fort. The British regular troops in the main camp, reduced by those working on the roads and those at Oriskany, numbered rather less. The camp of the Tories and Canadians at the Lower Landing was but lightly guarded, the Indian camps hardly at all, except by their squaws. At these there was hardly a show of resistance. At Willett's approach their occupants fled to the woods; Sir John Johnson departed in his shirt sleeves.

Methodically and completely, Willett looted the camps. He destroyed all their provisions, and carried off twenty-one wagonloads of spoils, muskets and weapons of all sorts, ammunition, camp kettles, blankets, and clothing. He stripped the Indians' tents of everything movable, including their deerskins and their packs, thus giving them ground for deep discontent with their allies. He got all Sir John Johnson's papers and five flags. Before troops from the main British camp could arrive to cut him off from the fort, he was back in it with his spoils and without losing a man. The five flags were hoisted on the fort's flagstaff "under the Continental flag." [7]

On the return of his men from Oriskany, St. Leger again disposed them for the siege. The next day he sent Colonel Butler, Major Ancron, and another officer to the fort, under a flag. They were received by Gansevoort and Willett and as many other officers as could crowd into a small room. Ancron delivered the message.

Its effect was that Colonel St. Leger had, with difficulty, prevailed upon the Indians to agree that if the fort were surrendered its garrison would be secured in their lives, their persons, and their private property. But if the

fort had to be taken by force he could not restrain his savage allies from an indiscriminate massacre of its defenders. Indeed, he went on, the Indians were so provoked by their recent losses of several favorite chiefs that they threatened to march down the valley and destroy all the settlements and their inhabitants, men, women, and children; and he could not prevent it.

Willett answered for the garrison: "Do I understand you, sir? I think you say you come from a British Colonel, who is commander of the army that invests this fort; and by your uniform you appear to be an officer in the British service. . . . You come from a British colonel to the commandant of this garrison to tell him that, if he does not deliver up the garrison . . . he will send his Indians to murder our women and children." With blistering scorn, Willett told Ancron that he had brought a message degrading for any British officer to send and disreputable for any British officer to carry. No, they would not surrender.[8]

St. Leger set about building new redoubts more closely to invest the fort and establishing batteries to bombard it. But his guns were too light to have any effect on its sod-covered walls. He then began digging trenches, regular approaches by parallels, which would allow him to undermine the walls of the fort and breach them.

While this was going on, Willett and one companion undertook to penetrate the enemy's lines with an appeal to the militia of Tryon County for help. Working their way by night through the swamps and across the streams in the ground held by the Indians, they got to Fort Dayton in two days and there learned that a relieving force of Continental troops was already on its way.

Schuyler at Stillwater had received news of the investment of Stanwix. He called a council of war and proposed to send a detachment to relieve it. Most of his officers opposed this as weakening the army already too weak to resist Burgoyne. They muttered among themselves that it was an intentional weakening. The insinuation was in line with the charges of cowardice and even of treason, which had been leveled against the general on account of his successive retreats. Schuyler, who was pacing the room in agitation at the opposition to his plan for succor, overheard the remarks. In his anger he bit the stem of his clay pipe in two. Casting away the fragments, he stopped and looked the council in the face. "Gentlemen," he said, "I shall take the responsibility upon myself. Fort Stanwix and the Mohawk Valley shall be saved! Where is the brigadier who will command the relief? I shall beat up for volunteers to-morrow."[9]

Benedict Arnold, angry at the false imputations cast upon Schuyler and ever ready for action in the field, instantly offered his services. Although a

major general, second in command to Schuyler, he was more than willing to take up the duties of a brigadier. Volunteers to the number of 950 were eager to follow a leader whom they admired and trusted. Brigadier General Ebenezer Learned of Massachusetts took the second command.

At Fort Dayton, on the 21st, they were joined by a hundred Tryon County militia and were informed that St. Leger had 1,700 men to oppose them. It seemed even to Arnold, that fighting man, that prudence called for reinforcements. Yet, the next day, hearing that St. Leger's approaches were very near their objective, and that the fort was in grave danger, Arnold decided to go forward with what men he had. On the 23rd he started, with a part of his force, on a forced march up the Mohawk. He had gone but ten miles when he got word that a ruse he had employed had been successful.

A Mohawk Valley German, Hon Yost Schuyler, had been sentenced to death for trying to recruit men for the British cause. He was generally esteemed a half-idiot, and was therefore regarded by the Indians with the respect and awe that they always accorded to the insane. Yet he was both cunning and shrewd. Arnold promised him a pardon if he would go to St. Leger's camp and spread a report of the approach of a relief force overwhelming in numbers.

Hon Yost took off his coat and had it shot through by several bullets. With an Oneida Indian as assistant, he started for Stanwix. Entering the Indians' camp alone, he said he had narrowly escaped from Arnold's force, and showed the bullet holes as proof. He had come, he said, to warn his red brothers that they were in danger. Thousands of troops were about to attack them. To St. Leger he told a circumstantial story of his escape while on the way to the gallows.

The Oneida assistant came in to tell *his* red brothers of their danger, repeating the story the other had told. The Indians took alarm, began to pack up for immediate departure. St. Leger's attempts to quiet them had no effect. Rumors that Arnold was coming with 3,000 men, that he was only two miles away, ran through the camp. He was feared by the white soldiers and the red warriors alike as was no other American officer. A panic ensued. The Indians rioted, seized the officers' supplies of liquor and even their clothing. They became, as St. Leger said, "more formidable than the enemy!" Two hundred of them fled to the woods. The chiefs of those remaining insisted on an immediate retreat. St. Leger gave the order.

Leaving their tents standing, their artillery, ammunition, and supplies, the whole force started for their boats on Wood Creek, with only such baggage as they could carry on their backs. So they made their way back to Oswego.

That was the story Arnold got from the crazy Hon Yost, who slipped away and came back to meet him. There was nothing now to do but push on to Stanwix and be received by its garrison with cheers and a salute from the artillery.

The losses on both sides at Oriskany were never accurately ascertained. It was as bloody a battle in proportion to the numbers engaged as any in the war. Fought at close quarters with unusual ferocity, the usual relative proportions of killed and wounded were reversed. Perhaps as good a guess as any is that the Tryon militia had 150 to 200 killed and 50 wounded, while of the Indians and Tories 150 may have fallen. Herkimer died shortly after his wounded leg was amputated.

But one thing was certain. Part of Burgoyne's plan had been knocked into a cocked hat. St. Leger had been beaten back. There would be no one to meet Burgoyne at Albany. He had to see it through alone.

CHAPTER 39

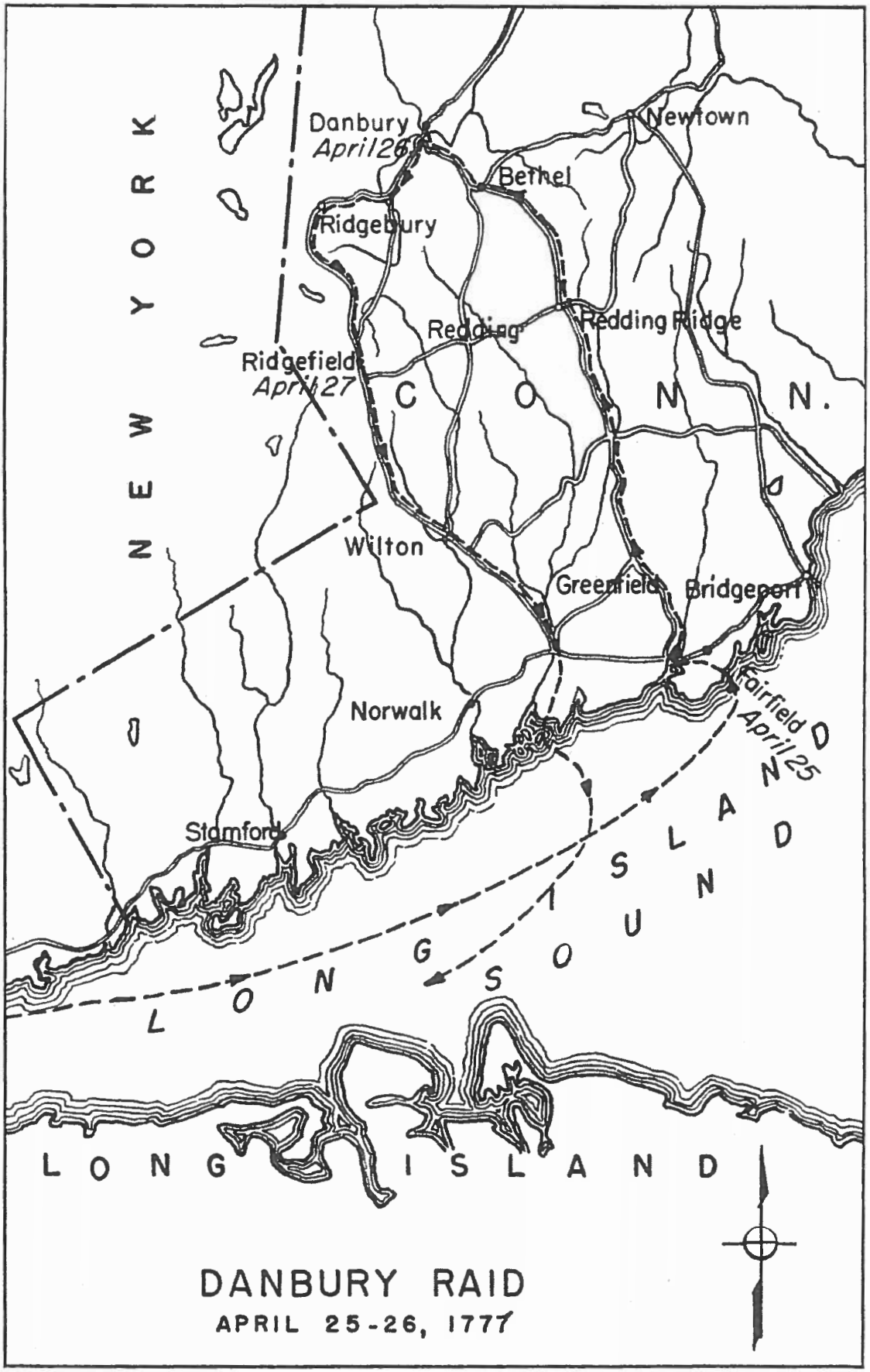
Danbury

Before the narrative of the movements of the two armies towards their final meeting at Saratoga, two incidents that occurred previously must have their place here, for, though they were slight in proportion to the magnitude of the Hudson River campaign, both had important effects upon it.

The first of these occurred in April, 1777. General Howe directed William Tryon, royal governor of New York, lately commissioned a major general, to destroy a magazine of American stores and provisions at Danbury in Connecticut. Detachments of 250 men each were drawn from the 4th, 15th, 23rd, 27th, 44th, and 64th British infantry regiments, and of 300 from Brown's Tory regiment. A few light dragoons and some fieldpieces were added. Generals Agnew and Erskine were appointed to commands under Tryon. Convoyed by two frigates, the expedition sailed from New York on the 23rd and landed near Norwalk in the evening of the 25th.

The march to Danbury was unopposed. Its garrison of 150 Continentals removed a small part of the stores before they retired on Tryon's approach. About three o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th the work of destruction was begun; and it was continued until the next morning. Nineteen dwelling houses and twenty-two storehouses and barns, as well as great quantities of pork, beef, flour, wheat, clothing, and tents were burned. At ten o'clock the next morning the return march to the ships was begun.

In New Haven, Brigadier General Benedict Arnold, the Achilles of the American army, was sulking in his tent, that is to say in the house of his sister. Despite his brilliant services in the war, five brigadiers, all junior to him in rank and one a mere militia general, had been made major generals


NEW YORK
Danbury
April 26
Newtown
Bethel
Ridgebury
Redding
Redding Ridge
Ridgefield
April 27
CONN.
Wilton
Greenfield
Bridgeport
Fairfield
April 25
Norwalk
Stamford
LONG ISLAND SOUND
LONG ISLAND
DANBURY RAID
APRIL 25-26, 1777

on February 19, while he was unnoticed. Astonished and indignant at the slight put upon him by an ungrateful Congress, he wrote to Washington that he intended to resign the service. Washington having urged him "not to take any hasty steps," [1] he consented to hold his place in the hope of rectification of the "error." But, naturally, he was in the meantime in no pleasant mood.

News of Tryon's invasion reached him at his sister's house. Always eager for a fight, he at once mounted his horse and rode to Redding, where he found General Wooster and General Silliman with a hundred Continentals and about 500 militia. They immediately marched to Bethel, four miles from the ravaged town. Arriving there at two in the morning of the 27th, they learned that it had been burned, and that the invaders would soon be on their way back to the ships.

They divided their forces, Arnold and Silliman taking 400 men to meet the enemy at Ridgefield, while Wooster, with 200, harassed the rear. Wooster made the first contact. He attacked the British rear guard and took a number of prisoners. Continuing to press on the enemy's rear, he had got within two miles of Ridgefield when he was mortally wounded. His force then retreated. At Ridgefield a hundred more militia, proud of the fame of Arnold, a Connecticut man, and eager to fight under him, joined his force.

A barricade of carts, logs, stones, and earth was thrown up across the narrow road, which was flanked on one side by a ledge of rocks, on the other by a house and barn. Two hundred were posted behind this, the rest on its flanks. Tryon came up in the middle of the afternoon, his 2,000 men marching in a solid column, and opened fire on the Americans, who responded with spirit. Tryon threw out flanking parties on both sides. General Agnew, leading one, took his men up on the rocky ledge. His fire enfiladed the barrier, and Arnold ordered his men to retreat. A platoon of Agnew's troops came down into the road behind the barricade and fired a volley at Arnold, no more than thirty yards away. His horse fell, struck by nine bullets. Entangled in the stirrups, he was struggling to arise when a Tory who had joined the British ran at him with the bayonet, crying out: "Surrender! You are my prisoner!" "Not yet!" Arnold answered, shot the soldier with his pistol, disentangled himself, and got away into a wooded swamp.

A mile farther on, the British went into camp for the night. About sunrise they resumed their march. The aroused inhabitants beset them on all sides, firing from houses and from behind walls and fences, in much the same manner as in the retreat from Concord, but not so effectively.

In the meantime, Arnold had collected his men and secured three field-pieces with their appropriate companies of artillerists. He posted his force so as to command both of two roads by which Tryon might gain the water-side where his ships awaited him. But a Tory guide showed Tryon a circuitous way around Arnold's position to Compo Hill near the landing place. There the British stood on the defensive. The Americans formed in two columns for the attack. But before it could be launched, General Erskine led 400 of his men in a bayonet charge, which despite the valiant efforts of Colonel John Lamb's artillery to check it, broke the American ranks, and Tryon was enabled to embark his men.

Howe admitted no greater loss than 60 killed and wounded, but Stedman, the English historian, figured their casualties at "near two hundred men, including ten officers." The Americans lost perhaps 20 killed and 40 wounded.[2]

The results of this expedition reflected no credit upon the Connecticut people, who allowed the British to make a leisurely march through their country without opposition until its objects had been accomplished, and failed to remove the precious stores from Danbury before they could be taken and destroyed. The contrast between such pusillanimous behavior and that of the men of Massachusetts on a similar occasion is painful to contemplate.

Lamb and Wooster, however, and especially Arnold, deserved much praise. Of Arnold's services the Congress took notice immediately. Within a week, it made him a major general and shortly afterward ordered the gift of a horse "properly caparisoned as a token of . . . approbation of his gallant conduct . . . in the late enterprize to Danbury." [3] This was balm to Arnold's injured feelings, yet not a complete assuagement of his resentment, for he was still junior to the five major generals who had been promoted over his head. He still sought for the restoration of his proper rank, but in vain. Again he offered his resignation, driven to it, he said, by a sense of injustice. "Honor is a sacrifice no man ought to make," said he. "As I received, so I wish to transmit it to posterity." [4]

But on the very day that his letter was presented to the Congress, that body received a letter from Washington suggesting the sending of Arnold, "an active, spirited officer . . . judicious and brave," to the northern army opposing Burgoyne. "I am persuaded his presence and activity will animate the militia greatly." [5] This praise from his chief calmed Arnold. He asked leave to suspend his resignation and even agreed to serve "faithfully" under St. Clair, one of the juniors who had been promoted over his head. So it came about that Arnold had a part in the affairs at Saratoga.

The second incident was a tragedy, in which a woman played the leading part. Jane McCrea was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister of New Jersey. On the death of her mother and her father's marriage to a second wife, she went to live with her brother, who had settled in the Hudson valley about halfway between Fort Edward and Saratoga. At the time of Burgoyne's invasion, her brother, a colonel in the militia, decided to move to Albany. But she was engaged to marry David Jones, who had fled to Canada and become an officer in one of the Tory contingents then on the march with Burgoyne.

Jane refused to go with her brother, went instead up to Fort Edward, evidently hoping to greet her lover on his arrival. In one of two or three cabins near the fort lived a cousin of the British General Fraser, an old woman, Mrs. McNeil, who received her as a guest.

On July 27, two days before Burgoyne's army took over the abandoned fort, a group of his Indian forerunners came to it. They seized Mrs. McNeil and Jane and started back towards the British army at Fort Ann. They had not gone far when two of them "disputed who should be her guard," [6] and one shot her, scalped her, and stripped the clothing from her body.

They took Mrs. McNeil and Jane's scalp to the British camp, where General Fraser received his cousin and, it is said, David Jones recognized his fiancée's hair. Burgoyne ordered the arrest of the murderer and proposed to execute him, but St. Luc La Corne advised him that if this were done all the Indians would desert the army. Burgoyne pardoned the culprit, who is said to have borne the suitable name of Wyandot Panther.

That is the story of Jane McCrea as related by the most credible historians. In itself, it was but a minor incident in the list of Indian atrocities on that march. There was, for example, the slaughter of the whole family of John Allen—himself, his wife, three children, and three Negroes—on the day when Jane was killed. No one ever hears of them, yet not a history of the war fails to tell of Jane McCrea's murder. The difference lies in the results of the two outrages. The massacre of the Allen family was but one of a familiar type that had happened all along the frontier ever since the white man came to America; but Jane McCrea's murder was different, and for propaganda purposes it was made to measure.

She was young, twenty-three years of age, beautiful, "tall and noted for her long lustrous hair, which could reach to the floor when she stood up and let it down." [7] Or at least, if "not lovely in beauty of face," she was "so lovely in disposition, so graceful in manners and so intelligent in features, that she was a favorite of all who knew her." And her hair, an important element even if it did not reach to the ground, "was of extraordinary

length and beauty, measuring a yard and a quarter . . . darker than a raven's wing," [8] says one authority; but another sees her locks, not as long and dark, but as "clustering curls of soft blonde hair." [9] Still another says "she was finely formed, dark hair, and uncommonly beautiful." [10] Another description makes her "a beauty in her bridal dress, hastening to her lover." [11] These descriptions are all from reputable histories. It matters not that James Wilkinson, who must have seen her, describes her as simply "a country girl of honest family in circumstances of mediocrity, without either beauty or accomplishments." [12]

The beautiful Jenny McCrea of the general run of the historians is the Jenny McCrea that was important, and she was very important. To the Americans she became more real than the real Jenny had ever been—a martyred saint in the patriotic hierarchy. Gates was the one most responsible for her prompt canonization. He had lately received a letter from Burgoyne complaining of the treatment of some of the prisoners taken by Stark at Bennington. To that he replied:

> That the savages of America should in their warfare mangle and scalp the unhappy prisoners who fall into their hands is neither new nor extraordinary; but that the famous Lieutenant General Burgoyne, in whom the fine gentleman is united with the soldier and the scholar, should hire the savages of America to scalp Europeans and the descendants of Europeans, nay more, that he should pay a price for each scalp so barbarously taken, is more than will be believed in England until authenticated facts shall in every gazette convince mankind of the truth of this horrid tale. Miss McCrae, a young lady lovely to the sight, of virtuous character and amiable disposition, engaged to be married to an officer of your army was, with other women and children, taken out of a house near Fort Edward, carried into the woods, and there scalped and mangled in the most shocking manner. . . . The miserable fate of Miss McCrae was partly aggravated by her being dressed to receive her promised husband; but met her murderers employed by you.[13]

Gates was proud of that letter. He showed it to Lincoln and to Wilkinson. When they suggested it was rather personal, he exclaimed, "By God! I don't believe either of you can mend it." And he had a right to be proud. It was a prize bit of propaganda, and it worked. That letter was printed and reprinted in newspapers all over New England.

The story got about. It was "told at every village fireside and no detail of pathos or horror was forgotten. The name of Jenny McCrea became a watchword." [14] "It seems to have been the one thing needed to inflame the patriot imagination." [15] Washington added fuel to the flame when he wrote urging the brigadiers of militia in Massachusetts and Connecticut to "repel an enemy from your borders, who not content with hiring mercenaries

to lay waste your country, have now brought savages, with the avowed and expressed intention of adding murder to desolation." [16] A general statement; but in the common mind it was Jenny McCrea he was writing about.

Trevelyan says that the men of New England were "determined that the story of Jane MacCrea should not be repeated in their own villages. They arrived at the very sound conclusion that, in order to protect their families from the Wyandot Panther and his brother warriors, the shooting must be done, not from the windows of farm-houses . . . but in the line of battle outside the borders of New England. Before the middle of August, a sixth of the militia of several counties marched off to reinforce the Northern army." [17] They came to it, says John Fiske, "inflamed with such wrath as had not filled their bosoms since the day when all New England had rushed to besiege the enemy in Boston." [18] They were also encouraged to come by the fact that Gates, whom they trusted, was now in command.

A few days after the murder of Jenny McCrea another important incident occurred—Gates was chosen commander of the northern American army. A tug of war in the Congress between the friends of Schuyler (that is to say, the delegates from New York and the more southerly colonies) and the friends of Gates (the New Englanders) had been won temporarily by the Schuyler men when on May 22 their favorite was ordered to the command of the northern army; [19] but since that time the fortunes of war had run against him.

The precipitate evacuation of Ticonderoga, that famous fortress which had bulked so large in the imagination of the Americans, had caused astonishment and spread dismay throughout the country. For this St. Clair might be held primarily responsible; but Schuyler, as chief commander of the northern army, must also bear the blame. Added to that, the continuous series of retreats was certainly Schuyler's work. Moreover his reports to Congress were tinged with defeatism. New England raged against him, with the result that he was displaced from his command, and on August 4 Gates was elected "by the vote of eleven States." Subsequently both Schuyler and St. Clair were "called down" to face a committee of the Congress appointed to conduct an inquiry into their conduct "at the time of surrendering Ticonderoga and Mount Independence." [20]

Horatio Gates, English-born, was the son of an upper servant in the family of the Duke of Leeds. Although his membership in the servant class apparently debarred him from elevation in the aristocratic military profession, he succeeded in obtaining a captaincy at the age of twenty-seven in a provincial regiment in Nova Scotia. He saw service in Braddock's ex-

pedition and in the capture of Martinique, and achieved the rank of major. In 1772, resigning from the British army, he crossed the Atlantic and settled in Virginia on an estate of modest dimensions. There he renewed an acquaintance with George Washington which had begun in the Braddock affair, and in 1775 he enthusiastically threw himself into the American cause.

Gates was one of the few American generals who had seen service in a regular army. Probably at Washington's suggestion the Congress, in 1775, made him adjutant general of the army with the rank of brigadier.[21] In that position, so especially important in the organization of a new army, Gates rendered excellent service. He was acquainted, as were few of the American officers, with military paper work and seems to have been indefatigable in the performance of his duties. He had undoubted ability as an administrator, and he was not without talent in the field.

In May, 1776, Gates was raised to the rank of major general and, in the next month, after the disaster at Trois Rivières, was ordered to the command of the American forces in Canada. How that order failed to take effect, because all the American troops had been driven out of Canada, and how he obtained only a subordinate command under Schuyler, have been already noted in this narrative. Gates, always ambitious, was disappointed. With the support of New Englanders in Congress who admired him and despised Schuyler he succeeded in displacing Schuyler to his own advantage, only to lose out two months later when his rival was reinstated. Now he had again achieved the high command.

It is not proposed here to follow his subsequent career. It is enough to say that he was more at home and more effective in the lobby of the Congress, that source of promotion and preferment, than on the field of battle. What seems to be an example of Gates's preference of intrigue to combat is furnished by his conduct in December, 1776. Washington was then, with a sadly deficient force, trying to hold the Delaware River in the neighborhood of Trenton against any attempted crossing by Howe's army on the way to Philadelphia. Schuyler ordered Gates to march with certain regiments to reenforce Washington. Gates's regiments arrived a few days before that Christmas Day on which Washington planned to attack the Hessian troops at Trenton. In expectation of his coming, Washington had allotted to him the command of the right wing of the attacking force. Gates did not fancy committing himself to so desperate an enterprise, and he seems not to have had the courage to present his excuses to Washington in person. He sent a letter by Wilkinson, his aide-de-camp, begging off on the plea of illness. He wished to go to Philadelphia to recover his health. What he actually did

was immediately to go on to Baltimore, where the Congress was in session after its flight from Philadelphia. There he busied himself in an effort to secure the command of the northern army.

In person, Gates was of medium height, his body not muscular, his shoulders somewhat stooped. He seemed older than fifty, his age at that time. His face was rather long, his features heavy, especially his aquiline nose with its drooping tip and his long chin. His eyes were somewhat hooded by heavy lids. In the excellent portrait of him by Gilbert Stuart, his face wears a shrewdly calculating expression, the eyes as if watching an opponent narrowly, the slightly smiling lips confident, as if he had an ace up his sleeve.[22]

Gates, whatever his faults, was jolly and kindly.

Gates arrived in the camp at the mouth of the Mohawk on August 19. There he found an army of about 4,500 rank and file, less one brigade posted about five miles up the Mohawk. Arnold had not yet returned from Stanwix. Lincoln, with about 500 militia, was in Vermont ready to act against Burgoyne's rear. Stark and his brigade still lingered at Bennington.

Arnold, having left a garrison of 700 men at Stanwix, brought 1,200 men to the camp in the first week of September. About the same time came a contingent, sent by Washington, which, though small, added vastly to Gates's strength. It was a corps of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia riflemen led by that redoubtable warrior Daniel Morgan numbering 331 effectives, with 36 on the sick-list. To strengthen it, 250 "vigorous young men" [23] equipped with muskets and bayonets were selected from the army. Major Henry Dearborn, a veteran of Arnold's march to Quebec, was assigned to their command under Morgan.

Gates wanted to add Stark's brigade to the main force. Lincoln again undertook to induce that difficult soldier to take his men over to the Hudson, but Stark would not give up his independent position. To be sure, his brigade was enlisted for only two months, its term expiring in the middle of September; but there was still need for his men in the army, even for so short a time. And, with the fateful conflict with Burgoyne so imminent, Stark should have been able to induce them to extend their time. But his ingrained cantankerousness had the upper hand of his patriotism. He felt that he and his men had been "slighted" in the report of the Bennington battle made by Lincoln. He made various excuses: his men had the "meazels," he himself was ill, he had only 800 men, too few to march so close to Burgoyne, and so on.[24] At last, in the morning of September 18, he

appeared. At noon, he and all his troops departed. Their time was up. The very next day the Americans were locked in combat with the enemy.

The effect of Bennington on Burgoyne's army had been immediate and severe. In general orders he said that Baum's expedition to procure stocks of food, which "might have enabled the Army to proceed without waiting for the arrival of the Magazines" from the north, having failed "thro the chances of War, the Troops must necessarily halt some days, for bringing forward the Transport of Provisions." [25] So they remained in camp at the so-called Fort Miller a short distance above the Batten Kill and about four miles above Saratoga.

The shortage of provisions was not the only cause for concern on the part of Burgoyne. Bennington had deprived him of more than 800 men, of whom nearly 450 were regulars. Severe restrictions which he had imposed on the independent operations of his Indians, in consequence of the McCrea murder, had disgruntled his savage allies, and the Bennington affair had not encouraged them. They held a council and decided to go home. Soon there were left to him no more than 80 out of his original 500.

The Tories in his ranks were few and unreliable. "I have about 400 (but not half of them armed), who may be depended upon," he wrote to Germain after Bennington. "The rest are trimmers merely actuated by interest." [26] His belief in a prevailing mood of loyalism in Tryon County and in Vermont had been shattered. He could not rely on any uprisings to assist him.

He had begun to doubt, more than doubt, the success of his expedition with only his present force. "Had I a latitude in my orders," he wrote to Germain, "I should think it my duty to wait in this position, or perhaps as far back as Fort Edward, where my communication with Lake George would be perfectly secure, till some event happened to assist my movement forward; but my orders being positive to 'force a junction with Sir William Howe,' I apprehend I am not at liberty to remain inactive longer than shall be necessary to collect twenty-five days' provision" and to receive the reenforcement of certain new German auxiliaries coming down from Canada. But he added, "I yet do not despond." If he could get to Albany, he would fortify it and wait for Howe to get in touch with him.[27]

Gates's army had been built up to about 6,000 rank and file, say 7,000 in all. The Mohawk, since the Stanwix affair, was no longer a threat in his rear. His position at its mouth offered no satisfactory ground for the

American style of fighting, being rather fit for the British regular formations. He decided to move north to a more suitable and more easily defensible terrain. On September 9 he was at Stillwater again, and his chief engineer, Kosciuszko, began to lay out defenses; but it was not a good choice. The wide river meadows offered too favorable an opportunity for turning the chosen position. He therefore moved again, on the 12th, about three miles north to a point where the river ran through a narrow defile dominated on the west by bluffs rising steeply more than a hundred feet, called Bemis Heights from the name of the owner of a tavern by the riverside.[28]

The plateau above the bluffs rose again in steep slopes to greater heights, 200 to 300 feet above the river. These heights were irregularly shaped and were separated from one another by ravines, in which small streams flowed down to the Hudson. One of the ravines, that of Mill Creek, reached through the bluffs northwestwardly, in front of the position taken by the American army, and thence northerly to the final position of the British. Another, the widest and deepest, called the Great Ravine, started somewhat farther north and reached northwestwardly behind the ground on which the British army was first deployed. On the bluffs and the plateau were thick woods of pine, maple, and oak, interspersed with a few small clearings. Certain roads, or rather wagon tracks, ran from the main river road up the sides of the ravines and interlaced on the plateau above in a complicated and irregular pattern.

At the southern end of this area, on a 200-foot elevation south of the Mill Creek ravine, the American position was taken. It is said to have been selected by Arnold and Kosciuszko, who laid out plans for its fortification. Beginning at the river's edge, near Bemis's tavern, an entrenchment was drawn across the main river road; and at its eastern end a battery was erected. From this point a bridge of boats was swung across the Hudson.

Connected with this, trenches were dug; and breastworks of logs and earth were erected in a line running at a right angle with the river up the bluff to the higher level of the main fortification. This was constructed of the same materials in the form of three sides of a square about three-quarters of a mile on each side. The rear, which was somewhat protected by a ravine, was left open. A small redoubt, mounting artillery, was built at the middle of each of the three fortified sides. At the northwest angle there was a house belonging to one Neilson. A log barn near by was stockaded and named Fort Neilson.[29]

The ground was well chosen to oppose Burgoyne's advance down the west side of the river, except in one respect. To the west and not far distant

was a greater height, which dominated the fortification. If it should be occupied with artillery in sufficient force, the American stronghold would be in a precarious situation. This point had been incompletely entrenched and was not occupied by the Americans when Burgoyne pushed forward in force, on September 19.

Gates established his headquarters in "a small hovel, not ten feet square" [30] in the side of a slope near the rear end of the western side of the fortification and awaited the arrival of the enemy.

CHAPTER 40

Freeman's Farm

For his southward march from Fort Miller, Burgoyne had a choice between the road on the east side of the Hudson, where he was, and that on the west. Gates had blocked the west road at Bemis Heights and held a position dominating it; the east road was open. But Albany, Burgoyne's objective, was on the west side. If he marched down the east side, he would find the Hudson at Albany greatly increased in volume and width by the inflow of the Mohawk, and the American army would certainly have moved down to oppose him. The crossing there would be difficult and hazardous.

On the other hand, if he now crossed to the west side and took that road he would have to fight his way past his enemy. In either case, he would have to cut his already too long and too tenuous communications with Lake Champlain and Canada. Choice was difficult, but it had to be made promptly: he could not winter where he was, having no proper shelter for his troops, nor any certainty of food even from Canada after Champlain froze over—a supply sufficient for thirty days already brought down was all he could rely upon.[1] Unless he retreated, Albany was his only hope for the winter. He boldly chose the west road and a fight at Bemis Heights.

Strengthened by the arrival of the guns from Fort George and by a new draft of 300 regulars from Canada, Burgoyne threw a bridge of boats across the river; and his right wing, the British troops, crossed to Saratoga on the 13th, followed shortly after by the Germans. On the 15th the bridge was dismantled, and the whole army resumed its southward march in three columns: the right wing taking the right of the road; the left wing the meadows between the road and the river; the artillery, the road itself. The supplies and baggage were committed to the bateaux. So they proceeded

about three miles to a farm called Dovecote—or "Dovegat." Two days later they made another three miles and camped about the house of one Sword.[2] Up to this time, although he was now within four miles of Gates's position, Burgoyne seems to have had no definite idea of his enemy's whereabouts. His intelligence had formerly been derived from his Indian scouts, of whom few were left to him. But now he heard of the Americans.

A small party of British soldiers and some women went out to dig potatoes on an abandoned farm. An American patrol surprised them, fired on them, killed several, and took 20 prisoners.[3] So Burgoyne knew that the Americans were close at hand. He soon ascertained their exact position and made his dispositions to attack them.

The right wing, under General Fraser, was made up of the light infantry companies of the 9th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 29th, 31st, 34th, 47th, 53rd, and 62nd British regiments, under command of Major the Earl of Balcarres; the grenadiers of the same regiments, commanded by Major John Dyke Acland; also the battalion companies of the 24th Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Breymann's Brunswick riflemen, and an artillery brigade of four 6-pounders and four 3's. Being the advance corps, it received the few remaining Indians (about 50), the 70 to 80 Canadians, the Tories (perhaps 150), and 50 of the British "marksmen." All told, there were about 2,000 in this wing.

The center, under command of General Hamilton, included battalion companies of the 20th, 21st, and 62nd British regiments, with the 9th regiment in reserve. It had six light fieldpieces, 6's and 3's under Captain Jones. General Burgoyne was to accompany this section.

The left, led by General Phillips and General Riedesel, comprised the Brunswick infantry regiments of Riedesel, Specht, and Rhetz, and Captain Pausch's Hesse Hanau artillery, six 6-pounders and two 3's. Six battalion companies of the British 47th were detailed to guard the 200 bateaux containing the provisions and supplies. The wheeled carriages for the rest of the baggage were to be protected by the Hesse Hanau infantry. The center and left wings numbered about 1,100 each, rank and file. Fifty Brunswick dragoons, the relics of Baum's expedition, "shabbily mounted, attended (occasionally)" General Burgoyne. All in all, the British army now numbered only about 6,000 rank and file.[4]

On the morning of September 19, the sun rose bright and clear; the air was cool and bracing, and hoarfrost whitened the grass.[5] The British army prepared for its advance, but it was not until some time after ten o'clock that the discharge of a gun called for a simultaneous movement of the three

divisions.[6] Led by a party of the "shabbily mounted" dragoons and a hundred light infantry, Riedesel's division, accompanied by a detachment of pioneers and followed by the heavy artillery and the baggage, took its way in two columns down the road that ran under the bluffs and through the alluvial meadows by the riverside. Bridges, destroyed by the Americans, had to be replaced and guarded. Dispositions of troops on the heights above the road to protect the workers had to be made at each halt. Thus the progress of the division was much delayed. By one o'clock it reached a point about a quarter-mile below Wilbur's Basin, the farthest south that any part of Burgoyne's army ever penetrated.[7]

Meanwhile, Fraser's division had left the riverside by a rough road running west from Sword's house. Crossing the head of the Great Ravine, it marched nearly three miles until it met a crossroad on which it swung to the left, then south for a short distance to take a position on a height of land west of Freeman's Farm.[8]

The center division followed the right for about a mile, took a southward road for a half-mile, crossed the stream in the bottom of the Great Ravine on a bridge that the Americans had failed to destroy, and halted at noon for an hour on the south side of the ravine to give Fraser time to make his more circuitous march.

In the American camp, the right wing was composed chiefly of the Continental troops of Brigadier General John Glover, Colonel John Nixon and Brigadier General John Paterson. It occupied the heights near the river and the narrow level ground below them, under personal command of Gates.

The left wing, commanded by Arnold, included the New Hampshire regulars of Colonels Joseph Cilley, Nathan Hale,[9] and Alexander Scammell; Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt's and Colonel Henry Livingston's New Yorkers; the Connecticut militia under Colonel Jonathan Lattimer and Colonel Thaddeus Cook; Colonel Daniel Morgan's riflemen; and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dearborn's light infantry.

The center was held by Brigadier General Ebenezer Learned's Continental brigade, the Massachusetts Continental regiments of Colonel John Bailey, Colonel Henry Jackson, and Colonel James Wesson, and Colonel James Livingston's New Yorkers. The total number of effectives in Gates's army was about the same as that in Burgoyne's, perhaps a thousand more.[10]

Burgoyne's army, divided into three widely spaced parts, its communications so difficult because of the broken terrain, was really in a pre-

carious condition. It would seem, for example, that a swift attack in substantial force down the slope and upon Riedesel's division, in its narrow space by the waterside, might have routed it before it could have help from the right or center, Fraser or Burgoyne. Or that a strong detachment might have turned either the right or the left of the British center division and fought it successfully in the woods, in which neither its artillery nor its bayonets would have been of much use. But Gates undertook no such bold enterprises. To be sure, the defense would probably be less costly, and time then seemed to be on the American side.

Gates is said to have been subject to "the fatal attraction which the apparent security of a fortress has so often exercised upon the mind of a timid and incompetent general." It is argued that he proposed to concentrate his army either altogether within his fort or in that and on the narrow ground between it and the river, in "the insensate belief that his adversaries would run their heads, wantonly and obstinately, against his impenetrable bulwarks." [11] But it is asserted only by Gates's enemies, friends of Schuyler and Arnold, with whom he was now on bad terms, that he was not properly concerned about his left flank and the possibility that it might be turned.

Burgoyne planned an attack. Phillips and Riedesel were to advance along the river road and engage the American right. Burgoyne and Hamilton, with their four regiments, were to attack in the center, while Fraser's light infantry and grenadiers, the 24th British regiment, and his mixed auxiliary force of Tories, Canadians, and Indians swept around the American left and occupied that undefended higher ground to the west of the fort. From it Fraser could bring his guns to bear on the entrenchments, enfilade their front lines, and finally assault them in flank and rear, in the hope of pushing the Americans down the slope and into the river.[12] It was a bold plan, yet not unfeasible.

The movements of the British army into its chosen positions could not be concealed from the American scouts perched in treetops. The brilliant colors of the uniforms and the flash of sunlight reflected from their polished steel gave notice for three hours of its continuing advance; yet Gates gave not a single order to meet the developing emergency. Arnold was not so complacent. He could not have known what Burgoyne planned. Indeed, he seems to have been at fault in permitting that western dominating height to remain partly fortified and entirely undefended; or, at least, if he could not induce Gates to occupy it, in making no protest. But he did argue with his superior against remaining on the defensive in and about the fortifications. Letting Burgoyne approach the fort unopposed would permit him to

bring up his heavy guns to bombard it. And if the camp were stormed successfully there would be no natural rallying place for the defeated Americans, no chosen position to which they could withdraw. But if the fight were made in the woods—where their superior marksmanship would tell and the British could not fight in close ranks with orderly volleys and finally with the bayonet—and they were beaten off they could still retire to the fort and defend themselves.[13]

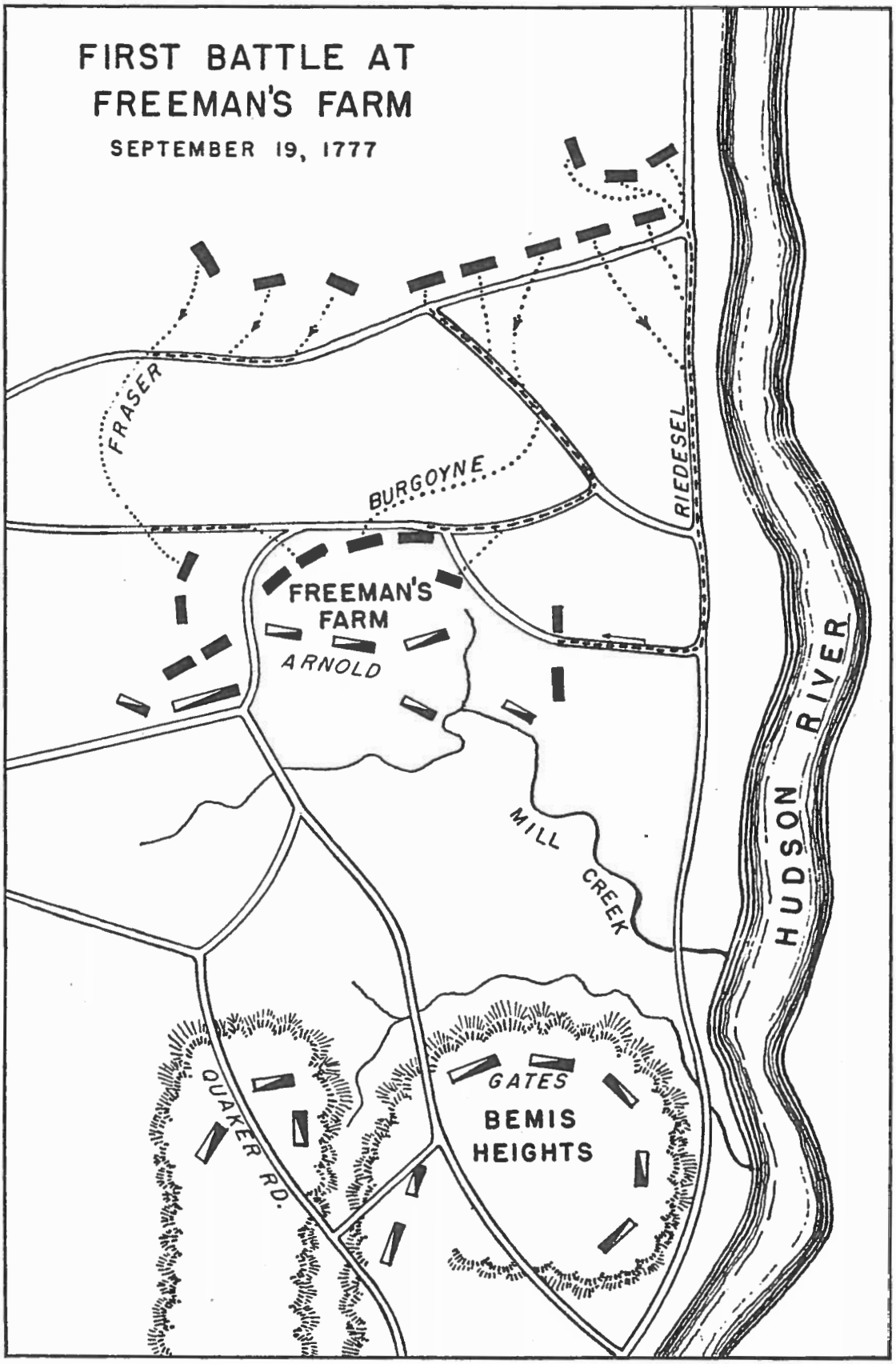
Arnold was vehement in his argument and, according to a bitter enemy of Gates, "urged, begged and entreated" [14] permission to attack with his division. Whether or not he had any influence upon Gates is not clear. Gates did send Morgan's riflemen and Dearborn's light infantry to cover his left and to meet the enemy's flanking move, Arnold's division to be called on for support when needed.

It was after one o'clock when Burgoyne in his temporary position on the southern side of the Great Ravine concluded, or was informed, that Fraser had gained his appointed post. As a signal for the advance, three guns were fired; and Burgoyne's division marched west along a road towards Freeman's Farm.[15]

In the meantime, Morgan's riflemen, seconded by Dearborn's light infantry, had set out from the American left wing through the woods towards Freeman's Farm. The riflemen divided into parties to comb the woods and deployed in a long irregular line, Morgan taking his accustomed place close behind its center, where he could best observe and control his men. In a ravine south of Freeman's Farm, the riflemen came upon a picket of Fraser's irregulars, Canadians, Indians, and Tories. Under a crackling, deadly fire from the riflemen, every officer of the picket and many of its men fell, dead or wounded. The rest fled.

With too great impetuosity and in no order at all, Morgan's riflemen rushed after the fleeing enemy. From Fraser's position, Major Forbes led out a strong detachment of Tories and struck the disorganized Americans with such force that they were dispersed and scattered through the woods, leaving Morgan almost alone. He stood there, tears of chagrin and anger on his face, sounding the turkey call, an instrument used to decoy wild turkeys, which he most appropriately substituted for trumpet or drum. His men soon responded and began to gather about him.[16]

In the meantime Cilley's and Scammell's New Hampshire Continentals in Arnold's division came out. They went to the left of Morgan's and Dearborn's reorganized line, extending beyond Fraser's right, which they


FIRST BATTLE AT
FREEMAN'S FARM
SEPTEMBER 19, 1777
FRASER
BURGOYNE
RIEDESEL
FREEMAN'S
FARM
ARNOLD
MILL
CREEK
HUDSON RIVER
QUAKER RD.
GATES
BEMIS
HEIGHTS

sought to turn. But the British grenadiers and light infantry met the thrust with "a tremendous fire" [17] and forced them to withdraw.

Burgoyne and Hamilton had already arrived at Freeman's Farm, where there was a clearing about 350 yards long, containing fifteen or twenty acres around a log house. The artillery was posted in the northern edge of this opening. Three regiments were deployed in line in a thin pine wood behind the guns—the 21st on the right, the 62nd in the center, and the 20th on the left. The 9th was held in reserve. Thus they faced the American fortified lines to the south of them, about a mile distant, but, because of the irregular nature of the ground between and the heavy growth of trees, neither side could be seen by the other.[18]

There was a considerable interval of ground between the 21st and Fraser's position. Arnold, who seems to have assumed command on the American left, thought he saw a chance to strike at this and cut the enemy force in two. He "countermarched" his men and attacked the British center.[19] More men of his division were coming to his aid; Hale's, Van Cortlandt's, James Livingston's, Bailey's, Wesson's, Jackson's, Marshall's, Cook's, and Lattimer's regiments arrived successively and took their places in the line.[20]

In the clearing the fighting was furious. The 21st, to prevent being outflanked, had to swing back and face west. This created a salient in the British line, with the 62nd at its angle exposed to fire on both flanks. Fraser sent the battalion companies of the 24th Regiment and Breymann's riflemen to aid Burgoyne. Otherwise he remained inactive in his position on the British right.[21] The attempt to cut the British line in two was unsuccessful. The battle became a face-to-face engagement between Arnold's force and the British center.

Back and forth across the clearing in alternate waves, the combat raged. Now the Americans would push the British into the woods and take their guns. But they could not turn them on the enemy, because the gunners always carried away the linstocks, the instruments holding the slow matches with which the guns were fired. Nor could they withdraw them, for the British always came back with the bayonet and forced them to retreat.

Riflemen climbed trees south of the clearing and devoted their attention to the British officers and the gunners. The Americans had "a great superiority of fire." [22] "Senior officers who had witnessed the hardest fighting of the Seven Years' War declared that they had never experienced so long and hot a fire." [23] The 62nd British regiment was punished with especial severity. It almost broke. Once it tried a bayonet charge, but

carried it too far beyond its supporting regiments and lost 25 men as prisoners.[24]

General Phillips had ridden up from his and Riedesel's division, to see what was going on in the center. He found a deplorable condition.[25] Every officer of the British artillery in the center save one and 36 out of 48 gunners and matrosses had been shot down. The guns had been silenced. Phillips called on Riedesel for four more. They came, but were soon also out of action for want of ammunition.[26]

In person, Phillips led the 20th out into the clearing in a bayonet charge to rescue the 62nd, enable it to withdraw and re-form.[27] Yet, for all he could do and for all Burgoyne and Hamilton could do, repeatedly exposing themselves to the American fire,[28] the center remained in a desperate situation.

Arnold believed that only a little more force was needed to break through and throw the enemy's line into complete confusion; but his entire division was already engaged—he wanted more men. He applied for a reenforcement.

Gates "deemed it prudent not to weaken" his lines.[29] Late in the after-noon he sent General Learned's brigade. Instead of striking at the British center, Learned led his men in a futile attack on Fraser's wing and was beaten off. All other aid, Gates refused.

But Riedesel down by the river was not so "prudent." When he had word of the precarious condition of the British line he ordered his own regiment to follow two companies of the Rhetz regiment which he led through the woods a mile and a half to a height where he could see the field of battle. The fight was "raging at its fiercest." "The three brave English regiments had been, by the steady fire of fresh relays of the enemy, thinned down to one-half and now formed a small band surrounded by heaps of dead and wounded." Without waiting for the support of his own regiment, he called on the two companies to charge. "With drums beating and his men shouting "Hurrah!" he attacked the enemy on the double-quick." [30]

This sudden and unexpected attack on the flank drove the Americans back into the woods. Captain Pausch of the Hesse Hanau artillery was coming up with two 6-pounders. Officers and privates of the British regiments and some of the Brunswick jägers seized the dragropes and hauled the guns up the steeps and through the forest into position in the British line. They opened fire on the Americans with grape, "within good pistol-shot distance." [31] Riedesel's own regiment came up and fired a volley of musketry. That was about the end. It was growing dark. Hopeless of achieving a decisive victory, the Americans ceased firing and withdrew. The British bivouacked on the field.

The British loss was extraordinarily heavy. With as many as 2,500 men on the field, only three of the four regiments in the center—about 800 men—were deeply and continuously engaged. Yet the casualties of the whole British force amounted to about 600 killed, wounded, or captured. Of these, 350 were in the three regiments, the 20th, 21st, and 62nd. The 62nd was reduced from about 350 to scarcely 60 men.[32]

Of the Americans, 8 officers and 57 noncoms and privates were killed, 21 officers and 197 noncoms and privates were wounded; 36 others were reported missing.[33]

The incapacity of Gates as commander of a fighting force was convincingly demonstrated that day. If Arnold's persistent importunity had not forced his hand, the battle would have been fought on Burgoyne's own terms, in accordance with his plan, with the Americans trying to hold their works under a heavy, enfilading fire from that undefended western height. All the advantages which the Americans enjoyed in woods fighting, where marksmanship counted for so much and where the artillery and the bayonets of the British were of little avail, would have been lost.

Again, his failure to send to Arnold, at the crucial moment of the battle, a substantial reenforcement prevented the Americans from achieving a complete victory. Sir John Fortescue, the English military historian, says, "Had Gates sent to Arnold the reinforcements for which he asked, Arnold must certainly have broken the British centre, which, even as things were, could barely hold its own."

There was also open to Gates an opportunity to act on his own in a decisive manner. When Riedesel withdrew his own regiment, the two Rhetz companies, and Pausch's guns to go to Burgoyne's aid, there were left on the low ground by the riverside to protect all the baggage, provisions, and supplies of the entire British army only the 47th British regiment, the regiment of Specht, the Hesse Hanau infantry, and the rest of the Rhetz, perhaps eight or nine hundred in all. Gates had at least 4,000 on the height above. A swift descent by half of these could hardly have failed to capture and destroy all the British bateaux and land carriages with all their contents, leaving Burgoyne, bereft of food and supplies of every kind, to surrender or starve.[34]

CHAPTER 41

Fort Clinton and Fort Montgomery

From the day after the fight at Freeman's Farm until the 7th day of October, the opposing forces lay in their respective positions, facing each other at a distance of little more than a mile, without any hostile move except frequent little affairs of outposts and continual sniping. But, in that interval, there occurred a conflict at a place somewhat distant, yet closely related to the principal contest between Burgoyne and Gates. This must be described before returning to the major scene.

It will be remembered that Burgoyne received a letter dated July 17 in which General Howe announced his intention of going south to Pennsylvania instead of up the Hudson to Albany, writing, "Sir Henry Clinton remains in command here and will act as occurrences direct." This unpromising reference gave no assurance that Clinton would move northward; nor did Howe give Clinton any orders in that respect.

Certain letters to Clinton vaguely referred to the possibility of Clinton's "acting offensively"; and on July 30 Howe had written, "If you can make any diversion in favor of General Burgoyne's approaching Albany, I need not point out the utility of such a measure." [1] Clinton accepted this merely permissive, casual suggestion at its face value. He later wrote to General Hervey, "I have not heard from Howe for six weeks and have no orders to co-operate with Burgoyne." [2]

Howe had left in New York no more than 7,000 troops, including 3,000 Tories, with whom Clinton had to hold Manhattan Island and the various outposts on Long Island, Staten Island, and Paulus Hook. This was not a force sufficient to be divided for offensive operations elsewhere. But Clin-

ton was expecting reenforcements from England, and when he heard that Burgoyne was no farther advanced than Saratoga on September 12 he wrote a reassuring message: "You know my good will and are not ignorant of my poverty. If you think 2000 men can assist you effectually, I will make a push at [Fort] Montgomery in about ten days." [3] Burgoyne got this on the 21st and immediately dispatched a message urging Clinton to hasten his advance. The messenger failed to arrive. Another messenger, sent on the 27th, was so long delayed by the difficulties of travel and of escaping American patrols that he did not find Clinton until October 8, the day after Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga. But Clinton had not awaited an answer. His reenforcements came in on September 24 or thereabouts, bringing his force of regulars up to nearly 7,000 men—2,700 British and 4,200 Germans. He at once began preparations for the projected advance.

Sir Henry Clinton was by now in his fortieth year. Behind him were one signal failure, his repulse at Fort Moultrie, and one signal success, his part as commander of the flanking column in the Battle of Long Island. He had been too often hindered by an abundance of caution, as at Kip's Bay and at White Plains and on the whole had scarcely distinguished himself. He was, however, competent and hard-working, apt to the burdens of administration and thoroughly reliable, a man normal in every respect save one; namely, his curious *idée fixe* that General Howe had slighted and wronged him. Troyer Anderson concludes from a perusal of Clinton's papers that he was "almost mentally unbalanced on this subject." Perhaps because of this unfortunate (and completely unjustified) prepossession, or perhaps through less partisan judgment, he had opposed Howe's move southward and had urged a junction with Burgoyne. He had no fondness for Burgoyne; indeed, he seems to have been disappointed that he himself had not received the Canadian command. But he was strong in force, temporarily unrestrained by Howe's presence, and in every way perfectly situated for a vigorous stroke.[4]

Though he "never showed that he possessed the tactical ability" [5] of Howe, Clinton was a skillful soldier, especially in such an enterprise as he was now about to embark upon, capable of striking hard and effectively. He conducted his operation "with more energy than most of the military operations that took place in America." [6] He was not handicapped in his activities by Howe's sloth, nor by such dissipated habits as characterized both Howe and Burgoyne.

Clinton's immediate objectives were two forts about forty miles above New York in the Highlands of the Hudson. A lofty height of land, a huge

massif about fifteen miles wide, extends like a great wall across the course of the Hudson, which flows through a narrow cleft in it. On both sides of the river steep, rocky eminences arise to heights of a thousand feet or more, the southernmost on the west side being Dunderberg. Next above that is Bear Mountain, which slopes sharply downward on its northern side to a deep ravine through which little Popolopen Kill flows into the Hudson. On the northeast shoulder of Bear Mountain, about 120 feet above the water, stood Fort Clinton. Across the ravine was Fort Montgomery, in a similar, somewhat lower, shoulder a half-mile distant. These guarded one half-mile width of the river, which was blocked by a chevaux-de-frise of heavy timbers, strengthened by a log boom and a great iron chain extending to Anthony's Nose on the opposite side. Montgomery was the larger and the more elaborately planned of the forts but was yet unfinished, so to that Clinton was the stronger. Both had been planned especially for offense and defense on the waterside to hold this narrow gateway to the upper Hudson. The approaches on the land side were through narrow, steep, and rugged defiles extremely difficult to penetrate and very easy to defend.

The two forts were under the command of Brigadier General George Cinton, who was also governor of New York. His brother, Brigadier General James Clinton, was in particular charge of Fort Montgomery. They were garrisoned by a few regulars, a number of militia from the surounding country, many of them unarmed, and a company of Colonel John Lamb's 2nd Continental Artillery, a force "not a tenth part enough to defend them." [7] In the river above the boom a little American flotilla of two frigates, the *Congress* and the *Montgomery*, a sloop, and two galleys rode at anchor.

On the other side of the Hudson, in and about Peekskill, Major General Putnam had been posted in May with a strong force to cooperate with the forts in guarding the Highlands. But that force had been reduced, by drafts to aid of Gates and Washington, to 1,200 Continentals and 300 incompletely armed militia.

Sir Henry Clinton did not expect to be able to fight his way through to Albany. To create a diversion in Gates's rear, in the hope of relieving the pressure on Burgoyne, was as much as he considered feasible. Indeed, he regarded even so much as "a desperate attempt on a desperate occasion." [8] For this purpose, he detached 4,000 men, including some of his Tory regiments

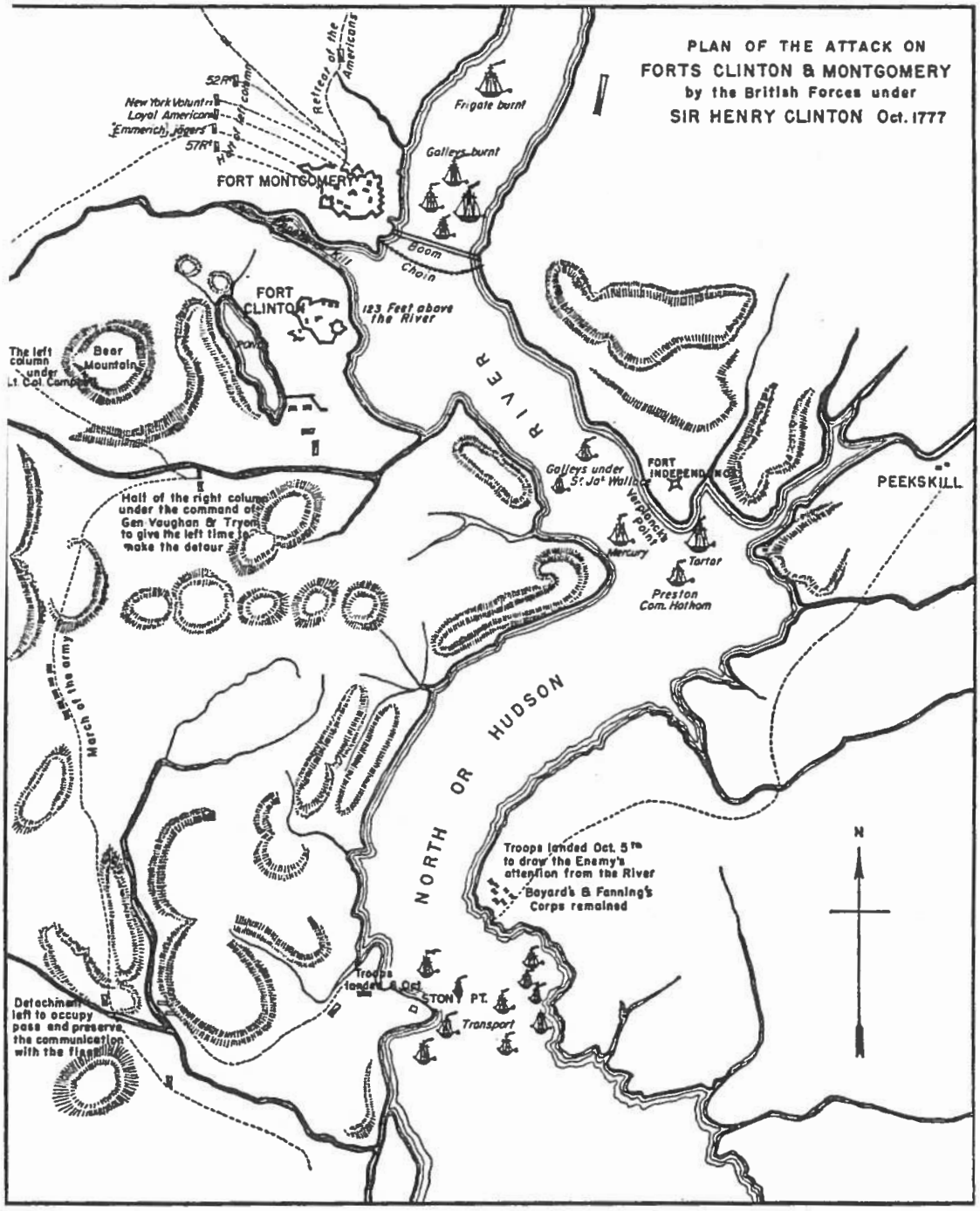
The first contingent, 1,100 men, embarked in flatboats and bateaux at

Spuyten Duyvil Creek in the evening of October 3 and reached Tarrytown on the Hudson, about halfway to Peekskill, at daybreak. There it was joined by a second division of equal strength, which had marched overland from Kingsbridge. The third division embarked on the 4th in transports, convoyed by the frigates *Preston, Mercury*, and *Tartar* under the command of Commodore William Hotham, and arrived off Tarrytown on the same day. In the evening of the 5th, the convoy of transports, flatboats, bateaux, and galleys carrying the entire force proceeded up the river to Verplanck's Point, where there was a little breastwork mounting two guns. There 400 men were landed, and the small force of Americans holding the point retired without any resistance.

This concentration of attention upon the east side of the river was intended to make the Americans think that the expedition was against Putnam at Peekskill, and it succeeded. Putnam hastily withdrew to the hills four miles inland and sent a message to George Clinton asking for all the troops he could spare from the forts, and actually obtained some of them. Having accomplished this initial purpose of deception, Sir Henry proceeded vigorously and without delay against his real objective.

Leaving a thousand of his men, chiefly Tories, to hold Verplanck's Point against Putnam, he carried the rest early in the morning of the 6th, under cover of a thick fog, across the river to Stony Point, whence a rugged road ran west for two miles and then turned to the north behind Dunderberg and towards the forts. The British column took this northern road under the guidance of Brom Springster, a Tory. The advance was led by Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, with the 27th and 52nd British regiments, Colonel Andreas von Emmerich's Hessian jägers, and 400 of Colonel Beverley Robinson's Loyal Americans (Tories), a force of 900 in all. General Sir John Vaughan followed with the main body, the light infantry, the Koehle and Anspach grenadiers, the 26th and 63rd British regiments, a company of the 71st, a troop of dismounted men of the 17th Light Dragoons, and a number of Hessian jägers, making up 1,200 rank and file. General Tryon brought up the rear, with the 7th British and the Trumbach Hessian regiments. Sir Henry marched with the main body.

The road soon degenerated into a wagon track so narrow that the troops could march only three abreast. After three miles, it came to a 500-foot, almost precipitous ascent to a notch called the Timp. Up this, for three-quarters of a mile, scrambled the heavily laden men—the British carrying sixty pounds of equipment each, the Germans even more. A handful of determined opponents posted at the top of the acclivity could have held them off; but the road was not guarded, not even picketed.


PLAN OF THE ATTACK ON
FORTS CLINTON & MONTGOMERY
by the British Forces under
SIR HENRY CLINTON Oct. 1777
Retreat of the Americans
52Rts
New York Volunteers
Loyal Americans
Emmerich's Jagers
57Rts
Part of the column
FORT MONTGOMERY
Frigate burnt
Galleys burnt
Boom
Chain
FORT CLINTON
123 Feet above the River
The left column under Lt Col Campbell
Bear Mountain
RIVER
Galleys under Sr Jas Wallace
FORT INDEPENDENCE
PEEKSKILL
Half of the right column under the command of Gen Vaughan & Tryon to give the left time to make the detour
Verplanck's Point
Mercury
Tartar
Preston
Com. Hotham
March of the army
NORTH OR HUDSON
Troops landed Oct. 5th to draw the Enemy's attention from the River
Beyard's & Fanning's Corps remained
N
Troops landed 6 Oct
STONY PT.
Transport
Detachment left to occupy pass and preserve the communication with the Fleet

A mile or so farther, at Doodletown in the valley between Dunderberg and Bear Mountain, the road forked. The right-hand branch led down to the low ground by the river and then up directly to Fort Clinton. The left fork passed around Bear Mountain, came down the Popolopen ravine, and emerged behind Fort Montgomery. At this fork Clinton divided his army, sending Campbell with the advance on the left-hand, circuitous path. The main body was to time its march along the other road so as to reach Fort Clinton simultaneously with Campbell's arrival at Montgomery. Tryon was to secure the pass with a detachment and hold the rest of his men in reserve to cover a retreat or assist either attack, as the case might require.

General George Clinton was in attendance upon a session of the legislature at Esopus (now Kingston) when he heard of Sir Henry's expedition. He immediately hastened to the forts, calling out the militia on the way, and took command. A party of 30 under Lieutenant Jackson was dispatched from Fort Clinton to reconnoiter. It met Sir Henry's advance at Doodletown, exchanged a few shots with it, and retreated to the fort. Clinton hoped for aid from Putnam, to whom he had sent an urgent message. To delay the enemy, he sent Lieutenant Colonel Jacobus Bruyn with 50 Continentals, and Lieutenant Colonel James McLarey with 50 militia from Fort Clinton, back along the Doodletown road. From Montgomery he dispatched Captain John Fenno with 60 men, later reenforced by 40, and a brass fieldpiece to meet Campbell in the pass behind Bear Mountain.

Bruyn and McLarey had little success. Though they fought courageously, they were promptly driven back to their fort, at the point of the bayonet. Fenno did better. He posted his men on the side of a ravine and opened fire with musketry and his one gun on Campbell's advance. The American fire was hot and well sustained, and checked Campbell's troops at first; but they divided, climbed the hill on Fenno's flanks, and were about to surround his little force when it retreated, first spiking the gun, but leaving its captain a prisoner.

Captain Lamb had brought out a 12-pounder and placed it in a commanding position. To it Fenno's men rallied, but from it they were again driven, leaving it, spiked, to the enemy. That was the end of resistance outside the forts.

Although Sir Henry's force had left its landing early in the morning and had reached Doodletown by ten o'clock, it was half past four when the divisions were in position before their respective forts. A summons to sur-

render having been refused by General George Clinton, simultaneous attacks were begun.

Sir Henry sent the 63rd Regiment around Fort Clinton to attack it on the northwest. The rest he formed for an assault on the southern side, the flank companies of the 7th and 26th British regiments and a company of Anspach grenadiers in the van, backed by the battalion companies of the 26th, the dragoons, and some Hessian jägers, with a Hessian battalion and the battalion companies of the British 7th in the rear. Between a small lake and the river there was a space no wider than 400 yards. It was blocked by in abatis and commanded by ten of the fort's guns. Through this space Sir Henry sent his men with orders to fire no shot, but to assault the works with the bayonet alone.

In the face of all the fire the insufficient garrison could bring to bear on them, the British regulars gallantly pressed forward. The defenders were too few—a few Continentals and 600 militia divided between the two forts —but their fire was deadly. The attackers fell by tens and twenties; but unfalteringly the rest came on. They reached the fort, pushed and pulled one another up through its embrasures, and swept into the works. The defenders immediately threw down their arms.

At Montgomery, Campbell had placed his German jägers in the center, his two British regiments on the right, and Robinson's Tories on the left. Thus he led them to the assault, only to be shot down before he reached the works. Colonel Robinson took command, and, with gallantry equal to that of Sir Henry's men, the fort was stormed successfully. The two forts fell almost at the same time.

It was now late in the day. Under cover of darkness General George and General James Clinton escaped with the greater part of their troops, some taking to the woods, others crossing the river in boats.

The American loss was heavy. Of the 600-odd men in the two garrisons, 250 were reported killed, wounded, or missing.[9] Also lost were sixty-seven guns and a considerable amount of stores.

The British lost about 40 killed and 150 wounded.[10] Whether these figures include the Hessian casualties, not usually included in the British returns, is uncertain.

The American vessels in the river tried to get away, but they were insufficiently manned, and the wind was against them. One of the sloops was captured, and one of the frigates went aground. They were all burned. "As every sail was set, the vessels soon became magnificent pyramids of fire." The loaded guns were set off by the heat in succession until the fire reached

the magazines and "the whole was sublimely terminated by the explosions that left all to darkness." [11]

The next day, Sir Henry cut through the river barrier, chevaux de frise, boom and chain, and sent a flag, with a demand for surrender, to little Fort Constitution on an island opposite West Point. The tiny garrison fired on the flag, but set fire to the works and fled the following day on the approach of the enemy.

The two American Clintons, bringing Lamb's artillery company and some others that had escaped from the forts, joined Putnam at New Windsor. General George Clinton tried to arouse him to active measures; but he was gloomy. He thought he saw Sir Henry pushing on vigorously to a junction with Burgoyne, and did not see how he could be stopped. He was for standing on the defensive where he was.[12]

But Sir Henry Clinton had no intention of going farther. He had carried out a diversion, and he believed he could do no more. Beyond sending Vaughan to burn Esopus, some barracks at Continental Village, and residences of conspicuous rebels, he engaged in no further hostilities. He garrisoned the forts and returned to New York. But first he wrote a short note from Fort Montgomery on the 8th to cheer and encourage Burgoyne: "*Nous y voici* and nothing now between us and Gates; I sincerely hope this little success of ours may facilitate your operations. . . . I heartily wish you success." But Burgoyne did not derive from the debonair epistle the encouragement intended. The messenger, having been captured by the Americans, tried the silver bullet trick; it was recovered in the usual manner, and its bearer met the prescribed fate. In any event, the encouragement, such as it was, would have been too late. The day before it was written, Burgoyne had finally put his fortunes on the wheel and had lost everything.

CHAPTER 42

Bemis Heights

Burgoyne was of a mind to attack Gates in full force on the day after the Battle of Freeman's Farm. Had he done so, it is quite possible that he would have won. The ill organized American army was in confusion. Though heartened and inspirited by their demonstrated ability to cope with the British and German regulars, the men who had fought through that long afternoon of the 19th were tired out and in no condition to fight again the next day. So were the British, especially the three regiments that had borne the brunt of the battle; but there is a greater resilience in the regular soldier than in the militiaman. Accustomed to checks, which doubtless they longed to avenge, the British regulars, well disciplined to obey orders to the utmost of their strength, would have gone forward with the same dogged courage that had characterized the repeated attacks on Bunker Hill. Fraser, however, was opposed to immediate action. He said his grenadiers and light infantry who were to make the first move, against the American left wing, would do better after a day's rest. So Burgoyne decided to wait a day.

On the 21st his army was drawn up in battle array and an attack seemed imminent; but Burgoyne was digesting the contents of a dispatch received from Sir Henry Clinton early that morning. It was that note, dated September 12, in which Clinton had written that he expected to "make a push" against the two forts, Montgomery and Clinton, "in about ten days." That "push" might be the turning point of the campaign; it might draw men from Gates and leave him too weak to defend his position. So Burgoyne canceled the orders for the attack; he would await the outcome of Clinton's move. And by that decision he lost the last chance for success in his enter-

prise, the last chance even for a safe retreat, for from that time onward the American army gained strength by the continued arrival of reenforcements, while under the usual attrition of sickness and desertions the British force grew steadily weaker.

To hold his position while awaiting good news from Clinton, Burgoyne at once began to entrench. From Freeman's Farm on the right, the lines were run across the British front to the bluffs at the riverside. They began, on the right, with a short entrenchment facing west, then turned at an angle to face south and ran eastward to their end on the river bluffs. Redoubts strengthened the angle and the extremities of the line. One of considerable size in a horseshoe shape was erected well in the rear of the right end of the lines, facing north to prevent that wing from being outflanked. "A deep, muddy ditch" [1] covered the entire front and ran in a curve around the angle at the right. All trees within a hundred yards of the front of the lines were felled. Fraser's corps of light infantry and grenadiers held its old position on the extreme right, beyond the angle and outside the ditch. The Earl of Balcarres held the angle with more of the British light infantry. Breymann's corps was posted in the horseshoe, which was separated from Balcarres by an interval defended only by two stockaded log cabins held by some Canadians. The rest of the army manned the lines to the river bluff.[2]

On the bluffs by the riverside redoubts were built to protect the boats and baggage. A floating bridge spanning the Hudson was contrived. The Hesse Hanau regiment, the British 47th, and a corps of Tories were encamped in the meadows by the stream. "An abundance of artillery" [3] was distributed along the lines. These positions were held until the final battle.

There was no change in the American lines, except that the western height outside them, which had been Burgoyne's objective in the first battle, was occupied and fortified. But within the camp there was enough discord in the high command to wreck an army.

Ill feeling had existed for some time between Gates and Arnold. After Freeman's Farm, Gates was angered because friends of Schuyler and Arnold in the army gave the whole credit in that affair to Arnold. He did not even mention Arnold's name in his report to Congress on the engagement. Arnold wrote to him protesting and asking for a pass for himself and two aides to Philadelphia. Gates responded by offering a letter to the president of Congress. But Arnold was unsatisfied with this document, technically not what he had requested. He called at headquarters to protest.

Gates laughed at Arnold's pretensions; expressed the view that he did not consider him a major general since he had submitted his resignation to

the Congress, that he had in fact never received any command in that army, that he was of little consequence anyhow, and that the command of the left wing was to be given to General Lincoln; and wound up by saying that he would gladly give Arnold a pass to Philadelphia whenever he wanted it.[4]

Arnold was enraged, and there was a bitter quarrel with high words on both sides. Following that there was an exchange of foolish, quibbling letters. "Gates was irritating, arrogant and vulgar; Arnold indiscreet, haughty and passionate." [5] Finally came an order relieving Arnold of all command and excluding him from headquarters. Brockholst Livingston, one of Gates's enemies, wrote that most of the other officers and many of the men "had lost all confidence in Gates and had the highest opinion of Arnold"; and he declared that all the general officers except Lincoln signed a letter urging Arnold to remain, "for another battle seemed imminent." [6] In any case Arnold stayed, an idle hanger-on in the camp waiting for that coming fight.

General Benjamin Lincoln had been sent in July by Schuyler at Washington's suggestion to encourage and to command the militia in Vermont; and he had remained in that territory ever since. He had collected 2,000 men whom he held inactive as a menace to Burgoyne's flank and rear until the middle of September. Then he sent three detachments of 500 men each, under Colonel Woodbridge, Colonel Johnson, and Colonel John Brown, against Skenesboro and Ticonderoga.

Skenesboro had been abandoned by the British, and Woodbridge occupied it without opposition. But Brigadier General Powell still held Ticonderoga and its outposts with the 53rd British regiment and some Canadians, also Mount Independence with the Prince Frederick Regiment of Brunswickers—in all, about 900 rank and file.

Brown rushed the Lake George landing place at daybreak on September 18, occupied Mount Defiance (Sugar Loaf Hill), captured 300 of the enemy, 200 bateaux, a sloop, and some gunboats, drove all the rest of the garrison into the fort, and released a hundred American prisoners. Johnson, coming a little later in the day, kept the Germans on Independence busy under a continuous fire. But the main defenses were too strong to invite an assault, and both forces withdrew. Johnson went back to Lincoln's camp Brown sailed up Lake George in the captured British boats, tried to surprise two companies of the British 47th, under Captain Aubrey on Diamond Island; but he was expected and was beaten off.[7]

This was a minor affair; but such an operation in Burgoyne's rear en-

couraged the army at Bemis Heights, which celebrated it by prolonged cheering and a salute of thirteen guns. To Burgoyne, the news brought no comfort.

Gates now called on Lincoln to bring his men over to the main army. Between the 22nd and the 29th they arrived, and this was not the only addition to the army. Aroused by the story of Jennie McCrea—which had been published throughout the country—encouraged by the news of Burgoyne's plight, and eager to serve under Gates as they had not been to serve under Schuyler, the militia of New England and New York were flocking to Bemis Heights. They came singly, in groups, in companies, armed men looking nothing like soldiers, but each with his musket or fowling piece and as much powder and lead as he owned. They were ready and fit to take their places in the ranks. They could shoot from behind a tree better than the best of their enemies. By October 4 Gates had more than 7,000 men—about 2,700 Continentals, the rest militia—and they were still coming. By the 7th he had 11,000. His slender store of ammunition had been replenished by Schuyler from Albany. His men were well fed; they rejoiced in their gathering strength; and they were ready, eager, to try conclusions with the redcoats and the bluecoats again.

In Burgoyne's camp the case was far otherwise. Three months in the bushes and brambles of the wilderness had reduced their uniforms, the pride of the regulars, to tatters. Their food was salt pork and flour, and even that was running out. On October 3 their rations were reduced by one-third.[8] The grass in the meadows had been very soon eaten by their horses. There was no more forage to be had, and many horses died of starvation. Of the 8,000 rank and file with whom Burgoyne had appeared before Ticonderoga, there were perhaps fewer than 5,000 now in the camp; and even this number was continually sapped by desertions. It was easy enough to slip off into the surrounding forest. Every man in the British camp must have known that the invasion had been stopped, and that even a retreat was hardly possible.

To those discouraged men the Americans gave no rest. Day after day and night after night their outposts were under fire so close to their camp that the sleep of the men within the lines was disturbed. Burgoyne described this continual harassment:

> From the 20th of September to the 7th of October, the armies were so near, that not a night passed without firing, and sometimes concerted attacks, on our advanced picquets; no foraging party could be made without great detachments to cover it; it was the plan of the enemy to harrass the army by constant alarms and their superiority of numbers enabled them to attempt it without fatigue to

themselves. . . . I do not believe that either officer or soldier ever slept during that interval without his cloaths, or that any general officer, or commander of a regiment, passed a single night without being upon his legs occasionally at different hours and constantly an hour before daylight." [9]

On the 4th of October, Burgoyne called Riedesel, Phillips, and Fraser into a council of war and proposed action. His plan was to leave 800 men to defend the low ground by the river where were the boats and the army's store of supplies, and to march with all the rest against the American left wing in an effort to flank it and get to its rear.

It was an audacious plan; it was, indeed, a foolhardy plan, as the other generals more than intimated. In the first place, none of them knew anything about the American position. Time after time parties had been sent out on reconaissance, but had not succeeded in approaching near enough to get more than the sketchiest idea of the position and shape of the lines, hidden as they were by the dense forest.[10] In the second place, leaving so few men to guard the boats and supplies would amount to an urgent invitation to the Americans to attack them. While the main force was making a slow and difficult march around the American left, the Americans could capture the whole store of provision and ammunition and destroy the bridges across two streams running into the Hudson above and below the riverside defenses, and thus cut the British army off from its only means of retreat and leave it to starve and surrender. To clinch this argument, an inspection of the British works by the riverside was proposed and made. They were found to be badly placed for protection of the supplies, and the plan was abandoned.[11]

Riedesel now proposed a retreat to their old position at the mouth of Batten Kill, where communication with Lake George might be reopened and the hoped-for arrival of Sir Henry Clinton's force could be awaited. Fraser seconded him. Phillips declined to give any opinion.

Burgoyne refused to agree to a retreat before he had made one more attempt to find out whether there was not a way through or around the Americans.[12] He presented another plan, a "reconnoisance in force" to discover the American position and find out its weak point. There was that much discussed height on the American left, the objective of the attempted movement of September 19: it might be seized, fortified, and armed with artillery to fire down into the American works. He evidently did not know that since September 19th it had been strongly occupied by the Americans.[13]

His plan was to draw out 1,500 regulars and some of his irregular auxiliaries and approach near enough to learn whether the American left was vulnerable. If it were, an attack in force could be made on the following

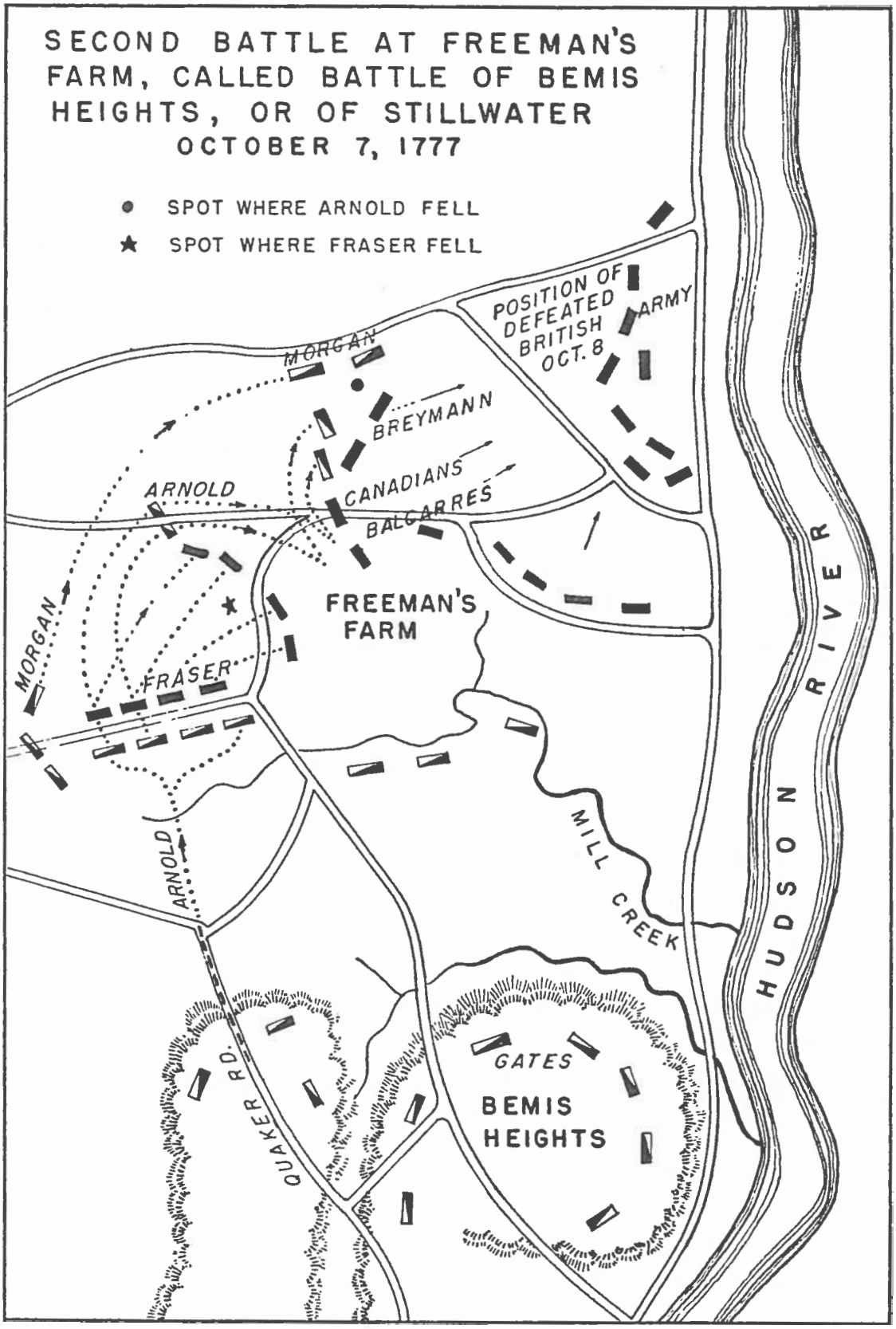
day. If not, a retreat to Batten Kill would be in order. That was the final decision. To hearten the troops for the adventure, twelve barrels of rum were broken out of the stores and distributed.

In the morning of the 7th the reconnoitering party was made up. The British light infantry, led by Lord Balcarres, composed the right. The 24th Regiment, a detachment of Brunswickers chosen from all their regiments and from Breymann's jägers, made up the center, commanded by Riedesel. The left was composed of the British grenadiers under Major Acland.[14] First having sent out Captain Fraser with his rangers and 600 Canadian and Indian auxiliaries on a long circuit to westward to divert the Americans and keep them in check, the expedition moved southwest from Freeman's Farm in three columns, supported by six 6-pounders, two 12's, and two howitzers.[15] When they had gone about three-quarters of a mile they halted in a wheat field on a low ridge, deployed into line, and sat down to wait while foragers cut the wheat for its straw. At the same time the generals, mounted on the roof of a log cabin, strained their eyes to see through their glasses something of the American position and saw absolutely nothing. As a reconnaissance, the expedition was a complete fiasco. As an invitation to attack, it could hardly have been better. As a preparation for defeat, it was an outstanding success.

The British line extended about a thousand yards with only two men to hold every three yards. Though its front was cleared of trees and was a good field for artillery practice or for a bayonet charge, its flanks rested on thick woods, which gave cover for the kind of fighting favored by the Americans. So they sat there, discovering nothing, doing nothing, a "meaningless and objectless military expedition which, on Burgoyne's part, was a counsel of despair." [16]

The first news of this movement of the enemy came to Gates from an outpost on Mill Creek. He sent Major James Wilkinson out to investigate. Receiving an account of the enemy's disposition, he ordered Morgan "to begin the game." Morgan suggested that his men should attack the British right. Gates agreed, and directed that Poor's brigade should go against the flank of the enemy's left. The two detachments were to move secretly through the dense forest, so as to strike by surprise at the same moment.

To secure a proper position from which to launch his attack, Morgan had to make a wide circuit. Poor's march was much shorter. His brigade, comprising Scammell's, Hale's, and Cilley's New Hampshire Continental regiments, Van Cortlandt's and Livingston's New Yorkers and Cook's and


SECOND BATTLE AT FREEMAN'S FARM, CALLED BATTLE OF BEMIS HEIGHTS, OR OF STILLWATER
OCTOBER 7, 1777
SPOT WHERE ARNOLD FELL
SPOT WHERE FRASER FELL
POSITION OF DEFEATED BRITISH ARMY OCT. 8
MORGAN
BREYMANN
CANADIANS
ARNOLD
BALCARRES
FREEMAN'S FARM
MORGAN
FRASER
ARNOLD
MILL CREEK
HUDSON RIVER
QUAKER RD.
GATES
BEMIS HEIGHTS

Lattimer's Connecticut militia—perhaps 800 in all [17]—by "a sudden and rapid" [18] movement gained the desired point about half past two and immediately attacked.

Acland's grenadiers occupied an elevated position. Poor's men, advancing up the slope, received a heavy fire of grape and musketry; but most of it flew high, cutting the leaves and branches of the trees. They reserved their fire until this first volley had been discharged. Acland then called for the bayonet, but the Americans loosed a deadly blast before the charge could develop. Many of the grenadiers fell. Acland himself was shot through both legs. The Americans, shouting, rushed the position, seized a 12-pounder, and turned it on the enemy. The grenadiers were swept away. Acland was taken prisoner.

By this time Morgan was in action. His riflemen, in the face of "a severe fire of grape-shot and small arms," "poured down like a torrent" on the flank and the rear of the British right, posted behind a rail fence.[19] Balcarres tried to change front to receive them, but Dearborn's light infantry, coming up after Morgan, poured in a close fire, leaped the fence, and drove the enemy in disorder. Balcarres rallied his force behind a second fence, but Morgan's and Dearborn's men came on with fierce impetuosity that could not be denied. His troops retired in disorder to the shelter of their lines, leaving their guns to the Americans.[20]

At this juncture Burgoyne sent his aide-de-camp, Sir Francis Clarke, with an order for a general retirement; but Clarke was shot down and captured before he could deliver the order.

The Brunswickers in the center were left without support. Learned with his brigade was advancing to meet them when a new figure, a small man dressed in a general's uniform and mounted on a great, brown horse, flashed onto the field. It was Benedict Arnold.

Ever since Gates had displaced him, he had lingered in the camp, with no command, no status at all in the army, eating his heart out in enforced idleness and disgrace. Now, with a battle raging before his very eyes, neither the lack of orders nor consideration for his irregular condition could restrain him. He had put spurs to his horse and dashed into the conflict.

Fearing that he "might do some rash thing," Gates sent Major Armstrong to order him back to the camp. Arnold saw Armstrong and spurred the faster. He first came up with one of Poor's Connecticut militia regiments. "Whose regiment is that?" he shouted. "Colonel Lattimer's, sir." "Ah!" he cried. "My old Norwich and New London friends. God bless you! I'm glad to see you." [21] They gave their old general a hearty cheer as he swept on to overtake the head of Learned's brigade.

Three regiments were in advance. Arnold called on them to follow him. They responded with shouts and cheers, charged across Mill Creek and up the opposite slope full upon Riedesel's Brunswickers, commanded by Colonel Specht. But these had been strengthened by detachments of the Rhetz and Hesse Hanau regiments and manfully withstood the shock. The Americans were repulsed.

Specht's right was uncovered when Balcarres's light infantry were driven back to the lines, and the Americans came back. Though exposed to fire on three sides, the Germans fought bravely until, when about to be surrounded, they were ordered to retreat to the works.

General Fraser had been conspicuous throughout the fight, riding to and fro and encouraging his troops. Now he tried, with the British 24th and the light infantry, to form a second line. Arnold saw him and said to Morgan, "That man on the gray horse is a host in himself and must be disposed of." Morgan called on one of his riflemen, Tim Murphy, an old Indian fighter and a noted marksman.

Murphy climbed a tree and took aim with his double-barreled rifle. His first shot cut the crupper of Fraser's horse. The second went through the horse's mane. One of Fraser's aides told his chief that he was the object of dangerous personal attention and urged him to withdraw. Fraser answered that his duty compelled him to remain there. The third shot passed through his body, wounding him mortally.[22]

At this point Brigadier General Abraham Ten Broeck, with his brigade of 3,000 New York militia lately arrived in camp, appeared on the field; but they were not needed. At Fraser's fall the last hope of British resistance had died. The whole line gave way and retreated to the shelter of the breastworks, just fifty minutes from the time the first shot was fired.

The fighting seemed to be over, and if Gates had commanded in the field it would have been over; but Arnold was of different stuff. He was not content with driving the enemy from the field; he wanted a smashing victory. "With true military instinct, [he] seized the opportunity for a general attack upon the British entrenchments." [23]

With a part of the brigades of Patterson and Glover he assaulted that part of the works held by Balcarres and his light infantry, and drove through the abatis. But though Arnold, raging with the ardor of battle, exposing himself to the rain of grapeshot and musketry, animated his men to the last degree of courage, the defense was too strong. They were driven back, and the fight settled down to continued hot firing at musket range.

While this was going on, Learned's brigade appeared off to the left, marching toward the extreme British right. Arnold clapped spurs to his

horse and galloped straight across the line of fire, exposing himself to what seemed certain death. With his complete disregard of all military conventions he took charge of Learned's men and led them past Balcarres's right and against the two stockaded log cabins between Balcarres and Breymann's horseshoe redoubt. They had been and were still held by a weak force of unreliable Canadian irregulars. The Americans swept them away.

Now Breymann was exposed on all sides. His force had been reduced from 500 to 200 by drafts for the British line of battle. Arnold took over two regiments, Wesson's and Livingston's, and Morgan's riflemen, who had made a complete circuit of the British right, and ordered them forward. At the head of Brooks's Massachusetts regiment, just then coming up, he swung to the left and attacked Breymann's redoubt. "His impetuous onset carried everything before it." [24] He rode around the redoubt and entered the sally port. There his horse was shot down, and he himself received a bullet in his leg that fractured his thigh bone. It was the same leg that had been wounded at Quebec. It is said that the shot was fired by a wounded German, and that Arnold called out, "Don't hurt him! He's a fine fellow. He only did his duty." [25] Here at last Armstrong caught up with the man who had successfully avoided him up to this time. There was no need to deliver Gates's order to return to the camp. Arnold went willingly enough on a litter, with the glory of that mad afternoon coruscating about him.

Breymann had been mortally wounded in the attack, and his small force had given up the redoubt. Burgoyne's main position was thus open to the Americans, both on the right and in the rear. But it was growing dark, and, besides, they had no Arnold to lead them. Colonel Specht with a small force of Brunswickers made an attempt to recover the redoubt; but they were easily driven off, and he himself taken prisoner. That ended the battle.

The losses of the British army amounted to about 600 killed, wounded, and captured. They also lost every one of the ten guns they brought into the action. The Americans suffered about 150 casualties.

From the time when Arnold had come onto the field, he was never for a moment idle. Exercising command without warrant, but most effectively, over whatever brigade, regiment, or company he came across, he was incessantly active wherever the fighting was heaviest. He seemed to be endowed with the headlong energy of a madman,[26] exposing himself to the enemy's fire with the utmost temerity, flourishing his sword, shouting encouragement to the troops, and inspiring them with his own intrepidity and dash. He was exactly the sort of leader needed by the untrained militia

and by the half-trained Continentals as well. The British were, of course, heavily outnumbered, and their defeat was in the cards before ever Arnold injected himself into the battle; but that it would have been so quickly and so completely accomplished without him is more than doubtful. Certainly to him and to Morgan belongs the credit for the victory.

Gates, on the other hand, was never on the field of battle at any time during the fighting. He remained in his headquarters, about three-quarters of a mile behind the front line of the American entrenchments and fully two miles from the scene of action. From there he could not even see what was going on; and, except for that first order to Morgan to attack and the subsequent sending out of other detachments, he exercised no control over the conduct of his troops nor over the tactics of the battle.

It may have been Gates's idea that a general commander should remain in a safe place, where reports of the progress of the fight could be brought to him and where he would be safe from injury. That is doubtless the correct principle in warfare, where enormous numbers have to be guided by a master-mind, but it was not the principle generally observed in the battles of the Revolution. Howe at Bunker Hill did not disdain to lead his men to the attack in person and to share their dangers. Washington exposed himself fearlessly at Kip's Bay and at Princeton; so did Burgoyne and Phillips and Riedesel at Bemis Heights; so did Arnold and Montgomery at Quebec. Someone has said that Gates never once heard the whistle of an enemy's oullet through his whole term of command of the northern army.[27]

That to Arnold is due the credit for the victory at Bemis Heights is the considered opinion of a distinguished military historian, Sir John W. Fortescue:

> In natural military genius neither Washington nor Greene are to my mind comparable with Benedict Arnold. The man was, of course, shallow, fickle, unprincipled and unstable in character, but he possessed all the gifts of a great commander. To boundless energy and enterprise he united quick insight into a situation, sound strategic instinct, audacity of movement, wealth of resource, a swift and unerring eye in action, great personal daring and true magic of leadership. It was he and no other who beat Burgoyne at Saratoga and, with Daniel Morgan to command the militia, Benedict Arnold was the most formidable opponent that could be matched against the British in America.[28]

The opinions of some others regarding Arnold's behavior before Saratoga are not so favorable.

CHAPTER 43

Saratoga

The loss of Breymann's redoubt threw the British wide open to attack in flank and in the rear, so that Burgoyne's position was no longer tenable. During the night of October 7 he withdrew his army in good order to a position north of the Great Ravine, on the riverside bluffs where strong redoubts had been erected to protect the train of artillery, the provisions, the bateaux, and the hospital. The next day, the Americans took over his old campground.[1] Lincoln occupied the bluff and the river meadows nearby, threatening an attack, of which Burgoyne was apprehensive. He wrote afterward that he had offered battle,[2] but that his position was too strong for the Americans to risk it. There was, however, "a great deal of cannonading" [3] of the enemy's camp and some skirmishing between the outposts, in which Lincoln was wounded.

That same morning Gates dispatched Brigadier General John Fellows and his brigade of 1,300 Massachusetts militia up the east side of the Hudson to the mouth of the Batten Kill, with orders to cross the river and entrench a position on the west side at Saratoga. Brigadier General Jacob Bayley, with 2,000 New Hampshire militia, was already posted on a height north of Fort Edward. Thus Burgoyne was menaced both in the front and in the rear; but Fellows in the rear was too weak to offer effective opposition.[4]

Anticipating the necessity of further retreat, Burgoyne sent Lieutenant Colonel Sutherland with the 9th and 47th British regiments to reconnoiter the road up to Fort Edward.

The movement of Fellows's troops had been observed by the British.

Burgoyne interpreted it as a preliminary to an attack on his rear. To obviate that, he decided to withdraw at once to the heights of Saratoga.

The retreat began about nine o'clock in the evening of the 8th. Captain Fraser's Rangers and the few remaining Tories and Indians led the van, followed by the Brunswickers, the heavy artillery, and the baggage train. The British regiments under Balcarres, marching in two columns, Burgoyne with them, closed the rear. While they were on the march Sutherland's detachment returned and fell in behind the Brunswickers.[5] The bateaux were laboriously rowed upstream alongside the marching men. The hospital, with more than 300 sick and wounded men, was left, in the care of a surgeon, to the mercy of the Americans.[6]

The progress of the British army was slow beyond belief, not more than a mile an hour. At Dovecote—now Coveville—a halt was ordered at two o'clock in the morning to let the bateaux carrying the provisions catch up. The march was not resumed until four o'clock in the afternoon. It was a dolorous march. Rain was falling heavily. The road, bad enough before, was now a bog. The tired men could hardly drag their feet out of the mud. The wagons stuck fast and were unable to go on.[7] The tents and baggage were therefore left behind. Parties of Americans hung on the rear of the retreating army, waylaying the bateaux, many of which were captured and looted. It was late in the evening of the 9th when the beaten army reached the mouth of the Fish Kill, forded the stream, and found itself in its desired position on the heights of Saratoga—where Schuylerville is today, near Saratoga Springs on the north. Wet to the skin and almost dead-beat, the men "had not strength or inclination to cut wood and make fires, but rather sought sleep in their wet cloaths and on the wet ground, under a heavy rain that still continued"; so says one that was with them.[8]

From that place Burgoyne sent Sutherland, with the 9th and 47th, some Canadians, and a corps of artificers, up the river again to the neighborhood of Fort Edward to build a bridge by which the retreating army could cross the Hudson to the only practicable northward road, that on the east side.[9]

The position taken was favorable for a defensive stand. It was on a rise of ground north of Fish Kill, with much open ground before it, which would afford a field of fire for the artillery and permit of battle formation in the classic style and the free use of the bayonet, the favorite weapon of the British and Brunswick regulars. It had already been fortified by Burgoyne's troops when they lay there on September 13 and 14. These works were now strengthened. Fellows and his brigade, who were there before Burgoyne, forded the river on his approach and took a position on a height opposite the British camp.

Gates was slow in his pursuit, lingering in camp until after noon of the 10th; but his men marched faster than the British and came in sight of them by four o'clock.[10] Burgoyne had left the 20th, 21st, and 62nd British regiments south of Fish Kill as a guard for headquarters established in Schuyler's great house near the river. These were now withdrawn to the main position, and Schuyler's house, being in the way of artillery fire from the heights, was burned.

After all his seeming dilatoriness and lack of energy Gates now suddenly grew bold. The movement of Sutherland's detachment up the river had been reported to him, and he assumed that it was the main body of the British, and that he faced only the rear guard. Without any reconnaissance to determine the true state of affairs, he drew up orders for an attack at dawn the next day.[11]

At that season of the year a morning fog always overhangs the river country; and so it did on the morning of October 11 when Morgan advanced along the edge of the bluffs and the rest of the army moved up the road by the riverside. They were going blindly against a strong position strongly held and mounting twenty-seven guns of various calibers with a clear field of fire when, by mere chance, Brigadier General John Glover learned the truth. His men had picked up a lone British deserter, who told them that the whole British army was in the entrenchments they intended to attack, even Sutherland's two regiments having been recalled. Glover sent the news back to Gates and to Nixon, whose brigade had already crossed Fish Kill. He suggested a return. Nixon halted. At that moment the fog lifted, disclosing the British position. The enemy opened fire, and Nixon's men hurriedly withdrew to the south side of the Kill.[12]

Learned's brigade had meanwhile proceeded according to orders, and was advancing in the fog up the slope against the enemy when James Wilkinson, Gates's youthful aide, overtook them bringing news of the true situation. Learned, with some reluctance, ordered a withdrawal, which was made under fire. There can be little doubt that, if the attack had been made according to Gates's orders, it would have resulted in a defeat.[12]

Concentrating their attention on Burgoyne's fleet of bateaux, the Americans captured most of them that day. Morgan, who had remained north of Fish Kill, now took post to the west of the British position and was joined by Learned's brigade and some Pennsylvania regiments. Burgoyne was thus invested on three sides, but his way to the north was still open. For the first time in the campaign he called a council of war—always before he had made his own decisions without asking his generals' advice.

Riedesel proposed abandonment of the baggage and retreat up the west side of the river, to cross above Fort Edward and go on to Fort George. But Burgoyne would not agree.[13] The Americans established three batteries at Fellows's position on the opposite side of the river and opened fire on the British camp, and there was constant fighting of outposts.

In the afternoon of the 12th Burgoyne called another council, including Riedesel, Phillips, and the two brigadiers, Gall and Hamilton. He placed before it the situation of his army: It was facing 14,000 rebels equipped with "considerable artillery" and was threatened with attack by them; other forces were between the British position and Fort Edward; the bateaux were either ruined or captured; the way up the west side of the river was impracticable, except for "small parties of Indians"; to get the artillery away, bridges would have to be built across the affluents of the Hudson under the fire of the enemy and with Gates attacking their rear; nothing had been heard from Clinton. He now asked for opinions on five propositions: (1) to wait in this position for coming, fortunate events; (2) to attack the enemy; (3) to retreat, repair the bridges on the march and thus, with artillery and baggage, force the fords at Fort Edward; (4) to retreat by night, leaving the artillery and baggage behind, cross above Fort Edward or march round Lake George; (5) in case the enemy should move to the left, to force a passage to Albany.

The first, second, and third propositions were promptly rejected as impracticable. Burgoyne, Phillips, and Hamilton were inclined toward the fifth; but its execution depended on a foolish move by Gates, and he could not be relied upon to make it. Riedesel insisted on the adoption of the fourth, and it was approved, the march to begin that night "with the greatest secrecy and quietness," each soldier carrying his own provision for six days.[14]

At ten o'clock Riedesel sent word to headquarters that the rations had been distributed and asked for marching orders. The answer was: "The retreat is postponed; the reason why is not known." [15] So Burgoyne lost his last chance to get away, for by the next day he was entirely surrounded.[16] In the night American troops had crossed from the mouth of Batten Kill on the east side of the river and erected a battery on the west side. They were commanded by John Stark, that unpredictable person having arrived with 1,100 New Hampshire militia.

"Numerous parties of American militia . . . swarmed around the little adverse army like birds of prey," says Sergeant Lamb, who was there. "Roaring of cannon and whistling of bullets from their rifle pieces were heard constantly by day and night." [17] And according to Riedesel:

Every hour the position of the army grew more critical, and the prospect of salvation grew less and less. There was no place of safety for the baggage; and the ground was covered with dead horses that had either been killed by the enemy's bullets or by exhaustion, as there had been no forage for several days. . . . Even for the wounded, no spot could be found which could afford them a safe shelter—not even, indeed, for so long a time as might suffice for a surgeon to bind up their ghastly wounds. The whole camp was now a scene of constant fighting. The soldier could not lay down his arms day or night, except to exchange his gun for the spade when new entrenchments were thrown up. The sick and wounded would drag themselves along into a quiet corner of the woods and lie down to die on the damp ground. Nor even here were they longer safe, since every little while a ball would come crashing down among the trees.[18]

Small wonder it is that "order grew more and more lax."

On the 13th another council was assembled, including not only the general officers but also "the field-officers and captains commanding corps of the army." [19] Burgoyne presented the same five propositions, but added a statement of the increased difficulties. He also said that he believed that some of the officers were in favor of capitulation, but he would not consider that without the assent of those in the council. He asked three questions. (1) Could an army of 3,500 effective combatants enter into an agreement with the enemy without detriment to the national honor? They all answered "Yes." (2) Was this now the case for this army? They all agreed that it was. (3) Was this army's situation such as to make an honorable capitulation really detrimental? They replied in the negative.[20]

Burgoyne sent Gates a letter asking for a meeting with a staff officer "in order to negotiate matters of high importance to both armies," [21] and in the morning of the 14th Major Kingston met Wilkinson between the lines and was conducted to Gates's headquarters. Kingston said that his chief knew Gates's superiority of numbers and their disposition, which would render a retreat "a scene of carnage on both sides," [22] and proposed a cessation of hostilities to consider terms. To his surprise, Gates presented a paper already drawn up, containing his terms.

They included a surrender of the troops as prisoners of war, grounding their arms within the camp and marching out to such destination as should be directed. Other provisions allowed the officers and soldiers to keep their personal baggage, admitted the officers to parole, and required the delivery of all public stores, arms, ammunition "&c &c." [23] But the two terms first mentioned amounted to a demand for unconditional surrender, and Burgoyne's officers made violent objection. The terms were "inadmissible in any extremity. Sooner than this the army will ground their arms in their en-

campment, they will rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarter." [24] So Burgoyne replied to Gates.

In thus presenting his terms, Gates made a tactical error. It was customary to let the besieged propose terms, which the besiegers could modify or reject. Now Gates had either to stand on the terms he proposed and take the consequences, or to let Burgoyne do the revising and accept what he offered. Burgoyne sent back his terms, to which, he said, he would accept no amendment. His troops were to march out of the camp with the honors of war and ground their arms by the riverside at the command of their own officers. Moreover, they were not to be considered as prisoners of war, but were to be granted passage back to Great Britain from the port of Boston, on British transports "whenever General Howe shall so order," on condition of "not serving again in North America during the present contest." [25] They were to have rations at American expense while on the march to Boston and while quartered there. The officers were to retain their carriages and horses, and "no baggage was to be molested, General Burgoyne giving his honour that their are no public stores secreted therein." The Canadians were to be permitted to return to Canada, being supplied by the Americans on the march. There were other similarly generous provisions, but those mentioned constitute the gist of the proposal.

To the amazement of Burgoyne and his officers, Gates immediately accepted the proposal, with only one addition: the surrender was to take place at two o'clock in the afternoon of the following day. This precipitate abandonment of his former demands and acceptance of the extraordinary proposals of the enemy aroused Burgoyne's suspicions. He thought that Gates must have heard that Clinton was coming up to relieve his compatriots. To gain time he asked for a postponement of the ceremony. Gates agreed, and the articles were drawn up in form and signed by representatives of both armies.

Then Burgoyne asked one more concession. The agreement must not be called a "capitulation" but rather a "convention." Again Gates consented. His willingness to yield was indeed, as Burgoyne suspected, prompted by news of movements of Clinton's army.

Although Clinton himself had returned to New York after capturing the two forts, he had sent a detachment up the river as far as Esopus. From this fact Gates deduced an intention to push on to Burgoyne's relief. Burgoyne had also heard of this. Hopes that relief was coming burgeoned in his mind, and he began to regret his proposal to give up. He went so far as to ask his council whether, at this stage of the proceedings, he could honorably with-

draw from the negotiations. The council voted that he could not, and that the advantageous terms agreed to by Gates should not be rejected. Still Burgoyne delayed signing. He called another council, but found his officers still of the same mind. Then he yielded and signed.[26]

In the afternoon of the 16th, Burgoyne and his staff in their "rich, royal uniforms" rode out to the American camp and met Gates in "a plain, blue frock." "The fortune of war, General Gates," said Burgoyne, "has made me your prisoner." To which Gates replied, "I shall ever be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault of your Excellency," and invited the party to dine with him.[27]

In the morning of the 17th, the British army marched out of its camp to the appointed place in the meadows by the river and, at the command of its own officers, piled its arms and emptied its cartridge boxes. In order that the conquered troops might be humiliated as little as possible, Gates had ordered his men to remain within their own lines. The British then marched through the American camp between two lines of troops drawn up in order, from whom they received not "the least disrespect, or even a taunting look, but all was mute astonishment and pity." [28]

One of the Brunswickers has described the appearance of the American troops:

> Not one of them was properly uniformed, but each man had on the clothes in which he goes to the field, to church or to the tavern. But they stood like soldiers, erect, with a military bearing which was subject to little criticism. All their guns were provided with bayonets, and the riflemen had rifles. The people stood so still that we were greatly amazed. Not one fellow made a motion as if to speak to his neighbor; furthermore, nature had formed all the fellows who stood in rank and file, so slender, so handsome, so sinewy, that it was a pleasure to look at them and we were all surprised at the sight of such a finely built people. And their size! . . . The officers . . . wore very few uniforms and those they did wear were of their own invention. All colors of cloth . . . brown coats with sea-green facings, white linings and silver sword-knots; also gray coats with straw facings and yellow buttons were frequently seen. . . . The brigadiers and generals have special uniforms and ribbons which they wear like bands of orders over their vests . . . most colonels and other officers, on the other hand, were in their ordinary clothes.

He was amazed at the variety and size of the wigs worn by the older Americans "between their fiftieth and sixtieth year," who had "perhaps at this age followed the calfskin [drum] for the first time" and "cut a droll figure under arms"; yet "it is no joke to oppose them . . . they can cold-bloodedly draw a bead on anyone." He noted the variety of "standards with all manner of emblems and mottoes, some of which seemed to us very caustic. . . .

There was not a man among them who showed the slightest sign of mockery, malicious delight, hate or any other insult; it seemed rather as if they wished to do us honor." [29]

When the beaten army came to a large tent, Gates and Burgoyne emerged from it, turned and faced each other. Silently, Burgoyne drew his sword and tendered it to Gates, who received it with a bow and returned it. So the ceremonies of the "convention" were completed, and the British army set out on its march to Boston.

For the Americans it was a stupendous victory. Two lieutenant generals, two major generals, three brigadiers, with their staffs and aides, 299 other officers ranging from colonels to ensigns, chaplains and surgeons, 389 non-commissioned officers, 197 musicians, and 4,836 privates passed out of the armed forces of Great Britain in America. The matériel captured was of vast importance, including 27 guns of various calibers, 5,000 stand of small arms, great quantities of ammunition, and military stores and equipment of all kinds.[30]

Even more important were its psychological effects among the patriots. Coming close after Washington's defeats at Brandywine and Germantown, it was a needed restorative of confidence in the American cause; and it acted as such. The ill organized, ill disciplined, ill supplied American amateur soldiers had defeated the British and German regulars in two battles in the open field. To be sure, the enemy was greatly outnumbered; but that fact did not affect the rejoicing, nor did it reduce the newborn confidence in the American armies. They had a great store of men to draw upon and might again produce armies greater in numbers than their foes.

Upon the disposition of the British troops in America, Burgoyne's defeat had an immediate effect. Ticonderoga and Crown Point were evacuated, and their garrisons were withdrawn to Canada. Sir Henry Clinton recalled Vaughan's detachment, which had got within forty miles of Albany and withdrew the garrison he had left in Fort Clinton, thus abandoning his hold on the Highlands and retaining only the town and island of New York, with their outlying posts. Only there, in Rhode Island, and in Philadelphia had His Majesty's forces any hold upon the revolted colonies.

In England the news of Bennington had already called forth from the politicians and newspapers of the Opposition "croaking prophecies of disaster to Burgoyne." When Saratoga's news arrived the Opposition in Parliament received it with "a howl of insulting triumph." But upon the country in general it had a tonic effect. There was considerable apprehension that the defeat would bring France into the war on the side of America. It was

evident that a greater army would be needed, in that case, to carry on the struggle. Towns and cities volunteered to raise regiments at their own expense. In Scotland a number of noblemen and wealthy gentlemen offered to enroll battalions, though not at their own expense. Thus 15,000 men were added to the royal army.[31]

In France the effect was more encouraging to the Americans. Although for a long time, secretly and by various subterfuges, that country had been supplying the Americans with great quantities of arms and war matériel, it had refrained from entering the conflict even to the extent of recognizing their national existence. Now it acted with almost dizzy haste. Within two days after the arrival of the news of Saratoga, the King of France signed a short note extending such recognition and virtually making his country the ally of the United States. On February 6, 1778, a formal treaty was signed. Upon its publication, in March, the British ambassador was recalled from Paris. France and England were now at war, and after a considerable delay Spain and then Holland came into the conflict on the American side. Saratoga thus fairly earned the epithet of Turning Point of the Revolution.

Although the subsequent treatment by the Congress of the troops surrendered at Saratoga is a political matter, not within the strict scope of this account of the military operations of the Revolution, it is so intimately connected with the war itself and is of such interest and importance that it should be briefly discussed.

While the victory was received with rejoicings, the terms granted to the defeated were thought by the Congress and by the people generally to be far too liberal. It was too plain to be overlooked that, though they were under engagement not to serve against the Americans in the war, there was nothing to prevent the government of Great Britain from employing them elsewhere and so releasing other troops that might be sent to America. The Congress was indisposed to give Britain this advantage by ratifying and carrying out the terms of the convention, if any subterfuge could be hit upon to justify refusal. "The public wished to have some pretence for detaining them." [32]

Having scanned the returns of the matériel surrendered, a committee of the Congress reported, on November 22, that they included only 648 cartridge boxes, a manifestly insufficient number for over 5,000 men. This evident failure to give them all up was esteemed to be a breach of the convention. Yet, at that time, the committee did not regard that state of facts as warranting delaying the embarkation.[33]

Unfortunately for the captive troops, Burgoyne himself furnished a reason deemed by the Congress sufficient to justify a refusal to carry out the agreement. Boston was already overcrowded with American troops when Burgoyne's soldiers arrived. There was a consequent delay in securing for the British officers quarters "according to their rank," as specified in the agreement. They were crowded together, without regard to rank, in huts made of boards, poorly built, and quite open to the wintry weather.[34] Burgoyne took offense and wrote a haughty letter to General Heath, in command there, charging that, by this failure in the matter of quarters, "the public faith is broke." [35]

Howe contributed his share to the difficulties of the situation. Instead of at once dispatching to Boston a fleet of transports to carry the British troops back to England, he delayed for months in an effort to change the plan so that the embarkation might be made in some port in British possession—Newport or New York. This meant, in the minds of the delegates to the Congress, that his real intention was to get Burgoyne's troops within the British lines and keep them as an addition to his own army.[36] But, chiefly, it was Burgoyne's words that were seized upon as an excuse for disregarding the agreement. "Congress had now obtained what they wanted, a plea for detaining the convention troops." [37]

On January 8, 1778, a committee of the Congress reported that "this charge of a breach of public faith is of a most serious nature, pregnant of alarming consequences," affording grounds for a belief that Burgoyne intended to rely upon such breach of faith to absolve himself and his army from the obligations of the contract, including the agreement that his troops should not serve again in America. The Congress, with this in mind, but falling back upon the missing cartridge boxes as a concrete breach, resolved that "the convention, on the part of the British, has not been strictly complied with." [38]

Yet it had not the resolution boldly to denounce the agreement as broken by the other side. It merely suspended the embarkation "till a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga shall be properly notified by the court of Great Britain to Congress." [39] When the British transports arrived off Boston, late in December, they were not admitted to the harbor.[40]

His Majesty sent orders to Clinton, Howe's successor, to signify his ratification of the convention. Clinton did so, whereupon the Congress was driven to declaring that it had "no evidence" that Clinton "had any orders from his King for the ratification of the Convention, that the whole might be, for what they knew, a forgery" and that "a responsible witness" must be

produced "to swear he saw the King sign the order"; until then "they would not believe a word that he [Clinton] advanced," [41] which was surely as miserable a pretense of honorable dealing as was ever put forth.

Burgoyne and a few of his officers were allowed to go home, but the rest of his troops were marched down into Virginia and held as prisoners until the end of the war. The action of the Congress in this regard reflected great discredit upon the nation. The public faith had been broken without justifiable excuse or palliation. It was, indeed, a dirty business altogether.