

## CHAPTER IX.

CAPTAIN SCHUYLER again appeared in public life in the spring of 1758, in connection with his friend, Colonel Bradstreet, who had been active at Albany during the previous year as deputy quartermaster general. Lord Howe, whose regiment was quartered on Long Island, had spent much of the winter at Albany, (where Abercrombie remained,) making preparations, first for a winter attack upon Ticonderoga, and finally for the next summer's campaign. His was a lovely character, and he had endeared himself to the soldiers and the people. At the Flats he was "Aunt Schuyler's" frequent and most welcome visitor. Her husband had died of pleurisy in February, 1757, but the hospitalities of his house were continued by his widow.

After the death of Colonel Schuyler, Philip and his wife, with their infant children, spent much time at the Flats. The younger of the infants at the beginning of 1758 was Elizabeth, who became the wife of the eminent Alexander Hamilton, and lived to the age of more than ninety-six years. It was there that Captain Schuyler and Lord Howe formed an intimate relationship as friends. Their mutual attachment, growing out of wise appreciation, was very strong; and when the former was assured that his noble friend was appointed Abercrombie's lieutenant, and would be the active spirit of the expedition against the French on Lake Champlain, he resolved to join the

provincial army, and share the fortunes of the campaign. At the urgent solicitation of Colonel Bradstreet, he accepted the office of deputy commissary with the rank of major.

As early as March, when Bradstreet, warmly supported by the zealous Howe, proposed an expedition against Frontenac, Major Schuyler entered upon his duties, and from that time until the close of the campaign he was continually in the public service. It had been determined that a strong force should march upon Frontenac as soon as the army should be established upon Lake Champlain, and to promote this enterprise the New York officers and soldiers bent their best energies. But these were continually paralyzed by the indolence and absurd interferences of the commander-in-chief, and it was late in June before the army destined for the capture of Ticonderoga had collected at Fort Edward, the designated place of rendezvous.

Lord Howe was a Lycurgus of the camp. He introduced stern reforms, which commended themselves to the common sense of his associates, but which caused the incredulous shaking of the big-wigs of the elders, who made innovation and sacrilege convertible terms. He labored to conform the methods of the service to its wants in this new country. Laying aside pride and prejudice, he applied for advice to those whose experience and observation entitled them to respect. He forbade in his own regiment all displays of gold and scarlet in the rugged marches of the army, and led the proposed new fashion himself, by wearing a plain short-skirted ammunition coat. He ordered the muskets to be shortened, that they might be used with more freedom in the forests; and to prevent the discovery of his corps by the glitter of the barrels, he directed that portion of their weapons to be painted black. To preserve

the legs of his men from briars and the bite of insects he caused them to wear buckskin or strong woollen cloth leggins, such as were used by the Indians. The innovation most deprecated by the young men of his corps, who took great pride in their long, abundant powdered hair, was his order for them all to have their locks cut short, that they might not become wet and produce maladies when the owners slept upon the damp ground or marched in storms. But Lord Howe, whose hair was fine and abundant, set the example in this as in other movements, and had his own locks cropped short. He also abolished the use of chairs, tables, and other things used in the tents, because it would be almost impossible to carry them through the wilderness which the army was about to penetrate ; and he set his officers an example one day, when he had invited them to dine with him. They found him in his tent to welcome them. The ground was covered with bear skins, and there was a log for each of the guests to sit upon, after the manner of his lordship. Presently his servants set a large dish of pork and beans in their midst, when his lordship took a sheath from his pocket, containing a knife and fork, and with them he proceeded to distribute the food. The guests sat in awkward surprise, for they had neither knife nor fork. They were soon relieved by the host presenting each with a similar sheath and contents. To each man of his regiment he also furnished a quantity of powdered ginger, with orders to mix it with their water when on weary marches, and not to stoop down, as was customary, and drink from the streams. This precaution saved many lives, and kept off agues when these troops were in swampy places.

Through the activity of Bradstreet, assisted by Major Schuyler, the batteaus for carrying the troops over Lake

George were ready by the time the necessary stores arrived from England, and before the end of June Lord Howe led the first division of four thousand men to the head of the lake. Abercrombie arrived there with the remainder at the beginning of July. His entire force at the head of the lake then consisted of seven thousand regulars, nine thousand provincials, and a heavy train of artillery. Montcalm then occupied Ticonderoga with less than four thousand men.

The provincial troops were chiefly from New England, New York, and New Jersey ; and among the former were Stark, of New Hampshire, and Putnam, of Connecticut, the former now promoted to captain, and the latter to major. These were men who were afterward to fill a conspicuous place in the history of their country. There was Gage, likewise, who, in later years, was the executor of his royal master's will in oppressing the Bostonians. Five hundred rangers were under his command. And there was the bold Rogers, too, the ever brave partisan, at the head of four hundred others, gallant like himself, who all the spring had been scouting among the mountains, and performing deeds of daring which the world knows little of. With a part of these he had passed over Lake George in five whale-boats, and in company with Captain Jacob (Nawnawapateonks,) and a party of Mohegan Indians had fully reconnoitered the French works at Ticonderoga.

Before sunrise on the morning of the 5th of July, the whole armament under Abercrombie proceeded to embark on Lake George, in nine hundred batteaus and one hundred and thirty-five whale-boats. The artillery was placed upon rafts, and before ten o'clock the immense flotilla moved majestically down the lake, led by Lord Howe in a large boat, accompanied by a guard of rangers. Bradstreet was

in the boat with Lord Howe ; Schuyler remained at the head of the lake, to superintend the forwarding of supplies for the use of the army.

Seldom has a scene more imposing than this been looked upon in America. The day was bright and warm, the waters of the lake still and clear as crystal, and around them lay the lofty, everlasting hills, covered with the green forest from their summits to the water's edge, and echoing the sounds of martial music, which, toward evening, fell faintly and mysteriously upon the ears of the French scouts in the direction of Ticonderoga. In that stately procession the regular troops occupied the centre of the flotilla, and the provincials formed the wings. Over all waved the bright banners of the regiments ; and floating proudly from a staff in the barge of the commander-in-chief, was the royal flag of England with its union crosses.

As the flotilla approached the narrows of the lake an order for silence went from boat to boat. The trumpet, fife, and drum were dismissed ; the oars were all muffled, every voice was subdued to a whisper, and as the sun went down in glory, and the bright stars came out in a serene sky, the movement of the armament was so silent that not a scout upon the hills appears to have observed them.

The flotilla reached Sabbath-day Point, a low promontory on the western shore, just as the twilight was fading into night, and there the army landed and rested five hours. Lord Howe pitched his tent there, and during the evening he sent for Captain Stark. Reclining upon his bear skin bed, he talked with the Captain long and seriously respecting Ticonderoga, the French works there, the best mode of attack, and the probabilities of success. They supped together ; and before Stark left, Lord Howe gave orders for the rangers to carry the bridge at the falls between

Lake George and the plains of Ticonderoga on the following day.

Soon after midnight the army moved silently on ; Lord Howe, doubtless meditating upon the chances of war and the glory to be won, had not slept, and at early dawn, accompanied by Colonel Bradstreet and Major Rogers, he pushed forward to within a quarter of a mile of the landing place at the foot of the lake. There he discovered a French picket. The whole army soon afterward appeared, and the first intimation that the French outposts received of the proximity of an enemy, was the full blaze of their scarlet uniforms in the morning sun. At twelve o'clock the landing was effected in a cove on the western side of the lake.

The outlet of Lake George forms a winding, rapid river, less than four miles in length, and falling, in that distance, about one hundred and sixty feet. It connects Lake George with Lake Champlain, having a mountain over eight hundred feet in height on the western side of its mouth, and a rocky promontory, rising more than a hundred feet, on the eastern side. This promontory was called Ticonderoga, and upon its highest point the French had built a fort, which they named *Carillon*.\* It was substantially built of limestone, with which the promontory abounds, and was constructed with so much skill that a small garrison might make a respectable defense against quite a large army. On the extreme point of the promontory was a grenadier's battery. Northward of the fort were marshes and wet meadows, over which it was difficult to pass, and the only solid

\* Ticonderoga, or Tionderoga, is a corruption of Cheonderoga, an Iroquois word signifying *sounding water*, in allusion to the roar of the falls in the outlet of Lake George. The French named their fort Carillon for the same reason, that word, in their language, signifying chime, jingling, noise, brawling, scolding, racket, clatter, riot.

way, from the northwest, was over quite a narrow isthmus. Across this the French had placed extensive outworks. They had also built mills at the falls, and posted some troops there; and they had stationed a picket guard at the foot of Lake George.

Such was the position of the belligerents on the morning of the 6th of July, when the troops under Abercrombie landed and took up their line of march toward Ticonderoga in four columns, leaving behind their artillery, provisions, and baggage. The French advanced guard fled when the British landed, setting fire to the bridges and carrying alarm to the fort. This movement, and intelligence that Montcalm was in hourly expectation of a strong reinforcement under De Levi, caused Abercrombie thus to disencumber his army and press forward to an immediate attack. But the country was covered with such a dense forest, in which lay occasional morasses, that the progress of the British was very slow. Their guides were incompetent, and the moving columns, following these bewildered leaders, frequently encountered each other and became broken and confused. In this manner they had proceeded about two miles, and were crossing a brook within sound of the rushing waters of Cheonderoga, when the right center, commanded by Lord Howe in person, came suddenly upon a French party of about three hundred men, who had lost their way and had been wandering in the forest for twelve hours. A skirmish immediately ensued. Both parties fought bravely, but the wearied Frenchmen were overcome. Some of them were killed, some were drowned in the stream, and more than one half of them were made prisoners. At the first fire Lord Howe was struck by a musket ball and expired immediately. His fall produced dismay in his soldiers,

and the British columns, broken, confused, and fatigued, marched back to the landing to bivouac for the night.

Early on the morning of the 7th, Colonel Bradstreet, with Rogers' rangers, advanced, rebuilt the bridges, and before noon took possession of the saw mills. Abercrombie then advanced to that point with the whole army, and sent out Clerk, his chief engineer, to reconnoiter the French works. He was accompanied by Captain Stark with a part of Rogers' rangers. All returned the same evening. Clerk reported the French works to be deceptive. They appeared strong, but were in reality very weak and unsubstantial. The practiced eye of Stark had a different perception, and he averred that the works were well finished, and that preparations for defense were ample. With his usual contempt for the provincials, Abercrombie paid no attention to Stark's opinion, and resolved to press forward to the attack the next morning, without waiting for his cannon. This was his fatal mistake.

At daybreak of the 8th, Sir William Johnson joined Abercrombie with four hundred and forty Indians, and before sunrise the British forces were moving toward the French works, New Jersey and Connecticut troops forming a rear guard.

Through his scouts Montcalm had watched these movements. On the day that the British landed he called in all of his troops at outposts, and prepared for a desperate defense. His force in Fort Carillon and upon the out-works did not exceed three thousand men, but on the evening of the 7th, De Levi returned from an intended expedition against the Mohawks, with four hundred followers. With this reinforcement Montcalm felt confident, notwithstanding he had not yet completed an important battery. On the morning of the 8th, when the drums beat to arms, he



placed himself just within the trenches. With quick eye he discerned every movement, and with ready skill directed every maneuver.

The British approached the French lines in three columns. Abercrombie kept at a safe distance in the rear. As the army approached the out-works, the French, completely hidden in their trenches, and well defended by a deep *abatis*, (composed of felled trees, their tops lying outward from the embankments,) opened a sudden and incessant fire from swivels and small arms. The British were entangled in the projecting limbs, logs, and rubbish, yet they pressed forward with the greatest intrepidity, while officers and men were swept down as with a mower's scythe. For four hours, in the face of a most destructive storm of iron and lead did they strive to cut their way, and the carnage was dreadful. Some did, indeed, mount the parapet, and scores fell within a few feet of the trenches. Never was British valor more strikingly displayed than on that occasion, and had Abercrombie brought up his artillery, or possessed a tithe of the activity and courage of Montcalm, he would have secured a victory. But as the moments sped on, and he heard that his brave regulars were rapidly diminishing (for he had remained, like a coward, at the mills), he ordered a retreat to be sounded. The British had then lost two thousand men, and in the conflict had become much disordered. The retreat became a flight, and when Abercrombie was sought for to rally them he could nowhere be found. He had hurried back to the landing place on Lake George, in "extremest fright," and the army, in consternation, followed. They would have rushed pell mell into the boats but for the alertness and influence of Colonel Bradstreet, who had the command of the flotilla.

Meanwhile a courier had been dispatched in a whale-boat, with the following hurried letter from Abercrombie's aide-de-camp to Colonel Cumming, who had been left in charge of a detachment at the head of the lake :\*

“FRENCH ADVANCED GUARD, July 8, 1758.

“COLONEL CUMMING :

“You are hereby directed not to send any more provincial troops down the lake, but stop them all there, as likewise all the stores that have been ordered down, except as many men as is necessary to bring all the empty batteaus down immediately, which you are to forward without any loss of time. All the wounded are to be forwarded to Fort Edward. You will observe the above orders. Our army, who have behaved with the utmost intrepidity, were obliged to give way to batteries and the strongest intrenchments. Forward the wounded to New York as soon as possible.† Send this note to Captain Read. Forward the heavy artillery to New York as soon as possible. Collect the provincial troops at Fort William Henry, as we hope to advance again soon. Finish all your stockaded forts immediately, and particularly the hospital. Keep a good watch, and defend your post to the last. You will soon have a large body of troops down at your post. Give all the assistance to the sick and wounded you can.

“I am, dear Cumming, your most humble servant,

“JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Aide-de-camp.”

\* Autograph letter.

† Among the wounded was Captain Charles Lee, afterward the second major-general in the army of the Revolution. He was then distinguished for his recklessness, bad manners, and worse morals. On the march of the troops from Albany, he commanded a small detachment that encamped at the Flats, the residence of “Aunt Schuyler.” He had neglected to procure the customary warrants for impressing horses and oxen, and obtaining necessary supplies for the army. Without authority he seized what he wanted, and did not spare even Mrs. Schuyler, the friend and benefactor of the army; and when remonstrated with he answered by coarse oaths. Her domestics were enraged, but she remained calm, and quieted their excitement. When the wounded at Ticonderoga were brought down, she caused her great barn to be converted into a hospital, and a room was furnished in her house for the use of a surgeon. Among the surgeon's patients was the rapacious and ill-mannered Lee. Mrs. Schuyler treated him with the utmost kindness, and never made the least hint concerning his past misconduct. Lee was charmed, and “he swore,” says Mrs. Grant, “that he was sure there would be a place reserved for Madame in heaven though no other woman should be there, and that he should wish for nothing better than to share her final destiny.”

Two days before this courier was sent, another boat had passed over the lake, but upon a different errand. It conveyed the body of the young Lord Howe, who fell, as we have seen, in the first encounter with the French in the forests at Ticonderoga. Its arrival upon the sandy beach at the head of the lake was the first intimation to Colonel Cumming and his command of the great loss the army had sustained. None grieved more sincerely than Major Schuyler, and he asked and received permission to convey the dead body of his friend to Albany for interment. It was carried on a rude bier to Fort Edward, and thence to Albany in a batteau. Major Schuyler caused it to be entombed in his family vault, and there it lay many years, when the remains were placed in a leaden coffin and deposited under the chancel of St. Peter's church, in that city. They rest there still. We have observed that Lord Howe, as an example for his soldiers, had cut his fine and abundant hair very short. When his remains were taken from the Schuyler vault for reëntombment, his hair had grown to long, flowing locks, and was very beautiful.

Lord Howe was not quite thirty-four years of age when he died. "With him," observes Mante, "the soul of the army seemed to expire."\* In England intelligence of his death caused a profound sensation, and there was sincere

\* "A few days after Lord Howe's departure, in the afternoon, a man was seen coming on horseback from the north, galloping violently, without his hat. Pidrom, as he was familiarly called, the Colonel's [Schuyler] only surviving brother, was with Aunt Schuyler, and ran instantly to inquire, well knowing he rode express. The man galloped on, crying out that Lord Howe was killed. The mind of our good aunt had been so engrossed by her anxiety for the event impending, and so impressed by the merit of her favorite hero, that her wonted firmness sunk under the stroke, and she broke out into bitter lamentations. This had such an effect on her friends and domestics that shrieks and sobs of anguish echoed through every part of the house."—*Mrs. Grant's Memoirs of an American Lady.*

mourning throughout the colonies. The general court of Massachusetts Bay, as a testimonial of their respect for his character, appropriated two hundred and fifty pounds sterling for the erection of a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey.\*

On the morning of the 9th, Abercrombie's broken army retreated across Lake George as rapidly as possible, as the frightened chief could not feel safe until that little sea, thirty-eight miles in length, was between himself and the dreaded Montcalm. At the head of the lake a council of war was held. Colonel Bradstreet, burning with indignation because of the defeat at Ticonderoga, and hoping nothing from a general who, while he calumniated his army as broken-spirited, exhibited none of the characteristics of a good general, urged the importance of attempting his long cherished scheme of capturing Fort Frontenac, at the foot of Lake Ontario. He offered to conduct the expedition himself, and by his strong appeals he wrung from the council a reluctant consent. Abercrombie, after some hesitation, commissioned him to lead three thousand men against that fortress, and "he rather flew than marched with them," says a cotemporary, "through that long route from Lake George to Albany, and thence again up the stream of the Mohawk river."

At Albany Bradstreet was joined by Major Schuyler and his kinsman by marriage, Dr. John Cochran, who became surgeon-general of the northern department in the war for independence. At the Oneida carrying-place he

\* "Lord Howe was a grandson of George the First, his mother being the natural daughter of that monarch and his mistress, Lady Darlington."—*Grahame*. His father was Sir E. Scrope, second Viscount Howe, in Ireland. His brothers, Richard and William, were British commanders in America during the earlier years of the war for independence. The former succeeded to his brother's title.

found General Stanwix, who was about to commence the erection of a fort where the village of Rome now stands. That officer placed under Bradstreet's command an additional force of twenty-seven hundred men, eleven hundred of them New Yorkers. He was also joined there by forty warriors under Red Head, a renowned war-chief of the Onondagas. With this strong force, eight pieces of cannon, and three mortars, Bradstreet pushed forward to Oswego, by way of Wood Creek, Oneida Lake, and the Onondago or Oswego river.

Major Schuyler, accompanied by Dr. Cochran, a corps of provincial soldiers, and a large number of carpenters and other artificers, had made much quicker marches than the main body of Bradstreet's army, and arrived at Oswego several days in advance of them. That place presented a picture of utter desolation. There was scarcely a vestige of the forts to be seen, and no memorial of the French occupancy remained but a huge rude, cross. Schuyler immediately commenced the construction of a rude but strong schooner, to bear the cannon and howitzers, the powder and balls of the expedition over Lake Ontario, light whale-boats only having been transported from Albany by the army for their use. This schooner, incredible as it may seem, was completed within three weeks after the keel was laid. It was named *The Mohawk*, and did good service in carrying the heavy ordnance to Frontenac.

Bradstreet and his army embarked in open boats upon Lake Ontario, and creeping along the southeastern shores, landed within a mile of Fort Frontenac on the evening of the 25th of August. M. de Noyan, the commander of the fort, was taken completely by surprise. The fortification was a quadrangle, strongly built, and mounted with sixty pieces of cannon. But the garrison was small, and a feel-

ing of absolute security caused them to be ill prepared for defense. Couriers were immediately sent by Noyan to M. de Vaudreuil, at Montreal, for aid. That officer caused the *generale* to be beaten, and without regard to the harvest then ready for the reapers, he levied fifteen hundred men—soldiers, farmers, and Indians—and sent them toward Frontenac under Fabert, the major of the town. But succor was not timely. At the close of the second day Bradstreet opened batteries at so short a distance from the fort that almost every shot took effect. The Indian auxiliaries of the French soon fled in dismay, and on the evening of the 27th Noyan was compelled to surrender the fort and all its dependencies. Bradstreet allowed the chaplain of the garrison to carry away all the sacred vessels belonging to the chapel; and Noyan, who was permitted to go to Montreal, agreed to effect an exchange of himself for Colonel Peter Schuyler, of New Jersey, who had been made a prisoner at Oswego the year before, released on parole, but afterward reclaimed.

There were only about one hundred men in the fort, who became prisoners of war; but the captors found there forty six pieces of cannon, sixteen small mortars, together with a prodigious collection of military stores, provisions, and merchandise, intended chiefly for Fort Du Quesne and the interior dependencies. Nine armed vessels, carrying from eight to eighteen guns each, also fell into their hands. After destroying the fort and seven of the vessels, and such stores as he could not carry away, Bradstreet loaded the two remaining vessels with spoils, and with his whole army returned to Oswego. Major Schuyler had remained there, and joined the victorious colonel in his march back to the Oneida carrying place. There Bradstreet found General Stanwix engaged in building a fort, which he had com-

menced on the 23d of August, for the security of the Indian country. He lent his aid to that officer for a time, and then returned with his main army to Lake George, after losing five hundred men in the wilderness by sickness.

The capture of Frontenac was a most important event in the history of the war, and should have secured for Bradstreet greater honors than he ever received. It facilitated the fall of Du Quesne in the west, discouraged the French, and gave great joy and confidence to the English. The resources of Canada were almost exhausted, and there was a cry for peace, "no matter with what boundaries." "I am not discouraged," wrote Montcalm, in evident disappointment, "nor are my troops. We are resolved to find our graves under the ruins of the colony."

The sagacious mind of Pitt comprehended the value of this conquest. He "appeared accurately informed of the inland geography of America," says Smith, the historian, whose letter to Governor Morris, in England, bore the first intelligence of the event to the British cabinet. Pitt perceived that Bradstreet had secured the dominion of Lake Ontario, and an easy way to the possession of Niagara and the country beyond, and he looked with confidence to the operations then in progress toward Fort Du Quesne.

Nor was that confidence disappointed. The command of the expedition was entrusted to General Joseph Forbes, and in July he had about nine thousand men at his disposal, including the Virginia troops, under Colonel Washington, at Fort Cumberland. Forbes was taken ill at Philadelphia, and this circumstance, and his perversity of will and judgment, caused most disastrous delays in the progress of the expedition. Contrary to the advice of Washington and other provincial officers, Forbes insisted upon the construction of a new road over the mountains, instead of

following the one made by Braddock three years before. So slow were his movements that in September, when it was known that not more than eight hundred men were in garrison at Fort Du Quesne, and its conquest might be easily accomplished, Forbes, with six thousand troops, was yet eastward of the Alleghanies. Major Grant, of the British army, a brave but injudicious officer, had been detached with eight hundred of Colonel Bouquet's advanced corps, part regulars and part provincials, to reconnoiter the condition of Du Quesne and the surrounding country. With foolish recklessness he displayed his force near the fort, and invited an attack. It was accepted, and before he was aware of his danger he was surrounded by a large force of French and Indians, and furiously assailed. Three hundred of Grant's men were slain or wounded, and himself and nineteen officers were made prisoners and carried to Canada.

This was on the 21st of September. Forbes still moved on slowly and methodically, and when the main army joined Bouquet's advance, on the 8th of November, they were yet fifty miles from Fort Du Quesne. Winter was approaching, the troops were discontented, and at a council of war it was resolved to abandon the enterprise and return. At that moment three prisoners were brought to headquarters, who assured the general that the French garrison at Du Quesne was extremely weak and illy supplied, for they had relied upon the provisions and stores which Bradstreet had captured at Frontenac. Washington was immediately sent forward with his Virginians, and the whole army made preparations to follow. When the advance were within a day's march of the fort, Indian scouts discovered them, and their fears, magnifying the numbers of the Virginians, caused them to tell a most alarming tale to the commander at Du Quesne. The garrison was then re-



duced to five hundred men, and was short of provisions. They were seized with panic, and on the 24th of November they set fire to the fort and fled down the Ohio in open boats, leaving everything behind them. Washington and his Virginians took possession of all that was left, on the following day, and raised the flag of England over the smoking ruins. A detachment of four hundred and fifty men were left to repair and garrison the fort, and the remainder of the army hastened back to winter quarters. The name of the post was changed to Fort Pitt, in honor of the great statesman at the head of public affairs ; and around its site is now spread out the manufacturing city of Pittsburg, with full sixty thousand inhabitants.

With the close of this expedition ended the campaign of 1758. On the whole it had resulted favorably to Great Britain ; sufficiently so to encourage Pitt in making vast preparations for the campaign of another year. French pride had been effectually humbled by the loss of three of their most important posts—Louisburg, Frontenac, and Du Quesne—and the weakening of the attachment of their Indian allies. Many of the savage warriors had openly deserted the French ; and at a great council held at Easton, on the Delaware, in Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1758, six tribes had, with the SIX NATIONS, made treaties of friendship or neutrality with the English.