

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL SCHUYLER left Ticonderoga on the evening of the day on which the Commissioners sailed down Lake Champlain, and returned to Fort George, which he made his headquarters for several weeks. The exigencies of the service compelled him to exercise the arduous and then all-important functions of both quartermaster-general and commissary-general. No other man could have done what he did, in forwarding men and supplies to Canada. His exalted character as an upright and skilful business man, and his almost boundless personal influence, enabled him to control labor, materials and food within reach of that influence, in a marvellous manner.* His activity, in spite of perpetual suffering, was amazing. He made many journeys between Ticonderoga, Fort George, Saratoga and Albany, in response to urgent calls for his personal supervision of important affairs connected with every portion of the service in the Northern Department. The Indians, the Tories, the exchequer, the commissariat, the transportation, the recruiting, and the general supervision and

* "The duty of procuring supplies, though less splendid in its effects, is often more effectual to the safety and success of an army than prowess in the field. General Schuyler, by his thorough business habits, his precise attention to details, and by his skill and science in every duty connected with the equipment of an army, was admirably fitted to be at the head of the commissariat; and he gave life and vigor to every branch of the service. His versatile talents, equally adapted to investigation and action, rendered his merits as an officer of transcendent value."—*Chancellor Kent*.

direction of military and Indian affairs, all claimed and received his attention, while his daily correspondence with officers, committees, public authorities, the commander-in-chief, and Congress, conducted by his own hand, was extremely voluminous. He built batteaux and procured wagons in the comparative wilderness, when other officers could not do the same in populous districts. He procured subsistence from unsuspected or hidden sources, whence no other man could have drawn it; and he gathered specie, and sent it to the army, when Congress could not borrow a dollar. He forwarded supplies to the suffering army in the region of the St. Lawrence, in spite of the most appalling obstacles, the tardiness of moving troops, and the unpatriotic conduct of selfish men. With this tardiness and selfishness he was continually vexed. "Immediately on receiving intelligence of our distress, in Canada," he wrote to Washington from Fort George, on the 15th of May, "I flew to the communication below and sent on a part of Reed's [New Hampshire] regiment, the first of which I met on the 5th day after their leaving Albany, twenty-three miles below this. I had their heavy baggage taken out of the batteaux and loaded them with pork, acquainting the officers and men with the distress our people labored under in Canada, for want of provisions. But as I could not stay to see the boats off, being obliged to push further down the river to the other places of embarkation, no sooner was my back turned when the officers threw the provisions out of the batteaux and reloaded their baggage, by which means I have forty-eight barrels of pork less here than I should have had. At this outrage and infamous conduct I must, however, wink, lest the service should be still more retarded."*

* Schuyler's MS. Letter Books.

This was one of scores of similar acts of insubordination and vexations to which Schuyler was continually exposed, but he pressed on in the way of duty to his bleeding country; and it is not too much to say, that by his personal exertions he saved the little army in Canada, smitten by disease and menaced by destruction, from intense suffering and even actual starvation.

The proceedings of Congress, at this period, would have given an observer but little hope of success for the struggling colonists, could he have comprehended the situation, as the student may to-day, in the light of sober history. Their councils were often divided by sectional and personal jealousies within and without the hall of legislation; and there seems to have been, on the part of a majority of the delegates, an amazing lack of correct knowledge respecting the actual condition of the forces in the field and the theatre of military operations. They also appear to have been frequently moved to important action by some sudden impulse, rather than by a grave consideration of the exigency; and at no time did they seem to fully apprehend the immense importance of securing the coöperation of the Canadian colony, in the revolt and in the struggle for liberty and justice. Hence it was that spasmodic efforts, to that end, were made whenever urgent letters from General Schuyler, or some startling event, aroused them to action. They would then pass some strong resolves concerning the supply of men, money and materials, that were not followed by corresponding energy of action on their part. They would excite hopes and movements by promises, positive or implied, that were seldom fulfilled. They seemed to regard General Schuyler as an almost omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent mortal wielding a magician's wand, directing him to raise

troops, procure provisions, collect specie, furnish transportation, suppress the Tories, conciliate or overcome the Indians, and take cognizance of every public concern, from the Delaware to the St. Lawrence and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, without furnishing him, at any time, with adequate means for performing the stupendous task. They left the management of the Northern Department almost to his discretion, but gave him, after the fall of Montgomery, incompetent or unfriendly lieutenants, and raw and insubordinate troops to execute his commands. "*Resolved*," they would say with unanimous voice, "That General Schuyler be directed to take any further measures for supplying the army in Canada with provisions, which his prudence may suggest, in which Congress place the highest confidence."* Also, after hearing importunities for the all-important article of specie, for the support of the cause in that province, for many months, they finally "*Resolved*, That some person or persons be employed by the President, in New England, as an agent or agents, to procure, if possible, hard money to the amount of \$100,000, the said agent to be directed to transmit the same to the Commissioners of Congress, in Canada."†

And when the army in the Canadian province, weak in numbers, and weaker still in consequence of sickness and want that prostrated nearly one half of it, was flying for its life before a greatly superior force of well-fed veterans from England; and when, for five months, Schuyler had urged the necessity of holding Canada, and begged for means to do so, the supreme legislature "*Resolved*, That the commanding officer in Canada be informed that Congress are fully convinced of the absolute necessity of keeping possession of that country, and they expect the forces

* Journals of Congress, ii. 174.

† Ibid., ii. 175.

in that Department will contest every foot of the ground with the enemies of these colonies."* And at the very time when Schuyler was greatly distressed, because of the impossibility of procuring a supply of provisions and means for sending them forward, and was advancing large sums of money for that purpose, Congress "*Resolved*, That General Schuyler be desired to take care that the army in Canada be regularly and effectually supplied with necessaries."† This seemed almost like cruel mockery.

When the winter had passed away, the spring had far advanced, British reinforcements were in Canada or out on the ocean on their way thither, their own army in Canada shivering, starving, wasting and dying with small-pox and other diseases, and dissolving by the expiration of terms of enlistment, and their own credit in that province utterly destroyed, they were aroused by the cries of distress raised by Schuyler and their Commissioners, and again resolved to send ten thousand soldiers, well provided, into that colony, and followed it up by some corresponding action. The dread of a standing army had caused the adoption and continuance of the unwise policy of making short enlistments, and the armies were constantly dissolving and reorganizing, and were filled, much of the time, with raw and undisciplined troops.

The evil of this policy was now felt in its full force, yet Congress, instead of remedying it by a wiser course, continued the policy, and relied for success upon the plan of sending troops in the field from point to point immediately menaced, thereby often uncovering other points of equal importance, and inviting attack. In pursuance of this policy, Congress, late in March, when Washington had driven the British from Boston, ordered him to send

* Journals of Congress, ii. 179.

† Ibid.

four regiments of his troops into Canada; and again, on the 23d of April, when he was guarding New York and the Hudson River, and a British fleet, with troops, might be expected at Sandy Hook any day (for thirty thousand had been provided for the campaign of 1776), Congress, without consulting him, ordered him to send six more battalions into Canada, and inquired whether he could spare more.

It was late on the night of the 25th of April when Washington received this peremptory order. He had a clear perception of the value of Canada, and acted accordingly. Six battalions, formed into a brigade—General John Sullivan, of New Hampshire, commander, with Stark and Reed of that province, and Wayne and Irvine of Pennsylvania, among his colonels—were sent up the Hudson with all possible despatch. Sullivan bore to Schuyler \$300,000 in specie, and Washington ordered a supply of provisions and powder to be sent with the troops. It was the four regiments under General William Thompson, sent forward early in April, and the brigade under Sullivan, that gave Schuyler so much concern in the matter of their transportation, with supplies. To the question of Congress, concerning the sending away more troops from New York, Washington replied that it would be running too great a risk trusting that city and Hudson's River to the handful of troops that remained there. His effective force at New York was only eight thousand three hundred when the requisition was made, and only a little more than half that number remained after Sullivan's brigade had departed. All were poorly fed and worse clad, whole regiments not possessing a waistcoat between them, and but one shirt to a man. Instead of sending more men away, Washington said it was necessary to reinforce his

little army at New York, with at least ten thousand men.

General Thomas arrived at the camp, before Quebec, on the 1st of May. He found the little army there in a wretched condition. It was only nineteen hundred strong, and of that number only a thousand were fit for duty. The remainder were in hospitals, sick, chiefly with the small-pox. Of the one thousand, the time of enlistment of three hundred had expired, and they had refused to reënlist, while two hundred others had been inoculated for the small-pox and would soon be in the hospitals. Thomas's effective force, on duty, numbered only about five hundred, and these, as we have seen, were distributed at batteries so distant from each other that not more than three hundred men could be rallied in case of a sudden attack.

It was known that British reinforcements were hourly expected, for the ice was moving in the river, and Thomas made an immediate and bold attempt to take the city. He sent up from Isle Orleans a fire-ship, with the flood, on the 3d of May, to burn the shipping in the harbor, and moved troops, with scaling ladders, intending to take advantage of the confusion caused by the conflagration, to climb the walls and obtain armed possession of the town. The fire-ship failed to perform its duty, and the enterprise was abandoned. A council of war was held on the 5th, when it was determined to retreat up the river, for information had been received that fifteen British ships were then making their way up the stream. The Americans had no means for a protracted contest, for in all the magazines there were not more than one hundred and fifty pounds of powder, and provisions for only three days remained.

Early in the morning of the 6th, when Thomas was engaged in carrying the sick on board of batteaux, remov-

ing the artillery, etc., five British war-ships appeared in sight, and three of them, the *Surprise* frigate, *Isis* and *Marten*, found their way through the ice into the basin, and immediately landed their marines and part of a regiment. At near noon, Carleton, thus reinforced, sallied out of the gates with nearly a thousand men and a train of six pieces of artillery, to attack not more than two hundred and fifty Americans—all that Thomas could rally on the Plains of Abraham. This was the occasion when he “marched out of the ports St. Louis and St. Johns, to see what the mighty boasters were about.” Thomas was compelled to retreat precipitately, leaving baggage, artillery, and many of the sick behind. The latter, about two hundred in number, were kindly treated, and sent home on parole. The fugitives halted at Point Deschambault, about sixty miles above Quebec. “I do not mean to reflect,” Thomas wrote to Washington, from that place, “on any gentleman who has had command in this department; but, in my ideas of war, as there was nothing which promised success in the issue, it would have been highly proper to have made this movement some weeks past.”

Carleton did not follow Thomas in his retreat, but the three war-vessels did. The American camp was without cannon. Two tons of powder, forwarded by General Schuyler, had been captured by the *Surprise*, and the provisions were nearly exhausted. His troops were in no better condition than when they were at Quebec, and a council of war determined to continue the retreat up the river. Thomas, however, concluded to send forward the invalids and make a stand where he was, with five hundred men, until he should receive orders from Montreal, and learn whether he might be strengthened so as to defend his position.

The news of the arrival of British reinforcements, and the retreat of Thomas, satisfied the Commissioners that Canada must be lost. "From the present appearance of things," they wrote to Schuyler, "it is very probable we shall lie under the necessity of abandoning Canada, at least all except that part which lies on the Sorel. We may certainly keep possession of St. John's till the enemy can bring up against that post a superior force and artillery to besiege it."*

Schuyler was greatly distressed and perplexed by the news, for it plunged him into a sea of new and vexatious embarrassments. He was then working with all his might, and successfully, in pushing forward Sullivan's brigade and sending on provisions; yet he was all the while annoyed by vexatious circumstances, great and small. Among these was the enormous amount of baggage which Sullivan's troops insisted upon taking with them. Of this Schuyler complained. In a letter to Washington, written at Albany on the 11th of May, he said that Reed's regiment took eight batteaux, and that Stark's, which had been embarking their baggage "all day, with the activity of snails," would carry more. To the Commissioners in Canada, he wrote from Fort George, that Sullivan's brigade of six regiments had "three hundred wagon loads of baggage," and he could not prevail upon them to leave an ounce behind, although he urged the necessities of their famishing fellow-soldiers in Canada. At last he ordered the baggage out of the batteaux, "but," he said, "no sooner was my back turned than they took out the pork and returned their dirty trumpery, and came on with it." He was satisfied that the army would be compelled to abandon

* Autograph Letter, May 10, 1776.

Canada, and frankly gave this opinion to Washington. The chief, less acquainted with the situation there, was more hopeful.

“I am not without my fears, I confess,” Washington wrote, on the 17th of May, “that the prospect we had of possessing that country, of such importance in the present controversy, is almost over, or, at least, that it will be effected with much more difficulty and effusion of blood than were necessary, had our exertions been timely applied. However, we must not despair. A manly and spirited opposition can only ensure success, and prevent the enemy from improving the advantage they have obtained. * * * * I am fully sensible that this unfortunate event has greatly deranged your schemes, and will involve you in difficulties only to be obviated by your zeal and assiduity, which I am well satisfied will not be wanting in this or any other instance, when the good of your country requires them.”*

The personal and political enemies of Schuyler made these reverses in Canada and the distressing situation of affairs there, an occasion for assailing his public character. The news spread consternation all over the New England frontier, now exposed to invasion and desolation. Committees of towns and districts assembled in many places to consult upon the public welfare. As in all times of calamity, it relieves the public mind to find some individual upon whom may be laid the blame, as the cause of disaster, so now, among the New England people, whose prejudices against Schuyler had sometimes assumed the form of malignity, there was a supple willingness to hold him responsible for the impending evil. We have seen how the New England troops had harrassed him from the beginning, and almost driven him from the service. He was now stigmatized as the chief cause of the late reverses. In the face of all truth he was charged with neglect in forwarding reinforcements and supplies to the army in Canada. His generosity toward Sir John Johnson, in allowing him to remain at large after the affair in Febru-

* Schuyler's MS. Letter Books.

ary, and his misplaced confidence in the honor of the baronet, which circumstances now made conspicuous, as we shall presently observe, were magnified into high misdemeanors; and his enemies even went so far as to charge him with positive disloyalty to the cause of his country, and a design to league himself with its foes. This charge, at first vaguely whispered rumors, took tangible shape and substance, when, late in May, a convention of the Committees of Safety and Inspection in the several towns of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and parts adjacent, bordering on New York, with the approbation of King's District, (now Kingsbury, Washington County,) in that province, sent an address to General Washington, signed by Asa Douglas, their chairman, which cautiously embodied the several complaints against General Schuyler, and which they said, "we take to be facts, though we may be deceived as to some of them." At the same time they expressed a hope that the charges were not true, saying, "We wish not to injure the reputation and glory of General Schuyler, were it in our power; we sincerely hope his name may be handed down with immortal honor to the latest posterity, as one of the great pillars of the American cause."

This address the Committee of King's District, a settlement in which were many Scotchmen who were loyalists, was sent by express to General Washington, by Martin Beebee, their secretary, with a letter of their own, in which full credence was given to the charges against Schuyler. At the same time his enemies in that section tried to alienate from him the friendship of his most active compatriots, among whom was William Duer, a large landowner on the Upper Hudson, against whose loyalty to the Whig cause it was asserted Schuyler had made insinuations.

Resolves of other Committees along the Western New England border, expressing distrust of Schuyler, were passed, and some of these were sent to Washington and to the New York Provincial Congress, but they made not the slightest impression unfavorable to the character of the patriot in circles wherein he was known. The Provincial Congress were quick to assure Schuyler of its entire confidence; and the Committee of Berkshire, after an honest investigation, hastened to repair the mischief its too inconsiderate action may have worked, by sending a letter to the commander-in-chief, from Mark Hopkins, then secretary, on the 26th of May, in which they said: "It is with the greatest pleasure we are now able to acquaint your Excellency that the convention are satisfied that their suspicions concerning him [Schuyler] were wholly groundless."

Schuyler's heart was almost as well known to Washington as to himself, for, during all his trials in the public service, he had continually laid it open to the inspection of that magnanimous and sympathizing friend, who had also experienced his full share of similar difficulties. Nobly was that confidence repaid in kind at this time. The generous soul of the commander-in-chief flamed with indignation when these accusations against the patriot were laid before him. He instantly sent copies of the papers to Schuyler, saying:

"From these you will readily discover the insidious and diabolical acts and schemes carrying on by the Tories and friends of Government, to raise distrust, dissension and divisions among us. Having the utmost confidence in your integrity, and the most incontestible proofs of your great attachment to our common country and its interests, I could not but look upon the charges against you with an eye of disbelief, and sentiments of detestation and abhorrence; nor should I have troubled you with the matter, had I not been informed that copies were sent to different committees, and to Governor Trumbull, which I conceived would get abroad, and that you, should you hear of

my being furnished with them, would consider my suppressing them as an evidence of my belief, or, at best, my doubt of the charges.

“The confidence and assurance I have of the infamy and injustice of the charges against the [New York] Convention, obliged me also to lay the matter before them, lest my not doing it should be construed a distrust of them, of their zeal, and promote the views of the Tories, who, to excite disorder and confusion, judge it essential to involve those in high departments in a share in the plot, which is not unlikely to be true in some parts, as I believe our internal enemies have many projects in contemplation to subvert our liberties.”*

On the day when Washington wrote to Schuyler (May 21), the latter, in a letter to the commander-in-chief, alluded to the scandalous charges, and said:

“Bennet [a courier employed by Schuyler in the secret service] informs me that a report prevails in the western part of Connecticut that I was to head some of the regiments raised in this colony, join the Tories, and fall upon the country; that the people were ordered to collect on this occasion, and that affidavits to support this report had been taken and sent to your Excellency. I hope the scoundrels may be secured, and held to public contempt. Ungrateful villains! to attempt to destroy a man's reputation who, having lighted the candle at both ends, is rapidly bringing on old age by fatigues that nothing but a wish to be instrumental in procuring liberty to my country would make me undergo.”†

Although annoyed by these reports, Schuyler resolved to treat them as merely wicked rumors, until he received Washington's letter, containing copies of the charges against him. Then he wrote, saying:

“While this was only report, I treated it with contempt, without taking notice of it, but it is now become a duty I owe myself and my country to detect the scoundrels, and the only means of doing this is by requesting that an immediate inquiry may be made into the matter, when, I trust, it will evidently appear that it was a scheme more calculated to ruin me than to disunite and create jealousies in the friends to America. Your Excellency will, therefore, please to order a court of inquiry, the soonest possible, for I cannot sit easy under such an infamous imputation, as on this extensive continent numbers of the most respectable characters may not know what your Excellency and Congress do of my principles and exertions in the common cause.

“It is peculiarly hard, that at the very time that assassins and in-

* Letter to Schuyler, May 21, 1776.

† Schuyler's MS. Letter Books.

cendiaries are employed to take away my life, and destroy my property, as being an active friend to my country, at the very time when I had taken measures, and given orders, some of which are actually executed, to secure the Tories and to send them down to your Excellency, a set of pretended Whigs (for such they are, who have propagated these diabolical tales) should proclaim me, through all America, a traitor to my country.”*

Smarting under the wrongs inflicted by these slanders, Schuyler, in a few words, laid his grievances before the Continental Congress incidentally, in a letter, on the 31st of May. “I have requested my general,” he said, “for an inquiry to be made into my conduct. His soul is above the meanness of suspicion, for his feelings are the most delicate; and although his opinion does me the most ample justice, yet it is a most natural wish that my innocence should be made as public as the charge against me, which has been industriously propagated, and ere this has probably reached every quarter of that country to the preservation of which my all is devoted.” Here the matter rested. Washington expressed his willingness to gratify the General by appointing a court of inquiry, but, he said, the “charges appeared so uncertain, vague and incredible that there is nothing to found proceedings on, were there the most distant necessity for the scrutiny.”

We have alluded to Schuyler’s misplaced confidence in the honor of Sir John Johnson. This was made manifest to him by the most particular information communicated early in May, and he took efficient measures, instantly, to

* Schuyler’s MS. Letter Books. In a subsequent letter to Washington, Schuyler wrote: “I am informed by persons of good credit, that about one hundred persons, living in what is commonly called the New Hampshire Grants, have had a design to seize me as a Tory, and perhaps still have.” At about the same time a copy of an affidavit was sent to Schuyler, in which the deponent said he had heard, at the house of Dr. Williams, in the present Washington County, a declaration that a guard of men had “gone in quest of General Schuyler, to take him for enlisting men for the King.”

avert the mischief that Sir John's perfidy might work. He had assurances that the baronet's cousin and brother-in-law, Sir Guy Johnson, with the Butlers and Brant, had been holding councils with the Indians, and intended to reënter the valley with a British and savage force.* He was also well assured that the baronet was in correspondence with these enemies of the cause, and was not only inciting the Indians to make war, but was preparing for hostile movements with the tory Highlanders under his influence. He, therefore, ordered General Sullivan, who was moving with his brigade toward Lake George from Albany, to detach Colonel Elias Dayton, of New Jersey, one of the most active and intelligent officers in the service, with three hundred of the best men in his regiment, and furnish them with supplies for six days and transportation for them, for the purpose of arresting the perfidious baronet and taking him a prisoner to Albany.

This service would require great caution, circumspection and judgment on the part of all concerned in the movement, for Sir John had vigilant friends in Albany who kept him constantly informed concerning everything that pertained to his interest, and it was necessary to thoroughly mask the real business of the troops marching into Tryon County. Happily an excellent pretext existed. The chief of the clan McDonald, of Johnson's Highlanders, had asked Congress to remove his associates and their families from that region, and subsist them. A compliance with that request was now the pretext, and on the 13th of May General Schuyler wrote to the baronet, saying :

“The elder Mr. McDonald, as chief of that part of the clan of his name, now in Tryon County, has applied to Congress, that these peo-

* See chapter xx. vol. i.

ple, with their families, may be moved from thence and subsisted, you will, therefore, please to advise them to prepare, and to be ready to come to Johnstown whenever the troops shall arrive there, who are ordered to conduct them to Albany, that they may not experience any insult that might be offered by intemperate people."

This letter Sullivan sent to Johnson by express, and, on the following day Schuyler gave Colonel Dayton explicit instructions, and with them two letters for delivery, one for Sir John and the other for Lady Johnson.* The first was to tell the baronet why he was arrested, and that all care should be taken for his personal comfort while a prisoner, and the second was to assure Lady Johnson that her husband should be kindly treated, and that she might follow him if she chose, or remain at Johnson Hall, under guard, to prevent any insult being offered to herself or family. The general also wrote to Volkert P. Douw, of the Indian Commission, requesting him to assure the Mohawks that the troops penetrating their country had no designs hostile to them. †

Schuyler instructed Colonel Dayton to march directly to Johnstown, make his quarters at the tavern of Gilbert Tice, ‡ a bitter Tory, summon the Highlanders to appear there, and send their baggage, their infirm, women and

* She was Miss Polly Watts, daughter of John Watts, of his Majesty's council. They were married on the 29th of June, 1773.

† Schuyler's MS. Letter Books.

‡ Tice had gone into active service with Guy Johnson, was wounded in Canada, and late in September, 1775, wrote to his wife from Montreal, that he was out of danger. His spouse, who was now compelled to entertain at her inn, Colonel Dayton and his staff, and who professed to be a good Whig, was as hearty a Tory as her husband. In her reply to his letter from Montreal, she wrote: "I am now in good health, and no rebel shall ever have the pleasure of knowing, by my outward behavior, my inward concerns. May the all-powerful Jehovah cover the head of my dearest in the day of battle, and send you soon home, victorious, to the longing arms of your longing turtle-dove; so wishes, so prayeth, my dearest, your ever loving wife, while
CHRISTINA TICE.—Autograph Letter, Oct. 28, 1776

children, in wagons, to Albany. This done, he was to inform Sir John that he had a letter from General Schuyler to him, which the Colonel was ordered to deliver in person, and beg his attendance to receive it; and that if he should come, so soon as the baronet should read the letter, the Colonel was to make him a close prisoner, go with him to his house, search it and seize his papers, in the presence of William Duer who was to accompany him; make a list of all pertaining to the great controversy and give copies to Sir John, carefully shield his person from harm and insult and his property from plunder, and take him under a strong guard to Albany.

The wily baronet was not to be caught in the snare laid for him by Schuyler. He wrote to the General that McDonald had no authority to make the request of Congress; that the Highlanders were his tenants and his debtors, and begged that no troops should be sent for their removal, as none of the families wished to leave—not even Mrs. McDonald herself. And when Dayton arrived, on Sunday evening, and sent the message to Johnson Hall, for Sir John to come to him and receive a letter from General Schuyler, the bearer of it, Major Barber, was informed by Lady Johnson that her husband had the General's first letter, had assembled the Highlanders, who had determined not to surrender themselves, and that the baronet had retired with his people to the woods who were fully prepared to confront all pursuers. On receiving this information, Colonel Dayton sent Major Barber back with a note to Lady Johnson, apprising her of his intention to take possession of and search Johnson Hall, and requesting her to deliver up the keys. This she consented to do; when Dayton waited upon her, received the keys and a considerable quantity of papers, and after searching every

part of the house, and carrying out his general's instructions concerning letters and papers, he placed a strong guard around the hall, so as to cut off all communication between its inmates and the fugitive baronet in the forest. Lady Johnson assured the Colonel that her husband was on his way through the wilderness to Niagara, and with a defiant air she remarked that his enemies would soon hear where he was. Dayton proposed to escort Lady Johnson to Albany, where she had many friends, and be spared the pain of being under a military guard, but she did not incline to go.

When all this was reported to General Schuyler, he sent orders to Colonel Dayton to immediately remove all the families of the fugitive Highlanders to Albany, and also Lady Johnson, without delay, "in the most easy and commodious manner to her." The declarations of Lady Johnson, he said, "that Sir John is gone to Niagara, and that we shall soon hear where he is, induce me to believe that he will be joined by a party from Niagara, perhaps at Oswego, under Major Hamilton, of which I had a hint in a letter from Canada which arrived about twelve last night." He directed Dayton to post his troops at some advantageous point on the Mohawk River, and to remain there until further orders, so as to secure that part of the country and awe the enemy. "It may be necessary," he said, "to remove all the Tories out of Tryon County.

* * * Should Sir John fall into your hands, you will send him down under such a guard as that there may be no danger of a rescue."*

Lady Johnson was conveyed to Albany, where she was treated with all the delicacy due to her sex, and where she was retained for some time as a sort of hostage to secure

* Schuyler's MS. Letter Books.

the peaceable conduct of her husband. This was in accordance with the advice of Schuyler. Of this detention she complained to General Washington, who left the whole matter in the hands of General Schuyler and the Albany Committee.

Sir John and his followers did not go to Niagara, nor to Oswego, but started for the St. Lawrence, through the woods, by way of the Sacandaga River, with the hope that the British had, or speedily would have, possession of the posts on Lake Champlain. But Sir John thought it prudent to keep deeper in the wilderness, and they made their way through the dark forests around the head waters of the eastern branch of the Hudson River, in the neighborhood of the Adirondaek Mountains. They suffered intensely, and would have perished had it not been in summer time. So short was the time for their preparations for flight that they hurried away with insufficient food and clothing. Hungry, half-naked, foot-sore and desponding, they made their weary way through mountain passes, over oozy swamps and across rapid rivers during nineteen days, leaving several of their number exhausted in the wilderness, to be picked up by Indians sent out for the purpose. In a most wretched plight they reached the St. Lawrence, some distance above Montreal. Sir John was at once commissioned a colonel in the British service. He raised two battalions—a total of a thousand men—composed of his immediate followers and other American Loyalists who followed his example in deserting their country, and these formed that active and formidable corps known in the frontier warfare of that period, in Northern and Central New York, as the “Royal Greens.”