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STONY POINT BATTLE-FIELD

A SKETCH OF ITS REVOLU-
TIONARY HISTORY, AND
PARTICULARLY OF THE
SURPRISE OF STONY POINT
BY BRIGADIER GENERAL
ANTHONY WAYNE ON THE
NIGHT OF JULY 15-16, 1779

BY

EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

FRANCIS WHITING HALSEY

Published by
The American Scenic and Historic
Preservation Society
New York : 1902



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Introduction.

THE HUDSON VALLEY IN THE REVOLUTION.

DURING the Revolution the valley of the Hudson was the central and critical ground of the war.

Of supreme importance was it that the navigation of this river should be controlled. Had the English ever secured its entire length, the New England colonies would have been cut off from those to the south and west. The "rebellion" would thus have been severed in twain and its suppression made easy. In part the valley was lost more than once—twice through military valor and again through treason, but lost entirely it never was.

Around the conflict for control of it, revolved the battles of Long Island and Harlem Heights, of Princeton and Trenton, the Brandywine and Germantown, Monmouth and Stony Point, Oriskany and Saratoga, and finally the treason of Arnold. Here, indeed, at the mouth of the Hudson, the war, in the sense of actual fighting, first began—in that battle of Golden Hill, fought in John street, New York City, in 1770, where was shed the first blood of the Revolution.

After Golden Hill the first armed conflicts took place near Boston, but these engagements were scarcely more than preliminary events in the greater war which followed. So soon as this rebellion was found to be no longer local, so soon as thirteen colonies instead of one were seen to be in revolt, the scene shifted to New York, where in this valley lay the prize to be fought for. The British might well have hoped for success. The Tory party in New York was in control. New York was the administrative center of the British power in America. Its chief city had long been the center of a small court, modelled after the court of London. Society and public life had derived their tone from a royal example. New York harbor, indeed, commanded the Hudson Valley, and nearly forty British ships of war had sailed into it, while the Americans had no ships of war.

First among Americans who saw the importance of holding this valley was a man whose name was repeatedly to be covered with martial glory, but a name that is remembered now almost wholly for his act of treason—Benedict Arnold. Immediately after the fight at Lexington, Arnold started with an army for the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point. Ethan Allen met him on the way and together they pressed on to demand surrender in famous words—“In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress.” Crown Point was next taken and then St. John.

Late in the following summer another army set out along the upper Hudson, and Benedict Arnold traversed the forests of New England, bound also for Canada, meeting on arrival Gen. Montgomery who had forced his way from New York territory to Montreal. The two men pressed on to Quebec, on whose heights eighteen years before Wolfe had gained his imperishable renown.

In scaling these heights Arnold was wounded and Montgomery killed—that soldier of New York who died all too soon for his country, and who lies buried beneath the portico of St. Paul's Church, with the roar of Broadway above him chanting his eternal requiem. Around this valley for the remainder of the war this contest was mainly fought.

Benedict Arnold not only at Ticonderoga and Quebec did service to his country, but he won the chief laurels at Saratoga, and all through the summer of 1776, was busy on the shores of Lake Champlain building an American fleet of war boats—the first navy of this country. After the first attempt by the British to gain control of the Hudson they could boast only that they still retained New York Island and that Carleton kept his place on Lake Champlain. From Ticonderoga all the way down the Hudson this territory remained in American hands.

But when the second campaign for its capture ensued it was the most desperate of all. It was destined, however, to an inglorious defeat, ending in surrender—the surrender of Burgoyne. Arnold, by a brave dash in the decisive moment at Saratoga, had swept down and cleared the field, and yet in that monument which commemorates the surrender no statue of him is seen. Only a vacant niche is found there—pathetic witness alike of Arnold's glory and his infamy.

Great with meaning was Burgoyne's overthrow. Not only had England lost an army, but America gained the confidence of Europe, and the practical assistance of a great power. From this event we must reckon the loan we got from France, the soldiers she sent us, and chief among them all Lafayette. France had found that an American alliance was well worth having. She had

just lost to England an Empire in the East; she still hoped to recover it, and hence was glad to aid this new and rising power in the West in its conflict with her own enemy.

A new kind of warfare then arose in New York—a warfare of arson, massacre and ambush fighting, of which Indians were masters, and in which they had constant aid from Tories. Those border conflicts were essential parts of the struggle for the Hudson Valley. They had been directly inspired from London and were actively directed by the British in New York and Canada. It was believed that forces might thus be drawn away from the Hudson Valley and that men, pouring down from Canada by way of Oswego and the Mohawk, by way of Niagara and the Susquehanna, might force their way to the Hudson Valley. Indeed, at one time these conflicts had gone so far that Gov. Clinton expressed grave fears lest the Hudson should become the frontier of the State.

From the battle of Oriskany in 1777 until peace returned, these border lands became lands of terror. They were finally reduced to lands of complete desolation. Here were more than 12,000 farms that had ceased to be cultivated. More than two-thirds of the population had died or fled, and among those who remained were 300 widows and 2,000 orphans. It is a record of battles in the open, battles in ambush, massacre and child murder, in the midst of which perhaps the great gleam of light that came from the conflict outside was the capture of Stony Point by Anthony Wayne, who was “mad” only in courage and patriotic zeal.

One year of the war remained when all the fruits of it came near being lost in Arnold’s treason. It is matter for much marvel that so ignoble an act, an act which in its success would have completely undone all that Arnold

had fought six years to gain, was possible to so brave and patriotic a soldier. Arnold was a man of impulses, generous and improvident, daring and adventurous; one of those mercurial natures which in great crises often seem endowed with the highest kind of manhood. Adversity, combined with temptation and false ambition, more often give us the true measure of natures like his. He had all the personal bravery of Washington and Greene, of Putnam and Wayne. What he lacked in woeful degree was that supreme endowment of the friend he wronged—that final test of all human excellence—character. Success for Arnold would have put the end of the war far longer off. Control of the Hudson must then have passed to British hands, and no man can say how the conflict could have been won. Last of these scenes on the Hudson came that meeting in the Livingston house at Dobbs Ferry, where Washington and Rochambeau planned the campaign at Yorktown which ended the war.

The way lay open now for the formation of a new nation on this continent, and largely because the Hudson Valley had been saved. New York had held fast to her allegiance—patriotic, imperial New York. Thus was prepared the way for that empire of democracy in which New York has formed the most glorious part. Out of that war, so largely fought with the Hudson Valley as the central ground, and out of the town meeting and the little red schoolhouse, has been raised up this republic where exists the happiest condition of man the earth anywhere has known—something far better than

“The glory that was Greece,
The grandeur that was Rome.”

FRANCIS W. HALSEY.

STONY POINT BATTLE-FIELD

I.

THE PROMONTORY DESCRIBED.

“**M**AD” Anthony Wayne? When one stands on the peak of one of those beetling crags of Stony Point up which the audacious Pennsylvanian led his intrepid followers in the dead of night, July 15-16, 1779, one little wonders at first that Wayne was called “Mad.” But on second thought, it is realized that this sobriquet was nothing more than poetical hyperbole, employed for lack of a more effective word to express the invincible courage of a man who feared no enemy, not even the Fiend himself.*

It was not a man with deranged faculties who went to Canada in 1776 with the regiment which he had raised, and so skillfully covered the retreat of the provincial forces at Three Rivers; who so judiciously commanded at Fort Ticonderoga until 1777; whose splendid powers kept the British at bay for hours at Chad’s Ford; who brilliantly led the attack at Germantown; who success-

* Wayne is reported to have told Washington that he was willing to storm the infernal region itself if only Washington would plan it.

fully captured supplies to keep the army from starving at Valley Forge ; who won the distinction of being the only officer named in Washington's letter to Congress for bravery at Monmouth ; who captured the almost impregnable Stony Point; whose skill saved Lafayette in Virginia in 1781 ; and who contributed to the final victory at Yorktown.

"*Mad*" Anthony! A singular title indeed for a man whose brain was so clear, logical and practical in its operation that it could foresee the feasibility of his extraordinary exploit at Stony Point. The world generally calls anyone "mad" who conceives some great idea which it is pleased to consider impracticable ; but the moment the so-called "mad man" has demonstrated the truth or the practicability of his conception—be it in the domain of abstract philosophy, invention or in some other field—then the world falls at his feet and calls him a genius. In Wayne's case we have a paradox—a distinguished military genius, ranking next to Greene, perhaps—a man who made impossibilities possible, and whom the world has honored by departing from its custom and calling him "mad," when it means the very antithesis of madness.

"I do most seriously declare that your assault on Stony Point is not only the most brilliant, in my opinion, throughout the whole course of the war, on either side, but that it is the most brilliant I am acquainted with in history. The assault of Schweidnitz by Marshal Laudun I think inferior to it." This encomium from the not too friendly General Charles Lee, ranking Wayne above the great Austrian military commander, indicates the degree of admiration excited by his feat of July 15-16, 1779. To realize fully what this feat was, one needs to go to this historic spot and stand on the summit of the rocky

promontory which, with Verplanck's Point across the river, forms the gateway to the Highlands, which were poetically likened by Irving to the Pillars of Hercules, and of which Stony Point is the Gibraltar.

Stony Point juts into the Hudson River from its western shore about 35 miles north of New York City and about 12 miles south of West Point. This rocky promontory was formerly separated from the mainland by a marsh, which was threaded by a small stream navigable at high tide by small row-boats. The area thus cut off comprised about 100 acres, and was reached by a causeway, or "mud bridge," which crossed the marsh about midway between its northern and southern extremities. This marsh has latterly become partially obliterated by a growth of brakes, rushes and low shrubbery. The elevated enclosure which the marsh and river encircle is extremely bold and rocky. It rises rapidly from the swamp toward the apex of the peninsula and is very precipitous on the river shore. At its highest point, it has an elevation of 140 feet above the river. The West Shore Railroad runs from north to south, through the point in a deep cut in the living rock, separating about 43 acres on the east from about 57 acres on the west. The eastern portion, comprising the historic scene of the assault, is owned in part by the United States and in part by the State of New York.

The location is of such commanding importance that the United States Government has long since acquired jurisdiction over about 9 acres at the extremity of the promontory and erected thereon, in the middle of the site of the old Revolutionary fort, a government beacon for the guidance of passing vessels. A portion of the light-house reservation has been cleared, and upon it may be seen, in excellent state of preservation, some of the works

which protected the fort from the river side. Between the United States property and the railroad cut, the State of New York acquired and committed to the custody of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society about 33 7-10 acres.

One needs good lungs and strong muscles to take him to the elevation which Wayne and his men reached on that famous night in July, 1779, and which Washington ascended to congratulate the exultant victors; but when he reaches it he is repaid by the magnificent prospect. He finds himself lifted 140 feet in the air and looking down upon a diverse panorama of great extent and unsurpassed beauty. At his feet, on three sides, sweeps the queenly River of the North, expanding to the north into Peekskill Bay, and to the south into the majestic Haverstraw Bay, five miles wide,—the broadest part of the river. At Verplanck's Point across the river, he sees the anchorage of Henry Hudson's "Half Moon," its first halting place after leaving the mouth of the river; and a few miles to the south, opposite Croton Point, the anchorage of the "Vulture," on which the traitor Arnold made good his escape, abandoning the unhappy André to his fate. Upon Verplanck's Point is the site of Fort Fayette, at whose capitulation the same André joyously assisted on June 1, 1779, when Stony Point was abandoned to the British. In a little cove on the northern side of Stony Point, lies the terminus of the famous King's Ferry, back and forth across which passed nearly all the heroes of the great drama of the Revolution. Up and down the river he sees the course over which sailed the naval pageant in honor of the close of the War for Independence—not the greatest procession in numbers, or tonnage, or destructive power, but the grandest in significance that ever floated on the bosom of the Hudson.

In the distance toward the north, on either side of the river above Peekskill Bay, tower the giant sentinels of the Highland Passage, the Donderburg, 1098 feet high on the western bank, and Anthony's Nose, 1220 feet high on the eastern. Casting the eyes down the eastern shore of the river, one views a smiling landscape of beautiful hills, peaceful intervals and thriving villages. To the southward on the western shore of Haverstraw Bay, the High Torn Mountain, 820 feet high, foreshadows the sublimity of the scenery which the traveler from the south is approaching. Turning to the west, the dangerous morass, which served as a natural moat to the Stony Point fortress, and the famous Mud Bridge causeway come into view, and beyond appear rolling hills and higher mountains. From one's feet the ground falls away precipitously on all sides, and massive crags, more or less concealed in the leafy screen of shrubs and young trees, jut up and out from the surface, affording natural defences against an enemy. By one's side stands the government's faithful monitor, its tall white tower a conspicuous landmark by day, and its sleepless eye a never-failing beacon by night.

Whichever way one looks, his eye rests on ground made classic by the history and traditions of the country and upon scenes abounding in reminders of the truthful chronicles of the historian and the legendary fancies of the poet and romancer. "Mad" Anthony Wayne's picturesque and daring exploit, Arnold's treason, André's capture, the vagaries of the "bulbous-bottomed Dutch goblin," the fearful apparitions of the phantom "storm ship" and a hundred other histories and fictions invest the region with a fascinating interest second to that of no other on the Hudson.

II.

THE ACQUISITION OF THE RESERVATION.

Before proceeding to a detailed history of the remarkable events during the Revolutionary War the appreciation of which led to the acquisition of the battle-field of Stony Point for a State Reservation, it is proper to recall the steps which led to the creation of the Park.

In 1895, at the request of the Gettysburg Commission, Mr. H. K. Bush-Brown, the sculptor, of Newburg, N. Y., acted as a cicerone for them while on a visit to the Stony Point Battle-field. The visitors displayed such great interest in the spot and its history that Mr. Bush-Brown suggested to the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution that some steps be taken to secure the property for a State Reservation. At the meeting of the Board of Managers of that Society, on March 8, 1895, "on motion, Compatriots Thomas Wilson,* Frederick D. Grant,† and Edward Hagaman Hall were appointed a Committee to examine and report upon the proposition of Compatriot H. K. Bush-Brown regarding Stony Point."

This Committee, accompanied by Messrs. Bush-Brown, Ira Bliss Stewart, Stephen M. Wright, and Lieut.-Col.

* Brig. Gen. Thomas Wilson, U. S. A., now deceased.

† Col. Frederick D. Grant, now Brig. Gen., U. S. A., son of U. S. Grant.

Peter C. Hains, U. S. A. (United States Engineer of the Third Lighthouse District), made a personal and critical examination of the ground on June 1, 1895. On Sept. 19, 1895, the Committee presented its report, in favor of the creation of a public reservation, to the Society, whereupon it was resolved, that "the report of this Committee be submitted to the Trustees of Scenic and Historic Places and Objects * accompanied by the recommendation that the Trustees institute steps for the preservation of Stony Point as a State Park."

From this point, the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, under the presidency of Hon. Andrew H. Green, has carried the undertaking forward successfully. In 1897 the Legislature passed the bill introduced by Hon. Clarence Lexow, appropriating \$25,000 for the purchase of the Stony Point Peninsula and committing the reservation to the care of the Society; and with the latter's assistance, the Comptroller was enabled to purchase 33 7-10 acres for the sum of \$21,500, leaving an unexpended balance of \$3,500.

The property of the State is bounded as follows: Beginning on the south side of Stony Point Peninsula, at high-water mark of the Hudson River, and at the south-west corner of the land owned by the government of the United States, and running thence along said land north $3\frac{1}{4}$ degrees west 965 feet, to the north side of said peninsula and to high water-mark of the Hudson River; thence westerly along said high-water mark about 1,065 feet, to land of John Teneycke; thence southerly along said land about 500 feet, to the land of the West Shore Railroad Company; thence southerly along said railroad company land about 758 feet to the line separating the

* Now the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

upland on the north from the marsh-land on the south; thence easterly along said land about 550 feet to the Hudson River; thence along the high-water mark of said river easterly about 830 feet, to the place of beginning, containing 33.7 acres more or less.

The Society then appointed a Committee consisting of Messrs. Samuel Parsons, Jr., its Landscape Architect, H. K. Bush-Brown, George F. Kunz, and Edward Hagaman Hall, who made a furthur examination of the property and prepared a report, which was communicated to the Legislature of 1900, recommending the appropriation of the unexpended balance of \$3,500 for the improvements necessary to make the Reservation accessible to the public, and by Chapter 408 of the Laws of 1900, the State made the appropriation requested.

The Society then appointed as a committee to have charge of the improvements, Messrs. H. K. Bush-Brown, of Newburg, Samuel Parsons, Jr., of New York, Edward Hagaman Hall, of New York, Gordon H. Peck, of Haverstraw, and the Hon. Ira M. Hedges, of Haverstraw.*

Under their direction, the reservation has been greatly improved. Three-quarters of a mile of new roadway has been constructed and one-eighth of a mile of old roadway rebuilt and widened, making an ample driveway from the public highway to and through the Reservation to the steamboat landing, on the northern side of the reservation. The latter is an entirely new structure, on the site of an old landing, and is capable of accommodating the largest river steamboats. The house on the Reservation has been repaired and made tenantable for a caretaker.

* Mr. Hedges died in April, 1902, and was succeeded by the Hon. Alonzo Wheeler, of Haverstraw. Mr. Parsons resigned the following month and was succeeded by Charles Frederick Wingate, of New York.

A complete topographical survey of the Point was made by United States Engineers from West Point by the courtesy of the War Department and with the valued co-operation of Col. A. L. Mills, U. S. A., Superintendent of the West Point Military Academy. By means of a map of the period, furnished by the Society, the U. S. Engineers located the sites of the Revolutionary works, and the Society has marked them with stone monuments lettered to correspond with the map. These interesting reminders of the military history of the Point can thus readily be identified and recognized on both the United States and the State Reservations. The U. S. Lighthouse Board has permitted the Society to remove the divisional fence between the United States and State Reservations and in future the two reservations can be treated upon a single plan in the matter of improvements.

Since the Reservation has been thrown open to the public* it has been visited by thousands of persons, and when the proper shelters and conveniences are provided, it will undoubtedly become a very popular resort.

* The Reservation was formally dedicated July 16, 1902, but was informally accessible when the right-of-way to the public highway was opened in the spring of that year.

III.

BEFORE THE ASSAULT.

Two facts chiefly conspired to make Stony Point prominent in the American Revolution. The first was its geographical situation, and the second the British plan of campaign.

At Stony Point, the banks of the Hudson River approach within half a mile of each other, making the river narrower there than at any other place between the Point and the lower end of Manhattan Island, 40 miles below. This practical convenience led to the early establishment, between Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, of the ferry known in Colonial days as King's Ferry, which was a much frequented thoroughfare between the New England colonies on the east and their sisters on the west and south. The western terminus of the ferry was in an indentation on the northern side of Stony Point, where the protection of the promontory and the depth of water close to shore afforded exceptional accommodations for boats.

As soon as the British had been driven out of Boston, on March 17, 1776, it became evident that they would direct their main efforts to the conquest of the central colony of New York. Such a plan appeared particularly feasible to them, because the Tory sentiment in New York was very strong; and because the Hudson River and the Champlain Valley afford unusual facilities for a

combined attack from the north and south. By controlling the line of the Hudson, they hoped to cut the Colonies in two, and having severed the wickedest two of the conspirators, Massachusetts and Virginia, they expected to have little difficulty in subduing the rebels in detail.

Washington's quick military genius anticipated such an attempt. When Howe sailed away from Boston in 1776, Washington, supposing his destination to be New York, despatched five regiments and some artillery to Manhattan Island, the rest of the army following at intervals. On April 4th, he left Cambridge himself for New York, and one of his first concerns was to fortify New York and the Hudson against the expected arrival of Howe. He therefore appointed a Board of Officers to examine the river, and on June 1, 1776, Lord Stirling reported to him in part as follows :

“ Agreeable to your request, I left New York on Sunday last in order to view the fortifications on the Hudson River in the Highlands. I took with me Colonel (Rufus) Putnam, Chief Engineer and Captain Sargeant of the Artillery. The winds were so averse that we did not reach Fort Montgomery until Wednesday evening, but with the help of our boat we employed our time in visiting several other parts of the river that appeared proper for fortifying. At the mouth or south end of the Highlands, about four miles below Fort Montgomery, there is a post (Stony Point), which appears to me well worth possessing on many accounts; should the enemy be in possession of it, we should be cut off from our best communications with the whole country below the Highlands, eastward as well as westward. * * ”

The suggestion concerning Stony Point does not appear to have been acted upon at once. On November 9, 1776—after the battles of Long Island, Harlem Heights and White Plains—Lord Stirling crossed King's Ferry with 1200 men bound for New Jersey, apparently landing on the southern side of the point, for he wrote to Washington under date of “ Haverstraw, November 10,

1776," complaining of the shallowness of his landing place, and saying :

" About half a mile farther north and on the north side of Stony Point is a good landing place in deep water, and easily secured by placing two pieces of cannon on the end of the Point. It will require about half a mile of new road and a short causeway and a small bridge."

Four days later, Washington had a chance to verify Stirling's statement, for on November 14, having despatched his army from Westchester County to the Jerseys and having inspected places at Peekskill and in its neighborhood, he crossed King's Ferry en route to Hackensack. Soon thereafter more attention was given to this point, and on November 18, 1776, General Heath "ordered a detachment from Peekskill to King's Ferry, to do duty at that place, as they were well acquainted with boats."

This detachment doubtless rendered material assistance in collecting the boats which carried the contumacious General Charles Lee and his belated troops from Verplanck's Point to Stony Point on December 2d, 1776, en route to join Washington in his famous retreat through the Jerseys.

But on account of the small resources of the Colonists, the American army made no attempts at any extensive fortifications at Stony Point for some time, concentrating their efforts in the Highlands, more particularly on the works at Fort Clinton, Fort Montgomery and West Point ; and there was nothing at this point to impede Sir Henry Clinton, when, in October, 1777, he threw his forces across King's Ferry to capture the Clinton and Montgomery forts. This episode is described in the Life of John Lamb as follows :

" Early in October, 1777, the British General embarked his forces, ostensibly for a southern expedition and wanted a favorable wind for the execution of his real design, which was to make a diversion in

favor of Burgoyne (then held in check at the north) by the capture of the river defenses. The opportunities were propitious and a powerful naval armament with 4000 troops on board suddenly menaced Putnam's position* and landed at Verplanck's Point.† Putnam was caught by the device, and believing the east side of the river to be the object of the British General, obstinately refused the entreaties of officers more sagacious than himself to send adequate succor to the posts opposite ; nor after the main body of the British had next day‡ crossed to Stony Point and were on their way to Forts Clinton and Montgomery, and even after the firing on the forts above him, could he be prevailed upon to send relief to the beleagured posts."

Following their success at Forts Clinton and Montgomery, the British, under Vaughan, pushed farther north and burned Kingston October 13th ; but on that very day, Burgoyne had opened negotiations for surrender at Saratoga, and when the lower party heard of his capitulation October 17th, they withdrew down the river. A year later, a portion of Burgoyne's captive army crossed King's Ferry en route to Virginia.

Sir Henry's successful dash at the Highland forts seems to have directed attention more seriously toward the necessity of interposing more formidable obstacles at King's Ferry ; and the Americans therefore constructed some works on Stony and Verplanck's Point. The works at Verplanck's Point were named Fort Fayette, but neither post was strong enough to resist an assault, as was soon to be proved.

Determined to evict the Americans from these positions, Sir Henry Clinton, accompanied by General Vaughan sailed up the river on May 30, 1779, with a strong force on a flotilla commanded by Commodore Sir George Collier. On the morning of the 31st, they landed in two divisions, one under Vaughan on the east side about 8 miles below Fort Fayette, and the other under Clinton

* Putnam was stationed at Peekskill.

† October 5th, 1777.

‡ October 6th, 1777, the day of the capture of Forts Clinton and Montgomery.

himself on the west side, a short distance above Haverstraw. The garrison at Stony Point, numbering only 40 men, seeing the futility of any resistance, discreetly withdrew to the Highlands, burning their blockhouse and destroying their stores ; and on the morning of June 1st, Sir Henry was in possession. The British then turned their guns across the river upon Fort Fayette, while Vaughan attacked it from the rear ; whereupon the garrison of 70 men surrendered. The terms of capitulation granted by the British bore the signature of an officer whose name was destined to a melancholy prominence in connection with Stony and Verplanck's Points the following year. They read as follows :

“ On the glacis of Fort Fayette, June 1, 1779.
“ His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton and Commodore Sir George Collier grant to the garrison of Fort Fayette terms of safety to the persons and property (contained in the fort) of the garrison, they surrendering themselves prisoners of war. The officers shall be permitted to wear their side arms.

“ JOHN ANDRÉ, Aide-de-Camp.”

IV.

WAYNE'S EXPLOIT.

That the enemy went to work with the most earnest assiduity to render Stony Point impregnable, if possible, appears from a graphic letter written by Col. Jesse Wood hull from Haverstraw, on June 7th, 1779, to "Coll. Malcom, near West Point," describing what he could discover with a spy-glass, of the enemy's activities: (verbatim) "They are at work Like a Parsels of Devils in fortifying both Stony Point and Van Planck's Point; they have got no Less than five Redoubts to all appearances finished and their Cannon mounted on Stony Point."

The loss of these outposts was greatly lamented by Washington, and doubtless strengthened his determination to summon to his aid a man who enjoyed his unreserved confidence and whose courage and abilities placed him, if not among generals of the first rank, like Greene, certainly first in the next rank of men like Montgomery, Marion, Morgan, Allen, Stark, and Putnam.

Anthony Wayne was the grandson of another Anthony Wayne who had fought for the King at the battle of the Boyne and who came from Ireland to Pennsylvania in 1722, and the son of Isaac Wayne, who was a member of the Provincial Legislature and a commissioned officer in the Indian wars. He was born in Chester County, Pa., Jan. 1st, 1745, and in his youth adopted the

profession of civil engineer. From 1767 to 1774, he discharged various trusts, public and private. He was elected to the Pennsylvania Convention in 1774, and appointed a member of the Committee of Safety in 1775, where he performed effective duty in organizing the military in his part of the State.

On January 3d, 1776, Wayne was commissioned Colonel of a Pennsylvania Regiment, and participated in the expedition to Canada, successfully conducting the retreat at Trois Rivières. From July 17th, 1776, until May, 1777, he had command of Fort Ticonderoga, having been promoted to the rank of Brigadier General on February 21st, 1777. He then joined Washington in New Jersey, and so distinguished himself in the repulse of Howe from Middlebrook that Washington mentioned him in a letter to Congress on June 28th. At the battle of the Brandywine, on September 11th, 1777, Wayne's plucky defense of Chad's Ford kept Knyphausen from precipitating his division and artillery on the retreating Americans, and materially assisted in checking the reverse of the day.

On Sept. 20th, 1777, near Paoli, Pa., Wayne, finding his brigade intercepted by the British, cut his way out of a desperate situation with a loss of 150 men. At the battle of Germantown, his horse was shot from under him and he was wounded in the left foot and left hand. It will be remembered that in the fog and smoke of the battle of Germantown which "made it almost as dark as night," the Americans mistook each other for the enemy and frequently exchanged shots with themselves—a disastrous error which probably led to the precaution at Stony Point of putting pieces of white paper in the hats of the soldiers. During the winter of 1777-1778, Wayne, by successful foraging raids, helped to carry the Army through the sufferings of Valley Forge.

At the battle of Monmouth, on June 28th, 1778, for the third time under the eyes of the Commander-in-Chief, Wayne handled his troops with great intrepidity and effect. He was the only officer of whom particular mention was made in Washington's communication to Congress. When Gen. Charles Lee was court-martialed for his conduct at Monmouth, Wayne, as an impartial witness, was obliged to pass some severe strictures on Lee's military character. This incident will assist the reader in appreciating at its full value Lee's unreserved commendation of Wayne's conduct at Stony Point. In the winter of 1778-1779, the army being quartered at Middlebrook, N. J., Wayne resigned his command, meanwhile keeping actively at work, raising troops, etc.

This was Wayne's record in brief up to the time when Stony Point was taken by the British, on June 1st, 1779. On June 21st, Washington summoned Wayne to the army in the Highlands of the Hudson and gave him command of the Light Infantry posted near Fort Montgomery, and on July 1st, wrote to Wayne a confidential letter, in which he said :

“ The importance of the two posts of Verplanck's and Stony Points is too obvious to need explanation. We ought, if possible, to dispossess them. I recommend it to your particular attention, without delay, to gain as exact a knowledge as you can of the number of the garrisons, the state of the creeks that surround the former, the nature of the ground in the vicinity of both, the position and strength of the fortifications, the situation of the guards, the number and stations of the vessels in the river, and the precautions in general which the enemy employ for their security.”

On July 2d, Wayne reconnoitred Stony Point with the aid of Col. Butler and Major Stewart, who were thus prepared for the part which they were to take on the night of July 15-16. On July 3d, Wayne expressed to Washington the opinion that a siege or storm would be impracticable, but that a surprise might succeed. On

July 4th, Washington made an appointment with Wayne to reconnoitre the works in person on the following day.

While this critical study of the works at Stony Point was proceeding, Washington's purpose to undertake some enterprise against the post was strengthened by the enemy's harassing incursions into Connecticut, which, owing to his circumscribed resources, he was unable to prevent.

On July 5th, 1779, Tryon had burned the ships in New Haven harbor and two or three streets of warehouses, and slain several citizens. On July 8th, he landed at Fairfield and, having utterly destroyed the town, burned Green Farms and Norwalk. In Fairfield and Norwalk, he destroyed 162 dwellings, 142 barns, 59 stores and 4 churches.

Chafing under the disabilities imposed by inadequate military resources, and yet realizing the necessity of counteracting these wanton raids upon Connecticut, Washington wrote from New Windsor, on July 9th, 1779, to General Wayne, as follows :

“ While the enemy are making excursions to distress the country, it has a very disagreeable aspect to remain in a state of inactivity on our part. The reputation of the army and the good of the service seem to exact some attempt from it. The importance of Stony Point to the enemy makes it infinitely desirable that this post could be the object. The works are formidable, but perhaps on fuller examination they may be found accessible. A deserter yesterday informed me that there was a sandy beach on the south side, running along the flank of the works, and only obstructed by a slight abatis which might afford an easy and safe approach.”

On the following day, Washington wrote to Wayne the following letter, which illustrates in a remarkable way the minuteness with which Washington mastered every detail and anticipated every contingency involved in a critical operation :

“New Windsor, 10th July, 1779.

“Dear Sir:—

* * * * My ideas of the enterprise in contemplation are these:

“That it should be attempted by the Light Infantry only, which should march under cover of night and with the utmost secrecy to the enemy’s lines, securing every person they find to prevent discovery.

“Between one and two hundred chosen men and officers I conceive fully sufficient for the surprise, and apprehend the approach should be along the water on the south side, crossing the beach and entering at the abatis.

“This party to be led by a vanguard of prudent and determined men, well commanded, who are to remove obstructions, secure the sentries, and drive in the guard. They are to advance, the whole of them, with fixed bayonets and muskets unloaded. The officers commanding them are to know precisely what batteries or particular parts of the line they are respectively to possess, that confusion and the consequence of indecision may be avoided.

“These parties should be followed by the main body at a small distance for the purpose of support and making good the advantage which may be gained, or to bring them off in case of repulse and disappointment. Other parties may advance to the works (but not so as to be discovered till the conflict is begun) by way of the causey and river on the north if practicable, as well for the purpose of distracting the enemy in their defence as to cut off their retreat. These parties may be small unless the access and approaches should be very easy and safe.

“The three approaches here mentioned should be well reconnoitred beforehand and by persons of observation. Single men in the night will be more likely to ascertain facts than the best glasses in the day.

“A white feather or cockade, or some other visible badge of distinction for the night, should be worn by our troops, and a watchword agreed on to distinguish friends from foes.

“If success should attend the enterprise, measures should be instantly taken to prevent if practicable the retreat of the garrison by water or to annoy them as much as possible if they attempt it; and the guns should be immediately turned against the shipping and Verplanck’s Point and covered if possible from the enemy’s fire.

“Secrecy is so much more essential to these kind of enterprises than numbers, that I should not think it advisable to employ any other than the light troops. If a surprise takes place they are fully competent to do the business; if it does not, numbers will avail little.

“As it is in the power of a deserter to betray the design, defeat the project, and involve the party in difficulties and danger, too much caution cannot be used to conceal the intended enterprise to the latest hour from all but the principal officers of your corps and from the men till the moment of execution. Knowledge of your intention ten minutes previously obtained, blasts all your hopes; for which reason, a small detachment composed of men whose fidelity you can rely on, under the care of a judicious officer, should guard every avenue

through the marsh to the enemy's works by which our deserters or their spies can pass, and prevent all intercourse.

"The usual time for exploits of this kind is a little before day, for which reason a vigilant officer is then more on the watch; I therefore recommend a midnight hour.

"I had in view to attempt Verplanck's Point at the same instant that your operations should commence at Stony Point, but the uncertainty of co-operating in point of time, and the hazard thereby run of defeating the attempt on Stony Point, which is infinitely most important,—the other being dependent,—has induced me to suspend that operation.

"These are my general ideas for a surprise, but you are at liberty to depart from them in every instance where you think they might be improved or changed for the better. A dark night and even a rainy one, if you can find the way, will contribute to your success. The officers in these night marches should be extremely attentive to keep their men together as well for the purpose of guarding against desertion to the enemy as to prevent skulking.

"As it is a part of the plan, if the surprise should succeed, to make use in the enemy's cannon against their shipping and post on the other side, it might be well to have a small detachment of artillery with you to serve them. I have sent an order to the park for the purpose, and to cover the design have ordered down a couple of light field pieces. When you march you can leave the pieces behind.

"So soon as you have fixed your plan and time of execution, I shall be obliged to you to give me notice.

"I shall immediately order you a reinforcement of light infantry and more espartoons.

"I am, with great regard,

"Dr. Sir,

"Yr. most Obed. Servant,

"Go. Washington.

"Brigr. Genl. Wayne."

On the day following the receipt of this letter (July 11th), Wayne made another reconnoissance of Stony Point, taking with him Colonels Butler and Febiger. Meanwhile, to make assurance doubly sure, Washington had directed Col. Rufus Putnam, one of the most skillful engineers in the army, to scrutinize Stony and Verplanck's Points. After four days of diligent reconnoissance, Putnam made a report to Washington on July 14th.

Affairs now culminated rapidly and on July 14th, Washington authorized Wayne to make the attack the next night. Wayne proceeded with the utmost swiftness

and secrecy in maturing and executing his plans. They were concealed from all but a few trusted officers until almost the moment of the assault. By 11 o'clock on Thursday morning, July 15th, he had prepared and forwarded to Washington the following Order of Battle. It is a grim document, terrible in its requirements and penalties ; but, while reflecting the stern and determined characters of both Washington and Wayne, it was dictated by humane principles, was based on the most painstaking study of the problem in advance, and proceeded from the almost certain knowledge that compliance with its terms would ensure success.

ORDER OF BATTLE.

“The troops will march at o'clock and move by the right, making a short halt at the creek or run next on this side Clement's. Every officer and non-commissioned officer must remain with and be answerable for every man in their platoons, no soldier to be permitted to quit his ranks on any pretext whatever until a general halt is made, and then to be attended by one of the officers of the platoon.

“When the head of the troops arrive in the rear of the hill ‘Z,’ * Febiger will form his regiment into a solid column of a half platoon in front as fast as they come up. Col. Meigs will form next in Febiger's rear, and Major Hull in the rear of Meigs, which will form the right column.

“Colonel Butler will form a column on the left of Febiger and Major Murphey in his rear.

“Every officer and soldier are then to fix a piece of white paper in the most conspicuous part of his hat or cap as an insignia to be distinguished from the enemy.

“At the word March, Colonel Fleury will take charge of 150 determined and picked men, properly officered, with their arms unloaded, placing their whole dependence on the bayonet, who will move about 20 paces in front of the right column by the route ‘I’ and enter the sally-port ‘B.’ He is to detach an officer and 20 men a little in front, whose business will be to secure the sentries and remove the abatis and obstruction for the column to pass through. The column will follow close in the rear with shouldered muskets led by Colonel Febiger and Gen. Wayne in person. When the

* Up to the present time the map to which these marks refer has not been discovered, if it is still in existence. The exact routes of the attacking columns, after leaving the rendezvous at Springsteel's, are, therefore involved in some obscurity.

works are forced, *and not before*, the victorious troops as they enter will give the watchword * with a repeated and loud voice, and drive the enemy from their works and guns, which will favor the pass of the whole troops. Should the enemy refuse to surrender, or attempt to make their escape by water or otherwise, effectual means must be used to effect the former and to prevent the latter.

“Col. Butler will move by route ‘2,’ preceded by 100 chosen men, with fixed bayonets, properly officered and unloaded, under command of _____ at the distance of about 20 yards in front of the column, which will follow Col. Butler with shouldered muskets and enter the sally-port ‘E’ or ‘D’ occasionally. These hundred will also detach a proper officer and 20 men a little in front to remove the obstructions. As soon as they gain the works, they are also to give and continue the watchword, which will prevent confusion and mistake.

“Major Murphey will follow Col. Butler to the first figure ‘3,’ when he will divide a little to the right and left and wait the attack on the right, which will be his signal to begin and keep up a perpetual and galling fire and endeavor to enter between and possess the work ‘AA.’

“If any soldier presumes to take his musket from his shoulder, or to fire or begin the battle until ordered by his proper officer, he shall be instantly put to death by the officer next to him; for the misconduct of one man is not to put the whole troops in danger or disorder, and be suffered to pass with life. After the troops begin to advance to the works, the strictest silence must be observed and the closest attention paid to the commands of the officers.

“The General has the fullest confidence in the bravery and fortitude of the Corps that he has the happiness to command. The distinguished honor conferred on every officer and soldier who has been drafted into the Corps by His Excellency Gen. Washington, the credit of the states they respectively belong to, and their own reputation will be such powerful motives for each man to distinguish himself, that the General cannot have the least doubt of a glorious victory. And he hereby most solemnly engages to reward the first man who enters the works with \$500, and immediate promotion; to the second, 400; to the third, 300; to the fourth, 200; and to the fifth, \$100; and will represent the conduct of every officer and soldier who distinguishes himself on this occasion in the most favorable point of view to His Excellency, whose greatest pleasure is in rewarding merit.

“But should there be any soldier so lost to every feeling of honor as to attempt to retreat one single foot or to skulk in the face of danger, the officer next to him is to immediately put him to death, that he may no longer disgrace the name of a soldier, or the Corps or State he belongs to.

“As General Wayne is determined to share the danger of the night, so he wishes to participate of the glory of the day in common with his fellow soldiers.”

* The watchword was “The Fort’s Our Own.”

The foregoing Order of Battle, it must be remembered, had not yet been divulged to the men in Wayne's command.

About noon on July 15th, Wayne held a review of his troops at Sandy Beach, about 14 miles north of Stony Point. It was the first inspection he had made of them as a body since he assumed command. Little did they suspect the grim work in store for them, disguised as it was under his order to officers and men to appear freshly shaved, well powdered, and fully equipped and rationed in order that he might judge of their preparation for duty. When the inspection was over, instead of being dismissed to their quarters, they were wheeled into column and started on a march southward. There were about 1,300 men in Wayne's Corps in 1779, and his organization as stated below appears to have been substantially that of the attacking party, which numbered 1,150 men. The First regiment was commanded by Col. Christian Febiger, who had come to America from Denmark in 1774. His First Battalion of two Virginia and two Pennsylvania companies was commanded by a gallant Frenchman, Lieut. Col. Louis de Fleury, and his Second Battalion of four Virginia companies by Major Thomas Posey of Virginia.

The Second Regiment was commanded by Col. Richard Butler of Pennsylvania. Four Pennsylvania companies formed his First Battalion under Lieut. Col. Samuel Hay and four Maryland companies composed his Second Battalion under Major John Stewart.

The Third Regiment was commanded by Col. Return Jonathan Meigs of Connecticut. Four Connecticut companies under Lieut. Col. Isaac Sherman composed the First Battalion and four more under Acting Major Henry Champion the Second.

The Fourth Regiment in Wayne's organization was that of Col. Rufus Putnam of Massachusetts. His First Battalion, four Massachusetts companies, was commanded by Major Wm. Hull, of Massachusetts, and his Second, two North Carolina and two Massachusetts companies, by Major Hardy Murfree of North Carolina. At this time, however, it was only partially organized, and Major Hull's command in the battle was a "detachment" of about 300 men assigned to him for the occasion.

"Light Horse" Harry Lee had been ordered to follow the expedition with a reserve corps. A regiment under Col. Ball was moved forward from Rose's Farm for additional support, and General Muhlenberg's brigade had been manœuvred into the vicinity by Washington upon some pretext as a cover for the whole.

Wayne's own troops took an unfrequented back road, behind Bear Mountain, and about 8 P. M. halted at Springsteel's Farm, about a mile and a half west of Stony Point. Here, while the troops were resting, Wayne and other officers made another careful examination of the ground they were to cover. Wayne also took time to write a farewell letter to his brother-in-law, Sharp Delany, committing his wife and little son and daughter to Mr. Delany's consolation and care.

At length the Order of Battle was read to the troops, and then they knew the bloody work for which they were destined. The watchword was given and pieces of white paper were fixed in their hats.

At 11.30 P. M. the order to march was given, and with the silence of a phantom army the two columns started for the assault.

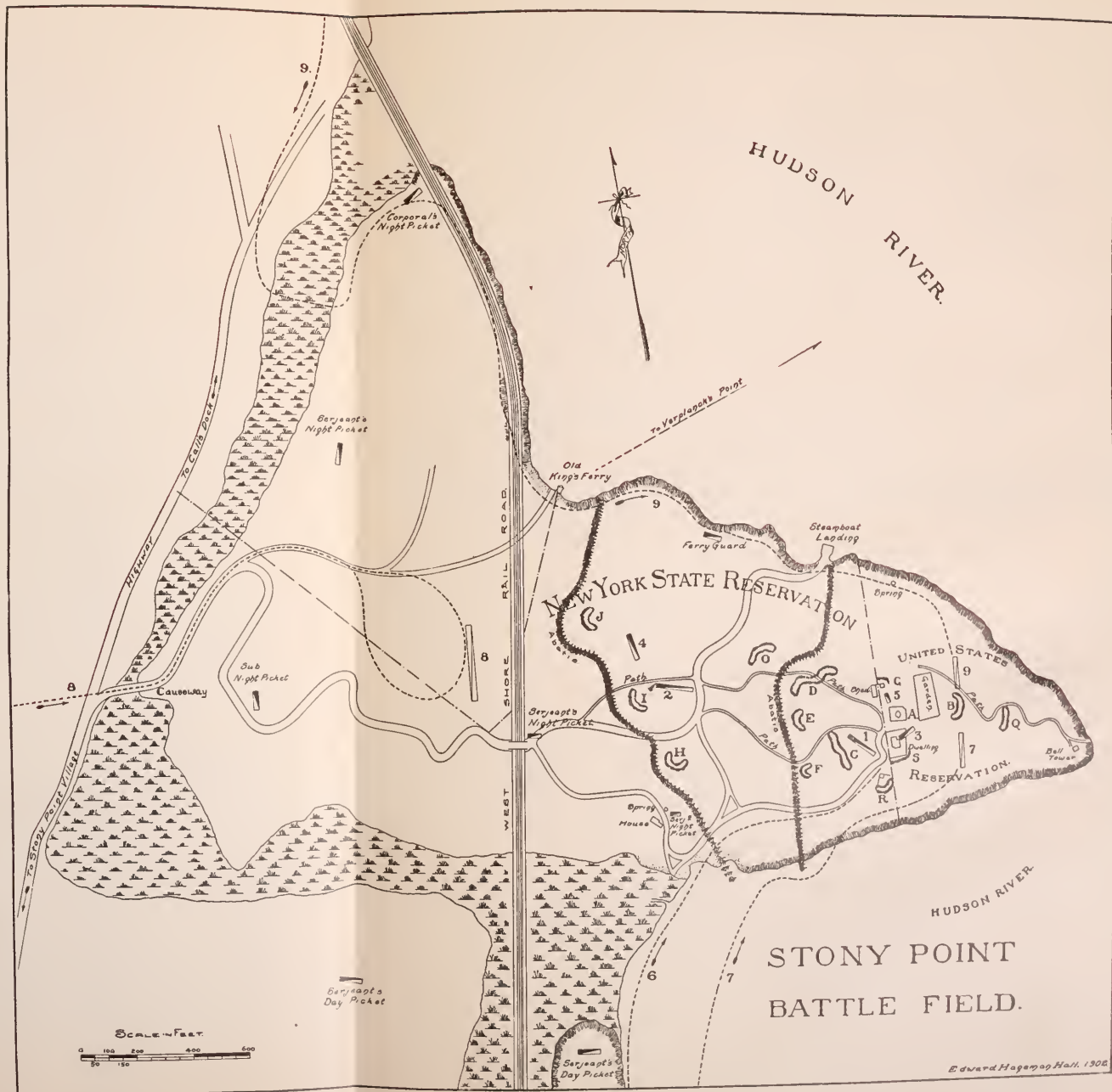
The right column was headed by a "forlorn hope" of 20 men under Lieut. Knox. Next came the remainder of the van, 130 men under Lieut. Col. Fleury. Then,

REFERENCES.

- Work A. "Ruins of a blockhouse erected and destroyed by the Americans." Site now occupied by the U. S. Lighthouse. Elevation 130 feet.
 Work B. Earthwork near site of "a temporary magazine."
 Work C. "One 24 and one 18 pr. ship guns." Elevation 130 feet.
 Work D. "Ditto." Elevation 130 feet.
 Work E. "One iron 12 pr." Elevation 130 feet.
 Work F. "One 8 inch howitzer." Elevation 120 feet.
 Work G. "One brass 12 pr." Elevation 130 feet.
 Work H. "One short brass 12 pr." Elevation 101 feet.
 Work I. "One long brass 12 pr." Elevation 115 feet.
 Work J. Elevation 140 feet, highest on the Point.
 Work O. Elevation 125 feet.
 Work Q. Elevation 75 feet.
 Work R. Elevation 100 feet.
 Work S. Elevation 125 feet.

1. "Two companies of the 17th Regt."
"Do."
2. "Sixty of the Loyal Americans."
3. "The Grenadier companies of the 17th Regt."
4. "A Detachment of the Royal Artillery."
5. Approach of American right column, night of July 15-16, 1779.
6. American right column as erroneously shown on British map.
7. Major Murfree's approach to make feint in center.
8. Approach of American left column.

The fourteen works above mentioned appear on "A plan of the Surprise of Stony Point by a Detachment of the American Army commanded by Brigr. Genl. Wayne, on the 15th of July, 1779. . . . From the surveys of Wm. Simpson, Lt. 17th Regt., and D. Campbell, Lt. 42d Rt., by John Hills, Lt. 23d Regt. and Asst. Engr. London. Printed for Wm. Faden, Geographer to the King, March 1st, 1784." They were located for the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society by a topographical survey, made with the permission of the War Department, by direction of Col. A. L. Mills, U. S. A., Superintendent of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, by a party of Engineers under Lt. James P. Jervey. They are readily recognizable on the ground, and may be identified by means of stone markers. Works A. to I. inclusive, are lettered identically with those on the British map. Works J., O., Q., R. and S. appear on the British map without letters and have been lettered by the U. S. Engineers. References 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are taken from the British map on which they are similarly numbered. The lines of approach here numbered 7, 8 and 9, the pickets, ferry guard, abatis and quotations, are from the same map. Route 7 is undoubtedly erroneous. The weight of present evidence indicates that routes 6, 8 and 9 are approximately correct.



with General Wayne, came the regiments of Febiger and Meigs and the detachment of Hull.

The left column was led by another "forlorn hope" of 20 men under Lieut. Gibbon. Next came the remainder of the van, 80 men under Major Stewart, and then Butler's regiment, followed by Major Murfree's companies.

While the Americans stealthily approached, the British garrison was sleeping quietly in the fancied security of its position. It numbered some 700 men, chiefly from the Royal Artillery, the 17th Foot, the 71st Grenadiers, and the Loyal Americans, all under command of Lieut. Henry Johnson of the 17th. Perched in their craggy fortress, like eagles in their nest, protected on two sides by the Hudson River in which British gunboats rode at anchor, and on the inside shore by a dangerous morass crossed only by a narrow causeway, the position of the British was well-nigh impregnable. Their works on the heights contained fifteen pieces of artillery, ranging in caliber from an 8-inch howitzer down to 12-pounders, and were protected on the western slope by two rows of abatis, reaching from the river on the north to the river on the south.

In the absence of the diagram referred to in Wayne's order of battle, a rough sketch in President Stiles' Diary in the Yale University Library,* and a plan of the surprise of Stony Point drawn by British engineers † and published by William Faden, the King's geographer in

* This sketch is reproduced in Prof. H. P. Johnston's valuable book on Stony Point.

† This map is certainly wrong in representing the Americans wading out so far as to strike inside of the inner line of abatis; and there is some reason to doubt that the Americans crossed the marsh at three different places; but the preponderance of available evidence is in favor of this latter theory.

1784, are generally accepted as approximately correct in showing the routes taken by Wayne's troops when they invaded the peninsula. The Americans reached the peninsula and began the assault about 12.30 A. M., on July 16, 1779.

Wayne's right column is supposed to have made a wide detour to the southeast from Springsteel's, striking the beach south of Stony Point, wading across the southern mouth of the marsh, reaching the upland of the peninsula just west of the first line of abatis, and fighting its way up the southern side of the slope. Butler's column is thought to have waded across the northern end of the marsh, and skirted the northern end of the peninsula. Murfree is commonly conceded to have broken off from Butler's rear and crossed the Mud Bridge midway between the right and left columns, to "amuse" the enemy in the center. Murfree's men were the only ones permitted to load their guns, and as soon as the firing from the British apprised him that Wayne's approach was discovered, he began a noisy demonstration in the center to give the impression that he was making the main attack.

Meanwhile, the right and left columns, still without loading, were picking their way up the precipitous rocks like mountain goats, fighting only with the bayonet. The British were soon astounded to find the Americans right under their noses on two sides of their works. In their desperation, they poured down a frightful fire from heavy guns and small arms at the attacking parties, whom they could but dimly see and whose numbers they had no means of ascertaining. The surprise and terror of the British could not have been greater if the rocks had opened and a thousand crews of Henry Hudson's men had appeared in the midst of them.

But they had no vapory ghosts to contend with; and Wayne's men, plunging into an inferno of grape shot and musketry and pressing steadily upward, tore their way through the double line of abatis, passed to the breastworks, cut away the pickets, cleared the chevaux-de-frise at a sally-port, mounted the parapet, and entered the fort at the point of the bayonet, shouting, by pre-arrangement, "The Fort's Our Own!"

Almost immediately the left column entered from the other side, and the triumph was complete. During the assault, Wayne was wounded in the head, but struggling to his knees, cried out, "*March on. Carry me into the Fort. Let me die at the head of my column.*"

Wayne's wound, however, proved to be a slight one, and he lived many years to add to an already glorious career.*

The total loss of the Americans was 15 killed and 83 wounded. The British placed their losses at 20 killed and 132 wounded and missing. Wayne, however, reported that he had killed 63, wounded 61 and captured 575 prisoners. Only one of the British garrison escaped.

Upon securing possession of the fort, the Americans turned the guns on Verplanck's Point, but without effect. The British ships discreetly slipped their cables and dropped down stream.

The day after the capture, Washington came to Stony Point with Generals Greene, Steuben, and others and

* His raid at Bull's Ferry, N. J., July 21, 1780, which formed the theme of André's famous satirical poem; his battle at Jamestown Ford, Va., July 6, 1781; his participation in the siege of Yorktown; and his appointment in 1792 and services as Commander-in-Chief of the American Army for the suppression of the border war in the Northwest, are only a few of the mountain peaks that glow with the light of the brilliant life that ended at Presque Isle, on December 15, 1796.

congratulated his troops on their gallant behavior. The country rang with praises of Wayne, and Congress voted him a gold medal. It also gave Fleury a medal for being the first to enter the enemy's works. Gen. Charles Lee wrote to Wayne the letter already quoted in the opening chapter.

V.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS.

Washington had not intended to retain Stony Point. On the 18th he evacuated it, destroying the works and taking away all the valuable stores and guns. The assault had served its purpose, however, as a counter-irritant for the troubles in Connecticut, and for the time being the aggressive operations of the enemy were paralyzed. On July 20th, 1779, the British re-occupied Stony Point and set to work industriously to rebuild their defenses more strongly than before. Washington meditated another assault, and on the 30th of July, 1779, wrote Wayne:

“ I wish for your opinion as a friend (not as commanding officer of the Light Troops) whether another attempt upon Stony Point by way of surprise is eligible. In any other manner, under present appearances and information, no good I am sure can come from it.”

Wayne evidently concluded to let well enough alone, for another assault was not attempted. Forces, however, were operating in other ways to shorten the tenure of the enemy. Early in September the French fleet arrived off the southern coast, and Clinton, apprehending a joint attack by the French and American forces on New York, concluded to draw in his outlying forces. On September 23d, a report reached the American headquarters at New Windsor that the King's Ferry posts had been abandoned, but it proved premature.

On or about October 21st, however, the posts were evacuated, the enemy withdrawing a few days latter from

Newport, R. I., and thus freeing New England and the Hudson from British restraint. By October 29th, strong fatigue parties of Americans were at work restoring the fortifications at Stony and Verplanck's Points.

On November 22d, 1779, General Knox instructed Colonel Lamb to inspect the posts at and near West Point, saying :

"It is also necessary that you should examine whether the posts at Verplanck's and Stony Points are finished for the reception of the cannon designed for them. If they are prepared, or when they shall be, you will direct the cannon, which has been pointed out to you, and a proportionable quantity of ammunition (about 25 or 30 rounds for each piece with a sub, and fifteen or twenty men to manage them). The artillery men of the garrison will consist of Moodie's, Walker's and Fleming's companies of your battalion, and Sewell's, Dinnel's, Wells', and Burbeck's Companies of the 3rd Battalion."

The next important event in connection with Stony Point was the treason of Arnold which was discovered on September 23d, 1780. Not only was Stony Point included in the fortifications which Arnold intended to betray, but the rendezvous at which Arnold and André met to complete their designs was near by, and both of the men passed over the Point in taking passage at different times at King's Ferry.

It has been noted on a preceding page how the generals and armies, both American and British, tramped across Stony Point peninsula to or from this ferry, but perhaps no picture heretofore presented is so full of dramatic interest and vivid suggestion as that presented on Monday, September 18th, 1780, when Washington and his staff arrived at King's Ferry from West Point and crossed in the ferry barge, Washington en route to Hartford to meet Rochambeau. In this barge, side by side, were the greatest American patriot and the greatest American traitor. When they separated, a few minutes later, they separated for life. Stony Point was

the diverging point in two historic lives,—one ending in consummate human glory, the other in the depth of shame.

The story of the perfidy which Arnold that day concealed from his confiding chief is well known. On the night of September 21-22, 1780, the British Adjutant Major André, by Arnold's assistance, came ashore from the "Vulture" about 5 miles below Stony Point. After a prolonged night conference on the shore, Arnold took André to Joshua Hett Smith's house on Treason Hill, about 2 miles southwest of Stony Point. Here Arnold finally left André, who, disguising himself in Smith's clothes, and armed with a pass from Arnold, went up to Stony Point at sunset on September 22d, and took the ferry to Verplanck's Point. The next day, André was captured at Tarrytown. Two days later Arnold, hearing of André's fate, fled to the enemy. André was taken to West Point and confined a few days in Fort Putnam. On September 28th, he was rowed down the Hudson to Stony Point, and there went ashore with his guard, en route to Tappan, where he was tried and hanged as a spy.

The next conspicuous incident connected with Stony Point was intimately associated with the close of the War for Independence. In July, 1781, the French Army under Rochambeau joined the American Army under General Washington at Dobbs Ferry. It was there that the Commander-in-Chief matured his triumphant Yorktown campaign, and when this movement was determined upon, the artillery, placed under Col. Lamb, broke up at Dobbs Ferry, marched up to Verplanck's Point, and crossed King's Ferry to Stony Point with the ordnance and stores. Thence, having joined the division under Gen. Lincoln, they took up their march for the Head of Elk. Thus we see the historic battle-field of Stony Point

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once more pressed by the feet of martial hosts, en route to a great and final victory.

Two years later, a little flotilla of American boats containing American troops sailed down the Hudson past these historic heights. Troop-laden vessels had ploughed the water of the great river many times during the past seven years, and many times had the shores on either side reverberated with the roar of cannon as they passed. But on that November day of 1783, the troops on these vessels wore not the strained look of men going to battle; and the salvos that greeted them were not the voices of hostile guns. The treaty of peace had been signed; and the war-worn veterans from West Point, with the light of victory shining in their faces, were en route to New York, to occupy the city which the vanquished enemy were about to vacate. The closing act of the great drama had begun, and with the passage of the victors before her lofty front, the story of Stony Point in the Revolution is completed. It is now embalmed among the proud and imperishable traditions of our State and Nation.

By the work of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, Stony Point has been saved from the despoiling hand of the quarryman, and henceforth will stand, in all its native grandeur, as one of Nature's rugged monuments to the sublime heroism of patriots.



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