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The Real Benedict Arnold

By the same Author

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The Real Benedict Arnold

BY

CHARLES BURR TODD

Author of "The True Aaron Burr," "The Story of the City of New York," etc.

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"Tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"

NEW YORK

A. S. BARNES AND COMPANY

1903

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Foreword to the Reader

"I would give a great deal for a true, unbiased, concise biography of Benedict Arnold," said a bright young clergyman to the writer, "one that would reveal the hidden springs of his action in betraying his country. Do you know, the reasons given in the histories never seemed to me sufficient; and on the principle of giving the devil his due I have an unpleasant impression that he has not been fairly treated." To fill the want mentioned by the clergyman this book has been written.

Two biographies of its subject have preceded it — one, by Jared Sparks, long since out of print; a second, by Isaac N. Arnold, first published in 1879, ostensibly in defence of Arnold, but which, either from deference to family pride, or from its author's prejudice against Aaron Burr, fails to present the one great palliating fact in Arnold's treason — that it was the fascinations, the persuasions long continued, the intrigues with the British, of a wife madly loved, and which, if discovered, he knew

would tear her from his arms, that led him to commit his monumental crime. In this little book I have given this at length as the real source and spring of his action. Admitting it, everything becomes clear as noonday: denying it, no adequate motives for his conduct can be found.

In writing the work I have for the most part gone to the original sources for material, and have personally visited most of the scenes described. In the accounts of the march through the wilderness given by those who took part in it many discrepancies occur, and these I have endeavored to harmonize as much as possible.

C. B. T.

New York, Oct. 30, 1902.

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The Real Benedict Arnold

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

THE time was the year 1740, at the very threshold of it: a time that tried men's souls, — of French and Indian wars, wilderness conquering, high endeavor by sea and land. Never was the strenuous life lived more completely. Across the sea George II. was King of England. Jonathan Law was Governor of his remote colony of Connecticut. The year was but three days old when in an obscure corner of this colony — Norwich, on its extreme eastern border adjoining the Quaker and Anabaptist plantation of Rhode Island — the old wives bruited about that a man child was born to Captain Benedict Arnold and his wife Hannah.

"A lusty babe," they observed, "and hath already begun to do battle for his rights."

This boy, following the custom of their family, the parents named Benedict, — the fifth of that name in direct line.

The Arnolds came of what is called in New England "good stock." Their first ancestor in this country was William Arnold, son of Thomas Arnold of Melcolm Hersey, Cheselbourne, Dorset, England, who was a son of Richard Arnold, Lord of the Manor of Bagbere, Middleton Parish, Dorset, who came to the New World and settled in Rhode Island in 1651. His son Benedict was elected Governor of Rhode Island for several terms. This Governor Arnold had a son, also named Benedict, who was a member of the Rhode Island Assembly in 1695. His son Benedict moved to Norwich in 1730 and married there, November 8, 1733, Hannah, the young and beautiful widow of Absalom King, and daughter of John Waterman and Elizabeth Lathrop. He was bred a cooper, but being of a bold, ambitious, and enterprising turn, soon exchanged that vocation for the more lucrative and commanding one of merchant and sea captain.

The genius of the town was at that time wholly commercial. Seated at the head of the deep, narrow estuary of the Thames, which, nine miles below, emptying into the Sound, gives New London her unrivalled harbor, Norwich was admirably situated for commerce. Behind her lay a back country that had staves, hoop-poles, corn, wheat, rye, butter, cheese, ponies, and provisions of all sorts to exchange for sugar, molasses, and rum, which the West Indies produced in abundance, and so according to the course of nature Norwich grew into a seaport. A forest of masts rose from the trim, graceful schooners moored at her docks. Along the Thames were the shipyards in which they were built. Portly, linen-clad merchants and shrewd, calculating skippers were familiar figures in her streets. A procession of great freight wagons bore into the interior commodities of the tropics, and brought back in return products of the farms. To one like Benedict Arnold the scene taught its lesson: he too became a merchant, a shipowner. He went farther: he commanded his own ships and made many prosperous voyages,

fairly earning the title of "captain," than which none was more honorable in Norwich in 1741. That he had the confidence of his townsmen is also shown by the offices he held, — selectman, collector, assessor, surveyor of the port, etc. His wife, Hannah Waterman, was a worthy helpmeet, being of the purest Puritan stock, and of the straitest sect of the Presbyterians. Their house stood in a home lot of five and one half acres, about midway between the "old town" and Chelsea Society, and must have been a house of some pretensions for its day, since it was sold with the home-lot when the family removed to New Haven, for seven hundred pounds. After Arnold's treason it was noted by the village gossips that a strange fatality attended its subsequent owners. The wife of Captain Hugh Ledlie, who bought it of Captain Arnold in 1764, became insane. Deacon William Phillips of Boston, father of Lieutenant-Governor Phillips, bought it in 1775, and his family complained of strange noises and supernatural appearances: next, one of the well-known Malbones of Newport pur-

chased it and died within eighteen months. The house was struck by lightning in September, 1800, and its doors and windows shattered: however, it stood until 1853, when it was demolished.

CHAPTER II

ENVIRONMENT

IN order to grasp fully the character and limitations of Arnold let us glance briefly at the conditions of the society into which he was born. These were narrow, cramping, rasping, restrictive to a degree. Government was almost purely ecclesiastical: the church was the state and the state was the church; the latter was also despotic in social matters. To abstain from "going to meeting" on Sunday was to invite social ostracism. Nowhere were the classes more sharply defined, or class privileges more rigidly insisted upon; and it was an aristocracy not of birth or knighthood, but of wealth, the most odious of all. The minister was the great man of the village, and after him the magistrate, or "squire," as he was called. The pews in the church were "dig-

nified,"—that is, set apart by a committee counting from the pulpit toward the doors,—and assigned, the first in dignity to the member whose tax list was the largest and who had been longest on the membership roll, and so on according to the tax lists, until all were seated. A man must pay tithes to the church, whatever his religious belief, or be sold out. Jew, Papist, Quaker, Anabaptist, Churchman, could live in Bedlam with more peace and quietness than in one of these communities. The arrogance of the ruling class was insufferable. "We must keep down the under-brush," was the slogan of the country squires when, after the Revolution, the commonalty began to insist on being heard in the town meetings.

With these conditions Arnold at a very early age found himself not in sympathy. He was bold, strong, ardent, proud, sensitive, impulsive, restless, impatient of control, with such an inborn passion for leadership that he must be first or nothing: innumerable were his collisions with the powers above

him: fishing, hunting, trapping, skating, coasting, birdnesting, raiding apple orchards, playing truant, he delighted in — as well as in feats of strength and endurance. Going to mill is one of the country boy's perquisites: the ride thither through green fields and cool woods, oftener than not on horseback with the grist thrown across Dobbin's back; the great pond, with its swimming possibilities, its acres of lilies, its suggestions of pickerel and other huge fish; the low-roofed, weather-beaten mill with its dim interior; dust-covered bins and hoppers, whirring wheels, and motes floating in the long lanes of sunlight, — are things of perennial enjoyment to the boy. Young Benedict, when he went, usually contrived to collect other boys on the way to whom he exhibited himself in feats of daring or recklessness. The favorite one was to cling to the paddles of the great water-wheel and be carried with them into the air and down beneath the water as they turned. He was always a leader in holiday and election-day sports. To build bonfires on the evenings of these

days has always been a jealously guarded privilege of city boy and country boy alike; once Benedict and his brave troops fought a pitched battle with the town constables, who surprised them while stealing away with a quantity of tar barrels to be sacrificed to this patriotic purpose.

At another time, in one of the French and Indian wars, when the whole town went mad over a victory of the colonials, he with his mates drew a fieldpiece upon the common, tilted it until the muzzle pointed to the sky, poured in a horn full of powder, and dropped a blazing firebrand into its gaping mouth. A sheet of flame followed, but not before the reckless youngster had sprung back, so that little injury followed the dare-devil deed.

At the age of twelve he was sent to Canterbury Academy, twelve miles north of Norwich, kept by a Mr. Cogswell who had high reputation as a trainer of boys, and where, besides the English branches, he was well grounded in Latin and the higher mathematics. His education was further added to, it

is probable, by several trading voyages with his father, in which he gained that knowledge of seamanship which he afterward used to such advantage, although we have no proof of the fact.

In 1755 the "Old French War" broke out, and there was enough stir and tumult in the village to delight the soul of a boy of Benedict's parts. The train bands turned out with fanfare of fife and drum, marched and countermarched on the village green, and disappeared in the forest on their way to an appointed rendezvous; at intervals, as days and months passed, a mounted express would dash into the village with news of battles, or a wounded and crippled soldier would return with thrilling tales of foray and adventure. By 1756 volunteers were called for, and the boy's martial ardor was so intense that he ran away, threaded the forests and byways to Hartford, where the troops were to rendezvous, and enlisted there. He was easily traced by his mother, however, who had him released and returned home before his martial ardor was at all appeased, whereupon he promptly ran

away again and enlisted. This time his wise mother allowed him to have his way. He accompanied the troops on their rough march to Albany and the Lakes, and endured for a time the perils and hardships of wilderness campaigning; but after a time a great longing for home and mother seized him; it grew so irresistible that one night, firelock in hand and a few days' rations of parched corn in his wallet, he deserted. It seems almost incredible that a boy of fifteen could have made his way alone through the howling wilderness beset by savage and wild beast that then stretched between Lake George and the frontier towns of Connecticut; but the lad achieved it, and reached home in safety.

He had previously been apprenticed to the firm of Lathrop Brothers, who owned the largest drug-store in the town. These gentlemen were regularly educated physicians, having graduated at Yale College, while Daniel, the elder, had finished his medical studies in London. They were relatives of the lad's mother, and took the greater interest in him. He was received into the family

of the elder and given every facility for learning the business, so that when he left them at twenty-one, he was not only well versed in drugs, but had some knowledge of medicine and surgery as well.

CHAPTER III

IN NEW HAVEN

ARNOLD was not one to remain long an employé, and the moment he became twenty-one he set about looking for a place in which to begin business. His choice fell upon New Haven, then one of the capitals of the colony, and a thriving trading village of some five thousand inhabitants, already dominated by its great university, which had been founded sixty-one years before. But before opening his shop he made several trading voyages to the West Indies as supercargo, and one to London, where he laid in a stock of drugs, books, stationery, etc., for his proposed venture. The death of his father about this time — 1761 — gave him ample capital, and in 1762 we find on the main street of the little city a well-equipped drug-store and bookshop combined, bearing the modest sign, "B. Arnold, Druggist, Bookseller," etc., with the

apt motto, "*Sibi Totique*" (For himself and for all).

Arnold rapidly acquired prominence, and for the thirteen years that he lived in New Haven was one of its leading citizens. His business was successful from the first, and his superabundant energy led him into other forms of trade. He became a ship-owner and merchant, and did an extensive trade with the West Indies. At times he commanded his own ships, as his father had done before him. He also had a large trade with Canada, now become a British colony, and often visited Quebec to purchase horses and cattle, which he shipped from there to the West Indies, and acquired a knowledge of the country which later did him good service. He was elected a member of the local lodge of Free-Masons and soon attained prominence in it. He was also chosen Captain of the Governor's Foot Guards, composed of the finest young men of the city, and which had an *esprit du corps* similar to that of the Seventh Regiment of New York or the Twenty-third of Brooklyn in our day.

Young, handsome, prosperous, a rising man,

he was a general favorite in the society of the village, and entered with his accustomed zest into all its frolics and merry-makings. With the ladies he was always a decided favorite. Miss Margaret Mansfield, daughter of Samuel Mansfield, the high sheriff of the county, was a reigning belle in New Haven at that time; and when the two young people met, a mutual attraction was noted by the observing dowagers. The courtship progressed swiftly and smoothly; and on the 22d of February, 1767, they were married and went to housekeeping in "a handsome frame dwelling embosomed in shrubbery" near the shipyard. This marriage was a very happy one, rudely sundered by the early death of the wife. Three children were born to them, — Benedict, born February 14, 1768; Richard, born August 22, 1769; and Henry, born September 19, 1772.

From the beginning of our difficulties with the mother country, Arnold ardently espoused the cause of the Colonies. When the "Boston Massacre" occurred in March, 1770, he was in the West Indies and wrote from there: "Good God, are the Americans all asleep and

tamely yielding up their liberties, or are they all turned philosophers, that they do not take immediate vengeance on such miscreants?"

When the initial battle of Lexington — April 19, 1775 — aroused the country, Arnold was living in his comfortable home in New Haven, a merchant of standing and assured prospects. "I was," he said when later cited before a court-martial at Morristown to defend his honor, "in easy circumstances, and enjoyed a fair prospect of improving them. I was happy in domestic connections and blessed with a rising family which claimed my care and attention." "He was possessor of an elegant house, storehouses, wharves, and vessels at New Haven," testified a neighbor, but all these he cheerfully resigned at the call of his imperilled country. He was one of the first in the field.

The news of Lexington borne by pony expresses on relays of horses from Watertown reached New Haven at midday on the 20th of April. In half an hour Arnold had assembled his company on the public square and in a fiery speech assured them he was ready then

and there to lead them to Boston, and called for volunteers. A majority at once stepped out of the ranks; joined by some patriotic students, they made a body of sixty men. Their preparations were made that afternoon, and next morning early they were ready to march.

The selectmen of New Haven, in conjunction with the Town Committee of Safety, had with wise forethought collected a quantity of powder, lead, and flints. Col. David Wooster, who later became general and fell at Ridgefield mortally wounded by a British bullet, was their leader and spokesman. Arnold sent a polite request for enough to supply his men.

"This is colony property," replied Wooster; "we cannot give it up without regular orders from those in authority."

"Regular orders be d——d," cried Arnold, "and our friends and neighbors being mowed down by red coats! Give us the powder or we will take it."

The keys were given up under protest, and the men helped themselves. The incident

affords a key to Arnold's character. It explains in some measure the disappointments and disasters of his later career. He had a fatal facility for making enemies. He never stopped to consider whose head he was about to hit, nor the possible consequences of it. In this case Wooster never forgave him the affront. A proud, cold, stern, determined man, a shining example of the "standing order," he resented Arnold's impulsive act as if it were a personal insult, as did his fellows, all men of power and influence in the colony; so at the threshold of Arnold's career he aroused that unfriendliness at home which had a most disastrous influence on his subsequent fortunes, and which, reinforced by an even more potent influence, drove him at last into the ranks of his natural and once most fervently hated enemies. No premonition of this came to him, though, as at the head of his troops he cantered gayly over the hills of Connecticut, now mantling with the vivid green of early spring. All were splendidly mounted and richly uniformed, and attracted no little attention as they galloped bravely

along, heralding their approach with the mellow notes of the bugle. As a recruiting band, no troop ever met with greater success; tidings of Lexington had been borne on viewless wings to the remotest hamlets, and everywhere sturdy yeomen, seizing flint-lock musket or long goose-gun, fell in, — on horseback if they owned a beast, if not, on foot.

The company was not made up of daredevils, as one might imagine, as is attested by a pledge they signed before setting out. In it they agreed to conduct themselves innocently and inoffensively, to obey all the rules and regulations, to discountenance drunkenness, gaming, and every vice, and if any man after being admonished by his officers should prove incorrigible he should be expelled "as totally unworthy of serving in so great and glorious a cause."

As he rode, Arnold's thoughts were busy with a great plan of campaign, — one of many which his remarkable military genius originated, only to see the credit for them accorded to others, and largely because from a native defect of character he never could

keep a project to himself long enough to execute it, but must impart it to others. On this occasion he met presently, astride his good gray mare, saddle-bags bulging with official documents, the worshipful Samuel H. Parsons, Esq., later Brigadier-General in the Continental army, riding up to Hartford to attend the General Assembly of Connecticut then in session, and of which he was an important member. To him Arnold must needs unbosom himself of his plan.

The only highway between New York and New England and Canada at that time was by way of Lake Champlain and its outlet, the Sorel River, which empties into the St. Lawrence a short distance east of Montreal.

As a matter of course, the French during their occupancy of Canada fortified this natural highway. They built a strong fort at the head of Lake George, a tributary of Champlain, and much used by those going to Albany. At Ticonderoga, a peninsula, where Lake Champlain narrows to eighty poles, and where Lake George, approaching to within two and a half miles, sends its outlet into it,

they built another strong fortress. Ticonderoga was thirty miles north of Skenesborough (now Whitehall), which lay at the head, or extreme southern end of the lake. Fifteen miles north of Ticonderoga was Crown Point, another strong fortification, commanding the lake, which here narrowed from five hundred rods to one hundred and sixteen. A fourth was St. John's, still farther down the lake. All of these had been captured by the English and provincials under Amherst in 1756. Arnold in his frequent trips to Canada had often visited them, and knew they were held only by a corporal's guard,—drunken swashbucklers at that,—and told Parsons that a hundred determined men making a forced march thither before news of the war should reach them could capture the whole chain of forts.

Parsons rode on, and the troop, resuming its march, swept into its ranks at Brooklyn that grizzled Indian fighter, now turned farmer, Israel Putnam, whom they found ploughing in his fields. By the time it reached Cambridge, the company had swelled to a

little army for fighting qualities excelled by few.

On arriving at Washington's camp, Arnold lost no time in seeking the Massachusetts Committee of Safety and imparting his plan to them. Dr. Joseph Warren, the martyr of Bunker Hill, was a member of the committee, and warmly advocated the idea; it was adopted with enthusiasm. Arnold was commissioned to command with the rank of colonel and authorized to enroll four hundred volunteers, picked men, for the assault. Supplied with money by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts wherewith to purchase horses, powder, lead, flint, and provisions, he set off on horseback for Stockbridge, then the frontier town of Massachusetts, intending to collect his little army in that section, whence a forced march of four or five days would bring him to the forts. Three days' hard riding along the wilderness paths brought him to the pretty little village nestled under its protecting mountains, but on beating up for recruits he found to his surprise that he had been forestalled, — Parsons had not been

idle in Hartford. A small party had ridden up from Connecticut and met a similar party of Berkshire men under Colonel Easton, and these in turn had joined a larger party of Green Mountain Boys under the famous partisan ranger, Ethan Allen. Burning with patriotism and love of glory, the detachment had pushed forward and was now two or three days in advance. Leaving some officers to raise troops, Arnold spurred on, and overtaking Allen on the 9th of May claimed command. He was, he said, the only officer who had been commissioned by any recognized State authority to capture those posts. He exhibited his commission and instructions, and claimed command by virtue of them.

Allen might perhaps have yielded, but the hardy Green Mountain Boys would have none of it. "They would fight under their own leader," they said, "or not at all." Arnold was forced to submit; it was a bitter disappointment, but he bore it with a self-restraint and in a spirit of patriotism creditable alike to his head and heart.

"If he could not fight as leader," he said,

"he would as a private," and he joined the ranks as a volunteer. How on the next day — the 10th of May, 1775 — they came out on the shores of Lake Champlain, seized what few boats could be found, — enough to carry eighty-five men in all, — crossed the lake, and in the gray of the morning entered Ticonderoga by an unguarded sally port, Allen and Arnold side by side, is familiar to every school-boy. Crown Point soon fell to the victorious force.

Arnold now renewed his demand that he be put in command of the captured fort so as to obey his instructions to send its stores and munitions to Cambridge, where they were greatly needed. Warren also wrote to the Connecticut authorities asking that this might be done, and deprecating any conflict of authority, but the Connecticut Committee, which had followed the troops, by written order appointed Allen commander "until further orders from that State or from the Continental Congress."

Four days after the capture Arnold received a company of fifty men of the levies he had

ordered raised in Berkshire County, who on the way captured at Skenesborough a schooner from a certain Major Skene, "a dangerous British agent," and brought it with them.

Supplied now with a fleet and army, Arnold showed his mettle. Arming the men and schooner, he embarked and coasted the lake shore northward to St. John's, which was abundantly supplied with stores and munitions, captured it with a "king's sloop and crew," and returned in triumph to Ticonderoga, meeting on the return the belated Allen with a force bound on the same errand. These captures seized time by the forelock, for scarcely had St. John's been reduced ere there appeared before it a body of four hundred British and Canadians sent to regain control of the lakes. Arnold at once made preparations to resist them. He armed the schooner, the king's sloop, and a number of batteaux he had collected; and his force having been increased to one hundred and fifty men, he held himself able to resist any army the enemy could bring against him.

At this juncture there arrived at the fort a committee of three members of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, delegated by that body to go to Ticonderoga, and inquire into the "spirit, capacity, and conduct of Colonel Arnold, and if they found what had been charged against him to be true, order his immediate return to Massachusetts to give account of the money, military stores, etc., he had received, and which it was alleged he had converted to his own use;" but even if these charges were found not true, he was ordered to turn over the command to Colonel Hinman, a Connecticut officer whom that colony was sending forward to take command, — in other words, he was superseded.

Arnold was thunderstruck. He could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses; for only a few weeks previously, on the 1st of June, this same Provincial Congress had written him expressing its great satisfaction at the "acquisitions" he had made at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and St. John's, assuring him that they placed the greatest confidence in his "Fidelity, Knowledge, Cour-

age, and Good Conduct," and requesting him to continue in command until the colonies of Connecticut or New York should take on them the garrisoning and maintaining the forts subject to the orders of the Continental Congress. He saw that while he had been fighting in the field his enemies had gained the ear of authority at home and filled it with open and repeated calumnies. As before remarked, Arnold's evil fate was a rare facility for making enemies. He was a genius, with all the limitations of genius. He lacked tact and at times common-sense; he despised the small arts of the courtier, so necessary to him who would succeed in public life. To those with whom he differed he was often haughty, arrogant, and dictatorial. His demanding the keys of General Wooster and the selectmen of New Haven had created a powerful cabal in that city inimical to him. His expedition to the Lakes had embroiled him with the leading men of at least two colonies, while his success had inflamed the usual number of envious Cascas, unable to command hearts' ease whilst they beheld another "greater than them-

selves," and intent on reducing him to their level.

He now expressed his indignation to the Committee without reserve, telling them he had been treated with injustice, ingratitude, and disrespect, resigned his commission, discharged the men he had enlisted, and set out for Boston, where he had no difficulty in proving to the satisfaction of the Provincial Congress and of Washington that the charges against him were baseless, existing only in the imaginations of his enemies. Washington believed him, and became until his treason his steadfast friend. The later eminent Silas Deane, then a member of Congress from Connecticut, wrote from Cambridge, August 10, 1775: "Colonel Arnold has been in my opinion hardly treated by this colony, through some mistake or other. He has deserved much and received little, or less than nothing." Barnabas Deane, writing to his brother Silas, mentioned above, from Ticonderoga on June 1, 1775, said: "Colonel Arnold has been greatly abused and misrepresented by designing persons, some of whom were from Connect-

icut. Had it not been for him everything here would have been in the utmost confusion and disorder: people would have been plundered of their private property, and no man's person would bave been safe that was not of the Green Mountain party. Colonel Arnold has been twice fired at by them, and has had a musket presented at his breast by one of that party, who threatened to fire him through if he refused to comply with their orders, which he very resolutely refused doing, as inconsistent with his duty and directly contrary to the opinion of the colonies."

To add to Arnold's bitterness of spirit, a crushing domestic affliction had fallen on him while absent at the camps, — his wife had died on the 19th of June, 1775, at the early age of thirty, leaving three children of tender age motherless.

Certainly this wronged man might now have left the turmoil of camps, and retiring to New Haven have devoted himself to his children and neglected business, without his honor or patriotism being questioned; but so far from this, his fertile brain had already

conceived a plan that could it have been carried out would have detached Canada from the mother country, added her to the United States, and shortened by many years the struggle for independence.

CHAPTER IV

THE MARCH THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

THIS plan was in brief to lead a small, quickly moving force into Canada by way of the Maine wilderness, ascending the Kennebec to Dead River, its head tributary on the west, whence a short carry would take the adventurers over the "divide" to the headwaters of the Chaudière, which emptied into the St. Lawrence about four miles above Quebec; descend that stream rapidly and secretly and take Quebec, which Arnold knew to be practically without defenders; then co-operate with the northern army under General Schuyler, which was then on the march to invade Canada. Incidentally the army would endeavor to win over to the American cause the French inhabitants who were known to be averse to British rule, and who, it was believed, would rise to a man at the first decided victory for our

arms. When the plan was presented to Washington, his first inquiry was as to its feasibility. In reply, Arnold produced a rough map made by a Colonel Montresor of the British Engineer Service, who, in 1760, had ascended the Chaudière to its source, crossed the "divide" to the headwaters of the Penobscot, descended that stream, crossed over to the Kennebec on his return, and ascended that river and its principal western branch, the Dead River, whose source is but a few miles from Chaudière Pond, the fountain head of the Chaudière. In his report of the journey Montresor declared that the route was practicable and the carries easily accomplished by determined men.[1]

Arnold now proposed to embark a force of one thousand picked men in sloops at some small port to escape observation, sail across the Gulf of Maine to the mouth of the Kenne-

[1] This journal is still preserved in the Maine Historical Society's Library. Pierrepont Edwards, a connection of Col. Aaron Burr, was appointed by Connecticut a commissioner on Arnold's effects after his treason, and the journal said to have been found among his papers after his death was secured for the Society through the influence of Colonel Burr.

bec, and up that stream as far as Gardiner, thirty-eight miles, to which point it was navigable for sloops, there build batteaux, load them with the baggage and stores, and continue the voyage in them, following the route before laid out.

Washington, after studying the matter closely, consented. The expedition was got ready with great secrecy and the utmost celerity, for September had already come, and the army must thread the wilderness before the Northern winter set in, or the results would be lamentable. Only picked men were selected, — the very flower of the army, — and Arnold's reputation as a fighting man was so high, they were glad to go under him. It is a little remarkable how many of them later rose to eminence in public life. Aaron Burr, "an amiable youth of twenty," just out of Princeton College, who rose from a sick bed to volunteer, was afterward Vice-President: his classmate and chum, Matthew Ogden, attained eminence both as lawyer and in public life. A classmate of both was the Rev. Samuel Spring, chaplain of the corps, later a cele-

brated divine of Newburyport, Mass. Dr. Isaac Senter, the surgeon, became a leading physician in Newburyport, R. I. Private John J. Henry, a lad of sixteen, but a man in endurance and mettle, became an eminent lawyer in Pennsylvania and Judge of the County Courts. Dr. Senter kept a diary, and Judge Henry late in life wrote an account of the expedition, which we shall follow closely in describing it. Capt. Henry Dearborn became general, congressman, and Secretary of War under Jefferson. Capt. Daniel Morgan, who commanded the rifle corps, was later the famous partisan ranger of Saratoga, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The field officers were Lieut.-Col. Christopher Greene of Rhode Island, Col. Roger Enos of Vermont, Major Return J. Meigs of Connecticut (later an eminent geographer), and Major Timothy Bigelow of Massachusetts. The staff were Adjutant Frebecer, a Dane, Quartermaster Hyde, Surgeon Isaac Senter, and Chaplain Samuel Spring. The captains were Henry Dearborn of New Hampshire, Samuel McCobb of Georgetown, William Goodrich, Jonas Hub-

bard, and Scott of Massachusetts, Oliver Hanchett of Connecticut, John Topham, Simeon Thayer, Samuel Ward, Oliver Colburn, and Thomas Williams. Morgan commanded the rifle corps, composed of his own Virginia company and two Pennsylvania companies under Hendricks and Smith. There were eleven hundred men in all, eighty-four to a company, rank and file.

On September 6 orders were given to draft the men, collect provisions, and build two hundred batteaux, — the latter at Argy Point, on the Kennebec, two miles below the present flourishing city of Gardiner. The appointed rendezvous was Newburyport, thirty miles north of Boston, a busy little seaport with a good harbor, and a flourishing coasting and West India trade. Here ten — some accounts say eleven — "topsail schooners" were collected to transport them. The men left Cambridge on September 11, in several detachments to avoid remark, and marched by different routes. Henry, who was with the riflemen, says they reached Newburyport next day. Several days were spent there getting

the baggage and stores aboard, a patrol of small boats being kept out meantime, to give timely notice of a British fleet reported as hovering on the coast.

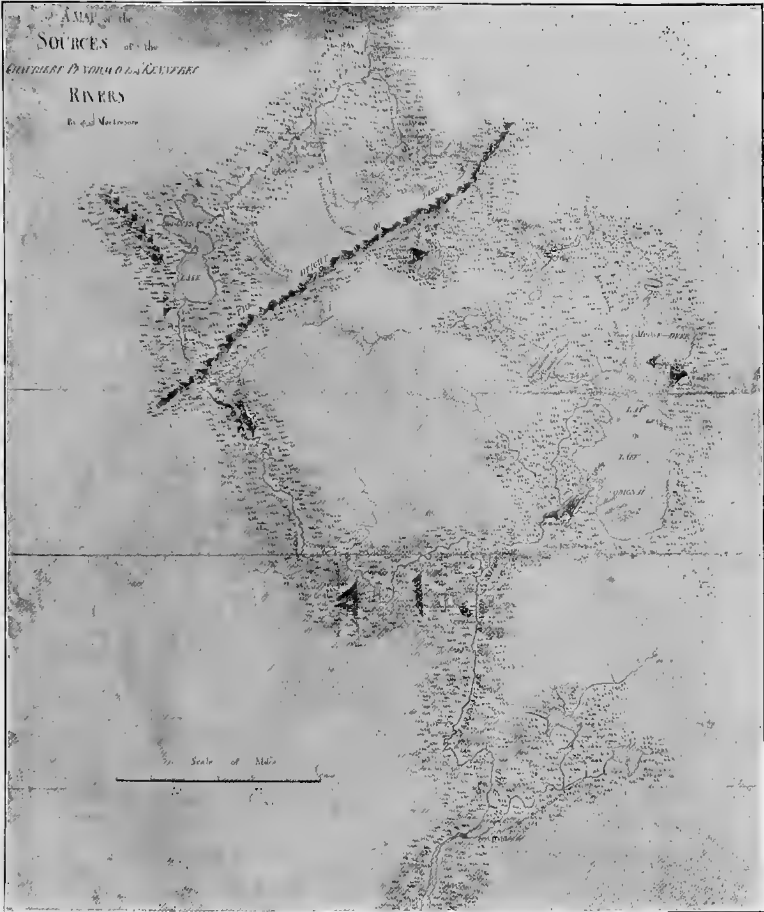
Arnold did not leave Cambridge until the 15th, and reached his army the same night. He bore detailed written instructions from Washington and an "address" to the inhabitants of Canada urging them to rise, free themselves from the British yoke, and ally themselves with the United Colonies. "Let no man desert his habitation," it concluded; "let no one flee as before an enemy. The cause of America and of liberty is the cause of every virtuous American citizen, whatever may be his religion or his descent. Come, then, ye generous citizens, range yourselves under the standard of General Liberty, against which all the force and artifice of tyranny will never be able to prevail."

These handbills had been printed by hundreds on the little hand-presses of Boston, and were to be sown broadcast when the army reached Canada. Arnold's instructions were to press forward over the route selected

with all the secrecy and despatch possible, to attack and carry Quebec by surprise if practicable, and then co-operate with Montgomery, whose objective was Montreal, in the further reduction of the country. The utmost care to placate and reassure the inhabitants was to be taken. They were to be paid liberally for everything had of them and for all services performed; their religion was to be respected; in all things it was to be made clear to them that the army came not as invaders, but as brethren and liberators.

The fleet sailed at ten on the morning of the 19th, but did not get to sea until the afternoon, because of one vessel running aground on a shoal in leaving the harbor. It is one hundred and fifty miles across the Gulf of Maine to the mouth of the Kennebec. Before noon of the next day the fleet, though separated by a storm on the way over, was safely within the noble river. The summer voyager of to-day in his sail up its winding course passes on its banks a constant succession of field and forest, elegant villas, hotels, and populous towns, with all the evidences of

wealth and civilization; he meets fleets of small steamers, launches, sail-boats, skiffs, canoes, laden with merry tourists; farther up the river he will pass rafts and flotillas of spruce and poplar logs destined to be ground into paper pulp. At Gardiner he must exchange the large, ocean-going steamer which has brought him from Boston for a little stern-wheel river boat, which alone is able to thread the shallow channel some twenty-two miles further to Augusta, Maine's thriving and beautiful capital, where navigation ends. But in 1775 the river flowed through an almost unbroken wilderness quite to its mouth. There was a village at Gardiner, a hamlet at Fort Western, opposite the present Augusta, another at Fort Halifax, now the busy city of Waterville, where the railroad to Bangor leaves the Kennebec Valley, but the general aspect of the river was that of savagery and solitude. The fleet stood up the river that night as "far as the tide would allow," and on the 23d arrived at Fort Western, the head of navigation, where the batteaux had been collected.



A MAP of the
SOURCES of the
RIVERS
Scale of Miles

Arnold, writing from Point aux Trembles, near Quebec, to a friend on November 27, gives an interesting résumé of the progress of the expedition from this point as follows: "21st reached Fort Western. 25th to 29th sent off one division each day with forty-five days' provisions. From the 29th to Oct. 8 the whole detachment were daily up to their waists in water, hauling up the batteaux against rapid streams to Norridgewock, fifty miles from Fort Western. From the 9th to the 16th not a minute was lost in gaining the Dead River, fifty miles. From the 16th to the 27th ascended the Dead River to Lake Megantic or Chaudière Pond, eighty-three miles. On the 28th I embarked (there) with seventeen men in five batteaux resolved to proceed to the French inhabitants and send back provisions to the detachment, who were nearly out and must inevitably suffer without a supply. At ten we had passed the lake, thirteen miles long, and entered the Chaudière, which we descended about twenty miles in two hours,—amazing rocky, rapid, and dangerous,—when we had the misfor-

tune of oversetting and staving three batteaux, and lost all the baggage, provisions, etc., and with great difficulty saved the men. This disaster, though unfortunate at first view, we must think a very happy circumstance on the whole, and a kind interposition of Providence; for had we proceeded one half-mile farther we must have gone over a prodigious fall which we were not apprised of, and all inevitably perished. Here I divided the little provisions left and proceeded on with two batteaux and five men with all possible expedition, and on the 30th at night arrived at the first inhabitants, upwards of eighty miles from the Lake (Chaudière), where I was kindly received. The next morning early I sent off a supply of fresh provisions to the detachment by the Canadians and savages, about forty of the latter having joined me. By the 8th the whole arrived except two or three sick left behind. The 10th I reached Point Levi, seventy-five miles from Sartigan, the first inhabitants, and waited until the 13th for the rear to come up; employed the carpenters in making

ladders and in collecting canoes, those on Point Levi being destroyed to prevent our crossing; having collected about thirty we embarked at nine P. M. and at four A. M. had carried over, at six times, five hundred men without being discovered. Thus in about eight weeks we completed a march of near six hundred miles not to be paralleled in history, the men having with the greatest fortitude and perseverance hauled their bateaux up rapid streams, being obliged to wade almost the whole way, nearly one hundred and eighty miles, carried them on their shoulders near forty miles over hills, swamps and bogs almost impenetrable, and to their knees in mire, being often obliged to cross the rivers three or four times with the baggage, short of provisions, part of the detachment disheartened and gone back, famine staring us in the face, an enemy's country and uncertainty ahead.

"The night we crossed the St. Lawrence we found it impossible to get our ladders over, and the enemy being apprised of our coming, we found it impracticable to attack

them without too great risk; we therefore invested the town and cut off their communication with the country. We continued in this situation until the 20th, having often attempted to draw the enemy out in vain. On a strict inquiry into our ammunition, we found many of our cartridges (which to appearance were good) unserviceable, and not ten rounds each for the men, who were also almost naked, barefooted, and much fatigued; and as the garrison was daily increasing and nearly double our numbers, we thought it prudent to retire to this place, and await the arrival of General Montgomery, with artillery, clothing, etc., who to our great joy has this morning joined us with about three hundred men."

In one important object, the surprise of the enemy, the expedition failed. Let us turn now to the annalists and learn why it failed, and also glean some interesting details of this Spartan march. It must be admitted that Arnold's disposition of his men was excellent. While the army lay at Fort Western transferring stores to the batteaux, calking the

seams in the latter (which being made of unseasoned lumber shrank daily so that new seams opened almost as fast as the old were stopped), and in general girding up its loins for the coming struggle, he selected nine men, young, supple, strong, sternly ambitious and patriotic, and sent them into the trackless wilderness to blaze a path for the army along the route — so obscurely defined by Montresor. Lieutenant Steele commanded it; the others were Jesse Wheeler, George Merchant, and James Clifton, of Morgan's riflemen, Robert Cunningham, Thomas Boyd, John Tidd, and John McKonkey, of Smith's Pennsylvania riflemen, and John Joseph Henry, a lad of sixteen, afterward judge, but so strong that, as he tells us, he could clap a canoe on his back and run a hundred yards across a carry with it, without stopping for breath. Two guides were provided: Nehemiah Getchel, "a very respectable man," and John Horne, an Irishman, who "had lived so long in that frosty clime that his hair and beard had become frosted also."

A day or two behind this party marched

Morgan and his riflemen, "an excellent body of men, rude, hardy, and fearless, formed by nature to be the stamina of an army, fit for tough, tight work." Every man was clad in dark ash-colored hunting-shirt, leggings, and moccasins, with home-knit woollen stockings and stout shoes in reserve, and each carried his favorite weapon, "a rifle-barrelled gun," sighted to pick off a squirrel from a hickory limb at one hundred yards, a tomahawk, and scalping-knife, the latter a handy tool that could be used to skin a moose, slit a trout, or whittle shavings for the camp-fire, as well as lift the hair of an enemy. At their head strode Morgan, the Indian fighter and ranger, "a large, strong-bodied personage, whose appearance gave the idea history has left us of Belisarius. His manners were of the severest cast."

Morgan's orders were to proceed to the "Great Carrying Place" and prepare a road for the army. The next day the second division embarked — led by Colonel Greene, and comprising three companies of musket-men. These were more jaunty than the rifle-

men in their roundabout woollen jackets, hunting-shirts, buckskin breeches, moccasins, hats with a feather stuck in them, and home-knit woollen stockings and stout shoes carried for an emergency. A day after them Colonel Enos set out with four companies and forty-five days' provisions, making a fourth division. The latter was more encumbered with provisions than the other divisions, but had the advantage of the well-trodden path of preceding battalions.

The whole force being now under way let us return and follow the fortunes of Steele's party, the pioneers. His canoe bore five men and their baggage; the other, six. A barrel of pork, a bag of meal, and two hundred-weight of biscuit were distributed among them. Leaving Fort Western on September 23 they reached Fort Halifax, opposite the present city of Waterville the same evening, and, accommodations being somewhat limited at the fort, were glad to accept the hospitality of a well-to-do settler, one Squire Harrison, whose large frame-dwelling stood about half a mile from the fort.

At that time every spring the salmon churned their way up the river by millions and were caught plentifully by the fishermen at the Fort, who were quite willing to exchange a barrel of smoked salmon — to the inlanders a great luxury — for a barrel of salt pork.

Embarking next morning they soon reached Skowhegan Falls, five miles east of the present Norridgewock, and there made their first carry. On leaving this point they plunged into the great northern wilderness, Norridgewock being the outpost. The sombre forest as they entered it seemed the chosen home of solitude and death. Under its lofty canopy of pines and spruces lay acres upon acres of dreary swamps covered with ghostly, grayish white moss, or quaking bog, natural meadows clothed in coarse grass and rushes, often breast-high, mighty rock-ribbed mountains, lonely lakes with low, marshy shores, sluggish streams choked with fallen trees, or changing without warning into rushing torrents beset with jagged rocks and walled in by stern, frowning precipices. Here roamed

the panther, bear, lynx, wolf, moose, and catamount. Over it brooded a stillness, terrifying in itself, broken only by the roar of the waterfall, the sigh of the wind, or the crash of some mighty monarch of the forest as it fell to years of mouldering and decay. Here death was to be found in its most abhorrent forms — from the treacherous Indian, the wild beast, the falling tree, from flood, hunger, cold, disease, and that strange panic which often deprives of their wits the hopelessly lost. Nevertheless the pathfinders plunged bravely and even cheerily into it. On the 28th, after several small carries, they arrived at the "great carry" of twelve miles, from the Kennebec across to its main western tributary, the Dead River.

This stream joined the main river some twenty miles above the "carry," but so winding was it that to ascend to its mouth and thence up it to the point where the great carry struck it involved a journey variously estimated at from sixty to one hundred miles. To save this detour, the Indians had from time immemorial packed their canoes across

this "cut off" which was shortened somewhat by three lakes in succession, about a mile apart.

Steele's men had much trouble in finding the trail, which the Indians hid as much as possible, wishing to keep strangers out of their country. At last they found it, and blazed the way to the first pond that night by slashing the trees with their tomahawks. On this lake they stored half their provisions against their return, and left James Clifton, the oldest man of the party, who in their rapid pace had begun to lag, and John McKonkey, the Pennsylvanian, to guard them, charging them to make camp on the south side of the lake, to keep themselves hidden, and to use every precaution against being discovered by the savages. Steele expected to be back in eight or ten days, and with the remaining nine men pushed on, reaching the Dead River in two days more; a deep, dark, sullen-looking stream they found it, with no perceptible current and about two hundred and fifty yards wide. The country around this river was the home of the moose.

"Here," wrote Henry, "the moose deer reigns master of the forest" and "monarch of the glen." By their camp-fires on the Dead River, he further records, they saw these "stately deer" pass in droves of fifteen or twenty, walking behind one another; but no man dared fire at them for fear of Indians. Once, near Natanis' cabin, they came upon a herd of four or five up to their knees in water, feeding on the red willow, their favorite food; on these they fired, being sorely in need of meat, but got none of them. When at sound of the rifles the bull moose threw up their heads, "the tips of their horns seemed to me to stand eighteen feet from the ground." One day on a point they saw a gray wolf sitting on his haunches, and fired at him, but he disappeared like a ghost in the forest. Near by, a moose — a young one of about three hundred pounds' weight — was swimming across the river; this they shot and found its ears and flanks badly torn, presumably by the wolf. Henry records a curious story of the moose told him by Captain Harrison at Fort Halifax. He said that

when he first came to the country, twenty years before, the red deer were very plentiful with an occasional elk, but no moose; by and by the moose came, and the deer disappeared.

On September 30, while they were making the great carry, the first snow fell and ice formed. Winter, their most dreaded enemy, was stealing down from his northern fastnesses. On October 2 they launched their canoes on the Dead River, and that night reached the foot of the first rapid, which to them seemed very much alive. Here the party put themselves on short rations, and as a fire would betray them to the Indians, resolved henceforth to eat their pork raw, and to eat but twice a day, morning and evening. "Unacquainted with the distance we had to go," writes Henry, "without map or chart, yet resolved to accomplish our orders at the hazard of our lives, a half a biscuit and half an inch square of raw pork was our evening meal."

October 3, after pulling the canoes up the rapid, they "found good water the rest of the day, and camped at night at the foot of a fall

of four feet." The next day also "there was good water and plenty of trout and chub." Toward evening of this day they approached the wigwam of Natanis, last of the Norridgewock Indians, whom Arnold had ordered them to kill or capture, as he was thought to be in the pay of the British. Secretly they surrounded the house, knocked at the door, and found it empty; the bird had flown. As later events proved, however, Natanis favored the Americans, and later joined the expedition with forty St. Francis Indians. His cabin stood half-way between the first American and Canadian settlements, so that their perilous journey was half accomplished. Heartened by this the adventurers pushed on with renewed vigor. Several miles above, on the bank of a large stream that entered from the north, they found a stake firmly fixed in the earth, with a roll of birch-bark stuck in a cleft at the top, which contained an accurate map of the streams above, which aided them greatly. This also was the work of Natanis, who had discovered them on their first approach to his country, and took this way of

assisting them. By and by they reached the large lake in which the Dead River had its source. On the west rose the high, rocky, mountainous ridge which formed the watershed between the St. Lawrence and the rivers of Maine. On the other side, five miles distant, was the pond out of which flowed the newborn Chaudière. This ridge was the abode of desolation. The trees grew dwarfish, vegetation became scant, they saw no game except the little pine squirrel and a small bird of the sparrow family; stumbling through a gloomy defile strewn with huge boulders they came down into the valley on the other side, and to a little stream which they thought must flow into Chaudière Pond. A huge pine, forty feet without a branch, stood on its banks.

"Who will climb it?" asked Steele, "and discover the pond and the stream coursing from it." Cunningham, a mountain giant, in "almost the twinkling of an eye climbed the tree. He discerned fully the meandering course of the river as upon a map, and even descried Lake Chaudière at the distance of fourteen or fifteen miles."

Their mission was accomplished; they had discovered the Chaudière and blazed a path to it; now the problem was to retrace their steps, footsore and short of rations as they were, and gladden the heart of the main army with the news. At once, without waiting for felicitations, they began the toilsome return to the canoes on Dead River, walking in Indian file and carefully covering their trail, that the keen eye of their savage foe, with whom their imagination peopled the forest, might not discover it; indeed the only bit of humor in this grim march is the care taken to conceal their presence from a supposed enemy who was aware of it before they left Fort Western.

That night they were overtaken by a fierce storm and crawled into the shelter of the friendly evergreen thickets, and "slept notwithstanding the pelting of the storm." On the 9th Henry, rummaging his pockets, found "a solitary biscuit and an inch of pork," — all the food he had; nor were the remainder of the party much better off. That day they shot a small duck called a diver, and around the camp-fire at night anxiously debated how

best to utilize it and the remaining pittance of food. They decided to boil the diver — which is the toughest and oiliest as well as smallest of the species — in their camp-kettle, each man throwing in his remaining pieces of pork, marked by a skewer run through it, bearing his own private mark. The broth, they agreed, should serve them for supper, the pork for breakfast, and the duck should be divided and reserved for contingencies. Their appetites "were ravenous as wolves," but only the broth was eaten that night. Next morning they were astir at the earliest dawn, and ate their pork, after which Steele divided the duck after a manner favored of backwoodsmen from time immemorial. One of the men turning his back Steele asked, "Whose shall this be?" the duck having previously been divided into ten parts, the number of the party; as the man indicated, it was divided. Henry's share, he tells us, "was one of the thighs." That day they saw off to the eastward a great smoke, and hailed it as a camp-fire of Morgan's men; but what was their disappointment on coming up to find it

was one of their own fires, that had been smouldering in the peat all this time and had burned a large hole in it, amply advertising their presence to the enemy. That night they went supperless to bed. Nor had they anything for breakfast: no game was to be seen; no fish could be caught. As they hurried on down stream with the recklessness of desperate men, in some rapids a sunken tree suddenly appeared with two prongs uplifted above the surface. There was just room between them for a canoe to pass. Getchel, the guide, was steering the first boat, which also bore Steele, the commander. Like racehorses the canoes bore down on the obstruction. Getchel held his to the inch and passed through safely, but the rear boat swerved a trifle, struck her port quarter, and in a twinkling was ripped from stem to stern. By springing to starboard the men were able to keep the gash above water until the craft could be beached on a sand-bar. Then a council of war was held. Getchel called for birch-bark, pitch, and thread. They had none, but great birches rose all around with

bark like rolls of parchment hanging from their hoary trunks; this was stripped off. From the pines they scraped the exuded turpentine which had hardened in the sun; the roots of the cedar yielded thread; but there was no oil to change the turpentine into pitch. Turning their wallets inside out the men found some crumbs of pork fat, which the guide mixed with turpentine and made a very good article of pitch indeed, and with these materials soon had the canoe as good as new. But misfortunes never come singly. As they went to launch the canoes, which had been drawn up on the beach, Sergeant Boyd raised the uninjured one by the bow to push it into the water, and broke it in twain in the middle. This seemed the last straw. They were one hundred miles from any succor, without provisions and famishing; and now their canoe, their sole dependence, seemed wrecked beyond hope of repairing. Getchel, however, rose to the occasion. Procuring more materials he repaired this boat, and after two hours the party were able to resume their journey.

All that day they saw no game, "neither moose, bear, nor wolf;" but after sunset, Henry's canoe having lagged behind from exhaustion, its occupants were suddenly startled by a rifle shot ahead, and rowing up with a burst of speed found that Lieutenant Steele had shot a moose. At once the guide cut off the nose and one of the huge ears, and broiling them at a camp-fire hastily built, the men enjoyed a feast only to be appreciated by those who have gone hungry for three days. They were without salt or bread, however, and eating so much fresh meat made them seriously ill.

Next morning Steele and two men hurried forward to meet and guide the advancing army, while the remaining seven stayed behind to jerk the meat, thus rendering it more portable. Steele met the riflemen next day at the third pond on the Great Carry, who told them that McKonkey and Clifton, overcome by the terribleness of the wilderness, had deserted their post and joined the main army. The first they met was a body of pioneers building a corduroy road over a

quagmire, and then the three companies, with Morgan at their head, "his leggings black with mud, and his bare thighs above them roughly handled by briars and bushes."

We now return to follow the fortunes of the four parties whom we left setting out from Fort Western in four detachments a day apart. Arnold remained behind until the last detachment was afloat and then, believing it a leader's province to lead, he took a light birch canoe propelled by Indians, and pressing forward swiftly passed all the detachments in turn until at Skowhegan Falls he reached Morgan in advance. Here the first portage of two hundred and fifty paces was encountered. With Colonel Greene and Major Bigelow of the second division, marched Dr. Isaac Senter, the surgeon, Aaron Burr, "and other gentlemen." When they came to rapids, notes Senter in his diary, the men would spring out waist-band deep in the icy flood; some would seize the painters, others push at the stern, and thus propel the craft into smoother waters. The batteaux, unwieldy, box-like flat-boats, square at both

ends, had been made of green lumber, which shrinking caused them to leak like sieves, wetting the flour and biscuit and spoiling half of them; stopping to calk the batteaux delayed them as much as the frequent portages. Arrived at one of the latter the batteaux would be hauled up, the stores unloaded, and with the batteaux be carried on men's shoulders around the falls. A fat ox was driven as far as Dead River, swimming the rivers and being driven round the swamps and bogs, there butchered, and each man "received a pound of fresh meat as he passed;" — they had been for twelve days on salt meat. Arnold passed and repassed in his swift boat heartening the men. "He had specie, a good pilot in a British canoe, hands sufficient to carry over quickly," but was mostly with the advanced party under Morgan. "A direful howling wilderness," the good doctor notes, "not describable."

Through this wilderness the army may be imagined as toiling along the route blazed by the pathfinders through the whole month of October. The fall rains came, turning the

streams into rushing torrents up which they pulled the boats by the bushes along the banks, drenching them to the skin, wetting the baggage and stores; once a hurricane tore through the forest, hurling the giant boles about as if they were jack-straws and killing one man. This was followed by snow and sleet and ice. On Dead River, October 13, Arnold, it is said with the concurrence of his officers, performed an act which showed serious lack of judgment, and defeated the main object of the expedition — the surprise of the enemy. He wrote a letter to certain friends of his in Quebec — "to John Marvin, or in his absence Capt. William Gregory, or Mr. John Maynard" — inquiring as to the disposition of the French inhabitants in Quebec, and enclosing one to General Schuyler, announcing his coming and disclosing his plans. This letter he sent by Emaus, a supposed friendly St. Francis Indian, who proved false, as might have been expected, and delivered both to the British commander in Quebec.

On reaching Dead River, Arnold caused an

accurate account of provisions to be taken, and found he had enough to last for twenty-five days; ten, he felt sure, would bring him to the Chaudière. As many were sick, he built a block-house hospital near the second pond, where the sick were left. Another had previously been built on the Kennebec. On the night of the 23d, during a fearful storm the Dead River rose nearly ten feet, and in pulling the batteaux up it next day seven of them were capsized and everything they contained — provisions, baggage, and some specie — was lost. This was a serious check, as they were in the heart of the wilderness and their larder was getting bare. To retrieve it, Arnold at once wrote to Colonel Enos, who was in the rear, to select as many of his best men as he could furnish with fifteen days' provisions, and with them hurry forward to join him, sending the rest back. Fifteen days more, he thought, would bring them to the French settlements. "I make no doubt you will join with me in this matter," he added, "as it may be the means of saving the whole detachment, and executing our plan." The

same day he wrote to Greene, in command of the second division. "Send back all the sick and proceed on with the best men. Pray hurry as fast as possible." And after, through snow and sleet, the struggling, starving army had surmounted the divide and had come down to the Chaudière, he wrote again, on the 27th, "to Greene, Enos, and the captains in the rear" to make all possible despatch, as a crisis in the fortunes of the expedition had arrived. Yet, in the face of this, Enos with his command deserted his chief and returned to Boston. At the same time Arnold wrote to Washington explaining at length the causes of his slow progress, — the excessive rains, the loss of provisions, the cold and snow, the sickness of the men.

"I have been deceived," he wrote, "by every account of our route, which is longer and has been attended by a thousand difficulties I never apprehended; but if crowned with success I shall think it but trifling." He added that the expedition was starving, that he found it necessary to himself hurry forward to Sartigan (the nearest French settle-

ment), purchase provisions, and send them back to the advancing companies. If he found the garrison was not informed of his coming he should attack Quebec as soon as a proper number of men should arrive.

Two days later, on his way to Sartigan, he wrote another encouraging letter "to the field officers and captains, and to be sent on that all may see it," saying he had just met some scouts who reported the French inhabitants as well affected, and that they would gladly supply provisions; that he had just met the party under Steele and Church; that he was pushing forward with all possible speed, and hoped in six days more to send back abundance of provisions; and exhorted them to keep up good courage, to hasten on with all possible despatch, and if any could spare provisions, to divide with those most needy.

From Chaudière down, all attempt to march in company formation seems to have been abandoned, and the men scattered through the woods, hoping the more readily to meet with game. Indeed their condition had be-

come most deplorable. Henry wrote: "Oct. 29 our provisions were exhausted. We had no meat of any kind. The flour was divided, and each man had five pints, and it was baked into five cakes under the ashes in the way of Indian bread. We slept on fir branches, and on awakening in the morning and the blanket thrown from my head, what was my surprise to find we had slept under at least four inches of snow."

Melvin notes in his diary that on October 30 they came to rapids in the river and a batteau laden with provisions for Captain Goodrich's company was stove, and all its contents lost. They had eaten almost nothing for several days, and waded through ice and water, and were still a great way from the inhabitants; they scattered and each man sought food for himself. October 31: "Goodrich's company marched three miles, when they were overtaken by Captain Smith, who said Captain Goodrich had left two quarters of a dog for them; they sent for the meat, but some one had taken it. They then killed another dog, which was eaten to the entrails."

The first dog was a large black Newfoundland belonging to Captain Dearborn, a great favorite with all, and the idol of its master, but sacrificed to grim necessity. Two women accompanied the soldiers in their march, cheerfully sharing their privations, — the wife of Sergeant Greer, and the wife of private Warner. Coming to a pond one day frozen over, they broke the ice with their gun-stocks and waded through it waist deep. Henry noted the endurance of Mrs. Greer, who waded before him to firm ground.

"Marching on without even the path of the savage to guide us, we found a batteau to take us across, which the providence of Colonel Arnold had stationed there for our accommodation.

"Thus we proceeded, and coming to a sandy beach of the Chaudière some men of our company were observed to dart from the file and with nails tear out of the sand roots which they deemed eatable and eat them raw. Powerful men struggled even with blows for these roots, such was the extremity of their hunger. During the day's march (November 2)

I sat down on the end of a log absolutely fainting with hunger and fatigue. A party of soldiers were making a broth. They gave me a cup of it." It proved to have been made from Captain Dearborn's dog.

But the troops ate food more unpalatable than dog's flesh: they first boiled and then broiled on the coals strips from their buckskin breeches, and made soup from their deer-skin moccasins; they ate roots and bark; many died in five minutes after staggering from the ranks and sitting down. Melvin records under date of November 1 that his company kept together and went twenty-one miles; ate the last of their provisions. November 2: "Travelled four miles. Shot a small bird and a squirrel. About noon met some Frenchmen with cattle for the army, and meat, in a canoe. Had a small piece of bread and meat given me. This evening arrived at the first French house, where supper was ready for us." The expedition was saved. "When we saw the cattle that Arnold had sent coming up the river," said one, "it was the joyfulest

sight I ever beheld, and some could not refrain from tears."

On the 8th of November Arnold was able to write to Washington that the detachments had all arrived within two or three days' march except "Colonel Enos' division, which I am surprised to hear are all gone back."

Stronger language might have been applied to the deserter, who, it is said, not only abandoned his comrades, but took with him more than his share of the provisions which had been intrusted to him as forming the rear-guard. On his arrival at Cambridge, Washington put him under arrest and had him tried by court-martial, which in the absence of witnesses, and with Enos' plea that his men were nearly all sick, and that his retreat had been decided on by a council of his officers, acquitted him; but he never regained the confidence of the soldiers, and soon left the army.

Thus ended this march, certainly one of the most wonderful in history. It was original in conception and execution; there had been nothing quite like it before and there has been

nothing since with the possible exception of Sherman's march to the sea. But Sherman had the resources of a great nation behind him; he marched through a civilized country of supplies, toward an objective point where powerful allies awaited him. Arnold, on the contrary, had no nation, no organization behind him. He marched through a wilderness in the teeth of approaching winter into an enemy's country, his objective the most strongly fortified post in America. That the expedition came out of the wilderness alive was attributable largely to his forethought, courage, patriotism, magnetism, and power over his men, and credit for it was cheerfully accorded him by Washington and his contemporaries.

CHAPTER V

THE ASSAULT ON QUEBEC

FOR a week Arnold remained at Sartigan reorganizing the "straggling and emaciated troops" as they came in, singly, by squads, and in companies. While here a delegation of about eighty Norridgewock and St. Francis Indians, through whose hunting grounds the army had passed, came to him, "all finely ornamented with brooches, bracelets, and trinkets," and demanded to know why he had thus invaded their country. Arnold in reply made a long and formal speech, in which he recited the differences between the colonies and the mother country, and concluded: "Now if the Indians, our brethren, will join us, we will be very much obliged to them, and will give them one Portuguese per month, two dollars bounty, and find them their provisions, and the liberty to choose their own officers." The

speech proved very effective, as the whole body joined the provincials and rendered effective service in the subsequent operations.

The moment all were in and ready Arnold put his Spartan band in motion, for he still had hopes of surprising Quebec. On the way down the valley he scattered liberally the "address;" but although the habitans were friendly and supplied him with provisions — for a consideration — no considerable body of them enrolled under his standard, and that hope had to be given up. Although the troops were weakened by privation they made the march of seventy-five miles to Quebec in three days, and reached Point Levi, on the St. Lawrence opposite the stronghold, on December 13.

Let us pause a moment to describe the stronghold which their weary eyes descried rising on its frowning cliffs beyond the broad and swiftly flowing river. Founded by the great French navigator Champlain, in 1608, its fortifications were planned by French engineers accounted the greatest masters of their art then alive. The town was divided

into three sections, the upper and lower towns, and the citadel. The lower town was a mass of warehouses, stores, and shanties of laborers and the lower orders, covering a few acres of flat land between the base of the cliff and the river, where ships moored to discharge cargo, and where the importing and exporting business of the town was done. Over the lower town hung a nearly perpendicular cliff, some three hundred feet high, a mass of black slate carrying quartz crystals imbedded in it like plums in a pudding, which, sparkling in the sunlight, gave to the promontory its name — Cape Diamond. The streets of this quarter were winding, narrow, and steep. The broadest and steepest was Mountain Street, which, commencing near the centre of the lower town, climbed the face of the cliff through a narrow passage-way to the upper town, — a passage raked its whole distance by cannon mounted on intersecting barriers and parallel intrenchments. It was always wet, and in winter slippery with ice. This street afforded the only means of access from the lower to the upper

town. A wall, two and three-quarter miles long, defended the upper town from attack by the Plains of Abraham, which lay on the west and north, the precipice of Cape Diamond being its defence on the east and south. From the great bastion of Près de Ville on Cape Diamond the wall ran inland toward the northeast some eighteen hundred yards, and from twenty to thirty feet in height, to meet the inequalities of the ground, and separating the suburbs of St. Louis, St. John, and St. Roque from the upper town, to the Palace Gate, having in this distance four bastions — La Glacière, St. Louis, St. Ursula, and Potasse — flanking the gateways of St. Louis and St. John.

From Palace Gate the wall turned sharply to the right, and continued along the face of the cliff overlooking the St. Charles River three hundred yards, where it met an elevation of land which acted as a natural fortification and completed the line of defence. This great wall was further protected by a deep moat or ditch, and bristled with heavy mortars and cannon which commanded the

The St. John's Gate, built in 1693, rebuilt in 1867.

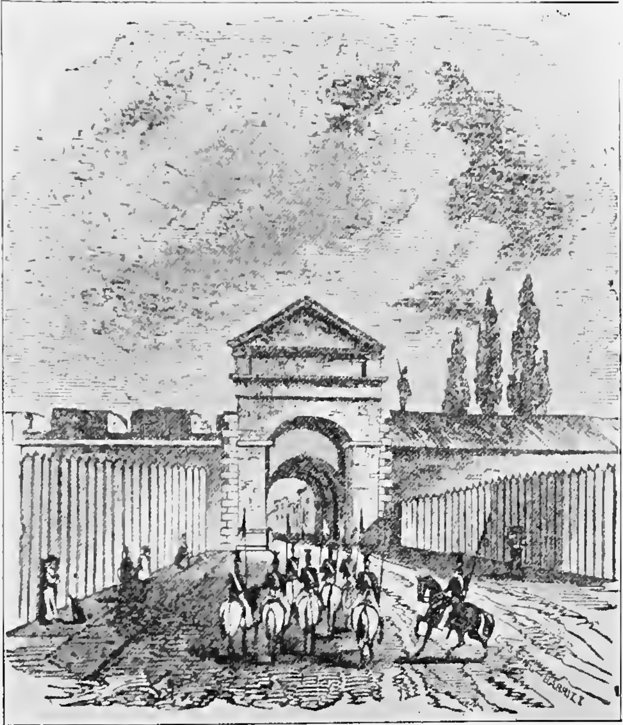
upper and lower towns and all approaches to them. The only access to the citadel was by a winding road leading from the Gate St. Louis, hewn from the solid rock and raked by the guns of the bastions. Before the lower town rode the British frigate "Lizard," Captain Hamilton, of twenty-eight guns, and the sloop of war "Hunter." For garrison, under command of Sir Guy Carleton, an able and veteran officer, were: the 84th Regiment of Royal Emigrants, under Colonel Allen McLean; British militia, under Major Henry Caldwell; French Canadian militia, under Colonel le Comte Dupré; and a battalion of seamen commanded by Captain Hamilton of the "Lizard,"—all told, between eight and nine hundred men, regulars, militia, and seamen.

Above the squalor and dirt of the lower town Arnold's men could see the glittering roofs and towering spires of the public buildings, the charitable and religious houses of the upper town,—the Government House, the Castle St. Louis, Hôtel Dieu, Church and Convent of the Récollets, the Seminary

of Quebec, — and many private mansions set in gardens and orchards.

Arnold had preceded the main body by three days in order to collect boats for passing the river, but found to his dismay that the British had burned or secreted every available craft along the shore for twenty miles. With his accustomed energy he set carpenters to work, and with what they could construct and what they could collect had ready a fleet of about thirty birch-bark canoes when the army arrived. With these on the night of the 14th he succeeded in passing five hundred men to the opposite or Quebec shore. By daybreak on the morning of the 14th the little army had surmounted the steep, and were drawn up on the Plains of Abraham before the city.

Sixteen years before, Wolfe, with his Englishmen and provincials, had fallen there at the moment of victory. Then the French held the citadel, and an English army with its New England allies were the invaders. Now the Provincials attacked, and the English defended. Of the former, there were



The St. Louis Gate, built in 1693, razed 1871.

some six hundred effective men, ragged, worn, footsore, armed with unserviceable muskets, and with only five rounds of ammunition to a man; yet, adopting the tactics of Wolfe, and hoping that the citizens within might rise, Arnold marched his men up to the walls, cheered, waved his standards, and tried every means to provoke the enemy to a sortie. But Lieutenant-Governor Cramaha and Colonel McLean were too wise to leave the shelter of their walls, standing in mortal dread of the aim of the American riflemen, of whose skill they had often heard; nor did the citizens make any demonstration except to return the cheers of the "Bostonians." Arnold also sent a messenger with a flag demanding surrender, but it was fired on, the British commander refusing to hold any parley "with rebels." Hearing of the approach of reinforcements, and his own ammunition being nearly exhausted, Arnold now moved his army to Point aux Trembles, some twenty miles up the St. Lawrence, a good strategic point for purposes of defence, and intrenching, waited for reinforcements under Mont-

gomery. The latter had succeeded Schuyler as commander of the Northern army, and had been very successful, having taken Montreal and St. John's. It was vitally necessary to communicate with him quickly, and having no faith in Indians or Canadians after his previous experiences, Arnold called for volunteers from the ranks. For a moment no one responded; in truth it was a service one might think twice before engaging in. Eighty miles of wilderness stretched between them and Montreal, infested with wild beasts, and what was worse, scouting parties of Indians and royalists under orders to intercept any messenger that the American commander might send. Besides, on this No-man's-land Death reigned supreme, hunger in one hand, Arctic cold in the other. Of all that hardy company none volunteered, until at last a stripling stepped forward, one whose place throughout the march had been with the leaders in the van rather than with laggards in the rear,—Aaron Burr, "son of the former President of the College of New Jersey." Burning with patriotism and the

laudable desire of fame, this "amiable youth," as Henry styles him, had risen from a sick bed in Cambridge, and volunteered as a private in the ranks, but failing of acceptance because of his physical condition, had joined the expedition as a "gentleman volunteer."

His conduct through the long march had aroused the admiration of the army. A few days in the woods had restored him to his wonted vigor; his skill in boating, gained while at college, placed him at an early stage of the march in command of a batteau, where he did yeoman service, himself steering and directing the unwieldy craft with unerring skill, while his naturally hardy frame, and abstemious habits acquired while at college, enabled him to bear up under privations that overcame many men of double his weight and inches. Once his boat went over a twenty-foot fall that, hidden by a bend, suddenly opened before them, and the crew barely escaped with their lives. On several occasions his heroic conduct had come under Arnold's eye, and now, after some hesitation because of his extreme youth, the commander-

in-chief accepted him. While Burr was making his brief preparations Arnold wrote this letter to Montgomery:

POINT AUX TREMBLES, 30th November, 1775.

DEAR SIR: This will be handed you by Mr. Burr, a volunteer in the army and son to the former President of New Jersey College. He is a young gentleman of much life and activity, and has acted with much spirit and resolution on our fatiguing march. His conduct I make no doubt will be a sufficient recommendation to your favor.

I am, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. ARNOLD.

BRIGADIER GENERAL MONTGOMERY.

Burr had already formed his plan of campaign. Knowing the Catholic clergymen to be averse to British rule, he went direct to a monastery near by and asked to see the father-in-chief; to him, after feeling his way a few moments, he frankly disclosed his true character and the object of his mission, and asked his aid.

Burr at this time was a high-spirited, pure-hearted youth, handsome as a girl, his face glowing with courage and resolution, and the

good father was captivated by him at once. "You show great faith in human nature, my son," he said.

"My heart tells me whom to trust," replied Burr.

"Well, well. It will be no doubt to the glory of God to aid you." He supplied him with the hat and frock of a priest, with a guide and a letter to the next religious house, and disguised in this manner the emissary was passed quickly and safely along the wilderness paths; although, as they neared Montgomery's lines, so thick were the enemy's scouts that it was necessary to lie by for two days. But the verbal instructions were safely delivered, and Montgomery at once put his little band in motion to effect a junction with Arnold. So pleased was he with the address and daring of the young messenger that he made him his aide at once. Burr, on his part, conceived a strong attachment for his noble chief, which found expression a few weeks later in his attempt to bear off his body from under the walls of Quebec amid a storm of bullets from the victorious enemy.

Montgomery joined Arnold at Point aux Trembles on December 3, with three hundred men only, — all that were able to endure the forced march, — but with sufficient clothing, provisions, and ammunition. Of the eleven hundred who had marched from Cambridge three months before he found six hundred and seventy-five only, but these, he says, were of "a style of discipline much superior to what I have been used to see in this campaign." "Arnold's corps," he wrote to Schuyler two days after his arrival, "is an exceedingly fine one, and he himself is active, intelligent, and enterprising."

The two commanders seem from their letters to have been mutually pleased with each other. Montgomery, as the ranking officer, took command, but he was ably and cordially supported by Arnold. The generals found that together they could muster about a thousand men wherewith to storm the strongest fortress in America, — nine hundred and seventy-five Provincials, raw levies all, two hundred French Canadians which Arnold had raised, and the St. Francis Indians he had

gathered in on his march. What was to be done had to be done quickly, for the term of enlistment of many of the men would expire on December 31, and they were anxious to return to their families; besides, the inclement season rendered rapid action imperative. Montgomery sent a flag to demand the surrender of the town, but it was fired on as Arnold's had been. Then, probably at the suggestion of Arnold, he wrote an "extravagant and menacing letter," which met with the reception that might have been foreseen — General Carleton refused to have "any kind of parley with rebels."

"Well," said Montgomery, "to the storming we must come at last."

He called a council of his officers and the unanimous voice was for an assault. One can but admire their infinite nerve — there in the depths of the wilderness, hundreds of miles from any succor or base of supplies; there is really nothing quite like it in the history of warfare. The plan of attack was simple: Arnold was to strike on the side of St. Roque; Montgomery simultaneously was

to assault the lower town from the river near Cape Diamond, and there were to be two feigned attacks on other quarters.

The night of December 31 was chosen for the attack. It came with a snowstorm — a favorable condition. At two in the morning word was passed and silently the attacking columns formed and moved to the walls. That he might be recognized in the mêlée, each man wore in his hat band a strip of white paper on which some wrote the patriot slogan "Liberty or Death." Montgomery's column marched from the latter's headquarters at Holland House to Wolfe's Cove on the river, thence down stream two miles to the barrier under Cape Diamond. In a few moments the sappers and miners had cut away the pickets of the barrier, and the storming party rushed on to the gate, which was defended by a blockhouse with a battery of two three-pounders and a few soldiers and seamen from the British ships. In the van with Montgomery marched his aides, Burr and McPherson, the former leading a forlorn hope of forty men armed with ladders for scaling the walls.

Taken wholly by surprise the guard in the blockhouse showed a disposition to fly, and could Montgomery have pressed on he might have taken the gate and gained the city; but the main body of his men were a few hundred yards behind, and he paused a moment for them to come up. That moment was fatal. The British officers had time to rally their men "who stood to their guns with lighted linstocks."

"Men of New York," shouted Montgomery, "follow where your general leads! Come on, my brave boys, and Quebec is ours."

They sprang forward, but as they came up one field-piece loaded with grape was discharged full in their breasts. The noble form of Montgomery plunged forward and lay quivering in the snow, with his aide, McPherson, and eleven others beside him. Captain Aaron Burr, of all that were in the van, alone remained upright. Seeing their leaders fall, those behind broke and fled. Captain Burr, after vainly attempting to rally his men, seized the body of Montgomery in his arms and bore it several yards through the falling

snow with the bullets of the enemy whistling about his ears; but the latter making a sortie just then, he was obliged to drop it and flee to avoid capture. This gallant act was witnessed among others by his college chum, the chaplain, Rev. Samuel Spring, who many years after narrated it; and although all mention of it has been studiously suppressed by the historians, so-called, who have written of the assault, the fact remains and the glory of it; of the comrades of Aaron Burr in this memorable march none could be found to engage in the shameful hue and cry raised against him by revengeful enemies in later life.

Let us now turn to the northeastern quarter of the town, where Arnold himself led a forlorn hope to the attack. The point approached was the Palace Gate, which it was hoped to carry by surprise; but as the column arrived near it, there fell through the swirling snow-rifts the clangor of bells and roll of drums, showing they were discovered, while a storm of grape and canister tore through their ranks. Bending their heads against

The Palace Gate, built in 1750, rebuilt in 1831, razed 1871.

the driving snow and covering their gun-locks with coats to keep their powder dry, the intrepid leader and his men rushed along in single file, followed by Morgan and his riflemen, and by Lamb dragging a single field-piece upon a sled. In the Sault au Matelot they found the first barricade in a narrow street commanded by a battery and by neighboring houses, from which soldiers fired upon them; here the same casualty befell them as had overtaken their fellows. Arnold fell, his leg broken by a musket-ball. He arose and endeavored to press forward cheering on his men, but was unable to stand, and two soldiers bore him to the rear. Day was just breaking. Morgan now took command, led on the attack, ably seconded by Greene, Porterfield, and others, carried the battery, taking its defenders prisoners, rushed on to the second barrier, and endeavored to carry that also; but the garrison had now been reinforced by those relieved by the failure of Montgomery's attack, and the gallant fellows were repulsed leaving Morgan, Meigs, Greene, and many others in the hands of the

enemy. Everybody supposed the British would improve their advantage and attack in turn, when no doubt they could have captured the entire army. Arnold, on his back in bed in the improvised hospital, expected it. Says Dr. Senter in his journal, "We entreated Colonel Arnold for his own safety to be carried back into the country where they could not readily find him, but to no purpose. He would neither be removed nor suffer a man from the hospital to retreat. He ordered his pistols loaded, with a sword on his bed, adding he was determined to kill as many as possible if they came into the room. We were now all soldiers; even the wounded in their beds were ordered a gun by their side, that if they did attack the hospital they might make the most vigorous defence possible. Orders were also sent out into the villages round the city to the captains of the militia to immediately assemble to our assistance." But kind Providence, shall we say, put into the heart of Carleton such distrust of his populace, or such fear of the American rifles, that he forbore to attack, and the devoted band escaped.

Arnold by the death of Montgomery became commander-in-chief, and still had hopes of accomplishing his task. On January 6 he wrote from his sick bed: "I received a wound by a ball through my left leg at the time I had gained the first battery at the lower town, which by loss of blood rendered me very weak. As soon as the main body came up I retired to the hospital, near a mile on foot, being obliged to draw one leg after me, and a great part of the way under the continued fire of the enemy from the walls at no greater distance than fifty yards;" yet he adds: "I have no thoughts of leaving this proud town until I first enter it in triumph." He maintained a close siege until the first of April, when General David Wooster, whom he had defied at New Haven, and who had been appointed to command the Northern army, arrived and took control.

Neither Congress nor the country was insensible to the services of Arnold during this winter. When news of his gallantry before Quebec reached the former body it unanimously appointed him Brigadier Gen-

eral, and by his countrymen at large his name was joined with those of Montgomery and Wolfe, whose memories are imperishably associated with these sanguinary heights.

At the time Wooster arrived Arnold had sufficiently recovered from his wound to ride, and the day after received a serious mishap by being thrown from his horse while visiting an outpost, which confined him to his bed for some time. When fully recovered he asked for and obtained leave of absence and retired to Montreal; his reasons for the step he gives in a letter to General Schuyler dated April 20: "Had I been able to take any active part I should by no means have left camp, but as General Wooster did not think proper to consult me I am convinced I shall be more useful here than in camp, and he very readily granted me leave of absence." Even into Canada the rancor of his enemies in Connecticut pursued him.

Practically this ended Arnold's campaign in Canada,—and the general campaign for that matter, since Wooster adopted the Fabian policy and did nothing; and in June,

the British government having reinforced its army in Canada with thirteen thousand men — Irish, English, and Germans — to make its attack on New York and split the colonies in twain, the American army quitted Canada, Arnold being the last man to leave its shores. Sullivan, who succeeded Thomas, who relieved Wooster of command of the Northern army, retreated first, leaving Arnold to hold Montreal, which was the last post given up, and protect his retreat. Arnold held it until the British hosts under Burgoyne were almost in sight, when he retreated rapidly to St. John's, on Lake Champlain, pulling up the bridges behind him, — "a very prudent and judicious retreat, with the enemy close at his heels," wrote Sullivan to Washington on June 19.

To a certain extent his expedition had proved abortive, but his harshest critic will scarcely dare maintain that it was through his fault. The causes for it are very judicially summed up by Chief Justice John Marshall in his Life of Washington:

"It was a bold and at one time promised to be a successful effort to annex this exten-

sive province to the United Colonies. The disposition of the Canadians favored the measure, and had Quebec fallen there is reason to believe the colony would have entered cordially into the Union. Had Arnold been able to reach Quebec a few days sooner, or to cross the St. Lawrence on his first arrival, or had the gallant Montgomery not fallen in the assault on the 31st of December it is probable the expedition would have been crowned with complete success. But the radical causes of the failure were: the lateness of the season when the troops were assembled, a deficit in the preparation, and still more the shortness of the term for which the men were enlisted."

He might have added to these causes want of proper support at home. The invading army never was supplied with money, arms, provisions, and munitions of war sufficient for the undertaking. Said Arnold in one of his letters: "We labor under almost as many difficulties as the Israelites did of old — obliged to make brick without straw." In April, 1776, Congress sent three commis-

sioners — the venerable Benjamin Franklin, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Samuel Chase — to inquire into the condition of the Northern army and its failure to perform the work assigned it. They reported: "The army is in a distressed condition, and is in want of the most necessary articles, — meat, bread, tents, shoes, stockings, shirts, etc. They say they were obliged to seize by force flour to supply the garrison with bread, but men with arms in their hands will not starve when provisions can be obtained by force. Soldiers without pay, without discipline, living from hand to mouth, grumbling for their pay; and when they get it it will not buy the necessaries of life. Your military chest contains eleven thousand paper dollars, and you are indebted to your soldiers treble that sum, and to the inhabitants about fifteen thousand."

Thus hedged about with difficulties if Arnold on one or two occasions exceeded his powers who can blame him? Military necessity knows no law.

CHAPTER VI

TICONDEROGA AND THE LAKE

LAKE CHAMPLAIN, lying between the green hill-ranges of Vermont on the east and the wooded peaks of the Adirondacks on the west, clear, blue, islanded, and forest-hung, was, as before remarked, the natural, and in 1776 the only highway from Canada to New York. Control of it was essential to the British for their proposed plan of invasion which should dismember the colonies; it was equally vital for the Americans to retain it, and both parties now began to make preparations for the heady battle which should decide its ownership. After the reverses in Canada, General Horatio Gates was appointed to the command of the Northern army. He was at this time forty-eight years of age, an Englishman, born in Malden, England, who had been trained in the English army, and owed his influence with Congress chiefly to that fact and to his ser-

vices in the French and Indian Wars, he having been one of the officers saved from the perils of Braddock's defeat by the skill and daring of a young Virginian surveyor,—George Washington. Gates was courtly and suave, an intriguer and wire-puller, the bravest of the brave in drawing-rooms and before congressional committees, but on the field of battle a weakling and poltroon.

The American army under his direction now retreated to Crown Point, thence by decision of a council of the officers to Ticonderoga, there to dispute for the supremacy of Champlain.

Sir Guy Carleton, in command of the British forces, quickly advanced to St. John's, at the northern end of the lake, and the struggle was on. The odds were so greatly in favor of the British that for the Americans to dispute them seemed the height of folly; that the latter succeeded so long in holding their foe at bay can but awaken our heartiest admiration; surely such fighting qualities and such staying power were never before exhibited by any people.

Carleton had everything at command that the practically exhaustless treasury of Great Britain could supply, — ships, seamen, naval stores, munitions of war; the admiralty sent him out at least three war vessels especially adapted to lake service, — one, the "Inflexible," a three-master of twenty twelve-pounders, and ten smaller guns. Contractors and shipbuilders were also sent from England, who built at Montreal two hundred batteaux which were transported overland to St. John's. The larger vessels were taken to pieces, carried across, and reconstructed at the same place. For men to man them Carleton had seven hundred picked seamen taken from the British fleets and transports in the St. Lawrence. The Americans, on the other hand, had nothing save a few sloops and flatboats, little money, no ship timber, no naval stores, no skilled shipwrights, no guns, no munitions of war. To add to their fleet they must cut timber in the neighboring forest and shape it into ships. Everything else must come from the Atlantic seaboard over the almost impassable roads of the wilderness; but when the

British sailed down the lake, there behind Valcour lay the American fleet to oppose them. It was really one of the most remarkable achievements of the war. One man did it and saved the colonies from invasion that year, giving them breathing space and time to muster their resources for the life-and-death struggle of the succeeding summer.

To Arnold, Washington, Schuyler, and Gates at this supreme moment instinctively turned. Let us see what he did in this feat of making brick without straw. He was not himself a shipwright; it is not probable that he could muster a ship carpenter in his whole force who had served a regular apprenticeship. Tools, sails, shrouds, iron-work, guns, munitions, must be hauled and boated from Albany with infinite labor; and then his men must go into the forest, chop down the trees, hew them to the proper shape and length, and put them together in the semblance of ships. The latter were crude creations no doubt, but two weeks before the British sailed in their pride, Arnold had to oppose them three schooners, two sloops, three galleys, and eight gunboats.

He was appointed, besought, implored to command the fleet his genius had created. This, although he had never before manœuvred a fleet, and for captains and seamen must depend largely on landsmen; for gunners, on men who had never seen artillery. The signals, manœuvres, and evolutions of a fleet he must first learn himself, and then teach his men. Surprise was expressed by his fellow-officers at his relinquishing command of the right wing to accept that of the fleet, but there lay the path of duty, there his country greatly needed him, and there was to be fighting under fearful odds, with consequent glory.

While engaged in these herculean efforts he must needs turn about and defend himself from a fire in the rear. One of the bitterest enemies he had made was Lieutenant-Colonel John Brown, who had formed one of the Connecticut contingent which had marched against Ticonderoga in 1775 under Colonel Easton. Their unfriendliness began with the clash of authority as to who should command at that time. After the assault on Quebec

Arnold wrote a letter to Congress charging that Brown had been "publicly impeached with plundering the officers' baggage taken at Sorel," that it was the topic of public conversation at Montreal, and protesting against that officer's promotion until the matter should be cleared up. Brown characterized this charge as "false, scandalous, and malicious," and demanded a court of inquiry, which was denied. He applied to General Wooster on his arriving to take command, and was again refused; he made the same complaint to the Committee of Congress, and met with the same rebuff; to General Schuyler, with a like result.

Wooster, at least, was no friend to Arnold, and if there had been no ground for Arnold's charge, it is certain that Brown's request would have been granted. However this may be, it was not long after the army's retreat ere General Arnold became aware that many scandalous stories concerning him were being circulated, covering many years of time and a wide range of scene, all emanating from one source — Colonel Brown.

These culminated early in December, 1776, by the latter's filing thirteen formal charges against Arnold, beginning with the affair at Ticonderoga in 1775, and continuing through his subsequent career at Cambridge and in Canada. These charges were contained in a letter to General Gates, couched in violent and heated terms, asking for the summary arrest and trial of the accused officer. The charges were as a rule trivial and puerile; the most important related to his seizure of certain goods from the merchants of Montreal while he was in command of that post, and holding it in the face of the enemy, a short time before the retreat. Arnold's first mention of the affair is in a letter to the Committee of Congress, dated June 2, in which he writes: "I am making every possible preparation to secure our retreat. I have secured six tons of lead, ball, shot, and merchandise. The inhabitants I have not yet taken hold of; I intend to begin to-morrow. Everything is in the greatest confusion. Not one contractor, commissary, or quartermaster. I am obliged to do the duty of all."

Four days later he wrote to Schuyler: "I have received your instructions respecting the Tories and their effects; most of the former have absconded — great part of the latter is secured. I have sent to St. John's a quantity of goods for the use of the army, some bought, some seized." The goods were sent, in care of Major Scott, to Chamblay with orders to deliver them to Colonel Hazen, the officer in command there. Hazen refused to receive them; the goods lay unguarded for several days, and some of the packages were broken open and rifled. Arnold reported these facts to both Generals Schuyler and Sullivan, and asked that Hazen be court-martialled for disobedience of orders. A court-martial was accordingly ordered, but when it sat, it refused to hear the testimony of Major Scott, Arnold's principal witness. Arnold indignantly protested against the refusal as "unprecedented and unjust." The court refused to enter the protest, because it appeared to them "illegal, illiberal, and ungentlemanlike." It also directed its President to demand satisfaction, which he did, in the following language:

"SIR: As you have evidently called in question, not only the honor, but the justice of this court, by the illiberal protest you exhibited, the court have directed me — and as President of this court, I deem it my duty — to inform you that you have drawn upon yourself their just resentment, and that nothing but an open acknowledgment of your error will be considered as satisfactory." As every officer of this model court was far inferior in rank to Arnold, the impudence of this demand is refreshing. The latter replied promptly: "The very extraordinary vote of the court, and directions given to the President, and his still more extraordinary demand, are in my opinion, ungenteel, and indecent reflections on a superior officer, which the nature and words of my protest will by no means justify; nor was it designed as you have construed it. I am not very conversant with courts-martial, but this I may venture to say: they are composed of men not infallible; even you may have erred. Congress will judge between us, to whom I will desire the General to transmit the proceedings of

this court." He concluded by assuring them that when the war was over they should have all the satisfaction their nice sense of honor might require, but declining to grant their request. The court sent the papers to Gates, demanding the arrest of Arnold. In reply, Gates dissolved the court, and sent the papers to Congress, with a letter which contained the following comment: "Seeing and knowing all the circumstances, I am convinced if there was fault on one side, there was too much acrimony on the other. I was obliged to act dictatorially, and dissolve the court-martial the instant they demanded General Arnold to be put under arrest. The United States must not be deprived of that excellent officer's services at this important moment."

The incident is noteworthy as showing the rancor of the enemies by whom Arnold was surrounded at this time, and incidentally the discipline prevailing in the army of invasion. Gates' letter also shows that he entertained a much higher opinion of Arnold at this time than he did a few months later, when he deprived him of command on the eve of the

most important battle of the war. As to the charges, Arnold's letters show them to have been false, and a subsequent Committee of Congress, after an exhaustive investigation, reported them groundless.

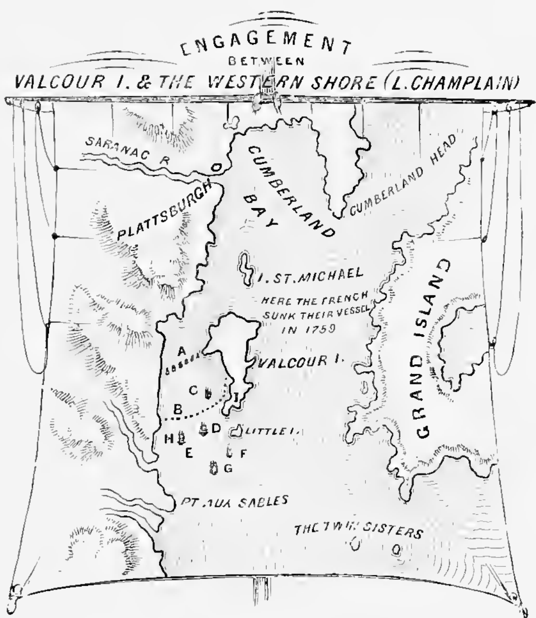
CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST NAVAL BATTLE ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

EARLY on the morning of the 11th of October, 1776, the guard boats of the American fleet reported the British ships in the offing, evidently advancing to attack. One look convinced Arnold that the hour of struggle for command of the lake had arrived. He had chosen his position with consummate skill. Fifty miles down the lake from Crown Point lay Valcour Island, trapezium-shaped, in the widest part of the lake but so near its western shore that only a narrow channel intervened; so that to one ascending the lake it might easily be mistaken for an out-jutting promontory. In 1776 it was densely wooded, as were the adjacent shores of the mainland. Across this narrow channel, between island and main, Arnold moored his ships, each flank protected by the shore. His fleet com-

prised three schooners and a sloop, armed with four and six pounders; eight gunboats, armed with nine and twelve pounders; and three galleys, carrying three or four eighteen-pounders each, — in all seventy guns.

The British fleet was commanded by Captain Pringle, a gallant officer of the British navy; but Carleton was himself on board, with the chief officers of his army, so that his men fought under the eye of their commander. Seven hundred picked seamen manned the ships. The latter were far superior to the American fleet both in number and weight of metal. They comprised the "Inflexible," before described, two schooners, — the "Lady Mary" and the "Carleton," — a floating battery, the "Thunderer," and over two hundred flat-boats and transports, with a combined armament of ninety-three guns, some of heavy calibre. From its position the American fleet was wholly hidden from the view of an enemy ascending the lake, and in choosing it, it was no doubt Arnold's intention to let the enemy pass and then assail him in the rear, taking him by sur-



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prise; he may have shrewdly reasoned also that raw militia would be apt to fight better with the enemy between them and their only line of retreat.

Proudly before a stiff northwester the British bore down the lake looking for their prey; few thought the Americans would dare to fight. "The rascals won't give us a chance to burn powder," said Pringle on the quarter-deck of the "Inflexible." "Wait and see," replied Carleton grimly, having had a taste of Arnold's mettle at Quebec. As the British passed the southwestern corner of the island they became visible to the American fleet, and Arnold saw that the smaller vessels had drawn ahead beyond the protection of the heavier ones. The opportunity was too good a one to be lost. He at once dashed out after them in his flagship, the "Royal Savage," followed by the galleys but leaving his line unbroken. The enemy closed in on him, however, quicker than he had anticipated, and he attempted to regain his line. To do this it was necessary to beat, and in coming round with her inexperienced

crew the "Royal Savage" ran aground and had to be abandoned, Arnold transferring his flag to the "Congress."

The British having started their quarry now ranged their ships in a parallel line three hundred and fifty yards distant from the Americans, and at half-past the meridian the battle was on in earnest. Previously Carleton had landed one thousand men and stationed them along both shores to pick up such men as should escape to land after he had blown their makeshift craft out of water, while a select corps of Indian sharp-shooters were ordered into the tallest trees on either bank to pick off the Americans as they fought, — a ruse that availed him little, however, from its having been foreseen by the wary Arnold, who protected his men by fascines fixed to the vessel's sides. Arnold anchored the "Congress" in the centre of his line, and with his men stood like a rock against the repeated assaults of the foe, who again and again attempted to break his line, but in vain. More than once the enemy's leading vessels fell to the rear to repair

damages, and when night brought the sanguinary action to a close his line was fully six hundred yards distant. Nor had the Americans escaped injury. The "Congress" and the "Washington" were the most seriously injured. The former had been hulled twelve times, had received seven shots between wind and water, her mainmast was nearly severed in two places, and her rigging cut to pieces. The captain and master of the "Washington" were wounded and her first lieutenant killed, and the vessel herself nearly as badly shattered as the "Congress." The "Philadelphia" had been pierced below the water line so many times that she sank an hour after the engagement. The "New York" lost every officer except her captain. A marvellous gift Arnold had of inspiring every man under him with his own desperate valor. Of his little force of five hundred men, eighty had been killed and wounded.

All through the heady fight, Arnold is said to have pointed his guns himself, having no gunners he could trust. "Never mind," said Pringle as the British withdrew, having

wholly failed to break the American line. "We have winged the bird, and will pick him up in the morning; he cannot escape us." So it seemed in all human probability, for the British lay between the crippled Americans and their base at Ticonderoga; and so it would have been with almost any other leader. After nightfall, Arnold called a council of war on board the "Congress," which decided to retreat. Several plans for evading the enemy were discussed. "There is but one way, gentlemen," said Arnold, "and that is to run the gantlet of the British line. The place to strike is where the enemy is n't looking for you." The night favored his design. It was misty, and the wind came out of the north — a fair wind. The foe, never dreaming of such temerity, kept no unusual watch, and silently as ghosts, with every lantern out except a stern light as a guide for the following ship, the whole fleet stole by the slumbering Englishmen, Arnold in the "Congress" bringing up the rear, and bore away up the lake as fast as the freshening breeze would waft them. They were so crippled, however,

— some waterlogged, some deficient in spars and rigging, — that they made slow progress, and many were the anxious glances cast behind, as the sun rose over the bold and wooded eastern shores. When Schuyler's island, some twelve miles down the lake, was reached, the water had so increased that it was found necessary to stop, pump out the ships, and repair damages. Here Arnold sent off an express to Gates, informing him of the retreat, and adding that as soon as they could stop the leaks, they would press on to Crown Point. "We have great reason to return our hearty and humble thanks to Almighty God, for preserving and delivering so many of us from our more than savage enemies," he added.

It was found that two of the gondolas were so badly injured that they had to be sunk; with the rest of the fleet Arnold moved on, but the wind which had before been fair, now failed, and then sprang up from the south, hindering their advance. Sweeps were got out, but added very little to their progress. So the night passed. Next morning, when

the rising sun dissipated the fog-banks, they saw away to the north the whole British fleet bearing down on them. Pringle had found it necessary to spend a day in repairs, but was now in excellent fighting trim, and confident of victory. What he said on finding that his bird had flown, on the morning of the 12th, has not come down to us.

Arnold saw that he must fight again, or submit to the ignominy of capture. The "Congress" and the "Washington," with two or three galleys, were still in the rear; these turned at bay like a wounded lioness in defence of her young, while the rest of the fleet was commanded to make all haste for the desired port. The British were soon upon them, and after a few broadsides, Colonel Waterbury, of the "Washington," ingloriously struck his colors, whereupon the enemy turned his whole attention on the "Congress" and the galleys. The "Inflexible," of eighteen twelve-pounders, and a schooner of fourteen six-pounders, ranged themselves under her stern, another of twelve sixes on her broadside, and the three poured their concentrated

fire of round shot and grape into her; but Arnold knew that the safety of his fleet depended on his holding the enemy at bay, and for four strenuous hours he kept up the unequal fight, the British momentarily expecting to see his starry flag descend, and in every chasm and uplift of the volleying smoke, still seeing it floating at his masthead. Gradually other hostile vessels came up and surrounded him, until seven were pouring in their broadsides. Under this fire the "Congress" became a wreck, not a whole plank in her, her masts, rigging, and sails torn to fragments; but still her gallant commander refused to surrender. The vessels had gradually worked near shore, and he now contrived to get the "Congress," and gunboats into a small creek, and ordering the marines to leap overboard, and wade ashore with their small arms, he set fire to the vessel, the marines meantime keeping off the small boats of the British, which were at once lowered when the object of the Americans became apparent. When the fire was well kindled, the cry was, "All overboard!" and commander and crew escaped

safely to shore. But here their troubles were by no means over, for many miles of tangled wilderness intervened between them and safety, and Carleton had at command savage allies, keen as hounds on the forest trail, and eager for scalps; these allies were, indeed, set on, but Arnold and his men eluded them, and arrived safely at Ticonderoga, where they rejoiced to hear of the escape of their comrades.

Of the many gallant sea-fights in history,— Trafalgar, Aboukir, Flamborough Head, New Orleans, Hampton Roads, Manila, Santiago,— none show such desperate valor under fearful odds, such patriotism, self-sacrifice, high sense of duty, as this. Arnold's instructions were to hold the enemy in check, "to act with such cool, determined valor" as would cause him to repent of his temerity; and nobly did he fulfil his trust.[1] Yet Valcour has never been

[1] General James Wilkinson, whose account of the battle was had from Sergeant of Marines Cushing (later brigadier general), who served on Arnold's flagship (which account we have largely followed), charges that Arnold exceeded his instructions in venturing so far down the lake, and that his chief motive was by a desperate fight to win personal glory.

celebrated in song; there is no mention of it in the school books, although Perry's victory

The following are Gates' official instructions, dated August 7, 1776:

"Upon your arrival at Crown Point you will proceed with the fleet of the United States under your command down Lake Champlain to the narrow pass of the lake made by Isle aux Têtes and the opposite shore. You will station the fleet in the best manner to maintain possession of those passes according as your judgment shall determine, cautiously avoiding to place the vessels in a manner which might unnecessarily expose them to the enemy's heavy artillery from the shore.

"You will most religiously observe that it is my positive order that you do not command the fleet to sail below the pass of the Isle aux Têtes above mentioned, incessantly reflecting that the preventing the enemy's invasion of our country is the ultimate end of the important command with which you are now intrusted. It is a defensive war we are carrying on, therefore no wanton risk or unnecessary display of the power of the fleet is at any time to influence your conduct. Should the enemy come up the lake and attempt to force their way through the pass you are stationed to defend, in that case you will act with such cool, determined valor as will give them reason to repent their temerity.

"But if, contrary to my hope and expectation, their fleet should have so increased as to force an entrance within the upper part of the lake, then, after you shall have discovered the insufficiency of every effort to retard their progress, you will, in the best manner you can, retire with your squadron to Ticonderoga. Every vessel in the fleet being furnished with a batteau, you will have it in your power to keep out scout boats at night, and occasionally to annoy the enemy's small craft. In the daytime your boats will act when oppor-

on Lake Erie is a household word ; so greatly may one infamous act obscure a whole lifetime of noble deeds. At the time the whole country rang with his praises; no officer probably had a greater following among the rank and file of the army ; all desired to follow where he led, as was shown the following autumn at a most critical instant in his country's history. Gates in sending Arnold's report of the battle to Schuyler wrote: "It has pleased Providence to preserve General Arnold. Few men ever met with so many hair-breadth escapes in so short a time;" and on the 14th of October, in General Orders published to the army, he returned "thanks

tunity offers, under cover of the cannon of the fleet. As the most Honorable the Congress of the United States rests a great dependence on your cautious and prudent conduct in the management of the fleet, you will on no account detach yourself from it upon the lesser service above mentioned. A resolute but judicious defence of the northern entrance into this side of the country is the momentous part which is committed to your courage and abilities. I doubt not that you will secure it from further invasion."

After some general details he concludes: "It only remains for me to recommend you to the protection of that Power upon whose mercy we place our hopes of freedom here, and happiness hereafter."

to General Arnold, and the officers, seamen, and marines of the fleet for the gallant defence they made against the great superiority of the enemy's force." Washington, Franklin, Schuyler, Trumbull — all the purest patriots of the Revolution — at this time loved, respected, and trusted him.

Carleton did not attack Ticonderoga. The lateness of the season, the strength of the fortress, and the taste of the fighting qualities of the Continentals gained at Valcour were no doubt the real reasons, although the first-named was the one publicly given out.

The campaign being over, Arnold in December set out to visit his children, who were being tenderly cared for by his sister Hannah in New Haven, but on his way made a detour to visit his beloved commander-in-chief, — then in winter quarters on the banks of the Delaware.

The British were at this time threatening a descent on the coast of New England, and Washington sent our hero with General Spencer to Rhode Island to assist General Heath in rallying the militia to its defence.

In Rhode Island and in Boston he spent the winter of 1776–77, drilling the raw troops he had raised, and begging in frequent letters to Washington that he might be allowed to lead them against the enemy, who had occupied Newport; but Washington refused on the ground that his force was insufficient for any promise of success.

During this winter an event occurred which no doubt had an important bearing on Arnold's future career. Congress, it was known, would appoint five new major-generals for the army. Arnold and the country expected that he would be one, both from his public services and his priority of rank; but when the election was announced on the 19th of February, 1777, it was found that Arnold had been passed over in favor of Stirling, Mifflin, St. Clair, Stephen, and Lincoln, all his juniors in rank, and one, Lincoln, taken from the militia. We now know it to have been due to the intrigues of the New England men in part, and in part to that powerful cabal just now gathering head, which was aimed at Washington and Schuy-

ler, and skilfully manipulated by Charles Lee, Gates, and a few other officers of equal calibre. Arnold was justly indignant, but bore himself with dignity and composure. Washington was astounded; he feared he would lose one of his ablest fighting generals, and they were none too plentiful at most.

"I am at a loss to know," he wrote Arnold, "whether you have had a preceding appointment, as the newspapers announce, or whether you have been omitted through some mistake. Should the latter be the case I beg you will not take any hasty steps, but allow proper time for recollection, which I flatter myself will remedy any error that may have been made; my endeavors to that end shall not be wanting."

Arnold wrote in reply: "I am greatly obliged to your Excellency for interesting yourself so much in my behalf in respect to my appointment, which I have had no advice of and know not by what means it was announced in the newspapers. I believe none but the printer has a mistake to rectify. Congress undoubtedly have a right of pro-

moting those whom, from their abilities and their long and arduous service, they deem most deserving. Their promoting junior officers to the rank of major-generals I view as a very civil way of requesting my resignation, as unqualified for the office I hold. My commission was conferred unsolicited, and received with pleasure only as a means of serving my country. With equal pleasure I resign it when I can no longer serve my country with honor. The person who, void of the nice feelings of honor, will tamely condescend to give up his right and retain a commission at the expense of his reputation, I hold as a disgrace to the army and unworthy of the glorious cause in which we are engaged. When I entered the service of my country my character was unimpeached. I have sacrificed my interest, ease, and happiness in her cause; it is rather a misfortune than a fault that my exertions have not been crowned with success. I am conscious of the rectitude of my intentions. In justice, therefore, to my own character, and for the satisfaction of my friends, I must re-

quest a court of inquiry into my conduct: yet every personal injury shall be buried in my zeal for the safety and happiness of my country, in whose cause I have repeatedly fought and bled, and am ready at all times to risk my life. I shall certainly avoid any hasty steps (in consequence of the appointments which have taken place) that may tend to the injury of my country.")

These are not the words of a man who in a fit of pique at slight or calumny could betray an important trust confided to him by his country. Washington wrote to his friend, Richard Henry Lee, then a member of Congress from Virginia, inquiring as to the cause of Arnold's non-appointment, who replied that each State claimed the right of naming general officers, according to the quota furnished by each. General Greene also made inquiry and learned that as Connecticut had already two major-generals, it was her full share and she could not expect more. On this principle, residence, and not merit or service, would place officers in command. "I confess this is a strange mode

of reasoning, but it may serve to show you that the promotion which was due to your seniority was not overlooked for want of merit in you," wrote Washington in a letter in which he endeavored to disarm the just resentment of his subordinate and keep him in the army, and which served its purpose — Arnold did not resign.

The opportunity to show that his wrongs would not deter him from taking up arms in his country's defence very soon came. In April, 1777, he left Providence for Philadelphia, and stopped en route to visit his sister and children in New Haven. While he was there the whole country side was aroused by news that Tryon, the former royal governor of New York, had landed at Westport, some twenty-seven miles west of New Haven, with a large force, evidently with the intention of attacking Danbury, twenty-four miles in the interior, where Governor Trumbull, of Connecticut, had stored large supplies for the army. Arnold was on his horse in an instant, and spurring away to meet the few hundred continentals and militia that his old

foe, General Wooster, then in command of the district, had at once called to arms. He joined Generals Wooster and Silliman at Reading, eight miles from Danbury, next day, and local tradition says swore like the army in Flanders on learning that the British were then encamped in Danbury, having burned the stores and pretty much all the town. In a heavy northeast rain storm the little army of six hundred men, mostly militia, pressed on to Bethel, within three miles of the foe, and there bivouacked. That night Tryon heard of the gathering of the clans, and early on the morning of the 27th started to retreat to his ships, which had been ordered to meet him at Norwalk, taking a circuitous route through Ridgefield on the west. When the patriot generals at Bethel heard of this they at once formed a plan to capture, or at least harass the invaders, whose force exceeded theirs nearly four to one. General Wooster, it was agreed, should follow the enemy in their rear and harass them whereever possible, while Arnold and Silliman with the main body of troops should make a forced

march across country, reach Ridgefield in advance of the enemy, intrench and give battle, thus enabling Wooster to come up and assail their rear. This plan was carried out admirably, except that Wooster struck the British before they had reached Ridgefield and in the sharp action that ensued was himself mortally wounded and his command scattered, thus enabling the enemy to give his undivided attention to Arnold. The delay, however, enabled the Continentals to reach the then pretty little village in time to throw a slight barricade of carts and wagons, felled trees, earth and stone across the highway along which the British were retreating. Ridgefield, now the summer home of wealth and fashion, was then a quiet country town, with its one wide main street shaded by noble elms and maples after the fashion of New England villages. Just without the town was a spot where the road narrowed, with a house and barn on one side and a ledge of rocks on the other; here Arnold threw up his breastworks and posting his men behind them, waited. His

ability as a fighting general was well known to the Connecticut farmers, and in his hurried march across country they had joined his standard in such numbers that he could muster five hundred men, indifferently armed and equipped, and raw recruits, it is true, but men fighting for their homes and firesides. Tryon had nearly two thousand men, mostly regulars, picked men of the British army, with several field-pieces, and led by some of the ablest officers in the British service, General Agnew among them. But Arnold fought best under fearful odds; it seemed to exhilarate him and induce a frenzy bordering on madness. So now when the British appeared, marching in solid column down the pike, no thought of retreat entered his head; and here again his wonderful power over men asserted itself, for of all those raw levies not one at the critical instant deserted his standard. Tryon no doubt thought the opposing force larger than it really was, for he halted, opened a brisk fire with his field-pieces, and sent out flanking parties both to left and right, to turn the American flanks

and gain their rear. Arnold returned the British fire with spirit, and for some time held his position against the whole British force; then a flanking party under Agnew appeared on the summit of the ledge of rocks above his head, and seeing that the position was untenable he ordered every man to save himself, and turned his horse to retreat. But a whole platoon of Agnew's infantry came running down the rocks and fired point-blank at him when not more than thirty yards distant. His horse fell with nine balls through him, but Arnold, strange to say, escaped unscathed; his spurs, however, became entangled in his stirrups, and he was unable to rise; seeing which a soldier rushed at him with lowered bayonet shouting, "Surrender! you are my prisoner."

"Not yet," replied Arnold, and drawing a pistol from his holster he killed the man on the spot; then with a supreme effort freed himself, and leaping to his feet escaped into a neighboring swamp pursued by a shower of balls and again escaping unhurt. The British soon after encamped, but Arnold kept his

saddle all that night, rallying his men and posting them so as to cut off the British next day. A hard struggle the latter had of it next morning in regaining their ships, for the farmers swarmed on every side like hornets and opened fire on them from rock, tree, and bush as well as from houses and barns; many a British officer and soldier bit the dust, and the whole force would probably have been captured had not Sir William Erskine landed a force of marines from the fleet and sent them to the relief of their beleaguered comrades. In this battle Arnold had a second horse shot under him, while a bullet passed through the collar of his coat.

When the last sail of the enemy fleet had disappeared he continued his interrupted journey to Philadelphia, where fresh trials and responsibilities awaited him.

CHAPTER VIII

ASKS FOR A SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

ARNOLD'S gallant conduct at Ridgefield overbore the influence of his enemies, and the long delayed appointment of major-general was made; but the adverse influence was sufficient to prevent full justice being done: he was not restored to the seniority of rank justly due him, but was still outranked by the five major-generals who had been promoted over his head. Congress also voted "That the Quarter-Master General be directed to procure a horse and present the same, properly caparisoned, to Major-General Arnold in the name of this Congress, as a token of their approbation of his gallant conduct in the action against the enemy in their late enterprise to Danbury, in which General Arnold had one horse killed and another wounded."

Immediately on arriving in Philadelphia he addressed a letter to Congress, calling

attention to the charges of Lieutenant-Colonel Brown and others, and urging that a full investigation of his conduct from his first taking up arms might be made. "I am publicly impeached," he very justly said, "of a catalogue of crimes which, if true, ought to subject me to disgrace, infamy, and the just resentment of my countrymen;" and he asked that a searching investigation be made, "that justice might be done to the innocent and injured." He enclosed a letter from Washington to the President of Congress asking that Arnold might have "an opportunity of vindicating himself and his innocence." "It is needless to say anything of this gentleman's military character," added the Commander-in-chief. "It is universally known that he has always distinguished himself as a judicious, brave officer, of great activity, enterprise, and perseverance."

Arnold's letter was referred to the Board of War, which reported, on the 23d of May, that it had conferred with General Arnold on the charges of Lieutenant-Colonel Brown, had had all the original orders, letters, and papers

before it, had examined them, and had questioned Mr. Carroll, one of the former Committee of Congress to Canada, now a member of the Board of War, which "have given entire satisfaction to this Board concerning the General's character and conduct, so cruelly and groundlessly aspersed in the publication." Congress resolved "That the said report be confirmed."

This matter out of the way, Arnold next asked that his accounts might be audited and he granted a release. These were quite voluminous, beginning with the expedition to Quebec, and continuing to the battle of Valcour Island. A committee of investigation was accordingly appointed, and wrestled with the mass of documents for some months. This committee found in the accounts some items that seemed to give color to the charges of Arnold's enemies of peculation and fraud, but when one considers the character of his service, how the purchases were made, and the nature of the man, it is only charitable to suppose him perfectly honest and honorable in the matter.

Arnold was generous, humane, and sympathetic almost to a fault. He had almost unlimited credit in Canada, where he was well known before the war, and when he saw his soldiers hungry, ragged, sick, he used his credit, after his money had gone, to supply their necessities. In some cases he may have been extravagant. He himself repeatedly declared that he had spent a handsome private fortune in the service of his country. Whatever may have been their reasons, the committee held back their report. In the meantime Arnold was appointed to the command of the force which had been collected near Philadelphia to watch the movements of Howe, who was suspected of a design on the latter place. On his way back from the East, Washington had offered Arnold command of the Hudson, — one of the most honorable appointments in the army; but he had declined it, in order to attend to his affairs before Congress. The present duty he discharged with his usual fidelity, and when Howe retired toward New York again returned to Philadelphia, to urge on Congress

restoration to his rank and settlement of his accounts. Neither was granted, and at last he wrote that body tendering his resignation, but declaring that he was driven to it by a sense of the great injustice done him. He was still an ardent lover of his country, he wrote, and willing to take up arms in her defence; "but," he added, "honor is a sacrifice no man ought to make; as I received, so I wish to transmit it to posterity."

The very same day Congress received a letter from Washington, saying that a large British army, under General Burgoyne, was advancing from Canada down Lake Champlain, evidently to carry out the plan of campaign of the preceding year, which had been temporarily abandoned on the approach of winter. It was now seen that Howe's advance was only a feint — the true theatre of war was to be the broken country lying between Lake Champlain and Albany.

In this letter Washington earnestly asked that Arnold be sent to take command in that quarter.

"He is active, judicious, and brave," he

wrote, "and an officer in whom the militia will repose great confidence. Besides this, he is well acquainted with that country, and with the routes and most important passes and defiles in it. I do not think he can render more signal services, or be more usefully employed at this time, than in this way."

One can imagine the expression on the faces of Arnold's enemies in Congress, on receipt of this letter; but knowing the feeling in that body against him, Washington followed this letter, two days later, with another even more imperative. Referring to his former request that Arnold be appointed, he continued: "Being more and more convinced of the important advantages that will result from his presence and conduct, I have thought it my duty to repeat my wishes on the subject, and ask that he may, without a moment's loss of time, set out from Philadelphia for that purpose."

What Congress would have done in the matter must be left to conjecture. Arnold himself relieved them of the dilemma, by volunteering for service at the North. The

letters of his chief aroused the better nature in him, while the prospect of another bout with the British on his old camping ground aroused all his martial ardor. He knew that St. Clair, his former junior, who had been promoted over him, was in command of the Northern army, and to relieve all embarrassment, he decided to volunteer, leaving to Congress to take up the question of his resignation, when the service was over.

"He would do his duty faithfully in the rank he then held," he wrote, "and trust to the justice of his claims for a future reparation."

Again one is tempted to ask, "Was this the man to betray his country in a fit of pique at the neglect and injustice of Congress, or for a few hundred pounds of British gold?" Yet to these two causes alone have historians attributed Arnold's later infamous treason.

CHAPTER IX

THE BATTLE OF SARATOGA

CRESSY places Saratoga among the fifteen decisive battles of the world. It was the Gettysburg of the Revolution. One general won it: Benedict Arnold.

The English plan of campaign was excellent, one may say perfect, theoretically. General John Burgoyne, a veteran of the wars in Portugal, and esteemed the ablest general in the British service, was sent out to take command, relieving Sir Guy Carleton. He was given a magnificent army of veterans — grenadiers, infantry and artillery, with four thousand German troops, hired at so much per head, and under command of Baron Riedesel, a brave and experienced officer. He had as assistants Major-General Phillips and General Fraser, both considered among the ablest in the service, and besides the regulars, useful as scouts and light infantry, a

considerable body of Indians and Canadians, thoroughly acquainted with the country; in all, a body of about ten thousand men. With this army he was to move by the old familiar route of Lake Champlain, to Albany or its vicinity, where he was to be joined by a second army of regulars, loyalists, and Indians, which was to disembark at Oswego on Lake Ontario, cross over to the head waters of the Mohawk, descend that stream, and form a junction with Burgoyne where it enters the Hudson, a few miles above Albany. The combined force was then to descend that noble river, scattering the American forces on the way, and effect a junction with Clinton, who was to ascend it from New York. It was a very promising scheme, and but for one man would no doubt have succeeded.

By the 2d of July Burgoyne's army had arrived in the vicinity of Ticonderoga. In that historic fortress, and in another recently erected across the lake opposite, St. Clair and his army were posted to dispute his passage. The lake there was very narrow, and, being commanded by the guns of both forts, it was

believed no enemy could pass. But by some fatality the American engineers had failed to see that two neighboring eminences, called Sugar Loaf Hill and Mt. Hope, commanded both forts, and had failed to fortify them: the British engineers at once noticed this omission, and on the night of the 4th made a road to the summit of Sugar Loaf, and ere day dawned, had a battery in position there, which could throw round shot and shell into Ticonderoga with ease. Of course, after that, there was nothing for St. Clair to do but retreat, which he did with alacrity, to Fort Edward, in the valley of the Hudson, some twenty miles above Saratoga, the British pursuing, but held in check at Hubberton by the brave partisans of Warner and Francis.

It was this near approach of Burgoyne which led Washington to urge Congress to send forward Arnold, and which at last led that stiff-necked body to consent to his going. Arnold, on his way North, reached Washington's headquarters on the Hudson on July 16, and received full verbal instructions

from his chief, the two going over the whole ground, and Arnold being fully informed as to the wishes and opinions of the commander-in-chief, which he was to communicate to Schuyler and St. Clair on meeting them. The same day, Washington wrote to Schuyler that "Arnold, although he conceives himself, if his promotion had been regular, as superior in command to General St. Clair, yet he generously upon this occasion lays aside his claim, and will create no dispute, should the good of the service require him to act in concert."

On the same day he issued a letter to the "Brigadier-Generals of Militia in the western parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut," which showed anew his appreciation. "General Arnold," he wrote, "who is so well known to you all, goes up at my request, to take command of the militia in particular, and I have no doubt but that you will, under his conduct and direction, repel an enemy from your borders who has brought savages with the avowed intent of adding murder to desolation."

A few days later Arnold reached the camp of Schuyler at Fort Edward, the latter having assumed command after St. Clair's inglorious retreat, and was at once given command of a division. Burgoyne continued to advance, and gradually pushed Schuyler down the Hudson to Stillwater, about four miles east of the present Saratoga, where the American general had decided to make a stand.

While lying here a letter was brought to Arnold stating that the matter of his rank had been brought before Congress, and that on an aye and nay vote — the first, it is said, ever cast in that body — his request for a restoration to rank had been denied. It was a cruelly unjust and shameful act. Again calumny and personal enmity had triumphed over honest merit, as they have done so often in the history of mankind, and as they will continue to do. Arnold was deeply indignant, and again asked permission of Schuyler to resign, but was persuaded by that pure-minded patriot to wait until the crisis now rapidly approaching was over. "No public or private injury or insult," he wrote Gates,

"shall prevail on me to forsake the cause of my injured and oppressed country, until I see peace and liberty restored to her, or nobly die in the attempt."

While lying at Stillwater intelligence was brought Schuyler that St. Leger's invading column had reached and invested Fort Stanwix (later Schuyler) in the valley of the Mohawk, on the present site of the city of Rome.

The messenger brought an earnest and pathetic letter from Peter Gansevoort, the brave and determined officer in command of the fort, setting forth the horrors of Indian warfare that would overtake the valley if the enemy should carry the fort, and imploring succor. Schuyler was for sending a relieving column at once but on calling a council of his officers all save Arnold declared against it. It would weaken the army, they said, already smaller than the force confronting it. Schuyler is said to have felt their opposition deeply. He walked the floor a few moments puffing his clay pipe furiously, then, crushing the pipe into fragments as he brought his jaws together in decision, he said: "Gentle-

men, I shall take the responsibility. Fort Stanwix and the Mohawk valley shall be saved. Where is the brigadier who will command the relief? I shall beat up for volunteers to-morrow."

Not one stepped forward, — whereupon Arnold, although a major-general and second in command, volunteered, thus relieving his juniors of any embarrassment. Schuyler accepted his offer with the greatest satisfaction. Next morning when the drums beat for volunteers eight hundred men stepped out of the ranks, for dearly the rough-and-ready frontiersmen loved a fighting general.

It was not the custom of Arnold in conducting a military expedition to let the grass grow under his feet. On the 20th of August he was at Fort Dayton on the German Flats, and called a Council of his officers to decide whether to go on or not, as the enemy's force exceeded theirs two to one. The Council decided that it would be imprudent and putting too much to the hazard to go forward until the army was reinforced. Arnold, after waiting two days for reinforcements to come in,

"which they did in great numbers," determined to push on and risk a battlė rather than "see the garrison fall a sacrifice."

But first he decided to employ a stratagem to force the enemy to retreat, which reads like a chapter of "Leather Stocking." His scouts had brought in a half-witted Dutchman named Hon Yost Cuyler, who with one Lieutenant Butler, a Tory, was caught at a public meeting within the American lines, in which Butler was making a speech urging the people to join the British cause. Both were promptly tried by court-martial and sentenced to be hanged as spies. The mother of Hon Yost came to Arnold to intercede for his life. Arnold knew that Hon Yost was well known to the Mohawk Indians, who regarded him with that superstitious awe with which the red man invests the insane and idiotic, as one stricken by Manitou. He now told Hon Yost and his mother that he would spare the former's life if he would hasten to the camp of St. Leger and by false and exaggerated statements of his (Arnold's) forces and proximity induce the Indians and Tories to decamp.

Simultaneously a friendly Oneida Indian was to enter the camp and support Hon Yost in his statements. Yost, who had a fair degree of cunning and shrewdness mixed with his madness, was only too glad to escape the noose so easily, and at once disappeared in the forest, his coat having first been shot full of holes to give color to his story that he had escaped from the rebels while on his way to be hanged as a spy.

St. Leger's Indians had become restless and discontented; they had been promised plenty of scalps and unlimited plunder; instead they had had plenty of fighting only. The battle with Herkimer at Oriskany had sadly decimated their ranks, and the news that another fighting general with a large force was near at hand disquieted them greatly; in fact, when Hon Yost reached the camp they were holding a council to consult their Manitou in the matter. Pale, breathless, eyes staring in terror, garments rent by the enemy's bullets, the mysterious one, the smitten of Manitou, burst into their presence.

"It was true," he declared, "the terrible Bostonians, led by their heap fighting chief, were at their doors, and in numbers like the leaves of the forest. They had taken him, he was being led to the gallows, when he escaped and hurried to warn his red brothers at once." At the same time the Oneida entered the camp on a different side and spread similar tidings. The news drove like wildfire; the effect was startling. One of those inexplicable panics that sometimes seize men whose nerves have become unstrung by long exposure to danger, fell upon the camp. The Indians first fled, disappearing like ghosts in the forest depths, then the Canadians, and after them the regulars in wild, unreasoning flight, throwing away arms, knapsacks, blankets, everything that could retard their progress. The siege of Fort Stanwix had been raised by a half-witted Dutchman and the terror inspired by the name of Benedict Arnold.

All the artillery, tents, baggage, wagons, etc., fell into the hands of the Americans. Better than all, the strong right arm of the

invading force had been lopped off at a blow. Henceforth Burgoyne must depend on his army alone.

Arnold returned in triumph to his camp at Stillwater, only to find that the intriguing Gates had succeeded the patriotic Schuyler, and was now in command of the Northern army. With Gates he had hitherto been on friendly terms, but now he was to experience a change, for his successful relief of Fort Schuyler (or Fort Stanwix, as it was then called) had so enhanced his reputation with the army and throughout the country that the envious Gates saw in him a rival to be dreaded and destroyed.

All fear of St. Leger being removed, the American army could now devote its sole attention to Burgoyne, and that brave commander soon gave it work to do. On his return Arnold found that the left wing, his division, was stationed at Loudon's Ferry, on the south bank of the Mohawk, about five miles above its junction with the Hudson. Gates was about to select a position where he could throw his army across Burgoyne's

path and give him battle, and intrusted the task to Arnold. The latter, with the aid of Kosciusko, the Polish engineer, selected a long range of hills on the west bank of the Hudson, known as Bemis' Heights, about four miles east of Saratoga, which with other hills farther west and flat ground extending from the base of Bemis' Heights to the river bank Kosciusko proceeded to fortify. Here Gates' whole army was massed — its right under the immediate command of Gates himself resting on the river and extending across the flats to Bemis' Heights; the centre, under Learned, comprising his brigades of New York and Massachusetts troops, holding Bemis' Heights, and the left, commanded by Arnold, holding the detached hills still farther west, about three quarters of a mile from the Hudson, and composed of Poor's brigade, the Connecticut militia, Dearborn's infantry, and Morgan's famous riflemen.

By September 18 Burgoyne had moved down within two miles of the Americans and taken position, and a battle was imminent. The British line began at the river, extended

across the flat, over the range of hills which was a continuation of the Bemis' Heights range, and about half a mile farther west to the isolated hills opposite Arnold's position. His left rested on the river and was supported by a heavy train of artillery. His centre and right wing were intrenched on the hills and were commanded by Burgoyne in person. They were composed largely of the German troops. His front and flanks were covered by the Indians, Canadians, and loyalists.

Burgoyne quickly formed his line of battle. For the attack on the American line he divided his force into three columns, which were to move simultaneously half a mile apart, — the right wing under Brigadier-General Fraser, the centre commanded by himself, the left wing under Major-Generals Phillips and Riedesel. Fraser had the British Light Infantry, the Grenadiers, and the 24th Regiment, supported by Colonel Breyman's German Riflemen. The centre comprised the 20th, the 21st, and the 62d regiments; the left wing, the artillery and

the German corps under Riedesel. The left was ordered to move along the bank of the Hudson, Burgoyne took another road half a mile inland, while Fraser was to deflect to the right, and take the Quaker Springs Road which ran about a mile from the Hudson and parallel to its course. The two last-named columns were to unite in front of the American line and strike the American left by surprise. The country, now one of the finest farming districts of the Empire State, was then covered with heavy forests, dark and gloomy, where twilight reigned even at midday, and it was arranged to give intelligence of the movements of the columns by signal guns: when the centre and right wing had effected a junction three guns were to be fired as a signal for a general assault along the whole line.

The three columns got under way at ten o'clock on the morning of the 19th. It was a bright, clear day and bracing air, with a hoar frost still sparkling on the leaves untouched by the sun. The Americans were not to be taken unawares, as the British very

soon found. They had stationed scouts in the tallest trees on the heights, who quickly caught the stir and bustle in the British camp — the rattle of small arms, the gleam of brilliant red uniforms, the rumble of heavy artillery — and hurried with news of it to their superiors. Arnold, keenly alert, wished to attack the columns while on the march and off their guard, as he believed they could easily be thrown into confusion, but Gates would give no orders and showed no disposition to fight. His officers were ready, Arnold begged, stormed, and entreated, but still he could get no orders. At length Gates consented to let Dearborn's infantry and Morgan's riflemen go in. They soon met the skirmish line of loyalists and Indians and scattered them like chaff, but when they struck the redcoats of Fraser and Burgoyne they rebounded and sought cover in the woods. For a moment Morgan feared his famous corps was "ruined," but on sounding loudly his shrill woodsman whistle — known by his partisans as the "turkey call" — they rallied about him, and Dearborn's regiments

coming up at the critical instant the battle raged with renewed fury. As soon as it became apparent that the conflict was to be general, Arnold took command of his division and led it during the day. This fact has been denied by Bancroft, on the sole authority of the later infamous James Wilkinson, who was adjutant to Gates on this day, but is too well established by testimony of eye-witnesses to admit of cavil.

His first object was to get into the gap between Fraser and Burgoyne, and taking the former on the flank detach him from the centre, but Fraser was too good a soldier to be caught in that way, and presenting a solid front a most desperate and sanguinary hand-to-hand fight was waged in and about a little clearing in the forest, known as Freeman's Farm. For some hours Arnold's one division held both Burgoyne's and Fraser's columns at bay — yes, and at times drove them back; for again and again Morgan's riflemen captured the British guns, but could not turn them on the enemy because they had no linstocks and the fleeing artillerists were always careful

to take theirs with them. Again and again Arnold sent for reinforcements, which were refused, Gates saying he must protect his camp. Had he been properly supported he would no doubt have won a decisive victory on that day. Phillips, out on the river road, hearing the crash and roar in the woods, and surmising — good soldier that he was — what had occurred, hurried Breyman's riflemen and the grenadiers to the support of the sorely beset centre and right. These fresh troops turned the day just when the victory seemed within the grasp of the Americans. Although the battle raged with the utmost fury until night put a stop to it, neither side could claim a victory. The patriots withdrew into their intrenchments, and the British bivouacked on the field.

"But for Arnold on that eventful day," remarks Lossing, "Burgoyne would doubtless have marched into Albany at the autumnal equinox a victor." The British officers declared it the most skilfully directed and hardest-fought battle they had engaged in in America. Arnold was the only major-gen-

eral on the field, and the honor of it belonged to him. But in the despatches of the commander-in-chief announcing the battle neither his name nor that of his gallant division was mentioned. Arnold took offence at this, justly, and in a letter to Gates declared: "On the nineteenth, when advice was received that the enemy was approaching, I took the liberty to give it as my opinion that we ought to march out and attack them. You desired me to send in Colonel Morgan and the light infantry, and support them; I obeyed your orders, and before the action was over I found it necessary to send out the whole of my division to support the attack. No other troops were engaged that day except Colonel Marshall's regiment."

This statement was made in the face of the whole army only a few days after the battle and was never questioned; if not true is it not certain that it would have provoked a thousand indignant denials?

Gates, having found that he had a subordinate who would win battles in spite of him, determined to get rid of him at any cost;

hence his ignoring him and his command in the despatches to Congress; hence the studied coldness and even disrespect with which he treated him personally. Arnold would have resigned, but the voice of the army was raised in protest. All the general officers — except Lincoln — united in a round robin begging him not to leave the army at that critical time. The gallant Colonel Henry B. Livingston, a former aide to General Schuyler, in a letter to the latter dated four days after the battle, gives a detailed and authoritative account of the quarrel between the two men.

"I am much distressed at General Arnold's determination to retire from the army at this important crisis. His presence was never more necessary. He is the life and soul of the troops. Believe me, sir, to him is due the honor of our late victory: whatever share his superiors may claim, they are entitled to none. He enjoys the confidence and affection of his officers and soldiers. They would to a man, follow him to conquest or death. His departure would dishearten them to such a degree as to render them of little service.

The difference between him and Mr. G. [Gates] has risen to too great a height to admit of compromise. I have for some time past observed the great coolness, and, in many instances, even disrespect with which General Arnold has been treated at Headquarters. His proposals have been rejected with marks of indignity. His orders have been frequently countermanded, and himself set in a ridiculous light, by those of the commander-in-chief. His remonstrances on those occasions have been termed presumptuous. In short, he has pocketed many insults for the sake of his country, which a man of less pride would have resented. The repeated indignities he received at length roused his spirit and determination again to remonstrate. He waited upon Mr. Gates in person last evening. Matters were altercated in a high strain. Both were warm — the latter rather passionate, and very assuming. Toward the end of the debate Mr. G. told Arnold he did not know of his being a major-general. He had sent in his resignation to Congress. He had never given him the command of any

division of the army. General Lincoln would be here in a day or two, and that then he should have no occasion for him, and would give him a pass to Philadelphia whenever he chose.

" Arnold's spirit could not brook this usage. He returned to his quarters, represented what had passed in a letter to Mr. G., and requested his permission to go to Philadelphia. This morning, in compliance to his letter, he received a permit, by way of a letter, directed to Mr. Hancock. He sent this back, and requested one in proper form, which was complied with. To-morrow he will set out for Albany."

At the request of the general officers, and out of regard for country, he consented to remain, as we have seen. The foregoing facts throw a flood of light on Arnold's conduct in the second battle, to which we now turn.

CHAPTER X

THE SECOND BATTLE OF SARATOGA

AFTER the 19th of September, the position of Burgoyne's army became critical. St. Leger, his right arm, had been destroyed; the Continentals were closing in on his rear, cutting off his communication with his base, and capturing his supplies and their convoys. Before him was an army, superior in numbers, and flushed with the pride of victory. Many and anxious counsels were held by the British officers in these early days of October; whether to retreat or to fight was the question. Riedesel advised a retreat to Fort Edward, the gallant Fraser was ready to fight, Phillips advised a detour, a rapid march, and a falling upon the American left. Meantime reinforcements were flocking to the Americans, and the situation each day was becoming more serious. At length it was decided to make a reconnais-

sance in force on the morning of October 7, and if there was a probability of success, bring on a battle. Accordingly at ten o'clock Burgoyne led in person a picked body of fifteen hundred troops to high ground, three fourths of a mile west of the American position, and formed line of battle behind a dense forest. He had previously sent five hundred Indians and provincials by a circuitous route to gain the American rear, and there attack, while he assailed them on front and flank. The British advance was quickly discovered, and news of it brought to Gates. He sent his adjutant-general, Wilkinson, to learn what it meant. Wilkinson reported that in his opinion they proposed to offer battle.

"What is the nature of the ground?" asked Gates; "and what is your opinion?"

"Their front is open; their flank rests on woods under cover of which they might be attacked. Their right is skirted by a height; I would indulge them."

"Well, then, order on Morgan to begin the game."

Morgan at his own request was allowed to

lead his men to a ridge on the enemy's right, where he waked him up with a galling fire. At the same time Poor and Learned with their brigades made a spirited attack on his left. The Indians and provincials had previously attacked the rear and had been driven back.

The British line at the moment of attack was as follows: Fraser, with five hundred picked men on the right, a little in advance, with orders to attack the Americans in flank when the Indians struck their rear; the Germans under Riedesel, and the British under Phillips in the centre; the grenadiers under Major Ackland, and the artillery under Major Williams on the left; with the light infantry under the Earl of Balcarras on the extreme left.

The American plan was for Morgan to attack the British right the moment the guns of Poor and Learned announced that they had struck the left. This occurred at half-past two. Steadily the New York and New Hampshire men marched up the slopes of the knoll where the grenadiers and artillery were stationed, with orders to withhold their fire

until after the enemy had delivered his. The British fired high, as was inevitable in aiming down hill; grape, canister, and musket-balls crashed through the trees over the heads of the on-rushing Continentals. They returned the fire and were up and over the crest in an instant, capturing the guns at the point of the bayonet, only to have them retaken the next instant, by the rallying British. One field-piece was thus taken and retaken four times. At length Colonel Cilley, who led his regiment in person, leaped upon the piece and waving his sword dedicated it to the patriot cause, then springing down he whirled it round and discharged it against the rallying enemy, — for to-day the Americans had provided themselves with linstocks. With their leader, Major Ackland, severely wounded, their chief of artillery, Major Williams, a prisoner, and their guns in the hands of the foe, the British — what was left of them — now broke and fled. The summit of the knoll is said by eye-witnesses to have been a veritable slaughter house. Eighteen dead grenadiers lay upon the ground, and many

more wounded ones — among them three officers — were propped against the trees. Simultaneously with Poor's attack, Morgan had poured down from his hilltop and struck Fraser with such force that the latter's men wavered despite their gallant leader's efforts to hold them to their work; at the same moment Dearborn, with two New England regiments, came up and poured in so deadly a fire that the column broke and fell back on its supports, — Riedesel's Germans of the centre. These Morgan took on the flank, while Dearborn assaulted their front, but they held their ground sturdily. Meantime Fraser, having rallied his troops and seeing the Germans so sorely beset, now came to their aid with the 24th Regiment. Mounted on a large gray horse, dressed in the full uniform of his rank, spurring his charger here and there, inspiring wavering regiments with his own sublime courage, reforming the lines bent and broken by the galling fire or impetuous charges of the Americans, he was the most conspicuous figure on that field of death.

It was at this moment that Benedict Arnold

broke like a whirlwind upon the scene. Deprived of command, he had chafed all day in his tent like a caged lion. At last when the tremendous roar told that the battle had become general he could bear it no longer, and exclaiming that no power on earth should keep him in his tent that day, he sprang upon his great black thoroughbred and followed by his aides rushed like a madman into the battle, placing himself at the head of Learned's brigade,—part of his former command,—which greeted him with cheers. Gates sent an aide to order him back, "lest he do something rash," but Arnold's horse was the faster, and he escaped his pursuer. Arnold's quick eye at once saw that Fraser was the animating spirit of the British, and calling Morgan he said, "That officer upon the gray horse is himself a host and must be disposed of." Morgan nodded, called his best sharp-shooter, Timothy Murphy, and five others, and pointing out the officer told them to secrete themselves in a clump of bushes and do their duty. A moment later a bullet cut the crupper of Fraser's horse; another

lifted the mane between its ears. Noticing this an aide remarked that the riflemen were making a target of him and suggested that he retire. "My duty forbids me to fly," replied Fraser, and the next moment fell mortally wounded. Meantime Arnold had led his men against the British centre, brandishing his broadsword and urging them on with cheers and animating words. The Germans stood their ground bravely and repulsed the first assault, but when Arnold, galloping up and down the line, shouting and waving his sword, had rallied his men and led them a second time to the assault the enemy broke and fled in terror. They had never seen anything like this madman, whom no bullets could kill, and no repulses daunt. The battle now became continuous along the whole line, the most conspicuous actor in it being Arnold. His black horse leaped and thundered from one end of the line to the other. Here occurred perhaps the first and only instance of a volunteer general taking regiments, brigades, and divisions from their lawful commanders, and himself leading them to

the assault; but Arnold did this many times. He seemed ubiquitous and invulnerable. With a part of the brigades of Patterson and Glover he assaulted the British intrenchments on the left, held by the light infantry under the Earl of Balcarras, and drove them from the outworks, but was not able to carry the main line of intrenchments. Leaving them he dashed rapidly to the extreme right exposed to a cross fire from both armies, and looking for a vulnerable point, when he met Learned's brigade advancing to assault the British line at an opening in the abatis between Balcarras' command and the Germans of the right wing under Breyman. The Canadians and loyalists had been set to defend this and made a brave resistance, but were overpowered, leaving the German flank exposed. Leaving Learned to assault the German flank and front, Arnold now dashed to the left and ordered Wesson's and Livingston's regiments and Morgan's corps to make a general assault all along the line, and returned in time to lead Colonel Brooks' regiment in person against the German works. At their head

he rode his horse into a sally port. The Germans, who had had a taste of his mettle before and believed him in league with the Evil One, fled in dismay, delivering their fire as they fled, which killed Arnold's horse under him; at the same instant a wounded soldier within the works propping himself up shot Arnold in the same leg which had been wounded at Quebec.

These works formed the key to the British position. With them in the enemy's hands there was nothing to do but retreat, which the English now did with some confusion; Burgoyne's capitulation at Saratoga on October 17 was the logical conclusion of the battle.

The candid reader who has followed the story of this campaign will have no difficulty in placing the credit for his defeat where it belongs. Neither Gates, nor his second in command, Lincoln, was on the field during the conflict. At its height an aide, dashing up to headquarters for instructions, found the commander-in-chief discussing the merits of the Revolution with Sir Francis Clarke,

who had been taken prisoner. As Arnold lay on the ground in the moment of victory Major Armstrong, Gates' aide, succeeded in overtaking him and in delivering the long delayed order to return to the camp.

The admiration of the army for Arnold was now so intense that Gates was forced to mention his name in his despatches to Congress, and that body was at last coerced by the power of public opinion into restoring to him his rank. Other than this it does not appear that he received any honor or emolument for his prodigious services, which under a monarchy would have brought him a coronet and decorations, to say the least.

CHAPTER XI

MILITARY GOVERNOR OF PHILADELPHIA

ARNOLD was carried on a litter from the field of honor to Albany, where he remained unable to leave his bed through the autumn and most of the winter of 1777–8. He had received a compound fracture of the left leg, which the surgeons at first thought would necessitate an amputation, but to that Arnold refused to submit. By early spring, however, he was able to be moved, and proceeded by slow stages to his home in New Haven meeting with ovations on his way; for, although Congress had given the credit of the great victory to the tent-keeping Gates, the common people were not to be misled as to who was the real winner of the battle. Many a soldier who was in it had returned to his fireside, and told there the thrilling story of the fight; others had

written; and the dwellers in the hamlets were perhaps better informed than some members of Congress as to the true state of affairs. Thereafter and until his infamous crime blotted out his honest fame there was no name so potent as a rallying cry with the rank and file as that of Benedict Arnold. His townsmen of New Haven received him with acclaim; a deputation comprising the officers of the army that chanced to be in the city, or were stationed there, the militia, the cadet company, and a number of the most respectable citizens went out to meet and welcome him, while a salute of thirteen guns announced his arrival in the city. While here his soldierly heart was still more gratified by receiving this letter from his commander-in-chief:

VALLEY FORGE, 7 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR: — A gentleman in France having very obligingly sent me three sets of epaulettes and sword-knots, two of which professedly to be disposed of to any friends I should choose, I take the liberty of presenting them to you and General Lincoln, as a testimony of my sincere regard and approbation of your conduct. I have been in-

formed by a brigade major of General Huntington's of your intention of repairing to camp shortly; but notwithstanding my wish to see you, I must beg that you will run no hazard by coming out too soon.

I am sincerely and affectionately

Your obedient, etc.,

George Washington.

On the 20th of January previous, on sending him the long delayed, antedated commission, forced from a reluctant Congress by popular clamor, Washington had expressed the kindest sentiments as to his health and well-being, and added: "As soon as your situation will permit, I request that you will repair to this army, it being my earnest wish to have your services the ensuing campaign."

While in New Haven, Arnold learned to his surprise, that the children of his lamented friend, General Joseph Warren, who fell at Bunker Hill, one of the first martyrs of the Revolution, had been unprovided for by the State, and sent five hundred dollars by Governor Hancock, for their relief, to Miss Mercy Scollay, the lady who had them in charge,

saying he would use his influence with Congress to provide for them suitably. "If they decline it," he added, "I make no doubt of a handsome collection by private subscription. At all events, I will provide for them in a manner suitable to their birth, and the grateful sentiments I shall ever feel for the memory of my friend."

Arnold did apply to Congress, but owing to the opposition of the Massachusetts members, as he charged, it was not until 1780 that that body approved a resolution allowing for the support of the children the half pay of a major-general, from the date of their father's death until the youngest should come of age.

Meantime, Arnold contributed from time to time to their support, but toward the last was obliged to curtail his benefactions because his own funds were becoming exhausted. On August 3, 1780, he wrote Miss Scollay: "It has not been want of inclination, but want of ability, which has prevented my remitting you the balance for the expense of the children. The Public are

indebted to me for a considerable sum which I advanced for them in Canada, and for four years' pay, which I cannot obtain." Toward the end of May, Arnold reported to Washington at Valley Forge, and as his wound unfitted him for active duty, the commander-in-chief decided to appoint him military governor of Philadelphia as soon as the British should evacuate it, which event was daily expected.

No more unfit appointment could have been made, for Arnold's qualities were those best calculated for the battle-field. He lacked the tact, the poise, the suavity, the diplomacy required in one who was to administer the affairs of a captured city, one, too, in which the chief law-making bodies of the nation, and of an important state, were to meet.

In Philadelphia occurred the most important event of his life: here the fates had decreed he should meet, and come under the spell of one who should lead him into such paths of shame, sorrow, treachery, infamy, remorse, and misery as man never trod before; for if Arnold had never married a second

time, there would never have been an Arnold the traitor. It might be more gallant, more soothing to family pride, to suppress this fact, as former historians and biographers have done, but in justice to Arnold, it should be stated; besides, the enlightened American public of to-day insists on knowing the truths of history, and the whole truth. Partisanship, prejudice, bigotry, family pride, after a century and a quarter, lose their potency, and we are now able to see men and things as they really were.

CHAPTER XII

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

PHILADELPHIA in 1778 was the capital and metropolis of the infant nation. It was the seat even then of a polite and cultivated society, and boasted many old families of wealth, culture, and social distinction. These were nearly all English, and of Quaker or Anglican church origin or affiliations. The Quakers were neutral in the pending contest, as their creed commanded; those of the Church of England almost without exception were king's men.

When the British army, under Sir William Howe, marched in and took possession — September 26, 1777 — Philadelphia was noted for the beauty of her women; a fact the young British officers were not slow in discovering. The most noted of these, the belles of the city, were the three daughters of Edward Shippen, a lawyer, a member of

one of the first families, but whose fortune as he himself tells us had been quite seriously impaired by the extravagance of his fashionable daughters. As was natural, the houses of these Tory families were thrown open to the officers, and the winter was marked by a round of social gayeties not at all conducive to military discipline, and which provoked scathing diatribes from Whig journals at home. The leader in all these festivities was Major John André, a poet, a wit, a scholar, and courtier, as well as a brave and chivalrous soldier. One of the first functions was the famous Mischianza in honor of Sir William Howe, and which was a water carnival, a tournament, a masque, a comedy, and a ball all in one. It was so named — André, the author of it, tells us — because "it consisted of a variety of affairs." ("A piece of tom-foolery," a disgusted old British major called it; a sentiment hugely relished at home.) On the appointed day a fleet of flat-boats escorting a galley in which were seated Sir William Howe and his principal officers, moved down

the Delaware to Walnut Grove, the estate of Joseph Wharton, one of the former great men of the city, now deceased; a fine old country seat it was, with wide lawns shaded by venerable trees sloping down to the banks of the river. This the young officers had taken possession of for the day, had provided lists for the tournament, a great and elaborately decorated banqueting hall, a ballroom and other accessories.

Twelve knights and twelve squires appeared in the tournament, which held first place on the programme. They were equally divided into two parties, of six knights and six squires each,—the one called the "Knights of the Burning Mountain," the other "the Knights of the Blended Rose," and each knight and squire had selected the lady of his choice for whose favor he would do battle in the lists.

Of the twenty-four young ladies thus selected, all but one were natives of Philadelphia. They were all clad in the fashion of the age of chivalry, while the knights were armed with lance and broadsword and rode

in mail. When all were seated a herald advanced amid a flourish of trumpets and proclaimed that the ladies of the Knights of the Blended Rose excelled in virtue, beauty, wit, and every accomplishment those of the whole world; in proof of which their knights were ready to do battle with any challenger according to the rules of ancient chivalry. This challenge was accepted by the herald of the Knights of the Burning Mountain, who declared that their ladies were superior to any in the universe. Both parties were superbly mounted, those of the Burning Mountain on black horses, those of the Blended Rose on gray, and now met in full career shivering their lances on each other's shields, though it is pleasant to record that nobody was hurt. On the second onset the contestants, having shattered their lances, drew pistol and fired them, to the no small terror of the fair ladies. At the third bout Lord Cathcart, chief of the Blended Rose, and Captain Watson, chief of the Burning Mountain, met as champions for their respective parties, and prodigies of valor would no doubt

have been witnessed had not Major Grayson, as marshal of the field, stepped in at the critical moment, and declared that the ladies of both parties were fully satisfied with the proofs of love and feats of valor shown by their knights, and commanded them as they prized their future favors to desist. This ended the tournament; afterwards there was dancing, then a magnificent banquet, and after that dancing again until the wee small hours.

The three daughters of Edward Shippen — Miss S. Shippen, Miss M. Shippen, and Miss Peggy Shippen — were in the party, and the most admired and sought after of all. Toward its end the gallant knights were called to real war, as was later the case at Waterloo; for the ragged Continentals, who during this winter were starving at Valley Forge, hearing of the party, made a descent upon the lines and were only driven off after a general alarm had been sounded.

These social amenities were practised all winter, the British officers having little else to do in the forced inaction of winter quarters.

The three lovely Misses Shippen were the belles of the season, and the frequent toast of the officers; of the three, the youngest, Miss Peggy Shippen, was the favorite. She was at this time about eighteen years of age, very beautiful and graceful, with a magnetism of person and charm of manner that attracted every one who came near her. The fascinating André and she soon became very good friends indeed. There is still preserved in the family a pen-and-ink sketch of her as arrayed for the Mischianza, drawn by him, and not a few of his warmest sonnets this winter were addressed to her.

The winter and spring passed, and as summer came the fortunes of war compelled the British to evacuate the city; they marched out on the 18th of June, 1778, and the next day the Americans took possession, with Arnold as military governor. It was not long before he met Miss Peggy Shippen and fell violently in love with her, exhibiting a marked trait in his character which biographers and historians have not discovered, but which proved a potent factor in his subse-

quent downfall. Like most men of great intellectual force and physical vigor, he was amorous as Tennyson's Prince. A pretty face, a graceful form never ceased to thrill him. During the life of his first wife he had been a devoted husband and father. In the years of his widowerhood he had had at least one affair with a Boston belle, — "the heavenly Miss Deblois," he styles her in a letter to a mutual friend; now he paid the most ardent and devoted court to this young and glowing Philadelphia beauty. His passion is shown in a letter he wrote her barely three months after they had first met:

Dear Madam: — Twenty times have I taken up my pen to write to you, and as often has my trembling hand refused to obey the dictates of my heart — a heart which, though calm and serene amid the clashing of arms and all the din and horrors of war, trembles with diffidence and the fear of giving offence when it attempts to address you on a subject so important to its happiness.

Dear madam, your charms have lighted up a flame in my bosom which can never be extinguished; your heavenly image is too deeply impressed ever to be effaced.

My passion is not founded on personal charms

only; that sweetness of disposition and goodness of heart, that sentiment and sensibility which so strongly mark the character of the lovely Miss P. Shippen, renders her amiable beyond expression, and will ever retain the heart she has once captivated. On you alone my happiness depends, and will you doom me to languish in despair? Shall I expect no return to the most sincere, ardent, and disinterested passion? Do you feel no pity in your gentle bosom for the man who would die to make you happy? May I presume to hope it is not impossible I may make a favorable impression on your heart? Friendship and esteem you acknowledge. Dear Peggy, suffer that heavenly bosom, which cannot know itself the cause of pain without a sympathetic pang, to expand with a sensation more soft, more tender than friendship. A union of hearts is undoubtedly necessary to happiness, but give me leave to observe that true and permanent happiness is seldom the effect of an alliance founded on a romantic passion, where fancy governs more than judgment. Friendship and esteem founded on the merit of the object, is the most certain basis to build a lasting happiness upon; and when there is a tender and ardent passion on one side, and friendship and esteem on the other, the heart (unlike yours) must be callous to every tender sentiment, if the taper of sentiment, love, is not lighted up at the flame.

I am sensible your prudence and the affection

you bear your amiable and tender parents forbids your giving encouragement to the addresses of any one without their approbation. Pardon me, dear madame, for disclosing a passion I could no longer confine in my tortured bosom. I have presumed to write to your Papa, and have requested his sanction to my addresses. Suffer me to hope for your approbation. Consider before you doom me to misery, which I have not deserved but by loving you too extravagantly. Consult your own happiness, and if incompatible, forget there is so unhappy a wretch; for may I perish if I would give you one moment's inquietude to purchase the greatest possible felicity to myself. Whatever my fate may be, my most ardent wish is for your happiness, and my latest breath will be to implore the blessing of heaven on the idol and only wish of my soul.

Adieu, dear Madame, and believe me unalterably your sincere admirer and devoted humble servant,

B. ARNOLD.

The reader can imagine the influence a wife would exert on a man thus constituted. Whether to the Tory maiden, as she pondered over this missive, there came visions of a young, handsome, gay, dashing, gallant British major, who had drawn her portrait, addressed sonnets to her, and whispered soft nothings in her ear, no one may say, but she

determined to accept this impetuous suitor, eighteen years her senior. She was socially ambitious; that, and a marked passion for display were her chief characteristics, and as the wife of a major-general in the army, and military governor of the city, she would attain a social prestige and leadership far above anything she had before dreamed of. It is not probable that she was very much in love with her husband ever; a member of the Shippen family is said to have had much to do with making the match, perhaps with the hope of winning over the ablest major-general in the rebel army, who was known to have suffered galling indignities from a Congress of irreconcilable factions, and from intriguing generals in the field.

In his letter to the lady's father, asking for her hand, Arnold wrote, "My fortune is not large, though sufficient (not to depend upon my expectations) to make us both happy. I neither expect nor wish one with Miss Shippen. My public character is well known; my private one is, I hope, irreproachable. Our difference in political sen-

timents will, I hope, be no bar to my happiness."

There seems to have been no parental opposition, although the reverse has been stated. Letters from both Edward Shippen and his father make it plain that the match was regarded with complacency.

The fair one, so hardly pressed, consented, and preparations were made for the wedding. On March 22, 1779, Arnold bought the fine old country seat, still standing in Fairmount Park, called Mount Pleasant, and settled it on his wife and children, they to have possession after his death. Two weeks later, the wedding occurred in the fine old mansion of the Shippens, on Fourth Street.

Mount Pleasant became the summer home of the newly wedded pair. Their town house was the old Penn Mansion, which had been built by Governor Richard Penn, grandson of William Penn, occupied by Sir William Howe as his headquarters, during the British occupancy, and which had been taken possession of by Arnold when he assumed command. Later, Washington occupied it while Presi-

dent, from which circumstance it was called "the Washington mansion." In both, Arnold lived in a style of extravagance and ostentation far beyond his means, and most imprudent in an officer of a poor and devoted country struggling for its rights. He kept a coach and four, with lackeys to care for, and accompany it. He gave frequent and grand dinners, to members of Congress, to officers of the army, visiting foreign celebrities, and to the élite of the city, friends of his wife; but it was observed by the envious that the major portion of his guests were from the fashionable contingent, which was Tory to a degree. As Arnold before his marriage had lived quietly and in true republican simplicity, we are justified, doubtless, in attributing this extravagance to the influence of his wife. However this may be, it was the beginning of his downfall. Heretofore no whisper of disloyalty had been breathed against him. Now the thousand tongues of rumor were set in motion. "He had married a Tory wife; his table companions and his bosom friends were to be found among the enemies of his

country. He was living at the rate of five thousand pounds a year; where did he get the money? Was his wife, the toast and lauded favorite of the British officers, selling information to the enemy?" So the gossip ran, sowing seeds of distrust and suspicion.

CHAPTER XIII

ARNOLD AND THE SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

THE Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, created by the Constitution of 1776, was charged with executing the laws of that great State. It was composed in 1778 of a President, General Joseph Reed, and thirteen members, one from each of the twelve counties and one from the city of Philadelphia,—gentlemen of an egotism almost sublime, who, sleeping or waking, never lost sight of the fact that they represented the great State of Pennsylvania. It was in the order of things that such men should quickly come into collision with the brusque, tactless military governor who represented the national government. Arnold was perhaps responsible in some degree for the bitter quarrel that followed, but the conduct of the Council was most reprehensible. The

grounds of the difficulty between them, as contained in charges preferred by that body, were: First, that the spring before Arnold had permitted a vessel belonging to Tories to come into the port without the knowledge of the State authorities or of the Commander-in-chief. Second, that on taking possession he had shut up shops and stores, preventing the public from purchasing, while he had made considerable purchases for his own benefit, "as was believed." Third, in imposing menial offices upon the militia when called into service. Fourth, in a dispute over the capture of a prize brought in by a State privateer, Arnold had purchased the suit at a low and inadequate price. Fifth, that he had devoted the wagons of the State to transporting the private property of Tories. Sixth, that he had given a pass to an unworthy person to go within the enemy's lines, although Congress had given the executive power of each State exclusive right to do this. Seventh, when the Council had requested an explanation from General Arnold in relation to the fifth charge they had been met with an

indecent and disrespectful refusal of any satisfaction whatever. Eighth, cold and neglectful treatment of the patriot authorities, both civil and military, with an entirely different line of conduct toward the adherents of the king.

The above is we believe a fair though greatly condensed statement of the eight charges preferred by the Council. While no one can question its right and even duty to make them, one must question its action in making them public before the accused officer had had an opportunity to see, much less answer them. It sent out printed copies of the charges to the newspapers of Maryland and Pennsylvania and throughout the country generally, while a circular prepared and signed by Joseph Reed was sent to the governors of the several States, enclosing the charges and asking that they be communicated to the General Assembly of each State. This looked more like persecution from private animosity than regard for the public interest. Again, they were presented just after Arnold had left the city, when it was not likely that he would soon become cognizant of them. Indeed he

had no knowledge of them until one of the printed circulars fell into his hands in the camp of Washington. He at once asked for a court-martial to inquire into his conduct. His letter and the charges of the Council were referred by Congress to the same committee which had made a report wholly exculpating Arnold. But now, through the influence of the Council, Congress refused to accept that report, but referred the whole matter to a joint committee composed of its own members and those of the Supreme Executive Council. This committee reported several resolutions intended to placate Pennsylvania, and recommended that the first, second, third, and fifth charges be referred to a court-martial to be appointed by Washington.

Arnold was naturally indignant at this, but in a letter addressed to Congress, wrote that if they had been induced to take such action for the public good, to avoid a breach with Pennsylvania, however hard the case might be, he would suffer with pleasure until a court-martial could have an opportunity of doing him justice by acquitting him of these

charges a second time. At the same time he wrote to Washington, asking for a speedy trial. The latter called a court for the 1st of May, but the Council complained that they could not get their proof ready on such short notice, and asked until the 1st of June, which Washington granted.

"The President and Council have had three months to produce the evidence," Arnold pertinently wrote, and he entreated that the court might sit immediately. Washington replied that he had every desire to gratify him, but that the pointed representations of the State as to the production of witnesses left him no choice. When the 1st of June arrived, the position of the enemy was so menacing that no time could be spared for a court-martial; and it was not until the 19th of December, 1779, that it was convened at Morristown, where the patriot army had gone into winter quarters. The court was composed of Maj.-Gen. Robert Howe of North Carolina, President, Brigadier-Generals Knox, Maxwell, and Gest, and eight colonels, — as fair a tribunal as Washington could select.

Before this court General Arnold appeared in person as his own counsel, an historic person in a most dramatic situation; let us sketch him. He was thirty-nine years old, though his scarred and weather-beaten face made him appear older. He was clad in the buff and blue uniform of a major-general of the Continental army. He leaned upon a cane as he talked, for the leg broken below the knee at Quebec, and above the knee at Saratoga, was still unhealed. On his shoulders were the epaulets, and about his waist the sword-knots, which Washington had presented him as the bravest of his generals. After presenting his evidence, he addressed the court at great length, and with a convincing earnestness which should have given him — what he unquestionably deserved — an unconditional acquittal.

"When one is charged with practices which his soul abhors," said he, "and which conscious innocence tells him he has never committed, an honest indignation will draw from him expressions in his own favor which on other occasions might be ascribed to an osten-

tatious turn of mind. The part which I have acted in the American cause has been acknowledged, by our friends and by our enemies, to have been far from an indifferent one. My time, my fortune, and my person have been devoted to my country in this war; and if the sentiments of those who are supreme in the United States in civil and military affairs are allowed to have any weight, my time, my fortune, and my person have not been devoted in vain. You will indulge me, gentlemen, while I lay before you some honorable testimonies which Congress and the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States have been pleased to give of my conduct. The place where I now stand justifies me in producing them." He then read several of the commendatory letters from Washington, which we have published, and also the resolution of Congress presenting him with a horse, in return for the one shot under him at Ridgefield, and the resolution of thanks for his services in the capture of Burgoyne, and asked if it seemed probable that after winning all these golden opinions from the most eminent, he should in a

moment engage in a line of conduct "equally unworthy of a patriot and a soldier." He recalled the long period that had intervened between the charges and the trial, caused by his persecutors, and expressed the most confident hope of being able to demonstrate to them and to the world that the charges were "false, malicious, and scandalous." He then took up one by one the whole eight charges of the Council, and explained and refuted them all in the most plain and convincing manner. In regard to the charge that he had privately made purchases of goods for his own benefit, he said:

"If this is true I stand confessed in the presence of this Honorable Court the vilest of men; I stand stigmatized with indelible disgrace, the disgrace of having abused an appointment of high trust and importance to accomplish the meanest and most unworthy purposes; the blood I have spent in defence of my country will be insufficient to obliterate the stain. But if this part of the case is void of truth, if it has not even the semblance of truth, what shall I say of my accusers? What

epithets will characterize their conduct the sentence of this Honorable Court will soon determine. . . . Who allege and believe this accusation? None, I trust, but the President and Council of Pennsylvania; because I trust none else would allege and believe anything tending to ruin a character without sufficient evidence. Where is the evidence of this accusation? I call upon my accusers to produce it; I call upon them to produce it under the pain of being held forth to the world and to posterity, upon the proceedings of this court, as public defamers and murderers of reputation. . . . On the honor of a gentleman and a soldier I declare to gentlemen and soldiers it is false. . . . If I made considerable purchases, considerable sales must have been made to me by some persons in Philadelphia. Why are not these persons produced? Have my prosecutors so little power and influence in that city as to be unable to furnish evidence of the truth? . . . This insinuation comes, in my opinion, with an ill grace from the State of Pennsylvania, in whose more immediate defence I sacrificed my feelings as a soldier when

I conceived them incompatible with the duties of a citizen and the welfare of the State. By a resolution of Congress I found myself superseded (in consequence of a new mode of appointment of general officers) by several who were my juniors in service. Those who know the feelings of an officer (whose utmost ambition is the good opinion of his country) must judge what my feelings were at this apparent mark of neglect. I repaired to the city of Philadelphia in the month of May, 1777, in order either to attain a restoration of my rank, or a permission to resign my commission. During this interval the van of General Howe's army advanced by a rapid march to Somerset Court House, with a view, as was then generally supposed, to penetrate to the city of Philadelphia. Notwithstanding I had been superseded and my feelings as an officer wounded, yet, on finding the State was in imminent danger from the designs of the enemy, I sacrificed those feelings and with alacrity put myself at the head of the militia who were collected to oppose the enemy, determined to exert myself for the benefit of the

public, although I conceived myself injured by their representatives. How far the good countenance of the militia under my command operated in deterring General Howe from marching to the city of Philadelphia, I will not pretend to say; certain it is he altered his route. What returns I have met with from the State of Pennsylvania, I leave to themselves to judge in the cool hour of reflection . . . which must sooner or later arise."

In regard to the last charge, in which he was accused of showing scant courtesy to the friends of America and a great deal to her enemies, he said that he was not sensible of having neglected any in the civil line or in the army, and appealed to the candor of Congress and the army in proof of his statement. "With respect to attention to those of an opposite character, I have paid none but such as, in my situation, was justifiable on the principles of common humanity and politeness. The President and Council of Pennsylvania will pardon me if I cannot divest myself of humanity, merely out of complaisance to them. It is enough for me, Mr. President, to

contend with men in the field; I have not yet learned to carry on a warfare against women, or to consider every man as disaffected to our glorious cause who, from an opposition in sentiment to those in power in the State of Pennsylvania may by the clamor of party be styled a Tory. . . . On this occasion I think I may be allowed to say without vanity that my conduct from the earliest period of the war to the present time has been steady and uniform. . . . The impartial public will judge of my services, and whether the returns that I have met with are not tinctured with the basest ingratitude. Conscious of my own innocence, and of the unworthy methods taken to injure me, I can with boldness say to my persecutors in general, and to the chief of them in particular, that in the hour of danger, when the affairs of America wore a gloomy aspect, when our illustrious general was retreating through New Jersey with a handful of men, I did not propose to my associates basely to quit the general and sacrifice the cause of my country to my personal safety by going over to the enemy and making my

peace. I can say I never basked in the sunshine of my general's favor and courted him to his face, when I was at the same time treating him with the greatest abuse, and vilifying his character when absent. This is more than a ruling member of the Council of the State of Pennsylvania can say, as it is alleged and believed."

On January 22, the Judge Advocate replied to Arnold, produced the evidence in support of the charges, and rested. On the 26th the court handed in its findings. It was a curious document; any unbiased person can see the effort made to please both parties regardless of right or justice. On the first charge they decided that his action was illegal. On the second, that his action in closing the shops was justified by the resolution of Congress and the instructions of Washington; as to his having made purchases for his own benefit they were "clearly of opinion that it is unsupported, and they do fully acquit General Arnold." They also acquitted on the third charge. On the fourth they were of opinion that Arnold, in employing the public

wagons, had no intention of defrauding the public, nor of injuring or impeding the public service; but considering the delicacy attending the high station in which he acted, and that requests from him might operate as commands, the court were of opinion the request was imprudent and improper, and therefore ought not to have been made. For this it sentenced him to receive a reprimand from the commander-in-chief. The reprimand seems to have been a sop thrown to the President and Council of Pennsylvania. In its general tenor the finding acquitted Arnold of all intentional wrong, of all private benefit from his public station. The court found that he had been imprudent in several instances, which was no doubt the case, but this was not so grave a fault as to call for a public reprimand.

On the fifth charge relating to the prize sloop "Active" Arnold showed that she had been originally taken by privateersmen from Connecticut, his native State, who applied to him for aid in securing their rights as against the State of Pennsylvania, which he did, ad-

vancing them money, and to secure himself taking an interest in their claim. The justice of this claim was later proved by its being allowed them by unanimous vote in the Court of Appeals.

Arnold had expected an acquittal from the court-martial, and the verdict simply astounded him. It was the last straw; henceforth his progress toward the pit of infamy which had been long preparing for him was rapid.

Washington never probably had a more distasteful duty to perform than in reprimanding his favorite and most gallant officer, many of whose troubles were due to his steadfast allegiance to himself. His reprimand was a model of kindness and courtesy in its way.

"Our profession," he said, "is the chastest of all; even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the lustre of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of the public favor so hard to be acquired. I reprimand you for having forgotten that in proportion as you have rendered yourself formidable to our enemies you should have been guarded and tem-

perate in your deportment towards your fellow-citizens! Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, as far as it may be in my power, with opportunities of regaining the esteem of your country."

As considerate as it could be made, but one can easily imagine how galling to one so proud and sensitive as Arnold.

CHAPTER XIV

THE TRAITOR

GENERAL ARNOLD had resigned his position as Governor of Philadelphia on learning of the favorable report of the committee of Congress. While in command of the city the petty persecutions and calumnies to which he was subjected became so annoying that he formed the design of retiring from the army, of securing a large tract of land in the western part of New York, and there dwell in retirement and dignity on his estate, as he had witnessed in the case of his old friend, General Schuyler, and other wealthy landholders of New York. He was on his way to New York in furtherance of this affair when, stopping at Washington's camp on the Raritan, the circular of President Reed and the Council fell into his hands, and he hastened back to defend himself, the enterprise being relinquished. If he

had now taken it up again how different on the page of history would have been his story.

True to his promise, Washington, early in August, 1780, gave him command of West Point, then the most important military position in his gift. It is probable that Arnold, through his wife, had been before this in treasonable correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton, then in command of New York. It is at least certain that his wife had continued a correspondence with her admirers among the British officers, particularly with André, and that much valuable information to them was received through this source. Peggy Shippen was a Tory when Arnold married her; she always remained a Tory at heart; her family and friends were sympathizers with the British cause. Her ardent admirers, the young British officers, were now cooped up with Clinton in New York; what more natural than that communications should pass between them. Arnold, as we have seen, was passionately devoted to her, and she had added to her influence over him by bearing him, in the first year of their wedded life, a son. While

other influences were no doubt brought to bear, she was the most potent factor used by a crafty enemy to induce him to yield up his post. Can any one believe for a moment that, if Arnold had been married to a patriotic wife whose family and friends were adherents of the patriot cause, and who would have refused to follow him into the British camp, his treason would have been consummated? It is most unreasonable so to suppose.

Should her husband accept the overtures of Clinton, she might hope for a peerage at least in return. This was lure enough for so ambitious a woman as Peggy Shippen is known to have been. What arguments she used, supplied in part no doubt by her friends in Philadelphia and by the British officers, we can readily imagine. The American cause was doomed: rent by faction, crippled by want of funds, the patriots must soon give up the hopeless contest. By yielding, Arnold might aspire to be made the ambassador who should offer the olive branch to the returning prodigals, having rendered efficient service on both sides. What glory that would be! On

the other hand she recounted his wrongs: Could he remain and dwell in a country that after such unparalleled services as he had performed could put an indelible stigma upon him? Could he remain and face his triumphant enemies with this stain resting on him?

Arnold yielded. He agreed to give up the post he had been set to defend, to betray his country, to destroy with base treachery the confidence reposed in him by his commander-in-chief. He went to his own place; but does no blame attach to those who by calumny, by ingratitude, by relentless persecution, placed him in a position where these arguments could be used with more telling effect?

The negotiations — begun by André and Mrs. Arnold, and continued by the principals — at last reached a point where a personal meeting was necessary. On September 20 André, now holding the commission of Adjutant-General in the British army, went on board the British sloop-of-war "Vulture," which bore him up the Hudson to a place about six miles below Stony Point, where she came to anchor; the next night, the 21st,

André was rowed ashore and met Arnold at midnight in a secluded place, where full details for delivering up the fortress were considered. Day broke before the business was fully concluded, and André was persuaded to accompany Arnold to the house of Joshua Hett Smith, some two miles below Stony Point, where they breakfasted and then perfected the details. Meantime the presence of the "Vulture" had been noticed by the patriots, and Colonel Livingston, who commanded in that quarter, ordered up some field-pieces and by a few volleys forced her to drop down the river. When André was ready to regain his ship she was out of sight, and Arnold gave him a horse and a pass through the American lines, in case he should not be able to reach the "Vulture." He could not board her and started to return by land. How he was intercepted by the three partisans, John Paulding, Isaac van Wort, and David Williams, taken and hung as a spy at Tappan, is familiar to every schoolboy. He was permitted to send word to Arnold, however, apprising him of his capture.

On this very same morning, two days before he was expected, Washington and his staff had come riding down into the defiles of the Hudson, returning from a conference with the French officers at Hartford. His object was to inspect the defences at West Point, and he had sent word to Arnold that he would breakfast with him. As they approached Arnold's headquarters in the Robinson House, Washington turned to visit the defences on the east side of the river. The gallant Lafayette, who formed one of the party, remonstrated, saying that Mrs. Arnold would be waiting breakfast for them.

"Ah, Marquis," rejoined Washington, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you would be with her as soon as possible; ride you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me, as I must inspect the redoubts on this side the river." Knox and Lafayette, however, remained with Washington, but Alexander Hamilton, then a member of the general's staff, with others of his suite bore the message to Arnold.

He was astounded. Washington had arrived two days sooner than he was expected, and this was the very day on which the post was to be delivered up. He had arranged with Clinton to so scatter the garrison among the defiles and passes of the mountains that a strong British force ascending the river could easily capture it. On the heels of this, and while they were at breakfast, came the messenger with word from André that he was a prisoner and his papers in the enemy's hands. Here again Arnold exhibited that wonderful nerve which had borne him through so many crises. Without a tremor or change of countenance he rose, excused himself, ordered a horse, and going to Mrs. Arnold's room sent for her.

"The whole plot is discovered, André a prisoner," he said. "I must fly instantly."

The news just when her long-cherished plans seemed on the eve of fruition overcame the poor woman, and she fell in a swoon, which on her recovering was succeeded by convulsions. Returning again to the breakfast-room Arnold asked his guests to excuse him,

as some of the details for the reception of Washington had not been carried out, sprang on his horse and dashed down a steep hill — still known as Arnold's path — to the landing, where his six-oared barge was moored. Entering it he ordered the oarsmen to row out into the middle of the river, then down stream, and as their oars smote the water he drew his pistols and seating himself in the prow directed the course of the boat. When off Verplanck's Point they sighted the "Vulture," and ordering the men to row with all speed for her, and raising a white handkerchief as a flag of truce, he reached the schooner and was safe.

"Whom can we trust now?" said Washington, when news of the defection of his bravest officer was brought to him.

Arnold's first thought after reaching the sloop was for the safety of his wife; knowing her guilt, and fearing it might be discovered, he sat down and wrote a letter to Washington, imploring him to protect Mrs. Arnold "from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may ex-

pose her to;" adding, "she is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong." He begged that she might be allowed to go to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to him, as she chose. He also exculpated the gentlemen of his military family, Colonel Varick and Major Franks.

As we have the lady's own confession of her guilt, and that she had been acting a part, Hamilton's highly rhetorical letter to his fiancée, Miss Schuyler, describing her conduct after Arnold's flight, awakens other sensations than those of pity. On his return from pursuing Arnold, he says, "I saw an amiable woman frantic with distress for the loss of a husband she tenderly loved, a traitor to his country and his fame, a disgrace to his connections; it was the most affecting scene I was ever witness to. She for a considerable time entirely lost herself. The General went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears. Sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occa-

sioned by the imprudence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all the fondness of a mother, showed themselves in her appearance and conduct. We have every reason to believe that she was entirely unacquainted with the plan, and that the first knowledge of it was when Arnold went to tell her he must banish himself from his country, and from her forever. She instantly fell into a convulsion, and he left her in that situation.

"This morning she is more composed. I paid her a visit, and endeavored to soothe her by every method in my power, though you may imagine she is not easily to be consoled. Added to her other distresses, she is very apprehensive the resentment of her country will fall upon her (who is only unfortunate) for the guilt of her husband.

"I have tried to persuade her that her fears are ill-founded, but she will not be convinced. She received us in bed, with every circumstance that would interest our sympathy, and

her sufferings were so eloquent that I wished myself her brother to have a right to become her defender."

All of which goes to prove the lady a most consummate actress as well as the most fascinating beauty of her day. Most of the historians who have treated of this topic have followed Hamilton's version. That it was false, we have conclusive proof, aside from inherent probability,—the circumstantial evidence already given. Mrs. Arnold, no doubt to disarm suspicion, elected to go to her father in Philadelphia, and Washington gave her a safe conduct thither, and detailed Major Franks as her escort. On her way, she spent a night at Paramus, in New Jersey, with an old and intimate friend, Mrs. Theodosia Prevost, widow of Colonel Mark Prevost, of the British army, and daughter of Theodosius Bartow, a lawyer of Shrewsbury, New Jersey. This estimable lady was engaged to marry Colonel Aaron Burr at the time; indeed, Parton says the latter was present when the interview we are to describe took place. Our account of it is taken from the "Memoirs of Aaron

Burr," by Matthew L. Davis, Vol. I. page 219.

"On her arrival at Paramus the frantic scenes of West Point were renewed, and continued so long as strangers were present. Mrs. Prevost was known as the widow of a British officer and connected with the royalists; in her, therefore, Mrs. Arnold could confide. As soon as they were left alone Mrs. Arnold became tranquillized and assured Mrs. Prevost that she was heartily sick of the theatricals she was exhibiting. She stated that she had corresponded with the British commander, that she was disgusted with the American cause and with those who had the management of public affairs, and that through great persuasion and unceasing perseverance she had ultimately brought the General into an arrangement to surrender West Point to the British. Mrs. Arnold was a gay, accomplished, artful, and extravagant woman. There is no doubt, therefore, that for the purpose of acquiring the means of gratifying an inordinate vanity she contributed greatly to the utter ruin of her

husband, and thus doomed to everlasting infamy and disgrace all the fame he had acquired as a gallant soldier at the sacrifice of his blood. Mrs. Prevost subsequently became the wife of Colonel Burr, and repeated to him this confession of Mrs. Arnold."

This confession has all the ear-marks of truth. Until both Colonel Burr and his wife can be impeached — and both of them were the soul of honor — it must be accepted as true. The Shippen family have sought to break the force of it by publishing long after, a "tradition" current in their family that Colonel Burr, who they say was visiting Mrs. Prevost at the time, on Mrs. Arnold's setting out next morning offered to accompany her, as his escort might be useful to her in the disturbed state of public feeling, and that on the way he sought to seduce her, and being repulsed reported this confession in revenge.

Of the thousands of silly calumnies circulated against Aaron Burr, this is perhaps the most puerile and foolish. Let us consider it a moment. Colonel Burr in his infancy, on the death of father and mother, was placed

for a year or more with a member of the Shippen family, for whom he always retained the warm regard of a child for its foster parent. He and the lady in question had been friends from childhood; yet we are asked to believe that he deliberately left the side of the lovely and accomplished woman to whom he was engaged to be married, to attempt the virtue of his old playmate, with the certainty that if he failed it would be reported to his fiancée at once. Besides, this confession was not made public by Colonel Burr until long after the death of all the parties concerned; whereas if revenge had been the motive it would have been published at once. No, Colonel Burr left the paper to be published as an act of justice toward his old commander, Benedict Arnold, whom he always held to have been quite as much sinned against as sinning.

Davis gives as corroborative proof the fact that when news of Arnold's appointment reached Philadelphia Mrs. Arnold was dining at the house of Colonel Robert Morris, who had himself been an applicant for the com-

mand of West Point, and that on hearing the news she was so affected as to become hysterical. They remarked that the station was superior to the one he then held, but this produced no effect. Afterward Colonel Morris' family believed she was privy to, if not the negotiator for, the surrender of West Point.

The Council of Pennsylvania seem to have had no doubt of her guilt, for on October 29 they passed a resolution that the "said Margaret Arnold depart this State within fourteen days from the date hereof, and that she do not return again during the continuance of the present war."

CHAPTER XV

UNIVERSALLY EXECRATED

WE of 1900 are more familiar with treason, perhaps, than were the patriots of 1780,—although they, from the British point of view, were all traitors,—and can scarcely realize the flood of abuse, contempt, obloquy, and hatred poured upon the devoted head of Benedict Arnold when his attempted treason became generally known; and this was no whit allayed when, on reaching New York, he issued an address to the American People, in which he attempted to justify his course and urged them to follow his example. The document was feeble, obscure, and unconvincing,—a sad falling-off in both vigor and style from Arnold's defence before the court-martial at Morristown, but as it is the only explanation of his conduct given by him it is here inserted in full.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF AMERICA

I should forfeit even in my own opinion the place I have so long held in yours if I could be indifferent to your approbation, and silent as to the motives that have induced me to join the King's Arms. A very few words shall suffice on a subject so personal, for to the thousands who suffer under the tyranny of the usurpers in the revolted provinces, as well as to the great multitude who have long wished for its subversion, this instance of my conduct can want no vindication; as to that class of men who are criminally protracting the war for sinister views at the expense of the public interest, I prefer their enmity to their applause.

I am only therefore concerned in this Address to explain myself to such of my countrymen as want abilities or opportunities to detect the artifices by which they are duped. Having fought by your side when the love of country animated our arms, I shall expect from your justice and candor what your deceivers, with more art and less honesty, will find it inconsistent with their views to admit.

When I quitted domestic happiness for the perils of the field I conceived the rights of my country in danger, and that duty and honor called me to her defence. A redress of grievances was my only object and aim; however, I acquiesced in a step which I thought precipitate — the Declaration of Indepen-

dence. To justify it, many plausible reasons were urged which could no longer exist when Great Britain, with the open arms of a parent, offered to embrace us as children, and grant the wished-for redress; and now that her worst enemies are within her own bosom I should change my principles if I conspired with their designs. Yourselves being the judges, was the war the less just because fellow-subjects were considered our foes? You have felt the torture in which we raised our arms against a brother — God incline the guilty protractors of these unnatural dissensions to resign their ambition and cease from their delusions in compassion to kindred blood.

I anticipate your question, Was not the war a defensive one until the French joined in the combination? I answer that I thought so. You will add, Was it not afterwards necessary until the separation of the British Empire was complete? By no means. In contending for the welfare of my country I am free to declare my opinion that, this end attained, all strife should cease. I lamented therefore the impolicy, tyranny, and injustice which, with a sovereign contempt of the people of America, studiously neglected to take their collective sentiments on the British proposals of peace, and to negotiate under a suspension of arms for an adjustment of differences, as a dangerous sacrifice of the great interests of this country to the partial views of a Proud, Ancient, and Crafty foe.

I had my suspicions of some imperfections in our councils on Proposals prior to the Parliamentary Commission of 1778, but having then less to do in the cabinet than in the field (I will not pronounce peremptorily as some may, and perhaps justly, that Congress have veiled them from the public eye), I continued to be guided in the negligent confidence of a soldier; but the whole saw, and all Americans confessed, that the overtures of the Second Commission exceeded our wishes and expectations. If there was any suspicion of the national liberality it arose from its excess.

Do any believe we were at that time entangled by an alliance with France? Unfortunate deception, and thus they have been duped by a virtuous credulity in the incautious moments of intemperate passion to give up their fidelity, to give up their native country with both the will and the power to protect us, and aiming at the destruction of both the mother country and the provinces. In the name of Common-Sense, for I pretend to no casuistry, did the pretended Treaty with the Court of Versailles amount to more than an overture to America? Certainly not, because no authority had been given by the People to conclude it, nor to this very hour have they authorized its ratification — the Articles of Ratification remain still unsigned.

In the firm persuasion, therefore, that the private judgment of any individual citizen of this country

is as free from all conventional restraints since as before the insidious offers of France, I preferred those from Great Britain, thinking it infinitely wiser and safer to cast my confidence upon her justice and generosity, than to trust a monarchy too feeble to establish your independency, so perilous to her distant dominions, the enemy of the Protestant faith, and fraudulently avowing an affection for the liberties of mankind, while she holds her native sons in vassalage and chains.

I affect no disguise, therefore; I frankly declare that in these Principles I had determined to retain my arms and command for an opportunity to surrender them to Great Britain, and in concerting the measures for a purpose in my opinion as grateful as it would have been beneficial to my country. I was only solicitous to accomplish an event of decisive importance, and to prevent as much as possible, in the execution of it, the effusion of blood.

With the highest satisfaction I bear testimony to my old fellow-soldiers and citizens, that I find solid ground to rely upon the Clemency of our Sovereign, and abundant conviction that it is the generous intention of Great Britain, not only to leave the rights and privileges of the colonies unimpaired, together with their perpetual exemption from taxation, but to superadd such further benefits as may consist with the common prosperity of the Empire; in short, I fought for much less than

the parent country is as willing to grant to her colonies as they can be to receive and enjoy.

Some may think I continued in the struggle of those unhappy days too long, and others that I quitted it too soon. To the first I reply that I did not see it with their eyes, nor perhaps had so favorable a position to look from, and that to one common master I am willing to stand or fall. In behalf of the candid among the latter, some of whom I believe serve blindly but honestly in the ranks I have left, I pray God to give them all the lights requisite to their own safety before it is too late. And with respect to that kind of censurers whose enmity to me originates in their hatred to those principles by which I am now led to devote my life to the reunion of the British Empire, as the best and only means to dry up the streams of misery that have deluged this country, they may be assured that, conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, I shall treat their malice and calumnies with contempt and neglect.

BENEDICT ARNOLD.

NEW YORK, October 7, 1780.

On the 20th he issued a proclamation to the officers and soldiers of the Continental army, in which he sought to seduce from their allegiance his old comrades-in-arms by offering to all who would join the King's

forces, rank, bounties, and other emoluments. Clinton, he said, had authorized him to raise a corps of cavalry and infantry, and he should take great satisfaction to advance therein men whose valor he had witnessed and whose principles were favorable to a union with Britain and true American liberty. Few were seduced by his promises; he did raise a corps, but it was composed mostly of loyalists.

Instead his name became a byword, a hissing and reproach. The tidings of his defection circulated slowly in comparison with the present rapidity of news transmission. The *Commercial Gazette* and *Universal Intelligencer* of New London, Conn., printed its first account of the affair in its issue of October 6, 1780:

"About the time of his [Washington's] arrival, a most horrid plot was discovered, the infamous General Arnold at the head of it, who, it is supposed, has been corrupted by the influence of British gold, having agreed to deliver up the fortress at West Point." And in its issue of October 17;

"Thursday the 2d of November will be observed in New York as a public thanksgiving to Almighty God for his remarkable deliverance in the discovery of the Horrid Conspiracy for the delivering up of West Point."

The same issue had an "Epitaph": "In memory of the fugitive shade of Benedict Arnold, once a major-general in the armies of the United States of America, who with incredible fatigue, unparalleled sufferings, and all the obstinacy of perseverance, pushed his way to the gallows, from which his tormented spirit fled, on a day too black to be mentioned, into a state of disappointment, want, chagrin, and despair, where the ghosts of a thousand murdered oaths cease not to harrow up his conscience, and the Genius of his betrayed country dashes with irresistible Force and in quick succession, huge masses of solid gold full in his face with one hand, while with the other she points him to a gallows at West Point where hangs poor André. In this situation while he catches in vain at the gold, his poor little, fickle, furious,

dastard, distracted shade, which once bore the name of a soul, stands an eternal butt for British ridicule.

ALAS, POOR ARNOLD.

May all who walk in his footsteps do that service for their country which he did before and at the time he eloped from life, and then share his present fate!"

In many of the larger towns his effigy was burned after being dragged through the streets amid a rain of missiles and torrent of abuse. The following account of the proceedings in Philadelphia is copied from the *Pennsylvania Packet or General Advertiser* of that city, and appeared in its issue of October 3, 1780:

"A stage was raised on the body of a cart, on which was an effigy of General Arnold sitting: this was dressed in regimentals and had two faces emblematical of his traitorous conduct. A mask was in his left hand, and a letter from Beelzebub telling him he had done all the mischief he could do and now he must go hang himself. At the back of the General

was a figure of the Devil, dressed in black robes shaking a purse of money at the General's left ear, and in his right hand a pitchfork ready to drive him into hell as a reward for the numerous crimes his lust for gold had made him commit. In front of the stage and before General Arnold was placed a large lanthorn of transparent paper with the consequences of his crimes there delineated, i.e. on one part General Arnold on his knees before the devil, who is pulling him into the flames, a label in the General's mouth with these words. 'My dear sir: I have served you faithfully;' to which the devil replies, 'I will reward you.' On another side two figures hanging, inscribed 'the Traitor's Reward,' and underneath, 'The Adjutant General of the British Army and Joe Smith. The first hanged as a spy, and the last as a traitor to his country.' On the front of the lanthorn this inscription in big letters: 'Major General Benedict Arnold, late Commander of the Fortress of the West Point. The crime of this man is High Treason. He has deserted the important

post of West Point committed to his care by Washington and gone to the British. The treachery of this ungrateful General is held up to public view for the exposition of his Infamy. The Effigy of this Ingrate is therefore hanged (for want of his body) as a traitor to his native country and a Betrayer of the Laws of Honor.'

"The Procession began about four o'clock — several Gentlemen on horseback, A line of Continental officers. Sundry Gentlemen in Line: a guard of City Infantry. Before the cart, drums and fifes playing the Rogue's March, Guards on each side. A numerous concourse of people attended the procession, who, after expressing their abhorrence of Treason and the Traitor, committed him to the flames and left both the effigy and the Original to sink into the ashes of Oblivion."

Lampoons and doggerel verses issued in a flood. Thomas Paine, then clerk of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania published a "Crisis Extraordinary," in which he flayed the unfortunate Arnold unmercifully. Several plans to kidnap him at his quarters and bring

him within the American lines for condign punishment were formed. One might have succeeded had not Arnold changed his quarters the day before the attempt was to have been made.

CHAPTER XVI

LATER LIFE, AND DEATH

ARNOLD'S warlike exploits after his change of flags were neither creditable to him nor productive of benefit to his new masters. Some two months after his defection he was given command of a predatory expedition of about fifteen hundred men launched against the Old Dominion as a punishment for her activity in resisting the King. Hitherto she had escaped serious injury. The expedition sailed up the James, burning the tobacco warehouses, foundries, and magazines along the banks, and at last captured Richmond, which was nearly all burned; after which it returned to Hampton Roads and went into winter quarters at Portsmouth, opposite the present city of Norfolk. Thither Washington sent a strong force of French and Continentals to capture Arnold, but he, on

March 26, 1781, received a large reinforcement from New York under General Phillips — the same who had fought against him at Saratoga. Phillips outranking him, took command, and in June Arnold returned to New York, thus escaping the mortification of a defeat with Cornwallis at Yorktown. While he was in Virginia, Jefferson, then governor, offered a reward of five thousand guineas for his capture. Here too the oft told colloquy between him and a Continental captain who had been taken prisoner occurred.

"What would be my fate if taken?" Arnold asked.

"They would cut off that shortened leg of yours wounded at Quebec and at Saratoga," replied the captain, "and bury it with all the honors of war, then hang the rest of you on a gibbet."

In September of the same year he was sent to destroy stores that had been collected at New London, on the Thames, about ten miles below Norwich, his birthplace. The town was burned, Fort Griswold, which defended

it, carried by assault, and almost the entire garrison barbarously murdered after surrendering. Arnold claimed that he was not responsible for this massacre, having been on the other side of the river when it occurred, but as he was in command the patriots held him accountable, and the affair added greatly to the horror and detestation in which he was held.

Barely had he returned to New York when news came of the surrender at Yorktown of Cornwallis and his ten thousand men, and all knew that the war must soon end in the independence of the colonies. This must have been a serious blow to Arnold, for with the success of the American arms his name would always remain infamous among his compatriots. In the December following, partly to escape this odium, partly from fear of the kidnapper and the assassin, he sailed for England with his family, which had been increased by the birth of a second son, August 27, 1781. His ostensible mission was to confer with the British ministers on the conduct of the war.

The reader can easily imagine his emotions as he watched the coast line drop below the waves, — his native land, for which he had bravely fought and bled, in which he would have henceforth no part nor lot, which he was destined never again to visit, at least not openly. There was a volume of tragedy in it, of an intensity never pictured on the mimic stage.

It must be admitted that England repaid Arnold well for his treason, that is, if material good can repay a man for loss of honor and self-respect. "He was received with open arms by the king, caressed by the ministers, and all imaginable attention showed him by all people on that side of the question," we are told, and was presented at court, by Sir Walter Stirling. £6,315 were voted him in return for his property in America, which the "rebels" summarily confiscated, while Mrs. Arnold, a little later, was voted a pension of £500 per annum, and each of her children £100.

Arnold's life in England and Canada was not one to be desired. The influence of the

Whig party — whose members were his bitter enemies — was sufficient to keep him out of the army, and after a while he returned to his old vocation of a merchant, in which he was quite successful, having business thrown in his way by the government. From 1787 to 1791, he and his family were in St. John's, New Brunswick, where Arnold conducted a profitable trade with the West Indies. In 1791, all returned to England, and took up their residence in London, which continued thereafter to be their home, though Arnold was often absent on trading voyages to the West Indies. Twice during these voyages, — England being at war with France at the time, — he was taken prisoner by French vessels of war, but contrived to escape to the British fleet with valuable information. For these and other services, the King, in 1798, granted him 13,400 acres of land in Canada. During the war with France, all his military ardor aroused, Arnold made repeated attempts to secure a command, which, however, was refused him. This, with the indignities and insults which he continually received from

the friends of America, joined to remorse and to certain pecuniary losses and embarrassments, brought on a nervous disease from which, after long suffering, he died, June 14, 1801, at his house in London, aged sixty years.

As death drew near, it is said his mind wandered, and he was again in America, fighting his battles with Washington and his old comrades in arms. In a lucid interval he asked that his Continental uniform of a major-general, in which he had escaped to the "Vulture," and which he had ever cherished, might be brought and put on him, with the epaulets and sword-knots which Washington had given him as bravest of the brave.

"Let me die in my old American uniform," he said, "the uniform in which I fought my battles. God forgive me," he added, "for ever putting on any other."

His wife died in London, August 24, 1804, aged forty-four years. Arnold never revisited his native country, so far as known, though he may have done so in disguise, when residing in New Brunswick. His wife

again visited her father and friends in Philadelphia, some years after the war, but her part in her husband's treason was so well known by the patriots that she was treated with the utmost coldness and soon returned to England.

Arnold's sons by the second wife, all of whom remained in England, came to honor. The eldest, Edward Shippen, born in Philadelphia, March 19, 1780, received a military education at the hands of the British Government, was appointed a lieutenant in the Sixth Bengal Cavalry, and rose to be paymaster. He died at Dingapoor, Bengal, December 17, 1813. James Robertson, the second son, born in New York, August 27, 1781, entered the corps of Royal Engineers in 1798, and after a service of nearly half a century, attaining the rank of lieutenant-general, died December 27, 1854, without issue, in London, England. George, the third son, born in New Brunswick, September 5, 1787, died in India, November 1, 1828, holding the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the Second Bengal Cavalry. William Fitch, born in London, June 25, 1794,

became a captain in the Nineteenth Royal Lancers. Sophia Matilda, the only daughter, was born in London, July 28, 1785, and married Captain Pownall Phipps, later lieutenant-colonel in the British army.

APPENDIX

LIST OF AUTHORITIES CONSULTED

Sparks' Life of Benedict Arnold
Arnold's Life of Benedict Arnold
Calkins' History of Norwich, Conn.
Atwater's History of New Haven, Conn.
Maine Historical Society's Collections
Pennsylvania Historical Society's Collections
Pennsylvania Archives
American Archives
Documentary History of New York
Stone's Campaign of General John Burgoyne
Marshall's History of the United States
Irving's Life of Washington
Sargent's Life of André
Bancroft's History of the United States
Watson's Annals of Philadelphia
Watson's Historic Mansions of Philadelphia
Davis' Life of Aaron Burr
Parton's Life of Aaron Burr
Fiske's The American Revolution
Wilkinson's Memoirs
Codman's Arnold's Expedition to Quebec
Arnold's Journal
Henry's Journal
Melvin's Journal
Meigs' Journal
Senter's Journal

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