

ETHAN ALLEN

OF THE CAPTURE OF
TICONDEROGA: HIS
CAPTIVITY AND
TREATMENT BY THE
BRITISH

Ethan Allen
Of the Capture of
Ticonderoga: His Captivity
and Treatment by the British

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=24166668

Of the Capture of Ticonderoga: His Captivity and Treatment by the British:

Содержание

INTRODUCTION	9
NARRATIVE	11
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	32

Of the Capture of Ticonderoga: His Captivity and Treatment by the British

No apology need be offered for presenting a new Edition of the following Narrative, of one of the most remarkable men of the age in which he lived. It is given in the plain language of its self-educated author, without any alteration. The Senior publisher has been intimately acquainted with his widow, who died about ten years since, and has been assured by her that this narrative is printed as he wrote it without alteration; and, that it shows more of his true character, than all else ever written of him.

Little is known of the life of Col. Allen, but what is found in Biographical Dictionaries, Spark's American Biography, and his Memoirs written by Mr. Moore, from whose introduction the following just tribute to his memory is copied:

"Perhaps no individual, of equal advantages, and the station he occupied in life, contributed more towards establishing the independence of our country, than Ethan Allen, the subject of this memoir. The mass of the people among whom he resided, were rude and uncultivated; yet bold in spirit and zealous in

action. It consequently followed, that no one, save a man of strong natural endowments – of much decision, energy and bravery, could control their prejudices and inclinations. Habit had rendered them familiar with danger, and impatient of restraint; hence, it followed, that no policy, unless proceeding from a source in which they had confidence, ever gained their approbation. Upon Allen, whose courage was undoubted, and whose zealous devotion to their interests was universally acknowledged, they implicitly relied. They had known him in adversity and prosperity – they had weighed him, and found nothing lacking. To friend or foe, he was ever the same unyielding advocate of the rights of man, and universal liberty. The policy, therefore he upheld, as beneficial to the common cause of American liberty, ever found strong and efficient supporters in the friends with whom he associated, and by whom he was known.

"From the commencement of our Revolutionary struggle, until its final close, Ethan Allen proved a zealous and strenuous supporter of the cause. Whether in the field or the council – whether at home, a freeman among the mountains of Vermont, or loaded with the manacles of despotism, in a foreign country, his spirit never quailed beneath the sneer of the tory, or the harsh threats of insolent authority. A stranger to fear, his opinions were ever given without disguise or hesitation: and, an enemy to oppression, he sought every opportunity to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. It is not to be supposed, however, that he was

faultless. Like other men, he had his errors – like other men, his foibles. Yet he was not wilfully stubborn in either. When convinced of an erroneous position, he was ever willing to yield a victory; but, in theory, as in practice, he contested every inch of ground; and only yielded when he had no weapons left to meet his antagonist. This trait in his character serves, at least, to prove, that he was honest in his conclusions, however erroneous the premises from which they were deduced.

"Much error of opinion prevails among all classes of individuals, at the present period, in relation to the character of Col. Allen. He is generally viewed as a coarse, ignorant man, void of all the social feelings, and arrogant in all his pretensions. Even Mr. Dwight, in his "Travels in New England," reports him in this light; and deems him only worthy a brief and unjust notice in his work. In what manner Mr. Dwight came in possession of the facts upon which he predicated his conclusions, is beyond the knowledge of the author of this Memoir: but, certain it is, he has materially misrepresented the moral principles, and in fact, the general character of Col. Allen. It is presumed, however, that Mr. Dwight, like many other travelers, drew his inferences from the gossip of the people among whom he associated, without being at the trouble of extending his inquiries to a source from whence he might have derived every material fact in relation to the subject. In making this suggestion, the author would not be understood as attaching any particular blame to Mr. Dwight; but merely as correcting an *error of opinion* which is quite too prevalent in our

country."

Burlington, Vt. Aug. 1st, 1848

PUBLISHED IN 1807.

In announcing the publication of this little, simple, true, and unvarnished *narrative*, the publishers have complied with the wishes of a number of persons, who had a desire to keep in remembrance the hero of Ticonderoga, and the exploits he performed. It is believed that there is not a copy for sale in any bookstore in the United States; and the style of printing, at the time of its first appearance, which is now near thirty years since, was in so unimproved a condition, that it has never been seen but in the shabby dress of a large and ragged pamphlet. The events of those "troublous times" in which Col. Allen took a conspicuous part, are rendered doubly interesting from the lively, unadorned manner of his own narration. The high compliments which he pays to the prowess, uniform perseverance and resolution, manifested by the "Green Mountain Boys" of his native State, will no doubt be an inducement to them, and to his countrymen generally, to read and preserve this monument of him, and, as they con the pages of this "little book" which he has "left them," to imitate the coolness and courage of the deceased veteran.

The sufferings and cruelties borne by him and his fellow soldiers, frequently draw from him in the course of his *narrative*, a language the most severe, with respect to a country from whom we originated, with whom we are now at peace, and with whom it is our policy to continue on a friendly footing; but the

candid and the feeling mind should make great allowance for the unparalleled situation of our affairs, for the sufferings of his handful of little "*Spartans*," for whom he felt a father's and a brother's affection. These circumstances must have given a deep coloring to the pencil which was portraying his own and his country's wrongs. On the whole, we think this little tract may be re-perused, with advantage and pleasure, by the aged, and read with much edification and entertainment by the young. As it is deemed that the very words, in every respect made use of by the Colonel, would be more acceptable to the reader, than any artificial decoration of style we shall invariably adhere to the original.

INTRODUCTION

Induced by a sense of duty to my country, and by the application of many of my worthy friends, some of whom are of the first characters, I have concluded to publish the following narrative of the extraordinary scenes of my captivity, and the discoveries which I made in the course of the same, of the cruel and relentless disposition and the behaviour of the enemy, towards the prisoners in their power; from which the state politician, and every gradation of character among the people, to the worthy tiller of the soil, may deduce such inferences as they shall think proper to carry into practice. Some men are appointed into office, in these States, who read the history of the cruelties of this war, with the same careless indifference, as they do the pages of the Roman history; nay, some are preferred to places of trust and profit by the tory influence. The instances are (I hope) but rare, and it stands all freemen in hand to prevent their further influence, which, of all other things, would be the most baneful to the liberties and happiness of this country; and, so far as such influence takes place, robs us of the victory we have obtained at the expense of so much blood and treasure.

I should have exhibited to the public a history of the facts herein contained, soon after my exchange, had not the urgency of my private affairs, together with more urgent public business, demanded my attention, till a few weeks before the date hereof.

The reader will readily discern, that a Narrative of this sort could not have been written when I was a prisoner. My trunk and writings were often searched under various pretences; so that I never wrote a syllable, or made even a rough minute whereon I might predicate this narration, but trusted solely to my memory for the whole. I have, however, taken the greatest care and pains to recollect the facts and arrange them; but as they touch a variety of characters and opposite interests, I am sensible that all will not be pleased with the relation of them. Be this as it will, I have made truth my invariable guide, and stake my honor on the truth of the facts. I have been very generous with the British in giving them full and ample credit for all their good usage, of any considerable consequence, which I met with among them, during my captivity; which was easily done, as I met with but little, in comparison of the bad, which, by reason of the great plurality of it, could not be contained in so concise a narrative; so that I am certain that I have more fully enumerated the favors which I received, than the abuses I suffered. The critic will be pleased to excuse any inaccuracies in the performance itself, as the author has unfortunately missed of a liberal education.

Bennington, March 25, 1779.

ETHAN ALLEN.

NARRATIVE

Ever since I arrived at the state of manhood, and acquainted myself with the general history of mankind, I have felt a sincere passion for liberty. The history of nations, doomed to perpetual slavery, in consequence of yielding up to tyrants their natural-born liberties, I read with a sort of philosophical horror; so that the first systematical and bloody attempt at Lexington, to enslave America, thoroughly electrified my mind, and fully determined me to take part with my country. And, while I was wishing for an opportunity to signalize myself in its behalf, directions were privately sent to me from the then colony, (now state) of Connecticut, to raise the Green Mountain Boys, and, if possible, to surprise and take the fortress of Ticonderoga. This enterprise I cheerfully undertook; and, after first guarding all the several passes that led thither, to cut off all intelligence between the garrison and the country, made a forced march from Bennington, and arrived at the lake opposite to Ticonderoga, on the evening of the ninth day of May, 1775, with two hundred and thirty valiant Green Mountain Boys; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I procured boats to cross the lake. However, I landed eighty-three men near the garrison, and sent their boats back for the rear guard, commanded by Col. Seth Warner, but the day began to dawn, and I found myself under a necessity to attack the fort, before the 'Ticonderoga Fort' is thus described in the

American Encyclopedia: – Ticonderoga; a post-town of Essex county, New York, on the west side of the south end of Lake Champlain, and at the north end of lake George; twelve miles south of Crown Point, ninety-five north of Albany; population in 1820, 1493. There is a valuable iron mine in this township. – Ticonderoga Fort, famous in the history of the American wars, is situated on an eminence, on the west side of lake Champlain, just north of the entrance of the outlet from lake George into lake Champlain, fifteen miles south of Crown Point, twenty-four north of Whitehall; lon. 73 deg. 27' W.; lat. 43. deg. 30'. N. It is now in ruins. Considerable remains of the fortifications are still to be seen. The stone walls of the fort, which are now standing, are in some places, thirty feet high. Mount Defiance lies about a mile south of the fort, and Mount Independence is about half a mile distant, on the opposite side of the lake, in Orwell, Vermont.

It was built by the French, in the year 1756, and had all the advantages that art and nature could give it; being defended on three sides by water, surrounded by rocks, and where that fails, the French erected a breastwork nine feet high. The English and Colonial troops, under General Abercrombie were defeated here in the year 1758, but it was taken in the year following by General Amherst. It was surprised by Colonels Allen and Arnold, May 10, 1775. Was retaken by General Burgoyne in July, 1777, and was evacuated after his surrender, the garrison returning to St. Johns.

The rear could cross the lake; and, as it was viewed hazardous,

I harranged the officers and soldiers in the manner following:

"Friends and fellow soldiers, You have, for a number of years past been a scourge and terror to arbitrary power. Your valor has been famed abroad, and acknowledged, as appears by the advice and orders to me, from the General Assembly of Connecticut, to surprise and take the garrison now before us. I now propose to advance before you, and in person, conduct you through the wicket-gate; for we must this morning either quit our pretensions to valor, or possess ourselves of this fortress in a few minutes; and, inasmuch as it is a desperate attempt, which none but the bravest of men dare undertake, I do not urge it on any contrary to his will. You that will undertake voluntarily, poise your firelocks."

The men being, at this time, drawn up in three ranks, each poised his firelock. I ordered them to face to the right, and at the head of the centre-file, marched them immediately to the wicket-gate aforesaid, where I found a sentry posted, who instantly snapped his fusee at me; I ran immediately towards him, and he retreated through the covered way into the parade within the garrison, gave a halloo, and ran under a bombproof. My party, who followed me into the fort, I formed on the parade in such a manner as to face the two barracks which faced each other.

The garrison being asleep, except the sentries, we gave three huzzas which greatly surprised them. One of the sentries made a pass at one of my officers with a charged bayonet, and slightly wounded him: My first thought was to kill him with my sword;

but in an instant, I altered the design and fury of the blow to a slight cut on the side of the head; upon which he dropped his gun, and asked quarter, which I readily granted him, and demanded of him the place where the commanding officer kept; he shewed me a pair of stairs in the front of a barrack, on the west part of the garrison, which led up a second story in said barrack, to which I immediately repaired, and ordered the commander, Capt. De La Place, to come forth instantly, or I would sacrifice the whole garrison at which the Capt. came immediately to the door with his breeches in his hand; when I ordered him to deliver me the fort instantly; he asked me by what authority I demanded it; I answered him "*In the name of the great Jehovah, and the Continental Congress.*"¹ The authority of the Congress being very little known at that time, he began to speak again; but I interrupted him, and with my drawn sword over his head, again demanded an immediate surrender of the garrison; with which he then complied, and ordered his men to be forthwith paraded without arms, as he had given up the garrison. In the mean time some of my officers had given orders, and in consequence thereof, sundry of the barrack doors were beat down, and about one third of the garrison imprisoned, which consisted of the said commander, a Lieut. Feltham, a conductor of artillery, a gunner, two sergeants, and forty-four rank and file;

¹ If the Colonel has expressed a little of his usual severity in this place, he might have remarked also, that neither of the authorities he mentioned were much known in a British camp.

about one hundred pieces of cannon, one thirteen inch mortar, and a number of swivels. This surprise was carried into execution in the grey of the morning of the tenth day of May, 1775. The sun seemed to rise that morning with a superior lustre; and Ticonderoga and its dependencies smiled on its conquerors, who tossed about the flowing bowl, and wished success to Congress, and the liberty and freedom of America. Happy it was for me, at that time, that the then future pages of the book of fate, which afterwards unfolded a miserable scene of two years and eight months imprisonment, were hid from my view.

But to return to my narration: Col. Warner, with the rear guard, crossed the lake, and joined me early in the morning, whom I sent off, without loss of time, with about one hundred men, to take possession of Crown Point, which was garrisoned with a sergeant and twelve men 5 which he took possession of the same day, as also upwards of one hundred pieces of cannon. But one thing now remained to be done, to make ourselves complete masters of lake Champlain; this was to possess ourselves of a sloop of war, which was then lying at St. Johns; to effect which, it was agreed in a council of war, to arm and man out a certain schooner, which lay at South Bay, and that Capt. (now general) Arnold² should command her, and that I should

² This name, which now calls to mind the idea of treason, at every mention of it, is "damned to everlasting fame." His early history, with his conduct during the revolution, is probably familiar to every school boy. His subsequent life is thus described by Dr. Allen, in his American Biographical Dictionary."From the conclusion of the war to his death, Gen. Arnold resided chiefly in England. In 1786 he was at St. Johns, New

command the batteaux. The necessary preparations being made, we set sail from Ticonderoga, in quest of the sloop, which was much larger, and carried more guns and heavier metal than the schooner. General Arnold, with the schooner, sailing faster than the batteaux, arrived at St. Johns; and by surprise possessed himself of the sloop, before I could arrive with the batteaux; he also made prisoners of a sergeant and twelve men, who were garrisoned at that place.

Brunswick, engaged in trade and navigation, and again in 1790. For some cause he became very unpopular; in 1792 or 1793, was hung in effigy, and the mayor found it necessary to read the riot act, and a company of troops was called out to quell the mob. Repairing to the West Indies in 1794, a French fleet anchored at the same island; he became alarmed lest he should be detained by the American Allies, and passed the fleet concealed on a raft of lumber. He died in Gloucester place, London, June 14, 1801. He married Margaret, the daughter of Edward Shippen of Philadelphia, chief justice, and a loyalist. General Greene, it is said, was his rival. She combined fascinating manners with strength of mind. She died at London, August 24, 1804, aged 43. His sons were men of property in Canada in 1829. – His character presents little to be commended. His daring courage may indeed excite admiration; but it was a courage without reflection and without principle. He fought bravely for his country and he bled in her cause; but his country owed him no returns of gratitude, for his subsequent conduct proved, that he had no honest regard to her interests, but was governed by selfish considerations. His progress from self-indulgence to treason was easy and rapid. He was vain and luxurious, and to gratify his giddy desires he must resort to meanness, dishonesty, and extortion. These vices brought with them disgrace; and the contempt, into which he fell, awakened a spirit of revenge, and left him to the unrestrained influence of his cupidity and passion. Thus from the high fame, to which his bravery had elevated him, he descended into infamy. Thus too he furnished new evidence of the infatuation of the human mind in attaching such value to the reputation of a soldier, which may be obtained, while the heart is unsound and every moral sentiment is entirely depraved."

It is worthy of remark that as soon as General Arnold had secured the prisoners on board, and had made preparations for sailing, the wind, which but a few hours before was fresh in the south, and well served to carry us to St. Johns, now shifted, and came fresh from the north; and in about one hour's time, General Arnold sailed with the prize and schooner for Ticonderoga. When I met him with my party, within a few miles of St. Johns, he saluted me with a discharge of cannon, which I returned with a volley of small arms. This being repeated three times, I went on board the sloop with my party, where several loyal Congress healths were drank.

We were now masters of lake Champlain, and the garrison depending thereon. This success I viewed of consequence in the scale of American politics; for, if a settlement between the then colonies and Great Britain, had soon taken place, it would have been easy to have restored these acquisitions; but viewing the then future consequences of a cruel war, as it has really proved to be, and the command of that lake, garrisons, artillery, &c., it must be viewed to be of signal importance to the American cause, and it is marvellous to me that we ever lost the command of it. Nothing but taking a Burgoyne with a whole British army, could, in my opinion, atone for it; and notwithstanding such an extraordinary victory, we must be obliged to regain the command of that lake again, be the cost what it will; by doing this Canada will easily be brought into union and confederacy with the United States of America. Such an event would put it out of the power

of the western tribes of Indians to carry on a war with us, and be a solid and durable bar against any further inhuman barbarities committed on our frontier inhabitants, by cruel and bloodthirsty savages; for it is impossible for them to carry on a war, except they are supported by the trade and commerce of some civilized nation; which to them would be impracticable, did Canada compose a part of the American empire.

Early in the fall of the year, the little army under the command of Generals Schuyler and Montgomery, were ordered to advance into Canada. I was at Ticonderoga when this order arrived; and the Generals, with most of the field officers, requested me to attend them in the expedition; and, though at that time I had no commission from Congress, yet they engaged me, that I should be considered as an officer, the same as though I had a commission; and should, as occasion might require, command certain detachments of the army. This I considered as an honorable offer, and did not hesitate to comply with it, and advanced with the army to Isle-aux-Noix;³ from whence I was ordered by the General, to go in company with Major Brown, and certain interpreters, through the woods into Canada, with letters to the Canadians, and to let them know that the design of the army was only against the English garrisons, and not the country, their liberties or religion; and having, through much

³ A small island containing about 85 acres, ten miles north of the boundary lines of the States of New York and Vermont. It is strongly fortified, and completely commands the water communication from lake Champlain. Here the British had a small garrison.

danger, negotiated this business, I returned to the Isle-aux-Noix in the fore part of September, when Gen. Schuyler returned to Albany; and in consequence the command devolved upon Gen. Montgomery, whom I assisted in laying a line of circumvallation round the fortress of St. Johns.⁴ After which I was ordered by the General, to make a second tour into Canada, upon nearly the same design as before; and withal to observe the disposition, designs and movements of the inhabitants of the country. This reconnoiter I undertook reluctantly, choosing rather to assist at the siege of St. Johns, which was then closely invested; but my esteem for the general's person, and opinion of him as a politician and brave officer, induced me to proceed.

I passed through all the parishes on the river Sorel,⁴¹ to a parish at the mouth of the same, which is called by the same name, preaching politics; and went from thence across the Sorel to the St. Lawrence, and up the river through the parishes to Longueuil, and so far met with good success as an itinerant. In this round my guard were Canadians, my interpreter, and some few attendants excepted, On the morning of the 24th day of

⁴ St. Johns is a thriving village, in the County of Chambly, situated at the north end of lake Champlain, on the west bank of the Sorel river, twenty-eight miles southward of Montreal. It is the port of entry and clearance, between the United States and Canada. It is now connected with the St. Lawrence river by a rail-road.

⁴¹ Sorel or Richelieu River, the outlet of lake Champlain, which after a course of about 69 miles north, empties into the St. Lawrence, in north lat. 46 deg. 10 min., and long. 72 deg. 25 min. west. Sorel fort, built by the French, is at the western joint of the mouth of this river.

September I set out with my guard of about eighty men, from Longueuil, to go to Laprairie⁵ from whence I determined to go to General Montgomery's camp; but had not advanced two miles before I met with Major Brown, who has since been advanced to the rank of a Colonel, who desired me to halt, saying that he had something of importance to communicate to me and my confidants; upon which I halted the party, and went into a house, and took a private room with him and several of my associates, where Col. Brown proposed that, "provided I would return to Longueuil, and procure some canoes, so as to cross the river St. Lawrence a little north of Montreal, he would cross it a little to the south of the town with near two hundred men, as he had boats sufficient; and that we could make ourselves masters of Montreal." This plan was readily approved by me and those in council; and in consequence of which I returned to Longueuil, collected a few canoes, and added about thirty English-Americans to my party, and crossed the river in the night of the 24th, agreeably to the proposed plan.

My whole party at this time, consisted of about one hundred and ten men, near eighty of whom were Canadians. We were most of the night crossing the river, as we had so few canoes that they had to pass and repass three times, to carry my party across. Soon after day-break, I set a guard between me and the town, with special orders to let no person whatever pass or repass them,

⁵ Laprairie, a populous little village, on the river St. Lawrence, in Canada, eighteen miles north of St. Johns, and nine south-west of Montreal.

another guard on the other end of the road, with like directions; in the meantime, I reconnoitered the best ground to make a defence, expecting Col. Brown's party was landed on the other side of the town, he having, the day before, agreed to give three loud huzzas with his men early in the morning, which signal I was to return, that we might each know that both parties were landed; but the sun, by this time, being nearly two hours high, and the sign failing, I began to conclude myself to be in preunire, and would have crossed the river back again, but I knew the enemy would have discovered such an attempt; and as there could not more than one-third part of my troops cross at one time, the other two-thirds would of course fall into their hands. This I could not reconcile to my own feelings as a man, much less as an officer: I therefore concluded to maintain the ground if possible, and all to fare alike. In consequence of this resolution, I despatched two messengers, one to Laprairie, to Col. Brown, and the other to l'Assomption, a French settlement, to Mr. Walker, who was in our interest, requesting their speedy assistance, giving them, at the same time to understand my critical situation. In the mean time, sundry persons came to my guards, pretending to be friends, but were by them taken prisoners and brought to me. These I ordered to confinement, until their friendship could be further confirmed; for I was jealous they were spies, as they proved to be afterwards. One of the principal of them making his escape, exposed the weakness of my party, which was the final cause of my misfortune; for I have been since informed that

Mr. Walker, agreeably to my desire, exerted himself, and had raised a considerable number of men for my assistance, which brought him into difficulty afterwards, but upon hearing of my misfortune, he disbanded them again.

The town of Montreal was in a great tumult. General Carleton and the royal party, made every preparation to go on board their vessels of force, as I was afterwards informed, but the spy escaped from my guard to the town, occasioned an alteration in their policy, and emboldened Gen. Carleton to send the force which he had there collected, out against me. I had previously chosen my ground, but when I saw the number of the enemy as they sallied out of the town, I perceived that it would be a day of trouble if not of rebuke; but I had no chance to flee, as Montreal was situated on an island, and the St. Lawrence cut off my communication to Gen. Montgomery's camp. I encouraged my soldiery to bravely defend themselves, that we should soon have help, and that we should be able to keep the ground, if no more. This, and much more I affirmed with the greatest seeming assurance, and which in reality I thought to be in some degree probable.

The enemy consisted of not more than forty regular troops, together with a mixed multitude, chiefly Canadians, with a number of English who lived in town, and some Indians; in all to the number of near five hundred.

The reader will notice that most of my party were Canadians; indeed it was a motley parcel which composed both parties.

However, the enemy began the attack from wood-piles, ditches, buildings, and such like places, at a considerable distance, and I returned the fire from a situation more than equally advantageous. The attack began between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, just before which I ordered a volunteer by the name of Richard Young, with a detachment of nine men as a flank guard, which, under the cover of the bank of the river, could not only annoy the enemy, but at the same time, serve as a flank guard to the left of the main body.

The fire continued for some time on both sides; and I was confident that such a remote method of attack could not carry the ground, provided it should be continued till night; but near half the body of the enemy began to flank round to my right; upon which I ordered a volunteer, by the name of John Dugan, who had lived many years in Canada, and understood the French language, to detach about fifty of the Canadians, and post himself at an advantageous ditch, which was on my right, to prevent my being surrounded: He advanced with the detachment, but instead of occupying the post, made his escape, as did likewise Mr. Young upon the left, with their detachments. I soon perceived that the enemy was in the possession of the ground, which Dugan should have occupied. At this time I had but about forty-five men with me; some of whom were wounded; the enemy kept closing round me, nor was it in my power to prevent it; by which means, my situation, which was advantageous in the first part of the attack, ceased to be so in the last; and being

almost entirely surrounded with such vast unequal numbers, I ordered a retreat, but found that those of the enemy, who were of the country, and their Indians, could run as fast as my men, though the regulars could not. Thus I retreated near a mile, and some of the enemy, with the savages, kept flanking me, and others crowded hard in the rear. In fine, I expected, in a very short time to try the world of spirits; for I was apprehensive that no quarter would be given me, and therefore had determined to sell my life as dear as I could. One of the enemy's officers, boldly pressing in the rear, discharged his fusee at me; the ball whistled near me, as did many others that day. I returned the salute, and missed him, as running had put us both out of breath: for I conclude we were not frightened: I then saluted him with my tongue in a harsh manner, and told him that, inasmuch as his numbers were far superior to mine, I would surrender provided I could be treated with honor, and be assured of good quarters for myself and the men who were with me; and he answered I should; another officer, coming up directly after, confirmed the treaty; upon which I agreed to surrender with my party, which then consisted of thirty-one effective men, and seven wounded.

I ordered them to ground their arms, which they did.

The officer I capitulated with, then directed me and my party to advance towards him, which was done; I handed him my sword, and in halt a minute after, a savage, part of whose head was shaved, being almost naked and painted, with feathers intermixed with the hair of the other side of his head, came

running to me with an incredible swiftness; he seemed to advance with more than mortal speed; as he approached near me, his hellish visage was beyond all description; snake's eyes appear innocent in comparison of his; his features extorted;⁷ malice, death, murder, and the wrath of devils and damned spirits are the emblems of his countenance; and in less than twelve feet of me, presenting his firelock; at the instant of his present, I twitched the officer, to whom I gave my sword, between me and the savage; but he flew round with great fury, trying to single me out to shoot me without killing the officer; but by this time I was nearly as nimble as he, keeping the officer in such a position that his danger was my defence; but in less than half a minute, I was attacked by just such another imp of hell: Then I made the officer fly around with incredible velocity, for a few seconds of time, when I perceived a Canadian, who had lost one eye, as appeared afterwards, taking my part against the savages; and in an instant an Irishman came to my assistance, and drove away the fiends, swearing by Jassus he would kill them. This tragic scene composed my mind. The escaping from so awful a death, made even imprisonment happy; the more so as my conquerers on the field treated me with great civility and politeness.

The regular officers said that they were very happy to see Col. Allen: I answered them, that I should rather chose to have seen them at General Montgomery's camp. The gentlemen replied,

⁷ Probably meant to be distorted; though, from the description it would appear that his visage had been extorted from some "Gorgon or chimera dire."

that they gave full credit to what I said, and as I walked to the town, which was, as I should guess, more than two miles, a British officer walking at my right hand, and one of the French noblesse at my left; the latter of which, in the action, had his eyebrow carried away by a glancing shot, but was nevertheless very merry and facetious, and no abuse was offered me till I came to the barrack yard at Montreal, where I met general Prescott, who asked me my name, which I told him: He then asked me, whether I was that Col. Allen, who took Ticonderoga. I told him I was the very man: Then he shook his cane over my head, calling many hard names, among which he frequently used the word rebel, and put himself in a great rage. I told him he would do well not to cane me, for I was not accustomed to it, and shook my fist at him, telling him that was the beetle of mortality for him, if he offered to strike; upon which Capt. M'Cloud of the British, pulled him by the skirt, and whispered to him, as he afterwards told me, to this import; that it was inconsistent with his honor to strike a prisoner. He then ordered a sergeant's command with fixed bayonets to come forward, and kill thirteen Canadians, which were included in the treaty aforesaid.

It cut me to the heart to see the Canadians in so hard a case, in consequence of their having been true to me; they were wringing their hands, saying their prayers, as I concluded, and expected immediate death. I therefore stepped between the executioners and the Canadians, opened my clothes, and told Gen. Prescott to thrust his bayonets into my breast, for I was the sole cause of the

Canadians taking up arms.

The guard, in the mean time, rolling their eye-balls from the General to me, as though impatiently waiting his dread commands to sheath their bayonets in my heart; I could, however, plainly discern, that he was in suspense and quandary about the matter: This gave me additional hope of succeeding; for my design was not to die, but to save the Canadians by a finesse. The general stood a minute, when he made me the following reply; "I will not execute you now; but you shall grace a halter at Tyburn, God damn you."

I remember I disdained his mentioning such a place; I was, notwithstanding, a little pleased with the expression, as it significantly conveyed to me the idea of postponing the present appearance of death; besides his sentence was by no means final, as to "gracing a halter," although I had anxiety about it, after I landed in England, as the reader will find in the course of this history. Gen. Prescott then ordered one of his officers to take me on board the Gaspee schooner of war, and confine me, hands and feet, in irons, which was done the same afternoon I was taken.

The action continued an hour and three quarters, by the watch, and I know not to this day how many of my men were killed, though I am certain there were but few. If I remember right, 7 were wounded; one of them, Wm. Stewart, by name, was wounded by a savage with a tomahawk, after he was taken prisoner and disarmed, but was rescued by some of the generous enemy; and so far recovered of his wounds, that he afterwards

went with the other prisoners to England.

Of the enemy, were killed a major Carden, who had been wounded in eleven different battles, and an eminent merchant, Patterson, of Montreal, and some others, but I never knew their whole loss, as their accounts were different. I am apprehensive that it is rare, that so much ammunition was expended, and so little execution done by it; though such of my party as stood their ground, behaved with great fortitude, much exceeding that of the enemy, but were not the best of marksmen, and, I am apprehensive, were all killed or taken; the wounded were all put into the hospital at Montreal, and those that were not, were put on board of different vessels in the river, and shackled together by pairs, viz, two men fastened together by one hand-cuff, being closely fixed to one wrist of each of them, and treated with the greatest severity, nay as criminals.

I now come to the description of the irons, which were put on me: The hand-cuff was of the common size and form, but my leg irons, I should imagine would weigh thirty pounds; the bar was eight feet long, and very substantial; the shackles, which encompassed my ancles, were very tight. I was told by the officer, who put them on, that it was the king's plate, and I heard other of their officers say, that it would weigh forty weight. The irons were so close upon my ancles, that I could not lay down in any other manner than on my back. I was put into the lowest and most wretched part of the vessel, where I got the favor of a chest to sit on; the same answered for my bed at night; and having procured

some little blocks of the guard, who day and night, with fixed bayonets, watched over me, to lie, under each end of the large bar of my leg irons, to preserve my ancles from galling, while I sat on the chest, or lay back on the same, though most of the time, night and day, I sat on it; but at length, having a desire to lie down on my side, which the closeness of my irons forbid, I desired the captain to loosen them for that purpose; but was denied the favor. The Captain's name was Royal, who did not seem to be an ill-natured man; but oftentimes said, that his express orders were to treat me with such severity, which was disagreeable to his own feelings; nor did he ever insult me, though many others, who come on board did. One of the officers, by the name of Bradley, was very generous to me; he would often send me victuals from his own table; nor did a day fail, but he sent me a good drink of grog.

The reader is now invited back to the time I was put in irons. I requested the privilege to write to General Prescott, which was granted. I reminded him of the kind and generous manner of my treatment of the prisoners I took at Ticonderoga; the injustice and ungentleman-like usage I had met with from him, and demanded better usage, but received no answer from him. I soon after wrote to Gen. Carleton, which met the same success. In the mean while, many of those who were permitted to see me, were very insulting.

I was confined in the manner I have related, on board the Gaspee schooner, about six weeks; during which time I was obliged to throw out plenty of extravagant language, which

answered certain purposes, at that time, better than to grace a history.

To give an instance; upon being insulted, in a fit of anger, I twisted off a nail with my teeth, which I took to be a ten-penny nail; it went through the mortise of the bar of my hand-cuff, and at the same time I swaggered over those who abused me; particularly a Doctor Dace, who told me that I was outlawed by New York, and deserved death for several years past; was at last fully ripened for the halter, and in a fair way to obtain it. When I challenged him, he excused himself, in consequence, as he said, of my being a criminal; but I flung such a flood of language at him that it shocked him and the spectators, for my anger was very great. I heard one say, damn him, can he eat iron? After that, a small padlock was fixed to the hand-cuff, instead of the nail; and as they were mean-spirited in their treatment to me so it appeared to me, that they were equally timorous and cowardly.

I was after sent, with the prisoners taken with me, to an armed vessel in the river, which lay off against Quebec, under the command of Capt. M'Cloud, of the British, who treated me in a very generous and obliging manner, and according to my rank; in about twenty-four hours I bid him farewell with regret; but my good fortune still continued. The name of the Captain of the vessel I was put on board, was Littlejohn; who, with his officers, behaved in a polite, generous, and friendly manner. I lived with them in the cabin, and fared on the best, my irons being taken off, contrary to the order he had received from the commanding

officer; but Capt Littlejohn swore, that a brave man should not be used as a rascal, on board his ship.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.