THE SIEGE OF LOUISBOURG

Quaint Account of the English Capture of Cape Breton's Capital Written 150 Years Ago.

AN ENGLISH OFFICER'S STORY

Troops of Undrilled Men Raised in New England Captured the French Stronghold After a Siege of Six Weeks' Duration.

The near approach of the one hundred and fifty-second anniversary of the capture of Louisbourg, Cape Breton, by the English and its capitulation, June 17, 1745, makes interesting this somewhat unique history of the siege. It was written 150 years ago by "a military gentleman in his Majesties service" who is anonymous. The book from which the sketch is taken is an oblong folio of about 500 pages, containing thirtythree quaint full-page copper plates, relating to the subjects enumerated in an equally quaint title page. It is in the possession of Miss Carrie E. Silkman of Scranton, Penn. It is an heirloom in her mother's family, and a very rare specimen of the bookmaking of its time.

While the story of the siege differs in some particulars from the story as told by Parkman in his "Half Century of Conflict," it is none the less interesting, and is of value as being written by one well conversant with the facts and a probable participant in the siege.

The title page reads as follows: A New Military Dictionary, or the Field of War.

containing A Particular and Circumstantial Account Of the Most Remarkable Battles, Sieges. Bombardments & Expeditions, Whether by Sea or Land, Such as relate to Great Britain & her dependencies. Deduced

From the Descent of Julius Caesar to the present

and Those that regard the Continent of Europe, Traced from The reign of Charlemagne, beginning with the Ninth Century. including

Anecdotes of the Lives, Military & Naval Transactions, of the most celebrated Admirals, Generals, Captains, &c., who have distinguished themselves in the Service of their Country, to which is added

An Essay on Fortification, and A Table explaining the Military and Naval Terms of Art. Compiled from the best Authorities and most approved Authors By a Military Gentleman. ILLUSTRATED with a great number of elegant COPPER-PLATES. Heads of the Admirals and Generals, Plans of Battles, Maps, &c. London. Printed for J. Cooke at Shakespear's Head be-

hind the Chapter-house in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1760. This is the dedication of the volume:

The Right Honorable EDWARD ROSCAWEN. One of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, Admiral of the Blue Squadron of his Majestie's Fleet, One of the Elder Brethren of the Trinity-House, And one of his Majestie's most honorable Privy-Council,

SIR-What inference the world will draw from my presuming to address you in this public manner I know not; but my only motive is to lay before you a work, I hope not unworthy your perusal. Why I have done myself the honour of prefixing your name to these sheets rather than that of any other English gentleman, your public character sufficiently declares: for to whom should a work which records heroic actions be dedicated but to a hero. Without enumerating your victories, which must so conspicuously appear in a work of this nature, let us only remember to whom we owe the conquest of that valuable island Cape Breton, for which you have meritoriously received the thanks of the British Senate: the highest honor a subject can obtain. Permit me, Sir, to add my mite to the public gratitude, by addressing to you a work which recounts the glorious actions of illustrious war-

I am, Sir, with the highest Esteem, your humble and obedient servant, THE AUTHOR. Here is the story:

Siege of Louisbourg. THE CAPITAL OF THE ISLAND OF CAPE

BRETON, IN NORTH AMERICA. The possession of Cape Breton, of which this is the metropolis, commands the navigation to Canada by the River St. Lawrence.

At the commencement of the war all the British colonies in North America began to be sensible of the utility of Cape Breton, for in a few months the inhabitants of this island infested the coasts of the British settlements, ruining their fishery, interrupting their navigation, destroying Canso, invading Anapolis, reducing the bordering colonies to many extremities, and carrying the natives prisoners to a place reported impregnable, being a safe asylum for the West and East India fleets, and their men-

of-war and privateers. These hostilities of the French was the cause which roused the British colonies to a true sense of their danger and insecurity, which they looked upon to be every day more and more fatal, while the French possessed this island, the richest gem in their American treasures, and which had already cost them nine millions of livres in

establishing. Sensible of what importance this place must be to England, Mr. Auckmuty, a native of Scotland, and Judge Advocate of the Court of Admiralty in New England, candidly stated it to several of his friends, at whose desire he reduced the several branches of its consequence into a regular plan, at the same time framing a scheme for the reduction of it, which by the means of William Vaughan, Esq., a gentleman of great property in the colony, was communicated, and warmly recommended to William Shirley, Esq., Governor of the Massachusetts colony, who laid it before the General Assembly, then met at Boston. The difficulties at first seemed so numerous and the undertaking of so arduous a nature, that it was deemed impracticable without parliamentary aid, where the very

debates on it must have transpired to the French, and put them on their guard; but Mr. Auckmuty, the original projector of the plan, secretly sounded the thoughts of the principal inhabitants, and finding them willing and able to concur in the measures he proposed, they examined several prisoners returned from confinement in that island, by whom they were informed of the facility of the enterprise by a secret and The store ships from France had been

newly driven off to Martinico, a fatal stroke of distress to Cape Breton at this juncture, as it was a happy incident in our favor. A redundancy of provisions at the time enabled us to supply the intended armament with everything necessary, so that the final resolution was taken on the twenty-fifth of January, though it was then carried by the majority of one single voice to attack Louisbourg.

In consequence of this Commodore Warren was ordered by the Government to repair immediately, with three men-of-war, from Antigua to Boston, and contribute to the success of the expedition, while the Government of Boston granted £27,000 towards this undertaking, to be raised by way of lottery, for their service.

While Mr. Warren commanded the naval department, there wanted a person of military capacity to carry on the land operations, and to superintend the troops on disembarking; Mr. Pepperel of Piscataway. a gentleman of uncommon influence, and large fortune. was by the unanimous voice appointed to this command, to whose standard numbers, from their great attachment to his person, flocked in a surprising de-

Plan of Campaign.

It is generally believed that no person in Europe knew of these secret proceedings, but his Britannic' Majesty, to whom, in duty, the Governor Shirley had communicated the design; the secrecy in councils, the extraordinary management, and great dispatch in providing the levies and preparations both for the army and navy were carried in with such harmony that the troops were assembled, and the fleet ready to sail before the rest of the world had the least intelligence of the apparatus. The inhabitants of the several colonies of New England, consisting of those of the Massachusett's Bay, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, so cheerfully concurred in seasonably expediting the prosecution of the enterprise that an army of 3,850 volunteers, principally men of property or beneficial businesses, were assembled at Boston, with 85 transports, and 8 privateers of 20 guns, and 100 men each, besides 10 skows, brigantines, and sloops of force for their convoy to Canso in Nova Scotia, where they were to wait the arrival of Commodore Warren. This brave, determined, though yet undisciplined band, embarked from Boston on

the 20th of March, 1745, for Canso. Pray for us, while we fight for you, was the valiant, endearing, and last expression, wherewith they comforted their parting countrymen, at their departure from their families, fortunes, and occupations. Mr. Pepperel's great interest among the country people of the country, both Indians and Mestizos, to whom he trusted whatever goods they wanted, and who returned that confidence by exact and honest payments, greatly conduced to the success of the expedition, for hundreds accompanied him as their father and protector, whom they had more in contemplation than any concern for the conquest of Louisbourg. How easy a task to procure love and respect! How difficult to create enemies and contract the odium of our countrymen! Mr. Pepperel, who was not ignorant of his interest, and who saw all the height of the Governor's proposals, yet modestly declined that honor, as being deficient in those branches of military knowledge, which he knew were requisite in so important a post; but was prevailed on at length by the repeated instances of his friends, and from a merchant became at once a warrior.

On the 2d of April the fleet arrived at Canso, a port town of Nova Scotia, near a narrow straight which separates that colony from Cape Breton, and about 167 leagues from Boston. In three weeks Commodore Warren appeared with the Superb of 60 guns, with the Launceston and Eltham of 40 each; he was soon joined by the Mermaid of 40 guns, and was to be reinforced by others destined to join him there.

Gabaron Bay was appointed for making the descent, which was within four miles of the rampart of Louisbourg; and there it was that the French first saw our armaments. the surprise of which prevented them from getting in the provisions necessary for sustaining the siege. The garrison of Louisbourg, with all its forts, consisted only of 600 French and Swiss regulars and 800 militia, formed of those inhabitants who were able to bear arms. The Governor of Canada, without any knowledge of this expedition, but sensible of the discontents and divisions which reigned in the town, and of the possibility of its being one time or another attacked by the English, had some time before offered the Governor of Louisbourg a reinforcement, which from motives not to be justified, and for which he was afterward called to an account, he declined.

But now he saw himself surrounded by the enemy, all the ways for applying for succor blocked up, and cut off from every communication of resource. Thus he became besieged in form, with

forces unequal to the defense of the place. nay, without any probability of receiving a reinforcement from either Canada or Europe. This was the first and not the least error to which his disgrace for the loss of the place was owing, as with the succors offered him he would have been more than sufficiently enabled to sally out and drive before him a body of undisciplined troops no way equal to the reduction of the place. The design of surprising it thus took place, and the English pushed the enterprise with the greatest dispatch and vigor, in order to be beforehand with the arrival of the annual supply from France, which, according to their plan, fell into their hands; and thus doubly profited the expedition, as at the same time it assisted their measures and broke those of the enemy.

A man-of-war and a frigate had previously been fitted out at Brest for carrying succors to this place, laden with all kinds of military stores, and ready to put to sea, when the man-of-war unfortunately took fire and burned to the water's edge. The Vigilante was the only ship, just on the point of being launched, that could supply the loss.

Delays Helped the British.

This delay also co-operated with the expedition with which the English carried on the enterprise. When the Vigilante, therefore, arrived near this coast it appeared extremely dangerous, on account of a thick fog, to make a near approach to the island, so that the Marquis de la Maison Forte, the commander, tacked till the weather should clear up. About the latter end of May he discovered near him a frigate of forty guns, which, as had been concerted, feigned to fly; the Marquis chased, and thus was decoyed into the middle of Commodore Warren's squadron. She was so deeply laden with military stores that her lower tier became useless, and she was, after a vigorous defense, taken, another previous and fortunate incident in our favor; for about the time of taking the Vigilante the troops were well nigh disgusted at the enterprise, which they began to look upon as romantic; and, as it is said, a resolution was entered into of abandoning the siege if the place was not

taken in a fortnight at least. The debarkation of the troops was immediately put in agitation, though no sooner were the whaleboats got out for their landing than Capt. Morepang came from the city with a detachment of 100 men to prevent the attempt. The English privateers, which lay at anchor, covered the landing with their fire, while 200 of the forces, having got on shore, defeated the detachment, with the loss of six men killed on the enemy's side, five taken prisoners, and the rest dispersed among the woods, being cut off from returning to the city; being thus disposed so as at once to possess the shore all the way to Louisbourg and to pursue the enemy, they found in several places, by them abandoned, several arms, a good quantity of ammunition, and provisions, which being secured, they marched directly up to the ramparts, through a boggy country full of rocks, hills, and thickets, so as to inclose the town, while Commodore Warren, with the men-of-war and cruisers, posted himself off the harbor so as to intercept all reinforcements and supplies by sea. They next formed two separate camps, the one on the southern part of the harbor to make their approaches to the town; the other to attack the grand battery.

The British scouts in the beginning of May reconnoitered the adjacent country to the grand battery, and the same night set fire to the storehouses, which were full of combustible matter, burning in so dreadful a manner as made the French imagine that the whole force of the English was entering the fort. At the same time another party threatened the royal battery, which was commanded by a very unexperienced officer: the garrison was weak, without guns to the landward, the part only from whence the enemy which faced it could be annoyed. The commandant of the fortwent over to view it and gave directions that in case the enemy approached on that side they should remove the guns, which pointed seaward, and use them to the best advantage; and, in case they were forced to capitulate, or the royal battery fall into the hands of the English, who would then turn the cannon against the fort, they should immediately pass over to the fort, first nailing up the cannon. But the imprudent officer availed his cowardice of these instructions, for, without trying his cannon on the English. who lay quiet in their camp, he embarked his men that very night and made over to the fort in confusion, pretending that the enemy had made an assault on the battery with a large force, which was absolutely false, the French flag flying some time after, which was an evident sign there was no person in it to lower it. The English, observing from the camp that no person appeared on the parapet of the royal battery. concluded that the garrison was employed in some secret attempt, and therefore in prudence made no further approaches till, believing at length that it was really abandoned, a Boston Indian, without any arms. went in a rambling manner, as if disordered in his senses, toward the gate, by which he entered the fort, cleared up the doubt, and lowered the French colours, which till then had been flying.

Troops Enter a Battery. On this signal the English entered it, and the artillery, having been very badly nailed up in the hurry of retreat, was pointed against the town, which it battered in flank with great effect, beating down the roofs of several houses, the chimney and embrasures of the other batteries. The other part of the British forces on the other side of the harbor drew up a large train of artillery to an eminence called the Green Hill, about threequarters of a mile from the city, from whence they briskly cannonaded it. On the 12th of May they had erected a fascine battery of twenty-eight guns within 200 yards of the walls, and broke down part of the circular battery with their shot. As the principal effort was to be made from this battery, not yet completely mounted, Col. Pepperel ordered several guns, fortytwo-pounders, to be brought from the grand to the fascine battery, though two miles distant, over hill and valleys, rocks and morasses, the men being up to the middle in mire. The success was equal to the fatigue; for they soon dismounted their cannon, and destroyed their houses, walls, and flankers.

On the 23d of May the island battery, which incommoded both the men-of-war and also the grand battery, began to be the object of attention, and about 12 o'clock the whaleboats, with paddles, ladders, and other necessaries for the attempt, were all ready; 500 men of the forces and marines embarked from on board the men-of-war. with a view of reducing that battery; but, the fog arising, gave the French time to reinforce the battery with 320 men, which before consisted only of 14. On the 27th. 320 men attacked the island battery and began to scale the walls, but, being discovered, this design was defeated, with the loss of 36 men killed and 118 prisoners, being those who had landed; some boats were also sunk by the French cannon from the battery in this hardy attempt. This, far from intimidating the bravery of our troops. spirited them up to revenge the death and imprisonment of their fellow-soldiers, which

they began with erecting a new battery on the 1st of June, at the lighthouse, and dragged up some of the heaviest cannon and mortars on the cliff which overlooked and commanded the island battery. The French were amazed to see a work of such labor executed in one night, justly apprehensive of its great success, as one flanker faced the sea, and the other the battery, commanding at once that and all the ships entering or going out of the harbor. It was in the greatest exigency and want of powder that 600 barrels of gunpowder arrived from Boston, with stores for the forces; intelligence was also brought from thence that 1,000 men were raised in New England to reinforce the troops, and that the French fleet destined for the relief of Cape Breton was blockaded up at Brest by the British squadron, a piece of information which greatly added to the success of the operations of the siege. Several ships meanwhile fell into the Commodore's hands, who little expected so unwelcome a reception in a port which they had thought their own. We were also informed by deserters that the Governor, on the intercepting so many ships, some destined for his relief, and having only 100 barrels of gunpowder in the whole island, had begun to despair of keeping the town, which caused the besiegers to redouble their fires against the

sentinels to shoot every Englishman who attempted to land, though, it must be observed, that this rigor was not the effect of any resentment occasioned by the loss of Louisbourg and Cape Breton, but owing to the detention of Marshal Belleisle, at that

time a prisoner of war in England. This was a continued siege of forty-seven days, almost seven weeks, from the 1st of May to the 15th of June, 1745, the day of sending the flag of truce. Few histories can furnish instances of a braver, more resolute, and well conducted attempt; let it be recorded to the immortal honor of this brave band of undisciplined soldiers, that a French officer of distinction. reported that it was thought by the Governor and the citizens, as well as officers and soldiers, civil and military, impracticable for less than 30,000 men to subdue so strong and well-fortified a city. And let posterity be also informed that no less a soldier, no less a politician, than Marshal Belleisle was heard to say, that the whole plan was too well concerted. too secretly conducted, and too vigorously executed, to be the scheme of a British Ministry, who, had they been the projectors of so noble an enterprise, it would have been early known, soon transpired, and from thence cautiously guarded against, and so defeated by the French Ministry.

The besiegers, from the investiture to the

mutinies of the regular troops that though these made an offer to make a sally, it was not judged advisable for fear of a general desertion in revenge for the oppression and severities which they had met with from their commanders. Thus, from a combination of contrary

men were also willing to put an advan-

tageous period to a state of life which had

drawn them from their domestic concerns,

and like Cincinnatus, the Roman, were willing to return from the field of war to

the field of agriculture, as this kind of

warfare was no way suitable to their dis-

norant that the most favorable occasion

of repelling the enemy was to fall on them

when they were beginning their works in

forming their approaches; yet such was the

mistrust they entertained from the late

The officers of the besieged were not ig-

positions.

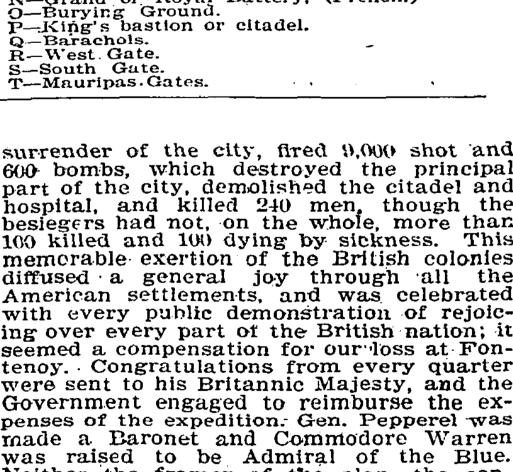
events, crosses, and a weak garrison, the English made an acquisition of new dominions, while the colony of Boston acquired an increase of territory; prosperous as it was before throughout its large inland extensions it wanted only this island to command the whole coast. The garrison consisted of 1,200 regulars,

French and Swiss, and about 800 militia. with some Indians and savages, which was by no means a force sufficient to make a brave and long defense, but was a plain proof of the opinion which the French Ministry entertained of the supineness and in-

dolence of the British. Importance of the Victory.

The possession of Cape Breton, in the reduction of Louisbourg, was doubtless a valuable acquisition to Great Britain. It not only distressed the French in their fishery and navigation, but removed all fears of encroachments and rivalship from the breasts of the English fishermen on the banks of Newfoundland. It freed New England from the terrors of a dangerous neighbor and invader, overawed the Indians of that country, and secured the possession of Acadia to the crown of Great Britain. By this fishery Great Britain received the annual return of £2,000,000 for the manufactures yearly shipped to the plantations, many thousands from it found employment who were otherwise unserviceable to the public and therefore a burden: it increased the shipping and mariners, extended navigation, cut off all communication between France and Canada by the river St. Lawrence, so that Quebec would necessarily fall (as it has since proved) into the hands of the English, who might then expel the French entirely from America, open a correspondence with the Canada Indians behind Montreal, and thus become masters of the fur trade, so long engrossed by the

Great Britain will do well to consider the importance of this acquisition, as the northern colonies may one day become the asylum of British liberty, when the nation (it is not impossible) shall be enslaved by domestic despotism or foreign dominion; when her substance is wasted, her spirit broken, and the laws and constitution of Britain are no more, then these colonies, long since sent off by our fathers, may receive and entertain their sons as helpless exiles and ruined refugees. More especially should the British colonies claim the attention of their mother country when our trade at home is visibly decaying; the French have undersold our cloths and spoiled our trade in the Levant. Spain is no longer supplied as usual with English commodities. The exports to Germany must be considerably diminished by our misunderstanding with the Emperor and the house of Austria, consequently her chiefest resources for riches (now lader as she is with a hundred million debt) must be in her communication with her own colonies, which consume her manufactures and make immense returns in rum, sugar, tobacco, fish, timber, naval stores, iron, furs, drugs, rice, and indigo, while the Southern plantations produce silk, and with care may furnish everything that could be expected from the most fertile soil and the happiest climate.



BATTLEFIELD OF LOUISEOURG.

From Parkmann's "Half Century of Conflict."

Key to Map.

K-Titcomb's Battery.

Lighthouse Battery.

M-Island Battery, (French.) N-Grand or Royal Battery, (French.)

city and the island battery, erecting another fascine battery of five guns, fortytwo-pounders, about a mile westward to the grand battery, and fronting the circular battery. Therefore, on the 14th of June, all things were preparing for a general assault by land and sea, when the French, finding themselves distressed to a great degree in the island battery, by our shot and bombs from the lighthouse battery, sent a flag of truce on the 15th from the city about 4 o'clock in the afternoon to the British camp, with offers to deliver up the city, upon which a council of war was called and all the batteries commanded to: cease firing. The flag of truce being ordered to attend the next morning, was punctual, and received the terms of capitulation, written by Commodore Warren and Col. Pepperel, which were agreed to by M. Chambon, the Governor of Louisbourg, whereby the French were permitted to eniov all their personal effects and to be transported to France at the expense of the besiegers.

A-Landing place of Now Englanders.
B-Camp of Burr's Regiment.
C-Camp of Pepperell's Regiment.
D-Camp of Willard's Regiment.
E-Camp of Moulton's Regiment.

F-Camp of Moore's Regiment. G-Green Hill Battery.

H-Second Battery.

I—Third Battery.

J—Advance Battery.

The French Colors Struck. The French flag was struck on the 17th, and the British one hoisted in its place at the island battery, of which the besiegers took possession early in the morning. At 2 o'clock Commodore Warren, with all the men of war, privateers, storeships, and transports, entered the harbor, and at 4 o'clock the British forces marched to the scuth gate of the city, which they entered, and proceeded to the parade near the citadel, the guard and watch of the city, the garrison's magazines, and other places were delivered up.

On the 4th of July the garrison and a great number of the inhabitants embarked on board fourteen cartel ships, convoyed by the Launcestor man-of-war, who convoyed them to Rochfort, where the clemency of Commodore Warren and Gen. Pepperel shown to these prisoners was but ill-requited by Commodore McNamara, the commander of the French squadron in that port, who treated the British Captain and sailors with an unexpected severity, and even denied them the liberty of going on shore for fresh provisions, ordering the

surrender of the city, fired 9,000 shot and 600 bombs, which destroyed the principal part of the city, demolished the citadel and hospital, and killed 240 men, though the besiegers had not, on the whole, more than 100 killed and 100 dying by sickness. This memorable exertion of the British colonies diffused a general joy through all the American settlements, and was celebrated with every public demonstration of rejoicing over every part of the British nation; it seemed a compensation for our loss at Fontenoy. Congratulations from every quarter were sent to his Britannic Majesty, and the Government engaged to reimburse the expenses of the expedition. Gen. Pepperel was made a Baronet and Commodore Warren was raised to be Admiral of the Blue. Neither the framer of the plan, the conductors of the operation, nor the soldiery, were of the English nation. Mr. Aukmutz was from North Britain, Admiral Warren a Hibernian, and Sir William Repperel of Piscataya, of New Hampshire, in New England, seventy miles north from Boston. A large train of artillery and several engineers were sent from Woolwich, with all convenient expedition, for the better security of this important conquest. Two American regiments were raised and put in garrison at Louisbourg, the one commanded by Col. Shirley, and the other by Sir William Pepperel.

What It Cost New England.

In the sessions at the close of the year 1747, the British Parliament thought proper to reimburse the people of New England for their expenses in the expedition. The

Pounds. Shil'gs P'ce. To the Massachuset'183,649 New Hampshire...... 16,355 Connecticut 28,863 Rhode Island 6,322 Capt. Gibson, a volunteer.

following draft shows at one view the several costs of each colony:

The terms granted by the English to the besieged were the more honorable, as there was certain intelligence of a large reinforcement expected to relieve the place, which, notwithstanding, the enemy was too much distressed to wait for: the New England

TO AID VACATION SCHOOLS.

Pupils of Trinity School, the Friends'

Pupils of Several Institutions Set a Good Example-Money Needed.

Seminary, Academic Classes for Girls, (the Misses Whiton and Bangs.) and the Misses Merington's School have subscribed toward a fund for assisting the work of the Vacation Schools, which are managed by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor during the Summer season. In remitting the amount collected by her pupils, Miss Ruth Merington of the Misses Merington's School writes: "The members of our school were very much interested in the work of the Vacation Schools, and with much pleasure contribute their mite to help in such a good cause. The kindest way to aid children in becoming useful members of society is to educate themto keep them busy and interested in work that will help them in their future lives. the value of the Vacation Schools in doing this for the little ones of the New York poor and keeping them out of harm's way during the hot Summer days cannot be

overestimated. Co-operative work such as this would soon result in raising the \$4,500 needed by the association for conducting the Vacation Schools this Summer. Checks should be made payable to Warner Van Norden, Treasurer, 25 Nassau Street