

A JOURNAL OF THE MARCH OF A PARTY OF PROVINCIALS FROM CARLISLE TO BOSTON AND FROM THENCE TO QUEBEC. 1775

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Sgt. William McCoy?

Begun the 13th of July, and Ended the 31st of December, 1775 to which is added An Account of the Attack and Engagement at Quebec the 31st of December, 1775.

Glasgow: Printed by R. Chapman and A. Duncan

The following authentic Journal, wrote by an Officer of the Party, was sent from a Gentleman in Quebec to his Friend in Glasgow, who put it into the hands of the Printers. They have subjoined an Account of the Engagement at Quebec, which was wrote by the same Gentleman who transmitted the Journal.

THE JOURNAL of Captain William Hendricks, and Captain John Chambers, of the Rifle Men, from Carlisle in Pennsylvania to Boston in Massachusetts, and from thence to Quebec, begun July 13th, and ending December 31st, 1775.

July 13

Marched from Carlisle, the county town of Cumberland, with my company of 90 men, John McClellan, Francis Nichols, and Matthew Irvine, my lieutenants. First day came to John Harris's ferry on Susquehanna river, two miles wide, and there we encamped. 18 miles

July 14

Marched to Hummelstown, 8 miles

July 15

To Lebanon. 17 miles

July 16

To the sign of the King of Prussia. 18 miles

July 17

To Riding, county town of Berks. 14 miles
Stayed at Riding until the 22d. Here we met Capts. Paterson, Smith, Lowden, and Noggle, with their companies, destined for Cambridge.

July 22

To Swan's Tavern. 18 miles

July 23

To Allan's town [Allentown]. 18 miles

July 24

To Bethlem [Bethlehem], over the rivers Jordan and great Lehay, to Easton. 18 miles. Note: Bethlem is a small town pleasantly situated on the banks of the Lehay. Here are beautiful gardens, with all kinds of fruit and flowers, and also an elegant nunnery.

July 25

Crossed Delaware river into Jerseys, and to Oxford Meeting-house. 13 miles

July 26

To the Log goal [gaol], where we tarried and feathered one of the ministerial tools, who refused to comply with the resolves of our Continental Congress.

July 27

To Sussex Court house. 10 miles

July 28

To Dr. Hinksman's. 23 miles

July 29

To Brewster's Tavern. 22 miles

July 30

To New Windsor, on North or Hudson's river. 11 miles

July 31

Rested at New Windsor, to get our linens washed, and ourselves recruited, being weary, marching in exceeding hot weather.

August 1

Proceeded on our march to Tarkin's, 27 miles

August 2

To Baker's Tavern. 25 miles

August 3

Thro' Litchfield, a small town in Connecticut government, where Capt. Price, from Maryland, came up with us, and brought with him another ministerial tool, whom he had caught on his march. Here they tarr'd and feather'd him; and, after his making acknowledgments, was drummed out of town. We then marched on to _____ Tavern, 29 miles

August 4

Arrived at Hartford, the chief town in Connecticut government. This town is pleasantly situated on Connecticut river. In this place are seven very

elegant Presbyterian parish churches. 22 miles

August 5

Crossed the river, about 80 perches wide, and marched through Farmington to Tunis, 29 miles

August 6

To Mr. Thomson's Meeting-house. 28 miles

August 7

To Mindon, a small village. 21 miles

August 8

To Mr. Ellis's Tavern. 23 miles

August 9

To head quarters at Cambridge, four miles from Boston.

Encamped at Cambridge until the 11th of September, and met with 11 companies of musqueteers, which, with our two companies from Carlisle, made 13, amounting to 1000 men, under the command of Colonel William Thomson of Carlisle.

During our stay here, nothing very material happened until the 3d of September, that 1000 of the American troops went from Prospect-hill, to raise a battery on Plowed-hill, about a quarter of a mile from the enemy on Bunker's-hill; during the time that our men were at work, the enemy kept a constant fire from their cannon on Bunker's-hill, and from a floating battery which lay contiguous to us in the bay, which killed 2 or 3 of our people, and wounded a few more; but as soon as our people got some of their cannon mounted, they sunk the floating battery, killed several of the enemy, and obliged them on Bunker's-hill to keep close within their entrenchments. This day was wounded Mr. William Simpson, a young gentleman volunteer with Capt. Smith, from Lancaster county (Pennsylvania). He was wounded in the foot, had his leg cut off, and died soon after. During these transactions, we were informed General Washington had received letters from gentlemen in Quebec, inviting him to send some troops thither, concluding it would be for the safety of the colonies. Accordingly General Washington ordered 11 companies of musket-men, with three rifle-men, to march for Canada. The rifle captains cast lots who should go, and it fell to Capts. Hendricks and Smith of Pennsylvania, and Capt. Morgan of Maryland, who, together with 11 companies of musket-men, under the command of Colonel Benedict Arnold, began their march for Canada; the whole detachment amounting to 1000 men.

September 11

Marched to Mr. Neal's Tavern, 13 miles

September 12

To Mr. Bunkham's Meeting-house. 15 miles

September 13

Arrived at Newberry, a sea-port town, 45 miles N. E. Of Boston, and there encamped until the 18th, when we embarked on board 11 sail of sloops and schooners, which lay ready to receive us. Lay on board all night in the harbor.

September 19

In the morning we weighed anchor and steered our course for Kinnebec river, 36 leagues N. E. of Newberry.

September 20

Arrived at the mouth of the river in the morning, after a good passage of 23 hours, fair wind, round sea. Most of our people were sea-sick. 125 miles

September 21

Sailed up the river for Fort Western, where we arrived the 23d, 45 miles

September 25

Embarked on board 200 batteaus ready to receive us, and rowed up to Fort Hallifax. 18 miles

September 27

Pushed against the stream to Taconic falls. Here we carried our boats, provisions, etc., forty perches or so, and pushed up farther, 3 miles

September 28

Pushed up eight miles, the water full of rocks and shoals. The men got into the water to haul the boats over; the bottom so uneven, that the men were sometimes up to the chin in water. 8 miles

September 29

Pushing against the stream to the second Carrying Place, Cohigin falls. 10 miles

September 30

Carried boats, etc., over 60 perches and pushed up the stream, 5 miles

October 1

Pushed and dragged up over rocks and shoals, where we, from the unevenness of the bottom, sometimes plumped over head, we got to the third Carrying Place, Norridge Walk falls. 7 miles

October 2

Carried over boats, etc., and encamped, and entered a wild barren wilderness, birch, pine, hemlock. Some parts of the river side good bottom, with sugar trees. 1-1/4 miles

October 3

Pushing and dragging. Today killed a moose-deer. 11 miles

October 4

Pushed and dragged to Tentucket falls (Hellgate). Carried 40 perches, and encamped. 8 miles

October 5, 6, 7

We poled and dragged against a shallow stream, and encamped at the place where we leave Kinnebec. Three days made 20 miles

October 8

Lay in our tents on account of a heavy rain.

October 9, 10, 11

Carried boats, etc., three miles and a quarter over a high hill, very bad way, to the first pond in the Carrying Place, and made one mile and a half more, and encamped.

October 12, 13

Carried three quarters of a mile to a second pond, a mile over; then two miles land to the third pond, two miles over, and encamped. 5 miles

October 14, 15

Carried three miles and a quarter to Dead river, a mile of this way very swampy. We were up to the knees in mud. Then up the river's side a mile more.

October 16

The water now being deep and dead, we plied our oars, and rowed. This river comes from the N. W. running S. E. four perches wide. Here the water very black. 10 miles.

October 17

After having carried over a short Carrying Place, rowed, 16 miles

October 18

Rowed up 20 miles, and carried over a short Carrying Place. 20 miles

October 19

This day we made 4 Carrying Places and on our way, 5 miles

October 20, 21, 22

Encamped on account of the heavy rain.

October 23

The water now being shallow, we threw our oars aside, and took to our poles. We pushed up, 10 miles

October 24

Our provisions now growing very scant, and some of our men sick, the several captains concluded to send the sick back and a captain, with 50 men, forward, to reach the inhabitants as soon as possible, in order to send us supplies of provisions before we should run out.

Accordingly the sick were sent back, and Capt. Hanchet, with 50 men, forward. Sometime before this, Colonel Innes, with three companies of musket-men, turned back, being discouraged by the many difficulties they met with; and our third lieutenant, Mr. Irvine, being sick, was left at the first pond, in care of a corporal and three men. This day several of our boats were upset, and much baggage, provisions, and ammunition, were lost, with some few guns. We got forward this day, 9 miles.

October 25

Snowed all last night, and very cold. Pushed up this day, and crossed two Carrying Places, 8 miles.

October 26

This day pushed up through four ponds, and carried over two Carrying Places, one a mile over, the ground covered with snow, 7 miles.

October 27

This day crossed a pond half a mile over, carried 15 perches to another pond, two miles over, to the greatest Carrying Place. Here it was agreed, by the several companies, to leave all the boats, except a few to carry the sick down Chaudiere after having carried them near 20 miles over mountains and rocks, and through such swamps as were never passed by man before. Our shoulders were so bruised by them that we could not suffer anything to touch them. Our company carried but one boat over, which was to take our lieutenant down the Chaudiere. The carriage here to a small stream leading to Chaudiere pond four miles and a half. Here we encamped, 7 miles.

October 28

We dealt out our flour, (meat we had none) four pints per man. Here we received a letter from Colonel Arnold, who had gone two days before, letting us know we were within four days march of the inhabitants, and might expect to meet provisions in three days time. That General Schuyler had gained an advantage over the ministerial troops near St. John's, by killing and taking a number of them. This news put us in high spirits; but it proved hurtful to many of us; for we, supposing we were much nearer the inhabitants than we really were, ate up our bread more lavishly than otherwise we would have done.

October 29

Set out thro' the woods for the head of Chaudiere river, and marched fourteen miles today, through swamps, in many places up to our knees, and over trees; that lay on the ground, covering it for several perches together, 14 miles.

October 30

This day went astray over mountains and through swamps, which could scarcely be passed by wild beasts. Waded a small river up to our [waists], then marched on until night in our wet clothes. At night we found ourselves within five miles of the place we started from. We marched fifteen miles in vain.

October 31

This morning set off on the path our advanced party had taken before, in better spirits than for many days past. In the evening came up with Mr. McClellan, our first lieutenant, who had come down the Chaudiere, in a batteau, with four of our men to row the boat. They had been overset in the river, narrowly escaping being drowned; they lost clothes, blankets, and ammunition. Capts. Smith and Morgan were also cast away in the river. Capt. Smith lost his chest and clothes, with his officers' clothes, and a considerable sum of money. Capt. Morgan also lost his clothes and cash; one of his men was drowned. They then all took to the land and made the best of their way towards the inhabitants. Mr. McClellan being far spent, and unable to march, was left in care of two of our company; he was greatly beloved by the whole detachment. Here our Captain, and some others of our company divided their small moiety of bread and flour with him, parting in great tenderness, never expecting to see him more; we then marched on till night, in a very deplorable condition, several of the company being out of provisions. We marched today, 25 miles.

November 1

This morning many of the company falling behind, being weary and faint for want of provisions, Capt. Hendricks thought it best to make forward as fast as possible to the inhabitants, with what men were with him. Our case being desperate, and every man, willing to save his life, if possible, marched on over mountains, and through swamps, enough to weary and discourage the stoutest traveler. On our way, passed some of the musket-men eating two dogs, which they had roasted skins, guts, and all, not having eat[en] anything for two, some three, days before. I myself saw one of them offer a dollar, to one of our company, for a bit of cake not above two ounces. At night, we encamped in a very deplorable condition; some of us had not eaten for 24 hours. We made today, 20 miles.

November 2

This morning, when we arose, many of us were so weak that we could scarce stand; I myself staggered about like a drunken man. We got our packs on our backs, and marched off, hoping to see the inhabitants this day: A small stick, lying across the way, was sufficient to bring the stoutest of us to the ground. In the evening, we saw some cattle coming up the river, the most joyful sight that we had ever seen. When we came to them, the men who drove them told us, we were then 20 miles from the nearest inhabitants; and that Colonel Arnold had got in two days before, and immediately sent off these cattle for our relief. Accordingly some went to work, and, in a short time, had one of the beasts killed and dressed. This night we fared sumptuously. We marched this day, 20 miles.

November 3

This day marched 20 miles, wading several small rivers, some of them up to our waists, the water exceeding cold. In the evening came in sight of a house, the first we had seen for four

weeks. Here we encamped all night, and got plenty of good beef and potatoes, little or no bread. 20 miles.

November 4

Snow in the night. Marched down the river, which was thickly settled. 10 miles

November 5

Continued our march down the river, the people kind and hospitable, provisions plenty, at a high price; we paid 1 sh. Sterl. per quart of milk, and 1 sh. for a small loaf of bread, about 3 lb. Today we came, 12 miles.

November 6

Came up with Col. Arnold and the advanced party, halted till 2 o'clock, then marched till 12 at night, most of the way half leg deep in mud and water, 17 miles.

November 7

Marched this morning 3 miles, halted till evening, when a Lieut. with 20 men, was ordered forward to see if the way was clear. Accordingly they marched till near 2 o'clock in the morning, then halted in sight of Quebec, the river St. Lawrence being between us and the city, 9 miles. In all 979 miles.

November 8

Quartered along the river's side (Point Levy) until our men, which were behind, should come up. Remained here until the 13th, when most of the men, who were behind alive, came up, who informed us that several of the musket-men had perished of hunger in the woods, and also some rifle-men, among whom was John Taylor of Capt. Hendrick's company. During our stay here, Capt. Morgan took a midshipman, belonging to a frigate in the harbor, who came ashore, with some men in a boat, to carry away flour from a mill on our side the river. A frigate of 20 guns, some few merchant-men, and small craft, in the harbor.

November 13

Crossed the river, this night, in long boats and canoes. Some clothes and guns were lost. Got all safe over in the morning to a place called Wolf's cove.

November 14

This morning were fired upon by the frigate, but received no damage. Took up our quarters in some good houses, near the town, which were deserted by the owners. Took several prisoners, who informed us that there was not more than 100 regular soldiers in the town, besides a number of sailors, and other new recruits, amounting, in the whole, to between 3 and 400 men under arms. The first day we came over the river, we passed close by the city walls, and gave three cheers, then marched off, without being molested by them in the town. They fired some cannon, but did no execution.

November 21

Marched up the river to Point au Tremble, 20 miles; our ammunition being insufficient to attack the town with. Here we were joined by Gen. Montgomery, with the New York troops, who had

taken St. John's, Fort Chamblee and Montreal, where they found considerable stores of ammunition, provisions, and clothing, with a great number of cannon, and took near 700 prisoners. Here the two men, who had been left with Mr. McClellan upon Chaudière, came to us and informed us that they had buried him at the first inhabited house they came to, after he had been brought down by two Indians, hired by Capt. Smith for that purpose. Continued at Point au Tremble till the 5th of December, when we marched back to Quebec, and laid siege to the town. We continued the siege till the 30th of December, during which time some were killed on both sides. The evening of the 30th prepared to attack the city. Gen. Montgomery, with the New York forces, on one side, and Col. Arnold, with his detachment from Boston, on the other side. Accordingly, about 5 o'clock in the morning of the 31st began the attack; but the snow being so deep, where the General made the attack, they could not reach the wall; they retreated back to their quarters. Col. Arnold's party carried on the attack, but he being wounded in the beginning of the affair, went back. Capt. Morgan then took the lead, who with Capt. Hendricks, and four or five other companies, (say Capts.) with some of their men, got over the walls, drove the enemy from their cannon, and got a considerable way into the town, when, at length, they being surrounded on all sides, and over-powered by numbers, we were obliged to surrender prisoners of war, being assured of good quarters.

The End of the JOURNAL.