

82. AN INVASION OF NEW FRANCE IN 1754.—I would like to have some particulars respecting the following historical fact:

"In the month of May 1754, a considerable body of English troops, commanded by Colonel Washington, invaded New-France. It was intrusted to a French officer, M. de Jumonville, with a guard of thirty men, to inform Colonel Washington that he was on the territory of New-France and to enjoin him to retreat. On the night of the 17th May, Jumonville, sheltered in a small valley, was discovered by some Indians, who acquainted Washington with the fact of his presence there. Washington marched all night, and early in the morning, surprised the French in their camp and ordered his men to fire. Jumonville and ten of his companions were killed. 1° Was Colonel Washington commanding English or American troops? 2° Was it in war time? 3° What is the exact place where this event occurred? 4° What had Colonel Washington in view in invading the territory of New-France?

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REPLIES

USE OF COFFINS.—(No 16, vol. I, p. 36.).—The query of W. J. J. seems to infer that the use of coffins may be only a modern custom. In book XXIII, chapters I and II, of Beingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, W. J. J. will find ample proof of the very early use of coffins. During the first three centuries of the Church, one great distinction betwixt Heathens and Christians was, that the former burned their dead, and placed the bones and ashes in urns; whilst the latter always buried the corpse, either in a coffin or, embalmed, in a catacomb; so that it might be restored at the last day from its original dust. There have frequently been dug out of the barrows which contain Roman urns, ancient British stone coffins. Bede mentions that the Saxons buried their dead in wood. Coffins both of lead and iron were constructed at a very early period. When the royal vaults at St. Denis were desecrated, during the first French revolution, coffins were exposed that had lain there for ages.

Notwithstanding this, it appears to be the case that, both in the Norman and English periods, the common people in Great Britain were often wrapped in a mere cloth after death, and so placed, coffinless, in the earth. The illuminations in the old missals represent this. And it is not impossible that the extract from the "Table of Duties", on which W. J. J. founds