

meet the emergency, and filling the openings in his masonry with logs and earthwork, he proceeded to make the best of his defences.

A full account of the siege is preserved in the diary of an officer.¹

The three sloops of war were so managed as to hold the mouth of the narrow harbour, and baffle every attempt of the enemy's ships to force an entrance. On the 28th, after being several times repulsed, the New Englanders succeeded in effecting a landing on the outer side of the peninsula. This enabled them to throw up two batteries on the heights above the fort, and thus complete its investment; but the delay had given the British time to mount several guns, and to carry up the most necessary stores from the landing place.

Falsely informed that the garrison was short of provisions, the New Englanders, perhaps, refrained from attacking in force, waiting for hunger to do its work and give them an easier victory; yet not a day passed without some exchange of shot and shell, some assault or sortie from the fort, or some movement, either afloat or ashore, to be skilfully met by counter-movement, the defenders still continuing to strengthen their works while they held the enemy at bay.

The situation at Penobscot was known to the military authorities at Halifax; but their depleted garrison could furnish no relief until reinforcements arrived from England, and the expedition then sent out returned to port with some of its ships damaged in a storm off Cape Sable.

In the meantime, however, while the brave defenders of the Penobscot post were looking to Halifax for the help which never came, Sir George Collier had sailed from New York, with a fleet of six ships, to bring more efficient relief.

The beleaguered garrison was not entirely shut off from a knowledge of what was going on beyond the enemy's lines. Secret service men, at the risk of their lives, kept up communication with the outside world; and deserters from the enemy, at an equal risk, from time to time joined their ranks. From one of the latter they had learned that a large number of the loyal inhabitants had been taken on board the enemy's ships, where they were held as prisoners and treated with great cruelty, and that the property of these Loyalists had been destroyed, and their wives and children left destitute.

On the 13th of August there came in some deserters, who said that a council of war had been held on the commodore's ship to lay plans for a decisive action, and that it had been determined to force the harbor at next tide, and take or destroy the king's ships.

The disposition of the enemy's fleet confirmed this report, and every preparation was therefore made for a desperate resistance. Night came on, and with it the full tide; but no aggressive movement was made by the enemy's ships, and at daybreak it was seen that the

¹ Dr. John Calef, a Massachusetts Loyalist, surgeon and acting chaplain to the garrison.