

them. The strategem was used of engaging in an extensive hunt, many of the officers joining the Indians. Materials had been prepared and while the hunt was in progress the French built and the walls were found to be high enough to act as a defence on the return of the Indians who felt themselves outwitted. The fort became in time a place of considerable strength and had its ravines, ditches and pickets, its curtains and counterscarp, its covered way, draw-bridge and raking batteries, stone towers, laboratory and magazine, its messhouse, barracks, bakery and blacksmithshop, its chapel with a large ancient dial over the door to mark the progress of the sun, the whole covering a space of eight acres and the strongest place south of Montréal and west of Albany.

In 1736 the fort was well fortified with thirty guns of the largest calibre, but the trade with the Indians had fallen off as many preferred to trade with the English, the jealousy between the two countries still continuing, each striving to gain supremacy, the French to confine the English to a narrow strip on the Atlantic seaboard had built a chain of forts along the frontier, Lake Ontario, Erie, the Alleghany, Ohio and Mississippi rivers, Fort Niagara being one of these. In 1756 war was proclaimed between England and France, this proved to be the seven years wars closed by the treaty of Paris in 1763, when the French possessions were given up to Britain. In 1755 Fort Niagara had been threatened with attack and the eminent engineer Pouchot was sent to strengthen it, but it was not till the 1st July, 1759, that a force was sent from Oswego under Brigadier John Prideaux with 2,200 regular troops and militia with 943 Iroquois warriors under Sir Wm. Johnson, who, by his remarkable powers of diplomacy, his character of integrity, his geniality had gained unparalleled influence over the Indians and held the position of Superintendent under the British government.

Capt Pouchot, the commander, gives an account of the horn work constructed by him, the garrison consisted of 486 and 39 employees, five of whom were women or children, who with two Donville ladies attended to the hospital, served up gun cartridges or made earth bags. The British force debarked at a cove some miles east of the Fort and secured themselves by entrenchment. Pouchot on the 7th sent runners to the French posts south and west asking the aid of their garrisons and all the Indians that could be rallied, the first point where warning was given being Little Niagara, the end of the portage from Lewiston, about the spot called Fort Schlosser. On the 7th the French saw seven barges distant a league and a half and sent out the armed schooner Iroquois to destroy them, but evidently failed to do so. On the 8th of July Pri-