

or disheartened and crushed by sudden defeat. For the Caucasian knew this spot, as did the lowly and cruel red man. No doubt it has been the passive observer of many a skirmish, and, it may be, bitter struggle. And as at yonder ford the weaker rested to bathe, so the stronger availed themselves of the pebbled path and hurrying over, sought victory beyond.

Omitting the earlier scenes with which this part of our lovely valley is fairly burdened, let me ask; was it not through the very fields whereon we stand that the sachems so often passed for their peculiar talks to the ancient place of treaties—Albany; that the adventurous Bradstreet crossed with his armament for Oswego; and when its Fort was completed that the motely brigades of Mercer, Schuyler and others marched to occupy and defend it; and that the relief corps of Webb so sluggishly journeyed? Indeed scarce had the rude posts of the stockade settled in their holes ere Prideaux and Johnson reached yon ford with the confederate troops of New England and New Jersey on their way to Niagara; breaking camp at Canajoharie on the 19th, and journeying by this site on the 20th of June. The same was true of other commanders, and other forces bent on kindred missions. As the tides rise and fall, or flood and ebb, so have valorous hosts moved to and fro before this place—now to defeat—now to victory—now to victory—now to defeat. In yonder meadow the gallant Herkimer bivouacked after his glorious victory at Oriskany—that royal struggle which turned the current of the Revolution and ended in our national birth. Beyond a doubt the first water that cooled and cleansed his mortal wound was dipped up from yonder daisied bank. The wily St. Leger also would have rested here had not the brave German assured him, by bullet messages, that the longest way round was the shortest way home. Here Arnold halted in seeking the relief of Fort Stanwix.

Numerous, very numerous, are the associations of this place; nor is there an area in all central New York abounding in memories of men more noble, in events more decisive, or in scenes more thrilling and important.

Referring, as I now am, to some of the events that have made this section of our valley so historic, may I add; few have ever estimated the strategic importance of central New York, and the bearing its topography has exerted upon our national destiny. In the line of hills a little to the south of us, no less than three streams have their rise, which with our own gently flowing Mohawk and the Hudson command nearly one-half the eastern area