

A. D.
1756.

fight, and bid defiance to a fort, which they might then have reduced in a few hours with one single mortar.

A resolution was then taken to enlarge the fort, or rather to erect some additional forts, to build vessels upon the lake, to increase the garrison, and to provide every thing necessary to annoy an enemy, and to render the place tenable. Accordingly Captain Bradstreet was dispatched with a reinforcement of two companies, some swivel guns, and the first set of workmen to build vessels: but these men were employed in building such craft, that, when, soon after, 11 more French battoes, with troops on board passed by Oswego, and we had a greater number of those boats in the harbour, they were suffered to pass unmolested, to the great danger and terror of our back settlements; our battoes not being stiff enough for the soldiers to stand to fire off at sea; so ticklish that the inadvertent motion of one man would overset them, and so small, as not able to carry more than six men each. Yet, if that was the real case, no care was taken to build their boats upon a more serviceable plan, against any future emergency, and to maintain the dominion of the lake. But there was another most unpardonable oversight in those, who had the direction of these works. Capacious stout vessels require a considerable deal of iron work in their composition. The managers had provided smiths enough: but there was no more than one pair of bellows. So that the first accident, which might unavoidably happen to that
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