

by joining in their dances, singing their war songs, and they placed themselves unreservedly under his direction. With their excitement at the highest point, he set out with them for Ticonderoga. He reached this fort with the largest Indian war party ever collected upon the lake, numbering more than two hundred canoes. The precise number of men he collected here and at Crown Point, we do not know; but it more than four times outnumbered the American army to which it was opposed. Montcalm spent but little time in preparation,—long enough, however, to send out a scouting party toward Fort Edward, which returned with forty-two fresh-torn American scalps, and only one prisoner. These trophies excited the Indians to frenzy. Montcalm restrained them with difficulty. On the 24th July, twenty barges of Americans, under Colonel Parker, appeared on the lake. The Indians rushed upon them, took one hundred and sixty prisoners, killed and dispersed the rest of the force. The succeeding ten days were filled with events which I must pass over.

It must suffice to say, that on the second of August, Montcalm, with an army of eight thousand French and Indians, had surrounded Fort William Henry, defended by less than five hundred men within the fort, and seventeen hundred intrenched around it.

You know what a bloody tragedy ensued; how the gallant Monroe, who had only reached the fort the day previous, answered the summons to surrender with defiance; how for five days he held the place against the assailing host of mad devils, directed by French genius, while the pusillanimous Webb, with an army of five thousand men, lay trembling at Fort Edward, and answered his demands for assistance by advice to capitulate; how, when aware that Webb's letter had been intercepted by Montcalm, who thus knew that all his hope of help was cut off, he would not treat until half his guns were burst,