

trained to savage warfare, and confident under such a leader as Frontenac. The chief object of the war parties against New York and New England had been to teach the Iroquois that they could not trust the English as allies. But the lesson was lost on these savages. In the spring and summer of 1690 and the two following seasons they continued their depredations, and kept the French settlers on the Upper Saint Lawrence in constant terror. In the spring of 1691, a combined force of English, Dutch and Iroquois, under Major Peter Schuyler, numbering two hundred and sixty-six men, left Albany and moved toward Montreal. A French force of between seven and eight hundred men crossed the St. Lawrence to meet them and encamped at La Prairie. Here a night attack by the English was completely successful, and Schuyler slowly retreated towards Chambly, on the Richelieu, where their canoes had been left. The sequel told by Parkman¹ is of great interest:

"A day or two before Valrenne, an officer of birth and ability, had been sent to Chambly, with about a hundred and sixty troops and Canadians, a body of Huron and Iroquois converts, and a band of Algonquians from the Ottawa. His orders were to let the English pass, and then place himself in their rear to cut them off from their canoes. His scouts had discovered their advance; and, on the morning of the attack, he set his force in motion, and advanced six or seven miles towards La Prairie, on the path by which Schuyler was retreating. The country was buried in forests. At about nine o'clock, the scouts of the hostile parties met with each other, and their war-whoops gave the alarm. Valrenne instantly took possession of a ridge of ground that crossed the way of the opposing English. Two large trees had fallen along the crest of the acclivity; and behind these the French crouched, in triple row, well hidden by bushes and thick standing trunks. The English, underrating the strength of their enemy, and ignorant of his exact position, charged impetuously, and were sent reeling back by a close and deadly volley. They repeated the attack with still greater fury, and lodged the French from their ambuscade. Then ensued a fight which Frontenac declares to have been the most hot and stubborn ever known in Canada. The object of Schuyler was to break through the French and reach the canoes; the object of Valrenne was to drive him back upon the superior force at La Prairie. The cautious tactics of the bush were forgotten. Three times the combatants became mingled together, firing breast to breast, and scorching each other's shirts by the flash of their guns. * * * At length the French were driven from the path. 'We broke through the middle of their body,' says Schuyler, 'until we got into their rear, trampling upon their dead; then faced about upon them, and fought them

¹Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV.