

with everything worth knowing of the great cataract and the neighbouring country. †That he soon after received the Cross of St. Louis shows that De Beaujeu discharged his duties with ability.

In 1755 he was sent to Fort Duquesne, with men and supplies, ‡and was appointed commandant of that important post, which was directly menaced by attack from Virginia. M. de Contrecoeur had in the preceding winter asked to be recalled, and the Marquis Duquesne, when dispatching Captain de Beaujeu to relieve him, ordered Contrecoeur to remain at the fort till after the expected operations.\*

The officer thus sent to hold with scanty force the fort, which France had so boldly planted at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela, had no easy task assigned to him. A formidable army, commanded by General Braddock, composed of veteran English regiments, and Virginia colonial troops, well supplied with artillery, was advancing against Fort Duquesne. That post was in no condition to sustain a siege, and the force at Captain de Beaujeu's command was utterly inadequate to defend it; still less was it such as to make it at all possible to retard the march of the enemy. There seemed to be no alternative but to abandon the fort and fall back on Fort Machault and the Fort de la Rivière au Bœuf, so as to cover the important position at Niagara.

†Kalm. Letter from Albany, Sept. 2, 1750 in *Bartram's Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals and other matters worthy of notice, etc.*, London, 1751, pp. 80, 81.

‡“Since Sieur de Beaujeu's arrival it must be well supplied,” wrote Duquesne, July 6, 1755, “as he had carried with his brigade succours of every description,” Doc. Col. Hist. N. Y.; X. p. 300.

\*“Annales” of Mère de la Nativité, Ursuline, cited in *Les Ursulines de Quebec*, II. p. 276. This explains the presence of Contrecoeur at the time of the battle, and his reassuming the command on De Beaujeu's death, as well as the consequent error in those who spoke of him as having had uninterrupted command, and of De Beaujeu as acting under him.