

have been no necessity for this communication. Which is the more probable, that the Vermonters, who lived in the vicinity, on an exposed frontier, which would be protected by the capture—who knew that Ticonderoga was the very “Gate of the Country” (and the only one), through which a hostile expedition from Canada could enter it—many of whom had been fighting through half a dozen campaigns to take it, should have been impressed with the necessity to themselves, as well as the colonies, of surprising these forts before they were reinforced, and should have seized the first opportunity through Brown of making its value known to the other colonies; or that Brown, a resident of Western Massachusetts, and a comparative stranger to the facts, should have made the suggestion to the Vermonters? There is nothing in Mr. Brown’s letter indicating that the idea of the capture originated with him; and positive proof will be cited that it was first proposed by the Vermonters.

Nor is there the slightest evidence that the proposition of Mr. Brown received any attention in Massachusetts. That colony was fully occupied with its own concerns, for it was the central point of revolution. It had no time to devote to matters which directly concerned only this remote northern frontier. Although the letter of Mr. Brown shows that the capture of this fort was discussed among the Vermonters earlier than elsewhere, I do not regard the fact as of any considerable importance. In view of the impending contest, it may have occurred to thousands; it must have occurred to those who were acquainted with the value of the position in past wars. But they who organized the expedition, were ready to act at the proper time, and who finally made the capture, are entitled to the credit, although a multitude of others had spoken of the enterprise as desirable.

The next witness, in chronological order, is Ethan Allen. His full account of the condition of affairs upon the Grants,