

EVENTS ON HUDSON'S RIVER IN 1777

As Recorded by British Officers in Contemporary Reports

(Continued from Year Book of 1935)

The said reports are on file in the Public Record Office, London, and copies of them, obtained through the courtesy of Lord Halifax and of Ambassador Bingham, have been deposited with the Dutchess County Historical Society

by

The President of the United States

As the Year Book for 1935 was passing through the press the editor received from the President of the United States a second consignment of transcriptions of British government documents in which references occur to the military campaign of 1777 in New York. The President has presented these transcripts to the Dutchess County Historical Society and a list of the items is appended below.

From the documents received a few are not offered here in print because space is limited and because they relate to British activities on Staten Island and in New Jersey. The Year Book is however most fortunate to be able to present and to place on record permanently details of the events on Hudson's river in 1777 in the words of British officers who described that which came within their personal observation.

The struggle for the control of Hudson's river was a pivotal one in the War of the Revolution, a fact which students of history realize and understand but the significance of which has not been absorbed by a large portion of the American public. The part played in the Revolution by New England and by the South is much more widely known than is this attempt by the British to take possession of the route between Canada and the Atlantic (via Lake Champlain, Lake George and the Hudson) and, by so doing, to separate New England and the South from each other.

The British campaign in New York was unsuccessful and, by its failure, the outcome of the War of the Revolution may be said to have been decided. In view therefore of the importance of the campaign in American annals, this new material, bearing upon it, is of primary importance and value and the Dutchess County Historical Society may congratulate itself upon having been enabled, through the good offices

of one of its members—now Chief Executive of the Nation,—to present the data to the many who will be interested in the same.

For local readers the most outstanding item contained in the documents here presented is, perhaps, the statement that four-hundred houses, barns and mills were burned in the expedition led by General Vaughan from the Highlands northward after the capture of Forts Clinton and Montgomery. In Dutchess and Orange and Ulster Counties traditions are still numerous and persistent of instances where buildings were fired upon or burned down by General Vaughan's forces but the number reported here as actually destroyed is surprisingly large.

Local readers will also note the references to the fate of the frigates: *Montgomery* and *Congress* (Dispatch No. 69, enclosure No. 4), which were built at the Continental Shipyards at Poughkeepsie in 1776; to the destruction of Continental Village in the Highlands (*Ibid.*); and to the burning of Kingston (Dispatch No. 71, enclosure; Dispatch No. 74, enclosure); while they will find the accounts of the capture of Forts Clinton and Montgomery (Dispatch No. 69, enclosure No. 4) very informing.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Correspondence

Letter, Ambassador Bingham to President Roosevelt, September 21, 1935

Letter, Lord Halifax to Ambassador Bingham, July 30, 1935

Letter, Lord Halifax to Ambassador Bingham, August 31, 1935

Letter, Admiral Dickens to Ambassador Bingham, July 31, 1935

Transcriptions

Sir William Howe's Dispatch No. 69, dated Philadelphia, October 21, 1777, with the following enclosures:

- (1) Report on engagements on Staten Island in August, 1777
- (2) Report on incursion into New Jersey in September, 1777
- (3) Return of casualties in New Jersey
- (4) Letter of October 9, 1777, Sir Henry Clinton to Sir William Howe, reporting the action in the Highlands of the Hudson October 6-9, 1777. *See below.*
- (5) Return of British casualties, October 6th, 1777
- (6) Return of stores, etc., taken by the British October 6th, 1777. *See below.*

- (7) Letter of August 6th, 1777, General John Burgoyne to Sir William Howe. *See below.*
- (8) Note of September 23, 1777, General John Burgoyne to Sir Henry Clinton. *See below.*
- (9) Letter of September 20, 1777, General John Burgoyne to Sir Henry Clinton. *See below.*
- (10) Letter of October 8th, 1777, Sir Henry Clinton to General John Burgoyne. *See below.*
- (11) Letter of September 27th, 1777, General John Burgoyne to Sir Henry Clinton. *See below.*

Sir William Howe's Dispatch No. 71, dated Philadelphia, October 25, 1777; with the following enclosure:

Report of October 17, 1777, General John Vaughan to Sir William Howe. *See below.*

Sir William Howe's Dispatch No. 74, dated Philadelphia, November 29, 1777; with the following enclosure:

Report of October 26, 1777, General John Vaughan to Sir Henry Clinton, with list of stores taken and destroyed in the expedition up the North River. *See below.*

(ENCLOSURE NO. 4 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69)

Fort Montgomery October 9th 1777.

Sir,

In the last Letter which I had the Honor to write to your Excellency, I mentioned my Intention, with the small Force that could be spared from the important Post you had left under my Command, to make an Attack upon Forts Clinton, Montgomery &c. Your Excellency recollects the Situation of these Forts, that they are separated by a Creek which comes from the Mountains, and communicate with each other by a Bridge.

In my Opinion the only Way of effecting it was by a Coup de Main in the unguarded State they then were. The Commodore and I having made our Arrangements, and every proper Jealousy having been given for every Object but the real one, the little Army, consisting of about 3,000 Men, arrived off Verplancks Point, proceeded by the Gallies under the Command of Sir James Wallace. On our Appearance the Enemy retired without firing a Shot, leaving a Twelve Pounder behind them, and Sir James moved up to Peaks Hill Neck to mask the only Communication they had across the River on this Side of the Highlands.

*At Daybreak on the 6th the Troops disembarked at Stoney Point. The Avant Garde of 500 Regulars & 400 Provincials commanded by Lieut. Colonel Campbell, with Colonel Robinson of the Provincials under him, began its March to occupy the Pass of Thunder Hill; this Avant Garde after it had passed that Mountain, was to proceed by a detour of seven Miles round the Hill, and Debouchee in the Rear of Fort Montgomery, while General Vaughan, with 1200 Men, was to continue his March towards Fort Clinton, covering the Corps under Lieut. Colonel Campbell, and apportee to cooperate by attacking Fort Clinton, or in case of Misfortune, to favor the Retreat. Major General Tryon with the Remainder, being the Rear Guard to leave a Battalion at the Pass of Thunder Hill to open our Communication with the Fleet.

Your Excellency recollecting the many, and I may say extraordinary Difficulties of this March over the Mountains, every natural Obstruction; and all that Art could invent to add to them, will not be surprized that the Corps intended to attack Fort Montgomery in the Rear, could not get to its Ground before five o'Clock, about which Time I ordered General Vaughans Corps, (apportee to begin the Attack on Fort Clinton) to push if possible, and dislodge the Enemy from their advanced Station behind a Stone Breast Work, having in Front for half a Mile a most impenetrable Abbatis, this the General by his good Disposition obliged the Enemy to quit, though supported by Cannon, got Possession of the Wall, and there waited the Motion of the Cooperating Troops, when I joined him, and soon afterwards heard Lieutl. Colonel Campbell begin his Attack. I chose to wait a favorable Moment before I ordered the Attack on the Side of Fort Clinton; which was a circular Height, defended by a Line of Musquetry with a Barbet Battery in the Centre of three Guns, and flanked by two Redoubts: The Approaches to it, through a continued Abbatis of 400 Yards, defensive every Inch, and exposed to the Fire of Ten Pieces of Cannon. As the Night was approaching, I determined to seize the first favorable Instant. A brisk Attack on the Montgomery Side; the Gallies with their Oars approaching, firing, and even striking the Fort; the Men of War that Moment appearing, crowding all Sail to support us; the extreme Ardor of the Troops; in short, all determined me to order the Attack; General

*52nd & 57th Regts. Loyal Americans New York Volunteers & Emidik's Provincial Chasseurs. Grendrs. & Light Infantry 26th & 63rd Regts. 1 Comp. 71 1 Troop dismounted Dragoons Hessian Chasseurs. Royal Fuzileers and Hussr. Regt. of Trumbach.

Vaughan's spirited Behaviour and good Conduct did the rest. Having no Time to lose, I particularly ordered that not a Shot should be fired; in this I was strictly obeyed, and both Redoubts &c were stormed. General Tryon advanced with one Battalion to support General Vaughan in case it might be necessary and he arrived in Time to join in the Cry of Victory.

Trumbach's Regiment was posted at the Stone Wall to cover our Retreat in case of Misfortune. The Night being dark it was near eight o'Clock before we could be certain of the Success of the Attack against Fort Montgomery, which we found afterwards had succeeded at the same Instant that of Fort Clinton did, and that by the excellent Disposition of Lieut. Colol. Campbell, who was unfortunately killed on the first Attack, but seconded by Colonel Robinson of the Loyal American Regiment, by whose Knowledge of the Country I was much aided in forming my Plan, and to whose spirited Conduct in the Execution of it, I impute in a great Measure the Success of the Enterprise.

Our Loss was not very considerable excepting in some respectable Officers who were killed in the Attack.

About 10 o'Clock at Night the Rebels set Fire to their two Ships, Montgomery and Congress, some Gallies and other armed Vessels with their Cannon Stores &ca in them.

I have the Honor to send to your Excellency a Return of the Cannon, Stores &c. taken. That of Stores is very considerable this being I believe their principal Magazine.

The Commodore has assisted me with his Advice, and every Effort. We sent a joint Summons to Fort Constitution, but our Flag meeting with an insolent Reception unknown in any War, we determined to Chastize, & therefore an Embarkation under Major General Tryon, and Sir James Wallace with the Gallies was ordered. They found the Fort evacuated in the greatest Confusion, the Store Houses burnt, but their Cannon were left unspiked. The Commodore immediately ordered Sir James Wallace up the River, and if it should be possible to find a Passage through the Chevaux de Frize, between Polypus Island and the Main, he may probably do most essential Service.

In Justice to Captain Pownal, who commanded the Flat Boats, and the Officers under him, I must mention to your Excellency that that Service could not have been more zealously or punctually attended to.

I have the Honor to be your Excellencys most faithful obedient
humble Servant

(Signed) H. Clinton Lt.Genl.

P. S. October 9th. Ten o'Clock at Night.

Major General Tryon whom I detached this morning with Emericks Chasseurs, 50 Yagers, the Royal Fuzileers & Regiment of Trumbach, with two three Pounders, to destroy the Rebel Settlement called the Continental Village has just returned and reported to me that he has burned Barracks for 1500 Men, several Storehouses, and loaded Waggons. The extreme Badness of the Weather making it necessary to be as expeditious as possible no Account could be taken of the Stores, but I believe them to have been considerable. I need not point out to your Excellency the Consequence of destroying this Post, as it was the only Establishment of the Rebels in that Part of the Highlands and the Place from whence any neighbouring Body of Troops drew their Supplies. Fannings and Bayards Corps marched from Verplancks Point to co-operate with General Tryon, but finding he met with no opposition, they were ordered back to their Post.

(Signed) H.C.

(Endorsed) Copy of a Letter

From Lieut. General Sir Henry Clinton

To General Sir William Howe.

dated 9th October 1777.

No. 3.

In Sir Wm. Howe's (No. 69)

of 21st Octr. 1777.

(4)

(ENCLOSURE NO. 6 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69)

Return of Cannon, Stores, Ammunition &ca., taken & destroyed
upon the Expedition up the North River October 6th 1777.

CANNON

32 Pounders	6
18 Ditto	3
12 Ditto	7
9 Ditto	3

6	Ditto	41
4	Ditto	3
3	Ditto	2
2	Ditto	2

—
Total, 67 Peices of Cannon.

Two Frigates, built for 30 & 36 Guns, were burnt by the Rebels on the Forts being taken. The Guns aboard them & two Gallies which were likewise burnt amounted to above 30. One Sloop with 10 Guns, fell into our Hands. The whole loss therefore is about 100 Peices.

POWDER

54 Casks

118½ Barrels

12,236 lbs. Exclusive of what was aboard the Vessels.

CARTRIDGES FILLED

1,852 Cannon

57,396 Musket

CANNON SHOT

9,530 Round

886 Double-Headed

2,483 Grape & Case

Ct. Qr. lb.

36. 1. 15 Landgridge.

FOR MUSKETS

1379 lbs. of Ball

116 Do. of Buck Shot

5400 Flints

Every Article belonging to the Laboratory in the greatest Perfection. Other Stores, such as Portfires Match, Harness, Spare Gun Carriages, Tools, Instruments &ca. &ca. in great Plenty. A large quantity of Provisions. The Boom and Chain which ran across the River from Fort Montgomery to Anthony's Nose is supposed to have cost the Rebels 70,000 £. Another Boom which we destroyed near Fort Constitution must likewise have cost the Rebels much Money & Labour. Barracks for 1500 Men were destroyed by Major General Tryon at Continental

Village, besides several Store Houses & loaded Waggons, of the Articles contained in which no Account could be taken.

(Endorsed) Return of Cannon, Stores,
Ammunition &ca. taken &
destroyed upon the Expedition
of the North River, October
6th 1777.

In Sir Wm. Howe's (No. 69) of
21st Octr. 1777.

(ENCLOSURE NO. 7 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69).

Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant General Burgoyne to General Sir William Howe, dated Camp at Fort Edward August 6th 1777, with a Note annexed—received from Sir Henry Clinton 7th October.

Sir,

I received yesterday the Duplicate of your Letter of the 17th July, and shall strictly observe the Contents. My Progress from Skenesborough hither was very laborious, through a Country naturally difficult, the Roads and Bridges all broken up, and in the Face of the Enemy, who retired nevertheless from Post to Post with considerable Loss in killed and Prisoners, and without any other Troops engaged on our Side than Indians & Provincials, and those have suffered no otherwise than in a few Wounds. I have had the fullest Satisfaction in the Alacrity of the Army, and the Issue has justified my Perseverance in preferring this Route to the retrograde Movement, which it would have been to have taken the more commodious one by Ticonderoga and Lake George. The Garrison of Fort George, in Danger of being cut off by my Movement directly upon the Hudson's River, abandoned, as I had expected, the Fort, and burned the Vessels designed for the Defence of the Lake. The first Embarkation therefore from Ticonderoga, which I had ordered to be ready for that Purpose passed the Lake the Day I took Possession of this important Communication by Land, and the Batteaux which, had I taken the other Route, must have been destined to the Troops, were now employed for the Transport of Part of the Magazines, which puts me well forward. I have nevertheless been compelled impatiently but inevitably, to give considerable Time to pass Artillery, Provision, and

Batteaux over so long a carrying Place as 14 Miles, with a small Number of Horses and Carriages respectively to the Work. Your Excellency will likewise see the Necessity of fortifying some Posts in so very long a Communication. I hope however to move to Saratoga (where the Enemy is at present posted, but making Disposition to retreat) in a few Days, but as I have a carrying Place at Fort Miller, and another at Stillwater, I do not apprehend it will be possible to be in Possession of Albany, even suppose the Enemy should not stand a Battle before the 22nd or 23rd. Should the Opportunity of any Stroke offer I certainly, where I can convey necessary Provision only, shall not wait the Carriage of the Tents or any other Baggage. During my Stay here the Indians have done good Service; not a Day passes without Prisoners brought in, some from Miles behind the Enemy's Camp. I have Detachments of seventeen different Nations. There is infinite Difficulty to manage them. My Effort has been to keep up their Terror, and avoid their Cruelty. I think I have in great Measure succeeded. They attack very bravely; they scalp the Dead only; and spare the Inhabitants. I believe the scalp of the famous Partizan Whitcombe, who killed Brigadier Gordon last year, to be in their Possession. Mr. Arnold professes an Intention to stand an Action some whereabout Albany. I yet hear nothing of Mr. Washington. St. Leger is, I am assured by Intelligence, in Operation about Fort Stanwix. One reason of my Impatience to gain the Mouth of the Mohawk is to favor him. I hope the Difficulties of communicating with your Excellency will soon decrease. I sent a confidential Messenger to you some Days ago, who I hope arrived safe. The Letter you mention to have been intercepted in a Canteen was not *from me*, nor *to you*. It was an Attempt of material Purpose, had it succeeded, without any possible Disadvantage happening from the Discovery.

As I mean Sir Henry Clinton to read this Letter in its Passage, I do not write to him separately, my best Wishes and Affection to him.

I am with every possible Sentiment of Respect and Attachment,
Sir,

Your most faithful and
obedient Servant,
(Signed) J. Burgoyne.

Purport of a Dispatch on or about 20th July 1777.

On the 16th Instant the Enemy dislodged from Ticonderoga and were driven on the same Day beyond Skenesborough on the Right, and

to Huberton on the Left, with the Loss of 128 Pieces of Cannon, all their armed Gallies and Ammunition, Military Stores and Provision, to a vast Amount.

On the two succeeding Days the Ascendency of His Majesty's Arms was further established by two sepearate Actions at distant Places, and against superior Numbers, in which the Enemy's Loss amounted to above six hundred dead upon the Field, above three times that Number wounded, and one Colonel, seven Captains, ten Subalterns, and near four hundred Prisoners.

Of the King's Troops were killed one Major, one Captain, three Lieutenants, one Volunteer Lieutenant of Marines, two Serjeants, 41 Rank and File.

Wounded two Majors—five Captains—ten Lieutenants—one Volunteer—13 Serjeants 142 Rank & File.

Major Grant of the 24th Regimt. was the Field Officer killed.

(Endorsed) Copy of a Letter from Lieut.General Burgoyne to General Sir Willm. Howe dated Camp at Fort Edward August 6th 1777.

In Sir Wm. Howe's (No. 69) of 21st Octr. 1777.

(ENCLOSURE NO. 8 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69).

Copy of a Note from Lieutt. General Burgoyne to Lieutt. General Sir H. Clinton, dated 23rd Sepr. 1777.

“ I have lost the old Cypher, but being sure from the Tenor of your Letter you meant it to be so read, I have made it out.

An Attack, or the Menace of an Attack upon Montgomery, must be of great Use, as it will draw away a Part of this Force, and I will follow them close: Do it my dear Friend directly.

Yours ever faithfully,

J.B.

(Endorsed) Copy of a Note from Lieutt.Genl. Burgoyne to Lieutt.Genl.Sir H. Clinton.

23rd Sepr. 1777.

In Sir WmHowe's (No. 69) of 21st Octr. 1777.

(ENCLOSURE NO. 9 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69).

Copy of a Letter from Lieutt.General Burgoyne to Lieutt. General Sir H. Clinton dated 20th Sept. 1777 & received the 5th October.

Sir,

The Bearer Captain Campbell, an officer of great Merit and full confidence, is charged with an exact Duplicate of my Message to your Excellency dispatched yesterday by another officer, I request the most speedy answer by Triplicates.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) J. Burgoyne.

Copy of an Enclosure received from Lieutt.General Sir H. Clinton with the above Letter.

Conversation with Captn.Campbell sent by General Burgoyne to me.

“He said, he was desired by General Burgoyne to tell me, that the Generals whole Army did not exceed five Thousand Men, that the Consequences of the Battle on the 19th were the Loss of between five and six Hundred Men. That the Enemy were within a Mile & a half of him, that he knew not their Numbers for certain, but believed them to be twelve or fourteen Thousand Men, that there was besides that a considerable Body in his Rear. That he wished to receive my Orders whether he should attack or retreat to the Lakes. That he had but Provisions to the 20th of this Month, and that he would not have given up his Communications with Ticonderoga had he not expected a cooperating Army at Albany. That he wished to know by positive Answer as soon as possible, whether I could open a communication with Albany, When I should be there, and when there keep my Communication with New York. That if he did not hear from me by the 12th Instant, he should retire.

To which I returned the following Answer by Captain Campbell —vizt.

“That not having received any Instructions from the Commander in Chief relative to the Northern Army; and unacquainted even of his Intentions concerning the Operations of that Army, excepting his Wishes, that they should get to Albany, Sir H.Clinton can not presume to give any Orders to General Burgoyne. General Burgoyne could not suppose that Sir H.Clinton had an Idea of penetrating to Albany with

the small Force he mentioned in his last Letter. What he offered in that Letter he has now undertaken; cannot by any means promise himself Success, but hopes it will be at any rate serviceable to General Burgoyne, as General Burgoyne says in his Letter answering the Offer, that even the Menace of an Attack would be of Use."

(Endorsed) Copy of a Letter from Lt.Genl.Burgoyne to
Lt.Genl.Sir H. Clinton—dated 20th Septr. 1777.
Recd. 5th Octr. 77.
In Sir Wm.Howe's (No.69) of 21st October 1777.

(ENCLOSURE NO. 10 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO. 69)
Copy of a Letter from Lieutt.General Sir H. Clinton to Lieutt.
General Burgoyne.
dated Fort Montgomery October 8th 77.

Dear Sir,

Nous y voila, and nothing now between us but Gates; I sincerely hope this little Success may facilitate your Operations.

In answer to your Letter of the 20th of Septr. by C.C. I shall only say I can not presume to order, or even advise, for Reasons obvious; I heartily wish you Success and am &ca.&ca.

H. C.

(Endorsed) Copy of a Letter from Lieutt.Genl.Sir H.Clinton
to Lieutt.Genl.Burgoyne.
Fort Montgomery 8th Octr.1777.
In Sir Wm.Howe's (No.69) of 21st Octr.1777.

(ENCLOSURE NO.11 TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH NO.69).
Copy of a Letter from Lieutt.General Burgoyne to Lieutt.
General Sir H.Clinton—dated 27th Septr.1777 & received
at Fort Montgomery October 9th.77.

Sir,

Captn.Scott of the 24th Regiment is intrusted with the fullest

Dispatches and Communications necessary to be known by your Excellency. He is an Officer of great Merit, and intitled to the fullest Confidence.

I request you to return your Orders by Triplicate by different Routes, reckoning that your old Cypher subsists.

I am &ca.

J. Burgoyne.

Copy of an Enclosure recd. from Lieutt.Genl.Sir H. Clinton with the above Letter.

“Captn.Scott of the 24th Regimt. arrived on the 9th from Genl. Burgoyne—Said, that the Army under the Genls.Command, amounting to 5000 Men, consisted of the following Corps. British 2000. Provl.V. 500. Germans 2500.

That the Rebel Army was about 12000, besides a Body supposed to be about 4000, that are hovering about—That the Continental Troops alone amount to the Number of Genl. Burgoyne's Army. Both Armies were encamped a few Miles above Still Water, and the Distance at any one Place, not exceeding a Mile & a half & in many Places not more than half a Mile—The Ground of both Armies very strong. Genl. Burgoyne can remain in his present Position until the 12th, or until the 16th, should it be certain that the Communication would be open by that Time between the Armies of Genl.Clinton & Genl.Burgoyne; if not, it will be necessary he should make good his Retreat to Canada before the Ice sets in.

Genl.Burgoyne begs Sir H.Clinton will give him an Answer conveying the plainest & most positive Meaning, how he should act for the Good of His Majesty; whether he should proceed to Albany, or to make good his Retreat to Canada. He cannot stay longer than the 12th should he be obliged to retire to Canada; nor longer than the 16th should he proceed to Albany. He was obliged to give up the Communication between him & the Lakes, on his quitting the Heights of Saratoga. Was he to get to Albany he does not think he could be supplied with Provisions for the Winter, the country there & on the Mohawk River, being much drained, unless the Communication is opened between Albany and New York.

In the Action of the 19th Sept. the British Troops acquired great Honor, tho' no material Advantage was reaped from it: Night coming

on prevented it. The Enemy fought with a good deal of Obstinacy. Our Loss about 530, mostly British, killed and wounded, that of the Enemy about 1200.

Genl.Burgoyne begs Sir H.Clinton will send Duplicates, either in Writing, or verbally, as soon as possible.

Genl.Burgoyne thinks he could force his Way to Albany, but unless assured that the Communication between that Place and New York was kept open, he could not subsist his Army during the Winter."

(Enclosed) Copy of a Letter from Lieutt.Genl.Burgoyne to Lt. Genl.

Sir H. Clinton—dated 27th Sepr.1777.

Recd. at Ft.Montgomery 9th Octr.77.

In Sir Wm.Howe's (No.69) of 21st Octr.1777.

(ENCLOSURE TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE'S DESPATCH No.71)

(Copy)

On board the Friendship Off
Esopus, Friday the 17th—
10.O'Clock Morning.

Sir

I have the Honor to inform you that on the Evening of the 15th Instant, I arrived off Esopus, finding that the Rebels had thrown up Works, and had made every Disposition to annoy us, and cut off our Communication. I judged it necessary to attack them, the Wind being at that Time so much against us that we could make no way, I accordingly landed the Troops, attacked their Batteries, drove them from their Works, spiked & destroyed their Guns.—Esopus being a Nursery for almost every Villain in the Country, I judged it necessary to proceed to that Town. on our approach they were drawn up, with Cannon which we took & drove them out of the Place. On our entering the Town they fired from their Houses, which induced me to reduce the Place to Ashes, which I accordingly did, not leaving a House. We found a considerable quantity of Stores of all kinds, which shared the same Fate.

Sir James Wallace has destroyed all the Shipping except an Armed Galley, which run up the Creek, with every Thing belonging to the Vessels in Store.

I enclose you a News paper I found in the Town, but am to inform you that a Messenger arrived at Esopus the 14th Instant at Night, giv-

ing an Account that General Burgoyne, had surrendered himself with his whole Army, and that they were marched Prisoners into Connecticut. How far we may depend on this Account, Time will shew.

Sir James & myself will push forward the next Tide.

I have the Honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedn.Servant,

(Signed) John Vaughan.

P.S.Our Loss is so inconsiderable that it is not at present worth while to mention.

(Endorsed) Copy of General Vaughan's Report 17th October from Esopus.

In Sir Wm.Howe's (No.71) of 25th Oct.1777.

(ENCLOSURE TO SIR W.HOWE'S DESPATCH NO.74)

Sir

I had the Honor of proceeding by your Orders with the Troops under my Command on the 15th Inst. and destroyed all the Enemies Vessels and Houses till our Arrival off Esopus on the 17th; and upon my Reconnoitring the Rebel Situation there, I perceived a Battery of 5 Pieces of Cannon with a Breast Work lined with Troops; and also a Work with nine Pieces more, It being proper for me to proceed further up the River, to get every Information possible relative to General Burgoyne's Situation, I found it absolutely necessary to dispossess the Rebels of Esopus, in order to secure my Communication with Fort Vaughan, and to prevent the Enemy's assembling there in Force to harrass me on our Return—Soon after landing the Troops, they dispersed the Rebels and took their Cannon, but they retired into the Town, and fired out of the Houses, which was a very sufficient Reason for destroying it, but I had a much greater Inducement as the Congress and Mr.Clinton had taken Refuge there that Morning, and its being a Town notorious for harbouring the most rebellious People in that part of the Country.

After reimbarking the Troops I proceeded up the River and detached two people with Letters to General Burgoyne, and had the Honor to transmit to you the Information I received on their Return, and also dispatched the next Day the Messenger that came from General Burgoyne—From the Accounts I had received of his Situation, I found it

impracticable to give him any further Assistance; and as M. Putnam had taken post with 5000 Men on my Right, and Clinton or Parsons with 1500 on my Left, I determined to return to Fort Vaughan where I arrived on the 26th Inst. without any thing further material happening; and agreeable to your Directions, ordered the Troops destined for Philadelphia to sail immediately for New York.

I can't be too thankful to Sir James Wallace, Captain Stanhope, and the rest of the Officers of the Navy for their great Attention and Assistance upon that Expedition.

On the other Side, I have given you the best Account I could collect of the Cannon &ca. taken and of the Houses and Stores destroyed.

I have the Honor to be with the greatest Respect

Sir

Your Excellency's &ca.&ca.

(Signed) John Vaughan

Major General.

Fort Vaughan 26th Octr.1777.

Destroyed and taken upon the Expedition under Major General Vaughan up the North River since the taking of the Forts in the Highlands.

Taken.

14 pieces of Cannon
150 Stands of Arms
12 Barrels of Flints
6 Sloops loaded with Provisions of all Kinds &ca. &ca.
&ca.

Destroyed

1150 Stands of Arms
44 Barrels of Gunpowder
80 Small vessels
400 Houses, Barns, Mills &ca.

(Signed) Henry Clinton.

(Endorsed) Copy of a Letter from Major General Vaughan
to

Lieut.General Sir Henry Clinton

dated Fort Vaughan 26th Octr.1777.

In Sir Wm.Howe's Letter of the 29th Novr. No.74.