

**HISTORY OF SULLIVAN'S
CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE
IROQUOIS, BEING A FULL
ACCOUNT OF THAT EPOCH OF
THE REVOLUTION**

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History of Sullivan's campaign against the Iroquois, being a full account of that epoch of the revolution by A. Tiffany Norton

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A. TIFFANY NORTON

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MAJOR GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN.

HISTORY
OF
SULLIVAN'S CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE IROQUOIS;

BEING A FULL ACCOUNT OF THAT
EPOCH OF THE REVOLUTION.

—BY—

A. TIFFANY NORTON.



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CONTENTS.

| | PAGE. |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| CHAPTER I. | |
| The Iroquois Confederacy, - - - - - | 8 |
| CHAPTER II. | |
| Outbreak of the Revolution—Indian Hostilities, - - | 33 |
| CHAPTER III. | |
| Retaliatory Measures Proposed, - - - - - | 61 |
| CHAPTER IV. | |
| Preparations for the Campaign, - - - - - | 81 |
| CHAPTER V. | |
| General Clinton's Division, - - - - - | 96 |
| CHAPTER VI. | |
| March from Tioga—Newtown Battle, - - - - - | 110 |
| CHAPTER VII. | |
| March from Newtown to Kanadesaga, - - - - - | 126 |
| CHAPTER VIII. | |
| March from Kanadesaga to Kanaghsaws, - - - - - | 139 |

CHAPTER IX.

Massacre of Boyd's Scouting Party, - - - - 150

CHAPTER X.

March to Chinese Castle, - - - - 163

CHAPTER XI.

The Return March, - - - - 169

CHAPTER XII.

Unjust Criticism of Sullivan, - - - - 186

APPENDIX, - - - - 192

PREFACE.

THE expedition of General John Sullivan against the hostile Indian tribes of the north was one of the most important military movements of the Revolutionary war. Undertaken during one of the darkest periods which the struggling Colonies saw, it furnishes an example of devotion, heroism and noble self-sacrifice that has seldom been equalled in the annals of history. The daring and intrepid march has been not inaptly compared to the famous expedition of Cortez to the ancient halls of the Montezumas, or that later brilliant military achievement, Sherman's march to the sea. In many respects it was a remarkable undertaking, and the boldness of its conception was only equalled by the bravery and determination with which its hardship and danger were met and its objects accomplished.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of the undertaking, however, and the beneficent results, immediate and remote, which are to be attributed to it, no portion of the history of the Revolution has received less attention from historians than this expedition. This fact having been emphasized by the approaching centennial anniversary of the campaign, the author of this little volume was prompted to supply these missing pages in our country's history. Engaged for some years in historical research, there had come into his hands a collection of materials relating to this campaign of considerable value, and he was both unwilling that the public should lose the benefit of the knowledge in his possession, and convinced that there was need of a work of this character. Hence, although conscious from the outset that the work could be better performed by others abler and wiser than

he, the writer made the attempt to give a complete and accurate yet entertaining history of Sullivan's campaign, with such results as now appear to the reader. Believing that the custom which makes so many prefaces simply vehicles for the conveyance of apologies is well honored in the breach, the author will offer no other excuse than this for adding to the world's already large store of books.

From the start the work has been conscientiously performed, without bias or prejudice, with the exercise of great caution against drawing hasty conclusions, and with patient toil and research, that the history might have the one merit, even if it possessed no other, of a strict fidelity to truth. In the belief that it will be found to possess this qualification, without which it would be valueless, this volume is now presented to a discriminating but generous public.

While omitting nothing that would add interest to the narrative, whatever was of doubtful authenticity has been either rigidly excluded or its mythical character so plainly shown that the reader will be in no danger of mistaking it for undisputed fact. In thus drawing the line between truth and error, it has been found necessary to sweep away many misty traditions and beautiful but delusive legends. Hence the reader who scans these pages for accounts of buried cannons, exciting tales of the driving of the Indians from some dizzy precipice, or other doubtful local traditions, will be sorely disappointed. Others, who have possessed for years a superficial knowledge of the expedition, derived from sturdy pioneers of honest heart but treacherous memory, will in all probability dispute some of the statements made in this work. Anticipating such criticism, the author would seek to disarm it in advance by giving the sources of his information and the grounds for his statements. During Sullivan's campaign in the Indian country, over thirty different army officers, at least, kept journals, wherein was daily recorded the line of march, the character of the country traversed, the number of miles marched, every important event, and many minor details. These journals are still in existence, while others

are constantly coming to light. While some are brief, others enter into the minutest details and furnish a complete epitome of each day's events during the campaign. By the aid of these journals the author has been able to verify every statement of fact by the concurrent testimony of those who were themselves participators in the events described. In addition he has had the aid afforded by the maps and data of the engineers who accompanied the army and chained every mile of the distance from Easton to the Genesee river, while letters, official reports, army documents and state papers have been accessible. In this rich field the gleaning was laborious but pleasant, and while the falsity of many traditions was exposed, it was satisfactory to know that the accuracy of the narrative was thus secured.

The grateful acknowledgment of the author is due to the Rev. David Craft, of Wyalusing, Pa., who has made the history of this expedition a special study for years, and whose rich collection of materials, freely placed in the former's hands, greatly aided him in his work. The researches of General John S. Clark, of Auburn, have also proved of inestimable value. The profundity of his knowledge concerning the history of the Indian tribes of New York is already well known, and the readiness with which he has given the public the benefit of his researches is worthy of commendation. To others, whose name is legion, who have greatly aided in the preparation of this work by the loan of rare books and documents, heartfelt thanks are due. The readiness with which such favors have been rendered, even by strangers in this and adjoining states, has been proof to the author of the warm and wide-spread interest felt in the work he had undertaken. The author is also under obligations to Mr. E. E. Doty for the loan of the engravings of the powder horn, bullet mould, etc., which first appeared in the pages of Colonel L. L. Doty's *History of Livingston County*.

It is a fact to be much regretted that while the present generation devotes much attention to the history of the Old World, it has little acquaintance with that of our own land. Thus there is a tendency to forget at what cost the liberties of the American