

**REMINISCENCES OF THE
REVOLUTION, OR, LE LOUP'S
BLOODY TRAIL FROM
SALEM TO FORT EDWARD**

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Reminiscences of the revolution, or, Le Loup's bloody trail from Salem to Fort Edward by
Arthur Reid

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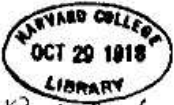
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• P R E F A C E .

IN the month of March last, a sketch appeared in the *Salem Press*, entitled, "REMINISCENCES OF THE REVOLUTION." Since the appearance of these "Reminiscences," our friends have represented them as containing historical facts worthy of preservation, and have intimated a desire to have them published in a more permanent form. In view of the foregoing solicitation, and in consequence of the seeming demand for this reminiscential article, and in consideration of the perishable nature of the columns of a newspaper, we have concluded to put the work in a pamphlet form, with some alterations and additions.

Without any further prefatory remarks, the following pages are submitted to the public, hoping that they may awaken in the minds, of some at least, a spirit of thankfulness and gratitude for the great change that has taken place since the days of the Revolution,—“the days that tried men's souls.”

ARTHUR REID.

SOUTH ARGYLE, WASHINGTON Co., N. Y., October 1, 1852.

REMINISCENCES OF THE REVOLUTION.

It cannot but be interesting and profitable to contrast the present condition of this country, with what it was in its early settlement, when our forefathers had to encounter so many difficulties and toils and trials and privations. Now we are seated by our firesides in the enjoyment not only of the necessaries, but of the luxuries of life; not only of civil, but religious liberty—alike free from internal commotions and foreign invasions. The wigwam and the log cabin have turned into commodious and comfortable dwellings. The hunting shout of the Indian has died away upon the breeze, but he has left his wild, poetic names indelibly impressed upon land and water. The tomahawk and scalping knife have changed into implements of husbandry and usefulness.—The Indian coin—beads and shells—has turned into gold and silver currency. The fragile birchen canoe, skimming the crested wave, has been supplanted by the gallant steamer, plowing deep the majestic rivers and lakes, and anon, riding triumphantly the briny crescent wave. The circuitous, ambushed Indian path has turned into the scientific iron pathway, upon which the iron horse, puffing and blowing, travels at a fearful pace, his whole system wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement, his veins distended with boiling liquid, his heart composed of glowing coals, onward he rushes breathing fire and smoke; anon, he stops to slake his thirst, and behemoth like, "drinketh up a river," and like the overgrown mastodon, devours the trunks of trees to appease his hunger—refreshed, "like a strong man to run a race," he springs forward, "rejoicing in the greatness of his strength." The howling of the wild beasts of the forest is changed into the neighing and lowing of domesticated animals. The red man's wild halloo, echoing and re-echoing along the hills, is changed into the scream of the steam whistle of the locomotive, reverberating from the mountain sides. The dense forests have been turned into fruitful fields; the war whoop of the Indian has been changed into the proclamation of peace and tranquility; and the horrid and terrific yell of the savage, into the din of civilization.

Incidents of the Revolution must be interesting to every American citizen, and particularly so to the surviving friends and relatives of those

immediately connected with such incidents, as well as those now residing in the vicinity where such incidents occurred.

It is perhaps worth while to rescue from oblivion the following reliable reminiscences of the Revolution, which I had from various sources, but particularly from the lips of my aged aunt, (lately deceased,) who was eight years of age at the time these incidents transpired—a time of life in which the memory is in full vigor. The impressions then made are vivid and lasting. The accumulating cares and toils and sorrows of after life can never eradicate them. And even in old age, when the mind is incapacitated for receiving new impressions—when the passing events of the day are soon obliterated, and leave scarcely a trace upon the mind—incidents, even the most minute connected with youth, or even childhood, are recalled without any apparent effort; with vivid and startling accuracy. The human mind being thus constituted, early recollections may be received as reliable information, and may be recorded as such on the historic page.

In the latter part of the summer of 1777, a scouting party of Indians, consisting of eight persons, received an injury, or a supposed injury, from some white persons at New Perth, now Salem, Washington County, New York, for which they were determined to have revenge.

But little more than a year had then elapsed since the birthday of the Empire in which we live,—an eventful period in the history of our country. The colonists had made many unsuccessful attempts to obtain a redress of grievances, and at the same time protested their unabating attachment to the mother country, and a willingness, notwithstanding all that had passed, still to be dutiful and obedient subjects, on condition certain odious acts of the British Parliament were repealed. But when all hopes of effecting a reconciliation vanished, they then openly and avowedly asserted their rights in the very face of the tyranny and oppression of the mother country, and proceeded to dissolve all their allegiance to the British Crown, and to declare themselves free and independent, and, in their weak and infantile condition, were determined to make a desperate struggle in order to obtain a name and place among the nations of the earth; whilst, on the other hand, the mother country was equally determined to exert her every energy to bring into dutiful subjection her disobedient and refractory offspring, and make her succumb to her parental authority, and to crush every effort that was made to set up an Independent Government. One of the measures resorted to in order to intimidate and terrify those who dared to make resistance to her authority, was the adoption of the cruel and mistaken policy of forming an unnatural and culpable alliance with the treacherous and bloodthirsty American savages. The consequence was, that bands of

these merciless marauders were scouring the country, committing depredations and spreading dismay and terror among the scattered settlers.

At the above date, the inhabitants of New Perth and vicinity had erected a temporary fort to which they resorted, especially at night, for protection. The inmates of this fort, observing the scouting party of Indians above alluded to, prowling around, fired upon them from the fort, and killed one of their number, at which the seven surviving Indians were exceedingly exasperated. With a spirit of revenge rankling in their bosoms, they swore, according to their custom, that for the blood of their comrade they would exact the blood and scalps of the first white family that came in their way, as a plenary, expiatory sacrifice. This oath was taken in the presence of a white man, a prisoner then in their possession. Who this prisoner was, where he resided, how, where, and when, they became in possession of him, is not now known; to each of these inquiries history is silent—and all that is known of his future history will appear in the sequel.

The party of Indians alluded to, was a part of a large body, who had assembled, according to previous arrangements, at the place where the invading army, under General Burgoyne, was then encamped, which was on the banks of the Boquet—a romantic and picturesque little river upon the west bank of Lake Champlain, and not far distant in a northerly direction from Crown Point. In order to inspire the savages with courage, Gen. Burgoyne considered it expedient, in compliance with their custom, to give them a war feast, at which they performed many rites and ceremonies peculiar to themselves, indulging in the most extravagant manoeuvres, gesticulations, and exulting vociferations, such as lying in ambush and displaying their rude armorial devices, and dancing and whooping and yelling and brandishing their tomahawks and scalping knives. Such barbarous conduct preparatory to engaging in war, must have been looked upon by the assembled civilized troops with suspicion and disgust.

It ought to be stated, in justice to Gen. Burgoyne, that he was in sentiment opposed to entering into an alliance with the treacherous savages. He had been in the country long enough to learn something of the character and disposition of the Indians, and from the knowledge he had acquired of their unreliahness, he was led into the belief that their presence would be a hindrance instead of a help, and he was confirmed in this belief by after bitter experience. The achievement of splendid victories was marred by their inhuman and barbarous conduct, and in the hour of need they basely deserted him. But Burgoyne being ambitious of military preferment, and desirous that his name should go down to posterity covered with military glory, yielded to the positive

instructions of the British ministry, which were to form an alliance with the Indians—a policy cruel and unjustifiable—a policy that redounded to their own confusion.

After the war feast was over, Gen. Burgoyne, attired in splendid uniform, assembled his dusky auxiliaries, and, in a dignified manner, made a speech to them distinguished for its ingenuity and singular energy.— He endeavored to explain to them the cause and nature of the war—that it was not a war waged against a common enemy—that there were many in the country that adhered with unabated faithfulness to the mother country—that there was an intermixture of friends and foes—and that they must discriminate between those that were friendly to the British Crown, and those that were not. He strictly charged them to put none to death excepting those who actually opposed them with weapons of warfare in their hands, and that they might scalp those, and those only, whom they had fairly slain in battle. He was willing to indulge them thus far in the great honor they had affixed to these barbarous badges of victory. But he strictly enjoined them to spare the lives of old men, women, children and prisoners, under every possible circumstance. He forbade them, under any pretext whatever, to scalp the wounded, or even the dying—and pronounced it still more unpardonable, if possible, to kill the wounded, in order to evade the injunction. He promised to reward them liberally for every prisoner they captured and brought into the camp. He profusely bestowed upon them flattering commendations of their previous conduct; and finally, he charged them to—“Go forth in the might of your valor and your cause; strike at the common enemies of Great Britain and of America—disturbers of public order, peace and happiness—destroyers of commerce—paricides of the State.”

When Burgoyne had concluded his elaborate speech, a chieftain of the Iroquois, whose name was Le Lonp, and who was the chief of the scouting party of Indians alluded to above, arose in a dignified manner, and with an easy repose of limbs, to reply, not only in behalf of his own tribe, but also of the other Indian tribes present. After taking a brief survey of the troops and his fellow-warriors, he stretched forth his hand and spoke as follows:

“I stand up in the name of all the nations present, to assure our father that we have attentively listened to his discourse. We receive you as our father, because when you speak we hear the voice of our great father beyond the great lake. We rejoice in the approbation you have expressed of our behavior. We have been tried and tempted by the Bostonians (meaning the Patriots); but we loved our father, and our hatchets have been sharpened upon our affections. In proof of the

sincerity of our professions, our whole villages able to go to war, are come forth. The old and infirm, our infants and wives, alone remain at home. With one common assent, we promise a constant obedience to all you have ordered and all you shall order; and may the Father of Days give you many and success!"

This Iroquois chieftain was distinguished for his insatiable thirst for blood and plunder, in consequence of which "the followers of Montcalm had appropriately bestowed upon him the appellation of '*Le Loup*'—*the wolf*!" He was so named in consequence of possessing so many points of resemblance to that rapacious, crafty, bold and warlike animal. It is well known that wolves go in packs, and it is said they always select the most bold and ferocious of their pack for a chief or leader; in like manner, his tribe had chosen *Le Loup*, inasmuch as he was the most bold and ferocious of their number, for a chief or leader. He manifested his boldness and forwardness in volunteering to speak in behalf of his own tribe, and the other tribes present. In his reply to Burgoyne, he fairly promised a constant obedience to all the orders he had given, and that he might think proper to give, but his wolfish disposition was concealed underneath "sheep's clothing."

It was on the 21st of June that these scenes were enacted at the Boquet; and it was before leaving this vicinity that Burgoyne issued a manifesto, rampant with pomposity and exaggeration. He prefaced this remarkable manifesto by enumerating all the numerous titles and offices he held, both in America and Great Britain, in order to gratify his vanity, and overawe the Americans by his many high-sounding titles. He invited all well-disposed persons to assist in putting an end to the existing disgraceful rebellion. He promised protection and security to all those who remained neutral, and to those who quietly pursued their occupations. He promised that all those who would furnish the camp with necessary provisions should be amply rewarded. But to those who offered resistance, and obstinately persisted in rebellion, a terrible war awaited them. He magnified the strength of the British armies and fleets, and greatly exaggerated the number of Indians under his direction. He represented that thousands of these ferocious warriors were under his control, and that they were eager to be let loose upon the enemies of Great Britain and America, and that it would be the height of madness and folly to attempt resistance, as there could be no escaping the penetrating search of the Indians. He had only to say the word, and the keen-scented savages, like trained blood-hounds, would penetrate the most distant and deep recesses of the forest. No covert, however reclus, could screen from their pursuit—even the subterraneous caverns could not escape their scrutinizing search.