

FORT TICONDEROGA

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Essay for your consideration

“Without a single shot:” The 1759 “Siege” of Fort Ticonderoga

by Christopher D. Fox ©

In the 18th-century, artillery often made the difference between success and defeat in battle. At Ticonderoga, (known as *Carillon* to the French) artillery was a means to an end. For the attacking British army whose goal it was to eject the French from their southernmost stronghold on Lake Champlain, it helped to ensure success. To the French garrison who realized that their occupation of Carillon was about to end, the artillery would hopefully buy them some time.

The British army under the command of General James Abercromby¹ had suffered a surprising and devastating defeat on 8 July 1758 within sight of the three-year old French stronghold at the south end of Lake Champlain. An unfortunate set of circumstances forced the English and provincial troops to retreat after facing, without the aid of cover, six hours of devastating musket fire from a hidden army one-fifth the size of their own.² The French army at Ticonderoga under the command of Louis-Joseph the Marquis de Montcalm³ had only about 3,500 troops compared to Abercromby's 16,000. The defeat set back the progress of the war from

¹ James Abercromby (1706-1781), Colonel of the 44th Foot, succeeded the Earl of Loudoun as commander-in-chief in North America. Following his defeat in July 1758, Abercromby was recalled home where after a series of promotions based upon seniority in the army, he attained the full rank of general by 1772. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography [DCB]* vol. IV (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), pp. 4-5.

² For a thorough examination of Abercromby's attack on Ticonderoga see Ian McCulloch "Like roaring lions breaking from their chains:" The Battle of Ticonderoga, 8 July 1758. in *Fighting for Canada Seven Battles, 1758-1945*, edited by Donald E. Graves (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2000).

³ Louis-Joseph, the Marquis de Montcalm's (1712-1759) military career was long and distinguished even before coming to America in 1756. Commissioned an ensign at the age of nine, Montcalm steadily rose through the ranks to earn the Order of Saint Louis in 1744 and become major-general (*maréchal de camp*) just before embarking for New France. With already thirty-one years of service in eleven campaigns, Montcalm soon proved the competency of his military command by capturing Oswego in 1756 then Fort William Henry in 1757. The greatest and last victory of the Seven Years' War in America was his at Ticonderoga in July 1758. *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 458-469.

the English point of view. That same summer General Jeffery Amherst⁴ captured Louisbourg, the French stronghold at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River thereby securing English control of the principal military access route into New France. Had Abercromby been successful, it is likely that the two forces would have converged on Quebec City, the heart of French control in North America. For the French, Montcalm's victory secured another year's occupation of the Champlain valley.

Capturing Fort Ticonderoga located at the strategic choke point in communication between New York and New France remained one of the principal goals for the coming campaign.⁵ Throughout the spring of 1759, General Amherst was busily making preparations for what he believed would be a prolonged siege at Ticonderoga. At Ticonderoga, a small force of about 3,500 French soldiers under the command of Brigadier-General François-Charles de Bourlamaque⁶ was awaiting an English advance into Lake Champlain. While his garrison was about the same size as Montcalm's a year before, his troops, like all French troops in New France, were suffering the ill effects of disease and short rations. Unfortunately for the French in North America, the problems of the war in Europe had redirected the attention of the council of military ministers in Paris to the home front.⁷ The war in America was no longer of prime importance to King Louis XV of France.

By mid June 1759, Amherst had assembled more than 6000 British regular and American provincial soldiers at the south end of Lake George and his artillery and artillery stores were gathered at the rendezvous

⁴ Jeffery Amherst's (1717-1797) military career before coming to America was largely administrative. As aid-de-camp to Sir John Ligonier he saw limited service in the War of the Austrian Succession, but did not command troops in the field. As captain in the 1st Foot Guards, he spent much of his career in England with his regiment. At the beginning of the Seven Years' War he made colonel of the 15th regiment and acted as commissary in charge of the administration of eight thousand Hessian troops on the English military establishment. It was not until Ligonier succeeded the Duke of Cumberland as commander-in-chief of the army in Great Britain that Amherst was granted his first solid field command and elevated to the rank of Major-General in America. In this capacity Amherst proved his field-commanding ability in the thorough and deliberate siege of Louisbourg in 1758. In light of Amherst's victory in Nova Scotia and Abercromby's defeat at Ticonderoga, Amherst was promoted commander-in-chief of the British army in North America. *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 20-26.

⁵ See Pitt to Amherst, Whitehall, 29 December 1758 in *Correspondence of William Pitt Volume 1*, edited by Gertrude Selwyn Kimball (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969), pp. 432-442.

⁶ François-Charles de Bourlamaque (1716-1764) entered military service in the *Régiment du Dauphin* as a volunteer in 1739 where he was promoted to second lieutenant in 1740. By December 1745 he worked his way to the rank of captain. He served with distinction in the War of the Austrian Succession and was given a pecuniary award in 1755 for his work in improving the infantry's manual of arms. As the New France military establishment was reinforced in 1756, Bourlamaque was commissioned colonel of infantry in Canada and became third in command of the French forces in America under the Marquis de Montcalm. Bourlamaque's successes with Montcalm at Oswego, Fort William Henry and Carillon in 1758 compelled Montcalm to place Bourlamaque in command of Carillon in 1759. *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 84-87.

⁷ Russell P. Bellico, *Sails and Steam in the Mountains A Maritime and Military History of Lake George and Lake Champlain* (Fleischmanns: Purple Mountain Press, 2001), p. 90.

post of Fort Edward.⁸ Shortly after daybreak on 16 June, the artillery with nearly 300 wagons loaded the previous day with shot and shells began to move, escorted by the 55th Regiment to the staging area at Lake George.⁹ Road conditions between Fort Edward and Lake George were very poor due to the unusually wet spring season. Because of the bad roads, half of the carriages were damaged on the march and the artillery was delayed at Halfway Brook¹⁰ until the roads could be repaired.¹¹ Finally, five days later on 21 June the train of artillery, ammunition and troops was again on the march. An hour and a half after daybreak General Amherst with about 3000 British regulars and 4000 provincials left Fort Edward. In tow were the beginnings of the compliment of artillery and supplies intended for laying siege to Fort Ticonderoga consisting of six 12-pounders, two 6-pounders, two royal howitzers,¹² 100 wagons carrying bateaux and many more loaded with provisions.¹³ Immediately after unloading the artillery, many of the wagons returned to Fort Edward to be loaded again with ammunition and supplies for the artillery. Over the next two weeks the wagons and carts would traverse the road between Fort Edward and Lake George many times hauling artillery stores and provisions as quickly as possible in preparation for an intended siege.¹⁴ Finally on July 3rd the remainder of the artillery consisting of six 24-pounders and four 18-pounders left Fort Edward at eight o'clock in the morning

⁸ Edward P. Hamilton, *Fort Ticonderoga Key to a Continent*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1964), pp. 90-91. Fort Edward was located at the south end of a fourteen-mile portage between the Hudson River and Lake George.

⁹ Jeffery Amherst, *The Journal of Jeffery Amherst*, edited by J. Clarence Webster (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1931), p. 121-122. John Hawks, *Orderly Book and Journal of Major John Hawks*, edited by Hugh Hastings (New York: Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New York), 1911, p. 13-14. Alexander Monypenny, *Orderly Books for the Campaign of 1759*, 6 May to 3 August 1759, Collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum, [M-2161, M-2164, M-2170]. *Commissary Wilson's Orderly Book*, edited by J. Watts De Pyster (Albany: J. Munsell), 1857, pp. 26-28. Robert Webster, "Journal," *Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*, vol. II, no. 4, (July 1931), p. 124 and original manuscript in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum [M-3053]. Henry Skinner, "Proceedings of the Army under the Command of General Amherst" *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, vol. XXV (London: July 1759), p. 266.

¹⁰ The post at Halfway Brook was located on the military road connecting Fort Edward and Fort William Henry. It served as a midpoint rendezvous and depot for troops and supplies in transit.

¹¹ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 122. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 266.

¹² "Royal" howitzers fired exploding balls 5½-inches in diameter. George Smith, *An Universal Military Dictionary* (London: J. Millan, 1779), p. 227.

¹³ Jesse Parsons, *Journal for 1759*, transcript on file at the Thompson-Pell Research Center, Fort Ticonderoga Museum (original manuscript in the collection of Dr. Gary M. Milan), June 21. Lemuel Wood, "A Journal of the Canada Expedition in the Year 1759" in Russell P. Bellico, *Chronicles of Lake George Journeys in War and Peace* (Fleischmanns: Purple Mountain Press, 1995), p. 129. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 123. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, June 20. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 266. Webster, "Journal," p. 125.

¹⁴ Wood, "Journal," p. 129-130. Daniel Sizer, a sergeant in the seventh company of Phineas Lyman's 1st Connecticut Regiment and responsible for the accounting of the materials passing through the post at Halfway Brook records in his journal the transportation of 1527 barrels of pork, 1262 barrels of flour, 45 barrels of butter, 353 tierces of bread, 114 wagons and 80 barrels of powder, 329 bateaux and 148 whaleboats to Lake George from Fort Edward. Daniel Sizer, *Journal for the Campaign of 1759*, 21 July to 6 July 1759, photocopy in file at the Thompson-Pell Research Center, Fort Ticonderoga Museum (original manuscript in the collection of the Connecticut Historical Society).

escorted by the 77th regiment, Massachusetts provincials and rangers.¹⁵ At Halfway Brook seven additional smaller field pieces were added to the train heading to Lake George.¹⁶ Upon arriving at the lake that evening at eight o'clock, the final pieces of artillery were immediately placed under guard in the artillery park. The following evening the last 20 wagons of powder arrived at the lake.¹⁷ By the evening of July 5th the last of the supplies needed for the campaign were in place. After months of planning and the exhausting labor of 114 teams of oxen, General Amherst's artillery was assembled and ready for action.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the troops at Lake George were kept busy with a variety of tasks. Some soldiers were busy retrieving extensive artillery stores buried by Abercromby's army in the vicinity of Fort William Henry for secure storage over the winter.¹⁹ Others were involved in moving provisions nearer the lake in preparation for loading into bateaux. Two hundred fifty provincials were regularly employed by the artillery to help organize the stores or perform guard duty over the artillery park while the artificers of the Royal Artillery busied themselves in preparing ammunition.²⁰

One of the more daunting tasks in preparation for the campaign was the raising of the English sloop *Halifax*. At the close of the 1758 campaign season, the *Halifax* along with the radeau *Land Tortoise* and a row galley were sunk at the south end of Lake George to protect them from theft or destruction by French raiding parties during the winter months. On 25 June Captain Joshua Loring²¹ began the arduous task of raising the sloop.²² To bring the ship to the surface, soldiers began by free diving to a depth of thirty to forty feet in the cold clear water of the lake to manually remove ballast stone used to sink the ship. Once the stones were removed the sloop could then be pulled from the bottom by ropes and grapnels. While relatively simple in concept, the task took over two weeks. Finally on July 4th, the sloop broke the surface of the lake and was

¹⁵ John Hurlbut, "The Journal of a Colonial Soldier" in *Magazine of American History* vol. XXIX, no. 4 (April, 1893), p. 396. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 131. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 268. Wood, "Journal," p. 130.

¹⁶ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 268. Wood, "Journal," p. 130.

¹⁷ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p.131.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.131.

¹⁹ Parsons, *Journal*, 21-29 June.

²⁰ Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 22 June. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 41.

²¹ Joshua Loring (1716-1781), born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, became master of a privateer during the War of the Austrian Succession. Through the influence of Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts, Loring received the commission of lieutenant in the Royal Navy in 1745 and continued to serve until 1749 when he went on half-pay. At the outbreak of the Seven Years' War he was promoted to commander and later was in charge of all naval construction and operations on the lakes of America. In 1759 General Amherst relied on Loring to construct his fleet to transport the army to Ticonderoga. *DCB*, IV, pp. 486-488.

²² J. Amherst, *Journal*, 127.

hailed to the wharf in front of the camps.²³ It would be another five days before the ship would be raised high enough out of the water to be repaired and outfitted with mast and sails for the expedition.²⁴ The very next day the guns for the sloop were recovered from their hiding places where they were buried between the graves of soldiers who died in previous campaigns.²⁵ Perhaps the English believed that the enemy would have enough respect for the dead not to disturb the graves of fallen soldiers in search of cached military stores.

The radeau, *Land Tortoise*,²⁶ was the only ship of great importance not found by Captain Loring.²⁷ Believing that the French had found and destroyed the ship, Amherst feared on 5 July that he would have to leave the heavy artillery behind for lack of a ship capable of transporting such immense weight.²⁸ Concerned that the success of the campaign depended upon the ability to use the heavy artillery, Amherst ordered Major Thomas Ord²⁹ to construct a new radeau.³⁰ Incredibly, the new two-masted radeau capable of transporting four 12-pounders and four 24-pounders, named the *Invincible*, was launched only nine days later at five o'clock in the evening on 16 July.³¹ Upon inspection, Amherst was quite pleased with the ship. The only problem resulting from the speed of the radeau's construction was that the gun ports were a little high.³² Amherst and the ships architects were relieved to learn upon mounting and test firing each gun that the height discrepancy had no effect upon the servicing of the cannon.³³

The *Halifax* and *Invincible* were just two of the hundreds of boats needed for the 35-mile trip up Lake George to Ticonderoga. As soon as bateaux arrived at Lake George, they were placed in the water to keep the boards swollen tightly together. When the allotted bateaux were delivered to each regiment, they were ordered

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

²⁵ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 268.

²⁶ The radeau *Land Tortoise* was constructed in the fall of 1758 and sunk in late October for protection from destruction by the French over the winter. The fifty two feet long by eighteen feet wide radeau had ports for seven cannon. In June 1990 the radeau was discovered by the Lake George Bateaux Research Team (later renamed Bateaux Below, Inc.). Today the *Land Tortoise* is a National Historic Landmark and is preserved as part of a "Submerged Heritage Preserve" in Lake George accessible to scuba divers during the summer months. Bellico, *Sails and Steam*, pp. 80-83.

²⁷ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 267.

²⁸ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 131.

²⁹ Thomas Ord (d. 1777) was a first lieutenant in the Royal Artillery in 1741. Promoted to captain lieutenant in 1743, Ord fought at Fontenoy and was promoted to captain in 1746 for his service. Upon coming to America he commanded the artillery with General Edward Braddock. Amherst promoted Ord to major in January 1759 and placed in charge of the artillery on the expedition to capture Ticonderoga. Stanley Pargellis, *Military Affairs in North America 1748-1765*. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), footnote 1, p. 96. *List of the Officers of the Royal Regiment of Artillery*, (Woolwich: Royal Artillery Institution, 1891), pp. 2, 197.

³⁰ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 132. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 268.

³¹ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 138. Skinner, "Proceedings," pp. 285-286. Wood, "Journal," 132.

³² J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 141.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

to fill the bottoms with water, or if possible, keep them afloat in the water every day to avoid leakage when loaded.³⁴ This seemed to be only partially effective as on July 16th the 1st and 17th Regiments along with the provincial regiments were ordered to supply men to begin cutting fascines³⁵ to be placed in the bottom of the bateaux.³⁶ Hopefully the layer of fascines would keep the provisions off the bottom of the bateaux and out of the water which continued to seep into the boats.

Military discipline and the exercise of arms also occupied a great deal of time for the troops at Lake George. Regular and provincial soldiers alike were in constant need of discipline as new recruits had often little or no experience with firearms. Marching and understanding and obeying orders were critical to the success of the campaign. The success of an engagement could hinge upon the effectiveness of musketry in the confusion of the smoke and noise of battle. Nearly every day numerous regiments turned out for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon to practice marching and target practice.³⁷ On occasion, the artillery also exercised. During the morning of 29 June the firing of a number of cannon at Lake George alarmed soldiers at Fort Edward until they learned that the artillery were simply exercising as ordered.³⁸

Occasionally there were accidents. On July 13th upon firing a cannon recently recovered from nearby buried artillery stores, the ball killed two horses and broke one man's thigh as it flew wildly through the middle of the camp and crashed through a hut belonging to a group of light infantry soldiers.³⁹

All the while, more troops continued to arrive at Lake George. By the evening of July 15th Amherst's army of 5,854 British regulars and 5,279 provincial troops was completely assembled and awaiting orders for embarkation.⁴⁰ While his artillery stores were extensive, Amherst was well aware of the hazards of war in northern New York. Boats could easily sink in an unexpected storm or accident on Lake George and an extended siege far away from a friendly post could deplete military stores quickly. He also realized that it was

³⁴ Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 72.

³⁵ Fascines are made by tying small branches or brush together at the ends and middle to create cylindrical bundles approximately one foot in diameter. They are most often used as the internal structure of field fortifications. Smith, *Military Dictionary*, pp. 87-88.

³⁶ Moneypeny, *Orderly Book*, 16 July. Wood, "Journal," 132.

³⁷ Ebenezer Dibble, "Diary of Ebenezer Dibble" in *Proceedings of the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Connecticut* vol. I (1903), p. 313. Hawks, *Orderly Book*, pp. 25-26. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 29-30 June. Webster, "Journal," pp. 123-132. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, pp. 51-53.

³⁸ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 129-130. Dibble, "Diary," p. 313. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 29 June. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 53. Wood, "Journal," p. 130.

³⁹ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 135. Dibble, "Diary," p. 314.

⁴⁰ J. Amherst, *Journal*, 138. Bellico, *Sails and Steam*, pp. 89-90.

likely that his troops would find lost or abandoned arms and ammunition during the campaign. With this in mind, he authorized a bounty on any and all serviceable military stores that might be found. If found and delivered to the commissary of stores at the artillery park, each 13-inch shell would be worth one dollar; 10-inch shells, one-half dollar; large caliber cannon shot, two-pence; small caliber shot, one-pence; and five-shillings for each good or repairable musket.⁴¹ But before the soldiers could begin counting their money, much work remained to be done.

On 13 July, after only three days of repair and re-rigging, the sloop *Halifax* was loaded with over one hundred tons of cannon shot, shells and powder.⁴² The sloop was filled to capacity and there was still more ordnance to be loaded. An additional fifty bateaux were needed.⁴³ Because of the extreme weight and critical importance of their cargo, any bateaux delivered for the use of the artillery and found in any way insufficient were to be immediately exchanged for others in top condition.⁴⁴ By the morning of July 17th the additional bateaux were in place and the loading of the remainder of the shot and shells began.⁴⁵ Over the next three days, the regiments at Lake George provided two hundred men to assist the artillery in loading the remainder of shot and shells.⁴⁶ While the bateaux were better than most awaiting embarkation, there were problems. Even some of the artillery's new bateaux leaked and were not large enough to hold their allotted stores. As soon as they were loaded, some began to sink under the extreme weight of their contents.⁴⁷ Even larger boats had their problems. On the evening of July 20th, one large boat with more than one hundred barrels of powder sunk, but its precious cargo was quickly salvaged.⁴⁸

Simultaneous with the loading of the ammunition, the artillery were loaded onto thirteen rafts.⁴⁹ Specially made for the expedition, the carpenters built rafts constructed of board decks mounted across the midsections of three bateaux creating a simple, but stable floating platform.⁵⁰ The rafts could easily carry the

⁴¹ Hawks, *Orderly Book*, p. 34. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 15 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, pp. 76-77.

⁴² J. Amherst, *Journal*, pp. 134-135. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 284.

⁴³ Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 13 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 74.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 13 July. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 140. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 285.

⁴⁶ Hawks, *Orderly Book*, pp. 38, 41. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 17-19 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, pp. 81, 83, 85.

⁴⁷ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 285-286.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁹ PRO, CO 5/56, UP microfilm reel 4, frame 502 cited in Bellico, *Sails and Steam*, p. 89.

⁵⁰ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

cannon without dismounting them from their carriages.⁵¹ The design of the rafts made it possible to quickly roll the artillery onto shore and into immediate action via a plank ramp upon landing at Ticonderoga. The loading of the artillery proceeded smoothly with the exception of one raft carrying two 10-inch mortars which sunk at the wharf soon after it was loaded.⁵² Because the army was set to embark the next morning, Amherst decided to leave the mortars behind rather than delay the departure to retrieve the two lost pieces.⁵³ Hopefully, the small force left behind would be able to recover the mortars and the provisions scow, *Snow Shoe*, would bring them north along with horses for hauling the artillery in a day or two.⁵⁴

With the loading of the artillery underway, Amherst was satisfied that his army was finally ready to embark for Ticonderoga. At five o'clock on the morning of 20 July, the army began loading its provisions.⁵⁵ The 1st, 42nd and 77th regiments received thirty five bateaux each.⁵⁶ The 17th, 27th, 55th regiments as well as Ruggles' second battalion,⁵⁷ Willards,⁵⁸ Lovewell's,⁵⁹ Babcock's,⁶⁰ Whiting's,⁶¹ Fitch's,⁶² Wooster's⁶³ and Lyman's⁶⁴ provincial regiments received twenty six bateaux each.⁶⁵ Each 34-foot long bateau was expected to carry twelve barrels of flour or nine barrels of pork.⁶⁶ In addition, each was expected to carry at least 20 soldiers.⁶⁷ After working all day and well into the night, the army loaded into 391 bateaux 2292 barrels of flour and 1800 barrels of pork. With forty-nine pieces of artillery⁶⁸ and over one hundred tons of ammunition, Amherst was finally ready for the journey to Ticonderoga. The spirits of the army were high and both regular

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁵² James Montrésor, "Journals of Colonel James Montrésor," *Collections of the New York Historical Society for 1881*, vol. XIV (1882), p. 82. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 141. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁵³ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 141. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁵⁴ The troops in fact did raise one of the 10-inch mortars and it was transported to Ticonderoga in the scow *Snow Shoe*. Montrésor, "Journal," p. 82.

⁵⁵ Hawks, *Orderly Book*, p. 41. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 19 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 85.

⁵⁶ Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 11 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 69.

⁵⁷ Colonel Timothy Ruggles' Massachusetts Regiment.

⁵⁸ Colonel Abijah Willard's Massachusetts Regiment.

⁵⁹ Colonel Zacheus Lovewell's New Hampshire Regiment.

⁶⁰ Colonel Henry Babcock's Rhode Island Regiment.

⁶¹ Colonel Nathaniel Whiting's 2nd Connecticut Regiment.

⁶² Colonel Eleazer Fitch's 4th Connecticut Regiment.

⁶³ Colonel David Wooster's 3rd Connecticut Regiment.

⁶⁴ Colonel Phineas Lyman's 1st Connecticut Regiment.

⁶⁵ Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 11 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 69.

⁶⁶ Bellico, *Sails and Steam*, p. 90. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 11 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁷ Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 11 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 70.

⁶⁸ In total the artillery consisted of six 24-pounders, four 18-pounders, ten 12-pounders, seven 6-pounders, three 3-pounders, six 8-inch howitzers, two 5½-inch howitzers, eight "royal" (5½-inch) mortars, four 10-inch mortars (less two on the raft which sunk soon after they were loaded) and one 13-inch mortar. John Knox, *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North-America* vol. I. (London: 1769), p. 396.

and provincial officers had the highest regard for the abilities of their general.⁶⁹ The expedition was finally underway and the anticipation of victory was in the air.

At two o'clock in the morning on 21 July, reveillé was beat and the troops began to break camp.⁷⁰ Just as the sun began to rise at five o'clock, the general assembly was beat and the army stepped into their bateaux.⁷¹ An hour later, the first bateaux were rowing towards Ticonderoga.⁷² By nine o'clock the entire army was on the lake.⁷³ The weather was fair with a steady wind from the southeast which the army used to its advantage by raising blankets as sails to propel the fleet north.⁷⁴ The army passed the lake in four columns. The first on the right held the rangers, light infantry and grenadiers.⁷⁵ The second contained the British regulars and highlanders.⁷⁶ The third, led by the radeau *Invincible*, held the artillery, hospital, sutlers, engineers and carpenters.⁷⁷ The provincial troops brought up the fourth, or leftmost column.⁷⁸ Amherst led the entire body in a gunboat mounting a bronze 3-pounder followed perpendicularly by a two-boat deep row of bateaux filled with Gage's light infantry.⁷⁹ The rear of the army was composed of a double row of Whiting's Connecticut provincial troops followed by the sloop *Halifax*.⁸⁰

During the day the winds increased making it difficult to hold good order on the lake. At around three o'clock it began to rain.⁸¹ At the second narrows, within sight of Bald Mountain (Rogers' Rock) and with about one hour of remaining daylight, Amherst ordered the flotilla to halt for the evening.⁸² By sunset the winds had increased to the point where the lake had waves high enough to endanger the moorings of the radeau and

⁶⁹ Roger Townshend to unknown recipient, Lake George, July 20, 1759. Original manuscript in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum. [cat. no. 1999.1160.001]

⁷⁰ William Amherst, *Journal of William Amherst in America 1758-1760*, edited by John Clarence Webster (Frome and London: Butler and Tanner, Ltd., 1927), p. 44. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 141. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 20 July. Sizer, *Journal*, 21 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁷¹ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁷³ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 142.

⁷⁴ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286. Wood, "Journal," p. 134.

⁷⁵ Hawks, *Orderly Book*, p. 41-42. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 21 July. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 87.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42. *Ibid.*, 21 July. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42. *Ibid.*, 21 July. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42. *Ibid.*, 21 July. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁷⁹ The flat-bottomed boat was the boat in which General Amherst led the army on the lake. Wood, "Journal," p. 136. It mounted a "brass" 3-pounder mounted on her bow. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. See also Knox, *Journal*, pp. 388, 395.

⁸⁰ Knox, *Journal*, p. 396.

⁸¹ Wood, "Journal," p. 134.

⁸² Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286. Wood, "Journal," p. 134.

artillery rafts that were lashed to it for the night.⁸³ For much of the night, the army had to row their bateaux in opposition of the wind to keep from drifting into shore.⁸⁴ The troops passed the night damp and cold, and in anticipation of what lay ahead at the break of day.

The sun rose to a calm and much more pleasant day on the morning of July 22. At daybreak the first column advanced to the landing and the light troops immediately proceeded to secure the area toward the sawmill.⁸⁵ At the mill, they had a short engagement with Brigadier-General Chevalier de Bourlamaque leading about three hundred Indians and several French grenadiers. The brief skirmish ended when Bourlamaque's Indians dispersed and retreated to the French Lines. Once the light infantry and rangers had control of the landing area and mill, they positioned themselves to cut off any attack that might be launched by the French when the main body of the army attempted to land.⁸⁶ The remainder of the army got underway soon thereafter and proceeded in great order to the landing place and began unloading at about ten o'clock without the least resistance from the French.⁸⁷ It did not take long for Amherst to realize that the French had fallen back to their entrenchments on the heights of Carillon. Upon landing, Amherst dispatched Willard's and much of Ruggles' Massachusetts regiments to immediately follow the La Chute River to a small cove about one-half mile from the fort where the river empties into Lake Champlain.⁸⁸ At this point, the regiments set to work constructing a breastwork which faced directly into the rear, or the inside, of the French earthworks constructed just a year before.⁸⁹ These were the same earthworks, which repulsed the army under the command of General James Abercromby. This provincial breastwork was located at nearly the same point where Abercromby intended his artillery to be placed at the outset of his attack on Ticonderoga the previous July. Like Abercromby before him,

⁸³ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁸⁴ Salah Barnard, *Journal of Captain Salah Barnard*, 21 July. Manuscript in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum [cat. no. 1991.58].

⁸⁵ W. Amherst, *Journal*, pp. 45-46.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁸⁷ John Woods, *Diary of John Woods*, vol. 1, 10 June to 4 November 1759. Original located at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. Photocopy on file at the Thompson-Pell Research Center, Fort Ticonderoga Museum, 22 July. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 142. Hurlbut, "Journal," p. 396. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286. Webster, "Journal," p. 132. Wood, "Journal," p. 134.

⁸⁸ This position was scouted by Robert Rogers and engineer Diedrick Brehm of the Royal American Regiment during a reconnaissance mission to observe the works at Ticonderoga in March 1759. Brehm observed that artillery may be brought to this point by rafts to enfilade the French Lines. Diedrick Brehm, "Lieutenant Brehm's Report" *Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*, vol. XI, no. 1 (December 1962), p. 41. Original manuscript in the Papers of Thomas Gage, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan. See also Constantine Hardy, "Extracts from the Journal of Constantine Hardy in the Crown Point Expedition of 1759," *New England Historic and Genealogical Register*, vol. 60 (July 1906), p. 237. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 46. Barnard, *Journal*, 22 July. Wood, "Journal," p. 134.

⁸⁹ Wood, "Journal," pp. 134-135.

Amherst intended to use this position to rake the inside of the French entrenchments with enfilading fire in order to force the enemy from the high, commanding ground to the west of the fort.

While the majority of the Massachusetts troops were busy taking control of their position near the fort, the remainder of Ruggles' regiment and most of Schuyler's "Jersey Blues" were quickly clearing the road between the landing on Lake George and the saw mill a mile away of trees felled by the French to impede the British advance.⁹⁰ The provincials used the logs to construct a breastwork to protect the road from harassment by French or Indian raiding parties.⁹¹

As afternoon grew into evening, the road was cleared and two 12-pounders and two 6-pounders were transported to the area of the sawmill.⁹² At the sawmill, the carpenters soon repaired the bridge crossing the La Chute River to enable the artillery to advance towards the French Lines the next morning. By nightfall Amherst had secured the landing place and the sawmill.⁹³ The breastwork on the south side of the La Chute River within sight of the fort was well established and offered a clear view of the French fortifications on the high ground.

The work of the Massachusetts soldiers paid off in the early morning of 23 July. Shortly after sunrise, the sentries of Ruggles' regiment observing the French lines from their breastwork noticed that the French had struck their tents.⁹⁴ In the night, Broulmaque with most of his army retreated to Crown Point leaving a rearguard of about four hundred soldiers under the command of Captain Louis-Philippe Le Dossu d'Hébécourt.⁹⁵ Having much faith in this intelligence, Amherst immediately ordered the army to advance upon the lines via the shortest and most direct route through gullies and over very poor, potentially dangerous ground. By noon and without the loss of a single soldier, Amherst controlled the very ground where just over a year before two thousand of his comrades suffered the most devastating defeat in the history of North America until

⁹⁰ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 142. Knox, *Journal*, p. 397-398. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁹¹ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

⁹² J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 142.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁹⁴ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 143. W. Amherst, *Journal*, pp. 46-47. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286. Wood, "Journal," p. 135.

⁹⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 143. Bellico, *Sails and Steam*, p. 91. Knox, *Journal*, p. 402-403. Louis-Philippe Le Dossu d'Hébécourt became a captain in the *régiment de la Reine* in 1745. As a trusted officer he was given command of the garrison at Carillon during the winters of 1757 and 1758. He was wounded at Carillon on 8 July 1758. For his service in that battle, d'Hébécourt was awarded the Order of Saint Louis. "Officiers du régiment de la Reine," *Le bulletin des recherches historiques*, LI, no. 11 (November 1945), p. 388.

the Civil War a century later.⁹⁶ As the English took control of the entrenchments, the French artilleryists remaining at the fort began loading their cannon. At the same time they stripped wooden shingles from their barracks and set fire to the storehouses and outbuildings near the lake.⁹⁷ The opening shots were aimed at the Massachusetts breastwork.⁹⁸ When the balls failed to reach their targets, the French cannonade shifted to the troops at the lines. All day the French fired exploding mortar balls in the direction of their abandoned entrenchments on the high ground west of the fort.⁹⁹ Of the estimated four hundred shells fired at the lines,¹⁰⁰ only a few reached their mark. The height of their former entrenchments sheltered the English troops camped outside and caused only limited damage.¹⁰¹

Although the British army controlled the lines, they were unable to bring the artillery with them because the road connecting the mills to the entrenchments was muddy and in places completely washed away.¹⁰² With the French actively shelling the English position at the lines, the British artillery was absolutely necessary to the success of the campaign. A new plan was necessary for drawing up the artillery. The easiest way to transport artillery any distance was by water. Within hours, several artillery rafts were portaged from the landing on Lake George to the La Chute River just below the sawmill at the lower falls.¹⁰³ Quickly, two 12-pounders and two howitzers were loaded onto rafts and floated down the river to a shallow cove on the north side of the river about five hundred yards southwest of the French Lines.¹⁰⁴ Once unloaded, soldiers attached to the artillery

⁹⁶ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 143. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 46-47. Barnard, *Journal*, 23 July. Hurlbut, "Journal," p. 396. Knox, *Journal*, p. 398. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286-287. Webster, "Journal," p. 133. Wood, "Journal," p. 135. Woods, *Diary*, 23 July.

⁹⁷ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 144. Knox, *Journal*, p. 398. Wood, "Journal," p. 135.

⁹⁸ Wood, "Journal," p. 135. Stripping the roofs of the barracks and destroying the outer buildings and storehouses was recommended as one of the measures to be taken to defend the fort in case of siege. [Jean-Nicholas Desandrouins], "Memoir on the Defense of the Fort of Carillon," *The Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*, vol. XIII, no. 3 (1972), pp. 208, 209. Desandrouins' "Memoir" was published in the original French text as "Mémoire sur la défense du fort de Carillon," 10 fevrier 1759, *Lettres et Pièces Militaires*, Québec, 1891, pp. 107-143 in *Collection des Manuscrits du maréchal de Lévis*.

⁹⁹ Robert Rogers, *Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (Dublin: R. Acheson, 1769), p. 127. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 143. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 47. Knox, *Journal*, p. 398. Wood, "Journal," p. 135. Woods, *Diary*, 23 July.

¹⁰⁰ Webster, "Journal," 133.

¹⁰¹ At that time the French Lines were constructed of logs up to thirty-inches in diameter lying as many as three deep to a height between seven and a half and ten feet. Brehm, "Report," pp. 38-39. See also J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 143. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 47. Knox, *Journal*, p. 398.

¹⁰² Knox, *Journal*, p. 398.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 398. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 286.

worked through the night hauling these pieces up a firmer but steeper path close to the British encampment and posted them at each flank of the camp.¹⁰⁵

By sunset, Amherst's army was busily bringing up more artillery from the landing on Lake George.¹⁰⁶ Planks hauled to the site of the mill were being used to build more rafts for transporting the heavy artillery.¹⁰⁷ Provisions and ammunition were being unloaded and his troops were firmly encamped under cover of the French Lines. Already Amherst was preparing for an extended siege. All through the night the army worked at bringing up supplies. After dark, trenches were begun to allow the army to approach the fort under cover from enemy fire.¹⁰⁸ Exploding enemy bombs shattered the stillness of the night, but the English suffered few casualties from the French mortar fire. The successes of the day elevated the spirits of the army and motivated all the troops to double their efforts towards the common goal of victory.¹⁰⁹

As the sun rose on Amherst's army the enemy artillery fire increased. With the British encamped at the lines, the French realized that the bulk of Amherst's army was concentrating its force in this location for an attack. Since Amherst now firmly controlled the French Lines, he ordered the Massachusetts troops to tear down their breastwork and abandon their post on the south side of the La Chute River. At the same time, however it was becoming very obvious that the French were actively leaving their fort. Realizing that shelling alone would force the isolated fort to surrender, Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil¹¹⁰ had issued standing orders to Bourlemaque to destroy and abandon Carillon in the event of a concerted English attack.¹¹¹ Throughout the day French bateaux and Indian canoes were observed leaving with men and supplies from the endangered fort.¹¹² In response Amherst ordered several cannon to be placed near the shore of Lake Champlain north of the fort to cut off their route of communication and retreat to Crown Point.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 144. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁶ Dibble, "Diary," p. 315.

¹⁰⁷ Knox, *Journal*, p. 399.

¹⁰⁸ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Barnard, *Journal*, 23 July.

¹⁰⁹ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 47.

¹¹⁰ Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil de Cavagnial, (1698-1778) governor-general of New France held overall command of the French army in North America.

¹¹¹ E.B. O'Callaghan, editor, *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. X, (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1858) pp. 926 and 1002

¹¹² J. Amherst, *Journal*, 144. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287.

¹¹³ Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

All through the day the army labored at bringing up the artillery.¹¹⁴ To facilitate the process a new wharf located closer to the portage road to the sawmill was constructed on Lake George.¹¹⁵ As soon as an artillery raft was offloaded, the cannon were wheeled down the portage and placed on another raft and rowed down the river to the landing close to the lines. Apart from bringing up the artillery the most important job the army faced was continuing the progress of the trenches and building a set of batteries from which Amherst planned to use his artillery to bombard the fort. All day long, soldiers not occupied with unloading and transporting artillery and military stores were busy making fascines for use in constructing the batteries.¹¹⁶ The fascines were critical in forming the body of the breastwork on a peninsula where, in places, topsoil was very shallow. Once covered with the little earth available, the bundles of brush and saplings would effectively protect the artillery and its gunners from incoming cannon shot without putting the batteries at risk to severe damage or collapse.

Although a lot was accomplished by Amherst's army that day, much work remained. By the end of the day only two 24-pounders and two 10-inch mortars had been brought to the artillery park located on the English right flank of the French Lines.¹¹⁷ As night fell upon the army so did the mortar bombs from the fort. The bombardment was non-stop, and although there was little damage suffered by the troops, the army spent the night outside of their tents on the lookout for incoming shells.¹¹⁸

Soon after sunrise on 25 July a French mortar bomb exploded in the English trenches killing six soldiers.¹¹⁹ The French artillerists were clearly improving their accuracy. Nevertheless, the trenching and battery building had to continue. Already substantial work was completed on two cannon batteries and one mortar battery, but more fascines were needed before the artificers could mount their guns.¹²⁰ Throughout the day another four hundred shells continued to rain down upon the army keeping everybody on high alert.¹²¹

¹¹⁴ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 144. Knox, *Journal*, p. 399. Parsons, *Journal*, 24 July. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹¹⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, pp. 144.

¹¹⁶ Dibble, "Diary," p. 315. Hawks, *Orderly Book*, p. 45. Monypenny, *Orderly Book*, 24 July. Rogers, *Journal*, p. 128. Wilson, *Orderly Book*, p. 95.

¹¹⁷ Knox, *Journal*, p. 399. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287.

¹¹⁸ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 145. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Knox, *Journal*, p. 399. Parsons, *Journal*, 24 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. Webster, "Journal," p. 133. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹¹⁹ Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹²⁰ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Webster, "Journal," p. 133.

¹²¹ Parsons, *Journal*, 25 July.

The order of the day was get the artillery to the artillery park as quickly as possible. The French were continuing to make preparations to leave Ticonderoga. If Amherst hoped to capture the fort with its garrison and supplies, he needed to begin his siege soon. He would not, however, fire a single shot at the fort until he could do it effectively. By the end of the day, the remainder of the artillery was transported to the artillery park.¹²² Amherst now had six 24-pounders, several 12-pounders, a 13-inch and two 10-inch mortars waiting to take their positions for an attack on the fort.¹²³

In the afternoon the army was made painfully aware of just how close they were getting to the fort and how much the accuracy of the French artillerists had improved. While viewing the progress of the trenching and battery construction, Colonel Roger Townshend,¹²⁴ General Amherst's close friend and aid-de-camp, was slain by a lucky shot from the fort.¹²⁵ Ironically, just days before he had made arrangements with a friend in England to settle his accounts should he be "so unfortunate as to fall," in the same letter in which he praised the army and its officers and predicted nothing but sure success.¹²⁶

Towards nightfall William Amherst,¹²⁷ believing the enemy had burst one of their mortars, noted in his journal that the French momentarily ceased firing.¹²⁸ Although the French had killed and wounded only a few additional English soldiers including Col. Townshend, it was becoming apparent that the pace of the enemy's fire was taking a toll on the French artillery. When the firing resumed, it remained intense all night long. Again, the English were forced to spend the night on constant alert for incoming shells. Although few French bombs struck the camp directly, one bomb crashed down upon a tent and exploded, instantly killing all sleeping inside.¹²⁹

¹²² Webster, "Journal," p. 133.

¹²³ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 145. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Knox, *Journal*, p. 400. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹²⁴ Colonel Roger Townshend (d. 1759) served as Amherst's adjutant-general during the siege of Louisbourg 1758 and deputy adjutant-general at Ticonderoga 1759. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 138.

¹²⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 145. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Barnard, *Journal*, 25 July. Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Parsons, *Journal*, 25 July. Sizer, *Journal*, 25 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. Webster, "Journal," p. 133. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹²⁶ Roger Townshend to unknown recipient, Lake George, July 20, 1759. Manuscript 1999.1160.001 in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum.

¹²⁷ Lieutenant Colonel William Amherst (about 1732-1781) was a younger brother and aide-de-camp of General Jeffery Amherst.

¹²⁸ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48.

¹²⁹ Parsons, *Journal*, 25 July.

Dawn signaled the beginning of the third day of French shelling on the weary English camp and the firing was growing in intensity. Bombs were now falling at a rate of nearly one per minute.¹³⁰ The British army had been forced to endure three sleepless nights in front of the old French Lines. With all the necessary¹³¹ artillery brought up, Amherst was anxious for the batteries to be finished.

Teams of soldiers accomplished all hauling of cannon, ammunition and supplies over the previous days. It was backbreaking work, but the success of the campaign depended upon it. At about noon on 26 July, the provisions scow, *Snow Shoe*, arrived with sixty horses and several bateaux loaded with wagons.¹³² Without a doubt, it was a welcome sight to the thousands of soldiers who had been laboring day and night with aching backs and blistered hands to haul cannon, ammunition and supplies. Immediately the horses were hitched into teams and the wagons were put to work expediting the transportation of more ammunition, provisions and now planks for the construction of artillery platforms to the army encamped within sight of the fort.¹³³

As the three cannon batteries neared completion in the early afternoon, all that remained was the construction of wooden platforms for the artillery carriages behind the embrasures in the batteries. A brief dispute between the engineers and artillery officers as to exactly whose duty it was to lay the platforms forced Amherst to order the artillery to the task.¹³⁴ By the late afternoon the platforms were in place and the artillery was hauled to their positions. As night fell on Ticonderoga, Amherst had in place two batteries of cannon containing six 24-pounders and two 12-pounders and another more forward battery with two 10-inch and one massive 13-inch mortar.¹³⁵ Amherst was ready to begin his siege at daybreak.

¹³⁰ Sizer, *Journal*, 26 July

¹³¹ Although the artillery awaiting placement in the batteries accounted for less than one-fourth of all the artillery Amherst transported to Ticonderoga, the "necessary" pieces included principally the largest cannon and siege mortars in his train.

¹³² Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹³³ Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287.

¹³⁴ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 146. Part of the duty of the engineer was conducting siege operations, but not *specifically* building platforms for artillery. The dispute over whose duty it was to build the platforms apparently arose when both the artillery and engineers believed the duty was the others'. Amherst quickly informed the Artillery that the duty was theirs. In response the engineers, perhaps seeking to be regarded as the better corps, stepped in and did the job. The apparent ambiguity regarding the duty of the engineers plagued the corps from its creation in 1716. For decades the engineers were not considered part of the army by the British Board of Ordnance. It was not until 1741 that engineers were required to show any sort of proficiency in their duty. Only in 1757 did engineers receive actual British army commissions thereby making them equals-in-rank to the officers of the Royal Artillery. For more information on the engineer / artillery conflict during the Seven Years' War in America see M. John Cardwell, "Mismanagement: The 1758 British Expedition Against Carillon," *The Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*, vol. XV, no. 4 (1992), pp. 237-291.

¹³⁵ According to Jesse Parsons, there were eleven embrasures opened for the intended siege. Parsons, *Journal*, 26 July. See also J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 145. W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 48. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

Simultaneous with the placement of the artillery in the fascine batteries between the French lines and the fort, Amherst put into motion a plan to ensure free navigation around the Ticonderoga peninsula and to create a diversion to disperse the concentrated French mortar fire on his camp. Once darkness descended upon the valley Captain Philip Skene¹³⁶ and Major Robert Rogers¹³⁷ with sixty rangers were ordered to duty. Skene and Rogers set out in Amherst's armed gunboat, hauled over the portage on the morning of 24 July, and fifty whaleboats transported to the lake only the previous day to destroy a "boom" spanning the lake between the tip of the Ticonderoga peninsula and Diamond Point¹³⁸ on the opposite eastern shore.¹³⁹ This impediment to navigation was constructed of logs chained together forming a floating obstruction designed to keep enemy English boats on the lake from sailing around to back side of the fort to cut off the garrison's only route of retreat.¹⁴⁰ It was further protected by a two-cannon battery located on the Ticonderoga shoreline a few feet south of the boom.¹⁴¹ With saws in hand, Rogers quietly landed on the eastern shore and cut away the boom, exposing the rear flank of the fort to easy invasion.¹⁴² At the same time the rangers raised three tents near the point where Rogers was cutting the boom. As he finished, the rangers built a campfire that fooled the French into believing the English had established a camp on the eastern shore and where attempting to surround the fort.¹⁴³

¹³⁶ Philip Skene (1725-1810) began his military career as a cadet in the Royal Scots after his father's death in 1736 and commissioned ensign in 1741. During the War of the Austrian Succession he served under the Duke of Cumberland. For his service in the war he was commissioned second lieutenant in 1745 and later lieutenant in 1750. He came to America with the Royal Scots in 1756 and proceeded to work with Robert Rogers on occasion. In September 1757 he became a captain in the 27th regiment. In this capacity he was wounded in the 1758 attack on Ticonderoga. In the fall of 1759 Skene began settling Skenesborough (today's Whitehall) at the south end of Lake Champlain. Doris Begor Morton, *Philip Skene of Skenesborough*. (Granville: Ms. Cellaneous Enterprises, 1995), pp. 15-27.

¹³⁷ Robert Rogers (1731-1795) began his military career as a New Hampshire militia soldier during the War of the Austrian Succession. When the Seven Years' War came home to America, Rogers was appointed captain and given command of a company of New Hampshire soldiers. Rogers' scouting abilities were soon recognized and he was soon given responsibility for numerous scouts into French territory on Lakes George and Champlain. When his regiment was disbanded in the fall of 1755 he remained with the army and continued his scouting operations. In 1756 he was ordered to raise a regiment of rangers for the purpose of formally continuing his scouting activities. His regiment like those already working in the region greatly aided the British in gathering intelligence. By 1759, his many scouts to Ticonderoga over the past four years aided greatly in the planning of Amherst's expedition to capture Fort Ticonderoga. DCB, pp. 679-683.

¹³⁸ The small peninsula on the eastern side of Lake Champlain was named Diamond Point due to the presence of quartz crystals which were mistaken for diamonds by the region's earliest explorers. During the War for Independence Diamond Point was fortified and renamed Mount Independence.

¹³⁹ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 49. Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Rogers, *Journal*, p. 128. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287. See also footnote 79.

¹⁴⁰ Rogers, *Journal*, p. 128.

¹⁴¹ See feature "G" on the map *Survey of the Fort at Ticonderoga and its Environs, with the French Lines and part of Lake Champlain* by William Brazier, drawn November 1759, British Library (Manuscripts Add. MS 57712.10).

¹⁴² Rogers, *Journal*, p. 128.

¹⁴³ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 146.

Soon after Skene and Rogers embarked on their mission, the French artillery grew silent. Again, it was believed the French had shattered another mortar in their incessant fire.¹⁴⁴ But the firing did not resume. At about ten o'clock in the evening four French soldiers surrendered themselves at the trenches and were immediately taken to General Amherst for interrogation.¹⁴⁵ The deserters revealed that the last of the French army were leaving the fort with a lit fuse in the magazine and expected it to explode any minute.¹⁴⁶ Offering one hundred guineas as a prize, Amherst hoped to entice one of the deserters to lead a group of soldiers into the fort to cut the fuse, but nobody would accept the risk stating that they left before the fuse was set.¹⁴⁷ At about eleven o'clock the magazine exploded destroying an interior storehouse facing the door of the magazine and setting fire to the rest of the fort.¹⁴⁸ The explosion was violent enough to shake the English camp at the lines and loud enough to be heard at the landing on Lake George.¹⁴⁹ During the night, a sergeant of the regulars noticed the French flag silhouetted against the flames of the burning fort.¹⁵⁰ Upon securing permission from Amherst, the sergeant ran into the fort and struck the flag and presented it to his general for which he was given a reward of ten guineas.¹⁵¹ All night long the fort burned and several cannon and muskets that were loaded to their muzzles exploded as flames set fire to fuses poised for destruction.¹⁵²

In the confusion, the French successfully abandoned the fort and set off towards Crown Point in bateaux. Rogers was able to see the embarkation by the glow of the burning fort, and set out immediately after cutting the boom to attack the retreating French garrison. In the brief skirmish on the lake, Rogers and his men captured sixteen French soldiers and fifty barrels of gunpowder.¹⁵³

During the night, fewer and fewer explosions were heard and Amherst believed it was possible to get into the fort and remove some of the remaining hazards relatively safely. In the early hours of the morning of 27 July, he set his army to work with as many kettles and buckets as he could find in a bucket-brigade from the

¹⁴⁴ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 49. Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287.

¹⁴⁵ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 146. Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287.

¹⁴⁶ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁸ W. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 50. Dibble, "Diary," p. 315. Knox, *Journal*, p. 401. Sizer, *Journal*, 26 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 287-288. Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹⁴⁹ Wood, "Journal," p. 136.

¹⁵⁰ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 288.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

¹⁵² Knox, *Journal*, p. 401-402. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 288.

¹⁵³ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 147. Parsons, *Journal*, 26 July. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 288.

lake to try to extinguish the flames.¹⁵⁴ Although much of the fire was extinguished during the night, it took several days before the fires were completely doused. Upon entering the fort later in the morning of 27 July, thirty cannon, fifty-six muskets and a large quantity of shot were found as well as one burst mortar.¹⁵⁵ Finally, and without a single shot from the English artillery, Ticonderoga was in the hands of the British army.

In the days following the explosion of the fort, the English boats were portaged to Lake Champlain and the army prepared to resume its northward progress. More boats were built to transport artillery and several French boats were raised from the bottom of Lake Champlain and the water around French landing on Lake George and put to use in Amherst's fleet¹⁵⁶. With the English in possession of the fort, the artillery batteries were no longer needed. Because they faced the fort, Amherst ordered the batteries to be immediately torn down. On August 4th the army was once again on the move. By the time Amherst reached Crown Point, the French had blown up Fort St. Frédéric and were beginning their retreat to Canada. By mid-September, Amherst's army had pushed the French into Québec where they were defeated on the Plains of Abraham. With Lake Champlain and Québec securely in British hands, the war in America was, for all practical purposes, over.

The British finally had their victory at Ticonderoga. Unlike Abercromby's attempt a year before, Amherst's victory lay in his ability to use the artillery, or the threat of the artillery, to full advantage. Soon after his army landed, he dispatched troops to occupy and control critical ground to the southwest of the fort from which his artillery was to enfilade the back of the French entrenchments. Unbeknownst to Amherst, Bourlemaque's small force did not intend to put up much resistance to a direct attack. As a result he found the French Lines abandoned before he had a chance to even begin sighting his guns on the commanding high ground.

Amherst was also a patient leader and fully understood the importance of fighting a battle on his own terms. While he had some heavy artillery at the lines by the afternoon of July 23rd, he refused to open fire on the fort until his batteries were complete. Without his full compliment of artillery and supplies ready for a

¹⁵⁴ J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 146.

¹⁵⁵ Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 288. In his journal, General Amherst noted that in the fort were found two 18-pounders, one 16-pounder, seven 12-pounders, four 9-pounders, four 6-pounders, one 4-pounder, seven swivel guns, two 13-inch mortars, one 6½-inch mortar and one 8-inch howitzer. J. Amherst, *Journal*, p. 147.

¹⁵⁶ J. Amherst, *Journal*, pp. 148-149. Bellico, *Chronicles*, p. 127. Skinner, "Proceedings," p. 288. Wood, "Journal," p. 92-93.

possibly extended siege, Amherst saw no military value in risking the loss of his advantageous position. The previous year's defeat was still vivid in the memories of the British army. It would have been far too easy for the troops to equate even a minor setback as the beginnings of another disastrous defeat at Ticonderoga. The French maintained a steady and often nerve-racking mortar fire on the army for more than three days.¹⁵⁷ Luckily, few of the bombs struck the camp or the troops working in the trenches. This good fortune made it easy for Amherst to remain patient and kept the confidence of his army high.

Although the French had no intention of falling victim to an extended siege, they also did not intend to hand over the fort and all its supplies and dependencies at the first signs of invasion. As soon as the British were within the extreme range of their artillery, d'Hébecourt's rearguard artillerymen began firing. Although the French mortar bombs and cannon shot had little effect on Amherst's army, the artillery fire did buy the French a fair amount of time.¹⁵⁸ The engineers inside the fort could easily watch the erection of the British batteries and gauge the amount of time it would take for their completion. The French took advantage of their observations by mounting a quick but comprehensive evacuation and designed and implemented a comprehensive plan to destroy the fort and its armament. When they had finally loaded everything they could realistically transport, they lit a delayed fuse timed to blow-up the powder magazine and interior storehouse and set fire to the fort once they were safely on their way north toward Fort St. Frédéric. By destroying these structures, the French effectively denied the British anything useful that could not be loaded into their remaining bateaux. As a result the British were left with a severely, but not irreparably, damaged fort. Because the French had delayed evacuation to the very last minute, they were able to take away all of the garrison's useable provisions and much of its stores of gunpowder and shot. The 1759 "siege" of Fort Ticonderoga was not so much a formal siege as it was a delaying action fought by an army severely overextended and vastly outnumbered.

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¹⁵⁷ Indeed, vigorous mortar fire from the fort was one of the principal recommendations for the defense of Carillon which grew out of the surprising French victory in 1758 should it again be threatened by an English attack. Desandrouins, "Memoir," p. 213.

¹⁵⁸ Again, just as Desandrouins directed, an intense around the clock mortar fire forced the British to work at a slower pace digging their approaches and building their batteries than would be possible without the constant threat of death from incoming French mortar bombs. Desandrouins, "Memoir," p. 217.