

ARNOLD'S  
EXPEDITION AGAINST QUEBEC.

1775-1776.

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THE DIARY OF EBENEZER WILD,

With a List of such Diaries.

By JUSTIN WINSOR.

[PRIVATELY REPRINTED, SEVENTY-FIVE COPIES, FROM THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, APRIL, 1886.]

CAMBRIDGE:  
JOHN WILSON AND SON.  
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MR. WINSOR presented a copy of an unprinted journal kept on the Kennebec expedition to Quebec, under Arnold, in 1775-76. Its author was Ebenezer Wild, who was one of those captured in Arnold's party during the attempted storming of Quebec, Dec. 31, 1775. He remained a prisoner till the arrangement was made with Carleton for the release of the New Englanders in June. The manuscript was given to Harvard College Library in 1850 by W. S. Stoddard. It may be convenient to enumerate the other diaries of this expedition which have been preserved or noted.

1. Arnold's, Sept. 27 to Oct. 30, 1775. The original manuscript was left behind by Arnold when he fled from West Point. Extracts from it are printed in S. L. Knapp's "Life of Aaron Burr," 1835. It is now owned by Mr. S. L. M. Barlow, of New York. A copy made of it, when owned by Judge Edwards, of New York, is in the "Sparks Manuscripts" (LII. vol. ii.).

2. "Journal of the March of a Party of Provincials from Carlyle to Boston, and from thence to Quebec, begun the thirteenth of July and ended the thirty-first of December, 1775. To which is added an Account of the Attack and Engagement of Quebec, the 31st December, 1775." Glasgow, 1775, pp. 36. Sabin ("Dictionary of Books relating to America," vol. ix. No. 36, 728) says it is the journal of a company of riflemen, under Captains William Hendricks and John Chambers, and that it was sent from Quebec to Glasgow by a gentleman who appended the "Account."

3. A manuscript journal kept by Henry Dearborn, Sept. 10, 1775, to July 16, 1776, is in the Boston Public Library.

4. "Caleb Haskell's diary, May 5, 1775, to May 30, 1776, — a revolutionary soldier's Record before Boston and with Arnold's expedition." Newburyport, 1881, pp. 23. It is edited by L. Withington. The diarist was of Ward's company.

5. John Joseph Henry's "Accurate and Interesting Account of the Hardships and Sufferings of that Band of Heroes who traversed the Wilderness in the Campaign against Quebec." Lancaster, Pa., 1812. There were later editions, with changed titles, published at Watertown, N. Y., 1844, and at Albany, 1877, the last having a memoir of Judge Henry, the author, by his grandson Aubrey H. Smith, from which we learn that the narrative was dictated by Henry to his daughter in his last years, with the aid of notes and memoranda made at the time, and that it was printed without the author's revision.

6. A journal of Lieutenant William Heth, of Morgan's Riflemen, is referred to in Marshall's "Washington," pp. 53, 57.

7. A journal of Sergeant McCoy is referred to in Henry's "Account."

8. Major Return J. Meigs' "Journal of the Expedition against Quebec under Colonel Benedict Arnold in the Year 1775." It forms Vol. I. of Charles I. Bushnell's "Crumbs for Antiquarians," New York, 1859; and it is also printed in the Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections (vol. xii.).

9. J. Melvin's "Journal of the Expedition to Quebec in the Year 1775." New York (100 copies), 1857. Introduction by William J. Davis. It was also printed by the Franklin Club, Philadelphia, 1864. Melvin was of Dearborn's Company.

10. E. M. Stone (see No. 14) refers to John Peirce's journal of daily occurrences, Sept. 8, 1775, to Jan. 16, 1776. Peirce was an engineer with the pioneers. His record is defective at the beginning and end, and has not been printed.

11. "Journal of Isaac Senter, Physician and Surgeon to the Troops on a Secret Expedition against Quebec in September, 1775." Philadelphia, 1846, taken from Vol. I. of the Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. It begins at Cambridge, Sept. 13, 1775, and ends at Quebec, Jan. 6, 1776.

12. The diary of Ephraim Squier, Sept. 7 to Nov. 25, 1775, is preserved in the Pension Office, Washington, and is printed in the "Magazine of American History" (vol. ii. p. 685).

13. Stone (No. 14) reports, as at that time in the hands of David King, of Newport, a journal of Captain John Topham, for September, October, and November, 1775, which had not been printed, and was illegible before the date of October 6.

14. "Invasion of Canada in 1775, including the Journal of Captain Simeon Thayer, describing the Perils and Sufferings of the Army under Colonel Benedict Arnold, with Notes and Appendix by E. M. Stone." Providence, 1867, being Vol. VI. of the R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections.

15. "Journal of an Expedition against Quebec in 1775, by Joseph Ware, of Needham, Mass. Published by Joseph Ware, grandson of the journalist." Boston, 1852. It begins Sept. 13, 1775, and ends on board a cartel-vessel at sea, Sept. 6, 1776. The notes are by Justin

Winsor. It was first printed in the "N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register," April, 1852. Whitmore ("Amer. Genealogist," p. 84) questions Ware's authorship.

*A Journal of a March from Cambridge, on an Expedition against Quebec in Colonel Benedict Arnold's Detachment, Sept. 13, 1775. [By Ebenezer Wild.]*

*September 13th.* — Marched from Cambridge until evening, and encamped at Malden that night.

*14th.* — This morning marched very early, and encamped in the evening at Beverly. This day marched twenty-five miles; the weather very sultry.

*15th.* — This morning marched briskly along, and got into Newburyport at eight o'clock at night, where we were to make a stay for several days.

*16th.* — In Newburyport, waiting for the vessels getting ready to carry us to Kennebec.

*17th.* — This day had a general review, and our men appeared very well and in good spirits, and made a grand appearance; and we had the praise of hundreds of spectators, who were very sorry to see so many brave fellows going to be sacrificed for their country.

*18th.* — Had orders to embark in the evening. Our fleet consisted of eleven sail of vessels, sloops, and schooners. Our number of troops consisted of 1,300; eleven companies of musketmen, and three of riflemen. We were embarked this evening, and lay in the river all night.

*19th.* — Early this morning weighed anchor with a pleasant gale, our colors flying, drums beating, fifes playing, and the hills all round covered with pretty girls, weeping for their departing swains. This night had like to have proved fatal to us, for we were close on board of rocks before we knew anything about it. We were immediately all called upon deck, expecting every moment to be dashed to pieces against the rocks; but the wind freshing we got clear after several tacks, to the great joy of us.

*20th.* — Arrived in Kennebec River; rowed and sailed up against wind and tide.

*21st.* — Arrived at Fort Weston [Western], where we halted for some days, and here we were furnished with bateaux and provisions for carrying us up the river. Continued here the 22d, 23d, and 24th.

*25th.* — Embarked on board our bateaux, and arrived at Fort Halifax in the evening of the 26th.

*27th.* — Carried over Ticoneck Falls our bateaux and provisions, forty rods carriage, and pushed up three miles.



28th. — Pushed up eight miles; the water so bad that the bateaux men were obliged to drag the boats up over shoals; in many places were up to their chins in water.

29th. — Pushed up to the second carrying-place, called Cohiggin Falls.

30th. — Carried over sixty rods, and pushed up five miles.

October 1st. — Pushed up over rocks and shoals, where we were many times over head in water pulling the bateaux over; we arrived at the third carrying-place in the evening.

2d. — This day carried over Norridgewalk Falls one mile and a quarter, and then encamped. We felt very uncomfortable this night after dragging our boats over roots and rocks and mud.

3d. — Pushed up eleven miles on our way. Captain Hendricks' company of riflemen shot a young moose, which weighed about two hundred pounds. But we had none of it, they being before us. This day we left all inhabitants, and entered an uncultivated country and barren wilderness. The timber for the most part is birch, pine, and hemlock. Some places on the river there are places where large sugar trees grow.

4th. — Pushed up eight miles to Tintucket, or Hellgate Falls, and carried our boats over forty rods.

5th, 6th, and 7th. — Pushed up to the head of the Kennebec, where we carried out into a pond. These three last days we came about twenty miles.

8th. — This day we pushed on very briskly, it being Sunday. The foremost companies lying still on account of heavy rains; we marched all day, it being very wet and cold, and suffered a good deal from the inclemency of the weather, and came up with some of them at night.

9th, 10th, and 11th. — Carried to the first pond, three and one-half miles land-carriage; crossed the pond two miles.

12th and 13th. — Carried to a second pond three quarters of a mile; crossed the pond one mile over, then carried two miles to a third pond, and crossed the pond two miles over.

14th and 15th. — Carried to the Dead River three miles, and went up one mile; then encamped at night. This river runs so still that it can scarce be perceived which way it runs; it is black water, about four rods wide, and runs southeast.

16th. — The water now being deep and dead, we betook ourselves to our oars, and rowed up six miles.

17th. — After carrying over a small carrying-place, about ten rods, rowed up fifteen miles.

18th. — Rowed up twenty miles, and carried over a small carrying-place.

19th. — Carried over four carrying-places, and rowed up about five miles.

20th, 21st, and 22d. — Were detained in our tents by heavy rains.

23d. — The water being shallow, we were obliged to lay by our oars and take our setting poles. We pushed up ten miles.

24th. — Our provisions growing scanty, and some of our men being sick, we held a council, and agreed to send the sick back, and send a captain and fifty men forward to the inhabitants as soon as possible, that they might send us some provisions. Accordingly, the sick were sent back, and Captain Hanchitt, with fifty men, sent forward. Before this, Colonel Enos, with three captains and their companies, turned back, and took with them large stores of provisions and ammunition, being discouraged (as we supposed) by the difficulties they met with. This day got forward nine miles. The water being very rapid, many of our boats were upset, and much of our baggage lost, with provisions and guns.

25th. — Snowed all night; very cold this morning. Pushed over two carrying-places. Got forward eight miles to-day.

26th. — Pushed up four ponds, and carried over two carrying-places, one of them a mile over; the ground covered with snow.

27th. — Crossed a pond half of a mile over, and carried fifteen rods to another pond, two miles over, to the great carrying-place, four miles and fifty rods over. Here it was agreed to leave most of our bateaux, being greatly fatigued by carrying over such hills, rocks, and swamps as were never passed by man before.

28th. — After carrying over the great carrying-place, we encamped by a small stream, running into Chadore pond. Dealt out to each man four pints of flour and what little meat we had left, which was about four ounces per man.

29th. — Early this morning set out for the head of Chadore River. This day we suffered greatly by our bateaux passing by us, for we had to wade waist-high through swamps and rivers, breaking ice before us. Here we wandered round all day, and came at night to the same place which we left in the morning, where we found a small dry spot, where we made a fire, and we were obliged to stand up all night in order to dry ourselves and keep from freezing. We continued so till next day, when a bateau came up and took us across the river.

30th. — At noon were relieved from our miserable situation, and made the best of our way through the woods for Chadier [*sic*].

31st. — Pushed on for Chadore with all speed, in hopes of overtaking our bateaux in order to get some flour, for ours was all expended; but to our great grief and sorrow our bateaux were stove, and our flour was lost, and the men barely escaped with their lives. Now we were in a miserable situation, not a mouthful of provision; and by account seventy miles from inhabitants, and we had a wilderness, barren and destitute of any sustenance, to go through, where we expected to suffer

hunger and cold and fatigue. Here the captain with the ablest men pushed on in order to get provisions to send back for the sick.

*November 1st.* — This morning started very early, hungry and little satisfied with our night's rest. Travelled all day very briskly, and at night encamped in a miserable situation. Here we killed a dog, and we made a very great feast without bread or salt, we having been four days without any provisions; and we went to sleep that night a little better satisfied. Our distress was so great that dollars were offered for bits of bread as big as the palm of one's hand.

*2d.* — This morning when we arose, many of us were so weak that we could hardly stand; we staggered about like drunken men. However, we made shift to get our packs on our backs, and marched off, hoping to see some inhabitants. This night a small stick across the road was sufficient to bring the stoutest to the ground. In the evening we came in sight of the cattle coming up the river-side, which were sent by Colonel Arnold, who had got in two days before. It was the joy-fullest night that ever I beheld, and some could not refrain from crying for joy. We were told by the men who came with the cattle that we were yet twenty miles from the nearest inhabitants. Here we killed a "creetur," and we had some coarse flour served out, with straws in it an inch long. Here we had a noble feast, and some of the men were so hungry that before the "creetur" was dead the hide and flesh were on the fire broiling.

*3d.* — Marched this day twenty miles, wading through several small rivers, some of them up to our middle, and very cold. In the evening we came in sight of a house, the first we had seen for forty-one days.

*4th.* — Last night had plenty of beef and potatoes; but little or no bread was to be had. Snowed most of the night. In the morning marched down the river to inhabitants thick settled.

*5th.* — Continued our march down the river; the people very hospitable; provisions plenty, but very dear; milk one shilling sterling per quart, and bread a shilling per loaf, weighing no more than three pounds. Came this day twelve miles.

*6th.* — Came up with Colonel Arnold and the advanced party. Marched off together at two o'clock, and marched till twelve o'clock at night. Roads excessive bad, most of the way mid-leg deep with mud and water. Marched seventeen miles.

*7th.* — Marched three [miles]; then halted till night, when a lieutenant was sent forward with thirty men to see if our way was clear. Accordingly they marched till near two o'clock in the morning, when we halted. We were in sight of Quebec, the river St. Lawrence between us and the town.

*8th.* — Took up our quarters along the river-side until our troops behind could come up. Here we stayed until the 13th. By this time all the men alive had come, several having perished with hunger in the

woods. During our stay here, we took a midshipman belonging to a frigate in the harbor, who came on shore with several others in a boat, to carry away flour from a mill on our side of the river, which is about a mile or some better wide. At the city one twenty-eight-gun frigate and a sloop-of-war, with some merchantmen, were in the harbor.

13th. — Crossed the river at night in long boats and canoes. Some of the canoes upset in the river; but none of the men were lost, only some few guns and clothes. Got all over before morning at a place called Wolf's Cove.

14th. — This morning were fired upon by the frigate, but received no damage. Took up our quarters in some good houses near the town, which were forsaken by the owners. Here we remained until the 20th, during which time we were informed that there were not more than one hundred regulars in the city, with a number of sailors and other new recruits, in all not exceeding four hundred under arms. The first day we came over the river, we passed close by the walls of the town, and gave three cheers without being molested by the enemy, who fired a few shots from their cannon, but did us no harm.

21st. — Marched up the river twenty miles to Point aux Trembles, our ammunitions being almost expended and too scant to attack the town with. Here we were joined by General Montgomery with the York forces from Montreal, who had taken St. John's, Fort Shamble, and Montreal. In these places they took a great quantity of provisions, clothing, ammunition, and cannon, with nine hundred and fifty prisoners. Remained here until the 5th of December.

*December 5th.* — Marched back to Quebec and laid siege to the town; continued the siege until the 29th, during which time we took several prisoners. Cannonaded and bombarded each other both day and night. During these transactions the two men who had been left with Lieutenant McSolan came to us and informed us that they had buried him at the first inhabitant's, after he had been brought down the river by two Indians, hired by Captain Smith for the purpose.

29th. — This night prepared to storm the city in two different places. General Montgomery with the York forces on one quarter, and Colonel Arnold on the other hand. Accordingly, about five o'clock in the morning, began the attack; but they could not get to the wall, but retreated back to their quarters, their general and two leading officers being killed by the fire from the enemy. Colonel Arnold with his party carried on the attack on his quarter, and got possession of their two gun battery, and took seventy prisoners. Our colonel being wounded in the beginning of the attack, was carried back. The captains themselves then took the lead, and drove the enemy until, overpowered by numbers and surrounded, we were obliged to surrender ourselves prisoners of war.

*Jan. 1, 1776.* — In the French convent they gave us some rum to drink and some hard bread to eat. Our allowance of provisions was

one pound of bread, one half pound of pork, one gill of rice for a day, and six ounces of butter a week.

*2d.* — In prison, this day we had a cask of porter [given] by some gentleman of the town.

*3d and 4th.* — The general sent for a list of our names, of the old countrymen in particular by themselves that were with us, and they chiefly enlisted in the King's service.

*5th to 8th.* — The prisoners petitioned to have their packs sent in to them, whereupon they sent out a flag and received them for us.

*8th to 15th.* — The general sent for a list of the occupations of the prisoners. The small-pox is very plenty with us. Captain Hubbard died with the wound he received in coming in.

*19th to 22d.* — Five of those that enlisted out of prison and five others deserted in the night. There were two men put in irons for attempting to break out of prison.

*22d to 25th.* — There were three vessels and a house burned by our people. The enemy went into St. Rochs after plunder. There were two of our people taken going to set fire to the shipping.

*25th to 29th.* — There were three men deserted the garrisons. The people get out into St. Rochs every day and fetch in the remains of the buildings that were burnt.

*29th to 31st.* — Two men of Captain Ward's company died of the small-pox. The men are getting well, some of them.

*February 1st to 5th.* — There were two men deserted. Seven of our men died with the small-pox, and one of our men died with the pleurisy; he was sick but one day.

*5th to 9th.* — Three men deserted, and forty men lay sick in prison.

*9th to 12th.* — Very wet and snowy; the storm very heavy. Three men were stifled to death on duty.

*12th to 15th.* — This morning sixty men went to the hospital with the small-pox. The men have it very horribly.

*16th to 20th.* — Six of the old countrymen that enlisted in the King's service deserted, and the remainder were put in prison again because those deserted.

*20th to 24th.* — Five men died with the small-pox. The enemy made an attempt to go out after our people's cannon, and were driven back. There was a continual firing after them.

*24th to 31st.* — Nothing remarkable.

*March 1st to 6th.* — Three men deserted.

*6th to 10th.* — One of the prisoners was put in irons for talking with one of the sentries. We hear that Boston is taken by our people.

*10th to 13th.* — There was an alarm in the city about ten o'clock at night. A large picket-guard was set around the prison and a field-piece before the door.

13th to 18th. — The emigrants are moved to the artillery barracks and the rest of us into a stone jail, and are locked up at seven o'clock at night.

18th to 25th. — Nothing remarkable.

25th to 30th. — In the night one of the prisoners got out of prison, and run to our people. We are in a miserable condition. Having no wood, we are almost frozen.

30th and 31st. — Most of the prisoners consulted together to break out of prison, and to try their best to take the town ; but as one of the prisoners was cutting away some ice at the cellar door, in order to have it handy to open in a moment to go out at, the sentry standing near and hearing the cutting acquainted the officers of the guard, who acquainted some other officers. They, coming in, inquired who was cutting at the door, and what they were upon. One of the prisoners informed them of all the transaction that was going forward. The officers searched all the rooms in the prison and every man's pack to see if they could find any arms or ammunition, for they supposed some of the people in the town had supplied us with arms and ammunition, but they could not find any such things with us. At this, we were all put into strong irons.

April 1st to 14th. — Our people having a battery across the river at Point Lewis, they threw shot into the town, very merry. The officers of the guard are very particular with us ; they call a roll, and count us morning and evening.

14th to 27th. — It is very sickly with us. The scurvy and lameness rage very much, occasioned by living on salt provisions.

27th to 31st. — The town was alarmed in the night.

May 1st to 6th. — Nothing strange, but in great distress and despair.

6th. — This morning three ships came in with reinforcements of about one thousand men. All the bells in the town rang for joy most of the day ; then all the forces marched over to Abram's plains to have a battle with our people, but they retreated as fast as possible, and left a number sick in the hospital, likewise some of their cannon and ammunition, with a number of small arms and packs.

7th and 8th. — The general ordered the irons to be taken off the prisoners. He also gave the emigrants their liberty again. This morning two ships came in. The ships have gone up the river and a number of troops by land to Montreal.

9th to 14th. — Three ships and three brigs came in. There were six prisoners put in with us, taken stealing about. One company set out for Montreal.

14th to 19th. — Two ships went out, one of them a packet for England.

19th to 23d. — One ship and a number of small crafts came in. Thirteen prisoners enlisted into the King's service. One ship sailed out.

23d. — Our allowance is one pound of soft bread and one pound of beef per day.

24th to 26th. — The militia have laid down their arms. One of those men that went out of prison was put on board a fifty-gun ship; but as he did not incline to enter on board, they put him in irons, and threatened to hang him, but he was taken out of irons and put into [them] again in the evening. Robert Burd was taken out of prison, and has got his liberty; he is going to his home in Ireland.

26th to 30th. — One ship went out and twenty came in. There were eight or nine prisoners taken out to work; they stayed out one or two days, and were required to swear allegiance to the King that they would not take up arms against them, and to make known all experiments against him.

30th and 31st. — Four ships came in; one brig and two ships went out.

June 1st to 5th. — Twenty-eight ships came in with General Burgoyne. There are six thousand Hessians and Hanoverians come to assist the King's troops. Five hundred marched up the river for Montreal.

5th. — This day General Carleton and some other officers came to see us. He inquired of us whether we had fared as well as he promised us we should when we were taken. We told him we fared very well. He said he did not take us as enemies, and likewise said if he could rely upon our honors he would send us to N. England if we would promise to be quiet and peaceable, and not take up arms any more.

*June 6, 1776. A Copy of an Answer sent to General Carleton.*

May it please your Excellency: We, the prisoners in his Majesty's jail, return your Excellency our most hearty and unfeigned thanks for your clemency and kindness to us, while in prison, being sensible of your humanity. We return your Excellency thanks for your offer made us yesterday, and having a desire to return to our friends and families, we will promise not to take up arms against his Majesty, but remain peaceable and quiet in our respective places of abode; and we further assure your Excellency that you may depend on our fidelity, and we remain your Excellency's humble servants. Signed in behalf of the prisoners.

