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sure a victory. But the troops were commanded by an unskilled militia general; the chief naval officer was self-willed and incapable. Not till the twenty-fifth of July did the expedition enter Penobscot Bay. The troops, who on the twenty-eighth gallantly effected their landing, were too weak to carry the works of the British by storm; the commodore knew not how to use his mastery of the water; and, while a re-inforcement was on the way, on the fourteenth of August Sir George Collier arrived in a sixty-four gun ship, attended by five frigates. Two vessels of war fell into his hands; the rest and all the transports fled up the river, and were burnt by the Americans themselves, who escaped through the woods. The British were left masters of the country east of the Penobscot.”

Bancroft talks about “twenty-four transports, having on board nearly a thousand men.” If each transport carried no more than fifty men, there would have been well over a thousand. Documents have recently been discovered that speak of an American “army” of “three thousand five hundred men.” These contemporary records, now in the William L. Clements Library of American History in the University of Michigan, will call for the correction of Bancroft’s story on a number of points. The eye-witness report is here made public for the first time, and the Colby Library Quarterly is fortunate in being able to present an authentic first-hand account of this Maine fight that failed.

THE RELIEF OF FORT GEORGE

By COLTON STORM
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THE discovery of documents relating to the siege of Fort George, at Castine, Maine, deserves first announcement in a Maine journal. Among the Sir Henry
Clinton Papers at the University of Michigan, there has been found a ten-page report on the relief of Fort George in August, 1779, written by Captain Andrew Barkley to his chief, Admiral Merriot Arbuthnot, and dated from New York, September 8, 1779.

The British commander-in-chief, Sir Henry Clinton, had ordered the establishment of a post on Penobscot Bay by Brigadier General Francis McLean, and on the 31st of May, 1779, the Blonde, Albany, North, Nautilus, and Hope, with four transports carrying six hundred troops, set out from Halifax. The Blonde was commanded by Captain Barkley, who was, after Sir George Collier, Senior Officer at Halifax. They arrived at Penobscot Bay on June 13 and found the inhabitants "much inclined to be under the British Government."

As soon as the troops, supplies, and armament had been landed at Castine, the Blonde set out to return to Halifax. On his way out of the Bay, Barkley picked up a lieutenant and seven men, newly escaped from Boston, who brought word that a large American fleet was preparing to sail to the Penobscot and would be ready in about three weeks. Barkley sent the news to General McLean and then made haste to find Sir George Collier at New York. He arrived there on July 26, and by the third of August a hastily assembled fleet comprising the Raisonable (Collier's flagship), Blonde, Greyhound, Virginia, Galatea, Camilla, and Otter was ready to sail from Sandy Hook. The fleet arrived off Monhegan Island on August 12, ready to plunge into battle. Captain Barkley's report of the action of August 12 to 14 continues as follows:

"About Noon [of the 12th] ... I was ordered to make the best of my way to the Fort of Panobscot. ... I immediately made all the Sail I could. ... About three the same afternoon (when abreast of the Fox Islands) a large Brig appeared, turning down the Bay. Upon her perceiving me

1 This hitherto unpublished story of picking up the lieutenant may account for the rapidity with which the British learned of the Massachusetts expedition.
she immediately Tackd and stood up, with several Signals flying, which I imagined was to Apprize the Rebels of our approach. About six in the Evening, Seventeen sail of the Rebel Fleet appeared in view at Anchor, between Long Island and Magebiguiduce [i.e., Castine]. At the same time we heard a very brisk fire of Cannon from the Garrison. The Galatea having joined the Blonde, we kept pushing up the Bay. It coming Calm and the tide of flood done, I was obliged to anchor about four miles below the Rebel Fleet. Next morning about ten o'clock, the Blonde and Galatea got under way, and kept turning towards the Rebel Fleet. At that time the Virginia was about three Miles astern, the Raisonable and other Frigates about Six or Seven.

"The Rebel Fleet got under way the same time, and drew up in a line abreast, with their Transports in their Van. Seeing them draw up in a regular line, I imagined they meant to give us Battle.

"About Noon Lieut. Robinson, Agent for Transports, got out from the Garrison in a Whale Boat, and came on board the Blonde. . . . I immediately dispatched him down the Bay to Sir George Collier . . . to acquaint him that if the Rebels attempted to get round the West end of Long Island (which I imagined they would attempt) I would make a Signal for that purpose by which means he might cut them off by the sternmost Ships of the Squadron. . . ."  

"About 2 P.M. the Rebel Fleet began to be in some disorder, three of them separated from their Main body, with an intent to Escape round Long Island, but were prevented by the Blonde and Galatea, cutting them off from that Channell. They attempted to join their Main body again who were then pushing up Panobscot River. I gave Orders to Capt. Reid of the Galatea to make all the sail he could and bring the Sternmost of those Ships that separated to Action, which he did, and drove the Hunter of 18 Guns on Shore; and at sametime a Brig of 16 Guns took Shelter in

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2 This story of Lieutenant Robinson's escape from Castine has appeared in no previous account of the relief of Fort George.
a small Harbour within Brigadier Island. About 3 P.M. I made the Signal (that I had settled with Sir George Collier). On the Rebel Fleet pushing up the Panobscot River a most Ignominious flight took place among them, their whole Fleet flying in the outmost confusion. About Six, the Blonde and Virginia got near up with their Sternmost Ships, and began to fire upon them. A little while after the Hampden of 20 Guns Struck, she being so closely pursued she could not reach the Shore. I sent an Officer on board to take possession of her, and ordered him to fall in the Rear with her. About 7 their Transports got into a small bay, near the narrows under cover of some rocks, where they run on Shore. Their Troops landed, at the same time setting their Transports on fire, as they quitted them. The Main body of the Rebel Fleet got into the narrows and finding they were still closely pursued (for by this time the Greyhound and Galatea joined me) they began to set fire to their Sternmost Ships and Vessels. It being then dark and the flaming Ships and Vessels all round us. The Greyhound being grounded, the Blonde and Virginia at same time in less than three fathom water, I thought it best for the preservation of the King’s Ships to Anchor for the night. I accordingly made the Signal for Anchoring, knowing the remaining part of the Enemy’s Fleet could not escape, tho’ they might get a little higher up the River. The Boats of the Frigates were Employed all night in towing on Shore the flaming Rebel Ships and Vessels which floated very near us, and securing some Transports and Victualers, which the Enemy had not time to destroy, for the whole night there was nothing but one continued flame, and blowing up of their Ships in the Narrows.—All their Transports, and Eight or nine of their Armed Ships were taken and destroyed that night. Six Ships, four Brigs, and one Armed Sloop had got above the narrows and anchor’d, among whom was the Warren of 32. Guns.—Next morning as soon as the Tide of Ebb was done, I got under sail in the Blonde, followed by the Greyhound, Virginia, Galatea,
"I have the pleasure of informing you that no Vessel of any kind of their whole Armament escap'd, (not even a Whale Boat) which consisted of Ships, Brigs, Sloops and Schooners to Forty five Sail, Seventeen of them being Armed Ships and Vessels...

"Their Army which consisted of Three Thousand five hundred men, and their Sailors, are now exploring their way thro' the Woods and Wilderness [of Maine], where most likely many of them will perish for want of food, and thro' fatigue before they reach Boston...

Further light is thrown on the siege of Fort George by a set of four manuscript plans of the island of Castine and of Fort George drawn by Lieutenant George W. Dyall Jones and now found among the Clinton Papers. These plans of the island were made shortly after the garrison had been relieved—August 20, 1779. One of them is here reproduced. It is of peculiar interest, because it indicates the precise positions of the American forces on the island and the stations of the American and British shipping during the siege. Also here reproduced is Jones's plan of the fort itself, made in June, 1780, showing the works in their finished state.

The American attack on Fort George was so disastrous and the relief of the siege was so successful that no further attempt was made during the Revolutionary War to eject the British from Castine.

Of Jones, who signs himself "Assistant Engineer" on the plans, there is little known. He was a lieutenant in the 7th (Royal Fusiliers) Regiment of Foot, stationed at New York in 1779. He probably accompanied Collier from New York as a member of the staff of engineers, since Fort George was established and defended only by detachments of the 74th and 82nd Regiments from Halifax. Jones received his lieutenancy in 1778 and his name appears in the Army List from 1779 through 1792.

4 From a photographic copy now in the Colby College Library.