



Death of General Wolfe.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FOURTH INTERCOLONIAL, OR OLD FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

HERETOFORE the hostilities in which the French and English colonies had been engaged originated in quarrels between European states, and were subordinate to the main current of affairs across the Atlantic. They began and ended when war or peace was declared in Europe. But the contest which is now to be presented grew out of collisions in America itself, and was not closed until it had involved the whole European continent and even the ancient empires of India. It was the final struggle between the French and English for the country on the great lakes and on the Mississippi River; or, in other words, for supremacy on the American continent. "Had either or both of the contending monarchs," as has been forcibly expressed by Graham, "perceived how injurious their collision must prove to the interests of royalty, surely the war which we are now approaching would never have broken out, and human prudence would have anticipated the mighty stream of events which, commencing with the conquest of Canada, and issuing in the independence of the United States and the impulse thereby communicated to the spirit of liberty and revolution throughout the world, has so wonderfully displayed the dominion of supreme wisdom and benevolence over the senseless, selfish, and malignant passions of men." But French and Eng-

Bk. IV.

Ch. 4.

A. D.

1748.

to

1753.

French  
and  
English  
jealous-  
ies.



Bk. IV. lish animosity, commencing with the claim of Edward III.  
 Ch. 4. to the crown of France, nourished, by successive contests,  
 A. D. by religious differences, and unnatural rivalry, for centu-  
 1753. ries, was extended to the most distant sections, both in  
 The America and Asia, and arrayed otherwise peaceful colo-  
 French and English struggle for the colonies. nists in destructive antagonism. They stigmatized each  
 other with epithets hard to be endured. They encroached  
 upon each other's rights. They laid claim to each other's  
 territories. They both sought to monopolise the fisheries  
 of the coast and the trade with the Indians in their dis-  
 tant forests.

Compa-  
 rative  
 force of  
 the par-  
 ties.

Of these two races in America the English were by far  
 the most powerful. They numbered more than a million  
 of people in the various colonies. They were in posses-  
 sion of nearly the whole of the sea-coast which was desi-  
 rable, and their settlements extended one hundred and  
 fifty miles into the interior. And among the English  
 colonies liberty and education, those great auxiliaries to  
 national strength, were in a flourishing state. The people  
 were devoted to agriculture, were moral and industrious,  
 and were bound together by the ties of friendship and  
 mutual interest. The French numbered only about fifty  
 thousand; they possessed scarcely any sea-coast or harbour;  
 they had made settlements only on two great rivers, nearly  
 two thousand miles apart; they were checked and con-  
 trolled by a rigid colonial despotism; they were indiffe-  
 rent to the great interests of commerce and manufacture,  
 and cared more to fortify and occupy strong and remote forts  
 than to improve the soil, or cultivate industrious habits.  
 Between such states and people the final issue of a contest  
 could not be doubtful. And yet the French, intoxicated  
 by their military successes, and indulging in dreams of  
 universal dominion, were eager to embark in the unequal  
 contest. The English, on the other hand, conscious of

superior strength, and equally ambitious, were not behind-  
 hand with their rivals in arrogance and encroachments.

It is difficult to decide who were the first to provoke an  
 appeal to arms. They mutually accused each other of  
 being the aggressors. Both parties were to blame, and  
 both were doomed to be sufferers. The English govern-  
 ment made a grant of six hundred thousand acres of land  
 on the Ohio River to a company of London merchants  
 and Virginia land speculators, with the privilege of exclu-  
 sive traffic with the Indians; which manifestly was an  
 encroachment on the rights of the French, if discovery and  
 occupation gave a claim to the Mississippi and its tributa-  
 ries. The French occupied more than sixty posts at diffe-  
 rent points between Canada and New Orleans, and a flou-  
 rishing trade had long been carried on with the Indians.  
 This constituted a title to the western country, according  
 to the principles which were then maintained in Europe.  
 On the other hand, the French were accused of erecting  
 a chain of fortresses along the St. Lawrence, the region  
 of the lakes, and the course of the Ohio and Mississippi  
 Rivers, to the Gulf of Mexico, with a view of cutting off  
 all communication of the English with the interior, and  
 of occupying the finest territory on the American conti-  
 nent, as far as the Pacific Ocean. For even in that age  
 the future greatness of America was appreciated and ac-  
 knowledged, and it was not until the colonies had secured  
 their independence that it became the fashion in England  
 to affect indifference and contempt.

The design of the French to restrict the growth of the  
 British settlements was perceived as early as 1715, and,  
 as the English meditated the possession of the whole con-  
 tinent, the French were regarded, of course, as hostile, and  
 as aiming at aggrandizement. But what most irritated  
 the English, both at home and in the colonies, was the

Bk. IV.

Ch. 4.

A. D.

1715.

Mutual  
causes of  
war.French  
ambition.Design  
of the  
French.



erection, by the French, of a chain of fortresses in what they considered as their territory, or as belonging to Indian tribes under their protection. England expostulated, and conferences were held at Paris to settle the difficulties, especially those of boundary. But these only increased the irritation and perplexity which already existed between the two nations, and induced the French to strengthen, rather than abandon, the posts they had fortified. The colonies were as indignant as the mother country, especially Virginia, which was interested in the success of the Ohio Company. Accordingly, Governor Dinwiddie despatched George Washington to the French commander on the banks of the Ohio, with a letter requiring him to retire from the country upon which he was supposed to encroach. The future hero of the Revolution was then only twenty-one years of age, but of great promise, being known as a man of uncommon energy, judgment, and fortitude. None better than he knew the wilderness through which he was to journey, having traversed parts of it as a land-surveyor. He was also a major in the militia, and discharged the duties of adjutant-general. He cheerfully undertook the dangerous mission, which he nobly discharged, but without producing the effect desired. The French still continued to construct their fortifications.

1754. Dinwiddie now called on the neighbouring colonies for aid to resist French encroachments, and the Virginia Assembly granted ten thousand pounds to defend the frontiers. North Carolina voted a regiment of four hundred and fifty men. The other colonies did not then respond to the call of the governor of Virginia, being engrossed with domestic difficulties.

A regiment of six hundred men had been enlisted in Virginia, of which Frye was colonel, and Washington

BR. IV.  
Ch. 4.  
A. D.  
1753.  
Erection  
of forts  
by the  
French.

First ap-  
pear-  
ance of  
Wash-  
ington.

lieutenant-colonel. Joined by two independent companies from New York, and one from North Carolina, the colonial troops penetrated to the frontier, with the view of dispersing the French, and building a fort at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers. But the French had already strongly fortified that post, which, in honour of their governor-general, they called Du Quesne. Washington, by the death of Frye, became the commander of the forces, and advanced to make himself master of that important fortress, having already been successful in an attack on a detachment of the enemy at the Great Meadows. Here he built a stockade fort, and then marched towards Du Quesne. But hearing of the approach of a superior French force, he fell back upon Fort Necessity, which he had but lately built, resolved there to defend himself. But, after a vigorous defence, he consented to capitulate, on condition of retiring with all the honours of war, and his troops retaining their arms and ammunition. Washington retreated with little loss to Wills' Creek, and assisted in the construction of Fort Cumberland—the westernmost English post.

Meanwhile, the colonies, persuaded that a sanguinary war was impending, took measures for mutual defence, and prepared to raise both money and men. But disputes about precedence and rank, and jealousy of a president-general, prevented the confederation which had been proposed by Franklin, and which was moreover distasteful to Great Britain and many of the colonies. The discussion of a plan of union served, however, to familiarize the idea of a federation, and prepared the minds of the people for that form of confederacy which was afterwards adopted in the Revolutionary War.

The British ministers, on receiving intelligence of the establishment of French posts on the Ohio, and of Wash-

BR. IV.  
Ch. 4.

A. D.  
1754.

Wash-  
ington  
marches  
against  
Fort Du  
Quesne.

Failure  
of the  
expedi-  
tion.

Project-  
ed union  
of the co-  
lonies.



BR. IV. ington's defeat, perceived that a war between France and  
 Ch. 4. England was begun, and took immediate measures for  
 A. D. vigorous hostilities. Early in 1755, General Braddock  
 1755. was despatched to America with two regiments of infantry,  
 while the provinces were called upon to furnish their  
 quotas of men and money, to which call they cheerfully  
 responded. Braddock summoned the provincial governors  
 to meet him at Annapolis, and settle military operations.  
 Three expeditions were projected. The first, against Fort  
 Du Quesne, was to be conducted by Braddock himself,  
 with British troops; the second was entrusted to Governor  
 Shirley, of Massachusetts, and was designed to reduce  
 Fort Niagara; and the third was to attack Crown Point,  
 on Lake Champlain, and to be undertaken by militia from  
 the northern colonies, under Colonel Johnson.

Brad-  
 dock  
 sent to  
 Ameri-  
 ca.

The French made still greater preparations, when they  
 learned the departure of Braddock; and a force of four  
 thousand regular troops, with a great quantity of military  
 stores, under Baron Dieskau, embarked for America, and  
 most of them succeeded in reaching their destination.

Inva-  
 sion of  
 Nova  
 Scotia.

While these preparations were making for a sanguinary  
 war, the people of New England agreed to invade Nova  
 Scotia, on condition of being reimbursed by the English  
 government for the expenses of the expedition. Accord-  
 ingly, about three thousand men, under the orders of  
 Colonel Winslow, of Massachusetts, departed for Nova  
 Scotia. There they were joined by three hundred regular  
 troops, and a small train of artillery; and the command  
 of the united forces was given to Colonel Moncton, an  
 English officer of experience and talents. The expedition  
 was not particularly glorious, but was completely success-  
 ful. The French forts erected in the province were de-  
 stroyed, the French troops dispersed, and the unfortunate  
 settlers carried captive to New England, and scattered

over the colonies. The Acadians were the most interest-  
 ing French colonists in America, and no plea of necessity  
 could justify the cruelty of tearing them away from their  
 homes, and consigning them to wretchedness and poverty.

BR. IV.  
 Ch. 4.  
 A. D.  
 1755

This successful, but useless expedition, diffused a mo-  
 mentary joy over the English colonies, and was regarded  
 as an omen of future triumphs—alas! soon succeeded by  
 a series of disasters of the most melancholy character.

The army destined to reduce Fort Du Quesne, advanced  
 under Braddock to Fort Cumberland amid unexpected  
 difficulties. Here the British regulars were joined by the  
 Virginia levies, the united forces amounting to twenty-  
 two hundred men. Through almost impenetrable woods,  
 and over the rough ridges of the Alleghany mountains,  
 the troops of Braddock slowly made their way. Vexed  
 at delay, the infatuated general left half his men, with  
 the heavy baggage, under Colonel Dunbar, and pushed  
 on heedlessly in advance. Washington was his aid-de-  
 camp; and he and others remonstrated against his reck-  
 lessness, and warned him of his danger. But Braddock  
 would take no advice, despising alike his Indian enemies  
 and his provincial friends. At length, when he had  
 penetrated to within seven miles of Fort Du Quesne, just  
 after fording the Monongahela, his van, composed of Eng-  
 lish regulars, was assailed by an invisible enemy. Eight  
 hundred French and Indians, concealed by the high grass  
 and undulations of an open wood, poured upon the Eng-  
 lish a most destructive fire, singling out the officers espe-  
 cially for their deadly aim, of whom sixty were either  
 killed or wounded. Braddock knew not how to advance  
 or retreat, and insisted upon fighting according to rule, as  
 if Indians were to be subdued in their own forests by  
 European tactics. Accordingly, he lost half of his men  
 and his own life. The provincials, accustomed to Indian

Brad-  
 dock's  
 advance  
 to Du  
 Quesne.

Falls in-  
 to an  
 ambush,

And is  
 defeated.



Bk. IV. warfare, were the only troops who effectually resisted;  
 Ch. 4. and Washington, the only unwounded officer who was  
 A. D. mounted, succeeded in securing their retreat—preserved,  
 1755. perhaps miraculously, certainly providentially, for the  
 future service of his country. The defeated army, unpursued except for a few miles, did not rally until they reached the camp of Dunbar. They would have been entirely cut off, had not their savage foes preferred plunder to massacre.

Expedition against Niagara. Meanwhile, the second expedition, designed to attack Fort Niagara, and composed of Shirley's and Pepperell's regiments, together with a few Indians and militia, proceeded from Albany to Oswego. On reaching Lake Ontario, August 21st, Shirley's forces were so much reduced by desertion, so overcome with fatigue, and so discouraged by the news of Braddock's defeat, that the expedition was abandoned.

Against Crown Point. The forces which were to proceed to Crown Point, consisting of five or six thousand militia from New York and the New England States, and entrusted to the command of Colonel William Johnson and General Lyman, reached, toward the end of August, the southern extremity of Lake George. Meanwhile, Dieskau, with two thousand troops, advanced to relieve the fortress. Informed of his approach, Johnson detached a body of one thousand men under Colonel Williams, and some Indians under Hendrick, to resist him; but, encountering Dieskau's army in a narrow defile, they were driven back with great loss. Among the slain were Williams and Hendrick. The former, before he left Albany, bequeathed a legacy for a free-school in Western Massachusetts, which has since grown into Williams College.

Dieskau was so elated with his success, as to venture upon an attack of Johnson's camp, which was protected

by impassable swamps and a breastwork of fallen trees. Bk. IV.  
 But the assailants were soon driven back, with the loss Ch. 4.  
 of one thousand men. Dieskau himself was mortally A. D.  
 wounded, and taken prisoner. Had the provincial militia 1755.  
 known how to avail themselves of their success, or Defeat of Dieskau.  
 had they been favoured with an able commander, they might have taken Crown Point; instead of which, they even permitted the French to fortify Ticonderoga, while the Indians perpetrated their customary barbarities on the frontier settlements.

Thus completely failed the three expeditions which 1756.  
 England and the colonies had fitted out to dispossess the England remunerates the colonies.  
 French of their strongholds. But these military operations, of course, led to a formal declaration of war between England and France; and preparations were made for prosecuting hostilities on a greater scale. The colonies agreed to raise as many as twenty thousand men; while England voted 115,000*l.* as a reimbursement to the provinces concerned in Dieskau's defeat. The French, too, sent out a reinforcement under Montcalm, the successor of Dieskau.

The campaign of 1756, however, terminated without anything being accomplished by the English, partly because the colonies did not raise so large a force as they had contemplated, and partly because differences arose between the English and provincial officers respecting rank. And all plans of offensive operations were abandoned in consequence of the successes of Montcalm, who had succeeded in capturing the forts which the English had built on Lake Ontario. Upwards of one thousand men, and one hundred and thirty-five pieces of artillery, together with a great quantity of provisions, fell into the hands of the French general. Successes of Montcalm.

The campaign of 1757 was limited to the defence of



BK. IV. the frontiers, and an expedition against Louisburg. But  
Ch. 4. no scheme of defence could avail much when the great  
A. D. frontier forts were in possession of the French, and the  
 1757. Indians were free to commit their destructive ravages;  
 and, so far from capturing Louisburg, the large force  
 of twelve thousand troops which General Loudon led  
 against it, assisted by eleven ships of the line, was forced  
 to retreat, since a fleet of seventeen French ships had  
 anchored under the very batteries of the fortress.

Another  
 expedi-  
 tion  
 against  
 Louis-  
 burg.

Contin-  
 ued dis-  
 asters to  
 the Eng-  
 lish.

While the English wasted their strength in a futile attempt against Louisburg, Montcalm, with eight thousand men, laid siege to Fort William Henry; a strong fortification which the English had lately built on the southern extremity of Lake George. Colonel Munroe had only two thousand men to defend the post, and was obliged to surrender, especially since no effort was made for his relief by General Webb, who, with four thousand men, was entrenched at Fort Edward, fourteen miles distant. Montcalm, satisfied with his success, returned to Canada.

Thus, after three campaigns, the French still held possession of the disputed territory, and had, in addition, gained signal advantages. They had expelled the English from Fort Oswego and from Lake Champlain, and had devastated the whole north-western frontier of the British colonies. The English had gained nothing but disgrace, and had wasted money and men enough to have conquered Canada. The French exulted, while England was filled with mortification and alarm. The feeble ministers of George II. were assailed with reproaches from every corner of the land. It was necessary for the king to make a change, or yield to French supremacy; and William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, came into power.

William  
 Pitt.

The moment this great man assumed the reins of state, a new spirit animated both England and her colonies.

The most vigorous measures were immediately adopted, and great preparations were made for offensive war. The active minister wrote circular letters to all the provincial governors, inviting the colonies to a generous co-operation, promising them compensation for any expenses they might incur, and appealing to their patriotism and their courage. A common zeal animated all the colonies, who responded nobly to the call of Pitt. Massachusetts voted to raise 7000 men, Connecticut 5000, New Hampshire 900, New York 2680, New Jersey 1000, Rhode Island 500, Pennsylvania 2700, and Virginia 2000. Meanwhile, 12,000 British troops, under General Amherst, early in May, arrived at Halifax, beside the regular forces which were brought together from the various provinces.

The united English and American armies at this period, composed by far the largest military force ever yet assembled in America, and equal to the whole number of male French settlers in Canada. The supreme command was given to Abercrombie—the chief blunder which the English minister made, after assuming the direction of the war.

The old schemes of Shirley were renewed. Three expeditions were planned—the first against Louisburg, the second against Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and the third against Fort Du Quesne.

Louisburg was first assailed. Early in June, 1758, Admiral Boscawen appeared before that fortress with thirty-eight ships, and fourteen thousand troops. It was defended by only three thousand men, and was moreover in a state unfit to withstand a cannonade. It of course capitulated, and, with it, fell all its dependencies.

The second expedition, though well planned, failed from the incapacity of the general-in-chief. Abercrombie, at the head of fifteen thousand men, embarked on Lake

BK. IV

Ch. 4

A. D.

1757.

Pitt's

minis-

try.

Capitu-

lation of

Louis-

burg.



Bk. IV.  
Ch. 4. George in flat-bottomed boats, landed near its outlet, and advanced upon Ticonderoga. The van of the army, led by unskilful guides, became entangled in the thickets, and would have experienced the same catastrophe which befel Braddock, had not Lord Howe, a brave and gallant officer, at the head of the right centre column, unexpectedly rescued the panic-stricken troops, though with the loss of his life. The British forces, without further opposition, then advanced to the attack of Ticonderoga, which was strongly defended. The assailants were repulsed with the loss of two thousand men, and, dismayed by their disasters, made a rapid retreat to Fort William Henry.

Attack on Ticonderoga. The expedition against Fort Du Quesne was more successful. It was entrusted to General Forbes with seven thousand men. After encountering great difficulties in the pathless wilderness, they reached, in the latter part of November, the French fortress, whose garrison, reduced to four hundred and fifty men, retired as they advanced. The fort was of course taken, and its name was changed to Pitt, in honour of the minister.

Capture of Du Quesne. The campaign was thus honourably terminated, on the whole, notwithstanding the defeat at Ticonderoga. But preparations were made with great zeal for still more vigorous measures the next year. The genius of Pitt planned the entrance to Canada by three distinct routes, with the view of attacking simultaneously all the strong fortresses in the country. It was designed that an army under General Wolfe, who had greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Louisburg, should ascend the St. Lawrence and attempt the capture of Quebec. General Amherst, who had superseded Abercrombie, was directed to march against Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and then to penetrate Canada, and join Wolfe at Quebec. The third army, composed of provincials, and conducted by

Project-  
ed inva-  
sion of  
Canada.

General Prideaux and Sir William Johnson, was to be sent against Fort Niagara, and, after reducing that post, was ordered to embark on Lake Ontario, descend the St. Lawrence, subdue Montreal, and then join Amherst and Wolfe.

The campaign of 1759 resulted gloriously to England, but chiefly in consequence of the successes of Wolfe, who, without the co-operation of the forces of Amherst or Johnson, succeeded in taking the most important fortress in America, and the capital of Canada.

General Amherst, on reaching Lake Champlain, found both Crown Point and Ticonderoga abandoned, their garrisons having been withdrawn for the defence of Quebec; but he was unable to advance to the assistance of Wolfe, from a lack of vessels to transport his troops. He was obliged to content himself with the possession of the shores and forts of Lake Champlain.

Prideaux had a prosperous voyage from Oswego to Niagara, but was killed while investing the fortress by the bursting of a gun. The command devolved on Johnson, to whom the fort surrendered; but he, like Amherst, was prevented from descending the St. Lawrence for want of proper shipping.

To Wolfe alone belongs the glory of the conquest of Quebec. After a successful voyage from Louisburg, he disembarked, with eight thousand troops, towards the end of June, on the Isle of Orleans, a little below Quebec. His naval superiority gave him the command of the river, and he succeeded in gaining possession of a high eminence opposite Quebec. But two months were wasted without much prospect of success. His batteries had no effect on the fortifications of the strongest fortress in the land, and he was unable to bring the French into an engagement. At last, the intrepid general meditated an attack on the

Bk. IV.

Ch. 4.

A. D.

1759.

Crown

Point

and Ti-

conde-

roga aban-

doned

by the

French.

Reduc-

tion of

Niagara.

Wolfe's

expedi-

tion

against

Quebec.