

COLONEL ANDREW BURR. [53]

HE was a son of John, and grandson of Major John Burr, of Fairfield. His father died when he was quite young, and he, having no brothers, his father's portion of the major's estate descended by entail to him. He was a lawyer by profession, an assistant and magistrate of the colony, several times Speaker of the House, and wielded large influence in the councils of the Colony; yet his chief claims to distinction rest undoubtedly on his military services, which were many and varied. Passing first to the consideration of his military career, we find him, in 1731, lieutenant of the second company or train-band of Fairfield. Two years later, he was promoted to be captain of the same company. In 1739, he was appointed major of the Fourth Regiment, of which the Fairfield company formed a part; the next year he was made commissary, to provide supplies for the troops ordered to be raised for an intended expedition against the French power in the West Indies.*

In 1745 occurred the famous Cape Breton Expedition, which, as being intimately connected with the family history, should be noticed in detail; it was in fact the most brilliant passage in the long series of colonial wars, and worthier of more attention than it has received from historians. The fortress of Louisburg was built on a precipitous rock, at the head of Chateaurouge Bay—an arm of the Atlantic,—about midway of the eastern coast of the island of Cape Breton. By the treaty of 1715, the French had relinquished Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to England, and soon feeling the need of a fortress in that region, seized upon this rock, and in the course of twenty-five years' persistent labor had succeeded in converting it—with its natural escarpments of rock, strengthened by every device known to the science of war—into the most formidable fortress of the New World. About the time of its completion, in 1744, war again broke out between France and England, and very soon after the colonists discovered that the French privateers were using the place as a covert, from which to dart out on their fishing and trading craft, employed in those waters. They accordingly determined to capture it, and Maine, New Hampshire,

* He received for this service £46,5s. 4d.

Jonathan
and was His Majesty's English Colony of Connecticut in New England in America.
To Andrew Burr, Esq. Justice

By Virtue of the Power and Authority to Me given in and by the Royal Charter to the Governor and Company of the said Colony under the Great Seal of England, I do by these Presents, appointing special Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty Courage and good Conduct Com. That when you shall go to Scotland of a Regiment of Foot, to be raised in the said Colony for His Majesty's Service, and to be settled with the Forces of the neighbouring Governments to be employed in an Expedition against the Majesty's Enemies in Cape Breton and Parts adjacent of which Force William Pepperell Esq. is appointed Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief, in Roger Wolcott Esq. is appointed Major General. You are therefore to take the said Regiment as Enrolled into your Care and Charge, and daily to exercise the said Officers as buildiers thereof in Orders, and to set your best Endeavour to keep them in good Order and Discipline, who are hereby commanded to obey you as their Colonel, and you are to observe and follow such Orders and Directions, from Time to Time as you shall receive from Me, or the Commanders in Chief of the said Colony for the Time being, or from the Commanders in Chief of the said Forces, or any other your superior Officer, according to the Rules and Discipline of War, in pursuance of the Trust hereby reposed in you.

Given under my Hand and the publick Seal of the said Colony at Hartford the 16. Day of March 1744 in the eighteenth year of the Reign of His Majesty King George the second.

By Order of the Governor and Company aforesaid,
George Wyllys Justice
Rogers
Law

Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut entered into a coalition to effect this object; New York and the western colonies were invited to join, but declined participating in the affair. As soon as the news of the agreement reached Hartford, Governor Law called a special meeting of the Assembly, which accordingly met at New Haven, February 26, 1745. Major Andrew Burr was chosen Speaker and Captain John Fowler clerk of the House. Of the seventy-five deputies present, thirty-six were colonels, majors, or captains. The war spirit of the colony was at its highest, and several extreme war measures were passed almost without debate. The first measure provided for the enlisting of five hundred, afterward raised to eight hundred, men for service in the intended expedition, and further provided that each man so enlisting should be paid from the public treasury eight pounds for each month of actual service in the war. If he provided himself with a good firelock, sword, belt, cartridge-box, and blanket, he was allowed a premium of ten pounds; if not, of three. He was to have, further, one month's wages before embarkation, "to be excused from all impresses for the space of two years after his discharge from service, and have an equal share in all the plunder with the soldiers of the neighboring governments."

A second act directed that the colony sloop-of-war *Defence* should be forthwith equipped and manned with her full complement of men, and sail, with all convenient speed, as a convoy to the transports for Cape Breton. A third appointed Hon. Roger Wolcot commander-in-chief, and Major Andrew Burr colonel of the forces engaged in the expedition. Jonathan Trumbull and Elisha Williams, Esqrs., were also appointed a committee to visit Boston and confer with the committees of the different governments there in managing the affairs of the war, and a board of commissaries was created, of which Col. Gurdon Saltonstall was chairman, who were instructed to provide four months' provisions and other necessities for the troops, and also good well-found vessels for transports.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Assembly again met at Hartford, March 14, 1745. Colonel Burr was continued Speaker, and Captain Fowler clerk. The Assembly then proceeded to fix the pay of officers of the expedition. The major-general was voted £100 per month, the colonel £65, the lieutenant-colonel £55, the major £45. Hon. Roger Wolcot was also granted £300 to provide his tent, bedding, etc., and for the entertainment of the chaplain; Colonel Burr, Esq., £120; Simon Lathrop, Esq. (lieutenant-colonel), £80; and Israel Newton, Esq. (major), £60 for the same purpose. The different officers of the regiment were commissioned. The treasurer was directed to pay to the commissaries twelve thousand pounds in addition to the four thou-

sand already paid, to provide for the needs of the expedition, and an act was passed empowering the commissaries to impress transports, provisions, etc., when they could not otherwise procure them on just and reasonable terms. In the meantime, recruiting had been briskly carried on, and Colonel Burr had rendezvoused his regiment of five hundred men at New London, where the commissaries had been busy collecting a fleet of transports to receive them. This fleet consisted of twelve vessels—the colony sloop-of-war *Defence*, the Rhode Island sloop-of-war, a privateer, a snow of Newport, another snow * ; Captain Rouse, a ship ; Captain Snelling, a brig ; a snow, and three sloops. One of these was the *Jane*, of Norwalk, subsequently lost off Louisburg ; another, the *Diamond*, of Middletown, lost on her return passage from Louisburg with all on board ; and a ship, Captain Ting.

By the middle of April everything was in readiness, and the little army, amid a storm of huzzas and farewells from the crowded streets, marched on board the transports, which immediately put to sea, standing out to windward of Block Island, and through the portals of the sound at Montauk into the ocean.† The fleet was sixteen days at sea, but came safely and dropped anchor, April 30, 1745, in Cabaroosa Bay, near the fortress. Not, however, without mishap. On the 23d, they fell in with the French frigate *Renomme*, thirty-six guns, from Louisburg, with dispatches to France, which engaged them, and damaged the Rhode Island sloop-of-war considerably, but which, after an hour's spirited conflict, was glad to haul off and bear away on her voyage. Had she known their weakness, with her superior weight of metal she might easily have sent the whole convoy to the bottom. The Massachusetts troops had arrived on the 4th, so that the combined land and naval forces of the colonies, numbering about 4,500 men, were collected in readiness for the approaching struggle. On the morning of the 30th, the fleet crossed the bar, and approached the town, piloted by the fishermen of Marblehead and New London. The surprise of the garrison at sight of this armament, which, seen in the offing, they had supposed to be privateers in wait for their trading craft, was complete, but at the tap of the drum, they sprang to arms, and a detachment of 150 men, under command of Col. Bouladrie, was sent to resist the landing of the troops. Gen. Wolcot, however, with Yankee shrewdness, made a feint of landing at one point, while Col. Burr, with his men, waded the surf, reached the shore at another, and were drawn up in line of battle

* A vessel equipped with two masts like the fore and mainmasts of a ship, and a third small mast just abaft the mainmast carrying a trysail.

† The fleet sailed Sunday, April 14th, at 11 A.M. (see Journal of Rev. Adonijah Bidwell, chaplain of the expedition).

before the enemy could cover the distance between them. Then followed a sharp skirmish in which the French were utterly routed, and fled, leaving their commander, Bouladrie, and half their number in the hands of the victors.

Thus the initial step of the campaign, that of gaining a safe landing for the troops, was accomplished. From their camp that night, Wolcot and Burr could take in at a glance the whole line of coast and the defences of the enemy. Hard by, two miles away, was the grand battery, armed with thirty 42-pounders, and commanding the harbor and city. Nearly opposite their position, on an island of the bay, was the Island battery, mounting the same number of 28-pounders. Between the town and the mainland lay a morass two miles wide and impassable for horses, and when this was passed, the fosse 80 feet wide, and the ramparts 30 feet high, and mounting 65 cannon of different calibres, still interposed between the invaders and the city. In the batteries and the fortress were posted 600 regulars and 1,300 militia, well armed and provisioned for five or six months, and, in addition, an irregular force of half-breeds and Indians was ambushed in the neighboring forests, and was available under certain contingencies.

Having thus briefly stated the obstacles, let us go on and see how they were overcome.

Early next morning a detachment of 400 provincials was sent around behind the hills east of the city, burning houses and stores as they advanced, until they came within view, at scarce a mile's distance, of the grand battery. At this moment, the smoke from the burning houses surging through the provincial ranks, deceived the enemy into the belief that a great army was upon them, and panic-stricken, they threw their powder into a well and fled in confusion toward the town, leaving the provincials to rush in and secure the fortress without the loss of a man.

It was a proud moment for the gallant fellows, and as the tricolor of France came down with a run, and the great guns, double-shotted, were turned upon the foe, they felt, no doubt, that their losses from the piratical Frenchmen were amply avenged. Next morning the army addressed itself seriously to the work of the siege. Five fascine batteries were begun beyond the morass, and within striking distance of the town, the Connecticut troops erecting the redoubt nearest the enemy's position, and but two hundred yards distant. The heavy cannon were placed on wooden floats, and drawn by the strong lumbermen of Maine across the morass to the batteries, where they were placed in position. The men carried the ammunition and other stores in baskets on their shoulders, as in more peaceful days they had been wont to carry grain from their sunny cornfields. Working slowly in this manner, by the 20th of May they had succeeded in

erecting five fascine batteries, one of five 42-pounders, and in completely investing the town. On the 21st they commenced a furious bombardment in which they were aided by the British men-of-war, several of which had now come in ; this was continued for twenty-four days, almost without cessation, although the besiegers suffered greatly during the time from cold, hunger, severe rains, the sorties of the besieged, and the attacks of the Indians.

By the 14th of June, it was observed that the fire of the carronades and 42-pounders had begun to tell terribly on the walls, and success seemed near. The Island battery was then nearly silenced, and untenable ; the west gate of the town broken down ; a large breach made in the adjoining wall ; the circular battery of 16 guns in ruins ; the northeast battery badly damaged, and the soldiers driven from its guns. Under these circumstances it was determined that, on the 18th, the combined land and naval forces should assault the town, but the enemy, judging that such an attack was intended, and fearful of its result, on the 16th sent in a flag of truce, asking for terms of surrender. These were given and accepted, and, on the 16th of June, the city and fortress of Louisburg, with the island of Cape Breton, were surrendered to the provincial arms. Theirs had been the hardships of the enterprise, and theirs was the glory of the victory, though they were not destined to share in its fruits. During the siege prizes to the value of five million dollars had been taken, a share of which belonged of right to the colonists, but which was awarded by the home government to the naval forces, nor is there any record of their receiving a penny of it, nor any indemnity whatever for the losses and burdens of the war, although a few years later they saw the mother country reap the fruits of their victory in the acquisition of Canada, and the withdrawal of French pretensions in that quarter.

A very interesting memorial on this subject was addressed to the British King, by the General Court of Aug. 16, 1745. Its closing paragraphs are as follows :

“ Will your Majesty be pleased further to permit us humbly to recommend to your royal consideration and favor, the officers and soldiers who have voluntarily served their King in this expedition, going through incredible labors and fatigues in erecting batteries, (one of which they advanced within about 200 yards of the city walls,) drawing guns, (some 42-pounders) firing nine or ten thousand great shot and shells, and small shot without number, and in receiving the enemies' shot near equal, in all which the officers and soldiers from Connecticut, (whose loyalty and resolution is inferior to none,) bare their full share, notwithstanding all

which, these officers and soldiers, (who would have been entitled to the plunder if taken) received no benefit thereof, the same by capitulation being given up, and the city and forts, with their artillery, saved and surrendered to your Majesty, whereas the officers and soldiers at sea, both before and since the surrendery, have had great and valuable prizes fallen into their hands, even within sight of the city walls, particularly since the surrendery, two French East India ships richly laden, and one South Sea ship, which we have advice had on board four hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, besides a valuable cargo in goods, and it is supposed that the captures there amount to a million pounds sterling or more, which it is probable would never have fallen into the hands of your Majesty's subjects if this expedition had not been undertaken. We have presumed to send your Majesty a roll of the officers from Connecticut, and most humbly pray your Majesty's most gracious acceptance, audience, and favor.

"Signed by JONATH. LAW, *Gov.*"

In taking leave of the subject, it is worthy of remark that fifteen days after the surrender, and before news of the event had reached the colony, the Connecticut Assembly passed a vote to raise 300 additional men for the Cape Breton expedition. The said troops "to be and belong to Col. Burr's regiment now employed in such service."

The General Assembly of Aug. 15, 1745, detailed Col. Burr with 350 men of his regiment for garrison duty at Louisburg, until the next June, or until the pleasure of the home government should be known. He was shortly relieved, however, for we find him Speaker of the House at the next session of the Assembly in October, 1745.*

With the spring of 1746 another war threatened the half exhausted colonies. The English ministry then decided on a campaign against the Canadas, and sent directions to the colonists to furnish their quota of men and stores for the expedition. In this war Colonel Burr seems not to have taken active service, though he bore a prominent part in the preparations for enlisting and provisioning the troops. He with Gurdon Saltonstall (afterward Governor), and four other prominent gentlemen, constituted a board of commissaries for providing transports, provisions, arms, clothing, and other necessaries for the use of the troops. He was at the same time appointed War Committee for New Haven County, with Col. Thomas Fitch as colleague, "to assist his Honour the Governor in the affairs relating to the war, referred, or that may be referred by this Assembly to said Committee." † No mention is made of him in a military capacity

* "Aug. 31, Col. Burr, and 60 or 70 Connecticut men sailed in a sloop for Connecticut."—*Rev. Mr. Bidwell's Journal*.

† This campaign against Canada proved abortive.

again, until 1750, when, at the October session of the Assembly he was commissioned Colonel of the Fourth Regiment (of Fairfield County). The war of 1744 terminated with the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in October, 1748, and from that time to the famous French and Indian war in 1756, the colonists enjoyed comparative peace, yet during this time there were, no doubt, almost daily incursions of the savage hordes along the borders, so that we are not to infer that his sword was left to rust from disuse; of his personal history and adventures not a scrap remains, and the biographer is unfortunately confined to the bare, dry details of the records for the materials of his history; enough, however, is gleaned there to prove that he was an efficient officer, brave, firm, and capable, and of great reputation in the colony. In the consideration of his civil career, we must return for details to the invaluable records of the colony.

He was Deputy for Fairfield, Oct., 1727, 1729, 1731, May, 1732, Oct., 1732, Feb., 1733, May, 1733, Oct. 1733, May, 1735, May, 1736, 1737, 1738, Oct., 1738, May, 1739, Oct., 1739, May, 1740, July, 1740, Oct., 1740, Nov., 1740, May, 1741, Oct., 1741, May, 1742, Oct., 1742, May, 1743, Oct., 1743, May, 1744, Oct., 1744, Feb., 1745, March, 1745, Oct., 1745, May, 1746, and June, 1747. He was Justice of the Peace, May, 1727, 1728, 1729, 1730, 1731, 1732, 1733, 1734, 1735, 1744, and 1745. Appointed Judge of County Court, May, 1745, 1746, 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750, 1751, 1752, 1753, 1754, 1755, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759, 1760, 1761, 1763. Judge of Probate Court, May, 1749, 1750, 1751, 1752, 1753, 1754, 1755, 1756, and 1762. Assistant or member of the Upper House, May, 1746, 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750, 1751, 1752, 1753, 1754, 1755, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759, 1760, 1761, 1762, 1763. Present in Court as Assistant, Oct., 1746, Jan., 1747, May, 1747, Oct., 1747, May, 1748, Oct., 1748, May, 1749, Oct., 1749, May, 1750, Oct., 1750, Nov., 1750, May, 1751, Oct., 1751, May, 1752, Oct., 1752, May, 1753, Oct., 1753, May, 1754, Oct., 1754, Jan., 1755, March, 1755, May, 1755, Aug., 1755, Oct., 1755, Jan., 1756, Sept., 1756, Oct., 1756, Jan., 1757, Feb., 1757, May, 1757, Oct., 1757, March, 1758, May, 1758, Oct., 1758, Feb., 1759, March, 1759, May, 1759, Oct., 1759, March, 1760, May, 1760, Oct., 1760, March, 1761, May, 1761, Oct., 1761, May, 1762, Nov., 1762, May, 1763, Oct., 1763. Clerk of Lower House, Oct., 1738, May, 1740, July, 1740. Speaker, Oct. 8, 1741, May, 1742, Oct., 1742, May, 1743, Oct., 1743, May, 1744, Oct., 1744, Feb., 1745, March, 1745, and Oct., 1745.

June 2, 1726, he was appointed by the Governor and Council, sheriff of Fairfield County; his recognizance was 2,000 pounds; his sureties were Thomas Hill, of Fairfield, and John Lyon, of Greenwich. He held the office until the 13th of May following, when he resigned it, "repre-

senting the disadvantages that attended him in sustaining the office," and Thomas Hanford, of Fairfield, succeeded him. While sheriff, he had some difficulty in disposing of a certain Thomas Shaw, who had been placed in his charge by the Superior Court at its August term in Fairfield, "to be disposed of in service," and to aid him, a resolution was passed at the fall term of the Assembly, empowering him to agree with the person to whom said Shaw should be indentured, that in case he (Shaw) should persist in his thievish and burglarious practices, so as to expose himself to the gallows, and to suffer the pains of death, which then "seemed very hazardous," in that case, such person should be paid back so much of the money agreed upon as should then—*i. e.*, at the time of the hanging—remain unsatisfied for, by the service of said Shaw; and with this guarantee, we are to infer that Mr. Shaw soon obtained a situation, as we hear no more of the matter.

At the Oct. session of the Court, 1727, he was appointed with Capt. Moses Dimon, to sell lands of Joseph Lockwood, of Fairfield, minor. May 11, 1732, he was on a committee with Capt. Platt and Esq. Lewis, to lay out a new parish at Stanford and Horse Neck. At the May session in 1733, he was one of a committee of six, who submitted a report on the disposal, or dividing, of the several townships laid out in the western lands. The report recommended first, an act granting all the money received from the sale of the seven towns lately laid out in the western lands, to the then settled towns of the colony, divided to them in proportion to the list of their polls, and ratable estate for that year, and to be secured and forever improved for the use of the schools kept in said towns according to law. And second, an act, creating a committee of two for each county, to sell the townships, or receive subscriptions for the shares—each town being divided into fifty shares, three of which were reserved, one for the first minister there settled, one sequestered for the use of the established ministry forever, and the third for the use of the school or schools in such town forever. The report was accepted by the Assembly, and Andrew Burr, and Samuel Burr, were appointed to take subscriptions for Fairfield County. The land open to buyers in this county lay in Township No. 4, the middle town of the tract, bounded on the west by Ousatunnuck River. In Oct., 1734, he was appointed with Stephen Burr, to sell estate of David Burr, of Fairfield, and to put the money it should produce at interest for the use of the same.

May, 1737, he was appointed with Nathan Stanley and others, to receive the money contributed by the several societies, "for the civilizing and Christianizing the Indians in this Colony." May, 1746, on committee with Ebenezer Silliman and Thaddeus Burr, to settle differences in the

parish of North Stratford, "and to pursue proper and peaceable methods for the settlement of a gospel minister among them." May, 1749, he was granted eighty-one pounds for his services as committee in assisting Col. Fitch in revising the laws. Jan. 8, 1755, on committee with Ebenezer Silliman, Samuel Fitch, and Joseph Platt, "to assist the Governor with their advice and counsel," in regard to the raising of forces for the defence of his Majesty's just rights and dominions in North America (see letter of Sir Thomas Robinson, in "R. I. Col. Rec.," vol. v., p. 406). Also March 17, 1756, the same were appointed a Committee of War, "to attend, and advise the Governor in any matters aforesaid—(relating to the intended expedition against Crown Point)—whenever he shall think proper to call them together." November, 1755, appointed with David Rowland and John Reed, "to repair to Greenwich, to consider and settle some disputes that had arisen between the parishes of Greenwich and Horse Neck, respecting their parochial extension, and levying ministerial taxes." The same committee was reappointed on the same business at the May and September sessions of the Court, in 1756. Feb. 9, 1757, he was appointed "to receive the arms and accoutrements belonging to the king, used by the soldiers of the Colony in the last campaign," (that against Crown Point). His last appearance in public life was as Assistant at the October session of the Court in 1763. He was renominated for Assistant at that time, but died before the election in May. His death occurred at his home in Fairfield, Nov. 9, 1763, and his tomb is still to be seen in the old burial-ground at Fairfield.

His domestic life was a pleasant and happy one. He married, April 30th, 1719, Sarah, daughter of Jonathan Sturgis of Fairfield, who bore him thirteen children. She died about 1745. He again married Sarah Stanly of Hartford, by whom he had one child, a daughter, born Dec. 3, 1749.

He died Nov. 9, 1763. His will was dated Nov. 24, 1760, and reads as follows :

"24th Nov. 1760; Imprimis. I give and bequeath to my loving wife Sarah, the household goods that she brought with her, that are in being after my decease. And also the use of one-third of my real estate that I shall die possessed of during her natural life, this to be in lieu of dower.

"Item. All the rest of my estate I will and bequeath to my children, viz : David, Andrew, John, George, Oliver, Elizabeth, Mary, Sarah and Jerusha, in manner and proportion hereafter mentioned, I having already given to my son David the value of thirty-four pounds lawful money, which shall be accounted as part of the portion given him.

"Item. To my son Andrew, I have already given him thirty pounds lawful money, which shall be accounted part of his portion : And to my

son George I have given ten pounds lawful money which shall be accounted part of his portion.

"Item. To my son David, in consideration of his being my first born, I give all my law books being in partnership with Gov. Fitch : Also what I expended on his College learning. Also the acre of land I gave him where his house now standeth to be over and above his share with the rest of his brethren.

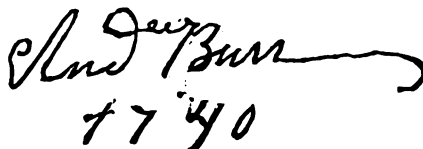
"Item. All the rest and remainder of my estate not given before in this my last will, I give, devise, and dispose of the same to my aforementioned children to them their heirs and assigns forever, in such manner that each of my sons shall have twice as much as each of my daughters aforementioned, making what is set off to my three sons as part of their portions respectively, and what I have charged to my daughter Elizabeth shall be part of her portion given in this my will, so that my aforementioned daughters shall have equal share, and half so much as each of my said sons, and my will is, that whatsoever I shall hereafter give to any of my children and shall be charged to them : or if it be by deed of gift, shall be taken and accounted as part of the portion of my estate, given to them in this my will. As to my daughter Ann, the wife of Capt. Sam. Sturges, I have already given her what I consider her full portion.

"Finally. I do hereby constitute and appoint my dutiful and beloved sons, David Burr and George Burr, executors of this my last will and testament (hereby revoking all former wills by me made.) In confirmation whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and date fixed before written. My will farther is, that if my movables will not pay my debts, besides what is given to my wife, then my executors shall have power to sell lands to pay them.

"ANDREW BURR.

"Signed in presence of
DAVID ROWLAND,
ANDREW ROWLAND,
SARAH WARD."

Fac-simile of autograph :



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