



The French Lake Champlain Fleet and the Contest for the Control of the Lake, 1742–1760

The intent of the designers of the French fleet was never to seriously challenge England for naval supremacy over the waterway, but instead to construct an opportunistic squadron, a scout fleet that, if managed correctly, could dictate the terms of any engagement and withdraw once it found itself at a disadvantage.

By MICHAEL G. LARAMIE

Plattsburgh, Valcour Island, Arnold's Bay: these are common place names along Lake Champlain that conjure up images of British and American warships long since past. And understandably so. The campaigns of these fleets have been well documented over the last two centuries, and such names as Arnold, Pringle, and Macdonough fill the pages of numerous texts on the subject. The first warships to operate on the lake, however, have not been so fortunate. For whatever reasons, the members of this original band of French vessels, and their commanders, the first to ply the waters of Lake Champlain, have faded into obscurity, and it seems fitting that a few words should be said on their behalf.

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FORMATION

The history of the French Lake Champlain fleet rightly starts with the construction of Fort St. Frédéric in the early 1730s. This is not to say that French military expeditions requiring naval elements did not take place on Lake Champlain before the construction of the fortress at Crown Point. Several significant ones did. In 1666 for instance, the Marquis de Tracy led 1,200 men up the lake to strike at the Mohawk villages in the upper Hudson Valley, and in 1709 Claude Ramezay led 1,650 men in an abortive expedition against Fort Schuyler near the headwaters of Wood Creek. But in each case, the needs of the troops involved were admirably served by the traditional mainstays of lake transportation, canoes and flat-bottomed bateaux. With the advent of a permanent establishment at Crown Point, however, French military leaders began to express concerns as to whether or not these types of vessels were sufficient to maintain such a post.¹

The idea of a vessel large enough to be classified as a ship was first broached by Governor Charles Beauharnois in a letter to the French minister of the marine on October 13, 1735. Beauharnois posed the possibility of constructing a vessel at Fort St. Frédéric, which would not only help transport the materials needed to finish the fort, but would also “greatly facilitate the transport of provisions and munitions necessary for the garrison.” Although a prudent economic and military move, such a possibility, he quickly pointed out, was contingent upon whether the upper Richelieu River was navigable, and at the moment this was not known. The French ministry was receptive to the idea, which continued to gain momentum as work on the fortress progressed; but the true stumbling block was not overcome until the fall of 1741, when the Intendant of Canada, Gilles Hocquart, was able to report that soundings made of the Richelieu River above the St. Jean rapids had shown the waterway capable of supporting a vessel of the type being proposed.²

With this favorable news, Hocquart immediately contracted master carpenter and private shipbuilder David Corbin to construct a barque at Crown Point. Corbin’s crew of ten carpenters and two blacksmiths spent the next seven months at Fort St. Frédéric framing and fitting out the vessel, and by the early summer of 1742, she was ready for her maiden voyage. Beyond detailing the payment owed to his men and a list of naval supplies forwarded from Québec to fit out the vessel, there is little information from Corbin about the first sailing ship on Lake Champlain. He described her as a *barque*, and although multiple financial records from the next several years would refer to her as such, it would not be until much later that such a term actually described a class

of ship. Nor does he make any mention of the size of his vessel or how she was rigged.³

These details, however, can be pieced together from earlier documents and later French and British eyewitness accounts. In September 1740, a year before Corbin started his work, Hocquart submitted a cost proposal for “the construction and armament of [a] gabare or bateau . . . for the navigation of Lake Champlain.” The vessel was to be forty-eight feet long, fifteen feet in breadth, and to displace thirty-five tons. Although Corbin clearly did not build a *gabare*, that is, a sailing barge, it seems that Hocquart, unfamiliar with ship design, was projecting the costs based on the size of the vessel more than the type. This is borne out by a letter a month later to the minister of the marine in which Hocquart refers to the plan to construct a barque on Lake Champlain. As for the type of vessel Corbin constructed, a number of records from the period just after its completion refer to her as a *goélette* (schooner), and it seems from later French and English eyewitness accounts that she was indeed a two-masted schooner, displacing somewhere between thirty to forty tons, which is in accordance with Hocquart’s original dimensions. She carried a crew of six, was likely equipped with oars to help handle the tricky confines of the Richelieu River, and was armed with four *pierriers*, small swivel guns initially designed to fire stone projectiles or musket balls. Just as with the details of her construction, the vessel’s name has become clouded with the passage of time. Records shortly after her commissioning refer to her as the *Goélette du Roy*, the *Barque du Roy*, or the *Barque de Saintonge*. This last title was in clear reference to her master, Joseph Payant *dit* Saint Onge, whom Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm had the opportunity to speak with in 1749 and claimed was one of the carpenters who built the vessel.⁴

For the next several years the *Saintonge*, for lack of a better name, made runs between Fort St. Frédéric and the waters above the St. Jean rapids, where a few storage sheds had been erected and a crude road hacked out of the woods leading back to Fort Chambly. The arrangement proved more economical than convoys of bateaux, but not as efficient as hoped. The primary fault in the system, which was soon to be tested with the outbreak of King George’s War in 1745, was that the schooner had no northern port to anchor at while awaiting supplies. This, coupled with the fact that supplies still had to be shuttled by wagon from Fort Chambly to the rendezvous point, led to a frustrating system fraught with frequent delays that left either the *Saintonge* waiting for the arrival of the supply trains, or the supply trains waiting on the schooner.⁵

A solution to this problem was proposed by the architect of Fort St. Frédéric, Chaussegros de Léry, in the fall of 1744. Léry’s recommendation

was to build a small fort above the St. Jean rapids to act as a magazine and anchorage for the *Saintonge*. A road would then be cut from this location across the wooded marshlands to La Prairie some fifteen miles away, which would link the new post with Montreal. The plan dispensed with the long water route to Fort Chambly and the subsequent wagon trail around the Chambly and St. Jean rapids, and it established a permanent support facility for Fort St. Frédéric. Although such an arrangement would undermine the usefulness of Fort Chambly, there was little else to argue with in the proposal. Even so, it was not until the spring of 1748 that the plan was approved and work began in earnest on Fort St. Jean. The fort's faults, costs, and construction miscues aside, when finished, the palisade structure boasted a number of warehouses, both inside and outside its compound, and a pier that would become one of the focal points of naval construction on the lake for the next fifty years. More importantly, when it was put into service in late 1748, the stronghold closed the last gap between Montreal and Fort St. Frédéric, leading to the claim that if need be, the latter could be reinforced in less than forty-eight hours.⁶

For the next seven years the *Saintonge* quietly performed her duty, at least until the last French and Indian War broke out in 1755, and the routine supply runs took on more significance. The vessel is frequently mentioned in French and English journals during this conflict, but almost always in passing and never by name. On the morning of July 2, 1756, the schooner added the newly constructed Fort Carillon to her route, pulling astride the main dock to the delight of the French troops encamped about the Ticonderoga peninsula.

Captain Payant and his crew were fortunate during this time in only having to fire the vessel's guns once in anger. On the morning of August 13, 1756, the *Saintonge*, a dozen or so miles from Fort St. Jean, stopped for some reason to put three of her crew ashore at the northern end of Île aux Têtes. The vessel's progress had been monitored by an Iroquois war party, who by chance lay in wait near the landing site. The three crewmen were immediately ambushed and killed, at which point, "The barque made such a great fire with her pierriers" that the Iroquois retreated without taking any scalps. The loss of three crewmen on such a small vessel certainly weighed heavily on Captain Payant, but in reality he was more fortunate than he might have imagined. The indefatigable Captain Robert Rogers had come across the schooner a month before and formulated a plan to seize her while she lay at anchor in Basin Harbor. Only the untimely appearance of a pair of French bateaux upset Rogers's plan and undoubtedly saved the *Saintonge* from destruction.⁷

As it was, the vessel's days as the lone sentinel on the lake were numbered. After fourteen years of service along the northern waterway, she was showing her age, and with the increased needs of the garrisons at Fort St. Frédéric and Fort Carillon to be considered, the decision was made to construct a larger, more capable vessel. In early October 1756, Pierre Levasseur was dispatched to Fort St. Jean with twenty carpenters to begin work on this new ship. He was joined shortly thereafter by his father, New France's most prominent shipbuilder, René-Nicolas Levasseur, who oversaw the construction of the vessel over the course of the winter. Finished early the following summer and christened the *Vigilante*, she was a sixty-ton topsail schooner armed with ten four-pound cannon. After a quick shakedown cruise, the ship was handed over to the lake's most experienced sailor, Joseph Payant, and was soon on its way to Fort Carillon, arriving there on May 27, 1757.⁸

The *Saintonge* was not retired with the launching of the *Vigilante*. The smaller vessel seems to have operated on the lake for some time, augmenting its larger cousin's activities. Major Joseph Hippolyte Malartic of the Bearn Regiment noted its arrival at Fort Carillon in mid June 1757 with a "load of straw for the hospital and equipment for the troops."⁹ Together the two vessels helped supply the French army on Lake Champlain throughout the summer of 1757, carrying forward equipment that the Marquis de Montcalm would ultimately use in his successful campaign against Fort William Henry during the opening weeks of August, and later in transporting British prisoners from this expedition back to Montreal.

With the close of the campaign and the onset of winter, it was once again decided to add to the fleet. On April 27, 1758, another vessel was launched at Fort St. Jean. The details of this vessel are wholly lacking, but indications are that it was a gabare, probably similar in size to the *Saintonge*, whose activities become difficult to track at this point. On July 27, 1758, Malartic recorded in his journal that the "small barque is anchored near the shed," while the large one had set out for St. Jean. The larger one in Malartic's entry seems to have been the *Vigilante*, but when it comes to the "small barque," it is not clear whether the major meant the *Saintonge* or the newly constructed gabare. The day also signaled a smaller, albeit important addition to the growing fleet, when Lieutenant Louis-Thomas Jacau de Fiedmont of the Royal Artillery successfully fired a twelve-pound cannon from a gunboat of his own design. The year before Fiedmont had built and demonstrated a similar vessel, which mounted a twelve-pound cannon in its prow and two smaller swivel guns along the sides. Montcalm had been so pleased with the design, which despite its small size handled well when its armament

was test fired, that he placed it at the head of his flotilla bound for the siege of Fort William Henry. The “Jacobs,” as the gunboats were called, seem to have been little more than large bateaux with their prow and perhaps their stern cut so as to mount and handle the recoil of a nine- or twelve-pound cannon. In any case, they proved useful deterrents, and perhaps as many as a half a dozen were constructed over the next few years to handle escort and patrol duties. The obvious merits of the design would have suggested larger numbers, but one suspects that Fiedmont soon realized that small heavily burdened vessels such as these were of questionable use once the weather on Lake Champlain took a turn for the worse.¹⁰

The year also brought crisis to the French defenders of Lake Champlain, when British General James Abercromby at the head of 16,000 provincial and regular troops landed at the outlet of Lake George and marched on Fort Carillon. Only a series of blunders and the loss of will on the part of Abercromby, coupled with a calculated and spirited defense by Montcalm and his men, preserved the French position on the lake. The victory against all odds, however, was rightly seen by the French commander for what it was, a stroke of good fortune and a turning of the tide. New France was being worn down by her larger adversary, who continued to put more men in the field with each successive campaign. The English would undoubtedly return to Fort Carillon next year, and given that another miraculous victory was unlikely, plans began to take shape that called for contracting New France’s defensive perimeter in the Champlain Valley. Forts Carillon and St. Frédéric were to be abandoned as French troops developed a more defensible position along the Richelieu River at Île-aux-Noix. A key component to this strategy would be naval supremacy on Lake Champlain, first, to guarantee a safe withdrawal of the army back to Île-aux-Noix, and second, to contest control of the lake with the British and prevent them from advancing down the waterway once they secured the former French outposts. It seemed clear that a naval race was about to take place on Lake Champlain and that New France would be wise to get a head start.¹¹

In keeping with this new strategy, Pierre Levasseur was once again dispatched to Fort St. Jean, this time tasked with building a fleet of warships. Accompanying Levasseur was the new naval commander on Lake Champlain, Lieutenant Jean d’Olabaratz *dit* Laubaras. Although St. Onge was the most experienced sailor on the lake, he was not a regular officer, and with a naval encounter likely, Governor General Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil felt that the French fleet needed a commander with a military background. Experienced naval officers, however, were

in short supply in the colony, and the choice of Laubaras seems to have been based more on his availability than any other factor. It was an unfortunate decision. Although Laubaras was certainly an experienced sailor, his recent career had been mired in bad luck.

Raised in a seafaring family, Laubaras joined the navy in 1745, serving first in administrative positions at the port of Bayonne, and subsequently on a number of warships during the War of the Austrian Succession. In 1750 his father was appointed port captain at Louisbourg, which in turn led to Laubaras being appointed to the position of port ensign later that year. In 1755 he returned to France and a year later took command of the frigate *Aigle*, which he sailed to Louisbourg that fall. Laubaras returned to France soon thereafter, then left for Québec in early 1757 in the *Aigle*, this time accompanied by the frigate *Outarde*. After capturing a number of British merchant ships, the two vessels became separated near Newfoundland. Proceeding on alone, Laubaras elected to make his way to Québec through the dangerous Straits of Belle Isle, and as a result, ran aground. Intendant François Bigot dispatched two vessels to assist him, but both of these ships collided and sank in a storm not long after reaching the stranded crew. Determined to reach Québec, Laubaras requisitioned the old fishing schooner *Roi du Nord*, loaded it with what could be salvaged from the three wrecks, and set course for the colonial capital, only to have the dilapidated vessel sink a hundred miles short of his destination. Once again Laubaras and his crew waded ashore, this time finally reaching their goal by foot. Thus, when Governor Vaudreuil began looking for an officer in early 1758 to command the fleet being constructed on Lake Champlain, he found the downcast lieutenant without a ship and appointed him to the position.¹²

Working together, Levasseur and Laubaras agreed to build four *xebecs* to form the core of New France's naval deterrent on the lake, and by late May 1759 three of these had been completed. The first vessel launched was the fleet's flag ship, the *Musquelongy*. She was armed with two twelve-pound cannon and eight iron four-pounders, easily making her one of the deadliest fish on the lake. The remaining two vessels were the *Brochette* and the *Esturgeon*, the first of which mounted six four-pound cannon and a pair of swivel guns along her deck rails, while the second carried six four-pound cannon in addition to four swivel guns. The final armament of these warships was something of a compromise. René Levasseur in a letter to Governor Vaudreuil stated that the armament for the *xebecs* his son was building was to be six four-pound cannon and a pair of twelve-pound cannon. Certainly the larger guns were not easy to come by after four years of war, but just as much

of an issue seems to have been the vessels' ability to carry them. Colonel Charles Bourlamaque, admittedly unfamiliar with the crafts' design, was nonetheless taken aback by how small they were when he viewed them at St. Jean. In an attempt to bolster their armament, he suggested that the captain's cabin, which he considered nearly useless, be removed to make room for a pair of guns, but nothing came of the idea, as the work would have delayed the fleet's scheduled deployment.¹³

The sixty-five-foot xebecs were unlike anything previously seen at St. Jean. Xebecs in general were slim, low freeboard vessels favored by the Mediterranean pirates of the age. Descendants of the galley, they were fragile, shallow-draft craft that emphasized speed and agility over sturdiness. The vessels' trademark, however, the three short masts and taller near-vertical yard arms fitted with triangular sails, seem to have been modified by Levasseur to the point of creating a number of confused looks. Montcalm's second in command, General François-Gaston de Lévis, could only say that "some species of chebecs" were being built at St. Jean, while veteran Captain Medard Poularies of the Royal Rousillon regiment was even more puzzled, commenting upon seeing them for the first time that "they didn't resemble anything."¹⁴

The nature of Levasseur's change is unclear. There is almost no information from French sources beyond Lévis's claim that the vessels had "masts," and British accounts of these ships shed only a small amount of light on the subject. Commodore Joshua Loring, who commanded the British squadron on Lake Champlain, would later classify these vessels as sloops and claimed that they employed topsails. This description would imply that the xebecs were actually single-masted vessels that employed a fore and aft sail plan along with a small square topsail, similar to the British sloop *Boscawen*, which Loring would build at Ticonderoga. Such an assessment, however, needs to be qualified. The definition of a sloop in the British navy of the time was typically applied to a wide range of small craft based on their function and gun count, rather than their sail plan. Hence, Loring's definition does not necessarily imply a traditional sloop rig on these ships, nor does it account for Lévis's statement regarding the masts, or the uncertainty expressed by him, Poularies, and Bourlamaque as to the vessels' type. Another interesting British account comes from an officer by the name of Wilson who claimed that he saw a French brigantine, schooner, and a topsail sloop at anchor near Split Rock on August 11, 1759. The schooner, at least, would be easily explained, except that the *Vigilante* did not operate with Laubaras's squadron. Thus, we have three common ships, all of which appeared different to the observer.¹⁵

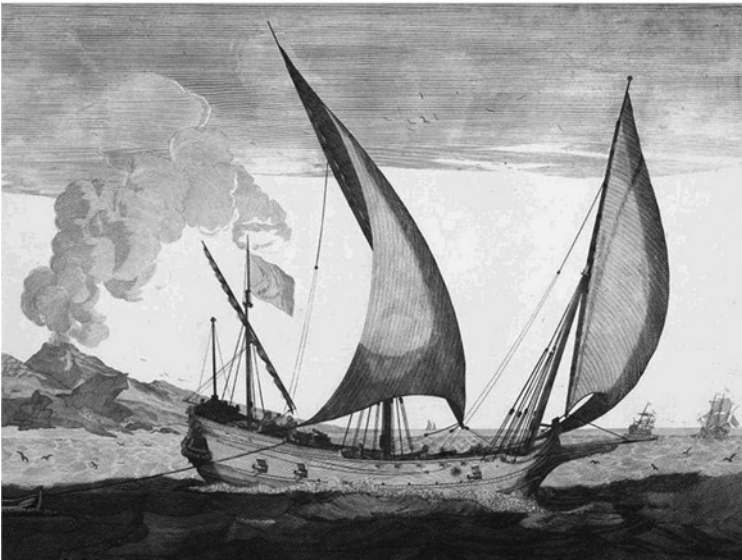
Levasseur probably built a hybrid ship known as a polacre-xebec.

The *polacre* was a variant that employed three masts, like the traditional xebec, with the foremost mast rigged with a large lateen sail, the mizzen mast rigged with a smaller lateen sail, and the central mast rigged with square sails. The mixed sail plan was a compromise. Lateen sails allowed for maneuverability and movement close to the wind, but such vessels suffered a performance loss when running before the wind (that is, when the wind is directly from behind). The square sail mainmast helped alleviate this problem. The mixed sails gave such a vessel an odd look, almost as if a major mistake had been made in construction. Such an arrangement would explain Loring's observations, would account for the comments from the senior French officers, and could give the appearance of different rigs, especially at a distance, depending on what sails were raised or lowered.¹⁶

The fleet constructed at St. Jean over the winter of 1758 had two major failings. The first was purely technical. The change of the vessels' rigging led to a difficult and unstable platform, and one is left to wonder if Pierre Levasseur's lack of experience in building such craft wasn't to blame. Governor Vaudreuil reluctantly noted that the xebecs required a good wind to get underway, an odd characteristic for such a vessel, while Colonel Broullamaque, in charge of the Lake Champlain frontier, questioned the vessels' usefulness, particularly in the narrow confines of the Richelieu River, as they were, strangely enough, not equipped with oars. Even Laubaras, who as naval commander on the lake must have had some say in the vessels' construction, complained to Montcalm that they were poorly built.¹⁷

Beyond these technical matters, a more pressing question was the philosophy behind the construction of the squadron, and what might be expected from it. With the abandonment of Forts Carillon and St. Frédéric likely and a withdrawal of the French army to Île-aux-Noix, the first line of defense was control of the lake. The English would certainly be forced to construct a number of warships to challenge for this control and to ensure the safety of their troop columns moving north against Île-aux-Noix. Thus, a naval encounter was all but assured, one in which New France would have the upper hand in numbers by virtue of having started the construction of her fleet at least a year earlier. With this obvious scenario in mind, why depart from the well-understood sloops and schooners, solid vessels with a relatively straightforward building process and a proven track record on the inland lakes of North America? Why then, if the intent was to contest the waters of Lake Champlain, would the plan not be to build vessels capable of the yardarm-to-yardarm fight that was certain to come? A fleet of ships so constructed would not only be capable of taking on the British warships, but would

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*A polacre (top), and a xebec (bottom), from Pierre Mortier's *Le Neptune françois, ou Atlas nouveau des cartes marines* (Paris, 1703). The differences in the sail plans between the two vessels, particularly when it comes to their main masts, can be seen from these early paintings. Note that the xebec has not deployed a sail on its aft mast. (Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.)*

wreak havoc on an advancing British troop column, if they could isolate them from their escorts. Yet by choosing to build xebecs, whose attributes emphasized speed and agility over firepower and defense, it is clear that a conscious decision was made to avoid battle. The intent was never to seriously challenge for naval supremacy over the waterway, but instead to construct an opportunistic squadron, a scout fleet that, if managed correctly, could dictate the terms of any engagement and withdraw once it found itself at a disadvantage. Such a fleet, Bourlamaque pointed out, could harass the English and bring news of their advance, but ultimately would not be capable of preventing their movement down the lake.

Although such a policy might appear questionable on the surface, it meshed nicely with Marquis de Montcalm's plan of the defense of the colony, and in all likelihood the squadron had its roots within this approach. The marquis, seeing the war all but lost in North America, proposed trading territory for time so that some portion of the colony might remain in French hands when the eventual negotiated settlement in Europe ended the conflict and hopefully restored the boundaries of New France. The abandonment of Fort Carillon and Fort St. Frédéric was the first part of this policy along the Lake Champlain frontier, while maintaining a fleet along the lake, one that would force the English to consume a campaign season in order to overcome it, was the second part. The fleet, then, like the abandonment of the forts, needed only to buy the defenders a year to fulfill its purpose. This is not to say that Laubaras's squadron was sacrificial. It was not. The ships would be needed to help defend Île-aux-Noix. In the meantime, however, their primary purpose lay in delaying the attack that was certain to come.

A LAKE LOST

In late July 1759, Bourlamaque withdrew the French army down Lake Champlain, as planned, when General Jeffery Amherst appeared before Fort Carillon with 14,000 English troops. The retreating French were assisted in their withdrawal by the elements of the French Lake Champlain fleet, and once at Île-aux-Noix Bourlamaque began preparing the island's defenses while his fleet moved back out onto the waterway. Throughout the late summer and fall Laubaras's squadron, supported by a number of makeshift gunboats and the *Vigilante*, operated on the lake, looking to interdict English scouting parties and gather information on Amherst's impending advance. They achieved little in the way of accomplishing either goal. There was nothing to report on Amherst, and English scouting parties, both large and small, routinely slipped past them unnoticed.¹⁸

Although he had secured the fractured remains of both Fort Carillon and Fort St. Frédéric, Amherst had no intentions of stopping. There was, however, an important matter to contend with. As the French were known to have several sloops and a schooner operating on the lake, some measure of defense against these vessels had to accompany his troop columns if they were to move forward. As it was impossible to move the fourteen-gun sloop *Halifax* or the eight-gun radeau *Invincible* over from Lake George, and because it would take too much time for Commander Joshua Loring to construct a brigantine at Ticonderoga, Amherst settled on constructing a number of smaller gunboats, each of which would carry a single twenty-four-pound gun in its prow. The general was convinced that such an approach would allow him to advance on Île-aux-Noix. “They [the French] depend on my not getting my boats over and being forced to build some for cannon,” he wrote in his journal on July 30, “but I shall be ready sooner than they imagine.”¹⁹

A storm on the night of August 8, however, altered these plans. The bateaux, neatly arranged along the beach at Crown Point, were scattered by the stiff winds, suffering various degrees of damage, while the makeshift gunboats that Amherst had counted on to cover his advance had suffered even more. “The boats with guns can’t live in this lake in bad weather,” he reluctantly wrote in his journal that evening. Reluctantly, because he knew what the conclusion implied: He would have to wait for Loring’s brigantine.²⁰

Loring had barely started his new vessel when a French deserter entered camp with disturbing news. The soldier had been stationed as a marine aboard one of the French warships, and what he had to say worried both Amherst and his senior officers. Four French vessels were operating on the lake, he reported: the *Vigilante*, an old schooner armed with ten guns, six-pounders and four-pounders; two sloops, the *Brochette* and *Esturgeon*, both armed with eight guns, six-pounders and four-pounders; and a third sloop, the *Musquelongy*, the fleet’s flagship, armed with a respectable complement of two brass twelve-pounders and six iron six-pounders. All of these vessels carried detachments of regulars aboard and were armed with varying numbers of swivel guns. In addition, the Frenchman informed a now alarmed Amherst, a fifth vessel was undergoing repairs at St. Jean.²¹

After digesting the news, Amherst met with his officers the next day. All agreed that the French fleet was larger and better armed than first thought, and the consensus was that the brigantine Loring was working on would not be sufficient to contend with such a force. To supplement Loring’s ship, Major Thomas Ord of the Royal Artillery offered to build a six-gun *radeau*, a large flat-bottomed craft rigged with sails and oars,

similar to the gabares in French use. A few weeks later, a scout returned from Île-aux-Noix and informed the British commander that he had seen a new French sixteen-gun sloop anchored in the east channel. It was unwelcome news. Clearly a naval race was taking place, one that was consuming the season, and with it, Amherst's opportunities to strike at the enemy. The general met with Loring the next day and ordered him, once the brigantine was completed, to build a sixteen-gun sloop to counter this new threat.²²

Unbeknownst to Bourlamaque, who was struggling to fortify the sprawling Île-aux-Noix with far too few troops, two British mistakes had bought him the time he desperately needed. First, the French deserter, whom Amherst took at face value, had greatly overestimated the strength of the French fleet. Second, the sixteen-gun sloop reported in the east channel of the island was in fact the unfinished hull of the last xebec Levasseur had planned to build. It had been transformed into a stationary gun platform by mounting six cannon on one side and securing it between the two shores via a set of posts driven into the channel. It was not until mid September, when Ranger Joseph Hopkins led an unsuccessful attempt to burn this ship, and informed Amherst of the true state of the vessel, that the general realized she posed no threat to his movement across the lake. Nevertheless, these two pieces of information forced a major delay upon the British advance as Loring and Ord struggled to finish the vessels needed to counter the imagined threats.²³

Bourlamaque's luck, however, could not hold out forever. By the second week of October, the brigantine *Duke of Cumberland*, the sloop *Boscawen*, and the radeau *Ligonier* were all anchored at Crown Point taking on supplies. With his navy ready, Amherst gave the order for the army to embark the next day. While the troops busied themselves with loading their boats and last-minute preparations, Loring met with Ord and Amherst. Amherst informed his officers that he now felt strong enough to advance against the French fleet, but Loring was not so confident, expressing concerns that the *Duke of Cumberland* and *Boscawen* were not equal to the combined strength of the French squadron. Having waited the better part of the summer and fall, Amherst was not interested in the assessment and dismissed it with little discussion. He ordered Loring to take his two warships down the lake, and if possible, slip past the French fleet to cut off their communications with Île-aux-Noix. The hope was to isolate the enemy warships, thereby delaying any warning the defenders of the island might receive of the English advance. If this was not possible and he was discovered by the French squadron, Amherst ordered Loring to "do Your utmost to come up with and Attack them, and that without any regard to the army you

leave behind.” The army, he assured Loring, would be well enough protected by the *Ligonier* and the small gunboats he had used earlier.²⁴

Armed with his sailing orders, Loring set out late on the afternoon of October 11, quickly leaving Amherst’s four long columns of bateaux and whaleboats in his wake. Loring stationed himself on the brig *Duke of Cumberland*, while command of the *Boscawen* was given to Lt. Alexander Grant of Montgomery’s Highlanders, an officer with prior sailing experience. Although he did not know it at the time, Loring’s doubts as to his ships’ ability to meet the French on equal terms were unfounded. At 115 tons, carrying four six-pound cannon, twelve four-pound cannon, and twenty-two swivels, with a complement of 112 sailors, officers, and marines, his smaller ship, the *Boscawen*, was more than a match for any two ships in the French fleet. The *Duke of Cumberland* was even more powerful. Carrying twenty more men than the *Boscawen* and mounting two extra six-pounders, the 155-ton brigantine evened the odds against the combined French fleet.²⁵

In keeping with his orders, Loring moved down the lake under the cover of darkness and slipped past Laubaras’s squadron. At first light, the two English vessels found themselves nearing the passage between Grand Isle and Cumberland Head, and as dawn took hold, a cry rang out from a lookout on the *Duke of Cumberland*. The French schooner *Vigilante* was dead ahead! Loring signaled to the *Boscawen* to give chase, crowded on the sail, and cleared his ship for action.

Following Robert Rogers’s raid on St. Francis a few weeks earlier, Bourlamaque had stationed the *Vigilante* and a few bateaux to guard the entrance to East Bay. It had proven quiet work until the morning of October 12, when a lookout on the *Vigilante* spied a pair of English warships headed directly for them. St. Onge was quick to react. He gave orders for the bateaux accompanying him to scatter and then raised every square inch of sail his vessel had. As the pursuit pressed north, it became clear to the French captain that he had neither the speed to escape the English nor the firepower to turn and face them. He did, however, have one advantage. He knew the lake better than the British did. As the English vessels edged closer, he saw his opportunity. Ahead about three-quarters of a mile off the northwest coast of Grand Isle lay two small islands known at the time as the Two Brothers, but now more commonly referred to as Bixby and Young Islands. The waters around the Two Brothers were laced with shoals and sand bars. If the consequences were not so dire, the situation might have brought a smile to the mariner’s face as the timing could not have been better. When the larger of the enemy vessels was almost upon him, St. Onge ran the rudder hard over to starboard, passing between the two islands. Seeing

that the *Vigilante* was aiming for the passage into East Bay, Loring followed with the aim of cutting off the Frenchman's escape. A few moments later, a scraping noise reverberated down the length of the *Duke of Cumberland's* hull, followed quickly by another, and then a jarring jolt as the vessel bottomed out. Lt. Grant, not far behind in the *Boscawen*, screamed at his crew to spill the air out of their sails and spun the wheel hard to port, but it was too late. The *Boscawen* touched bottom and then shuddered to a stop on another shoal. As the *Vigilante* disappeared behind Grand Isle, a furious Loring, shouting a dozen orders to his crew, couldn't help but pause and give the departing vessel an approving nod. He had been outdone and knew it.²⁶

To the south, not far from the Four Brothers Islands, the rest of the French fleet was surprised at first light to spot a number of bateaux approaching them. Seeing that they had no escort, Laubaras steered for them. The boats were from the 42nd Regiment, the occupants of which had mistaken the *Boscawen's* signal lamp for the *Ligonier's* during the night and thus found themselves separated from the army. Thinking that the vessels that lay ahead were British, they calmly rowed toward them. The xebecs made short work of the Highlanders' bateaux, damaging one, capturing another, and scattering the rest. It took only a few minutes with his new prisoners for Laubaras to realize that Amherst was advancing down the lake. For a moment the French commander considered attacking, but his orders from Bourlamaque were specific: He was to return to Île-aux-Noix immediately upon obtaining information that Amherst was on the move.

At dawn Amherst, at the head of his flotilla in the *Ligonier*, could hear cannon in the distance, but thinking that it was Loring engaging the French fleet, he continued on. Not long after, several boats, one of which carried Major John Reid of the Royal Highlanders, arrived. Reid informed Amherst of the Highlanders' mistake and what had transpired. The conversation had barely ended when the sails of the French xebecs could be seen on the horizon. It was now Amherst's turn to make a decision. Loring had clearly slipped past the French fleet, trapping them between the two English forces as Amherst had hoped, but unfortunately, that now placed his troop columns in a precarious position. The *Ligonier*, although heavily armed and an excellent gun platform, was a poor sailor, being nothing more than a barge with sails; and his little gunboats that could barely handle the rough waters of the lake were no match for several well-armed sloops. If the French acted aggressively, he might well have a disaster on his hands. As a precaution, he ordered the bateaux to form one column along the west shore of the lake, while his gun boats and the *Ligonier* moved into position to cover

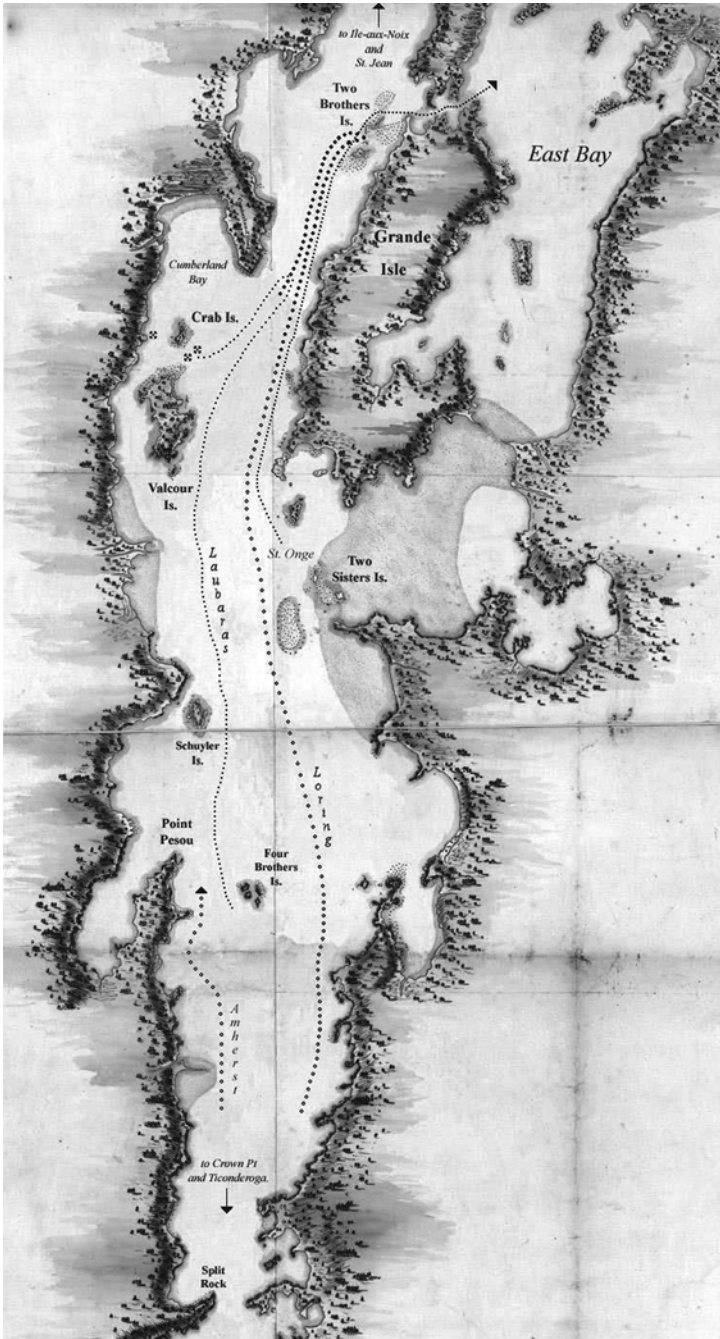
the column's right flank. Several anxious moments passed before it became apparent that the maneuver was unnecessary. The French vessels were headed north at full speed.²⁷

Loring and Grant spent most of the day cursing St. Onge and the shoals they were stuck on. The *Boscawen* was freed fairly easily, but the *Duke of Cumberland* proved to be stuck fast. After removing eight guns and sixty men, the vessel was finally refloated to the cheers of all and the relief of Loring. Neither vessel was damaged, and after transferring the guns and men back aboard, the two warships headed back out into the main channel. Although the *Vigilante* was trapped in East Bay, Loring did not dare go after her for fear of allowing the rest of the French fleet to slip past him. It proved a wise choice, for the two vessels had no sooner begun moving when a cry from a lookout drew everyone's attention. To the south three vessels could be seen tacking north. It seemed that the French fleet had found him and not the other way around, but with the wind in his favor, Loring was not going to argue the point and gave the signal to close on the enemy.²⁸

With the wind gauge against him and his route north blocked, Laubaras had little choice but to reverse course. It now became a matter of who was faster. If Laubaras could outdistance Loring before nightfall, he might be able to turn back under the cover of darkness and make his way past the English to Île-aux-Noix. Such was not the case, however. Loring pressed the French squadron, and with night falling and the wind failing, Laubaras saw no option but to take shelter in the lower portion of Cumberland Bay near the southern end of the Isle of St. Michael or Crab Island as it is known today.

With the two English warships anchored not far away, Laubaras called together Captain Rigal of the *Brochette* and the captain of the *Esturgeon* to discuss their options. It was agreed that a pair of small boats would be sent to warn Bourlamaque, and then, strangely, the decision was made to put the crews ashore and scuttle the fleet. It was an odd course of action, because nothing had been attempted. Although Laubaras's fleet was south of the English warships, it was hardly an iron trap. It was nightfall and the channel north between Cumberland Head

Facing page: *Naval actions on Lake Champlain, October 12–13, 1759. The author has added the movements of the French and English warships during this timeframe, and for clarity, has simplified several notational aspects of the 18th-century map, A Plan of Lake Champlain from Fort St. John to Ticonderoga . . . 1779. The original map can be found in the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.*



and Grand Isle was close to a mile and a half across, covered by only two warships whose crews were unfamiliar with the waters. At the very least, Laubaras could have tried to slip past the English. Given that there were three French ships and only two of the enemy, the odds were good that even if things went badly, at least one of the French vessels would have escaped. Nor was choosing to fight out of the question. The three xebecs, although outgunned and outmanned, were hardly facing overwhelming odds.

The weather, however, had much to do with the decision. At the moment both sides were becalmed, but indications were that at first light the weather would deteriorate, bringing the wind once again from the northeast. The xebecs had proved poor sailors under the best of circumstances, and without oars to counter the contrary winds, Laubaras seems to have judged both flight and fight impossible.

There was yet another option that must have been discussed. Although the weather and the English barred the route north, nothing was stopping the French fleet from moving south. At first light, or better yet before, as the wide part of the lake lay before them, the xebecs could proceed south. With a little luck they would shake their pursuers, hide, seek a defensible position in one of the many coves along the east shore, or launch a surprise attack on Amherst's troop columns, which they now knew were without their main escorts. Laubaras had already passed up one opportunity to attack Amherst. Given his orders and his belief that the English column would be screened by their principal warships, such a decision was not without merits. But now neither were guiding factors. The French fleet was lost in almost any scenario. It simply became a matter of what price to make the enemy pay for its loss. A more aggressive commander would not have hesitated. The chances of success were not good, but if just one French ship could get among the British troop columns, or better yet, among the boats carrying Amherst's artillery, they could deal the enemy a blow that would neutralize their new control of the lake. A Benedict Arnold would have certainly taken these odds, but Laubaras was not such a man.

The act of scuttling the fleet was accomplished almost as quickly as the decision was arrived at and with nearly the same thought process. The twelve-pounders from the *Musquelongy*, a few swivel guns, and a handful of muskets were thrown overboard, but the *Brochette* and *Esturgeon* were sunk intact in five fathoms of water, and the *Musquelongy*, after her masts were cut, simply run aground on the west shore of the lake. The work seemed to satisfy Laubaras, who along with the rest of the sailors and marines began the overland trek to Montreal. When dawn broke the next morning, Loring was stunned to find the abandoned

French fleet before him. When he and Lt. Grant investigated the wrecks, the shock turned to satisfaction. In both his and the Highlanders' estimation, all three of the ships and most of the items thrown overboard could be salvaged. Leaving Grant and the *Boscawen* to handle this task, Loring set sail north in hopes of catching the *Vigilante* before she returned to Île-aux-Noix, but poor weather and contrary winds forced him to seek shelter before he got more than a few miles from Cumberland Head.²⁹

The same storm that stopped Loring had also forced Amherst's flotilla ashore. A letter from the commodore reached the general on October 14 with news of the French fleet's destruction, but there was little he could do at the moment to take advantage of the situation. The winds were so bad that he could not even get a message back to Loring, and the lake was as choppy "as some seas in a gale." The 15th proved "impractical," the 16th no better, and the 17th just as bad, and on each of these evenings a hard freeze gripped the area, making the troops' life ashore nothing short of miserable. The weather lifted some on the 18th, but it no longer mattered. A courier reached the general from Crown Point that morning with news of Québec's capture and Wolfe's death. The fall of Québec, while good news for the British cause, spelled a death blow for Amherst's campaign. With the loss of Québec, the French army would fall back on Montreal, which meant that if Amherst proceeded, he would now have to contend with the combined armies of Bourlamaque and Lévis. To add to the decision, the air had taken on "an appearance of winter." The weather was not likely to improve, and by the general's estimation Île-aux-Noix was still a good ten days away at their current pace, plenty of time for the French to prepare a warm reception for his men. It all signaled the end of the campaign. "I shall decline my intended operations and get back to Crown Point where I hear the works go on but slowly," he wrote in his journal. The next morning he made his decision official. After detaching troops to assist Loring in his hunt for the *Vigilante* and to aid Grant in his salvage operations, Amherst ordered the army back to Crown Point.³⁰

For Bourlamaque the entire chain of events proved nothing less than frustrating. Given the vessels built and their glaring defects, he never had much faith in his navy's ability to halt the English advance; and although its loss was tempered by Amherst's decision to abandon the campaign, the French commander was mystified as to what had motivated Laubaras's decision. "[Laubaras] has sunk his boats without trying to march, without firing his cannon, and without attempting to escape under the cover of darkness," he wrote to Lévis. Nor was an explanation forthcoming, as Laubaras and his men elected to march straight for

Montreal. Bourlamaque wrote Governor Vaudreuil, demanding an explanation and the return of these men to bolster the defenses of Île-aux-Noix, but with the campaign season coming to a close, the whole matter soon faded into the background. At least the French commander could take some solace in the return of the *Vigilante*, which emerged from East Bay a few days later no worse for wear.³¹

The failure of Amherst and his men to reach Montreal was more than offset by the year's gains. Québec, Fort Niagara, Fort Carillon, and Fort St. Frédéric were now in British hands, and in an impressive feat Lt. Grant had managed to salvage all three French xebecs and much of their armament. By November 16 these vessels, which more than doubled the English naval presence on Lake Champlain, were safely anchored alongside the *Duke of Cumberland* and the *Boscawen* under the guns of Fort Ticonderoga. The conquest of the Lake Champlain corridor was not complete, but for the moment at least, there were no questions as to who commanded the lake.³²

THE LAST BATTLE

With the turn of the year, command of Île-aux-Noix was turned over to Montcalm's old chief of staff, Louis-Antoine Bougainville. Bougainville was under no illusions about what his new assignment would bring. With an English attempt on the island all but certain, he was forced to operate under a greater handicap than Bourlamaque the year before. A lack of manpower crippled the young colonel's efforts to secure the post, and what he did possess after the reinforcements finally arrived was less than half of what Bourlamaque had found necessary to defend the post the year before. Even with these setbacks, he made a great deal of progress. By August the island bristled with field fortifications. Most of the work was logically confined to the southern portion of the island, where the initial attack was certain to fall, and focused on improving the works previously erected there. The northern part of the island, however, lacked adequate defenses. Although the ground here was marshy, the English still might attempt to bring cannon over to this part of the island and attack the French fortifications via trench work, in the fashion of a formal siege.³³

Among the most important elements of Bougainville's defenses were the vessels assembled around the island. The loss of the three xebecs the previous fall had left the French scrambling for naval support. The gabare, armed with four small cannon, and the schooner *Vigilante* still remained, but little else. To fill the void left by the loss of Laubaras's squadron, two vessels, known as *tartanes*, were constructed at St. Jean during the fall of 1759 and the summer of 1760. The tartanes were in

keeping with the Mediterranean theme set earlier by the construction of the xebecs. Essentially row galleys, these vessels employed a short lateen-rigged main mast, and a small sail on their bowsprit to go along with a lateen sail on a short mizzen mast. The larger of the two, christened *Grand Diable*, carried forty to sixty oars and was originally to be armed with four twenty-four-pound cannon, but such guns were no longer to be found within the colony, and three eighteen-pound cannon were substituted instead, two mounted in the prow and another firing astern. The smaller of the two tartanes, simply referred to as the “little one,” carried twenty-four oars and was armed with a number of swivel guns and four-pound cannon in lieu of the twenty-four-pound guns originally planned for her. Four small “Jacob” gunboats, armed with eight-pound guns in their prow, rounded out the naval forces at Bougainville’s disposal.³⁴

At Crown Point, General William Haviland had spent a busy summer preparing for the upcoming campaign. Although he had previously commanded Fort Edward, the assignment was Haviland’s first independent command of a corps, and he was eager to show that his recent promotion to brigadier general was well founded. Throughout May, June, July, and the first part of August, his days were spent immersed in the details of forwarding troops and supplies to Crown Point, repairs on Fort Ticonderoga, work on Fort Amherst at Crown Point, and dispatching scouting parties north. To seize Île-aux-Noix, the Richelieu Valley forts, and from there march on to Montreal, Amherst had given Haviland two regular British regiments, several provincial regiments from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, Rogers’s Rangers, and a detachment of the Royal Artillery. To protect his advance down the lake, Haviland could look to the naval squadron under the command of the Highlander-turned-commodore, Lt. Alexander Grant. Although it was known that the French still had a few vessels at their command, the British knew they controlled the lake. Grant had successfully raised and refitted the scuttled French fleet at Cumberland Bay, which meant that in addition to the *Duke of Cumberland* and the *Boscawen*, he now had three more sloops at his disposal, and in addition to the *Ligonier*, Lt. Colonel Ord had seen to the construction of three more flat-bottomed vessels, known as *radeaux*, to carry his artillery. Added to this were a number of gunboats, whaleboats, and smaller flat-bottomed vessels, all of which more than ensured English naval superiority.³⁵

By August 11, 1760, all the details having been addressed, Haviland pushed out onto the lake. Rogers’s men took the lead in whaleboats, followed closely by the grenadiers and light infantry. In the boats behind them stretched out in three columns were the provincial troops

and the two regiments of British regulars. The *Ligonier* and three smaller radeaux carrying Ord's artillery and supplies along with the army's provision boats followed, escorted by the Rhode Island forces. Compared to previous years the flotilla was small, but in all it consisted of some 3,400 troops in eighty whaleboats, 330 bateaux, and 4 radeaux—more than enough for the task at hand. Grant's squadron had been ordered to lie off of Windmill Point in expectation of the fleet.³⁶

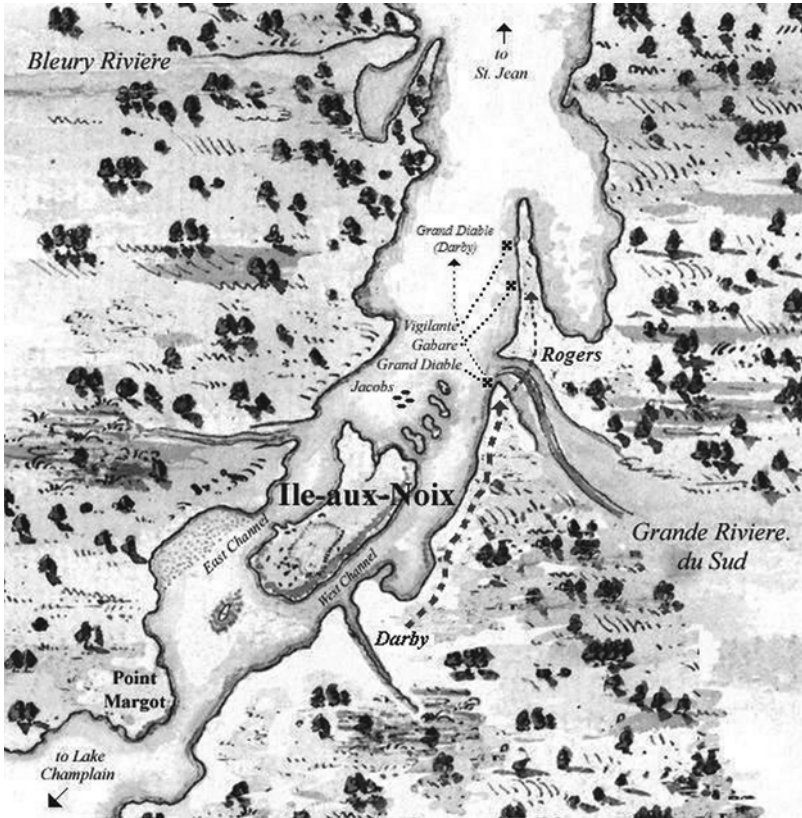
By daybreak of August 16, Haviland's troop columns had joined with Grant's fleet, forming two four-mile-long columns on the lake, which when cast against the perfect weather "made a very beautiful appearance," according to one provincial journalist.³⁷ Led by the *Ligonier*, the other artillery radeaux, and a few small gunboats, the columns entered the confines of the Richelieu River, where they encountered two small French boats that quickly beat a retreat at the sight of the armada. Around noon Haviland ordered the columns to halt just above Point à Margot, out of sight of Île-aux-Noix. The radeaux and gunboats were sent ahead to distract the enemy, while the order was given for Lt. Colonel John Darby's advanced guard of Rangers, Grenadiers, and Light Infantry to land on the east bank of the river. After scouring the shore for an hour, Darby gave the "all clear" signal and the rest of the army disembarked shortly thereafter with little incident. By nightfall over 3,000 men were ashore in the woods south of the island, secure behind a mile-long wooden breastwork that Haviland ordered built.³⁸

Haviland spent the next few days shuffling his army forward along the east shore, throwing up new breastworks, and positioning his artillery. Bougainville occasionally fired on his opponent, but it did little to distract their focus, and as the days progressed he was quickly finding himself in an impossible situation.³⁹ A few reinforcements had reached him on the opening days of the siege, but nowhere near what was needed or promised. Although Haviland had no intention of doing so, Bougainville's first concern was to prevent an English landing on the island, especially on the northern part where the enemy might appear suddenly via the Rivière du Sud, which entered the Richelieu a few hundred yards north of the island. If they secured a foothold here, they could entrench themselves and haul cannon forward against the weaker northern fortifications. To prevent this, at the start of the siege he dispatched Captain Jean Valette with 230 men and four cannon to this part of the island with orders to man the blockhouse there in hopes of hindering any English landing. St. Onge in the *Vigilante*, Captain Lesage with the *Grand Diable*, the gabare, and four gunboats were posted at the mouth of the Rivière du Sud, not only to block any English descent down the river, but to keep open the supply and communications

lines to St. Jean. It was hardly a formidable position, nor the ideal approach, Bougainville informed Lévis, but “The isle is immense and I must avoid all arrangements which would put me in the position of being taken by a coup de main.”⁴⁰ Still, he assured Lévis, regardless of the defects in the position, he and the garrison were up to the task of defending it.⁴¹

A little over a week after landing, Haviland gave the order for the siege guns to open fire. For two days the English artillery pounded the island through a low-hanging mist that scattered showers across defender and foe alike. Both nights Haviland used the cover provided by the barrage to send several parties out to cut the boom blocking the east channel in hopes of opening the waterway to his vessels, but with little success. The detachments found the structure much stronger than anticipated, and in each case they were eventually chased off by a hail of grapeshot and small arms fire.

In the early morning hours of August 25, the English artillery renewed their systematic pounding of Île-aux-Noix. With the sound of their march masked by the thumping siege guns, Colonel Darby’s detachment of Grenadiers, Light Infantry, and Rangers plowed through the mire along the east shore, dragging two twelve-pound cannon and a pair of five-and-a-half-inch howitzers behind them. It was grueling work, manhandling several tons of iron through the muck and between the trees, but by mid morning Darby’s men had reached their destination and erected their little battery on a point of land just south of the confluence of the Rivière du Sud and the Richelieu. Across from them, anchored below the northern tip of the island, were three French vessels, the objective of their trek. Haviland had ordered Darby to destroy the French fleet in order to cut the island’s communications with Fort St. Jean and open a passage for English vessels once the boom was cut. Around ten o’clock that morning, Darby opened fire on his unsuspecting targets. Onboard the *Grand Diable*, Captain Lesage responded instinctively to the attack and ordered the anchor cable cut so the vessel could be rowed to safety. Darby’s men, however, were quick to find the range, and the next few shots crashed into the *Grand Diable*, killing Lesage instantly. With the tartane under fire and drifting slowly under a northwest wind toward the English battery, the crew thought the better of the matter and either swam to safety or surrendered. With the *Grand Diable* aground on the east shore, Darby turned his attention to the *Vigilante* moored a few hundred yards to the north. St. Onge had slipped his anchor at the start of the engagement in an attempt to run down the river, but quickly found himself sliding toward the east shore under the prevailing winds. Soon he too was aground on a peninsula



The capture of the French Fleet, October 25, 1760. The author has simplified portions of the 18th-century map, A Plan of Lake Champlain from Fort St. John to Ticonderoga . . . 1779, and has added the final movements of the French fleet leading up to their capture. The original map can be found in the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

north of the Rivière du Sud. The gabare that accompanied his flight met a similar fate, running aground not far away. The gabare, stuck fast, was doomed, but with luck the *Vigilante* might still be able to free herself, if she had the time. Darby, however, had no intention of allowing his quarry to escape. He ordered Rogers across the Rivière du Sud, while he and his men attempted to free the *Grand Diabie*. Rogers and his men made their way across the river, and once opposite the two vessels, laid down a barrage of musketry. A few of the Rangers, armed with tomahawks, swam out to the gabare and boarded her with little in

the way of opposition. The *Vigilante's* crew put up a little more resistance, banging away with her small cannon, but when the *Grand Diable*, now manned by English sailors, came into view, St. Onge resigned himself to the futility of the situation and struck his colors.⁴²

The engagement was an unqualified success for Haviland, and the end of the French Lake Champlain fleet. Twenty French sailors, including St. Onge, had been captured, the garrison's communications with Fort St. Jean had been cut, and the English now had three vessels under their control below the island. The entire venture had been accomplished without the loss of a single English soldier. The general was quick to exploit the victory. He ordered Lt. Grant and seventy sailors down to Darby's position to man the prizes and followed this with supplies and new cannon for the vessels. Ten whaleboats were also sent forward with orders for Darby to use them to ferry his men across the river to seize control of Prairie de Boileau on the west bank, further tightening the noose around the island.⁴³

For an exasperated Bougainville, the action was nothing short of a disaster. Although he had ordered the remaining elements of his fleet to support the vessels when they came under attack, they had refused to advance. The loss of the three warships now placed him in an impossible situation. His lifeline to St. Jean was cut, and what remained of his fleet, even if he had any faith in their abilities, could not contest the waters with the English. In addition, the enemy had made repeated efforts against the east boom, and it seemed only a matter of time before they managed to cut it and open the channel to their vessels. The turn of events called into question his entire position. To a large extent, the defense of Île-aux-Noix hinged on naval control of the river north of the island. Once this was lost, the island's fortifications could, at best, only serve to pin down a portion of the English army, while the rest circumvented the island and carried their advance farther down river. The conclusions were clear, and the next evening, under the cover of darkness, Bougainville abandoned the island.⁴⁴

It then only became a matter of days before the end of New France. Haviland cut the boom blocking the east channel, and with the captured *Grand Diable* in the lead, arrived at Fort St. Jean on the afternoon of August 30 to find it a smoldering ruin. Here lay the last two elements of the French Lake Champlain fleet, "one on ye stocks and one burned." The vessel on the stocks was the unfinished xebec that Broulmaque had used as a floating battery. In November of the previous year, he had ordered this vessel towed to St. Jean and pulled out of the water in preparation for winter. Given the problems encountered with the earlier xebecs, their lack of oars needed to navigate the Richelieu River, and the

real possibility that such a vessel might be surprised and boarded in the narrow waterway, the decision was made not to finish her. The ship reported as burned was in all likelihood the *Saintonge*, the only major vessel not accounted for in the French Lake Champlain fleet.⁴⁵

Fort Chambly fell quickly on September 4, 1760, after a few shots, the only artillery rounds ever fired at the structure in its ninety-five-year history. With the forts and towns of the Richelieu Valley secured, Haviland turned his army to the west to take part in the final moments of New France. At one o'clock on the afternoon of September 8, his troops arrived on the south bank of the St. Lawrence opposite Montreal. General Amherst was encamped on the island to the west of the city with his army, while General James Murray was on the eastern end of the island, marching toward the last French stronghold. At almost the same moment as Haviland appeared, Governor Vaudreuil, realizing that further resistance was useless, gave the official order surrendering the colony.⁴⁶

EPILOGUE

With the surrender of Canada, calm descended over the Champlain Valley. For the next few years, sizable garrisons were dispatched each spring to man and work on the forts, and each fall a small core of these men were selected to garrison these locations throughout the winter. During this time, talk abounded about the return of Canada to France and even consideration of trading Canada for one of the valuable sugar islands, but when the Seven Years' War concluded in 1763, England retained Canada at the peace table. The English ministry's decision to keep Canada was called into question by many at the time and would have far-reaching consequences, but for the moment the colonies who had borne the brunt of the century-long conflict with the French rejoiced at the news.

St. Onge and most of the Canadian sailors who had served with him returned to quiet lives. A general amnesty was put into place in an effort to return the countryside to some form of normalcy, and for the Canadians who had seen the conflict to the end, the terms of the surrender were simple: go home. Some of the sailors who were French regulars returned to France. Many however, through family bonds or links to the land, elected to stay. The terms of the English occupation were not harsh, and the prospects Canada afforded those who chose to stay opportunities not to be found in Europe. The architects of the fleet, René and Pierre Levasseur, returned to France with the surrender of the colony. Although the elder Levasseur had lost nearly everything during the war, he was quickly put to work upon his return harvesting

masts in the Pyrenees forests for the French navy. As in New France his talents were quickly recognized and in early 1764 he was appointed commissary of the marine, a position he would hold until his retirement a few years later. Pierre did not fare as well as his father. He seems to have been employed as a writer in the marine for some time, but despite his father's influence he was later refused the position as deputy commissary of the marine.

Although he was never seriously challenged on his decision to scuttle his squadron, Laubaras was nonetheless dismissed from the service of New France. In keeping with his impressive string of bad luck he was shipwrecked on his return voyage to France in 1760, and after finding passage on another vessel, was then captured by a British frigate and taken to England where he was held until exchanged. His adventures on Lake Champlain do not seem to have stigmatized his later career. After serving on various vessels he was made a captain in 1779, and after commanding a pair of vessels over the intervening years, he retired as a rear admiral in 1786.⁴⁷

For the ships they sailed on, almost all of which were captured by the British, the future was varied. The *Grand Diable*, after carrying General Amherst from Île-aux-Noix to Ticonderoga in late September 1760, was used for a time to ferry supplies between Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point. On the night of October 22, 1761, loaded down with 150 barrels of flour, she tripped her anchor in a gale and caved in her hull against the rocks. The *Brochette* and *Esturgeon* were taken into Grant's fleet under the names *Brochet* and *La Chigan*, both classified as sloops. In constant need of repairs, they were operated sporadically until 1767, at which point both were either purposely sunk in the cold lake waters, or like the *Duke of Cumberland* and the *Boscawen*, simply left to rot along the shore until the lake eventually claimed them. The *Vigilante*, used for a brief period of time to shuttle troops between the Champlain Valley forts, seems to have gone this way as well. The *Saint-onge's* fate is unclear, as is the incomplete sloop-hulk found at the capture of St. Jean. The first seems to have been burned when Fort St. Jean was put to the torch in the final days of the war, while the second, although it escaped the flames, was never finished and likely ended up on the scrap heap cannibalized for its fittings. The "little one" tartane found itself gainfully employed for a few years, first in carrying off anything useful from Île-aux-Noix, and then in transporting supplies between Ticonderoga and Crown Point. With the war's official conclusion in 1763, however, and the reduced garrisons that followed, she quickly outlived her usefulness and was allowed to decay until she eventually sank. The gabare, christened the *Waggon* and classified as a sloop by the British,

was quickly put to use carrying supplies and troops down the lake. By early November 1760 she was already at Crown Point, and on the 17th of that month Haviland reported her loaded and ready to sail north, waiting only on the weather. She was utilized along with all the other vessels the following year, and shows up on a list of vessels prepared by Loring at Ticonderoga in late 1762. From here however, there are no more records of her actually being employed, implying that she too found a home beneath the cold lake waters.⁴⁸

Ironically, the last of the ships afloat from the French and Indian War was Laubaras's old flagship, the *Musquelongy*. The vessel underwent a major overhaul in 1765 to replace her rotting deck and upper works, and in 1767 John Blackburn, an English merchant, entered into a contract with the army to use this vessel to maintain the supply routes between the posts on Lake Champlain and the upper Richelieu River. The last ship of the French Lake Champlain fleet continued to operate until 1771, when it was deemed so unfit that it was replaced by the fifty-ton sloop *Betsy* built at the reconstructed Fort St. Jean. Sometime later that year, the crew of the *Musquelongy* stripped her of anything valuable and scuttled her, making her perhaps the only warship in history intentionally sunk by two different nations.⁴⁹

In retrospect, although the French Lake Champlain fleet was but a passing phase in the history of the Champlain Valley—it existed barely eighteen years—during this time it made significant contributions to the defense of New France. In shuttling troops and supplies back and forth from St. Jean to posts further up the lake, there is little doubt that the *Saintonge*, the *Vigilante*, and the gabare (*Waggon*) had a major impact on the defense of the Lake Champlain frontier, and in performing this tireless duty the little fleet showed its true mettle. In the higher profile role of a naval deterrent, the fleet performed admirably. It may seem odd to view the loss of the best armed ships in the fleet as a success, but one must remember that the three warships built at St. Jean during the winter of 1758 were never intended to do battle with the English. By simply existing they forced Amherst to build a fleet of his own, which consumed the better part of the campaign season. In the end, these three vessels stymied the efforts of a 12,000-man English army for a year. It was a remarkable feat by any military standards, and although all three were lost to this cause, it was an exchange that New France was more than happy to make.

Of more lasting importance was the precedent the French Lake Champlain fleet set in demonstrating the virtues of naval control over the Champlain Valley. Through its actions it became the forerunner of future fleets—larger, more capable, and better led ones that would vie

for control of the strategic north-south waterway and would ultimately help shape the fate of a new republic.

NOTES

¹For an overview of these two early campaigns see Jack Verney, *The Good Regiment: The Carignan-Salières Régiment in Canada, 1665–1668* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 71–84, and Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict* (2 vols. Boston, Ma.: Little, Brown and Co., 1894), 1: 134–138.

²Beauharnois to Minister, 13 October 1735, National Archives of Canada (NAC), MG1-C11A, vol. 63, fol. 73–103; Hocquart to Minister, 3 October 1741, *ibid.*, vol. 75, fol. 28–33. Note that directions on Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River are based on how both drain. Thus “down the lake/river” would be moving north and “up the lake/river” would be moving south.

³Hocquart to Minister, 3 October 1741, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 75, fol. 28–33; Bordereau de la dépense . . . de la construction d'une barque dans le lac Champlain la présente année 1742, *ibid.*, vol. 78, fol. 129–130; État des munitions . . . pour le service d'une goëlette que Sa Majesté a ordonné être construite pour naviguer sur le lac Champlain, *ibid.*, vol. 78, fol. 131–132; État de la dépense . . . du fort Saint-Frédéric pendant l'année 1745, *ibid.*, vol. 85, fol. 392–394; État de la dépense . . . du fort Saint-Frédéric . . . 1744, *ibid.*, vol. 84, fol. 113–114.

⁴Projet de dépense pour la construction et armement d'une gabare ou bateau plat... à faire naviguer dans le lac Champlain, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 73, fol. 21–22; Beauharnois and Hocquart to Minister, 5 November 1740, *ibid.*, vol. 73, fol. 46–48v; Robert Rogers, *The Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (London, 1765; reprinted University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Mi., 1966), 21; Edward P. Hamilton, ed., *Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1756–1760* (Norman, Ok.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 65; Extrait des registres des magasins . . . la présente année 1746, (31 December 1746), NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 88, fol. 214–245; État de la dépense . . . du fort Saint-Frédéric . . . 1744, *ibid.*, vol. 84, fol. 113–114; État de la dépense . . . du fort Saint-Frédéric pendant l'année 1746, (15 October 1747), *ibid.*, vol. 88, fol. 246–246v; Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*, trans. John Reinold Forster, 3 vols. (London: T. Lowndes, 1771), 3: 42.

⁵Beauharnois and Hocquart to Minister, 5 October and 5 November 1740, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 73, fol. 19–20v, 46–48v. The author has seen the unconfirmed name *Saint Frédéric* applied to the vessel without reference to the original source. This apparently originates from a personal loan St. Onge made to a friend ten years after the vessel's construction. Given that the ship appears in dozens of official documents both before and after this incident without mention of this name, it seems likely that the title was contrived in order to facilitate the paperwork.

⁶Léry to Minister, 7 November 1744, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 82, fol. 306–307v; Galissonniere et Bigot to Ministre, 26 September 1748, *ibid.*, vol. 91, fol. 40–45v; Kalm, *Travels*, 3: 45–46.

⁷“Journal of Chaussegros de Léry,” *Fort Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin*, hereafter *FTMB* (July 1942), 143–144; “Journal de Nicolas Renaud d'Avène des Meloizes,” *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Québec pour 1928–1929* (Québec: Rédempti Paradis, 1929), 11; Rogers, *Journals*, 21–22; H.R. Casgrain, ed., *Lettres du Marquis de Vaudreuil* (Québec: J. Demer and Frère, 1895), 25. Île aux Têtes is known today as Ash Island.

⁸Gabriel de Maurès, de Malartic, *Journal des campagnes au Canada de 1755 à 1760 par le comte de Maurès de Malartic* (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit, et Cie, 1890), 108; Levasseur to Minister, 1 November 1756 and 1 November 1757, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 101, fol. 318–319 and vol. 102, fol. 223–224.

⁹Malartic, *Journal*, 114.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 117, 195; Abbé Charles-Nicolas Gabriel, *Le Maréchal de camp Desandrouins, 1729–1792*, 2 vols. (Verdun: Renvé-Lallement, 1887), 1: 286. A similar confusion as to the first and second “barques” can be seen in a letter from the Marquis de Montcalm to Colonel Charles Bourlamaque in December 1758, see H.R. Casgrain, ed., *Lettres de M. de Bourlamaque* (Québec: J. Demer and Frère, 1891), 283.

¹¹E. B. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 12 vols. (Albany, N.Y.: Weed, Parson, and Co.; 1858), 10, 873–874. “The only way to assure ourselves the possession of Lake Champlain and the St. Frédéric River,” Bougainville wrote in mid 1758, “is by a strong naval force. I hear of chebecs, half-galleys, bateaux like that of M. Jacquau, of officers and of experienced crews” (Bougainville, *Journal*, 246–247).

¹²Levasseur to Minister, 30 October 1758, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 103, fol. 414–417; Jean de Olabaratz (Laubaras), *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5.

¹³Levasseur to Minister, 30 Oct 1758, NAC, MG1-C11A, vol. 103, fol. 414–417; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 35. The armament stated is that recovered by the British after raising the vessels,

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but this may not be complete. Amherst informed Loring after the vessels were raised that “The Enemy had thrown overboard two Brass Guns from Each Sloop where they Sunk them as Lieut. Mackay Informs me; and appears likewise, by the Carriages left in the Sloops.” (Return of Guns . . . found on board the Three French Sloops, Great Britain, Public Records Office, Colonial Office Papers Class 5, American and West Indies, Original Correspondence, vol. 57, hereafter C.O.5/57, copies in NAC; Amherst to Loring, 16 November 1759, Great Britain, Public Records Office, War Office Papers Class 34, vol. 64 hereafter, W.O.34/64, copies in NAC). If all three xebecs, or even two, were actually armed with a pair of twelve-pound cannon, then the striking power of Laubaras’s flotta was much greater than has been estimated over the years.

¹⁴O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10:835, 865; J. Clarence Webster, ed., *The Journal of Jeffery Amherst* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1931), 156–157; H.R. Casgrain, ed., *Journal des Campagnes du Chevalier de Lévis* (Montreal: C.O. Beauchemin and Fils, 1890), 175; “Relation de Poulariès Envoyé à Marquis de Montcalm,” *Rapport de l’Archiviste de la Québec pour 1931–1932* (Québec: Rédempti Paradis, 1933), 89. Bourlamaque stated that the xebecs carried a crew of fifty sailors and marines, and that a total of eighty-two sailors manned the three xebecs and the *Vigilante*, supported by ninety-six regulars and militiamen who acted as marines. (O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1055; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque* 16–17.) For the sake of argument we will assume that the three senior French commanders had seen xebecs before. This is not much of a stretch given that between the three they had close to seventy-five years of military experience.

¹⁵Loring to Admiralty, 22 November 1759, NAC, Admiralty Papers, vol. 2048; Webster, *Amherst*, 154.

¹⁶See entries for polacre and xebec in William Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine* (London: T. Cadell, 1780).

¹⁷Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 22, 327; Andre Charbonneau, *The Fortifications of Île aux Noix* (Ottawa: Canadian Parks Department, 1994), 332; René-Nicolas Levasseur, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4.

¹⁸As an indication of Laubaras’s inability to impede English scouting parties it should be noted that in September Rogers, with 190 men in seventeen whaleboats, slipped past the French fleet on his way to attack the Abenaki settlement on the St. Francis River. (Rogers, *Journal*, 146, 150–151).

¹⁹Webster, *Amherst*, 147–150; Amherst to Pitt, August 5, 1759, C.O.5/56.

²⁰Webster, *Amherst*, 153.

²¹*Ibid.*, 156–157.

²²*Ibid.*, 157, 163–164.

²³Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque au Lévis*, 31; Mémoire sur la Frontière du Lac Champlain par M le Chevalier de Bourlamaque, NAC, MG18-K9, 6: 105–115; Webster, *Amherst*, 168; Amherst to Loring, 15 September 1759, W.O.34/64.

²⁴Sailing Orders for Captain Joshua Loring, 10 October, 1759, W.O.34/64; Webster, *Amherst*, 178–179; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 39.

²⁵Amherst to Pitt, 22 October 1759, C.O.5/57. There is something of a discrepancy when it comes to the armament of the English vessels. Loring reported to the Admiralty that he had built a “Brigantine Capable of Carrying Eighteen Six and Nine pounders and a Sloop of Sixteen Six pounders but we have no Larger Guns here than Four pounders.” (Loring to Admiralty, 22 November 1759, NAC, Admiralty Papers, vol. 2048). In an oversight, the original six-and nine-pound guns did not arrive as expected, leaving Loring to request replacements from Ord. It seems that at least some of the six-pounders were replaced, but if Loring’s statement is true, it would explain why he was hesitant to engage the French fleet with his two vessels. (Amherst to Loring, 28 August and 18 September, 1759, and Loring to Amherst, 29 August and 16 Sept, 1759, W.O.34/64). Opposing fleets of this time were often compared by their weight of metal, that is, by the total poundage of their guns. Counting swivel guns as one-pounders and using the guns recovered by the English for the French numbers we have: Loring (2 vessels)—200 lb. Laubaras (4 vessels)—150 lb. If the *Brochette* and *Esturgeon* were each armed with a pair of twelve-pounders, as Amherst later suspected, this would have put the two sides on par.

²⁶Loring to Admiralty, 22 November 1759, NAC, Admiralty Papers, vol. 2048; Webster, *Amherst*, 180–181; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 61, “Journal de Meloizes,” 80; John Knox, *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760*, 2 vols. (London: Johnston and Dodsley, 1769). Edited by Arthur G. Doughty and reprinted in 3 vols. (Freeport, N.Y.: Libraries Press, 1970), 2: 196.

²⁷Webster, *Amherst*, 179–180; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 30, 61; Amherst to Pitt, 22 October 1759, C.O.5/57; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1056.

²⁸Loring to Admiralty, 22 November 1759, NAC, Admiralty Papers, vol. 2048; Webster, *Amherst*, 180–181.

²⁹Amherst to Pitt, 22 October, 1759, C.O.5/57; Loring to Admiralty, 22 November 1759, NAC, Admiralty Papers vol. 2048; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 62, 65–66, 68; “Journal de Meloizes,”

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80–81; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10:1056; Knox, *Journal*, 2: 196–197; Casgrain, *Journal de Lévis*, 228. As it turned out, a British scouting party under Ranger Nathaniel Burbank had spotted Laubaras’s squadron on the night of October 12, noting “that they kept up a great hammering and noise” throughout the evening. When Laubaras’s men came ashore they discovered the Rangers, forcing the badly outnumbered Burbank to beat a hasty retreat (Webster, *Amherst*, 183–184).

³⁰ Webster, *Amherst*, 181–183.

³¹ Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 68. Vaudreuil promised Bourlamaque that Laubaras would be held accountable for his actions and apparently whatever explanation he received did not sit well with the governor. Lévis refused to give Laubaras command of a vessel being built on Lake Ontario, and the author of an anonymous French journal later referred to Laubaras as “a man no longer to be employed in any command.” (Vaudreuil to Bourlamaque, 25 October, 1759, NAC, MG18-K9, 12: 463–466; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 65–69; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1042.)

³² Webster, *Amherst*, 191; Gertrude Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of William Pitt*, 2 vols. (London: MacMillan, 1906), 2, 223–224. Note that there are contrary statements by Amherst, based on Lt. McKay’s account, on whether the French threw two or four brass guns overboard during the scuttling. Loring attempted to rechristen the *Musquelongy* the *Amherst*, in honor of the general, but the name did not stick. (Webster, *Amherst*, 185).

³³ H.R. Casgrain, ed., *Lettres de Divers Particuliers* (Québec: J. Demer and Frère, 1895), 137–147; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1101–1102; Charles Winchester, ed., *Memoirs of the Chevalier de Johnstone*, 3 vols. (Aberdeen: D. Wyllie and son, 1871), 3: 68–69.

³⁴ Casgrain, *Lettres de Divers Particuliers*, 148–149; Mémoire sur la Frontière du Lac Champlain par M le Chevalier de Bourlamaque, NAC, MG18-K9, 6:105–115; Examination of Prisoners aboard the *Duke of Cumberland*, 20 June 1760, W.O.34/51; Charbonneau, *Fortifications of Île aux Noix*, 331–336; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 September 1760.

³⁵ Hugh Hastings, ed., *Orderly Book and Journal of Major John Hawks, 1759–1760* (New York: H. K. Brewer and Co., 1911), 73–87; “Captain Samuel Jenks’s Journal of the Campaign of 1760,” *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings (MHSP)*, 2 (1890): 355–366; Amherst to Grant, 13 April 1760, W.O.34/65.

³⁶ Rogers, *Journal*, 188–190; Haviland’s Journal, 11–15 August 1760, W.O.34/77; “Journal of Sergeant David Holden,” *MHSP*, 4 (1889): 396–397; “Diary of John Bradbury,” in William Lapham, *Bradbury Memorial* (Portland, Me.: Brown Thurston and Co., 1890), 275–276.

³⁷ “Jenks’s Journal,” 368.

³⁸ *Ibid.*; Haviland’s Journal, 16 August 1760, W.O.34/77; Rogers, *Journal*, 190; *Col. John Whitcomb’s Orderly Book for 1760*, MS at Lancaster Public Library, Lancaster, Massachusetts.

³⁹ Haviland’s Journal, 17 August, 1760, W.O.34/77; “Diary of John Bradbury,” 276–277; P. M. Woodwell, ed., *The Diary of Thomas Moody* (Berwick, Me.: The Chronicle Print Shop, 1976), 26.

⁴⁰ Casgrain, *Lettres de Divers Particuliers*, 144–146. Haviland in his report on the island’s defenses noted that “The works are extensive and with a great garrison it could not be taken, but it would require at least 6,000 men to fill it properly.” (Haviland to Amherst, 31 August 1760, W.O.34/101.)

⁴¹ Casgrain, *Lettres de Divers Particuliers*, 144–146.

⁴² Haviland’s Journal, 24–27 August 1760, W.O.34/77; Haviland to Amherst, 31 August 1760, W.O.34/101; Rogers, *Journal*, 190–191; “Jenks’s Journal,” 371–372; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 and 18 September 1760; Casgrain, *Lettres de Divers Particuliers*, 148–149; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1103–1104. A number of English accounts claimed that a sloop was taken as well as the *Vigilante* and the *Grand Diable*. This was actually the gabare. It should be noted that small vessels such as this were commonly misclassified. Loring, for instance, in a survey of the vessels at Fort William Henry in the fall of 1756, refers to “two open lighters of about 25 tons each” as small sloops in a list he presented to the Admiralty. (“Diaries Kept by Lemuel Woods,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, 20 (1883): 293; “Jenks’s Journal,” 371; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 September 1760; Loring to Admiralty, 29 September 1756, NAC, Admiralty Papers, vol. 2046.) It should be noted that the prisoners interrogated by Rogers in June also referred to the gabare as a sloop. (Examination of Prisoners aboard the *Duke of Cumberland*, 20 June 1760, W.O.34/51).

⁴³ Haviland’s Journal, 24–27 August 1760, W.O.34/77; List of Prisoners Taken at the Reduction of Île aux Noix, C.O.5/59; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 and 18, September 1760.

⁴⁴ Haviland’s Journal, 24–27 August 1760, W.O.34/77; Haviland to Amherst, 31 August 1760, W.O.34/101; Rogers, *Journal*, 190–191; “Jenks’s Journal,” 371–372; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 September 1760; Casgrain, *Lettres de Divers Particuliers*, 148–149; O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1104. With the abandonment of the island the English seized the remaining elements of the French Lake Champlain fleet, namely, the “little one” tartane, and the four Jacobs. The importance placed on the French fleet’s defense of the Richelieu River below Île-aux-Noix may be

seen in a comment attributed to St. Onge. The “Commodore,” as the English stylized him, was reputed to have wished Darby “the joy of the country” upon his capture. Meaning simply, that with this last obstacle overcome New France was open for the taking. (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 September 1760).

⁴⁵Bourlamaque Instructions to La Valette, 24 November 1759, NAC, MG18-K9, 6: 129–132; Casgrain, *Lettres de Bourlamaque*, 21–22; “Diary of John Bradbury,” 281.

⁴⁶“Journal of Sergeant David Holden,” 401; Webster, *Amherst*, 245–247. The Articles of Surrender are printed in O’Callaghan, *Colonial History of New York*, 10: 1107–1120.

⁴⁷René-Nicholas Levasseur, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4; Jean de Olabaratz (Laubaras), *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5.

⁴⁸Webster, *Amherst*, 261–262; Col. John Young to Amherst, 23 October 1761, W.O.34/51; Haviland to Amherst, 17 November 1760 and 4 June, 1761, *ibid.*; Elliot to Amherst, 21 November 1761, *ibid.*; Loring List of Vessels, November 1762, W.O.34/65; Grant to Amherst, 22 November 1760, *ibid.*; Grant to Amherst, 1 December 1763, Gage Papers, vol. 10, William Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Mi.; Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, 2 vols. (London: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1933), 1: 301.

⁴⁹Contract between John Blackburn and Lords of Treasury, 5 May 1767, NAC, Haldimand Papers, B27; Carter, *Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, 1: 258, 301, 2:427, 466; Burton to Gage, 2 May 1765, Gage Papers, vol. 35, William Clements Library. In 1767 Francis Grant on a voyage up Lake Champlain reported that the British fleet at Ticonderoga consisted of the *Duke of Cumberland*, the *Boscawen*, two schooners, some bateaux, and three French sloops, one of which was constantly employed in transporting supplies between Ticonderoga and Fort St. John (“Journal from New York to Canada, 1767,” *New York History: Quarterly Journal of the New York Historical Association*, 13 (1932): 319–320). The statement is somewhat deceptive. The *Boscawen*, for one, had been underwater for five years at this point, and a report from Brigadier General Ralph Burton in 1765 stated that only the three French sloops, all in need of major repairs, were currently active on the lake, which implies that the other vessels had been either intentionally or unintentionally sunk as well. It seems what was meant by Grant’s statement was that if need be, all of the before-mentioned vessels could be raised and refitted. It also seems that Grant mis-categorized the *Waggon* as a schooner, which might easily be done as she was likely underwater by this point. It should also be noted that the “little one” tartane, and none of the British radeaux, including the *Ligonier*, appear on his list.