INDIAN DEPREDATIONS ON THE FRONTIERS.

THE Treaty of Paris of 1763 was a turning point in American history. In its wake came the gradual demise of the Indian menace on the Northwest Frontier. One of the last steps curbing these Indian forces who had previously been allied with the French was taken in October, 1764. A significant figure in this work was a Swiss mercenary of French extraction who was employed by the British as an army officer, Colonel Henry Bouquet.

There had been a prior attempt to deal with the Indians in the Northwest area. Colonel John Bradstreet had gone as far as Detroit and had been involved in unsuccessful negotiations. Therefore, the settlements on the western frontier were still in a precarious position. The Indians were determined to halt white incursions upon their lands and drive them back to the sea. Pontiac’s war in 1763 gave the tribes a renewed spirit in that direction. Attacks on frontier settlements continued to be frequent and devastating.

The opinion of informed members of the British forces and their desire to push the fight to the Indians was summed up by Colonel John Reid in a letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet on August 25, 1764:

. . . I have heard Mr. Potts mention the principal articles of peace, which Mr. Bradstreet has made with the Indians, but I don’t find that the Ringleaders of all these inhuman Barbaritys are to be deliver’d up to us, or any Satisfaction given on that Account. I hope no such Peace Will be ratified, which cannot be of long Duration: but that we shall Still march into their Country, and make such examples of these inhuman Monsters, as will make their Posterity tremble to think of. . . .

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William Potts also expressed these sentiments in a letter to Bouquet on August 28, 1764. He said: "... it will be a great pity if you have not the pleasure of humbling those Barbarous Wretches. ..."  

Bouquet was a Swiss soldier of fortune who had come to this country to serve in the British army. He achieved eminence while commanding a small army enfeebled from the rigors of a West Indian tour of duty. At the Battle of Bushy Run in Pennsylvania Bouquet's force, surrounded and without water, seemed destined to the fate of Braddock in 1755. Colonel Bouquet concocted a ruse that effected a victory for him. He had the men fall back as if in retreat leaving baggage and supplies behind. The Indians, with victorious howls, rushed toward the provisions. Bouquet's men halted and turned a vigorous and deadly fire upon the surprised Indians which routed them and saved the day.  

The battle of Bushy Run is called by Parkman "one of the best contested actions ever fought between white men and Indians." The news of the victory prompted a vote of thanks from the Pennsylvania Assembly. Bouquet also received formal thanks from the king through General Amherst.  

Colonel Bouquet then traveled to Fort Pitt to prepare an expeditionary force to go into the Ohio country. During 1763 and part of 1764 he struggled to raise funds and troops with which to conduct a successful expedition against the Indians. He asked Pennsylvania for assistance in the form of men and supplies, pointing out that no other province had so much at stake in the Indian wars. Pennsylvania, he said, was notoriously weak, and the Indians would soon fall upon it if he did not receive assistance in his venture. Bouquet in 1763 asked for only 700 men but did not get them. The Pennsylvania Assembly refused to act until the next summer when they voted for 1,000 men to join Bouquet and, interestingly, for the purchase of fifty pairs of bloodhounds to hunt Indian scalping parties.  

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2 Lieut. Wm. Potts to Col. H. Bouquet, August 28, 1764, *ibid.*, 103-104.  
3 Frederick A. Ogg, *The Old Northwest: A Chronicle of the Ohio Valley and Beyond* (New Haven, 1921), 7-9, 15-16.  
Some aid also came from Virginia. This is witnessed by a letter from Colonel Adam Stephen in 1763 who reported that he could not order troops out of Virginia but could persuade several to volunteer if Bouquet could provide them with supplies. The willingness of Virginians and the shyness of Pennsylvanians were again shown by a letter from Colonel Bouquet to one John Harris of Paxton in July, 1764. Harris had applied to Bouquet for the employment of his brother Samuel Harris as armorer for the expedition. Bouquet’s reply showed preference for the Virginians and contempt for Pennsylvania’s warriors:

After all the noise and Bustle of your young Men on the Frontiers, Everybody thought they would have offered their services as Soldiers or Volunteers, for the defence of their Country, as being the fittest men for an Expedition against the Indians, and as the best way to wipe out the Reproaches cast upon them for the violences committed, and offered to defenceless Indians.

Instead of Such honourable Conduct, I see by your letter that they go as Pack Horse Drivers and Waggoners, Employes for which a coward is as fit as a brave man; Will not People say that they have found it easier to kill Indians in a Gaol than to fight them fairly in the woods? . . .

They have called very loudly for scalps, tho’ I don’t hear that any of them stirrs to obtain it.

The Virginians who are not so nearly concerned in this War, having a brave militia to cover their Frontiers, have offered me a number of Volunteers to serve on the expedition without pay; and not a Single man of the province had hitherto offered himself. They will be judged by their actions, and not their words and that judgment will not be as much to their credit as I could wish. . . .

The procrastination, in which Bouquet was in no way at fault, facilitated desertions. In July, 1764, Captain Gavin Cochrane wrote to Bouquet and expressed his sorrow at seeing men desert

7 Col. A. Stephen to Col. H. Bouquet, September 15, 1763, ibid., 51.
8 J. Harris to Col. H. Bouquet, July 15, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21650, II, 29.
9 The reference here is to the slaughter of friendly Indians by the Paxton boys.
10 Col. H. Bouquet to J. Harris, July 19, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21650, II, 32.
Fort Loudon when Bouquet needed them so badly. Bouquet expressed great concern over these desertions in a plea for funds to use in recruiting troops. In a letter to Governor Penn he noted that in his two battalions he was 200 men short as a result of desertions. The Pennsylvania Assembly recognized that their previous allotment of funds for men, provisions and bloodhounds was in danger of going for naught. Consequently, they appropriated three pounds per man and twenty pounds per officer for recruiting the 200 men that Bouquet needed to replace the deserters.

The army finally reached full strength by the end of September, 1764. But before it set out on the expedition, two Iroquois arrived and said that the Indians would capitulate if Bouquet would only wait for them to come to Fort Pitt. Bouquet sensed that this was a plot to delay the expedition until winter would forestall it. He was determined to set out for Ohio. On October 1 the army began to march westward. Bouquet followed the "Great Trail" in Ohio. He crossed the Tuscarawas River about one quarter of a mile north of Fort Laurens. Here Bouquet turned south and proceeded toward the site of present day Coshocton in the upper Muskingum Valley.

The force occupied the heart of the enemy country. Bouquet could strike at any village, except some of the most remote, in a few days march. The Indians knew this but were reluctant to take flight as they would have to leave their dwellings and corn. They were amazed that an army of this size had penetrated so deeply into their country. They also knew that Bradstreet was still at Sandusky and that they were cut off at the rear. Ultimately they came to the conclusion that they must submit.

Deputations were received by Bouquet from the Indians who stated that the chiefs wished to have a conference with him. He accepted this proposal and picked a rendezvous site near the margin of the river below his camp. An arbor was erected there to shelter the officers and chiefs in their conference. In the

12 Col. H. Bouquet to Governor J. Penn, August 10, 1764, *ibid.*, 59.
13 Capt. J. Young to Col. H. Bouquet, August 16, 1764, *ibid.*, 67.
15 Frank N. Wilcox, *Ohio Indian Trails* (Cleveland, 1933), 83-87.
17 Parkman, *Conspiracy of Pontiac*, II, 227-228.
morning the company proceeded to the meeting place. The Indians also came: Kiyashuta, the Seneca, Custaloga, the Delaware, and others including the spokesman, a Delaware named Turtle Heart.**

When the talks began, Kiyashuta, the Seneca, spoke for the Indians in a conciliatory manner saying that the war was neither the fault of the British nor of the Indians present. It had been caused by the western tribes. He asked for peace and friendship and delivered eighteen white prisoners in the course of his talk.** The meeting then broke up. Parkman points out that this was the custom in Indian councils after an important speech had been given.**

A few days later Bouquet delivered his reply in a voice and manner apparently designed to humiliate the Indians:

Chiefs, Captains and Warriors,

You say that it was not your fault, that this war has happened, but that it is owing to the western nations and to your foolish young men. I answer that it is your fault, because we might have protected you against those Nations had they attempted to force you to make war upon us; and as for your young men, it is your duty to chastise them, when they do wrong, and not to suffer yourselves to be directed by them. . . .

When you begged for peace, you assured Colonel Bradstreet that you had recalled all your warriors from the frontiers, and you know, that contrary to that declaration, they have continued to murder our people and to take them prisoner to this day, which we can prove by an old man, here present, who was taken the 28th of September last; forty-five days after the peace was made. . . .

. . . the English are a merciful and generous people, averse to shedding the blood, even of their most cruel enemies. And if it was possible that you could convince us, that you sincerely repent of your past conduct, and that we could depend on your good behavior for the future, you might yet hope for mercy and peace. . . . You have dared to attack Fort Pitt. . . . You attacked, soon after, the King's Troops in the woods, and being defeated in the attempt, you fell upon our frontiers. . . .

** Ibid., 228-229.

** Speech of Kiyashuta, the Seneca, to Col. H. Bouquet, October 17, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21655, 235-236.

** Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, 232.
You have constantly declared you would never make peace with the English. . . .

I have brought with me the Relations of the People you have massacred, or taken Prisoners; they are impatient to take Revenge on the Bloody Murderers of their Friends. . . . It is consequently in our Power to destroy you. But if I find you execute faithfully the Conditions I shall require of you, I will not treat you with the Severity you deserve.

I give you twelve days, from this Date to deliver in my hands . . . all the Prisoners in your Possession without any Exception, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Women, and Children, whether adopted in your Tribes, Married or under any other Denomination whatever, and all Negroes, and to furnish all the Said Prisoners with Cloathing, Provisions, and Stores to carry them to Fort Pitt. . . .

When you have fully complied with the above conditions and delivered the Hostages I shall require of you I will then permit you to Send Deputies properly authorized to make your Peace with Sir William Johnson, His Majesty's Sole Agent and Superintendent of Indian Affairs and retire with the army without doing you any hurt or damages. . . .

The Indians retired to the forest after this beration and began to bring in the white captives. Bouquet built a small town of cabins and tents to receive the prisoners and placed in them some matrons brought along to tend the released people.

One of the prisoners surrendered was John Prentice who wrote to Bouquet from Fort Louden on October 15, stating that the Indians would have been glad to make peace on any terms because when he was a prisoner they told him they doubted that the British would give them peace. He also noted that some of the Wyandots feared Bouquet's large army so much they had moved out of Sandusky to a place some forty miles up the creek.

The Shawnees were still bringing in prisoners as late as January, 1765. A list of the prisoners they surrendered at Fort Pitt on January 5 illustrates in some respects those that had been

21 Speech of Col. H. Bouquet to the Indian Chiefs, October 20, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21655, 238-243.
22 Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, 236-237.
23 J. Prentice to Col. H. Bouquet, October 15, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21651, 23.
held captive. Only useful prisoners or those useful in the future
were kept alive by the Indians.

Mary Hamilton, a fifteen year old; Miriam Hamilton,
a ten year old; Jane Gilmore, a woman; Margaret Bird,
an old woman; Elizabeth Yoakim, twelve years old;
Elizabeth Fulkison, sixteen years old; Eliz’ Counsman,
nine years old; Mary Williams, an old woman; David
Williams, four years old and son to Mary Williams.

The return of prisoners was not without its problems and
human interest. Several of these people had lived with the
Indians for so long that they didn’t want to leave them. Some
even managed to escape and hasten back to the savage life.
Colonel Bouquet wrote in a letter to Governor Francis Fauquier
of some of the captives reticence at being freed:

Several of the captives have remained so long amongst
the savages, that they leave them with the utmost Re-
luctance, and we are obliged to keep Guards upon them
to prevent their escape. In my opinion these unfortunate
people ought to be treated by their Relations with
Tenderness and Humanity, Till time and Reason make
them forget their unnatural attachments.

Many of the women had had children by Indian braves. Many
of the whites taken captive as children could not remember their
civilized relatives. In one instance a woman discovered a girl
whom she recognized to be her daughter. The girl showed no
signs of recognition until Colonel Bouquet suggested that the
woman sing the song she used to sing to the girl when she was
on her knee. The woman did, and the youngster was restored
to her mother as her own.

Upon the bringing of many of the prisoners to him, Colonel
Bouquet made another speech. He stated that he could not deal
with them (as Bradstreet had erroneously done), but that he
would allow them to go to Sir William Johnson, the superintend-

24 The age of the women is undetermined. They are either mentioned
as a “Woman” or as “old”; however, one “old woman” had a four-year-old
son which does not attest to antiquity.
25 List of Prisoners, January 5, 1765, Bouquet Papers, Series 21651, 96.
26 Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, 248.
27 Col. H. Bouquet to Governor F. Fauquier, November 15, 1764, Bouquet
Papers, Series 21651, 50-52.
28 Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, 250.
ent of Indian affairs for the crown. Johnson would make peace with them. Bouquet insisted on hostages to assure their good faith.29

On November 15 he wrote to Colonel Andrew Lewis telling of the number of prisoners being delivered by that date:

The Mingos and Delawares have already delivered all their prisoners to the amount upwards to 150 and the Shawnees are collecting theirs as fast as they can. The Mingos give two Hostages, the Delawares Six and the Shawnees Six, in all fourteen, who are to remain in our hands as a security, that all the prisoners yet remaining amongst them, shall be delivered with all Expedition. . . .30

Colonel Bouquet also wrote on November 15 to Governor Horatio Sharpe, Governor Francis Fauquier and Colonel John McNeill noting the success of his expedition. In the letter to McNeill he stated that he would return to Fort Pitt as soon as he had received the prisoners from Wacetamica, the principal Shawnee town fourteen miles away from his camp.31 He soon accomplished this purpose and headed back to Fort Pitt where he arrived on November 28, 1764, with 200 captives. The Indians had also promised him another 100 prisoners.32 Thus ended the "reign of terror" over the frontier. Bouquet had saved the prestige of the British and countless frontier lives by his bold expedition into the Ohio country.

Colonel Bouquet was highly respected for his work at Bushy Run. But the success of this Ohio expedition was the biggest feather in his cap. For this he was thanked by resolution of both the Pennsylvania and the Virginia assemblies. Both colonies applied to the king for his promotion.33

Several letters of congratulations came to him. One of the most revealing was from one of the men of the ranks who served under him. It showed how he was regarded by the troops.

29 Ibid., 243.
30 Col. H. Bouquet to Col. A. Lewis, November 15, 1764, Bouquet Papers, Series 21651, 52-53.
31 Col. H. Bouquet to Col. T. McNeill, November 15, 1764, ibid., 48-49.
Whils't this part of the country & the Battalion in particular are full of Joy, at the news of your promotion... nobody shares it more heartily than I do...

The Gentleness of your command, had so much endeared you to the Battalion, that 'tis with the greatest pain we can bear the thoughts of being deprived of you...

After his promotion Bouquet was assigned to the military governorship of Florida. Upon arriving in Florida, he was struck by fever at Pensacola and died in September, 1765. To his credit Bouquet had left a more peaceful frontier and a group of Indians in a submissive condition who complied with Sir William Johnson's terms. The Indians had agreed to (1) grant free passage to English troops and travelers in their country; (2) make full restitution of the goods taken from traders at the outbreak of the war; and (3) aid the British in taking the Illinois country and occupying it. The frontier was now open to further settlement. Pontiac's Conspiracy had been broken, and the British were supreme in North America east of the Mississippi.

24 J. Stevenson to Col. H. Bouquet, April 21, 1765, Bouquet Papers, Series 2165, 202.
26 Parkman, Conspiracy of Pontiac, II, 259-260.