

F

483

S13 R78

CORNELL
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY



10



Major-General Arthur St. Clair.

A BRIEF SKETCH

BY

ARDA BATES RORISON

AND

JOHN NEWTON BOUCHER.

A more extensive Life of General St. Clair, illustrated, (now in preparation by the above authors,) will soon be published.

+

F
483
S13
R78

B 755269

41



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.



A. S. C. Clair

Major-General Arthur St. Clair.

PARENTAGE: EARLY YEARS.

“I hold that no man has a right to withhold his services when his country needs them. Be the sacrifice ever so great, it must be yielded upon the altar of patriotism.”

That these were not idle words but a deep felt conviction on the part of St. Clair, when he left his home and family to enter the Revolution, his whole life is replete with indisputable testimony. To refresh in the memory of the reader a few incidents in the life of this heroic character, is the object of this brief sketch.

Arthur St. Clair was the son of William and Margaret (Balfour) St. Clair and was born at Thurso Castle, in Scotland, on March 23rd, 1734, old style. His family was of Norman origin and became one of the most noted in British history. In the line of his ancestry were knights, earls, lords and dukes, many of whom had battled for English and Scotch supremacy, and whose names have been preserved for centuries in the poetic and legendary lore of English story.

Many poets sang of their illustrious deeds and the sweetest singer of them all tells in "The Song of Harold" how the Orcades, were once held under the princely sway of the St. Clairs :

"Then from his seat, with lofty air,
Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
St. Clair, who, feasting with Lord Home,
Had with that lord to battle come.
Harold was born where restless seas
Howl round the storm-swept Orcades;
Where once St. Clair held princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay;
Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall."

By the reverses of fortune on the part of their immediate forbears, his parents had lost their extensive ancestral possessions and at the time of his birth were without great influence at the court of St. James or in Scotland. The remnant of the original estate once held by William St. Clair was moreover entailed by the laws of primogeniture, so that Arthur, the youngest son, could not hope to inherit a part of the encumbered possessions. His education therefore was to fit him for a profession and in early manhood he entered the University of Edinburg, intending later to take up the study of medicine. On the death of William St. Clair, the young student removed to London, that he might have the benefit of a hospital practice in the world's greatest metropolis. There he entered the office of Dr. William Hunter, then regarded as one of the first physicians of the city.

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

But about that time a war broke out between England and France, the American part of which is known as the French and Indian War. Murray, Monckton and the brave romantic young Englishman, General James Wolfe, were raising an army to carry the war against the French on the St. Lawrence river in Canada, the whole of which was then under the dominion of Louis the XV. William Pitt had succeeded the weak Duke of Newcastle as premier of England, and almost the first work of his great administration, was to inspire the young Briton with faith in the new ministry. War was shaking both Europe and America. The streets of London were filled with the sound of the bugle and the measured tread of the grenadiers. Energetic young men from every calling in life, were anxious to abandon their pursuits and enlist in the service of the crown. St. Clair, like many other talented youths, could not resist. His mother having died the year previous, upon securing an ensign's commission, dated May 13, 1757, he sailed for America with Admiral Edward Boscawen's fleet, the same which brought to our shores the historic army of General John Forbes. He was in the army of General Jeffrey Amherst, whose object was the capture of the strong-holds on the St. Lawrence, and in the division of the army that was commanded by General James Wolfe. His first experience in battle was therefore at the defeat at Louisburg, Canada, in 1758. On April 17, 1759, he was made a lieutenant and held that rank when the army to which he was attached, engaged in one of the most daring and romantic military expeditions in American history. He was with the army when under the cover of darkness, it silently floated down the St. Lawrence and landed under the shadowy Heights of Abraham, since known as Wolfe's Cove.

He heard Wolfe repeat the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," which the poet Thomas Gray had just published to the world, of which the General said he would rather be the author than to take Quebec:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The low'ng herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

He was with them, too, when they clambered up the hitherto impossible Heights, and was near the brave young Englishman when he received his death wound; when the shout of victory recalled for a moment his departing spirit, and was with him when he died with the song of battle on his lips at the very moment of success.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

More than this, to add to his superior military training, he was with the Sixtieth Royal American Regiment, which had been organized by the Duke of Cumberland for services in the Colonies, and in the same battalion was Charles Lawrence, Robert Monckton, James Murray and Henry Bouquet, names without whose brave deeds the French and Indian War would be tame indeed.

When Quebec was captured from the French the fortress was garrisoned by the English, and St. Clair, among other young officers, remained with the army. After a few months

occupation, a part of the Sixtieth Regiment was sent to Boston. St. Clair accompanied them, bearing letters and documents for General Thomas Gage, his kinsman. While stationed there he became acquainted with Phoebe Bayard with whom he was united in marriage at Trinity Church, Boston, on May 15, 1760, by the rector, Rev. William Hooper. Phoebe Bayard, born in 1733, was the daughter of Balthazar Bayard and Mary Bowdoin, who was a half-sister of Governor James Bowdoin, of Massachusetts. With his wife St. Clair received a legacy of about 14,000 pounds, indeed a princely fortune, as fortunes were in those days.

Their social standing opened to them every avenue of cultured association in Boston. His wife was related to the foremost families of that city and of New York, the Winthropps, Jays, Verplancks, and Stuyvesants and St. Clairs own connection with General Gage, the commandant of Boston, added military luster to their prospective future.

The French and Indian War was terminated in 1764, but after the victory at Quebec the English army had not been so active and St. Clair resigned his lieutenancy in 1762. For a few years they remained in Boston and with their position, a life of affluence either there or in Scotland, was easily within his grasp. But the same spirit which prompted him to turn his back upon the culture of his native land, pushed him westward, and as early as 1765, a military permit to a tract of land near Fort Pitt, now Pittsburg, was granted to him by General Gage.

IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

For years after the French were expelled from the Ohio Valley, by General John Forbes, the English Government, and later the Proprietories of Pennsylvania, were compelled

to garrison Fort Pitt and keep up a road and a line of forts connecting it with the east. St. Clair was accordingly in command of Fort Ligonier in 1767, and from that time on, was a citizen of Western Pennsylvania, first in a military capacity and later as agent of the Penns and as a private citizen.

Cumberland was then the most western county and he was appointed a justice of that county for its western districts. In 1770 when Bedford county was formed, he was given the same position and was also appointed the first prothonotary and clerk of courts of the new county.

But by this time Pittsburg was building up and the country between the Ohio and the Allegheny mountains, along the Forbes Road, was rapidly being settled. St. Clair, who vigilently watched the interests of the Penns, readily saw that what the western section needed most was the formation of a county west of the Allegheny mountains. To this he bent his energies in 1771 and 1772, and in February, 1773, succeeded in the formation of Westmoreland county. It included Pittsburg, but its temporary county seat was at Han-nastown, about 30 miles to the east. Again he was appointed prothonotary and clerk of courts of the new county. By this time he and his family had located near old Fort Ligonier, where he owned large tracts of land and from which place, nearly all of his extensive correspondence with the Penns and others, is dated.

St. Clair, owing to his thorough education, to his military service under the romantic Wolfe and to his wealth, was easily the most prominent man west of the Allegheny mountains. In the almost constant warfare with the Indians he was looked to by the pioneers not only for protection in

their home defenses but to plead their cause before the Proprietories for assistance in building roads, forts and block-houses, and in patrolling the entire district with regular soldiers or with armed militia.

IN DUNMORE'S WAR.

When added to this constant danger from Indian outbreaks, came Dunmore's War in 1774, all turned to St. Clair as the one above all others who should take charge of the home forces and also of the troops of the Province in defending this section from the invading enemy. But to understand thoroughly his work in this war it will be necessary to go back a few years, and look into its cause.

All of Western Pennsylvania was then claimed by Virginia, and, though the claim had really no foundation in fact, the Old Dominion exercised almost complete civic jurisdiction over it for some years. The grant by Charles II to William Penn, was to extend five degrees west from the Delaware river, and thence north to the waters of Lake Erie. This five degree line had never been surveyed, and the Virginia authorities claimed that it would not extend west of the Allegheny mountains, or not as far at most, as the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, either of which would make a natural western boundary for Pennsylvania. It is true that in 1767, Jeremiah Mason and Samuel Dixon, two English surveyors, had been authorized to survey and determine the boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania. As a result of their work Mason and Dixon's line was definitely and irrevocably determined, and it has preserved their names in American history for all time. But their jurisdiction did not

extend west of the western point of Maryland, and in reality, settled nothing beyond the boundary of that state.

The reader will remember, too, that in the long contest of the English and American armies to expel the French from Western Pennsylvania, begun by Washington under Governor Dinwiddie and later carried on by Generals Edward Braddock and John Forbes, Virginia had battled most royally, and had in truth furnished more men and money than Pennsylvania, though the point of contention lay nominally within the Province of the Penns. On several occasions when the Penns were asked to contribute their share in soldiers and in money, to expel the French from the Ohio Valley, they refused the assistance and gave as a reason, that they were not certain that the section held by the French, was within their territory. In the meantime many citizens of Virginia had settled near the Fork of the Ohio, (Pittsburg) supposing that they were still within the boundary of the Old Dominion.

After the passage of the Stamp Act and kindred legislation on the part of the English Parliament, both Massachusetts and Virginia manifested great hostility toward England. Perhaps to chastise the Virginians for their insolence, John Murray, known in history as the Earl of Dunmore, was appointed governor of Virginia. He proved to be a most cruel and selfish man. Bancroft says of him, "No royal governor showed more rapacity in the use of official power." In June, 1774, he sent an army to Western Pennsylvania under John Connolly, his object being to conquer and humiliate its people. Both the commander and his soldiers were without character. They rode rough-shod over the rights of the people; they burned the farmers houses and fences; they wantonly shot down and destroyed live stock; they subsisted entirely by stealing; they broke open houses in the night time and

frightened the inmates; they arrested three judges as they sat on the bench and sent them in irons to Staunton, Virginia, for trial. They broke open the jail at Hannastown and liberated its prisoners; they arrested prominent citizens and imprisoned them in Fort Pitt, the name of which they changed to Fort Dunmore. They named the region West Augusta County of Virginia and set up Virginia courts in Pittsburg and elsewhere. Citizens of Western Pennsylvania were elected to and actually sat as members of the Virginia Legislature.

It was Arthur St. Clair to whom the people turned as their leader, in this reign of terror. In one of his letters to Governor Penn he says that in riding over the country a distance of twenty miles, that morning, he saw more than one hundred families with more than two thousand head of live stock, on the highways, fleeing from their homes to forts for safety or to their old homes in the east, leaving their harvests ungathered, and deserting their log cabins because of these outrages.

St. Clair undoubtedly foresaw this approaching danger, and to lay claim to it by extending civic dominion over this section on the part of Pennsylvania, was one reason for urging the formation of Westmoreland county. While the Penns entrusted the management of their local affairs entirely to him, they gave him but little aid in the Virginia troubles. Dunmore saw that but for St. Clair he could easily effect a conquest. He therefore demanded of the Penns that St. Clair be delivered over to Virginia authorities. They refused this and furthermore intimated that they would hold themselves responsible for all of St. Clair's acts. His prominence and character gave weight to his advice. He rode day and night urging the people to arm themselves for self-defense. As rapidly as possible he organized militia companies, he drilled

them and personally guaranteed them pay for their assistance. These were called rangers and were posted at stations all the way from the mountains to the Ohio river. He supervised the building of a chain of blockhouses and forts along the rivers and on the Forbes Road, and supplied them at his own expense. All these matters were reported to the Penns by St. Clair, and his modest correspondence is the basis of all history yet written on the subject.

St. Clair had Connolly arrested and put in jail, but he was promptly bailed out. Later, he with a company of militia, arrested him again, meaning this time to send him in irons to Philadelphia for trial. From this purpose he was dissuaded lest it might further alienate the few Virginians in the community who were loyal to the Penns. Dunmore insisted that St. Clair be made to ask pardon for this insult to his army, but as the latter never willingly bent his knee to a foe, it is likely that he died in old age without having obtained his lordship's forgiveness.

The Penns hesitated to spend money in defense of the territory for they knew not where the boundry line would fall, and they were anxious to settle it amicably. To this end the council appointed James Tilghman and Andrew Allen to confer with the Virginia authorities. Dunmore treated these agents with contempt and the only result was to make Connolly and his army much more oppressive than ever. Frightened by this reign of terror, the farmers thought it not worth while to plant crops in the spring of 1774, and St. Clair was face to face with an approaching famine among those whom he had undertaken to lead to safety.

Nor were the people all united in their opposition to Dunmore. Among them were hundreds of prominent families

from Virginia, who, having purchased their lands from Dunmore, and thinking they were settling in Virginia, were loathe to be considered as residents of Pennsylvania. The Quakers in the east, the thriftiest people of the Province, would not help them, for they were religiously opposed to war and were opposed to the Penns whom they regarded as renegades from the religion of their revered father, for the sons had embraced the religion of the Church of England. The Quakers talked of the sinfulness of war, wore broad-brimmed hats, defied Lindly Murray and devoted themselves to the acquisition of wealth and the enjoyment of the comforts it brought. The middle counties had been settled largely by German peasants, who, having known little else than servitude in Europe, were delighted with their new enjoyment of liberty. They hated the idea of military service, for it reminded them of the oppressive armies of Germany from which they had fled. Speaking only a German tongue, they neither knew nor cared who owned the land in the Ohio Valley, so long as they could by industry, increase their herds and widen their productive acres in peace.

Benjamin Franklin was the intellectual and political leader of the Province. Now the feudalism which had grown up among the Penns was extremely obnoxious to him, though he saw the danger of the French operations and now of the Virginia claims on the Ohio. He therefore opposed any administration measure which would add strength to the Penns and their feudal tenure. These matters left the defense against Virginia mostly to a divided settlement, among whom the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, the Catholics and the German Lutherans predominated, and these were equally intolerant of each other.

St. Clair's greatest difficulty was as a private citizen to

hold the people together and keep the inhabitants from leaving their homes and abandoning the western section to Virginia. The pioneers were willing to endure the constant danger from Indian outbreaks but now with these new difficulties added, the country was on the verge of being depopulated.

Against all this opposition, almost single-handed, St. Clair held the settlers together, and the documentary evidence indicates, that, but for him and his efforts, Western Pennsylvania would have been abandoned to Virginia. What the effect would have been, had this section, with its unnumbered millions of natural wealth been peopled and managed by the lassitude of the cavalier rather than by the energy of the Scotch-Irish, the reader can easily conceive. When the dark clouds of the Revolution began to gather, both Virginia and Pennsylvania forgot their personal quarrels and united in the common cause against Great Britain. At the close of the war the boundary question was settled by arbitration, which gave Pennsylvania more than the Penns at one time offered to accept.

THE HANNASTOWN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

When news of the battles of Lexington and Concord spread over the country, the whole populace was greatly aroused. The inflammable Scotch-Irish of Western Pennsylvania were promptly up in arms. Four weeks after this first war-peal, on May 16th, 1775, a largely attended meeting was held in Hannastown, then the largest town in the west, at which St. Clair was, at all events, the most prominent man and the leading spirit. This convention adopted what has since

been known as the "Hannastown Declaration of Independence," a document which will compare favorably with any paper yet penned in this country. It is to be found in the American Archives, Fourth Series, Vol 2, page 615, and in many other publications. It defines the causes of complaint on the part of the pioneer, and points out the remedy as clearly as the best writings of Thomas Jefferson or Alexander Hamilton. Clause after clause of it may be substituted for parts of the Great Declaration passed more than a year afterwards, and will be read without detection, except on the closest scrutiny. It is undoubtedly the first Declaration of Independence adopted in any of the colonies.

Nearly all of St. Clair's biographers have attributed its authorship solely to him and not without great reason. He was, in all probability, the author of the fourth paragraph and much of the document is very like his chaste and vigorous style. The resolutions were certainly prepared by a man of education and ability and most likely by one educated abroad. They show also an intimate knowledge of military life and but few civilians could write in such rich military terms, unless from a personal knowledge of the army. Furthermore, in a letter to Col. Allen, dated at Ticonderoga, September 1, 1776, St. Clair lays down two principles, viz: First, that "Independence was not to the interest of America if the liberties could be otherwise secured," and, second, "If foreign troops were employed to reduce America to absolute submission, that independence or any other mode was justifiable." Here he clearly enunciates the substance of the third and fifth clauses, and also the condition in part, which brought the pioneers to armed resistance.

Yet in a letter to Joseph Shippen concerning the meeting, the resolutions, the arming of men, etc., written the day after

he says, "I doubt their utility and am almost as much afraid of success in this contest as of being vanquished." And again nine days later he wrote to Governor Penn on the same subject saying he "got a clause added to it, (the declaration) by which they bind themselves to assist the civil magistrates in the execution of the laws they have been accustomed to be governed by." We scarcely think St. Clair was the sole author, for had he been, there would be no need in his getting a clause added, nor do we believe he would have drawn a set of resolutions, the logical result of which was the proceedings "the utility of which he doubted." Yet he was undoubtedly the leader of the convention and by intelligence, by culture and by military training, was one of the few men of the colonies who could pen such a paper.

IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

St. Clair's work in the Revolution can be accurately traced from the histories of that period. His correspondence with the leading men of Boston, Philadelphia and New York, shows conclusively, that though he had been an English army officer, there was not the least danger of his becoming a Tory, but on the contrary that he had most radical views on the impending difficulty between Great Britain and the Colonies. The impartial reader cannot but regard his espousal of the American cause as one of the most independent and significant acts in his eventful life. The centuries of royal blood in his veins, his every tie of kindred and youthful affiliation, his services in the royal army and his long and intimate association with the Penns and other Tories of Philadelphia, apparently bound him indissolubly to the English cause. But these were as gossamer threads to him when they conflicted with the rights of the oppressed colonies. It has been said

of him that, "When he drew his sword he threw away its scabbard."

In 1775 the Indians in the west were very troublesome and had repeatedly adopted Pontiac's tactics in making long raids on the east. Congress therefore appointed commissioners, Judge Wilson, of Pennsylvania, Morris, of New York, and Walker, of Virginia, to treat with them. St. Clair, who had gained high standing with the tribes was made secretary of the commission. The conference was barren of immediate results, and St. Clair was appointed to raise an army to chastise the Indians in the region of Detroit. They gave him no financial aid, but that never mattered with St. Clair. He enlisted about four hundred and fifty men who were to furnish their own arms, horses, forage and provisions to march at once.

At that time General Benedict Arnold was storming Quebec and all interests centered there. When Arnold's expedition failed St. Clair went to Philadelphia to urge his project before the Continental Congress. But instead of sending him and his army to Detroit, he was called into the Revolution where it was thought he would be of greater use. In this way he entered the Great War, entering under the commission of a colonel in the Continental Army. His first assigned duty was to make arrangements and preparations for war rather than to actively engage in it. His duties were in and around Philadelphia where he recruited, drilled and provisioned volunteers. He was forced to advance money which was not paid back to him until after the war was closed.

His first duty in the actual field of war was to take six full companies to Quebec where Arnold was in dire straits. General Montgomery, first in command was killed, and was

succeeded by Arnold, who being severely wounded, was succeeded by Thompson after whose early death came General Sullivan. It will be remembered that St. Clair had spent over a year in the Quebec region under General Wolfe and was quite familiar with all points on the St. Lawrence river. He suggested a fortification on a point at Three Rivers to prevent the British transports from reaching Quebec. His plan was adopted and he was appointed to guard the point. Sullivan afterwards reinforced St. Clair's army with Thompson's troops but they were all beaten back to their original positions. Though unlooked for misfortunes alone prevented their victory, they retired from Canada with colors flying.

The battle at Three Rivers and the retreat, managed by St. Clair, has been the admiration of military writers ever since and one of them has considered Three Rivers as one of the best contested fields, from a scientific military standpoint, among all the battles of the Revolution. No campaign in the Great War shows more military genius nor more personal heroism. Mr. James M. Swank in his sketch of St. Clair says, "In this campaign St. Clair acquitted himself with credit in aiding to save Sullivan's whole army from capture. For this service he was appointed a brigadier general."

St. Clair's army was next at Ticonderoga where on July 28, 1776, he read to his soldiers the Declaration of Independence. In his report he says, "They threw their hats in the air and cheered for the United Colonies."

THE BATTLES OF TRENTON AND PRINCETON.

In August when he was made a brigadier general he was called to Washington's army then in his well managed retreat before General Howe across New Jersey. He was now for

the first time under the eye and direct command of the Great Chief and fought under him at White Plains. He was with the army on the stormy night in December when they crossed the Delaware on their march to Trenton and in conjunction with General Sullivan, commanded the division of the army which took the river road from the crossing to Trenton, Washington and General Nathanael Greene leading the other division. He shared, in no small degree, the victory over the Hessians and no battle in the Revolution did as much to strengthen the cause of the colonies as this.

It is claimed by all of St. Clair's biographers and also by St. Clair himself that he suggested to Washington the movement of the army which culminated in the victory at Princeton a few days later. The great historian, George Bancroft, labors vainly to prove that this claim is without foundation, and without apparent reason, save to glorify Washington. Like many writers he seems partial to the Great Chief. He bases the theory that Washington conceived this movement, on the report of the march, but the report does not cover the origin of the plan and there is no authority to refute St. Clair's positive statement which is corroborated by a number of the staff officers. It is not denied, however, that General St. Clair directed the details of the march and that his brigade, composed of New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts troops, with two six pounders, marched at the head of the advancing army with Washington. For St. Clair's part in these two battles he was made a major general on February 19th, following, on the recommendation of Washington. It may be mentioned in this connection that he was the only officer from Pennsylvania who became a major general during the Revolution; others were brevetted when the war closed but to him alone came this honor during its continuance.

FORT TICONDEROGA; VICTORY AT SARATOGA.

The outlook for the Colonial army in the summer of 1777 was a very gloomy one. The soldiers were but half clothed, half fed and almost ready to disband. This condition of affairs moved the British to greater efforts, hoping thereby to stamp out the rebellion at once. They set about to divide the colonies by a line of English fortresses going up the Hudson, thence by Lake George and Lake Champlain to the St. Lawrence river. General Burgoyne's army was already in Canada and he was instructed to march south by the lakes and unite with St. Henry Clinton's army which was to pass up the Hudson from New York. This, we need scarcely add, would have hopelessly divided the colonies, and by stopping all communications between them, would probably have compelled our armies to disband. Ticonderoga, the same which Ethan Allan had captured, and which Francis Parkman calls the "School ground of the American Revolution," was then in possession of the Colonists and is situated between Lake Champlain and Lake George. The tenure of this post by the American army prevented a confluence of Burgoyne's forces marching south, with those of Clinton marching north. A quarrel between Generals Schuyler and Gates necessitated a new commander. Congress, perhaps because of St. Clair's newly won laurels, though some of his biographers say, to sacrifice him, sent him to take command of Ticonderoga and hold it at all hazards. He was given two thousand two hundred men in all, a force that was entirely inadequate, though it was probably all that the weak army could furnish.

Many victories in the Revolution were won by taking desperate chances, and no one was more willing to make the

sacrifice, with even the slightest hope of success, than St. Clair. Burgoyne's army came down the lake and attacked Ticonderoga in June, 1777. Near by was a high, rocky promontory since called Mount Defiance, which overlooked and practically commanded the fort. This was inaccessible to the Continental army because of their weakness, and moreover, St. Clair's army was too small to occupy and hold Ticonderoga and Mount Defiance both. General Arnold a few months before this had asked for not less than twenty thousand men to hold it. Burgoyne found that he could not capture Ticonderoga without fortifying Mount Defiance. He therefore, by means of ropes and tackle, hoisted cannon to its crest and placed there sufficient arms and men to overcome the fort below. The French, English and American officers had all regarded Mount Defiance as inaccessible to heavy artillery, but now the top of the mountain bristled with English guns.

St. Clair and his officers agreed at once that against such a fortification even ten thousand men could not hold Ticonderoga and that his army must either retreat or be captured. The army retreated the following night going towards Hubbardton and Castleton, thirty miles away. The British followed them and several small engagements ensued in which St. Clair lost heavily. But to follow his divided forces Burgoyne was compelled to divide his army. As St. Clair's men retreated they blocked the way with deep ditches, destroyed bridges, fallen timber, etc., making it still more difficult to pursue them. St. Clair's soldiers formed a nucleus to which Generals Horatio Gates and Arnold added their forces and all under Gates attacked Burgoyne. Clinton's army, with provisions, was delayed in its journey up the Hudson, and in the meantime the forces under Gates were increased daily by hardy volunteers so that in a few weeks the entire army of

Burgoyne, waiting for Clinton's tardy relief, was forced to surrender at the battle of Saratoga, though Clinton was then less than fifty miles away. Creasy has seen fit to include this as one of the Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World's History.

Reporting the surrender of Ticonderoga and the retreat, St. Clair wrote these words: "I knew I could save my reputation by sacrificing the army; but were I to do so, I should forfeit that which the world could not restore and which it cannot take away, the approbation of my own conscience." On July 14th, before Burgoyne's victory, he wrote to Congress, "I have the most sanguine hopes that the progress of the enemy will be checked and I may yet have the satisfaction to experience, that by abandoning a post I have eventually saved a state." This proves almost conclusively that St. Clair foresaw a brilliant victory over the English and was willing to sacrifice himself, if by so doing he could save his army from capture and thus assist in bringing about the great victory.

All blame for the loss of Ticonderoga was for a time put on St. Clair who explained the matter to Washington and Jay, and quietly asked for a court of inquiry. A very able one was finally granted with Major General Benjamin Lincoln as president. They heard the evidence and in their findings entirely exonerated St. Clair "Of all and every charge against him with the highest honor." Then the tide turned somewhat in his favor. The people saw that as a direct result of his surrender, the English army had sustained the heaviest loss ever known in America, this, after all their preparations and glowing prospects, and that the Colonies were yet intact. St. Clair was warmly congratulated by the leading men of the nation, but the letter from Lafayette was perhaps the most cherished of all. "I cannot tell you," wrote

the eminent French General, "how much my heart was interested in anything that happened to you and how much I rejoiced, not that you were acquitted, but that your conduct was examined."

St. Clair has been criticised for surrendering the fort before he was attacked. His only alternative was to remain as General Greene did shortly before at Fort Washington, and like Greene, needlessly sacrifice his entire army, which, by retreat, might have been saved to the Colonies. Upon several occasions, had Washington not retreated before he was attacked, his army would have been captured. Indeed, one of his strongest points as a general was his ability to evade a contest and extricate his army, when there could be but one result, if he gave battle.

Let us look further into his reasons for retreating, for the facts brought out by the court of inquiry speak very eloquently in favor of St. Clair. Burgoyne's army, when he met St. Clair, numbered 7,863, while St. Clair had less than 2,200, all of whom were ill fed and but half clad. Burgoyne surrendered 142 heavy guns, while St. Clair had less than 100 second rate cannon of various sizes and they were served by inexperienced men. It is scarcely necessary to defend his retreat in this age of general intelligence. The United States Gazette, in speaking of his defense before the court of inquiry said: "His defense on that occasion is still extant and exhibits a sample of profound generalship. While the English language shall be admired it will continue to be an example of martial eloquence." It is easy now to see the wisdom of St. Clair's retreat, rather than to surrender his entire army, in which case Burgoyne's defeat could not have been brought about.

After this he was with the army at Brandywine and Val-

ley Forge and was then detailed to organize Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops and send them to the front. When Arnold turned traitor Washington scarcely knew whom to trust, but with implicit confidence, he selected St. Clair to take charge of West Point. He was then selected with Greene, Lafayette, Clinton, Knox, Stark, etc., as a member of the most noted military jury that ever sat in this country to try the unfortunate Major Andre. They were selected because of their high character both as soldiers and civilians and because they were educated in the military history of Europe. They reported that Andre should be considered as a spy and should suffer death.

ST. CLAIR AS A STATESMAN, PRESIDENT OF CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.

It is usual to consider St. Clair as a military character only, while in reality he was one of the statesmen of the Revolutionary period and united a very extensive knowledge of letters, of history and of the classics, with his military life.

Shortly after the close of the Revolution he was selected as a member of the Executive Council of his state and in 1785 was elected as a member of Congress. Even in the council and in Congress before party lines were drawn, he began to take sides and express views afterwards adopted by the Federalists. In 1787 he was elected President of Congress, the highest office in the government, a position which can be compared only with that of President of the United States. The latter position was created by the Constitution in 1787, which abolished the office of President of Congress. While President of Congress he resided in Pottsgrove, now Pottstown, Pennsylvania. The house in which he resided is yet standing, and as he was then the executive head of the new

nation, the old building has been fondly called the "First White house" by the people of Pottstown.

It was the Congress over which he presided which provided for the convention by which the Constitution of the United States was formed.

GOVERNOR OF NORTHWESTERN TERRITORY.

Under the celebrated Ordinance of 1787, he was appointed Governor of the Northwestern Territory, the appointment being made by Congress. This territory embraced all the country belonging to us west of Pennsylvania and north of the Ohio river, and now forms the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, which now have a population of nearly twenty millions. His prerogatives as governor were very extensive. He was not only the executive officer of the territory but the law-giver as well. He appointed all judges and these in council with himself, had the power to make laws for the government of the territory. He erected counties and named them, appointed officers, built forts, founded and named towns and held treaties with the Indians. Going down the Ohio river in 1791, he arrived at Fort Washington and around it organized Hamilton county, naming it after the great constructive statesman, then Secretary of the Treasury. To the town around the fort he gave the name of Cincinnati, after the society by that name consisting of officers of the Revolution, of which he was president of the Pennsylvania division.

His administration in Ohio territory is too extensive a subject to be reviewed in this brief sketch. Governor Nash at the Centennial of Ohio's Statehood said, "Our grandest glory arises from the fact that we have faithfully kept, during

these 100 years, all the precepts of the best law ever formed for the government of mankind, the great Ordinance of 1787, in making of which St. Clair took an active part.”

In all this new country he again encountered hostile Indians who, having been driven westward, were then constantly committing depredations on the Ohio frontier. General Josiah Harmar was accordingly sent out in 1790 to subdue them, but his army was badly defeated. In 1791 St. Clair was appointed commander-in-chief of the army and vested with a corresponding military power in the territory. An army of two thousand regular troops was at his disposal, and he had authority to increase it as he saw fit, by calling out the militia.

THE BATTLE OF THE WABASH.

In September, 1791, the army was assembled at Fort Washington, now Cincinnati. It was not, by any means an ideal army, though there were three regiments of regulars in the infantry, two companies in the artillery and one of cavalry. As they journeyed towards the enemy about six hundred militia joined them, though by St. Clair's proclamation, all should have been with them at Cincinnati, and should have been subjected to the severest discipline. The march began on September 17, and as usual, in new countries, the army had to cut roads through the wilderness, which made its progress necessarily slow. On the Big Miami river they erected Fort Hamilton, some distance farther on they erected Fort Washington and still later Fort Jefferson. At each post a small garrison was left, for they were nearing the Indian country. Shortly after they left Fort Jefferson one of the militia regiments deserted bodily. Washington Irving in his admirable *Life of Washington* in referring to these

militia, says, "They were picked and recruited from the worst element in Ohio. Enervated by debauchery, idleness, drunkenness and by every species of vice it was impossible, in so short a time, to fit them for the arduous duties of Indian warfare. They were without discipline and even the officers were not accustomed to being under a commander." Such men were useless in a campaign, yet St. Clair was forced to send the First Regiment after the deserters to prevent their waylaying the belated provisions, which was their avowed intention, and of which his men were in urgent need. His effective army yet numbered about fourteen hundred and moved to a point near the headwaters of the Wabash river, now in Mercer county, Ohio. It was supposed that the main body of the Miami tribe of Indians was about twelve miles from the encampment. Here they meant to entrench themselves and build such fortifications as would protect them while they awaited the arrival of the First Regiment with the deserting militia. They encamped late and weary on November 3rd, and the General, with the engineers, immediately laid out plans for the proposed "works of defense" which they were to erect the day following.

St. Clair knew that his army was not in proper condition to meet the Indians, but the matter was urgent, for, emboldened by Harmar's defeat, the enemy was almost daily committing depredations on the settlers. He had learned in the Revolution, that a weak army can sometimes overcome a strong one, or by desperate effort, grasp victory from defeat. There is no doubt but that he could have conquered the enemy, with a reasonable time given to discipline his army, but winter was fast approaching, supplies were scarce, the sturdy settlers were calling for relief, the government at Philadelphia urged him to immediate action. "The Presi-

dent urges you," wrote the Secretary, "by every principle that is sacred, to stimulate your exertions in the highest degree and move as rapidly as the lateness of the season and the nature of the case will possibly admit." There was nothing left for him to do but to go against them at once.

A short time before the break of day on November 4, the General had the reveille sounded, which brought all troops to line ready for action. Thus they watched till the sun arose, when, there being no sign of danger reported by the outposts, the troops were dismissed to get rest and breakfast. But they had scarcely disbanded when a scattering volley of rifle shots came from the front. The Indians, having found the army in battle array, had delayed the attack until it broke ranks. At once the drums beat and the officers formed their ranks in line. The Indians, with their usual cunning, fired first on the militia, which at once fell back in confusion on the regulars. They were followed by swarms of Indians some of whom ran beyond the first ranks and tomahawked officers and soldiers who had been carried back to have their wounds dressed. The confusion was terrible.

St. Clair was suffering from a fever. Irving says: "The veteran St. Clair, unable to mount his horse, was borne about on a litter, and preserved his coolness in the midst of the peril and disaster, giving his orders with judgment and self-possession." By his own suggestion, he was carried to a place where the firing seemed heaviest, and where Colonel Drake, a Revolutionary officer of great bravery and experience, was trying to overcome the confusion and hold his lines steady. St. Clair directed them to make a vehement charge with bayonets. This at first promised good results, for many Indians, concealed in the tall grass, fled in confusion, but the soldiers were unable to overtake them. They soon returned

seemingly in increased numbers, and a second bayonet charge was followed with the same results. The artillery was practically of no use, for the daring Indians killed the men and horses before they could render any service against the scattered and concealed foe. The regulars fought bravely and with much more system and effect than one might expect, but the confusion spread from the militia till it pervaded all the troops,

Behind trees and bushes and hidden in the tall grass, were apparently Indians without number. With their bullets came showers of arrows and the wounds from the latter seemed more painful and exasperating than gun-shot wounds. The soldiers were necessarily more or less in line, and this seemed only to aid the Indians in their peculiar style of warfare. The General did not require a litter to carry him from place to place, except in the beginning of the contest. When the battle raged and his forces began to wane, the excitement brought back his strength as though the vigor of his youth had been renewed. Eight balls passed through his clothes and hat, one of which cut a lock of hair from the side of his head. Two horses were killed under him just as he had been helped to mount them. For an hour or so, no horse being near, he moved about on foot, and surprised all who saw him by the agility he displayed. When again well nigh exhausted, he was placed on a pack-horse, the only one that could be procured, and though he was scarcely able to force the animal out of a walk, he rode him till the battle closed. Adjutant General Winthrop Sargent, in a private diary wrote particularly of "St. Clair's coolness and bravery, though debilitated by illness." The battle lasted about four hours when there was nothing left to do but to retreat and this the army accomplished but with the greatest confusion. Hundreds of soldiers threw away their arms and fled towards the fort.

When fourteen hundred men thus fought this infuriated mob of savages, struggling for their native land, it seems an insult to heroism to have the event forever known in history as St. Clair's defeat. It is more fitting to commemorate their unrivaled bravery by calling it the Battle of the Wabash. Though countless acts of heroism and daring courage, which have challenged the praise and admiration of four generations and will live as long as any war stories of our border history, were performed, yet the result was nevertheless most disastrous. There were five hundred and ninety-three reported killed and two hundred and fourteen wounded. The brave general was among the last to leave the field.

After the result of the battle became known, a bitter feeling arose throughout the Union against St. Clair. The real situation, had it been understood as it is now, would have thoroughly defended him against all blame, but the means of circulating the true story of the battle were extremely limited and most people knew nothing of it except the general result and the number of killed and wounded. At St. Clair's request therefore a congressional committee was appointed to investigate the entire affair and report their findings. The investigation disclosed a most disgraceful neglect in the commissary department, over which the commander had no control and which alone would have rendered success almost impossible. It disclosed also that Captain Slough with a scouting party was sent out on the night of the 3rd and that he found Indians in large numbers. This he reported to General Butler, who said he would report it to the Commander, but he made no report whatever. Butler, though a man of great bravery who lost his life in this struggle, was disgruntled because of St. Clair's appointment over him. It disclosed also that St. Clair had ordered Colonel Oldham to take four or five parties out

an hour before daybreak the following morning. Very early on the morning of the fourth he sent his adjutant-general to see if they had started; they had not, and then came the battle. The committee reported as follows: "The committee conceive it but justice to the commander-in-chief to say that in their opinion the failure of the late expedition can in no respect be imputed to his conduct, either at any time before or during the action, but that, as his conduct in all the preparatory arrangements was marked with peculiar ability and zeal, so his conduct during the action furnishes strong testimonies of his coolness and integrity."

St. Clair resigned and General Anthony Wayne succeeded him as Commander-in-chief early in 1792. Through Washington the former promptly tendered the benefit of his information concerning the army to his successor, whereupon President Washington replied: "Your wishes to afford your successor all the information of which you are capable, although unnecessary for any personal conviction must be regarded as additional evidence of the goodness of your heart and your attachment to your country."

Both the government and Wayne profited by the early lessons in Indian warfare. A well equipped army, more than twice as large as St. Clair's, was given to General Wayne. He was also given an adequate commissary and was allowed to drill his men until they were competent, and to select the season of the year that he should march against the enemy. By this time, too, the people had awakened to the magnitude of the undertaking, just as the English did after Braddock's defeat, and as our own nation did after the first disasters of the Civil War. So Wayne was supported by every one, from the President down to the humblest citizen. After drilling his army for over two years, he marched over the roads which St.

Clair had opened up and in August, 1794, met the Indians at Fallen Timbers and completely overwhelmed them.

St. Clair has been more or less censured for not throwing up breastworks on the night of November 3rd, notwithstanding the fatigued condition of his army. These critics forget that an enemy confronted him which did not fight according to the rules of civilized warfare. Breastworks, such as an army could construct in a night, would have been utterly futile against savages who fought like wild animals, and against whom the only effectual defense was a stockade or other obstruction which they could not surmount. Such were the fortifications which St. Clair built on his march from Cincinnati, but it was impossible to build one in a night's time. Bouquet was by far the most successful Indian fighter of his day and in his greatest contest and victory at Bushy Run, he fought the enemy all afternoon and until night-fall temporarily ended the battle. He could then have thrown up breastworks in the night as a protection against the enemy in the more terrible contest which he knew would follow with the earliest dawn. Such an idea certainly never entered his mind. Like St. Clair, he knew too well the methods of Indian warfare not to realize that such earth works, though potent against drilled troops, would have been no protection whatever against his savage enemy; indeed, both commanders must have known that breastworks in either instance, would have but aided the savages by confining the troops to a position that was not in anyway, inaccessible to them.

No intelligent student of history holds now that St. Clair should have been expected to hold Ticonderoga against Burgoyne's army or that his army was properly equipped and drilled to meet the Indians in 1791. In both of these battles the highest possible military skill was displayed on the part

of the commander, yet even in our highly educated and considerate age, there are some who seemingly forget the great achievements of his military and civil life, and remember him largely in connection with his last battle, thus unjustly coupling his name with defeat. In this connection, in his sketch of St. Clair, Mr. Swank very aptly observes :

“Generals cannot always win victories, as illustrated in the Battle of Waterloo. In our own country, Washington was compelled to surrender to the French and Indians at Great Meadows and he was repeatedly defeated during the Revolution. McDowell lost the first Bull Run battle, Burnside failed at Fredericksburg, Hooker at Chancellorsville, Sherman at Kenesaw Mountain, although these were all good soldiers. Grant met with signal defeat on the first day at Shiloh and also at Cold Harbor, while Lee lost the battle of Antietam and his star set at Gettysburg. St. Clair was not defeated because of any lack of generalship or personal bravery in himself.”

St. Clair was retained as Governor of the Territory until the beginning of Thomas Jefferson's administration, in all about fifteen years, and was removed by Jefferson in 1802. As we have said, he was an ardent Federalist and had unbounded admiration for the centralized power doctrine of Alexander Hamilton. Holding such views he was necessarily antagonistic to the tenets of Jefferson, whose policies were opposed to those of Hamilton. He had moreover advocated the re-election of John Adams, whose unpopular administration, favoring among other things the deservedly obnoxious alien and sedition laws, had elected Jefferson.

It may have been unfortunate that so pronounced a Federalist was appointed to this position for western people

were largely Jeffersonian. The citizens of the Territory were anxious to form a state which could be brought about mainly through Jefferson's friends. Ohio came into the Union in 1802, and St. Clair was therefore its first and only Territorial Governor.

IN PRIVATE LIFE.

When St. Clair returned from Ohio he again settled in Ligonier Valley and near his residence, built Hermitage Furnace, hoping thus to recuperate his well nigh exhausted fortune. For a time he manufactured pigiron and castings, the former for Pittsburg market, when the iron industry of the city was in its infancy. A flouring mill which he had built on his estate before the Revolution and which he gave to his neighbors for their use during the war, was now in ruins and he rebuilt it. His residence, "Hermitage," was about a mile and a half north of Fort Ligonier, now Ligonier, and was probably built before 1799, for there is a well handed down tradition that Washington sent two expert carpenters, who came out on horseback from Mt. Vernon to do the finer work. The carpenter work was the admiration of the common people and is equal to the best on the old colonial houses. It was certainly done by skillful workmen who could scarcely have found employment on the frontier in that age. In building it he looked forward to the time when he should put aside public duties and pass his remaining years in the ease and comfort earned by a busy life. The residence is all gone now save the parlor, torn down perhaps by the ruthless hand of an ignorant iconoclast who cared nothing for its hallowed memories. The quaintly devised woodwork, the mantle piece and wainscoating of the room remaining, doubtless saved it from destruction. It is now preserved because

of its historic associations. Vying in stately simplicity of design and in rich interior with the woodwork of our best homes in modern times, it bids fair to bear down to coming generations one of the few splendid specimens of colonial architecture in Western Pennsylvania. Near by are the crumbling ruins of Hermitage Furnace.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

The story of the financial difficulties which so clouded his latter years, is not a pleasant one to contemplate. Besides the 14,000 pounds which came to him by marriage, he was the owner of large tracts of lands which he had purchased or received by grant from the Penns for services rendered them. He also made some good land investments. All his property was sold by the sheriff to satisfy his creditors and the most lamentable feature of his embarrassment is that his debts were nearly all contracted in the interests of the state and nation and should have been paid by them and not by St. Clair. In a letter to Hon. William B. Giles he says that the office of Governor was forced upon him by friends who thought it would afford him an opportunity to replenish his fortunes, but that it proved otherwise. He writes, "I had neither taste nor genius for speculation in land, nor did I consider it consistent with the office."

During his last years he presented memorials to the state legislature and to Congress, asking, not for charity, but for a simple reimbursement of the moneys he had expended for the public, and not a statement in any of them was ever disbelieved or denied. In one of them he explains his situation by saying that, when he entered the Revolution he could not

leave his young wife, born and reared in the best of society of Boston, alone with her children on an unprotected and hostile frontier. This compelled him to sell part of his real estate, in Western Pennsylvania, upon some of which he had expended large amounts of money, at a great sacrifice. It was sold for 2,000 pounds in deferred payments. But the purchaser paid him in depreciated Continental currency, so that of the 2,000 pounds he received less than one hundred. He purchased a house in Pottsgrove near Philadelphia as a family residence while he was in the army. On selling this he lost the half by the bankruptcy and suicide of the purchaser.

In a memorial to the Assembly he says that, beginning in 1774 (in Dunmore's War) he supplied nearly all the forts and blockhouses in Westmoreland county with arms and means of defense at his own expense. To Congress he says that in the darkest days of the Revolution, when Washington's soldiers were daily deserting and the army rapidly melting away because they had not been paid, Washington himself applied to him (St. Clair) to save the Pennsylvania line, the best organization in the army. He accordingly advanced the money for recruiting and for bounty and with the aid of Colonel William Butler, the line was saved. To this claim the Government actually pleaded the statute of limitations.

But the indebtedness which directly caused the sale of his real estate, was contracted while he was Governor of the Territory. Among other duties which he performed there, was to act as Indian agent and as such he negotiated several important treaties. But the amounts appropriated were not generally sufficient to cover the terms of the treaty and rather than have it fail, St. Clair advanced the necessary money.

In one treaty he was forced to expend sixteen thousand dollars while but eight had been set aside for it. When the army for the campaign of 1791 was assembled at Cincinnati, it was found that the appropriation was not sufficient to equip it. St. Clair gave his bond for the amount necessary, on the express promise of the Secretary of the Treasury that it would be repaid. It probably would have been had Hamilton remained in office, but the new administration was averse to making good the amounts expended by the Federalists. There was hope, however, while Hamilton lived, for he, better than any other, knew of the justice of the claim. St. Clair with no desire whatever to contest the validity of the bond, came into the Westmoreland courts and confessed a judgment against his real estate for the face of the bond with interest, in August, 1803, or \$7,042.00. Payments had been made on it from time to time by St. Clair so that at the time of the sale in 1808, it amounted to \$10,632.17.

His property was sold by the sheriff in 1808-09-10, when the embargo had driven all of the money out of the country, and, though valued at \$50,000, it did not bring more than the debt, interest and costs. The residence and furnace were sold for \$4,000, though the furnace and mill alone had been rented to James Hamilton & Co., for \$3,000 per year. The first sale took place, as the Westmoreland records show, in June, 1808, and the last tract was sold on October 15, 1810. His creditors did not stop with the sale of his real estate but sold also, all of his personal property, save a few articles which he selected as exempt from levy and sale. Among these was one bed and bedding, a few books from his English library, embracing his favorite Horace, whose classic beauty of verse he had long admired, and a bust of Paul Jones, King of the Seas, presented to him and sent by Jones himself from Paris.

LAST DAYS OF POVERTY AND NEGLECT.

When the General was turned out of house and home by these proceedings, he and his family moved to a tract of land, which his son Daniel owned on Chestnut Ridge, about six miles west from Ligonier. Though the house was little more than a log cabin, it was on the State Road leading to the west, and here he entertained travelers that he might thus earn board for his family. Broken with the storms of more than three score years and ten, saddened by the memories of the past, denied by ingratitude that which was justly due him from his state and nation, he quietly awaited the last roll call.

To a truly altruistic man like St. Clair who had really given of his abundance with a profligate hand to the weak and destitute, poverty, though gloomy in its aspect, was a bright and shining crown of glory which only added to his greatness. No one who was capable of appreciating true worth ever came in contact with him, even in his last years, who did not recognize at once the presence of a statesman, a soldier unacquainted with fear, a scholar in the best sense of the term and a patriot pure and unswerving. Read his letter to the ladies of New York, who, hearing of his needs, sent him a present of four hundred dollars, and compare it with our best English letters. We quote but a few lines:

“To soothe affliction is certainly a happy privilege and is the appropriate privilege of the fair sex, and although I feel all I can feel for the relief brought to myself, their attention to my daughters touches me most. Had I not met with distress, I should not perhaps, have known their worth. Though all their prospects in life, and they were once very flattering, have been blasted, not a sigh, not a murmur, has been allowed

to escape them in my presence, and all their plans have been directed to rendering my reverses less affecting to me; and yet I can truly testify that it is entirely on their account that my situation ever gave me a moment's pain."

The last picture we have of St. Clair refers to a period but three years before his death, when he was almost overwhelmed with a mountain of sorrow, yet there are few public men of our day who would not feel proud to be thus described. It is from the pen of Elisha Whittlesly, who, with Joshua R. Giddings and James A. Garfield, represented the Ashtabula district in Congress fifty-six years. Whittlesly was afterwards for many years an auditor of the United States Treasury, and by a life of association with distinguished men, could recognize true greatness. The letter was written to Senator Richard Brodhead and is as follows:

"In 1815 three persons and myself performed a journey from Ohio to Connecticut on horseback in the month of May. Having understood that General St. Clair kept a small tavern on the Ridge east of Greensburg, I proposed that we stop at his house and spend the night. He had no grain for our horses, and after spending an hour with him in the most agreeable and interesting conversation respecting his early knowledge of the Northwestern Territory, we took our leave of him with deep regret."

"I never was in the presence of a man that caused me to feel the same degree of veneration and esteem. He wore a citizens' dress of black, of the Revolution; his hair was clubbed and powdered. When we entered he arose with dignity and received us most courteously. His dwelling was a common double log house of the western country, that a neighborhood would roll up in an afternoon. There lived the

friend and confidant of Washington, the ex-Governor of the fairest portion of creation. It was in the neighborhood, if not in view of a large estate at Ligonier, that he owned at the commencement of the Revolution, and which, I have at times understood, was sacrificed to promote the success of the Revolution. Poverty did not cause him to lose self-respect, and were he now living, his personal appearance would command universal admiration."

St. Clair at no time in the war appeared so great as when, under adverse circumstances, he tried to save an army or prevent its destruction. So it may have been that in the poverty of his declining years, his true nobility asserted itself, and shone forth all the more brilliantly. With no complaint whatever, he readily forgot that the nation had taken the best years of his life and much of his property, and now in want, another generation of rulers refused to recompense him. One sentence from the New York letter above is the key to his whole life: "It is entirely on their account that my situation ever gave me a moment's pain." He always forgot himself when the rights of others or the interests of the state were being considered. Perhaps more than any other was he an exemplar of the motto of the Society of the Cincinnati, "Omnia relinquit servare republicam."

There, on the mountains, in a rude log cabin, lived the personal friend and companion of Washington, Greene, Steuben, Lafayette, Hamilton, Franklin, Wayne, Gates and Schuyler and in no small degree did he share their glory. When the Revolution closed he was one of the leading men of the new nation, a gentleman, a scholar, a soldier, a statesman. His manners were those of the polished society in which his earlier days were spent and no adversity could change the unvaried courtesy which was part of his nature. His con-

versation was always embellished with wit and wisdom. Often was he seen wandering alone over the hills and through the wilderness with his hands behind his back and in deep thought, like Napoleon on the bleak and lonely island of St. Helena.

In his youth he has been described as being tall and graceful, with chestnut brown hair, blue eyes and fair complexion and as a complete master of all the accomplishments of the best society of the age. In old age his form was somewhat bowed, but his square shoulders, his cleanly shaven face and dignified address still remained. His portrait, given with this sketch, is from a painting by Charles Wilson Peale, the original of which hangs in Independence Hall in Philadelphia,

Never did the proud old General seek pity or charity. On one occasion, he and William Findley, who was then in Congress, were talking, perhaps concerning measures for St. Clair's reimbursement. Findley was then a man of power and wealth while St. Clair was almost in penury. Findley, with perhaps the kindest feelings, said, "General, I pity your case and heartily sympathize with you." Then the old warrior, though bent with the adversities of more than four score years, proudly drew himself up and with flashing eyes said, "I am sorry sir but I cannot appreciate your sympathy." At another time, toasted at a militia muster by a thoughtless admirer, as "the brave, but unfortunate St. Clair," he drew his sword in an instant and demanded that the offender retract his words. He would not be complimented and commiserated in a single sentence; his achievements in the service of England and America in both war and peace, were deserving of all glory without a compromising word of pity or regret.

On August 30th, 1818, while driving down the mountain

on his way to Youngstown, he probably sustained a paralytic stroke, for he fell from his wagon and was found unconscious by the road side. Taken to his home he died the day following without regaining consciousness. The citizens of Greensburg called a public meeting at once and adopted resolutions of condolence and requested that his family select their cemetery as his final resting place. This was accordingly done. Nineteen days after, his wife, the once accomplished Phoebe Bayard, of Boston, who had willingly accepted the hard life on the rude frontier with her husband, was laid to rest by his side. So they sleep in the old, tree-grown and now abandoned cemetery which, for nearly a century has borne his name.

In 1832 a plain monument of sandstone was erected over his grave by the Masonic fraternity and its inscription speaks most eloquently and truthfully of the neglect of the nation. "The earthly remains of Major-General Arthur St. Clair are deposited beneath this humble monument, which is erected to supply the place of a nobler one due from his country."

In a wider sense, however, General St. Clair has builded for himself, by his life's work, monuments more enduring than marble. The progress of Western Pennsylvania, the center of commercial industry, a section which he practically founded, and over which he first spread the elevating influences of civil government, is his monument; the freedom of the nation, to secure which he gave the best years of his life, is his monument; the achievement of the Middle West which he opened up to civilization and education under the Ordinance of 1787, five great states, now teeming with nearly twenty millions of happy and industrious people, is his monument.

Let him sleep, therefore, if need be, without "the nobler

monument due him from his country," for as long as the maples wave above him their graceful branches and yearly strew his grave with the golden leaves of autumn; as long as flowers bud and bloom at his feet and the morning songs of wild birds fill the air; as long as honor, charity, self-sacrifice and patriotism remain the sweetest of human virtues, so long will the name of Arthur St. Clair awaken alike the proudest and saddest memories of the American people.

PAMPHLET BINDER
Syracuse, N.Y.
Stockton, Calif.

Cornell University Library
F 483S13 R78

Major-General Arthur St. Clair : a brief



3 1924 028 847 246

olin

