

For Want of Sloops, Water Casks, and Rum:
The Difficulty of Logistics in the Canadian Theater of the Seven Years War

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Introduction

From 1650 to World War II, Great Britain dominated the seas. Its command of the deep waters allowed them to overpower its opponents and create an empire that lasted into the twentieth century. Without their utilization of logistical support, though, they would not have gained this overriding presence upon the oceans. The Royal Navy and its supporting vessels relied on each other: without the one, the other could not survive. Scholars often overlook the importance of logistics with the Royal Navy in favor of its officers, the battles, and the operations that led to their dominance. It is true that without these factors, the Royal Navy could not have gained command of the seas. Logistics, however, played a major role in this ascension to power. While Britain had dominated the seas since the mid-seventeenth century, the Seven Years War proved an important turning point for the Royal Navy. Before the conflict of 1756 to 1763, Britain dominated the oceans, yet other nations contested that supremacy. With the conclusion of this world war France and Spain did not have the capability to regain territories lost to the British, nor did they have the fleets to reestablish maritime trade. Not until the Revolutionary War did they have the capacity to fight against the British once again and then only for a short while.

Beginning on the North American continent, the Seven Years War established British supremacy in the New World. While scholars entitled the war the “Seven Years War” to describe it in the global sense, they titled the war in North American as the “French and Indian War.”¹ Here the logistical support of the Royal Navy undeniably aided the war effort. Without this logistical support, the British would have lost the war. The campaign to take Canada was the most evident example. While there, the British faced obstacles such as Native American

¹ This thesis will utilize the term “the Seven Years War” to refer to the global war, while “the French and Indian War” will refer to the North American theater of the Seven Years War.

ambushes, uncertain supply lines, and inclement weather. During the war's early stages, as the British struggled with mobilizing resources, France pushed back their forces and nearly overcame them. Once the British gained proper logistical support, though, they proved more than adequate in taking Canada from the French. With their superior navy backed by a resourceful economy, the British overwhelmed the French, regaining lost forts and seizing the fortresses of Louisburg and Quebec, essentially ending the war in North America. Without the efforts of the Royal Navy, this would not have been possible. In 1759, the fleet gained control of the inland waters and utilized the rivers and lakes that make up the region as thoroughfares for providing supplies and fresh troops. At the same time, the British gained needed experience in frontier campaigning and put these lessons to use against the French and Indian forces arrayed against them.

This control of the inland waters provided the British with valuable ports and access points to begin offensives. One of the most important contributors to the effort to take the inland waters was Captain Joshua Loring. As an agent for transports and a captain in the Royal Navy, Loring utilized the resources at hand to construct vessels to assist with Major General Jeffrey Amherst's push to take Quebec. While unable to deploy these vessels in the thrust before the winter of 1759, Loring's contributions to the war effort allowed the Royal Navy to utilize various vessels to transport troops to the North American continent.² In addition, Amherst's ability to understand the necessities of logistics and to utilize the resources at his disposal ensured that the British succeeded in the French and Indian War

Necessity calls for a brief discussion of the events leading to the French and Indian War. The War of the Austrian Succession ended between the French, British, and their respective

²While not the focus of this thesis, Joshua Loring's contributions to the British war effort are a needed addition to the historiography of the British logistical support on the North American front of the Seven Years War.

allies in 1748. The nature of the treaty did not settle a number of points of contention globally and thus disagreements abounded. Hostilities continued in India even after the treaty restored territory to their previous owners. After the war ended in 1748, the combatants established a joint Boundary Commission to resolve any border disputes remaining between the countries. Owing to intense competition between Britain and France, the commission achieved nothing. France claimed all territory west and north of the British colonies. Owing to tradition, France believed it owned all areas near rivers and tributaries that a Frenchmen had sailed on.³ Naturally, this included the Ohio River Valley and the Mississippi River Valley.

While various other incidents occurred between the two governments around the globe, the impetus for the outbreak of the French and Indian War came from contested claims in the Ohio River Valley. French traders used the rivers and lakes to barter with Native Americans nations in order to gain wealth. While the French grew rich from the fur trade, the Indians gained access to European goods, such as guns and musket balls. This mutual trading built alliances between the French and the Indians. After King George's War,⁴ however, the fall of Louisbourg and the closing of the St. Lawrence River cut off this ready supply of French products to the Indians. French traders in Ohio, specifically, had difficulty obtaining goods and increased the value of the products they traded.⁵

Many historians traditionally argue that the war began with English or Virginian encroachment westward and the French reaction of bolstering their military presence in the region. They claim that the chartering of Ohio Company in 1749 caused the French distress.⁶

³ Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, 2011), 35. Watershed principle helped to explain the strange shape of the Louisiana Purchase.

⁴ Known in Europe as the War of the Austrian Succession.

⁵ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 25.

⁶ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 57.

Thus, they place the fault of the war on the English. Daniel Baugh argues in *The Global Seven Years War*, however, that when the French acted in 1752, the English seemed prepared to move into the Ohio River Valley, but they had yet to make this a reality. He also argues that with the threat of English expansion, many of the French-allied Indian forces believed that the English would encroach upon their territory. The French did not possess the resources or the colonists to settle the region, so the representative for the French found it relatively simple to assure the Ohio Indians that the French would never colonize upon their lands.⁷

Whereas the British found the utilization of rivers integral to the logistical support of their troops in the North American theater, the French coveted the upper Ohio region because the region provided “the easiest point of access to the whole river from Canada; no Frenchman knew of a better one, and in fact there was none better.”⁸ Baugh states that the region provided a convenient shield against British traders infringing upon the French fur trade with the Indians of that region. Finally, he argues that moving into that region provided the French with the ability to protect the claim made by French explorer Lieutenant Pierre-Joseph de Céloron de Blainville.⁹ France’s willingness to disregard British response to their invasion of the region led Virginia’s Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie (1751-1758) to send a letter to the Board of Trade requesting assistance.¹⁰ George Montagu-Dunk, the president of the board (also known as Lord Halifax), read the letter and sent extracts to the Duke of Newcastle, Thomas Pelham-Holles, that highlighted Dinwiddie’s testimony of the building of French forts in the Ohio region.¹¹

Newcastle called a gathering of the cabinet, and they sent a letter to the governors of the colonies

⁷ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 57. Céloron placed plaques throughout the region in the 1740s in an attempt to claim the region for France.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid. This movement of troops upon the area also broke the conditions of the 1748 Treaty of Utrecht, which stated that the area belonged to the Iroquois of the region. The treaty also assigned the British the duty of protecting the Indians.

¹⁰ This board handled colonial affairs.

¹¹ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 59.

in North America to raise awareness of the situation, as well as request them to do everything in their power to halt the aggressive actions of the French. The cabinet ordered the colonials to remain on guard against French incursion, as well as to verify reports of the French building forts in the Ohio River region.¹²

Dinwiddie received special instructions to construct a fort on the Ohio River as soon as possible. If anyone sought to obstruct the project, then he should utilize the militia.¹³ In order to gain intelligence on the French fort, Dinwiddie sent Major George Washington of the Virginia militia to journey northward. Dinwiddie ordered him to scout the enemy fortifications, as well as order them back to French territory if possible. After trudging to the north “across swollen streams and half-frozen swamps,” they arrived at Fort Le Boeuf, where he met the commanding officer of the French forces in the area: Sieur Legardeur de Saint-Pierre.¹⁴

While Saint-Pierre explained that his superiors ordered him to occupy the area, Washington gained valuable information about the fortifications that the French established in the area. He noted the dimensions and defenses of the palisades and barracks that the French built and ordered some of his men to count the number of canoes that the French had prepared. He found that they had constructed approximately 220 of them and seemed prepared to begin building more. With the letter that the commanding officer of the French sent back with him, Washington was convinced that the French meant to maintain their claim of the Ohio Valley.¹⁵

¹² Ibid., 59. It is imperative for the reader to know some background concerning the Newcastle administration. A very capable administrator, he did not give the image of a strong leader. Experienced in European politics, he harbored a fear of the aggressiveness of Louis XV and his court. He believed that the French king would instigate another devastating war, if he could they could gain something from it. Thus, he refrained from commencing any action that would antagonize the French. His counterpart, John Russell, or the duke of Bedford shared his Francophobia. Halifax however, as the head of Board of Trade readily collected accounts of French encroachments upon the frontiers of British colonies. Found in Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 33-34.

¹³ Surprisingly, the cabinet accomplished these resolutions in three weeks, especially considering that the ruling class in England believed August a month of respite from the bustle of the city.

¹⁴ Ibid., 60.

¹⁵ Anderson, *Crucible of War* 44-45.

Washington left the fort on 16 December and arrived in Williamsburg a month later. The reply of the French convinced Governor Dinwiddie that Virginia faced a crisis on her western borders. While Dinwiddie was continuously at odds with the House of Burgesses and remained so, the upper house proved more willing to respond to his request for the raising of arms.¹⁶ Dinwiddie ordered the recruitment of two hundred men to march under the newly promoted Lieutenant Colonel Washington “to the Forks of the Ohio and defend Virginia’s interests against further French encroachments.”¹⁷

This marching of troops expedited the outbreak of the French and Indian War. While Washington had gained experience leading his command to the French fort previous excursion, he had no experience in the art of warfare. His only knowledge of it came from reading books and questioning his older half-brother Lawrence about his experience as a British army officer. A lack of recruits for the expedition also hindered the start of his campaign. Few colonists chose to enlist owing to the Virginia legislature providing only enough expenditure to pay the soldiers half of what a normal laborer made in a day. Not only did Washington struggle with a lack of experience and soldiers, the disinterest of Native Americans to assist him in his previous

¹⁶ While Dinwiddie convinced the upper house to approve his measures to take arms against the French, he did not alert the Burgesses until a special session called after preparations had moved too far to stop. While the Burgesses decided to approve ten thousand pounds in funds for the expedition, they attached stipulations to the expenditures, so that they remained aware of what each pound paid for. They feared that Dinwiddie would utilize the war to increase the power of the Virginian government and enrich him and his associates connected to the Ohio Company, Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 46.

¹⁷ Baugh., 45. James Titus, *The Old Dominion at War: Society, Politics, and Warfare in Late Colonial Virginia* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991). Before the venture even began, it ran into trouble. Dinwiddie had no military experience and it did not seem to occur to him that his actions could possibly cause a war. Furthermore, Virginia did not have the infrastructure necessary to sustain a fighting force hundreds of miles into the wilderness. Nor did it have the industry to produce the materials for war: it was an agrarian colony, focused on the production of tobacco and other agricultural products. It had a feeble militia, limited revenue, and the majority of the colony saw the French crisis as something created by the governor and his conspirators in the Ohio Company (29). Virginians also saw war as an event where “members of the community rallied in defense of their homes and families.” (33). They also had difficulty with recruiting, because Dinwiddie would not pay them with money, but with the land they would secure if the venture succeeded. Thus, few chose to join the militia’s expedition. Finally, Dinwiddie casually told Commissary John Carlyle what to order for the expedition. His orders, however, did not include an understanding of the difficulty with supplying an army in the wilderness. After the failure, he laid the blame on everyone, except himself. Carlyle received the worst of it. He in turned laid the blame on unreliable frontiersmen, as well as a lack of capital to purchase supplies (49).

expedition into the Ohio River region signified the weakening of British-Indian alliances. Without their help, Washington could not hope to drive the French from the area.¹⁸

Washington proceeded to Will's Creek in Maryland in mid-April commanding a paltry one hundred fifty-nine men. In order to supplement his lack of experience, Washington expected Colonel Joshua Frye to meet him there, with British regulars from South Carolina joining them shortly afterward. While at Will's Creek, the lieutenant colonel received news that hundreds of French soldiers were preparing to pour into the Ohio River Valley, to claim it for the crown of France. Taking stock of his poorly equipped men, Washington chose to march for the Ohio River Valley on 30 April. This action instigated the beginning of the French and Indian War and ultimately the Seven Years War. Washington's desire to follow Dinwiddie's orders to the letter forced him to attack a French encampment. Joining his men in the attack, were Indian warriors led by Tanaghrisson, the Half-King. Washington and his allies successfully ambushed the French camp and quickly subdued their enemies.¹⁹

Unfortunately, owing to either unclear orders or Washington's intentional silence, the Native American warriors slaughtered several of the French soldiers including the commanding officer of the expedition. Fred Anderson argues that the thirty-five year old French ensign, Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville tried to explain to Washington that he was a diplomatic envoy. His commandant at Fort Dusquene had sent him with a letter to order Washington to cease marching his troops across French lands. While in the process of translating the letter

¹⁸ Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 43-45.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

however, Tanaghrisson stepped in and smashed his tomahawk down upon Jumonville's skull, killing him.²⁰

This single act by Tanaghrisson did more to instigate war between Britain and France than any other action taken by either side. After this occurrence, Washington withdrew from the area and sent out troops to head off a French advance, only to receive intelligence after they had left that the French had marched in the opposite direction. Realizing the direness of the situation, he returned to the fort constructed earlier in the campaign, Fort Necessity. Upon his arrival, he set up his troops to prepare for a French siege. Realizing the weaknesses of the fort and the futility of the resisting parties, Tanaghrisson withdrew from the campaign, hoping that the situation that he instigated would return him to power over the Indian tribes in the Ohio River Valley.²¹

After his withdrawal, Washington found himself besieged by French forces under the command of Jumonville's brother, Captain Louis Coulon de Villiers on the morning of 3 July. Coulon attacked the fort with six hundred French regulars and Canadian militiamen, as well as 100 French-allied Indians. Their attack continued throughout the day and by nightfall,

²⁰ Ibid., 46-47. Anderson states that the words spoken by Tanaghrisson to Jumonville before his subsequent skull-cracking, "Thou art not yet dead, my father," (spoken in French) represents the symbolic break of Tanaghrisson from France. Culturally, the Native American tribes allied with the French had considered the French king their metaphorical father. Since Jumonville represented the king, Tanaghrisson killed the man, denying the French king of his power over the Native American tribes, that Tanaghrisson represented. Essentially, "the Half King declared war upon France—for both him and the Virginians. This shedding of blood represented an unbreakable covenant in Native American culture and thus, Tanaghrisson declared that he was allying himself with the British and their English king. Anderson continues on stating that Washington may have been more prepared for this catastrophe, if he had understood the situation of the Native American peoples that Tanaghrisson had brought with him. Tanaghrisson only had eighty people with him; a dozen warriors at most and the rest of his group consisted of women and children. He had been ousted from power and sought to return to his former position of authority over the Ohio River Valley region and the former prominence of the Iroquois. This ultimately failed however, when the Mingos, Shawnees, and other Indian tribes chose to ally with France, Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 47-48.

²¹ Ibid., 49.

Washington contemplated the possibility of defeat. At this moment, though, the French declared a ceasefire and sent envoys to convey terms of peace.²²

Owing to his inability to understand French and his translator's mistranslation of the surrender document, Washington signed a document declaring that he had ordered the assassination of Jumonville. Nor did he realize that elsewhere the document stated that Jumonville had been an envoy, carrying a summons to order the British forces of the French majesty's land. Washington's actions ultimately gave the French king the justification needed to declare war against Britain once again.²³

Even at this point, the French did not declare war on the British. They seemed inclined to wait until hostilities increased. Washington's inexperience at command began the French and Indian War, but other events influenced its outbreak. British command sent General Edward Braddock to take command of the colonial forces and to force the colonies into some semblance of cooperation. The colonies had split in their desires and some did not intend to strike against the French. This led to Newcastle and Cumberland to develop a strategy to pull together the colonies. Owing to Cumberland's mindset, however, the plan soon became one consisting entirely of his manipulations, leading to his selection of General Braddock as the leader of the expedition to oust the French from North America. Upon his arrival in the colonies on February 19, 1755 he did not wait for the 44th and 48th Foot Regiments to arrive, but instead began conferring with Governor Dinwiddie concerning the specifics of his campaign in the north. Yet, Braddock's actions endeared him little to the British colonists. In quick succession, he sent

²² Ibid., 49-50. The attack suddenly ceased owing to the lack of ammunition that the French forces carried with them; the long day had used up much of his ammunition. He also realized that he did not have much legal authority over the defeated colonial force considering that no state of open war existed between France and Britain at the time.

²³ Ibid., 52. Owing to the number of troops that traveled with Jumonville, there may have also been a mission of scouting out the British forces, somewhat nullifying the diplomatic envoy status that Jumonville had. Washington's translator's inability to correctly read the document, may owe to the rain that continued to fall throughout the day and night, as well as the lack of light.

letters ordering each of the colonies to join in the war effort, commanding the Pennsylvanians to provide the support he required, while pressuring New York, Albany, Boston, and Philadelphia to cease trading with the French.²⁴

When the governors and Braddock finally met in the middle of April 1755 in Alexandria, Virginia, his brash and forceful personality put him at odds with the colonial governors. He treated them “as if they were his battalion commanders instead of men who would have to cajole stubborn, suspicious, locally minded assemblies into supporting the common cause.”²⁵ Instead, he read out his commission and only provided enough information about his objectives for his coming campaign to alert the governors that the colonies would finance it. Concerning the military operations, Braddock revealed that British high command was sending Admiral Edward Boscawen and his fleet to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In theory, this fleet would prevent the French forces in North America from receiving reinforcements.²⁶ The 44th and 48th Foot Regiments would depart soon upon “an expedition against Fort Duquesne. The 50th and 51st Regiments, deactivated at the end of King George’s War and lately reconstituted, were to march under the command of William Shirley from Albany to seize the French fort of Niagara, at the head of Lake Ontario.”²⁷

While Braddock’s plans seemed to have a logical basis in European warfare, colonial warfare had a different sort of taste to it. The governors knew this and Braddock only learned this when he lost his life on the Monongahela River. It took until 10 June 1755 for Braddock to march his 2,000-strong force from Fort Cumberland, Maryland. While well supplied and

²⁴ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 86.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁶ Although Boscawen’s forces patrolled the Gulf of St. Lawrence in an attempt to prevent French reinforcement to Canada, their lack of knowledge concerning the area hindered them from effectively completing their mission.

²⁷ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 87.

provisioned, his army “was nonetheless a lumbering ox.”²⁸ The wagons were heavy, the artillery pieces were designed for coastal bombardment instead of frontier warfare, and a large number of camp followers “blunted [rather] than sharpened its strategic focus.”²⁹ It took the army seven days to travel twenty-two miles on the same route that Washington had taken in 1753 and 1754. The density of the forest also hindered the progress of the train, as they cut down trees in order to allow its passage. In an endeavor to enhance the speed of his army, he divided it into two parts: with 1,300 men, the majority of the cannon, and a quarter of the wagon train, he would continue forward.³⁰ The rest would come along as fast as they could. This attempt at alacrity though, only weakened him. Yet in his arrogance, he did not know the size of the French force.³¹

Even with the reduced force, he still needed to clear trees in the path of his men. This slowed him his approach upon Fort Duquesne. Forced to deal with rolling hills and dense forests, and stopping to cross streams, the troops arrived eight miles southeast of the fort twenty-two days later. Braddock’s arrogance showed ever more, when his subordinate officers continued to request that he call up the remainder of his forces. He refused.³²

They continued into the forest and on 9 July 1755 they met with the enemy. Around one in the afternoon, scouts spotted the French and Indian force in the woods in front of them. As the opposing forces arrayed themselves for battle, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Gage’s men opened fire with three volleys. Even though they were still two hundred yards apart, one of the balls

²⁸ Walter R. Borneman, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006), 48-49. Interestingly, Braddock nearly did not get the number of provisions and horses that he required. It took the assistance of Benjamin Franklin to gather the necessary logistical factors needed to begin the expedition. Even so, it was not until Franklin hinted that Braddock might start appropriating horses for military use from the colonists that they achieved the needed number of horses for the operation.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

³⁰ The army originally consisted of 2000 regulars, provincials, and a few sailors. They left Virginia with a baggage train composed of 150 wagons.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 49. Daniel Baugh argues instead however, that this was a wise decision. He claims that their penetration into the wilderness was a commendable feat, traveling through one hundred miles of mountain ranges and soggy meadows in just over a month.

³² *Ibid.*, 50.

killed the commanding officer of the advancing French force, Captain Daniel Liénard de Beaujeu. While his loss threw the militiamen and regulars into confusion, the Indians under his command continued forward, slipping into the forest on the flanks of the British detachment. Later accounts reveal that the battle occurred at an Indian hunting ground, where in previous years the local tribes had burned the undergrowth down to allow quicker movement and better vegetation for fodder. The conditions that huntsmen utilized to kill prey, now allowed the Native American marksmen to bring down the British soldiers.³³

The ferocity of the Indians forced the regulars to retreat. Unfortunately, at the first sound of shots, Braddock had ridden forward with his men. He attempted to restore some order, but he failed. Within the span of a few minutes, the formation had fallen into chaos. Forced to retreat, Braddock fell prey to the shots of the enemy. While he survived the day, his wounds overtook him and he died before 14 July, buried without ceremony in the middle of the road.³⁴

The enemy was well fed and rested. Not only did they have the advantage of the home ground, but also the British had no idea about fighting in the forest. When attacked by such a foe, they fell back on their training, relying on their columns for defense. Yet, in the end this proved their undoing. The French and Indians fired straight down the columns, which made it easier for them to kill the “redcoats.” The British suffered from exhaustion, hunger, thirst, and heat. Fear had worn on their nerves, and suddenly they found themselves fighting a battle in the middle of a forest. They had never encountered such warfare in Europe.³⁵

While Braddock did make mistakes, the larger reason for this failure came from the unpreparedness of the British forces for wilderness campaigning in the New World. This battle only served as an example of the defeats Britain would suffer. Not until she understood the

³³ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 99.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 100-104.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

importance of preparedness and logistics in frontier warfare could she hope to overcome the French in this battle for the New World. Unfortunately, the British continued to suffer these failures in the early years of the war. It was not until 1758, that the fortune of war turned in their favor, when Major General Jeffery Amherst took command of the British forces in North America.

The goal of this thesis is to examine the importance of logistics on the inland waters of Canada during the French and Indian War. It is thus necessary to investigate a variety of logistical factors. A historian cannot overlook the role of geography and weather in the North American theater of the Seven Years War. These two elements caused havoc upon both sides as the testimony of John Knox and Louis Antoine de Bougainville share. Canada's geography posed a problem for maneuvering badly needed supplies and provisions to troops fighting against the French and the Indians. Consistently used roads were non-existent in the northern wilderness and the unpredictability of raiding parties from New France made the transportation of necessities to British soldiers dangerous. Even the very foliage worked against the British in their early attacks upon Canada. The densely grown trees and undergrowth prevented the full-scale column marching that typified European warfare and led to the full-scale slaughter of British regulars and colonial militias. The officers of His Majesty's army failed to understand the intricacies of frontier warfare and the necessity of fighting "Indian-style" in the cold forests of the north. Their reliance on traditional warfare prevented them from responding efficiently to the hit and run tactics of the enemy.

The weather also proved a formidable foe in the conquest of New France. Sudden snowstorms blinded troops and trapped colonists, leaving them to die from suffocation or - starvation before help could intervene. Soldiers succumbed to freezing temperatures owing to a

lack of proper clothing and nutrition. Immense snows prevented the transportation of supplies, while mudslides from the melting of snow destroyed established routes into the interior of Canada. In order to survive and conquer New France, the British learned to adapt and utilized the lakes and waterways of the north. By relying on them, the British forged a path to victory. Still, the dangers of the waters often took vessels from the war effort and the vast distance across the ocean slowed the transportation of needed materials, but the eventual wresting of control of the passages from the French allowed the British to obtain the advantage. Without the rivers and lakes of the Canadian frontier, their success in the north would have never occurred. The utilization of amphibious operations was a key factor in the defeat of the French.

Chapter Two covers the various logistical issues that occurred in the conquest of Canada and ultimately the winning of the Seven Years War. This ranged from the programs of the Victualing Board to the colonial ranging companies that understood the intricacies of fighting frontier warfare. The chapter attempts to tie together a variety of issues and serves as a general overview of the vast components of successful logistical operations in the French and Indian War.

The examination of the personas involved in the actual undertaking of logistical operations in North America during the French and Indian War occurs in Chapter Three. Without the desperate efforts of the agents for transports, the British victory would not have happened. Their work to charter vessels in preparation for transporting supplies, provisions, and reinforcements to North America and around the world, led to the successful conclusion of the world war. By utilizing the services of the various merchant vessels and directing them to ports in desperate need of supplies, agents for transports allowed the British troops and their allies to keep fighting what seemed at times a losing war. Their successful contracting of vessels also

provided the Royal Navy with needed ships for the undertaking of amphibious operations whether in Europe or in North America.

Not content to utilize only British vessels, they acquired the services of various merchants and captains in the American colonies. The shorter distance between the colonies and Canada allowed the British to resupply their troops faster. The agents for transports also utilized shipping from the New England colonies, where shipbuilding and maritime affairs remained an important part of life even into the eighteenth century. The vessels contracted from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and even New York took troops to the walls of Louisbourg, and after its fall, to the gates of Quebec. The absence of American vessels would have severely inhibited British operations in North America.

Other key military and civilian personnel during the Seven Years War heavily involved themselves with logistics. Major General Jeffery Amherst, the commander-in-chief of British operations in North America, understood logistics deeply, unlike the officers that served in his post before him. While in the earlier years of the war, several officers had attempted to dislodge the French from their hold in North America, none succeeded. This owed in large part to their lack of understanding of logistics.

Amherst, on the other hand, had a greater understanding of logistics. Utilizing the resources at hand, he obtained the necessary supplies and provisions needed to ensure that his forces succeeded in their conquest of North America. Instead of charging straight into the midst of battle, he waited until he had the necessary logistics to carry out his operations. He also worked with the navy to ensure that amphibious operations could occur. The proper coordination of both the army and the navy gave the British the advantage they needed to defeat the French in the Seven Years War. The letters between him and his officers offer an interesting perspective as

he inquired about the provisions and supplies needed for the successful execution of his invasion of Canada. This concern for logistics eventually led him to become master of Canada.

Joshua Loring was another key figure concerning logistics in the world war. Overlooked by many historians, his contribution nonetheless was important to the success of Amherst's operations upon the lakes. This included his time as an agent for transports and as a captain aboard *Squirrel* on the inland waters. His involvement with the procurement of vessels and other necessary equipment for the invasion of Canada was integral to the success of the British mission. The captain's victory over various French elements on the lakes also cleared the path for the operation to proceed.

Since the British dominated the world's oceans from the time of the Anglo-Dutch Wars to the modern era, there exists a sense that their victory in the Seven Years War was a foregone conclusion. The evidence shows otherwise. Their opponents overtook them in the early stages of the war and the French dominated the northern frontiers of North America until 1758, when Amherst took command and the flow of the war turned to England's favor. After this point, it decisively defeated the French on every front, essentially ending the war in North America by 1760. This owed to their realization that without logistics they could never defeat the French in Canada. In breaking down the factors of geography, logistics as a whole, and the agency of man in logistics, a sense of the difficulty in waging war on such a geographically diverse continent as North America will appear. Owing to this, the eventual outcome of the Seven Years War that rendered the power of France and her allies inert for a time and placed Britain at the forefront of the world will seem all the more remarkable. Without a proper understanding of the importance of logistics and the factors that contribute to it, there can be no true understanding of the Seven Years War.

CHAPTER I: Powdered Snow and Frozen Rivers

Since the beginning of warfare, logistics has played a critical role in military operations. In ancient times, logistics concerned the supply of arrows, provisions, water, or even horses. From the fifteenth century, gunpowder, ammunition, and firearms have complicated the issue. Access to these necessities helped change the course of human history. Without access to proper logistical support, armies, if not entire countries, have fallen to their enemy. Even if a power properly supplies its military there still exists the potential obstacle of geography.

Weather and geography have controlled the flow of battle for centuries. Whether in the jungles of India or in the forests of Canada, inadequate preparation for the battleground's geography ultimately leads to the defeat of a military force. Geography and climate destroyed the Spanish Armada and prevented Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolf Hitler from conquering Russia. In the French and Indian War, the forests and ice of Canada nearly ensured the defeat of the British military in North America. Professor John Shy states in his work *Toward Lexington* that "geography created problems of communications and supply so great that the principal task of generalship was in simply moving a force of moderate size into contact with the enemy."¹

Unlike Europe, dense forests and lakes covered Canada and the Ohio backcountry in the eighteenth century. In previous European wars, the British troops had fought on relatively developed ground. In North America, however, they had to deal with frontier campaigning, a more difficult form of warfare. Not only did they struggle with fighting in the closely grown vegetation, they also had to deal with raids by the Native Americans, Canadians, and even the French. The forests prevented them from fighting in the traditional fashion, long lines of soldiers

¹ John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (ACLS History E-Book Project, 2008), 87.

aiming their muskets at the enemy. Owing to the proximity of the trees and the raiding tactics of their enemies, the British soldiers found themselves at a severe disadvantage.

Just as the density of the forest prevented the British from carrying out normal military operations, the vegetation hampered the desperately needed logistical support. The movement of supplies from one place to another either necessitated utilizing non-existent roads or find another viable route to transport such things as food, clothing, gunpowder, or ammunition. Building roads from scratch consumed time and left the British regulars open to raids by the French and their Indian allies. The dense forests also made the felling of timber and building of roads difficult. Even when Washington built the aptly named Fort Necessity, the geography of the land worked against him, causing him great difficulties in the defending of the Ohio River territory from French incursion. The fort consisted “of a seven-foot-high circular stockade of split logs enclosing a shelter for storing ammunition and supplies.” Only fifty feet in diameter, the “fort” could barely hold sixty to seventy men. In order to “protect” the rest of the men, Washington ordered trenches dug around the perimeter of the fortification. Tenuously situated on the floor of the valley and overlooked by hills, enemy fire could easily penetrate the fort. This seems a somewhat careless disregard for the geography of the region, even more baffling considering Washington had at least some knowledge of geography from his previous experience as a surveyor.²

Since they did not have the time or capacity to mount a full-scale construction of a properly protected path for logistical support, the British needed to find some other way to transverse Canadian territory. While dense forests populate the region, rivers cross the entire area from the northern lakes, to the reaches of New York. Without mastering these important

² Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 59-60. Admittedly, this was Washington’s first military command, so the intricacies and importance of geography to battle seem to have escaped him.

geographical features, the British conquest of Canada would have failed. In *The Global Seven Years War*, Daniel Baugh argues that the success of military operations in this theater depended upon the Royal Navy's role. Without its pioneering developments in joint operations with the British army, the amphibious operations that eventually captured Louisbourg and Quebec would have failed.³

Baugh also explains that, while the brunt of the offensive in Europe lay upon the French, in North America it lay on Great Britain and the American colonists. Combat forces relied on colonial troops⁴ to "bring up provisions and guard supply lines."⁵ While the wilderness could provide for some of the army's needs,⁶ it could not supply the guns, mortars, or projectiles needed to mount a siege upon the French fortifications. Thus, the army needed to utilize the rivers to reach a distant objective. In fact, the offensive against the French in Canada depended entirely upon the waters, traveling "up the St. Lawrence River," as well as "upon the rivers and lakes of northern New York."⁷

Even though these waterways provided valuable ways of attacking the French, the rivers and lakes also acted as pathways for Indian and French raids upon the vessels and troops that sailed along these waters. Louis Antoine de Bougainville, an officer in the French army recalled a French action carried out on the Oswego River under the command of Monsieur Louis Coulon de Villiers. He attacked a convoy of three to four hundred bateaux, each containing two men.⁸ The convoy was "returning from Oswego, where they had carried food and munitions, and had

³ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 9.

⁴ Also called "provincial troops."

⁵ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 12. The burden lay on the British owing to the necessity of relying on colonial troops to protect supply lines and transport provisions. The distance between Britain and the colonies also created problems.

⁶ This included wood, water, and green forage.

⁷ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 13.

⁸ According to de Bougainville, the English company in the Canadian theater numbered one hundred men. Look up the meaning of bateaux.

gone up again after more provisions.”⁹ De Villiers ambushed them with four hundred men, forcing the British to flee and “knocked off a great number, and would have knocked off a lot more were it not for the poor quality of the tomahawks by the King’s Store.”¹⁰ According to de Bougainville, the French suffered the loss of “a colony officer, six Canadians and colony soldiers and one Indian,” while claiming that the French “took twenty-four scalps and killed or wounded in their flight about three hundred men.”¹¹

The waterways also provided a valuable route of communication between the besieged French forces. With the rivers, the French traders and Canadians could easily contact reinforcements. Dominating the rivers gave an advantage throughout the war. Ultimately however, the waterways allowed General Jeffery Amherst to proceed into the heart of Canada relatively bloodlessly,¹² albeit with the help of Captain Joshua Loring, post captain in charge of all naval construction and operations on the ‘Lakes of America.’”¹³

Owing to the strategic and logistical importance of the waterways in America, Baugh asserts that the English and the French waged the Anglo-French Seven Years War on water. While classic naval battles did not occur with regular intensity, the war effort depended on the control of the waterways. Failure to control this vital resource blocked offensive action. The comparative efficiency with which water transports allowed amphibious operations proved vital to the British war effort. Without mastering this challenging aspect of warfare, the British could

⁹ Louis Antoine de Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1756 to 1760*, trans. and ed. by Edward P. Hamilton (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 6.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid. Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet led the convoy. His record testified to him as a competent officer. While according to the Canadian officer who brought the news of de Villiers victory (he held ten English prisoners, some who appeared to be deserters) claimed that the English had suffered massive losses, Bradstreet “actually lost between sixty and seventy men,” bringing back eighty French muskets and two prisoners. This discrepancy however, only serves to expound on the concept that the confusion of the battle (possibly owing to the denseness of the vegetation and the concepts of actions upon vessels) created a misconception.

¹² Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War* 13.

¹³ *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, Vol. IV, “Loring, Joshua,” by W.A.B. Douglas.

not have won the war. While this seems an over-exaggeration, the difficulties the French experienced with penetrating northwestern Germany owed to the lack of viable waterways.¹⁴ In warfare, geography relates to logistics, and without the proper coordination of these factors by Amherst, the British war effort would have failed. Logistics relies on the smooth and the efficient transportation of materials to a destination, and if the British had continued to ignore the importance of geography (as they did in the early part of the war), they would have lost North America and perhaps the first global war.¹⁵

Without knowledge of the geography of Canada, there exists an incomplete understanding of the logistical and military operations in the territory during the French and Indian War. Examining primary sources from both the British and French provides historical context. While both accounts hold similar thoughts and observations, they provide perspective from the eyes of a European soldier in unfamiliar terrain. Shortly following the conclusion of the French and Indian War, John Knox, an officer in General Jeffery Amherst's army published *A Historical Journal of the Campaign in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760*. Of particular importance is his description of the Canadian territory. In September 1760, he recorded his journey back to the American colonies after the conclusion of fighting in North America. According to Knox, observers believed that the British were the undisputed masters of the province of Nova Scotia.¹⁶ Knox claims otherwise. Britain held control of the settlement of Halifax in Chebucto harbor, a garrison at Annapolis Royal, one at Chiquecto,¹⁷ "and three other

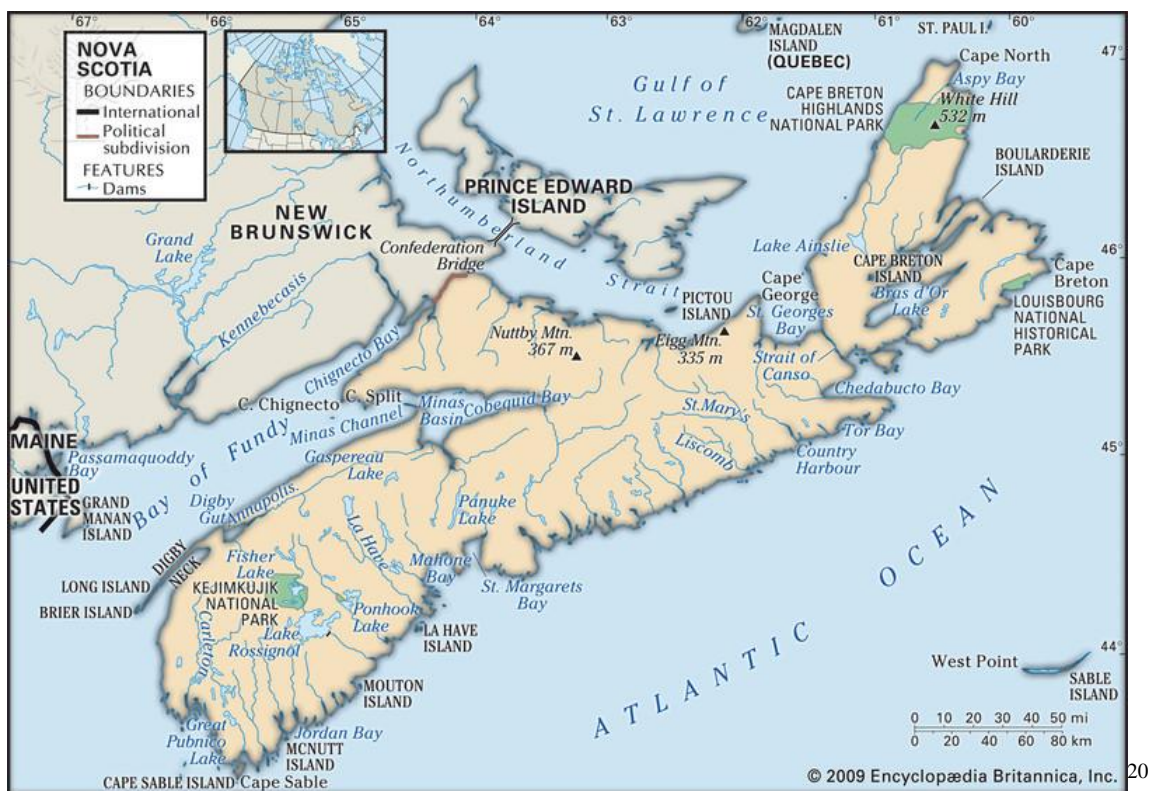
¹⁴The French, on the other hand, did possess an advanced road system that enabled them to move swiftly their troops to the fields of battle. Yet, their inability to dominate the waterways led to their demise in the French and Indian War, and ultimately the Seven Years War.

¹⁵ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 13.

¹⁶ Also known as Acadia.

¹⁷ This was Fort Cumberland,

insignificant stockade intrenchments.”¹⁸ The three stockades guarded the southern peninsula. Knox asserted that the British troops and the inhabitants of the aforementioned towns, garrisons, and forts were virtual prisoners of surrounding French forces. While the southern peninsula remained in British hands, the French controlled the north and northeast, as well as all of the interior locations. The French essentially held three fourths of Nova Scotia. By holding these islands, including Cape Breton and St. John, the French held strategic positions to strike at the British in Canada, as well as the northern colonies.¹⁹



Knox also explained the alarming condition of the provinces west and south of Acadia.

The French had

¹⁸ John Knox, *A Historical Journal of the Campaign in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760* (London, 1769), 443. The British knew the three stockades as Fort Sackville, Lunenburg, and Fort Edward.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Encyclopedia Britannica Image Quest*, “Physical Map of Nova Scotia,” accessed 14 April 2013, http://quest.eb.com/images/309_2916184

“...drawn a line from Cape Canseau, on the east side of the peninsula, opposite to Cape Breton, across the bay of Fundy to the river Penobscot in the province of Maine, through [New Hampshire], [New England], and along the frontiers of Albany, through New York and [Pennsylvania], excluding also the greatest part of Virginia, by the Allegany mountains, down through the Carolinas and Georgia, as far south as Cape Escondide, in the gulph of Mexico, claiming all the countries, lake, and rivers, north and west of this line...”²¹

Knox stated that they secured this vast amount of territory utilizing “a chain of forts.”²²

This “chain of forts” deprived the British “of the greatest part of our most valuable settlements, and the benefit of the fur-trade with our Indian allies on the lakes Champlain, Erie, and Ontario.”²³ In addition, the French made frequent sorties and excursions from the forts, which were easily reinforceable. Their movements “struck terror into the unfortunate inhabitants of those countries, by scalping and otherwise barbarously butchering our people of both sexes, of all ages; and dragging some, whose lives they chose to spare in a horrible captivity.”²⁴ The sheer number of raids only exemplified France’s power in North America. British America remained at its mercy in the year of 1757.²⁵

Knox continued describing that in 1757, John Campbell, the Earl of Loudon, and Admiral Francis Holburne set to subjugate the islands of Cape Breton and St. John. They hoped to curb the “unparalleled insolence of these restless, and...faithless invaders.”²⁶ Since the French controlled the aforementioned islands, they made it difficult for the British to enter Canada. Knox also argued that the islands were the keys to eastern navigation into the bowels of Canada. Without Britain controlling this, the French would keep the British from moving into the interior of the country.²⁷

²¹ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 443.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 443-444.

²⁵ Ibid., 444.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ The commanders of the British forces sent an expedition to the east, but it failed and the French destroyed it.

In Knox's short review of the war, he only focused on geography on his trip home after the British victory in the war. He mentioned the interior of Montreal describing it as a less rigorous climate than Quebec. Montreal stood on the side of a hill that sloped down towards "the river with the south country, and many gentlemen's' seats²⁸ thereon, together with the island of St. Helen."²⁹ To him, Montreal seemed very agreeable compared to similarly sized Quebec. Shortly after the capture of Quebec and Montreal, Knox received permission from Amherst to return to Europe. On his journey to his port of departure, Knox had more opportunity to examine his surroundings.³⁰

Like most British, Knox could not determine either the extent of boundaries of Canada or the source of the St. Lawrence River. While in previous years French historians and geographers affixed the boundaries of Canada, he believed the territory far smaller than what scholars claimed. As the French had been the only ones to explore the vast reaches of Canada, British writers took these assumptions as fact. Thus, Knox limited his account: "I shall confine my narrative of this country from Lake Ontario, the most natural sources of this majestic river, to its gulph or entrance at Cape Raye on the island of Newfoundland, and to the lands and settlements in view of this navigation."³¹ Forests dominated the area and existed in a primeval state, unchanged by the passage of time. Mostly uninhabited and unvisited, the only form of sentient being that lived in the massive forests were "savage aborigines" and other hunters. While others may have taken the accounts given by these persons as fact, he argued that the accounts of the

²⁸ This refers to a feature of geography.

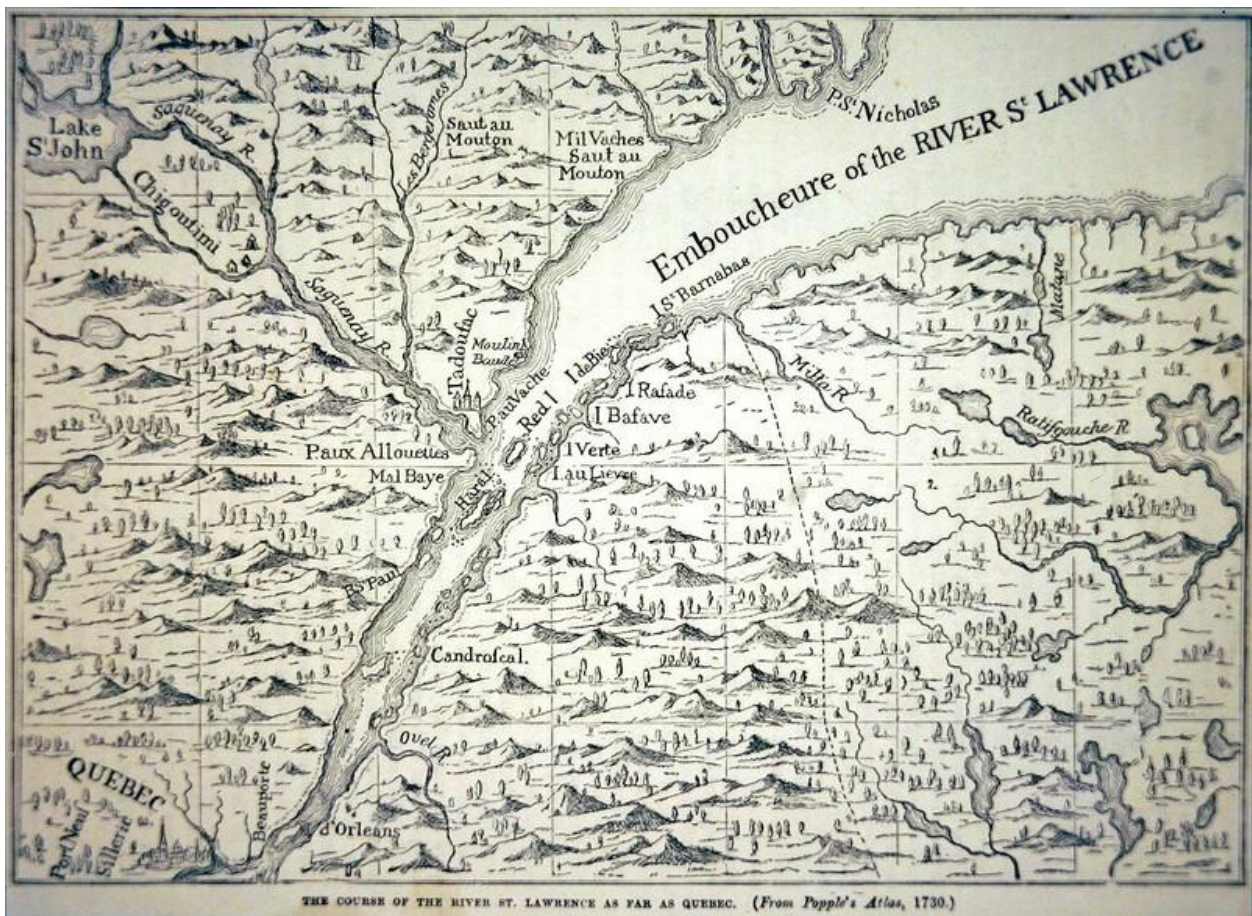
²⁹ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 453.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 455.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 456.

two groups were normally extravagant and erroneous. Thus, the British could not trust them to give an accurate account of the size of the Canadian territory.³²

Cape Raye formed the entrance to the St. Lawrence River on the northeast and north cape. There is another entrance into this river the sea to north through the straits of Belle Isle. Dangers beset the route, possibly owing to the current or ice. Thus, the British seldom sailed this route, given that French vessels traversed the route when avoiding British warships or other vessels that traded contraband with the enemy.³³



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³² Ibid..

³³ Ibid..

³⁴ "New France: The Course of The St. Lawrence River As Far As Quebec," *Encyclopedia Britannica Image Quest*, http://quest.eb.com/images/108_266781. Accessed 14 April 2013.

As he continued his journey, Knox noted that the river contained hundreds, if not thousands of islands. He stated that “many of them are inhabited and well-cultivated, particularly the Isles of Coudre and Orleans, below Quebec; those of Ignatius, Teresa, Montreal, and Jesus, with some of lesser note in that district.”³⁵ Several other islands lay to the southwest of the aforementioned in the St. Francis Lake. The principal of the islands located in the lake was St. Peter’s, but Montreal and Orleans were “more considerable.” Montreal was nearly forty miles in length, and approximately thirteen miles in breadth. Where it was widest, the soil was exceedingly rich and good. The soil there could produce all kinds of European grain and vegetables. The best-cultivated ground lay on the south side, where the majority of the population took residence. The settlements and parishes on the island were numerous, but there existed no native Indian inhabitants on the island, since they avoided European settlements lest the colonists hem them in. Of Orleans, Knox said little, calling it “that fertile and beautiful garden.”³⁶

He next treated navigation of the St. Lawrence River, stating that though the King’s ships had already sailed the river and could do so without local pilots, the waters continued to be dangerous and confusing. The channel in the river sometimes ran by the north and other times it flowed by the southern coast.

³⁵ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 457.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 457.



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When a vessel tried to tack from one shore to the other, they often found themselves obstructed by rocks and shoals of sand or mud. The rocks could severely damage the vessel, while the shoals could slow the vessel's journey up or down the river. These obstructions move from one part of the river to another, "by the immense floats of ice that roll up and down with the currents, at the breaking up of the winters."³⁸ At this comment, Knox reflected and advised that since the currents of the river flowed rapidly in many places, the British should sufficiently prepare any vessel that intended to make the voyage with well-made ground-tackle,³⁹ and the crew should always keep this ready, whether they are sailing alone or in the company of another vessel. Owing to the presence of cataracts⁴⁰ between the settlements of Quebec and Montreal,

³⁷"Map of Quebec," *Encyclopedia Britannica Image Quest*, http://quest.eb.com/images/309_2915813. Accessed 14 April 2013,

³⁸ Knox, 458.

³⁹ A device that prevented an anchor from moving.

⁴⁰ Large and strong waterfalls.

with a strong ripple existing at the Rapids of Richelieu,⁴¹ vessels needed to prepare for the conditions found in these waters.⁴²

While there existed “frequent interruptions in the navigation from Montreal upwards, particularly between that island and Lake St. Francis,” the sailing between Montreal and I’Isle Royale was terrifying, but not dangerous.⁴³ Even so, sloops, or barges of similar size could not move higher up than Montreal, nor could they sail farther down from Lake Ontario to I’Isle Royale. Sailors could overcome these “intermedial difficulties” with the use of flat-bottomed boats, canoes, or other small vessels.⁴⁴

In the river, there existed “a great variety of safe and commodious bays and harbours” in the river, especially after a vessel passed the islands of Cape Breton and St. John.⁴⁵ During the war, the British needed to watch these areas, since the French could run up the river after escaping from the British and then ambush them from one of these safe havens. Knox observed that the principal havens were Chaleuer, Gaspee, Tadousac, Chaudiere, and many others.⁴⁶ The safe haven of Quebec exceeded all of these. Its massive size allowed a hundred ships of the line to ride safely through it.⁴⁷ Militarily, the St. Lawrence River was a valuable passageway. Once a vessel sailed a short way in from the Gulf of St. Lawrence the fogs endemic to the coast of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and Newfoundland no longer clouded visibility.⁴⁸ The lifting of the fog gave the British an advantage on the inland waters. Throughout the war, they experienced difficulty with the weather, especially fog off the coast of Canada. Indeed owing to the weather,

⁴¹ Located between Jacques Cartier and Chambaud.

⁴² Knox *A Historical Journal*, 458. Even though the channel ran “serpentine,” there was sufficient depth for the passage of a forty-gun ship.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 458.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 459.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 459. Knox claimed that there were far too many to cite and that it was needless to do so.

⁴⁷ A ship of the line was a vessel that sailed in the line of battle. Normally the vessels ranged from seventy-guns to one hundred-guns.

⁴⁸ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 459.

Admiral Holburne failed to prevent the French fleet from reaching Canada and resupplying its troops in the early years of the war.⁴⁹

After Knox explained the details of the St. Lawrence River, he went on to describe the lower part of Canada. Generally uncultivated, the wilderness presented a vast and unknown obstacle to the British. The battles fought in Canada demonstrated the variability of frontier warfare and when the British refused to utilize the resources at hand, or to understand the difficulties of this form of fighting, they found themselves forced back on the defensive in North America. The south side of the St. Lawrence River was “covered with dark impenetrable woods, mostly pine and dwarf spruce, with [stupendous] rocks and [barren] mountains, which form a most dismal prospect.”⁵⁰ The territory’s features varied, with the north side of the river stretched in low, marshy ground for several miles. Strong reeds and “rushy grass” covered the ground with a forest appearing to the north. After the traveler cleared the frontiers of Nova Scotia, the first settlement they would find was St. Barnaby, located on the south shore, “about thirty leagues within the gulph.”⁵¹

When Knox arrived at St. Barnaby, he saw “an open, seemingly fertile and civilize country.”⁵² At the settlements opposite of Montreal, the land was “rich, open, and well cultivated, producing corn, flax and vegetables.”⁵³ Horned cattle, sheep, horses, swine, and poultry fed upon the fertile land. An innumerable amount of tributary rivers, rivulets, and smaller brooks flowed through the land, sustaining life, before flowing into the St. Lawrence River. The northland, though, did not have a promising appearance. No “improvements” or settlements

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 110.

⁵⁰ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 459.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 459. In Knox’s account, he refers to the south side of the country and the north side of the country. His location and description of the geography seems to refer to the St. Lawrence River.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 459.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 459.

existed until the traveler reached King's farm at Mal Bay. Located near the Sagueny River and the haven of Tadousax, the Canadian settlers cultivated the land. Here the soil was kind, but to the east and northeast of these farms, the land remained in a primitive state. The river had lofty and steep banks, with the lands on the south gradually rising higher. After a traveler cleared the wood filled island of Anticosti, they would see that trees and under wood grew on the face of the declivities on the island. This continued all the way up on both coasts.

Knox stated that the geography between Mai Bay to Cape Tourmentc, was mountainous and barren.⁵⁴ At the settlement of St. Paul's, the country was clear, fertile, and improved upon by the settlers, much like the land on the south coast. Many rivers and streams run through the area and drain into the St. Lawrence River. He believed that the south country's soil took preference, but neither coast was universally fertile, with both sides growing some produce better than the other. The coastal lands from Montreal to St. Francis Lake, had potential, but at the time of the writing, it had been cultivated. Forests filled the land, growing in cold, spongy soil. The ground was much better from St. Francis Lake to Ontario. It had the capacity to produce an array of excellent timber for many uses. There was good grass there, and little under growth. The numerous islands in the area were well cultivated and rich, inhabited by Canadians under the government of Quebec.⁵⁵

With regard to the French, their settlements extended no farther west than the Cedars.⁵⁶ Knox stated that Native Americans, mostly of the Iroquois Confederacy populated the area surrounding the settlement. The country was unsettled allowing the Indians to live peacefully,

⁵⁴ Approximately thirty miles.

⁵⁵ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 460.

⁵⁶ This was about halfway between Ontario and St. Francis Lake.

without tensions. On both sides of the river, from the island of Coudres to Montreal, a large number of colonists settled, living in close contact with one another.⁵⁷

The winter in Canada lasted for about six months and was severely cold. Once winter set in, however, the average person did not feel it as much after adjusting to the conditions. In fact, Knox claimed that it was a generally serene atmosphere except when a snowstorm began, which seldom lasted more than twenty-four hours.⁵⁸ Regarding the summers, Knox claimed that they were usually pleasant, except in the months of July and August, which were exceedingly hot and violent thunderstorms were common. Owing to the fertility of both the ground and the season, a farmer could expect to reap his harvest within four months of seeding the ground.⁵⁹

As the aforementioned material referred to an English understanding of the geography and focused on Knox's return trip to Europe, the historian needs another viewpoint. Bougainville's journal provided an intensely organized record of the events that occurred during his time in North America. These events include various issues with the geography, weather, and even provisions. Focusing on these three logistical concerns provide insight into the issues that confronted officers in the field.

Bougainville arrived at Quebec on 12 May 1756. Beginning from there, he continued his journal until the final days of the war in North America. He journeyed to Montreal and awaited the arrival of the French General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm. Once the commander arrived, he left Montreal with Bougainville on 21 July and arrived at Lachine. Three leagues from Montreal, Lachine marked the point where a vessel embarked on all journeys to the west. The river from Montreal to Lachine was not navigable. They left Lachine the next day, and Bougainville commented on the difficulty of navigating the river, but finding the scenery, "the most beautiful

⁵⁷ Ibid., 461. Coudres was just below Quebec

⁵⁸ Knox stated however, that the storm "is incessant."

⁵⁹ Knox, *A Historical Journal*, 462.

in the world.”⁶⁰ Densely wooded islands and rocks obstructed the river. For forty leagues there existed waterfalls and ongoing rapids. The river divided into two rivers at a point called the Cascades, with the northern branch called “La Grande Rivière,”⁶¹ while the southern branch went to Frontenac and to the Illinois country by the route of the lakes. A peninsula “three hundred leagues long, which extended as far as Detroit,” and “twenty-four leagues wide”⁶² separated the two rivers. At Cascades, from St. Francis Lake to Isle Perrot, the river was full of waterfalls and rapids. Owing to the nature of the rapidly moving water, the river never froze at this point. The lake and the river connected to it extended up to the foot of the Long Sault, a rapid on the St. Lawrence River that extended for six leagues. According to Bougainville, St. Francis Lake was seven leagues long and lay at a distance of seven leagues from the Cascades. He claimed that the trees were admirable and suitable for the building of vessels.⁶³

Bougainville eventually arrived at St. Frederic with Montcalm on 26 October.⁶⁴ As winter began to approach, the French commanding officer in North America split his force into various divisions for the season. He assigned Monsieur de Lusignan, commanding officer at Fort St. Frederic to take command of Fort Carillon by St. Sacrement Lake and its frontier. Shortly after he arrived there, Montcalm enacted an order he received from Marquis de Vaudreuil on 11 October, to decrease the field ration for the garrison at Fort St. Frederic as soon as he arrived. This owed to the lack of provisions in the storehouse, the poor harvest for the year, the colony’s inability to pull together resources, and the unknown factor of help from France.⁶⁵ Yet, Montcalm postponed the decrease to the rations for the soldiers, believing that if they did so at

⁶⁰ Bougainville, *Adventures in the Wilderness*, 14.

⁶¹ This river was also called the River of the Ottawas. Following this route leads to Michilimakinac.

⁶² Bougainville, *Adventures in the Wilderness*, 14.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

⁶⁴ Concerning the major focus of this chapter is the geography of Canada, there may appear to be major gaps in Bougainville’s story. The writer has chosen to take from various places in his journal instances where weather or geography is elaborated on or played a major role in the text.

⁶⁵ Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 63.

the end of a campaign, the enemy would come to know and utilize it to their advantage.

Vaudreuil repeated the order, and Montcalm decided that the reduction in rations would occur on 1 November, at the end of the campaigning season.⁶⁶

On 27 October, Bougainville and Montcalm left St. Frederic and journeyed to St. Jean, a fort that Bougainville declared “could very easily be burned by a winter raiding party.”⁶⁷ They left the following morning following the road from the fort to La Prairie for a short while. A little river ran throughout the region and inundated the entire area with its waters. Bougainville complained that unless they (most likely referring to the French) built a place for the river to drain, then anyone that desired to travel on it could not utilize the road. At this time, Bougainville also mentioned that the regiment of La Sarre, encamped at La Sahvane, constructed “about two hundred *toises* of road commencing at a point which is on the river to the right of their camp.”⁶⁸

Bougainville analyzed the geography at this point and realized that the location of the river provided an excellent point to stop an enemy who may have taken St. Frederic. Once they took St. Frederic, he argued that the opponents of the French would drive a body of troops across the land from St. Jean. When they reached the river, the French could then halt the British advance and prevent them from pushing further into the Canadian interior.⁶⁹

By 9 November, Bougainville traveled to Quebec on Montcalm’s orders. The snow covered the ground, and the edges of the river were frozen. The violence and danger of the ice prevented merchants at Quebec from conducting much business during the winter. Even though the river allowed the rapid transportation of materials and supplies across the Canadian

⁶⁶ Ibid., 64.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 65. St. Jean seems to refer to a city, as well as an island. This island is known as Prince Edward Island.

⁶⁸ Ibid. A *toise* was an old French term for a unit measuring approximately 2.1315 yards.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 65-66. This assertion that the French could use the river to stop their enemy gives support to Baugh’s argument that the British and French fought the Seven Years War on the waterways.

battlegrounds, the change in seasons prevented its usage during the cold winter months. Normally, the French did not allow vessels to remain at Quebec past October, but owing to the conflict with the British and the need for supplies, they probably extended the stay of these vessels. No matter the reason, ships rarely stayed the winter there owing to several cases of vessels, departing during the month of November, only for the ice to catch them, or dangerous and rogue winds to dash them ashore.⁷⁰ The citizens of Quebec normally hauled the smaller boats on land, to prevent their destruction by ice. A league from Quebec, there was a bay, but no vessel that anchored there passed the winter in safety. Even if they chose to stay at Quebec, no port existed there. The ships had no shelter from squalls, with the storms smashing several vessels against the shore.⁷¹

While the storms prevented ships from sailing or resting in the harbors safely through the winter, other issues plagued the French and by proximity, the British. Bougainville recorded in his journal that the Marquis de Vaudreuil's dispatches sped up the departure of the vessels that remained at Quebec.⁷² In his letters, the marquis requested that the king of France send more troops. More important than troops, however, Vaudreuil desired the monarch to send "foodstuffs." Even with the influx of troops, without the proper supplies, they would not survive the war in Canada. At this point, Bougainville stated that this owed to the bad harvest and that in order to make bread, they needed to mix oats with flour. Vaudreuil claimed that, "unless they send foodstuffs in abundance, not only [was] it useless to send troop reinforcements, but also he

⁷⁰ At this point, Bougainville stated "The ice does not allow it." He seemed to give ice a personality, perhaps referring to Old Man Winter.

⁷¹ Bougainville, *Adventures in the Wilderness*, 68-69.

⁷² Earlier in his journal, Bougainville stated that the vessels awaited de Vaudreuil's orders to sail.

[would] send back two of the battalions now [there].”⁷³ He continued asking that his superiors prepare the vessels to sail by the end of February.⁷⁴

Winter continued to affect operations in Canada. Bougainville wrote in his diary on 15 November of the Guyenne battalion’s journey to Quebec from Carillion. Leaving the town on the fifth of the month, they travelled through St. Jean, Chambly, and Trois Rivières. They did not find bread at these places, though. Forced to continue on, they tried to proceed down the river, but contrary winds forced them ashore. Forced to remain in deserted regions for several days, a sudden squall on the twelfth forced them to the St. Anne River.⁷⁵ There the battalion found their transportation trapped by the ice. After strenuous labor, they could only free twelve bateaux. They placed the small amount of food that remained with the troops into those bateaux, which continued their journey upon the river. The remaining men arrived at Quebec on 14 November. They came on foot, scrounging for bread and food with great difficulty. The weather forced them to bivouac at night in the midst of ice and snow. When they appeared at Quebec, Bougainville claimed that all of them had colds, and their bodies were “wasted and emaciated.”⁷⁶ Bougainville claimed that such a march was too laborious, considering that, it came at the end of a campaign as violent as the French just experienced. To him, they should have started at an earlier date, to reach winter quarters so far away.⁷⁷

The winter weather seemed to vary, with some days intense and cold with thirteen inches of snow. The ice on the rivers and in the harbors prevented vessels from sailing into open waters and trapped them in their ports. Not only did they continue dealing with the winter’s cold and snow throughout their quartering, but also issues with the bad harvest affected them.

⁷³ Ibid., 70.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 69-70.

⁷⁵ This river lay twenty leagues from Quebec.

⁷⁶ Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 70.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Bougainville mentioned that they mixed peas with flour to make bread.⁷⁸ The authorities at Quebec established a police regulation stating that the public would receive bread in the afternoon. Bougainville took time to see the distribution and was shocked. The sight indicated famine, with the populace fighting to near the wicket, through which the officials distributed the bread.⁷⁹ Those who were unable to leave their homes, placed their permits on the end of a stick, as a measure to ensure they receive bread.⁸⁰ Winter affected them throughout the French quartering at Quebec. Bougainville wrote in his journal on 20 December, that snow and powdered snow fell that day. He described the powdered snow as “extremely fine snow, which, falling from the sky and combining with that which the wind raises from the roofs and roads, envelops you, blinds you, and leads astray one who knows the way very well.”⁸¹ He urged that anyone finding themselves in such a storm should realize the threat. The danger was such that, there were “instances of people who in the night, a hundred paces from their houses, have perished without being able to reach them.”⁸²

On 29 December, Bougainville wrote that a ship had sailed for Gaspé, where it intended to leave “foodstuffs” and receive a load of salt cod destined for France. Before this vessel could pass the heights of Cape Chat, however, the ice caught it, locking it into place. Three sailors froze while aboard the vessel, and the rest of the vessel’s crew mutinied. Bougainville stated that the French command considered the vessel lost.⁸³ This harsh winter lasted until the month of April. Bougainville stated that the thaw of the ice and snow started on 4 April. Two days later, it was too dangerous to attempt to cross the river, and the massive flow of water changed where a

⁷⁸ Originally, they used oats, but this produced bran instead of flour, while the mixture with peas produced a better bread.

⁷⁹ A wicket is a small gate or door.

⁸⁰ Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 71-72.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 76.

military force could cross the river.⁸⁴ At the beginning of such weather, the campaign season started once again and continued through the year. Yet, by October, the weather forced commanders to garrison their troops to try to survive the harsh Canadian winter.

Knox's and Bougainville's experiences provide valuable testimony concerning the geography and weather of Canada. They explained how it affected the movement of troops across the landscape and how it hindered their resupply. Without the usage of waterways, the British war effort would have failed. Once they gained access and then control of the waterways, however, they remained a dominant force on the inland waters to the end of the war. The terrain and density of forests in Canada prevented the British from moving quickly, and their animus toward irregular warfare and Native American assistance nearly led to their downfall. While the small size of the French forces in the beginning of the war enabled them to move deftly through the forest to ambush their enemies, the British had difficulty reacting even minimally to the attacks. After the arrival of certain military commanders though, they began to rely upon Indian allies and the colonial rangers. They understood the terrain and utilized it against the French, overcoming them in small, but meaningful victories. General Amherst, in particular, utilized these resources to establish a strong position in North America. With the help of Joshua Loring, he secured the lakes and waterways that led to the Canadian settlement of Quebec.

Weather remained a factor throughout the war, and the vicious Canadian winters often overcame even the strongest British soldiers. Considering that the hostile French forces controlled the Canadian territory, the British had difficulty procuring supplies, except when at their own fortifications and settlements, which were few and far between. Still, even those places found themselves overcome by hunger, disease, and most deadly, the weather. Even if they had protection against the cold, they lay far from established supply trains and with hostile French-

⁸⁴ Ibid., 99.

allied Native Americans patrolling the land, they could only hope that supplies came through, or that their own Indian-allies remained true to them.

Without established roads or paths fortified against the geography and weather of Canada, supplies often could not get through. Even the French had difficulty provisioning their own forces and ensuring the safety of the citizens of their settlements. Only when the British learned the value of the waterways did they finally achieve the capability to supply their troops. Once they gained control of the rivers and lakes of Canada and New York, they obtained an advantage in the North American theater of the Seven Years War. No matter the force, weather and geography played an important role in the nature of war. It could stop an army in its march, ice over rivers, and ruin provisions and supplies. The nature of logistics necessitates an understanding of the importance of geography and weather. If geography and weather slow or prevent movement, then the lack of provisions can decimate military forces and cause nations to fall in battle.

CHAPTER II: Logistical Factors

For two centuries, the Royal Navy dominated the seas. Its superior training and technological advanced vessels overpowered any enemy they encountered upon the high seas. The fleet could not have achieved this superiority without highly developed logistical support. A subject often overshadowed by the worthy study of battles and wars, logistics provided the materials, resources, men, and funds necessary for the triumph in conflict and the dominance Britain held over the vast waters of the oceans. Without sufficient logistical support, armies starve, fleets rot, and nations fall. In the same way, had the British failed to consider logistical planning, they would not have been victorious upon the great waters nor in their wars with France and other European rivals. The French and Indian War presented the British with a serious logistical obstacle. Owing to the distance between Britain and America, and the geography of the colonies and Canada, the British forces struggled to fight the French. Numerous instances show the importance of logistics and their effects upon the outcomes of the war's battles and campaigns. In the Americas wilderness covered the majority of the land. With the threat of attacks by French-allied Native Americans, the British needed to adapt to irregular warfare. In order to sustain themselves, they needed resources and supplies to cope with the harsh North American winters.

The British found the campaign on the inland waters to be one of most difficult theaters of war.¹ The geography of the Canadian coastline and the climate made it difficult for vessels to pass unharmed on the rivers. Depending on their size, they could access the St. Lawrence River and sail down it or disembark troops to assault the forces and forts of the French. A map of Canada reveals the difficulties that the British faced when trying to access the rivers.

¹ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 9.

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2

In order to access the River St. Lawrence, the Royal Navy needed to enter the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which the French fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island protected. Much to the frustration of numerous captains, the ice-choked waters around Newfoundland blocked the more northerly routes.³ Louisbourg, a port city harboring French vessels, ensured that French raiders would hinder any British attempt to sail into the gulf. The persistent threat of the French ships at Louisbourg hindered the transportation of material and supplies to British troops on

² Educational Maps, "The French and Indian War, 1754-1763," *Historical Maps of Canada* http://www.google.com/imgres?q=map+of+canada+in+fr+and+indian+war&hl=en&sa=X&tbo=d&biw=1366&bih=705&tbn=isch&tbnid=D5kqNDIvcs9kTM:&imgrefurl=http://www.edmaps.com/html/canada.html&docid=fp5NE7NPc3TytM&imgurl=http://www.edmaps.com/french_indian_war_1763.gif&w=1000&h=750&ei=KfqzUPSnCqTU0gHO2IGYDQ&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=953&vpy=153&dur=608&hovh=194&hovw=259&tx=120&ty=99&sig=114657619658458800153&page=1&tbnh=142&tbnw=195&start=0&ndsp=31&ved=1t:429,r:5,s:0,i:102. Accessed 28 November, 2012.

³ Earl of Loudon, "Letter to superior, 22 November 1756," *Military and Naval Correspondence, Volumes Forty-eight to Fifty-one* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress: 1756).

campaign in Canada. The weather also worked against the British owing to their lack of knowledge regarding the climate of Canada. On the sea, fog constantly prevented vessels from sailing. One captain commented that since he arrived in North America, there had been six straight days of fog.⁴

Dealing with the fog and weather of the northern waters hindered the Royal Navy in its mission to stop French movement on the ocean. On the 8 June off Louisbourg, Vice Admiral Edward Boscawen with his squadron patrolled the waters. At the “seventh instant,” Captain Richard Howe of *Dunkirk* reported that an Ensign Banker saw the French on the coast, with a vessel of fifty-gun size, accompanied by soldiers. Early in the morning on the next day, Boscawen and his fleet saw “four sail of large ships” to the windward, bearing down upon his squadron. As they watched the French vessels, a fog rolled in that stayed until 10:00 a.m. on 9 June. Because of the fog, they lost sight of their quarry. On the next day, they saw “three sail of large ships” around 4:00 p.m. Boscawen hoisted the French colors and the sails came towards them, but the winds kept them from the squadron.⁵ On the next morning, Boscawen reports that the supposed French vessels were six or seven miles away. The French vessels signaled Boscawen, but when he failed to reply, they sailed away in an attempt to flee the squadron.⁶

Howe came alongside of the sternmost French vessel and when the ship did not shorten his sail, Boscawen ordered Howe to engage.⁷ Howe obeyed and opened fire upon the French ship, but in a few minutes, he brought to the lee.⁸ When *Torbay*,⁹ the British ship, came up and

⁴ Earl of Loudon, “Letter to superior, 16 August 1757 while aboard H.M.S. Winchester” Found in *Military and Naval Correspondence, Volumes Forty-eight to Fifty-one* (Madison Building, Library of Congress: 1757).

⁵ The French colors refers to the French flag. Warships would raise the enemy’s flag in order to draw them close to attack them.

⁶ Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen, “Letter to Superior, 22 June 1755,” *Letters of Edward Boscawen, Commander in Chief of North Atlantic Fleet* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress: 1755).

⁷ Sternmost referred to the rearmost vessel.

⁸ Lee refers to the area sheltered from the wind.

⁹ Another vessel in Boscawen’s squadron, commanded by Charles Colby.

fired one gun upon the *Alcide*,¹⁰ she struck her colors surrendering. The *Lis*¹¹ fired her stern chaser for two hours, but eventually struck her colors to *Fogeux*¹² and *Defiance*.¹³ At that moment, a fog rolled in and *Dauphin Royal*¹⁴ escaped. The fog continued to plague Boscawen. That night, *Defiance*, *Fogeux*, *Litchfield*, *Alcide*, and *Lis* lost company in the fog. On 18 June, *Defiance*, *Fogeux*, *Litchfield*, and *Alcide* rejoined with the squadron, but *Lis* proceeded to Halifax, in accordance with Boscawen's orders in the event of separation.¹⁵ As evidenced, the weather of the northern waters continued to hinder Royal Navy operations. With the descent of the fog upon the vessels, they could not capture the final French ship, which then alerted the French to their presence off the coast of Canada. With a renewed watch for the Royal Navy, operations became more difficult for them on the northern waters. Owing to the unpredictability of the weather, the British found themselves on the defensive, until they could gain some semblance of familiarity with Canada.

The failure of the Royal Navy to stem the flow of French supplies caused the loss of British fortifications during the early stages of the war. The story of the fall of Fort Oswego, a trading post on Lake Ontario, provides a poignant image of the necessity of logistical management. General William Shirley found himself frustrated with his inability to initiate operations. He could not obtain unused cannon from Albany owing to his dispute with the De Lanceys while other logistical issues including a lack of Indian scouts hampered the start of his

¹⁰ A French vessel of sixty-four guns commanded by Monsieur Hoquart.

¹¹ A second French vessel of sixty-four guns.

¹² A British vessel commanded by Rear Admiral Spry.

¹³ A British commanded by F. Andrews. The chasers were guns placed on the ship for using in pursuing an enemy vessel.

¹⁴ The French said *Dauphin Royal* was the best sailor in France.

¹⁵ Ibid.

operation.¹⁶ While supervising the transfer of provisions and troops to the fort, he received news that General Edward Braddock, the commander-in-chief of North American operations, had died at the battle on the Monongahela River. With the death of Braddock, Shirley received Braddock's position and responsibilities. Over the next few weeks, he found the situation dire.¹⁷

Admiral Edward Boscawen failed in his patrol of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, unable to prevent French reinforcements from entering Canada. At the same time, logistical issues plagued Shirley's campaign. Fred Anderson attributes a portion of this problem to the lack of available funds. Following Braddock's death, the deputy paymaster refused to honor drafts presented by various military contractors. Even with these issues hindering the progression of his campaign, Shirley pressed forward until he reached the shores of Lake Ontario. Arriving there, he found that he could not continue his campaign any longer. Fort Oswego was indefensible, requiring a massive renovation to convert it into a supply base. This forced him to abandon his Niagara campaign for the time. He ordered that the fort repaired and fortified, while also quartering his two regiments of regulars to garrison there for the winter months. He then returned to New York to await the end of winter.¹⁸

Logistical problems plagued the British on the inland waters as well. At Fort Oswego, Captain Housum Broadley was the commander-in-chief of His Majesty's vessels on Lake Ontario.¹⁹ He commanded a sloop that carried four four-pounders, one three-pounder and ten swivels, as well as a crew of forty-five men. On 27 June 1756, he sailed on the lake with a smaller schooner in company. The escorting vessel had six swivels and could carry fourteen

¹⁶ Earlier when preparing for Braddock's expedition, Shirley had cut the New York Lieutenant Governor James De Lancey from a contracting deal, while supporting their mortal enemies the Livingston-Morris faction. The De Lanceys had nursed a grudge since then.

¹⁷ Anderson, *The Crucible of War*, 112.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Captain Housum Broadley, "Letter to Rear Admiral Boscawen from Oswego Sloop at Oswego on 18 September 1755," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

men. While sixty-six miles south of Oswego the smaller schooner spotted two large sails to the northwest. As he turned towards them, the sails came towards the sloop and schooner. At the same instant, two other sails appeared, bearing down upon Broadley and his squadron. As these vessels approached, the British discerned all of them to be of schooner class. One of the new vessels hoisted a white a flag and fired two guns, while the other two vessels continued to stand towards them. These two vessels appeared new, indicating that the French had initiated the construction of vessels to patrol the lake. One of the vessels had seven guns on a side, while the other, of similar size, had eights guns mounted on her with additional ports.²⁰

Broadley conversed with a Captain Laferey, as well as their officers, deciding that the French vessels were superior to their own and that they could not hope to defeat them in battle. In response, they bore away to the southeast. Understanding that his vessel sailed better than the schooner, he ordered her to turn towards the east. Obeying his orders, she turned to the east for a while then stood northwest. At this sudden change in course, the sternmost French vessel gave chase, while shortly afterwards another vessel stood to the northwest. The largest of the French ships chased Broadley's vessel until 8:00 p.m. with the headmost of the French vessels firing several of her chase guns. The headmost of the vessels was at this time under Captain Laferey's stern, where he discharged his broadside. The two chasing vessels then stood to the northeast. Around noon, Broadley lost sight of them, and arrived in port on the night of the 27 June. As he arrived in the port, a builder²¹ came to him and announced that a new sloop would be ready to launch in four days, while the brig would take eight more days.²²

The French control of the lakes limited further British incursions into Canada. The need for control of the lakes proved another logistical challenge for the British. With the French

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ The Brig had eight ports on each side for guns, while the sloop had six ports on each side.

²² Broadley, "*Letter to Rear Admiral Boscawen.*"

vessels on the inland waters, the British could not transport supplies to troops inland. Further the British found themselves struggling to provide ships capable of navigating the shallower inland bodies of water. Finally, on 2 July, Colonel James Bradstreet arrived at Oswego with six six-pounders, ten four-pounders, fourteen swivels, and double-headed shot. When he arrived, the docks had prepared and launched the brig. The dockyard, though, believed that the snow, a form of sailing rig, would not successfully serve upon the waters. Even if the snow performed as needed, the dockyard could not provide any guns or sails for her. Scavengers had used the sails provided for the new vessels for whaleboats.²³

Well into July, the port at Oswego continued to have difficulty with receiving supplies. Colonel Bradstreet reported that as of 7 July, the British had not received the needed supplies, among which included nails. Without the needed nails, Oswego found its stores and provisions exposed to the weather. Not only did they find themselves running low on supplies, with their stores and provisions slowly going bad, but also a French prisoner revealed hidden information. The prisoner recounted that the French workers were building another vessel of superior capabilities than any other upon the lake at Luadroque and they planned to launch it soon.²⁴

While logistics primarily concerns supplies, it also deals with the movement of men. Early in the French and Indian War, commanders in the North American theater found it difficult to complement vessels with the appropriate number of sailors. While on the lake, Broadley met with two large vessels, with one hundred men each. He wanted to reinforce each “with a very

²³ Captain Hosum Broadley, “Letter to Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen, aboard Oswego Sloop, at Oswego on 2 July 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

²⁴ Captain Hosum Broadley, “Letter to Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen aboard Oswego Sloop, at Oswego on 7 July 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756). No more information is revealed concerning this vessel being built. It is possible this was *Le Québec*, a vessel of forty guns. It was built in 1756, but was destroyed on the stocks, Jeffery Amherst, *The Journal of Jeffery Amherst: Recording the Career of General Amherst in America from 1758 to 1763* (Toronto, Canada and Chicago: The Ryerson Press and The University of Chicago Press, 1931), 333.

strong party.”²⁵ They should have been able to reach their complement at Oswego, but owing to the lack of competent sailors, they could not. He had made an agreement in New York concerning the number of men to be aboard his vessels, but in order to reach this complement of men, he needed thirty more, yet still considered this too few. Besides needing men for other vessels, he still needed some to man a small schooner.²⁶

Broadley requested permission to build another schooner for operations upon the lake. He also requested materials for the completed snow such as rigging, sails, guns, ammunition, and cartridge paper. While the snow may have been seaworthy, without these necessities, she would be doomed to failure upon the lakes. Broadley recorded that the supplies for the navy had stopped at the forts along the way for some reason.²⁷ Showing the need for the supplies, he requested that the commanding officers of the forts forward them as soon as possible. Alerting his superiors to the situation upon the lake, he also requested permission to build a wharf for the security of the vessels.²⁸

Even into 15 July, logistical concerns continued to plague Oswego. Its commanders had difficulties with procuring the naval stores,²⁹ forcing them to forge their own nails. Things seemed desperate to the residents at Oswego, as they needed supply-laden *bateaux* to arrive to resupply them.³⁰ Colonel James F. Mercer sent a letter to Captain Williams at Oneida on 24

²⁵ Broadley, “Letter to Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen, 7 July 1756.”

²⁶ *Ibid.*

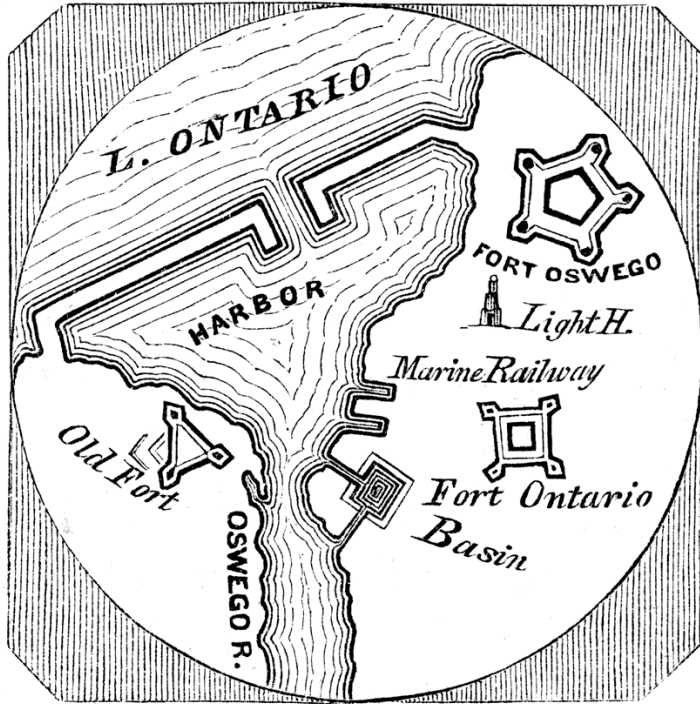
²⁷ In order to get supplies to the commands in Canada, the British utilized supply trains (using wagons) and rivers. With the French dominating the waterways however, it would have been difficult for supplies to reach the British by river. Thus, the British found themselves forced to rely on baggage trains subject to French patrols and Indian raids.

²⁸ Broadley, “Letter to Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen, 7 July 1756.”

²⁹ Presumably still held up at the forts.

³⁰ Captain Housm Broadley, “Letter to Rear Admiral Edward Boscawen aboard Oswego Sloop at Oswego on 15 July 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

January 1756, requesting provisions. They desperately needed them, since they had already reduced the troops' rations to three-quarters of their normal intake.³¹



32

FORTS AT OSWEGO.³

Even though the British had good relations with the Native Americans before the war, they could not convince the tribes to assist them. Instead, many times the nations sided with the French. The problems experienced with gaining the cooperation of the Indians persisted into the next year. These unresolved disputes soon led to the fall of Oswego to the French. On 10 August, soldiers stationed at Fort Ontario, a defensive outwork of Oswego, spotted the scalped corpse of a fellow British soldier near the palisade. The raiders had killed the man in broad daylight, presenting the first evidence in a month of any hostile Indians in the area. In response, Lieutenant

³¹ Colonel J.F. Mercer, "Letter to Captain Williams at Oneida, from Colonel Mercer at Oswego, 24 January 1756," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

³²Florida Center for Instructional Technology, *Fort Oswego, 1727-1756* (Florida: College of Education, University of South Florida, 2009), <http://etc.usf.edu/maps/pages/8100/8156/8156.htm>. Accessed 29 November 2012.

Colonel Mercer sent one of the post's small, armed schooners out on the morning of 11 August to reconnoiter the lakeshore in order to ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy encampment. She only sailed a mile and a half from the fort, when she observed the three thousand troops led by the marquis de Montcalm. Later that afternoon, Indian snipers climbed trees near the perimeter of the outpost and fired into the interior of the outwork.³³

On 22 July, Mercer sent a letter to General Shirley alerting him that an attack on the fort was imminent, as enemy forces moved through the woods from the eastward.³⁴ By the beginning of August, the French had the fort under siege from all sides, securing its capitulation a few days later.³⁵ The Earl of Loudon sent a letter to the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia to alert them that they lost all stores and ammunition at Oswego. With the defensive post of Oswego taken, Loudon encouraged the states to fortify their frontier defenses. As a final order, he asked them to prohibit the exportation of provisions to the northern theater for the time. He believed that if they continued to export supplies, then the French would gain access to them. With a steady stream of provisions, the French could continue the war indefinitely, while the British would constantly be at a disadvantage.³⁶ Possibly owing to the deteriorating supply situation, scurvy afflicted the troops

³³ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 150.

³⁴ Colonel J.F. Mercer, "Letter to General Shirley, from Oswego on 22 July 1756," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

³⁵ Daniel Webb, "Letter sent to superior officer on 17th August 1756," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

³⁶ Earl of Loudon, "Letter sent to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia on 20 August 1756," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

and the pursers had not paid them since 24 October. This contributed to discontent in the fort and to loss of morale among the troops.³⁷

It is interesting to note that Montcalm did not want to utilize the Indians to the extent that he did in the battle. Governor-General Vaudreuil and his brother, Francois-Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil argued for the extensive usage of Native American in the fight against the British. They examined history and observed that Canadian troops and Indians had always played a crucial part of the defense of Canada against the British and colonial encroachment. Their raiding tactics forced the northern colonies to focus more on the defense of their frontiers than providing forces for the invasion of Canada. The two also realized that in order to retain the good graces of the Indians, they needed to allow them to fight according to their own form of warfare. If they refused them this right, the French would estrange themselves from the Indians.³⁸

The defenders at Fort Ontario heard the sound of Canadian axmen cutting down trees to open a cannon road. The garrison, though, had yet to complete the fortifications necessary to withstand the French attack. Even after the 50th and 51st regiments regained their health,³⁹ they found their attempts to build the defenses of the fort hampered by the rapid change of commander-in-chiefs.⁴⁰ Shirley poorly designed Oswego's defenses, owing to both his naivety concerning fortifications and to the strange geography of the land. The original trading post was a stone blockhouse that stood on a low hill "beside the bay where the Oswego River emptied into Lake Ontario."⁴¹ Across the river no more than a quarter of a mile to the east, a fifty-foot hill overlooked the lake, "while a quarter mile west of the blockhouse, a second hill stood even

³⁷ Unknown author, "22 February letter from Oswego," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

³⁸ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 151.

³⁹ A lack of proper nutrition induced sickness among the troops.

⁴⁰ The command transferred from Shirley, to Lord Abercromby to the Earl of Loudon.

⁴¹ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 152. It was founded in 1727.

higher.”⁴² Oswego was thus located between two points of potential artillery crossfire. Owing to the weakness of the trading post, even light cannon could bring down the fort. A more prudent commander would have abandoned the position to find a more defensible one, but Shirley’s insistence on remaining at the fort and adding new fortifications indicated a shallow understanding of the tactical disadvantages of the position.⁴³

On 22 July, Mercer sent a letter to General Shirley alerting him that an attack on the fort was imminent.⁴⁴ By the beginning of August, the French had the fort under siege from all sides, securing its capitulation a few days later.⁴⁵ John Campbell, also known as the Earl of Loudon, sent a letter to the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia to alert them that they lost all stores and ammunition at Oswego.⁴⁶ With the defensive post of Oswego taken, Loudon encouraged the states to fortify their frontier defenses. As a final order, he asked them to prohibit the exportation of provisions to the northern theater for the time. He believed that if they continued to export supplies, then the French would gain access to them. With a steady stream of provisions, the French could continue the war indefinitely, while the British would constantly be at a disadvantage.⁴⁷ Possibly owing to the

⁴² Ibid., 152.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Colonel J.F. Mercer, “Letter to General Shirley, from Oswego on 22 July 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

⁴⁵ Daniel Webb, “Letter sent to superior officer on 17th August 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

⁴⁶ At the time Loudon was the commander-in-chief.

⁴⁷ Earl of Loudon, “Letter sent to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia on 20 August 1756,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

deteriorating supply situation, scurvy afflicted the troops and the pursers had not paid them since 24 October. This contributed to discontent in the fort and to loss of morale among the troops.⁴⁸

When Montcalm besieged Oswego, the fort consisted of three separate posts. None of these forts were “planned correctly or built well.”⁴⁹ Montcalm soon overwhelmed Lieutenant Colonel Mercer’s 1,135 soldiers. Montcalm first took Fort Ontario, constructing platforms from which to fire their cannon at point-blank range at the wooden palisade. Mercer ordered the troops to abandon the fort on 13 August, not wanting them to endure the artillery barrage. The next morning, the French had not only the cannon of Fort Ontario on Oswego, but also another dozen cannon on high ground aimed at the British fortifications. To make it even more hopeless, Fort Oswego’s own batteries pointed in the opposite direction. Mercer ordered the gunnery crews to turn their ordinance so that they aimed over the heads of the garrison and then ordered them to fire. With that, the battle commenced, the French firing their cannon into the fort as well. Cannon shot beheaded Mercer, leaving command to Lieutenant Colonel John Littlehales. Mercer’s death affected Littlehales profoundly. Within an hour he called for a ceasefire and dispatched a representative to Montcalm in order to ask for terms. Montcalm refused to offer Littlehales the honors of war, believing their defense unworthy of the privilege.⁵⁰ He only promised them “that he would protect the British from the attacks of his Indian allies and would guarantee their safe conduct to Montréal.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Unknown author, “22 February letter from Oswego,” *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 152.

⁵⁰ The honors of war was to grant the defeated with the ability to depart with their colors, and their personal possessions, as well as a symbolic cannon. The defeated would then give a promise not to participate in military for a specified period of time.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 152-154. The Indians however, did not abide by these terms and during the afternoon after the siege of Oswego, the “Indians killed and scalped the sick and wounded in the British hospital, appropriated property, and took captives from among the soldiers’ and traders’ families.”⁵¹ The Indians killed several American soldiers

As previously stated, British regulars had little idea as how to fight on the North American continent. While they eventually gained the experience and capacity to fight frontier campaigns, they found the French soldiers and their Indian allies to be far more competent in the wilderness of North America. Originally, the Indians proved to be one of the greatest danger to the British regulars and their provincial auxiliaries. Pat MacKellar, an *engineer en second* stated that while building a fort, the engineers encountered trouble in the form of Indian scalping parties.⁵² Owing to their extensive knowledge of the North American forests and their own form of warfare, the Native Americans could sweep in from the forest, take scalps, and raid British provisions and supplies.⁵³

The British eventually gained some measure of the defense against these ambushes by relying on ranging companies. Also called rangers, the ranging companies understood the lay of the land and could prevent surprise attacks upon the British companies, while gathering needed intelligence.⁵⁴ The ranging companies assisted the regular troops greatly in wilderness warfare. The Earl of Loudon saw the need for the rangers. In a letter written 22 November 1756, he requested a fleet sufficient to protect troops in transport to Quebec. Later on in his letter, he mentioned that he was working with the ranging companies who brought him a prisoner while he was at Fort Edward. He made the comment that the ranging companies should be able to prevent the enemy from making incursions into the settled country. Loudon hoped that the rangers could effectively curtail enemy offensives from the frontier. He also believed that they would prevent

and civilians, while making captives of an indeterminate number before Montcalm placated them.⁵¹ The number killed is unclear. Anderson lists it as between thirty and a hundred dead, 154.

⁵² *Engineer en second* Pat Mackellar, "Letter to superior officer on 25 May 1756," *Colonial Office 5: America & West Indies, Volumes Forty-six to Forty-seven, French and Indian War* (Washington, D.C.: Madison Building, Library of Congress, 1756).

⁵³ Earl of Loudon, 22 November 1756.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

scalping parties, utilizing their wilderness and skirmishing skills to gain intelligence and eliminate the threat.⁵⁵

For logistics to successfully affect a war, transportation of provisions and materials is required. During the mid-eighteenth century, the fastest way to transport materials was via shipping upon the waters. Owing to its naval superiority, Great Britain held the dominance in overseas shipping. David Syrett argues in *Shipping and Military Power in the Seven Years War* that had it not been for Britain's dominance of the sea, then they could not have supported the troops fighting the war in America.⁵⁶ The Royal Navy allowed Britain to suppress the power of the French fleet and escort the vessels that carried provisions and troops to the North American continent. Yet, naval power is not the only necessity for maritime mobility. Britain "also needed money, merchant shipping, and administrative skill to be able to conduct effectively a strategy of maritime mobility."⁵⁷

In order to administer effectively shipping, several boards oversaw different aspects of the issue. The Navy Board oversaw the chartering of merchant ships to transport troops, horses, and the stores required for overseas military operations. Also known as the Commissioners of the Navy,⁵⁸ this body supervised the Royal Dockyards and held responsibility for the building, maintenance, and fitting out of naval vessels.⁵⁹ The board often provided transportation for the Ordnance and Victualing Boards. The Navy Board normally worked with merchant shipping in an equal exchange. They chartered the merchant vessels to transport naval stores and provisions to the West Indies, where the merchants could then pick up a cargo to sell in other ports or back

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶David Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power in the Seven Years War: The Sails of Victory* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2008),

⁵⁷Ibid., 3.

⁵⁸The two names are interchangeable.

⁵⁹Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 8.

home. This in many ways was opportunistic. By utilizing merchant ships to transport materials to North America, this freed up naval storeships and other vessels to be used where needed.

Sometimes merchant captains would come to the government and offer to let the government charter their vessels for long periods. During the Seven Years War, the government preferred to convey troops aboard ships under a long-term charter and specially fitted for that purpose. The Navy Board leased hundreds of merchant ships under lengthy contracts to sail as transports.⁶⁰

Before they could utilize a vessel for service, the Navy Board needed to inspect and measure it.⁶¹ Once it passed inspection, the commissioners then fitted the ship for service. In the case it became a transport, the Navy Board instructed dockyard officers to construct cabins in the hold of the vessel in order to house soldiers. The number of cabins depended on the tonnage of the vessel “and the length of her intended voyage.”⁶² For ships intended to transport horses, they constructed stalls. To construct these vessels, or to modify them in any shape, the workers and carpenters needed to use wood. During the eighteenth century, the shortage of timber continually grew greater. Most if not all British shipwrights agreed that oak held the foremost place among all timbers used for shipbuilding. The English oak was rugged and its massive trunk held a hardened strength. John Evelyn claimed it was “tough, bending well, strong and not too heavy, nor easily admitting water.”⁶³ He believed that without oak, Britain’s fleet would weaken.

Shipwrights believed the best oak to be from Sussex, and many times contracts specified that the

⁶⁰ Ibid., 7-13

⁶¹ They measured it to ensure that they placed the proper amount of freight on the vessel, as well as to calculate the payment the master of the vessel would receive for his service.

⁶² Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 18-19. Transports sent to Germany or the Netherlands took on three men for every ton of shipping. If the vessel received orders to participate in amphibious operations on the French coast or if going to Portugal, they received one man for each ton. Vessels en route to the West Indies or North America carried one man for every two tons of the ship’s burthen.

⁶³ G.J. Marcus, *Heart of Oak: A Survey of British Sea Power in the Georgian Era* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 11.

builders use “good, sound Sussex oak” in the construction of the vessel.⁶⁴ Still, with the influx of building, it soon became apparent that the seemingly bottomless supply of English oak could not last forever. The new growth could not grow fast enough for demand, especially since an oak-tree took about one hundred years to reach full stature. While the Royal Dockyards initially utilized the king’s forests for the harvesting of oak, soon shipwrights received the majority of the oak supply from private estates.⁶⁵

While the supply of English oak diminished, the usage of oak from the American colonies increased, alleviating some of the demand for English oak. While it never did find favor with the Navy Board, mercantile shipbuilding and domestic architecture imported it in significant quantities. The colonies even built some of the British vessels. By the end of the colonial period, one-third of the British naval registry consisted of American-built ships.⁶⁶

The Seven Years War saw British vessels sailing all over the world. In order to equip them for their long journeys, the Admiralty assigned the Victualing Board the duty of ensuring that all vessels had the necessary provisions and supplies for their voyages. In order to complete this objective, “the Victualling Board entered into contractual arrangements with merchants for the necessary supplies.”⁶⁷ Similar to the Navy Board, the Victualling Board contracted with merchants when possible “to supply provisions directly to ships of the Royal Navy in those ports in Britain that were not the site of a major depot of the Victualling Board. It obtained the help

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 12. Many of these ships were built in New England, where an extensive ship-building industry existed. At end of the Seven Years War, suppliers had stripped bare the oak plantations of the southern counties. They harvested anything useful for shipbuilding. It became extremely difficult to gain supplies of English oak, owing not only to the reduction for the navy during the war, but also owing to the East India Company’s demand for the increasingly scarce wood. Without the seasoned timber, shipbuilding became difficult, as the ships were built with unseasoned timber, which often led to rotting. The English navy also needed to guard the transportation of pine from the forests of New England. The navy had become dependent on this wood for the most important component of a sailing vessel: the mast. Without this, vessels in the Age of Sail were dead in the water.

⁶⁷ Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 36.

from a myriad of different sources including the East India Company. They utilized this company's connections to the Indian Ocean to transport provisions and supplies there for the Royal Navy ships fighting against the French in those waters. Sometimes they hired shipping to carry supplies to vessels in areas where the Board found it difficult or impractical to send private contractors. On several occasions, the British army requested the Board to transport supplies and provisions to forces stationed around the world.⁶⁸ Without the continuous flow of provisions to these various outposts and vessels around the world, the British military structure would have collapsed quickly. Instead, owing to the logistical competence of the men involved with the Victualling Board, the British military continued to function even in moments of crisis, as the early years of the war in North America show.

A final component of the shipping process was the Board of Ordnance. A military department of the British government, the board sought to transport troops, munitions, and other necessary materials for the waging of war. This board held an important role in the military structure of Great Britain; as it was "the agency of the British government responsible for maintaining fortifications: it supplied munitions, arms, and equipage to the military services as well as administering the Royal Regiment of Artillery and the corps of engineers."⁶⁹ The military relied on the Ordnance Board for the transportation of "munitions, ordnance, and military equipment as well as engineers and members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery."⁷⁰

Like the Navy Board and the Victualling Board, the Board of Ordnance chartered vessels to transport military equipment to various points of action around the world. They specifically employed merchants in the River Thames, however. This specific usage of merchant shipping in the River Thames may have owed to the necessity of transporting military equipment and other

⁶⁸ Ibid., 36-37.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 57.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

personal up the rivers of North America. The merchants would have understood the dangers of river navigation. They hired merchant ships with space charters. This ensured that the board paid for the cargo placed aboard the vessel. When they did not place the agreed upon amount of cargo aboard the vessel, they reimbursed the vessel by paying for cargo that would have been loaded on the ship.⁷¹

Since these ships contained the materials necessary for the war to continue, the Ordnance Board usually ordered vessels to sail to the Nore.⁷² There they would join a convoy, as well as alert the master of the vessel where he should deliver his cargo at the end of his voyage. Owing to the risk to attack by the enemy, it was the policy of the Board of Ordnance to refrain from sending a vessel loaded with military supplies to sea without a proper convoy.⁷³ While convoys deterred the chances of enemy attack, sometimes they caused delays that led to merchants asking for more payment since they would not be able to reach their destination by the time originally specified in their original contract.⁷⁴ While this did lead to some conflicts, British shipping during the Seven Years War helped to ensure eventual British victory.

While shipping played an enormous role in the logistical victory of the British over the French, an even more important factor gave the British a greater advantage. The maritime power of Britain allowed it to maintain control over the seas and over commerce throughout the war. As mentioned, the Navy Board, the Victualling Board, and the Ordnance Board utilized merchant shipping to transport materials around the globe. While merchants are limited by the number of open ports, war is also a time of economic prosperity. Following the Seven Years War, the French monarchy could not meet its financial obligations. It found that it could not pay back the

⁷¹ Ibid., 57-58, 62.

⁷² A sandbank at the mouth of the Thames Estuary in England.

⁷³ Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 63.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

war debt that it had incurred. Even during the war, owing to its lack of trustworthiness in paying off debt, lenders refrained from allowing France to borrow from them. England, on the other hand, borrowed heavily during the war, spending large amounts of capital. Owing to their financial reputation, the English did not find it difficult to meet its financial obligations.⁷⁵

As previously shown, the campaigns in North America during the Seven Years War depended on a commander's competency in the art of logistics. Without a thorough understanding of the complexities in this area of war, the most intricately planned campaigns utterly failed. Behind the concept of logistics, though, remains a quandary. Without the money for the purchase of necessary supplies for the army, or timber for the construction of naval vessels, logistical considerations failed. The main reason for the British success in North America was the government's access to the flow of cash.

With her propensity to obtain money, she regained some of her prosperity during the years before the war with the American colonies. This prosperity allowed her to fight the colonies, France, and Spain at the same time. With the inflow of cash, she maintained her fleet leading up the America Revolution, and not until the failures of some of her prominent generals in America, did she submit to defeat. There remains the question though, as to why she held an economic superiority over her rival France.

Niall Ferguson's *The Cash Nexus* provides some insight into the reasons for Britain's economic superiority. In his Fifth Philippic, Cicero proclaimed "The sinews of war [are] unlimited money."⁷⁶ Thus, finance controls the ebb and flow of war. While a state may have a large treasury and is normally able to pay for the daily necessities of running a nation, war stretches the limits of that treasury. Ferguson declares "that money at the immediate disposal of

⁷⁵ Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War*, 644-645.

⁷⁶ Niall Ferguson, *The Cash Nexus: Money and Power in the Modern World, 1700-2000* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 23.

the state treasury is usually more limited than the costs of war.”⁷⁷ For centuries, war was the greatest drain on a state’s capital. It was only in the twentieth century that the institution of welfare overtook the cost of war as the greatest expenditure of a country’s budget.⁷⁸

Ferguson also states that the burdens of war heavily influenced the amount of money spent in order to carry out such war. This included the proportion of the population involved in the war, the increase in the cost of weapons, and the distance between the various theaters of war.⁷⁹ While Britain may have had a larger proportion of her population involved in the war, France needed to field a larger army in order to counteract its enemies on the continent. Britain did not need to rely necessarily on an army, since she did not connect to the continent.⁸⁰ Her navy could defend her, thus making any invasion of the island difficult. Intricately connected to the size of a nation’s army was the price of weapons and armaments. As the weapons advanced over the years, the cost to develop and construct the weapons grew greater. In the eighteenth century, the manufacture of artillery, including the bored barrel developed by the Swiss engineer Jean Maritz set new standards. This development remained the norm until the 1850s, when the breech-loading gun came into prominence. The design of vessels allowed them to have a greater speed in the cutting of the water, expediting the time needed for them to transverse the ocean.⁸¹

This point necessitates discussing the distance between the colonies and their mother country. Ferguson argues that over the years distance decreased between wars and the home nation. While geographically the miles did not disappear, the time required for the movement of troops and supplies did. With the advances in technology such as the constructing of sea vessels, nations could mobilize their troops faster and thus strike at the enemy sooner than before. This

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 38.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 28. Alfred T. Mahan’s *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* covers this concept in detail.

⁸¹ Ibid., 31.

“abolition of distance” also dealt with the supply lines that ensured a military force could continue to function.⁸² In the case of Great Britain, its supremacy of the blue waters enabled it to transport troops and supplies faster than their rivals. The French, Spanish, and Dutch, while capable of moving supplies to their troops via sea craft, also dealt with the need to forge a powerful army to protect their borders from the invasion of foreign powers.

In order to finance war however, there needs to be an influx of cash. Without this, the coffers run dry rendering the nation weak. Throughout history, nations and kingdoms have tried various methods to raise revenue to prepare or pay for war. A nation could possibly rely on the concept of state-owned assets. The profits of such enterprises were ultimately taxes. Where limited representation ran a system, the government tended to utilize indirect taxation or taxation that worked through “customs levied on imports and excise duties on consumption.”⁸³ This did not suffice during times of crisis considering that many times trade and consumption of products reduce in size. Such taxes are often “regressive, and over-reliance on it can lead to political unrest.”⁸⁴ In order to raise successfully revenue, many countries eventually turned to direct taxation.

While indirect taxation has its benefits, many times it fails to generate the needed revenue. The taxation of imports and exports often times simply did not work. If a government sets the tax on imports too high, it may discourage the import of such products and the lessening of customer consumption. This happened to wool industry in the fourteenth century leading to its slow, but inevitable decline. The high duty on such imports also encouraged the smuggling of such imports. The government could in no way enforce the indirect taxation of raw materials or

⁸² Ibid., 38-39.

⁸³ Ibid., 51.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 53.

finished products brought in by smugglers. Learned in the ways of evading governmental detection, they often slipped by customs officials.⁸⁵

The English instead relied intensely on indirect taxation, especially during the Hanoverian reign of the state. The French also sought to rely on such taxation, but their utilization of it failed. Multiple uprisings occurred in the *ancien régime* of France. Ferguson stated, “The combined squeeze on peasant incomes of rising tazes and rising rents triggered the uprising of the Pitauds against the *gabelle* in Gueyenne in 1548.”⁸⁶ This example echoed throughout the history of the *ancien régime*. While the indirect taxes did cause some unrest in Britain, it never reached the scale of the widespread revolts that abounded in France. Britain’s success with indirect taxation owed more to the range of commodities that it taxed than to how high they set the tax. Refraining from taxing bread and other daily necessities alleviated the strain, while taxation imposed on such things as legal documents, newspapers, and cards usually did not create cause for revolt. The sole exception was the Stamp Act of 1765, which brought about violent protests in the colonies.⁸⁷

Direct taxation on the other hand has always been an area of soreness with taxpayers. These taxes however were vital to the waging of war and the successful conclusion of a war for the nation. Governments utilized these taxes in various ways including a poll tax, land tax, or most commonly an income tax. While each tax had their positives and negatives, their existence provided the government with a steady flow of revenue. Direct taxes do not depend on the market for the successful gathering of capital, but rather on a set status. Even so, direct taxes can

⁸⁵ Ibid., 57.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 61.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 61-62. Many historians point to taxation as the cause of the French Revolution. Ferguson agreed with this assertion, but made the point that the unrest that occurred owed more to the fact that various sectors of society were exempt from the direct tax levied on the population, Notably the First and Second estates. The violent protests brought about by the Stamp Act find their cause more in the constitutional legality of the tax, rather than the burden that the tax placed upon the colonists.

seem more of a burden upon the populace if incorrectly levied. This high direct taxation inadvertently led to the end of the *ancien régime* in France.⁸⁸

Indirect and direct taxation though, cannot generate the necessary revenue to pay for a war. When confronted with such issues, a nation needed to find some way to finance its military operations. This often led to the country incurring a larger public debt. This debt affected Britain and France differently. While both countries had an enormous debt after the Seven Years War, Britain managed its debt more efficiently.⁸⁹ While there still existed a poor portion of the population, Britain could utilize an inflation tax to help pay for the various debts that it had. France on the hand did not do so. Its financial institutions saddled under years of heavy debt did not have the capability to withstand the loss from the Seven Years War.

The study of logistics is a difficult process, taking time and patience. A country cannot fight a war however, without an understanding of logistics or its proper utilization. Had the British not provided supplies and provisions to its forces in North America, the French would have overwhelmed them. Upon the lakes, the British dealt with an unprecedented amount of difficulties and obstacles to their dominance of the inland waters, as the conflict at Fort Oswego shows. The French had long held dominance in Canada, where a large portion of their commerce came from. Their familiarity with the land and their willingness to work with the Indians allowed them to have an early dominance in the French and Indian War. The British on the other hand maintained a belief that the Indians were savages especially after the death of their main liaison with the Native Americans.

While Montcalm may have not wanted to utilize the Native Americans in his assault on Oswego, they proved integral to his capture of the fort. Used to fighting on the more developed

⁸⁸ Ibid., 74.

⁸⁹ Ibid.,135.

terrain of Europe, the British did not understand the battle tactics of the Native Americans, finding themselves caught off guard several times by the ambush of Indians. Anderson argues that with wilderness warfare, there could be no victory without the leave, if not assistance of the Indians. General Braddock failed to understand this and paid for his mistake with his life. Montcalm on the other, at least gained some knowledge of the importance of the Indians in wilderness warfare. From 1755 to 1757, the French utilized their relationship with the Indians to defeat nearly every Anglo-American operation.⁹⁰ Only by utilizing rangers did they gain any semblance of protection against the Native Americans. The ranging companies protected the supply lines of the British and helped stave off Indian attacks.

While the French held dominance on the North American continent during the early years of the war, the command of the seas ultimately brought victory to the British. Their mastery of the open waters allowed them to bring supplies to their beleaguered troops in Canada. Without this supply line, the lack of supplies and provisions would have sapped the morale of the British and left them open for French attack. Their mastery of the sea, however allowed them to ship the necessary supplies to the colonies, who then utilized the waterways to carry the provisions to the troops on the frontier and in the northern reaches of Canada. Only by the constant focus on logistics by the Admiralty allowed the British to survive through this bloody war. Without the influx of money, the Navy Board would not have been able to contract merchants to carry supplies to the other side of the ocean. Britain held dominance of the seas only by its continued supply of commerce throughout the war.

Even though the Seven Years War raged around the globe, the center of the action remained in the frontiers of the world. North America played a vital role in the outcome of the war, sapping the resources of France. She had to focus on maintaining a colony that did not have

⁹⁰ Ibid., 107.

the capacity to provide support the war effort, while France also needed to focus on its war on the European continent and the waters surrounding it. In the end, the Seven Years War depended on a nation's capacity to support its forces in the field and France's inability to do so, ultimately led to her defeat. While the British failed to grasp this in the beginning stages of this world war, she later obtained the experience and power needed to project her power across the ocean. With the acquisition of Canada, she gained an important resource, one she could use after the depletion of her lumber source. After the American Revolution, the possession of Canada made it possible for the British to maintain a presence on the North American continent.⁹¹

Without a constant supply of logistical support, France lost the war against the British. France never had the ability to maintain a wartime economy as Britain did. After the war with Britain, her naval minister, Etienne Francois de Stainville, duc de Choiseul told Spain, that within a few years, the Spanish and French could rebuild their navies and mount a war of revenge. Due to the inability to restore their economy, the French and the Spanish found their war of revenge continually postponed until the American Revolution.⁹² The European powers depended on logistics for the continually waging of war on the other side of the Atlantic. With its resources and the dominance of its navy, the British gained victory over the French. Had these advantages not existed, France may have won the war in North America and reduced Britain to a secondary power.

⁹¹ This statement refers to the continent as a whole, not counting the colonies in the Caribbean.

⁹²Ibid., 646.

CHAPTER III-The Agency of Man in Logistics

Ranging companies, provincial troops, the Royal Navy, the British Army, the merchant marine, and naval boards in Britain coordinated the transportation of supplies and provisions to British troops stationed in North America during the French and Indian War. Without their handling of the various logistical factors involved in fighting a war on the other side of the Atlantic, the British forces would have faltered and dissolved into disaster. The beginning stages of the war in North America stand as testimony to the necessity of logistics. The failures of commanders such as Washington and Braddock in part owed to the lack of proper logistical support. While shipping played an enormous role in the distribution of supplies to troops throughout the North American continent, human activity and decision-making remained an important factor throughout the entire process. Without the agency of man, logistical operations during the French and Indian War would have failed. While the previous chapter investigated logistics as a whole, the historian must make an examination to provide context concerning the contributions of shipping agents to provisioning and supplying British troops in the American theater of the war. This includes investigating the letters of Joshua Loring, a captain in the Royal Navy who also served as an agent for transports. Major General Amherst also played an important role in the supplying provisioning of British forces in the North American theater. Thus, his contribution must also receive recognition.

The Victualling and Ordnance Board provided the materials needed, but without the agents who worked behind the scenes, the structure of the operations would have fallen apart. David Syrett's *Shipping and Military Power in the Seven Years' War* examines this particular aspect. Merchant vessels hired for service or also known as chartered vessels, provided much of the force needed to perform operations during the conflict. Whether from the shores of the

British Isles, the coasts of northwestern Europe, or in the waters of the New World, these vessels performed their duties to the crown.¹ In regards to their operations in the disputed, inland waters of North America, they assisted with the assault and capture of Louisburg and Quebec. In order to utilize such a large number of vessels, the Commissioners of the Navy required the dedication of naval officers and the willingness of civilians to serve as agents for transports. The commissioners placed these agents over a multitude of chartered vessels in order to ensure that the ships arrived at their destination, as well as fulfill the terms of their contracts with the Navy. Besides serving as administrators over these vessels, they also sailed upon them to their destined port and assisted with the loading and unloading of the various troops, horses, and supplies needed to fight the war in North America.²

The agents also ensured that chartered vessels were ready for service. To ensure the safety of the cargo and crew, the agents inspected and insured that the ships could sustain the harsh voyage across the northern portion of the Atlantic. As discussed in the geography chapter, the weather could change at a moment's notice. These agents sought to reduce the chance of such occurrences and procured the necessary supplies for the vessels, whether it was food, extra sail, or a second mainmast to ensure that the ship reached its destination safely. The agents also obtained the necessary rations required for the necessary diet of the steeds British officers would ride into battle. Thanks to the agents for transports, the Navy Board could efficiently "command, control, and manage shipping, [and] also assisted and facilitated the British conduct of the war."³

Agents for transports came from both the military and outside world. The Navy Board appointed both civilians and naval officers choosing only those competent enough to serve as an agent for transports. Usually only the Navy Board appointed agents, but when flag and general

¹While they may have sailed for the crown, they had received payment for such voyages.

² Syrett, 69-70.

³ Ibid., 70.

officers needed someone to fill the position, they had the power of appointment as well. The commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America utilized these powers and appointed numbers of merchants from American ports to serve as agents for transports. Sometimes, if the merchant captained his own vessel, the commander-in-chief would also appoint them as an agent for transports, with the power to oversee several other vessels.⁴

Considering that many agents sailed for months on end, traveled to all parts of the world, and assisted with the offloading of cargo, soldiers, and horses, the Navy Board paid them handsomely.⁵ They needed to understand maritime knowledge, as well as to have a general understanding of economics. The Navy Board also issued them a standard boat or cutter, usually twenty-one feet in length, manned by six sailors. The board also gave the agents a set of signal flags, instructions, a copy of the ship's charter, and a warrant. With all of these preparations, the Navy Board expected the agents for transports to efficiently carry out their job, and for vast part this seemed the case. They expected the agents to alert them of any issues with the vessel, whether it dealt with the crew of the vessel or a lack of "windsails."⁶

The agents made constant inspections of the various vessels under their management to assess them and to guarantee the "transports were properly fitted, stored, and in all respects ready to embark soldiers."⁷ Many times, this extra precaution ensured the safety and health of the soldiers that embarked upon the vessel. Agent Lieutenant James Randell reported to the Navy Board on 27 September 1758, that on his inspection of various ships, he made sure to examine

⁴ Ibid., 70.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 70-72. The Navy Board also demanded that the agents alert them to the condition of the shipping under their administration. The agents also made reports, keeping their superiors knowledgeable about the condition and status of the shipping during the Seven Years War.

⁷ Ibid., 73. One of the other duties that agents for transports performed was the overseeing of the embarkation of troops aboard vessels and their disembarkation. This meant that they ensured the ships were prepared to receive troops and fitted to provide for their survival on their voyage to their destination, whether that be to Germany or to North America. This required the agents to not only co-ordinate their activities "with the master of the vessels but also with officials of the Victualling Board, dockyard officials, and the commanding admiral."

the bedding and sheets that the sailors would use. To his disgust, he found them dirty and filled with vermin. These and other reports concerning the health conditions aboard the vessels, helped to prevent the disastrous spread of disease among the occupants of the vessel on its long journey across the sea. When an agent ensured that a vessel was ready for service, they sent a notice to the Navy Board informing them of the amount of food and water each vessel stored and cited the number of men each vessel carried, alerting them the vessels were, “all ready for service at a moment’s warning.”⁸

In order to facilitate the embarkation of troops, the agent coordinated with army officers and naval commanders. They needed to select a suitable location for the embarkation and coordinate the movement of transports, stores, troops, and naval forces. Such a large operation required communication between all parties involved to avoid mishaps. In addition to overseeing the embarkation of soldiers, the agents also oversaw the loading of horses for usage in the various theaters of war. Sometimes in the process of preparing transports, they specifically selected those vessels that could accommodate horses. Necessity required agents for transports to order the construction of stalls for the horses. They also needed to monitor the ballast, since the mass of the horse outweighed several men. Agents also needed to consider the amount of water and “forage” for the animals to survive the voyage. Once he had obtained the necessary quantities of forage for the beasts, he had to ensure that the workers properly placed it upon the vessel.⁹

Just as the embarkation of men aboard a vessel required joint operations, agents for transports needed to work with army officers and naval commanders. They needed “to synchronize the movements of horses and ships as well as to ensure the selection of a proper site

⁸ Ibid., 73.

⁹ Ibid., 74.

for the embarkation.”¹⁰ The process to embark horses was more difficult requiring the agent to rent wharfage or to utilize a beach to transport the horses to a vessel. This proved one of the most difficult tasks of procurement that the agent faced.¹¹

The Navy Board also gave the agents a certain amount of authority over a vessel. Agents would accompany these groups of vessels to ensure that the contracted captains fulfilled the terms of their agreement. If the agent held a commission with the Royal Navy, then often they traveled on an armed vessel. If no armed vessel was available, they utilized one of the other vessels in the flotilla as their post of command. Concerning the involvement of vessels of a flotilla with military operations, the Navy Board stipulated that the naval commander of the operation held jurisdiction over the transports. The agents, though, held power concerning administrative duties. As long as their decisions did not interfere with those of the naval commander in control of the operation, the agents had complete jurisdiction over the ship. Syrett presents a case where an agent for transport appointed someone captain of a vessel after the previous captain died during the voyage. Since this appointment had no effect on the military operation, the agent had complete authority.¹²

In order to ensure that the transports remained safe from French warships or privateers, they often traveled in convoys with warships. Randell requested the admiral in charge of Portsmouth for a convoy.¹³ The admiral then furnished H.M.S. *Jason* to guard the vessels on their journey. He also made the commissioners aware that whenever the master of the warship made a signal to come aboard his vessel, the masters of the merchant vessels needed to board it to receive their orders. The commander of the escort held responsibility for the transports’

¹⁰ Ibid., 74-75.

¹¹ Ibid., 75. They might also need to rent boats or other vessels to assist with the transportation of materials.

¹² Ibid., 75-76.

¹³ The obtained evidence does not give a first name for Randell.

operational orders, while the agent for the transports oversaw the administrative functions of the convoy. The agents made sure that the vessels fulfilled the charter given to them and that the masters over each respective vessel carried out their required duties. Agents kept in constant contact with the Commissioners of the Naval Board, thus if the captains failed in their duties, then the agent would alert his superiors to these breaches in contract. They also ensured that the commissioners and senior naval officers knew the status of the flotilla.¹⁴

While the agents for transports played a significant role in the fitting and chartering of vessels, they also had an equally significant part to play in the Western Hemisphere. In order to save time and money, the British government chartered vessels in colonial homeports, especially Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. These ports served as disembarkation points for British forces in North America and were geographically suited to assist in operations upon the St. Lawrence against the fortresses of Louisbourg and Quebec. Thus, it seemed natural to use the vessels that called these ports home to transport both troops and supplies along the coastline of North America.¹⁵

Agents for transports were only one factor in the efficient use of logistics during the North American theater of the Seven Years War. As stated before, the first attempted assault on Louisbourg in 1757 by Lord Loudon ended in failure owing to the lack of naval support. Owing to the disparity in firepower between the French squadron based at Louisbourg and the British

¹⁴ Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 76-78. In one case Captain David Pryce, RN, “supplied Rear Admiral Charles Holmes with ‘a list of absent transports and what they [had] on board (77).’” As previously established, one of the main duties of an agent was to enforce the contract of a vessel’s charter. When a ship failed to meet the terms of its charter, the agents reported the breach to the Commissioners of the Navy. They then notified the transport that they needed to comply with their contract. If they did not do so, then the Navy Board reduced the freight of the transport, thereby reducing the vessel’s profit. The agents went before a notary and filed a sworn statement, called a protest, outlining the facts concerning the case. Then they sent a copy to the master of the vessel, and another to Navy Board to serve as a basis for impounding the freight of the vessel (78).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 79. The American populace also had a thriving maritime industry. With Americans engaged in shipbuilding and fishing since the earliest days of the colonies, “American merchant ships operated throughout the North Atlantic.” Syrett asserts that one authority claimed that Americans had built twenty-five percent of the vessels that served in the British merchant marine.

escort, the operation to capture the fortress failed. Loudon had embargoed American shipping, obtaining over one hundred ships to utilize as transports for the operation. Unfortunately, when Admiral Holburne arrived with his naval escort and the regiments sent from Ireland, sixteen ships of the line patrolled the Gulf of St. Lawrence off Louisbourg, with shore batteries assisting the defense. With his sixteen ships of the line, Holburne could not hope to fight an equal number of French vessels with a similar armament to his own, supported by covering fire from the fortress' cannon. Thus, the operation ended in failure.¹⁶

In a second attempt, though, the commander-in-chief of British forces in North America successfully pushed through the Gulf of St. Lawrence and brought Britain the possession of Louisbourg. His continued thrust down the St. Lawrence River, only slowed by the winter, eventually led to the capture of Quebec and the cessation of fighting in the North American theater of the Seven Years War. This commander-in-chief, General Jeffery Amherst, was the last of the British commander-in-chiefs in North America.¹⁷ His willingness to work with the local

¹⁶Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and the Seven Years' War* (Lincoln & London: The University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 79-81. Interestingly in accordance with intelligence received by the French regarding the reinforcements Britain sent to Canada, Versailles had sent three squadrons loaded with a large number of troops. This reinforcement however, met with unexpected disaster: typhus struck the entire French naval force off Canada. Jonathan Dull claims that, "nearly half of the 12,000 officers and crewmen who had sailed to Canada died from disease. . . , a blow to the French navy as serious as the loss of a great battle." The French reinforcements became a burden on Quebec depleting its resources. In an attempt to alleviate the troubles brought upon Quebec by the massive influx of French forces, France's naval minister Francois-Marie Peyrenc de Moras (also a minister in control of finance) paid a large amount of money to charter merchant shipping. Hoping that the shipping would provide the necessary supplies for the French forces, he sent the vessels to Canada. Unfortunately, the vessels did not receive protecting from British and American vessels (Lieutenant General of the Fleet du Bois de la Motte had command of the third squadron sent to New France, but a British blockade kept him in port at Louisbourg, preventing him from guarding the French transports). While fifty ships sailed and reached their destination in Quebec, private speculators sent a third of these vessels, each of them filled with brandy and dried goods, non-essential items to the survival of French troops. The British captured at least six provision ships and two others ships sent to bring recruits to battalions under the command of General Montcalm. The fifty ships that successfully sailed to New France in 1756, brought enough to only feed eight thousand troops for three months.

¹⁷ The commander-in-chief of the British army in North America usually provided the orders for the chartering of transports. At various times, the commander-in-chief of the navy in the Western Hemisphere also chartered vessels to assist with military operations in North America. For the most part however, agents for transports carried out the actual chartering of American vessels. Normally American civilians who served as agents for transports assisting the British forces stationed in North America were merchants and prominent members of colonial society. These individuals normally received a commission of five percent for their service to the British government. The usage of

population, negotiate alliances with the Native Americans, and usage of naval forces, allowed him to retain his position by conquering Canada.

One man in particular continued to appear in Amherst's letters. Joshua Loring, a captain in the Royal Navy, helped heavily with the thrusts down the St. Lawrence River Valley. Born to Joshua and Hannah Loring of Roxbury (modern day Boston), Massachusetts on 3 August 1716, Loring chose to go to sea as a boy. He served as a privateer during the War of the Austrian Succession. The French actually captured and imprisoned him briefly at Louisbourg in 1744. After his release, Governor William Shirley ensured that Loring received a commission of Lieutenant in the Royal Navy. He served until 1749. After the outbreak of the Seven Years War, he sailed to England where the navy commissioned him as a commander, gave him "command of a brigantine, and appointed agent for transports leaving English dockyard ports."¹⁸ A month later, he traveled to New York with some of the transports he had chartered and began preparing for Lord Loudon's operations upon the Great Lakes. This came to naught, when Montcalm captured Oswego, effectively ending British power upon Lake Ontario. After the French obtained the fort, Loring performed reconnaissance upon the lake, but seemed to fade into obscurity until 1759. Under Amherst's command, Loring assisted with the acquisition and building of vessels for the assault upon Louisbourg and Quebec. While the time taken to prepare

merchants also allowed for efficient negotiations when chartering a vessel. The British forces normally utilized the service of merchants and naval officers as agents, since they had the tenacity and knowledge to converse with ship owners and shipmasters to reach a reasonable contract. Syrett includes an example of the desire of British forces to use naval officers as agents for transports. When Colonel George Williamson of the Royal Regiment of Artillery needed to obtain the cooperation of the masters of transports to discharge them from service in 1758, he called upon the services of Lieutenant David Pryce of the Royal Navy. Pryce as previously mentioned had served as an agent for transports for some time and had the necessary experience to negotiate with the shipmasters (Syrett, 79-80). Allowing naval officers and American civilians to negotiate charters also produced better results. Since they had contacts among various ship owners and merchants located in American ports, they could more easily construct a contract for merchants to transport materials for the British forces. Sometimes however, owing to the lack of available or willing captains to charter their vessels as transports, the government placed a general embargo on merchant shipping from America ports. This occurred once in 1757 and then again in 1759 to assist in the procurement of vessels for the attack on Quebec (Syrett, 80-81).

¹⁸ W.A.B. Douglas.

the vessels prevented Amherst from pursuing his campaign until after the winter, Loring's role in preparing the logistics needed for the campaign was integral to its success.¹⁹

On 1 February 1759, Amherst wrote to Loring concerning the dimensions and necessary numbers of whaleboats that Amherst needed built for the successful execution of his campaign. Amherst ordered the captain to proceed, to contract various builders that Loring thought capable of completing the task. The major-general desired fifty whaleboats built, each twenty-eight feet in the keel, five feet and two inches broad, twenty-five inches deep, and thirty-four feet from stern to stern. Amherst then allowed Loring to delay in the ordering of the vessels for three weeks at most, until the major general knew that they needed them for the campaign, in order to save money for the public whom the navy relied upon for the construction funds.²⁰

While transports from England already sailed from America, Amherst utilized the agents for transports to charter vessels from Boston. Concerned over the possibility of something delaying the arrival of the English vessels, Amherst planned to have those chartered from available American merchants. Without transports for the utilization of amphibious operations, the major general believed that the expedition would fail.²¹

Loring continued to appear in Amherst's letters suggesting that he held an important role in the campaign. In a letter addressed on 15 March, the commander-in-chief commanded that the captain increase the previous order for fifty whaleboats to seventy and to make them all ready by

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Jeffery Amherst, "Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Captain Joshua Loring, 1 February 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 20.

²¹ Jeffery Amherst, "Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Captain Joshua Loring, 15 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 32.

1 April. Calling upon Loring's experience as an agent for transports, he instructed the captain to take up at Boston 3,000 tons of transports by 1 April as well.²²

Amherst also requested that Loring contract forty schooners or sloops. He believed that since they drew little water when sailing, their capabilities in shallow water would prove an asset to the expedition. Amherst's letter seemed to assert that the major general trusted Loring, leaving the choosing of the vessels and their details up to Loring, claiming, "You are the best Judge what Sorts are the fittest for that purpose and You will provide them accordingly."²³

Loring replied to Amherst on 25 March stating that he could procure twenty more whaleboats, at the dimensions that Amherst had requested. He had issues with another order of Amherst's stating that he could not obtain the sloops and schooners that his commanding officer desired. The directions for measuring them were different from the previous year and they drew too little water, with their holds not reaching eight hundred seventy-two feet. Loring also had have difficulty with the preparation of single-decked vessels that Amherst desired to utilize for his thrust up the St. Lawrence River. They could not yet receive troops for transportation until he outfitted them with water casks. While this may seem an insignificant problem, the vessels needed the casks to ensure that the crew and soldiers did not dehydrate during their voyage. The unpredictability of Canada's weather made such small measures necessities in order to ensure that the troops reached their destination safely.²⁴

²² Amherst desired that the transports be chartered for a specific price: masters of double decked vessels would receive thirteen sterling per ton and single decked vessels at nine or at most ten sterling per ton. They would have the same conditions as in the previous chartering of vessels, save that if they were ordered to sail without a convoy, they would do so and that they would discharge at Boston or they would receive a month's pay if they discharged at any other port than Boston. The major general also included in his letter an absolute rule for measuring them.

²³ *Ibid.*, 32-33. In the last bit of the letter, Amherst requested one other thing of Loring: "You will also, privately, Enquire at what Rate Rum and Molasses can be purchased at Boston, and to send me notice of the Prices, and the Quantitys that can be got..."

²⁴ Joshua Loring, "Letter to Major-General Jeffery Amherst from Captain Joshua Loring, March 25, 1759," Microfilm Reel 285, *Great Britain, Public Record Office, Amherst Papers* in the British Manuscript Project. Found in the Library of Congress Microfilm Reading Room.

The captain assured Amherst that he would take every measure to ensure that the transfer ships could take in as much luggage as possible, while still leaving room for the troops and other extraneous to board. Loring also shared his concern with Amherst that they did not have enough beds for the men, but pertaining to the liberties granted to him, Loring had already ordered a number of them, which would be ready in time for the departure of the vessels. Continuing, he informed Amherst that he had established how much rum and molasses the town contained. Finally, he told Amherst that he would ready all double-decked by 5 April at the latest.²⁵

In a letter dated 2 April 1759, Loring assured Amherst that he was taking particular care to follow everything in a Colonel Burton's instructions. These instructions concerned the request of materials for building a hospital. The captain intended to procure the necessary materials immediately to expedite the construction of the medical center, in preparation for any casualties that the British might incur during the execution of the operation. Logistically speaking, this showed that Loring or Amherst took into consideration the possibility that they needed medical supplies for the invasion of Canada. The acquisition of medical supplies is another part of the process in preparing for an assault against an enemy.²⁶

Six days later, Loring sent another letter to Amherst alerting him that the 1=1,000-ton vessels were ready to receive Colonel Webb's troops. Only some whaleboats had yet to arrive, but Loring hoped that they would come in time for the commencement of the operation. In accordance with his position as an agent for transports, Loring also mentioned that he was drawing up the charter for the usage of the whaleboats, signifying that British did not construct the aforementioned vessels. His letter continued stating that he was also taking particular care to

²⁵ Ibid., Also, if Amherst needed anymore more shipping, then two thousand tons still remained in Boston.

²⁶ Joshua Loring, "Letter from Captain Joshua Loring to Major General Jeffery Amherst, 2 April 1759," Microfilm Reel PRO 285, *Great Britain, Public Record Office, Amherst Papers* in the British Manuscript Project. Found in the Library of Congress Microfilm Reading Room.

provide a Colonel Jarvis with the necessary vessels that he needed for the transportation of supplies and provisions to Louisbourg. Referring back to his letter on 2 April, Loring assured Amherst that the frame and materials for the construction of the hospital would be prepared for transportation in time for the start of the mission.²⁷

Of the vessels in the harbor, Loring had engaged with thirty-one or thirty-two of them for the chartering of their services. They would soon be ready for the embarkation of troops and he hoped that he could procure all of the vessels in the harbor for Colonel Jarvis so that he would not need to wait to take the provisions up the St. Lawrence River. The agent also asked for Amherst's wisdom concerning the purchase of water casks. He had already purchased some, owing to their immediate need, but he was waiting for the rest of them to arrive from York. Unless Amherst directed him otherwise, he planned to wait for the additional casks to arrive. In addition, he desired to know the major general's orders concerning which of the vessels would take on the whaleboats. The organization exhibited by the various members of the British military ensured that the efficient procurement of supplies and provisions could occur. In order for this to happen though, there needed to be a certain degree of cooperation between the branches. Loring's willful submission to the directives of the army's Amherst represents an example of such mutual aid.²⁸

By 11 May, the last of the troops had embarked aboard the vessels. Two days later Loring wrote to Amherst, alerting him to the progress of the operation as well as to request funds. He desired for his superior to send him a list of credit for a Mr. Wheelwright. Loring had purchased

²⁷ Joshua Loring, "Letter from Captain Joshua Loring to Major General Jeffery Amherst, 8 April 1759," Microfilm Reel PRO 285, *Great Britain, Public Record Office, Amherst Papers* in the British Manuscript Project. Found in the Library of Congress Microfilm Reading Room.

²⁸ *Ibid.* This may of course owe to the fact that Amherst is the commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America. At the same time however, the armed forces conflicted with one another concerning the jurisdiction that the two forces had over one another. Before this war, joint amphibious operations had always failed. During the Seven Years War however, both sides worked in cohesion to defeat the French.

a great number of items in preparation for the invasion and the terms of the contract stipulated that Wheelwright receive payment upon the good's arrival. Loring intended to journey to New York soon and desired to settle the accounts as soon as possible. If the credit did not arrive before he left, his subordinates would remain in Boston until payment arrived for the goods.²⁹

He arrived in New York before 2 June 1759. On the 2nd, he wrote a letter to Amherst to deliver an update concerning his progress in preparing for the operation. As he was writing the letter, he was working to gather all the needed stores as quickly as possible. He hoped to have them completely ready by the following week. Unfortunately, he had experienced an obstacle in preparing for the invasion. In his search for carpenters for the vessels, he did not find anyone interested in employment with the Royal Navy. In the Age of Sail, carpenters not only built the vessels, but they also accompanied the crews on voyages. Their duties consisted of keeping the ship seaworthy and repairing any damage that the vessel incurred in battle. If they did not acquire the necessary carpenters for the vessels, then the invasion could very well stall. Loring had offered a certain wage, as well as provisions, but the carpenters received higher pay working for private enterprises and very few would serve at the navy's price.³⁰ The captain had sent a letter to the Jersey colony in an effort to obtain the services of the same Master Builder who served at Oswego before its fall in 1756 and expected to have his answer that night. Loring also informed the major general that he had applied to the lieutenant governor of the New York colony, but he had informed the captain that he did not think it possible to procure any shipwrights. The agent planned to send a courier to Boston to contact a Mr. Wentworth. Loring

²⁹ Joshua Loring, "Letter from Captain Joshua Loring to Major General Jeffery Amherst, 13 May 1759," Microfilm Reel PRO 285, *Great Britain, Public Record Office, Amherst Papers* in the British Manuscript Project. Found in the Library of Congress Microfilm Reading Room.

³⁰ The price was eleven quid and six pence.

hoped that Wentworth would assist the British with acquiring any shipwrights that he could locate and a Master Builder. Once he gathered them, he was to send them to Albany.³¹

At the same time, Loring needed to choose two officers to command the vessels under his command. He told Amherst that he believed that he could get them and they knew some men who could sail aboard the vessel as seamen. The agent, however, did not want to sign an agreement with these potential sailors until he had received his superior's instructions. The previous instructions indicated that Loring had the authority to hire the two officers, but had said nothing concerning seamen. In order to comply with the regulations of the British military force, he desired to await the orders of the major general.³²

Continuing, he alerted Amherst that he could purchase two pairs of six-pounders for a reasonable price. The cannons appeared to be in good condition, and their owner claimed they worked well. In the time since Loring began the letter, he had met with the Master Builder that served at Oswego. Unfortunately, no matter how much he prevailed upon him, the captain could not convince him to serve with the fleet again. The agent found out that the military had never paid the Master Builder for his time of service at Oswego.³³ The search for the carpenter had not been fruitful either, since Loring wrote, "I shall do everything in my power, but I am afraid it will be impossible to get any carpenter."³⁴

In concluding this letter, Loring alerted Amherst that a Mr. DeLancey and Mr. Walls had informed him that Colonel Johnson of the New York Troops had experience in the building of

³¹ Joshua Loring, "Letter from Captain Joshua Loring to Major General Jeffery Amherst, 2 June 1759," Microfilm Reel PRO 285, *Great Britain, Public Record Office, Amherst Papers* in the British Manuscript Project. Found in the Library of Congress Microfilm Reading Room.

³² Ibid.

³³ Loring and others found that several of the men that they called upon to assist them had never received payment for the services they had previously rendered to the Empire. Part of this may owe to Britain expecting to overcome the enemy quickly. When this did not happen, they did not have the funds at the time to pay for the services that they had utilized.

³⁴ Ibid.

various vessels. The captain suggested that they place the colonel in charge of directing the construction of the two snows. According to Johnson himself, he had built many vessels. Finally, Loring mentioned to the major general that he had picked five people to command two of the vessels that were going to sea. If they did not follow their orders, then he could not in good faith make a contract with them. In the event that they did not, then he would need Amherst's directions concerning the terms with which he would draw up an agreement with the five persons.³⁵

The aforementioned letters only highlight a few of the contributions that Loring made to the war effort. His work was typical of the agents for transports. Without the agents for transports, the conducting of joint amphibious operations would not have been possible.³⁶ Their ability to charter vessels for the operations and their capacity to carefully inspect and outfit vessels for usage during the Seven Years War and particularly the North American theater of the war proved vital throughout the war. The successful captures of Louisbourg and Quebec in the last years of action in the French and Indian War depended upon their work. In most if not all amphibious operations, agents for transports provided logistical support and competency needed for the triumphant execution of the mission parameters.

Others besides Loring and agents for transports understood the necessity of logistics and their intricate connection to the successful execution of a mission. Throughout his time as the commander-in-chief of the British army in North America, Amherst corresponded with several officers. These letters revealed the difficulties of obtaining the proper logistical support. Throughout them though, there is a sense that Amherst understood the importance of the navy in

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ See the end of the chapter for a discourse on amphibious operations.

the North American theater.³⁷ In one letter to Rear Admiral Philip Durell, he understood that there was difficulty in finding the correct number of men to serve as sailors aboard transports. It seemed that Durell had had difficulty with obtaining the number of men needed to sail the various vessels in the fleet under his command. Amherst advised him that, “the only Chance of pressing any is by Cruizing off this Port [New York], Rhode Island and Boston, and how that may be feasible You are the best Judge.”³⁸ He continued stating that nothing could “distress the Enemy more than hindering any Succors getting up the River St. Lawrence.”³⁹ Amherst assured him that if he still needed men, then he would write to Governor Pownall of Massachusetts to request that he supply men for the fleet. Amherst knew that some towns of the eastern coast of Massachusetts would gladly supply sailors to the Fleet, as long as they received promises that the navy would release them at the end of the war and paid them appropriate wages for their service. The general continued stating, “I shall most willingly lessen the numbers to be furnished to the Army, if absolutely wanted in the Fleet to forward that very essential Service.”⁴⁰

In another letter to Christopher Kilby, Amherst alerted him that he “[had] order’d all the provisions at Albany that [could] be spared to be forwarded to Fort Edward, Saratoga, Stillwater, and as near the Fort as possible.”⁴¹ At the same time, he directed a portion of the provisions sent to Schenectady. Also in concern for the well-being of his troops, Amherst ordered Kilby to prepare “a thousand half Barrels of good pork.” He continued stating that Kilby should arrange a

³⁷ The following letters are looked at in chronological order. While the subject matter may differentiate between the letters, their content deals with logistics and Amherst’s involvement.

³⁸ Jeffery Amherst, “Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Rear Admiral Philip Durrell, 14 January 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴¹ Jeffery Amherst, “Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Christopher Kilby, 3 February 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 20.

number of oxen driver up to the beginning point of the operation located on Lake Ontario by the time that the troops arrived at the spot he designated for the launching of the operation. He declared to Kilby that he would

depend on your utmost Zeal & care, in having such quantified of provisions ready, that, whatever our Motions may be, either from the successes which I hope will attend His Majestys Arms during the Campaign, or from the Movement that we may be forced to, we shall always be in a Situatoin with regard to provisions to follow & execute the Operations that will tend to the good of His Majestys Service and to distress the Enemy.⁴²

In another letter, Amherst wrote to Colonel John Bradstreet alerting him to Loring's progress made thus far on the whaleboats. Amherst stated that he intended to use the vessels as transports for the troops. He continued stating that in his current position, he desired to prepare his command for anything that may occur, whether it be from the enemy or another unexpected source. The major general explained to John Bradstreet that he had decided to carry out his operation on 10 April stating that he wanted to move as soon as possible. As soon as the weather turned fair, he planned to press forward in their campaign to take Canada. He argued that this would give Bradstreet enough time to build bateaux at Albany. If any operation should occur upon Lake Ontario, the bateaux would assist them in the successful completion of the mission. Soon, he would send up the workmen needed to build them, considering that the expense of building them in Albany would be less than the one incurred in Boston. Captain Loring would finish his task in Boston, and then would arrive in Albany to assist Bradstreet. Amherst stated that he had given Mr. Mortier permission to credit a maximum of 3,000 pounds to Bradstreet for the purchase of the material for the bateaux, as well as the wages for the builders themselves.⁴³

⁴² Ibid., 20-21.

⁴³ Jeffery Amherst, "Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Colonel John Bradstreet, 5 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst*

Amherst received a letter from Major General James Wolfe, a major contributor to the conquest of New France, on 6 March 1759. This letter detailed the various difficulties that lay ahead in the conquest of Quebec. While, an example of proposed military strategy, logistics continued to play a strong role. Wolfe claimed that they had received strong intelligence that the French had thirty to forty store ships at Rochefort and Rochelle. Destined to sail up the St. Lawrence River, the French planned to risk the ice that threatened to destroy the vessels in order to get supplies up the river as soon as possible.⁴⁴

Wolfe also reported that “the Government,” had a large fleet of vessels prepared to go up the St. Lawrence River.⁴⁵ This expedition would arrive at Quebec since a stroke there would spell the end of New France. Yet, in the fitting of the expedition those in command of it failed to provide a sufficient number of men. Wolfe argued that it would have been more prudent for British command to place Amherst at the head of fifteen or sixteen battalions, while the rest of his forces created a diversion on the Ticonderoga side of the river. During the diversion, Amherst would sail up the river with his forces and disembark within five miles of Quebec. From there, his army would proceed to take the town and place Amherst as the master of Canada. Wolfe claimed that a “Lord Ligonier...calculated that the Troops for the expedition [amounted] to 12000 men, concluding that the Recruits [would] arrive from Martinco.”⁴⁶

Owing to Wolfe’s experience in the navigation of the Bay of Fundy in the previous year, he felt apprehensive that the two militia units would arrive to their posts on the bay later than the

while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 25-26.

⁴⁴ James Wolfe, “Letter from Major-General James Wolfe to Major-General Jeffery Amherst, 6 March 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 26. British intelligence did not know the date of the invasion at the time Wolfe wrote this letter.

⁴⁵ Wolfe is unclear on the identity of the government that ordered the fleet to this point. Most likely this refers to the French government.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

British officers desired and consequently the two British Battalions would be late to the rendezvous. Wolfe's knowledge concerning the geography of the region influenced his fears. Considering that the ice had yet to melt in that region, the passage across the bay seemed fraught with danger. Thus, any travels across the icy waters required an agonizingly slow pace, not to mention the necessity of preparing supplies for the troops to take with them on the quest to take Quebec.⁴⁷

Interestingly enough, Wolfe also suggested that Amherst supplement the force with four to five hundred colonists in order to construct fascines and gabions, while working in the entrenchments.⁴⁸ He believed that the utilization of this work force would ease the load on the regulars as they fought against the French defenders of Quebec. As always, the condition of the rivers and the use that the enemy could put to the geography of Canada weighed heavily on Wolfe. He suggested that if owing to accidents on the river, resistance of the enemy, sickness, or any other cause, they could not take Quebec, Amherst should set the town on fire with shellfire. Wolfe desired to destroy French control in the North America, leaving only famine and desolation in his wake.⁴⁹

He took note that if the French fleet reached the river before the British, then they would proceed to do one of two things: either post themselves at a narrow passage in the river to inhibit the progress of the British invasion force, or anchor ashore above Quebec. He believed that they would choose the latter path, stating that the former would become "a trial of naval skill, and in the last...they [would] be burnt."⁵⁰ If Mr. Durrell arrived earlier than the enemy's fleet, then he could assist Amherst's operations in Canada by sailing sloops and schooners as far up the river

⁴⁷ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁸ Fascines are bundles of sticks bound together to strengthen earthen structures. Gabions are cages, normally filled with soil or rocks. They are utilized as cover positions in battle.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

as Fort de Chambly. Wolfe told Amherst that the vessels would help “facilitate your debaeché [sic] in to the River St. Lawrence, and favour an attack upon Montreal, or your junction with the Troops under my orders.”⁵¹ By utilizing the naval forces that cruised between Montreal and Quebec upon the river, the smaller vessels could slip by Quebec in the darkness of the Canadian night. To these men, the success of their invasion of Canada and the capture of Quebec depended on their utilization of amphibious operations. Without the naval forces upon the river, they would find themselves hard pressed to take Quebec or to gain further ground into the depths of Canada.⁵²

Because of the enemy’s control of the inland waters, Wolfe warned Amherst that they might strive to exchange blows over Lake Champlain. The French already sailed sloops and schooners upon the lake. Since the British forces did not yet have vessels built for battle on the waters, the enemy would remain superior on Champlain. If Bradstreet constructed vessels at Ticonderoga or Crown Point however, they would be able to counter the enemy. Wolfe also mused that if Bradstreet placed Amherst’s artillery upon rafts, he could use them to fight off the French forces upon the lake and protect his own boats, as they sailed upon the lake. With the French in danger of losing control of the lake, Marquis de Vaudreuil would split his troops, leaving Crown Point and Ticonderoga to soon fall under Amherst’s control.⁵³ Throughout this letter, Wolfe demonstrated his understanding that dominance of the lakes depended on the coordination between naval and army forces for the success of the amphibious operation to take the lakes. This required proper planning and logistical support. While not directly mentioned, in order for the British to execute their mission and obtain possession of Quebec, Amherst needed

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

to insure that the proper provisions and supplies reached his troops. Without it, then they would fail to take the town and the war in North America would continue.

Bradstreet also had an understanding of the difficulties concerning logistics that faced Amherst's campaign to take control of Canada. When trying to raise enough troops for the campaign to take Canada, Bradstreet realized that the 3,000 pounds credited to him by Amherst through a Mr. Mortier, would not cover the expenses to recruit 2,000 men to pilot the bateaux needed to navigate the St. Lawrence River, not the five hundred drivers. The advance pay for the men alone would cost Britain 7 to 8,000 pounds. Without more money, he could not contract the men, nor could he hope to continue paying their wage during their time of service.⁵⁴

At Amherst's orders, Bradstreet endeavored to properly examine the men and pay them in advance, as well as alerting Mortier to the need to establish credit for Boston, New York, and Pennsylvania. Not only did he need to credit these colonies for the service already provided, Bradstreet also discovered that the British owed large amounts of money to the colonists since General Shirley utilized their services in the early years of the French and Indian War. While Bradstreet dealt with these issues that threatened to stall the British war effort, he did find that the carpentry work underway was going well in preparing vessels for the amphibious operation to take Canada.⁵⁵

By 15 March 1759, the British took Louibourg and controlled it as a stage for the assault on Quebec. While preparing to take the capital of New France, Amherst wrote to Governor Thomas Pownall concerning the state of the troops and his plans to utilize amphibious operations to take the town. For the expedition up the St. Lawrence River against the French forces to occur,

⁵⁴ John Bradstreet, "Letter from Colonel John Bradstreet to Major-General Jeffery Amherst, 10 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 29.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

Amherst needed to take large number of the garrisoned troops at Louisbourg. In order to provide for the security of the post, he received orders from the king of England to recruit a battalion of 1,000 provincial troops to fill the absence of the garrisoned troops. These provincials would remain at the garrison as long as needed. At the same time, “the greatest Part of the troops in Nova Scotia and the Bay of Fundy, [would] likewise be ordered on the same Expedition, wherefore it will also be absolutely necessary to have a Body of Provincials to join what [remained] of the King’s Regular Troops,” to protect the weakened defenses of the various posts from where Amherst drew troops.⁵⁶ Amherst also alerted Pownall that the British government ordered 1,500 provincial troops to ensure that the enemy could not overcome the posts.⁵⁷ This utilization and movement of troops required that Amherst provide the necessary supplies, provisions, and transportation for their movement.

In the next paragraph of his letter, Amherst stated, “Transports shall be provided at Boston or sent there to take the 2500 men to their Destination.”⁵⁸ He desired to send them early enough so that the troops from Halifax and Nova Scotia would arrive at Louisbourg and be ready to sail with the entire fleet around 7 May. The utilization of transports would assist with the traversing of the waters and shorten the time taken for the passage. It would save the populace’s money, considering that traveling by sea would be cheaper than marching over the land to Quebec. It also seemed that the people of New England had a propensity for being “employ’d up the River St Lawrence.”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Jeffery Amherst, “Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Governor Thomas Pownall, 15 March 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 30.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid..

Amherst sent a letter that same day to Colonel George Williamson. In this letter, Amherst detailed the orders he received from the king concerning the supplies and provisions necessary for the survival of the troops in their invasion of Canada. The king commanded Amherst to ensure that the train and stores utilized for the expedition remained “in most perfect repair and order for immediate service.”⁶⁰ Amherst could then employ them on the excursion against Quebec, while England shipped more supplies for utilization in the campaign. Amherst continued explaining that the king desired the battering train and stores “with three Companies of the Royal Regiment of Artillery should be embarked in such manner as to be at Louisbourg by the 20th of April.”⁶¹ Williamson would obey any orders that the Lieutenant General and Board of Ordnance issued to him regarding the battering train. Considering the necessity of supplies for the success of the operation, Amherst placed a large amount of trust in Williamson. The colonel would take command and provide as much service as possible to ensure that the train reached its destination.⁶²

⁶⁰ Jeffery Amherst, “Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Colonel George Williamson, 15 March 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 31.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 31.

city could journey up the river to Lake Erie. Once they reached the large body of water, the small force could then act to clear all enemy forces that might be upon the waters. Amherst believed that only a small number of their French opponents remained at Presqu' Isle. The commander-in-chief hoped that he could utilize the arraigned forces in Pittsburgh to overcome the enemy, annoying them on their flanks.⁶⁵

Amherst also sent various letters directly regarding the various provisions needed for the British troops to make a difference in the war effort. First, he ordered that all transports take great care in their loading of provisions. At Boston, these necessities would serve to provide sustenance for 13,000 men for the length of eight months. This figure excluded the amount placed on board for the troops on their voyage to Louisbourg, Halifax and other places. Amherst intended the aforementioned number of provisions for the expedition upon the St. Lawrence River. This expedition eventually led to the capture of Quebec. Amherst next required that the necessary officials acquire provisions for 30,000 men, including the portion of the army stationed at Albany. He urged those concerned to forward the provisions as soon as possible so that the troops could continue to remain alert for the possible incursion of the enemy, however unlikely at this point in the war.⁶⁶

Finally, his letter alerted the officers involved in the supplying of provisions that the troops in the south portion of the North American theater may yet require more provisions. At the time of the letter's sending, though, Amherst did not know the amount of provisions needed or if they even needed any. He had sent Mr. Christopher Kilby to ascertain the necessity of such

⁶⁵ Jeffery Amherst, "Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Brigadier-General John Stanwix, 16 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 33-34.

⁶⁶ Jeffery Amherst, "Provisions for 1759, 21 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 35.

materials. Once he received the desired intelligence, he promised to let the officers concerned know of the amount of supplies that he required.⁶⁷

In his letter to Kilby, he referred to the previously mentioned letter. He mentioned as well, that among the transports used for transporting provisions to the two armies, there was a vessel suitable for service as a hospital ship. He asked Kilby to ensure that the hospital ship received the proper provisions needed to provide for the sick aboard the vessel.⁶⁸ At the end of his letter, he once again requested Amherst to gain access to and acquire as large amount of fresh provisions as possible for the usage of the two armies.

At times, politics also played a role in the harnessing of resources to supplement the British forces in North America. In another letter to Governor Thomas Pownall, Amherst discussed how the Massachusetts Bay colony's legislature voted to provide 2,000 pounds less than the previous year. Considering the colonies waged war against the French at this time, their hesitation to utilize all of their resources at hand to overcome the enemy astounded the major general. Amherst claimed that the current campaign would end the war in the North American theater if every colony provided the aid and assistance he desired. He feared that that this reluctance to provide necessities for the war effort would set an example for other colonies to follow. It seemed to Amherst that with their decision to provide fewer troops than the year before would have repercussions throughout the colony.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Ibid., 35.

⁶⁸ Jeffery Amherst, "Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Christopher Kilby, 22 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 36., Amherst also requested that Kilby provide four cows for the sick and injured soldiers aboard the vessel.

⁶⁹ Jeffery Amherst, "Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Governor Thomas Pownall, 23 March 1759," in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 36. The letter does not make mention why the Massachusetts Bay colony chose not to provide an equivalent assistance in the year of 1759 compared to the year before.

Ultimately, logistics relies on the ability of a nation to acquire the necessities to provide for a military force. In order for a nation to gain access to the necessary provisions, they need to purchase them. Even Amherst, in his brilliance, was not immune to the difficulties of acquiring funds. In a letter to Lieutenant Governor William Denny, Amherst stated that he wrote to Sr. John St. Clair to access the standing accounts of every expense incurred from the previous year during “the expedition against Fort du Quesne.”⁷⁰ The sheer number of receipts made navigating the expenditures “so intricate and Complicated a Nature, as to require a very Narrow inspection to Set them in Such a light as will warrant the payment of them with Justice to the Crown and the persons concerned therein.”⁷¹

Owing to the divisive nature of paying bills, Amherst chose to appoint a committee to inspect the accounts and settle them.⁷² This committee consisted of two commissioners appointed from the populace, with another two appointed “in behalf of the Crown.”⁷³ Both sides would meet as often as possible in order to discern the amount owed. Once they had come to an agreement, they would send the report to Amherst. Once he received the report, he would inspect it. If he found it agreeable, he would discharge the funds to pay for the expenditures found.⁷⁴

Amherst’s capacity to utilize logistics to enable his forces to move swiftly and efficiently across the hostile environment of Canada, earned him the conquest of Canada. Without logistics, his forces would have floundered and failed to capture New France. Amherst was not alone in this ability to utilize logistics. As previously demonstrated, the most competent of commanders,

⁷⁰ Jeffery Amherst, “Letter from Major-General Jeffery Amherst to Lieutenant Governor William Denny, 30 March 1759,” in *Amherst and the Conquest of Canada: Selected Papers from the Correspondence of Major-General Jeffery Amherst while Commander-in-Chief in North America from September 1758 to December 1760*, ed. Richard Middleton (United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2003), 38.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁷² Apparently, the authorities had undertaken a similar act following the death of General Braddock.

⁷³ Amherst, “Letter to Lieutenant Governor William Denny,” 38.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 39, Amherst appointed that each commissioner would have a clerk to expedite the process. At the end of his letter he nominated Sr. John St. Clair, the Dep. Quarter Master General and Mr. Barrow, the Deputy Pay Master General for the two commissioners on the behalf of the crown.

such as Forbes and Wolfe heeded the importance of logistics and chose to wait until the necessary parameters for the successful execution of an operation appeared. Normally these included the arrival of provisions and supplies or the weakening of French forces from the blockade of ports and harbors. This competence gave Amherst the needed edge in the North American theater of the Seven Years War.

Britain's large navy enabled it to dominate the high seas. This and their ability to transport great numbers of British troops efficiently and quickly to enemy territory allowed the British military to obtain "crucial maritime strategic mobility during the Seven Years War."⁷⁵ Without such operational flexibility, they would have hindered their capacity to execute successful amphibious operations. While the Royal Navy had mounted amphibious operations in conflicts prior to the outbreak of the Seven Years War, earlier attempts at assaulting an enemy stronghold or beach from the sea left the British forces decimated. Such operations required that all branches of His Majesty's forces coordinate their efforts to carry successfully out the objectives of the mission. Considering that French soldiers, Canadian militia, and Native American warriors patrolled the routes their foe commonly used to invade Canada, British needed to utilize another corridor of invasion. This required them to obtain control of the waterways into Canada. They often found their path impeded by the constant change in weather and the severity and length of the winter months, effectively limiting their campaigns to begin in mid-spring and end in mid-autumn.⁷⁶

Braddock's failed campaign to take Fort Duquesne in the summer of 1755 exemplified the necessity of utilizing the waterways into Canada to attack strategic French fortresses and posts. In his attempt to attack and capture a French fort, he failed to employ scouts, in light of the

⁷⁵ Syrett, *Shipping and Military Power*, 88.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

lack of resistance he encountered while approaching the fort. His troops vastly outnumbered the some nine hundred French and Indians, but owing to their knowledge of the topography and their ability to execute effective for ambushes, the French forces soundly defeated Braddock, killing him and sending his decimated force back to safety.⁷⁷ This humiliating defeat probably caused one of Braddock's successors, the Earl of Loudon to formulate a plan in 1756, where British forces would strike up the St. Lawrence River at Quebec. The British government under Pitt approved the plan and pledged to send six thousand troops to assist with the operation. Pitt only made one significant change to the plan, asserting that instead of attacking Quebec first, Loudon's forces should first capture the fortress at Louisbourg, thus opening the passage for supplies to reach the advancing British forces⁷⁸

These instances, and others, constantly plagued British operations in Canada. With these early failures, British commanders learned of the complexities of conducting amphibious operations. They required detailed planning and significant skill, in order to efficiently and swiftly move troops from a vessel to the shore. In addition, in preparation for enemy attacks, these troops needed to deploy into battle formation once they stepped onto land. These operations required planning months in advance, long before the voyage to the stage of execution began. They needed to embark troops and equipment, arrange them, and then control it while at sea. If they did not plan profusely, then the possibility existed that the order, discipline, and organization of the army would dissolve in the midst of sailing. In order to ensure that they arrived in North America with at least some of the equipment they needed, the planners would divide the troops, military equipment, and stores among various vessels of the invading force.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy*, 31-32.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁷⁹ Syrett, 88.

While the commander-in-chief of the army commanded the forces aboard the ship, the navy commander-in-chief commanded all the vessels in the amphibious operation: transports, victuallers, storeships, and other small vessels utilized. Navy commander-in-chiefs normally divided these vessels into groups and appointed a navy officer to exercise control over them. While the navy officer commanded the vessels, “the army did not trust the masters of transports to obey [the orders of the navy officer over them] and directed that, if necessary, an army officer on each transport should enforce the orders.”⁸⁰ As long as the operation continued, the responsibilities of the Royal Navy continued. In the invasion of the shores, the army utilized flat-bottomed boats and escorts to arrive upon the shores. While they assembled and began their journey, the navy commander-in-chief deployed other warships to act as floating batteries and sometimes utilized them as distractions, to draw the enemy’s attention from the landing.⁸¹

The warships’ focus, however, remained upon the assault and destruction of enemy defenses that surrounded the landing area. Without this supporting fire, the cannons of the French would tear through the ranks of the British army. Even after the army landed upon the shore, the navy continued to support them, through cover fire and the landing of the army’s supplies and stores. Without the assistance of the navy, the failure of an operation was certain. Without the support of the navy, General Wolfe of the British army could never have probed the

⁸⁰ Ibid., 89. Masters of transports normally received “a sealed rendezvous” before they sailed. This detailed their orders in the case of separation from the rest of the invasion fleet. This ensured that some semblance of safety and order remained in the fleet even in the case of separation by storm or enemy attack. Since they transported the army across the seas, they remained responsible for the army until they disembarked. Thus to ensure that they arrived at their destination safely, the navy worked to ensure that they took the necessary precautions. In the case that they transversed “a body of shoal water or [passed] a narrow channel, the area was first reconnoitered, in some cases mapped and the channel marked and if possible, knowledgeable pilots obtained.” In some cases, the geography proved the greatest foe of the navy and her responsibilities. Without a proper understanding of Canada’s features, the very waters the vessels sailed upon could destroy them.

⁸¹ Ibid., 98.

shores of the St. Lawrence River and the capture of Quebec would have remained a dream. The navy even allowed the utilization of seamen to carry out work ashore in support of the army.⁸²

⁸² Ibid., 100.

CONCLUSION

Without the full-scale implementation of logistics during the Seven Years War, Britain would have lost to the French, in both North America and Europe. Their capacity to utilize shipping and learn from earlier mistakes in the New World enabled them to overcome their enemies and establish themselves as a dominant force on the international level. The inability of the French to fully supply and provision their troops in North America, as well as provide the reinforcements needed led to their defeat in the war. Logistics played an enormous role in this first instance of global war.

While Britain continued to rise in power, the Spanish and the French dealt with many difficulties after the war. With both countries deeply in debt, they were unable to raise a sufficient military force to avenge their defeat after the Seven Years War. The French minister promised the Spanish repeatedly that they would fight and regain the land that the British took, but their economic woes kept them from pursuing aggressive courses of action. Without money, they could not buy uniforms, armaments, or supplies for the troops, nor could they outfit vessels to go into battle. Such weaknesses ultimately led to their downfall in the Seven Years War. The French, particularly, could not hope to fight a war on the other side of the ocean, especially with the Royal Navy mastering the difficulties of sailing in the northern waters of the Atlantic. Britain's dominance of the high seas and their capacity to charter vessels from the Americans allowed them to provide the necessary supplies and reinforcements to their troops around the world, and particularly in North America. After their early blunders, the British military gained a more full understanding of the difficulties of frontier warfare and the necessity of supply lines in wilderness campaigning.

The study of logistics is difficult and does not consist of the excitement of battle or the intrigue of court politics. Yet logistics is integral to both. Without the art of logistics, the

probability of a nation gaining victory in a war drastically falls. While vessels and armies bring the fight to the enemy, without the proper preparations or supplies, they fall. The politics of courts govern nations, but ruling a nation requires capital. If a country does not provide for proper expenditure of such capital, nations fall into debt and collapse as happened to France during the late seventeenth hundreds. Ultimately, mastery of logistics won the Seven Years War for Britain. A lack of understanding of logistics and improper usage of the resources at hand typified the earlier years of the war. The latter years of the conflict (especially under Amherst's command) showed that these earlier failures provided the necessary lessons needed for the British to reign victorious over her adversaries at the end of the Seven Years War or as Americans know it, the French and Indian War.

More so, the scholar may argue that the conclusion of the French and Indian War in America brought about the doom of Britain's enemies in the larger scale of the Seven Years War. While the war officially lasted until 1763, the undoing of French power in North America laid the groundwork for their ultimate defeat in the Seven Years War. While the French and Indian War represented only a small part of the global war, the defeat of Britain's enemy in the North American theater essentially crippled the French. They had expended many resources on their forces in New France and utilized a large portion of their vessels in order to transport the necessary supplies and materials needed to ensure the survival and continued operation of their forces. This splitting of their resources, however, weakened the fleets that sailed elsewhere in the world. While the British dealt with the same issue, the massive number of vessels under their command allowed them to field adequately the number of vessels needed in each corner of the global where conflict occurred. This enabled them to utilize their vessels to perform amphibious operations in Europe, the Caribbean, and India.

The scholar cannot ignore geography's role in the conflict either. Indeed, the vast span of the ocean contributed to the demise of the French, yet their connection to the continent of Europe forced them to field an enormous army at the same time. While the British still needed to raise an enormous army, they depended on their Hanoverian and Hessian allies for the necessary troops needed to fight upon the land. Their status as an island nation also meant that the former route of invasion became a defense against invasion forces. In order for the French and the nations allied with her to take the British, they needed to cross the channel with enough vessels to transport an army to capture and occupy Britain. With the size of the Royal Navy, the course of action proved difficult, if not impossible for the French to accomplish.

Just as the geography of the world prevented the French from easily defeating the British, the geography of the New World prevented the British from claiming total victory over the French in the first part of the war. Britain struggled with understanding the difficulties of frontier warfare and the commanders who led the armies in North America on their early outings met with disaster. They failed to understand that conflict on the frontier was fundamentally different from the classical column style that Europeans fought in upon the plains of battle. This indifference cost the lives of hundreds if not thousands of men. At times, even commanders learned the folly of their tactics by experiencing death. The French though, along with their Indian allies understood the complexities of fighting in the wilderness and utilized the forest to their advantage. Gaining control of the lakes through taking forts such as Oswego allowed them to seal off British advances into the interior of Canada.

Not until Amherst took command of His Majesty's forces in North America did the British counterattack begin. While unwilling to work with colonial troops or ranging companies initially, his military experience overruled his pride and soon found it imperative that the regular

troops work congruently with American rangers. He also coordinated joint amphibious operations that took Louisbourg and pushed up the St. Lawrence River to take Quebec itself. Utilizing the resources at hand, he transformed the military strategy for North America. In the process, he relied more upon logistical support to alleviate the passage across the harsh wilderness of Canada and ensured that his forces could fight upon reaching the field of battle.

The mastery of geography was only the first step towards winning the war. The British also needed to overcome the Indian raiders. Their raiding tactics wrecked devastation upon the regulars, as well as the colonists they sought to protect. Early in the struggle the inability of the British to understand the complexities of wilderness campaigning led to the slaughter of Braddock's force. They charged forward with little regard for the capabilities of the allied Indian and French forces and suffered a bloody defeat. Before the British could hope to withstand such attacks, they needed to understand them, something that most commanders of His Majesty's army failed to do. This weakness was prevalent throughout the officers of the Britain's forces and meant they would suffer humiliating defeats in the early part of the war. After they gained an understanding of such complexities however, they overcame their adversaries. Again, Amherst provided the greatest example of such understanding. His negotiating with the Native Americans alleviated some of their raids against the British, allowing them to proceed relatively unmolested in their assault against New France.

While it is important to examine the specific logistical factors that made the British victory in the war possible, the nature of logistics requires another aspect in order to work properly: man. Without the assistance of man, logistics is useless and as such, a scholar cannot overlook their importance. Amherst's importance cannot be underestimated. Had it not been for his ability to capitalize on logistical factors and prepare properly for his expeditions into the

interior of New France, Britain would have lost the war. While aggressive in his tactics, he waited for the precise moment to strike out against the enemy. As the war carried on and as Amherst ordered small surgical strikes against the enemy, slowly enclosing around them, he cut off the French and Canadian supplies through striking out against trains or ensuring that the Royal Navy assisted with blockading the coastline. This provided a stranglehold on the ability of New France to protect herself and ultimately ensured the British victory.¹

Agents for transports assisted him however. Ensuring the chartering of vessels and the movement of supplies and provisions agents allowed the continuation of military operations across the ocean. They boarded the vessels they chartered, checking that the contracted transports reached their destination. While often times civilians, they participated in the amphibious operations that landed troops at Quebec and Louisbourg, as well as other locations. Appointed as the officials in charge of a group of transports they watched over the welfare of the crew and vessels. Their power over the vessels was absolute save where matters involved military affairs. One such agent was Joshua Loring, the Roxbury, Massachusetts colonist who received a commission as captain in the Royal Navy. He chartered various vessels while in England to serve as transports. Upon his return to America, he assisted in preparing ships and boats for the assault upon Canada, but his efforts did not come to fruition until Amherst took command of the British forces in North America.

Ultimately, the success of the British in North America depended upon logistics. If the British command had not realized the value of logistical factors in the waging of war and the necessity of preparation when participating in frontier warfare, they would have lost to the French in this global conflict. The Seven Years War began in North America. While other areas

¹ It is important to note that Amherst had actual military experience compared to the likes of Washington, who only understood military tactics from what he read and heard from his older brother, Braddock's experience behind the desk, or Shirley's inability to command.

of the world saw action, the balance point for the war depended on success in North America. Britain's victory in the New World taught them valuable lessons, which they employed throughout the rest of the war. France's failure in the realm of logistics on the other hand, guaranteed their defeat in the Seven Years War.

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