

lieutenant, Simon Lossing, second, and Abraham van Keuren, ensign. On March 4, 1780, Abraham Fort succeeded him as captain of the company.

In the fall of 1776, the obstructions to prevent the British from ascending the Hudson in their ships were placed in the river between Fort Montgomery and the rocky base of the mountain figuratively called Anthony's Nose, on the east side of the stream (see map, page 157). Opposite this conspicuous eminence in Westchester County, about four miles north of Peekskill, the river is about a quarter of a mile wide. The stretching of the iron cable across the river was begun not long after the following action was taken by the New York committee of safety, on October 22, 1776:

"Resolved, That Mr. Gilbert Livingston be one of the secret committee directed to be sent down with the utmost dispatch to Fort Montgomery with such parts of the chain as is fixed in the logs, and that Mr. Henry Wisner, junior, co-operate with him in carrying the measure into execution in the most safe and expeditious manner possible."

The strength of the chain was not adequate to withstand the great strain of the current, and it broke in two places. Concerning the undertaking Major-General Heath, writing to General Washington, from Peekskill, on November 18, remarks: "The chain which has been extended across the river above this place has broken twice. I must confess that from my first hearing of the intention I expected no real advantage from it."

Pierre van Cortlandt, president of the New York committee of safety, writing two days later to the president of the congress of the United States, discloses the character of the mishap: "In projecting the obstruction between Anthony's Nose on the eastern shore, and Fort Montgomery, we endeavored to avail ourselves of the model of that which had proved effectual on the river Delaware, and were assisted by the advice and experience of Captain Hazard. But the great length of the chain, being upwards of eighteen hundred feet, the bulk of the logs which were necessary to support it, the immense weight of water which it accumulated, and the rapidity of the tide, have baffled our efforts; it separated twice after holding only a few hours, and we have too much reason to despair of its ever fully answering the important purpose for which it was constructed."

Gilbert Livingston and Henry Wisner having made a report of the miscarriage of the undertaking, the New York convention, on November 23,

"Resolved, That a copy of the said report be transmitted to General Schuyler with a request that he will favor the convention with his advice on the best and most effectual plan for obstructing the navigation of Hudson's river, that the committee of the convention of this state, appointed to obstruct the navigation of Hudson's river, be instructed to cause a nautical survey to be