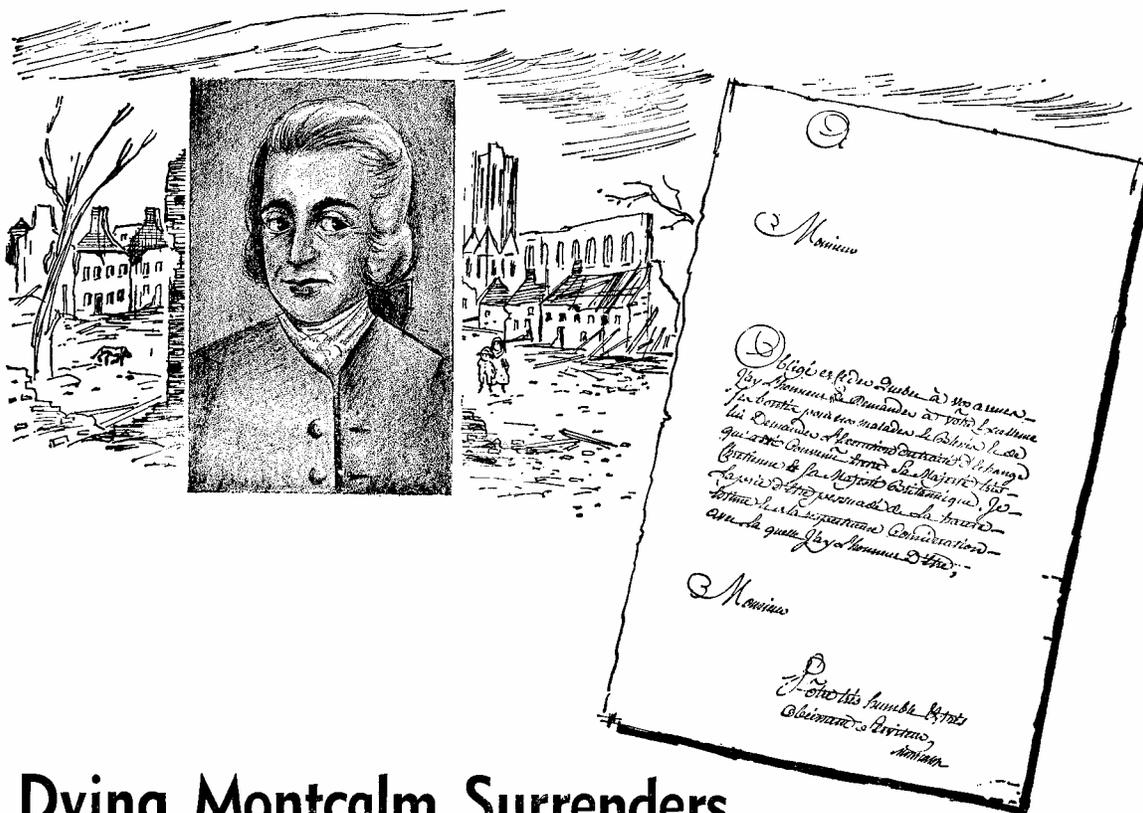


FAMOUS LETTERS IN CANADIAN HISTORY



Dying Montcalm Surrenders

Montcalm was dying.

Surrender, now, like his death, was inevitable. The French Army had fled in disorder back to the city after failing to dislodge the thin red line that James Wolfe had strung across the Plains of Abraham after scaling the Quebec escarpment that September morning of 1759.

So the dreams, nurtured from the days of Cartier, of a French stronghold in North America were ending. The new Canada was to replace New France.

It was in this setting that Louis Joseph Marquis de Montcalm called his faithful secretary, Sergeant Marcel, and began to dictate this, his last official message, as an officer of the king.

It was meant for Wolfe. But the British general, like Montcalm, was to die of wounds from that critical encounter. The next day an aide of the dead Montcalm handed it to General George Townshend, the acting British commander.

The original today is in Canada's National Archives.

Text of Montcalm's Appeal for Compassion

Sir:

Being obliged to surrender Quebec to your arms I have the honor to recommend our sick and wounded to Your Excellency's compassion and to ask you to carry out the exchange of prisoners as agreed upon between His Most Christian Majesty and His Britannic Majesty.

I beg Your Excellency to rest assured of the high esteem and great respect with which I have the honor to be, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant.

MONTCALM