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THE SAILING OF THE GRIFFON.

WALL PANEL IN THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL BUILDING. PAINTED BY H. T. KOERNER.  
SEE APPENDIX A.



PUBLICATIONS  
OF THE  
BUFFALO  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EDITED BY  
FRANK H. SEVERANCE  
SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY

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# LIST OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY

FROM ITS ORGANIZATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

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*JULIUS H. DAWES, . . . . .	1893
ANDREW LANGDON, . . . . .	1894 to 1905

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\* Deceased.

## P R E F A C E

**I**N this volume the Buffalo Historical Society continues the publication of papers relating to the history of Buffalo, the region of the Niagara and the lakes. For the most part, the material has been drawn from manuscripts prepared for and deposited with the society, some of them many years ago.

The opening paper, on "The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838," is a notable addition to the literature of that subject. In its preparation its author, Prof. Orrin Edward Tiffany, found ample assistance in the library of the Buffalo Historical Society. Some idea of the extent of the society's collections on this subject may be gained from "The Bibliography of the Upper Canada Rebellion," contained in Vol. V. of its Publications. The list fills nearly seventy pages, and most of the works enumerated are to be found in the Historical Society library. Yet there is not among them or elsewhere, a treatise which, like the one now published, reviews in an impartial and philosophic temper the attitude of the United States Government, and of the governments of the border states, towards the turbulent spirits of the Canadian frontier, towards the responsible officials of Canada, and towards the Government of Great Britain. It is a chapter of high worth in the history of the diplomatic relations between the two great English-speaking

nations. In the local point of view, it is also of conspicuous value, since no part of the disturbed border played so famous a part in the "war" as did the Niagara and immediate vicinity. The "Illustrative Documents bearing on the Canadian Rebellion," which in this volume follow Mr. Tiffany's paper, have the piquant interest that always attaches to the original documents in a famous case.

Very local and very modern, is the "History of the Abolition of Railroad Grade Crossings in the City of Buffalo," by the late Robert B. Adam. That it is an important chapter in the history of Buffalo, certainly no one now a resident of the city, whose knowledge of local conditions runs back say twenty years, will hesitate to admit. Not even in the War of 1812, when Buffalo was practically annihilated by the enemy, did it sustain such loss of life or such menace to its welfare as was the case through many later years, when the greatest foe with which its citizens had to contend, was the deadly grade crossing. The publication of the history prepared by Mr. Adam is timely now, when the commission of which for many years he was the head, has been reorganized, and again addresses itself to a further prosecution of the work.

Of the Dobbins papers, sufficient comment is made in the introductory sketch that accompanies them. These, and the short papers that follow on related subjects, supply a lack heretofore existing in the annals of our region. They also suggest the need of further research on certain phases of lake history. There does not exist an adequate account of the origin and rise of traffic on the lakes, or any complete list of the vessels employed in trade or military transportation, during the period of British control and the succeeding years of American development. Of the earliest days of French adventure, and the chronology of lake

vessels into the opening years of the British period, we have a most satisfactory study in Mr. Henry R. Howland's "Navy Island and the First Successors to the Griffon," in Vol. VI. of the Buffalo Historical Society Publications. But for the continuation of the record, down say to the War of 1812, though much has been written, there is no single narrative that can be considered either accurate or complete. The papers of Daniel Dobbins, printed in this volume, are a helpful contribution, by the aid of which, and other data chiefly to be drawn from British sources, a definitive record of the rise of our lake commerce, may be compiled.

Suggested, too, by the Dobbins papers, is the opportunity for a monograph on the early salt trade of America, as carried on through the lakes, the Niagara and inland waterways to the southward. This subject was touched by the Wilkeson papers in Vol. V. of these Publications, but has nowhere received the attention that it merits.

The other papers here printed need no especial comment. It is a pleasure to be able to include the reminiscences of Mrs. Martha Fitch Poole, of whom many readers of this volume cherish affectionate memories. It is not strange, in recalling the Buffalo of her youth—the Buffalo of well-nigh three quarters of a century ago!—that the infant city should appear all pleasant, its men brave and gallant, its women all lovely. Happy those whose memories ever hold the past in roseate hue. Nor is there any question that the Buffalo of which Mrs. Poole has written was a place of peculiar charm. Between the years of pioneer privation and hardship, and a later period of unlovely largeness, lie the golden years of the social life of the community. Social and moral standards were high; neighborhood bonds were strong; and neither railroad nor telegraph nor telephone made possible the constant intrusion of the outer world. Those were the years

when, even amid financial reverses, the foundations were laid for many of the best things that endure in the Buffalo of today.

The letters and addresses of General Ely S. Parker came into the editor's hands too late to give them the place in this volume to which their character entitles them. Happily, however, they could be printed with propriety in connection with the account of the reburial of Gen. Parker by the Historical Society, and the exercises incident to unveiling a stone at his grave. Of the unique interest of these writings it is superfluous to speak. Where else has a full-blooded Seneca left such a correspondence? What other North American Indian has written his autobiography? And not only written of himself, but of his people, summing up in a few clear, dispassionate, philosophical paragraphs, a century of dishonor in the dealings of the "Christian" white man with the Indian. Gen. Parker's modest writings are a contribution to American historical literature which merit, and which fill, a niche by themselves.

Much material intended for this volume, is omitted, that the book may not be bulky. Many papers of the pioneers, which it is desirable to publish together, are reserved for a subsequent issue. The opportunity for illustration, particularly ample in such a paper as Mrs. Poole's, with its many references to people and houses worth picturing, has been made avail of far less than the editor could wish; though it may be noted that more illustrations are here given than in any preceding volume of the series.

Acknowledgment, for help given in the preparation of this volume, is gratefully made to Miss Eliza A. Blakeslee of Caledonia, N. Y.; Mrs. James P. White of Buffalo; Mr. John Fleeharty, Erie, Pa., who assisted Capt. William W. Dobbins in the original preparation of his narrative;



Mr. John Miller, Erie; Major T. J. Hoskinson, Philadelphia; Mr. Arthur C. Parker, New York City; and Mr. Edward B. Guthrie, chief engineer of the Buffalo Grade Crossings Commission.

F. H. S.



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## PREFATORY NOTE

It has been my design in preparing this thesis to accomplish three objects, so far as was practicable within the necessary limits of such a work. The first and foremost object has been to narrate the relation of the people in the border states to the Revolutionists of Canada; especially to describe the organization and workings of the various secret societies formed within the United States to advance the interests of the Canadian Patriots; the purposes of these societies to promote filibustering expeditions into Canada, and to involve the United States in war with England; and finally, the part played by them politically in the overthrow of the Democratic party in the northern states, have received extended consideration.

The second part of the plan has been to set forth in clear light the policy of the Van Buren Administration toward the violation of the neutrality laws on the northern border, and the international questions arising out of the border disturbances, such as the Caroline affair and the northeast boundary dispute. Furthermore, as several of the American leaders among the Patriots aspired to accomplish in Canada what Sam Houston had wrought in Texas, the policy of President Van Buren has been contrasted incidentally with that of President Jackson in regard to the filibustering expeditions fitted out in the southern states for the overthrow of the Mexican authority in Texas.

The third purpose is to show the action of the border states regarding the conduct of their own citizens during this period of intrigue and border raid, and also to note the conflict between State and Federal authority as clearly illustrated by the McLeod case.

The footnotes and the bibliography will show the sources from which the material has been obtained. Besides having the advantages of the library of the University of Michigan, many valuable documents and papers have been consulted in the libraries of Detroit, Buffalo and Toronto. I wish at this time to acknowledge the many courtesies received from the librarians at these cities; especially the service rendered me in the matter of bibliography by Mr.

Frank H. Severance, the Secretary of the Buffalo Historical Society. I would further acknowledge the assistance of Professor A. C. McLaughlin of the Carnegie Institute for certain materials furnished me from Washington, and my indebtedness to Professor C. H. Van Tyne of this university for his helpful criticisms.

ORRIN EDWARD TIFFANY.

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, June, 1905.



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THE  
RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES  
TO  
THE CANADIAN REBELLION  
OF 1837-1838<sup>1</sup>

---

BY ORRIN EDWARD TIFFANY<sup>2</sup>

I. COLONIAL MISRULE.

The Rebellion of 1837-1838 in Canada is of little consequence so far as military events are concerned; but the struggle marks a turning-point in Canadian constitutional development. While the evolution of the rebellion covers a period of forty years, producing different degrees of contention in the various provinces, the resort to armed force took place only in two provinces, Upper Canada or Ontario, and Lower Canada or Quebec. In fact, the revolutionary movements even in these two provinces were so futile that they scarcely deserve the name of rebellion. The results, however, were important: England was aroused to the neces-

1. A thesis submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Michigan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, June, 1905.

2. Orrin Edward Tiffany is a native of Minnesota, who received his early training in district schools and the seminary at Spring Arbor, Mich. In 1895 he graduated from the University of Michigan with the degree of A. B., receiving the degree of A. M. the following year. He worked his way through college, all his studies being pursued at Ann Arbor except one summer spent at the University of Chicago. From 1896 to 1903 he was professor of history and economics in Greenville College, Greenville, Ill., being Dean of the college, 1900-1903. He still holds a non-resident membership on the Greenville college faculty. The author's present address is Ann Arbor, Mich.

sity of changing her colonial policy in the Canadas; and the sympathy excited in the United States produced a series of unfortunate border raids that severely taxed the military vigilance and friendly feeling of the two governments, and led to international complications; - while within the United States itself, the affair furnished new instances of conflict between State and Federal authority; and contributed somewhat to the defeat of the Van Buren administration and the downfall of the Democratic party.

Canada, originally a French colony, came to England by the treaty of Paris in 1763 which brought to a close the Seven Years' War, or the French and Indian War, as it is known in American history. This transfer of Canada to England took place just at the beginning of the controversies that led to the American Revolution and the loss of the thirteen English colonies. During this war Canada, being French and Roman Catholic, showed little sympathy with her Puritan neighbors in their revolutionary struggle.<sup>1</sup>

With the outbreak of the French Revolution the British Government, led partly by the desire to give the French Canadians good government, partly to please the loyalists who, recently driven from the States, had found new homes in the upper province, and deeming it, perhaps, advisable to anticipate any open demonstration of sympathy on the part of the French Canadians with the revolutionists of the mother country, passed the "Constitutional Act" of 1791. By this act of Parliament the colony was divided into Upper and Lower Canada. The government in each province was to correspond to the English model: in the place of the King stood a Governor appointed by the Crown; for the Cabinet, an Executive Council chosen by the governor; for the House of Lords, a Legislative Council appointed for life by the sovereign; and for the House of Commons, a Representative Assembly elected from districts by the people on a restricted franchise.<sup>2</sup> Thus was representative government first established in Canada; and with it began the con-

1. Bourinot, "Canada," 1760-1900, 68.

2. Goldwin Smith, "Canada and the Canadian Question," 85-86; Bourinot, "Manual of Constitutional History of Canada," ed. 1888, 21.

stitutional and political difficulties which finally culminated in rebellion.

The Act of 1791, though granting important privileges, contained certain sources of weakness. By dividing the provinces England hoped to leave the French to themselves and to their own institutions; but such was not to be the result. The English were drawn to Quebec by the allurements of trade, and when once there, they struggled for political supremacy. Another source of weakness was the lack of responsible government in the English sense. The British element entrenched in the executive office, in the legislative council, and in almost exclusive access to the Home Government, could determine the governmental policy in the provinces irrespective of the legislative assembly. Thus there began a conflict in Upper, or British Canada, for the establishment of the principles of English parliamentary government; and in Lower, or French Canada, began "the war of races" between the French elected element which predominated in the assembly and the English or the official element of the legislative council.<sup>1</sup> The French demanded the election of the appointed legislative council; all the passion of race, religion, and politics became involved in the "irrepressible conflict." Parties arose; patriot leaders appeared; and a press devoted to reform scattered the seeds of political and constitutional strife.

From 1791 to the close of the War of 1812 the movement was slow and the demands for reform moderate; from then on, the conflict became more aggravated. "The battle-fields," says Goldwin Smith, "were the control of the revenues and the civil list, the composition of the Legislative Council (which the patriots desired to make elective that they might fill it with men of their own party), and the tenure of the judges, whom they wished to make irremovable, like the judges in England, in order to diminish the power of the Crown, besides minor and personal questions about which party feelings were aroused."<sup>2</sup>

1. Durham's "Report," Parliamentary Reports Canada, 1839, I, 8-9.

2. Goldwin Smith, "Canada and the Canadian Question," 88.

The disposition of the public revenues finally became the center around which the two parties in Lower Canada contended for political supremacy. By the imperial statutes of 1774-1775, duties were to be levied for the sole benefit of the Crown in "defraying the expenses of the administration of justice and the support of the civil government of the province"; and whatever sums remained were "for the future disposition of parliament." Besides the revenues the Government had exclusive control of "the casual or territorial revenues," arising from the Jesuits' estates, royal seigniorial dues; and certain moneys arising from timber and land. The assembly controlled only such revenues as it itself might levy. Sometimes the royal revenues were not sufficient to meet the needs of the Government: under such circumstances the military exchequer was drawn on for the balance. As time went on the deficit constantly increased, owing to the increased expense of maintaining the provincial administration. On the other hand, the provincial revenues tended to exceed the expenditures of the local legislature. The financial burdens of the War of 1812-15 caused the Government to draw heavily on the provincial revenues, until by 1817 it "had incurred a debt of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds to the province without the direct authority of the legislature." The war being over, the Home Government desired to end such questionable methods of raising funds by securing from the provincial legislature an appropriation covering the past indebtedness and providing for such contingencies in the future. This was the beginning of the financial difficulties that ceased not to agitate the provincial legislature until the outbreak of the revolt.<sup>1</sup>

Control of the purse was the demand of the popular assembly as the means of commanding political concessions and constitutional reform. The assembly not only refused to provide for the government civil list; but even demanded the control of the revenues derived by imperial statutes. To such a degree did the obstinacy of the parties develop that the machinery of government became clogged and deadlock

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1. Bourinot, "Canada, 1760-1900," 124-125.

resulted. In 1836, the controversy became so heated that the majority of the assembly asserted its right to set aside the constitution of 1791: nothing short of an elective council would satisfy the demands for constitutional reform. The Home Government was petitioned and commissioners were appointed to investigate conditions in Canada. England was aroused to action; ten resolutions were introduced in Parliament; the arrears of indebtedness were provided for, and some concessions as to the legislative council were made: but it was not deemed expedient to make it elective. The crisis was at hand. The standard of revolt was raised: "*Vive la liberté!*" "*Vive la Nation Canadienne!*" "*Point de despotisme!*" became the cry wherever the revolutionists predominated.<sup>1</sup>

In Upper Canada the financial disputes were less intense; and were more easily adjusted. In 1831 the assembly passed an act providing a permanent fund for the civil list and the judiciary with the condition that the government revenues be placed at its disposal. Now that the salaries of the judges were made permanent, the provincial legislature was permitted in 1834 to enact that the judges should hold office during good behavior rather than at the pleasure of the Crown as heretofore. Besides demanding an elective council the reformers of Upper Canada desired a responsible council; and some even "wished to assimilate the institutions of the Province rather to those of the United States than to those of the mother country."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the chief object of attack was the so-called "Family Compact," which represented a political and social combination rather than a family connection. This became so all-powerful that it controlled all branches of the Government—"the executive, legislative council, and even the assembly where for years there sat several members holding offices of emolument under the crown."<sup>3</sup> The banks, the finances, the Church of England, the judiciary, the public domain—all were monopolized by this bureaucratic aristoc-

1. *Ibid.*, 127, 133.

2. Durham's "Report," 55.

3. Bourinot, "Canada, 1760-1900," 140; Goldwin Smith, "Canada and the Canadian Question," 109.

racy. This exclusive social circle was composed for the most part of the descendants of the loyalists who had faithfully stood by the king during the American Revolution; and who, as a consequence, claimed special favors by way of government patronage. With this class stood the descendants of the first settlers who had come before the war; and certain retired officials from England coming hither to better their conditions. Thus the late comers and certain of the loyalists, for one reason or another, found themselves excluded from office and government favor. The result was the growth of a party opposed to the exclusive class—a reform party demanding an elective legislative council and responsible government; and so desperate became the struggle that the whole machinery of government was brought to bear at the polls to defeat certain of the liberal leaders. Then came the open breach with the Government and an appeal to arms.<sup>1</sup>

Another abuse that furnished material for the agitator was the method of disposing of the public lands. In sad contrast with the efficient system of the United States, gross favoritism was shown in large gifts of land on purely personal or political grounds, 10,000 to 50,000 acres not being an uncommon grant to such persons. Thereby millions of acres were placed beyond the control of the Government: from eight-tenths to all the land was thus alienated in certain of the provinces by the time of the rebellion. A very small per cent. of these vast tracts of land was brought under cultivation; and the difficulties and uncertainty of securing title, together with the separation of the settlers and difficulty of communication, reduced the agricultural class to the verge of existence, and the value of farm lands to a mere pittance. Immigration decreased, or was turned across the border into the more prosperous States.<sup>2</sup>

The greatest of grievances arising out of the land grants was found in the Clergy Reserves. By the Constitutional Act of 1791, the ecclesiastical as well as the civil polity of Great Britain was to be reproduced in Canada: provision

1. George Bryce, "History of the Canadian People," 387-388.

2. Durham's "Report," 72-86, 92.



was made to affix titles of nobility to members of the upper house; and for a church establishment by setting aside an eighth of the crown lands for the maintenance of a "Protestant clergy." Later, the Church construed the act to mean a seventh of the waste land; and "Protestant clergy" to mean the clergy of the Anglican Church. The attempt to fasten titles of nobility in America failed; but the church establishment took root and became the source of much trouble: the various other Protestant bodies demanded a share in the revenues, and not meeting with success in their demand, they later (1826) passed a resolution through the Assembly in Upper Canada that if it seemed inexpedient to grant a denominational division, the whole reserve should be devoted to educational purposes. The Church of England, however, backed by the powerful "family compact," maintained its hold upon the lands; and in 1836 defied the opposition by establishing forty-four endowed rectories within the province. "But the action," says Sir J. Castell Hopkins, "created a feeling which, combined with other causes, broke into the ultimate storm-cloud of rebellion."<sup>1</sup>

Besides these main causes were numerous others of more or less importance, each of which contributed its share to the final reckoning. In Upper Canada, besides the general constitutional and political questions, the "family compact," the land grants including the clergy reserves, there was a sort of silent opposition to immigration due to the jealousy with which the dominant class wished to maintain their own exclusive interests. The franchise was granted on illiberal terms to immigrants from Great Britain; and immigrants from the United States were refused the right to hold land, so fearful were the loyalists of the liberalizing tendencies of the New Democracy. Even professional men from the home country had to undergo a long apprenticeship before being allowed to practice in the province. The narrow exclusive educational policy was another point of attack; while the close censorship of the press, and the persecutions of the agitators resulting in heavy fines, confiscations of property,

1. J. C. Hopkins, "The Progress of Canada in the Century," 218-219. See also, Hopkins, "Encyclopaedia of Canada," III, 136-166.

and even banishment, but added fuel by winning new martyrs to the cause of liberty.<sup>1</sup>

In Lower Canada there was mingled with the general causes already mentioned a war of races: on the one hand, a Celtic race with French institutions of the old regime, the French language and the Roman Catholic religion—a people embittered by conquest. On the other hand, an Anglo-Saxon race with Teutonic institutions, the English language, the Protestant religion—a world-wide conquering and commercial people. Social seclusion and religious separation existed; political and commercial isolation were likewise sought by the French. Nor should the French Revolution of 1830 be overlooked; for the French-Canadian leaders were touched by it and quickened into new activity. The liberalizing influence of the United States, though often silent, was a potent factor always present to urge on every lover of true representative government. The rule of the people, the industrial activity, and the commercial prosperity of the great republic to the southward, were in marked contrast to the semi-despotic rule of the governors, and the industrial and commercial stagnation of the provinces.<sup>2</sup>

And last but not least of the causes leading to the revolt, was the short-sightedness of the Home Government. The political changes in England effected a change of government on the average of once in five years. Little was known of the distant colonies in America and little care was taken in regard to them except to get along with them with as little trouble as possible. Moreover, since the loss of the thirteen American dependencies, it had been the policy of Great Britain "to govern its colonies by means of division, and to break them down as much as possible into petty isolated communities, incapable of combination, and possessing no sufficient strength for individual resistance to the Empire."<sup>3</sup>

Another weakness in the Colonial Government was the

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1. "Handbook of Canada," 152-153; Hopkins, "Progress of Canada in the Century," 220-223; Durham's "Report," 35.

2. Durham's "Report," 15-18, 66.

3. *Ibid.*, 25.

method of appointing the governors. Instead of selecting men with executive capacity, relying on their knowledge of local affairs to govern the provinces as the real representatives of the Crown, the governors were appointed through the colonial office; given full instructions as to their method of procedure; held responsible for carrying out the same; and were then recalled for not being able to conciliate the people whom they were supposed to rule in peace and equity. Thus governors were forced to carry out a policy foreign to the interests of the people; or waste valuable time in what too often proved a futile correspondence with the colonial office. Hence, where conditions called for a vigorous administration of the royal prerogative, a weak, hesitating policy was pursued. A biting comment on the two centuries of England's colonial policy is summed up in the remark of Lord Durham in 1838: "The experiment of keeping colonies and governing them well ought at least to have a trial."<sup>1</sup>

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## II. LEADERS AND EVENTS.

The leaders most closely associated with the Patriot uprising are Louis Joseph Papineau of Lower Canada and William Lyon Mackenzie of Upper Canada. Papineau was born in Montreal, 1789, educated in the Seminary at Quebec; elected to the Assembly in Lower Canada at the early age of twenty, and by 1817 was made Speaker of the Assembly, which position he held, but for one short interval, until the rebellion. He was a brilliant orator; a deep student of politics; energetic and aggressive; but vain and lacking in that mental equipoise essential to a true statesman. In his aspirations to lead his countrymen to successful revolution and republican government, he has been thus contrasted with Washington: "As the Canadian rebellion differed in all respects from the American war of independence, so was the impassioned, prejudiced, and imprudent Louis J. Papineau, the antipodes of the sober, impartial, and prudent

1. *Ibid.*, 25, 37, 38; "Handbook of Canada," 151.

George Washington. One loved himself, the other loved his country. The Canadian advocate, whose battles had ever been one of words, regardless of his countrymen, desired to raise himself to supreme power in the state; the American soldier, who had faced many a danger by flood and field, sought only the happiness of his citizens."<sup>1</sup>

Closely associated with Papineau in the struggle for political liberty in the lower province was Dr. Wolfred Nelson, of English birth, and a radical member of the Assembly. Having been educated at Montreal, he began the practice of medicine at St. Denis. During the War of 1812-15, he served in the army as a surgeon and learned something of military tactics. A man of wealth, scholarly attainments, and good judgment, he was highly respected, and wielded great influence over the people of the southern counties.

Another Liberal who finally took part in the uprising was Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan. A native of Ireland, carefully educated both at home and in Paris, he came to Canada in 1823 and continued his studies in medicine at Quebec. His wit, genial manner, earnest character and professional skill soon won him an extensive practice. He early took part in political life: he took part in the organization of the Society of the Friends of Ireland. In 1834 he became editor of the *Vindicator* which so boldly championed the Patriot cause that the office was attacked and destroyed by the tory Doric Club. In 1835 he was made a member of the Assembly and there nobly supported the revolutionary party. When the meeting took place on the Richelieu to determine the final course of action O'Callaghan was present and supported Papineau in condemning the proposed resort to arms; but when the crisis came he joined the Patriots, took part in the engagement at St. Denis, and when failure came to their cause, he joined Papineau in flight to the United States.

Other names connected with the revolt were: Thomas Starrow Brown, an American who had found his way to Canada, engaged in the iron retail trade, and politics—

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1. MacMullen, "History of Canada," 414.

withal, an enthusiastic applauder of the liberty movement, who by some means became leader in certain engagements only to display utter lack of courage and generalship; Amerry Girod, of doubtful nationality, a linguist of some note, a man who, before coming to Canada, had gained some military experience as lieutenant-colonel of cavalry in Mexico—an extremist of the most violent type, who with Dr. Chenier became leader of the uprising at Saint Eustache; and Dr. C. H. O. Cote, a tory hater, who after the suppression of the revolt in Lower Canada became, together with Dr. Robert Nelson, an active organizer of border raids.

The father of the Upper Canadian revolt was William Lyon Mackenzie. "A wiry and peppery little Scotchman"; honest, brave, energetic; but ruthless in his exposure of wrong and wrong-doers: a man of strong personality, but unsafe in council, and oftentimes intemperate in word and action. Many were the vicissitudes of this extremist. Elected a radical member of the Assembly in 1828, he was again and again expelled by the influence of the "family compact," only to be reëlected by a devoted and enthusiastic constituency. His vituperative pen, also, aroused against him bitter enemies: at one time it lost him the public printing; at another it led to the sack and destruction of his printing press. He was withal a born agitator, a man more suitable to engender strife and augment revolt than capable of exercising the patience and tact necessary to command large forces of men, or the judgment essential to political reorganization and true statesmanship.<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the western division of the organization for revolt was Dr. Charles Duncombe. He was a native of the United States who had settled in the province after the War of 1812; he became a large purchaser of land, and in his professional capacity supplied a much needed want in the western region of that day. Being a skilful physician and a man of affable disposition, he soon obtained considerable means, and became extremely popular. His popularity and liberal views led after a time to his election to the Assembly; where being selected by the reform party as a suitable per-

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1. Charles Lindsey, "Life and Times of Wm. Lyon Mackenzie."

son to represent their claims to the Home Government, he was sent to England. On failing to obtain a favorable hearing, he returned embittered against the ruling class; and when approached by Mackenzie readily gave him his support in favor of a "grand political demonstration."

More intimately connected with Mackenzie in his attempt at revolution was Dr. John Rolph, a lawyer and a physician; a subtle-minded and sagacious reformer, who urged on the organizations for revolt by accepting the chief position in the proposed provisional government; but who, when the revolt broke out, played the double part of acting openly as the agent or "truce bearer" of the governor while at the same time he secretly incited the insurgents to action. Another associate was Marshal Spring Biddle, a man of lofty aims and commanding eloquence, and, for a time, speaker of the Assembly, who, when the crisis came, though abstaining from any open assistance, sympathized with the revolt until, suspicion being aroused in the Lieutenant-Governor, he allowed himself to become expatriated rather than face the probable results of an arrest and trial. Besides these there were other persons, some of whom halted at the verge of armed resistance, such as Drs. Morrison and Baldwin, or paid the penalty of their rashness with their lives as did Lout and Montgomery; while there were others who pined away in jail, or suffered banishment, not to mention the leaders of the hundred and fifty various local organizations pledged to the overthrow of the existing form of government.<sup>1</sup>

While the uprisings in Upper and Lower Canada were simultaneous, and while a deep sympathy existed between them, the two movements were quite distinct in origin and in development, as a study of the causes of the insurrection in the respective provinces clearly shows. The occasion of the rebellion in each is equally distinct. As already noted, the refusal of Parliament to grant the request of the French Canadians for an elective franchise led to a violent outburst of feeling: Papineau was ready for anything—independence, or even annexation with the United States. Agitation everywhere became fierce. The various local commit-

1. Lindsey, II, 32.

tees of correspondence with the central committee of Montreal were everywhere actively urging the Patriots to armed resistance. "Anti-coercion meetings," as the patriot assemblies were called, were organized; military drill was begun, officers appointed; and the permanent committee called on for munitions of war.<sup>1</sup> In all these movements, however, there seems to have been more of bluff and noise than of real military organization. In fact, with the exception of Dr. Nelson, the leaders of the revolt were woefully lacking in both the knowledge and the courage of war.

On Nov. 6, 1837, the first blow was struck at Montreal. Here a collision took place between "The Sons of Liberty" and "The Doric Club," a loyalist association, with a slight advantage in favor of the Patriots.<sup>2</sup> The Government became thoroughly aroused: warrants were issued for the arrest of the rebels; and decisive steps were taken to suppress the revolt.

The real center of the disaffection, however, was along the Richelieu. At St. Charles, on this river, there met, on October 23d, the delegates of the "six confederated counties" and assembled with them were some five thousand persons. Resolutions were adopted that left no doubt as to the intent of the agitators. Military preparations soon followed; bands of Patriots gathered at both St. Charles and St. Denis, and made ready for war. These things coming to the notice of the authorities, Colonels Wetherall and Gore were hastened forward to the Richelieu to nip the insurrection in the bud. The Patriot forces were attacked by Colonel Gore at St. Denis on the 23d of November; but Dr. Nelson, turning his three-story distillery into a fort, proved himself a skilful tactician by maintaining his position in nearly an all-day battle, in which he finally repulsed the Government troops.<sup>3</sup>

This victory gave considerable encouragement to the Patriot cause; but it was short-lived, for soon the Patriots met with an overwhelming defeat at St. Charles. At this

1. Kingsford, "History of Canada," X, 28-29.

2. Earl Gosford to Lord Glenelg, Nov. 9, 1837; Col. Wetherall to Lord Gosford, Nov. 6, 1837, in Parliamentary Reports, Canada.

3. Col. Gore to Sir J. Colborne, Nov. 25, 1838; Sir Colborne to Lord Somerset, Nov. 29, 1837, in Parliamentary Reports, Canada.

place, Colonel Wetherall arrived on the 25th of November with five companies, two pieces of artillery, and a small cavalry force. The Patriots occupied the house of M. Debartzch, an old French château substantially built; the walls were pierced for the use of guns; and the grounds enclosed by barricades extending from the Richelieu on either side to a hill back of the house. The chief leaders to whom the people looked being absent, there was a hesitancy about assembling when the battle came on; and there were but 550 fowling pieces to supply those who did assemble. As a consequence the barricades when stormed by the provincial troops were easily carried; and in less than an hour after the firing began the insurgents were in full flight. "The slaughter on the side of the rebels," writes Colonel Wetherall, "was great." "I counted," he adds, "fifty-six bodies, and many more were killed in the building and the bodies burnt."<sup>1</sup>

The spell was broken; the Patriot army suddenly vanished: a majority to their homes; but the more conspicuous members sought safety across the border. Papineau, who struck for the States at the first approach of the British, made sure his escape; while Dr. Nelson, who bravely held his ground while hope of success remained, was apprehended and, with other prisoners, lodged in Montreal jail. Elsewhere at St. Eustache and St. Benart, northwest of Montreal, and on the national boundary, the Patriots attempted to prolong the struggle, but in vain.<sup>2</sup> Thus within the short space of a month, the first attempt at armed revolt disappeared. The cause of the failure was due, in part, to the timidity and lack of initiative on the part of a people long accustomed to absolute government in Church and State, and to a leadership utterly lacking in military knowledge or experience; and, in part, to the decisive and soldierly action of Sir John Colborne, who not only suppressed the insurrection; but, having been appointed Administrator, suspended the constitution, and placed the province under military rule.

1. Col. Wetherall to Adj. Gen., Nov. 27, 1837; Earl of Gosford to Lord Glenelg, Nov. 30, 1837; Lindsey, II, 69.

2. Sir Colborne to Lord Fitzroy, Dec. 22, 1837, in Parliamentary Reports, Canada.



The rebellion in Lower Canada, though crushed for the time being, was not dead: the majority of the French element remained in a sullen and hostile mood. During the summer of 1838 secret organization of the Patriots was going on through the agency of the chief refugees on the New York and Vermont frontiers—Dr. Robert Nelson, brother of Dr. Wolfred Nelson, the hero of St. Denis, Dr. Cote, and Mr. Mailliot; and immediately after the departure of Lord Durham, who had been appointed in March as “Captain General and Governor-in-Chief” of all the Canadas, a new uprising took place, “The Rebellion of 1838.” It began, November 3d, in the counties on the Richelieu, and extended west to Beauharnais: large bodies of hostile *habitants* gathered at the leading towns of this district, where they were to be equipped with arms, and supported by large bodies of sympathizers from the United States. This insurrection was even more futile than the previous one: the arms and troops from the United States failed to materialize; and within seven days the revolt collapsed.<sup>1</sup>

The rebellion of Upper Canada presents a similar fiasco. Exasperated beyond endurance by defeat at the polls, by methods decidedly questionable, certain of the liberal leaders became reckless in their zeal to thwart the “family compact.” A “Committee of Vigilance” was formed with Mackenzie as agent and corresponding secretary; and meetings were held throughout the province with but one intent. Mackenzie claimed to have the names of thousands ready to rise against the Governor, and to establish a provisional government. Military drill and target practice became common in various places.<sup>2</sup> On Nov. 25, 1837, a proclamation was issued by Mackenzie entitled, “Independence,” in which he claimed that there had been nineteen strikes for independence on the American continent; and that all had been successful. “Up then, brave Canadians! Get ready your rifles, and make short work of it,” was his final appeal.<sup>3</sup>

The center of the revolt was around Toronto. The

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1. Kingsford, X, 167-175.

2. Bryce, “History of Canada,” 388-389.

3. Lindsey, II, Appendix F.

Patriot rendezvous was Montgomery's Tavern, a few miles north of the city on Yonge street. From here an attack on Toronto was planned for the night of December 7th, under the command of Van Egmond, who had been a Colonel under the Great Napoleon. Much to the discomfort of Mackenzie, who had been absent some days, Dr. Rolph, who was to be made President of the Republic, changed the date of assault to December 4th. The change of dates produced confusion: but a small portion of the Patriot army were on hand the evening designated. Lack of numbers and a disagreement concerning plans delayed the advance till so late in the night that when finally they were ready to make the attack, the golden opportunity to seize the city was gone: for in the meantime the Governor had been informed of the premeditated seizure of the capitol; and preparations for its defense were hastily provided. The insurgents under Samuel Lout marched to within a short distance of the city, when being fired upon by a picket sent forward by the Governor, they retreated. The Patriot forces remained at Montgomery's until December 7th, when they, in turn, were attacked by the provincial troops under Governor Sir Francis Bond Head and Colonel Allen MacNab. A brief but sharp action resulted in which the militia easily defeated the "half-armed mob" collected by Mackenzie. The rebellion was at an end; and as in Lower Canada, the leaders, with the exception of Lout and Van Egmond, who were taken prisoners, sought refuge in the Republic across the border.<sup>1</sup>

Such in brief outline was the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-1838. There was little bloodshed; but a vast amount of noise. The clamoring democracy of the New World had made itself felt: its liberalizing influence reached across the ocean to England; and Lord Durham, a Liberalist of the most advanced views, was sent to govern Canada, with instructions to report upon the conditions there, and to suggest the form of government needed to unite the contending factions—to unite the French and English in Lower Canada without the suppression of the latter and the loyalists of the "family compact" system and the reformers of Upper Canada

1. *Ibid.*, II, 70-99; Sir F. B. Head, "Narrative."

so that neither might become all powerful. The interests of all parties were to be so conserved that the loyalty of both provinces might be permanently secured to the British crown. Lord Durham met the requirements most successfully. Every phase of colonial life was thoroughly investigated; and the results, with suggestions for the solution of the difficulties, were embodied in his Report—the ablest state paper of the century. The union of the two provinces; the establishment of a permanent civil list, and the absolute control of the finances, public lands, and militia by the provincial Parliament are among the suggestions for governmental reform; but the keynote of his recommendations is found in the statement that if the Crown “has to carry on the Government in unison with a representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence.” Such political, financial, and constitutional reform may well be called, “the fountain head of all that England has since done for the betterment of government in her colonies.”<sup>1</sup>

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### III. CROSSING THE BORDER.

“If freedom is the best of national blessings, if self-government is the first of national rights, and if the ‘fostering protection’ of a ‘paternal government’ is in reality the worst of national evils—in a word, if all our American ideas and feelings, so ardently cherished and proudly maintained, are not worse than a delusion and a mockery—then are we bound to sympathise with the cause of the Canadian rebellion.”<sup>2</sup>—Such was the opinion expressed by the *Democratic Review* and such was the sentiment of the mass of the people in the United States. Their origin, their form of government and their prosperity were based upon the principles of self-government asserted by the Canadians. Thus the Patriot fugitives whose attempt at revolt had been nipped in the bud

1. Durham's "Report," 100; Woodrow Wilson, "The State," 429; *Am. Hist. Rev.*, IX, 393.

2. *Democratic Review*, Vol. I, 1838, p. 218.

and who had escaped the vengeance of a victorious British soldiery and an incensed government found protection and succor among the liberty-loving people of the American Union.<sup>1</sup> No doubt other motives than that of pure love of liberty brought sympathy and assistance to the Patriots. The hatred of Great Britain engendered by the Revolution of 1776 still rankled in many hearts; the consideration always given the "under dog" possessed others, nor were such sinister motives as hope of conquest and desire of personal aggrandizement wanting. The northeast boundary line furnished another source of aggravation.<sup>2</sup> Politics, too, contributed its share, though the Administration was anxious to avoid war.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the panic of 1837 left numerous unemployed who were ready for something to be doing.<sup>4</sup> The undue severity of the punishments inflicted by the local authorities upon the prisoners, which called forth a well merited rebuke from the Home Government,<sup>5</sup> led in some instances on the part of the sympathizers to a spirit of retaliation. Kinship, intimate acquaintance, long-continued social and business intercourse between the two peoples whose only real separation was the imaginary line that divides two nations, made them one in this struggle for a government whose various departments should be responsible alone to the people governed.

After the suppression of the revolt in Lower Canada, many of the Patriots fled across the border to the neighboring villages in Vermont and New York. A "very strong feeling in their favor" existed among the people which expressed itself in supplies of cannon, small arms, powder, lead and other valuable munitions of war.<sup>6</sup> The women of

1. Bell, "History of Canada," II, 476; *Democratic Review*, IV, 1838-1840, pp. 82, 90.

2. Johns Hopkins Univ. "Studies," XVI, p. 92; Kingsford, "History of Canada," X, 181; MacMullen, "History of Canada," 417.

3. Mackenzie, "Life and Times of M. Van Buren," 282; Shepard, "Van Buren," 311, 316.

4. MacMullen, "Hist. of Can.," 417.

5. Lord Glenelg to Sir Geo. Arthur, May 30, 1838; Parlt. Rep. Canada, 1839, II.

6. See Correspondence, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., Vol. III, No. 74, pp. 33, 38.

the vicinity showed their sympathy for the cause by working "an artistically conceived banner," a badge of victory.<sup>1</sup> Thus reinforced the Patriots recrossed the line, Dec. 6, 1837, with the intent of continuing the war for liberty. At Mooers' Corners they were met by a body of loyalists and dispersed: some were killed, some taken prisoners, while the majority leaving behind a considerable portion of their accoutrements of war fled back in all haste to their friends in the States.<sup>2</sup>

Defeat seemed but to quicken the pulse of American sympathy. A few days later a company "consisting of from twenty-eight to forty men" was formed at Plattsburg, New York; arms were furnished and "private drilling" became the "business of each night."<sup>3</sup> A barber, when not engaged at his trade, manufactured balls with which "to kill the tories"; a law student, Mr. Samborn, was made captain of the company; Mr. Palmer figured "as a subaltern"; a paper bearing "all the mental obligations of an oath" was signed by each volunteer, whereby he engaged "to march to Canada whenever his services might be required." At other places about the foot of Lake Champlain similar organizations were formed. Raids and rumors of invasions kept the people on both sides of the line in a state of nervous alarm. The sudden attack of Canadian refugees and American sympathizers upon the homestead of some loyalist; the burning of his buildings and the turning of his family out of doors in the dead of night to suffer the cold of a rigorous northern winter, as in the case of the Caldwell manor, or the more notorious case of the farmer Vosburg, whose entreaties for mercy were answered by a threat to hang as many tories as the Government had hanged Patriotic friends;<sup>4</sup> or the counter raids of the Provincial militia for the purpose of kidnapping or insulting refugees or sympathizers, but

1. Kingsford, X, 70.

2. *Ibid.*, 71, 72.

3. Lyman to Gov. Marcy, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 74, p. 36.

4. Kingsford, X, 196; see Correspondence, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., Vol. IV, No. 181, pp. 17, 28.

whetted the appetite for vengeance and hastened on the organizations of invasion.<sup>1</sup>

Under the leadership of Dr. Robert Nelson and Dr. Cote the various bands that had for some time been under preparation at the foot of Lake Champlain crossed over "in forty sleighs" to Alburgh on the last day of February.<sup>2</sup> A proclamation signed, "Robert Nelson, Commander-in-Chief of the Patriot Army," promising "security and protection, both in person and property, to all such as shall lay down their arms," and a declaration of independence signed "Robert Nelson, President," were issued by Dr. Nelson at this time.<sup>3</sup> The declaration is of interest as indicating the French Canadian views of government. The Indians were no longer to be under "civil disqualification"; all union between State and Church was to be dissolved; feudal or seignorial tenure of land was to be abolished; imprisonment for debt was to cease; the death sentence was no longer to be executed except in case of murder; election by ballot, and a constitution "according to the wants of the country," were to be secured. The invasion failed. Finding a large force of loyalists at hand, the Patriots returned to the boundary, where they were met by General Wool, and were permitted to enter the United States only on condition of surrendering themselves and their arms. The whole force of 600 men, 1500 stand of arms, some cannon and a large amount of ammunition were surrendered, and Dr. Nelson and Dr. Cote were turned over to the civil authority for violation of the neutrality laws.<sup>4</sup>

Such was the beginning of a series of border raids that extended the entire line of frontier from Vermont to Michigan and increased in number and influence until the whole machinery of government became actively engaged in their suppression.

The most important center during the early period of the

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1. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12, 14.

2. Sir J. Colborne to Fox, Feb. 28, 1838, Parl. Rep. Canada, 1838, p. 12.

3. *Ibid.*, 14-16.

4. Gen. Wool to Col. Jones, March 2, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., Vol. IV, No. 181, p. 15.

border strife was Buffalo. Here on the 11th of December, 1837, Mackenzie, his Patriot band having been defeated at Montgomery's Tavern, arrived after one of the most thrilling escapes. Constantly pursued by Loyalists, a reward of £1000 offered for his capture, he hastened on in the depth of a Canadian winter in the open or through by-ways; assisted by some friendly Patriot; at times on foot; again by horse, the gift of some lover of liberty more than the lover of British gold; by night or by day; sleeping or fed in some humble cottage while his host stood sentinel without; crossing the Niagara River in full view of Colonel Kerby and his "mounted dragoons, in their green uniforms," though unseen by them, the Colonel being entertained by the wife of his host who was rowing him across the river in his own boat to the American shore.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the uprising in Canada was made known meetings were held in nearly all the towns and cities of note in the border states, Middlebury, Burlington, St. Albans, Albany, Troy, Oswego, Rochester, and New York, in which strong "resolutions of sympathy and support for the Patriot cause were adopted."<sup>2</sup> - On the 5th of December, even before the purposes of the Upper Canadian insurgents were made known, a large and influential meeting of the citizens was held in Buffalo; - an executive committee of thirteen was appointed to call "future meetings in relation to the affairs of the Canadas and to adopt such measures as might be called for by public opinion."<sup>3</sup> This committee performed an important part in the Patriot movements about Buffalo. The next day Mackenzie addressed a note from the camp on Yonge Street to the press of Buffalo, setting forth the Patriot cause and asking for assistance.<sup>4</sup> On the evening of the 11th, the day Mackenzie arrived in the States, the largest meeting ever held in Buffalo assembled at the theatre. When Dr. Chapin remarked in the course of his address to the citizens that he had a man under his protection at his

1. Lindsey, II, 102-122.

2. *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 81.

3. *Ibid.*, 95; Lindsey, II, 123.

4. *Ibid.*, 124.

house "upon whose life a price was set—William L. Mackenzie"—a tremendous applause burst forth from the audience, "such a shout of exultation" as was never heard before.<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie being called for, it was announced that he was too much fatigued to address them, but would do so the next evening. After strong expressions of sympathy and promises of assistance for the struggling Canadians, a guard of six was appointed for the protection of the Patriot leader; and the meeting closed with "cheers for Mackenzie, Papineau, and Rolph."

On the following evening Mackenzie addressed a large assembly at the theatre: he recounted the struggles of the Americans to throw off the yoke of English tyranny and avowed that he "wished to obtain arms, ammunition, and volunteers, to assist the reformers in Canada."<sup>2</sup> -The Eagle tavern was designated as the place of deposit. - All night and the following day great activity was displayed in the collection of arms, munitions of war and in the enrollment of names. A general being appointed the volunteers marched out of the city, for the night, as was supposed; but shortly after midnight they returned, seized from the sheriff two hundred stand of arms, took two field pieces and marched off to Black Rock.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, who had publicly declared his intention of assisting the Patriots, claims to have originated the plan of occupying Navy Island.<sup>4</sup> At least his name stands at the head of a list of ninety-seven young men of Buffalo who pledged their "mutual support and coöperation, for the commendable purpose of aiding and assisting" the Canadian Patriots in their struggle for liberty.<sup>5</sup> This island belongs to Great Britain and is situated in Niagara River some two miles above the falls. Mr. Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, son of General Van Rensselaer

1. Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*; Lindsey, II, 124.

2. Mayor Trowbridge to the President, Dec. 14; Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., Vol. III, No. 74, p. 31.

3. *Ibid.*, 31, 40.

4. Lindsey, II, 126.

5. *Ibid.*, 126, note.



of Albany, was chosen Commander-in-chief of the Patriot forces. He was represented as "a cadet of West Point"; and one who had received practical experience under Bolivar in South America; neither of which representations was true. Van Rensselaer accepted this post of honor according to his own account, because he believed the "vast majority of the Canadians were ready for revolution" and, if given assistance in winning one battle, they would then "concentrate their forces and do their own fighting."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, he desired as a Northerner to emulate "the chivalrous example of the South in the case of Texas."

The 13th day of December was chosen for the departure to Navy Island. Mackenzie and Van Rensselaer stopped on the way at Grand Island, some ten miles distant from Buffalo, where they expected to find a large body of volunteers, the result of the previous meetings and enthusiastic expressions of sympathy and assistance. But much to their surprise, only twenty-four men were in readiness to accompany them. Though disappointed, they determined to proceed; so trusting in the good faith of friends and in Providence, the word was given, "Push off."<sup>2</sup>

-Arriving at the island, a provisional government was formed and a proclamation was issued signed by William L. Mackenzie, Chairman, *pro tem.* - The proclamation stated, that for fifty years their government had "languished under the blighting influence of military despots"; that the standard of liberty was raised for the attainment of a written constitution; perpetual peace based on equal rights to all; civil and religious liberty; abolition of hereditary honors; a legislature of two houses chosen by the people; an executive elected by public voice; a judiciary chosen by Governor and Senate; free trial by jury; vote by ballot; freedom of trade; exemption from military service; "the blessings of education to every citizen"; the opening of the St. Lawrence to the trade of the world, and the wild lands were to be distributed "to the industry, capital, skill, and enterprise

1. *Ibid.*, 128.

2. *Ibid.*, 131.

of worthy men of all nations."<sup>1</sup> While written in a bombastic and highly-inflated style, the programme of government announced in the proclamation is a worthy commentary on the misrule of the provinces and the crying need of political, constitutional and economic reform.

Eleven other names were signed with Mackenzie's to the document as members of the Provincial Government, and two others for "powerful reasons" were withheld "from public view."<sup>2</sup> Of these eleven persons, Lout and Duncombe had not yet made their escape from Canada; Von Egmont was dying from exposure in a Toronto jail; Darling refused the appointment; and of the two names withheld, probably, Rolph and Bidwell, the former still played the double part rather leaning to the side of the Government; while the latter denied being one of the persons designated.<sup>3</sup> Three hundred acres of "the best of the public lands" were offered each volunteer who would join the Patriot forces, and as a further inducement there was added, a few days later, the promise of "\$100 in silver, payable on or before the first of May next."<sup>4</sup> The reward offered for the capture of Mackenzie was reciprocated by an offer of £500 for the apprehension of Sir Francis Bond Head, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, that he might be "dealt with as may appertain to justice."<sup>5</sup>

The Patriot flag with its twin stars representing the two Canadas was unfurled to the breezes; and a government seal showing a new moon breaking through the surrounding darkness contained the words, "Liberty—Equality."<sup>6</sup> Government bills were issued in denominations of from one to ten dollars, and found a ready exchange on the American side. A treasurer was appointed "to receive all moneys which may be subscribed within the United States" in behalf of the Patriots. Much enthusiasm was shown for the cause:

1. *Ibid.*, 363-369.

2. *Ibid.*, 365.

3. Kingsford, X, 433.

4. Lindsey, II, 366, 131.

5. *Ibid.*, 367.

6. *Ibid.*, 132.

"deer hunts," "exploring expeditions," search for "red foxes" in Canada, suddenly became the rage.<sup>1</sup> Every implement from a cannon to a drum was desired to complete the equipment. General Cameron in a letter dated December 23d, states that the excitement is "very strong" in New York State; that depots of men, money and arms are being formed in all the small towns ready to move when occasion demands; that the "very women" excite the men to proceed to the frontier; that one woman was seen casting bullets in her own home from a mould that ran sixty at a time.<sup>2</sup> From another letter comes information that "munitions of war, provisions, etc., are daily going on to the island from Buffalo."<sup>3</sup> Again word comes that forty soldiers are marching the streets of Rochester under drum and fife; that "three-fourths of the people" there "are encouraging and promoting the thing" and that "seven-eighths of the people at Buffalo and all along the lines are taking strong interest in the cause."<sup>4</sup>

Innumerable letters full of sympathy, offers of assistance and enquiry, found their way to Navy Island addressed to Mackenzie as President of the Provisional Government, or to Van Rensselaer, Commander-in-chief of the Patriot army.<sup>5</sup> The usual embarrassment that accompanies the outbreak of war in the way of applications for commissions in the army presented themselves to the Provisional Government: surgeons to care for the sick and wounded; engineers to construct defenses; military veterans to train volunteers; militia officers of the various states seeking equivalent positions in the Patriot army, and many a one proffers his services whose only equipment is, "an empty hand, a stout heart, and a fair knowledge of military tactics." Numerous inquiries are made as to means of avoiding infringement of the law, in the raising of troops, manufacture of cannon and

1. *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 96.

2. Gen. Cameron to Gen. of Militia, Toronto, Parlt. Rep. Canada, 1839, III, 447.

3. Scoville to Benton, Dec. 21, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., Vol. III, No. 74, p. 46.

4. Garrow to Benton, Dec. 21, *ibid.*, 47.

5. Lindsey, II, 133-138.

in the furnishing of warlike supplies from the state arsenal. By such means were a handful of poorly equipped men increased to several hundred so fully supplied with arms, cannon, ammunition, provisions, clothing and shelter that they were able in the dead of winter to seize one of her Majesty's islands, fortify it, establish a Provisional Government; maintain an aggressive attitude in the face of superior forces, and finally, after a month of occupation, withdraw without fear or hindrance.

Although there was much of the "spread eagle" in the utterances of the orators and the press of the day and even more exaggeration in the number of volunteers and assistance furnished the Patriot cause, still there was a considerable amount of fact. Nor were the sympathisers composed entirely of the mob element, mere "parcels of boys," "persons of no respectability."<sup>1</sup> Many citizens of high standing both in official and private life not only expressed strong sympathy for the cause but aided it, openly at first, then more cautiously and secretly as the strong arm of the law made itself manifest for the purpose of maintaining neutrality.<sup>2</sup> And though the majority of the American people stood with the administration, and even though in the border districts where the excitement was the strongest there was a large conservative class that desired peace, still it needed but a slight incident touching the honor of the nation to drive the country to the verge of war.

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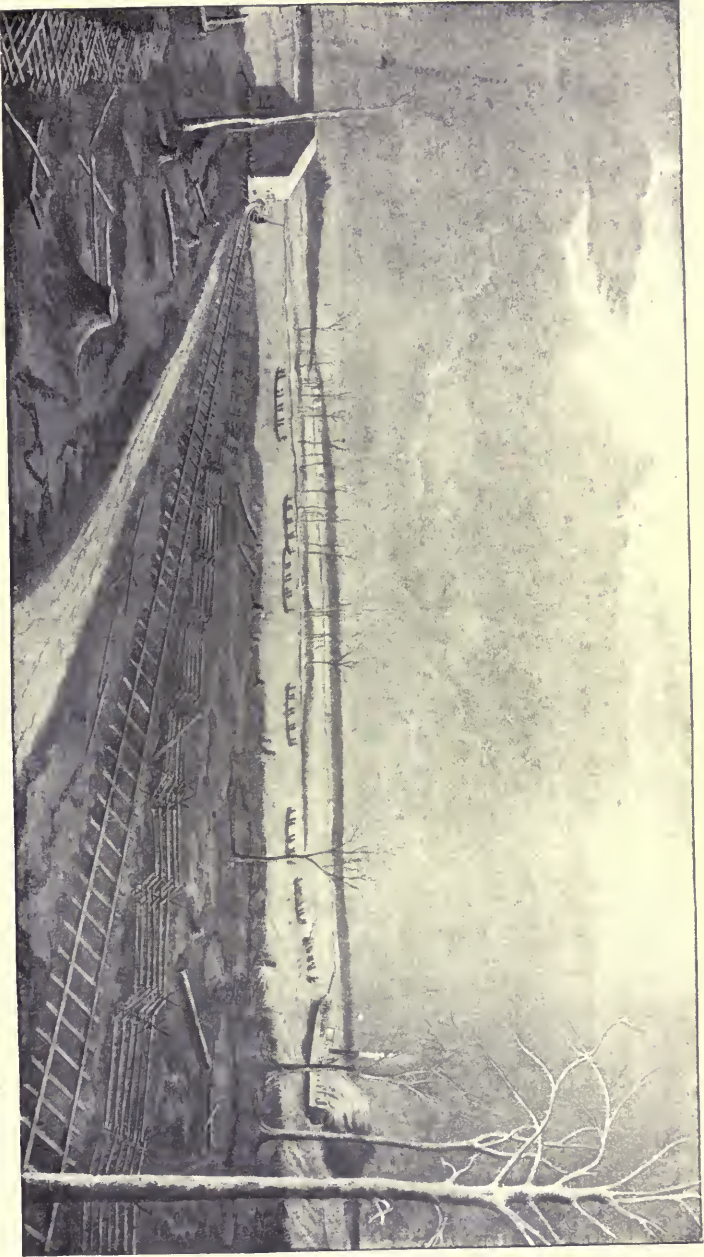
#### IV. TO THE VERGE OF WAR.

On the 29th of December, an event occurred which threatened to produce war between the United States and England: it was the burning of the "ill-fated" steamboat *Caroline*. The seizure of Navy Island gave promise of success to the Patriot cause; as a consequence, supplies be-

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1. Wm. Symon to Gov. Marcy, Dec. 14, 1837, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., Vol. III, No. 74, p. 36.

2. Sir Geo. Arthur to Gen. McComb, Oct. 22, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., Vol. IV, No. 181, Part 2, p. 24.



BURNING OF THE CAROLINE ON THE NIGHT OF THE 29 TH, DECEMBER, 1831.

From Field's Tavern, near Schlosser.

*The 16th and 17th of December, 1831, were the most memorable of the lives of the people of the State. On the 16th of December, 1831, the burning of the Caroline was the first step in the rebellion against the British.*

*Wm. W. Woodbury*

*Wm. W. Woodbury*

*British burning of the Caroline was the first step in the rebellion against the British. It was the first step in the rebellion against the British. It was the first step in the rebellion against the British.*



came plentiful, though there was difficulty in securing transportation of goods and men from the shore to the island. The need of a steamer was felt; so a Mr. Wells of Buffalo, the owner of a small boat of forty-six tons capacity, was prevailed upon to put her into service. Security having been furnished by seventeen men of means in the city, the steamer *Caroline* was cut out of the ice by a large body of men on December 28th; received clearance from the collector of the port; and under the command of a lake sailor named Appleby, began service with the ostensible purpose of running from Buffalo to Schlosser, Black Rock, Tonawanda, Grand Island and Navy Island, "carrying passengers, freight, etc.," with the view "of making money."<sup>1</sup>

The next day, the *Caroline* left Buffalo for a trip down the river, stopping at Black Rock where the American flag was run up;<sup>2</sup> and then touching at Navy Island where "several passengers and some freight were landed," she proceeded to Schlosser.<sup>3</sup> During the afternoon two trips were made from Schlosser to Navy Island "conveying passengers and freight."<sup>4</sup> At six o'clock in the evening, the *Caroline* was made fast to the dock at Schlosser for the night. The crew and officers numbering ten, and twenty-three other persons unable to find accommodations at the inn, lodged on board the steamer, little dreaming of the fate awaiting them before morning.<sup>5</sup>

The movements of the *Caroline*, however, had not escaped the notice of the British. Rumor had found its way to Colonel McNab who had charge of the loyalist forces across the river at Chippewa that the "*Caroline* was going to be run between Schlosser and Navy Island."<sup>6</sup> Two officers were commanded to watch her movements; they reported having seen her "land a cannon and several men armed and equipped as soldiers." Believing the steamboat

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1. Kingsford, X, 437; Lindsey, II, 145; sworn statements, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 302, pp. 38, 15.

2. *Ibid.*, 17, 39.

3. *Ibid.*, 17.

4. *Ibid.*, 46.

5. *Ibid.*, 17.

6. Lindsey, II, 145, note.

to be the property of the insurgents on Navy Island and to be engaged in conveying men and munitions of war for the injury of the provinces, Colonel McNab determined to destroy her.<sup>1</sup> Turning to Captain Drew he said: "This won't do. I say, Drew, do you think you can cut that vessel out?" "Nothing was easier," replied Drew, "but it was to be done at night." "Well, then, go and do it," commanded McNab. "These," says Drew, "were literally all the orders I ever received."<sup>2</sup>

Captain Drew decided to carry out his instructions that very night: volunteers were called for, "who would follow him to the Devil."<sup>3</sup> Seven boats were prepared, each containing four men to row, and three or four to be available for the attack. This force started from the mouth of the Chippewa river; went up the shore a short distance; then, Captain Drew, calling the boats about him, told the men for the first time the nature of the expedition and the danger involved; they were to follow close to him, keeping away from Navy Island lest they draw upon them the fire from the men on the island, and were all to meet on the shore above Schlosser.<sup>4</sup> Two of the boats, however, being discovered were fired upon, whereupon they withdrew, taking no further part in the affair; the other five pushed boldly out into the channel. The swift current surged against their boats threatening to draw them into the rapids; for a time there was terrible anxiety; but after a while a light from the steamer became visible, and by it the men learned they were making progress. They soon came upon a small island that intervened and protected them from the view of the steamer. On reaching the head of the island they found themselves some forty yards from shore and two hundred from the

1. *Ibid.*, 146; Parl. Rep. Canada, 1838, 89.

2. Account of Admiral Drew, Kingsford, X, 437.

3. Sir F. Bond Head to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 9, 1838, Parl. Reports, Canada, 1839, III, 466.

4. Arnold's Narrative, Dent, II, 215. In the preparations for the attack upon the Caroline, the facts seem to indicate that Captain Drew knew that the vessel was at Schlosser, rather than at Navy Island. It is difficult to harmonize his official statement made some time after the affair with his instructions and with the movements of the boats, or with certain private accounts.



vessel. The moon was still shining; the vessel lay peacefully at her moorings; all was quiet; evidently, no attack was expected.

It being considered prudent, they remained quiet till the moon had set; and then dropping quietly down the stream, scarcely dipping the oars and, without a whisper, they approached the steamer.<sup>1</sup> When within fifteen or twenty yards of the *Caroline* the sentinel called out, "Boat ahoy! Boat ahoy! Who comes there?" "A friend," was the reply from the boats. "Give the countersign," called out the sentinel. "I'll give it you when we get on board," responded Captain Drew as he came alongside and boarded the vessel.<sup>2</sup> Then followed a scene so utterly confusing that all the facts cannot be obtained even from the voluminous mass of conflicting testimony. The shot of the pistol and the stroke of the cutlass mingled with the fierce oaths of the combatants and the deep groans of the wounded. The conflict was brief; the sleepers on board the boat, entirely unconscious of the premeditated attack, were easily overcome. The melee over, the *Caroline* was loosed from her moorings; towed into the stream; set on fire, and allowed to drift towards the falls;<sup>3</sup> a beautiful sight as she ever more swiftly glided, all ablaze, down the rapids, until lost to view, as she sank beneath the surface or was carried over the falls into the fathomless gulf below.<sup>4</sup>

Their task accomplished, Captain Drew and his men took to their boats. A huge fire on the Canadian shore furnished a beacon to light them across the river. The object of their expedition being made known a vast throng assembled on shore to welcome the return with "three of the heartiest cheers ever given."<sup>5</sup> The British Government approved the

1. Kingsford, X, 436-440; Marsh, "Narrative of a Patriot Exile," 8.

2. Sir F. B. Head to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 9, 1838.

3. See Evidence, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 302, pp. 18, 19, 26, 29, 40, 41, 62.

4. It appears from the statements of Hon. L. F. Allen, Van Rensselaer and others, that a portion of the vessel containing the engine sank in the river, while a portion went over the falls. The figurehead was picked up near Lewiston by Jack Jewett and is now in the possession of the Buffalo Historical Society.

5. Kingsford, X, 441.

act; and conferred upon Colonel McNab the honor of knighthood; while the Provincial Assembly "tendered its thanks to the men engaged in the expedition and granted swords of honor to Colonel McNab and Captain Drew."<sup>1</sup>

Very differently was the destruction of the *Caroline* received throughout the United States. Scarcely had the attack commenced before the neighboring citizens began flocking to the scene of action. At the sight of the burning vessel, a thrilling cry ran round, that there were living souls on board; and many fancied that even in the midst of the tremendous roar of the great cataract they could hear the wail of the dying wretches hopelessly perishing by the "double horrors of a fate which nothing could avert."<sup>2</sup> The people were horrified at the deed. Governor Marcy in a special message to the Legislature stated that the thirty-three persons on board "were suddenly attacked at midnight, after they had retired to repose, and probably more than one-third of them wantonly massacred."<sup>3</sup> President Van Buren in a message to Congress stated that "an outrage of the most aggravated character has been committed, accompanied by a hostile though temporary invasion of our territory, producing the strongest feelings of resentment on the part of our citizens";<sup>4</sup> and a letter from Secretary of State Forsyth to Mr. Fox, the British minister to Washington, said that "the destruction of property and the assassination of citizens of the United States" would "necessarily form the subject of a demand for redress upon her Majesty's Government."<sup>5</sup> General Scott was ordered to the "Canadian frontier."<sup>6</sup> The state militia of New York and Vermont were called out for the purpose of protecting "the frontier of the United States."<sup>7</sup> Affidavits were taken from the survivors of those on board the *Caroline*; and a bill for murder was drawn up

1. Read, "The Rebellion of 1837," 344.

2. *Democratic Review*, June, 1838, 98.

3. Gov. Marcy to State Legislature, Jan. 2, 1838. Niles, LIII, 339.

4. President's Message, Jan. 8, 1838.

5. Forsyth to Fox, Jan. 5, 1838. Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., IX, No. 302, 2.

6. Poinsett to Gen. Scott, Jan. 5, 1838. Niles, LIII, 309.

7. Poinsett to Gov. Marcy, Jan. 5, 1838, *ibid.*

against twelve persons supposed to have taken part in the "murder of Amos Durfee and others, on board the steamboat *Caroline*."<sup>1</sup>

For the moment war seemed imminent; but the sincere desire of the Administration to avoid hostilities with England, and the efficient management of General Scott on the frontier, together with the delay necessary to secure all the evidence, and to carry on an extended correspondence with the British Government, allowed the public temper time to cool.<sup>2</sup> Thus the matter of "reparation and atonement" demanded from England remained for several years undisposed of, neither government being quite sure of its grounds. In the meantime, the facts became better known; only one person, Amos Durfee, was found to have been killed; though others seem never to have been accounted for.<sup>3</sup>

The question of international law became involved:—as to whether the Canadians had a right, the questionable purpose of the *Caroline* being known to them, to seize and destroy the vessel in the waters of the United States; the Government at Washington, though claiming that under no interpretation of international law was the act justifiable in the face of the evidence, still hesitated to push its claims;<sup>4</sup> while the British Government, for the time being, neither disclaimed nor affirmed the act except in an unofficial way;<sup>5</sup> the demands for an explanation and reparation, not being urged, remained unanswered, until the whole matter was suddenly reopened by the arrest and trial of a British subject, Alexander McLeod, by the State of New York.

McLeod had foolishly boasted of having taken part in the expedition for cutting out the *Caroline*; and had even confessed to the killing of Durfee, the one person found dead upon the dock after the seizure of the *Caroline*.<sup>6</sup> This

1. Bill for Murder, Niagara General Sessions, Jan. 23, 1838. Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., IX, No. 302, 31.

2. Fox to Forsyth, Feb. 16, 1838. Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., IV, No. 183, 2.

3. Stevenson to Lord Palmerston, May 22, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 183, p. 4.

4. *Ibid.*, 6.

5. Fox to Forsyth, Feb. 6, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 302, p. 3.

6. Testimony of Norman Barnum, *Ibid.*, 27.

gasconading was not forgotten by the people of New York; for on his crossing to the United States, he was arrested at Lewiston, Nov. 12, 1840; indicted at the Niagara general session, in February, 1841; charged with the murder of Amos Durfee; and placed in Lockport jail to await trial.<sup>1</sup> The English Government through its minister, Mr. Fox, demanded his immediate release on the ground that "the destruction of the steamboat *Caroline* was a public act of persons in her Majesty's service, obeying the orders of their superior authorities"; and that according to the "usages of nations" the act was subject to the discussion of the two national governments alone, and could "not justly be made the ground of legal proceedings."<sup>2</sup> In reply, Mr. Forsyth informed the British minister that the President was "unable to recognize the validity" of the demand; that the jurisdiction of the several states was "perfectly independent of the Federal Government"; that the question arose out of "a most unjustifiable invasion," the destruction of a steamboat, and "the murder of one or more American citizens"; that if the destruction of the *Caroline* "was a public act of persons—obeying the orders of their superior authorities," the fact had not before been communicated to the United States Government "by a person authorized to make the admission."<sup>3</sup>

McLeod after his imprisonment at Lockport was brought before the Supreme Court of New York by writ of *habeas corpus*, and his discharge was asked for on the ground that whatever part he had taken in the *Caroline* affair had been done under orders from his Government. The court refused to discharge him on the ground that the proceedings of the British in coming into New York territory to seize the steamer were unlawful; and that the man in custody having killed another in New York territory was guilty of murder.<sup>4</sup> This holding of the court was severely criticised by some of the leading legal authorities of the country.<sup>5</sup>

1. 25 Wendell, 483.

2. Fox to Forsyth, Dec. 13, 1840, 25 Wendell, 500.

3. *Ibid.*, 502.

4. *Ibid.*, 596; J. B. Angell, "Lectures on Public International Law," 62.

5. Review by Judge Tallmadge, 25 Wend., 663; Append., Webster's works, V, 129.

Pending the trial a change of administration took place: the Democrats went out and the Whigs came in under Harrison and Tyler; Secretary of State Forsyth gave way to Daniel Webster. The British Government boldly renewed its demand for "the immediate release" of McLeod and advised the President "to take into his most deliberate consideration the serious nature of the consequences which must ensue, from a rejection" of the demands.<sup>1</sup> Pretty strong language had been used in some of the notes from her Majesty's Government which Webster in his reply called to the attention of the British minister: he emphatically denied that the American sympathizers were "American pirates," or that they had been "permitted to arm and organize themselves within the territory of the United States." He said that on a frontier "long enough to divide the whole of England into halves" violences might sometimes occur "equally against the will of both countries and that such things might happen in the United States, without any reproach to the Government, "since their institutions entirely discourage the keeping up of large standing armies in time of peace"; that their situation happily exempted them "from the necessity of maintaining such expensive and dangerous establishments." He further said that the prime movers in all these border raids were British subjects who came to our citizens, seeking to enlist their sympathies "by all the motives which they are able to address to them." Webster held that McLeod could not be released because he was on trial for murder; that his case must be disposed of in accordance with the methods of legal procedure, and that while he was willing to accept the public character of the Caroline affair, he did not think it could be justified by "any reasonable application or construction of the right of self-defence under the laws of nations"; that if such things were allowed to occur, "they must lead to bloody and exasperated war"; that to justify the act, her Majesty's Government must show "a necessity of self-defence, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation," that "daylight could not be waited for"; that there "was neces-

1. Fox to Webster, March 12, 1841; Webster's works, VI, 247.

sity, present and inevitable, for attacking her in the darkness of the night, while moored to the shore, and while unarmed men were asleep on board, killing some and wounding others, and then drawing her into the current above the cataract, setting her on fire, and, careless to know whether there might not be in her the innocent with the guilty, or the living with the dead, committing her to a fate which fills the imagination with horror!" "A necessity for all this," wrote Webster, "the Government of the United States cannot believe to have existed."<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of such serious correspondence came the trial of McLeod. It was held in the Circuit Court of the state of New York at Utica, and lasted from the 4th to the 8th day of October, 1841. Excitement ran high; and so solicitous was the General Government that a fair trial take place, that the Attorney-General, Mr. Crittenden, was sent to manage the defense, and General Scott, of the United States army, to protect the prisoner "from popular violence."<sup>2</sup>

On behalf of the prosecution three witnesses swore that they saw McLeod enter one of the boats that made up the expedition to cut out the *Caroline*; one that he saw him return; two that they heard him admit being present; three declared that he had killed one man; one that he had admitted the killing of Durfee. An *alibi* was set up by the defense, and several witnesses swore that he was not of the number that made up the expedition.<sup>3</sup> Whether he was guilty or not the jury declared him not guilty. Thus the Federal Government was relieved from embarrassment, and the danger of war was again averted. Now that the popular clamor for a trial had been satisfied the State government no doubt was glad to be relieved from a position that could not be sustained in the light of the best authorities on public or international law.<sup>4</sup>

To avoid similar difficulties in the future, Congress

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1. Webster to Fox, April 24, 1841, Webster's works, VI, 250.

2. Benton, "Thirty Years View," II, 286; Mrs. C. Coleman, "Life of Crittenden," 149.

3. Lindsey, II, 161; "The Trial of McLeod."

4. See Citations, Webster's works, VI, 266, 268.

passed an act, Aug. 29, 1842, whereby such cases might be brought before the federal courts.<sup>1</sup> The same year saw an adjustment of the Caroline affair. Mr. Webster in a note to Lord Ashburton spoke of the matter as "a wrong and an offence to the sovereignty and dignity of the United States, being a violation of their soil and territory; a wrong for which to this day, no atonement, or even apology, has been made."<sup>2</sup> To which Lord Ashburton made immediate reply that "the British officers who executed this transaction, and their government who approved it, intended no slight or disrespect to the sovereign authority of the United States"; that what was to be most regretted was, "that some explanation and apology for this occurrence was not immediately made."<sup>3</sup> Here the matter ended, being swallowed up in the weightier matters that went to make up the treaty of Washington; and if reparation was wanting for the Caroline it found plentiful compensation in the territory gained by the settlement of the northeast boundary line.<sup>4</sup>

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## V. EVACUATION.

Whether or not the destruction of the Caroline was justifiable its rashness can scarcely be exaggerated. There is little to commend the deed except the halo that must ever surround the successful accomplishment of a bold and daring feat. The two governments were agreed as to the suppression of hostile invasion; the steamer had made but three trips to Navy Island, all in the afternoon of the first day out from Buffalo; no time had been taken to inform the United States Government concerning the boat, or time to allow the proper authorities to arrest her movements: furthermore, at the time of the attack, Navy Island contained less than 200 men,<sup>5</sup> while the British forces numbered about 1600 who

1. Revised Statutes, Secs. 752-754.

2. Webster's works, VI, 292.

3. *Ibid.*, 294, 300.

4. Hopkins, "The Progress of Canada in the Century," 270.

5. Private letters of Nelson Gorham, Dent, II, 193, note.

might with more consistency have taken possession of the island,<sup>1</sup> and thereby have avoided an occasion for great national offence. The effect was likewise miscalculated; for according to Sir Francis Bond Head: "Before it took place American 'Sympathy' for our absconded Traitors was unbridled and unchecked"; but no sooner was "the Caroline in Flames than a sudden Excitement prevailed, but it was the Excitement of Fear. The Women fled from the Villages on the Coast, People who had fancied themselves bed-ridden decamped, and the Citizens of Buffalo evinced the greatest possible Consternation for the Safety of their Town."<sup>2</sup> True there was excitement but it was of the kind that begot a spirit of retaliation; a kind that augmented rather than assuaged the spirit of war and border raid. John Doyle, a reviewer of Sir Francis Bond Head's "Narrative" in the *Westminster Review*, says that "there was not the slightest danger till the destruction of the Caroline; that there was no necessity for that act, and that it could not have taken place had Sir Francis at the outset done his duty in crushing the invasion; that that act, in truth, created all the danger which ever did exist."<sup>3</sup>

The forces on Navy Island, hitherto made up largely of Canadian refugees, were rapidly increased by Americans to triple their numbers;<sup>4</sup> city after city vied with one another in its enthusiastic support of the Patriot cause; the state militia of New York, called out to maintain peace, threatened for the moment to go over in a body to Navy Island and join the Patriot army;<sup>5</sup> even Congress felt the influence of the wave of popular sentiment that swept over the country.<sup>6</sup>

The logic of events moved westward, and for a time

1. Lindsey, II, 164; F. B. Head to Sir J. Colborne, Dec. 26, 1837, in Parl. Reports, Canada, 1838, 74.

2. Sir F. B. Head to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 9, 1838, in Parl. Reports, Canada, 1839, III, 467.

3. *Westminster Review*, XXXII, 239; Joseph B. Bishop, "Our Political Drama," 112-113.

4. Gen. R. Van Rensselaer to his father, Jan. 4, 1838, Bonney, "Legacy of Historical Gleanings," II.

5. Lindsey, II, 153.

6. Report of Committee on Foreign Affairs, Feb. 13, 1841, 2d Sess. 26 Cong., No. 162.



Detroit became the chief center of action. The city hall was thrown open for public meetings in behalf of the Patriot cause; the Patriot Army of the Northwest was organized, with Henry S. Handy, as commander-in-chief, having authority over the whole of western Canada; James M. Wilson, as major-general; E. J. Roberts of Detroit, as brigadier-general of the first brigade; Dr. Edward Alexander Theller, formerly of Montreal, as brigadier-general, to command the first brigade of French and Irish troops to be raised in Canada. Colonels were appointed; the staff was organized; and the council of war made preparations for invasion.<sup>1</sup> The proceeds of the Detroit theater were devoted by Manager McKinney to the cause; here, also, on New Year's day, 1838, a public meeting was held at which money and arms were subscribed. Four days later the jail was forced; the jailor overpowered, and 450 muskets, stored there for safe keeping by the authorities, were taken and appropriated by the Patriots.<sup>2</sup>

So open and outspoken did the Patriots become in their project that the "friendly" governor of Michigan was obliged quietly to intimate to Commander-in-chief Handy that "he should be obliged to disperse the Patriot forces, and that they must move to some other place."<sup>3</sup> They decided to move; the steamboat McComb and the schooner Anne were secured; arms, munitions and provisions were put upon the schooner, and the troops were to be put upon the steamer which was to take in tow the schooner. Before the steamer was ready she was seized by General Brady of the United States army and a guard placed over her.<sup>4</sup> The steamboat Brady was then contracted for; but she too was seized. Not to be baffled, General Handy ordered General Wilson to take the troops under cover of night to Gibraltar, across from Fort Malden, at the mouth of the Detroit river; and to tow the schooner Anne down the river with yawl-boats. That night the schooner was rowed down stream to the

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1. Lindsey, II, 168; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 521.

2. Mich. Pioneer Coll., Vol. XXI, 522.

3. Lindsey, II, 168.

4. *Ibid.*, 169.

River Rouge, where a sail was procured; and, under command of Colonel Davis, she started towards Gibraltar, but meeting the steamer United States, Colonel Davis took alarm and returned to Detroit.<sup>1</sup>

The following day, January 6th, General Handy ordered Colonel Davis of Mount Clements to take his two companies of riflemen to Peach Island, six miles above Detroit, where he would meet him the next day. Again word came from Governor Mason that "he and the Brady Guards would probably be at Gibraltar on the 18th, from which point he should be obliged to disperse the troops." On receiving this information General Handy sent orders to Brigadier-General Roberts, that on the morning before the Governor should arrive, he should place the arms and munition on board the Anne; and the troops on board sloops, scows, yawl-boats and canoes; that he should make a landing at Bois Blanc Island; and unload all from the Anne except three cannon and thirty men under Colonel Davis to man them; that he should throw up temporary fortifications; prepare the schooner for action; and, on the morning of the 9th, run up the tri-colored flag, and demand the surrender of Fort Malden; that in case of refusal to surrender, the fort should be carried by storm. General Handy proposed at the same time to move with Colonel Davis's troops; seize the public stores at Sandwich and Windsor; then march to Malden and assume command.<sup>2</sup>

These plans, however, were destined to interruption from an unexpected source. General Rensselaer Van Rensselaer in planning larger things than the seizure of Navy Island, had on the 28th of December ordered Brigadier-General Sutherland to Detroit to "promote every arrangement for making a descent upon Canada."<sup>3</sup> The general set out at once; stopped at Cleveland; raised troops; secured the steamboat Erie; and on arriving at Gibraltar claimed from General Roberts, by virtue of his instructions, the chief com-

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1. John Prince to Gov. Mason, Jan. 6, 1838, Parl. Reports, Canada.

2. Lindsey, II, 170.

3. *Ibid.*, 167, note.

mand.<sup>1</sup> General Handy being informed of the situation hastened to Gibraltar; and after some difficulty adjusted matters by giving Sutherland the command provided he "would implicitly obey the orders of the Commander-in-chief sent to General Roberts" until he himself should reach the island. This being assented to, Sutherland assumed command, placing General Theller in charge of the schooner *Anne*.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile opposition was brewing at Detroit: a public meeting of the leading citizens was held at the city hall; addresses were made; and resolutions passed "to sustain the Government in its efforts to preserve neutrality."<sup>3</sup> Governor Mason deemed it proper to act: the militia were called out; the arsenal at Dearborn drawn on for arms, munitions, and accoutrements; and the "armed militia, with eight rounds of ball cartridges each, embarked" with the ostensible purpose of arresting the rebels and preventing "any breaches of international peace."<sup>4</sup> The expedition left Detroit about ten o'clock; and after getting under way, the soldiers "stacked arms" on deck; reclined at ease, and dined "in true military style on bread and raw salt pork."<sup>5</sup> On arriving at Gibraltar, the governor and staff spent an hour on shore, then returned; and the boats put out for Detroit. Next day the *Morning Post* published the following account of the expedition: "Killed, none; wounded, one man in the cheek by handling his musket carelessly; missing, none; army, 400 stand; ammunition, eight rounds of ball and buckshot cartridge; provisions, several barrels of pork and bread. Losses of the enemy not known, as he had not been seen, but supposed to be heavy."<sup>6</sup> Such was the character of state interference to Canadian invasion in the West just after the burning of the *Caroline*.

1. *Ibid.*, 171.

2. *Ibid.*, 171; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 522.

3. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 522.

4. *Ibid.*, 523; *ibid.*, XII, 417; Adj. Gen. Schwartz to Authorities at Sandwich, U. C., Jan. 8, 1838.

5. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XII, 417.

6. *Ibid.*, 418; *ibid.*, XXI, 522, 523. "This movement was not attended with any good results." J. Price, Parl. Reports, Canada, 1838, p. 108, note 2.

Though highly favored so far as state action was concerned, nevertheless, the expedition against Fort Malden was destined to prove abortive. Either by adverse winds or through disobedience of orders, Sugar Island rather than Bois Blanc was made the place of landing. From here on the 9th, General Sutherland with sixty volunteers proceeded to Bois Blanc Island; hoisted the tri-colored flag; and issued a proclamation to the "Patriot Citizens of Upper Canada," calling upon them by the voice of their "bleeding" country to rally around the "standard of Liberty."<sup>1</sup> The schooner *Anne* was ordered to move round the island in front of Fort Malden. In attempting to carry out orders the schooner, becoming unmanageable, drifted toward the main shore where she was beached.<sup>2</sup> The Canadian militia opened fire on her; boarded her, and took possession of the whole outfit.<sup>3</sup> General Sutherland, on discovering the fate of the schooner, took fright and, in spite of the protest of his men who wished to rescue the boat, cried out, "Away to Sugar Island! Fly, fly, fly, all is lost!"<sup>4</sup>

The next day General Handy arrived; and by vote of the troops took command, hoping to retrieve the Patriot misfortunes. He remained several days on Sugar Island, drilling the troops, while awaiting new military supplies from Detroit; but no supplies came; and the ice, filling the river in large quantities, threatened to cut off his means of escape. Under these circumstances the friendly Governor of Michigan was petitioned for assistance. The Governor responded to the call; proceeded to Gibraltar with the avowed purpose of dispersing the rebels; met General Handy there and then proceeded to Sugar Island with the steamer *Erie*; transported the troops to the main shore; receipted for the arms taken; and returned to Detroit.<sup>5</sup>

Still undaunted, preparations were immediately begun

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1. Lindsey, II, 172, note.

2. *Ibid.*, 173.

3. Col. Radcliffe to Military Sec. Strachan, Jan. 10, 1838; Head to Glenelg, March 17, 1838, Parl. Reports, Canada, 1838.

4. Lindsey, II, 173; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 523.

5. Lindsey, II, 177.

for a third attempt upon Fort Malden. The troops housed in canal shanties near Gibraltar were drilled for some days without arms, the attempts to furnish them having been frustrated by the vigilance of the United States marshal and the federal troops under General Brady. The Governor and state militia seem to have entered into a plot at this time to assist the Patriots. Six hundred of the militia were called out to enforce the neutrality laws; one half of them had their headquarters at the city hall in Detroit. The night they received their arms they are supposed to have stacked them in the outer porch of the hall for the purpose of having them seized by Handy's men who were to become volunteers in the paid service of the state while they prepared for the attack on Fort Malden.<sup>1</sup> This project also failed; for Sutherland, the rival general, seized the arms and secreted them; but they were retaken on the following day. As a result General Brady's suspicions were aroused, and the militia were no longer trusted with arms. "Thus," says Handy in his manuscript report, "was the third and last arrangement to carry out the campaign broken up by treachery or ignorance."<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime changes were taking place at the Patriot headquarters in the East. Navy Island had been possessed by the Patriots with the intent of soon crossing over to join their forces with those of Dr. Duncombe in the West.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Duncombe, whom we have already noted,<sup>4</sup> had followed Mackenzie in his method of organization: a provisional committee had been formed; secret meetings held; a military leader chosen with the view of assembling at Brantford; from which place they were to make a descent upon Hamilton.<sup>5</sup> Like the other uprisings in Canada his followers were poorly organized and without arms; and on the approach of Colonel McNab after the defeat of Mackenzie near Toronto they withdrew westward, and the attempt at revolt was suppressed without bloodshed; the leaders crossed over into

1. *Ibid.*, 178.

2. *Ibid.*, 179.

3. Lindsey, II, 165.

4. Chap. ii.

5. Kingsford, X, 419.

the United States; while their followers either joined McNab's forces or petitioned him for clemency on promise of humble submission.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Duncombe's effort at revolution having proved futile, the main purpose for which Navy Island had been seized disappeared. Although the Patriot forces on the island had rapidly increased since the destruction of the *Caroline*, they still were too few in number and too poorly equipped in certain respects, to make a successful invasion. The vastly superior forces on the mainland, protected by strong fortifications; the vigilance of United States authorities who circumvented in one way or another the Patriots' plans; the impossibility of procuring the means of transportation, because, says General Van Rensselaer, "General Scott's *money-bags* were too heavy for us," led the Patriots to give up the idea of invading Canada from Navy Island.<sup>2</sup> "These brave men," says General Van Rensselaer, "stayed on Navy Island, for a month, left it, and not in fear of their opponents."<sup>3</sup> The British across the river loudly boasted of the ease and swiftness with which they would rid her Majesty's territory of the "Pirates"; they gathered troops; secured boats of various kinds, sufficient to transport their entire forces to the island; made threats of attack, delayed; called in their Indian and Negro allies; made more boasts, more threats; but still hesitated, seemingly awed by a fear entirely out of keeping with the usual military skill and daring of Canadian soldiers.<sup>4</sup>

The seizure of the island by the Patriots; the readiness with which provisions and munitions of war were furnished for maintaining the position;<sup>5</sup> the fear inspired in the enemy; and the ease and safety with which the evacuation was accomplished, mark the Navy Island campaign as the most successful of any in the history of the rebellion.

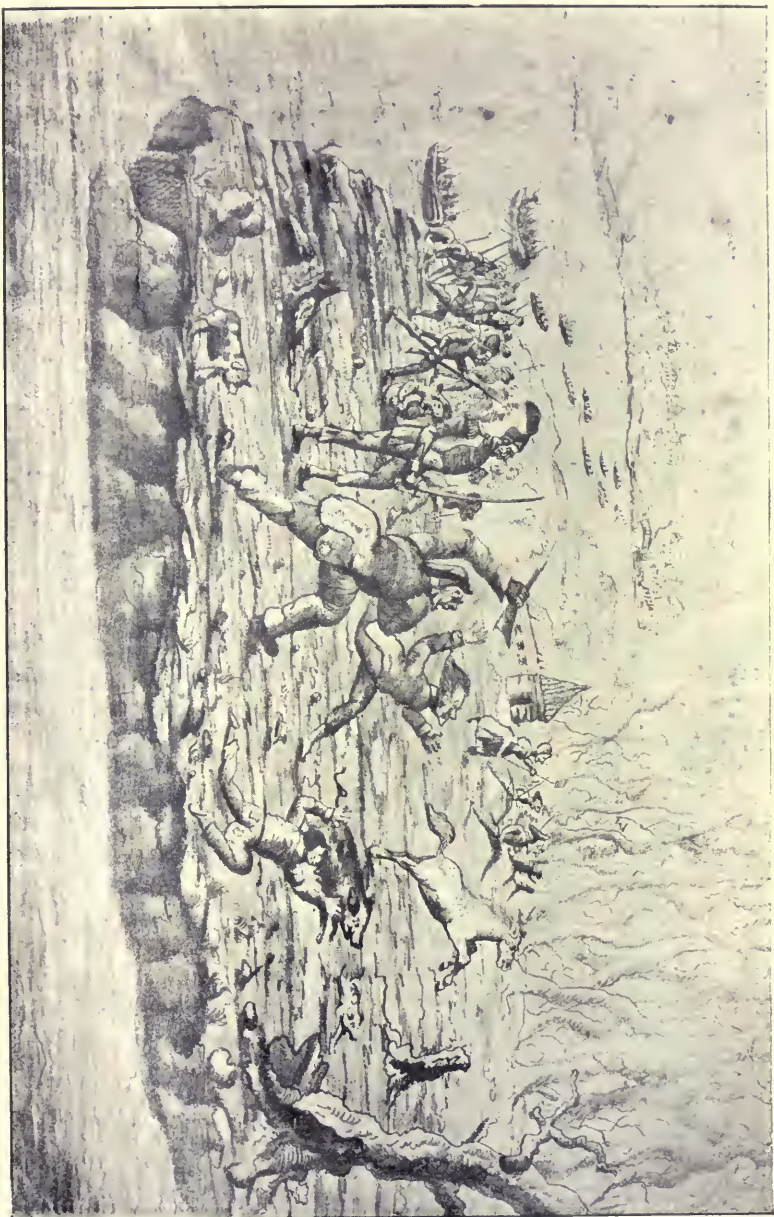
1. Petition, Parl. Reports, Canada, 1838, No. 19, 77; Head's Dispatches, Dec. 28, 1837.

2. "Narrative of Van Rensselaer," Mrs. Bonney, "Legacy of Hist. Gleanings," II, ch. iv, Jan. 18, 1838; "Autobiography of Gen. Scott," I, 314.

3. "Narrative of Van Rensselaer."

4. *Westminster Review*, XXXII, 239; "Reminiscences of Chas. Durand," 508, 514.

5. Dr. Johnson to Van Rensselaer, Jan. 4, 1838.



"BRITISH INVASION OF NAVY ISLAND." A CARTOON OF 1838.

SEE "ILLUSTRATIVE DOCUMENTS BEARING ON THE CANADIAN REBELLION," PAGE 120.





Whether the success of this exploit was due to the timidity of the enemy;<sup>1</sup> or to the military skill of the inexperienced general in command;<sup>2</sup> or to the timely and wholesome instructions of the senior Van Rensselaer, whose military ability is well known;<sup>3</sup> or to the good sense of the executive committee at Buffalo, is difficult to determine. One thing is certain: that finding the forces at the island insufficient in numbers, and lacking in certain essential means for a permanent invasion of Canada, the executive committee exercised the rare good judgment to order a withdrawal from the island.<sup>4</sup> The evacuation took place without molestation, Jan. 14, 1838.<sup>5</sup>

Withdrawal from Navy Island, however, did not mean the abandonment of the campaign; for before leaving, a general plan seems to have been formed whereby invasions at various points along the border from Michigan to Vermont were to be made simultaneously.<sup>6</sup> The date chosen for these invasions was Washington's birthday; and some of the places designated as the points from which these incursions were to be made were: Detroit, Sandusky, Watertown, and the region of Plattsburg.

The first point of attack was Fighting Island, a Canadian island some seven miles below Detroit. On the night of Feb. 23, 1838, the movement began; the steamboat Erie took on board supplies at Detroit and steamed down to the island. General Sutherland, having addressed a body of Patriots at the Eagle tavern offering them "land and glory," marched them down to the shore opposite the island where they were joined by 400 troops from Cleveland under Gen-

1. Van Rensselaer, "Narrative."

2. *Ibid.*; Nelson Gorham to editor *Cayuga Patriot*, March 7, 1838.

3. Letters of father to son, Mrs. Bonney, "Legacy of Hist. Gleanings," II, ch. iv.

4. Van Rensselaer to his father, Jan. 8, 1838, *ibid.*; E. G. Lindsey, "Navy Island Campaign," 10; Lindsey, II, 164.

5. Col. Hughes to Gen. Scott, Jan. 16, 1838; Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, p. 30; Van Rensselaer, "Narrative."

6. Van Rensselaer to father, Jan. 8; *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 101; Lindsey, II, 181; Niles, LIV, 20; LIII, 409; Head to Lord Glenelg, March 14, 1838, Parl. Rep., Canada, No. 33.

eral Donald McLeod. They crossed over to Fighting Island; but were poorly equipped for fighting, the arms they were expecting to arrive having been captured by the authorities the previous night.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian authorities, being informed of the movement, assembled their troops; crossed over on the ice February 25th; and soon dispersed the invaders.<sup>2</sup>

Two days later the Patriot forces under General Van Rensselaer advanced from Watertown, in Jefferson County, New York. Through the influence of messengers sent to all parts of the country nearly 1500 men were gathered at French Creek, a stream which enters the St. Lawrence some distance below Kingston. To aid this corps, the arsenals at Watertown, Batavia and Elizabethtown had been plundered.<sup>3</sup> Thus equipped, Hickory Island, a Canadian island, but a short distance below Kingston, was seized. By correspondence Mackenzie had arranged an uprising on the part of the Canadians to coöperate with the army of invasion. "Fort Henry was garrisoned by civilians; a person in the fort had agreed to spike the guns, on the approach of the Patriots, and at a concerted signal to throw open the gates for their admittance."<sup>4</sup> But this expedition planned with such care was destined to prove a failure. A rivalry which had begun between the two leaders on Navy Island deepened into open hostility: Mackenzie would take no part in the expedition if Van Rensselaer led it. "I cannot," says Mackenzie, "sail in a boat to be piloted as he thinks fit."<sup>5</sup> He even went so far as to insert notices in the papers disclaiming all association with Van Rensselaer and urging his friends "to withdraw all confidence from him in matters connected with Canada."<sup>6</sup> On the other hand Van Rensselaer

1. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 529.

2. *Ibid.*, 531; Head to Lord Glenelg, March 20, 1838, Parlt. Rep., Canada, No. 43; *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838.

3. *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 102; Gov. Marcy's Proclamation, March 1, 1838; Niles, LIV, 19.

4. Lindsey, II, 182.

5. *Ibid.*, 181; Van Rensselaer, "Narrative."

6. Mackenzie to editor of *Jeffersonian*, Feb. 22, 1838; Watertown papers, Feb. 17, 1838.

was bent on control of the expedition. This quarrel of the leaders, and the dissipation of the Patriot commander during the several days' stay on the island filled the troops with distrust; they began leaving in squads; and but few could be prevailed upon to persevere; as a consequence the enterprise was abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

The third movement upon Canada was under the command of Doctors Nelson and Cote, and took place on the last day of February. The events connected with it have already been recited and need no further comment.<sup>2</sup>

The last of these futile expeditions took place on the north-western frontier, and was not terminated without bloodshed. A strong body of men composed of the numerous bands that had previously dispersed found a rendezvous at Sandusky Bay; and about March 1st, took possession of Pelee Island, situated in Lake Erie some fifty miles south-east of Detroit. This island, which belongs to Canada, is the largest of the Put-in-Bay group, being nine miles in length, and containing 11,000 acres of land.<sup>3</sup> Here the raw recruits increased by squads from the various parts of Michigan, Canada, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania to several hundred men, spent two days in constant drilling under the leadership of George Van Rensselaer, a relative of the Van Rensselaer of Navy Island fame, and General Sutherland.<sup>4</sup> The ice on the lake was about fifteen inches thick from shore to shore. A large number of sympathizing spectators had crossed over in sleighs from the vicinity of Sandusky to view the contemplated invasion of Canada.<sup>5</sup> The arms which were to be furnished for the expedition by Colonel John L. Vreeland, the "master of ordnances," failed to appear; the experience of Fighting Island was repeated; the United States authorities had captured all the arms but one sleigh load.<sup>6</sup>

1. Niles, LIV, 19.

2. Chap. iii.

3. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 534.

4. *Ibid.*, 535.

5. *Ibid.*, 534; see also report of Col. E. D. Bradley to Gen. McLeod, T. E. Wing, "History of Monroe County, Michigan," 204.

6. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 537.

More arms were sent for but in the meantime the British becoming aware of the intrusion upon their territory made ready to attack the invaders. Colonel Maitland moved his whole force, consisting of "two guns, five companies of regulars, and about 200 militia and Indians, of which forty were cavalry" to a point opposite the rebels; and at two o'clock in the morning on the third of March started across the ice for the island.<sup>1</sup> At an early hour the Patriot scouts announced the approach of the red-coats. A council of war was called; some of the wiser heads advised immediate retreat; but the majority clamored for war; they had come "to fight," and wanted "to have the fun of it."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the loyalists were advancing: the regulars to the west shore of the island; the cavalry to the east shore; while the militia landing on the north shore swept across the island. On the south end nearest the American shore the Patriots were formed in line, with less than 200 guns for the entire force.<sup>3</sup> The armed men were placed in front, the unarmed back of them ready to seize the guns of any comrades that fell, and thus arranged, they awaited the attack of the British. Nor had they long to wait, for the British regulars circling round the island were soon upon them; while the militia crowded upon their back. A brisk engagement with the regulars soon took place in which the Patriots, considering their meagre equipments, conducted themselves with rare courage. They disentangled themselves from the net that had been set for them, and withdrew to the mainland with but a comparatively small loss. Major Hoadley, Captains Van Rensselaer and McKeon, with a few privates were killed;<sup>4</sup> while the British regulars sustained the severe loss of thirty men in killed and wounded.<sup>5</sup> Arriving at the American shore the retreating Patriots were met by General Hugh Brady with a company of Ohio militia; their arms

1. *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 102.

2. *Mich. Pioneer Coll.*, XXI, 537.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Conflicting accounts, *Mich. Pioneer Coll.*, XXI, 600, 601; *Dem. Rev.*, June, 1838, 102; Bradley's account, Wing, "Hist. of Monroe County, Mich.," 203.

5. *Ibid.*; Head to Lord Glenelg, March 14, 1838, *Parl. Rep.*, Canada, No. 33.

taken from them; disbanded; and then allowed to return to their homes.<sup>1</sup>

With this episode of Pelee Island comes to a close the expeditions planned for February 22d; and with their failure closes the active career of the chief leaders. William Lyon Mackenzie betook himself to newspaper work; was soon indicted for the part taken in the Navy Island campaign, and convicted and sentenced to imprisonment.<sup>2</sup> Rensselaer Van Rensselaer, shunned by the Patriots because of his failure to win laurels in the East, threw up his commission "in disgust at the want of good faith, and the base ingratitude of Mackenzie." Soon afterwards he was arrested by the United States authorities and placed in jail for the violation of the neutrality laws.<sup>3</sup> While Thomas Jefferson Sutherland, having been captured by the British near Detroit after the battle of Pelee Island, was hurried off to Toronto jail to await such justice as her Majesty's officials in Canada were likely to bestow upon "rebels" and "pirates."<sup>4</sup>

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## VI. SECRECY.

With the performance of the fiascos planned for Washington's birthday, and the removal of the chief leaders from the stage of action the curtain drops upon the Navy Island campaign. New leaders with new methods come upon the scene of action. The enactment of more stringent laws for the enforcement of neutrality; the more complete extension of troops along the entire border on either side; the extensive system of espionage whereby the plans of the revolutionists being made known were frustrated; and the swiftness and severity with which justice was meted out to the apprehended violators of international comity, led the Patriots to abandon the publicity and open organization of the

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1. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 540.

2. Lindsey, II, 185, 243, 252.

3. *Ibid.*, 182; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 533; Van Rensselaer, "Narrative."

4. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 541; Head to Lord Glenelg, March 14, 1838, Parl. Rep., Canada, No. 33.

early period of the struggle and assume toward the public more reticence and an organization whose members were bound together by strong oaths to maintain profound secrecy while binding themselves likewise to do all within their power to further the interests of their cherished project.

The beginnings of these organizations seem to have been in March, 1838. At a meeting held at Lockport, New York, on the nineteenth of March, a committee consisting of Dr. A. Mackenzie, George H. Clark, Samuel Chandler, Michael Marcellus Mills, Dr. J. T. Willson, Silas Fletcher, Dr. Charles Duncombe, William L. Mackenzie, General Donald McLeod, William H. Doyle, James Marshalls, Jacob Rymal, and Nelson Gorham, was formed to secure information relative to the Canadian refugees in the United States: their number, location and condition were among the things to be ascertained; the committee was, also, instructed to draw up articles of association by means of which their sufferings might "be mitigated and a redress of their grievance obtained"; and, "to adopt such other measures as, in their discretion, might best conduce to their welfare."<sup>1</sup> The name given to this organization was: "Canadian Refugee Relief Association." Dr. Alexander Mackenzie, at one time a resident of Hamilton, Canada, was made president of the association; his headquarters were to be at Lockport, whither all correspondence was ordered to be directed. Agents were to be sent throughout the Union in the interests of the society; and for the purpose of establishing branch unions. General Donald McLeod, who had just come from the West, and was "not discouraged" was made general organizer of the association and soon proceeded to the St. Lawrence river under directions of the general committee.

As a result of this association disturbances upon the frontier were soon renewed. On the night of the 29th of May, 1838, the *Sir Robert Peel*, a Canadian steamer, landed at Wells' Island, a few miles below French Creek, for the purpose of laying in a supply of wood. About two o'clock in the morning, the steamer was boarded by a band of Patriots, disguised as Indians. Raising the cry of "Remember the

1. Lindsey, II, 186.

Caroline!" they aroused the passengers aboard and ordered them with their baggage ashore. After assisting in the removal of the luggage they took possession of the vessel; set fire to her, and burned her to the water's edge.<sup>1</sup> General McLeod, who was organizing the Canadian Refugee Association on the St. Lawrence at the time, seems to have been associated with the expedition, though the command of "this curious naval foray" was under<sup>1</sup> Commodore<sup>1</sup> William Johnston. For some time after the burning of the Sir Robert Peel, Johnston rendezvoused among the Thousand Islands, where among the labyrinthine passages he easily escaped all pursuers and struck terror into the whole region by his sudden and daring exploits.

The burning of the Sir Robert Peel was followed during the month of June by two attempts at invasion of Canada from the Niagara region. At Clark's Point near Lewiston some 200 men under the leadership of Colonel George Washington Case and Colonel James Morreau assembled June 8, 1838. A scow and an open boat lay moored to the shore. Colonel Chase, who was the commanding officer, called for volunteers to enter the boats, claiming that a steamer would soon appear to tow them across the river. For some reason only twenty-three men responded to the call, which so disgusted Chase that he refused to go further with the expedition; so the attempt to cross the river near Lewiston was abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

Colonel Morreau, however, took up the cause, and three days later crossed over into Canada by way of Navy Island and Chippewa. His followers consisted of but twenty-five persons: twenty-four Canadians and an American youth named Cooley. All along the Niagara frontier were many sympathizers with the Patriots; it was claimed that several thousand were ready to join arms against the "family compact" system whenever sufficient reinforcements should appear from across the river. Advices received from the spies urged Morreau to advance; so the "twin stars" was hoisted

1. Earl of Durham to Lord Glenelg, June 2, 1838, Parl. Rep., Canada, No. 2; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 541.

2. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 542.

and the sympathizers urged to join the expedition. Having secured fifty or sixty stand of arms and a supply of provisions the band proceeded towards the Short Hills, some twenty-five miles west of the Niagara river. On failing to secure the promised reinforcements Colonel Morreau wished to retreat; but others of the company wished to attack a party of lancers at St. Johns. Word had come from McLeod, also, that he would join them with more troops. So on the night of June 20th, they advanced upon the lancers, quartered at Osterhout's tavern. The tavern was fired, and the lancers taken prisoners, though they were soon released on making an oath not to take up arms against the Patriot cause. The horses and arms of the lancers, however, were appropriated.<sup>1</sup>

As there was no rallying to the cause among the inhabitants, the band broke up into small parties that they might the better make their escape to the United States. Thirty of the company, however, were arrested; among them were Morreau, who first planned the party, Major Benjamin Wait, a Patriot hero of Pelee Island, Samuel Chandler, a prominent member of the Canadian Refugee Relief Association, and Donald McLeod, the leading organizer of the association. Thus closed the expeditions of this association so far as we have been able to discover; though there is evidence that McLeod was planning in connection with another association in the West a general assault upon Canada for July 4th.<sup>2</sup>

William Lyon Mackenzie, though chosen a member of the executive committee of the Canadian Refugee Relief Association, seems not to have been present at the first meeting nor to have taken any part in the organization. Whenever he learned of any contemplated invasion of Canada, he wrote to Lockport advising them "to abandon all such attempts as injurious to the cause of good government in Canada."<sup>3</sup> He had not, however, given up his desire for the independence of the Provinces, but disap-

1. Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 544.

2. *Ibid.*, 544; Sir Geo. Arthur to Lord Glenelg, June 30, 1838, Parl. Rep., Canada, No. 32; Kingsford, X, 479; Lindsey, II, 193.

3. Lindsey, II, 196.



proved their methods. "Their organization and union," he said, "apart from that of the associations who aid them, is nothing. They have little influence, nor will it increase until a better system is adopted. I shall try to get up such an organization—and make such use of that already in operation, as will probably somewhat change the aspect of Canadian affairs. The material is before us if we choose to make use of it."<sup>1</sup>

Acting upon his belief he issued a confidential circular, March 12, 1839, calling a special convention to be held at Rochester, New York. The convention was to be made up of Canadians, or persons connected with Canada who were favorable "to the attainment of its political independence, and the entire separation of its government from the political power of Great Britain."<sup>2</sup> Some fifty persons responded to the call: on the 21st and 22d of March they met at Rochester; organized an association of Canadian Refugees; elected Mr. Montgomery, President; Mr. Mackenzie, Secretary, and Samuel Moulson, Treasurer. A circular was issued setting forth the character of the newly-constituted society. The association was open to all those who had left Canada within two years, or were refugees from thence for political causes, or who, having been born British subjects, were desirous of aiding the Canadians in winning independence. The organization was to be known as "the Canadian Association"; and its objects were: to obtain for the North American Colonies the power of choosing their form of government; to prevent hasty and ill-planned attacks upon Canada; to discountenance the burning of private property or the taking of human life in Canada, except by legal trial and conviction; to disapprove of further expeditions into Canada from the States so long as the United States Government considered the Union "bound by treaties to abstain from such invasions"; to act in concert with all patriotic societies within any state of the Union for aiding the Canadians by all lawful means "in obtaining relief from the British yoke."<sup>3</sup> The circular contained a table for each sub-

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1. *Ibid.*, 232.

2. *Ibid.*, 238.

3. *Ibid.*, 239.

scriber to make out requiring: "names of volunteers in the township of —— who would be ready in case five thousand men joined them on this side, to go into Canada—as soon as the Canadians should have planted the standard on their own soil";<sup>1</sup> the means each volunteer had of transporting himself to the place of rendezvous; and the names of any having served in the armies of any nation, "stating the rank held."

During the previous January a similar convention had been held at Auburn under the name of an "Agricultural meeting."<sup>2</sup> The information secured by the Rochester circular was to be laid before both the Auburn Executive Committee and the Rochester Special Committee. An auxiliary association including Dr. Duncombe as a leading member was formed at Cincinnati; but no Americans were connected with it. The circular sent out from Rochester did not receive much notice though it was sent to refugees all over the United States. One reply from Florida stated that "in the South, all about the Gulf of Mexico, are hardy maritime people, bred from childhood to fishing, slaving, privateering, wrecking, and piracy, ready, if they can get commissions from any government, to cruise against the rich trade of England"—all of which materials would be available for privateering could the Patriots but "establish a fixed government for three weeks."<sup>3</sup> No oath nor affirmation seems to have bound the members of this new organization of Canadian Refugees; nor were any of its members under penalty to perform certain obligations. The burden of advancing Canadian independence was to be thrown upon the Patriots within the provinces; but little money was raised; no expeditions were fitted out; nor does this association seem to have exerted much influence, either upon the Canadians, or upon the other organizations of a more secret order composed for the most part of Americans and directed by Yankee ingenuity.

Owing to the increasing severity of police regulations in

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1. *Ibid.*, 240.

2. *Ibid.*, 240.

3. *Ibid.*, 242.

Canada a large number of persons who had been active in the revolutionary movements there crossed over into Michigan during the early summer of 1838. About the first of June there began an organization for the revolution of Canada which was destined to enroll among its membership many thousands of Canadians. The headquarters were in Michigan; and Henry S. Handy, who acted as Commander-in-chief of the new secret army, became the chief promoter of the organization. Each member took the following oath:

"You do solemnly swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that you will bear allegiance and fidelity to the Sons of Liberty engaged in the Patriot service and in the cause of Canadian Independence—that you will obey the orders of your superior officers in whatever department you may serve—that you will never communicate, or in any way divulge the existence or plans of said association. You also swear that you will devote your time, your person, your interest in promoting said cause, so far as may be consistent with your other duties—that you will never sell, barter, or in any way alter any badge that may be bestowed upon you for the purpose of designating your rank in said association. You also swear that you will not disclose or in any way communicate to any person the contents or purport of this Oath, and that you will not converse with any person in reference to this Oath, except in convention, or with the man who first presents it to you."<sup>1</sup>

Agents bearing blank commissions signed by Handy were sent throughout the provinces to form secret lodges, initiating only such persons as could be relied upon for the work of revolution. In the more densely populated districts one person was stationed in every square mile of territory with authority to confer commissions on persons suitable to hold the position of captain in the secret army. The colonels were to be elected by the lodges or members that made up the army of revolt. General Handy was kept in constant communication with the entire system of organization by the means of a hundred spies or couriers; each one of whom had a certain beat of ten miles which he covered daily communicating with the one in advance information from the

1. *Ibid.*, 192. This oath was secured from the prisoners the following winter, and possibly may not have been the one administered by Handy.

interior, and receiving such orders as had been forwarded from headquarters. By this system 200 companies containing a hundred men each were enrolled during the month of June. The arms to equip so large a force were to be supplied from the Michigan state arsenal. Among the sentinels at the arsenal were those who had been under the command of General Handy years before when he held a commission in the United States army; others were among those who had coöperated with him during the previous campaign against Fort Malden. General Handy still retained the confidence of these men; and by this means the windows of the arsenal were to be left unfastened; and the way left open for seizing a large supply of arms. In a similar manner the keys to the magazine at Detroit found their way into the hands of General Roberts. Two scows of twenty tons each were taken near the arsenal; and thirty men were designated to remove from the building the fifteen thousand stand of arms together with fifteen cannon and ammunition. Thus were the 20,000 enrolled members of the secret army in the Canadas to be equipped and ready for action whenever the standard of revolt should be raised.

The day selected for striking the first blow was July 4, 1838. Windsor, across from Detroit, was to be seized, the announcement of the uprising heralded with all possible speed by the secret couriers; then all available public arms, munitions, and provisions were to be seized, and some place of strategic importance was to be taken and strongly fortified.<sup>1</sup> But at this juncture took place an incident that defeated all these well-laid plans. Other principles than those of true patriotism and love of liberty dominated some members of this new association. The motive of plunder led one such person to thwart the plans of General Handy. A ruffian named Baker, purporting to be under orders of General Handy, gathered a band of free-booters along the Black River, crossed into Canada and began pillaging. The affair created such a commotion that General Brady of the United States army was put on the alert. His suspicions were aroused, and as a result a new guard was placed over

1. *Ibid.*, 192-195.

the arsenal. Thus on the day before Windsor was to have been taken and the standard of revolt raised in Canada, the plan collapsed from the want of arms. Strenuous efforts were made to secure them elsewhere; Cleveland and other cities were appealed to but in vain.<sup>1</sup> Again General Handy might say as he did at Fighting Island that the last arrangement was "broken up either by treachery or ignorance."

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## VII. THE HUNTERS.

The association, however, into which all other Patriot organizations were merged because of its purpose; the membership of its lodges; the extent of its resources; the number and variety of its projects; the secrecy with which all its proceedings were conducted, and the vast stretch of territory under its domination, was the "Hunter Lodge." The origin of this lodge is attributed partly to the burning of the Caroline;<sup>2</sup> and partly as a result of General Handy's failure to gain a foothold in western Canada by the capture of Fort Malden. This led to a belief that the object for which the Patriots sought might be more readily accomplished in the eastern province by augmenting and assisting the rebellious French Canadians in Lower Canada.<sup>3</sup> The society seems to have taken its name after a man named Hunter, who lived near the town of Whitby, Upper Canada, in the east riding of the old county of York, but now known as the county of Ontario. This man had been active in the Patriot cause in the Home district; and had narrowly escaped capture at the time of the insurrection on Yonge Street by concealing himself in an old oven ten miles east of Toronto. From here, after the passage of the militia, Hunter escaped to the United States, where after the failure of the first attempts to carry on the revolutionary struggle

1. *Ibid.*, 195. This account of Handy's organization is taken by Lindsey from Handy's own private reports now in the possession of Chas. Lindsey, Toronto. See also enclosures of Sir Geo. Arthur to Lord Glenelg, July 10, 1838, *Parlt. Rep.*, Canada, 1839, II, Nos. 33, 37, pp. 320-324.

2. Kingsford, X, 456.

3. D. B. Read, "The Rebellion of 1837," 352.

from across the border, he set about a work of organization destined to perpetuate his name; the work of forming Hunter lodges.<sup>1</sup>

The first Hunter lodges seem to have been established in Vermont in May of 1838.<sup>2</sup> The work of organization advanced rapidly; and within a few months lodges were established in all the chief centers, from the state of Maine to Wisconsin and inland to the states of Pennsylvania and Kentucky.<sup>3</sup> Soon these secret associations penetrated to nearly every town and hamlet along the border on either side and swept over both provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.<sup>4</sup> The oath taken by the would-be Hunter upon initiation was:

"I swear to do my utmost to promote Republican Institutions and ideas throughout the world—to cherish them, to defend them; and especially devote myself to the propagation, protection, and defence of these institutions in North America. I pledge my life, my property, and my sacred honor to the Association; I bind myself to its interests, and I promise, until death, that I will attack, combat, and help to destroy, by all means that my superior may think proper, every power, authority, of Royal origin, upon this continent; and especially never to rest till all tyrants of Britain cease to have any dominion or footing whatever in North America. I further solemnly swear to obey the orders delivered to me by my superior, and never to disclose any such order, or orders, except to a brother 'Hunter' of the same degree. So help me God."<sup>5</sup>

There seem to have been different degrees of initiation; and a complete system of secret signs, badges, pass-words, cypher or secret alphabets for correspondence, peculiar raps for obtaining admittance at the door, were used as means of communication with each other; and for determining the degree or rank of the various lodges;<sup>6</sup> and as if to make

1. *Ibid.*, 352.

2. Lindsey, II, 199.

3. Fox to Sec. State, Nov. 3, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, Part I, p. 6.

4. Geo. Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, Part II, p. 25.

5. Lindsey, II, 199, *note*.

6. Fox to Sec. State, Nov. 3, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181; Sir Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26, *ibid.*; Moore's testimony, Sir Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Sept. 27, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

more certain the secrecy of their intentions, and to escape the vigilance of the Government's paid spies, the leaders belonged to two or more of the Patriot secret societies, thereby possessing a larger number and variety of secret means of identification and communication.<sup>1</sup> The emblem of the order was the "snowshoe."<sup>2</sup>

The most important of the lodges were located at Rochester, Buffalo, Lockport, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Detroit, and Port Huron; while the grand lodge of the West to which all reports and communications were to be made was at Cleveland; and that of the East was at Rochester, although Lockport, the headquarters of the Canadian Refugee Relief Association, seems to have received a considerable amount of communication.<sup>3</sup>

The membership of the Hunter lodges has been variously estimated from 15,000 to 200,000; the majority of estimates, however, claim from 25,000 to 40,000 during the years 1838 and 1839, when the lodge was most active.<sup>4</sup> All classes appear to have joined the lodges: "Laborers left their employ; apprentices their masters; mechanics abandoned their shops; merchants, their counters; husbands, their families; children, their parents; Christians, their churches; ministers of the gospel, their charge to attend these meetings."<sup>5</sup> Judges, legislators, governors, army officers, and even the Vice-President of the United States were claimed among the adherents of these lodges.<sup>6</sup>

As already stated, the grand central lodge of the Hunters was at Cleveland. Here from the 16th to the 22d of September, 1838, was held a convention, composed of seventy (or 162 according to one account) representatives from the

1. Moore's testimony, *ibid*; Lane, "Hist. of Akron and Summit Counties, O." p. 596.

2. Lane, "Hist. of Akron and Summit Counties, O." 596.

3. Lindsey, II, 199; Fox to Sec. State, Nov. 3, 1838; Sir Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Oct. 15, 1839.

4. Sir Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26, 1838; Fox to acting Sec. State, Aaron Vail, Feb. 8, 1838.

5. Report of Select Committee of Upper Canada, April 30, 1839.

6. *Ibid*.; Sir Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26, 1838; testimony of Prisoners captured at Prescott and Windsor, Parl. Rep., Canada.

various lodges.<sup>1</sup> During the sessions of this convention, several matters of importance came before the delegates for adjustment. A republican government for Upper Canada was formed: A. D. Smith, "chief justice of the peace for the city of Cleveland," was made President of the Republic of Canada; Colonel Williams, "a wholesale grocer in Cleveland," was made Vice-President; a Secretary of State, a Secretary of Treasury, and a Secretary of War were, also, appointed.<sup>2</sup> A military organization was completed: Lucius Verus Bierce, a lawyer, and a man who, because of his military ability, had risen to the rank of brigadier general of the Ohio militia, was made Commander-in-chief of the Patriot Army; a commissary-general, adjutant general, two brigadier generals, and a long list of officers of lower rank were named.<sup>3</sup> Gilman Appleby, "master of the Caroline," was made commodore of the Patriot navy in the West; and "Bill" Johnston, who had led the assault on the Sir Robert Peel, was made commodore of the navy in the East. Nine steamboats and 25,000 men ready to bear arms were estimated as available for the Patriot service.<sup>4</sup>

A banking scheme of extensive proportions was devised as a means of financing the Canadian Republic with its extensive army and fleet. The "Republican Bank of Canada" was to be established and a "Joint-Stock Banking Company"; the capital stock of the bank was to be \$7,500,000, divided into 150,000 shares of \$50 each; later if necessary the stock was to be increased so that every one in the country might "become the lucky possessor of a share." The prospectus issued by the company stated that "gold and silver should be the only money of a country," unless absolutely necessary to issue paper currency in which case it should be done by a "Republican Bank controlled by the people." The vignette of the bills was to be the head of the

1. Sir Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26; Lindsey, II, 199.

2. Lindsey, II, 200-203; Sir Arthur to Gen. Brady, Oct. 26, 1838; Sir Arthur to Gen. Macomb, Oct. 22, 1838.

3. *Ibid.*; Lindsey, II, 200-203; McLeod, "Settlement of Upper Canada and the Commotion of 1837 and '38," 254.

4. Arthur to Macomb, Oct. 22, 1838.



leading martyrs for the cause in Canada: The head of Matthews at the left end, that of Lout in the center, and that of Morreau at the right end of the bill. Above the central figure were the words, "The Murdered"; while beneath was the motto, "Death or Victory"; and on the margin were to be the words, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." A Mr. J. Grant, Jr., was chosen president of the concern, though a man by the name of Smith appears, within a short time after the election, to have acted in that capacity. Messrs. B. Bagley and S. Moulson acted as vice-presidents of the bank. The whole scheme was based upon the confiscation of Canadian property which was to take place so soon as the Canadian Republic should be established in Upper Canada; and although the members of the convention pledged themselves to raise \$10,000 in a fortnight there seems, by the 1st of November, to have been but \$300 raised.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the convention in Cleveland the Hunters began to prepare for the invasion of Canada. Rumors of such an expedition appeared; but it was uncertain, in the meantime, where the blow would be struck: "Kingston, Toronto, and several intermediate harbors, Hamilton, the Niagara frontier, different places on Lake Erie, and the eastern frontier of the province, were all spoken of as the intended points of attack." No doubt many of the reports were set afloat by the leaders in order to distract attention from the real designs of the organization.<sup>2</sup> In the first week of November the insurrection known as the Rebellion of 1838 broke out in Lower Canada. There is little doubt but that the Hunters were acting in coöperation with the leaders of that uprising, if not the originators of the movement.<sup>3</sup> This rebellion has already been outlined in Chapter II, and needs no further notice here than the mention of its relation to the military operations of the Hunters.

During the first days of November, the Hunters south and east of Oswego began to move and concentrate. Os-

1. Lindsey, II, 202-203; Arthur to Brady, Oct. 26, 1838.

2. Sir Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 5, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

3. *Ibid.*

wego, Salina, Liverpool, Syracuse, Auburn, Great Bend, Pamela, Dexter, Evan's Mills, Watertown, Brownville, Leraysville, Sackett's Harbor, Cape Vincent, Chaumont, Williams Bay, Alexandria, Orleans, Flat Rock, Ogdensburg, Rossie Village, and other places where Hunter lodges were established furnished their respective contingencies who, between the first and tenth of November, "embarking at different ports and bays, concentrated together, and landed in hostile array about a mile and a half below Prescott."<sup>1</sup>

Arms in considerable quantities had been previously collected, packed in boxes, and shipped on board the steamer United States, from some of the ports along the St. Lawrence where the boat was wont to stop. Two schooners which had been secured for the expedition lay at Millen's Bay near French Creek, for several days. On these were placed several pieces of artillery, with balls and barrels of powder; and many of the Patriots who came from the vicinity embarked. Sunday night the 11th of November, the steamer United States took in tow the schooners; one of which was under the command of Von Schoultz, a brave Pole; and the other in charge of Commodore "Bill" Johnston. During the passage down the river a council of war was held by the leaders without arriving at any definite plan of action. A few miles above Prescott, the schooners were cast loose, while the steamer proceeded to Ogdensburg. Their original plan seems to have been to land at Prescott in the night, and seize Fort Wellington by surprise. In this, however, they failed; for the sentry spied the schooners and gave the alarm; while the larger of the boats, in attempting to pass below the city, was grounded on a bar. The smaller of the schooners passed on and landed at Windmill Point, a mile and a half below Prescott. Von Schoultz immediately took possession of a strong stone mill, some stone houses near by, and erected breastworks and prepared for battle.

Out of the 1,000 or more who were to have crossed over only 200 joined the party. J. Ward Birge, who posed as major general of the Patriot army of the East, and who was

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1. *Ibid.*

to have commanded the expedition, "fell sick with a suddenness that created a suspicion of cowardice"; while Johnston and other prominent leaders remained out of harm's way at Ogdensburg.

On the morning of the 13th, the militia at Prescott, having been reënforced by some marines and a few regulars, made an attack upon Von Schoultz; but could make no impression upon the stone mill. After sustaining considerable loss they withdrew until heavier artillery might be received.<sup>1</sup> The men in the mill also began to realize the danger of their situation; reinforcements from Ogdensburg had failed; the inhabitants in whose behalf the invasion was being made did not join them. Word was sent for boats to take them away; but the British steamer, *Experiment*, cruised up and down the river making relief difficult. And Colonel Worth of the United States army, on hearing of the proposed exploit, hastened to Ogdensburg, and took charge of all the boats there.

It appears, however, that Colonel Worth wished the Patriots to be saved from the sure destruction that awaited them; and for that purpose permitted the steamer *Paul Fry*, then in the custody of the marshal, to be used. The boat left for the mill; but after a time returned without Von Schoultz and his Patriot band. Whether the attempt failed because of British interference, or because of the refusal of the brave Polish leader to retreat, or whether it was due to a sudden fright which may have seized the master of the boat and caused him to turn about before his mission of mercy was completed, remains an unsolved mystery.<sup>2</sup> At any rate the Patriots were not withdrawn from the Point; and on the 16th, the British, reinforced and supplied with heavy guns, renewed their attack on the mill. A fierce fight ensued which resulted in the surrender of the Patriots. The British loss was twenty killed and sixty wounded; the

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1. Lindsey, II, 205-211; Sir Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 5, 1839; Niles, LV, 200; Donald McLeod, "Settlement of Upper Canada and the Commotion of 1837 and '38," chap. xxv.

2. Lindsey, II, 209; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 606; Niles, LV, 200; Col. Worth to Col. Young, Nov. 15, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, p. 20.

Patriots, fifteen killed, thirty wounded, and 157 taken prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

The severe lesson given the Patriots at Prescott brought to a close the military expeditions of the Hunters in the East; but they were to make another attempt at invasion of Canada before they could learn the futility of such attempts with the resources at their command. The last exploit of importance was made at Windsor on the 4th of December, 1838. Men were collected at various places along the frontier. A regiment from Ohio and Pennsylvania under Brigadier General S. S. Coffinberry was ordered by General Handy to Detroit. To these were joined one hundred Hunters from Monroe county, Michigan, sixty from Buffalo, seventeen from Rochester, and many from the vicinity of Detroit. The central rendezvous of the eastern bands was at Swan river, near the mouth of Detroit river; while the western contingencies encamped at Bloody Run north of Detroit.<sup>2</sup>

After remaining at Swan river forty-eight hours, the party, numbering 362, marched to the junction four miles below Detroit, where being equipped for a winter campaign by means of the money and provisions secured through Commissary Bronson of Buffalo and the funds of the banking scheme, they awaited the steamer that was to take them over to Canada. But for some reason the steamer did not appear; whereupon they marched at night up to Detroit. Here they found a steamer ready to transport them; but Major General Bierce, who was to command the expedition, was not ready. They withdrew to the woods; and returned next night ready to cross; but General Bierce sent word that the steamer was not ready, though the men knew that the steamer had been waiting for twenty hours or more. There was a similar delay at Bloody Run: the company was made up for the most part of young bloods who were eager to cross at once; but Bierce kept putting them off, claiming

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1. Sir Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 5, 1839; Lindsey, II, 210, 211; Sir Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Oct. 14, 1839; Report of Tucker, Provincial Sec., Toronto, Oct. 13, 1839.

2. Lindsey, II, 225-227; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 552-556.

that he was waiting recruits from the South; and in the meantime contented himself by issuing a proclamation announcing to the Canadians that the invasion was in the interest of free institutions and not for plunder.<sup>1</sup> The delay caused by this inactivity on the part of the commanding general was ruinous to the expedition: two whole companies of the Patriots left; and a knowledge of the intended invasion reached the province in time to bring forward troops for the defense of Windsor, Sandwich, and Fort Malden.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, an under officer volunteered to lead the Patriots against the enemy at once. This aroused Bierce to action: the following evening the Patriots marched down the streets of Detroit in full view of the sentinels at the arsenal without the least molestation; took possession of the steamer Champlain; and early in the morning of December 4th, landed at Windsor. The barracks were attacked and burned; and a steamer, the Thames, lying at the dock was seized, the cry of "Remember the Caroline" raised, and the boat set on fire.<sup>3</sup>

Some 5,000 persons had gathered on the Detroit shore, and, as the smoke and flame from the burning barracks and steamer arose, three hearty cheers were wafted across the river for the encouragement of the Patriots. Their victory, however, was short-lived, for the British troops coming up from Amherstburg soon checked these depredations; and General Bierce, who had kept well in the rear, ordered a retreat. But the steamer Champlain was gone; and the Erie, which had a detachment of United States troops on board, was signalled in vain. The invaders were reduced to the necessity of picking up canoes, or whatever they could seize, with which to escape. In this last raid of the Hunters, twenty-five of the Patriots were killed, and forty-six were taken prisoners. Four of the twenty-five killed met their death by the wrath of Colonel Prince of the provincial militia, who on taking them prisoners ordered them shot on the spot; and the remainder of the prisoners would, no

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1. Hopkins, "Encyclopaedia of Canada," III, 72.

2. Lindsey, II, 225-231; Mich. Pioneer Coll., XXI, 552-571.

3. *Ibid.*

doubt, have met the same fate had he not been checked in his inhuman rashness.<sup>1</sup>

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### VIII. FEDERAL INTERFERENCE.

All the armed movements of the Patriots from the attack at St. Charles and the battle of Yonge Street to the Hunter raids at Prescott and Windsor were attended with a certain fatality: there was always some great want; some fatal blunder; some gross neglect of duty; some act of indiscretion; some ruinous delay; some deed of treachery or cowardice to mar the plans and render abortive all the military operations of these civilian soldiers. During the first uprisings there was a woeful lack of arms; but a few hundred where there should have been several thousand with some pieces of cannon. There was need of promptness and a well-regulated plan on the part of the insurgents; where there should have been a common plan of coöperation between the Patriots of Upper and Lower Canada there existed merely a common sympathy. Leadership was, also, lacking: no great leader appeared who could command the respect of all classes, and join to his standards all those who desired a change of government. There was no Washington to wring victory out of defeat; no Franklin to win succor and military coöperation from a sympathizing foreign power; there was not even a Sam Houston among the numerous aspirants to such notoriety who could, with the aid of American sympathizers, wrest a province from the hands of an oppressive ruler.

Sam Houston, however, was the friend if not the agent of an Andrew Jackson.<sup>2</sup> All the assistance that a most powerful administration could give, attended the hero of San Jacinto: New Orleans became a rendezvous where men and supplies were openly enlisted for Houston's army; and when the Government at Washington was reproached for

1. *Ibid.*; Sir Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 5, 1839, Parl. Reports, Canada.

2. H. H. Bancroft's "History," XVI, chap. xii.

this open violation of the neutrality, it disclaimed responsibility on the ground that the affair at New Orleans was a matter of individual conduct over which it had no control. Again, when once victory had been won by the revolutionists, an American force was placed on the Mexican frontier for the ostensible purpose of "preventing Texas Indians from invading the soil of the United States," but in reality to assist Houston in maintaining his position; and when the Mexican minister at Washington demanded his passports for this affront to his government, Jackson recalled the troops, and employed more convenient means in the way of trumped-up spoliation claims whereby peremptory demands were made upon Mexico and the basis laid for concessions of some kind in the near future.<sup>1</sup>

Could the Patriots who labored for the independence of the Canadas in 1837 and 1838 have had the friendly assistance of the Jackson Administration, the story of Texas might have been reiterated in the provinces to the northward. But the brief interim of a year that marks the distance between the battle of San Jacinto and the uprising at Yonge Street saw a marked change at Washington: the Jackson Administration gave place to that of Martin Van Buren. The former had shown itself friendly to the revolutionary movement; the latter was to show itself hostile. Jackson had connived at the Texas revolution, and when an opportunity presented itself he made all possible haste to acknowledge her independence; while Van Buren, when Texas was offered to the United States, refused her proposal of annexation.<sup>2</sup>

A president who was thus to refuse the gift of territory that had been so eagerly sought by his predecessor and the founder of the policy of his own party would not be likely to tolerate acts of violence that might involve the Government in war with the mightiest of nations. On the 7th of December, 1837, within two weeks after the rebellion in Lower Canada arose, the Secretary of State addressed com-

1. *Ibid.*

2. Schouler, "History of the United States," IV, 256, 303; *Am. Hist. Rev.*, X, 75, 90.

munications to the United States attorneys for the Northern Districts of Vermont, New York and Michigan, in which he said:

"In the course of the contest which has commenced in a portion of the territory of Great Britain, between portions of the population and the Government, some of our citizens may, from their connection with the settlers, and from their love of enterprise and desire of change, be induced to forget their duty to their own Government, and its obligations to foreign Powers. It is the fixed determination of the President faithfully to discharge, so far as his power extends, all the obligations of this Government, and that obligation especially which requires that we shall abstain, under every temptation, from intermeddling with the domestic disputes of other nations."<sup>1</sup>

It was enjoined upon the attorneys to be attentive to all movements of a hostile character within their respective districts; and "to prosecute, without discrimination, all violators of those laws of the United States" which had been enacted to preserve peace with foreign powers or for the fulfilment of all our treaty obligations with such powers. On the same day the Secretary of State addressed letters to the governors of Vermont, New York and Michigan, in which he called their attention to the contest that was taking place in the provinces and the possibility of attempts being made "to violate the laws of the United States passed to preserve the relations of amity with foreign Powers and to fulfil the obligations of our treaties with them." "By the directions of the President," writes Secretary Forsyth, to each governor, "I have the honor to request the attention of your excellency to any movements of that character that may be contemplated—and your prompt interference to arrest the parties concerned."<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see that at the very beginning of hostilities in the provinces the Administration at Washington, in anticipation of difficulties on the border, took a firm position regarding the matter of neutrality. The President was determined to maintain inviolate our treaty obligations; and to main-

1. Forsyth to Kellogg, and others, Dec. 7, 1837, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 74, p. 29.

2. Forsyth to Marcy, Dec. 7, 1837, *ibid.*



tain that policy of strict non-interference which has ever characterized the attitude of the United States towards foreign nations. Nor were the instructions of the President issued through the Secretary of State a matter of mere form: the President was in earnest, as may be seen by the correspondence that immediately sprang up between the Administration at Washington and the government officials and the state officials and private individuals along the Canadian border.<sup>1</sup>

The crossing of the border by the Canadian refugees into Vermont and the Mackenzie meetings at Buffalo were communicated in all haste to the various State and Federal authorities; while the authorities, especially the Federal officials, immediately set themselves to the task of subduing the popular frenzy for the Patriot cause; and for the enforcement of the national laws. On the 15th of December, Mr. Parker, collector of duties at Buffalo, after detailing the conditions in the city, says in a letter to United States Attorney Benton: "I have ordered a portion of your letter published, in order to deter any further violations of the law; also to satisfy the inhabitants of Canada that such acts are not countenanced by our Government."<sup>2</sup> On December 18th, we learn that the United States marshal has been ordered to Buffalo to make "arrests of all offenders against the laws of the United States"; and Governor Marcy notified that the state militia may be needed to assist the marshal in his work.<sup>3</sup> Two days previous, Attorney Benton had had extracts of the United States law for the apprehension of offenders, together with the legal forms for arrest, recognizance, and *mittimus* published for the benefit of all officers of the law; while on the following day, a circular was issued from the Treasury Department to the collectors of customs of the United States in the districts bordering on the Canadian frontiers ordering them to coöperate with the attorneys in prosecuting "all citizens and other inhabitants" who might

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1. See correspondence, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 74.

2. *Ibid.*, 35.

3. United States Attorney Benton to Gov. Marcy, Dec. 18, 1837; *ibid.*, 34.

in any manner be concerned in the violation of those laws or treaty obligations which would prevent "a strict neutrality on the part of the Government and the people of this country."<sup>1</sup>

On receiving information of an invasion of Canada by a small body of refugees on the Vermont border, Secretary of State Forsyth wrote Attorney Kellogg stating that the President directed him to make "an immediate inquiry into the facts" and to "commence legal proceedings against all such persons as appear to have been concerned in violating the laws for the preservation of the neutral relations of the United States." In closing Forsyth said: "You are also directed to exercise constant vigilance during the pending contest, and to take all proper steps to prevent the recurrence of acts similar to those into which you are now called upon to examine."<sup>2</sup> Similar instructions were forwarded to Attorney Benton at Buffalo regarding the apprehension of Mackenzie and those associated with him.<sup>3</sup>

In the former instance United States Attorney Kellogg, having learned through the papers of the disturbance on the border, proceeded at once to the scene of action before receiving instructions from the Secretary of State. On his arrival he learned that the refugees, having met with defeat after their invasion, recrossed the state line, where, their arms having been taken from them by the local authorities, they had all dispersed.<sup>4</sup> Likewise in the latter case, Attorney Benton found Mackenzie and his compatriots at Navy Island beyond the jurisdiction of the United States authority.<sup>5</sup> In all this correspondence we see the determination of President Van Buren to enforce the law and preserve peace; but such was the nature of the border raid—the fewness of the participators, the secrecy of the organization, the rapidity of dispersion on the approach of the enemy; and, in too many instances, the friendly protection of the community—

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1. *Ibid.*, 42.

2. Dec. 20, *ibid.*, 39.

3. Dec. 21, *ibid.*, 41.

4. Kellogg to Forsyth, Dec. 20, *ibid.*, 38.

5. Benton to Forsyth, Dec. 26, *ibid.*, 43.

that it was exceedingly difficult for the Federal Government either to find the offenders, or to secure their arrest and conviction when located.

During these early days of the border disturbance it was hoped that the sympathetic assistance rendered the refugees might be held within the limits of the law by the Federal and State officials without recourse to armed force;<sup>1</sup> but with the seizure and fortification of Navy Island the popular sympathy was so aroused as to thwart the purposes of the officials and render enforcement of the laws difficult. Under these circumstances we find United States Attorney Benton suggesting to the President "the propriety of ordering an armed force to Fort Niagara";<sup>2</sup> while United States Marshal Garrow, after reciting the events connected with the reënforcement of the Patriot army at Navy Island, says: "From all that I can see and learn, I am satisfied that, if the Government deem it their duty to prevent supplies being furnished from this side to the army on the island, and also the augmentation of their forces from among the citizens of the States, an armed force, stationed along upon the line of the Niagara will be absolutely necessary to its accomplishment."<sup>3</sup> He, also, informed the President that persons were engaged in dislodging "one or more steamboats from the ice," as was supposed with a view to aiding the Patriot expedition.

On receipt of these letters the President sent a message to Congress stating that the recent experiences in the South and the events occurring on the Northern frontier "abundantly show that the existing laws are insufficient to guard against hostile invasion, from the United States, of the territory of friendly and neighboring nations"; that while the laws provided "sufficient penalties for the punishment of such offences," after they had been committed, provided the parties could be found, the Executive was powerless in many cases to prevent their commission even while in possession of ample evidence of such intention. Congress was

1. Forsyth to Gov. Jenison, Dec. 27, *ibid.*, 50.

2. Benton to Forsyth, Dec. 20, *ibid.*, 44.

3. Garrow to Van Buren, Dec. 28, *ibid.*, No. 64, 2.

urged to revise the law, and to enact such additional ones as "to vest in the Executive full power to prevent injuries being inflicted upon neighboring nations" either by citizens of the United States, or by other persons within her jurisdiction and subject to her control.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time the revenue cutter Erie was ordered to Buffalo for the use of the collector of that port "in maintaining the laws, and enforcing the obligations thereby imposed on citizens of the United States."<sup>2</sup> "It is represented," wrote the Secretary to Collector Barker, "that armed vessels and boats are engaged within the limits of your district, in carrying arms, ammunition, and military supplies to the Canadian side of the line, for the use of forces arrayed against the British Government. You will take measures to seize any vessel or carriage of any kind which may be engaged in such transactions."<sup>3</sup> Thus we see each new violation of law on the part of the Patriots met by renewed efforts on the part of the Administration to maintain the peace, and to search out the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

In the meantime an event occurred which dispelled all hope of maintaining peace without the use of an armed force. On the night of the 29th of December, the Caroline was destroyed, and the popular indignation was so aroused all along the border from Maine to Michigan that the Administration was taxed to its full extent to preserve the peace. Information of this disaster reached the White House on the evening of the 4th of January.<sup>4</sup> In spite of the difficulties which this untoward incident produced the President was determined to exercise his utmost authority for the preservation of the peace. Brevet Major General Winfield Scott was ordered to the northern frontier with instructions to assume command of the State militia for the protection of the frontier, being cautious to select the troops "from a portion of the State distant from the theatre of

1. President's Message, Jan. 5, 1838, *ibid.*, 1.

2. Sec. of Treasury Woodbury to Commander Daniel Dobbins, Jan. 4, *ibid.*, No. 74, 52.

3. Woodbury to Barker, Jan. 4, *ibid.*, 53; Woodbury to Scoville, Jan. 5, *ibid.*, 54; Forsyth to Benton, Jan. 5, *ibid.*, 53.

4. Autobiography of Lieut. Gen. Scott, I, 306.

action." "The Executive," says the Secretary of War, "possesses no legal authority to employ the military force to restrain persons within our jurisdiction, and who ought to be under our control, from violating the laws, by making incursions into territory of neighboring and friendly nations, with hostile intent." "I can give you, therefore," he further says, "no instructions on that subject; but request that you will use your influence to prevent such excesses, and to preserve the character of this Government for good faith and a proper regard for the rights of friendly Powers."<sup>1</sup>

On the 8th of January President Van Buren sent a special message to Congress concerning the Caroline affair in which he said: "In the highly excited state of feeling on the Northern frontier, occasioned by the disturbances in Canada, it was to be apprehended that causes of complaint might arise on the line dividing the United States from her British Majesty's dominions. Every precaution was, therefore, taken on our part, authorized by the existing laws." After noting the aggravating character of the attack on the Caroline he closed the message by asking for such appropriations as the circumstances in which our country was "thus unexpectedly placed" required.<sup>2</sup>

Congress took under consideration both this message asking for an appropriation and the previous one asking for enlarged powers. On the 30th of January a law was passed appropriating "the sum of \$625,000" for the purpose of defraying "any expenses which have been or may be incurred in protecting the northern frontier of the United States";<sup>3</sup> and on the 10th of March a law was passed for the "Punishments of Military Expeditions against the conterminous Territory of Foreign Governments at peace with the United States." Under the old statute of April 20, 1818, the Executive's power was limited to the apprehension and punishment by fine and imprisonment of any person setting on foot

1. Poinsett to Gen. Scott, Jan. 5, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 73, p. 4.

2. President's Message, Jan. 8, *ibid.*, 73.

3. U. S. Statutes at Large, Jan. 30, 1838.

within the jurisdiction of the United States, any military expedition against a friendly power.<sup>1</sup> While by this act the President could prosecute the leaders, he had no means for preventing enlistment, nor could he check the movements of armed forces of men along or across the border. By the new act the various officers, "collectors, naval officers, surveyors, inspectors of customs, the marshals and the deputy marshals of the United States, and every other officer" whom the President might specially empower, were "authorized and required to seize any vessel or vehicle, and all arms or munitions of war about to pass the frontier of the United States" for the purpose of carrying on a military expedition against any conterminous foreign power at peace with the United States.<sup>2</sup> This law, while some improvement upon the previous one, was not very stringent: the leaders alone were subject to arrest and punishment; the arms and munitions of war could be seized only upon the actual attempt of invasion, or of embarkation with hostile intent. Such being the nature of the law, it is evident that the President did all within his authority to maintain neutrality and prevent hostilities.

On receipt of his instructions Major General Scott departed at once for the frontier; and that he might have the immediate coöperation of the State authorities he passed by way of Albany and prevailed on Governor Marcy and State Attorney-General McDonald to accompany him to Buffalo.<sup>3</sup> The regular troops for the most part were in Florida and on the western frontiers. General Scott, however, had on his way north ordered several recruits to follow him, which force was to be augmented by the use of the State militia if needed.<sup>4</sup> General Scott was ably seconded in his work on the border by Brigadier General Hugh Brady, on Lake Erie and the Detroit frontier; Colonel W. J. Worth, on the Niagara, Lake Ontario, and St. Lawrence frontier; and

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1. U. S. Statutes at Large, Apr. 20, 1818.

2. U. S. Statutes at Large, March 10, 1838.

3. Scott's Autobiography, I, 308.

4. *Ibid.*; Scott to Col. Hughes, Jan. 15, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, p. 6.

Brigadier Generals Wool and Eustis on the New York and Vermont borders. These officers were in constant communication with one another, and with the officials across the line; much information regarding the designs and movements of the Patriots was thus obtained and communicated to the proper authorities in time to thwart their plans.

We have already seen how Van Rensselaer was outbid by General Scott in the purchase of steamboats, thereby rendering it impossible for the Patriots to cross over to Canada from Navy Island.<sup>1</sup> When the Patriots were seeking to secure the steamboat Barcelona in which to remove their arms and munitions from the island to some other rendezvous, General Scott secured her services, much to the discomfiture of the Patriots, and to the surprise of the British who were lying in wait to destroy her as she proceeded down the river from Buffalo.<sup>2</sup> The steamer New England, "understood to be engaged to take off portions of the hostile expedition," was also detained by the General, thereby leaving no boat east of Cleveland for the use of the Patriots.<sup>3</sup> These steamboats with detachments of United States troops on board were used along the foot of Lake Erie to prevent any hostile embarcation on the part of the Patriots; while the steamer Robert Fulton was sent to Cleveland and then to Detroit for a similar purpose.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise at Detroit Brigadier General Brady proved himself an efficient agent in thwarting the hostile attempts of the Patriots. During the first movements there General Brady took from the Patriots the steamers Macomb and Brady;<sup>5</sup> recaptured the arms which the militia had allowed Sutherland to seize; replaced the militia with regulars;<sup>6</sup> thereby checking the Patriot attempt to seize Fort Malden; and together with the assistance of the United States marshal compelled the Patriot force under General Handy to

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1. Chap. iv.

2. Scott's Autobiography, I, 314; Scott to Col. Hughes, Jan. 20, 1838.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*; Niles, LIII, 353.

5. Lindsey, II, 169.

6. *Ibid.*, 179.

disband.<sup>1</sup> Time after time the Patriots had their arms seized, their means of transportation taken from them, all of which materially interfered with their embarkation or their chief means of retreat after some disastrous invasion.<sup>2</sup>

While the Patriots became more closely organized and their movements more stealthy, and while the State authorities to a degree lost interest in the matter, the President maintained his full determination to continue the policy of non-interference. When he learned of the destruction of the *Sir Robert Peel*, he issued a special message to Congress in which he said :

“The excited state of public feeling on the borders of Canada, on both sides of the line, has occasioned the most painful anxiety to this Government. Every effort has been and will be made to prevent the success of the designs apparently formed,—to involve the nation in a war with a neighboring friendly Power. With a fixed determination to use all the means in my power to put a speedy and satisfactory termination to these border troubles, I have the most confident assurances of the cordial coöperation of the British authorities, at home and in the North American possessions, in the accomplishment of a purpose so sincerely and earnestly desired by the Governments and people both of the United States and Great Britain.”<sup>3</sup>

In his message at the opening of the third session of the twenty-fifth Congress, President Van Buren dwells at length upon the abhorrence with which the Government has ever looked upon the depredations by our citizens upon nations at peace with the United States. At the same time he issued a proclamation stating that, whereas citizens of the United States had combined with Canadians and others for the purpose of renewing the disturbances in the provinces, he thought it necessary and proper to call upon “every citizen of the United States neither to give countenance nor encouragement of any kind to those who have thus forfeited their claims to the protection of their country”; and to warn all those who had engaged in those criminal enterprises, that if persisted in, no matter what might become their condition,

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*; Donald McLeod, “Settlement of Upper Canada and the Com-motion of 1837 and '38,” Chaps. xxii-xxiv.

3. President's Message, June 20, 1838.



"they must not expect the interference of this Government in any form on their behalf." They would be left, reproached by every virtuous citizen, to be dealt with according to the policy and justice of that Government whose dominions they had, "in defiance of the known wishes and efforts of their own Government, and without the shadow of justification or excuse, nefariously invaded."<sup>1</sup>

The firm determination of President Van Buren was, likewise, manifest in the conduct of the United States army officers during the trying year of 1838. They used every vigilance within their power to thwart the machinations of the Hunter organizations. A worthy tribute to the earnest endeavors of Colonel Worth is recorded in a petition of the citizens of Oswego, New York, beseeching the Colonel to use his respected influence to secure, if possible, clemency from the Canadian officials for the prisoners taken at the battle of Prescott. "Your character as a military man," said the petitioners, "is well known to the colonial authorities. The zeal and firmness you have displayed from the commencement of the troubles, in endeavoring to preserve our neutral obligations inviolate, to protect our national honor, and to enforce the laws of the union, are known as well to the inhabitants of Upper Canada as to your own fellow-citizens; and we believe your services and character are by them not less justly appreciated than by ourselves."<sup>2</sup>

Brigadier General Brady was equally active on the Detroit frontier; and although the Patriots eluded his vigilance sufficiently to cross over to Windsor they could accomplish little. "It may seem strange," says Major General Scott in commenting on the attack on Windsor, "that this new outrage should have been committed near the United States, both civil and military, without the previous knowledge of either. I am, however, perfectly satisfied that the United States have not two more vigilant and determined commanders than Brigadier General Brady and Major Payne. As soon as the alarm was given, they, their officers

1. President's Proclamation, Nov. 21, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 2, p. 34.

2. Niles, LV, 236.

and men, flew to the spot, and exerted themselves to the utmost. The collector also did his duty, and the district attorney has been active in causing the principal offenders, who escaped to our shore, to be arrested.”<sup>1</sup>

During these winter campaigns against the trespassers of the borders, General Scott posted himself nowhere in particular, but passed along the entire frontier. His journeyings were made by land, and often at night, the daytime being used in organizing, by means of correspondence, the forces under his command, and in conveying information to the various officials regarding the contemplated movements of the Patriots. During his movements along the frontier for a distance of 800 miles, he addressed immense gatherings, principally of sympathizers ready to embark on some hostile expedition. He appealed to their patriotism; and to the necessity of strict obedience to the laws of the land; and showed them that a war to be successful must be differently commanded and differently conducted. To the query everywhere heard: “But what say you of the burning of the *Caroline*, and the murder of citizens at our own shore?” he frankly admitted that the act constituted a national outrage that called for satisfaction; that the President would make the proper demand; and, failing to obtain reparation, would lay the matter before Congress—“the representative of the public will, and next to the people, the tribunal before which the ultimate appeal must be made.” After making a strong appeal to them to desist from their course of action, he often concluded as follows: “Fellow-citizens, I stand before you without troops and without arms, save the blade by my side. I am, therefore, within your power. Some of you know me in other scenes, and all of you know that I am ready to do what my country and duty demands. I tell you, then, except it be over my body you shall *not* pass this line—you shall *not* embark.”<sup>2</sup>

These addresses were generally successful: masses of the Patriots desisted from further violations of the law; and the friends of order were encouraged to take a firmer posi-

1. Gen. Scott to War Department, Dec. 16, 1838, Niles, LV, 281.

2. Scott's Autobiography, I, 313.

tion in their support of authority. Nor were the civil authorities of the Federal Government less active in the arrest and conviction of the leaders when possible, as a study of the prisoners will reveal.<sup>1</sup> It was this firm determination of President Van Buren to enforce the laws and maintain a strict policy of non-interference that kept us out of war with Great Britain; prevented the Patriots from a successful campaign in Canada; and lost to the United States one of the most opportune moments for securing the overthrow of British rule in America.<sup>2</sup>

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### IX. CONFLICT OF AUTHORITY.

During the period of the border difficulties we have been describing, the Canadians doubted much the sincerity of the United States Government in its attempts to suppress the Patriot invasions of Canada; and some of their writers on the Rebellion of 1837 and 1838 have severely criticized the failure of our Government to prevent all encroachments upon the territories of her Majesty's provinces in the Canadas. This distrust on the part of the Canadians was due to various causes. The remembrance of the attitude of the new Republic toward the loyalists of the Revolutionary times was one cause. The suspicions aroused by the marvelous industrial, commercial, and territorial development of the democracy to the southward which threatened to revolutionize the political institutions of the provinces,<sup>3</sup> was another. While a third cause was due to the knowledge that the Americans might, amidst the disturbed conditions of the colonies, attempt to make good their claims, more or less generally advanced during the period of their existence as a nation, that the Canadas should some day become annexed to the United States.<sup>4</sup> Another ground for distrust is found in the inability of an imperial, and, in large measure, a military people, to comprehend the nature of a government

1. Donald McLeod, "Settlement of Upper Canada."

2. *Ibid.*, 225; "Reminiscences of Chas. Durand," 455, 522.

3. Niles, LVI, 196, 200.

4. Lindsey, II, 248-251.

whose laws were made for the protection of the individual citizen in the freest and fullest exercise of his personal liberties, rather than for the supremacy of the executive—a conception of government which while giving the freest play for the development of self-initiative, the truest and noblest basis for national progress, may at times of great popular excitement lead to license and wrong doing beyond the possibility of immediate legal adjustment. Nor is the duality that exists in the Government of the United States more readily comprehended by people of a unitary government—a duality which because of the conflict of authority between the local and State officials, and between the State and Federal powers, furnished the British and Canadian officials more than one occasion for legitimate doubt regarding the proper enforcement of the neutrality on the part of the United States.

We have seen that letters were addressed to the governors of Vermont, New York and Michigan, as early as Dec. 7, 1837, calling their attention to the disturbed conditions in the Canadas; and requesting their assistance in case any attempts should be made by the citizens of the United States to violate the neutrality. Governor S. H. Jenison of Vermont heartily responded to the call; and issued, on the 13th of December, a proclamation cautioning the citizens of the State against letting their enthusiasm in the cause of liberty lead them to acts inconsistent with the treaty relations between the United States and Great Britain; and warning them of the peril of violating the laws of neutrality established by Congress.<sup>1</sup> Having been waited on a day or two later by committees from Swanton and St. Albans requesting arms and munitions of war for the citizens on the frontier suitable for self-defence, the Governor wrote the Secretary of State enclosing papers showing the condition of things on the border, and asking the General Government to judge "of the propriety and expediency of placing a detachment of troops in that neighborhood, to allay the fears of the inhabitants."<sup>2</sup> Again, in January, when Brigadier General

1. Thompson, "History of Vermont," II, 103.

2. Gov. Jenison to Forsyth, Dec. 16, 1837, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 74, p. 31.

Wool called on Governor Jenison with instructions from General Scott to call out the State militia if needed, the Governor accompanied General Wool to the frontier for the purpose of ascertaining the situation there; but finding everything quiet he returned home after assuring the General that, "should a military force become necessary, it would be called out and placed under his command."<sup>1</sup>

For several weeks no further disturbance took place on the Vermont border; but late in February Governor Jenison received word from General Wool stating that the Patriots were on the move. "No time is to be lost," wrote the General, "everything is to be done in a few days. I have not the least doubt I shall defeat their plans; still I think nothing should be left undone to defeat their diabolical purpose, which is nothing short of a war between this country and Great Britain." Governor Jenison immediately repaired to Swanton, whence expresses were started and sleighs engaged to bring in the militia to assist in the suppression of the Patriot movement. The affair was soon terminated by the return of the refugees from Canada; and the surrender of the leaders of the expedition to the civil authorities; and the giving up of their arms to General Wool.<sup>2</sup>

These efforts on the part of Governor Jenison, while appreciated by the General Government and by the well-disposed citizens of the State, met with a marked opposition on the part of a large number of persons who strongly sympathized with the Canadian refugees. His proclamation "incurred the censure of many of the good people" of the State; and the public press of the State treated it "with almost universal censure and condemnation";<sup>3</sup> while some 400 voters of northern Vermont even went so far as to petition Congress, protesting against the passage of any law that would deprive them of "the privilege of selling, transporting, or giving to the Canadians, arms, ammunition, or provisions, either in this country or in Canada."<sup>4</sup> In his

1. Gov. Jenison to John Smith, Apr. 2, 1840, Reports of Committees, 2 Sess. 26 Cong., No. 126, p. 4.

2. *Ibid.*, 5.

3. *Ibid.*, 2; Thompson's "Vermont," II, 103.

4. Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., Nos. 193, 194.

attempt to enforce the law amidst such strong opposition on the part of his fellow citizens, there is little doubt that Governor Jenison spoke the truth when he said: "The difficulties upon our northern frontier have been to me a source of much perplexity and uneasiness, from their commencement in the fall of 1837. So far as my official station gave me influence, it has been exerted to maintain the neutral relations of the country, and to protect the rights of our citizens. I have spent much time in correspondence upon subjects which have grown out of this unhappy state of things; and whenever I have been led to suppose that I could accomplish any good by it, I have on several occasions, at a sacrifice of time and money, promptly visited the frontier."<sup>1</sup>

All the difficulties that attended the enforcement of the law in Vermont, and even greater ones, confronted the Governor of New York. Here was the center of the Navy Island campaign; and here took place the destruction of the *Caroline*, and the burning of the *Sir Robert Peel*. In no part of the country was the excitement more intense, or opposition to the authorities more violent. When Mr. J. Trowbridge, the Mayor of Buffalo, made himself conspicuous in his attempts to hold in check the Patriot movements in that city, he was "hooted out of office."<sup>2</sup> When the militia were called out for the protection of the frontier, there was fear that they would go over in a body to join the Patriots on Navy Island.<sup>3</sup> When Mackenzie, on his return from the island to Buffalo, was arrested by a United States marshal, there was much excitement; and a Mr. Burton who was suspected of having informed against him "was greeted with hisses and groans, and handed round to be gazed upon by the crowd as a monstrosity."<sup>4</sup> When the notorious "Bill" Johnston and J. Ward Birge, the leaders of the Prescott invasion, were apprehended by the United States marshal, there seems to have been no place where they could be confined with safety; and even while under the strict charge of the marshal's

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1. Reports of Committees, 2 Sess. 26 Cong., No. 126, p. 5.

2. The Van Rensselaer narrative.

3. Lindsey, II, 153.

4. *Ibid.*, 163; Niles, LIII, 323.

deputies the prisoners, not without the suspicion of assistance, made good their escape.<sup>1</sup> When the Canadian authorities made requisitions on the Governor of New York for the return of certain criminals, the State Secretary replied that it could not be done unless Colonel McNab and Captain Drew be turned over to the State authorities of New York for the murder of American citizens at Fort Schlosser.<sup>2</sup> And when Alexander McLeod was charged with the murder of Durfee, we find the State of New York acting in direct opposition to the Federal Government;<sup>3</sup> and even later, when another British subject was arrested on the same charge, we find President Tyler petitioning Congress in a special message "for the immediate adoption of some suitable legislative provision on this subject."<sup>4</sup>

With such conditions existing; with the mass of the citizens on the border supporting the Patriot cause; with the press ready to denounce all attempts to interfere with the Patriot projects; and with State and Federal officials, and even members of the bench, sworn members of the Hunter lodges, a governor must necessarily risk his political existence if he would, in the face of such public sentiment, faithfully perform his duty in the execution of Federal and State law. Governor Marcy of New York seems to have attempted to steer between the demands of the Federal Government and the popular clamor. While receiving full information regarding the movements of the Patriots at Buffalo, he does not appear to have exerted himself much for the suppression of their movements; he seems to have remained silent concerning the questions involved, or to have forwarded the information received to the various Federal officers, leaving in large measure the maintenance of peace to the National Government.<sup>5</sup> Some demands were made upon Van Rens-

1. Niles, LV, 237.

2. Sir Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, July 1, 1839.

3. Mrs. C. Coleman, "Life of J. J. Crittenden," 155; Bancroft, "Life of Seward," I, 111-116.

4. President's Message, March 8, 1842.

5. Sir F. B. Head to Gov. Marcy, Dec. 13, 1837, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 302, p. 9; Head to Fox, Jan. 8, 1838, *ibid.*, 7; Marcy to Benton, Dec. 17, 1837, *ibid.*, No. 74, 36.

selaer by the State Commissary General, Henry Arcularius, for the arms taken from the State arsenal; but nothing came of it.<sup>1</sup>

When the destruction of the *Caroline* occurred some action was necessary. The Governor addressed a message to the Legislature of the State in which he said: "If it should appear that this boat was intended to be used for the purpose of keeping up an intercourse between this State and Navy Island, which is now held by an assemblage of persons in defiance of the Canadian government, this circumstance would furnish no justification for the hostile invasion of our territories and the destruction of the lives of our citizens"; and under the circumstances, he thought it would probably be necessary for the State to keep a military force for the protection of the citizens and the maintenance of peace, until an opportunity be given "to the General Government to interpose with its power."<sup>2</sup>

When General Scott arrived at Albany on his way to the front, Governor Marcy accompanied him to the Niagara frontier, where he conferred freely on all military questions with the General; and, on receiving information of the evacuation of Navy Island, he so placed the State forces as "to exert whatever legal means and moral influence" he might possess to preserve the neutrality.<sup>3</sup> Likewise when General Scott made a requisition on Governor Marcy for two battalions to check the contemplated invasion of Van Rensselaer from French Creek, the Governor "promptly caused orders to be issued to supply the troops from the nearest brigades," if Brigadier General Wool who was in that quarter "deemed their services important."<sup>4</sup> Also, when the State arsenals at Batavia, Watertown and Elizabethtown had been robbed by the Patriots, the Governor issued a proclamation offering rewards from \$100 to \$500 for the

1. Niles, LIII, 305; Van Rensselaer to Arcularius, Jan. 4, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 302, p. 10.

2. Gov. Marcy's Message, Jan. 2, 1838; Niles, LIII, 339.

3. Niles, LIII, 321; Scott to Hughes, Jan. 15, 1838, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 3 Sess., No. 181, p. 7.

4. Niles, LIII, 386.



detention and conviction of the persons who broke open the arsenals and stole the property of the State therefrom.<sup>1</sup>

Again, when the destruction of the *Sir Robert Peel* came to his notice, Governor Marcy took the initiative in investigating the affair. He went at once to the northern frontier; spent ten days or more in gathering information regarding the sentiments of the people; the nature of the Thousand Islands; the retreat of "Bill" Johnston's band; the advisability of retaining the State militia more or less permeated with sympathy for the Patriots; which information he forwarded to the General Government with the hope that the officers and troops of the Federal Government would soon come to dislodge the bands from the islands, and ensure peace on the borders.<sup>2</sup> In all these border exploits we do not find the Governor of New York taking the decided and energetic stand taken by the Governor of Vermont; evidently this turmoil was either not considered of much moment, or else, desiring to shift as much as possible of the reproach of interference upon the National Government, he thought the least said or done by himself the better for the peace and harmony of all factions within the State, and the less likelihood of any adverse political consequences.

When we turn to the State of Michigan, we find a condition even more anomalous. Governor Stephen T. Mason was a man of action; but while at times he appears to have given the Federal officers considerable information and assistance, he as surely, at other times, seems to have given aid and succor to the Patriots. On receiving the circular letter sent out by the Secretary of State on the 8th of December, 1837, Governor Mason made reply that he had no idea that any attempts would be made by the citizens of Michigan to interfere in the controversy pending between the Government of Great Britain and a portion of the peoples of the Canadas. "Should, however, the contingency contemplated by the President arise," wrote the Governor, "he

1. Gov. Marcy's Proclamation, March 1, 1838; Niles, LIV, 19.

2. Gov. Marcy to Sec. of War, June 3, 5 and 10, 1838; Governor's Proclamation, June 4; Poinsett to Van Buren, June 19, Ex. Doc. 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 440, pp. 22-27.

has my assurance that I will use every exertion to prevent any violation . . . of the relations of amity with foreign Powers and the Government of the United States."<sup>1</sup>

That the Governor was aware of the movement on foot by the Patriots there can be little doubt; for on the 28th of December he issued a proclamation warning the people against any violation of the neutrality laws; again, about the 1st of January, we find him sending word to General Handy "that he should be obliged to disperse the Patriot forces, and that they must move to some other place";<sup>2</sup> likewise on the 6th of January, when the Patriot forces were proceeding to Gibraltar, preparatory to their attack upon Fort Malden, Governor Mason intimated to General Handy that he would probably go to Gibraltar "from which point he should be obliged to disperse the troops."<sup>3</sup> We also learn that two days later the steamer Brady with the Governor and over 200 of the Michigan militia on board went to Gibraltar; but no harm seems to have come to the Patriots. It is even stated by Levi Bishop, who was a private in the militia and had been detailed to furnish each militiaman his military accoutrements, that "not one of the 400 stand of arms and ball cartridge" that had been brought down were on board when the steamer and troops returned to Detroit; but that they had been left behind for the use of the Patriots.<sup>4</sup> Again, when General Handy was on Sugar Island and threatened to have his communication with the shore cut off by the floating ice in the river, we find him calling on "the friendly Governor of Michigan" for succor; and not in vain, for the Governor came to the rescue, and helped remove the Patriot troops to the mainland.<sup>5</sup>

In his third attempt to raise a Patriot force to attack Fort Malden, General Handy claims that the Governor called out 600 of the militia for the ostensible purpose of

1. Gov. Mason to Forsyth, Dec. 21, 1837, 25 Cong. 2 Sess., No. 74, p. 42.

2. Lindsey, II, 168; Detroit *Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 30, 1837.

3. *Ibid.*, 170.

4. *Ibid.*, 174; Mich. Pioneer Collections, XXI, 522, 523; *Ibid.*, XII, 417; Farmer, "Hist. of Detroit and Mich.," 301; Wing, "Hist. of Monroe County," 210.

5. Lindsey, II, 177.

enforcing the neutrality of the United States; but that on the night on which the militia received their arms they were to stack them in the outer porch of the city hall "for the purpose of having them taken for the use of Handy's men who were to become volunteers and have their services paid for by the State"; that this project was defeated by the rashness of Sutherland who stole the arms, but lost them again the following day; and that as a result of this blunder General Brady refused for the time being to trust the militia with arms.<sup>1</sup>

While Governor Mason may have been friendly to General Handy and the Michigan Patriots under his command, he appears to have been "highly exasperated" by the conduct of Sutherland, and to have shown himself less tolerant toward the Patriots under his command.<sup>2</sup> On the 11th of February, we find him acting in unison with General Brady in forwarding an express to Washington urging the passage of the pending neutrality bill. "I regret," wrote Governor Mason to President Van Buren, "to inform you that . . . this frontier is again thrown into a state of confusion by the appearance of the force recently disbanded from Navy Island. The Patriot forces (so called) are at present scattered in detached parties in different directions, preparatory to a movement against the Canadian frontier on the 22d of the present month. Their arms and munitions of war are in boxes, and conveyed through the country as merchandise. If the existing law would permit the seizure of these boxes . . . the parties could, at once, be disarmed, and permanent tranquility restored."<sup>3</sup>

The State Legislature of Michigan, also, took up the matter and passed resolutions requesting the Governor to apply to the President for a force of United States troops, with due proportion of artillery, for the protection of the Michigan frontier.<sup>4</sup> Whether or not some of the members of the House had grown suspicious of the Governor, we find the House passing a resolution on the 24th of January, re-

1. *Ibid.*, 178, 179.

2. *Ibid.*, 179.

3. Niles, LIII, 409.

4. House Journal, 1838, Jan. 11; Senate Journal, Jan. 16.

quiring him, "with as little delay as possible" to report the quantity of ordnance, muskets, other arms and munitions of war on hand; also, the place of deposit, "and their present state of preservation."<sup>1</sup> Likewise, on March 27th, the Legislature passed a law for the reorganization and enlargement of the State militia.<sup>2</sup>

Although Governor Mason appears to have approved these acts of the Legislature; and, in his message to the succeeding Legislature, he claimed to have regretted the "violation of our neutral relations" by his "misled" citizens; and although he, at times, wrote conveying intelligence concerning the Patriots, and coöperated with General Brady in the suppression of their attempted invasions of Canada, nevertheless, there remains a strong suspicion that he remained on friendly and intimate terms with the Patriot leaders, and gave them to understand that he stood ready to assist them should an opportunity present itself.<sup>3</sup> In a letter of General Handy, written probably about the end of May, 1839, Handy says: "The Executive and many worthy officers of the State and United States have been more or less concerned in our exertions to sustain the Canadian standard"; and he predicted that they would assuredly do more in the future.<sup>4</sup> The Hunters, also, as we have seen, claimed Governor Mason not only as a friend, but as a sworn member of their lodge; and Colonel Airey of Canada, who associated some with General Brady during this period, claims that the latter said that the civil authorities of Michigan all but openly countenanced the Patriots.<sup>5</sup>

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## X. DARK DAYS.

The years 1839 and 1840 were years of discouragement to the Patriots. Though the war hawks of the Hunters

1. House Journal, 1838, Jan. 24.
2. Laws of Michigan, 1837-8, No. 57.
3. Governor's Message, Jan. 8, 1839; Diary of Wm. H. Bissell, in *Detroit News*, Oct. 16, 1904.
4. Lindsey, II, 179.
5. Col. Airey to Capt. Halkett, May 6, 1839, Parlt. Rep., Canada.

continued to shout for the fray, they failed more and more except on the occasion of some momentary alarm to gain the public ear on either side the border. The National Government still wielded its powerful influence for peace; and the State governments which at first leaned somewhat to the Patriot cause began, as the hopelessness of the Canadian project became more apparent, to coöperate with the Federal authorities in the suppression of the border raids. The utter failure of the Hunters at Prescott and Windsor, and the sentence of death or of lifelong banishment pronounced upon the prisoners taken during these attempts at invasion, acted as a damper on the ardor of the American sympathizers; while the cowardly conduct of the leaders in the presence of the foe disgusted many of the Patriots and caused them to withdraw from the enterprise. Thus the disapprobation of the mass of the people in the United States and the wisdom of the higher officials on both sides the border checked the war fever and postponed the settlement of the most irritating questions to a future time, when, full confidence having been restored between the two peoples, their representatives were ready to make such mutual concessions regarding the questions at issue as to establish a permanent peace.

Though defeated and disheartened the Patriots had no notion of abandoning their purpose to free the provinces from British control. After the defeat at Windsor, Major General Bierce gave place to H. S. Handy as Commander-in-chief of the Patriot army. On the 1st of January, 1839, Handy ordered General Donald McLeod to the West to organize a new force and prepare for another invasion of Canada.<sup>1</sup> General McLeod spent several months in the West and in April or May he returned "3,250 efficient men ready for service when called for";<sup>2</sup> at Coldwater, Missouri, were 1,500 Indians and 500 whites under the command of J. B. Stewart, formerly of the United States army; at Chicago, 560 Irish Catholics, under command of A. Smith; on the Desplain River were 250 men under Colonel

1. Lindsey, II, 236, *note*.

2. *Ibid.*, 236.

W. R. Miller; at Kankakee, 140 French Canadians under Francis Brodieau; along the Illinois and Fox Rivers were 300 Canadians, Dutch, and Irish to be commanded by Major Luddington.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the men reported by General McLeod, Handy mentions many others that were available. "Of the several tribes of Indians," says Handy, "in the states of Mississippi, Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin Territory, and west of the Mississippi River, I have a general knowledge, and for reasons hereafter to be explained, I have a social and friendly alliance with them."<sup>2</sup> All that was necessary to secure their assistance according to his views was the means to clothe and pay them. From the situation in the West, General Handy turns to Canada. "From the enrollment of the returns from the Upper Province during the last summer," he says, "which amounts to 38,000, I can safely calculate on 4,000 efficient and determined men."<sup>3</sup> The greatest difficulty connected with this new project was the lack of money. "If I should succeed," he further says, "in obtaining my anticipated means, I can purchase from a factory 30,000 stand of muskets, by paying one-fourth in advance and the remainder on credit."<sup>4</sup> But as with the previous schemes of General Handy for the invasion of Canada, so with this one, it failed to materialize; no doubt the project collapsed for want of money.

Finding it beyond their power to obtain the means necessary to equip and pay an army for the invasion of Canada, the Hunters determined upon a new line of procedure for keeping up the excitement along the border with the hope of ultimately involving the two nations in war. In a letter of General Brady to Colonel Airey who commanded the Canadian frontier, we learn that the Hunters "intend to commence operations about the time the farmers commence planting their corn, and that their plan is to send over small marauding parties to burn houses, and destroy other prop-

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1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.*, 237.

3. *Ibid.*, 237.

4. *Ibid.*, 238.

erty, in hope of producing retaliation, and thus keep up excitement until the Governments are induced to call the militia into service."<sup>1</sup> The base of operations for these border depredations was the St. Clair and St. Lawrence rivers.<sup>2</sup>

The war fever, however, which the Hunters hoped to excite was somewhat checked by a temporary adjustment of the northeast boundary dispute. Early in the year 1839 the State of Maine and the province of New Brunswick were fast approaching actual hostilities. The Government felt alarmed at the prospects of a formidable war, though little had been done during the twenty-four years of peace to meet such an exigency. Two bills were introduced in Congress, one authorizing the President to call out the militia for six instead of three months, and to accept 50,000 volunteers; the other, appropriating \$10,000,000 extra for the President's use. Major General Scott, who had been actively engaged during the winter in quieting the disturbances on the frontiers, was dispatched to the region of contention to prevent, if possible, an armed conflict. The General met with success; having procured from the two contending parties a temporary withdrawal from the territory in dispute, awaiting a final adjustment of their respective territorial claims, by negotiation, between the governments of the United States and Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

It was hoped in England that this abandonment of hostilities in Maine would have a quieting effect all along the border, and that the "general expectation and desire for war," would cease;<sup>4</sup> but in this the British were to be disappointed. Though it threw a temporary gloom over the cause, the agitations of the Hunters still continued. As the 4th of July approached there were apprehensions of another invasion; vague rumors of new depredations kept the border region in a restless condition. The eventful day passed, however, without any evil consequences; but the programme

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1. Brig. Gen. Brady to Col. Airey, May 4, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

2. Col. Airey to Capt. Halkett, May 6, 1839, *ibid.*

3. Scott's "Autobiography," II, 333-352.

4. Marquis of Normanby to Sir George Arthur, May 7, 1839; *ibid.*, May 18, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

of the Patriots for the season was carried out: small marauding bands continued their work throughout the summer and fall; bank robberies, mail robberies, the burning of houses and public buildings with now and then a murder kept alive the excitement, intensified the bitter feelings along the frontier, and augmented the spirit of retaliation.

Another disappointment that came to the Patriots during the summer of 1839 was the trial and conviction of William L. Mackenzie. Though Mackenzie had been arrested and placed under bonds early in January, 1838,<sup>1</sup> for some reason, the trial was postponed until June 20, 1839. It lasted two days. The indictment under a law of 1794, and another of 1818, charged the defendant with setting on foot a military enterprise, at Buffalo, to be carried on against Upper Canada at a time when the United States was at peace with her Majesty; with having provided the means for the prosecution of the expedition, and with having done all this within the territory and dominion, and against the peace of the United States. After the evidence for the prosecution was concluded Mackenzie addressed the jury for six hours; he defended himself with ability; he recalled the work of the French during the American Revolution; what the United States had done for, and in, Texas; he dwelt at length on the desire of the Americans to obtain Canada and rehearsed the sayings of leading Americans, and made numerous references to their writings on the subject; he even appealed to their sympathy and love of freedom. "I think it hard," he said, "to be singled out and dragged here at this time; but as I require an asylum in your country, I am bound, and I do sincerely wish to pay the utmost respect to your laws. Indeed it is admiration of your free institutions, which, strange as it may seem, has brought me here to-day." The jury, however, after three hours' consideration brought in the verdict of "guilty." He was sentenced to be confined in the county jail of Monroe for eighteen months, and pay a fine of ten dollars.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Lindsey, II, 163.

2. *Ibid.*, 244-252.



Later in the year, General Rensselaer Van Rensselaer was brought to trial; convicted of having violated the neutrality law, and sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of \$250.<sup>1</sup> This conviction and imprisonment of the leading Patriots, and the trial of numerous other persons who had taken an active part in the cause, greatly incensed the Hunters. Their sentiments are well expressed in a letter from Brigadier General McLeod to Rensselaer Van Rensselaer while in Albany prison. "Let the political sages of this great Republic," says McLeod, "palliate or varnish over the verdict of the United States court, as plausibly as they please, yet the law which dooms the Canadian Patriots to fine and imprisonment, is, to say the least, a foul blot on the pages of the statute books of the Federal Government; and a deep stain on the formerly fair beauties of the National Constitution. This Sentence, openly and decidedly, approves the invasion of your country, and the murder of your fellow citizens at Schlosser—and of the murders committed by Prince at Windsor, the execution at London, U. C., Niagara, Toronto, and Kingston. But worse than all, the transportation of free-born American citizens to Van Diemen's Land for life."<sup>2</sup>

During the fall the clouds seem to lift somewhat. News reached the Patriots from England that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared in the House of Commons that the Canadian revolution had already cost Great Britain upwards of \$10,000,000, and that the continuance of such expense could not long be borne. They further learned that John G. Parker, and seven other leading Patriots who had been banished by Governor Arthur had been liberated in England, and were on their return home.<sup>3</sup> Word also came that Governor Sir John Colborne had been recalled because of the severity with which he treated the French Canadians engaged in the revolution, and that Governor Arthur had been strongly censured for having executed the brave patriots, Lout and Matthews; and it was confidently expected

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1. Van Rensselaer Narrative, Bonney, II, 112-113.

2. McLeod to Van Rensselaer, Nov. 20, 1839; *ibid.*, II, 115.

3. Lindsey, II, 233-235.

that he too would soon be dismissed and follow Governor Colborne.

This with other information of a gratifying character was embodied in a circular entitled, "Glorious News for the Patriots," and sent out, from the Safety Committee Room, Aug. 18, 1839, for the encouragement of the Patriots. The views of the committee concerning the attitude of England toward the provinces is thus summarized:

"The frankness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in stating that the Canadas could not be long held by Great Britain, under such heavy yearly expense; the manner Messrs. O'Connell and Leader, both in the confidence of the ministry, advocate in the House of Commons the course pursued by the Lower Canadians; the certain dismissal of Governor Colborne, in consequence of ill-treating the French Canadians, suspected of being concerned in the rebellion;—the strong language made use of in the House of Commons by Mr. Charles Buller, relative to Governor Arthur's conduct in executing Lout and Matthews;—the daily censure heaped upon the latter functionary by the authorities in England, for the tyranny which has characterized all his past acts (whenever he had patriot prisoners in his power);—the liberation of that useful and leading patriot, John G. Parker, and others;—the restoring to office of the Lower Canadian judges, dismissed by Governor Colborne for allowing bail to patriot prisoners confined under Sir John's martial law;—the attention paid to Lord Durham's official report in England (which is most unquestionably in favor of the discontented in the Canadas);—with many other similar facts, all go to strengthen the Committee in their well-grounded belief, that whatever those who wield the power in Great Britain may openly say relative to holding the Canadas, they very prudently, and with an eye to their alarming troubles at home, secretly desire to rid themselves of these expensive colonies, the assertion of all the tory tyrants therein to the contrary notwithstanding."

"We shall no doubt be told,"

says the committee with reference to the attitude of their own government,

"That we are engaged in a cause calculated to create ill feeling between Great Britain and the United States, that may ultimately bring on a national war between those two powers. Anticipating such an objection by some few citizens against the patriot cause,

the Committee, in reply, do not hesitate to say, that Great Britain, with her alarming difficulties at home, will not venture a war with the United States Government, in consequence of citizens of the latter taking possession of a territory four thousand miles from England, which costs the latter millions of dollars yearly more than its worth, and which they no doubt wish to get rid of; but suppose on the other hand, that Queen Victoria should be advised to declare war against Uncle Sam, pray tell us, ye wise men, what she would gain by such a step. The Committee say, nothing whatever. What than would she lose? All her North American Colonies. Besides, would not a war firmly unite the Southern and Northern States? Would not the question relative to Maine, and other disputes, be finally settled in less than a month after a declaration of war? Would the Canadas remain a day under Great Britain? Nay; but why dwell on this subject?—there is no danger, if danger it can be called, of such being the case.”

The Committee was not at the time decided on the policy to be pursued in the future, but for the time being it was thought advisable to reorganize on a more secret basis, and that no place taken possession of in the Provinces should “be permanently held” while so large a military force continued in the Canadas; and while the authorities there believed that the home government desired further defense of the colonies.<sup>1</sup>

During the following months representatives from the various Hunter lodges met in convention at Lockport, N. Y. Here on the 28th of September eighteen delegates convened “to consult upon the plan that should be adopted by the ‘Patriots’ to carry their wishes into effect.” Four of the delegates were from the Canadian lodges. From them it was ascertained that considerable disaffection still existed there; that many arms had found their way into the provinces and had been concealed in convenient places for the use of the Patriots when needed; and that in case of an attack upon Canada “700 men, free of expense,” could be furnished. From the American delegates it was learned that 3,000 men could be relied upon for making another invasion. As for equipment, it was stated that 700 stand of arms

1. Hunter circular found in enclosure of Sir Geo. Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Oct. 15, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

was at Buffalo; that a quantity of arms and six pieces of cannon were back of Detroit; while at Oswego there was a considerable quantity of ammunition and some cannon. The better portion of the delegates thought that the system of burning houses should be abandoned; but that the burning of "the barns of the Tories" might be continued to good advantage. It was also decided to postpone "the destruction of the English church at Toronto, until its completion." The "Dunham meetings," which had begun in Canada for the purpose of advocating the union of the provinces and certain reforms, were highly commended by the Hunters, "as it enabled the 'patriots' in the provinces not only to assemble publicly but privately also"; and it was advised that they should be held at as many places as possible.

And finally it was decided to make another invasion of Canada. Detroit was again selected as the place of departure; and the assembling of the forces and the munitions of war for this expedition was to begin "as soon as the canal-boats should be laid up." It was mentioned as their plan, that so soon as the Patriot army landed at Windsor, the disaffected in the various districts of the provinces should rise for the purpose of distracting the attention of the Government, and preventing its sending troops to the West. It was thought that if the Patriots could make a stand for a few days, they would be joined by great numbers of persons from the States who were only waiting for such an opportunity to go over to Canada. It was said that Generals McLeod and Sutherland had already left for the West to make preparation for the attack; and that Lett had gone to Oswego to make arrangements for the destruction of the steamer *Great Britain*. It was expected that she might be detained in that port over night by stress of weather when her destruction might easily be accomplished.<sup>1</sup>

But enthusiasm for actual invasion had subsided; plans might be formulated, and rumors of new raids might for the moment harrass the border populations; but no body of men could be found who were ready openly to meet the armed

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1. Report of spy found in enclosure of Sir Geo. Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Oct. 15, 1839, Parl. Rep., Canada.

forces of the British which were established along the entire Canadian frontier; though incendiarism and robbery seem to have been common during the years 1839 and 1840. On April 14, 1839, we learn that the British at Prescott had fired upon the steamer *United States* on her first trip out for the season;<sup>1</sup> on the 22d instant, the American schooner *Gerard* while at Port Colborne on her way through the Welland canal, was boarded by Canadian militiamen who insulted the captain and committed certain depredations;<sup>2</sup> on the 25th instant the British steamer *Traveller* was outraged by Americans while lying at Charlotte, New York; while on the 28th instant the mails were robbed near Kingston by Canadian refugees or their American sympathizers.<sup>3</sup> In June several violations of a similar character took place;<sup>4</sup> while in July the incendiary laid in ashes many a building of his neighboring Tory;<sup>5</sup> again on September 17th, we are informed that "some robberies of a daring kind have been committed within the last fortnight on the rivers St. Clair and St. Lawrence; and four days ago the Episcopal church at Chippewa, on the Niagara frontier was burned by incendiaries," who were supposed to have come from the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Now and then throughout the winter and the following year similar depredations were committed, though the instances recorded are fewer in number and pertain more to property of a public nature such as the attempt to destroy Brock's monument in April, 1840;<sup>7</sup> and to blow up the locks in the Welland canal in September, 1841.<sup>8</sup>

Many things during these years conspired to embarrass and hinder the Hunters in their raids across the border: the military organization of Canada had been greatly increased since the outbreak of the rebellion, and the forces were so

1. Niles, LVI, 129.

2. *Ibid.*, LVI, 180.

3. *Ibid.*, LVI, 306.

4. *Ibid.*, LVI, 225, 243, 264.

5. *Ibid.*, LVI, 306, 320, 322.

6. Sir Arthur to Marquis of Normanby, Sept. 17, 1839.

7. Sir Arthur to Lord John Russell, Apr. 24, 1840.

8. Johns Hopkins Series, XVI, 115.

well distributed that no project of importance could be undertaken in Canada by the refugees without their being discovered and summarily dealt with; the United States, also, maintained a military force along the border which, with the assistance of the numerous federal officers on the frontier, kept a vigilant watch and prevented the assembling of any organized band of Patriots; the courts, too, were busy during the years of 1839 and 1840 in dealing out justice to all violators of the neutrality laws. The readjustment of the provinces which was beginning in Canada for the moment released the political strain imposed upon the Government by the rebellion; while in the United States all other questions for the time being were either brushed aside by the whirlwind that characterized the presidential campaign of 1840, or swept into the vortex of the movement.

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## XI. POLITICS.

Upon few Presidents have more unpopular duties devolved than upon Martin Van Buren. The financial panic of 1837 with the relapse of 1839 held the country in its melancholy grip throughout the four years of his administration: it produced political and partisan differences that for the time concealed the real causes of the disaster; and led to such demands upon the Government as to tax the courage of the Executive to its full extent. Closely associated with the panic and in large measure growing out of the financial disturbances of the times, arose the measures that resulted, after many series of tedious debates, in the establishment of the independent treasury system. The cessation of the distribution of the surplus revenues among the states furnished another ground of popular discontent; while the atrocities of an Indian war which lasted for seven years (1835-'42), resulting in the loss of many lives and the expenditure of millions of dollars, contributed to the cares that rested heavily upon the man of the White House. The Texas question and the Canadian situation also furnished fertile material for differences that taxed the skill and cour-

age of the Administration to its utmost; and resulted in much political disaffection.

In the midst of so many difficulties Van Buren bore himself bravely. The condition into which the country was thrown by the panic led to the calling of an extra session of Congress. In his message to this Congress the President took the ground that the Government could not help the people earn their living; but that it could refuse to aid the deception that paper was gold, and that value could arise without labor. "To avoid every necessary interference," wrote Van Buren, "with the pursuits of the citizens, will result in more benefit than to adopt measures which would only assist limited interests, and are eagerly, but perhaps naturally, sought for, under the pressure of necessary circumstances."<sup>1</sup> The clear logic and wise counsel of the President, however, appeared cool and heartless to a people who were suffering from financial prostration; and who had hoped to receive from the new Administration some measures for their relief.

The moneyed class was no less irritated because of the Administration's attitude towards the banks. In his message to Congress Van Buren called attention to the law of 1836 which required the Secretary of the Treasury to discontinue the use of such banks "as should at any time refuse to redeem their notes in specie." As all the banks had stopped such payment it was necessary that some other means be provided for the safe deposit of the revenues. To the demand for the reestablishment of a National bank he replied that quite the contrary should be done; that the fiscal concerns of the Government should be completely separated from all individuals and corporations and placed under the immediate supervision of federal officers,—in short, he asked for nothing less than the "independent treasury," which was adopted during the last year of his administration.<sup>2</sup>

The position taken by Van Buren in refusing the proffers of Texas for union with the states checked temporarily the itching of the Democracy for territorial aggrandizement; and gave offence to the slave power. While the policy of the Executive toward the movements upon the Canadian border

1. President's Message, Sept. 4, 1837.

2. *Ibid.*; U. S. Statutes at Large, 1840.

was, in like manner, received with bitter resentment by those who aspired to the freedom of the Canadas, and the establishment of republican government throughout the length and breadth of the North American continent.

As might be expected, the attitude of the new President with reference to these serious problems furnished excellent material for his political opponents. Public sentiment expressed itself at the ballot-box. Even so early as the summer and fall of 1837 the elections went heavily against the Administration, though in 1838 there seems to have been a partial recovery. New York became the center of the political contention. Here the gubernatorial election of 1838 was a life and death struggle with the Democratic party. The whole immense patronage of the State depended on the issue. Governor Marcy and Lieutenant Governor Tracy were the unanimous choice of the Democrats for a fourth term; while Wm. H. Seward and Luther Bradish became the Whig candidates for the same offices. Besides national questions, several issues of local importance came before the people of the State for settlement. The intensity of the political contest gave the Hunters an opportunity to manifest their disapproval of Governor Marcy's policy toward the Canadian question. We have already shown the attitude of the Governor in this matter: that while he pursued a hesitating policy at the beginning, he became more active after the burning of the *Sir Robert Peel*, even entering into hearty coöperation with President Van Buren in attempting to enforce the neutrality laws. As a consequence the Patriots voted against him. The election resulted in favor of the Whig candidates. The heavy Whig majorities in the western and northern counties where the Hunters were strongest surprised every one. Chautauqua gave about 2,200 majority; Erie 2,600; and Genesee more than 3,000; while Jefferson county, which the previous year had elected Democratic members, this year gave the Whig ticket a majority of about 600.<sup>1</sup>

1. J. D. Hammond, "Political History of New York," II, 486, 487; J. S. Jenkins, "Lives of the Governors of N. Y.," 465; E. M. Shepard, "Martin Van Buren," 311; E. S. Brooks, "The Story of N. Y.," 222; E. H. Roberts, "New York," II, 595; F. Bancroft, "The Life of Seward," I, 72; *Democratic Review*, Jan., 1839, p. 8.



Throughout the campaign Mackenzie had held meetings in many of the larger cities in behalf of the Canadian cause. Only at Washington did he receive the cold shoulder. There the Administration used its influence against him. Two of the leading papers refused to print the announcement of his intended meeting. Some of the heads of the Departments even sent notes to their clerks ordering them not to attend the meeting.<sup>1</sup> This conduct on the part of those at the White House only increased the bitter feelings of the Patriots; and their resentment was manifest at the polls. Not only in New York but in other states the political influence of the Hunters was apparent. "Along all the rest of the frontier," says the *Democratic Review*, "where the reverse was the case, that influence unquestionably has told with a very serious effect against the Administration."<sup>2</sup>

The political hostility which manifested itself toward the Democratic administration in 1838 was renewed in 1839 and found full fruition in 1840. The partial industrial relapse of 1839 which befell the first manifestations of relief from the panic made all attempts at political recovery on the part of the Democrats impossible. "Woe to Martin Van Buren," the war cry of the Hunters, was the key note of the campaign.<sup>3</sup> The Whigs under the leadership of General William Henry Harrison, the war veteran of 1812, and John Tyler, began the log cabin and hard cider campaign with an assurance that portended a sweeping victory. In the election that followed Harrison received 234 electoral votes, and Van Buren sixty. Thus ended one of the most picturesque campaigns ever held in the United States.

New York rolled up 13,300 more votes for Harrison than for Van Buren; "but a large part of this plurality, perhaps all, came from the counties on the northern and western borders."<sup>4</sup> Here again are found strong evidences of the Hunter influence.<sup>5</sup> The imprisonment of Mackenzie and

1. Lindsey, II, 225; Niles, LV, 193.

2. *Democratic Review*, Jan., 1839, p. 8.

3. Bonney, "Historical Gleanings," II, 126.

4. Shepard, "Martin Van Buren," 334.

5. *Ibid.*; Mackenzie, "Life and Times of Van Buren," 282; "Reminiscences of Charles Durand," 390; Jenkins, "Life of Silas Wright," 127; Niles, LIX, 198; Lindsey, II, 270; Sir Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Feb. 19, 1839.

Van Rensselaer, and the severe treatment of the former during confinement, called loudly for vengeance; and although the President finally yielded to the influence of petitions signed by 300,000 persons for his release, it came too late to change the vote of the Patriots on the border.<sup>1</sup>

Another element that contributed to the large Whig vote in the Hunter districts was the dismissal of General Solomon Van Rensselaer, the father of the Patriot leader at Navy Island, from the Albany post-office. The Administration had accused Postmaster Van Rensselaer of "con-  
niving at, and abetting his son in the insurrectionary movement in the provinces."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, early in March an article appeared in one of the Albany papers stating that the General had "tendered his services as senior major general of the New York State infantry to the Commander-in-chief in the event of a war between England and America."<sup>3</sup> Whether because of this seeming interest in his son's command in the Patriot army, or because of political exigencies we find the old general receiving word about the middle of March, 1839, by direction of the President, that "the Public Interests will be promoted by a change of Post Master at Albany."<sup>4</sup> General Van Rensselaer had held the Albany post-office ever since Monroe's administration; and this removal was made use of by the opposition party to the injury of Van Buren. Van Rensselaer took an active part in the Whig campaign. He was elected a delegate to the Whig national convention, and played an important part in securing the nomination of his old comrade in war.<sup>5</sup> During the campaign he travelled extensively throughout Ohio and northern New York, where he wielded the whole influence of his respected character for the election of his old friend, and against the man who had thrust his son into prison and dismissed himself from an office which had been given him for his heroism in the field—an office which he had been al-

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1. Lindsey, II, 253-268.

2. Bonney, II, 106.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, 109.

5. *Ibid.*, 117, 118.

lowed to retain so many years irrespective of party politics.<sup>1</sup> The presence of the senior Van Rensselaer was everywhere the occasion of a large and enthusiastic gathering; and the 13,300 plurality vote in New York was due, in some measure at least, to his influence, and that of the Patriot followers of his less distinguished son.

Although the Whig party was ready to avail itself of the prejudices of the Hunters in the campaign of 1840, it was in reality no friend to the Canadian cause. Even Seward, who had been elected Governor of New York in 1838, acted in sympathy with Van Buren on the border difficulties;<sup>2</sup> and when the British minister at Washington called on the Government of the United States for the liberation of Alexander McLeod, who had been arrested in New York on the charge of murder and arson in connection with the destruction of the *Caroline*,<sup>3</sup> the President acted in unison with Governor Seward in maintaining the right of the State of New York to bring McLeod to trial in her own courts.<sup>4</sup> With the change of administration in 1841, the British minister immediately renewed the demand for the release of McLeod on the ground that the acts for which he had been arrested were of a "public character, planned and executed by her Majesty's colonial authorities."<sup>5</sup> Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, under the new Administration, was inclined to the English view, but acknowledged that the President had no power to stop a proceeding in a State court. He sent Attorney-General Crittenden to consult with Governor Seward regarding the demands of Great Britain; the advisability of a change of venue for the prisoner; the need of retaining skilful and eminent counsel; and to press upon the Governor the earnest desire of the President to have the case brought before the Supreme Court of the United States.

The people of New York, however, were of a different mind. The prejudice there against Great Britain was in-

1. *Ibid.*, 194.

2. F. W. Seward, "Life of W. H. Seward," 401.

3. Nov. 12, 1840.

4. F. W. Seward, "Life of W. H. Seward," 519.

5. Fox to Webster, Webster's Works, VI, 247, 248.

tense. The Democrats in 1838 had paid the penalty of fulfilling international duties in opposition to this prejudice; and Governor Seward was not insensible to the popular verdict. The sentiments of the border population of the State were, no doubt, expressed by Mr. Levi Hubbel in the State Legislature when he said: "There is not power enough—there is not gold enough in Great Britain to take this man's body out of the county of Niagara, until he shall have gone through the form of a trial."<sup>1</sup> The people of New York who had sympathized with the Patriots, neither knew nor cared a fig either for constitutional or international law. They regarded the arrest of McLeod as a rare opportunity to take vengeance on one who, it was believed, had made it dangerous for them to participate in the revolutionary movement. When an attempt was made (Jan. 27, 1841) to bail McLeod out of the Lockport jail, several hundred citizens met and demanded that he should not be liberated. His bondsmen were required to withdraw their names from the bail, and did so. According to a correspondent of the times, a cannon was brought in front of the court house about midnight, "and commenced firing, and made the glass fly in the court house, to the amusement of the *patriots*." "What must have been McLeod's feelings," says our writer, "not knowing what was going on during the seven hours the court house was full?"<sup>2</sup>

The arrest and retention of McLeod greatly incensed the English people; and their Government, after demanding his release, entreated the President "to take into his most deliberate consideration the serious nature of the consequences which must ensue from a rejection of this demand."<sup>3</sup> On being refused her request Great Britain began to prepare for war. In a private letter of Mr. Harcourt to Mr. Webster he said: "As to McLeod's case, I assure you there is in this country but *one* feeling on the subject among all parties and all ranks, that, if he should be condemned, it would be such an outrage on international justice, that we must throw

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1. Apr. 17, 1841, Niles, LX, 135.

2. Niles, LIX, 304, 384; Seward's Works, II, 551, 552.

3. Webster's Works, VI, 249.

away the scabbard at once."<sup>1</sup> Word also reached Webster from the United States minister at Paris that a large portion of the British fleet in the Mediterranean was to prepare to move to Halifax; that unusual energy was being displayed in the English navy yard; and that fourteen steam frigates would be upon the American coast by June, if necessary.<sup>2</sup> Even France grew solicitous for a season, fearing that in case war should break out between Great Britain and the United States she could not long remain out of the contest.<sup>3</sup> By the middle of the summer Congress, also, became quite alive to the situation. Lake defenses, improvement of harbors, fortifications, war steamers, enlargement of the navy became topics of interest; while the attitude of the Administration with reference to McLeod and the Caroline affairs was debated in Congress with considerable vehemence.<sup>4</sup>

On the border the excitement was intense. After the decision of the Supreme Court of New York refusing to dismiss the McLeod case from the State courts, the *Montreal Courier* declared that "the time has now arrived when there can be no more dallying about the matter; and if our neighbors will persist in their assumptions, let them take the consequences, for however much we should deprecate a war with them under different circumstances, the sooner we decide this question the better. If war must come, let it come at once, for it is very evident unless we settle all our disputes now, it will only be putting off the evil day to a period when we may not be so well prepared to deal with our wilful and headstrong neighbors."<sup>5</sup>

The possibility of war gave courage to the Hunters, and they began anew their work of intrigue. Early in July we find President Tyler addressing a note to Webster concerning them; and the steps he had taken to secure information regarding their movements, with the necessary precautions to prevent, if possible, further disturbances upon the border.<sup>6</sup>

1. March 12, 1841. Curtis, "Life of Webster," II, 62, *note*.

2. Gen. Cass to Webster, March 5, 1841, *ibid.*, 62.

3. *Ibid.*, March 15, p. 63.

4. *Congressional Globe*, 27—1, Vol. VIII, *see index*; U. S. Stat., V, 460.

5. Niles, LX, 368.

6. L. G. Tyler, "Letters and Times of the Tylers," II, 211.

Later in the month Webster in a private note informed the President that he had learned, "pretty fully" the real objects and plans of the Hunter lodges which existed "all along the Northern frontier, from Maine to Wisconsin." According to Webster's note, the Hunters were in constant correspondence with the disaffected in Canada; and that these disaffected persons often came over to harangue them in their secret meetings; that they did not expect to invade Canada with any hope of success unless war should break out between Canada and the United States, an event they desired "*above all things*"; that to bring about war they were ready to join "in any violence, or outbreak," even to attempt violence upon McLeod on his way from prison to the place where the court might sit, or after the trial, in case he should be discharged by the court. He further stated the Hunters numbered not less than 10,000, that officers were already designated for the command of their volunteers; and that in case of war they were "to unite themselves to the disaffected in Canada, declare the Province free and set up another Government." "It becomes us," wrote Webster, "to take all possible care that no personal violence be used on McLeod. If a mob should kill him, war would be inevitable, in ten days. Our duty, is . . . to have officers all along the frontier, in whom we have confidence, and let them understand that there is danger."<sup>1</sup>

The trial of McLeod was set for the 27th of September. In the meantime there was much disquietude along the border. Vague rumors of a plot to assassinate the prisoner were circulated: that for this purpose the state arsenals had been forced; several field-pieces secured, and secreted in canal-boats; that supplies of ammunition had been obtained in New York City and conveyed to the vicinity of Utica; that it was the intention of the conspirators to assemble at Whitestown where McLeod was confined, surround the jail, demand his delivery from the keeper, and, in case of refusal, to affect an entrance by means of artillery, seize McLeod, and instantly "lynch" him.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, it

1. C. H. Van Tyne, "Letters of Daniel Webster," 232.

2. Seward's Works, II, 578.

was rumored that the Canadians were forming a plot to rescue McLeod from prison and abduct him out of the country;<sup>1</sup> and there were found in the prisoner's bed a small saw, two small files, two chisels, and other means for effecting his escape.<sup>2</sup>

As the day of the trial approached the excitement grew more intense. With the news that the Canadians were building strong vessels on the Lakes preparatory to a sudden blow upon the United States, came the report that the secret organizations on the American side were preparing to disturb the peace with Great Britain.<sup>3</sup> With the information that James Grogan, of Lockport, had been seized near St. Albans, Vermont; wounded by a bayonet; gagged, and dragged across the border by a party said to be composed of dragoons and volunteers from Canada, came also the news of the Hunters' attempt to blow up the locks on the Welland canal; and of their attempt, from Navy Island, to fire upon the British steamships, *Minos* and *Toronto*, with a field-piece which had been taken from the American shore for that purpose.<sup>4</sup>

Beneath this large amount of rumor danger seemed to lurk. It seemed to those in authority that we were treading upon half-smothered embers which might burst forth at any moment into a dangerous flame. This intense solicitude, however, begot prudence. It was under these circumstances that President Tyler issued his proclamation, already referred to in a previous chapter, calling upon the Hunters to 'disband.'<sup>5</sup> At the same time General Scott was informed that these disturbances on the frontier must be suppressed, otherwise we should "ere long be engaged in an inglorious warfare, of incursions and violations, ending in general hostilities."<sup>6</sup> Governor Seward, likewise, took precautionary steps. A guard of thirty persons was stationed at the jail

1. Niles, LX, 53.

2. *Ibid.*, 88.

3. Johns Hopkins Univ. Series, XVI, 115.

4. F. W. Seward, "Life of W. H. Seward," 566.

5. Chap. x.

6. Johns Hopkins Univ. Studies, XVI, 118.

to protect McLeod until his case should be decided; and a volunteer infantry company of a hundred men was enlisted, organized, equipped and held in readiness by the sheriff for any emergency; while General Scott ordered a company of regular troops at Rome to move to Utica at once should their services be needed; and Brigadier General Wool was to be present at the trial to give assistance and advice to the sheriff whenever called upon.<sup>1</sup>

Finally the day of trial arrived: the Court of Oyer and Terminer was duly opened, Judge Gridley presiding; and on the 4th of October, the case was opened. Utica was full of visitors and strangers. Mackenzie was there, so was General Sutherland, and other participators in the frontier troubles. The court room throughout the trial, which lasted from the 4th to the 12th of the month, was crowded, but perfect order was maintained; and when the jury brought in a verdict of "not guilty," "all was hushed and quiet—no excitement visible anywhere."<sup>2</sup> McLeod, under the Governor's direction, was safely and quietly taken to the frontier; placed on board the steamboat *Princess Victoria*, and taken to Montreal, where he was received with open arms and loud cheers by the immense throng that awaited him.<sup>3</sup>

McLeod's acquittal relieved the strained situation; the war fever rapidly abated. One source of international embarrassment was ended, and the way opened for the friendly negotiations of Webster and Ashburton at Washington, a few months afterwards, where wisdom and diplomacy prevented two great nations from breaking the peace of the world. Neither country desired war; what each wanted so far as anything savoring of aggressiveness was concerned was to be let alone. Now that the real danger was passed England ceased her preparations for war, and gradually reduced the British force on the Lakes; and the United States, now that the war scare had collapsed, soon turned her attention to inland commerce and to politics instead of frontier defences.

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1. Seward's Works, II, 560-586.

2. Niles, LXI, 119-125.

3. *Ibid.*, 128.



Though both nations were ready to enter into friendly conferences regarding their differences, there still remained on either side the Lakes a war party ready to fan the flame of discord. On the last of November we learn from Mr. Fox that the Hunters still threatened the provinces with hostile incursions from "within the frontier of the United States";<sup>1</sup> while early in the following year a conspiracy was formed by the Hunters to reenact the McLeod fiasco. The intended visit of Lord Ashburton to the United States was a matter of considerable interest to the people of both countries early in the year 1842. On its success depended the settlement of several very delicate questions. The chances of an international quarrel were likely to soon pass away, and with them the opportunities of the Hunters to free the Canadas. Just before the arrival of Lord Ashburton to this country it was arranged with one John Sherman Hogan, a Canadian journalist who resided at Hamilton, that he should be arrested in New York as a party to the Caroline outrage; and after his committal, he was to make a public confession of having been a participator in the affair, and throw himself on the protection of the British Government. Hogan was twice arrested at Rochester; but after having undergone a judicial investigation he was discharged without even being compelled as McLeod had been to undergo a term of imprisonment.<sup>2</sup>

This was the last expiring effort of the filibusters to bring about a war. Lord Ashburton arrived on the 4th of April and on the 9th of August, 1842, the Treaty of Washington was signed whereby all matters of difference between Great Britain and the United States were amicably adjusted. In Canada the agitation and turmoil that accompanied the readjustment of the provinces gradually wore away; the prisoners who had been committed to confinement or banishment on account of political offences were finally liberated, and, in due course of time, restored to political and constitutional favor; while in the United States the return of commercial and industrial prosperity lifted the dark cloud

1. No. 20, Notes to State Department.

2. Lindsey, II, 280.

of discontent that had enveloped the nation throughout the whole period of the Canadian troubles; and opened to the unemployed class new opportunities for personal achievement and financial aggrandizement. The brief excitement that surrounded the Oregon question several years later seemed, for a season, to afford hope to the Hunter that he would again find employment for his talents; but that danger too passed away, and with it the last of the Hunters, though his legitimate successor has been known to us in more recent times under the guise of the Fenian raider.<sup>1</sup>

1. Dent, "The Upper Canadian Rebellion," II, 300.

ERRATA.—In preceding pages, note following corrections:

Page 1, note 2. For "He worked his way through college," etc., read: "All his studies have been pursued in resident work at Michigan University," except one summer in Chicago University.

Page 18. For "Biddle" read "Bidwell."

Pages 18, 22, 30, 65, 97, 98. For "Lout" read "Lount."

Page 30. For "Von Egmont" read "Van Egmond."

Page 32, note 1. For "Wm. Symon" read "Wm. Lyman."

Page 44. For "Mount Clements" read "Mount Clemens."

Page 45, note 6. For "J. Price" read "J. Prince."

Page 51. For "George" Van Rensselaer read "Henry" Van Rensselaer.

Page 66. For "Pamela" read "Pamelia."

Page 67. For "Paul Fry" read "Paul Pry."

Page 73. For "Parker," collector of duties at Buffalo, read "Pierre A. Barker."

On p. 18, John Montgomery is spoken of as thought put to death. His death sentence in 1838 was commuted to transportation for life. In 1843 he was pardoned, and he returned to Toronto, where he continued to reside for many years. He died at Barrie, Ont., Oct. 31, 1879, in his 96th year.

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1837

# AT A MEETING of the Executive Com-

mittee of 13, on Canadian affairs, held on Monday, the 25th of December; pre-  
sent the entire Committee.

The following preamble and resolutions were offered and unanimously adopted  
WHEREAS it has been represented to this Committee from good authority, that individ-  
als attached to the government of Upper Canada, in Upper Canada, have threatened to violat  
the neutrality of our territory and to attack the city of Buffalo, for the frank and manly ex-  
pression of the sentiments of its citizens on the present controversy in the Canadas, an  
whereas the duty of defending our soil from invasion and insult devolves upon the citizens o  
the country from whom all law and authority emanate.  
Therefore, Resolved: That this Committee, pledge themselves to raise and arm a volunteer  
corps of one hundred men, to hold themselves ready at a minute's notice, to protect the neu  
trality of the American territory, and to defend this city from any attack, whether open or ec  
vert, which the Royalists in Canada or their abettors may feel inclined to make.

Resolved, That the services of the said corps, when organized, be tendered to the Comm  
Council of the city, to perform such duties as the said Council may request.

- Ebenezer Johnson,
- John Wilkeson,
- Horatio Seymour, Jr.,
- Francis G. Maey,
- Emanuel Ruden.

- George P. Barker,
- Joseph G. Masten,
- John M. Bradford,
- Alonzo Raynor,

- Luman A. Phelps,
- Seth C. Hawley,
- Joseph Stringham,
- Henry K. Smith,



## ILLUSTRATIVE DOCUMENTS

BEARING ON

# THE CANADIAN REBELLION

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From the collections of the Buffalo Historical Society a few documents, handbills and pictures have been selected for reproduction herewith, by way of local illustration of the foregoing historical study by Mr. Tiffany.

One of the handbills gives the resolutions adopted by the "Executive Committee of 13," at a meeting held on Christmas Day of 1837. That committee, to which Mr. Tiffany has referred (p. 27), was named, according to the *Buffalo Journal* and the *Commercial Advertiser* of concurrent dates, not at the meeting of December 5th, but at an adjourned meeting on the evening of December 12th, a great gathering of citizens in the old Eagle-street theater, on which occasion William L. Mackenzie spoke at length. The committee was made up of reputable and representative men, who pledged themselves, as the resolutions show, not to aid or abet any invasion of Canada, but to "protect the neutrality of the American territory," and to defend their home city from attack. This attitude towards the promoters of the disturbance is very different from that attributed to the people of Buffalo by certain Canadian writers on the subject.

On the proceedings of the "Patriot Lodge of the city of Buffalo" the newspapers of the time throw no light. The handbill which we reproduce illustrates how the Patriot war engendered feeling which showed itself in local politics; the Patriot sympathizers lining up against George P. Barker, candidate for Mayor, and no doubt assisting in his defeat. The Mayor of Buffalo at that time was elected by the Board of Aldermen, which body, on March 13, 1838, chose Ebenezer Walden for Mayor.

The contemporary cartoon of the British invasion of Navy Island, and the engraving of the cutting out of the *Caroline*, require little if any comment. No one with a sense of humor can read of the Navy Island affair without seeing how ridiculous it was; that there were those who saw this aspect of the "war," even when excitement ran highest, is made evident by this crude but not wholly unedifying cartoon of almost seventy years ago. The original lithograph is some 12 by 16 inches in size, crudely colored. The artist's identity is disguised under the signature of "Hogarth," and beneath the picture is printed the following alleged "extract from Col. McNab's dispatches to Gov. Head":

"At length, finding we had silenced the cannon of the enemy, our brave band determined upon endeavoring to land. All hearts were nerved for the contest, and our invincible corps stepped briskly into the boats, aided however by occasional pricks from the officers' swords. In approaching Navy Island a tremendous guttural noise was heard from an immense porker, who, surrounded by her infant family, came fiercely bristling up to dispute our passage. Our men gave way, but on my representing to them the glory to be obtained by so valiant an achievement, they again rallied and succeeded in taking the entire force of the Island prisoners, consisting of one old horse, a sow and two pigs, and an old woman."

The picture of the burning of the *Caroline*, the original being some 20 inches wide, was published in 1838, with the title as here reproduced, and the certificate of Messrs. Appleby, Harding and Wells that "the above is a true representation of the scene as presented to us immediately after the *Caroline* was towed into the stream, set on fire and left to drift."

The other handbills and poster proclamations here reproduced illustrate various phases of the excitement of the time. It will be noted that the name of the only known victim of the *Caroline* affray is spelled, on the poster announcing his funeral, "Durphy"; the published accounts usually have it "Durfee."

Especially illustrative of Mr. Tiffany's purpose to show the relations between State and Federal authority, as exercised in this affair, is the following letter, written by Gen. Scott to Gen. David Burt. It is also given in facsimile, from the original, in the possession of the Buffalo Historical Society:

DEAR GENERAL: I put a note under cover to you. In the absence of the Governor & Adjutant General, I beg you to charge yourself, as the highest *State*-authority, with the recovery of the *State* guns, muskets & ammunition. I do not wish the *U. States* to have anything directly to do with this business, tho' I will approve all you may do, in behalf of the State.

Yrs, truly,

Buffalo, Jan. 25, 1838.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

Dear General

I put a note under cover to you. In the  
absence of the Governor & Adjutant General, I beg you to  
charge yourself, as the highest State authority, with the recovery  
of the State funds, markets & ammunition. Do not wish the U States  
to have any thing exactly to do with this business; this I will  
advise all you may do, in behalf of the State.

Yrs: truly

Winfield Scott  
Buffalo, Jan. 25, 1838.

## THE REVENUE CUTTER AND THE REBELS.

An interesting phase of Federal activity, perhaps not elsewhere brought out, is learned from certain papers now in the possession of the Buffalo Historical Society, formerly belonging to Captain Daniel Dobbins of Erie, Pa., and later in the hands of his son, Capt. D. P. Dobbins of this city. Further data regarding the Dobbins papers will be found in subsequent pages of this volume. It will suffice here to state that at the time of the Patriot disturbances on the Niagara and Detroit rivers, Capt. Daniel Dobbins was in command of the U. S. revenue cutter Erie. Among his papers referring to that period, are the following, now for the first time published. The first one, unsigned, is obviously a copy of a letter which Capt. Dobbins sent to Collector Kelso:

ERIE, Jan. 2, 1838.

E. J. KELSO, Esq.,  
Collector of the Port of Presqu' Isle:

SIR: In the present disturbed state of the Province of Upper Canada, it is impossible to foresee what may take place the ensuing summer. Lawless free-booters are always found in such a state of things in any country, and that depredations will be committed on the commerce of the Lakes cannot be doubted. I therefore beg leave to draw your attention to the state of the small arms of the Revenue Cutter Erie, all of which are not fit for use, even dangerous for a man to fire, either the muskets or pistols, and was so when put on board by your predecessor. They cannot be repaired, the greatest fault being in the barrels.

And also respecting Mr. Ottinger, 2d Lieutenant of the Cutter. That a full crew of both men and officers will be necessary, is plain. I wish to be informed whether he intends to remain in service or not, if not it is time the thing were known, that his place may be supplied in due season.

The Mr. Ottinger referred to was Douglass Ottinger, afterwards commander of the revenue cutter Perry, and for many years distinguished in the U. S. revenue service on the lakes.

The following letters require little comment. The omitted portions are merely personal or family references, of no historical interest.

ERIE, Pa., 12th January 1838

Capt. DANIEL DOBBINS,  
U. S. Revenue Service:

DEAR SIR: Having understood that the Revenue Cutter Erie under your command is ordered to be fitted out and proceed to Buffalo to assist in the protection of our frontier in that vicinity, I beg leave to offer myself as a volunteer on board the Erie under your orders. Should you not think proper to accept my services I will

6. —

# PATRIOT MEETING.

— 6. —

W.E.H.U.N.T.T.O.O.

## Spirit of '76!

“Liberty and Equality thro’out the World.”

AT a special Meeting of a portion of the members of THE PATRIOT LODGE OF THE CITY OF BUFFALO, held this morning, March 2, SCHUYLER ROSS was appointed Chairman, and H. D. HUFF, Secretary. On Motion, the following gentlemen were appointed a committee to draft resolutions expressive of the views of the meeting:

Geo. W. Bull,  
A. M. Clapp,  
John C. Haggerty,  
James Lawson,  
F. W. Emmons,  
Wm. Lewis,  
Wm. Wells,  
Horace H. Hungerford,  
Geo. McKnight,  
V. R. Strickland,

Elias Doty,  
John Pierce,  
J. P. Davison,  
Wm. Butterworth,  
Geo. B. Gates,  
A. M. Grosvenor,  
John W. Stewart,  
Wm. S. Waters,  
C. F. Butler,  
F. Cowing,

Joseph Shepard,  
Wm. Kennedy,  
D. Lockwood,  
Pearl L. Sternberg,  
F. S. Wheeler,  
Thos. H. Qulun,  
Nathan Norton,  
Stephen C. Clark,  
Loomis Lyman,  
J. Houston.

The committee, through their Chairman reported the following resolutions, which were UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED:—  
Resolved, That as PATRIOTS, we totally disclaim all connection with a RESOLUTION published in a hand bill, purporting to have been passed at a meeting of the Lodge on Saturday evening, in which George P. Barker is recommended for Mayor—and do not consider said resolution BINDING on ANY PATRIOT.

Resolved, That while we cherish the principles of LIBERTY, EQUALITY, and '76 we cannot consent that a portion of ANY POLITICAL PARTY shall get together and pledge us to the support of their cause and candidate, under the sacred name of PATRIOTS!!!

Resolved, That as we have never taken any obligation by which we are to relinquish our rights as citizens, and as GEORGE P. BARKER DID REFUSE to attend the last meeting in commemoration of the Burning of the Caroline, when requested so to do, and as he has said that if elected Mayor he should consider it a LOCO FOCO VICTORY we cannot as PATRIOTS give him our support.

Resolved, That the proceedings be signed by the Chairman and Secretary, and published.

**SCHUYLER ROSS, Chairman.**

**HENRY D. HUFF, Secretary.**

*Witness 2 2 1878*

POSTER OF BUFFALO'S "PATRIOT LODGE," 1838.

SEE "DOCUMENTS BEARING ON THE CANADIAN REBELLION," PAGE 119.



# CITIZENS of Buffalo.

An outrage of the most gross and bloody character has been committed by British forces upon our shores. Our flag has been trampled upon, and our rights as Neutrals have been most outrageously assailed; that every one may be fully satisfied upon this point let them examine the 6th Lecture part 1st vol 1st Kents Commentaries. The question now is, what is our duty, and how should we act in the present crisis?

We should act with due calmness and deliberation; but if our civil authorities are not sufficiently prompt and active, we at least have certain duties to perform. These duties are 1st To protect our homes and firesides from slaughter and destruction, 2nd To redress the insult inflicted upon us, and to drive off the invaders from our soil.

That these duties may be properly performed, and in order to ensure unity and concert without which all military operation are inefficient, we must act under one chief. The military force of the city should be called out and properly organized; from it a strong and efficient guard should be formed to prevent arson and murder, and to seize upon suspicious characters. No person should, and no American Citizen will, consider that duty tedious, or severe, which has for it's object the safety of his liberty, his family, and his life. To repel the invading force, and to protect our soil, which is even now in the occupancy of armed British Troops; a body of 500 or 1000 friendly Indians acting under their own chiefs, should be despatched to Grand Island. This force will be more useful than any other that can be immediately raised; because they know their duty as citizens and are willing to fulfil it; and because there is no force near this city which will be as efficient in the forest of Grand Island. It will not be improper to send a few companies of Light Infantry and Riflemen upon the Island, if such troops can be raised.

We cannot now await tedious action, and be perplexed by unnecessary delay. If the city authorities do their duty we shall not sleep under the apprehension of being aroused by the fire of the incendiary, or the yell of the Savage; Our flag will no longer be insulted; our territory invaded; and our soil occupied by an armed Foreign Force. In the mean time let us be calm, collected, and ready for action, men equal to every emergency are amongst you, if the authorities fulfil their duty our glorious Flag will still float over every portion of our Country and we shall be in safety and security.

J. E. B.

## FUNERAL.

The Funeral of Mr. AMOS DURPHEY,  
who was one of the

### AMERICAN CITIZENS

wantonly Murdered by the BRITISH, in cold blood, on board the Steamboat Caroline, at Schlosser, on the morning of the 30th of December, 1837, will be attended at 2 o'clock this afternoon, from No. 40 Church-street. The City Guards are particularly requested to attend.

Dec. 31, 1837.





# City Guards.

*Deposited to the Historical Society by J.C.P.H.*

Buffalo, Dec. 30, 1837.

HON. P. A. BARKER, Mayor City of Buffalo:

Sir—The Volunteer Corps under my command, through me as their Commandant, do hereby tender their services to the City authorities, as a City Guard, and patrol, so long as their services may be required, by the exigencies of the times, and do authorise me to say that they hold themselves ready to obey orders at a moment's warning, or to do any duty that may devolve upon their situation.

I am, Dear Sir, very respectfully Yours,

J. Mc KAY, Com. City Guards.

[C: PY.]

Mayor's Office, Buffalo, Dec. 30, 1837.

JAMES Mc KAY, Esq.:

Sir—I have this moment received yours, tendering to the City the Volunteer Corps under your command, as a City Guard, and do hereby accept the services of your Corps for that purpose; and would say further, that no other guardians for the city will be provided. You must therefore hold yourselves under the highest obligations to the duties required. I will be at the Mayor's Office at 4 o'clock, to administer the necessary oath.

With great respect, I am your Ob't Serv't,

Signed, PIERRE A. BARKER, Act. Mayor.

*Deposited to the Historical Society by J.C.P.H.*

# PROCLAMATION.

Mayor's Office, Dec 30, 1837.—Noon.

## Fellow Citizens:

The report that outrages have been committed by persons from Canada upon the lives and property of our inhabitants, has justly excited in your bosoms that spirit which is so worthy of American Citizens.

All legal measures will promptly be taken to prevent any future aggression, and you will be called upon as fast as your services are required.

In the mean time, I enjoin you all to act with discretion, and only under the direction of the proper authorities.

The Common Council having placed ample means at my disposal for the defence of the City, nothing will be wanting on my part to ensure the safety of all, and for that purpose I feel assured I shall be fully sustained by you.

A competent and well armed CITY GUARD, of respectable citizens has been organized under the authority of the Common Council, and sworn in as a city patrol.

The Laws must be strictly enforced, and to prevent any unnecessary alarm, the firing of guns after sundown is forbidden, and the ordinance in relation thereto will be rigidly adhered to, it is to be hoped however, that in times like the present no person will be found who will wantonly violate any law.

The firemen are requested to be on the alert, and see that their engines are in good order, though it is to be hoped that they will have no occasion to use them.

Citizens are requested to call at any, and all times, at this office to report, or receive orders.

PIERRE A. BARKER.  
Acting Mayor.



ask the favor of a passage with you to Buffalo, where I may offer myself to some other Department of the Government.

Respectfully Sir Your obdt servt

JAMES T. HOMANS,  
Lieut., U. S. Navy.

N. B. Please acquaint me what time you will probably be ready to sail.—J. T. H.

ON BOARD THE U. S. REVENUE CUTTER ERIE  
BLACK ROCK January 16th 1838

DR. WIFE: We arrived at Buffalo this morning at 8 o'clock all well. At four p. m. Mr. Barker the Collector came on board and ordered us to this place, to protect the Steam Boat Barceloni [Barcelona], in going up the rapids from the British who had three schooners above here mounting on board each from two to three guns, we did expect we would have had a Brush with them, but nothing of that kind took place. The shores on both sides were lined with men, to see the sport, but they were disappointed, and no attempt has been made to intercept her this far.

The Patriots on Navy Island have abandoned that Island, and dispersed. Genl. vanransleer is in Buffalo who was arested and held to Bail.

I expect I will be ordered down the river in the morning to look for the Cannon and other arms taken by the Patriots, from this side and not taken away by them, it is reported that they have gone up the Lake, some say to Vanburen Harbour, to cross over but that I do not believe. I shall keep you advised of the movements as they occur. They say here that there was but five hundred on Navy Island. I hope the difficulty is about over.

Your husband,

Mrs. Mary Dobbins.

DANIEL DOBBINS.

U. S. R. CUTTER ERIE  
BUFFALO Jany. 18th 1838

DR WIFE: we are here and all well and hope the war is over we have been kept busy night and day, the weather this morning is so severe that all appears quiet. I was introduced to Gen. Scott yesterday, and heard him hold forth to the Committee of thirteen, who he invited to an interview, he appears to be determined to observe and preserve the neutrality of the United States with Canada. Last night appeared to be a disastrous night to the Patriots, by means of a forged order they got possession of five Brass pieces of Cannon which it is thought, they intended to send out of the Harbour, on board the schooner Savanna, to be put on board the Steam Boat Barcelony which was outside; but the weather was bad and I was ordered to take the schooner in charge, which was done, and a guard of twenty men put on board, under the command of Capt. Wright. The Steam boat was obliged to come in this morning. General Scott has chartered her and thus the Patriots are deprived of her service the New England has been fitted out but they appear

to have discontinued their operations from all appearance I think the whole thing will subside soon.

Your husband

DANIEL DOBBINS.

Mrs. Mary Dobbins.

The following letter, to Capt. Dobbins' son William, contains a bit of good advice for Decatur Dobbins, another son:

ON BOARD THE UNITED STATES REVENUE CUTTER ERIE,  
BUFFALO, January 29th 1838.

WILLIAM: This day about noon the steamboat New England came in and was enabled to get through the ice up the creek. I have not seen any person from on board of her as yet. Mr. Connor got a letter today from Erie which reports that the artillery arms have been purchased, it is supposed by the Patriots, and that many of them are about Erie. I hope Decatur will not meddle with them, for depend [*upon it*] all that does will be marked by the Government.

Things are all peace at this place now, as they have disappeared from this. We have had a very severe storm yesterday and last night. The water was all over the flats and the ice has been continually running up and down the creek with great force. It was with difficulty that we could keep our place with the Cutter the current with the ice was so strong about 12 last night a fire broke out near the stone building occupied as a blacksmith shop on the flats, we were not able to get to it for the ice. I fired a gun to alarm the people, they collected and got the fire under with the loss of one building, which was a grocery.

Show this letter to Decatur and the rest of the family. I do not know how soon I will be able to visit Erie, not until the ice has closed the creek for good. . . . Decatur, . . . I hope you will not be silly enough to meddle with these patriots in way that your name may be known.

Your father

D. DOBBINS.

Michael Connor, who writes the following, was first lieutenant of the Erie, left in command of her in the captain's absence:

ON BOARD U. S. CUTTER ERIE  
Feb. 5th 1838 BUFFALO CREEK

DEAR SIR: On my visit to the City today I called at the Custom House, and when I got up to the American I fell in with the Officers of Gen. Scott's staff and Mr. Brown the Dep. Coll—just arrived—came through Canada—left the Fulton at Detroit and all things quiet in that quarter. Ottinger would leave Detroit probably today, of course he will be at Erie soon and can give you an account of the trip. . . . I shall advise you of any change here.

Yours Respectfully

MICHAEL CONNOR.

Capt. D. Dobbins.

ON BOARD CUTTER ERIE  
BUFFALO CREEK Feb. 9th 1838

DEAR SIR: I received yours by Leonard and have nothing to inform as I wrote to you on the arrival of the Officers of Gen. Scott's Staff through Canada. This day I have seen Mr. Homans and the report in town is that Col. Worth will send some troops on west by stages. I have not seen any of the military and you know what reports are good for. Gen. Scott left here last evening going East.

I have nothing new to give things go on smooth and at present I find the House erected over the Vessel pretty comfortable, as there is an old-fashioned snow-storm and every appearance of it continuing some time.

I make my appearance in Town occasionally and really I am glad when I get back on board again. Buffalo is a gloomy place at present—nothing doing and I feel when there a good deal like a loafer and so get back to the creek again. I shall be heartily rejoiced when the Spring comes, to get in motion once more, and probably we may have some active duty to perform. . . .

Yours Respectfully

Capt. D. Dobbins.

MICHAEL CONNOR.

ON BOARD CUTTER ERIE, BUFFALO CREEK,  
Feb. 15th, 1838

SIR: I have nothing in the news line to give you things are all quiet at Buffalo at present and we are all looking for news from the Patriots in the West. Col. Worth is still receiving reinforcements of recruits so as the agitators will have no chance of starting any new difficulties. Ottinger arrived on Sunday evening he gave me an account of things in Erie. I have made enquiry about the arms. Col. Worth tells me the best armory he knows is at Middletown Connecticut—Mr. North. I have written to him requesting he will let me know whether he can furnish and to state the price—Musketts, Pistols and Cutlasses and to direct to me at this place—that when arrangements are made for delivery he will receive his pay from the Collector at Erie. I thought Eighteen Musketts—twenty four pistols and twelve Cutlasses would be the quantity we should want. Anything else belonging to the armament we could get ourselves. About the boats you were saying one boat was as much as you thought Southwick could get along with, while you have the opportunity to get two I should think it best to get them it may not be so easy by and by to get an order. However you know best what to do in that case. Everything goes on regular, we have cold weather and ice accumulating fast—give my best wishes to all the family and enquiring friends.

Give my best respects Mr. Kelso—and dont forget to write me if anything new should occur—there is to be a grand military ball on the 22d great preparations are making and no doubt there will be great doings on the occasion you will perceive I have only written for the terms the arms can be procured when I get the answer I shall write you immediately.

Yours Respectfully

MICHAEL CONNOR.

P. S. The inventory book I have found also the two Cutlasses.

## ON BOARD CUTTER ERIE

Feb. 25th 1838, BUFFALO CREEK

DEAR SIR: The Pirates are on the move again. for the last week we have had news of meetings in the country East of this, and robbing of Arsenalls etc.

Last night a party made a move to cross on the ice about eight miles above this place. Col. Worth got intimation of it, turned out a force to prevent them but got there just as they had all got some ways over—he succeeded in capturing two pieces of Artillery from them.

I suppose there were about two hundred gone over—reports vary some say a great many more. We have all sorts of reports some say the Patriots will cross into Canada from Lewiston. this thing came up so sudden I can give you no particulars—they are a damned sett about the frontier at any rate and I should not be surprised should those Piratical parties continue to cross in this way if the Canadians should retaliate by making reprisals. Ottinger was out with all our availables, the men have returned and Ottinger is with Mr. Barker I presume. I felt the loss of our cartridge boxes and belts they were left by mistake be so good if an opportunity offers to have them sent down as we may probably have occasion to use them.

Give my respects to all enquiring friends, particularly Mrs. Dobbins and the family. Things all go on regular. . . .

I am Respectfully Yours

MICHAEL CONNOR.

Capt. D. Dobbins.

P. S. Capt. Douglass has just arrived and says the gang that attempted to cross got within a mile or two of the Canada shore and returned and I regret that they were so fortunate as to get back, for they had no other intention than to rob and plunder. M. C.

The following is preserved among the Dobbins papers referring to the Patriot troubles:

COLUMBUS, Mar 5, 1838

TO LYMAN RICE:

I am directed by the Solicitor of the Treasury of the United States, to notify you that the Western Sister Island in Lake Erie near the mouth of the Maumee Bay, of which you are said to be in possession, is reserved from sale and entry for public purposes, and that any further occupation of it on your part will be considered and treated as trespass.

Yours, etc.,

A. H. SWAYNE,  
U. S. Atty, Dist. Ohio.

U. S. REVENUE CUTTER ERIE,  
BUFFALO CREEK, June 11th, 1838.

DR WIFE: We are still at the same place, and I am not able to tell when we will leave it. I have got all hands back but two, who still are at the falls. We have had news of another steam boat being

burnt, the William the Fourth, the place I do not now recollect, but at some point on Lake Ontario. The people on the other side the water, appear to be very wrathful. I do not know what the final result will be. I find many of the inhabitants of Buffalo favouring anything that would lead to a war. . . .

Your husband

DANIEL DOBBINS.

Mrs. Mary Dobbins,  
Erie, Pa.

On the day when the above was written Capt. Dobbins was summoned to the West:

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

DETROIT, 11th June, 1838.

SIR: It is said that there is some stir among the Canadian refugees within our borders, along with such as have associated with them on this frontier, of a hostile character towards the opposite side of the river. I have no facts within my own knowledge to warrant such a belief. It appears however that a cannon, a nine pounder belonging to the United States, a condemned piece of ordinance [*sic*] that lay on one of the wharfs in the City, was stolen last night, whether by the Patriots or Canadians on the opposite side of the river or by whom has not yet been ascertained. It is evident and clear to my mind that there are many false rumours spread on the Canada side of an exciting nature. It is also evident that many of the leading people on the Canada side, especially such as have lately been there in military service on the spur of the occasion, are endeavoring to provoke hostilities between the two Governments. They appear such as are already in service, desirous of being continued in the Queen's pay, and others equally anxious to get into the service. I think it would be well for you without delay to come or send the Revenue Cutter at this time to cruise on those waters, which may answer a double purpose in preserving the neutrality of our own Government, and to prevent any aggression that may possibly be attempted from the other shore.

Perhaps it may be well to keep the contents of this letter private for the present.

With great respect Your obedient servant

JOHN McDONALD,  
Collector.

Capt. D. Dobbins,  
Commander Revenue Cutter Erie.

ON BOARD REVENUE CUTTER ERIE

BUFFALO CREEK, June 25, 1838.

SIR: I have just received an order from the Dep. Coll.—in the absence of the Coll—to proceed down the River and take a position on the West Side of Grand Island to prevent suspicious movements in that quarter. Should anything take place before you join I shall apprise you of it. Major Young has made the request of the Coll, that the Cutter may be used for the above purposes. Qr. Master

Gen. Staunton has gone to Detroit to employ a Steam boat to be employed for the purpose of preventing any movements from our side.

Yours Respectfully

MICHAEL CONNOR.

Capt. D. Dobbins.

BUFFALO, 9th July, 1838.

DR SIR: When I delivered to you the box of arms belonging at Erie, I was not aware what expenses had been incurred, in paying freight etc. when they were seized. It appears that we are responsible for about six dollars on that account, which I presume will be paid by the officer in whose custody the guns were at Erie.

The reward offered for these arms is claimed, and justly due to two men here, one of them a soldier in the army. Allow me to ask of you the favor, to present these claims to the proper officer at Erie; by doing which you will much oblige

Your Friend & Servt

G. WRIGHT,  
Capt. U. S. A.

Capt. D. Dobbins,  
U. S. Revenue Cutter Erie,  
Erie, Pa.

HEAD QUARTERS 7TH MILITARY DEPT  
DETROIT Nov. 23d 1838

CAPTAIN: The interest of the Service requires that you should repair with the United States Revenue Cutter to this frontier as soon as possible, to aid the Civil Officers of the United States, in enforcing the laws, and preserving inviolate our neutral relations with the Government of Great Britain.

There is no doubt, but at this time, men are collecting in large numbers at different points between this place and Toledo, with the intention of invading Canada. Therefore I hope on the recd. of this letter, you will lose no time in repairing hither with the Cutter fully armed and equipped for the above purpose.

I am respectfully

H. BRADY  
Brig. Gen. Comng.

Capt. Dobbins,  
U. S. N.

The following copy of a letter sent by Capt. Dobbins to the Secretary of the Treasury, in December, 1838, well shows the perplexity of the situation as regards jurisdiction:

[No address on the copy.]

The United States Circuit Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, held at Pittsburg Nov. 19, 1838, on an indictment for rape on the high seas, have decided that the United States have no Admiralty and Maritime jurisdiction on Lake Erie. This appears to me to involve a question highly interesting to the people on this



border; owing to the situation they are placed in, the difficulties now existing in the Canadas between the Patriots so-called, and the legitimate Government; might induce piracy, murder and robbery, with impunity.

The Court of Sessions in Erie County have decided that Pennsylvania has no jurisdiction on Lake Erie, where then is the jurisdiction? My situation is a delicate one. On boarding vessels for examination, either for arms or munitions of war, or for smuggled goods, how shall I conduct myself? The State Courts will take no cognisance of any offence unless it be committed in the body of a County, the United States Courts declare they have no jurisdiction. So let the offense against the Law be ever so grate the Culprit escapes.

I trust you will have the thing laid before Congress as early as possible, that a decision may be had by the Supreme Court or enactments by Congress. I am ordered up the Lake to assist in the enforcement of neutrality between this and the Canadian Government how to do my duty without incurring risk, I am at a loss to know, as I am bound by your instructions to observe the Laws of the U. S. strictly—Without the jurisdiction of any particular State, and within the Admiralty and Maritime Jurisdiction of the United States.

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#### THE WOES OF A PATRIOT LEADER.

In 1873 Mr. George W. Kingsley deposited with the Buffalo Historical Society a bundle of letters relating to the Upper Canada Rebellion, none of which has ever been published. The following will illustrate the vicissitudes and difficulties which beset the path of a Patriot leader who sought to "free" Canada, without public sympathy on either side of the border, without any "army" to speak of, and grotesquely without funds. The one real accompaniment of a revolution which he seemed sure of, was a traitor in the camp, whom he dignified by calling a second Benedict Arnold. Most of the following letters were written by "General" McLeod, or to him. He usually calls himself adjutant general, though on the title-page of the book which he published in Cleveland in 1841, his fame is preserved for posterity as "Major General, Patriot Army, Upper Canada." In this redoubtable army (or as often signed, Patriot Service—"P. S. U. C."), rank and official honors were easy; and any man who could gather a few followers for the cause, get together a few muskets, or best of all, contribute a few dollars, could count at least on ranking as a colonel.

The following selections from the secret and official correspondence of the Patriot Army of Upper Canada, are printed in the order of their dates. They require little comment; but for the student of the subject they shed new light on the causes of failure, and make a not wholly undiverting chapter in the record of this famous border

ruction of almost seventy years ago. The Dr. Johnson mentioned in the first and some of the other letters was Ebenezer Johnson, who had been Buffalo's first mayor (1832), prominent as a physician and in business.

BUFFALO, January 28, 1838.

To Adj. Gen. McLEOD:

SIR: I arrived at Buffalo yesterday morning and presented Dr. Johnson the letter you sent. The committee was consulted on the subject. They refused to give bonds for the Virginia, as they were in momentary expectation of being arrested, and they did not feel able to assist a great deal as far as money was concerned. However they say, "You must not give it up, go ahead, we will help you what we can," etc.

The following are the suggestions of different members of the committee, viz.: If you could obtain an old vessel, valued at some few hundred dollars, sufficiently large to contain the men and baggage, that you persuade the committee at Erie to enter into bonds, etc. They think also that the steamer Peacock now at Erie, can be fixed up in 12 hours and that you could obtain her. They are fearful that the cutter and the steamboats now in the service of the U. S., would interfere and seize our craft if you should attempt to embark.

Dr. Johnson thought—and so did some others—that the army should return but keep back from Buffalo, and they will engage to ferry you to the Canadian shore. They engage also to obtain us arms if more are wanted; and they finally agreed that this was the best plan; that the enemy would be off their guard and your success doubtless. They are as warm as ever, but cannot consistently become liable. They were also of the opinion that it was useless for me to proceed any further after Genl. Van Rensselaer, they could not supply me with funds.

These are their suggestions. You can judge what their feelings are now, and how far assistance may be obtained here. They wished me to state to you their views, and that you should proceed as your own good judgement should dictate. I am disappointed to find they doubt the importance of Genl. Van R's mission to the East. They however of course are ignorant of the nature of his business. It is impossible for me to proceed to Genl. Van Rensselaer. I heard of him on his way to Albany. A gentleman of his acquaintance met him a short distance beyond Cazenovia; he was quite unwell, but travelling in the stage. I will find some way to forward the documents I have, to him. I cannot proceed without funds, and I cannot obtain any of my own at present; but as before mentioned, will forward them to him as soon as possible.

Mr. Nickerson I found was quite unwell. He had been trying to obtain the steamboat Webster, but the committee say it is useless. Mr. N. has gone East, but when or for what I cannot discover.

My health will not permit me to proceed further at present. I shall await further orders, when my services are wanted.

Respectfully Your obdt. servant

WM. E. D. MORGAN.

P. S. There are nearly a hundred men here enlisted in the Patriot cause, they have provided quarters for themselves, and have means to sustain themselves, they are waiting orders.

BUFFALO, Feb. 3, 1838.

DEAR SIR: I arrived here this morning penyles and am likely to Remain so as I could get no money on the Rout. I have seen Doct. Johnson and several of the committee, they have no funds and have paid a great deal out of their own pockets, and will not pay a cent more. It is impossible to get the effects forward without some means. if I could pay the expence of the men and teams they would go for nothing, but it is out of the Question, I cannot get it. I am informed by the Committee that Whipple will not give up what things are [*in his hands*] untill \$200 is paid him, which he has sewed Genl. Vanrenseller for. Nickerson sais all the arms are seised except 40 or 50 guns and all the U. S. ordinance.

When I came down Saml. Johnson agreed to pay the stage fare to Buffalo and told me in presants of the proprietor that it was settled and when I arrived we found that the proprietor at Buffalo was ordered on the Way Bill to collect the money from me, which took all the money I had and I spoak to the committee to kno how I was to live, and they told me that I must look out for myself, and here I am to Starve Beg or Steel and which course to take I dont know. I can get nothing by Begging here, I could Steel well enough if I knew how to hide.

If I can get a passage any way at all I shall put of for Erie and se if I can get hold of any means thare, & you had better despatch a letter to the Erie Com'y, to try and assist me & I think they will, your letter can reach them before me if you despatch it by 1st mail, if they dont do it I shall Despair of getting the effects forward. You kneed not expect any more aid from S. Johnson or Snow. Nickerson talks of coming with me. If we do not have success we shall come to you.

Yours respectfully

J. HENDERSON,

D. M. O. P. A. U. C.

To Brigade Inspector Vreeland.

The letters after Henderson's name stand for "Deputy (or District) Master of Ordnance, Patriot Army, Upper Canada."

Written on the same sheet as the foregoing, is the following:

CONEAUT, Feby 5th 1838

General VREELAND:

DEAR SIR: You will perceive that I have taken the liberty to open these Letters adress to you this I done supposing they come from the sourse they have. The mission of Mr. Henderson has resulted as I expected for without means I was sure he would effect nothing. The committee at Buffalo are willing to do all they can as long as their own Purses and Persons are not concerned, and no further. the excitement has gone over in that section of the country their Patriotism fades with the excitement. Sir not wishing to add to the Calamities I would remind you of my own circumstances of which you are already apprised. Major Flemming is here at this present time the arms have not yet come now it is not the place of Flemming to say when they will come as you know the Responsible station he holds but I think I shall hear from them in the course of

the night, and will forward them on as fast as possible nothing strange or curious has happened since you left.

Yours &c., &c.,

MAJOR T. I. LAWSON.

The following, which lacks an address, is a fair sample of several reports received at this period by Adj. Gen. McLeod:

BUFFALO, 4 Feb., 1838.

DEAR SIR: I arrived here safe after seeing Col. Snow and others of the Committee, but could get no funds of any of them. The Erie Com. probably would have helped me if I had have stayed there a day for them to make some excursions, as they had not collected enough to defray the expenses already incurred, they could not help me any.

Col. Johnson or Snow will do nothing towards getting on the baggage and arms unless they can be furnished with funds; I see they work for their own profit and not for ours.

I don't know what way I am going to get the effects forward, for I can do nothing without a little money to bear expenses. The drawing I can get done without pay by bearing their expenses, but that I cannot do, the committee here have no funds, and will not do anything at all. My funds are exhausted, and I don't know what to do. I am going to go up again to see whether I can raise anything to proceed with and shall do all in my power to get them forward.

As it respects General Vanrensselaer, you need not look for anything from him in my humble opinion. I am informed he went to Syracuse when he left here, & has been there with his beloved intended ever since till within a few days, from whence he has departed to Albany, and has not despatched a single word to Nickerson or any one else since his departure from Buffalo. I think now as I thought when he left here, that he has abandoned the cause, as I told Martin at the time he left.

And my advice to you is, to proceed agreeable to your own notions relative to the Expedition. there is a report flying about town today, that Duncomb has taken Toronto, but not to be depended upon. there was a Report in the Buffalo paper, which I suppose you have seen, that Duncomb was in the neighborhood of Lake Simco about 8 days since with a large force, and a string of Baggage Wagons following him a mile long, and the man that brings the Report says he passed them, and was put on his oath in this place and swore to the fact.

Your ordnance is safe, all belonging to the U. S. are seized. It is supposed that Huff the Inn keeper in this place informed Scott where they were for the Reward of \$100 which was offered.

Mr. Mills is going to leave today for Homer about one hundred and seventy miles south to purchase 2500 muskets, which are offered at the armory at \$2. each. Doctor McKenzie is going with him.

I have nothing more to write at present.

JOHN HENDERSON, D. M. O. P. A.

"Huff the Inn keeper" referred to above was Henry D. Huff, who in 1837-'39 kept the "Travellers' Home" at No. 83 Main Street.

ADGT GEN'L'S OFFICE, CLEAVLAND Feby 4, 1838.

To Dr. JOHNSON, Chm. of the committee at Buffalo:

DR SIR: This morning I received a letter from Major Morgan giving the suggestions of different members of the committee as to the proper course to be pursued by the patriot service, in their intended attempt at Landing in Canada. those suggestions however do not meet with My approval the principal reasons apertaning against them is these. On account of the sudden change in our winter, if boats could be procured they would be of no service the Lake being filed with ice. The Patriot forces would become disconted [*discontented*] if they should be ordered to retrograde their march and we would unquestionably loose a number of our men. This at these peculiar times would put in jeopardy our success which is now almost within our grasp, for the troops pursue their march westward in good spirits, determined when the opportunity offers itself to show themselves the avengers of the right and oppressed in a foreign land.

Our prospects are brightening. The Pa [*Patriots*] as they advance, are continually augmenting in numbers. I have no doubt that before they reach the destined Point of crosing the waters they will number at least 1000 men good and effective, and with them when the trial comes I have know doubt but what the day is our own.

For your exurshuns in behalf of the cause of humanity receive my Gratitude and esteem.

I have the honor to be Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Adj. Genl. P. A. of U. C.

Certified

R. W. Ashley, Jr., 1st Aid.

BUFFALO, 5th Feby, 1838.

DEAR SIR: I am yet at Buffalo, and on account of Gen. Scott's management. I should have left here on the 3, but for being informed that Scott was fitting out an expedition to go and seize the remainder of our arms, which he was informed were at Fredonia, & on hearing the fact I immediately procured a horse and put off to secure them, but when I arrived thare I found they were taken care of.

I returned again to Buffalo, and Nickerson and myself have been to se General Scott, and I think we shall be able to make an arrangement with him so as to get an order for the guns that he has seized, which are on board the *Barcelona*, which number 118, & if I do get Scott's order for those we think with what you have, & what you can pick up about the country you will be able to arm your men. And as it is so extremely difficult to get those forward, if for no other reason but for want of funds, we consider it best to leave them whare they are at present, and perhaps they may be usefull here before long.

We shall leave here this evening for Silver Creek, to put forward the Baggage, and I shall come on with it as fast as possible after I get under way. Mr. Nickison thinks he shall go to the lower province to se what Papineau is going about, and on his way se if he can

hear anything of Johnson or Fletcher. Any news he gets he will forward you at Cleveland, and if you leave that place you had better appoint some person there to forward on dispatches to whatever point you will be found, as I shall also forward to Cleveland I have the pleasure to enclose a note from a St. Lawrence paper, which you will look into the policy of.

We have some reports flying here that Duncomb is up about Simco, & that Sutherland has crossed into Canada and had a Battle, killed some 500 Royalists, lost 42 Patriots, taken 3 cannon a great quantity of provisions ammunition, &c, &c, but we don't know the truth of the case. We also have it in a Cleveland paper that your troops have dispersed, after arriving at Cleveland, that we suppose grew out of the understanding at Conneaut.

If you have any thing to convey to me, if you address a letter to me at Ery, I should be pretty sure to get it.

In haste your obdt. humble servt,

J. HENDERSON.

Adgt. McLeod.

P. S. We have just received the order for the guns, they are at Detroit in a warehouse, I shall get on as fast as possible. J. H.

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BRIGADE INSPECTOR'S OFFICE,  
SANDUSKY, Feby 8, 1838.

To D. McLEOD, Adjt. Genl., Patriot Army Upper Canada:

DEAR SIR: I arrived at this place this evening and found some of our friends. Capt. Tyler gave me an introduction to some of them and has raised some of the Needful. I arrived at Green Creek eight miles from this place, where I dined, and the land lord gave me a five dollar bill. I have heard from the baggage, and there are said to be seven or eight teams a head and that they are as far west as Monroe, and the prospect is not favorable of returning them you act accordingly. the Sherriff of this county called on me and said that he Commands a Company of Cavalry and that he has a man at work for some days past for fiting them arms in order and was ready to start tomorrow with us. the feelings are strong. I have conversed with sum of the most influential men. I informed the inhabitants that you would deliver a lector in this Place To morrow evening and it will be verry desirable and will illegible and the inhabitants are one and all willing to Raise means for the purpose of affecting our object. My opinion is that the men is to move west of this. Sutherland is at Perrysburgh and that he sent dispatches to the army below to day I am not aware of the contents. I shall leave for the west this morning.

Very Respectfully yours,

JOHN S. VREELAND,  
Inspector, etc.

The writer of the foregoing and the following letter was presented to be denounced by McLeod as a "second Benedict Arnold."

SANDUSKY CITY, Feb. 8, 1838.

DEAR SIR: I have learned by the bearer of this that you have some mind to join our band with a good Force under your command

if so it will afford us much pleasure in commissioning you to the command of a Regiment. We shall not be able to procede to the other side for the present, but we have no idea of abandoning the expedition only for the time being. We shall get employment for our own men until navigation opens or the Ice gets harder. We shall then be able to get a force sufficient to procede safely. I shall be happy to hear from you through the Post Office at Detroit as soon as you receive this.

I have the honor to be, Your Very Obdt. Servant,

JOHN S. VREELAND,

Brig. &c. &c. 1st Regt. P. A. U. C.

P. S. After hearing from you if your mind continues the same I shall be happy to call on you.

Yours, &c.,

J. S. VREELAND.

To Genl. Woolf, Plymouth.

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SANDUSKY CITY, Feby 14, 1838.

W. B. NUTTER, Esq.,  
Unionville.

DR. SR: I was informed this afternoon, that you, in connection with others, had formed a company fully armed and equipped, for the purpose of joining the Patriot service; but having rec'd information that they had disbanded, the project was given up. That information however was incorrect. They have not disbanded nor do they intend to. On the Contrary the prospects are brightening, and not any human means can prevent the P. A. from gaining unfaded laurels.

The regulations which has been adopted, gives the privilege to each company to select their own officers. That right in no instance as yet has been taken away from a Volunteer Company, neither will it be hereafter.

If a Company of young men wish to join the service from your neighborhood, they will be acceptable. It is necessary that they should immediately *come on*.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,

Adjt. Genl. P. S. U. C.

The following letter to Col. Trumbull was addressed to him at Trumbull's Mills, O. Like several other letters of this collection, though signed by Gen. McLeod, it is in the handwriting of Adjutant Ashley.

SANDUSKY CITY, Feby. 15, 1838.

CON'L TRUMBULL:

DR. SR: It is with pain and regret, that my duty to you (the friendship which you have always evinced to me, calling for it), compels me to make known the conduct of the young man, who was at your house in company with Capt. McMauman, and the circumstances of his departure from this city. I do so, believing it to be

proper that you should be put on your guard against the insinuating stories that he may relate to you.

This young man came on to Cleveland with me. I received news in the evening that made it absolutely necessary that I should hasten on with all possible dispatch to this place. Circumstances compelled me to leave him with others at the former place. As soon as he ascertained that I had left, he, publicly, in the Bar-room of the Franklin house, at which place I stopt, commenced a long tirade of abuse against the officers of the patriot army. With this I could put up with. But he did not stop here. He disclosed all the secrets that had been made known to him, not however as they were, but in accordance with the dictates of a bad mind. He went further than this. He made known the contents of certain letters that he had copied. On account of his conduct there, Mr. Herrington was obliged to call Capt. McMauman aside, to prevail upon him to *soothe* the excited feelings of the young man. It was all to no effect whatever. The result was, that the P. A. rec'd but little assistance from the citizens, and the high expectations I indulged were utterly blasted.

On his way here, the same course of conduct was persisted in. Everywhere he seemed to take delight in abusing the patriot army and villifying the officers. After he arrived here he continued to practice the same despicable *pranks*, and used every exertion to disparage the cause, and bring a stigma and disgrace upon its officers. Such was his conduct, all men become disgusted with him.

I assure you, Sir, I should not have made known these facts, but to put you on your guard against imposition. My high regard of you compelled me to pursue this course. Believing that you will now be proof against his insinuations and falsehoods,

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD MCLEOD,  
Adj. Genl., P. S. U. C.

SANDUSKY CITY, Feby. 15, 1838.

J. HENDERSON, Esq.:

DEAR SIR: I received 2 letters, concerning the baggage &c. of the P. A. from you. The news you convey is somewhat gratifying, especially under existing circumstances. It is to true, that you have labored under great pecuniary inconveniences, but I hope they are buried at the recollection of the cause in which you are engaged. All revolutions labor under as many disadvantages, as the one in which the patriots of Canada are engaged, and if we bring to our recollections the many privations and sufferings which the fathers of the American struggle for independence suffered and endured, every cause which would occasion despondency and gloom, should not be permitted to enter our minds. I trust it never will that of a patriot of Upper Canada!

This however is foreign to the business on hand. My aim is not to stimulate you on to good deeds, but to request you to use every exertion (which I know you will), in forwarding on the baggage &c. belonging to the P. A. It is necessary, for the reasons, that it would



tend to put at rest dissatisfaction among the men, and would sooner effect the object of invading Canada, *which will be soon.*

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Adj. Genl. P. S. U. C.

SANDUSKY CITY, Feby. 15th, 1838.

CAPT. J. M. DOUGLASS and others of the Executive Committee of Erie:

GENTS: I have been informed that as soon as the P. A. were ready to commence active operations a Company of 30 men fully armed and equipped would from your City immediately come on to join them. If such is the fact, it is necessary that they should immediately march westward, to join the P. S. at whatever place they are rendezvoused. It is the intention of the officers of the P. A. to do all within their power to effect a landing in Canada; and when there they will need the Company from Erie to maintain it effectually. There is no doubt that an attempt will be made to land on the other side of the Lake soon. And if a company of young men from your city wish to Share the laurels to be gained, as I trust, by the P. A., they must without delay organize and march west. Our only cause of delay is the want of ammunition. If any can be procured at Erie, it would be of more service to the P. A. than any other munitions of war, that could be contributed by its citizens.

I have understood that a field piece in charge of a certain Capt. of Artillery at your place, would be when ever required, forwarded on for the use of the Service. If such is the fact, it is absolutely necessary that it should be forwarded on immediately.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Adj. Genl. P. S. U. C.

The John Trowbridge to whom the following letter was sent, was a Patriot sympathizer at Oswego, N. Y.:

SANDUSKY CITY, Feby. 15, 1838.

JOHN TROWBRIDGE, Esq.:

DEAR SIR: I received information from Mr. Webster, a patriot Volunteer from your place, that there was a considerable amount in funds raised for the benefit of the P. S. If they have not been expended, they would at this time be very servicable to the cause, for the purpose of procuring ammunition, &c. It is the intention of the officers of the patriot army, to commence operations immediately, and to effect a landing in Canada, if human means can accomplish it. The only cause of their delay now is, the want of ammunition. If then, you have funds on hand, for the object as before stated, they would be of more service, than at any other period of the Revolution. I assure you, Sir, that they will be appropriated to the advancement of the cause of liberty. If therefore, you deem it proper, and if any money is unexpended by the Committee, an immediate transmission of the same to Detroit, would be desirable.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Adj. Genl. P. S. U. C.

The recipient of the following was a resident of Painesville, O.:

SANDUSKY CITY, Feby 15, 1838.

J. S. SEYMOUR, Esq.:

DEAR SIR: Capt. McMauman, with whom you spent a few to all appearances agreeable hours, informs me that whenever the patriot army were ready to attempt a landing in Canada, you, and Mr. Van Buskirk, would come on and join them with a large company, or would raise a Company for that purpose, and send them on, if it were not possible for you to come. I will state to you, that the attempt will soon be made, and if you are of the same opinion now as then, it is necessary that you should immediately carry out either of your intentions. I should prefer, however, that you should come on with the men. It is no flattery when I say that you alone are a host, and if it is within your power, under existing circumstances to join your fortunes with that of the P. A., I hope the result of the contest with the enemies of the rights of man, will be such as to secure to the *poorest soldier* both honor and fame.

The regulations which have been adopted for the government of the army, grants to each company the privelidge of selecting their own officers. This has not been nor will be taken away from a volunteer company.

Major Lawton of the P. A. will be at your place probably before this reaches you. If you can render him any assistance, either to the procuring of arms and ammuniton, or in any other manner, the patriot service will hold it in their remembrance.

With high regard to you personally and my respects to the Committee and the Citizens of Painsville,

I have the honour to be, Sir, Yours, &c.,

DONALD MCLEOD,  
Adjt. Genl. P. S. U. C.

SANDUSKY CITY, 16 Feby, 1838.

HONBLE. JAMES THOMPSON:

DEAR SIR: Your hon'd favour of the 1st inst has been duly received. It was with high gratification, indeed, that I perused its contents. The kind manner, you notice the position I occupy, in the Glorious Cause of emancipating Canada from the Thraldom and oppression which has been visited upon her by an ignoble crew, will stimulate me on with renewed vigor, to the performance of a most sacred trust. Your prediction that we will eventually succeed, will I trust be confirmed by the events of time. It may occupy the same period in its final accomplishment as it took the fathers of the American Revolution to obtain for their posterity, the glorious privileges they now enjoy. The Cause of the Canadian patriots is the same, their grounds of complaint simular with those, which induced the peopel of the Colonies of Great Britain to revolt in 75, to declare, themselves free and independent, and to sustain it, by pledging to each other, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. They are contending for the same rights which induced your Ancestors to offer that most sacred pledge, and with their lives and fortunes will obtain them for their children, or die in the attempt.

The Course which your Government has pursued towards the patriots of Canada, seems to me, uncalled for, especially after the repeated insults it has received, and the numerous aggressions upon the persons and property of its citizens that have been committed by the authorities of Britain established in Canada. In no less than four instances, have they violated the existing neutral laws between the two nations, with impunity. 1st, The imprisonment of a civil officer in Maine, 2d, The burning of the Steamboat Caroline, and the barbruous murder of its passengers and crew. 3d, The capture of the Sloop at Malden, and seizing of its cargo. 4th, In keeping three armed vessels upon Lake Erie in violation of the treaty of 1815, which limits the number to be employed by each nation to two. These however are not the only instances in which the honor of the American people has been insulted, and insults offered to them. They are nevertheless sufficient, to demand from Great Britain at the hands of the National Government, full and immediate satisfaction. It is not my province to point out the line of conduct it should pursue. Whatever conclusion it arrives at, I will not complain. But I did expect, that it would have permitted the patriot army to proceed peaceable through its Territory, without Molestation, without seizing private property, and converting the same to its own use. And, as in the cause of Texas, leave us alone to manage our own affairs without its interpositions.

The kind tender of your services is most gratefully accepted, and any assistances that you can render the cause in your State, will be held dear in the recollections of every soldier and patriot of Canada.

As soon as a landing is effected on the other side of the Lake (which I assure you will be in the course of a few Days), I will again and more at length write to you, *if the fortune of war favours us*. Until then, and throughout life, may the merciful disposer of events keep you in safety, and preserve for you a long and distinguished career, to be handed down to posterity in connexion with the well-merited fame you have already received, for good, wise and benevolent actions. Accept Dr. Sr, this assurance of my high esteem.

I have the honor to be, Yours, &c.,

DONALD MCLEOD,  
Adj't. Gen'l & Brig. Gen'l, Act'g, P. A. U. C.

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MONROE, Feby 21, 1838.

— DUFORT, Esq.:

As Brigr, Genl. commanding the Western division of the patriot service of the Republic of Upper Canada, appointed by R. Van Rensselaer, Genl. in chief and the provisional government, having distinctly understood from Capt. Duncombe that you are a friend to the cause, beg leave to request you to furnish every assistance in your power, to Major George Case, in the demonstration which according to a general order, he is immediately to make against the enemy, and which is intended to coöperate with me at Malden. Rest assured, Sir, that the time of active operations has arrived.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

DONALD MCLEOD,  
Brig. Genl. P. A. U. C.

MONROE Feby 22, 1838

COL. D. D. MCKINNEY,

DEAR SIR: Having understood from Qmr. Chas. G. Irish Jr. that your feelings are with us in the righteous cause in which we are engaged, and are ready and willing to join the standard which has been raised by the Canadian patriots; and having also understood that you have in charge a considerable number of men, do respectfully request you, if of the same opinion now, as then, to immediately proceed with your forces to join the main body. As a matter of right, the command of them, belongs to you. If they number as many as I have been informed, your rank would be that of a Col.

Con'l Vreeland, of the Patriot service, will confer with you relative to the above matter.

With high consideration of respect to you personally, and admiration of your patriotism, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Yours, &amp;c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brig. Genl., W. D. P. S. U. C.

DETROIT, Feb. 23d, '38.

Brig. Gen. DONALD McLEOD,

DEAR SIR: Your despatches pr. Jas. Mackenzie Esq. came duly to hand and believe me, Dear Sir, I am highly gratified to know the confidence you have placed in me and I sincerely hope that nothing will be wanting on my part to preserve the same feeling, you are pleased to honor me with.

Immediately upon the receipt of your orders I dispatched an express to Pontiac, likewise to Mt. Clemens, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, &c., for the purpose of mustering into service the above-named companies which form the best of my Battalion. I started yesterday to Pontiac to ascertain the course of movement & found that Sutherland had given the Pontiac troops some foolish order to march, which I could not comprehend—but you may depend, that the receipt of yours has had much weight in restoring confidence in those engaged in the Patriotic Cause, as the people here were heartily disgusted with Sutherland's course.

By remaining here for two days, I think, I could join you, with some arms, Ammunition, &c., &c., which however will depend entirely upon circumstances. At all events, every effort shall be made. As for myself, I stand ready to follow any *judicious leader* to any point he may think fit to send me, but none of the kind we as yet have had. Therefore, I wish you perfectly to understand me, that from my knowledge of your *experience and courage* I stand ready to follow you "to the death" in the Glorious Cause we have espoused, and at all times I can assure you, I shall hold myself in perfect readiness to obey your orders. I am, Dear Sir,

Your Obedt. Servt.,

D. D. MCKINNEY.

Feby 24, 1838

Col. D. MCKINNEY,

DEAR SIR: I received yours conveying gratifying intelligence, at two p. m. today. The Patriot forces that were here have crossed

into Canada, this day, but lack arms and ammunition. You will therefore send all munitions of war, that you have on hand and can collect, immediately here to be forwarded across the River. You will also urge on the men from the different places without delay to join the main body.

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brig. Gen. P. S. U. C. W. D.

[Certified

R. W. Ashley, Jr.,  
Ad interim, Adj. Gen. P. S. U. C.]

— DUFORT, Esq.

DEAR SIR: You will perceive by the above that a landing has been effected in Canada. Now is the time for action. Will you therefore exert yourself in our behalf, in forwarding on what we most want, arms, ammunition and men? Send me a good spy-glass if possible.

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brig. Gen. P. S. U. C.

The following letter, plainly addressed as here printed, is endorsed on the back: "From the Acting Adj. Gen. to Lyman Sherwood and Capt. J. M. Douglass"; being no doubt sent to several lieutenants and sympathizers:

LOWER SANDUSKY, March 1, 1838

DR. BOND: My neglect of you must be excused. The fact is, I have been so much engaged in things appertaining to war, that I have had no time to spare, to be devoted to writing to my friends. Ever since I left Erie my expectations have been on the *qui vive*, and have only to regret that it was all to no purpose, except keeping up a decoy to divert the enemy. So far the operations of the extreme western division of the patriot army have succeeded, and if our friends at the East improve the opportunity offered to them, I have no doubt but that all will yet end well. It is too true, that all my expectations have not been realized. The reason is, a Judas crept into the camp in the shape of *John S. Vreeland*, Master of Ordnance. This man had charge of all the arms and ammunition belonging to the service of the western division of the Patriot Army. When we marched for the West, for the avowed purpose of capturing Malden, he assured us, that arms, ordnance and ordnance stores, were in that vicinity, and where they could easily be obtained by the forces. But this assurance was false. He intended to be another Arnold, there is no doubt, but that so much of his story as relates to the arms &c were there is true, and that he had secreted them for speculative purposes and the damning idea of destroying the expedition.

This Traitor (or Second Arnold) said on the morning of the 24th of last month when he knew that it was the intention of the officers of the Patriot Army to cross over into Canada, that arms would be sent over to them. Believing that no man could be so damnably a scoundrel as to deceive us under such circumstances, the Patriot forces were paraded on the Ice at River Ecorse, and took up

## DOCUMENTS BEARING ON

their line of march at 12 o'clock noon for Fighting Island (a part of the British Dominion) with only 6 Rifles and 1 musket to defend themselves with in case of an attack by the enemy. There they remained during a long and I must say a tedious night, the most so of any we have as yet experienced this winter, liable every moment to a surprise and inevitable destruction, while this cursed wretch, who now dare not show his face for fear of the vengeance of an outraged community, dressed himself in a stolen military dress, paraded himself before the U. S. Marshalls, and forced them to notice his conduct, against their own wishes. He is now in the common jail of Detroit, as I understand to await his trial, and I hope he will remain there, till the biting pangs of remorse has drawn from his veins, the last drop of his life's Blood.

During the night, however, about 40 muskets arrived, procured by the exertions of our friends, of which about 35 were serviceable. On the morning of the 25th the enemy commenced firing with Musketry and Carronade, and kept it up incessantly for four hours, without much effect.

The Patriot Army of 105 men with 43 firelocks, returned the fire in good earnest or would have done so, if we had not been still further betrayed by this man Vreeland. The musket cartridges prepared by him were made of coarse powder resembling black onion seed. Our musketry was therefore rendered entirely useless. To sustain our position on the Island only 8 firelocks and one dismounted four pounder were put in requisition. With them, the Patriots withstood the fire of 500 British Troops and 2 field pieces from six to ten o'clock, and would have repulsed them, had not two spies from the enemies camp, captured the night previous through the negligence of the guard made their escape soon after the firing commenced, and gave information of our strength and situation.

In the affair, the patriots loss was 5 slightly wounded. Of the enemy five were killed and fifteen wounded, as I have been informed they acknowledge.

After the evacuation of the Island, I immediately proceeded with Genl. McLeod & suite, to this place, to evade an arrest, being pursued by the U. S. Marshalls to the State line of Michigan, for that purpose. Our object in evading them, is to join Col. Seward, who with over 200 brave spirits is now in Canada, contending against arbitrary power and for the rights of man.

Let not this misfortune of the Patriot Army, dampen the feelings you entertained for the cause in the commencement of the struggle. It is only a temporary defeat. In the American Revolution the people of the colonies suffered similar disasters, and I trust that the patriots of Canada, will be cheered as they were, by the crossing of the Delaware. Emphatically, this is the winter of our discontent—the winter of '77. The forlorn hope in Canada may yet dispel the gloom which now pervades the countenances of every lover of freedom, and may scatter the cloud of darkness which now hangs over our heads. Believing that such will be the result, and that Canada will finally become a free and independent nation, and with every assurance of respect to you, the committee, and the citizens of Erie, I have the honor to be

Sir, Yours, &c.,

R. W. ASHLEY, JR.,

Actg. Adjt. Genl. P. S. U. C.

LOWER SANDUSKY, March 5th 1838

GEN. McLEOD,

SIR: Gen. Scott has just left our village for Sandusky City and we have every reason to believe he is in persute of you we thought it advisable to put you in possession of that fact we are with much respect your obdt servts

WILLIAM FIELD  
E. A. BOYCE  
MORRIS TYLER  
ISAIAH MORRIS

N. B. You will confer a favor by writing us any information respecting the Canada war and oblige yours.

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SANDUSKY CITY, Mar. 6 1838

DOCT. DUNCOMBE,

DR. SR.: I rec'd your letter of March 5th, this morning, per Mr. McDermid. I perceive that you have not heard of the defeat of the right wing of the patriot army, under my command, in charge of Col. Bradley in chief and Col. Seward. On the morning of the 3d at break of day the enemy estimated at 1500 strong, advanced upon the patriot forces, who were only 150 in strength, and almost surrounded them. A body of the enemy (about 500 Regulars) had stationed themselves at the south part of the Island to cut off our retreat. The patriot Cols. advanced with the patriotic troops to meet this body, and commenced a sanguinary battle. At half musket shot, the firing was kept up by the enemy and returned by the patriots. The action lasted half an hour. The loss of the patriots was Major Hoadley and Capt. Van Rensselaer & 11 privates killed, 18 wounded, & 1 drowned. The enemies loss is a number of officers (names unknown) and from fifty to sixty killed, and great numbers wounded.

Gen. Scott with the Marshalls arrived here last night. his object you already know, I am obliged to keep close.

Please write me at Erie, to the care of Capt. J. M. Douglass.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with every assurance, &c.,

Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brigr. Genl. P. S. R. U. C.

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LOWER SANDUSKY, March 7, 1838

HON. JAMES THOMPSON,

DR. SR.: I write you at this time, under the most mortifying circumstances that could be imagined. The patriot forces under my immediate command, have been defeated, but not disgraced—that our misfortunes are to be charged upon base and damning treachery, and that the Whigs, the patriots of Canada, have been betrayed by another *Arnold*. The facts are these:

On the 24th of Febry the patriot forces under my immediate command, crossed over upon Fighting Island (a part of Canada), with out arms and ammunition, being assured by John S. Vreeland, in whose charge they were, that they would be sent over in the

course of the day, and following night. This assurance however was false. Instead of fulfilling his solemn oath and promise as soon as we landed upon the Island, he forced himself upon the notice of the U. S. Marshalls, and voluntarily delivered himself up to them, regardless of the destitute situation of the patriotic volunteers, and humanity. Their arms were kept and secreted by him, and they would have had to sustain the shock of the enemy on the morning of the 25th with only 6 Rifles and 1 musket, if some 35 or 40 muskets had not been procured by the exertions of our friends, and put in the hands of the men. As it was, we sustained ourselves for four hours against 500 British Regulars, and then did not leave the field, till nearly surrounded by them.

After the evacuation of the Island, myself and suite, being informed that the authorities were in pursuit of us, traveled *post haste* to this place, and arrived here last night, without any means of support. I could have borne with all this without a murmur, if I had been forced to pursue this course, from circumstances of a different character. As they are, they cut me to the quick.

I trust, however, that a better fortune awaits me. Col. Seward, under a Genl. Order issued by me to him, with over 200 brave spirits under his command, is now in Canada. I shall proceed across the Lake to join him, as soon as circumstances will admit.

Dear and honored Sir, I am now placed under the disagreeable necessity of availing myself of your kind proffered assistance. I am here with my suite, without means to carry me to the place, where I intend to strike a desperate blow for Canadian liberty and independence. If your friends and yourself will therefore send us a little aid, I assure you, that it will be expended to advance the cause, in which I am so deeply interested, and which is similar to the one, which called forth the energies of the people of the confederated States in their memorable struggle for existence.

Please forward to Sandusky.

With every assurance of respect, I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Yours, &c.,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brigr. Genl. W. D. P. S. U. C.

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MILAN, March 8th 1838

DEAR SIR: I have come here and tried the general feeling and it is so much against us that I despaired of anything being effected by our addressing the people here. We could only expose ourselves to ridicule without effecting anything, nor would we get any assistance. Under these circumstances as Mr. Mackenzie consented to return I have addressed you that you may be aware of the fact.

A report that Gen. Van Rensselaer is in prison seems to militate against us—everything is unfavorable.

I am Dear Sir  
Your most obdt &c.

CALVIN WILLCOX.

Donald McLeod,  
Brig. Genl, P. A. &c.



BLOOMINGVILLE, Ohio, March 10, 1838

Col. BRADLEY,  
Major LAWTON,

GENTLEMEN: By order, I arrived here last evening at half past eleven, and found the rest of my company. It is my intention to proceed on East, immediately. For want of means, I am obliged to part with my horse furniture, in order to enable me to proceed to the East.

Major Lawton will endeavor to remain in the vicinity of Sandusky until further orders, which will be communicated as soon as possible. Major Lawton on account of his former exertions, and for his gallant conduct in assisting you at the memorable action at Point au Pelee Island, as related by you to me, I beg leave to proffer to him in the name of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Upper Canada, mine and their acknowledged thanks. . . .

I have the honor to be Gents,

Yours, &c

R. W. ASHLEY JR.  
Actg. Adj. Genl, P. S. U. C.

CLEVELAND, March 12, 1838.

Mrs. VAN RENSSELAER.

DEAR MADAM: I have just arrived in town, and it is with great pain that I announce to you, the death of your brave and heroic son, Henry Van Rensselaer, at the battle of Point au Pelee Island. He died cheering on his men to victory.

When Canada becomes free, I assure you, a monument shall be erected to your brave and chivalrous son.

I have the honor to be, with every consideration of respect,

Yours, &c

D. McLEOD,  
Brig. Genl. W. D. P. S. U. C.

EAGLE TAVERN, BUFFALO,

Monday, March 24, 1838

DEAR SIR: I arrived here on Saturday noon in a state of destitution, being obliged to leave my baggage and clothing at Silver Creek for want of the means to pay their transmission here. On Saturday morning, in consequence of the sudden arrival of a U. S. Marshall, I was compelled to leave Mr. Comstock's without making any arrangements for the payment of our bill. Mr. Ashley is now there expecting I may be able to arrange matters, relieve him and also forward the baggage.

I should hope that the disadvantageous and unfortunate circumstances which have taken place in the West, will not rest upon your mind nor weigh with the Committee in my present situation, as, had it not been for the Arnold treachery of Vreeland, all our operations would have been carried out.

It is my intention as soon as my papers come to hand to lay before yourself and the committee, all such documents as may be ex-

planatory of our plans, our intended movements and full proof of the treachery which caused their failure for the present.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

DONALD McLEOD,  
Brig. Genl P. A.

Dr. E. Johnson,  
Chairman Committee, &c.

A letter substantially like the foregoing, was written by McLeod on the same day to Silas Fletcher at Lewiston.

LEWISTON H. Q. May 1, 1838.

Major BENJ. WAIT,

DEAR SIR: I received yours of the 23d ultimo at Newark, on the eve of starting for Lewiston. It was with high gratification indeed that I perused your acceptance of the station proffered you by the Com. in chief, and learnt your willingness to undertake any task, within human probability of effecting anything for the liberation of Canada.

It is to true that many difficulties rise up before us to be overcome, but they will eventually be dissipated by a more brilliant sun. Trusting to that promise, and it cannot be hollow and black, all should continue their exertions, untiring exertions in the good cause in which we are engaged. However painful adverse circumstances may be to you, the same misfortunes, not equal in duration, have visited me. I even could not raise means to transport myself here. I have spent all my available funds, and am now to work with a good and sound heart, in the cause of emancipation. Yet it is harrowing to me to learn that you are working, day and night, without any aid. The time shall not be so long.

The recommendations you have made shall be duly considered, when the Com. in Chief arrives, which will be shortly.

As to the appointment of inferior officers in your company, That will be submitted and arranged upon the arrival of the Com. in Chief. You had better recommend such persons, as you deem most fit, and that recommendation will be acted upon.

You will from time to time inform me of the advancements making by you, under the general instructions dated at Lockport, &c. I will write you again on the arrival of the Com. in Chief.

With my assurances &c

I have the honor to be Dr. Sir, Yours, &c

R. W. ASHLEY JR.  
Adj. Genl, P. S. S. U. C.

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LEWISTON, May 12, 1838

Asst. Com'sry Genl. JAMES MARSHALL, and A. H. DOYLE, Esq.,  
Members of the Committee, etc.:

GENTLEMEN: You are probably aware of Mr. McLeod's movements in getting up an expedition for the publicly avowed purpose of invading, plundering and devastating the Province of Upper Canada. It is called a secret demonstration. I have understood that he

is now, and has been since his return, enrolling and swearing in men to enter upon this new move in modern warfare. His intention may not be as I have declared it, But that he is setting on foot an expedition of some sort or other I have no doubt. As to the result of it, there is no question. It will end in placing us in a worse situation than we were ever in before.

Before I give my reasons in coming to such a conclusion, I will give the avowals of McLeod in relation to his expedition. He says that it will not conflict with the previous arrangements entered into by others, and which have been in course of completion for two months. He says that the Committee knew nothing of his intentions, nor Genl. McLeod or other officers. He says that his plan is working in unison with Com'ry Genl. Mills and Assistant Com'ry Gens. To these avowals I have only one reply to make: that if unknown to the committee and the officers in the confidence of the Committee, his expedition conflicts with and renders nugatory all their exertions for the last two months. The preparations which have been making to go to work effectively on the other side of the line, will all be in vain, for as certain as the sun rises and sets, it will become public through his means, and the Canada frontier be again guarded by a large British Loyal force, and the Canadians be prevented from crossing the lines armed, by the civil and military authorities of the American Union. But Mr. Law says he is working in unison with two of the committee, and these two officers in the patriot service. This I must doubt and utterly deny as to Mr. Mills. As to Mr. Marshall, I await his answer.

Mr. Law further says, that 3 men have agreed to arm and equip his expedition. So far, well and good. But if these three men are M. Marshall, Mr. Mills, and Mr. Chandler, I must throw in my protest. No guns or military stores must be removed from this Frontier. They will be required for use in this immediate neighborhood. Therefore Mr. Marshall and Mr. Chandler will take good care to prevent their removal.

Mr. Law's expedition is wholly unauthorized. If he had received the consent of the proper authorities, I certainly should have known it. Mr. Law however has not nor will not divulge his plans to me. Assuredly, I am the proper authority to know. Therefore, it is my bounded duty to discountenance his expedition, for I am fully convinced that he has no authority to act in the premises, either by a vote of the Committee or the approval of any general officer.

As committee-men, having at heart the welfare and happiness of your fellow-creatures, desirous of alleviating the distresses and sufferings of Canadian patriots, and earnestly praying and looking for the liberation of your oppressed country from bondage and tyranny, you will also discountenance, and make abortive by every means in your power, this intended expedition of Mr. Law's.

Mr. Doyle and Marshall will please answer immediately.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Yours, etc..

R. W. ASHLEY, JR.,  
Adj. Genl. P. S. S. U. C.



HISTORY OF THE  
ABOLITION OF RAILROAD  
**GRADE CROSSINGS**  
IN THE  
CITY OF BUFFALO

---

BY ROBERT B. ADAM  
Chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission, 1887-1904







SPENCER CLINTON, *Attorney*.  
CHAS. A. SWEET.

JAS. RYAN. AUG. F. SCHEU.  
GEORGE SANDROCK. ROBERT B. ADAM, *Chairman*,  
FREDERICK KENDALL.

H. D. KIRKOVER.

JOHN B. WEBER.  
WILLIAM J. MORGAN.

GEO. E. MANN, *Engineer*.

**BUFFALO GRADE CROSSINGS COMMISSIONERS, UNDER THE ACTS OF 1888 AND 1892; AND STAFF.**

MR. E. H. BUTLER NOT IN ABOVE GROUP, HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION SINCE 1888. JAS. E. NUNAN, NOT IN ABOVE GROUP, SERVED FROM MAY, 1888, TILL HIS DEATH, DEC. 16, 1891.



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INTRODUCTION

On April 5, 1897, the late Robert B. Adam read a paper before the Buffalo Historical Society, entitled "The Grade Crossings Movement from its Inception to the Present Time." The more elaborate history of that work which he subsequently wrote, and which is now for the first time printed in the following pages, was in large part an amplification of his Historical Society sketch. As a record of the work of which for so many years Mr. Adam was the modest, but very persevering and efficient head, his later narrative is of the greatest value; but it lacks the personal quality, the touches of humor and criticism, which heightened the interest of the original sketch. There is evident in the fuller history a very rigid abstinence from everything but the impartial chronicling of fact, though a gleam of the native Scotch humor does break through, in his use of Dr. Johnson's wonderful definition of "network" to illustrate the railroad condition in Buffalo. That Mr. Adam could present his subject, when he thought it fitting, in an altogether different vein, may be judged from the opening paragraphs of his Historical Society paper:

"One day in September, 1887—the 10th I think—Secretary Thurston asked me if I would be willing to go to Albany as one of a committee from the Merchants' Exchange, to attend a hearing before the State Railroad Commissioners, upon a proposed plan for abolishing

a number of the most troublesome grade crossings in Buffalo. At that time I knew little, and cared less, about the grade crossings question; I had no desire to travel to Albany; and I declined the invitation.

"That same evening, as fate had decreed, an old friend, journeying from Colorado to New Hampshire, broke his journey at Buffalo, partly to rest for a day, partly to spend an evening in gossip over 'auld lang syne' with his old-time friends. I chanced to speak of the Albany committee business, and my friend immediately set himself to have me change my mind. 'Man,' said he at last, 'we'll take the morning train and have a grand time chatting together'—most likely he said, 'crackin' thegither'—and smoking all the way to Albany.' That settled it. I went with my friend to Albany, and thence he went on his way to the East. That's how it began, and why I'm here tonight."

For the most part, however, the two records of the grade-crossings work written by Mr. Adam are essentially the same. As history, the more detailed account, which is here printed, is unquestionably the one to be preserved. An occasional quotation from the shorter and less formal narrative is now and then added as a footnote.

Mr. Adam was chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission up to the time of his death, which occurred on June 30, 1904. His portrait, and a sketch of his career, were printed in Vol. VII. of the Historical Society Publications.

F. H. S.

HISTORY OF THE ABOLITION OF  
RAILROAD GRADE CROSSINGS  
IN THE CITY OF BUFFALO

---

BY ROBERT B. ADAM

Chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission, 1887-1904

I. THE PEOPLE AROUSED—"GRADE CROSSINGS MUST GO!"

The purpose of this paper is to record the history and progress of the movement for relief from the dangers and inconveniences of railroad grade crossings in this city.

The first attempt to abolish a grade crossing, of which record has been found, was made in 1856, when a plan was prepared by Mr. Peter Emslie, then city engineer, for a bridge or viaduct over the four tracks of the New York Central Railroad at Michigan Street. The approaches to the bridge were on a grade of six feet in a hundred. Beyond constructing the bridge on paper, nothing else appears to have been done.

It is a notable incident that the first grade crossing sought to be abolished, was also the first to be actually abolished, in 1896, just forty years after the first effort.

The next attempt to procure relief was made in 1874 by Alderman Joseph Churchyard, at whose request Mr. George E. Mann, city engineer, prepared plans for a bridge or viaduct over the tracks of the New York Central

Railroad at William Street. Mr. Mann writes as follows in reference to the result:

"Mr. Churchyard submitted the plans personally to Mr. Vanderbilt, then president of the New York Central Railroad Company, with an urgent plea for the construction of the bridge. Mr. Vanderbilt's reply was to the effect that until the city of Buffalo expressed a more emphatic desire for that improvement, and until they, the company, were obliged to do the work; they would decline to consider the matter. Mr. Churchyard, lacking the necessary legislation, and without public clamor to back him, dropped the subject."<sup>1</sup>

During the twelve years following, whenever an accident happened at a grade crossing; whenever one or more persons were killed or maimed; whenever some unusually long delay to street traffic would be caused by a train of cars obstructing the street; there would result some public indignation, involving a discussion upon the abolishment of grade crossings; a few sharp comments in the daily papers; then quiet settled down again. But there came a time when the fatal accidents became too frequent, the obstructions of the streets too irritating, and the emphatic mandate came forth from the people: Grade crossings must go! This happened in the beginning of 1887.

April 13th the Common Council adopted a resolution "That an invitation be extended to the Board of Railway Commissioners of the State of New York to inspect the entire system of railroad approaches entering the city, with a view to securing their recommendation of a comprehensive plan for elevating the tracks over the street crossings or otherwise providing suitable remedies." The Buffalo Lumber Exchange addressed a communication to the same commissioners, May 23d, which drew special attention to the "crowded condition of the railroad crossings at the grade of Washington, Michigan and Louisiana Streets. A tally of the traffic of these three streets, for

1. "How often since then, for lack of more *emphatic demand*, have needed improvements and needed reforms been delayed and hindered in this great and growing city of ours? How often has the determination of the great railroads to do nothing until *obliged* to do something, delayed the removal of the dangerous grade crossings? Even unto this day—through forty years of intermittent effort—have some of them succeeded in frustrating the wishes of the people."—R. B. A., Historical Society paper.

one day, April 7, 1887, between the hours of six A. M. and six P. M., gave the following results:

	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Train Movements
Washington Street . . . . .	1603	5724	132
Michigan Street . . . . .	2682	12995	412
Louisiana Street . . . . .	2158	6405	428

There were in all 384 miles of railroad tracks in the city, and counting all the railroad companies there were 275 grade crossings.

Due notice of a public hearing was given, and the same was held at Buffalo on the 7th day of June, 1887. The city in its corporate capacity, the Lumber Exchange, and other citizens in interest, were very numerously represented. The crossings complained of were inspected by the Board, in company with the president of the Common Council and others, and a full knowledge of the grievances complained of and the difficulties in the way of their removal, was obtained. The Inspector of the Board, Mr. Thomas W. Spencer, was immediately ordered to proceed to Buffalo, make a careful investigation, survey and make drawings of the crossings complained of, and prepare a plan to remedy the evils. Invitations were extended to the railroad companies to coöperate with him. A report from Mr. Spencer, in detail, dated July 26, 1887, was presented to the board. It was printed, copies sent to the railroads and complainants and other parties in interest, and a public hearing set in Albany for September 13th.

In the meantime, the citizens of Buffalo were getting ready a large delegation to attend the hearing in Albany. The Common Council appointed a committee, consisting of Aldermen Summers, Scheu, Ramsperger, Kendall and McMasters; also City Engineer Krause and Corporation Counsel Worthington. The Buffalo Lumber Exchange appointed Messrs. J. N. Scatcherd, H. J. Hurd, Britton Holmes, Oliver Laycock, S. D. Colie and E. T. Betts. The Buffalo Merchants' Exchange appointed Hon. Philip Becker, R. B. Adam, Jacob Dold, George Sandrock, and E. C. Wilbur. Committees were also appointed by the Buffalo Business Men's Association, consisting of R. R.

Hefford, James Mooney, W. J. Morgan, F. F. Fargo and P. J. Ferris; and the Buffalo Produce Exchange appointed LeRoy S. Oatman, G. M. Wattles, J. M. Gilbert, George Hornung and Charles Richardson.

A conference of these delegations was held at the Delavan House on the morning of the hearing, at which time, on motion of Mr. J. N. Scatcherd, Mr. R. B. Adam was chosen as chairman and Mr. P. J. Ferris as secretary. The organization thus formed held together for a long time afterwards and came to be known as the Joint Committee. Arrangements were made for concerted action at the hearing, and the committee adjourned to the Capitol, expecting a full and free discussion of the subject would there take place. The railroad companies, however, through their counsel, Hon. D. H. McMillan and others, stated that their engineers had been unable to give the subject attention, and that they were not prepared at that time intelligently to discuss it, and requested an adjournment to a later day.<sup>1</sup>

At this there was evident displeasure on the part of the commissioners, and the committees representing the citizens of Buffalo, and all expressed their indignation in very pointed terms. Upon repeated promise by the counsel for

1. "On the morning of September 13th, the day of the hearing, the delegates from Buffalo met in the parlor of the Delavan House. They represented the Board of Aldermen, the Lumber Exchange, the Merchants' Exchange, the Business Men's Association, the Produce Exchange and the Retail Grocers' Association. There had been no organization, no concerted plan of action, and something of the sort was evidently lacking. There were leaders enough, able and willing, waiting the opportunity to lead, when John Scatcherd, with that spirit of mischief and practical joking for which he holds a well-earned fame, proposed that I should act as chairman. It was a surprise to everybody—an unwelcome surprise to me—but as nobody made any objection and there were no indications of future responsibilities—nothing beyond the doings of that one day—I stood as chairman. Peter J. Ferris was chosen for secretary, and after arranging the order for appearing before the commissioners, we all marched up the hill to the Capitol, and, like the army of the King of France, we all marched down again. It wasn't much of a hearing on grade crossings. There wasn't much said about plans for abolishing grade crossings. The railroad engineers were on vacation, so said the railroad attorneys, and they hadn't thought of the plans, but they would do so after vacations were over. The commissioners were angry; because due notice had been given the railroads. The Buffalo people grumbled over the delay and the time and expense wasted in their going to Albany, and at being trifled with in the end. 'Gentlemen,' said the emphatic citizen to the railroad attorney, 'if you don't *begin* to do something, you won't *never* do nothing.'"—R. B. A., B. H. S. paper.

the railroads that they would immediately begin the consideration of the plans, and report on Oct. 19th, the board adjourned further hearing until that date, in the Common Council chamber at Buffalo. The intervening time was employed by the Joint Committee in preparing for the hearing.

Several meetings were held in the committee rooms of the Merchants' Exchange. A finance committee, consisting of F. F. Fargo, James R. Smith, Britton Holmes, Jacob Dold, and LeRoy S. Oatman, was appointed to secure subscriptions to a fund to defray expenses. A committee, consisting of John N. Scatcherd, John M. Farquhar and R. B. Adam, charged to secure expert engineering and legal talent, secured the services of Arthur M. Wellington of New York and George E. Mann, as consulting engineers, and Spencer Clinton as attorney for the Joint Committee.

Seldom has so large and representative a gathering of the prominent and influential business men of Buffalo been seen in the Common Council Chamber as that which assembled there, on Oct. 19, 1887, upon the occasion of the adjourned hearing before the State Railroad Commissioners. The commissioners were Hon. John D. Kernan of Utica, William E. Rogers of Garrisons, and Isaac J. Baker of Comstock; and with them were Wm. C. Hudson, secretary, and Thos. W. Spencer, inspector for the Board.

The New York Central was represented by J. M. Toucey, general manager; George H. Burrows, Buffalo division superintendent; Walter Katte, chief engineer; Hon. D. H. McMillan and James F. Gluck, attorneys. The Erie Railroad was represented by W. J. Murphy, general superintendent; R. H. Soule, general manager; Edward Van Etten, division superintendent; C. M. Buchholz, chief engineer; Norris Morey and Henry W. Sprague, attorneys. Other railroads were represented as follows: The Western New York & Pennsylvania by George S. Gatchell, general superintendent, and R. D. McCreary, chief engineer, and John G. Milburn, attorney; the Lehigh Valley by W. Stevenson, general superinten-

dent, and Peter C. Doyle, general passenger agent; the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western by Franklin D. Locke, attorney; the Buffalo Creek by General Superintendent Goodman. The city of Buffalo was represented by Hon. Philip Becker, Mayor; Aldermen Scheu, Summers, Ramsperger, Kendall, McMasters, Adams; City Engineer Krause, Corporation Counsel Worthington, City Attorney Laughlin. Members of the Joint Committee were present in large numbers, together with many other interested citizens.

The report of Mr. Spencer was again submitted, and also a report signed by the chief engineers of the railroads. These may be briefly quoted together. Mr. Spencer was clearly of opinion that the surface tracks of the New York Central through the Terrace should remain at grade and for protection he suggested "that an iron picket fence, six feet high, parallel and as closely adjoining the tracks as admissible, be erected from the west side of Erie Street to the east side of Main Street, with lift gates of same height, properly counterpoised for ease and rapidity of movement." Like protection was suggested for Washington Street. The railroad engineers dissented from this, being of opinion that guard gates at Washington, Main, Seneca and Erie Streets, would afford all needed public protection. The most radical change proposed by Mr. Spencer was at Michigan, Chicago and Louisiana streets. He suggested a plan for the elevation of all tracks crossing these three streets, excepting the freight tracks of the New York Central crossing the Hamburg Canal. The plan would, of course, make it necessary to elevate the passenger train-house, baggage-room and express building, with an inclined roadway along Exchange Street. The railroad engineers were unanimous in their opinion that the inadmissible grades on the railroad tracks, the great expense, and the disorganization of the traffic would be so great as to be utterly incommensurate with the benefits which the city would derive from it; and in lieu thereof proposed a viaduct be constructed to carry Louisiana Street over the railroad tracks, that Chicago Street be closed between the



Hamburg Canal and Carroll Street, and that Michigan Street be protected by gates and flagmen.

Mr. Spencer recommended a viaduct in Seneca Street over the tracks of the New York Central, the West Shore, and the Western New York & Pennsylvania railroads; and this was approved by the railroad engineers. Mr. Spencer considered that the crossing of the Erie tracks at Seneca Street would be sufficiently protected by gates and flagmen, but advised a viaduct over the tracks of the Buffalo Creek, Western New York & Pennsylvania, and the New York, Chicago & St. Louis railroads at Seneca Street; and this was approved by the railroad engineers.

There were a number of less important suggestions in the report of Mr. Spencer, which were duly considered by the railroad engineers; but the apportionment of the cost became the vital question, and was vigorously contested. The State Commissioners made no suggestions on this matter, but gave their opinion as follows:

"It is to be kept in mind that, notwithstanding the great inconveniences and dangers the public is suffering by reason of these railroads running on the streets, after all they are there and have vested rights. Consequently, if the grievances are to be removed it is but just that the city should pay a fair proportion of the expense of such removal. The Board trusts that the city and the railroad authorities will reach an agreement as to the expense to be borne by each."

The railroad engineers proposed that the railroads pay the cost of the structure over or under the tracks, and the city pay the cost of the approaches and all consequential damages to abutting property. For example: The viaduct in Seneca Street over the New York Central tracks, was estimated to cost \$83,000.00, including approaches, and of this amount the railroads would pay \$43,000.00; the city \$40,000.00, and consequential damages. The viaduct over the Buffalo Creek and other roads, at Seneca Street, was estimated to cost \$57,606.00, with approaches, and of this amount the railroads would pay \$12,079.00; the city \$45,527.00, and consequential damages. This method of apportionment was indignantly denounced by the represen-

tatives of the city, and of the business associations; and so, without reaching any understanding, the hearing was adjourned.

The Joint Committee met at the Merchants' Exchange Oct. 22, 1887. Twenty-five members were present. A report was read from Engineer Arthur M. Wellington, recommending the elevation of the railroad tracks about four or five feet from their established level, and the depression of the streets sufficiently to carry the roadway under the railroad tracks. The head-room required for street traffic was stated at eleven feet. This recommendation included the territory north of the Hamburg Canal and Seneca Street, and excluded the district in the south part of the city where the conditions were different and special.

A report was made by Engineer Albert Krause, that all the railroad tracks be elevated on an average of five feet, and the streets taken under them, excepting the railroads nearest Lake Erie and Niagara River.

A report was made by Engineer George E. Mann, approving the plan suggested by Engineer Wellington.

The three reports were ordered printed and sent to the State Railroad Commissioners, and the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved*, That this Joint Committee adopt the plans of Engineer Wellington, and have profile made at once of all existing tracks in Buffalo, noting on them the street and sewer grades of every street they cross, and to lay out a new system of grades for the whole trackage of Buffalo at such a height as to make it possible to carry the streets under."

A meeting of the Merchants' Exchange was held October 27th, President James R. Smith in the chair. The special committee of the Exchange submitted a report embodying the proceedings of the Joint Committee to date, which was received, adopted, and entered on the minutes. The committee was changed from a special to a standing committee of the Exchange, under the title of "Committee on Railroad Crossings at Grade."

The next meeting of the Joint Committee was held

December 7th, at the Merchants' Exchange. There were present R. B. Adam, chairman, P. J. Ferris, secretary, Mayor Becker, J. N. Scatcherd, R. R. Hefford, S. D. Colie, George Bleistein, F. F. Fargo, W. J. Morgan, Leroy S. Oatman, Alderman Kendall, N. W. Voltz and City Engineer Krause. It was resolved that letters be addressed to the presidents of the various railroads, inviting them to a conference, and the following communication was drawn up and forwarded:

BUFFALO, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1887.

DEAR SIR: The undersigned officers of a joint committee from the Common Council, the Merchants' Exchange, the Lumber Exchange, the Produce Exchange, Business Men's Association, and the Retail Grocers' Association, of the city of Buffalo, would respectfully represent that in answer to request made by the Common Council of Buffalo, the Board of Railroad Commissioners of the State of New York have prepared for submission and recommendation to the Legislature a plan for the relief from dangers and delays caused by the railroad street crossings at grade in our city.

This plan meets with the very general approval of our citizens, and its adoption by the railroad authorities of your and the other roads now entering our city at grade, would be received with cordial satisfaction. We are advised by competent engineers, familiar with railroad traffic, that the benefits to be derived by the citizens from the substitution of elevated tracks for grade crossings would be more than equalled by the benefits to the railroads themselves; and, therefore, believing it to be a matter of interest, we have been authorized to request the presidents of the several corporations to meet with those representative committees at Buffalo in conference upon the plans of the State Railroad Commission. We ask, therefore, that you appoint a day when such conference can be held, and we would respectfully request that as early a date as possible be designated, suggesting Wednesday, December 28th, current to your favorable consideration.

A duplicate of this letter has been sent to the presidents of—  
The New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Company;  
The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company;  
The Michigan Central Railroad Company;  
The Lehigh Valley Railroad Company;  
The New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company;  
The Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railway Company;

The New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company;  
 The Western New York & Pennsylvania Railway Company;  
 The Buffalo Creek Railroad Company;  
 The West Shore Railroad Company.  
 Your reply will have prompt attention.

(Signed)	R. B. ADAM, <i>Chairman</i> .
( " )	P. J. FERRIS, <i>Secretary</i> .

The date finally agreed upon for the conference was Jan. 10, 1888.

A motion was adopted authorizing the chairman to appoint a committee of three to take action to prepare a bill to be presented to the Legislature in the matter of grade crossings. J. N. Scatcherd, R. R. Hefford and Corporation Counsel Worthington were appointed such committee.

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## II. A SPLENDID DREAM—THE BUCHHOLZ PLAN.

The conference was duly held, January 10th, according to agreement. On the following morning the *Courier* said, editorially:

"As a conference with the railroad 'presidents' yesterday's grade-crossings meeting was a pronounced farce. As originally intended the conference was to be held last month, but it was postponed two weeks to accommodate the big railroad presidents. But they did not come; they sent their attorneys, superintendents, or engineers. . . . It is perfectly patent that the railroads in this latest conference played another game of diplomacy. . . . This is unfortunate. . . . It forebodes a prolonged contest."

The editor of the *Commercial* of the same day, said:

"Notwithstanding the *Courier's* opinion, the *Commercial* believes it was a marked success. It is true, the presidents were not all there, but they were all represented by prominent officials of their roads. As regards practical work quite as much was accomplished as any unprejudiced person had reason to expect."

Both of these opinions were true in different senses. There was a great deal of airy talk by the railroad attorneys, but the practical work done was really important.

First of all, a draft of a bill was introduced and read, appointing a board of commissioners to adopt and carry out plans for abolishing grade crossings in the city of Buffalo.

Second, a committee consisting of R. B. Adam, J. N. Scatcherd, R. R. Hefford, Alderman Kendall and Spencer Clinton, was appointed to confer with the railroads, through a committee appointed by them, upon the bill that had been read, and, if possible, adopt it or one in its place.

Third, the presentation by Chief Engineer Buchholz of the Erie Railway of his plans for union passenger and freight stations.

The Buchholz plans thus quietly presented did not at first attract much attention. Members of the Joint Committee looked at the plans, but without any particular interest in them. The officials of the other railroads glanced at the plans and one of the New York Central gentlemen called the elevations of the union depot "a very pretty picture." But of serious consideration there was none given the Buchholz plan on the day of presentation. Inasmuch, however, as the Buchholz plan played a leading part in many of the subsequent proceedings, it may be well to give an outline of its most popular features.

The proposed grand union passenger depot would have had a frontage on Washington Street, extending from Exchange Street to the Hamburg Canal. The Washington-street elevation represented an ornate brick and cut-stone edifice, with a frontage of 300 feet, seven stories high, covered by a Mansard roof with numerous dormer windows, and over-topped by a massive clock-tower over 200 feet high. A paved plaza 100 feet wide would separate the edifice from Washington Street proper. Over the main entrance would be a broad *porte-cochère*, and to the right of this about 75 feet further south would be a massive arch from which would emerge the double tracks of the Central Belt Line and Niagara Falls line. Crossing Washington Street at the northwesterly corner of Quay Street, the Belt Line tracks would be carried under Main Street, through Spaulding's Exchange and adjoining properties, would take the H. H. Baker building, the United States Hotel,

the Pascal P. Pratt buildings, curving thence across the Terrace at grade to the Terrace depot.

The Exchange-street elevation of the union depot dropped to three stories after passing the tower, and continued for 300 feet. Beyond the depot building proper would stretch away the mammoth train house for 500 feet more. The ground plan of the passenger station showed a general waiting-room 76 by 132 feet, a smoking-room 37 by 81 feet, a spacious ladies' room, a platform 50 by 280 feet between the waiting-room and the train house; and here would be the ends of 14 railroad tracks with eight broad platforms lengthways between the tracks for ingress and egress from the trains of cars, these platforms and the platforms of the cars being upon the same level. The train house would be a grand arched structure 108 feet high in the center and 280 feet wide. The estimated cost of the buildings was \$700,000.

The grand union freight depot was designed to occupy the space between Michigan and Alabama, Exchange and Carroll streets.

To carry out the Buchholz plan it would also have been necessary to take the Continental Hotel property and all other buildings on Exchange Street, extending to Washington Street, and on the east side of the latter street to the Hamburg Canal. It proposed to carry Michigan Street over the railroad tracks by a viaduct substantially as has now been done. It proposed to close Chicago Street between Carroll Street and the Hamburg Canal. It proposed to carry Louisiana Street over the railroad tracks by a viaduct with approaches extending from Seneca Street to Scott Street.

The union depot was intended to accommodate the passenger trains, and the local freight trains, of all railroads entering Buffalo. The scheme was not without its difficulties. It involved the outlay of a large amount of money; the moving and changing of many railroad tracks; the exchanging of much real estate owned by rival railroad companies and heavily mortgaged; the organizing of a grand union depot corporation, with many details of for-

midable character ; but, as we shall presently see, the Buchholz plan captivated almost all the citizens, and, as appeared at one time, all of the railroad companies. Those of the citizens who declared themselves in opposition did so because the railroad tracks were not elevated at the crossings of Michigan, Chicago and Louisiana streets ; all else they approved.

A conference was held January 17th, between the sub-committee on legislation and a committee of railway attorneys, consisting of Wilson S. Bissell, Franklin D. Locke, E. C. Sprague and John G. Milburn. The fifth member, Hon. D. H. McMillan, not being present, no definite action was taken. The bill prepared by Spencer Clinton and approved by the sub-committee was under discussion. It provided for the appointment by name of nine commissioners, citizens of Buffalo, to hold office for five years ; vacancies to be filled by the Governor. Power was given to adopt or modify plans after hearing the railroads and interested parties ; to determine what portions of the work to be done, would be done by, or paid for, the railroads and the city ; to enforce the carrying out of their plan ; to determine the time when the work or any portion of it should be begun by any railroad, and in case of default to do the work and collect the cost from the railroad. Lands required were to be taken by condemnation proceedings and the awards apportioned on the railroads and the city in such proportion as should be just. Claims for damages to property by change of grade, or by closing or discontinuing any part of a street, were to be made to the assessors, whose decision would be final and would be paid by the city. The commissioners would serve without compensation.

A substitute bill was introduced by Mr. Locke, which provided that the city of Buffalo might lawfully, upon resolution by the Common Council, present a petition to the Supreme Court for the appointment of five disinterested persons, of whom one would be a practical civil engineer, one an attorney-at-law, and three freeholders of the State of New York, to determine and file a plan for regulating

the railroad crossings. Thereafter the commissioners were to determine the proportion of cost and expense to be paid by the railroads and the city; they were to cause any railroad track or tracks crossing any public street to be elevated or depressed so as to separate the highway traffic on the street from the traffic on the railroad, but no change could be made on the alignment or grade of any railroad without the concurrence of the member of the commission who was a practical civil engineer; they were to determine the amount of damages to real estate caused by changes of streets, and to determine equitably the proportion of the cost of separating the grades of streets and railroads to be paid by the railroads and the city; they were to prepare and file with their report an estimate of the entire work to be done, and the proportion to be paid by the city, whereupon the city would borrow the amount required by the issue of bonds for that amount. The fees and expenses of the commissioners were to be paid by the city.

E. C. Sprague, attorney for the Erie Railroad, said that the officials of the Erie, New York Central, and West Shore were then consulting on the matter, and in a week their representatives would present a plan, and no doubt the Lackawanna and the Lehigh Valley would coincide with the other roads. Adjournment was made to January 25th.

Meanwhile the Buchholz plan was enjoying a boom of great prosperity. Newspaper editorials voiced the popular sentiment, as follows: "The best news of the day—a grand union railway station almost in sight." "Captivating offer of the railroads to build for Buffalo a seven hundred thousand dollar union station." "The railroads say that they are ready to spend three million dollars in building for Buffalo a union station and in depressing and elevating tracks." "The proposition made by the railroads is a happy surprise. The offer to build a grand union station is cause for general rejoicing." "The plan presents many excellent features, but there are serious objections to the long bridges on Michigan and Louisiana streets. It is estimated that drawing freight over these bridges would add one dollar a



load to the cost. The problem is a great one, and it may be that this plan is the best that could be devised under all the conditions."

With the way thus paved for favorable consideration the Buchholz plan was again presented to the Joint Committee on January 25th. Engineer Buchholz was present to explain his plan and furnish information thereon. The chairman suggested that the commission would like a definite statement by the representatives of each railroad that they were agreed as to the Buchholz plan, and that they have authority to say so. Mr. McMillan said: "On behalf of the Central, and West Shore, and Nickel Plate, I am authorized to say that the plans as here presented in a general way are satisfactory to those companies." Mr. Sprague said: "I think I am authorized to speak for the Erie Railway, that these plans are satisfactory to that company." Mr. Locke said: "I think I am authorized to speak for the Union Terminal Company, and the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railway to the same effect, and also for the Lackawanna."

A long discussion followed, in which was developed a serious division of sentiment as to the course to be pursued. An influential minority was strongly of opinion that the committee should insist upon elevated tracks, or nothing, and fight it out on that line. A member who approved the plan, said: "I think the great mass of the citizens of Buffalo would be greatly pleased by the carrying out of this plan," and one of different opinion said: "Perhaps it is all right, but I cannot say whether we should be thankful to have the privilege of building a bridge over the railroad. I don't see where the thanks come in. I don't see why it is not just as well as it is now, or better than it would be that way. I am thankful that the railroads are willing at least to come together and have a union depot. I approve of that very much. The Erie road, and all excepting the Central, have striven to get there, but the Central always has the advantage of them. And now, while I am a little surprised, it seems that the Central was really willing to give the rest of the railroads the same chance they have,

and I am thankful for that." Another member said: "I would rather cross Michigan Street at a grade than over a bridge. Although the centralization of the freight department is a fine thing, I would rather they would remain as they are." The majority, however, held that as the Buchholz plan was one upon which all the roads had agreed, and with which the great majority of the citizens were greatly pleased, the wise course to pursue was to move for the appointment of commissioners, vested with the necessary authority, to whom the entire problem could be referred; and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, This committee is gratified at the spirit displayed by the railway companies in agreeing upon a general plan of relief, and that they heartily approve of the suggestions to have a general union depot for passengers and freight, and heartily recommend the appointment of a commission to adopt the best measures for bringing about the same.

The sub-committee on legislation reported progress, was continued, and the meeting adjourned.

At a regular meeting of the Common Council, held Monday, Jan. 30, 1888, the Board of Aldermen passed the following resolution, on motion of Alderman Scheu:

*Resolved*, That the president of the Common Council name four members of the Council, who together with the president as chairman, the city engineer and the corporation counsel, shall constitute a committee, with power to take charge on behalf of the city of all matters pertaining to the railway crossing question, and to take such steps for the protection of the interests of the city as to them shall seem best.

The president appointed the following as such committee: Aldermen Summers, Scheu, Ramsperger, McMasters and Kendall.

Discussions upon the proposed bill were now the chief business of the Joint Committee, the Common Council committee, and the railroad attorneys. Conferences were frequent. The citizens were earnest and eager for immediate action. The railroads were all for delay and for restrictions in the bill to which the citizens could not agree.

The Business Men's Association held a meeting February 9th to consider the Buchholz plan. Among those present were James B. Stafford, chairman; Peter J. Ferris, secretary; James A. Roberts, James N. Adam, William J. Morgan, George Warner, James Crate, and H. D. Folinsbee. Here, as elsewhere, the differences of opinion were so great that the members, unable to agree upon resolutions of unqualified approval, adjourned for ten days, after extending an invitation to Hon. D. H. McMillan to be present at the adjourned meeting, to address them on the railroad view of the situation.

The full text of the revised grade-crossings bill drafted by Spencer Clinton for the Joint Committee was published in the *Courier* and the *Express* February 10th, and a conference thereon by the sub-committee of the Joint Committee, the special committee of the Common Council, and the committee of railway attorneys, was held February 18th, in the forenoon. No agreement was reached, as may be gathered from some of the recorded words of the attorneys. Said one of them: "I have no authority to act in this case." Said another: "This is a one-sided affair. If you want it, send to Albany. I shall oppose it." And yet another: "There is one feature of this bill which ought to be fatal to it. That is, that this commission is to be composed of citizens of Buffalo. . . . I think in the whole history of legislation, the whole history of legal proceedings, so far as I have known or heard of either, so monstrous a proposition has never been presented to reasonable men. . . . I would rather go into purgatory for a hundred years than be upon that commission, as a citizen of Buffalo, and undertake to do what was right. I don't envy his position, and I warn any man who desires any peace of his life in the future, to stay off the commission."

Mr. R. R. Hefford said: "From the spirit of enmity manifested here this morning it begins to look as if it is impossible ever to agree. I move the following:

*Resolved*, That the bill as prepared by the sub-committee be submitted to the Joint Committee this afternoon, and if agreeable to them that it be sent to Albany at once, and that, if necessary, an-

other meeting be held to come to some definite understanding with the railways upon minor amendments."

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

The Hon. D. H. McMillan then said: "If the gauntlet is thrown down at Albany, I have nothing more to say before this committee. The battlefield is now changed from Buffalo to Albany." And the Hon. E. C. Sprague said: "I think by next Thursday I would be prepared to come with authority to favor or oppose the bill," and it was voted to adjourn to that day.

On the afternoon of the same day, February 18th, a meeting of the Joint Committee was held at the Merchants' Exchange. The proposed bill was read by the secretary. A very spirited debate followed, and finally it was voted that the bill be received, and referred back to the sub-committee with the hope that they would be able to agree with the railroads before the bill was sent to Albany; and with full power to act for the Joint Committee.

The Merchants' Exchange held a meeting February 20th, when a report by the committee of the Exchange was presented in which the committee requested the endorsement of the Exchange on three points:

*First*—The immediate presentation of a bill to the State Legislature.

*Second*—That the bill provide for the appointment of a commission with power to adopt plans and enforce them.

*Third*—That the commission shall be citizens of Buffalo.

A resolution embodying these provisions was unanimously adopted.

The Business Men's Association held a meeting on the evening of the same day, and was addressed by the Hon. D. H. McMillan. He explained the Buchholz plan in detail, and showed the advantages it would confer upon the city. He was authorized to say, on behalf of the Vanderbilt interests, including the New York Central, the West Shore, the Lake Shore, and the Michigan Central railroads, that the Buchholz plan would be carried out in good

faith, if accepted. This was in accordance with the broad and liberal policy which had characterized the management of the corporation ever since Chauncey M. Depew became president. The plan proposed embodied as fair, just, broad and liberal a proposition as any man should ask.

Then he spoke of the proposed bill, one element of which he would feel called upon to oppose to the end, and that was, the provision that the commissioners should be citizens of Buffalo. It was an unjust and an unrighteous measure. "If," said he, "the commissioners are citizens of Buffalo and do their duty fearlessly, with due regard to the interest of the railroads as well as of the city, they will be ostracized socially and otherwise, because their friends and neighbors would charge them with having railroad money in their pockets. Life would become a burden to them." A long discussion followed Mr. McMillan's plea, resolutions and counter resolutions were offered, and the whole matter was laid over a week.

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### III. THE AMENDED CLINTON BILL.

The adjourned conference of the Joint Committee, and the Council Committee, with the committee of railroad attorneys, was held February 23d, for the purpose of discussing the provisions of the amended Clinton bill, but the attention of the committee was skillfully diverted from the bill by the suggestion of Hon. D. H. McMillan, that before deciding on a bill the committee should first agree upon an engineering plan, advocating the Buchholz plan as being the best. Then he proposed that the city engineers should meet with the railroad engineers and make a study of the situation. Then it was suggested that a disinterested engineer be employed on behalf of the Joint Committee. Then several engineers were suggested. And so the bill was sidetracked for the time being, and it was

*"Resolved,* That Engineers Buchholz, Mann, and such other engineers as may be selected by this committee and the railroads, meet

in this city not later than Tuesday next to decide upon a plan for the consideration of this committee, and that they report as soon as possible."

In accordance with that resolution a conference of civil engineers was arranged for February 28th. There were then present George E. Mann, city engineer; Edward B. Guthrie, assistant city engineer; Walter Katte, chief engineer New York Central Railroad; C. W. Buchholz, chief engineer Erie Railway; James Archibald, chief engineer Lackawanna Railroad; Thomas W. Spencer, inspector for the State Railroad Commissioners; and as special consulting engineers, John Bogart, New York State Engineer; Henry Flad, chief of the bureau of public works, St. Louis; George McNulty, expert bridge engineer, New York City; Arthur M. Wellington, editor *Engineering News*, New York.

The board of engineers was organized by the election of John Bogart as chairman. Mr. Spencer explained in detail the plan proposed by him for elevating the railroad tracks at Michigan, Chicago and Louisiana streets, and for the elevated passenger train house at the New York Central depot. Mr. Buchholz also explained his plan for carrying these three streets over the railroad tracks by viaducts, and the details for a union passenger station for all railroads entering Buffalo. Thereafter the members of the board inspected the streets and the railroad crossings, not only in the Michigan-Exchange Street district, but throughout the city generally. They occupied several days in examination, consultation and discussion of the situation, and prepared a full report of their conclusions and recommendations, which was submitted to the Joint Committee and the committee of the Common Council, March 12th.

The Board reported, in substance, that after a careful consideration of the two plans submitted to them, and after a personal inspection of the railroads and the streets, they had arrived at the conclusion that under the existing conditions the universal elevation of passenger and freight tracks was impracticable, because of the terminal facilities

which would be curtailed, and in many cases destroyed by such elevation of tracks, thus injuriously affecting not only the interests of the railroads, but also the interests of the citizens to whom the railroad connections were a necessity.

The Board advised the construction of viaducts to carry the streets over the railroad tracks in the principal thoroughfares in low-lying parts of the city; and the construction of subways to take the streets under the railways in the higher districts where sufficient drainage could be had; and this to be done by partially raising the railroad tracks and depressing the streets to pass under them.

For the Michigan-Exchange Street district, where there was evident necessity for speedy action, the Board was agreed that the Buchholz plan, in its general features, would be the best both for the city and the railroad companies, and that it involved no serious sacrifice to any interest of either. The Buchholz plan decreased in several ways objections which before its submission, were justly regarded as very serious, against carrying the streets over the tracks. The grades of the approaches were much easier than had hitherto been proposed or contemplated, and as they were planned for the full width of the streets as they then were, with an enlargement of the street alongside of them, to enable the traffic to pass around them if necessary, they seemed a most admirable provision in all respects for the requirements, and would be superior to any works of the kind in the United States. The general arrangement proposed by Mr. Buchholz to accommodate all the passenger traffic of the roads entering Buffalo, and the development of the tracks into a grand union station, was highly advantageous to all interests and was particularly approved by the Board.

A long discussion followed the reading of the report. There were still a few who thought that the inconveniences caused by carrying the streets by viaducts above the railroads would more than offset the advantages to be derived from a union passenger station, and they hesitated to approve the Buchholz plan; but finally the following was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the report of the board of engineers, that has been read by the secretary, be approved by the Joint Committee; and that the sub-committee on legislation be instructed to prepare a bill to carry the same into effect, and to be sent to the Legislature at once; and the sub-committee is requested to embrace in the bill a provision that in case of a failure of the railroad companies to carry out the proposed plan, the commissioners named in the bill shall have power to adopt a plan and enforce it.

Immediate action was taken by the sub-committee on legislation, and the committee of the Common Council, to modify their bill to meet the new conditions. Attorney Spencer Clinton prepared a new draft. The committee met on the evening of March 12th, considered and agreed upon an amended bill entitled "An Act to provide for the relief of the city of Buffalo, and to change and regulate the crossing of the streets, avenues and public grounds in said city of Buffalo." The bill provided for the appointment of a number of commissioners, citizens of Buffalo, to be named in the bill, to serve for a term of five years; vacancies to be filled by the Governor. The commissioners could agree with the railroads upon the general plan recommended by the commission of engineers held at Buffalo, Feb. 28, 1888, and the agreement so made would be binding upon the city. The general plan referred to was the Buchholz plan as modified, amplified and extended in the report of the engineers. The commissioners could by agreement with the railroads, adopt plans for carrying into effect the said general plan. They could enforce the execution of the plans adopted by them. The commissioners, in case they were unable to agree with the railroads upon the aforesaid general plan, recommended by the commission of engineers, could adopt such plans, general and detailed, as might be necessary to carry out the purpose of the Act as declared by its title.

Before adopting any plan, general or detailed, notice of such intention was to be given to the city, the railroads and any interested parties, and they were to be heard in opposition thereto or in respect to any proposed change therein. After such hearing the commissioners would make a detailed



report of the plan adopted by them, and file the same with the clerk of Erie County. The commissioners, in case they could not agree with the railroads upon the apportionment of the expense between the city and the railroads, would apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of three commissioners, by mandamus proceedings, could compel the doing of the work, and the railroad failing to comply would forfeit to the city treasury one thousand dollars for each week's delay in beginning the work. The commissioners were to receive no compensation.

On the following day, March 13th, the sub-committees met the railroad attorneys to discuss the proposed bill. There were present R. B. Adam, Spencer Clinton, R. R. Hefford, John N. Scatcherd, Aldermen Kendall, Summers and Scheu, Corporation Counsel Worthington, City Engineer Mann, E. C. Sprague, attorney for the Erie Railway, and D. H. McMillan, attorney for the New York Central Railroad. Mr. McMillan said that after consultation with the representatives of the railroads they had concluded to present for consideration a bill which they had prepared. This bill appointed the Mayor, the comptroller and treasurer of the city a commission authorized to enter into a contract on behalf of the city with the railroads to carry into execution the modified Buchholz plan; it provided that the work be done to the approval of the city engineer, and required the railroads to give bonds in fifty thousand dollars for the faithful performance of their part of the contract; it provided that if the commissioners and the railroads could not agree upon the division of the expense, the Supreme Court would appoint three citizens to make the apportionment; it provided that if the contracts were not entered into by the railroads the city might apply to the Supreme Court for a commission of seven citizens of the State with authority to abate the grade crossings evil, and who would receive compensation for their labors; and these provisions were followed by that portion of Mr. Clinton's bill which provided how such a commission would proceed.

Mr. Sprague objected to several of the provisions of Mr. Clinton's bill. He objected to the naming of citizens of

Buffalo as commissioners; objected to the giving the commissioners the power to adopt a plan. Said he: "The first and third sections together constitute a commission with such powers as, in our opinion, were never vested before in a commission in a civilized community." He objected to the authority to decide when portions of the work under the plan adopted must be begun and when finished; objected to the penalty imposed upon the railroads which failed to comply with the decision of the commissioners.

The main objection lay in the naming in the bill citizens of Buffalo as the commissioners. "That," said Mr. Clinton, in his reply, "that seems to be the whole question in a nutshell, and it demonstrates that, at least upon the part of the counsel of the railroad companies, they have something stronger than a lingering fear that the Buchholz plan will never be carried out, and therefore they don't want this commission clothed with power to obviate this evil. I submit it is only fair that we nominate a commission out of our own citizens, who have the question at heart, to have it decided readily, to have power to carry out the general plan if the railroads back down from the Buchholz plan. That is a proposition which I think as an ordinary business man is a fair one to make to them. The railroads suggest this Buchholz plan as a fair one, and they are ready and willing to carry it out. Very well; we have said on behalf of the city of Buffalo that we are ready and willing, and then if the railroads do not carry out this agreement we shall have the power in the city to adopt and carry out a plan."

There followed a discussion upon various sections of the bill which continued through the afternoon and evening without intermission, and after many hours spent in debating, altering and amending, it was agreed by both parties to have Mr. Clinton's bill, as it had been amended, go to Albany at once to be placed upon the calendar, March 15th being the last day it could go on and be sure of attention at that session of the Legislature.

The bill was taken to Albany March 14th by Peter J. Ferris, secretary of the Joint Committee, and was introduced the following day, simultaneously in the Senate by Hon.

John Laughlin, and in the Assembly by Hon. William F. Sheehan.

Briefly stated, the provisions of the bill as introduced were as follows:

Section 1. Robert B. Adam, Christian Klinck, Robert R. Hefford, Philo D. Beard, and James M. Smith were appointed commissioners to enter into contracts on behalf of the city of Buffalo with the railroad companies for the relief of the city upon the plan recommended by the commission of engineers, Feb. 28, 1888; or upon any modification that might be agreed upon.

Section 2. Detailed plans of the work to be prepared.

Section 3. In case the railroads and the commissioners could not agree upon the apportionment of cost, the Supreme Court would appoint three commissioners to make such apportionment. The same commissioners shall have power to change the grade or to close any street where necessary to carry out the plan.

Section 4. Along with the contract provided for in Section 1, a bond was to be executed by the railroads in the sum of \$50,000, for the faithful performance of the work, to be done subject to the approval of the city engineer.

Section 5. If within three months from the passage of the Act the railroads had declined or refused to enter into the contract, the city could apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of five disinterested persons of whom at least two would be citizens of Buffalo, as a commission to change and regulate the railroad crossings.

Section 6. Proceedings for the adoption of detail plans to carry out the general plan referred to in Section 1.

Section 7. Proceedings for the adoption of a general plan in case of failure to agree upon the plan recommended by the commission of engineers.

Section 8. Proceedings for altering or modifying any plan after its adoption.

Section 9. Proceedings for determining the apportionment of cost.

Section 10. Proceedings to compel the doing of the work by action of mandamus, and the forfeiture by any rail-

road to the city treasury of one thousand dollars for each week of delay after the time named by the commissioners for the work to be begun. Should the railroads neglect to do the work, the commissioners were given power to do it and recover the cost from the railroads.

Section 11. Contracts to be let by the Common Council to the lowest responsible bidder.

Section 12. Awards for lands taken and for damages to property, to be made by three commissioners appointed by the Supreme Court.

Section 13. Proceedings to apportion such awards between the city and the railroads.

Section 14. Provided for an appeal from awards under Section 12.

Section 15. Expenses of the commission to be paid by the city. The commissioners to receive \$20 per day while in the actual discharge of their duties.

Section 16. Empowered the city to issue bonds to pay for its share of the work.

Section 17. Limited the Act to railroads operated by steam.

Section 18. Act to take effect immediately.

Quite a little feeling was excited by a letter from Mr. John O'Connor, Commissioner of Public Buildings, published in the *Buffalo Times*, March 18th, calling attention to the fact that no Irishman has been named as one of the Grade Crossings Commissioners. It was explained by members of the committee on legislation that the subject of nationality had never entered into the question at all. No one had thought of such a thing, as being partial to any nationality. They had selected two members of the Joint Committee, two reputable business men, and one lawyer of acknowledged ability. The bill, however, was delayed in the Assembly committee on cities until some impatience began to find expression in the newspapers, and in reply to a dispatch from E. H. Butler, editor of the *News*, Mr. Sheehan replied, March 23d, "Bill will be reported next week. There will be some changes in the commission."

A despatch to the *Commercial* dated New York, March

21st, said that a meeting of the representatives of the several roads interested in the grade crossings matter was held there that day. The consultation was exceedingly satisfactory, and it looked as if nothing could arise to prevent the carrying out of the Buchholz plan.

A public hearing before the Assembly committee on cities upon the Grade Crossings bill was set for March 27th, at Albany. The following gentlemen appeared as a delegation from Buffalo: Spencer Clinton, J. N. Scatcherd, R. B. Adam, Frederick Kendall, O. S. Laycock, George E. Mann, W. J. Morgan, George Sandrock, E. T. Betts, James Bolland, R. R. Hefford, C. W. Hammond, S. D. Colie, P. J. Ferris, W. W. Sloan, A. W. Voltz, S. F. Sherman. The railroad companies were represented by Hon. D. H. McMillan and Hon. E. Carlton Sprague.

A preliminary meeting of the Joint Committee present was held at the Delavan House in the forenoon, and it was decided to present several amendments to the bill before the Assembly committee. The most important were the following: To strike out in Section 3, the requirement of a bond for \$50,000 from the railroads for the faithful performance of a contract; to strike out the clause in Section 10, requiring the forfeiture by the railroad of \$1,000 a week for delay in beginning to do the work; to strike out the provision for the payment of \$20 a day to the commissioners while in the active discharge of their duties, and provide that they serve without compensation. These amendments were subsequently presented and approved at the Assembly committee hearing. Other sections were amended in committee, the following being the important changes:

The commissioners named in Section 1 were changed to R. B. Adam, William Summers, Frederick Kendall, George Sandrock, James M. Smith. In Section 3, the provision giving to the Court Commissioners power to change the grade of and to close streets was stricken out, and that authority conferred upon the city. In Section 5, the time for agreement was extended to six months. Further changes were made in the names of the commissioners while the bill was before the Assembly, and when finally passed

they were as follows: R. B. Adam, John B. Weber, Frederick Kendall, George Sandrock, James E. Nunan, William J. Morgan, Solomon Scheu, James M. Smith, Edward H. Butler.

When the bill was reported to the Senate, April 17th, Senator Laughlin asked that it be referred to the Judiciary committee for amendment. It then transpired that objection had been made to the name of James M. Smith as a commissioner, and after a hearing at which the Joint Committee defended his appointment, claiming that the city was entitled to demand that it receive the benefit of Judge Smith's services and experience, and the railroads claimed the right of objection to any particular man, so long as they did not undertake to dictate who should be appointed, just as they would be allowed to object to a juror, if the case was tried before a court of justice. The Judiciary Committee took the same view of the matter as was claimed by the railroad attorneys, and the name of Charles A. Sweet was substituted for that of Judge Smith. A further amendment was made to the effect that any six of the nine commissioners could make a contract.

The amended grade crossings bill passed the Senate May 4th, and was signed by Gov. Hill May 22, 1888.

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#### IV. COLLAPSE OF THE TERMINAL COMPANY PROJECT.

The first meeting of the Grade Crossings Commissioners was held in the committee room of the Merchants' Exchange, May 31, 1888. All the members were present with the exception of John B. Weber, who was in Washington as a Member of Congress.

The commissioners organized by electing R. B. Adam, chairman, and William J. Morgan, secretary. On motion the chairman and secretary were directed to inform the several railroad companies interested that the commissioners were ready to enter into a contract to carry into execution

the plan of terminal improvements recommended by the board of engineers, Feb. 28, 1888.

On May 31st a meeting of the railroads interested in the Buffalo grade crossings was held at the office of President Depew, in the Grand Central depot, New York; and a committee, consisting of Mr. Toucey and Mr. Gatchell of the Western New York & Pennsylvania, was appointed to formulate a plan of organization to carry the proposed improvement into effect.

Another month passed, and complaints began to be made of the slowness of the railroads in organizing a proposed Terminal Company. In a published interview Hon. D. H. McMillan said that the progress being made was all that could be expected. The public should not be impatient. The union depot was assured. It must come, and when built would be a source of profit to all concerned.

It was reported in the newspapers, July 4th, that a map was being made of the premises involved showing the property owned by the railroads, which they proposed to contribute in exchange for stock in the proposed Union Terminal Company. The value of these properties would be appraised, also the value of the property not owned by the railroads but required for the construction of the union depots. Engineers would make estimates of the cost of the improvements. Then upon these data would be formed the basis of capitalization for the Union Terminal Company.

At a meeting of the Grade Crossings Commissioners, held July 11th, a preamble and resolutions, based upon belief that the railroads were maturing plans for the union depots, were adopted; suggesting that the engineers should be preparing plans for the crossings not included in the territory covered by the terminals, and asking the railroads to cooperate with the city engineer.

So much dissatisfaction was being expressed over the very slow progress made by the railroads that a meeting of the Joint Committee was called August 3d. It was still believed that the railroads were sincerely trying to organize a union terminal company, but a resolution was adopted earnestly requesting their cooperation in preparing plans for

the crossings outside the territory to be occupied by the proposed union terminals.

The Grade Crossings Commissioners met August 22d, and as no replies had been received from the railroads to the requests made July 11th, it was voted that the chairman and secretary personally visit the officials of the railroads and urge immediate action. As to the Terminal Company, it was said that difficult questions had been raised as to whether the general mortgages on the properties of the railroads could be released, and if not, it was doubtful whether the bonds of the new company could be floated subject to the mortgages. Already the project began to look doubtful. The Corporation Counsel was asked to define the powers and duties of the commission and report in one week. August 29th his opinion was given that the commissioners could direct the City Engineer to prepare the required plans without waiting for the coöperation of the railroad engineers; whereupon a resolution was adopted, and sent to all the railroads, again asking coöperation, but notifying them that at the end of ten days the City Engineer would be directed to begin the preparation of such plans.

At a meeting of the Grade Crossings Commissioners, held September 26th, the chairman and secretary reported that on the 20th they had a conference, in New York City, with President Depew, Chief Engineer Katte, and D. H. McMillan, attorney; and they were told by Mr. Depew that the Central Railroad meant to go forward with the improvement in Buffalo; that at the last meeting of the executive board the matter was discussed and the opinion was expressed that each railroad should go on and do its share of the work, but he did not think that idea would prevail. He felt confident that the Terminal Company would be formed. Mr. McMillan had been instructed to draw the charter for the Terminal Company, and Mr. Katte to make plans for the new terminals. The full board of Central directors would meet the following week to consider and decide the matter. President Depew and Chief Engineer Katte would be in Buffalo the first week in October to meet the commissioners.



President King of the Erie Railroad was also interviewed, but while he said that the executive committee of the Erie would be willing to go into a terminal company, the doing so was conditioned upon not being called upon to raise any money, and also conditioned upon the Trusts holding their mortgages agreeing to take the bonds of the Terminal Company and release the property taken by that company.

October 4th a conference was held at the Merchants' Exchange between the Grade Crossings Commissioners and officials of the New York Central Railroad. There were present R. B. Adam, W. J. Morgan, James E. Nunan, Frederick Kendall, George Sandrock, John B. Weber, E. H. Butler and Solomon Scheu, commissioners; Spencer Clinton, attorney, and George E. Mann, engineer; Cornelius Vanderbilt, chairman of the executive board of the New York Central Railroad Company; Chauncey M. Depew, president; H. J. Hayden, second vice-president; C. C. Clark, third vice-president; J. M. Toucey, general manager; Walter Katte, chief engineer, and D. H. McMillan, attorney. The public interest in this conference was evidenced by the number of citizens who crowded the large committee rooms. It was hoped that the actual formation of the Union Terminal Company would be declared. It was feared that the rumors which had recently been heard might mean further delay. It was not expected that the scheme for a terminal company had been abandoned—but the unexpected happened, and the hope of realizing a grand union passenger station and freight depot in Buffalo vanished in that hour. The attempt to unite the railroads in a terminal company had failed and had been abandoned by the New York Central Company. President Depew said: "This matter never has yet been brought before the board of directors for action and passed upon. We have no doubt what the board will do when the matter is presented. . . . The Central will desire to do its own part by itself so far as its own tracks are concerned, and take care of its own terminals as far as those accommodations are concerned. . . . We are ready to agree with the commissioners and begin work. We do not care for a union

depot for freight or passengers. We think it would be very much better for us in the end, as well as for the city, that that feature be eliminated."

Chairman Adam said: "We have never until today had any intimation of any abandonment of the Buchholz plan."

President Depew replied: "There are almost insuperable difficulties in the formation of a terminal company."

Chairman Adam said, inquiringly: "Then it is abandoned?"

President Depew replied promptly and with firmness: "Yes, sir."

Hon. D. H. McMillan said, by way of explanation: "The chairman of your commission knows that about three weeks ago instructions were given me to draft a charter for the proposed terminal company. I have busied myself with that task from that day to the present time. I have listened to the arguments, the excuses and pretexts for delay made by the representatives of the roads that were expected to unite in the terminal company. The Central has tried to meet these other roads fairly, but the latter have made such demands and put such obstacles in the way that it has been found impossible to organize such a company."

Engineer Katte was asked if he had formed any plan and he replied that he would follow substantially the plan recommended by the board of engineers.

After the adjournment of the conference, interviews with the attorneys of the Central and the Erie railroads were published in the newspapers. Mr. McMillan said: "I found that the Erie people did not want to go into the terminal company if it would cost much money. They would not go into it unless they could be guaranteed that their annual fixed charges in Buffalo would not be increased more than twenty thousand dollars. They would not go into it unless they could have as much say in the management as any other interest. Furthermore, they could not release their property from the mortgages upon it—meaning the property which they were to put into the terminal company. In putting in that property they desired it to be taken at its full value and that stock to the full amount of the value should be apportioned to the Erie road without the release of the mortgage."

Mr. E. Carleton Sprague said: "I have for some time thought that while it is comparatively easy for non-competing roads to occupy the same terminal station, it is a very difficult problem for closely competing roads. It has been my opinion for some time that the Central road would not go into this terminal project unless it had a controlling voice and interest in the management of the station and its approaches; and that no other road could afford to occupy a station in the management of which it had not an equal voice." Then he added: "Other difficulties, financial and otherwise, have arisen."

The ultimate failure of this attempt to organize a terminal company was probably due to a combination of difficulties, largely financial in their character, but in which the rival interests, ambitions and jealousies of rival railroads, controlling traffic, held and exercised the controlling influence.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Mr. Adam's Historical Society paper already quoted from has the following account of this episode:

"One day in the first week of October the officials of the New York Central Railroad came to Buffalo on a tour of inspection. I was telegraphed to meet them at the depot and was taken to the president's private car where I met Cornelius Vanderbilt, chairman of the executive board; Chauncey M. Depew, president of the company; C. C. Clarke, first vice-president; H. J. Hayden, third vice-president; J. M. Toucey, general manager; Walter Katte, chief engineer. Mr. Depew spoke for the New York Central Company, and said that they had found it to be impossible to form a union terminal company on lines which they could agree to, and that the Central was ready and willing to negotiate with the commissioners for the abolishing of grade crossings so far as their own tracks were concerned, but they would not any further consider a union depot. Of course I felt disappointed, but I cannot say that I was taken by surprise. The officials were going east to Syracuse and would return to Buffalo the day following. I made an appointment with them to meet the Joint Committee at the Merchants' Exchange October 4th, in the afternoon. I said not a word to anybody about what I had been told. I was determined I would not be the first to break the news which was to bring such sore disappointment to the citizens of Buffalo.

"When I met President Depew on the morning of the 4th he expressed disappointment that no mention of what passed at our previous meeting had been made in the newspapers. They had looked for it, but I told him he must deliver the evil tidings himself. The committee rooms of the Merchants' Exchange were crowded that afternoon when the officials of the railroad arrived. After a few personal introductions and some pretatory words I said: 'We will now hear from the president of the New York Central Railroad.'

"Mr. Depew arose, and in a hesitating sort of a way, as though he had an unpleasant piece of news to break, spoke of the disposition of the company to comply, as far as possible, with the wishes of the city; said they were prepared to instruct their engineer to meet the engineer of the city to provide plans for relief, said they were ready and willing to proceed at once to an agreement and as fast as possible to the completion of the work. 'I speak only for the New York Central,' he said, and then added slowly, with deliberation in every word, which, as he uttered them, fell upon the commissioners, and upon the audience, like a thunder-clap: 'The Central will desire to do its own part by itself, as far as its own tracks are concerned, and take care of its own terminals, as far as those accommodations are concerned.' And he sat down, having said not a word about the Buchholz plan or the union passenger station.

## V. PROGRESS UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Great was the disappointment under the loss of the grand union passenger and freight depots, but as the abolition of grade crossings was the main purpose for which the commissioners were appointed they resolved not to relinquish their determination to accomplish that object. They, therefore, decided to have a consultation between Engineers Katte and Mann upon plans for a contract with the New York Central Railroad, and sent the following letter to the officials of the other railroads:

BUFFALO, October 5, 1888.

DEAR SIR: You are hereby notified that the officers of the New York Central Railroad Company have informed this commission that owing to obstacles deemed insurmountable, the Terminal Improvement Company project for the abatement of the grade crossings evil and the construction of union passenger and freight stations in this city, has been abandoned. This commission is now negotiating a contract with the New York Central for the abatement of the grade crossings evil, so far as its tracks are concerned. This commission is now ready to negotiate with your company, and it urges immediate action on your part, as the six months limitation in which it is authorized to act is drawing to a close. The statute creating this commission provides that if no contract is entered into within six months, the city of Buffalo may apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of a commission that shall have power to abate the grade crossings evil, with or without the consent of the railroad companies. If a contract is not entered into with your company by the expiration of the six months the Supreme Court will immediately be asked to appoint a second commission.

An immediate answer is earnestly requested.

R. B. ADAM, *Chairman*.

W. J. MORGAN, *Secretary*.

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"I was bound to draw out their decision upon that matter, and began my reply by detailing the occurrences of the preceding eight or nine months in relation to the union depot project, and concluded by saying that the statement of President Depew that he spoke only for the Central did not cover that larger question; we had been expecting all along that the terminal company would be formed, and the commissioners would like to hear more definitely about that matter. Mr. Depew began his reply by fencing a little with the provisions of the act: the commissioners had power to agree with one, or any, or all of the companies upon a plan known as the Buchholz plan and to make such modifications as to detail as in their judgment seemed wise. What might be the views of the other companies he did not know, but he did know what their own views were: 'We do not care for a union depot for passengers or for freight. We think it would be very much better for us in the end, as well as for the city, that that feature should be eliminated.'"

October 16th, Engineer Mann reported to the commissioners upon his discussion of plans with Engineer Katte, when he had found that certain sketch plans for grades of the New York Central tracks had been made by Mr. Katte, which varied from the grades in the Buchholz plan; and the question immediately arose to to whether the commissioners could agree to any such changes. The matter was referred to counsel, and Mr. Clinton advised as follows:

“The Act was originally drawn upon the idea that the report of the commission of engineers would be the plan that would be accepted in solving these difficulties, and therefore in the Act itself it was stated that you are authorized to make a contract with different companies upon that plan, identifying it as the plan recommended by the commission of engineers and now on file in the Engineer’s office. You are therefore authorized to make no contract with any company or companies except such as are embodied in that plan. That is subject, however, to this modification: It goes almost without saying that the Legislature could not force a railroad company, nor the city, to make any contract, or do any act, which they did not see fit to do in regard to their own property; and therefore, so far as this plan of the engineers recommends the railroad companies to do certain things in reference to their own property, they may do it, or not do it, exactly as they see fit, and to that extent any contract that you could make with the companies would be subject to the modification that you could not require the railroad companies to make any disposition of their property except such as they thought would suit their own convenience. To that extent you would undoubtedly be permitted to depart from the plan of the engineers, and no further. That is a modification by necessity, and not otherwise.”

Query: “In how far would we be justified in departing from the Buchholz plan?”

Mr. Clinton replied: “Only so far as you are compelled to depart from it owing to the abandonment by the railroads of this feature of united terminal facilities for passengers and freight.”

Therefore it was then voted that Engineer Mann be requested to prepare plans for all crossings strictly in accordance with the plans presented in the report of the commission of engineers as required by the Act; and that Attorney Clinton be requested to draw up contracts with each railroad company interested, based on such plans. November 12th the plans were approved and ordered filed in the office of the City Engineer. The contracts were read, approved, signed, and ordered delivered in person to the presidents of the railroad companies. And the contracts were duly delivered.

The contract with the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company was subsequently amended and signed under date of Nov. 22, 1888, exactly six months from the day the Act took effect. No change was made in the grades of that railroad other than a slight raising of the tracks at the crossing of Michigan Street. At that time all the passenger trains of the Lehigh Valley road entered the Erie depot, and only local freight trains ran over the grade crossings at Louisiana, Chicago and Michigan streets.

November 22d, a consultation was held, over the terms and plans of the contract with the New York Central Company, between the commissioners and Vice-President Hayden, General Counsel Loomis, Engineer Katte and Attorney D. H. McMillan.

At a meeting held November 25th, the death of Hon. Solomon Scheu, two days previous, was reported, and the commission adopted the following

#### MEMORIAL.

The members of this commission have learned with deep regret of the death of our associate, the Honorable Solomon Scheu, who has been taken away from the scenes of life's activities after but a few days' illness. We especially regret his untimely taking away from the councils of this commission before the full fruition of our labors to the present promising condition, of which his extended experience, wise judgment and sagacious counsel have contributed so largely. In the death of Mr. Scheu our city has lost one of its most eminent and public-spirited citizens, and the members of this commission join in the general sorrow of this community, and extend to the family of the deceased our sincere sympathy and condolence.

At the same meeting Mr. Clinton reported that the amended contract had been approved, signed and forwarded to President Depew. The following letter from S. M. Felton, Jr., First Vice-President of the Erie Railroad, was read:

NEW YORK, November 22, 1888.

MR. ROBERT B. ADAM, AND THE OTHER COMMISSIONERS:

GENTLEMEN: We have examined the contract dated the 12th November inst. between yourselves and the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company, signed by you. We understand that the project of the Union Terminal Company and a union station has been abandoned, and we are advised that the contract as drawn is probably not within the powers of the commission, not being restricted as required by the first section of the Act of May 22, 1888.

It seems obvious that the union station being abandoned, it will be for the interests of all parties to arrange grade crossings in a manner differing very largely from the plans as filed in the office of the City Engineer. We are informed that this is the opinion of that officer. It is, therefore, unnecessary to discuss the merits of the contracts drawn.

We shall be glad to enter into negotiations with the commission and the other railroad companies interested, for the purpose of arriving at plans, which will be for the best interests of the city and the companies, which will be within the present or future powers of the commissioners, and within the financial ability of this company.

Yours very respectfully,

(Signed)

S. M. FELTON, JR.,  
*First Vice-President.*

The letter was received and filed, and no action taken thereon.

At a meeting held December 15th, the chairman of the commissioners reported that although the contract had been sent to President Depew, according to agreement on November 22d; a letter asking attention to the matter December 1st, and a second letter December 8th, no reply having been received, the meeting had been called to consider whether the time had not now come for requesting the city to apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of five commissioners having the enlarged powers provided for in Section 5 of the Grade Crossings Act, and giving his own judgment that such application should be made forthwith. A majority

of the five commissioners present were in full accord with the suggestion, but it was deemed unwise to take such important action without a full attendance, and in the absence of the attorney, an adjournment was made to as early a day as could bring all the commissioners together; and that the object of the adjourned meeting be announced to take steps to bring the matter before the officials of the city. After the meeting had adjourned the following letter was received:

NEW YORK, December 14, 1888.

MR. SPENCER CLINTON:

DEAR SIR: Your letter of Dec. 3d, reached me when confined to my house by my accident, but I referred it immediately to Mr. Loomis with directions to prepare a contract expressing our views, which would be in effect a modification of the one prepared by you. Mr. Loomis has been extremely busy trying cases, but promised me yesterday he would have the contract ready for me tomorrow, so that by the first of the week I hope to have it in your possession.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

Consequently the adjourned meeting was delayed, pending the arrival of the Central contract. Another week passed, and the contract had not been received. At a meeting of the Buffalo Lumber Exchange, December 22d, the following was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the Lumber Exchange is much disappointed that a contract has not been entered into with the different roads based on the Buchholz plan for the relief from grade crossings, and giving the city the privileges of a grand union passenger and freight station.

*Resolved*, That all reasonable time has been allowed for the making of these contracts.

*Resolved*, That the city authorities and the commissioners be urged to proceed under the second part of the bill passed May 22, 1888, and ask the proper court to appoint the commission of five to carry out the provisions of said bill.

*Resolved*, That the continued delay in obtaining the relief from the dangers of grade crossings necessitates that some immediate action be taken by the city, to temporarily prevent the unwarrantable use of the streets for switching purposes until more permanent plans are arranged for.



The daily press took up the complaint, and on December 24th the editor of the *Commercial* said:

"The action of the Lumber Exchange fairly represents public sentiment in Buffalo at the present time. The people are tired of the interminable delay on the part of the railroads. For months a union terminal company was all the talk of the railroad managers; it was only a question of time for an agreement as to details. But the details were never agreed to, and then came the surprising and disappointing announcement that a terminal company was an impossibility. Next the public were assured that the Central system would make a separate contract. Negotiations were begun on that line. Contracts were drawn by the commissioners. They were not satisfactory, and the whole matter was talked over; some concessions were made, and another contract was drawn. That was not satisfactory, and after another tiresome wait, we hear that the Central's chief attorney is drawing up a new contract. But it has not arrived.

"And so it has been from the first; one delay and then another until we reach the conclusion arrived at by the Lumber Exchange, namely, that the railroads do not intend to do anything. The proper thing, therefore, is for the city to go to the Supreme Court and ask for the appointment of the second commission. It will have power to enforce action upon the railroads. It is useless to delay any longer."

But on the first day of January, 1889, not one contract, but drafts of two new contracts, drawn by General Counsel Loomis, were delivered to the chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission. Accompanying the contracts was a letter from President Depew:

NEW YORK, Dec. 29, 1888.

HON. SPENCER CLINTON,

DEAR SIR: Herewith are two proposed contracts drawn as between the commissioners and the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Company. I regret very much that it has not been possible to send them before for your consideration and that of the commission.

Both contracts were prepared by Mr. Loomis; the one marked "No. 1" having been just prepared by him and submitted and considered at a meeting of Vice-President Clarke, Mr. Loomis and myself; and the one marked "No. 2" having been prepared in consequence of the discussion of No. 1, and considered by us today.

You will observe that an agreement upon plans for the "Belt Line" is omitted. We make the omission for the reason that the

Belt Line was not under consideration in the interviews and discussions that led to the passage of the Act, nor had in mind by the Legislature in passing the Act, nor referred to in the Act expressly or by implication.

We feel that an agreement upon these plans for the Belt Line would be followed so soon by requirements for their execution, and be so great an increase to the burden the company is willing to take upon itself in the execution of the plan as modified in detail, that the Belt Line improvement ought not now be insisted upon, but left to the future.

You will also observe that in the matter of the cost of work outside of the exterior lines of railroad property the contracts we send provide for the bearing of one half of such cost by the railroad companies and one half by the city. Our original thought and intention on this subject was that the railroad companies should not be called upon to bear any portion of the expense of work done outside of exterior lines of railroad property, but that the city should be at the whole of that expense, as of any public improvement, the railroad companies necessarily contributing a large proportion, as assessed upon their respective properties; and we agree to pay one half of this expense as a concession—so far as we can go—toward the opinion of the commissioners in that behalf.

You will also notice other departures in the contracts sent to you from the one submitted by you.

The matter seems to be one of considerable difficulty and intricacy under the Act, and to accomplish its object by reason of the number of railroad companies concerned; the contiguity and connection of their tracks with each other; and the practical impossibility of beginning and carrying out the work except as a whole.

Mr. Loomis is of the opinion that the contract marked No. 1 has been drawn more nearly in accordance with the Act and to effectuate its purpose than the contract marked No. 2.

It is our earnest desire to make progress in the matter and we are willing to execute either contract. It seems to us quite likely that the matter will require some further discussion after a consideration of the contracts now sent, and we shall be pleased in that event, if it will suit your convenience for you to come to New York, because, as the counsel and representative of the commission, a better understanding of the points of difference, if any, before final determination may be arrived at, at an interview with you rather than by a conference with the whole commission.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW,  
*President.*

Both contracts were printed in full in the daily papers and reporters sought the opinion of citizens thereon. The question most in interest was the apportionment of the cost of the approaches, and here follow a few opinions, as published:

John Greiner: I don't see why the city should pay anything.

P. P. Pratt: The city should get the best bargain it can.

D. E. Brown: We should hold strictly to what the commissioners propose.

D. C. Beard: The railroads should pay every cent.

E. B. Pratt: Satisfied to accept the judgment of the commissioners.

Henry Altman: Meet the railroads half way.

J. N. Adam: The city should not pay a cent.

Henry Gregg: Make the best terms possible.

A. B. Crandall: Do what is fair to both parties.

Robert Matheson: City should pay one fourth of approaches.

H. Canfield: Divide the expense equally.

George W. Stacy: Make the railroads pay all the expense.

Solomon Block: Railroads should pay 75 per cent.

George Rice: Get the best possible terms for the city.

A. P. Wright: Sustain the opinion of the commissioners.

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## VI. COMPLICATIONS—A CALL FOR COMPULSION.

For some time previous to January, 1889, the meetings of the Grade Crossings Commissioners for the discussion of the detail plans and terms of the contract with the Central Railroad were executive sessions. Reporters were not present. This was made the occasion for sharp criticism in some of the newspapers. The editor of the *Courier* said, in the issue of January 6th:

"What good end is served by thus keeping the public from the knowledge of public affairs? The commissioners are acting as the

agents of the community and it would seem to be self-evident that the principals in the transaction, who are the public, have a just right to know what their agents are doing. It may be taken for granted that the commissioners wish to do only what the public will approve; but how can the public form a judgment upon that which is kept in concealment? It is much to be hoped that hereafter the business of the public may be done in the view of the public."

In reply the editor of the *Commercial* said:

"This demand of the *Courier's* is similar to that made upon the generals in the late war. 'The public is chiefly interested in the result and the public is entitled to know what is going on,' shouted the metropolitan press. Correspondents were sent to the front, the position and movements of the several armies reported in detail, and the plans of the generals were in large degree given to the public, with the result that whenever a move was made by the Union troops the enemy was always prepared to meet it.

The Grade Crossings Commissioners have an exceedingly difficult and delicate task to perform. They have to deal with able and experienced men whose best efforts have been bent, first, to defeat the movement for a separation of the grades, and, second, to make the best possible bargain for the railroads in case a contract is made. Their consultations, suggestions, and half-developed plans are not to be given to the public, nor to the stockholders whom they represent. The best efforts of the Grade Crossings Commissioners are being given for the public good. Whenever anything tangible is reached they are quick to give it to the public, but they cannot see how the public interests can be served by giving to the press informal conferences held for the purpose of considering what is the best course to pursue. They see clearly, on the contrary, how much harm may be done by giving to the press, and through it to the railroad officials, the individual opinions of commissioners, as well as suggestions and incomplete plans."

As has already been shown, the question of expense and how it should be apportioned between the city and the railroads was one of the most difficult matters to agree upon. It was readily determined that the railroads should pay the entire cost of construction and change of grade within the boundary lines extended across the street at a railroad crossing; but the apportionment of the approaches to the viaducts and subways was for a long time matter of con-

troversy and disagreement. First of all, the railroads claimed that the city should be at the sole expense of the approaches, and many citizens held that the railroads should pay for the entire cost of the improvement. Next, the commissioners proposed that the city should pay 25 per cent. of the cost of the approaches, and the railroads 75 per cent. Then the railroads proposed, as a concession, that the expense be divided equally between the city and the railroads.

And thus the question stood when the two contracts were received from President Depew on New Year's Day, 1889. At an executive session of the commissioners, held Jan. 3d, confidential instructions were given to the chairman, engineer and attorney, for their guidance at a proposed conference with the officials of the Central Company in New York, which they were directed to attend. These three gentlemen had discretionary powers as to the use of these confidential instructions, which included the utmost concession the commissioners were willing to make on the apportionment of cost of approaches, as well as upon other important details, but of course they were not to be made public prematurely. Next morning the *Express* gave a report of the meeting under these head-lines:

### KEEPING MUM.

#### A SECRET SESSION OF THE CROSSINGS COMMISSIONERS,

and at the end of the article, which was about a half column in length, the report said:

"When the commissioners at last reached an adjournment, a reporter of the *Express* entered the room, and asked Chairman Adam how much of the proceedings he felt disposed to make public. The answer was: 'The only thing which I think ought to be said, is that the chairman, the engineer and the attorney have been instructed to go to New York.' Further questioning brought out: 'Well, that's all I think it is best to make public.'"

The report closed with the following paragraph:

"It was learned from other sources that the commission decided to yield the Belt Line as demanded by the Central authorities, and decided to compromise the cost of the approaches, etc., in this way:

Where streets are carried overhead the railroad to pay 75 per cent. of the cost and the city 25 per cent.; where streets are carried under the tracks the city to pay 50 per cent. and the railroads 50 per cent. It was also decided that the question of land damages, half of which the Central agreed to assume, should not enter into the contract, as the apportionment of that expense is left by the Act to a separate commission to be appointed by the Supreme Court. These are the main points of difference to be adjusted at the meeting in New York."

The enterprising reporter who learned these facts from other sources, and who knew that they were private and confidential instructions, for possible use in pending negotiations, gave them openly and instantly to the public of Buffalo, and to the railroad officials in New York. It may well be surmised that this indiscreet haste cost the citizens of Buffalo a magnificent sum of money. He was exactly like the farmer's boy who was sent by his father to buy a cow which a neighbor had for sale. "How much did your father say he would pay?" And the boy replied in a single breath: "I am to offer you forty dollars for the cow, and if you won't take that I am to offer you forty-five dollars." And right here is a question in the moral ethics of reporting: How far is a reporter justified in publishing such information, under the plea that it is public business, when he knows that its publication may work to the public disadvantage?

When Chairman Adam, Engineer Mann, and Attorney Clinton met the officials of the Central Railroad in New York, there was nothing for them to negotiate about; their confidential instructions had been published to the world. The new apportionment of the cost of the approaches was accepted by the railroad, but when, in the discussion of the matter, it was found that the number of viaducts and the number of subways were the same on the lines of the Central road, covered by the contract, President Depew suggested that it be changed to one percentage applied to both viaducts and subways; namely,  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. for the city and  $66\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. for the railroads; and as this would produce exactly the same result as the double rates proposed by the commissioners, the single percentage was agreed upon.

One important point was gained in reference to the beginning of the work. The Central contract provided that no work would be contracted for or begun until the other railroads whose premises were involved in the execution of the plan as a whole had entered into contract with the commissioners; which meant indefinite postponement of all work. Upon urgent request of the commissioners the contract was changed to provide that within three months of its execution work would be begun at Michigan, Washington, Main streets and through the Terrace, in which work no other railroad company was interested.

There remained, then, only the question as to the ability, under the Act, of the commissioners to include in the contract the apportionment of awards for consequential damages to adjoining property. The commissioners, as advised by their counsel, held that they had no right, under the Act, to enter into any agreement touching that question; while the general counsel of the Central Railroad took the opposite view. By mutual consent the matter was referred to one of the justices of the Supreme Court, whose decision would be accepted by both parties as final. The judge rendered his opinion that the commissioners could agree in a contract as to the proportion of such awards to be paid by the city; and in harmony with his ruling, on February 2d, the commissioners instructed their attorney, Mr. Spencer Clinton, to prepare a new contract upon the terms and conditions agreed upon.

About this time a remonstrance was received from owners of property on the Terrace protesting against the signing of the contract that provided for an open cut through the Terrace, unless it should also provide for bridges at Pearl and Seneca streets, and a hearing thereon was appointed for February 6th, on which day a number of the remonstrants with George Clinton and Franklin D. Locke as counsel met the commissioners in conference. After an explanation of the plan proposed to be adopted, and discussion of the obstructions that would be raised across the Terrace by the approaches to a bridge at Pearl Street, practically closing it to traffic, Mr. George Clinton, on behalf

of those he represented, withdrew the request for bridges, and as no other plan of treatment was presented he could only suggest that no change be made in the Terrace, and that the railroad tracks remain at grade. This the commissioners could not assent to and do their duty; but one of the most serious objections was removed by the suggestion of Commissioner James E. Nunan, that the beam tunnel in Main Street be lengthened westerly to include Commercial Street, instead of ending, as originally proposed, on the west line of Main Street; and the objection to cutting off Pearl Street was partially met and relieved by adding a foot bridge at that street.

From the beginning of February, 1889, till October, the commissioners held twenty regular meetings; they went over the tracks and crossings included in their plans a number of times; they discussed details of plans, grades and percentages; they sent their chairman, engineer and attorney repeatedly to New York to advise with the New York Central officials. It appeared that no very accurate surveys of railroad property lines and boundaries had been kept, and such surveys were necessary in locating viaduct and subways. One instance shows this. The cost of changing the grade of the double freight tracks which connect the Lake Shore freight yards with the New York Central yards at East Buffalo was apportioned upon the Lake Shore Company, upon the theory that they were the property of the latter. The New York Central contract, upon the authority of the chief engineer of the company, so treated them; but it was afterwards discovered that the Central Company owned these tracks and leased them to the Lake Shore Company.

The unavoidable settlement of all the details took a long time, and during this period of impatient waiting the hopes of the people were often excited by newspaper reports. February 28th it was said: "There are so many and such intricate problems to be considered by the engineers that they necessarily take a good deal of time. About the middle of April, probably, Buffalo people will look for gangs of men busy raising or depressing the New York Central tracks."



March 4th: "The engineers and draughtsmen of the New York Central are here and have begun work upon the grade crossings plans. It will be thirty days before the working plans are finished. The whole work west of Chicago Street ought to be finished within a year." July 13th: "Members of the Grade Crossings Commission visited several of the street crossings where work, it is hoped, will soon begin. In the party were Commissioners Adam, Sweet, Kendall, Weber, Nunan, Sandrock, Morgan, Butler and City Engineer Mann. They inspected the crossings at Emslie, Swan, Seneca, Louisiana, Chicago and Michigan streets, in connection with plans recently received from New York." August 6th: "There is a good deal of grumbling at the tardiness of the negotiations of the Grade Crossings Commissioners, but it is cheering to know that the prospect of a settlement is not far off. It is expected that a contract between the city and the New York Central will be signed before the 1st of September." September 10th: "The months glide by and the Buffalo Grade Crossings Commissioners are still awaiting the return of President Depew from Europe." September 21st: "Our citizens have displayed commendable patience in awaiting the development of the plans prepared by the engineers of the city and the New York Central. The absence of Mr. Depew in Europe has been a legitimate cause for delay."

There came an end to that period of waiting. Many and longer waits were to follow before the work was actually begun, but these were then in the unknown future; and it was a happy day when the chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission brought with him, from President Depew's office in New York, the contract, signed.

Extract from the minutes of the commission :

Meeting of the Grade Crossings Commission, held at Marshall, Clinton & Wilson's office, Oct. 12, 1889. Present: Messrs. Adam, Sandrock, Sweet, Weber, Butler, Nunan, Kendall, Morgan. Mr. Adam in the chair, Mr. Morgan secretary.

The New York Central contract was read through in detail.

Mr. Sweet moved that inasmuch as the contract had been read through and compared and found to be satisfactory, that it be ap-

proved and that the commissioners proceed to execute it. Carried unanimously.

The contract and maps were then signed by the commissioners. The attorney was instructed to furnish copy to the press.

Commissioner Weber moved that the secretary at once notify the other railroads interested that the commissioners have made a contract with the New York Central, and that they are now ready to enter upon negotiations with the other companies. Carried.

Adjourned subject to call of chairman.

(Signed)

W. M. J. MORGAN, *Secretary.*

A copy of the contract was delivered to Hon. Philip Becker, Mayor, and by him submitted to the Common Council, and printed in the official minutes. The commissioners having requested that the Common Council take such action as was needed on its part, the contract was referred to the Committee on Streets, the Corporation Counsel and the City Engineer. Upon recommendation of committee the Council, October 21st, directed the engineer to prepare detail plans and specifications and to advertise for sealed proposals for the construction of approaches to the structures in Michigan and Washington streets; and that the Corporation Counsel proceed to acquire the necessary lands on Michigan and Washington streets. November 18th, notice of intention was given by the Common Council, followed later on by notice of determination, to take the fees for a large number of streets and public places which had been in use for more than ten years. Jan. 16, 1890, Corporation Counsel Worthington made application before Judge Childs for the appointment of three commissioners to condemn lands required for the grade crossings improvement on Michigan and Washington streets. Hearing upon the petition was held January 10th, and opposed by Franklin D. Locke, attorney for the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company. Corporation Counsel Worthington and Frank C. Laughlin, city attorney, made argument for the city on behalf of the petition. Judge Childs ruled against the objections of Mr. Locke, and ordered the appointment of commissioners to make appraisals.

"Who shall they be?" was the headline of an article published in the *Express*:

"It is generally safe to proceed upon the assumption that a dollar possesses a certain commercial value, and will be what it purports to be in all transactions. But it has come to be said that the city government cannot obtain the worth of its money in the various expenditures which are made from time to time. In these days of great public improvements the city is frequently compelled to acquire title to the property of individual citizens through the instrumentality of a commission.

"Commissions, however, do not give satisfaction. Year by year excessive awards have been made and paid for property, and year by year public sentiment has sustained the conviction that the city was sure to get the worst of it in all cases of purchase by commission proceedings. The local application of the law of eminent domain has seemed to the majority of citizens to be a statute empowering the municipality to acquire title to property by paying twice what it is worth.

"In carrying out the plans to abolish grade crossings it will soon be necessary to appoint a commission which shall determine the compensation to be given to a large number of property owners. The amount of money to be expended by the railroad company and the city will be a very large one. Anxiety as to the complexion and character of this commission is excusable.

"Who shall the commissioners be? There is some doubt as to the possibility of getting good men to serve. The law under which the grade crossings appraisals will be made provides that the commissioners shall receive six dollars a day. Now, it is considered by some that this is small pay for the kind of men needed in these proceedings, and it is feared that it will be difficult to get them for any such sum. There is the possibility that enough public spirit will be possessed by the appointees to induce them to go on with the business without regard to the compensation.

"It must not be inferred, however, that there is any lack of would-be commissioners. They are numerous, many of them are incompetent, and if they could be corded up they would fill the City Hall from basement to garret."

"A Grave Responsibility" was the headline of an article in the *Commercial*:

"The public should know, and Judge Childs, a man trusted by the public, should know, that certain enterprising speculators are busily engaged in securing options and refusals on property along the line of proposed crossings, and for obvious purposes. The interests of the taxpayers of Buffalo must be scrupulously guarded in

this matter, and they look with confidence to Judge Childs to appoint as commissioners of appraisal men that neither can be foiled, bribed nor intimidated.

"The *Commercial* believes that Judge Childs will protect the public interests in his appointments, and of course the men who ask for places on such a commission are precisely the men he will carefully avoid appointing."

"A Serious Responsibility" was the headline of an article in the *Courier*:

"The *Commercial* says it believes that Judge Childs will protect the public interests in his appointment of commissioners of appraisal, and it adds: 'Of course the men who ask for places on such a commission are precisely the men he will carefully avoid appointing.' This is certainly devoutly to be desired. The announcement that many persons are personally seeking these appointments is well nigh startling. But the announcement has doubtless put Judge Childs on his guard.

"It may not be amiss at this time to recall the declarations of Judge Daniels in the decision setting aside the action of the Common Council in appropriating an extravagant amount for the purchase of a lot for School No. 5. Judge Daniels used the following language, which ought to be memorable:

"It involves an appropriation of a large sum of money belonging to the public for which no equivalent is to be received by the city. And it is accordingly in all substantial respects the gift or donation of so much money to the person from whom the property is proposed to be purchased. The law will not permit this. It requires the same fidelity, care and caution on the part of the individual representing the public interests as would be expected to be used by any individual purchasing the like property for himself and paying for it with his own money. In all public positions the law not only expects but exacts this degree of care and fidelity from those representing public interests.'

"The men chosen to ascertain the compensation, therefore, to be paid to the owners of, or parties interested in, the lands to be taken, or which may be injured, should be men who would look after the public interests in accordance with the principles laid down by Judge Daniels.

"Speculators and dealers in options are diligently at work; they are intensely interested in the makeup of the coming commission and those who represent the city's interests should be alert and keen-eyed in the service of the public."

On January 17th, Judge Childs appointed Adelbert Moot, Philo D. Beard, and John Satterfield as commissioners.

When months had been frittered away in fruitless attempts to make contracts with any of the other railroads, the Grade Crossings Commissioners adopted the following resolution, Jan. 8, 1890:

*“Resolved,* That the commissioners report to the Mayor and the Common Council what they have done, and what they have failed to do, up to this time, and that such report recommend that an application be made to the Legislature that the law be so amended as to give this commission the power to enforce the provisions of the Act, and also to amend the Act to remove ambiguity in the language of the Act referring to failure or declination of railroads to enter into contracts.”

A full report was accordingly submitted to the Mayor and Common Council, in which the commissioners concluded by respectfully suggesting that the necessary steps be taken to have the Act amended so as to clothe them with power to compel the railroad companies to carry out the plan adopted. In a communication to the Council, which accompanied the commissioners' report, the Mayor said:

“I respectfully suggest that you take appropriate action to receive from the Legislature such amendment of the law as will give the present commissioners the power by compulsory measures to make the delinquent railroad companies carry out the work of abolishing grade crossings.”

A resolution was then adopted by the Common Council instructing the corporation counsel to draft an Act for the Legislature to clothe the Grade Crossings Commissioners with authority asked for.

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## VII. THE ACT OF APRIL 30, 1890.

January 16th, Hon. John Laughlin in the Senate, and Hon. Wm. F. Sheehan in the Assembly, introduced a bill to amend the Grade Crossings Act. In the Assembly the bill was referred to the Committee on Affairs of Cities, and a

hearing appointed for January 28th. A meeting of the Merchants' Exchange was held January 21st to endorse the amending bill, and the president was instructed to appoint five members of the Exchange as a committee to represent it at the hearing. President Doyle appointed Pascal P. Pratt, E. G. Spaulding, Jewett M. Richmond, O. G. Warren and Henry M. Watson. Messrs. Pratt, Spaulding and Watson having declined to serve, President Doyle substituted Thomas L. Kerr, R. R. Hefford and Norman E. Mack.

After several postponements the hearing before the Senate Committee on Railroads and the Assembly Committee on Cities in joint session took place February 19th. It began early in the afternoon in the Assembly chamber, was continued in the evening in the parlor of the Delevan House, and concluded at nearly midnight. Hon. E. Carleton Sprague, attorney for the Erie Railroad, spoke at great length, strongly opposing the amendment, and as strongly against the contract which had been made with the New York Central. He argued that in the original Act the plan provided for a union terminal passenger and freight station, as well as for the removal of grade crossings, and that the union terminal was the elementary feature of the whole scheme. This, he asserted, was universally approved by the citizens, but when the commission failed to adopt the Buchholz plan the controversy and trouble began. The commission, he maintained, had no right to enter into a separate contract with the Central; that the contract entered into was void and would amount to nothing; but the Erie road was ready to meet a commission appointed by the Supreme Court as provided in the original Act.

Mr. Spencer Clinton, attorney for the Grade Crossings Commissioners, replied to Mr. Sprague, practically denying the statements made by him. He declared that the original Act had as its prime motive the removal of the grade crossings from the streets and that the matter of union stations was a secondary proposal which neither the city nor the Legislature had the power to enforce. "We asked the Legislature," said he, "for authority to make a contract with any railroad company or companies, or any terminal company

organized for that purpose, for the relief of the city from the present obstructions *in the streets* of the city of Buffalo. Not a word about a union depot, either freight or passenger. You will see that that was a province which these commissioners could not enter. There was not a word about the Erie giving up so much to the Central and the Central giving up so much to the Erie. They had no right to say when the Erie Railroad was in possession of a depot in Michigan Street, you must throw open your doors and let the Central come in. Such an idea never entered the head of anybody in favor of the abolition of this evil. What the Legislature was asked to do was to enact a law which would obviate the danger of these crossings in the streets of Buffalo. If an addition to that scheme—if this one which looks so beautiful on paper, could be carried out, the city would be glad to do it; but to say that that was the end and the object of the law is to misrepresent the whole attitude of the people of the city of Buffalo." The commission, he said, had the right to contract with each road separately, but that the Erie had refused to enter into the terminal scheme and since the contract with the Central had been constantly avoiding definite negotiations.

Hon. Sherman S. Rogers, attorney for the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company, made the concluding argument. He spoke strongly for the plan for union passenger and freight stations, and showed that the Central at the beginning stood committed to this highly desirable project; and argued that this plan having failed, there was no sound reason why the city should not go to the Supreme Court and ask for the appointment of a commission to prepare and enforce a plan. The method now proposed, to confer extraordinary compulsory powers on nine inexperienced busy men, dry goods merchants, bankers, commission merchants, editors, and one whom nobody in Buffalo knew anything about—would be an act of great injustice and unwisdom.

Members of the legislative committee were greatly interested in the arguments upon this important issue, as was evidenced by the many questions asked for information and explanation.

A second hearing was given before the Assembly Committee on Cities, March 27th. The Erie Railroad was represented by David C. Robinson of Elmira, and George F. Brownell of Buffalo; the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad by J. D. Hancock; the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburg Railroad by Franklin D. Locke. In the absence of Spencer Clinton, the city of Buffalo was represented by Corporation Counsel Worthington, and R. B. Adam, chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission. The arguments were substantially the same as those presented at the previous hearing.

The committee reported the bill in the Assembly on the following day, favorably and without amendment.

In the Senate the bill was referred to the Committee on Railroads and a hearing thereon was set for April 8th. Mayor Bishop called a meeting at his office in the City Hall, to organize a delegation to Albany. At that time there were three bills pending in the Legislature in which the people of Buffalo were vitally interested: the new city charter, the grade crossings bill, and the Syracuse water bill; and a large delegation was desired.

The Mayor and about eighty citizens appeared at the Capitol on the day of the hearing, wearing light blue satin ribbon badges with "Grade Crossings Must Go" printed in red letters. That hearing was a rather lively affair. David C. Robinson of Elmira appeared for the Erie Railroad, and repeated the same old story of the union passenger and freight stations, with some variations. He declared that the Erie road was still ready, anxious to go into that scheme. He asserted that the Erie road had not been fairly treated in the matter of assessments for the proposed terminals, as according to the Buchholz plan—

At this point the speaker was interrupted by Hon. D. H. McMillan, who said it was time to put an end to such assertions. He said: "I took the Buchholz plans to New York and conferred with the management there. President Depew approved them, after receiving a report from the chief engineer and his assistants, and there were no objections made except by the Erie people, who thought that their assessment



for the proposed depot was unfair, and out of proportion to the business of the Central Company. The assessment for the Central compared to that of the Erie was over seven to one. The Erie people were treated with all consideration, and they were the only people that put a check to the work of the commissioners."

Resuming his argument, Mr. Robinson declared the deep anxiety of the Erie people to abate the grade crossings evil. He maintained that the proposed legislation was unconstitutional. He paid his respects to the Buffalo Grade Crossings Commissioners by abusing them roundly. He expressed his surprise at the "pictorial display" exhibited by the delegation, and was presented with one of the badges as a souvenir. He declared his wonder that the city of Buffalo was not officially represented here.

Senator Laughlin said, in beginning his reply: "Mr. Robinson says the city of Buffalo is not represented here. That is rather astonishing. Mayor Bishop is here, and I, at least, am a humble representative of the city."

Mayor Bishop said: "Gentlemen, I came here merely to say to you that public sentiment in Buffalo is unanimously in favor of this bill. That sentiment says that the grade crossings must go. Our Common Council has asked unanimously that this bill may become a law. Finally, permit me to say that the people of Buffalo have absolute confidence in this Grade Crossings Commission."

Judge J. C. Hancock spoke for the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad in opposition to the bill. Millard S. Burns, for the Buffalo Lumber Exchange, delivered a telling address, enforced by statistics of street traffic over the grade crossings. Remarks were made by Adam Reid, R. B. Adam, and Wm. J. Morgan, who concluded the hearing by saying: "Gentlemen, these railroads always say that they keenly desire the abolition of the grade crossings, but when we call upon them to act, they never do. They must be forced."

The bill, with two minor amendments, mutually agreed upon, was reported favorably in the Senate next day, and sent to the Assembly, where, by skillful parliamentary tactics,

Mr. Sheehan had it substituted for the Assembly bill passed April 17th. The bill became a law April 30th, not having been vetoed by the Governor. By its provisions the commissioners could adopt a plan, after giving a hearing thereon; notify the railroads and the city to begin the work; if either neglected to begin the commissioners could do the work and collect the cost from the party in default. The cost was to be apportioned by mutual agreement or by special commission appointed by the Supreme Court.

The commissioners appointed by the amended Act met in the Merchants' Exchange committee room on May 26, 1890. There were present Commissioners Adam, Sweet, Sandrock, Nunan, Morgan, Kendall, Butler. Absent, Weber. Having taken the oath of office the commissioners organized by electing R. B. Adam, chairman; Wm. J. Morgan, secretary; and by appointing Spencer Clinton attorney, and George E. Mann, engineer. Their first action was the adoption of the following:

*Resolved*, That these commissioners hereby make known that they propose to adopt the general plan mentioned in Section One of Chapter 345 of the Laws of 1888, as shown by the report of the commission of engineers therein mentioned, and drawings on file in the office of the City Engineer, and that proper notice of such intention shall be given by publishing a notice thereof daily in each of the daily newspapers published in the city of Buffalo, from June 14th to June 26th, inclusive, together with a notice that on the 26th day of June, 1890, at 3:30 p. m., in room 38, in the Board of Trade building, corner of Seneca and Pearl streets, in the city of Buffalo, this commission will meet to hear the railroad companies interested and the city in opposition thereto or in respect to any proposed change therein. The secretary is requested to send a notice of such proposed meeting to the president of each of the railroad companies interested, and to the Mayor of the city.

Notices were duly published in the eight daily newspapers on ten several days, and the same was sent to each of the railroad companies and the Mayor of Buffalo.

Pursuant to these notices a hearing was held at the Merchants' Exchange, June 26, 1890. There were present Commissioners Adam, Sandrock, Weber, Butler, Kendall, Nunan, Sweet, and Morgan; Attorney Clinton and Engineer Mann.

The city was represented by City Attorney Laughlin, and the railroad companies as follows:

The New York Central by Attorney D. H. McMillan and Engineer Van Hoosen; the Lake Shore by Attorney Greene and Engineer Kimball; the Western New York & Pennsylvania by General Solicitor Hancock; the Buffalo Creek by General Manager Goodman, and specially by George F. Brownell; the Delaware & Lackawanna by Attorney Locke; the New York, Chicago & St. Louis by General Manager Johnson and Attorney Williams; the Erie by George F. Brownell; the Union Terminal Company specially by Franklin D. Locke. Mr. Locke explained that a "special" appearance was simply to enter objections, and not in recognition of the jurisdiction of the commissioners. The explanation was hardly needed, for that appeared to be the theory and principle upon which all the appearances were made.

Beginning June 26, 1890, the hearing was continued June 27th, July 8th, 10th, 15th, 19th, 23d, 25th, and 28th, when it closed. Many witnesses were sworn and examined by the railroad attorneys and the commissioners. Changes of plans and of grades of tracks and of streets were suggested, argued and discussed at great length; some were approved, others rejected, and some held for consideration. The final results were to be embodied in new plans which the City Engineer was directed to prepare, in consultation with the railroad engineers. Engineer Mann submitted to the commissioners, Sept. 15th, changes and modifications of plans approved by himself, by Engineer Buchholz of the Erie, and Engineer McCreary of the Western New York & Pennsylvania. These plans were considered by the commissioners, who again visited the several crossings; and a committee consisting of Chairman Adam, Secretary Morgan and Commissioner Weber, was appointed to confer with the railroad officials in New York upon the changes proposed by the engineers. On their return, report was made, October 18th, that their conference with the Erie officials had been very unsatisfactory and without result. No objection was made to the engineering plans, but being financially limited, the road could not afford the expenditure. The only suggestion

made by President King was that the city of Buffalo raise the money by issuing its bonds, upon which the Erie road would pay the interest, and reduce the principal by annual installments. To this the commissioners would not assent. The West Shore road and the Western New York & Pennsylvania were then negotiating for an exchange of property and tracks. This was a matter of much importance and considerable magnitude, requiring time and diplomacy, and until the parties reached agreement no contract with either could be expected; and it was nearly a year (August, 1891), before such agreement was concluded. Engineer Katte of the New York Central gave his approval to the modified plans, and would recommend their adoption by the Central Company. After hearing this report the commissioners formally adopted the plans for a modification of the contract with the New York Central.

Throughout the twelve months ending November, 1891, the engineer of the commission continued the preparation of details for the general plan applied to crossings of the Erie, the Lake Shore, the Lackawanna and other railroads, but was hindered and delayed by the inaction or indifference of their engineers. All this while the negotiations between the West Shore and the Western New York & Pennsylvania railroads were dragging slowly along. So also were the proceedings by the city to take the fee of the Terrace, Seneca and other streets, within the limit covered by the grade crossings plans. Much time was consumed in discussions and correspondence with representatives of the Lackawanna road—General Manager Wm. F. Hallstead, Chief Engineer Archibald, and Attorney Locke—until in the end the commissioners were notified by Mr. Locke that Mr. Hallstead would not agree to the same apportionment of cost as had been made with the New York Central; and as the commissioners would agree upon no other, Mr. Hallstead had decided to apply to the Supreme Court for commissioners as provided in the Act.

Satisfied that nothing short of absolute compulsion would bring the railroads to terms, the commissioners voted, November 25th, that a bill be prepared for presenta-

tion to the Legislature in January, 1892, conferring such power upon the commissioners.

At the first meeting of the commissioners in January, 1892, announcement was made of the death of Commissioner James E. Nunan, and they adopted the following

MEMORIAL.

Since our last meeting a few weeks ago one who was then with us, and took a lively interest in the deliberations, has passed away. James E. Nunan was appointed one of the Grade Crossings Commissioners when the bill was passed enacting this board, and has always been active and faithful in the performance of the duties imposed upon him as such commissioner. His counsel was valued by his associates, and in his death they lose an energetic co-worker in the great work of eliminating the evil of railroads crossing the numerous streets of our city on grade. This is the second death in our small number that we are called upon to mourn, and it is to be hoped that our ranks may not be further depleted before the consummation of the work to which we have consecrated so much time and effort. That this board might speedily secure desirable results was always the wish and prayer of Commissioner Nunan. It is a tribute to his memory to give utterance to this hope, for when it became apparent that his time on earth was not to be long, he frequently expressed the wish that he might be spared long enough to assist in completing the work of abolishing the grade crossings evil.

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VIII. ALBANY THE BATTLEFIELD—ACT OF APRIL 20, 1892.

Fruitless attempts at agreements with the West Shore, Lake Shore, and Buffalo Creek railroads were continued; and on January 28th Hon. Matt Endres in the Senate, and Hon. Edward Gallagher in the Assembly, introduced a bill to enlarge the powers of the commissioners. The bill was referred in both houses to the Committee on the Affairs of Cities, and a hearing set for February 9th. A public meeting was held in the Buffalo Merchants' Exchange, February 6th, of which the report said: "If any doubt existed as to the sentiments of the city of Buffalo on this vital question it

must have been dispelled by that meeting." Mayor Bishop was called to the chair. John J. McWilliams offered the following preamble and resolution:

WHEREAS, The citizens of Buffalo have been trying to relieve the streets of the city from the perils and evils caused by the railroads crossing the same at grade, and for that purpose in May, 1888, obtained from the Legislature of the State power to abate the grade crossings by amicable arrangement with the different railroad companies interested; and

WHEREAS, Since the passage of said Act some four years have passed, during which the evils of such crossings have increased, and our citizens have been compelled to see the traffic of our streets obstructed and our fellow-citizens maimed and killed without any effort being made by certain railroad companies to join the city in the attempt to abolish these crossings; and

WHEREAS, Certain railroad companies have refused to join with the city in an attempt to make any arrangement to abolish these crossings, and evince by their action a determination to prolong the existence of these evils, and have proclaimed their intention to resort to whatever device the law may afford to obstruct the city in its effort to abolish such crossings, and by their inaction, aided by the efforts of their counsel, prolong the period within which the traffic of our streets may be obstructed and our citizens maimed and killed; and

WHEREAS, The law as it stands now affords too favorable opportunities for such obstruction and too little power is given to the city to force such railroad companies to discharge their duty in aiding in abolishing such crossings; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Legislature be requested to speedily pass the Act submitted to it, giving to the Grade Crossings Commission of the city power to compel the railroad companies using the streets of our city to do their duty in protecting the lives and property of our citizens by abolishing the crossing of our streets by the railroads at grade.

"All in favor of the resolution say 'aye,'" said the Mayor, and a mighty volume of "ayes" rolled up from the crowd. Of "nays" there were none.

The delegation from Buffalo filed the Senate chamber in Albany on the day of the hearing. Spencer Clinton spoke for the city:

"We wish to be put in a position where we can force the Erie Railroad to abate these grade crossings. This is the only railroad

that says it will not obey the Grade Crossings Act. It says it will resist the Grade Crossings Commissioners at every step, and it has done so. We ask this Legislature to compel the Erie Railroad to enter into the scheme of grade crossings improvements which we have suggested. As long as it resists we cannot make these improvements, and it is the only railroad which stands out. In the meantime the citizens of Buffalo are being killed at these grade crossings, and the traffic of her streets delayed and obstructed."

John B. Stanchfield of Elmira spoke for the Erie Railroad:

"We deny that the Erie Railroad is blocking this scheme. In 1888 we were willing to go into a union passenger and freight depot with the Central Railroad, but President Depew said he would not accept that scheme. The Erie is ready to go ahead on the basis of 1888. We wish to abolish grade crossings. All that we differ about is in regard to the methods. We object to a commission composed of the citizens of Buffalo, and to other provisions in this bill. We ask time to prepare our objections. We have had only three days' notice of this hearing, and in justice should have three weeks."

Remarks in favor of the bill were made by John Fisher, private secretary of Mayor Bishop; President Hanrahan of the Common Council; Ex-Senator John Laughlin, Tracy C. Becker, Postmaster Gentsch, and Collector Morgan, who said that the people of Buffalo had heard the Erie Railroad sing the same tune year after year since 1888. It always pleads for delay. From September, 1890, to January, 1891, nineteen persons had been killed at the grade crossings in Buffalo. Contracts could be entered into with all the roads tomorrow, but for the Erie. Under such circumstances why should the Legislature delay in passing the bill? The committee decided to grant another hearing, February 24th.

President Scatcherd of the Merchants' Exchange called a public meeting, February 23d, to organize another delegation to attend the adjourned hearing in Albany on the following day. There was again a very large attendance, and Walter J. Shepard presented the following preamble and resolutions, which were adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, The railroad grade crossings in this city are a serious and ever-increasing menace to the lives and property of our citizens, impeding business and destroying life and property; and

WHEREAS, The city's Grade Crossings Commission has, for nearly four years, been trying to induce the several railroads in interest to abate the grade crossings evil created by them, offering on the part of the city to pay a fair proportion of the cost of the improvement and proposing to the companies in financial straits to allow them to proceed with the work by sections, as their finances would permit; and

WHEREAS, The commissioners in their efforts to secure favorable action have made every reasonable concession and with a view of encouraging negotiations have made numerous trips to New York, Cleveland and elsewhere to railroad headquarters; and

WHEREAS, The commissioners, through the City Engineer, have prepared a general plan for the abatement of grade crossings which the railroad engineers concede to be as good a one as could be desired, and free from serious objections. Speaking of this plan, Charles W. Buchholz, chief engineer of the Erie railroad, which road is chiefly responsible for the delay, at a meeting of the commission held at the Merchants' Exchange, July 25, 1890, expressed his opinion, upon his judgment as an engineer, that "the plan is impregnable," and

WHEREAS, The railroad situation is so complicated in this city that little progress towards abating grade crossings can be made unless all the roads join in the work; and

WHEREAS, Some of the roads have persistently declined to negotiate a contract with the Commissioners, and have opposed all legislation to afford the proper relief, and are now opposing at Albany, with renewed vigor, the pending amendment to clothe the commission with requisite authority to enforce action; and

WHEREAS, It is manifest that certain of the railroad companies chiefly in interest are determined to do nothing in the way of abating grade crossings until compelled to; and

WHEREAS, This grade crossing evil has reached such proportions as to be unbearable—the number of accidents, the killing and maiming of people increasing with the rapid growth of the city and its railroad traffic—a record of a single day's traffic of two of the many crossings shows the pressing necessity for the abatement of the evil and the great danger of the existing conditions. At Michigan Street Saturday, Feb. 20, 1892, 3,230 wagons and carriages, and 13,402 foot passengers, crossed the tracks. At Louisiana Street the record was: Passenger trains, 87; freight trains, 43; light engines, 110; wagons and carriages, 1,387; foot passengers, 5,716; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the people of Buffalo, speaking through their regularly constituted municipal authorities, through all their com-



mercial and business organizations, a united press, and this mass meeting assembled, protest against further delay in the matter of abating grade crossings and demand the passage by the Legislature of the pending amendment to Chapter 345 of the Laws of 1888, to the end that the people may be enabled to recover the right to use their streets in safety, and that the slaughter of our citizens at the street crossings may be stopped.

*Resolved*, That a copy of the foregoing be transmitted to His Excellency the Governor, and to each Senator and Representative.

President Scatcherd appointed the following delegates to represent the Merchants' Exchange: His Honor Mayor Bishop, Walter J. Shepard, J. J. H. Brown, J. N. Adam, J. Dietz, Harvey J. Hurd, and William Thurston.

In the Common Council Alderman Barnum introduced the following preamble and resolution:

WHEREAS, The city of Buffalo, through her able representatives on the Grade Crossings Commission, has worked assiduously for the past six years to abolish the deadly grade crossings, maintained by the various railroads within the city limits; and

WHEREAS, The city of Buffalo has been put to an expense of over \$17,000 to defray the legitimate expenses of the said commission; and

WHEREAS, The various railroads have, upon one technicality after another, postponed, and, in some instances, practically refused to take any action to mitigate existing evils, and have used and are using all means in their power to defeat the object for which said commission was created; and

WHEREAS, Public sentiment is aroused to that point that immediate action should be taken by this honorable body in conjunction with the Merchants' Exchange, which has called a public meeting this day, for the express purpose of publicly protesting against a further delay and also to make arrangements for a proper representation of our business men before the Railroad Commission at Albany tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, This Honorable Body, it being in hearty sympathy with the movements to abolish the grade crossings, and wishing to act in concert with the Merchants' Exchange and give its hearty support to the movement; it is hereby

*Resolved*, That the State Senate and members of the Legislature are requested to use all honorable means to secure the passage of the bill granting the Grade Crossings Commissioners more ex-

tended power; that the President of the Board of Aldermen be directed to appoint a committee of such members as he may deem proper to go to Albany for the purpose of urging speedy action; and that the City Clerk be directed to send our representatives a certified copy of this preamble and resolution.

The resolution was adopted, and the following committee appointed: Aldermen Summers, Johnson, Coe, Franklin, Barnum, and Sullivan.

When the committee of commissioners, Adam, Morgan and Clinton, went to the Capitol in the morning before the hour for the hearing, they were met by James S. Allen of New York and John B. Stanchfield of Elmira, attorney for the Erie Railroad, and invited to a conference in the Lieutenant Governor's room. There they were told that the Erie road would withdraw all opposition to the amended bill if the commissioners would consent to the appointment of a special commission to decide upon the plan and work to be done by the Erie road and its proportion of the cost; such commission to consist of five members, two from the present commission, and three disinterested persons, to be chosen by agreement by the commissioners and the railroad, or appointed by the Supreme Court. If this were assented to, the attorneys, Allen and Stanchfield, asserted, that they were authorized to make this agreement, and would stipulate in writing over the signature of Vice-President Thomas, that they would go on in good faith and negotiate a contract with the second commission. With certain specified limitations and safeguards the representatives of the commissioners would not object to such provision in the Act.

When the hearing began before the Committee on Cities, the room was filled with delegates from Buffalo. Mr. Stanchfield stated in substance what had been proposed to the commissioners. He said that they were on the point of an agreement, he had no doubt but an agreement would be reached that afternoon, and asked an adjournment of the hearing. Upon this statement an adjournment was consented to by the representatives of Buffalo, and an appointment made for conference in the afternoon. At the Kenmore House there were present with the two Erie attorneys,

Allen and Stanchfield, a number of Buffalo delegates, including Commissioners Adam and Morgan, Attorney Clinton, Aldermen Summers, Franklin, Coe, Johnson and Barnum. The agreement was put into writing, and was as follows:

"If within thirty days after this Act takes effect, the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railway Company shall have failed to enter into a contract as provided by Section One of this Act, there shall be a commission of five for the purpose of determining the plans of work to be done by such company and the proportion of work to be done and expense to be paid by said company, and its decision shall be final.

"The said commission shall consist of two members of the commission named in Section One of this Act, and of three other persons to be named by a special term of the Supreme Court of the State to be held in Erie County, unless such members are agreed upon by the commissioners named in Section One of this Act and said railroad company.

"The said commission shall do no act in any way affecting any contract made or plan heretofore adopted by the commission named in Section One of this Act."

Engineer Buchholz, having arrived from New York and joined the conference, the proposal made by the attorneys was submitted to him, and immediately he said that he would not consent to the arrangement, and further said that the attorneys had no authority from the officers of the company for making such a proposition. This led to a very hot discussion all around, and finally Mr. Buchholz consented to present the matter to Vice-President Thomas, without recommendation or objections, on the following day, and have the decision telegraphed to Buffalo. Attorneys Allen and Stanchfield accompanied Mr. Buchholz to New York, and on March 1st Vice-President Thomas telegraphed that he did not approve the proposition made, without any authority, by the attorneys at Albany.

The Buffalo *Evening News* of February 25th said, under the head-line of "More Dilatory Tactics":

"If any further proof were needed that the Erie is fighting purely and simply for delay, and striving to defeat the grade crossings bill by dilatory tactics, it was furnished at Albany yesterday.

And the corporation gained a point to the extent of securing another week's delay, at a time when delays are dangerous. This game of battledoor and shuttlecock by the attaches of the Erie is nothing new. It has been played right along ever since the Grade Crossings Commission was organized. Offers made by one have been repudiated by another, and thus delay after delay has been brought about. And this programme will, in all likelihood, be continued on indefinitely if permitted."

The adjourned hearing before the Senate Committee on Cities was held March 2d, and again a delegation from the Common Council, and from the Grade Crossings Commission, was present. Attorney Spencer Clinton represented the city; attorneys Allen and Stanchfield appeared for the Erie road. Arguments were made and followed by a long discussion until the chairman of the committee said, "Gentlemen, we have heard enough," and so the hearing ended.

A few days after that Senator Endres, who had introduced the bill, said to a reporter of the *Buffalo Commercial*: "It looks blue for the Buffalo Grade Crossings bill, and though it may come out of the committee it cannot pass the Senate." Just at this critical period Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan took the matter in hand himself, telegraphed for representatives of the Buffalo Commission, and Mr. Morgan with Mr. Spencer Clinton went to Albany March 9th. Then there were spirited discussions with Mr. Allen over the amendment which he and Mr. Stanchfield had submitted February 23d, which the Erie officials did not want, and which Mr. Sheehan now insisted should be inserted in the bill. Next day when the Senate committee was in session, and was discussing the bill with Mr. Allen and Mr. Clinton, the Lieutenant-Governor made his appearance in the room, and said: "If the committee will pardon me, I wish to say that Senator Endres' bill, as it is amended and now before you, meets my warm approval. While my friend Mr. Allen may object to it, I think it is an eminently fair and just bill, and I believe the committee will do right to pass it."

Mr. Allen sprang to his feet.

"On behalf of the Erie," said he, "I desire most emphatically to object to the passage of this bill."

Mr. Sheehan in reply, said: "This bill as it is here before you, gives the Erie concessions which it has sought for weeks. . . . The time has come when Buffalo must have relief from this constant daily murder of the people at the railroad crossings at grade. This committee cannot stand in the way of this great boon to Buffalo."

After considerable further argument the committee, in executive session, voted to approve and report the bill, with amendments, and it was so reported, March 10th.

Commenting upon the situation the *Buffalo Commercial* said: "If Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan is true to Buffalo, and is determined this bill shall pass, it will become a law. The people here know his power and insist upon his using it in their behalf in this instance." The *Evening News* said: "Many times before this Mr. Sheehan has given proof of possessing powerful influence at Albany, and it is gratifying to see him exercise it in behalf of a measure of such great concern to his native city. If he succeeds in winning the fight which he has now just begun, political foes as well as political friends will be forced to concede that he deserves well of Buffalo." The *Enquirer* said: "It was a long fight, a hard fight, and an earnest fight. The Erie was confident of the victory, . . . but when Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan saw how the tide of battle was turning he rushed into the fray. His arguments and his influence with the committee won the day." Commissioner Morgan said, in a reported interview: "Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan is entitled to great credit for the services rendered to the city of Buffalo in the matter of the Grade Crossings Bill. If it had not been for him, we could not have moved the bill out of the committee. He made a very earnest and very forcible argument before the committee, showing the absolute necessity of passing the measure."

There was a slight attempt to obstruct the bill in the Senate, but it was passed without a single negative vote, March 15th, sent to the Assembly, referred to the Committee on Cities, and a hearing set for March 24th. It was well understood in Buffalo that the bill was still in great peril. The Erie attorneys meant to defeat it if possible, and the

Erie lobby was very powerful. The situation was critical, and a large delegation, headed by His Honor Mayor Bishop, went to Albany. Interest in the hearing was intense, and some of the situations were quite dramatic. John B. Stanchfield, attorney for the Erie road, spoke against the bill. After a series of compliments to Buffalo, her people, her progress, her greatness, he related at great length the history of the scheme for union passenger and freight stations, and the bill of 1888. Now, he said, the Erie is faced with a bill which places despotic power in the hands of nine commissioners, whom he had the presumptive right to say, were hostile to the interests of the Erie Railroad; and he gave some supposititious instances in which the commissioners, if so disposed, might do serious injury to the Erie and embarrass its finances. He conceded the proposition that many people were being killed at the grade crossings in Buffalo, but that, he asserted, was no argument for the adoption of this drastic bill. He referred to the amendment offered by the attorneys of the Erie for the appointment of a special commission of five persons, and said: "With that provision the corporation for which I speak was satisfied. But by means which I know not and care not to discuss, some one, agile and adept in legislative matters, has added the words, 'The said commissioners shall do no act in any way affecting any contract made or plans adopted hitherto by the commissioners named in Section One of this Act.'"

Hon. D. H. McMillan interrupted the speaker to assert very vigorously that this was a misrepresentation; that this provision was in the copy which Mr. Allen had, and which he had seen. Mr. Stanchfield said it was not in accordance with the information he had, but he would concede it for the sake of argument. "What," said he, "would be the power of a commission when the language which provided for it took away any power to do anything?" Then, taking up the clause making the decision of the special commissioners final, "while we stand here," he cried, "extending the right hand of peace to the people of Buffalo, you want to shut out our right of appeal. The Erie Railroad will submit to this only when the Supreme Court of the United States says we must."

Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan spoke for the advocates of the bill. Up to that morning he had no idea of appearing before the committee, but he was glad of the opportunity, as a citizen of Buffalo, to do so. After paying a tribute to Mr. Stanchfield's ability in presenting his case, he proceeded to answer the arguments advanced. Mr. Stanchfield had asserted that the commissioners were presumptively antagonized to the Erie road. He denied it. There was no more antagonism to the Erie than to any road that placed itself as an obstruction to the great work of abolishing the grade crossings. True, Buffalo had much to thank the railroads for, but it was time that the railroads should feel some gratitude for what Buffalo had done for them. In no city of the United States had railroads been so leniently treated as in Buffalo. "My friend says it is no argument in favor of the bill that many people are being killed in Buffalo at the grade crossings. Is not the very reverse of the proposition true?" Mr. Sheehan referred again to the lines which Mr. Stanchfield said had been craftily added to the bill, and he asserted that he knew they were in the bill as originally drafted, and he did not think Mr. Allen would dare deny it.

Mr. Allen interrupted the speaker to say that they were not in his draft which he received from Mr. Clinton.

"I waive my whole case," exclaimed the Lieutenant-Governor, "if the amendment did not contain these words. It was drawn in my office, written by my typewriter, all four copies were the same and printed at one time."

Mr. McMillan again interrupted to say, "There can be no doubt of it. I had a copy of it, Mr. Sheehan had a copy of it, so did Mr. Allen, so did Mr. Clinton. They were all alike."

After further defense of the bill Mr. Sheehan concluded with these remarks: "Thank God, that by the official action of the upright, honest men of this committee the city of Buffalo will begin to see the day when grade crossings will be abolished."

The committee went into executive session and it was decided not to vote on the bill until the 29th. The postponement was made to allow time for consultation. The result

remained doubtful; the bill was in danger. Mr. Sheehan is reported as having said: "I went down to New York Saturday to get some assistance in securing a favorable report from the Assembly Committee on Cities on the Buffalo Grade Crossings Bill. I think I secured enough to get the bill out of the committee with favorable report, and that tomorrow we shall be able to liberate it from the committee and place it before the Assembly, where I think we shall have no difficulty in passing it."

The bill was approved by a majority of the committee, and reported favorably to the Assembly. But there was a week's delay in getting it brought to a vote. Not only on account of opposition to the bill, but partly for political reasons and to influence action upon another bill; a phase of legislative tactics often practised and well understood. At the same time Mr. Allen continued his active efforts to gain amendments, or to make delay and thus prevent the passing of the Act. On the evening of April 5th, consent was given to one unimportant amendment by inserting in the clause providing for the special Erie commission, "the power to make and to change detail plans of work to be done under the general plan in which no other company shall be interested," and on the following day the bill was passed in the Assembly by a unanimous vote. Next day it was returned to the Senate as amended, and there passed again without opposition. After due deliberation the Act was signed by Governor Flower, April 20, 1892.

Commenting upon the enactment of this law, the Buffalo *Commercial* said:

"It is fair to say that Lieutenant-Governor Sheehan, Senator Endres, and the Erie County Assemblymen rose to the occasion under the stimulus of a thoroughly aroused and resolute public opinion, and by their successful endeavors showed what a united community can accomplish, when it means business. But still greater praise and warmer thanks are due from the people of Buffalo to the Grade Crossings Commissioners and the private citizens who have time and again gone to Albany, at a personal sacrifice, to work hard for the passage of this bill, without remuneration or hope of reward. Their conduct has been public-



spirited; the success that has crowned their efforts ought to do much in the way of strengthening the growing civic pride and public spirit of Buffalonians."

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## IX. OBSTRUCTIONISTS AT HOME.

While the bill was making its slow and perilous passage through the Legislature, the Grade Crossings Commissioners continued correspondence and conference with the attorneys and engineers of the railroads upon the details of the plans which were being prepared for the general plan to be adopted in accordance with their resolution of May 26, 1900. The complications of railroad tracks and street crossings were so interwoven that to decide upon the best method of treatment was exceedingly difficult and perplexing.

Perhaps the best possible presentation of the difficulty may be found in Dr. Johnson's definition of "net-work," which is, "anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances with interstices between the intersections." To be sure, the railroad tracks and the streets reticulated or decussated at unequal distances, but all the same, they were constructed with interstitial vacuities, and intersect each other at acute angles. Three sessions were held in February, three in March and one early in April.

In 1889 it was found to be necessary that, before the work could be done through the Terrace and in Washington Street, the city should acquire the fee to those streets; and upon request of the Grade Crossings Commissioners, the Common Council began proceedings to that end under the provisions of the Charter, which gives the city the right, by specified legal proceedings, to take the fee of any street which has been in public use as a highway for more than ten years. Notice of such intention was declared by the Common Council Nov. 18, 1889; followed by notice of determination; followed by application for the appointment of commissioners; and the appointment, Nov. 21, 1890, of William

W. Hammond, Sylvester F. Eagan, and Clifford W. Nobles, as commissioners to award compensation to the owners of property abutting on these streets. The commissioners filed their report March 31, 1891, awarding nominal amounts, as had been the usual practice in all such proceedings. Pascal P. Pratt appealed from the report of the commission and claimed as substantial compensation a large sum of money. The report of the commission was referred back to them with instructions that Mr. Pratt was entitled to substantial compensation, Judge Beckwith writing the opinion. The commissioners made a supplemental report awarding to Pascal P. Pratt the sum of \$8,000. The Corporation Counsel appealed on behalf of the city, to the General Term, where the order was reaffirmed; thence the city's appeal was carried to the Court of Appeals, where the decision of the General Term was confirmed with costs. The awards and costs laid upon the city were as follows:

Pascal P. Pratt . . . . .	\$ 8,000 00
A. S. Mann, Jr., U. S. Hotel . . . . .	2,814 10
Costs of searches and appeal . . . . .	1,460 45
	<hr/>
	\$12,274 55

and these amounts were paid March 21, 1892; three complete years from the date when proceedings were begun.

One week after the Governor had signed the amended bill, the commissioners met at the Merchants' Exchange committee room, and after taking the oaths of office, reorganized by electing R. B. Adam chairman, and W. J. Morgan secretary; and appointing George F. Mann engineer, and Spencer Clinton attorney. The engineer was directed to prepare drawings for the general plan and the attorney to prepare a report as provided by the Act for filing in the office of the Clerk of Erie County. The secretary was directed to notify the officials of all railroads interested that the commissioners had organized and were ready to make contracts on behalf of the city, and that a hearing upon the proposed general plan would be held May 26, 1892.

The South Buffalo Business Men's Association had been among the most active and urgent advocates of the abolition

of grade crossings. At a meeting held April 30th the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"WHEREAS, The repeated exhibitions of duplicity and double-dealing on the part of the attorneys and officials of the Erie Railroad Company are proofs of the determination of that corporation to defeat, if possible, any feasible measures which may or can be adopted for relief from the evils of grade crossings;

*Resolved*, That this association, composed of citizens of South Buffalo, who are specially sufferers in this matter, is hereby pledged to continue the fight by all lawful means, by complaints to the courts whenever a case can be made, by appeal to the city authorities, and by all the aid which it can possibly give to the Grade Crossings Commission in its effort to obtain the necessary legislation; that we will most earnestly coöperate with any kindred organization in its efforts to do away with grade crossings, and that we will devote all the time and effort necessary to rouse the people of this great city to a determination that grade crossings must go, even if the Erie Railway has to go with them."

The Association was understood to represent the unanimous demand of the people for the abolition of grade crossings in that section of the city which more than any other had suffered from these evils. Therefore it was greatly to the surprise of the commissioners that early in May there suddenly arose an opposition to the proposed plans of carrying the streets in that portion of the city over the tracks by viaducts. The following is an extract from the plan recommended by the commission of engineers in their report dated 28th February, 1888: "Provision should be made to relieve the grade crossing at Elk Street by the tracks of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway. On account of the very low elevation of the ground, it seems impracticable to do anything but carry the street over by a bridge. And this should be done. And this bridge should be continued so as to cross the tracks of the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railway." And this was the plan proposed by the commissioners as being the best and most feasible method of treatment in that locality.

The origin of this opposition was told by William Sheehan, coal dealer, No. 773 Elk Street, in his sworn tes-

timony at a hearing before the Grade Crossings Commissioners, June 3d, in the following words:

Question: What influence has been brought to bear upon you to act in this matter?

Answer; I have no motive but my own interests.

Question: How did you come to take an interest in the question?

Answer: I had occasion to go to the City Engineer's office in reference to a proposed street which was about to be cut through from the Erie road to Elk Street. Then for the first time I looked over these plans and found we were to have a lot of stairs and bridges. I came away disgusted, and the first man I met was Dr. Crowe, to whom I recited my displeasure. We concluded to look into the matter further. We investigated the matter, and next morning in my office we held the organization meeting of this association. .

Question: Which viaduct do you object to principally?

Answer: To the bridge in Elk Street over the Erie tracks; it crosses within 300 feet of my property and greatly depreciates its value.

A meeting was held on Saturday evening, May 7th, in Burke's Hall, at the corner of Smith and Elk streets, which was reported in the *Buffalo Courier* as follows:

The meeting was presided over by Dr. Crowe. He spoke at considerable length, telling of the unsightly structures which the commissioners intended to erect in their midst. The plan seemed to be all bridges. If those present thought such a plan against their interests, it was their duty to oppose it. Before him on the table was a pasteboard model of one of the proposed viaducts. It was certainly an unsightly object. Dr. Crowe called upon the men present to express their views. Citizens Sheehan, O'Day, O'Connor, McMahan and Holmes spoke against the plans, though it was evident from the beginning to the end of the meeting that hardly any one present understood the plans as proposed by the commissioners. A permanent organization was formed to fight the matter before the commissioners and before the courts if necessary. The officers were: President, Dr. T. M. Crowe; secretary, J. J. Smith; treasurer, Patrick Brady; executive committee, Michael O'Day, William Sheehan, William J. Holmes, E. R. Brewer and John P. O'Neil.

The Citizens' Grade Crossings Association held another meeting in Burke's Hall, May 10th, Dr. Crowe presiding.

Over 200 persons were present. Addresses were made by the chairman, by Michael O'Day, Alderman Summers, ex-Alderman Hillery, Rev. Father McDermott, and others. It was announced that the officers of the association had decided to appear before the Grade Crossings Commissioners on the 26th and present in the form of a petition the wishes of the people. "When it was suggested that the next meeting be held in Gammel's Hall on Seneca Street, some one moved that the City Engineer be asked to attend and give his side of the case. William Sheehan at this stage showed signs of alarm, and said they didn't want Mr. Mann among them at all. As the author of these plans of course he would try and defend them, and make converts if possible. 'What we want to do,' said Mr. Sheehan, 'is to concentrate our thoughts on the bad side; we don't want to see any good side.' And the motion was withdrawn. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Hillery, as members of the South Buffalo Business Men's Association, denied that the proposed plans had been approved by that body."

Whatever may have been the motive, however good the intentions of the men who started the movement, it quickly ran beyond their control, and led up to a period of great excitement. In the end no great harm was done, and some good grew out of it, but the lot of the Grade Crossings Commissioners was not a happy one during these days and nights of warm discussion. They were characterized by some of the speakers at public gatherings as "high-toned polished anarchists who sitting in their easy chairs in their voluptuous uptown residences"; who knowing nothing of the wants of the people living on Elk Street, had approved plans which would be death-traps more dangerous and deadly than the grade crossings; plans which would ruin the property and destroy the little homes of the honest, hard-working men whose savings of a lifetime would thus be sacrificed; plans so costly that the taxes would be doubled; plans which would benefit nobody but the railroads, the contractors, and the commissioners themselves, "for," said one of the speakers, "there is a little nigger in the wood-pile. The railroads are in it. There is plenty of boodle for some men

in these plans and the railroads are willing and glad to pay it. The men who push these plans must have some unworthy motive for doing so. They must be dishonest"—the speaker paused, bethought himself for a moment, then added in diplomatic phrase—"dishonest in their pretensions to be working for the interests of the people."

Some of the daily newspapers had broadly hinted their suspicions that the Erie Railway had instigated this movement of opposition and was thus following up its determination to obstruct and delay the carrying out of the plans to abolish grade crossings. A number of Erie employees were prominent in the opposition, and they wished it to be distinctly understood that they were acting purely of their own volition as property-owners, and were not inspired by Erie considerations. At the next meeting of the Citizens' Grade Crossings Association, held in Gammel's Hall May 12th, great indignation was expressed over the insinuations that Erie influences were at work, and in most emphatic words—words more emphatic than elegant—the assertion was denied and denounced.

Dr. Crowe was asked on one occasion what the association desired to have done; and he replied, "Well, you see, we are not engineers. We are plain, every-day sort of people, and expect the engineering talent to be supplied for us. In the absence of any proper plan we would say it would be better to leave the situation as it is."

Dr. Crowe did not regard the elevation of the tracks as the solution of the problem. He said: "It would be ridiculous to elevate the tracks as they now are. Our association will not take any position to necessitate any railroads to abandon their tracks at grade. We don't believe there ought to be any compulsion whatever placed upon any railroad to elevate or remove its tracks." Continuing, he said: "Some of us interested in this movement are getting up a plan which we will submit." Another time he said: "There is a solution of the existing problem, and one that can be brought about without cost to the city or railroads. The city should have one terminal depot for the accommodation of all passengers coming to or leaving the city. Let the city

procure plans for a series of parallel tracks elevated twenty or twenty-two feet above the level of the streets, supported as a solid embankment, with stone arches over every street crossed. The sides of the embankment might be nicely decorated with small trees, shrubbery and flowers, so as to be an ornament instead of a disfigurement. The elevated tracks could run direct from a terminal depot to the city limits and there meet a belt-line track that would tap all the roads coming into the city. The passenger trains on the different roads coming in might proceed to a point where they touched the belt line and enter in that way, taking the elevated tracks to which all should have equal access. In that way all danger and all obstructions could be avoided. For freight traffic a large warehouse could be built at some convenient point with elevated tracks running to it in a similar way. Sub-warehouses might be erected at one or two points along the route for the accommodation of business establishments, their branches and switches. The plan I suggest contemplates the removal of the present railroad tracks from a valuable area in the heart of the city some two miles long and one mile wide, and the sale of this land. The amount of money which the railroads would thus obtain would not only reimburse them for the removal of their tracks, but would also give them a handsome sum to more than pay for other and less valuable land on which they could erect, outside the city, much better and more serviceable buildings than they now have and at the same time make a more desirable provision for their lines."

#### NOTICE.

To the city of Buffalo, the railroad companies interested and all other persons interested, notice is hereby given that the general plan proposed to be adopted by the Grade Crossings Commission for the relief of the city from obstruction of the streets of the city of Buffalo by railroads crossing the streets at grade, has been filed in the office of the City Engineer of the Bureau of Engineering of the city of Buffalo, and that a hearing will be had thereon by said Grade Crossings Commissioners on the 26th day of May, A. D. 1892, at ten o'clock a. m., in the room of the Board of Councilmen in the City and County Hall, in the city of Buffalo, at which time

and place all persons interested will be heard in relation to said proposed plan or any part thereof.

By order of the Grade Crossings Commission.

WILLIAM J. MORGAN, *Secretary.*

Dated, May 12, 1892.

On the morning of the hearing crowds of people were gathered in the street in front of the City Hall where a huge, unsightly framework structure of pine timber had been erected. Indeed it was a hideous-looking thing. The objectors to the plan to carry the streets over the railroad tracks by bridges had built the grotesque thing as an object lesson to show what they supposed the bridges would look like.

Inside the City Hall the crowd was so great that it was apparent the chamber assigned for the hearing was much too small, and so the large chamber occupied by the Board of Aldermen was opened for the proceedings, by the chairman of the Grade Crossings Commission, at 11 o'clock. There were present Commissioners Adam, Morgan, Kendall, Ryan, Kirkover, and Sandrock; Engineer Mann and Attorney Clinton.

The notice calling the hearing was read by the secretary. No one appeared for the city. A few technical objections were made by railroad attorneys, which were ruled out of order as not bearing upon the purpose of the hearing. Then a number of citizens were heard in objection to the proposed viaducts in Seneca and Elk streets and Abbott Road. Opinions were advanced that the grades of streets and railroads remain unchanged if the railroad tracks were not elevated or the streets taken under them. Some maintained that all railroad tracks should be elevated. Objections were made to the closing of certain streets which would be closed if the proposed plan was adopted. Objection was made to the proposed cut through the Terrace. The general sentiment was in favor of abolishing grade crossings and some good suggestions were made as to the best plans for approaches to viaducts. The hearing continued throughout the day, with a short interval at noon, and was adjourned to the evening of June 3d. This was done at the request of the president of the South Buffalo Business Men's Asso-



ciation and others, to give opportunity to members of the Citizens' Grade Crossings Association who could not attend during the day. It was a lively meeting. President Crowe conducted the examination of witnesses. Much time was being consumed by sworn testimony that the Erie Railroad had not influenced the action of members of the association, and the commissioners objected to the waste of time. With shouts and hisses the spectators demanded that the witnesses be heard. Some of the speakers, especially one or two who ought to have known better, were loud and abusive in their language. Beyond receiving objections from a number of citizens who believed that their property would be depreciated in value, or their business interests interfered with, by the proposed viaducts, nothing was gained on that occasion, and at a late hour the hearing adjourned until June 14th at 10 o'clock a. m.

On that day the session was given to the railroads. Objections and protests were made by Franklin D. Locke for the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, by E. Carleton Sprague for the Erie, by George C. Greene for the Lake Shore, and by Frank B. Rumsey for the Western New York & Pennsylvania Company. The hearing adjourned at noon, until 7:30 in the evening.

The evening session of June 14th was unique and breezy. One of the orators at an evening meeting of citizens in East Buffalo is reported to have said: "Get the women interested, my friends, and send them up to the City Hall. If they get after the commissioners the Salvation Army can't save them."

The first witness called by President Crowe was Mrs. Frances Michael, of No. 724 Perry Street, who said among other things: "The commission does not want to listen to the men that speaks for us, and means business and is interested in the welfare of our people. Now, we women will try and let you hear, and we will tell you what we will do. If these plans are not altered by good words we will have to use force as best we can. We women will practice how to use the crowbar and the sledge, and the first stone that will be laid for the viaduct we will take it up again. By all

means we women are perfectly willing to fight if it becomes necessary."

E. R. Brewer, a railroad engineer, of No. 235 Peabody Street, was the next witness. He objected to the viaducts in Seneca, Elk and Perry streets, and pictured the injury they would do his and other homes. "We are bound to have justice," he cried, "yes, justice. If we cannot get justice before the commissioners we shall go to the courts. If we cannot get justice from the courts we shall shoulder our arms and fight, and lay down our lives for our rights. This is no joke or idle threat. I mean it, I would just as soon die with a musket in my hands as have the Grade Crossings Commissioners rob me of my home and all that I hold dear. Yes, gentlemen; my home was built from the frugal savings of a small income for which I worked twelve hours a day. You shall not take it from me without a struggle, and I will shoulder my gun before you shall do it. If you do not hear from us now, and do not heed us now, you will hear from us later on. Later on—you hear me!—later on! I tell you, gates are good enough for the people of South Buffalo."

Mrs. Michael Martin, of No. 779 Elk Street, testified in answer to questions put by Dr. Crowe, that she owned property which would be injured by the proposed viaducts; that she would rather have the crossings remain on grade than submit to these abominable bridges and steps; that she would rather keep her children at home in ignorance than have them go to school over these bridges, and run the risk four times a day of coming home cripples; and that she would make a desperate effort to obtain compensation for damages done to her property which she thought would be the full value of the land.

After hearing other testimony of similar character adjournment was taken until June 29th, but before that day arrived other business intervened, the course of events changed, and no further hearings of citizens were held.

## X. EXPERIENCE WITH EXPERTS—A CONTRACT AT LAST.

In the Board of Aldermen, June 16th, Alderman Summers introduced a preamble and resolution requesting the Grade Crossings Commissioners to employ two competent consulting engineers to act with the chairman of the Board of Public Works, in carefully investigating the General Plan proposed to be adopted, and report whether in their judgment such plan was the best to be adopted; and if they conclude that some other plan would be more feasible and beneficial, to report the general outlines of such plan. The resolution was referred to the Grade Crossings Commission. In the Board of Councilmen, June 18th, President Hanrahan introduced a preamble and resolution of similar effect, which was unanimously adopted.

On June 27th the Grade Crossings Commissioners voted to comply with the request of the Common Council, and employ two consulting engineers. E. L. Corthell of Chicago, and A. W. Locke of North Adams, Mass., were selected to act with Chairman George S. Field of the Board of Public Works. The two engineers arrived in Buffalo July 11th, met the commissioners and were given a letter of instructions, which, after reciting the preamble and resolutions of the Board of Aldermen, said:

"Your attention is called to the following facts which must be borne in mind as to a certain extent restricting the field of your inquiry, as they restrict the action of the commission.

"1. That the city has entered into contracts with the New York Central Railroad Company, and the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company, which determine the character of the structures, at the following crossings: subways at William Street, Fillmore Avenue, Clinton, Eagle, South Division, Seneca and Jefferson streets; viaducts at Louisiana, Chicago and Michigan streets; bridge at Washington Street; beam tunnel at Main Street.

"2. The plan to be adopted by the commission must provide for eliminating the evils of the crossings of the streets by railroads with the least injury to the property of our citizens and of the railroads; to cause the least inconvenience to our citizens in the use of the streets, and yet not to burden the railroads beyond their capacity to transact their business, and to provide in the plan for improvements

which will not be too costly. The commission has sought to do this in the plans submitted to your consideration."

The engineers made a comprehensive study of the situation, occupying portions of two months therein, and when their report was ready for signing, they invited the chairman and attorney of the Grade Crossings Commission to hear their conclusions. The three engineers, Corthell, Locke and Field, were present, and after the draft of the report had been read, they were told that their plan, in its main features, was a reproduction of the Buchholz plan which the city had approved and had been obliged to abandon as utterly impracticable, and that it was useless to think of attempting to carry it through. They were also told that they had entirely disregarded the letter of instructions from the commissioners, in that they had ignored the contracts already entered into, and therefore their proposed plan was not acceptable or feasible. The interview did not change the opinions of Messrs. Corthell and Locke, but probably suggested the minority report of General Field.

The report signed by Messrs. Corthell and Locke, dated Sept. 6, 1892, was elaborate in the extreme. Going back to the beginning of the movement, it went over the ground which had been covered again and again by engineers and commissioners; gave the physical features and commercial and statistical history of the city, described and criticized in detail the proposed plans, and finally presented their own recommendations for joint elevated terminal passenger and freight stations. The union passenger station for all railroads entering the city to be located at the present New York Central and the Erie depots, and to be elevated eighteen feet or so above the street level, with hydraulic elevators for passengers, baggage, express and postal matter, arranged generally like those for the same purpose in the large station at Frankfort, Germany, and other large cities in Europe. The union freight station to be also elevated and provided with hydraulic elevators, and reached by teams going up long, wide, easy ramps. At the dock terminals, also elevated, freight elevators handled by hydraulic power would afford convenient methods of handling the

business. The main railroad lines, the connecting lines, and terminals at docks, to be raised sufficiently to allow the streets to be depressed and carried under without interfering with sewers. The cost of these improvements, as estimated by the engineers, would be \$10,450,000.

With reference to the existing contract with the New York Central Railroad the engineers reported: "We can not recommend the carrying out of this contract, for the reason that the plans on which it is based do not meet with our approval. . . . We believe the railroads would find it greatly to their advantage to agree with each other upon the terminal plans we have herein recommended; but if any road should decline to enter into it, or if it should be found impracticable to come to an agreement, the difficulty could be remedied by special legislation."

The chairman of the Board of Public Works did not fully accept the conclusions of Messrs. Corthell and Locke. Sept. 12, 1892, he wrote:

"I heartily concur in their plan, proposed as an ideal plan, and if there were not insurmountable obstacles in the way you would, I am sure, at once come to a unanimous conclusion as to the best plan to be adopted. But unfortunately you face a condition of affairs apparently not fully understood by Messrs. Corthell and Locke. . . . Your best efforts must be directed to attain such results as are possible under the conditions which exist; they may not be perfect, but they will be a very great improvement over present conditions. There should be a free and unobstructed route for traffic to the southeastern part of the city through Elk Street and Abbott Road; to the east through Seneca and Clinton streets; northerly through Hamburg and Michigan streets; by which the streets named can be traveled by people driving or walking without encountering a single railroad track on grade. No one expects the impossible; all expect relief."<sup>1</sup>

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1. In his Historical Society paper, Mr. Adam summarized the above instructions of Gen. Field, and added: "And here I may quote from Collingwood's 'Life and Works of John Ruskin,' a sentence which admirably gives the exact situation in which the grade crossings commissioners found themselves: 'An ideal, to be an ideal, is something out of reach; something to aim at, not to attain; the rest of us are content to be opportunists, to do the best we can with the materials we have.' And that the Grade Crossings Commission tried to do."

After having read and considered the two reports, the Grade Crossings Commissioners voted, October 8th, that the report of Messrs. Corthell and Locke was unsatisfactory and not in accordance with instructions given them; and that it will be transmitted, together with the report of the chairman of the Board of Public Works, without any recommendation, to the Common Council.

President Crowe of the Citizens' Grade Crossings Association is reported to have said: "Personally I favor those plans of Messrs. Corthell and Locke so far as they provide for track elevation and concentration. I disagree as to the details and believe a far better result can be secured by different grouping of tracks, accommodating a greater amount of traffic with much less trackage."

The commissioners now resumed negotiations with the officials of the New York Central, for modifications of the plans under the original contract; and Engineer Mann met President Depew and Engineer Katte in New York relative to such proposed changes; but under date of November 29th the chief engineer wrote: "It is not apparent to this company that there are any good reasons for asking further modifications of the existing contracts, and especially for the scheme now presented which would involve utter demoralization of the company's traffic, soon to be still further very largely increased by the impending World's Fair business, and it seems necessary for this company to say decidedly that it cannot even agree to consider any modifications of contract until the present pressing exigencies are past." The commissioners would not be satisfied until fuller information upon the proposed changes could be laid before the authorities of the Central road, and a committee consisting of Commissioner Adam, Attorney Spencer Clinton, Engineer Mann, and Chairman George S. Field of the Board of Public Works, went to New York, where the modifications proposed were shown to be advantageous alike to the railroad and to the city, and President Depew agreed to adopt them, provided the cost were not greater than the original plan. Estimates showed less cost, and these changes of plan were included in the contract subsequently entered into.

Again taking up the hearing upon the general plan proposed to be adopted, the commissioners sent notices to the several railroad companies of a continuation of the proceeding which had been commenced May 26th and interrupted since June 14th, and called a meeting for December 15th, but for various reasons the railroad attorneys were not prepared to go on, and adjournment was made to Jan. 4, 1893, and the commissioners gave notice that that would be the final hearing. The hearing was held according to appointment, and continued through the 4th and the forenoon of the 5th. Present, Commissioners Adam, Sweet, Kendall, Scheu, Kirkover, Butler and Sandrock, Engineer Mann, railroad attorneys Locke, Greene, Brownell, Rumsey and McMillan. Mr. Greene examined witnesses in opposition to proposed change of plan for Hamburg Street. Mr. Brownell offered in evidence as a proposed change of plan the report of Messrs. Cothrell and Locke. He examined witnesses to show that since the six miles an hour ordinances adopted March, 1892, had been enforced, no accident had happened, and argued that therefore no other protection was needed at the crossings. He was not ready with further evidence and asked an adjournment for a week or ten days. The commissioners, in executive session, considered whether they should allow further time to the railroads, and decided not to do so. The chairman declared the hearing closed.

April 3, 1893, Hon. John J. Clahan introduced in the Assembly at Albany, by request, a bill amending the Grade Crossings Act, by removing the commissioners, by providing awards for consequential damages to property, and by prohibiting the closing of any street. No direct reference was made in the bill to the removal of the commissioners, but their names were enclosed in parentheses to show that that part of the original Act was to be omitted in the amendment thereto. The bill was accompanied by a petition dated March 28, 1893, which recited that the Grade Crossings Commission had been in existence for five years and had accomplished nothing in actual work; asked that it be abolished by the Legislature and that the business of the commission be placed in the hands of men better qualified; pro-

posed that the new commission consist of a smaller number of persons and that they receive adequate compensation for their services. "We have no faith," said the petitioners, "in the old exploded theory of honorary commissioners serving without pay." The petition concluded by saying:

We urge upon the Legislature the wisdom of prompt and speedy action, in the hope that some good may be accomplished in the lifetime of the present generation. And your petitioners will ever pray.

EAST BUFFALO GRADE CROSSINGS ASSOCIATION,

SAMUEL J. RAMSPERGER, *President*.

CASPER L. DRESCHER, *Secretary*.

The introduction of that bill at Albany produced quite a little whirl of excitement in Buffalo, and provoked considerable irritation. The newspapers were full of it. Brilliant head-lines over columns of dispatches from Albany correspondents; columns of editorial comment and criticism; interviews with citizens and legislators; reports of public meetings held by the East Buffalo Grade Crossings Association in favor of the bill. The bill did not become a law.

The New York Central Railroad Company having agreed to elevate the tracks on an average of about seven feet from the crossing at South Division Street to the crossing at William Street inclusive, it was necessary to make new plans for that part of the work. The making of the surveys, the drafting of plans to show these changes, and the preparation of plans for the improved structures at Elk Street, Abbott Road and other crossings, occupied the engineers until the end of August.

One of the sections of the Grade Crossings Act of 1892, provides that before adopting, altering or modifying any plan, the commissioners shall give a hearing thereon, and shall give notice of their intention ten days before the first hearing, and file a plan in the City Engineer's office for examination. They shall hear the railroad companies interested, and the city, and any party interested; any of whom may propose changes, or modifications, or may suggest a new plan. After having heard all parties, the commissioners shall decide upon and adopt a plan, and shall file their report thereon, together with the evidence submitted before



them, in the office of the Clerk of Erie County; and thereupon it shall become the plan to be executed under the provisions of the statute.

The plans being all prepared and filed, legal notice was given for a hearing thereon, September 11th, in the Grade Crossings Commission room in the Municipal Building. No one appeared for the city. Robert S. Brown, who had spoken at the hearing, June 14th, in opposition to the former plans, appeared for property owners along the line of the New York Central between Swan and William streets, and said that the proposed plan for elevating the railroad tracks and depressing the streets to carry them under the tracks was satisfactory to the property owners. Attorney D. H. McMillan said the New York Central was ready to make a contract upon those plans. The other railroad attorneys asked that special days be set apart for each railroad, and this was agreed to. Beginning on September 18th, the commissioners held eight sessions on as many days, the last on October 1st. They heard the objections and suggestions of the attorneys and engineers; decided upon the details of the general plan, and directed the engineer to prepare new drawings of all the changes proposed. These were completed October 16th, examined, approved and filed in the City Engineer's office for examination by parties interested. After due legal notice, it was by the commissioners

*Resolved*, That the proposed plan, as modified, filed in the office of the Chief Engineer of the Bureau of Engineering, Oct. 21, 1893, be adopted as the general plan for the abatement of grade crossings of the streets in the city of Buffalo, and that the attorney for the commissioners file said plan as directed by the statute in the Clerk's office of Erie County, together with the evidence taken on the hearing upon the proposed plans, and the modifications of the same.

The report was duly filed November 18th, and notices to that effect sent to all the railroads. The reply which came from the attorneys of the Erie, dated November 27th, said: "The New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company is not prepared to enter into the contract mentioned in your notice"; and from the attorneys of the Buffalo Creek Railroad Company, dated Jan. 3, 1894, that circumstances had

prevented an earlier reply, and that "the Buffalo Creek Railroad Company is not ready to enter into such contract." Other railroads acknowledged receipt of the notice, and nothing more.

May 21, 1894, a draft of the proposed contract with the New York Central and West Shore railroad companies was received from General Counsel Loomis. The original contract of 1889 had provided that consequential damages to property, as determined by a commission appointed by the Supreme Court, were to be paid in the proportion of two thirds by the railroad company and one third by the city. When the modified plans were accepted by President Depew it was agreed that the new contract would be the same as the first contract in all particulars, except as it related to the modified plans. The draft submitted made no provision for the payment of awards allowed for consequential damages, therefore leaving them for the city to pay. This question was in dispute for many months, and failure to agree upon so important a matter had been the cause of the long delay in making the new contract; the commissioners demanding the original agreement. On July 20th, Attorney D. H. Mc-Millan, on behalf of President Depew, submitted a compromise proposition that the company and the city would each pay one half of such consequential damages; and after long discussion and hesitation the commissioners agreed thereto. But a further delay was caused by a modification of a portion of the plan for elevating the railroad tracks, and another public hearing was necessary. The hearing, duly advertised, was held November 15th; the modification adopted and the report filed, November 26th; and the contract between the New York Central and the West Shore companies, dated Nov. 30, 1894, was duly executed and reported to the Mayor and Common Council.

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## XI. CLEARING AWAY LEGAL OBSTRUCTIONS.

The adopting and filing of the general plan, Nov. 18, 1893; the failure of many of the railroads to enter into con-

tracts; the evident intention to delay indefinitely the consideration of the apportionment of cost; made operative the provision of the statute that in such event the commissioners could apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of three commissioners to determine the proportions; and on Jan. 27, 1894, the commissioners resolved to notify the railroads that such application would be made; and May 21st, Attorney Spencer Clinton was instructed to prepare the requisite petitions and applications. Proceedings were commenced September 4th, at a Special Term of the Supreme Court, by petitions for the appointment of three commissioners to apportion the cost of the improvement upon the city and upon each of the railroad companies: The Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Company; the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company; the Buffalo Creek Railroad Company; the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company; and also for the special commission for the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company, as provided in the statute. Adjournment was made until September 20th, when the railroad attorneys presented objections to the petitions and to the appointment of the commissioners, alleging every conceivable ground, including denial of the jurisdiction of the Grade Crossings Commissioners; denial of the validity of the Grade Crossings Act; denying the application of the law to the proceedings; denying the legality of the plan of the commissioners; objecting to the wording of the petition, and objecting to the manner of the service of the notices.

The objections were overruled by the court, the notices were held to be valid, the appointment of commissioners seemed to be assured and near at hand; when, in the course of the arguments, a new objection was raised that the Union Terminal Railroad Company and the Buffalo, New York & Erie Railroad Company had not been included in the proceedings. It was at first thought that they could be still brought in; and the Grade Crossings Commissioners instructed their attorney to prepare petitions for commissioners to make apportionment for these two companies also; but then it was still further objected that these companies

had been notified of the hearings of the Grade Crossings Commission upon the proposed general plan prior to its being adopted, and that they had not been afforded the opportunity to be heard thereon as provided in the Act. The Union Terminal Railroad Company did not exist as a railroad; it owned lands which had been acquired for railroad purposes, almost all of which it had leased to the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and upon which the tracks of the latter company had been laid. The Buffalo, New York & Erie Railroad Company had leased all its property to the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company for a very long term of years, possibly five hundred, and was not interested in these proceedings. The two companies were ghosts of railroads, and existing only as legal fictions. But in the law a fiction must sometimes be dealt with as a fact, and so it was in this case. And therefore it became necessary for the Grade Crossings Commissioners to begin all over again the proceedings preliminary to the adoption of a general plan, going back to where they stood before Nov. 14, 1893. Their attorney was instructed to discontinue and abandon the then pending proceedings before the Supreme Court for the appointment of commissioners to apportion the cost, and they ordered the publication of the following call for a meeting:

Notice is hereby given that the Grade Crossings Commissioners of the city of Buffalo propose to adopt, re-adopt, modify, alter and amend a general plan for the relief of the city from the present and prospective obstructions of the streets of the city by railroads crossing the same at grade; and all railroad companies which are to bear any part of the work for which such plan is made, and the city of Buffalo, and all other persons and parties interested are hereby notified that a meeting of the said Grade Crossings Commissioners will be held on the 22d day of December, 1894, in room No. 26 in the Municipal building of the city of Buffalo, at 10 o'clock a. m., to consider said plan and any modification and alteration thereof and any proposed change therein, and any new plan that may be suggested. The Grade Crossings Commissioners give notice that they make known the plan and modifications of the plan proposed to be adopted by them by this day filing such proposed plan and modifications of the plan in the office of the Chief Engineer of the Bureau

of Engineering and by publishing this notice thereof in two daily newspapers published in the city of Buffalo for at least ten days before the first hearing thereon.

The hearing began at ten o'clock in the morning and continued until long after ten o'clock at night; and in the proceedings of these twelve hours were received a condensed summary of all the obstructive and dilatory tactics of the railroad attorneys to which the commissioners had been treated during the preceding six years. All the commissioners were present except Mr. Butler, who was in Europe. After the notice calling the meeting had been read, the chairman explained that the primary object of the hearing was to give opportunity to the representatives of the Union Terminal Railroad Company, and of the Buffalo, New York & Erie Railroad Company, to be heard upon the general plan proposed to be adopted.

"We are ready to hear from the representative of the Union Terminal Railroad Company."

General Counsel Frank Rumsey said his company had objections to offer, without conceding the jurisdiction of the commissioners. "We desire a day fixed to hear testimony."

"That day has been fixed for today by the notice given. What objections have you to this plan?"

"A great many."

"We are ready to hear them."

"We have a great deal of testimony to introduce."

"We are ready to hear it."

"I did not think it would be heard today."

"That is what we are here for."

"I thought a day would be fixed for us."

"It is fixed."

"The notice was somewhat vague and uncertain."

"You had proper notice."

And as Mr. Rumsey was not ready to go on, the Buffalo, New York & Erie Railroad was called. Mr. George F. Brownell intimated that D. N. Lockwood, president of the company, was on his way from New York to attend the hearing and would appear later in the day.

Although the purpose of the hearing was perfectly well

understood, the railroad attorneys saw in it an opportunity for a protracted proceeding which, if skillfully managed, might cover many days, probably weeks, and if a sufficient number of adjournments could be gained, it might possibly extend to months. But their eagerness to force this delay led them into such questionable methods as defeated their own purpose.

The Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Company being called, General Counsel George C. Greene offered technical objections to the proceedings; objected to the plans to be adopted, and called witnesses to show injury to property of the company if the plans were carried out; the same objections having been brought before the commissioners at previous hearings. While Mr. Greene was waiting for a witness, Mr. Milburn pleaded for a hearing for the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company, promising to finish in two minutes. He objected to the new plan because it was not such as was required by the statute, and did not contain sufficient information to show to the road he represented what work was proposed to be done. "If you'll note that objection I'll take myself and my company away." Mr. Greene resumed the examination of witnesses, continuing until 12.30 p. m., when a recess of thirty minutes was taken, and for some time afterwards he held the floor.

Mr. Rumsey then renewed his application for an adjourned hearing of the Union Terminal Railroad Company, and was informed that the commissioners would consider his request later and in executive session.

Hon. D. N. Lockwood, president of the Buffalo, New York & Erie Railroad Company, requested time to examine the plans, and received the same answer.

George F. Brownell asked that a day be set for a hearing of the Buffalo Creek Railroad Company, and for the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company, and received the same reply.

The public hearing was suspended for a few minutes and in executive session the commissioners resolved to deny the applications for delay, and go on with the hearing. In resumed open session they announced their decision to the

railroad attorneys. Mr. Rumsey began a system of irrelevant testimony, was called to order and told to confine his remarks and questions to the discussion of the plans before the commissioners. In reply to a question he denied that he had made an agreement with another attorney to consume a certain amount of time, but continued ostentatiously to waste time until 6.30 p. m., when a vote was passed by the commissioners that all the railroad attorneys would be limited to thirty minutes each in which to argue and close their cases, and a recess of thirty minutes was then taken. At 7.10 o'clock the hearing of Mr. Rumsey was resumed. He presented twenty-one objections, which included every detail of the proposed plans which would affect the property or interests of the Union Terminal Railroad Company. He took them up separately, explaining the grounds of each of them in turn, until told that his time had expired.

"It is evident to every member of this commission," said the chairman, "that of your half hour twenty-five minutes have been uselessly wasted. Everything you have brought out could have been done in five minutes."

Then Mr. Brownell began by renewing his motion for adjournment to another day, and it was denied. He exhausted his time in objecting to everything the Grade Crossings Commissioners had done and proposed to do; he questioned the legality of the Act which appointed the commissioners, complained that his company had not been served with proper notice, and concluded by corroborating the statement of Mr. Rumsey that no agreement had been entered into to delay the adoption of the plans.

"Do you deny there was such an agreement?" asked Commissioner Weber.

"I do," said Mr. Brownell.

"Then I will call a witness," said the commissioner, and William H. Newerf was put on the stand and duly sworn. Being asked to state what he had heard he said: "Immediately upon the re-assembling of the commissioners after the executive session, Mr. Locke, Mr. Brownell and Mr. Rumsey were talking together. 'We will keep them till twelve,' said Mr. Brownell; and I heard him ask Mr. Rumsey how

long he could engage the attention of the commissioners. 'About an hour and a half,' he answered; 'how long will you take?' 'Oh, I can keep them busy for two hours and a half.' 'Good,' chuckled Mr. Locke; 'go ahead, I'll stand by you.'"

Continuing, Mr. Newerf said that he appeared as a delegate from the South Buffalo Business Men's Association; said that the plans were perfectly satisfactory to that association, and that they urged their immediate adoption.

F. P. Boechat, R. M. Choate, and Col. Rodney M. Taylor of South Buffalo gave similar testimony as to the demand of their people. About 10 o'clock a motion was made and carried that the hearing be declared closed, and that the commission go into executive session. The objections raised at the hearing were duly considered and discussed; and by a unanimous vote the general plan was adopted. On Monday, December 24th, the plan was duly filed in the office of the Clerk of Erie County.

The newspapers of the day applauded the commissioners for their action. Said one:

"In these degenerate days, when public officials are controlled by great corporations, especially by the railroads and trusts, it is inspiring to see public-spirited business-men devote many hours during their busiest season to the public interests, particularly when such service is without hope of compensation, and more especially when they are compelled to 'lock horns' with a railroad combination powerful and unusually combative. But yesterday Buffalo's Grade Crossings Commission locked horns with the railroads in a positively refreshing manner. Tired of the procrastinating methods of the railroads and their attorneys the commissioners made them dance the liveliest dance in the history of the commission."

Another said:

"The attorneys for the railroads resorted to every possible subterfuge for delay, but the commissioners took a firm stand and did precisely what the citizens of Buffalo are demanding that they do."

Another said:

"The commissioners are entitled to great credit for their firmness, as they have been at all times for their patience, in dealing



with this vexed and vexing problem. They have reached the point where patience ceases to be a virtue."

And still another:

"The Grade Crossings Commissioners gave the people of Buffalo the best possible Christmas gift in adopting a plan for the removal of the dangerous and damaging nuisance of railroad crossings at grade. . . . They have been patient with the railroads to the utmost limit of endurance, and the summary action at last taken will be heartily approved by the public sentiment of the city."

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## XII. CONSUMMATION.

The way being now clear of all legal obstructions, the Grade Crossings Commissioners, in January, 1895, again presented their petition to the Supreme Court for the appointment of a commission to apportion the cost of the approaches between the railroads and the city. Objections were again filed by the railroad attorneys, and on March 12th they were over-ruled and set aside. The proceedings were adjourned and continued from time to time, and are still held open.<sup>1</sup> The motion for appointment was not pressed, because in the meantime negotiations began with the railroad companies, and in good faith, with contracts in view.

The next contract made was with the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company, and dated March 6, 1895. It provides for the elevation of the railroad tracks at the crossings at Seneca Street, Elk Street and the Abbott Road, and the carrying of these three streets under the railroad tracks. Unwilling to accept the apportionment of cost agreed upon between the city and the New York Central Railroad, the Lackawanna claimed the appointment of a commission to decide that question, as it had a legal right to do. By mutual consent application was made in Special Term of the Supreme Court for appointment of a commission, and the Court named Francis R. Baxter, George F. Yeomans, and

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1. This was apparently written in 1897.

Edward A. Neale, as such commissioners. They made a report November 11th, that the city should pay 45% of the entire cost of changing the grade of the railroad and of the street, and that the railroad should pay 55%. An appeal was taken for the city, and the commissioners' report was confirmed, Feb. 11, 1896.

Next in order of time came the contract with the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Company, which was signed Oct. 1, 1895, under the same conditions and terms of apportionment as agreed between the city and the New York Central.

The financial condition of the Erie Railroad, the Western New York & Pennsylvania, and the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad, was the main reason, if not the only reason, for their continued refusal to enter into contract with the city; and when it became apparent that only by meeting that condition squarely would anything ever be accomplished, discussion began upon the best means of doing so. The Act provides that "if any railroad company shall neglect to begin or complete the work apportioned to it by the said commissioners, the said commissioners on behalf of the city may do and finish the work, and recover the cost from the company in default." To carry on the work under that provision it would be necessary first to secure the appointment of a commission to apportion the cost and receive their report as confirmed in court, probably after the delay consequent on an appeal. Then to do the work by contract, for which the city would have to provide the money in the first instance; then sue the defaulting railroad companies to recover the proportion allotted to each, and these claims would probably be contested to the court of last resort. Even after judgment had been obtained there would still be some difficulty, perhaps doubt, about recovering the money advanced by the city. To avoid all this delay it was suggested that, acting under the provision of the law, the city might do the work with the consent of the railroad companies, issue bonds to pay for the work, the railroads entering into agreements to repay to the city the amounts of their proportions of the cost in twenty annual payments with interest at

the rate paid by the city. It was like giving an extension of time to debtors who could not pay in full on demand, but who were willing to pay if time were afforded them. The Grade Crossings Commissioners decided to adopt that arrangement, but before doing so they sought the consent and approval of the Mayor and Common Council. A report of the proposed agreement and the reasons therefor was submitted to the Council, with estimates of the cost of the work to be done and paid for by the city, and repaid by the railroads as follows :

Erie Railroad . . . . .	\$ 917,594 00
Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad . . . . .	323,253 00
New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad . . . . .	123,000 00
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	\$1,363,847 00

The Board of Aldermen, Oct. 28, 1895, adopted the following resolution :

*“Resolved, That the proposed action of the Grade Crossings Commissioners in extending the time of payment by the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad Company, and the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company, of the moneys to be expended by the city in doing that part of the work which it is proposed to allot to said companies respectively, pursuant to the Grade Crossings Act, be approved, as is also the proposed agreement that the city provide the money for this purpose by issuing its bonds; the company agreeing to pay the city the same rate of interest as shall be borne by the bonds.”*

The resolution was approved by the Board of Councilmen and the Mayor.

These difficult matters having been arranged, a contract was made, Feb. 8, 1896, with the Erie Railroad Company, upon the same terms and conditions as the contract with the New York Central, except that the city will pay for the work in the first instance and the railroad company will repay the outlay in twenty annual payments with interest; and also that the viaduct in Louisiana Street will not be built until one year after the construction of the viaduct in Chicago and Seneca streets.

On the same day, Feb. 8, 1896, a contract was entered

into with the Buffalo Creek Railroad upon the same terms and conditions as the contract with the New York Central.

On the 7th day of June, 1896, a contract was entered into with the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad Company, upon the same terms and conditions as the contract with the Erie Railroad Company.

There now remained only the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the Union Terminal Railroad Company. It is as difficult to speak of these companies as being two as it is to consider them as being one. When in court, the latter company had an existence in fact; out of court, in fact it did not exist. The property it owned as a railroad company is used, perhaps owned, by the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company; excepting a strip which crosses Elk Street and the Abbott Road; and the portions of that strip which abut on these streets have been deeded to a private individual; so the company claims that it is not interested in or liable for any part of the cost of the viaducts. A partial contract, omitting these two crossings for the time being, was entered into Dec. 10, 1896, with the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company, so that it is now possible to go on with all other improvements under the general plan. The terms and conditions of the contract are the same as with the Erie Railroad, except as in the exchange of property with the West Shore Railroad Company the New York Central Railroad Company agreed to pay \$100,000 towards the part of this work to be done by the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad Company, this amount to be paid for work done under the contract.

I cannot refrain from quoting the remark made by the attorney for the commissioners to the attorney for the company immediately after the exchange of contracts: "Permit me to congratulate you . . . upon having delayed this contract as long as possible."

Having disposed of all the preliminaries, we now arrive at the period of actual work. In March, 1895, the New York Central contracted with Dwyer & Huntington for the construction of the improvement through the Terrace, the work

to be completed by October 1st the same year. On the 6th of April, Pascal P. Pratt began proceedings in the Supreme Court to enjoin the contractors and the New York Central from doing the work, and a temporary injunction was granted. May 2d the order was vacated and set aside. An appeal was taken by Mr. Pratt, and the final order of the General Term, denying the injunction, was entered October 31st, one month after the improvement was to have been completed. Work was begun immediately, but was considerably delayed by cold and storming weather during the winter months.

The excavation was mostly through beach sand and gravel, and partially through filled-in material. Hewed logs with plank covers and bottoms were found ten feet under ground at Main Street, showing that the street had been so much lower at one time. The rumors of large sums of money buried under the spot where the old Liberty Pole once stood, dwindled to a few copper coins of the year 1836. The improvements at Washington Street and through the Terrace were completed about Nov. 1, 1896.

The city contracted with Dwyer & McNaughton, May 7, 1895, for the approach work in Washington, Main, and Michigan streets. Work was begun in Michigan Street May 22d, and was to have been completed in October of the same year, but unlooked-for delays occurred, and the viaduct was not opened for traffic until June, 1896. In excavating for foundations at the Michigan-street crossing of the New York Central an old board fence was discovered eight feet under ground, and just north of Exchange Street a great bed of tan bark three feet thick was encountered.

The cost of construction in Michigan Street, Washington and Main streets, and through the Terrace, was \$265,116.52; of which the railroads paid \$228,546.00, and the city paid \$36,570.52. The awards paid for lands taken amounted to \$157,668.67; of which the railroads paid \$105,112.45, and the city paid \$52,556.22. There are claims for consequential damages to properties on Main, Washington, and Michigan streets which will be awarded by a commission appointed by the Supreme Court; and these when deter-

mined, will be paid one half by the railroad and one half by the city.

Work has just begun<sup>1</sup> upon the viaduct in Chicago Street, extending from Seneca Street to beyond the Hamburg Canal; being carried over Carroll Street, over the freight tracks of the New York Central, and the West Shore railroads; over Exchange Street, with an approach down to that street; over the main passenger tracks of the New York Central and the Erie railroads; and over the Hamburg Canal. The cost of construction will be \$177,319.28, of which the railroads will pay \$131,663.51, and the city will pay \$45,655.77. The awards for lands taken amounted to \$192,305.86; of which the railroads pay \$126,203.95, and the city pays \$64,101.89.

Work has also just begun upon the subway to carry Clinton Street under the tracks of the Erie Railroad. The cost of construction will be \$125,313.15; of which the railroad will pay \$111,604.00, and the city will pay \$13,709.15.

Bids have been received for a viaduct in Seneca Street and Smith Street, with an approach in Fillmore Avenue. This structure will carry the street over the tracks of the Erie Railroad in Smith Street, and in Seneca Street near Smith; and also over the tracks of the Buffalo Creek, the Western New York & Pennsylvania, and the New York, Chicago & St. Louis railroads, a short distance further east on Seneca Street. The estimated cost of the structure is \$309,150.00; of which the railroads will pay about \$232,000.00, and the city about \$77,150.00.

Plans are being prepared for a viaduct in Seneca Street and in Hamburg Street, to carry these streets over the tracks of the New York Central, the West Shore, the Western New York & Pennsylvania, and the Erie railroads.

Plans are also being prepared for a viaduct to carry Elk Street over the tracks of the Lake Shore Railway, and also Elk Street and the Abbott Road jointly over the tracks of the Erie Railroad.

Plans are also being prepared for a subway to carry Swan Street under the tracks of the New York Central,

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1. April, 1897.

West Shore and Western New York & Pennsylvania railroads.

When all the work included in the present plan has been completed, it will be possible to travel out Seneca Street from Main Street to the city line, or down Hamburg Street to Elk Street and thence out Elk Street and the Abbott Road to the city line, without encountering a single railroad track on grade. All the streets which are crossed by the tracks of the New York Central Railroad from Swan to William streets inclusive, will be carried under the railroad, the tracks being raised an average of seven feet above their present elevation.

According to the estimates of Engineer George Mann—and I may say that his estimates on the work already completed have been singularly accurate—the work under the present plan will cost, in round numbers, \$4,500,000.00; and he estimates that of this amount the city will pay \$750,000.00, and that making the most liberal estimates for consequential damages the entire cost to the city should not exceed \$1,000,000.00, as against \$5,000,000.00 to be expended by the railroad companies.

In conclusion, it is fitting that honor should be paid to the memories of the Hon. Solomon S. Scheu, who died in 1888, and of James E. Nunan, who died in 1891; Grade Crossings Commissioners whose services were invaluable to the city of Buffalo, whose sound judgments and solid good sense were appreciated by their associates, and whose names will be perpetuated upon the bronze tablet soon to be placed in a conspicuous part of the Buffalo Grade Crossings Improvement.

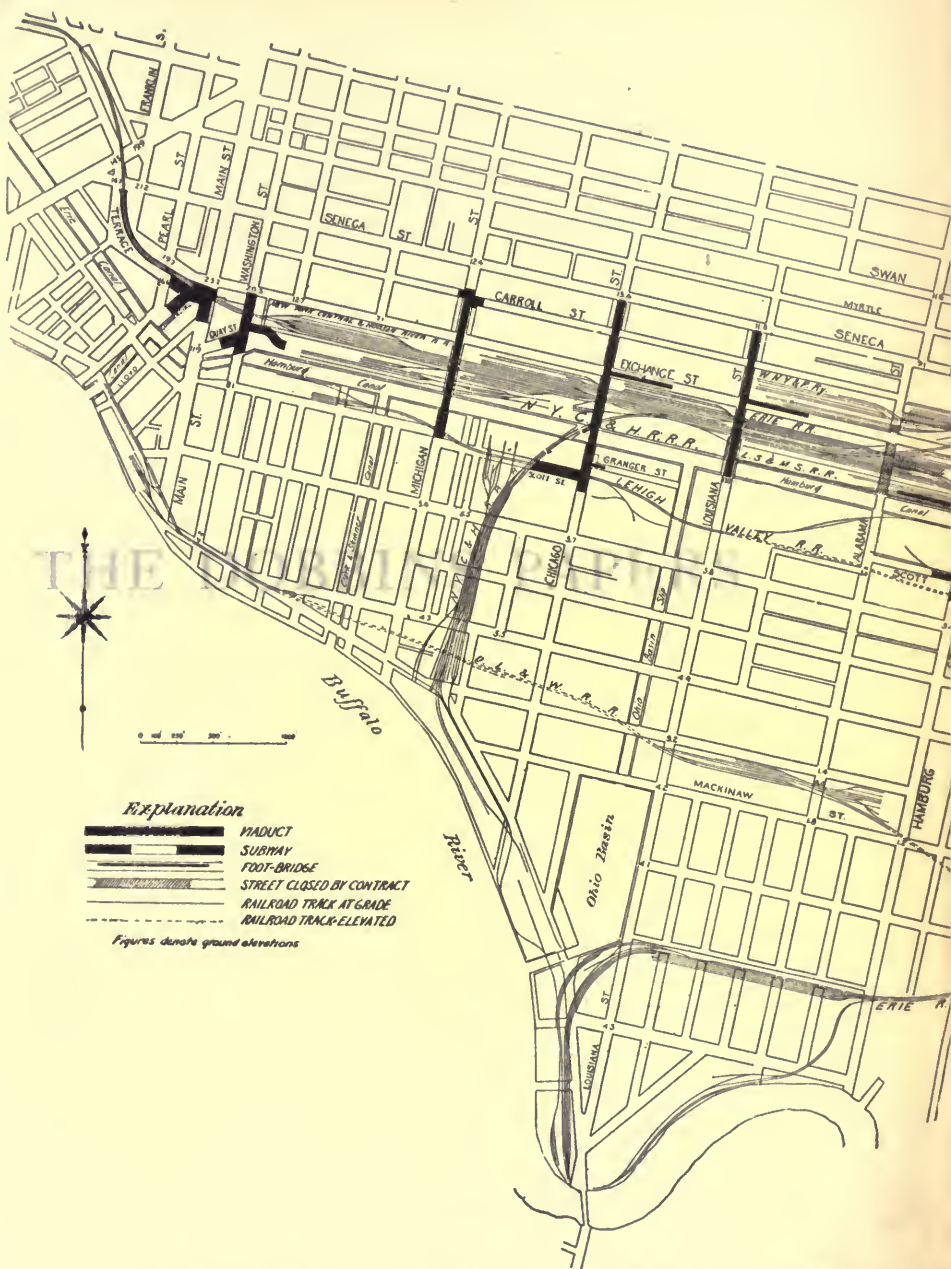
NOTE—In the eight years that have elapsed since Mr. Adam prepared the foregoing history, the work of abolishing the grade crossings has gone on. Since May 22, 1895, thirty-seven structures have been completed, which, with the closing of streets, have eliminated sixty-five crossings at grade. Five structures are yet to be built to complete the General Plan of the Commission. The cost of completed structures, to the spring of 1905, has been as follows: Right of way work, \$500,000, borne by the railroads; construction, \$824,693.96, borne by the city; \$3,005,555.08, borne by the railroads, a total of \$3,830,249.04; lands bought, \$292,697.86 by the city, \$575,254.94 by the railroads, a total of \$867,952.80. The grand total of cost, including right of way, construction and lands bought, is \$5,198,201.84, of which the city pays 21.5 per cent., amounting

to \$1,117,391.82, and the railroads 78.5 per cent., amounting to \$4,080,810.02. To these figures are to be added the consequential damages, amounting to \$2,035,244.91, of which \$1,055,101.84 are apportioned to the city, and \$980,143.07 to the railroads. Including the consequential damages, the total cost of the work to the spring of 1905, has been \$7,233,446.75. The estimated cost of structures to be completed, is \$233,152.36, of which \$60,885.79 is apportioned to the city, and \$172,266.57 to the railroads. There have been constructed fifteen viaducts, spanning seventeen crossings; eighteen subways, under nineteen crossings, and four foot-bridges. Twenty-five streets have been closed. By these means seventy grade crossings have been abolished; three more will be done away with by work now included in the General Plan.

In a statistical summary prepared by Chief Engineer Edward B. Guthrie, in March, 1905, after the foregoing and other data are given, is the following statement: "While insufficient time has elapsed to appreciate the full benefit of this improvement, it is of interest to note the decrease in fatal accidents to others than railway employes at grade crossings in the city, notwithstanding the fact that for the latest period mentioned below some of the structures were not commenced. For thirty-one months in each of the periods there were: From Jan. 1, 1890, to Aug. 1, 1892, fifty-five fatal accidents. From May 1, 1902, to Dec. 1, 1904, twenty-four fatal accidents, a difference of thirty-one."

Mr. Adam's history notes the death of several of the commissioners. Subsequent to the close of his chronicle, Commissioner George Sandrock died, Feb. 12, 1902; Commissioner Charles A. Sweet died Oct. 1, 1903; and Chairman Robert B. Adam died June 30, 1904. Secretary William J. Morgan died Sept. 5, 1900; on Sept. 21, 1900, John B. Weber was elected secretary. Engineer George E. Mann died Oct. 2, 1897, and was succeeded, Oct. 9, 1897, by Edward B. Guthrie, the present chief engineer. On Feb. 16, 1905, Messrs. Charles F. Bishop, John Esser, Andrew Langdon, Wm. P. Northrup and Henry Schaefer were appointed commissioners by the court; and on Feb. 21, 1905, Augustus F. Scheu was elected chairman of the board.





## BUFFALO GRADE CROSSING IMPROVE 1888 to 1905

All structures shown on Map are built to Spring, 1905, except marked "A" which are yet unfinished.



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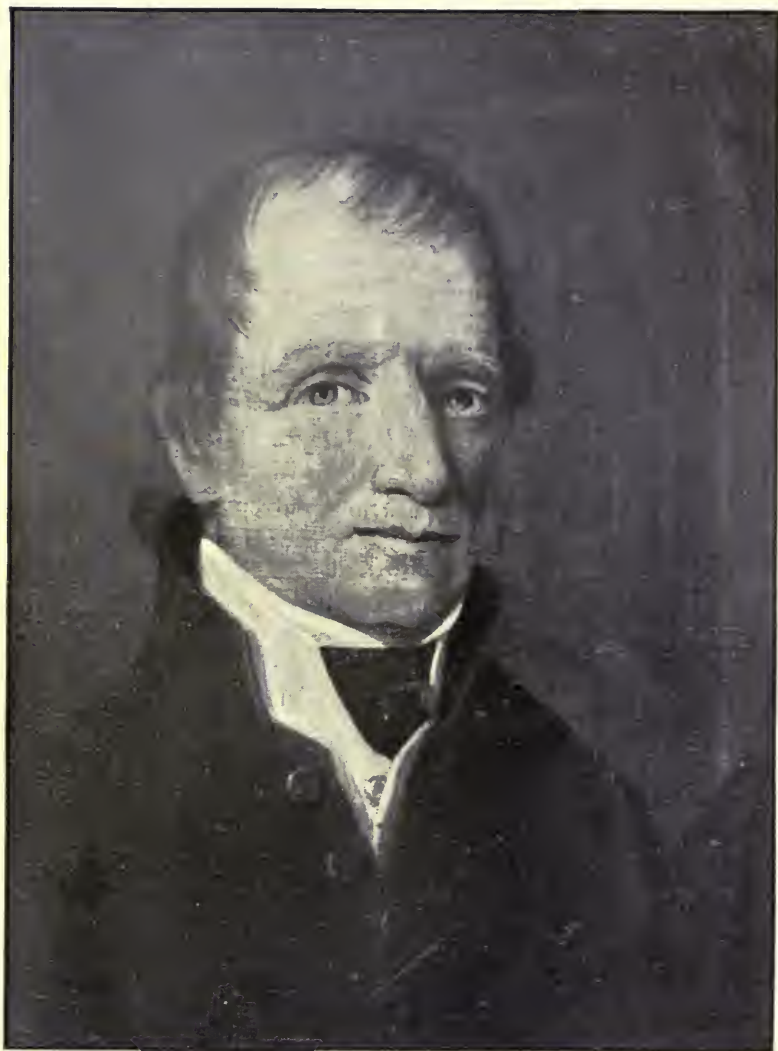




THE DOBBINS PAPERS







*Respectfully*  
Daniel Dobbins

FROM AN OIL PORTRAIT OWNED BY MRS. JAMES P. WHITE, BUFFALO.



## INTRODUCTION

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# CAREER OF DANIEL DOBBINS

NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME COMPILED FROM  
ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

BY FRANK H. SEVERANCE

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In 1892 Mrs. James P. White, of this city, and Col. John R. Dobbins,<sup>1</sup> of San Gabriel, Cal., the only surviving children of the late Capt. David Porter Dobbins, of Buffalo, presented to the Historical Society of this city, in accordance with the expressed wish of their father, a quantity of manuscript records in various form, including many papers of their grandfather, Capt. Daniel Dobbins; and also sundry relics of early days on the lakes, and of the War of 1812. Among these articles were a fine model of the square-rigged schooner Dobbins, built in 1863—foremast square-rig, main and mizzen of usual schooner rig; wood of the flag-ship Lawrence, and the Niagara, of Perry's fleet; an arms chest of the Lawrence, and Commodore Perry's wine case, a handsome mahogany brass-mounted case, containing a dozen cut-glass bottles. This case was presented to Capt. Daniel Dobbins by Commodore Perry, on board his shattered flagship Lawrence, at anchor in Misery Bay, off Erie, Pa., Oct. 23, 1813. These articles are preserved in the Museum of the Historical Society.

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The day after the Declaration of Independence was signed, July 5, 1776, Daniel Dobbins was born in a pioneer's home on the

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1. Col. John R. Dobbins died at Los Angeles, Cal., in April, 1905. He won his rank of colonel in the Civil War. Formerly a resident of Buffalo, he had for many years made his home in California, where at one time he was a large fruit-grower.

south bank of the Juniata river, near the present site of Lewiston, Mifflin Co., Pa. In 1795, a youth of 19, he walked through the wilderness to Colt's Station, some fourteen miles southeast of the present city of Erie, and engaged in the service of Judah Colt, agent of the Pennsylvania Population Company.<sup>1</sup> On July 1, 1796, he first visited the settlement of Erie. The following description of it is from his own papers:

"The only occupied houses were a small log cabin on the west side of the mouth of Mill Creek, occupied as a tavern by James Baird; one near the junction of Second and Parade streets, occupied by Rufus Seth Reed as a tavern; one on the present property of James M. Sterrett, occupied by Ezekiel Dunning, as a tannery; one on Front Street and French, occupied by Thomas Rees. In the county or Triangle [then a part of Allegheny County] there were a few who had built log houses, amongst them the Lowries who settled at and about the mouth of Sixteen Mile Creek, comprehending what is now the village of Northeast. All the rest was wild, gloomy forest; and these few hardy pioneers of the woods, with the Indians, disputed their right to the soil, with the bear, the wolf and the panther."

In a letter from Erie in after years, Capt. Dobbins wrote:

"I was in this place when General Wayne was brought here from Detroit, in the sloop Detroit, sick with the gout. He continued sick with this disease, till he died. I attended him part of the time and was at his funeral, Dec. 15, 1796. He was buried near the flagstaff, in the Fort, on the east side of the mouth of Mill Creek. In 1808 or '09 his son came and disinterred the body and took it to his native place in Chester County. When the body was disinterred it was in such a state of preservation that to detach the flesh from the bones, he employed Dr. J. C. Wallace to boil it in kettles. One of his boots was so well preserved that Mr. Duncan, who kept tavern here, wore it, having a mate made for it."

From about 1800 till 1812, Daniel Dobbins was engaged in lake navigation. In the seasons of 1803 and 1804 he was master of the sloop Good Intent, which had been sailed for some years by William Lee. Among the Dobbins papers are two thick manuscript volumes containing the original record of manifests of cargoes of vessels entered and cleared at the port of Presqu' Isle, from July 2, 1800, to Nov. 22, 1814. This fine old record of the infant days of lake commerce shows that most of the voyages of the Good Intent in 1803 and 1804 were between Presqu' Isle, Detroit and Fort Erie. Capt. Dobbins brought her to "Buffaloe" with "packages"—presumably peltries, Sept. 30, 1803. Salt and whiskey were the great staples taken on at Fort Erie, or occasionally at "Fort Slusher," though on July 13, 1803, the extraordinary shipment of "1 piano forte" was made

1. See "Judah Colt's Narrative," being his own journal, and account of the Pennsylvania Population Co., Buf. Hist. Soc. Pubs., vol. VII, pp. 331-359.

at Fort Erie, on the Good Intent, for Detroit, which the old book usually has "D Etroit," a sort of transition stage from French into English. Pork, tallow, clothing, and "powder from Connecticut" figure in the early invoices. The lading down from Detroit often included hemp seed, "furs,"—"I pack bare skins" on Capt. Dobbins' first voyage as master—and "mocoeks" of Indian, *i. e.*, maple sugar. Our dictionaries show no acquaintance with the word "mocoek," which was presumably the native package of maple sugar.

There are records that indicate that Mr. Dobbins was sailing the lakes as early as 1800 or 1801, probably in the schooner Harlequin, of which he was part owner, and Eliphalet Beebe master in 1801. The first appearance of Mr. Dobbins' name as master, in the port records, is on April 27, 1803, when he was in command of the sloop Good Intent, as above stated. He was master of the schooner Ranger, 1805-'07<sup>1</sup>; and of the schooner General Wilkinson, 1808. In 1809, in company with Rufus Seth Reed of Erie, he bought from Alexander McIntosh of Moy, Canada, agent for the Northwest Fur Company, the schooner Charlotte, renaming her the Salina, because it was expected that salt would be her chief cargo; and many hundred barrels of this article, along with furs, feathers, whiskey and miscellaneous goods, formed her freight up and down Lake Erie that season. At the close of navigation the Salina was brought to Black Rock, and under Mr. Dobbins' supervision, was refitted into a two-topsail schooner. Francis B. Holmes of Pittsburg also had a partnership interest in her.

Among the Dobbins papers are many letters written to Daniel Dobbins by Rufus Reed, while this work was in progress. Reed was sometimes at Erie, sometimes at Pittsburg, sometimes at Buffalo and Black Rock, but always solicitous about the progress of work at the

1. A glimpse of the frontier conditions of the time is afforded by the following letter from Samuel Smither to Capt. Dobbins, who was then trading in the Ranger:

ERIE RESERVE, Aug. 27, 1807.

SIR: The town of Erie is so illy supplied with goods this summer that I will be under the necessity of importing some articles of necessity from some place that they are to be had. I have lately inquired for coffee—none to be had, nor none even in expectation in a short time. Also Powder and shot much the same as with Coffee. If you can obtain a supply of any or all of them at Fort Erie or elsewhere in your perigrinations on the coast of the Lake or its waters please to procure for me each of the following quantity: 4 lb. Coffee, 1 do. Powder, 3 do. shot, 1 do. Lead. My gunlock is in need of some repairs I will send it along if there is any person in your course of trading that can do it Please to get it done—if not it will serve as a pattern to chuse another by if any any is to be had. . . ."

In 1810, while rebuilding the Salina at Black Rock, Capt. Dobbins complained of the appearance of maple sugar which was sent him, and received the following explanation from the sender at Erie: "The sugar which you speak of being black I have discovered is the same here it is owing to its being made in Black Walnut troughs."

little shipyard on the Scajaquada. "I depend on you," he wrote in March, "to drive on the repairs as fast as possible," and he sent fifty dollars—as indeed he often did—to facilitate matters. Mr. Dobbins was zealous, but there were delays and drawbacks. Mr. Reed wrote that he could furnish as many nails as needed, for he had two men making them. A hawser and "tart" came up by water from Schenectady. An account was opened at Porter, Barton & Co.'s store for sundry supplies. In April Mr. Reed hoped she would be up "as soon as the ice was out." In May, Capt. Abner Hathaway came down with the *Ranger*, bringing articles for the *Salina*, and nine barrels of whiskey for Capt. Samuel Pratt, "if," wrote Mr. Reed, "he will agree to give me credit for the same at 87½ cents a gallon and \$1 for each barrel, but I wish you to try to gitt more than the above from him if you can but I will not take less." Later correspondence shows that Capt. Pratt got the whiskey. Again Mr. Reed wrote, regarding the *Salina*, "Drive on as fast as posibel as I wish to have her a Saling once more." It was June before she was launched, and on June 20th a good share of the population of Erie gathered at the landing to see her arrive, bringing several hundred barrels of salt and a miscellaneous cargo.

From that time on until lake commerce was stopped by war, the *Salina* was an active factor in the forwarding trade between the Niagara and the little frontier settlements to the westward, sharing with the *Ranger*, the *Mary*, the *Contractor*, the *Packet*, and a few other small sloops and schooners, the business of the lakes. Her command forms a most interesting chapter in Capt. Dobbins' life; and her career, as will presently be shown, was to end with an uncommonly picturesque episode.

Mr. Dobbins' participation in the War of 1812 will be found set forth in detail in the following pages. He was at Mackinaw (the spelling of that day) with the *Salina*, July 16, 1812, when he heard that war was declared, and was made a prisoner of war. When the American force at the fort, fifty-six in number, were captured, Capt. Dobbins and all his crew were summoned to take the oath of allegiance, or give their word of honor, not to take up arms against Great Britain during the war. This Capt. Dobbins refused to do. Through the intercession of Mr. Wilmoth of the British Northwest Fur Co., he was allowed to depart with his vessel as a cartel, to take his fellow prisoners to Malden. Among them were Rufus Seth Reed and William W. Reed of Erie, and twenty-nine others.

At Detroit, he found Gen. Hull and troops encamped on the Canadian shore, opposite. A ball was fired across the *Salina's* bow to bring her to, and she was taken in charge by an officer. Capt.

Dobbins then joined a force under Col. Cass, against a British scouting party; and on his return from this expedition joined another force under Col. Miller, which met and defeated a party of British and Indians. He crossed with Hull's army to Detroit; was enrolled in a company of City Guards under Capt. Sibley; and was in that company under Col. Mack, which volunteered to take some mounted guns and drive the British ship *Queen Charlotte* and brig *Hunter* from their moorings, off Spring Wells, where they were landing soldiers to march into Detroit; but Hull refused to allow them to make the attempt.

After the surrender of Hull, Capt. Dobbins was taken with other prisoners, to Malden. Some one told the British commanding officer, Brock, that Dobbins had broken his parole by taking up arms in defense of Detroit. He was in danger of being executed, had sentence been passed on him; but a friend, a brother Mason whom Mr. Dobbins had known before the war, gave him private notice of the information that had been laid before Brock, and supplied him with a pass to Cleveland. This pass, preserved among the Dobbins papers, runs as follows:

Permit Daniel Dobbins and Rufus Seth Reed to pass from hence to Cleveland on board of boats despatched with prisoners of war.

ROBT. NICHOLS,  
Lieut. Col, Q. M. Gen.

DETROIT, Aug. 17, 1812.

Before receiving this pass, Mr. Dobbins lay concealed, part of the time in the woods, part of the time under the inverted hulk of a wreck, partly buried in the sand. A reward was offered for him, dead or alive; a price was set upon his scalp, and savages were put upon his trail; but he made his way on foot along the bank of the river, till he reached its mouth, where he found a dug-out, in which he paddled across Lake Erie to Sandusky, making his camp overnight on the shore of Put-in-Bay, which a year later was to become memorable in connection with Perry's victory.

At Sandusky, then but a small hamlet, a horse was procured, on which Capt. Dobbins journeyed to Cleveland. There the horse was abandoned and the captain took to a canoe, in which he made his way to Presqu' Isle, and to the garrison and people at that point gave the first news of the fall of Mackinaw and Hull's surrender. At the request of Gen. Mead, the officer in command, Capt. Dobbins at once started for Washington as bearer of dispatches giving details of the important events of which he had been a witness. The journey was a long and toilsome one, through the forest to Pittsburg, thence by the military road to Baltimore.

Arrived at Washington, he hastened to the War Office and laid his dispatches before Secretary Eustis. Not the slightest intimation

of the disaster had been received. The Secretary had hardly completed reading the dispatches when Col. Lewis Cass was announced. He had been with Hull and was included in the surrender—and it is related that he was so incensed at the action of his chief that he broke his sword across his knee rather than hand it over to the British commander. Burning with indignation he had hastened to Washington, bearing the sorry news, to find himself anticipated by Capt. Dobbins.

The Secretary of War, with the two messengers, went at once to the White House, to confer with President Madison. A Cabinet council was hastily summoned, and the news fully discussed. Cass and Dobbins were both present, and related the detail of events. It was a remarkable meeting. The intelligence of the double disaster was a crushing blow; it seemed as if our empire in the Northwest was gone; the New York frontier was threatened and in greater jeopardy than ever before. All seemed lost.

Finally President Madison exclaimed: "There is one thing to be done. We must gain control of the lakes. Therein lies our only safety."

Capt. Dobbins was questioned as to the best point to procure timber for ship-building, and he unhesitatingly pronounced in favor of Presqu' Isle. No finer oak grew than was to be found there, close to the water's edge, and in the land-locked harbor the vessels, when built, could ride in security. It was decided to give this brave fresh-water sailor, who had shown such energy and aptitude for affairs, charge of the preliminary work. He was accordingly commissioned an officer in the navy, and authorized to employ men, purchase supplies, etc. He started at once on his return. Going by way of New York, he engaged several ship-carpenters there, who accompanied him by way of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to Oswego, along Lake Ontario to Niagara, and so on to Erie.

From the hundreds of letters, accounts, receipts, and other documents preserved among the Dobbins papers, many curious facts might be gleaned, relating to the building of Perry's fleet. At the outset, Mr. Dobbins was authorized to draw on the Navy Department for \$2,000, which amount, in the form of a draft or warrant was put into the hands of Rufus S. Reed, who supplied the ready money in small sums as it was needed. One of the earliest documents relating to the work is a memorandum in Daniel Dobbins' writing, evidently made before he returned to Erie from Washington, September, 1812, recording the "dimentions of a Gun Boat built on the Ohio carrying one long 24 pd. weighing 56 hundred." It gives the various measurements of this craft, to which is added the fol-

lowing comment: "This vessel carried her gun verry well, and answer'd every purpose on the river, but perhaps it would be advisable to build them some larger for the Lakes." This and other practical suggestions, guided him in the initial work.

An early step was to make contracts for standing timber, convenient to the shipyard. The uniform price was one dollar a tree. Thus, Joseph M. Kratz, owner of tract 29, Erie Reserve, allowed timber to be cut as needed, then agreed that two tellers should examine and report how much had been taken. Robert Brown and Robert Irwin acted for the Government, reported that 113 trees had been cut, and Mr. Kratz received \$113. This was the procedure in many cases. One certificate runs as follows: "Gune the 25, 1813 trees cut on the widdo Lowreys plantation for ship timber twenty five counted by me Hugh McElroy," and the widow got \$25. Oak and cedar were at hand and cheap, but other articles were hard to get. Steel was hauled from Meadville, and axes were made at the shipyard. Holmes Reed received \$5.50 for setting a steam kettle, and \$5 for building a forge for John McDonald, the blacksmith. Coal was hauled from the pits—location uncertain—at 6¼ cents a bushel. Wages ranged from \$2.50 a day for the master ship-builder and \$2 for the blacksmith, down to the \$1.25 for sawyers and 62½ cents for axemen. Hauling, with horses or oxen, was paid for at \$4 a day. Board for the men was \$2.25 per week. William Black gave his receipt for \$64.09 "for working in the blacksmith shop sixty-eight days and boarding myself." "Fifteen dollars for a month's work," is a sum frequently given. Roswell Nettleton received \$47 for twenty-three days' work with his team, hauling iron from Bellefonte to the navy-yard. In March, 1813, Nettleton was sent to Buffalo for a load of spike-iron, the service costing the Government \$41.25. James E. McElroy received \$67.14 for bringing a wagon-load of carpenters' tools and nail rods from Pittsburg, a laborious haul through wild country.

At the outset Mr. Dobbins was much embarrassed by the lack of official orders and approval. Immediately after his return from Washington, he sent the following letter to "Commodore Chauncey or the commanding officer of the lake at Buffaloe," under date of Sept. 28, 1812, reaching Buffalo on the 30th:

SIR: I have the honor to transmit to you (the enclosed) a copy of my instructions from the Secretary of the Navy and assure you, Sir, that I stand ready to execute any orders you may be pleased to issue. I have made arrangements for the timber and iron work, steel for axes I have been obliged to send to Meadville for as there was not any at this place that is good for anything. I intend going to Pittsburg soon for the purpose of procuring Rigging and Cables,

anchors I believe I can get likewise the Riging can be got there cheap and that that is good. be pleased to let me hear from you at your arrival so that I may regulate my future Proceedings by your instructions. I have been obliged to hire the men by the day and shall be obliged to hire the teams the same way. Any further arrangements that I may make I will inform you of.

I am with respect yours,

DANIEL DOBBINS,  
Master, U. S. Navy.

This letter was received by Lieut. Elliott, who replied as follows :

BUFFALO, Oct. 2, 1812

SIR: Your letter of the 30th ultimo, directed to Com. Chauncey or the commanding officer on Lake Erie, I have received, together with its enclosed, a copy of your instructions from the Hon. the Secretary of the Navy, each of which, together with a copy of this letter, I have inclosed to him for his consideration. It appears to me utterly impossible to build Gun Boats at Presqu'ile; there is not a sufficient depth of water on the bar to get them into the Lake. Should there be water, the place is at all times open to the attacks of the Enemy, and in all probability when ready for action will ultimately fall into the hands of the Enemy, and be a great annoyance to our force building and repairing at this place. From a slight acquaintance I have with our side of Lake Erie, and with what information I have obtained from persons who have long navigated the lake, I am under the impression Lake Erie has not a single Harbor calculated to fit out a Naval expedition, and the only one convenient I am at present at, which is between Squaw Island and the main, immediately in the mouth of Niagara River. I have no further communication to make on the subject. Probably in a few days I shall be in possession of Commodore Chauncey's impressions, when you shall again hear from me.

With esteem, yours respectfully,

J. D. ELLIOTT.

Mr. Daniel Dobbins.

To this discouraging letter, Capt. Dobbins replied as follows :

ERIE, Oct. 11, 1812.

DEAR SIR: Yours of the 2d instant is received. In regard to the idea entertained by you that this place is not a suitable one to build gunboats at, allow me to differ with you. There is a sufficiency of water on the bar to let them into the lake, but not a sufficiency to let any heavy armed vessel of the enemy into the bay to destroy them. The bay is large and spacious, and completely land-locked, except at the entrance. I have made my arrangements in accordance with my own convictions, for the purpose of procuring the timber and other materials for their construction. I believe I have as perfect a knowledge of this lake as any other man on it and I believe you will agree with me, were you here, that this is the place for a naval station.

I remain, very respectfully, etc.,

DANIEL DOBBINS,  
Sailing-master, U. S. N.

To Lieut. J. D. Elliott, U. S. N., Black Rock.



Acting largely on his own responsibility, but as he believed with the approval of the Navy Department, Mr. Dobbins hastened the preliminary work. On Oct. 24th, in order to set a good example, he himself felled the first tree, a great oak, and hewed out the trunk. It afterwards formed the keel of the Niagara. At the beginning of November he came to Buffalo and engaged Ebenezer Crosby as master builder. Their original contract, still preserved, runs as follows:

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT made and concluded this third day of November, 1812:

Between Daniel Dobbins, Sailing Master in the United States Navy of the first part, and Ebenezer Crosby of the County of Niagara State of New York, Shipwright, of the second part, witnesseth:

That the party of the second part agrees to proceed to Presqu' Isle in the State of Pennsylvania, and take charge of the shipyard for the purpose of building four gunboats under the direction of the party of the first part; and there do and perform all the things that may be necessary for a master builder in the yard and out of it; to see that all the men that may be put under his charge do their duty, and to do all in his power to forward the work with expedition.

And for the above services to be done and performed by the party of the second part the party of the first part agrees to pay the party of the second part two dollars fifty cents per day and find him good lodging and board and half a pint of whiskey per day and the time of his beginning to be when he arrives at the yard, with the allowance of seven days wages to go and return.

For the faithful performance of the above agreement the parties bind themselves to each other in the penal sum of five hundred dollars to be paid by the party delinquent to the party observant. Witness our hands and seals.

DANIEL DOBBINS	[l. s.]
EBEN'R CROSBY	[l. s.]

Witness present  
WILLIAM LEE  
Approved  
L. ANGUS

William Lee was the pioneer skipper of the sloop Erie Packet and other craft, and Lieut. Angus was in charge of the ship-yard on the Scajaquada. A fortnight later, on November 16th, Mr. Dobbins sent to Commodore Chauncey a detailed report of what he had done, and forwarded the form of contract which he required the workmen to sign:

"We the undersigned having engaged to work for the United States during the time of building four gun-boats (if not sooner discharged), under the directions of Daniel Dobbins or any officer that may be appointed to direct and to faithfully do and perform all that may reasonably be required by the master builder in the yard not to absent ourselves from the work unless previously obtained liberty of the proper person to that effect. The columns below will show op-

posite our names (written by our own hands), the time of beginning wages, and occupation."

"You will see by the above list," wrote Mr. Dobbins to the Commodore, "the manner I have had the men engaged in getting the timber and the only way that men may be engaged at this place or any other on the lake. As for any person taking the building by the job it is not comatable in this Place unless they might be able to make a great Proffit and I think with a little trouble it may be conducted in this way to good advantage and so as to have the boats ready as soon in the Spring as the ice is out of the lake. I can engage at this place and its vicinity fifty men if they would be wanted Provided I should get orders to that effect before they scatter, as a great many of them has been discharged from the Militia. I hope you will let me know what to do as soon as possible."

There is nothing to show that Commodore Chauncey sent any reply at this time to Mr. Dobbins, who a fortnight later wrote to Lieut. Angus at Black Rock:

ERIE the 2d of December, 1812

DEAR SIR: I have been long anxiously waiting to hear from you, but I suppose the Commodore has not yet arrived. I am going on with one boat as you wished me but the weather has been bad and we have had a shelter to make to work under which I have completed and have one of the Boats Ready to Rais a number of the workmen at this Place are soliciting me every day to set them at work which I do not think myself altogether authorized to do without your consent but if the boats is to [be] built this winter no time ought to be lost. I would have sent you a draft but Mr. Crosby has been so busy he has had no time to draw em He has Drawn one to work by which looks well and I think will answer the purpose well. We have made the one that is in the works fifty feet keel 17 feet beam and five feet in the hold if Commodore Chauncey should not arive soon I should be extreemly glad to get Permittian of you to go down to Washington this winter to attend to the business of the vesel I lost at detroit. if you think of giving me such Permittian I wish you would signify it by a line to me.

I am Respectfully yours

DANIEL DOBBINS

To Lieut. Angus,  
Black Rock.

Ten days later Mr. Dobbins made a report to the Hon. Paul Hamilton, Secretary of the Navy, which contains details of interest. Among his own copies of letters dispatched at this period, are two to the Secretary, each dated Dec. 12th, one of them possibly misdated. They are printed here as written:

ERIE, 12th Dec. 1812

DEAR SIR: Shortly after I arrived at this Place I sent (as directed) to Commodore Chauncey a copy of my instructions, and not

having heard from him I went to Black Rock and found a Lieut. Angus, the gentleman commanding, and he not having any notice from the Commodore that boats were to be built at this Place appeared at a loss what to do. I urged the necessity of the boats going on and presented him with a contract of a Master builder which he sanctioned and the man came on according to it to take charge of the yard.

I expected workmen on or orders to hire but have Received none owing to the Commodore not having come on as was expected and at the time that we heard of the failure of the expedition to Canada my friends persuaded me to go on with the work which I have done and have at this time two of the boats on the stocks and will engage to have them all Ready by the time the ice is out of the lake if Required so to do there is a marchant in this Place who will advance Money for a draft on the Navy Department by authority.

The boats that I have laid down are 50 feet keel 17 feet beams 5 feet hold and from apearances will be fast sailors if you wish me to go on with the work you will Pleas give me orders to draw I have expended a considerable sum more than the two thousand dollars an acct. of which I will send by the next mail it apear that the Commd. has been so engaged on the lower lake as to have taken all his attention but the ice will soon lock him up as it has done our Harbour at this place which forms a complete Barrier against the British for this winter

it will apear from the foregoing that I have not been able to make contracts for the building, as the people of this Country are Poor and very liable to fail which would be a disadvantage

I have contracted individually with the men that I have at work. I have brot the iron from Pittsburg which comes high the Roads have been so bad if I am directed to go on with the work Pleas let me hear as soon as Possible.

DANIEL DOBBINS

Paul Hamilton, Esq.,  
Secretary of the Navy

[ERIE] Dec. 12, 1812

SIR: I would have sent you long before this time Coppies of all the articles of agreement and the other Regulations made by me but knowing the people of this Country to be poor and their liability to fail I thought I would wait to see whether they would fulfill and as common they in many instances have failed. The papers are large that I have, which is nothing but accounts and Repts, and having a calculation to go down this winter myself if I can obtain liberty I thought I would take them with me. The money that I have drawn for I have laid out in the following way: for the purchase of the timber and geting outfit for hauling 900 dollars being 200 tons for Iron 800 dollars 3 tons and a half for Coal 50 dollars 1000 bushels at 5 cents for team work 160 dollars as per act. and Repts. for building a Smith Shop and Smith work and building a shelter to work in in the yard a Considerable sum more than the two thousand dollars which I have Regular Receipts for in Consequence of the failure of the Expedition to Canada I have commenced building on my own footing the Commodore not having come to Black Rock this fall or

winter I have not been able to get any instructions from Mr. Angus who commands there farther than to sanction an agreement made with a master builder. I have not been able to make Contracts for the building that could be Relyed on and knowing the necessity of the boats being built I have concluded to forward them as fast as possible and if you think you will pay the bills I will warrant them Ready by the time the ice is out of the lake. I have two of them on the stocks one in frames and partly timbered up the keel laid for the other.

So much interest do I feel in preparing to meet them on the lake next Spring that I will be willing to give Security to the united States that all the money that comes into my hands shall be faithfully laid out if they should Require it. I had an idea when Mr. Angus approved of the contract made with a master builder that I would soon get orders to go on with the work but I have not heard from him since.

Yours, &c.,

DANIEL DOBBINS

Paul Hamilton, Esq.,  
Secretary of the Navy.

A week later he wrote to the Secretary as follows:

ERIE 19th December 1812

DR SIR: I herewith send you enclosed a statement of the expenses that has already accrued the timber is above half drawn to the yard, . . . [? *MS. obscure*] iron on the ground two of the vessels on the stocks one of which is timbered up and the other in frames Some of this expense has been made to build a shelter to work under and to build a blacksmith shop in the yard. The dimensions of the vessels I have on the Stocks was somewhat dictated by the officers at the Rock, as they alledged that the Rigging and sails that was intended for four vessels to [be] built at Black Rock would do for these as for the vessel that is last down and lying in an unfinished state at Black Rock there cannot be much Confidence put in as the yard is immediately under the Batteries of the enemy and liable to be cut to pieces with their shot in getting up the Rappids. the statement that I have given may not be entirely correct but it varies but little. The inclosed list will show in what way the men are engaged the Rate of their wages, the Black Smiths are at two dollars a day with their tools and board. The Copy of the master builder article is likewise inclosed I hope to hear from you soon for things as [*illegible*] myself are difficult for want of Money. I have stated in my last that I could get money for drafts Yrs &c

DANIEL DOBBINS

Paul Hamilton, Esq.,  
Secretary of the Navy

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J. McDonald supplied for the vessels four foremasts, four mainmasts, four main booms and four bowsprits, all for \$200. John Greenwood furnished sixty sweeps and fifty 14-foot oars, for \$92.25. From Pittsburg Mr. Dobbins received numerous offers from people

who sought the contract to supply cordage and canvas. "Mary & John Irwin" of Pittsburg solicited his order for rope. N. Richardson, agent "for a very extensive rope-walk in Kentucky," wrote: "I could supply you with every description from a cable down to twine," etc., etc. As the work went forward, Mr. Dobbins made frequent reports to his superiors. The following letter has no address in the copy:

ERIE, Jan'y 5, 1813

SIR: One thing that I neglected when with Mr. Eckford. I have a saw at Black Rock at the house of the late Capt. Lee, up in the garret I wish you would give orders to have it sent on by the Carage [*carriage*] that may first come on in May, we may want it. I have at the same place between four and five hundred pounds of spikes of an excellent quality, which the public may have if wanted. Mr. Eckford has not mentioned with respect to the masts and spars in his directions but I conclude they must be had for the ships as I have already contracted for the schooners masts and spars.

Yours, etc.,

DANIEL DOBBINS

Under date of Jan. 24, 1813, he wrote to Commodore Chauncey at Sackett's Harbor:

SIR: I have just arrived from Waterford after having made contracts for all the pine stuff. The masts was not mentioned in the bill but concluding they must be had I have contracted for them. You will see on what terms the Rope can be had at in Pittsburgh we have began to Plank two of the schooners last week. the sickness has attacked some of the hands and I wish to know how to act on that score with Respect to their Doctor. I have set an other Black Smith to work I will be able by the next Mail to inform you with respect to the anchors.

Yours, etc.,

D. DOBBINS

One man of the shipyard gang died; the bill for his coffin turns up among more important things. Several men deserted; Mr. Dobbins followed them through the woods (at a cost to the Government of \$41.79)—and they were ultimately lodged in Pittsburg jail, then probably turned over to the Federal authorities.

The designs for the vessels had been made by Henry Eckford, one of the greatest naval architects this country has produced. Noah Brown was superintendent of construction. The shipwrights sent from New York by Brown, Bell & Co. of that city were capable men, but there were too few of them. Others, to be sent from Philadelphia, did not reach Erie until the work had been long under way. The following letters (of which the copies preserved by Mr. Dobbins have no addresses) were probably written to the commodore:

ERIE the 28th Jan'y 1813

SIR: I have this day received the proposals of the Pittsburgh steam machine for making anchors which I herewith send to you, if you think it best to get the anchors at that place I could have it in my power to make contracts at this time to have them brought on early in the spring, as the boats and boat men are not engaged as yet. Immediately on the receipt of your letter I commenced to get the timber for the brig, the weather has been stormy which has been against the business in the yard but it still goes on well.

I am, Yours, etc.,

DANIEL DOBBINS

ERIE the 14th March, 1813

SIR: I received a line a few days since from you handed by Mr. Noah Brown, who appears to be the man that we want at this Place in order to drive the business and I shall make it a point to do all that is within my power to facilitate the business. Mr. Brown has been here but a few days and has but a small gang (as not one of the Philadelphia carpenters have arrived and no word of them), [*work*] has gone very fast the keels of the two brigs are laid or ready to lay and a number of the frames made and a house built to live in (but not finished). The gun boats two of them are getting the clamps in for the beams in the bottoms Ready for Caulking.

But notwithstanding all these prospects a cloud hangs over all having no guard the boats might be burnt without any discovery. I have been proposing to get volunteers to keep watch till I hear from you which I may perhaps effect. My fears arise from some of the People amongst us more than those at a distance.

I am very respectfully yours,

DANIEL DOBBINS

[*On the back of the folded sheet:*] Since writing the within I find that I cannot Rais volunteers to stand guard, but can have the workmen to stand which Method I mean to adopt untill I hear from you. Mr. Brown joins with me in opinion both with respect to the danger and the mode to pursue.

About this date Perry arrived at the shipyard with a draft of sailors and marines, and joined his energy to that of Mr. Dobbins. Specially arduous was the hauling of guns from Buffalo to Erie. Sacket Dodge furnished teams and hauled cannon from Black Rock to Buffalo. William Price piloted the teams (both horses and oxen were used) from Buffalo to Cattaraugus, in mid-winter, the guns being hauled part of the way on the ice of the lake. To move a 12-pounder "and other goods weighing 6,000 lbs" from Buffalo to Cattaraugus, cost \$133.33¼. Augustus Porter sold beef to the seamen employed in this work. For hauling "20 Bunches of Spike Rods" (2,000 wt.) from Black Rock to Erie, Jan. 15, 1813, Richard Williams received \$15. One long account, for transporting guns and stores from Buffalo to Erie, between March and July, 1813, foots up

\$843.95; among the items are board bills at Jos. Palmer's and Jos. Landon's hotels in Buffalo, and numerous charges for ferriage across Buffalo creek at Pratt & Leech's ferry. A fragmentary record kept by Mr. Dobbins of this work contains the following entries:

"Mch. 30. Arrived at the navy yard [Black Rock]. Went to Buffaloe, found we could get no private teams, apply'd to Aug. Porter but could get no teams from him.

"Mch. 31. Lodged at Major Miller's, took breakfast [*MS. torn*] navy yard, got one of the guns to Buffaloe.

"Apr. 1. The teams arrived that I had previously engaged to take the cannon up the lake. Had not the guns ready according to contract.

"Apr. 2. Teams employed in drawing down to the lake.

"Apr. 3. Started on ice with anchors other stores.

"Apr. 4. Employed drawing the gun from where it was sunk in the lake.

"Apr. 5. Employed drawing the gun and all the other articles up to the ferry.

"Apr. 6. Employed in getting the things over the ferry and fixing the teams.

"Apr. 7. Started the teams. The man that draw the cannon, Kenyon [?] has four dollars a day with one yoak of oxen and he finds himself and oxen, the others have 7.50 and I find them, for the two men and two yoak of oxen and span of horses. Lodged at Goodwin's.

"Apr. 8. Employed a team to help the gun along. At twelve o'clock arrived at Williams. . . . Broke one of the wagons . . ."

The Major Miller referred to was the pioneer innkeeper at the old Black Rock ferry. Capt. Samuel Pratt and Leech owned the ferry across Buffalo Creek.

There is nothing among the Dobbins papers which may be regarded as a total accounting of the cost of building the fleet, but it is probably closely approximated in Noah Brown's accounts, covering the cost of cutting timber, shipyard payrolls, board for the men, boating and hauling from Buffalo, etc., from Nov. 1, 1812, to March 27, 1813, a total of \$19,466.42. One item that arrests the eye in these old accounts, but which was then as much a matter of course as the weekly board-bill, is whiskey. Thus, Rufus S. Reed supplied to the ship-yard, Nov. 17, 1812, 32¾ gallons of whiskey; Dec. 25th, 30½ gallons; Jan. 19th, 34 gallons; Feb. 10th, 39 gallons; Feb. 20th, 30 gallons; etc., etc. The liquor cost 75 cents a gallon, and Mr. Reed never failed to make an additional charge of one dollar for the barrel. Mr. Dobbins' traveling expenses were allowed by the Government at fifteen cents a mile. For going to Washington in September, 1812, 370 miles of travel, he received \$55.50. A subsequent trip to Philadelphia, by way of Buffalo and New York, allowed at the same rate, cost the Government \$100.50. Further account of the building of the

fleet is left for the narrative that follows. An incident of this time—the winter of 1812-'13—not related in the following history, may be recorded here.

One morning in December, 1812, after a gale had been blowing for several days from the northwest, a vessel was seen opposite Erie, about midway to the Canada shore, fast in the newly-formed ice. That day was intensely cold, and the following morning the lake was frozen solid from shore to shore. Although the craft appeared to be abandoned, a great deal of curiosity was naturally felt at Erie, as to what she was and where she came from. Capt. Dobbins accordingly organized an expedition to go out and examine her. Several large sleighs drawn by horses, with a party of twenty men, started from the shore. As the leader of the enterprise got alongside the ice-bound derelict what was his surprise to find her his old schooner, the *Salina*. She had been loaded with a cargo of supplies for Fort Erie, by the British at Malden, but it was late when she started, and bad weather setting in, the crew had abandoned her. The Americans loaded down their sleighs with the best of the supplies; and fearing that by a change in the weather or some accident of war, she might again fall into the hands of the British, Capt. Dobbins set fire to her.

While the fleet was building, he was employed in transporting guns, munitions of war and provisions, from Buffalo to Erie. He brought Commodore Perry from Erie to Black Rock, in an open boat; and rendered other important services at the eastern end of the lake, and on the Niagara. As there was no sailor on Lake Erie who knew its ways, its winds and waters, better than he, he was given command of the *Ohio*, serving Perry as a dispatch boat; and was with her at Erie, procuring stores for the fleet, when the battle of September 10th was fought. He rejoined the fleet at Put-in-Bay, and was active in transporting prisoners, etc., until the end of the season. During the remainder of the war he was constantly in active, arduous and often dangerous service.

That he supplied the Government at Washington with information regarding the operations of the enemy, is shown by the following letter, preserved among his papers:

WASHINGTON, Feby 3, 1814.

CAPT. D. DOBBINS,

SIR: I have duly rec'd yours of 27th January, containing information interesting and important—think you it is correct that Dixon [Dickson] heads the party of Indians said to be at Fort George, and that the British are actually engaged in building vessels at Mashquidash [Matchedash] bay, and that Gen'l Hall's estimate of the British and Indians is tolerably correct—how do you understand



does he obtain these informations—the account we first had of the force that destroyed Buffalo was vastly exaggerated altho' they performed as great ravages as might have been expected from the largest number mentioned. If however it is true that the enemy is now in such form at F. George that Dickson is there with them with the Northwestern Indians, and that vessels are building at Mashquidash, the indications are more irresistible than any I have yet learnt of a determination to destroy the flotilla at Erie if possible—because without this step all their building is in vain. Dickson is a daring and fit instrument to head the Indians employed to aid in such an enterprise. I am happy to learn that you are so completely prepared for the worst that may be attempted.

The army laws, including those recently passed, are now calculated to fill the ranks and give vigor to our army. The land bounty was reduced by the Senate to 160 acres as heretofore, but still the bounty is great and as it should be calculated to render the reward adequate to the services of the most respectable men and not such as to create a desire to continue in the service after the war shall be over.

\$124 in money of which 50 is paid on enlisting, 50 at the time of mustering, the balance when discharged, this bounty with a freehold estate in 160 acres of land secured to the soldier whether discharged in one year or five—8 Drs monthly pay, the President authorized to provide clothing suited to the season and climate, abundant subsistence—medical attendance and a provision for the widows and children of those whose fate it may be nobly to fall—taken altogether certainly form a noble provision for the soldier and is the result of a great national effort, to give a respectability and irresistible effect to our arms in war at a liberal and ample expense which our peace policy of doing without an army in Peace enables us to meet with ease. And the effect of this once seen will be increased by the certainty it promises of shortening materially the war, which nothing but the most determined and thorough measures can tend to ensure.

Inclosed is your vessel account. You had better get Forster to make a fair copy. The bill making provision for payment to persons whose property has been impressed into the U. S. Service has not yet been acted upon but I have no doubt will pass—and will meet your case in the only way it can be met in order to [do] this I have taken considerable pains to have the subject introduced.

Yrs, with Esteem in haste,

THOS. WILSON.

In a subsequent letter (Nov. 23, 1814), he wrote:

“Have you any information, whether accurate or probable, whether the British fleet is yet laid up on Ontario—where it is—or whether it has made many trips between either the head of the lake York or Niagara and Kingston—for my great fear has been all along that the enemy would avail himself of the opportunity afforded by the entire command of the lake to throw in sufficient depot at those points to support his movements this winter to any extent.

Be pleased to continue your communications, and I shall continue

every [*illegible*] in my power to endeavor to awaken the attention of the Government to the situation of the W. Country.

Yrs. with great Esteem,

THOS. WILSON.

P. S. The Vice President died suddenly last evening without previous indisposition.<sup>1</sup>

It was the irony of fate that Sailing Master Dobbins, who of all men had been zealous in building the fleet and making ready to meet the enemy, was under orders which kept him out of the great battle. He naturally felt that under the circumstances he was entitled to a sailing-master's share of the prize-money, and presented his claim to Commodore Chauncey, who sent him the following reply:

U. S. SHIP GENERAL PIKE  
SACKETT'S HARBOR, 11th March 1814

SIR: I have received your Letter of the 6th January last upon the subject of your claims to Prize Money for the captures made on the 10th Sept'r 1813. I must refer you to Captain Perry who is acquainted with all the circumstances of the case and will I am sure be disposed to do you ample justice.

I am

very respectfully Sir

Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

S. M. Daniel Dobbins

U. S. Navy, Erie, Pennsylv.

ISAAC CHAUNCEY

Captain Sinclair interested himself in Mr. Dobbins' behalf, laid his case before the Secretary of the Treasury, and on Nov. 17, 1815, was able to send to Mr. Dobbins a prize-money warrant for \$295. "There is a vast difference of exchange in money at this time," he wrote, "between your western country and that of the atlantick, in favour of the latter. I would therefore recommend that you sell a draft on Mr. Hambleton [? Hamilton], for which I think you may get from 7 to 10 per cent. advance. . . . The sum of money due you will purchase you upwards of 80 shares in the Farmers' and Mechanics' bank in Georgetown, which will give you an interest of ten per cent. per annum, making an annual sum of \$205. If you can spare the money I advise you to lay it out in that stock. I have purchased 150 shares since my arrival. It is selling at \$28 per share of \$25, which is 12 per cent. advance, and if you hurry and purchase before the first of January, when the half year's dividend takes place, you will receive 5 per cent." After further advice respecting the prize money Captain Sinclair wrote at length of his own plans: "I have exchanged my seat near Norfolk, for a very handsome brick house and lot in this city, and when I settle again I believe it will be

1. Elbridge Gerry, the aged Vice President, fell dead in the street, while on his way to the Capitol.

here, as I think the place best suited to an officer. He is then always on the spot to receive what may be going. . . . Our squadron has arrived, after making a short and glorious cruise. The Secretary hinted to me today that the Constitution and Java would go out as relief-ships in the spring or summer. If so, I shall be the senior officer and once more wear the Broad Pennant; but much more distant service has been spoken of for me—God knows what my destiny may be." There are no documents among the Dobbins papers that show whether or not Captain Sinclair's advice as to investment was followed. An effort was made by Mr. Dobbins to secure one of the swords which the President presented to each midshipman and sailing-master who distinguished himself in the battle of September 1804, but his request was refused on the ground that he was not a participant in the battle.

From this time on for forty years Capt. Dobbins successfully navigated the lakes, and it used to be his warrantable boast that he had never lost a vessel, or even a small boat, spar, or package of cargo from stress of weather. Lake navigation, when he entered upon it, was far more difficult than now. There were no light-houses and no harbors except natural ones, and settlements were few and far between. Every feature of the land had to be carefully observed, and the soundings made familiar. Capt. Dobbins' old log-books are full of sailing directions, and sketches of landmarks, harbor entrances, with bearings and soundings indicated. Without charts, the frequent use of the lead and a sharp lookout were the only safeguard. To illustrate, here is an extract from Capt. Dobbins' own log of a perilous entrance into the St. Clair rapids from Lake Huron, in the schooner *Ranger* of fifty tons, early in November, 1809:

"Left Mackinaw for Detroit; on the second day out got a heavy gale from n. w. Off Thunder Bay two British vessels, a brig and schooner from De Tour [entrance to St. Mary's river] bound down, came in company with us. The night was dark and rainy and the gale furious. Could carry nothing but double-reefer foresail; could see nothing of Point au Bark but gave it a wide berth, then hauled in for the land until in three fathoms, then followed along in three fathoms as near as possible until I found myself in the rapids, having seen but an occasional glimpse of the land. Came to in the river. Next day the Indians reported both the other vessels ashore some twenty-five [miles] to the north'ard and eastward on the Canada shore."

In 1816 Sailing-Master Dobbins was in command of the schooner *George Washington*, the log-book of which for that season is in the possession of the Buffalo Historical Society. From it might be gleaned at considerable length a narrative of a voyage begun July 1st,

on which Capt. Dobbins took a company of troops from Detroit to Fort Mackinaw. She also had on board provisions and freight for Lord Selkirk, to be landed at Drummond's Island, Lake Huron. The sloop *Amelia* accompanied her as a tender. Having disembarked the troops at Mackinaw, Capt. Dobbins was solicited by Col. John Miller of the U. S. Infantry, and Major Gratiot of the Topographical Engineers, to join an expedition from that post to establish a post at Green Bay. Some fears were entertained at the time, of trouble with the Indians, as large numbers of loaded canoes had passed Mackinaw from Drummond's Island and vicinity, on their way to Green Bay. The *Washington* was detained at Drummond's Island for some days, awaiting Lord Selkirk, who arrived July 20th, with his agent, Mr. LaCroix. His Lordship urged Capt. Dobbins to proceed to Sault Ste. Marie with his cargo, but Capt. Dobbins refused, "the bar being so shoal it would have been impossible to get the schooner over"—and she was only 100 tons at that. Having unloaded the freight for Lord Selkirk at Drummond's Island, Capt. Dobbins returned to Mackinaw. With the *Amelia*, and the schooners *Gen. Wayne* and *Mink*, he set sail for Green Bay, the *Washington* being flagship of the little squadron. It was by this expedition that certain points, heretofore undesignated, were given their names: *Washington Harbor*, for the schooner *George Washington*; *Boyer's Bluff*, *Potawatomie Island*, for Col. Boyer, Indian agent, a passenger on board. *Chambers'* and *Green's* islands were named for officers in the expedition; and on August 5th the Dobbins islands were named for the master of the *Washington*.<sup>1</sup> Several days were occupied in exploratory work, sounding channels and making better known the navigable features of those waters. There was no trouble with the Indians, those seen at Drummond's Island having passed through Green Bay and Lake Winnebago on their way to the Mississippi. On August 8th the little squadron entered the mouth of Fox river and anchored abreast of the old French fort. On August 14th they were back at Mackinaw, and about a month later anchor was dropped at Erie.

After the conclusion of the war he held his commission as sailing-master in the navy, till June, 1826. In 1815-1818 he served on the *Porcupine*; in 1824 we find him at the Erie station under Capt. George Budd; and some two years later, having been ordered to sea, to bring home the remains of Commodore Perry, he resigned, preferring to remain on the lakes. In 1826-'28 he was employed by Major Maurice, of the U. S. Engineers, in the construction of piers at the mouth of Ashtabula river. His record-books of this work,

1. Other names are now given to most of these islands.

kept like a sailor's log, are in the possession of the Buffalo Historical Society. He had been instrumental in procuring the establishment of the U. S. naval station at Erie, though opposed by Commodore Sinclair, Commodore Chauncey, Capt. Elliott,<sup>1</sup> and others.

When, in 1826, he resigned from the navy, he requested that he might be transferred to the revenue service; and in 1829 he was appointed by President Jackson to the command of the U. S. revenue cutter *Rush*. In 1834 he was given command of the revenue cutter *Erie*, in which, as has been shown [pp. 122-129], he did good service during the border troubles of 1837-'38, in which duty he continued until the election of President Harrison, when he was removed; less, it would appear, for personal reasons than political. He was made to experience the effects of the system of partisan removal which had been put in force, as never before in our history, by President Jackson. That his removal did not please his home community may be judged from the following breezy letter, one of several copies of like tenor preserved among the Dobbins papers. The writer was one of Erie's most prominent citizens, and James Buchanan was then a United States Senator from Pennsylvania. The writer occasionally loses hold of his grammar, but there is never any doubt as to his meaning:

ERIE, March 24, 1841.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN:

DEAR SIR: I am sorry to inform you that notwithstanding the declaration of Mr. Preston and of the President himself before the election, Removal from office has taken place with unprecedented dispatch; and that our fellow-citizen Capt. Daniel Dobbins of the Revenue Cutter here is among the first victims, his commission having been rescinded on the 16th inst—not for any cause known, except it be, for opinion's sake. Capt. Dobbins has always been a Democrat, and has furthermore done some service to his country. [*The letter recites at length his services during the War of 1812,*

1. Captain Dobbins' relations with Commodore Elliott continued pleasant. In 1843 the commodore recommended Capt. Dobbins for a master's appointment for the iron steamer on Lake Erie, referring to the Michigan; and in a letter to Mr. Dobbins at this time touched on an incident of their earlier intercourse which must go elsewhere unexplained: "In all your intercourse under my command on Lake Erie I assure you I had nothing at which I could take exception except throwing old Tooksbury overboard. I don't know what I would have done under the same state of feeling you were at the time, no one has a right to call another a liar." The U. S. S. Michigan was built at Pittsburgh in 1842, taken apart and transported to Cleveland through the Cleveland canal, then carried by steamer from Cleveland to Erie, where she was rebuilt and launched in 1843. Her length was 167 feet, beam forty-seven feet. When she went into commission in 1844 she carried eight guns, eleven officers and eighty-seven petty officers and men. Her first commander was William Inman, and Stephen Champlin was the second. Capt. Dobbins never was in command of her.

*and continues:]* He remained in the service until 1826, when he resigned in consequence of the situation of his family—being ordered to sea. During his official career, in the expenditure of public monies entrusted in his care for the commencement of the building of the shipping in 1812, all was satisfactorily and honestly accounted for, and also in the discharge of his oath as sailing-master, his conduct was approved. But in 1820 the spirit of federal malignity made itself manifest here in pressing in the payment of officers and seamen depreciated paper, to which Captain Dobbins was the first to demur; and then came the persecuting spirit of the Comdr, Purser, and the knot of citizens who were benefitted by this scheme, untill at last by goading intrigues he had a quarrel or rather was insulted by another officer (sailing-master), when Capt. Dobbins resented it by taking hold of the other and was about giving him a ducking. However it came serious, and both were arrested and tryed at Philadelphia, and both suspended; Capt. Dobbins was suspended for eighteen months.

In 1826 Capt. Dobbins was engaged by Major Maurice, Engineer-Corps, as Superintendent of one of the Harbours, which situation he held untill appointed to the command of the Revenue Cutter in 1829, which duty he performed with entire satisfaction to Maj. Maurice. In the discharge of his duties as Master of the Cutter, which he has discharged with fidelity and economy to the Govt, his enemies cannot say aught against him, and now in his old age he is thrustured out of employ, and upon slender resources without any cause being assigned, and even [without] an enquiry, which he has demanded.

Capt. Dobbins has always been a Democrat and no doubt retained his own opinions, like every other American citizen. And besides that it seems to me peculiarly hard. The Revenue Service was I understand placed upon the same basis as the navy. Laws were passed by Congress fixing compensation, grades and mode of promotion, and also pension in case of disability—however you are better able to judge of this matter than I am, and Mr. Woodbury knows all about it. But if the President and his Cabinet can thus ferret out offices of the Army, Navy and Revenue Service it is more power than I thought the Laws conferred on him. When Genl. Jackson appointed Capt. Dobbins to the Revenue Service that service was then under no distinct organization, officers were appointed to it from everywhere, and no injustice could be done to under officers, or was done by appointing out of the service; but now it cannot be done without palpable injury to the rank of promotion. This matter ought not to be lost sight of because if this is Harrison Democracy, it is far from being the principles of Jefferson, and Genl. Harrison may quote all the great men of antiquity—and he may talk of republicanism too—but his allusion to the sword, in causing the public money to be under the control of the executive, is nearer the fact, than any sub-treasury man could for a moment think. But now by the arbitrary removal of officers created by Law, the people may well be alarmed for their liberties. If this is done in the green tree, what may we expect by & Bye.

I am very sincerely yours,

P. S. V. HAMOT.

The whole story of Capt. Dobbins' service in the Revenue Marine, as presented in a mass of documents which have been preserved for over half a century, constitutes a particularly edifying chapter in the history of our public service as disturbed and perverted by partisanship. When the Jackson administration came into power, in 1829, Capt. Dobbins, who as shown above, had resigned from the navy, visited Washington in quest of an appointment in the Revenue Marine. He was an ardent Jackson Democrat, did not lack influential friends, and secured appointment as master of the revenue cutter Benjamin Rush. Capt. Gilbert Knapp, who had been her commander, was removed to make a place for him. Knapp was an Adams man, and evidently a free talker. He was charged with having publicly called Gen. Jackson "a cutthroat and murderer," and with applying vile epithets to Mrs. Jackson. Sworn affidavits as to what he did and did not say, were sent to Washington, as were testimonials in great number regarding the character of both Knapp and Dobbins. In 1832, while Capt. Dobbins was in command of the *Rush*, the revenue cutter corps was organized distinct from any other branch of the Government service, and the officers were for the first time assigned their respective ranks, with promotions according to grade and length of service. Nevertheless, on the coming in of Gen. Harrison's administration, Capt. Dobbins was removed and Capt. Knapp restored. Again the Treasury Department and the President were bombarded with petitions, affidavits and testimonials. The incriminating evidence against Knapp, so far as it had been preserved by the Government, was presumably destroyed in the fire which ravaged the Treasury Department in 1833. The copies of letters, petitions, etc., still preserved among the Dobbins papers, show that there was no lack of effort in behalf of Capt. Dobbins, or of influential friends. Documents with pages of signatures of prominent citizens of Erie, Ashtabula, Sandusky, Meadville, Franklin, Harrisburg and elsewhere, were sent to Washington. In Buffalo, Capt. Stephen Champlin, Sheldon Thompson, George W. Clinton—then collector of the port of Buffalo Creek—and other prominent citizens, testified to Capt. Dobbins' character and ability. The beauties of the system are shown by a letter to Capt. Dobbins, from Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Treasury, under date of April 20, 1841: "Capt. Knapp was removed without cause in 1829 to make room for you, and it was deemed proper that you should now be removed in order that he might be reinstated"! Later that year, when President Tyler reconstructed Harrison's Cabinet, Ewing himself was succeeded by Walter Forward, to whom Capt. Dobbins addressed a long letter, November 1st, reciting the case at length, and concluding with a

moving appeal for reinstatement. "I have served my country long . . . and now in my old days to be thrust out without a cause, is hard." On the coming in of Polk's administration, in 1845, Capt. Knapp was again removed and Capt. Dobbins again appointed; and he continued to command in the revenue marine service until the administration of Taylor in 1849. President Taylor was besought not to remove him, but apparently other influences were more powerful, and Capt. Dobbins retired from the service. For a short time, 1845-'46, he was in command of the revenue cutter Taney, at Norfolk, Va., but seems never to have enjoyed service away from the lakes.

Five years after Daniel Dobbins first sought his fortune in the unsettled region of the lakes, he returned to Eastern Pennsylvania, and brought back a helpmeet to the wilderness. In April, 1800, he married Mary West, and that spring they made their home at the mouth of Twelve-mile Creek. Afterwards they removed to "Reed's Row," on Second Street, in Erie, near Parade; thence, before the War of 1812, to the southeast corner of French and Third streets; and in 1816 built the house so long known as the Dobbins mansion, at the northeast corner of State and Third streets. The old homestead is still in existence, and in good repair, near the original site of its erection. The family consisted of Elizabeth, died in 1813; Mary Ann, died unmarried, Dec. 31, 1887; William West, died March 4, 1877; Susan Jane (Mrs. Tracy), died April 15, 1867; Eleanor Matilda, died in 1813; Eliza Matilda (Mrs. Fleeharty), died at Erie, May 4, 1904, aged ninety-one years; Stephen Decatur, died about 1851 in Arizona; David Porter, died in Buffalo, Aug. 19, 1892; Leander, died at Erie; and Marcus, died at Prescott, Arizona, Aug. 28, 1871. Capt. Daniel Dobbins died at Erie, Feb. 29, 1856, his widow surviving until Jan. 22, 1879.

It has been a family of distinction in the Lake Erie region for a century; and of worthy achievement in many fields, by descendants to the third and fourth generation, to this day. The old Dobbins homestead at Erie had sheltered Perry and other heroes of the War of 1812; in 1825, Lafayette was its guest; as were many other famous men and women during succeeding years. "Perhaps the saddest scene on this household was the sudden death of William.<sup>1</sup>

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1. William W. Dobbins, eldest son of Daniel Dobbins, was born at Erie about 1800. When eighteen years old, or thereabouts, he entered the U. S. navy, which he left after one term of enlistment to engage in the mercantile marine. He sailed the lakes in various capacities, chiefly as master, until about 1847. In 1829 he was acting boatswain under the command of his father on the revenue cutter Benjamin Rush. In 1834-'35 he was master of the schooner Lady of the Lake. In 1836 he bought of Smith, Macy & Co. their three-quarters



He had, in 1856, after the death of his father, left his position in Marysville, Cal., and returned to Erie to care for his aged mother and sister. On March 4, 1877, returning on a cold morning from market, he sank in death in the presence of the aged mother and almost sightless sister."

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### THE DOBBINS PAPERS.

The Dobbins Papers include the manuscripts and writings of several members of the family:

(a) Original log-books of several early vessels on the lakes, sailed by Daniel Dobbins before the War of 1812; impost books (record of arrivals and clearances, cargoes, etc.) of the harbor of Presqu' Isle, 1800-1814, an invaluable source of information regarding this period; correspondence and miscellaneous papers of Daniel Dobbins, and his own account of many transactions during the war, in which he was a participant; letters and documents relating to the old navy-yard at Erie, early harbor construction and Government work at Ashtabula, and to the revenue-cutter service on the lakes, especially during the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837-'38.

(b) Papers and correspondence of Captain David Porter Dobbins, relating especially to life-boat construction and the life-saving service, with which he was prominently identified for many years. That material may well be drawn on for a valuable paper, to appear in a subsequent volume of these Publications.

(c) Miscellaneous correspondence, including numerous letters written by Stephen Decatur Dobbins during his service in Florida in the Seminole war, and in the Mexican war; with letters from other members of the family, and men in public life.

(d) Papers of Captain William W. Dobbins, with log-books of some of the vessels which he sailed on the lakes, correspondence with officers of Perry's fleet and others, and his own historical writings, based chiefly on his father's papers. The account of early

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interest in the schooner *Maria Antoinette*. In 1844 he was "captain protem" of the steamboat *Thomas Jefferson*. Probably his latest command on the lakes was the steamboat *Columbus*, owned by Capt. Augustus Walker, considered in her time one of the finest steamers on the lakes. In 1849 Capt. Dobbins went to California and settled in Yuba Co., near Marysville, the point becoming known as Dobbins' Ranch. He became interested with Judah P. Benjamin and others in promoting a railroad to the Pacific, and on that mission returned to the East in the early 50's. The time was not ripe for the enterprise; years afterward, when the Union Pacific was built, Capt. Dobbins had no connection with it. He never married; and his death occurred, as above related, on the morning of the day that Rutherford B. Hayes was inaugurated as President.

shipping on the lakes, and of the battle of Lake Erie, appeared as a series of articles in the *Buffalo Courier*, in 1876. Portions of the narrative were afterward reprinted as a pamphlet, for the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, where the remains of the Lawrence were on view. The following narrative is in the main as written by Captain William W. Dobbins; but the editor of this volume has in places substituted the original record as given by Daniel, and has omitted some portions which merely repeated facts of abundant record elsewhere, or were unprofitably controversial. More than one historian has been indebted to the unpublished Dobbins papers for assistance. Among the letters preserved are many from Usher Parsons, the surgeon of the Lawrence during the battle. Dr. Parsons published a valuable history of the battle, and, as is learned from these letters, prepared matter relating to it for Lossing's "Field-book of the War of 1812." His correspondence with William W. Dobbins shows that he derived great aid from the records of Daniel Dobbins.

The publication of at least a part of the Dobbins papers has long been incumbent on the Buffalo Historical Society. It was long the wish of Capt. D. P. Dobbins that his father's reminiscences should be suitably preserved and made available to students. They are indeed a valuable contribution to local history, and the history of the lakes, from an original source. While they necessarily cover much ground already familiar, they correct many errors in the histories, and they bring out, as does no other published account, certain events that were local to Buffalo and the east end of Lake Erie; the part borne in the events of the time by Commodore Stephen Champlin, long a distinguished resident of Buffalo; and most of all, the worthy service of Captain Daniel Dobbins himself.

# THE DOBBINS PAPERS

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EARLY DAYS ON THE LAKES, AND EPISODES OF THE WAR OF  
1812; WRITTEN BY CAPTAIN WILLIAM W. DOBBINS,  
FROM THE PAPERS AND REMINISCENCES  
OF HIS FATHER,

CAPT. DANIEL DOBBINS

In command of the Ohio, in Perry's Squadron

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## I. BEGINNINGS OF LAKE COMMERCE.

The earliest information we have of shipping on the upper lakes, under the English or Canadian government, was in 1770, when several craft were found in commission, mostly under what was called the "Provincial Marine," a *quasi* civil-military establishment. The first I have any account of, was the schooner Beaver of some 40 tons, Captain Gager, in 1771.<sup>1</sup> This vessel was wrecked in the fall

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1. This and some of the following statements regarding early British vessels on the lakes, can be supplemented with more accurate data than Capt. Dobbins had at hand. The first vessel which the British are known to have had on Lake Erie was the schooner Huron, built and launched at Navy Island in 1761. She was in service as late as the fall of 1763. The second British vessel on Lake Erie was the sloop Beaver, built 1762, lost off Eighteen-Mile Creek, in August, 1763. The third appears to have been the schooner Victory, 1763; and three others, the schooner Gladwin, the schooner Boston, and the sloop Royal Charlotte, were launched from the Navy Island yard in 1764. The Victory and Boston were burned at Navy Island in 1766. See Haldimand MSS. (Canadian Archives), B. 144, p. 97; also "Navy Island and the first successors to the Griffon," by Henry R. Howland, Buf. Hist. Soc. Pubs., vol. VI. The Gladwin continued in service until late in 1770, when she was lost with all her crew. The Beaver, whose loss in that year begins Capt. Dobbins' chronicle, was obviously not the first craft of that name on Lake Erie.

of that year, and all aboard perished. She was on her passage from "De Troit" to Fort Erie with peltries, and had on board several British officers as passengers. From scraps of history, and information obtained at Detroit by Capt. Daniel Dobbins in 1802, she was bound to Sandusky (probably Lower Sandusky) where there was a trading post, to complete her cargo, and was lost in a gale. It is not known at what place, but it is supposed to be at the entrance of Sandusky Bay. Several years since, while quarrying stone on West Sister Island to riprap round the lighthouse on Turtle Island, there were found the skeletons of six persons, presumed, from indications, to have belonged to a civilized race; probably she was wrecked on this island, and all perished from cold or hunger, or both.

The next we have any account of, is the schooner *Speedwell*, of some 30 tons, in 1792. The next, the schooner *Thames*, Capt. Wm. Gilkison, in 1796. Then the armed brig *Chippewa*, Capt. Cowen, and the armed brig *Ottawa*, Capt. Grant, each of about 100 tons. Then the armed schooner *Lady Charlotte* of some 60 tons, Capt. James Robinson; and sloop *Betsey* of some 30 tons, Capt. Friend. This comprises all the shipping we have any account of up to 1800, on the British, or Canadian side.

In 1795 Capt. William Lee (an Englishman) built a small schooner at Fort Erie, of 20 tons, named the *Erie Packet*, to trade between Fort Erie and Erie, Pa. (*Presque Isle*), which place, at that time, was the important point on the south shore of the lake. At this date, there was no business done on the American side of the Niagara river, it being but sparsely settled. At Black Rock there was but one family, who kept the ferry; two families at Schlosser, one family at Lewiston, and no more until you reached Fort Niagara. Transportation was via portage from Queenston to Chippewa on the Canadian side, and from Lewiston to Schlosser on the American side, and *vice versa*; and from those points to Fort Erie via batteaux.

The first vessel built by an American, was the sloop *Detroit* of 50 tons. She was built at Detroit early in 1796, after General Wayne took possession of that post, and pur-

chased by the United States Quartermaster's Department for the use of the Government. In the fall of that year, General Wayne, having completed a treaty with the northwestern Indians, embarked in the Detroit for Presque Isle, on his way to his home in Chester county, Pennsylvania. While on the passage, he was taken violently ill with gout, and, having no medical aid, was landed at Presque Isle in a dangerous condition, and there he died in the garrison, on the 15th of December, 1796. In 1809, his son, Col. Isaac Wayne, of Chester County, removed his remains to his late home, where a monument was erected by the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati, to his honored memory.

In 1796-7, settlements sprang up rapidly on the American side, and business followed. Porter, Barton & Co.—an enterprising firm just commencing business—established a transportation line via the American route to Black Rock, using what were called Durham boats from Schlosser, up the river, the freight being mostly salt and merchandise up, peltries, highwines, flour and pork, down.

In 1798, Captain Eliphalet Beebe was brought to Erie, Pennsylvania, from Connecticut, by Judah Colt, Esq., agent of the Pennsylvania Population Company, to build a vessel. A sloop of 63 tons was constructed a few miles below Erie, named the Washington, and commanded by Capt. Beebe. In 1801, she was purchased by a Mr. Hamilton, of Queenston, and Joshua Fairbanks, of Lewiston; taken across the portage to Queenston, fitted out, and sailed for Kingston with some thirty persons on board. She was never heard from after she left the mouth of the Niagara river.

In 1799, Capt. William Lee built a sloop at Erie of 40 tons, named the Good Intent, which he owned in company with R. S. Reed; she was first commanded by Capt. Lee. In the fall of 1806, while under the command of Capt. John Alley, she was wrecked on Point Abino and all on board perished, some eight souls in all; she had a full cargo of merchandise, which was a total loss.

In 1800, Capt. Beebe also built a schooner at Erie of 60 tons, named the Harlequin, commanded by Joseph May.

She was lost in the fall of 1801, with some twenty souls on board.

In 1801, the Government built a brig of some 125 tons on the river Rouge, below Detroit, named the Adams, commanded by Capt. Henry B. Brevoort, U. S. Army; also the schooner Tracy, of 60 tons. These vessels were under the supervision of the Quartermaster's Department, and were employed in transportation of troops, stores and Indian goods; they were also allowed to transport parts of cargoes on private account and take passengers, when such would not interfere with their public duties. J. Fenimore Cooper claimed to be "the first who ever wore a U. S. navy button on these lakes," he having been transferred to the War Department and attached to the Adams for a short time as midshipman.<sup>1</sup> The Adams was captured at Detroit when Gen. Hull surrendered that port; was re-named the Detroit, and subsequently recaptured at Fort Erie, together with the brig Caledonia, by Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott of the navy in October, 1812. The Detroit grounded on the foot of Squaw Island, and being within range of the enemy's guns, could not be got afloat and had to be destroyed. The Caledonia was saved, and belonged to Commodore Perry's fleet. The Tracy was bought by Porter, Barton & Co., in 1809, and lost on Bird Island reef in the fall of that year, while under the command of Capt. Wm. Baird.

In June, 1801, the Messrs. Abbott, of Detroit, built a

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Among the Dobbins papers is the following characteristic letter from Cooper:

COOPERSTOWN, May 20th 1843

DEAR SIR: Your letter has reached me in due time. I never flattered myself with having written a history without errors; such a phenomenon the world never yet saw, Moses excepted. Still, I believe myself to be the nearer the truth than any other writer on the subject of the Battle of Lake Erie. The second part of the Life of Perry will tell you more of my opinions, and, an answer to Capt. Mackenzie's book, which is now in press, and which I shall have the pleasure of sending you, will let all who read still deeper into the mysteries.

I shall be grateful for the information you name, which will reach me, if sent by mail. I am quite aware that Capt. Perry's charges against Capt. Elliott will not stand an investigation. Some of them are faulty even on their face.

I once served on the Lakes, myself having indeed been the first officer who ever carried the button on to those waters. This was in 1808. In 1809, I was on Lake Erie, and passed a day, or two, on board the Detroit, then the Adams, and under the command of Capt. Brevoort of the army.

With respect, your ob. ser.

J. FENIMORE COOPER.

Capt. Dobbin,  
Erie.

schooner of eighty tons, named the Gen. Wilkinson, John Conley, master. She was bought by Porter, Barton & Co., and re-named the Amelia. In the winter of 1812, she was bought by the Government—taken to Erie with the other purchased vessels by Commodore Perry in June, 1813, but, upon examination, was condemned as unseaworthy. Her remains now lie in the Little Bay at Erie.<sup>1</sup>

About the year 1800, a wealthy Scotchman, named Alexander McIntosh, settled on the Canadian side of Detroit river near the foot of Hog Island. Here he established a ship-yard, with all the requirements for building and repairing vessels, and carried on quite a trade. He always kept the crews of his vessels employed through the winter, making sails, fitting riggings, etc. The American Fur Company had a depot at Mackinaw and another at Detroit. The agents at both places were named Abbott. Here the furs were unpacked, whipped to remove the vermin and air the pelts, and then repacked for New York. At these points the supplies were collected for the traders in the Indian country. The Northwest or British company had their depot at Sault St. Mary's; thence they forwarded their furs via Penetanguishene, and across by land to Lake Ontario, thence to Montreal. Their supplies were mostly transported by the same route.

From the time the French gave up possession of the country up to 1790, the supplies—particularly merchandise—came mostly from Montreal. In 1794 they began to find their way from New York, via the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to the source of the latter, across the portage at Wood's Creek, down Oneida Lake and Oswego River to Oswego, thence up Lake Ontario and Niagara river to Fort Erie, and on to their destination. Emigration followed the same route. This trade was carried on with what was called "Schenectada boats." As to emigrants, when they had arrived at their place of destination, the boats were employed in "coasting." This coasting with open boats and small craft, was carried on for many years, in fact up to 1814,

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1. Written in 1876; but the Wilkinson, or what remains of it, is still at the bottom of the bay at Erie.

when it gradually ceased and the business was done by larger craft. From 1808 to 1812, a good portion of the transportation was by wagons from Albany to Black Rock, Buffalo, at the time, being but a mere hamlet, and of but little account in a commercial point of view.

The salt trade with Onondaga began about 1796, and extended rapidly to the west and southwest. Up to this time, salt had been brought from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh by pack-horses for consumption in that section, costing some \$12 per bushel. In 1798, or about that time, an enterprising citizen of Pittsburgh, named Gen. James O'Hara, conceived the idea of getting a supply of salt from Onondaga, N. Y.; and also to furnish provisions from Pittsburgh in return. Heretofore, the section of country round the salt works had been mostly supplied from the valley of the Mohawk. Gen. O'Hara's plan was to transport provisions with what were called keel-boats up the Allegheny river and French creek to Le Bœuf (Waterford), thence by wagon across the portage to Erie, and via Lake Erie, Niagara river, and Lake Ontario to Oswego, and return with salt. This salt trade, then about the heaviest on the lakes, increased so rapidly, the valleys of the Allegheny, Monongahela, Ohio and the surrounding country looking to this source for a supply, that in the season of 1808, some 8,000 barrels had passed through Erie, and in 1809, 18,000. The first Onondaga salt landed at Erie in the course of trade, was a cargo by the sloop Erie Packet, Capt. Wm. Lee, in the summer of 1797.<sup>1</sup>

Although the lake country was largely indebted to Pittsburgh for a supply of provisions by this above-named route, yet considerable was obtained from the Canadian settlements near Detroit. On the 1st of July, 1801, we find the arrival of a cargo at Erie by schooner General Wilkinson, Capt. Robinson, Samuel Abbott supercargo, on a sort of trading voyage from Detroit, the articles for sale being, 116 barrels of flour, twelve barrels of pork, a lot of Indian maple sugar, and 150 packs of furs for New York via Black Rock. This was but one of several cargoes that year. Again, in April,

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1. On the early salt trade, compare the account of Judge Samuel Wilkeson, *Buf. Hist. Soc. Pubs.*, vol. V, pp. 177-178.



1802, we find the sloop *Good Intent*, Capt. Lee, with a cargo from Detroit, as follows: 71 barrels of pork, 73 bushels of oats, 8 barrels of cider, 2 bundles fruit trees, 2 barrels and 121 sacks flour. To account for this advanced stage of agriculture in this new country, it will be remembered that, at the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, there were many farmers in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, who adhered to the Tory side, and removed to Canada, where, with their knowledge of agriculture and general intelligence, they opened a new field of improvement, and here were some of the fruits of their labor. In the fall, vessels bound down would be freighted, more or less, with apples and cider; in fact, nearly everything consumed along shore was obtained from that source. The French at an early day had paid considerable attention to the cultivation of fruit, more particularly the apple and pear, and these the farmers from the American side had improved upon. At that time, Canada was far in advance of us in improvement and commerce.

It may be considered singular that highwines from Pittsburgh were so much of an article of traffic at this early date. The inhabitants of Pittsburgh and vicinity were Scotch-Irish, and had brought their trade of distilling with them from the old country, and were driving it in the new. Transportation being expensive, they run their spirits high proof, that it might occupy but little space and weight, then reduced it for use at the place of consumption. Foreign liquors were mostly brought from Montreal, as were also refined sugars.

Some of the boats of that day were regular traders. The owners, who were in most instances the masters, purchasing the cargo in New York occasionally, but mostly at intermediate places along the circuitous route I have named, would reach the shores of Lake Erie, and trading from place to place, dispose of their cargo, provided it was not consigned to some particular point. Then, again, others would not venture east beyond Chippawa, or Fort Erie, on the Canada side, or Black Rock on the American. Erie being the shipping point for the Pittsburgh trade, much of the commerce

was with that port. Of the navigators of that period I can name Joseph S. Merant, Paul D'Ejerlais,<sup>1</sup> Elisha Norton, Allen Gaylord, Zadok Willman, Joseph D'Ejerlais, John Hewitt, Moses C. Wilcox, Joseph Tubbs, Anthony D'Ejerlais, George Phelps, Richard Craw, John Scott, John Ross, Simon Prier, John Ross Knapp, Joseph Wires, Hall Smith, John Hollister, Samuel Holmes, John Rudd, Amos Fisk, Jesse Skinner, Walter Richardson, John Thompson, and others. Amos Fisk was for many years previous to his death a prominent and wealthy resident of Ashtabula. In 1814, Samuel Wilkeson of Buffalo owned and commanded a trading boat; and sundry others, afterwards prominent in the lake cities, commenced life in this trade.

The first grain forwarded east from Ohio, was thirty bushels of corn and four bushels of wheat, belonging to Amos Fisk, via "open boat," Oliver Smith master, from Ashtabula, and landed at Erie Nov. 20, 1808.

On Nov. 9, 1802, open boat Lark, Moses Wilcox master, from Buffalo Creek district, Niagara, reported at Erie, bound for Ashtabula, New Connecticut, N. W. Territory. This is the first arrival from there I can find on record. The cargo was as follows: 1 tierce dry goods, 5 chests household goods, 1 bag shoes, 4 do. clothing, 2 kegs spirits, 2 brls. wine, 1 box tea, 2 kegs tobacco.

Nov. 10, 1802, I find the "Open Boat No. 902," Ichabod Marshall, master, from Chippewa, Upper Canada, reported at Erie, bound for Sandusky, Northwest Territory. Cargo as follows: 1 keg spirits, 1 keg Madeira wine, 2 trunks, 3 boxes dry-goods, 1 barrel tar, 2 bars iron, 2 bars steel, 1 pot, 1 kettle, 1 Dutch oven, 1 case bottles, 1 keg powder, 1 box medicine, 1 barrel salt, 1 keg whiskey, 1 barrel flour, 1 chest tea.

Also, "Open Boat No. 160," Ira Blanchard, master, from Onondaga Lake, bound to Grand river with 25 barrels salt.

I give these cargoes, as samples of the trade up the lake; and in return, at an early day, and before the settlers managed to have a surplus of provisions, Indian maple-sugar

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1. Spelling doubtful, but so written, also "D'Ejarlais" in the impost books of Presqu' Isle harbor, 1800.

in mococks, feathers, and fish in small quantities were found among the articles in their eastern bound cargoes. I find some of these craft, with names more comical and significant, than classic and euphonic, viz.: Crazy Jane, Roving Sally, Lovely Abigail, Leaky Slut, etc. It will be noticed that some have numbers; as it was necessary to have something to designate them at the custom houses, those were numbered that had no name.

By a law approved March 2, 1799, the following Collection districts were assigned and established for the North-west Territory and Upper Lakes:

First—District of Michilimackinac, including the south shore of Lake Huron, and all the waters, shores and inlets to the westward and northward of Lakes Michigan and Superior within the jurisdiction of the United States, unto the north and northwestern boundary line, including all the lands ceded to the United States by the Indian tribes at the treaty of Greenville. Port of entry, Mackinaw.

Second—District of Detroit, including the Detroit river, Lake St. Clair, river St. Clair, and the waters, inlets and shores of Lake Huron within the jurisdiction of the United States, unto the island of Mackinaw; and all the waters, shores and inlets of Lake Erie, down to the Miami of the Lakes, within the jurisdiction of the United States. Port of entry, Detroit.

Third—District of Erie, including all the shores of Lake Erie, bays, tributaries and domains of the United States, down to the west line of the State of Pennsylvania, and up to the west bank of the Miami of the Lakes. Port of entry, Sandusky.

Fourth—District of Presqu'île, including all the shores of Lake Erie within the State of Pennsylvania—the bays, tributaries and domains of the United States. Port of entry, Erie (Presqu'île).

Fifth—District of Niagara, including all the shores of Lake Erie, within the State of New York; the Niagara river, the shores of Lake Ontario, and on down to Genesee river, and all the tributaries and domain of the United States, included therein. Port of entry, Niagara.

Sixth—District of Oswego, including all the shores and waters of the St. Lawrence river from the place where said river intersects the 45th degree of north latitude, and all the shores and waters of Lake Ontario, and rivers and waters connected therewith, lying within the jurisdiction of the United States and within the State of New York, to the eastward of the west bank of the Genesee river. Port of entry, Oswego.

March 3, 1805, the districts of "Genessee," Buffalo Creek, and Miami were substituted.

March 2, 1811, the district of Sandusky was substituted.

Among the early navigators of the larger craft, whose names I can put on record, were the following American masters: Eliphalet Beebe, Joseph May, Thos. Nowlan, Daniel Dobbins, Richard O'Neil, Peter Prine, Joseph Palmer, John Conley, Joel Green, David Johnson, Job Loder, Wm. Baird, John Ally, Abner Hathaway, Wm. Mills, Henry B. Brevoort, U. S. A., Joseph H. Glynn, Silas Montross, Chas. Oliver, Oliver Luther, Luther Chapin, John Laughton, Timothy Shay, James Baird, Wm. P. Dexter, John G. Thayer, Budd Martin, Calvin Rode, Wm. Stow, Henry White, Bastion McDonald, Seth Tucker, Paul Chequet, Jonathan Dickinson, John Austin, Joseph Hammond, Nathan Cummings, Wm. Miller, Walter Norton.

Of British masters, I note — Cowen, — Grant, Wm. Gilkison, Wm. Lee (subsequently American), James Robinson (subsequently American), Robert Maxwell, John Fearson, Alexander McIntosh, James Rough (subsequently American), Peter Curry (subsequently American).

To contrast the facilities for travel and commerce of the present day, with those of our infant settlements, I will cite a couple of instances of voyages in those days. First, a Mr. Richard Bushnell, with his boat freighted with three bundles of raw cotton, a keg of gunpowder, some lead, camp equipage, provisions and arms—having previously descended the Cumberland river—left Kentucky early in July, 1803, and with his two companions worked his way up the Ohio and Wabash rivers, across the portage to the head waters of the Miami of the Lakes, down that river and Lake Erie, around

the falls of Niagara, and down Lake Ontario to Oswego, where he arrived late in September. Second, a Mr. David Ramsey left the city of New York early in October, 1803, with his little craft laden with merchandise, household goods, and stores, destined for Presqu'île (Erie), Penn.; and coursing up the Hudson and Mohawk, and via the Oneida Lake and Lake Ontario route, arrived at his place of destination on the 7th of December.

In 1802, a small schooner of thirty tons, named the Two Nations, was built at Chippewa creek, in Canada, commanded by Captain Thos. Nowlen.

In 1803, the U. S. Government ordered a vessel built at Fort Niagara, to be under the supervision of the War Department. Her duties were to transport Indian goods from Fort Niagara to the head of navigation, on the Miami of the Lakes, and for other purposes. The error of building her below the falls was rectified, and she was finally constructed at Cayuga creek, above the falls. She was to be commanded by Lieut. Dorr, U. S. A. She was a sloop of thirty-five tons, named the Niagara. After completion, the cargo on board and ready to sail, Captain Daniel Dobbins piloted her up the river to Fort Erie, and then gave the commander such instructions in regard to the route and navigation as would enable him to proceed on his voyage. However, after a long, wandering, and perilous trip, she got to Detroit instead of Maumee. The Government finally abandoned the project, and sold the vessel to Porter, Barton & Co., of Black Rock, who renamed her the Nancy, and gave the command to Captain Robert O'Neil.

In 1803, the sloop Saginaw, of forty tons, was built by Alexander McIntosh at Moy, on the Detroit river. Captain John Fearson commanded her.

In 1803, Porter, Barton & Co., of Black Rock, being at the time contractors for furnishing the western army, built a sloop of sixty tons named the Contractor, commanded by Captain Wm. Lee. She was sold to the Government in 1812, renamed the Trippe, and was one of the vessels of Commodore Perry's squadron, under the command of Lieut. Thomas Holdup.

In 1803, a sloop of thirty tons was built at Grand river, in Canada, by Moses Wilcox, named the Lark, and commanded by Captain Wilcox for a time. She was sold to parties at Presqu'île, then again purchased by parties in Canada. Thus it will be seen that the governments of the United States and Great Britain—particularly along the lakes—were not very tenacious in regard to the transfer of vessels, nor yet in regard to commanders, as American citizens frequently commanded British vessels, and *vice versa*.

In 1804, the Provincial Government of Canada built an armed brig of 150 tons, called the Camden. She was broken up at Malden at the commencement of the war in 1812, and all available portions of her used for the construction of the ship Detroit.

In 1805, the schooner Mary, of 100 tons, was built at Erie, for Thomas Wilson, Esq., then heavily engaged in the salt trade. She was first commanded by Capt. Joseph H. Glynn. She was captured at Mackinaw when that post surrendered to the British in June, 1812, then commanded by Capt. James Rough, sent as a cartel with prisoners and non-combatants down to Detroit, where she was again captured, when Gen. Hull surrendered that post. She was finally burnt by the British at the river Thames on the approach of Gen. Harrison's army in October, 1813.

In 1805, the schooner Cuyahoga Packet was built at Chagrin river, Ohio, by a Mr. Abbey, and commanded by Capt. Luther Chapin. She was of thirty tons burden, and built in a peculiar manner, her keel and keelson being of one stick of timber, and morticed through to insert the floor timbers. She was captured at Malden by the British in 1812, with Gen. Hull's baggage and papers on board.

In 1805, the sloop Surprise, of twenty-five tons, was built at Buffalo creek, Capt. Abner Hathaway owner and master.

In 1805, the schooner Ranger, of thirty tons, was built at the river St. Clair by Alexander Harrow, a half-pay British officer. She was at first commanded by Capt. Peter Curry, and subsequently by Capt. Daniel Dobbins.

In 1806 the Provincial Government of Canada built the armed brig Hunter of seventy-two tons. She was one of the British fleet, and was captured in Perry's victory.

In 1807, they also built the armed brig Caledonia, of eighty-six tons, at Amherstburg (Malden). She was captured, in company with the brig Detroit (formerly Adams), by Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott, Oct. 8, 1812, while lying at Fort Erie. She subsequently comprised one of Commodore Perry's squadron, under the command of Lieut. Daniel Turner. After peace, she was sold by the Government to John Dickson of Erie, Pennsylvania, repaired, and renamed the Gen. Wayne, under command of Capt. James Rough.

In 1808, the schooner Zephyr, of forty-five tons, was built upon the hill in the village of Cleveland, by Maj. Carter, and hauled down to the river with oxen; she was the first vessel built there; Capt. Cummings commanded her.

In 1809, the schooner Catharine, of eighty tons, was built at Black Rock by Sill, Thompson & Co. Capt. Seth Tucker was her first master. She was sold to the Government in 1812, renamed the Somers, and was one of Perry's squadron under command of Sailing-Master Thos. C. Almy. In August, 1814, she was captured together with the schooner Ohio by the enemy, at Fort Erie.

In 1809, the Provincial Government of Canada built the armed brig Queen Charlotte, of 255 tons, at Amherstburg. She was commanded by Capt. Finnis, royal navy, and was captured in Perry's victory, September 10, 1813. In 1815 she, together with the Detroit and Lawrence, was sunk in the little bay at Erie, Pa., for preservation. In 1837 she was, with the other two, sold by the Government to Captain Geo. Miles, and parties in Buffalo, and by Capt. Miles raised and repaired and put into the Chicago trade, under the command of Capt. Lester Cotton, who was succeeded by Capt. Wm. Keith. However, she did not last long, as her fastenings were found to be much rusted by the long submersion, and soon gave way.

In 1809, the schooner Catharine, of ninety tons, was built at Moy, opposite Detroit, by Alexander McIntosh. She was

purchased by R. S. Reed and Capt. Daniel Dobbins of Erie, Pa., who renamed her the *Salina*.<sup>1</sup> She was commanded by Captain Dobbins up to the war of 1812; when arriving at Mackinac in June of that year, with a cargo of merchandise and produce for that market, she was, together with the schooner *Mary*, Capt. James Rough, the sloops *Erie*, Capt. Norton, and *Friend's Good Will*, Capt. Lee, captured when that place was surprised by the enemy. The *Salina* and *Mary* were made cartels, and ordered to Cleveland with prisoners. They were stopped at Detroit upon their arrival there by order of Gen. Hull, and again captured when that post was surrendered. The enemy used her as a transport the rest of that season, and until late in the fall. While on her passage from Maumee to Fort Malden, she was caught in the ice and abandoned. In 1813, a vessel was discovered in the ice off Erie, and Captain Daniel Dobbins with a party went out some ten miles to her, when it was found to be the *Salina*, with a quantity of fresh beef and some other provisions on board, she having drifted from the head of the lake in the ice. A few days after Captain Dobbins stripped her, and taking such matters as were of any value, set her on fire.

In 1810, the Provincial Government of Canada built the armed schooner *Lady Prevost*, of ninety-seven tons, at Amherstburg. She was captured in Perry's victory. After peace, in 1815, she was sold by the Government to R. S. Reed of Erie, and subsequently Mr. Reed sold her to parties in Canada. She was afterward employed many years in the merchant service, under the command of Capt. Robert Maxwell.

In 1810, the sloop *Commencement*, of thirty tons, was built at Buffalo creek. Capt. Wm. P. Dexter commanded her. By this time Buffalo began to make something of a show in the way of a village; there were some half dozen stores, and the *Salisburys* contemplated starting a newspaper. In 1810, the sloop *Erie*, of sixty tons, was built at

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1. In some of the Dobbins papers the original name of this boat is given as the *Charlotte*. Capt. Dobbins renamed her the *Salina*, because the bulk of her cargoes was salt.



Black Rock by Porter, Barton & Co., and was commanded at first by Capt. Richard O'Neil; subsequently by Capt. Walter Norton. She was captured at Mackinac, as before stated. In 1810, the sloop *Friend's Good Will*, of sixty tons, was built at Black Rock by Capt. Wm. Lee, and was commanded by him. She was captured, as before stated, fitted out for a man-of-war by the British, and renamed *Little Belt*. She was one of the British fleet and was captured in Perry's victory.

In 1810, the schooner *Ohio*, of about sixty tons, was built at Cleveland by Messrs. Murray and Bigsby. Capt. John Austin commanded her. She was sold to the Government at Black Rock in 1812, and was one of Perry's squadron, under the command of Sailing-Master Daniel Dobbins. She, with the schooner *Somers*, was captured by the enemy while anchored at Fort Erie in August, 1814; the *Ohio*, under the command of Sailing-Master McCulloch, the *Somers*, under that of Lieut. Conckling.

In 1810, the schooner *Chippewa*, of thirty tons, was built at Maumee by Capt. Bud Martin, and sailed by him. She was captured by the British, fitted out for an armed vessel, belonged to the British fleet, and was captured in Commodore Perry's victory.

In 1812, the schooner *Sally*, of twenty-five tons, was built at Cleveland, and was sailed by Capt. Abijah Baker.

The country being now at war with England, nothing was done on the upper lakes in the way of ship building for the merchant service; and boats that could dodge along shore were used to some extent, though most of the transportation was done by land. All the vessels were either captured or bought by the Government. The enemy had the entire control over the lakes until Commodore Perry's squadron was ready for service, in August, 1813. After the victory of the 10th of September goods and other supplies, on private account, were shipped in the public vessels to a limited extent when it did not interfere with their duties, though they were mostly actively employed as transports and for other duties, particularly the smaller vessels.

From the time commerce commenced on the American

side of Lake Erie, and the vessels in size and numbers to meet the increasing trade were built, there were but few places along the entire lake coast and rivers where they could go into winter quarters and lay with safety, or be repaired and fitted out in the spring. There were Con-ja-qua-da's creek, below Black Rock, and river Rouge, below Detroit, on the American side; then Moy, Amherstburg and Chippawa creek, on the Canadian side. Con-ja-qua-da's creek was the one mostly resorted to, as much of the material required for fitting out was brought from the East, and this was the most convenient point to reach it. This creek was also made a temporary naval station in 1812-13, and until the arrival of Commodore Perry, when all the vessels and stores were removed to Erie.

In early days, there were but few conveniences for repairing vessels; no dry-docks or railways. To caulk a vessel's bottom, or repair below the water-line, she had to be hove down; and to make a thorough repair, she had to be placed on ways and hauled out of the water with purchasers. There were no lighthouses, nor yet harbors, except natural ones, and no charts; land marks and the lead were the only guides, consequently the "blue-pigeon" was kept constantly "on the wing" of a dark night, in making a port, or in dangerous waters. Then, again, the "ground tackling" was much inferior to that of the present day. Imagine the handling of a big hemp cable while riding-out a gale of wind on a lee shore, in freezing weather, and the trouble of getting the anchor, provided it was necessary to get under way, the cable freezing the moment it was out of the water, and it being next to impossible to bend it round the windlass. The hawse-pipes in those days were made of lead, and kept smooth to prevent chafe; and when an anchor was let go, and a scope of cable given, parcelling was put upon the cable in the wake of the hawse-hole, to keep it from chafing, which was renewed every watch, in heavy weather, by putting on fresh parcelling inside and surging or paying out more cable, until the new parcelling came into the hawse, when the old was taken off outside. From going through this process, originated the nautical phrase "freshen the

nip," which, when rendered in plain English, is "take a glass of grog." When this duty had to be gone through with in heavy weather, wet jackets were inevitable, consequently the grog. Jack has sundry significant phrases to designate grog time; for instance, "splice the main brace," after reefing topsails of a dark stormy night; and "the sun is over the fore yard," to designate 11 o'clock a. m.

I have mentioned above the stream at Buffalo known as Con-ja-qua-da's creek. The orthography should be, Gon-ja-qua-dah. The Indian from whom it took its name had his wigwam upon its banks for many years, and belonged to the Seneca or Nun-da-wa-o-no tribe. There are numerous Seneca names commencing with G; their great chief Cornplanter's name was Guy-ant-wa-chi-ah, and his half-brother was named Ga-nio-di-eugh, or Handsome Lake; and numerous others I could mention, though I will only refer to that of Cuyahoga county and river, and Geauga county and Grand river, in Ohio. The orthography in the former should be, to give the Indian pronunciation, Guy-aha-gah, which signifies "crooked river"; the latter should be Ge-au-gah, which signifies "great or grand river." The authorities have retained the Indian name for the county, but have given the English for the name of the river, in the latter. Most of the Indian names commencing with C, according to modern orthography, should commence with G, and end with h after a, or gugh. This, in order to give the guttural sound, incident to Indian pronunciation.

While upon the subject of Indian names, I have noticed that the origin of the name of "Buffalo creek" is rather a mooted question. By way of clearing up the subject, if not satisfactorily, at least to give further information, I will give a short piece of history pertaining to the subject, as given by Capt. Daniel Dobbins, on his first visit to this creek, in June, 1795, and found among his papers. He says:

"Having been employed for several months surveying with Andrew Ellicott, in the Genesee valley, I concluded to push on further west to Presq'ile, the original place of my destination. Started afoot and alone, with my pack on my back, and rifle in hand, for Buffalo creek; found but one

family on my route; they were located some 25 or 30 miles west of Genesee river. I think the name was Janson.<sup>1</sup> On my arrival at Buffalo creek, found a loghouse tavern—which was the only one there—kept by a man named Winney, an Indian trader; he had a negro named Jo for a partner, and they both had squaw wives. They owned two trading posts; Jo had charge of the one at Cattaraugus, and was on a business visit to Winney. There were hordes of Indians round and in the house all night, which kept me from sleeping much. . . . In conversation with Winney, I inquired if there were many buffalo round there? He said there were not; I then inquired about the origin of the name. He answered, that it took its name from an old Indian who had lived there for a long time, named by the Indians 'Te-ho-se-ro-ron' or 'De-o-se-o-wa,' or something like it—which signifies 'buffalo' in English. He assigned the reason for this sobriquet, that the old Indian was a large square-framed man, with stoop shoulders, and large bushy head, which, the Indian said, made him resemble a buffalo; thus, the name, 'Buffalo's creek.' It appears characteristic of the Indians to give significant names; some personal appearance, some feat achieved, characteristic, or place of location, is often the origin of a name."

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## II. FALL OF MACKINAW—MR. DOBBINS CARRIES NEWS.

The following account of the surrender of Mackinaw and incidents thereafter, is based on a narrative by my father, the late Capt. Daniel Dobbins, and found among his papers. As I have previously stated, Capt. Dobbins was at that place in command of the schooner Salina, Capt. James Rough in command of the schooner Mary, and Capt. Wm. Lee in command of the sloop Friend's Good Will. Capt. Dobbins says:

. . . "For some days previous to the surrender, Lieut. Porter Hanks, U. S. A., commandant of the post, together

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1. It was "Ganson."

with the citizens of the island and masters of vessels in port, felt some uneasiness in consequence of intercourse being stopped between that place and the British island of St. Josephs at the entrance of the Sault river, daily communication having been previously kept up. Prudential motives prompted them to go into council, and endeavor to ascertain the cause, as also to consult and conclude upon their future course, as they had no knowledge that war had been declared. After a full interchanging of opinions, it was finally concluded best to dispatch a messenger to St. Josephs for information, and Michael Dousman, an old and respectable citizen, was selected for that purpose; and he, consenting, embarked in a bark canoe with a crew of Frenchmen.

"On their way thither, they encountered, early in the night, a large force of British troops, Canadians and Indians, said to be 1,500 strong, embarked in armed batteaux and canoes; all under the command of Capt. Chas. Roberts of his Majesty's service. Mr. Dousman and party were taken prisoners, and Mr. Dousman forced to pilot them to the most eligible place to land on the back of the island of Mackinaw, as also to go to his farm in the neighborhood and get his ox-team to draw their cannon to the highest point overlooking the fort. Their arrangements being completed and the forces ready for attack, as day dawned, Mr. Dousman was released with orders to proceed to town and inform the citizens of the condition of matters, and also to collect them at a certain named place, where a guard would be posted to protect them from the Indians.<sup>1</sup>

"I was on board my vessel laying at the wharf when I heard the news, but I refused to go to the appointed ren-

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1. There are preserved a number of letters from Michael Dousman to "Dan Dobbins," and copies of some from Dobbins to Dousman, in which each makes sundry accusations against the honor of the other. Mr. Dobbins regarded Dousman as a traitor; Dousman retorted that at least he did not break his parole, and sought to justify his conduct in supplying the British with provisions. An elaborate document containing sixteen charges all tending to show the treason of Dousman, bears the signatures of seven men "and all the other inhabitants of Mackinaw." In the summer of 1816 the dispute, to judge from these letters, was likely to culminate in a duel; but settlement by the code was apparently prevented by the fact that Dousman stayed at Mackinaw and Dobbins stayed away from there.

devious, as I knew the Indian character too well to trust to the protection of a small guard. I considered myself much safer aboard my vessel, and at once commenced kedging her off to anchorage. As the vessel lay riding to the kedge, I made preparations to cut and run with the vessel as soon as a breeze sprung up, it then being quite calm. I could see the painted savages crawling along round the bank, to avoid the guns of the fort, and concluded I had taken the wisest course. This was a time of great suspense for me—all ready to give them the slip, and not a breath of wind! Shortly the British armed brig *Caledonia* made her appearance, rounding the point (*Robinson's Folly*), bringing the northeast breeze with her, and directly in the track of my escape; so I concluded the 'jig was up' with me, and must submit. Soon the Stars and Stripes came down, and the British flag was run up on the flagstaff at the fort—the surrender was complete.<sup>1</sup>

"Some few hours after, Mr. Allen C. Wilmoth, a British subject, formerly connected with the Northwest Fur Company, and one of the commissioners appointed to arrange the capitulation, came aboard to inform me that the British commander wanted to see me. On our way, Mr. Wilmoth informed me that Capt. Roberts wanted me to sign a parole not to come against his Majesty's forces during the war. On our arrival at the fort, this proposition was made to me, and refused; they then threatened me; I still was firm in my refusal, and was let off. However, many of the citizens and mariners signed it. I informed them I intended to offer my services to my country, and would do nothing to encumber my intentions. I further claimed protection under the capitulation, a copy of which I had:

"HEIGHTS ABOVE MICHILIMACINAC,

"17th July, 1812.

"Capitulation agreed upon between Capt. Charles Roberts, commanding his Britannic Majesty's forces, on the one part, and Lieu-

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1. When made prisoner Capt. Dobbins had living with him an Indian boy named Pan-de-gaw-weh, known to the Americans as Tom. Among the Dobbins papers is an order from the British commandant at Fort Mackinaw, directing that this boy be delivered up to the Indians.

tenant Porter Hanks, commanding the forces of the United States, on the other part, viz.:

"1st. The fort of Michilimackinac shall immediately be surrendered to the British force.

"2d. The garrison shall march out with the honors of war, lay down their arms, and become prisoners of war; and shall be sent to the United States of America by his Britannic Majesty, not to serve in this war until regularly exchanged, and for the due performance of this article the officers pledge their word and honor.

"3d. All the merchant vessels in the harbor, with their cargoes, shall be in possession of their respective owners.

"4th. Private property shall be held sacred as far as is in my power.

"5th. All citizens of the United States who shall not take the oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty, shall depart with their property from the island in one month from the date hereof.

"Signed,

"CHAS. ROBERTS, *Captain,*  
"Commanding His Britannic Majesty's forces, Mackinaw.

"PORTER HANKS, *Lieutenant, U. S. A.,*  
"Commanding United States forces."

"Provisions being scarce, all citizens who refused to take the oath were ordered to prepare to leave the island, and preparations were made to send the schooners *Salina* and *Mary* as cartels. The citizens were put on board the *Salina*, Captain Daniel Dobbins, and the prisoners of war on board the *Mary*, Captain James Rough. We were scantily supplied with provisions and stores, and received orders to proceed to Cleveland, Ohio."

Some of these Indians in this attack were from the Mississippi and of the Sac and Fox tribes, under the management of a Col. Robert Dickson, an influential Indian trader, connected with the Northwest Fur Company. These Indians were much dissatisfied—said they "had been promised a fight, but had got no blood yet." Col. Dickson then made a speech to them, saying, "The Yankees had given up without a fight, and it would not be allowed to kill them *now*, but that they (the Indians) should have some cattle to kill, when they could have some blood in *that way*." To carry this promise out, a lot of cattle were turned loose, and they had a hideous time chasing them round the island, yelling and shouting—shooting them with guns and arrows, the poor animals bellowing, and taking to the water occasionally with their sides

bristling with arrows. In addition to this, the public store was thrown open, and the clothing of the troops given to the Indians. This was amusing. You would see an Indian with a soldier's coat buttoned up to the chin, and cap, with bare legs; another with the coat tails in front, etc.

The next day after the surrender, July 18th, the sloop Erie, Capt. Walter Norton, came in sight, on her return trip from Chicago. In order to deceive Capt. Norton, the American flag was hoisted on the flagstaff. As soon as she got near the island several armed batteaux were sent out and captured her.

The fall of Mackinaw was a disastrous blow to our arms, particularly at this early period of the war. It gave prestige to the enemy, and served as a stimulus to induce the savages to join them, and put confidence in their many reports of our weakness, and the fallacy of our cause. But little would induce the Indians of the northwest to take the war-path, and the British were anxious to secure this position, when they, through their coadjutors, the Northwest Fur Company, could arouse these savage hordes, from Canada to the Rocky Mountains, and hurl them down by thousands upon our comparatively defenseless frontier. This gigantic company was anxious for the success of the British arms, more particularly in this quarter, as its interests were in this direction, and Mackinaw was the key. Therefore, without scruples, it threw philanthropy to the dogs, and went in for success at any sacrifice. Blood and plunder were the incentive and the savage was ready for the grasp—as such is his nature.

Sir Isaac Brock, as early as June 25th, while at Fort George, received intelligence of the declaration of war, and immediately dispatched a courier with the news to Captain Roberts, at St. Josephs, with instructions to summon to his aid the employes of the Northwest Fur Company, and the Indian tribes within reach, for the purpose of taking Mackinaw ere that post could get the news, and prepare for a defense. Mr. Pothier, the agent of the company, at once joined Capt. Roberts in his plans, proposed to furnish 200 *voyageurs* and boats, and sent messengers off to the Indian chiefs to assemble their warriors at St. Josephs. There were others



connected either directly or indirectly with the company, who joined the band, viz.: Dickson, Johnson, Crawford, Armitingin, La Croix, Rolett, Franks, Livingston, Akin & Son, and others; all men of influence and standing, and were assigned positions. The two latter, in conjunction with Dickson, were Indian commanders, and were dressed and painted as Indians. There were, in all, 306 whites and 715 Indians; this included the forty-six regulars and their officers. There were, also, 150 Chippewas and Ottawas, under the noted chief, Old Bastard, who arrived two days after the capitulation; and from some returned traders it was known that 500 Indians and Canadians had assembled at the Grand Portage, to reinforce in case they were needed.

On the other hand, Lieut. Hanks was ignorant of the declaration of war, and, should he have had the information, he could have made but a feeble defense with but 57 men, including officers; and as for reinforcements and supplies, they must come from below; the enemy held Lake Erie with a naval force, and had possession of the entrance to Detroit river, therefore nothing could reach Mackinaw by water, and by land it was equally impossible, as the Peninsula (now State of Michigan) was then a wilderness and swarming with hostile savages. Therefore a successful defense was impossible. Again, to show the character of the enemy Lieut. Hanks would have to contend with, John Akin, one of the Indian leaders, reported that "had a defense been made, and a single Indian killed, the whole garrison would have been massacred in case of capture." They in all probability would have then turned upon the American citizens, and it is hardly to be supposed the few British regulars could have stopped 700 blood-thirsty savages in the midst of their hellish carnival, provided they had the disposition to do so; and as for the *voyageurs*, many of them would in all probability have joined in the "feast of death," as this semi-civilized race were viewed, by the Indians, as the connecting link between themselves and the whites. As illustrative of this, many years since, when Michigan was a territory, an Indian murdered a white man, and after being caught was questioned if he had committed

other murders. His reply was, "Me kill two Indians, one Frenchman, never kill white man before." Thus, reason would dictate that the "bloodless surrender" was most fortunate; though the whole thing is a lasting disgrace to the British Government, in calling to their aid these merciless savages. This they continued to do throughout the war.

The cartels *Salina* and *Mary* being ready, sailed for Cleveland. The passengers on board the *Salina* were, R. S. Reed, W. W. Reed, Wm. Davidson, John Dowsman, F. B. Holmes, Ambrose Davenport, C. A. Andrews; as also Capt. Norton of the sloop *Erie* and crew, and Capt. Lee of the sloop *Friend's Good Will* and crew. The *Mary* had the prisoners of war and a few citizens. Not knowing how matters were below, on their approaching the St. Clair river, they had fears of an attack by the Indians, as they were quite numerous in that neighborhood. There being no arms on board, they erected temporary bulwarks with packs of furs and barrels to protect themselves, and made bludgeons of wood for weapons. However, they were not molested, and arrived safe off Detroit. Here General Hull, having possession of both sides of the river, took possession of the vessels, and ordered them alongside the wharf at Detroit and dismantled, the passengers going on shore to shift for themselves, except the prisoners of war, who were taken to the garrison. Pretty much all were taken prisoners again when Hull surrendered the place, but were soon let go on parole.

Capt. Dobbins procured a pass from Lieut. Col. Robt. Nichols of his Majesty's service, for himself and the two Reeds to proceed to Cleveland, Ohio. R. S. Reed concluded to go by land, but Capt. Dobbins secured a passage for himself and W. W. Reed with Col. Cass, who had charge of some boats with prisoners returning to Cleveland. At Malden Capt. Dobbins was solicited to manage a boat loaded with wounded from Van Horn's defeat on the river Huron, under the charge of Capt. Saunders of the Ohio Volunteers, which he accepted; and passing from island to island, crossed the head of the lake to Black river, and coasted along down to Cleveland, where they arrived safely on the

22d of August. Capt. Saunders was in honor bound to destroy the boat after landing, so Capt. Dobbins and W. W. Reed took passage in a small sail craft for Erie; and after causing some little alarm at Ashtabula and Conneaut, when they landed for a few hours, the people taking the little craft for an enemy, arrived safe at Erie on the 24th of August. R. S. Reed had purchased a horse at Detroit, and come round the head of the lake, and through Ohio, not arriving until ten days after.

General David Mead, who commanded at Erie at the time, wished Captain Dobbins to be the bearer of dispatches to Washington, which he consented to, and left immediately. On his way, he passed Col. Cass—who was also the bearer of dispatches—sick at Mercersburg, and gave the first authentic news of the surrender of Mackinaw and Detroit at the seat of government. A Cabinet council was called, and he summoned before it and fully interrogated in regard to the upper lakes, and frontier, as also the most suitable point on the borders of lake Erie for a naval depot; he recommended Erie. After consulting Colonel Cass, he accepted the appointment of sailing-master in the navy, and received orders to repair to Erie and commence the construction of gunboats. He arrived at Erie early in October, and having secured the services of Ebenezer Crosby at Black Rock, as master shipwright, commenced the work, the rest of the force being mostly house carpenters. In January, Commodore Chauncey and Henry Eckford made a visit of inspection, approved the work, and gave orders to get out timber for two sloops of war; they also approved the selection for a station. In February Mr. Noah Brown with a force of carpenters came on and took charge. On the 27th March, Commodore Perry arrived, when the work was pushed rapidly with a large force.

The capture of Fort Dearborn at Chicago, and the massacre at that place by the Indians—once friendly but subsequently rendered hostile by the machinations of the British and their coadjutors, the Northwest Fur Company—and the fall of Mackinaw, gave the enemy entire control of the Indian tribes; not only those of the west and northwest,

but those inhabiting our border territory. As an inducement, the Indians were led to believe that the Yankees were a feeble nation, and if they would assist in making war upon them, they (the Yankees) could be easily defeated and driven off, when the Indian would again be in possession of his "lost hunting ground." In addition, the British stores, as well as those of the Northwest Fur Company, were filled with Indian goods, and presents went hand in hand with the wampum belt.

By way of showing that they were preparing for coming hostilities, and as a sample of proceedings, I will state that Gov. W. H. Harrison wrote the Government, under date of April 17, 1811, from Vincennes:

"Almost every Indian from above, has been, or is now at Fort Malden, on a visit to the British agent. . . . I examined the presents of a returned Indian (not a chief), and found he had received an elegant rifle, 25 lbs. powder, 50 lbs. lead, 3 blankets, 3 strouds of cloth, 10 shirts, and other articles."

Similar accounts were received from Gen. Wm. Clark, of St. Louis; Samuel Tupper of Sandusky; John Johnson of Fort Wayne; M. Irwin of Chicago; Gov. Willie Blount of Tennessee; Gov. Ninian Edwards of Illinois, and others of the same period, all going to show the workings of the enemy. At this time, Canada was much superior to our frontier territory in point of population; there were not only the original French, but thousands of refugees from the United States during the Revolution, who, with their offspring, were "loyal to the core," and swarms of Indians, all well supplied with arms; whereas, the reverse was the case on the American side. Added to the disadvantages of a sparsely populated and new country, was the difficulty of transportation, the enemy having entire control of the upper lakes with armed vessels, constituting an effectual blockade. Troops and supplies had to be taken by land to Detroit, a distance of some 200 miles, and, as it would appear, the Government had a very imperfect knowledge of the western frontier.

In addition to these many difficulties, Gen. Hull issued

a bombastic proclamation to the people of Upper Canada on the eve of his contemplated invasion, in which he said that "If the savage and barbarous policy of Great Britain be pursued, and savages be let loose to murder our citizens, and butcher our women and children, this war will be a war of extermination. The first stroke of the tomahawk, the first attempt with the scalping-knife, will be the signal of one indiscriminate scene of destruction. No white man found fighting by the side of an Indian will be taken prisoner; instant destruction will be his lot." This, of course, would raise the ire of the British, and prompt them to retaliation in turn. Some of the Canadian militia put confidence in these threats, as also in the friendly propositions made in the same document, and deserted to his standard, and many of the inhabitants expressed anxiety for protection, let it come from what quarter it would. However, the effort was soon changed when Sir Isaac Brock assumed command in the field. He was a man of fine military and executive abilities, and rallied round him large numbers of militia and Indians, which, added to the regular force, showed a formidable front. He was also seconded by Gen. Proctor and other skillful officers.

Soon Gen. Hull's line of communication and base of supplies were being sadly interfered with by large parties of British troops and Indians, and several sanguinary battles had taken place. Then two of his best commanders, Col. Cass and Col. McArthur, with nearly half his force, had to be sent off to open communication. Gen. Brock being aware of this, availed himself of the position of matters to demand a surrender.

Now, then, taking all things into consideration—surrounded by hordes of hostile savages—a superior force to contend with—his base of communication cut off in a measure—isolated in position; and last, but not least, fearing that the savages could not be held in check, and that a massacre would follow in case of a defeat—based, as he might have presumed, upon his *own* proclamation, viz., "*extermination*," where savages are brought into the field; I repeat, taking all things into consideration, may it not be

considered a mooted question, whether the peaceable surrender was not a judicious one? Notwithstanding, he was tried by a highly competent court and convicted of cowardice. This constitutional defect shows itself in varied and singular phases. It is often found in men possessing a highly cultivated, intellectual and patriotic mind. Often we see it developed where physical powers are great, and also where they are small and *vice versa*. There are different classes of courage; a man may be courageous in debate, but would shrink from personal danger. Often want of what is called courage, is accompanied with moral and philanthropic proclivities—dread of the destruction of human life; such are often over-cautious; others of the opposite, desire victory at any cost. Commodore Perry had nearly as great a dread of a cow, as he would have of a lion; and I have it from those who knew of the fact, that he would cross a street, or road, through the mud, to avoid one. Yet he would face the cannon's mouth and fight his ship as long as there was a gun left mounted, and a man to work it.

The court assembled at Philadelphia for the trial of General Hull, February, 1813, was dissolved by President Madison for the reason that many of the members in the warmth of excitement incident to the disaster, had freely expressed their opinions in advance. In January, 1814, another court was convened at Albany. After a protracted trial, he was found guilty of "cowardice, neglect of duty, and unofficer-like conduct." The sentence was "to be shot dead, and his name stricken from the rolls of the army." The court strongly recommended him to the mercy of the President, who, on account of his advanced age, and Revolutionary services, pardoned him. Not cowardice, but imbecility and over-caution incident to old age, coupled with the dread of a massacre in case of defeat, were the cause of Hull's failure. General Cass, one who knew him well, several times expressed this as his belief. Hull, when in full vigor of manhood, did good service in the Revolution.

One of the accusations in the charge of treason was, "hiring a vessel (the Cuyahoga Packet) to convey the sick and baggage from Maumee Rapids to Detroit." I presume

it was thought by many, that it was his intention to throw this prize into the hands of the enemy. In a letter from Dr. James Reynolds, of the Ohio troops, to a friend in Zanesville, dated Detroit, July 7, 1812, he says:

“In order to hurry the march of the army to Detroit, the sick were put on board of a schooner and boat, with public property, and the greater portion of the officers’ clothing. I took command of the boat loaded with sick. We hoisted sail on the 1st of July from the Rapids (Maumee). We were ordered to sail in company, but the schooner passed me the first night; and about 10 o’clock the next day, opposite Fort Malden, she was captured by the British—thirty on board—among whom were Paymaster Lewis Dent, Captain Sharp of the Marietta, a lieutenant of the 4th Regiment, and three of the officers’ wives. Two of the ladies were sent to Detroit, the other remained with her husband at Malden. The evening of the same day we passed Malden by a different channel (American channel), without molestation by the British, but were harassed that night by the Indians. On the 3d, at 3 p. m., arrived at Detroit all safe, and here I first heard of war being declared.”

The news reached Detroit through Canada. Gen. Hull, with the army, did not arrive until the 6th. Had the news of the declaration of war been at the Rapids before these parties left, the capture of the schooner might have been avoided by taking the American channel, as Dr. Reynolds did with his boat, this being the first entrance to the river they reached, though somewhat intricate for the larger craft; but they being ignorant of the state of matters, dropped, un-awares, into the clutches of the enemy, with all the general’s public and private papers, and the public property, including nearly all the medical stores. No blame could be attached to the commander of the schooner, as this was the main ship channel, and the proper one for him to take, had not hostilities commenced, which he had no reason to suppose was the case, or they would have known it at the Rapids, where it was not known until the 6th, when a courier passed through from Washington, to Gen. Hull. Thus, it would appear, that the Government was remiss in a culpable degree, in not forwarding the news earlier. This neglect gave great advantage to the enemy.

The vessels at Detroit at the time of the surrender, the brig Adams, and schooners Salina and Mary, as also some smaller craft, were of course immediately taken possession of. The Adams, as I previously stated, was renamed Detroit; the Salina was used as a transport at the head of the lake; the Detroit, Caledonia (British armed vessel), and Mary took on board prisoners, and proceeded to Fort Erie. The Mary had on board a cargo of furs belonging to the American Fur Company. Great efforts were made by Captain Rough and the company to have it released, making their claim under the capitulation of Mackinaw, which says, "all vessels in port, with their cargoes, are to remain in the hands of their respective owners." The cargo of the Mary, having remained on board as it was when she left Mackinaw, the claimants thought they had a good case. The British authorities, on the other hand, claimed that she and the Salina had been taken possession of at Detroit, by order of the commanding general (Hull), after they had reached an American port, and had landed the prisoners; therefore their character of cartel ceased—that had not General Hull stopped them, they would have been allowed to proceed to Cleveland. Furthermore, had General Hull found use for them, he would not have hesitated to put them into service; therefore, they, with their cargoes, were subject to capture, and lawful prizes.

John Dickson, who was mate with Captain Rough in the Mary, and made to pilot her from Detroit to Fort Erie, then kept on board for a time, conceived the idea of re-capturing her, and had his plans laid, but matters changed and his intention was frustrated. Subsequently, and after Dickson had got on the American side, he served as pilot for Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott and Captain Towson at the time they captured the brigs Detroit and Caledonia from under the guns of Fort Erie. In Lieutenant Elliott's report from Black Rock, October 8, 1812, he speaks of the failure to get a line to the American shore, there being no wind and the vessel, only drifting with the current, while under a heavy fire from the British batteries, finally brought up on Squaw Island. Elliott says: "At that instant, I discovered that



the pilot had abandoned me." This is true, and the writer has heard Dickson assign the cause, which completely exculpated him from any blame.<sup>1</sup> He subsequently served as a subordinate in the navy-yard at Conjaquades Creek, and rendered valuable service in fitting out the vessels purchased by the Government. They managed to work the Caledonia inside of Squaw Island, and grounded her on the bank, where she was safe from the batteries of the enemy, and where she could easily be got afloat; while the Detroit had to be abandoned and burnt, the cannonading upon her was so heavy.

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### III. WITH PERRY ON THE NIAGARA.

The British having entire control of the upper lakes, and being in possession of all the western posts of any consequence, things looked rather discouraging for the American cause, and all eyes were turned to Commodore Perry in his efforts to get his fleet ready for service. Previous to the arrival of Commodore Perry and Mr. Noah Brown, the master builder, Sailing-Master Dobbins had, under the most unfavorable circumstances, succeeded in getting three gun-boats of fifty tons each, well under way, and a large portion of the timber out for the two sloops of war, which gave a good start in the enterprise.

In comparison with the excellent facilities for shipbuilding of the present day, one can have but an obscure idea of the difficulties Commodore Perry and his compeers had in building, fitting and arming his squadron. A new and sparsely settled country, scarcity of all necessary material, except timber, water communication with Black Rock cut off by the presence of the enemy's cruisers, the roads cut through swamps and forests and mud, incident to the breaking up in the spring of the year—all these and numerous other difficulties I could enumerate. From Pittsburgh were

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1. An explanation of Dickson's conduct will be found in a sketch of his adventurous career, on subsequent pages of this volume.

obtained all the iron, a large portion of the rigging and anchors, as also all the carronades, shot and shell. All the spikes had to be hammered, and in many instances to be made from square bars of iron; and owing to the scarcity of oakum, the Lawrence was calked with raw hemp obtained at Pittsburgh.

Although Presqu'île had twice been occupied as a military post—by the French as late as 1760, and by the United States as late as 1798, the latter having a stockade, with three block-houses and other military fixtures—yet there was not a single piece of ordnance in the place, except a small iron boat-howitzer, with which the villagers used to celebrate the 4th of July for many years, belonging to Gen. John Kelso, and which had been found by him on the beach of the lake, where probably an armed batteau belonging to the French had been wrecked, when they occupied the country. Nothing remained of the French fort, except a little of the earthwork; nor of the American, but the relics of one old block-house. The only matter in the way of defense, was a military company numbering forty, all told, and the workmen on the gunboats, whom Mr. Dobbins (that being the modest title officially applied to sailing master) had organized and armed, as best he could, for the protection of the vessels on the stocks. However, Gen. John Kelso had called out the militia of his brigade, though they had not yet organized, and upon the arrival of Commodore Perry, March 24, 1813, he at once counseled with Major Gen. David Mead, military commander in that portion of Pennsylvania, the result of which was the calling out of all the military forces; and in a short time 1000 militia were in camp, which number was soon reinforced by several hundred volunteers from the interior of the State.

The most important matter now, was to obtain some heavy pieces of ordnance, and Mr. Dobbins was dispatched to Black Rock for some 12-pounders and chests of arms. His journeys to that point illustrate the difficulties of transportation at that time.

Mr. Dobbins at once repaired to Black Rock, and after considerable delay and trouble, succeeded in getting four

12-pounders and four teams, loaded with small arms and stores, to the bridge over Buffalo creek, and one gun with some of the teams and guard over, when, from the ice gorge and flood—there being a thaw at the time—the bridge was swept away. He then proceeded with the one gun and stores on the ice, keeping near the shore. When near Cattaraugus, the team with the gun broke through the ice in twelve feet of water; however, they soon fished it out, and from this to Erie they took the land for it, though the road was in the worst possible condition, and succeeded in getting through on the 10th of April. This was the first piece of ordnance at Erie. Mr. Dobbins at once returned and got the remainder with less difficulty. It being now the middle of April, and the lake getting free from ice, he thought of trying water transportation.

Commodore Perry gave him instructions to call upon Lieutenant Pettigrew, who was then in command of the temporary navy yard at Conjaquada's creek, for such necessary aid as he wanted, when he again repaired to Black Rock, with instructions to take up three long 32-pounders, weighing 63 cwt. each. After some detention, Lieutenant Pettigrew furnished him with an old batteau, of only sufficient capacity to carry one gun. After placing timbers on her bottom, he got the gun in her, and tracked her up the rapids to Buffalo creek, when all the men were recalled, and Mr. Dobbins left to bail the boat himself, which, by the way, was leaking badly. In the morning, three men with three days' rations and no arms were all Lieutenant Pettigrew furnished to make a trip of ninety miles in this open boat, in the spring of the year, with some ice in the lake and in the face of the enemy. For this conduct Lieutenant Pettigrew received a severe reprimand from Commodore Perry. However, Mr. Dobbins started upon this hazardous trip, with two men rowing (they had no sail), one bailing, and Mr. Dobbins steering. Early on the morning of the second day, they reached the Eighteen-mile creek and made a stop.

Soon after their arrival, a six-oared boat was discovered coasting along down from the westward, as if reconnoitering the shore. Mr. Dobbins at once knew from appearances,

that it was a man-of-war boat; and as no boat of that kind was at Erie when he left, concluded it must be an enemy on the lookout for him. He at once got his boat behind some bushes at a bend in the creek, and kept themselves out of sight until the boat had passed. Presuming the boat would return on not finding him below, Mr. Dobbins at once hastened out of the neighborhood, mustered all the men and arms he could get, and constructed a sort of breastwork with trees, determined to make a strong resistance, should they be attacked. Toward night the boat returned, and seeing one of Mr. Dobbins' pickets on the shore below, showed the American colors and landed. It proved to be a boat which had been built after Mr. Dobbins had left Erie, and had been sent by Commodore Perry, under the command of Lieutenant Holdup, as an assistant and convoy; and after examining the coast and seeing nothing of the boat, reached Buffalo, and finding Mr. Dobbins had left, returned.

On the arrival of the boat in the creek, some of Mr. Dobbins' volunteers who were "sp'ilin' fer a fight" became rampant. However, explanations and a gallon or two of whiskey obtained from a neighboring trading-post, put all things to rights, and they returned to their homes. Mr. Dobbins, having now plenty of assistance, proceeded, and on the second day arrived safe at Erie.

The next day he left on still another trip. This time he obtained an old Durham boat, so called, which had been used in boating salt from Schlosser to Fort Erie, and after fitting her as best he could, with timbers on her bottom, got two of the 32-pounders, weighing 63 cwt. each, on board, together with naval stores, tracked up the Niagara rapids and started for Erie, having a four-oared boat with lug-sail, in company. He kept near the American shore, as the enemy were in sight. When off Cattaraugus, in the night, it came on to blow from the northwest, and in order to keep her off the beach, they got all sail on her they could, with two planks for lea-boards; and after a struggle, succeeded in getting an offing.

But their troubles were not ended. The steering-oar unshipped, and the boat fell off into the trough of the sea,

when the heavy rolling carried away the step of the mast before they could get the sail down. They finally got the repairs made, and sail on her again, when it was discovered she was leaking very much from the heavy rolling and heavy weight in her bottom, and likely to split open and founder. As the old maxim has it, "Necessity is the mother of invention." Mr. Dobbins took a coil of rope they had on board, and securing one end forward, passed the rope round and round her fore and aft, heaving each turn taut with a gunner's handspike; and in this way, kept her together and afloat, all hands bailing. At daylight they found themselves some ten miles below Erie, with two of the enemy's cruisers in the offing to windward. However, the wind had veered more to the eastward, and they soon made port in safety with a fair wind. The other boat had got in ahead of them, having left them to their fate when the mast went over the side, finding it as much as they could do to take care of themselves; and had reported Mr. Dobbins' boat as lost.

On the arrival of Sailing-Master Wm. V. Taylor, a skillful and experienced officer, which was about the 30th of March, Commodore Perry left him in command at Erie, and hastened to Pittsburgh to make complete arrangements for the carronades, shot, shell, etc., and to procure iron and other matters, in which he was materially aided by the advice and services of Capt. A. R. Woolley, a skillful and intelligent ordnance officer of the army, from whom he obtained four small pieces of ordnance and some muskets. He also made arrangements to have canvas for the sails and sailmakers forwarded from Philadelphia, and to hurry up a gang of carpenters and block-makers, on their way from the latter place.

On his return to Erie, in conjunction with Gen. Mead, he had a redoubt constructed on the bluff where the land light-house now stands, and three long 12-pounders mounted; and on the bluff known as Garrison Hill, near the village, where a regiment of troops were encamped, another was thrown up, and four pieces obtained at Pittsburgh mounted upon it. They also had a rude block-house erected on the point of the bluff east of the cascade, which effectually cov-

ered the vessels on the stocks at its base. In the rear of this block-house a brigade was encamped. The remainder of the troops were encamped on the banks of Lee's Run, at the mouth of which the gun-boats were being constructed; and on the bluff, directly above, a small redoubt with two long 12-pounders mounted. In addition to the troops, about 1000 strong, there were some 400 carpenters and other workmen upon and about the vessels, who were under a temporary organization, and would have done good service in case of an attack. Thus, it will be seen, had the enemy attempted to destroy the vessels, they would have met with a warm reception. Notwithstanding, there were those who would disparage these hasty preparations of defense, got up under the most unfavorable circumstances, and who sought to ridicule Perry's squadron as a "lot of cock-boats manned with Rhode Island fishermen." But they were of a class not having the good of their country and the ascendancy of her flag at heart in this war; and there were many such to be found along the frontier as well as elsewhere.

The work on the vessels now went on briskly, and on the 15th of April two of the gunboats were launched, and named, respectively, Tigress and Porcupine, and on the 1st of May the Scorpion. They were immediately fitted out, manned and armed—the Tigress and Porcupine with a long 32-pounder each, the Scorpion with a long 24 and a long 12-pounder. These vessels, now being ready for service, materially added to the defense of the place.

*[The following paragraphs, from the manuscript record of Capt. Daniel Dobbins, are here inserted, in place of the briefer and less graphic account of the same expedition, as recorded by his son.—ED.]*

"On the evening of the 23d of May Capt. Perry sent for me and said, he was going to Buffalo that night to join Commodore Chauncey on Lake Ontario, and be at the contemplated bombardment of Fort George, which was to take place in a day or two; wanted me to accompany him, and ordered me to prepare a boat immediately. I obeyed; and about 8 p.m. we started in rather a quiet way, as he did not wish our departure made public.

"The night was rather pleasant, with the wind off the land. The next morning we stopped at Chatauque, distant about thirty miles from Erie, to get something to eat at a house not far distant from the shore. Capt. Parry not liking the looks of things said, 'I believe we will push on, as this is a hard-looking spot for victuals.' I then observed I had something to eat in a basket on board the boat, which had been put up by Mrs. Dobbins when I left home. A man was then dispatched for the basket, from which we took a lunch while comfortably seated on a log.

"That night we arrived at Buffalo, where we were informed [by Major John G. Camp], 'The enemy have possession of the river, and you had better keep a sharp lookout while going down.' The next morning we started, and pulling along down close in with the American side, arrived at Schlosser about noon, without stopping, being molested, or in fact seeing or speaking to any one, friend or foe. On passing Grand Island I once thought I saw a man in amongst the trees, and mentioned it to Com. Perry, but on observing close it proved to be nothing but a stump. As we could not procure horses at Schlosser, we concluded to push along on foot, leaving the men at Schlosser. After walking about two miles to the Falls, and it raining very hard, we concluded to stop. I here made another attempt to get horses, and after some trouble made out to get an old nag, for the use of which I paid the owner \$3 in advance. As this was the only one to be got, Com. Perry concluded to go on alone, and gave me orders to return to Schlosser, and prepare some boats that were there, for the reception of a draft of men that would probably be up the next day, and to take them on up to Conjaquatas creek, a short distance below Black Rock, which was at that time a temporary naval station.

"I soon got the commodore mounted on this old horse, after fitting him out with rope stirrups, blind bridle, etc., all of which I fitted with my own hands, and off he started. I then returned to Schlosser. Next morning, not feeling satisfied at his going alone in this way, mounted on a miserable old horse, and himself in full dress, a fine mark for

the scattering Indians and scouting parties on both sides of the river, I ventured contrary to orders to follow him on foot, and did so on down to Youngstown, distant twelve miles. After being assured of his safe arrival I returned, and on my way back met with the very difficulty I had anticipated for him; viz., as I was passing along the river where the banks were within musket-shot of each other, a party of British soldiers fired across the river at me, but without effect. That evening, 26th, as was expected, a draft of men came up, whom I took in charge and proceeded on up to Conjaquatas creek, where I found Com. Perry had already arrived.

"I was then ordered to dismount some guns from the batteries on shore, and get them, together with all the naval stores at the station, on board the vessels, which duty I performed and came up to Erie in command of the schooner Ohio. The British squadron we were informed were lying in wait for us near the foot of the lake and in that case it required the greatest caution to elude them. We were drove back to Buffalo bay once with a heavy head wind, but were only four days from the time we left Black Rock, or commenced tracking up the rapids, until we arrived at Erie. I once saw the lights of the enemy from the decks of my vessel while we were working up past them in the night."

On the 27th of May, Fort George fell. The part Commodore Perry bore in this telling affair, is a matter of history, and was the first twig of the cluster of laurels so soon to adorn his brow.

On the 28th, the detachment of officers and men arrived at Schlosser, and were immediately embarked for Black Rock, where they arrived the next day; Commodore Perry had already arrived, having come up by land. After the capture of Fort George, the enemy evacuated the Niagara frontier to a great extent. Commodore Perry at once determined to avail himself of this condition of matters, to get the vessels purchased by the Government and prepared for war purposes by Henry Eckford, and kept in Conjaquades creek by the batteries of the enemy on the opposite shore, up to Erie if possible. At once orders were given to dis-



mount the guns from the batteries, and mount them on the vessels; and also to get all the stores on board, which duty was performed with celerity. On the 6th of June, the vessels being ready, the work of tracking them up the rapids commenced. This was a tedious job and lasted a week, though, in addition to the ox-teams and sailors, they had 200 soldiers under the command of Captains Brevoort and Younge. Unfortunately, they had no fair wind during the process, that the vessels might have assisted with their sails. On the morning of the 13th the last vessel got out of the rapids.

The detachment of officers and soldiers detailed by General Dearborn, to assist in getting the vessels up the rapids, were permitted to remain on board to assist in navigating and defending the vessels on the passage to Erie. This little flotilla was composed of the following vessels: Brig Caledonia (prize), armament, two long 24's and one long 12-pounder; schooner Somers (formerly Catherine, when purchased), armament, two long 18-pounders; sloop Trippe (formerly Contractor, when purchased), armament, one long 24-pounder; schooner Ohio (purchased), armament, one long 24-pounder; schooner Amelia (purchased), armament, one long 24-pounder. I may be in error in giving the arrangement of armament, though I think not. One thing is certain, there was not a 32-pounder on board any of them, as some historians have said, as there were but three all told, and they were previously taken to Erie, as I have before stated. The names of the commanders I have not at hand, except that the Caledonia was the flagship, and of course commanded by Commodore Perry, and the Ohio, by Mr. Dobbins; the rest of the commanders had been ordered from Erie.

On the evening of the 13th they sailed for Erie, but were driven back to Buffalo bay the next day with a heavy head wind. On the evening of the 14th, they sailed again. Great caution and vigilance were necessary in order to elude the fleet of the enemy then at the foot of the lake, and constantly on the lookout for them. The British fleet consisted of the following vessels: The Queen Charlotte with an armament

of seventeen guns; Lady Prevost, of thirteen guns; Hunter, of ten guns; Little Belt, of three guns; Chippewa, of one gun. Had they encountered our little flotilla, there would have been some warm work, but the disparity of force was too great to make a successful defense, consequently victory would have been with them, and British ascendancy on the lakes have been prolonged. But fortune favored Perry, and he managed to elude them. So near were they in meeting, that when off Dunkirk, the wind being light ahead, and the weather hazy, Commodore Perry anchored his vessels close in shore in order not to be seen from the offing. While here, a man made his appearance on the bank of the lake, and made signals. The commodore sent a boat for him, when he gave the information that the enemy had been at anchor the night before off the Twenty-mile creek below Erie, and sent on shore to obtain fresh supplies—that from an intermediate point, he could see both fleets at the same time. But good luck was on our side; our little squadron safely entered the harbor at Erie on the morning of the 19th of June. Every precaution, every preparation had been duly attended to by Commodore Perry, as he invariably had a system and code for all important matters. The code of signals he adopted, and the order of battle fixed for the vessels, were promulgated from Buffalo and were as follows:

*Code of Signals Adopted for the Squadron.*

- One gun—Get under way.
- Green, at the fore—Form the order of sailing ahead.
- Green, at the main—Form the order of sailing abreast.
- Green, at mizzen peak—Form the line of battle on the starboard tack.
- Green, in the fore rigging—Form the line of battle on the larboard tack.
- Green, in the main rigging—Close more the present order.
- White, at the fore—Open more the present order.
- White, at the main—Tack.
- White, at the mizzen peak—Follow the motions of the commodore.
- Ensign, at the gaff—Engage the enemy.
- White, at the mizzen, with stop in the middle—Chase.

Ensign, in the fore rigging—Repair on board the flagship, all commanders.

Green and white, at the main gaff—Come within hail.

It is expected officers will pay strict attention to the order of sailing.

No property other than public, or passengers, to be received on board any of the vessels under my command.

*Order of Sailing Abreast.*

Somers    Amelia    Caledonia    Ohio    Trippe

*Order of Sailing Ahead.*

Trippe  
Ohio  
Caledonia  
Amelia  
Somers

O. H. PERRY.

BUFFALO, June 12, 1813.

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#### IV. BUILDING AND EQUIPPING THE FLEET.

When at the lower end of the lake, the British fleet usually rendezvoused at what is known as Mohawk bay, below Grand river. It is an indentation of the main land, with Gull Island and the long reef extending off to the southward and eastward in front. It is a fine, spacious roadstead, with plenty of water and good holding ground. From here they would sail out occasionally to watch the movements on the American side. They must have been rampant on hearing of Perry arriving safely at Erie with his little flotilla.

The vessels to compose the squadron were now all within the bay at Erie, and the business of equipping went rapidly forward. The courthouse had been converted into a sail-loft, and the sails were nearly completed; the fitting of rigging was mostly done on board the vessels.

It may not be generally known that Commodore Chauncey was the senior officer on Lake Erie as well as on Lake Ontario, and that everything of importance connected with the building and equipping of Perry's squadron had to come

through him, instead of coming direct from the Navy Department to Perry. Hence the delay of many matters, particularly in procuring crews for the vessels.

The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* were 110 feet between the perpendiculars, 100 feet straight rabbet, 30 feet beam, and 9 feet hold. Mr. Noah Brown, the efficient and enterprising master-builder, gave them this shallow depth of hold, in order to have a good height of quarters or bulwarks, and at the same time not show a high side; and also to secure a light draught of water. They were hastily constructed of such timber as came handy, though staunchly built. In the language of Mr. Brown to one of the workmen who was somewhat particular in finishing his job, "We want no extras; plain work, plain work, is all we want. They are only required for one battle; if we win, that is all that will be wanted of them. If the enemy are victorious, the work is good enough to be captured." Many people are in error in regard to the name of the *Lawrence*, and give it as *St. Lawrence*. The name was given by the Navy Department in honor of Captain James Lawrence, who fell mortally wounded while in command of the frigate *Chesapeake* in her unfortunate encounter with the British frigate *Shannon*; and Commodore Perry adopted Lawrence's last words as a motto for his fighting flag: "Don't give up the ship."

The schooners *Ariel*, of pilot-boat model, and *Scorpion*, were about sixty-three tons; the *Tigress* and *Porcupine*, about fifty-two tons; of the *Caledonia*, *Somers*, *Ohio*, *Trippe* and *Amelia*, I have before given the tonnage.

There is some discrepancy between those who should have a correct knowledge, as to the date when the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* were launched. Mackenzie has it "on the 24th of May," and most authors have adopted that date. From circumstances and indirect data, as also the opinions of living witnesses who were connected with the building, I make it that the *Lawrence* was launched on or about the 20th of June, and the *Niagara* on the 4th of July.

Full crews of the vessels were now what was needed, and up to June 25th there had but about 150 men and officers arrived from Lake Ontario, that being where they

were to come from, and many of these were sick and otherwise disabled. Commodore Perry was every few days receiving communications from the Navy Department, urging him to hasten the equipment of his squadron, so as to act in conjunction with General Harrison in a combined movement against the enemy by land and water. This was perplexing to Perry, as he was short of men and officers; and to make matters worse, the 200 soldiers, with Captains Brevoort and Younge, who had gone up on board the flotilla of small vessels from Black Rock to Erie, and which he had made application to retain, to be distributed through the squadron as marines, were recalled. On the 10th of July, Perry had received a letter from General Dearborn, saying: "By order of the War Department, the soldiers must return," excepting Captain Brevoort, whom he permitted to remain, as Captain Brevoort had navigated the lakes several years in command of the brig Adams, under control of the War Department. The troops were immediately sent in boats to Buffalo, under command of Captain Younge. This was a sad blow to Perry in its interference with manning his vessels. However, after writing urgent letters to Commodore Chauncey in regard to the want of officers and men, he got news of a draft being forwarded, and on the 17th, "dispatched a sailing-master with boats, to be joined by the two sent down with the troops," etc., to bring them up to Erie. The following is a copy of the original order given to Sailing-Master Dobbins; it shows the difference between the number of men expected by Perry, and the number received:

ERIE, 17 July, 1813.

SIR: You will repair to Buffalo with two boats, and there wait until the officers and men destined for the vessels of war at this place, arrive. You will, on your arrival at Buffalo, endeavor to collect, in conjunction with Mr. Carter, boats, in addition to the four belonging to the Navy, for the transportation of the men, say three or four hundred, from that place to Erie. The boats to be collected in Buffalo Creek. Great caution will be necessary on your way up, to prevent being intercepted by the enemy. Should they appear off

this harbor, I will send an express to Chatauqua and the Twenty-Mile creek to give information.

Very Respectfully  
Your Obt. Servt

O. H. PERRY.

Daniel Dobbins,  
Sailing Master U. S. Navy.

Accordingly, Mr. Dobbins got information both at Chatauque and Twenty-mile creek, and arrived safe with the draft of men, numbering only seventy-five. On the 30th he made another trip, and brought sixty officers and men.

On the 25th of July, the vessels were completed, fitted and armed, but only partially manned; and at the same time Commodore Perry was in receipt of frequent communications from the Department and General Harrison, urging him to a forward movement; and, to add still to his anxiety, General Harrison informed him that "the enemy would, in a few days, launch their new ship *Detroit*, and had just received a reinforcement of experienced officers and prime seamen." This was truly annoying to Perry, as his vessels were helpless without men. However, while waiting, the men on board were constantly exercised at the guns, working ship, etc. Everything was done in the way of completion and preparation; even the ballast was stowed temporarily, to have it occupy as small a space as possible, and to get the trim of the vessel. This all in order that everything could be replaced quickly after they passed the bar.

The enemy were in the habit of making almost daily visits to the roadstead at Erie; sometimes the *Queen Charlotte* would make the visit alone; at other times the whole fleet would make the menace. On the 21st of July the fleet made one of these "calls," when several of the gunboats ran down to the entrance of the channel and exchanged a few shots with them, with but little effect on either side, when they bid adieu and left. The lack of crews for his vessels was the cause of Perry's not following them at once, could he have been outside the bar.

Here again was shown, on the part of the Government, the lack of knowledge of the frontier, and matters connected

with it. The naval operations on Lake Erie should at once have been designated a separate command, as Commodore Chauncey had his hands full on Lake Ontario, and of course could give but little attention to operations on Lake Erie. Again, the men should have been sent direct from Philadelphia, instead of first taking them from New York, and eastern ports, to Sackett's Harbor, thence to Buffalo, then to Erie, making at least double the distance it would have been from Philadelphia, had they come direct. Many of the carpenters, all the sail-makers and block-makers, came from there; then why not the seamen? Had this course been pursued, Perry would have been on the lake with his squadron and captured the British fleet before they could have got out their large ship, the *Detroit*, and would also have coöperated with General Harrison, and relieved the western end of the lake of the continual harrassing it suffered. Once supreme on the lake, the enemy would have withdrawn his forces to Malden, and the *Detroit* river.

While Commodore Perry is waiting for sailors, let us look at what is going on in the way of commerce. As is always the case, there are those whose cupidity will tempt them to run the closest blockade, and the fabulous prices were sure to bring out our frontiersmen. We find the sloop *Dove*, of twenty tons, Captain Seth Barney; the *Eagle*, twenty-five tons, Captain Samuel Perry; and *Teazer*, twenty-five tons, Captain Sebastian Adams. These craft were mostly employed between Erie and Buffalo. There were also a number of open boats, commanded by William C. Johnson, John Montgomery, Stephen Mack, Isaac H. Phelps, Zadoc Willman, Irad Kelly, Samuel Wilkeson, and others. They usually made the run in the night, if possible; and, should the enemy show himself, they dodged into Cattaraugus. Freights were from \$2 to \$3 per barrel.

Commodore Perry having established a recruiting station on shore to enlist landsmen, and having succeeded in getting about 100, as Lieut. John Brooks, Perry's chief marine officer, had enlisted forty men at Pittsburgh and Erie, the commodore concluded he had enough (some 300, after landing the invalids) to cope with the enemy before

they got their new ship Detroit out; and a further incentive to make a forward move, was that the enemy were endeavoring to concentrate a heavy force at Long Point, whence they were to be transported with their fleet to some point near Erie, where the troops and Indians were to be landed, and act in conjunction with their fleet in an attempt to take the village and destroy the vessels. Commodore Perry hastily informed the Secretary that he apprehended no danger of their getting possession of the vessels, provided they *did* capture the village, as the vessels were off at anchor in the bay, which the British fleet could not enter, and he could defend them against an attack from the shore.

On Sunday morning, August 1st, he got under way with all the vessels in a light breeze from the northeast, and worked down to the entrance of the channel, when they commenced making preparations for getting over the bar. In the afternoon Major General Mead and suite visited the Lawrence, and were received with a salute. The general was much gratified with the fine warlike and formidable appearance of the vessels, more particularly the Lawrence and Niagara. General Mead had rendered valuable services in the building and equipment of the vessels, and also in preparations for their defense, had they and the village been attacked; and Commodore Perry availed himself of this opportunity to tender the general his thanks, not only on his own account, but in behalf of the Navy Department.

The Lawrence and Niagara were twin vessels in every particular; were built from the same moulds, were fitted and armed alike, viz., pierced for twenty guns, mounting eighteen 32-pound carronades, and two long 12's in their "bridle" or bow-ports, and were full-rigged brigs. At the present day they would be considered small, though at that time they were immense.

Some authors give quite a minute account of religious services having been held on board the Lawrence that afternoon. This is all erroneous; no such services were held. Not that it was distasteful to Commodore Perry, but he had a time for everything, and the present was occupied with preparations for crossing the bar. As one of the numerous



versions of this fictitious record at one time gained belief, the writer, on reading it some years since, showed it to the Rev. Robert Reid, who undoubtedly was the clergyman alluded to, he being the only one located in Erie at the time, and was told by him it was not so. He said he had held services on board at the cascade, while they lay there, but not on this occasion; and spoke of visiting the bank of the bay when the salute was fired for General Mead. There have also been recorded some semi-slurring notices of the "gaping country people lining the shores to see the square-rigged vessel, and feast their eyes with the strangeness of the spectacle." This is all bosh. Square-rigged vessels had navigated the lake ten years before this. Besides, the people knew little and cared less about the *rig* of the vessels. They felt proud of their formidable appearance, and rejoiced to see that we now had a fleet that could cope with the British, who had controlled the lakes since the commencement of the war, and menaced us so long and frequently; were glad that we could meet the enemy and make them "ours." They felt that there would soon be an end to the frequent alarms; and the imaginary war-whoop of the Indian would no more haunt their midnight slumbers. They could now go to their homes and feel a security they had not felt for the last year.

Early on the morning of the 2d of August, Mr. Dobbins took charge of the *Lawrence* as pilot, and kedged her to the entrance of the channel, he having sounded and buoyed it out the day before. The water was found to be quite low in consequence of the east wind. The *Niagara* was then kedged up near the bar, and moored with springs on her cables, her port broadside facing the roadstead. The smaller vessels were then moored in a somewhat similar manner, and preparations made to defend the *Lawrence* while on the bar. The work of getting out the guns, ballast and all heavy matters, now went on briskly on board the *Lawrence*, and in three hours everything was removed; the camels alongside, the timber across, and camels sunk. The guns were all landed with scows on the sand beach near at hand and rolled up on timbers to such a position that they could be quickly reshipped in a short time, should occasion re-

quire. The fallacious yarn of the guns being "hoisted out with the charges in them, and placed in boats, which were dropped astern," is novel in the extreme, particularly when a landing was close at hand, and they exposed to sudden heavy winds; and does injustice to the intelligence of Commodore Perry. The absurdity, if not danger, of routing loaded guns about in this way, must be obvious to any one, but more particularly to those familiar with the handling and exercise of ordnance; therefore, this attempt at showing extraordinary preparation for an attack, condemns itself. It is well known that it takes but a moment to load a gun with prepared ammunition. No, sir! the gallant Perry knew his business better, than to be guilty of such an absurdity. Again, it has been recorded that a "water battery, of three long 12's, had been mounted on the beach," etc. This is all error. The guns were mounted in the redoubt upon the bank, where the land lighthouse now stands, at least 100 feet above the water, and completely commanding the channel. There was also the field battery on Garrison Hill, directly abreast of the channel.

The camels were an invention of Mr. Brown; were square, having no rake at either end, about ninety feet long, forty feet wide, and six feet hold. They had two holes six inches square cut through their bottoms, with curbs one foot high round them, and guides to conduct the long plugs into the holes when required.

The camels were placed one on each side the vessel, the plugs taken out and filled with water. Long heavy timbers were then shoved athwart the vessel through her ports, and strongly lashed to her deck frame, and large ring-bolts in her side. Blocking was then placed under the ends of the timbers on the camels, and wedged up. The holes were then plugged up, and the pumps set at work, and as the water was discharged, the vessel was lifted. Owing to continued easterly winds, causing the water to lower, the process of sinking the camels had to be repeated, before the *Lawrence* floated. Thus, after a most laborious task of night and day work, she was got over early on the morning of the 4th, and towed out to anchorage; and as an example

of the never-flagging energy of Commodore Perry, by two o'clock p. m. everything was replaced, guns mounted, a salute fired and she ready for action. The Niagara was now kedged to the channel's entrance, and preparation made to lighten her, while the camels were being prepared for their work.

In the meantime, early in the morning, the Queen Charlotte and Lady Prevost made their appearance in the offing, and hove to to reconnoitre, and were soon joined by the balance of their squadron. The wind, at the time, was from the southward and eastward, which made the Lawrence and smaller vessels head the same course of the Niagara, then hard aground; which, together with other circumstances, deceived the enemy as to the condition of our vessels, they supposing (as was afterwards ascertained) that the vessels were all over the bar and ready for action. As further illustration, I will state that to any one familiar with the climate and winds of Lake Erie, and the coast near the port of Erie, it is known that, viewing the coast from the offing during a southeasterly wind, the haze incident to such wind, coupled with the high land in the rear, deceives the vision. Thus, after an hour or so, they filled away, bore up and stood across the lake. Commodore Perry, wishing to know the course they would take, dispatched the schooner Ariel, Lieut. Packet, to follow them and ascertain it if possible. On the return of the Ariel, Lieut. Packet reported that they had gone to Long Point; which was afterwards ascertained to be the fact; and that they landed a courier to hasten to Malden and report. They then crowded all sail for Malden, and did not show themselves outside of the Detroit river, until they came out for an encounter with Perry on the 10th of September following.

Some authors have recorded that "the Ariel and Scorpion were sent out to annoy the enemy at long shot," etc. This is an error; the above is the truth. The absence of the enemy was more to the liking of the vigilant Perry than their presence at this particular time. Besides, sending two small schooners out twelve or fifteen miles in the lake to annoy the whole British fleet, particularly as they must be within a

mile or so of the enemy, to be within range, I fear would be considered bad strategy. The fact is much more creditable to Perry than this fiction.

Of course everything was in disorder on board the *Lawrence*, as she had but just got clear of the camels, and not a gun on board when the enemy hove in sight. On board the *Niagara*, they had just begun to lighten her of her guns, but held up at once and prepared for a defense. Let us see what could have been done had the enemy stood in and attacked. First, the *Niagara* had her port broadside bearing upon the roadstead, mounting twelve 32-pound carronades, and two long 12's; *Caledonia*, three long 12's; *Somers*, one long 24 and one long 12; *Ariel*, four long 12's; *Tigress*, one long 32; *Scorpion*, one long 12 and one long 24; *Trippe*, one long 32, with three long 12's in the redoubt on Lighthouse bluff, and four or five small pieces on Garrison Hill; and then the two long 12's of the *Lawrence* could have been mounted behind a sand ridge near at hand, and within a few rods of the beach.

This was fully equal to the armament of the British squadron, and no doubt a successful defense could have been made, as probably the first move Commodore Perry would have made would be to trip the anchor off the *Lawrence* and run her on the sand beach, to keep her out of the hands of the enemy, as she could have made no defense; and then gathered the small vessels close in with the bar. Should the *Queen Charlotte* have come close enough in to be within range of her seventeen 24-pound carronades, she would be within range of the *Niagara's* 32-pound carronades, which would have at least balanced their force; and should an attempt have been made to board, a heavy force could have been thrown on board the vessels from the shore in a very short time.

However, the enemy made off, and Perry was rejoiced at it, as he was not ready for them. As soon as the enemy bore up, the work of lightening was commenced on board the *Niagara*, and so rapidly was it pushed that in the course of two hours, everything was on the beach. In the meantime the wind shifted to the westward, which raised the water;

and the next day she was afloat, armed, and fully equipped for battle.

As soon as the *Lawrence* had been got afloat, the smaller vessels were taken over with but little difficulty; except the schooners *Ohio* and *Amelia*, which vessels were moored at the inside entrance to the channel, with their broadsides facing the roadstead. I mention this fact, as some authors claim that they were taken over the bar before the *Lawrence*.

Perry now had his squadron all safely in the lake, and with the exception of the proper complement of men, was ready for the enemy in his best shape.

The British squadron, when making their last visit, but one, off *Erie*, went to *Port Dover* on the main land and in the rear of *Long Point*, where *Commodore Barclay* and his officers were invited to a dinner given by the inhabitants. In reply to a complimentary toast, he said he "expected to find the Yankee brigs hard and fast aground on the bar at *Erie* when he returned; in which predicament it would be but a small job to destroy them." The result of this "return" I have already stated. However, had he made the attempt, he would probably have found it much more of a "job" than he anticipated; as I have stated, Perry could have made a good defense.

The whole country burst into a blaze of glory over the victory of the 10th of September; and yet Perry was deserving of full as much credit for having got up his squadron under such unfavorable circumstances. Had the Government placed the operations upon the upper lakes under a separate command, many of these difficulties would have been obviated. It was but natural to presume that *Commodore Chauncey* would not send these requisites from *Lake Ontario*, unless there was a surplus over and above, sufficient to fully arm and equip, officer and man, his own immediate command. Seamen on the seaboard were averse to this lake service, as a general thing, and it was a herculean job to transport heavy ordnance, anchors and supplies by land.

These were some of the many difficulties Perry had to labor under, as frequent appeals to *Commodore Chauncey* had but little effect. Add to this, every day or two he was

in receipt of letters from the Department, urging him to move and coöperate with General Harrison; and also frequent letters from the general himself. But he could not make the move with any degree of safety, for the want of officers and men. He was overworked, both bodily and mentally; added to which were these frequent urgent appeals, bordering on censure. They wore upon his health, and it is astonishing he did not break down under his troubles. However, he bore up manfully, with a determination to do his duty to his country and make the best of what he had.

Commodore Perry was a man of but few words, rather sedate and of serious turn of mind; seldom if ever addicted to profanity in the slightest degree, or even levity; prompt and emphatic in giving an order, though always courteous, and of charitable and generous impulses. His deportment was such as to command respect under all circumstances.

It was subsequently ascertained, that the concentration of a military and naval force at Port Dover, or some point on the main land near Long Point, the news of which had been communicated to Commodore Perry by General Porter of Black Rock, was fully contemplated, but failed for the want of a sufficiency of troops at the proper time. Therefore, Commodore Perry determined to follow the British squadron, and if not encountering them, to at least reconnoitre the coast, and if possible, ascertain what movements were on foot. With this view, such of his vessels as could be manned, with the addition of volunteers from the army, were hastily prepared for the cruise, and at 4 a. m. of the 6th, the squadron were under way for Long Point. On their arrival off the Point, nothing of the enemy was to be seen. They then stood in for the main land, and after sweeping the coast for some distance and making no discoveries, returned to their anchorage at Erie, there to await the expected reinforcements. The vessels, and their commanders, composing the squadron on this short cruise, were as follows:

Lawrence (flag-ship), Commodore Perry; Niagara, Lieut. Daniel Turner; Caledonia, Purser Humphrey Ma-

grath; Ariel, Acting Lieut. John Packet; Scorpion, Sailing-Master Stephen Champlin; Somers, Sailing-Master Thomas Almy; Tigress, Master's Mate A. McDonald; Porcupine, Midshipman George Senat. The Ohio and Trippe were left behind for want of crews. The Amelia, having been condemned as unseaworthy, was laid up at Erie.

Immediately on their return, preparations were made for another cruise, and during the 7th and 8th all were busy with getting stores and provisions on board. It has been said by some authors, that military stores to a large amount for General Harrison's army at Sandusky were taken on board. This is erroneous. Very little if any were received on board, as there were none at Erie; and furthermore, the vessels had only capacity for their own supplies, and berth-deck room for their crews.

Perry now hesitated about assuming the responsibility of encountering the enemy with his vessels half-manned, particularly as they were, or soon would be, reinforced by their new ship Detroit; and was canvassing the matter in conversation with Purser Hamilton, his intimate friend, at his lodgings on shore, when Midshipman John B. Montgomery entered and presented him a letter. It was from Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott, then on his way to join the squadron, with a number of officers and ninety seamen. This was joyful news for Perry, and he immediately repaired on board and dispatched Acting Lieut. Packet with the Ariel, to proceed down the coast to Cattaraugus, and meet Lieut. Elliott and party. The Ariel returned with them on the 10th, and they were immediately distributed among the vessels of the squadron; they proving to be a much superior class to those previously received, which was all very gratifying to Perry. Lieut. Elliott at once superseded Lieut. Turner in the command of the Niagara.

At this time, the commissions that had been made out for some time, and had been sent the usual roundabout course via Lake Ontario, were received from Commodore Chauncey. By these changes, Elliott became master-commander, and Messrs. Holdup, Packet, Yarnell, Edwards and Conkling, were promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

Mr. Dobbins, who had been actively engaged on general duty while getting the vessels over the bar, was now ordered to the Ohio, to "get over the bar as soon as possible, and to engage three good pilots immediately."<sup>1</sup> The pilots received were Azeal Wilkinson,<sup>2</sup> who died near Buffalo a few years since, and James Lee, son of Capt. William Lee, an early navigator. The other name I have not at hand.

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## V. THE BATTLE THAT MADE PERRY FAMOUS.

The squadron being now ready, sailed on the morning of the 12th of August for the head of the lake, and consisted of the following vessels, their armament and commanders, viz.: Lawrence (flag-ship), eighteen 32-pound carronades, Commodore Perry; Niagara, same armament, Capt. Jesse D. Elliott; Caledonia, three long 12-pounders; Purser Humphrey Magrath; Ariel, four long 12-pounders, Lieut. John Packet; Trippe, one long 32-pounder, Lieut. Joseph E. Smith; Tigress, one long 32-pounder, Lieut. A. H. M. Conkling; Somers, one long 24 and one long 12-pounder, Sailing-Master Thomas C. Almy; Scorpion, one long 24 and one long 12-pounder, Sailing-Master Stephen Cham-

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1. The following order is preserved among the Dobbins papers:

U. S. SLOOP OF WAR LAWRENCE  
OFF ERIE, 8th July 1813

SIR: You will immediately take command of the U. S. Schooner Ohio, and get her over the bar as soon as possible.

Respectfully, etc.,

O. H. PERRY

Sailing-master Daniel Dobbins  
U. S. Navy

P. S. You will also look out for two or three good pilots and engage them as soon as possible.

2. Azeal (or Asel) Wilkinson, the pilot of the Ariel, stood at his post throughout the battle of September 10th, "though the thunder of the great guns brought the blood from his ears and nose, and permanently impaired his hearing." (Lossing.) After the war he made his home at Colden, Erie Co., N. Y. He was present, with other veterans, at the unveiling of the Perry monument in Cleveland, Sept. 10, 1860, and gave to the historian Lossing many reminiscences of the great battle. On July 4, 1861, being in Buffalo to attend the celebration of the day, at the corner of Pearl and Mohawk streets, he suddenly fell to the pavement and died.



plin; Ohio, one long 24-pounder, Sailing-Master Daniel Dobbins; Porcupine, one long 32-pounder, Midshipman George Senat. The order of sailing was organized by the formation of two lines to sail abreast, viz., Ariel, Lawrence, Porcupine, Caledonia and Ohio in the starboard line; Scorpion, Niagara, Trippe, Tigress and Somers in the port line. There was also a *single* line, in which each vessel was to engage a certain antagonist, subject to circumstances. There were also signals established, in case the vessels got separated in the night, to recognize each other on meeting, as also in meeting with a strange sail.

On the 16th, the squadron arrived off Cunningham's (Kelly's) Island, without having seen or heard of the enemy. It was blowing fresh from the westward at the time, and the Scorpion, being a fast sailer, was ahead; and discovering a small craft coming out of Put-in-Bay through the east channel, at once gave chase, and would have caught her, but unfortunately grounded on the reef off the east side of Middle Bass Island, and the little schooner made good her escape to Canada. It proved to be the Ottawa, previously captured at Maumee; she was cruising among the islands, watching the movements of our vessels. The next day the squadron came to anchor off Sandusky, and Commodore Perry dispatched an officer in a boat to Lower Sandusky to inform General Harrison of the arrival of the squadron. The next day the general and staff, with Generals Cass and McArthur, Colonel Gaines, Major Croghan and some twenty chiefs of the Wyandot, Shawnee and Delaware Indians, came down; among the latter were several leading chiefs, Crane, Blackhoof, Captain Tommy and others. The object of bringing the Indians was that they might see the "big canoes," and "big guns," and then report to the members of their tribes who had joined the enemy, what they might expect should an encounter take place. The Indians expressed great astonishment, more particularly when the salute was fired in honor of General Harrison's visit. After fully consulting and due consideration as to the situation, it was concluded to make Put-in-Bay the rendezvous, to which place Perry repaired with his squadron, and General Harrison and party returned to camp.

On the 25th, Perry got under way with the squadron from Put-in-Bay, and stood across the head of the lake for Malden, to reconnoitre. He discovered the enemy at anchor within Bar Point, not having been reinforced by their new ship, as could be discovered from the offing; and the roadstead being immediately off from the mouth of the river, and within range of Bar Point, where there was a heavy battery, in case of an attack, they could receive great assistance from the shore; consequently, Perry concluded it impracticable at that time to attack, and returned to Put-in-Bay.

There was at this time much sickness in the squadron, consisting of bilious fever and dysentery; those mostly affected were from the seaboard. The change from salt to fresh water, combined with bad salt provisions and few vegetables, was fruitful of disease; and Commodore Perry was taken down with fever himself, as were also a number of his officers, including surgeons Barton and Parsons. The latter, with an honorable self-devotion, continued his work, though he had to be carried in a cot to visit the sick.

On the 31st, the squadron received a welcome reinforcement from General Harrison's army, in the way of some fifty volunteers, including several officers and one doctor, W. T. Taliaferro. They were mostly from Kentucky, and many of them had been boatmen on the western rivers, which as "watermen" would give them a slight knowledge of the duties they would be required to perform. They were immediately distributed through the squadron, to serve as marines in place of an expected guard that had been promised from Lake Ontario. This brought the muster-roll up to about 490 souls. Great attention was paid to drilling the men in the various duties pertaining to a man-of-war, and making every preparation for battle, as it was daily expected. Commodore Perry became convalescent after a week's confinement, and was able to take the deck and get his squadron under way for a second visit to Malden.

On his arrival off the place he found they had their new ship *Detroit* fully equipped and at anchor with the rest of the squadron. Perry stood off and on all day, but they did

not accept the banter, so he bore up for Sandusky, to again communicate with General Harrison. Upon his arrival at that place, he found letters from the Secretary of the Navy, the contents of which were a source of mortification. It appeared that the frequent calls upon Commodore Chauncey for reinforcements, had prompted that officer to answer with a very pungent and sarcastic letter. This so offended Perry that he applied to be "detached from the command on Lake Erie," assigning as a reason that "it was unpleasant to serve under a commander who had so little regard for his feelings," etc. These letters from the Secretary, though rebuking him for his frequent calls for additional officers and men, and also somewhat censuring him for what the Department deemed extravagant expenditures, closed with an appeal to his patriotism, and soothed his lacerated feelings with assurances of the confidence the Department still reposed in him; and at the same time counselled conciliation with Commodore Chauncey. On the same day he answered with a temperate and respectful reply, vindicating his conduct and rebutting the charges brought against him; the effect of which was, not only to satisfy the Secretary, but finally to restore kindly relations between Commodore Chauncey and himself.

Some change of officers now took place. Lieut. Smith was ordered to the Niagara; Lieut. Holdup to the command of the Trippe; Mr. Magrath to the Niagara, in his legitimate position as purser; and Lieut. Turner to the command of the Caledonia.

Mr. Dobbins had been dispatched to Erie for supplies and additional armament, as per the following order:

U. S. S. LAWRENCE,  
OFF SANDUSKY, 22d August, 1813.

SIR: You will proceed with the Ohio to Erie for the purpose of taking on board that vessel provisions and such other articles as are mentioned in the several requisitions you have in your possession. You will use every exertion to return to this place with all practicable speed; and on not finding the squadron at this place, you will proceed up Put-in-Bay and there wait our arrival.

Respectfully, etc.,

O. H. PERRY.

Sailing Master Daniel Dobbins,  
Comm'g U. S. schooner Ohio.

The following signals were to be observed :

OFF SANDUSKY, Aug. 21st, 1813.

On the appearance of any of the U. S. vessels of war off this place she will hoist her ensign at the mainmast-head, and fire one gun. After an interval of ten minutes she will fire two guns.

O. H. PERRY.

U. S. Schooner Ohio.

On the 3d September the Ohio returned to Sandusky, without meeting with any of the enemy's cruisers or other mishap, and was again dispatched on a similar trip, as the stock of provisions on hand was very low, and the beef not fit for use. The beef and pork had been put up in haste by the contractors at Erie, and of course carelessly; in consequence of which it nearly all became putrid in a short time, when exposed to the summer weather.

As the season was far advanced for a lengthy campaign, and the enemy's squadron showed no disposition for an immediate encounter the matter was canvassed in regard to making an attack upon Malden, and their vessels by a combined naval and land force. The most favored project was to transport the forces of General Harrison to one of the islands near the Canada shore, and from thence move in a body via the vessels of the squadron and boats, to some point in Pigeon Bay, say twenty miles from Malden, and move upon that post. At the same time, the squadron, after having landed the troops, to stand up and attack the vessels at anchor. However, this piece of strategy had its bad points, as, should the enemy get wind of it and attack our squadron in this crowded predicament, the probability would be a great slaughter and a defeat, as the decks of the vessels would be so filled with men as to render it impossible to work the guns with advantage.

About this time, three men, favorable to our cause, had made their escape from Malden, and communicated to Commodore Perry much valuable information, viz., that the British force at Malden was very short of provisions, and that at a council of military and naval commanders, it was determined their squadron should sail, and give battle to ours on the lake, or make the attempt to open communica-

tion with Long Point, their depot of supplies. They also gave information of their squadron, armament, etc.: Flag-ship Detroit, Commodore Barclay, nineteen guns; Queen Charlotte, Captain Finnis, seventeen guns; Lady Prevost, Lieut.-Commander Buchan, thirteen guns; brig Hunter, Lieut. Bignall, ten guns; Chippewa, Sailing-master Campbell, one gun; Little Belt, three guns; with thirty-two officers and 490 men, including troops serving as marines and volunteers. Some authors claim there were 502 in all, but I think this figure is a little too high. As will be seen, the number of officers and men of the two squadrons was about equal, though the British had the advantage in two respects, viz., the soldiers serving as marines on board their vessels were veterans, and of course far superior to the raw recruits received by Perry from General Harrison's army. Secondly, there were over 100 on the sick list on board the American squadron; whereas the British, being just out of port, all were in health.

There is no doubt that the British had much the advantage in regard to the quality of men—that is, those fit for duty. In regard to commanders, the advantage was decidedly with the British. Here was a young and inexperienced officer who had never seen a regular engagement, ship against ship, much less squadron against squadron; in fact, had never seen any war service, except it be a little in the Mediterranean during the Tripolitan disturbance; with a hastily got up squadron and armament; sickness prevailing among the crews of his vessels, and himself but just risen from a sick-bed; about to grapple with a veteran, who had served with distinction under the world-renowned Nelson in the battle of Trafalgar, and also in several other naval combats; and now in command of a squadron which, with the exception of one ship and two of the smaller vessels, had been cruising as war vessels under Capt. Finnis—an experienced officer and now second under Barclay—for several years.

However, to a great extent, Perry made up for his want of experience by his redoubtable energy and perseverance, counceled by his intuitive wisdom. Such a word as fail was

not found in his vocabulary. Thus, on the evening of the 9th of September, he summoned his commanders on board the *Lawrence* to receive their final instructions. He claimed the honor of fighting the enemy's flagship, with the *Lawrence*. The *Niagara* was allotted the *Queen Charlotte*; and so on. He also showed them his "fighting flag," which had been prepared before he left Erie, and on which were inscribed the last words of the gallant and lamented *Lawrence*, "Don't give up the ship." When the folds of this flag were thrown to the breeze, from the mainmast-head of the *Lawrence*, it was the signal to close with the enemy. He also enjoined upon them the advice of Nelson to his commanders under similar circumstances, "If you lay the enemy close alongside, you cannot be out of your place."

That of the 9th of September was one of those beautiful autumnal evenings peculiar to the lake region. The moon was at its full, the gentle land breeze was rippling the waters of the beautiful haven, and rustling the leaves of the surrounding forest. Occasionally was heard the hum of voices at the camp-fires on shore, accompanied by the "peep" of the frogs in Squaw harbor, a small inlet on the west side of Put-in-Bay; and heaven appeared to smile upon those here gathered for the deadly strife of the succeeding day. The officers were sauntering around the quarter-deck, enjoying social converse, or canvassing the probable result of the coming fight, which they knew must be near at hand. In this circle, none was more jovial, none was more gay, than the gifted and gallant Brooks. Ever noted for his genial spirit, fine social qualities, as well as manly beauty, he was a favorite wherever he went; and yet, alas, so soon to be sacrificed upon the altar of his country!

At the other end of the ship Jack was also enjoying himself seated upon a gun-carriage, hatch-combing, or upon the forecastle, cracking jokes, spinning yarns, or discussing the prospects of prize-money. Shortly the scene was changed. The announcement, "Eight bells," and the sharp note of the boatswain's call, "All hands stand by your hammocks," was followed by the shrill note of the fife and the tattoo of the rattling drum on shore. The "watch below" were soon

quietly sleeping in their hammocks, dreaming probably of distant dear ones and quiet homes; or mayhap, the booming of cannon, slaughter and carnage were fretting their slumbers. Alas, too true; many now sleeping so quietly, ere the same hour of the subsequent night, would be resting with mangled bodies upon the bottom of Lake Erie, wrapped in the same hammock they are now enjoying. This was the calm before the storm—the human mind at rest ere it was aroused to the frenzy of strife. Yes, such was the scene at Put-in-Bay the night before the battle.

As the sun rose on the beautiful morning of the 10th of September, "Sail ho!" was shouted by the lookout at the masthead of the *Lawrence*. "Where away?" responded Lieut. Forrest, the officer of the deck. "To the northward and westward, in the direction of the Detroit river," replied the lookout. The news was immediately communicated to Perry, and all was astir on board. Soon the enemy's vessels lifted one by one above the horizon, until six were counted. Immediately the signal, "Get under way," was flying from the masthead of the *Lawrence*, and in half an hour the whole squadron was beating out of the narrow passage, with the wind light at southwest. Rattlesnake Island lying immediately in front, Perry was endeavoring to weather it and keep the weather gage. Much time was taken up in this effort, and Perry becoming impatient, had given the order to bear up and go to leeward, as he "was determined to fight the enemy that day," when the wind shifted suddenly to the southward and eastward, which enabled them to clear the island to windward, and secured position to windward of the enemy. About this time, 10 a. m., the enemy seeing our squadron clearing the land, hove to in line on the port tack, with their heads to the westward, the two squadrons being now about eight miles apart. The American squadron had been formed with the *Niagara* in the van, as it was expected the *Queen Charlotte* would lead the enemy. It was now discovered that the enemy's line had been formed differently from what had been expected. Perry now ordered the *Niagara* to heave to until the *Lawrence* came up with her, when Perry held a conversation with Capt. Brevoort, the

acting marine officer of the Niagara, who was well acquainted with all the vessels of the enemy, except the Detroit, and gave the names and force of each vessel. The line of the enemy had formed as follows: Schooner Chippewa in the lead; next, barque Detroit; then brig Queen Charlotte; brig Hunter; schooner Lady Prevost; and sloop Little Belt.

Perry now changed his line, which was the work of only a few minutes, and arranged it as follows: Lawrence to lead in line with the Detroit, with the Scorpion and Ariel on her weather or port bow—they being good sailers—to act as dispatch vessels, and to support any portion of the line, should it be required; the Caledonia next, to meet the Hunter; the Niagara to meet the Queen Charlotte; the smaller vessels, the Somers, Porcupine, Tigress and Trippe, in line as named, to engage as they came up, without naming their particular opponents.

There was a three-knot breeze at this time, half past ten a. m., and the line being formed they all bore away for the enemy in gallant style. Perry now brought forth his battle burgee or "fighting flag," previously named, and having mustered the crew aft, unfolded it, and mounting a gun-slide, addressed them:

"My brave lads, the inscription on this flag is the last words of the late gallant Captain Lawrence, after whom this vessel is named. Shall I hoist it?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the unanimous response, when away it sped to the main-royal masthead of the Lawrence, and when the roll was broken and the folds given to the breeze, three hearty cheers were given for the flag, and three more for their gallant commander; the spirit of which was taken up by the crews of the different vessels as the flag was descried, and one continuous cheer along the line was the response to the motto, "*Don't give up the ship.*"

As the ordinary dinner-hour would find them in the midst of deadly strife, Perry ordered the noonday grog to be served, when the bread-bags and kids were produced for a lunch. Perry now visited every portion of his vessel's deck, and examined each gun and fixture. For every man he had



a pleasant and encouraging word. The Constitution's men, the Newport boys, and the hunting-shirted Kentuckians, each were kindly and encouragingly greeted.

For a time a death-like silence prevailed, and the approaching warriors appeared to be deeply absorbed in thought. The lake was smooth, and the gentle breeze wafted the vessels along without apparent motion. This lasted for an hour and a half, as our squadron gradually approached the enemy, steering for the head of their line on a course forming an acute angle of fifteen degrees. All necessary arrangements had been made for the coming strife. The decks had been sprinkled and sanded, to give a good foothold when blood began to flow; and this season was occupied mostly in arranging and the interchanging of friendship's offerings in case of death, disposing of their effects among their friends, distant and present, and like kindly offices for the survivors to execute.

As our vessels neared the enemy, all eyes were upon them. The British vessels at this time presented a fine appearance. Their line was compact, hove to with their heads to the westward. They had all been newly painted, their sails were new, and their bright red ensigns were tending to the breeze, all looking splendidly in the bright September sun. Their appearance and movements showed that a seaman and master spirit held them in hand.

At half past 11 a. m., the wind had become very light, though our leading vessels were all up in their stations, i. e., within a half-cable's length of each other; but the gunboats were somewhat distant and scattered. The Trippe, the last of the line, was nearly two miles astern. At this moment the mellow sound of a bugle was heard from the Detroit, the signal for cheers along their line, which was followed with "Rule Britannia" by their band. Directly a shot from one of the Detroit's long guns was thrown at the Lawrence, but fell short, the distance being about a mile and a half. Thus the long silence was ended. A few minutes later a second shot from the Detroit, which took effect on the Lawrence, when a fire was opened with all the long heavy guns in their squadron on the Lawrence; they being in compact

order, were within range of that vessel and the two schooners. Perry now ordered Lieut. Yarnall to hail the *Scorpion* and order to commence fire with her heavy gun, which was instantly complied with, and was soon followed with a shot from the *Ariel*. Finding these shots took effect, the *Lawrence* opened with her chase-gun forward, which was followed up by a discharge from the *Caledonia*. The long guns of the enemy began to tell heavily upon the *Lawrence*, when Perry brought her by the wind, and tried a broadside with the carronades. It was at once discovered they fell short. At this moment Elliott ordered the *Caledonia* to bear up and make room for the *Niagara* to pass to the assistance of the *Lawrence*. Perry now bore up and ran down within half musket-shot, when the *Lawrence* was brought by the wind on the port tack with her main-topsail aback, taking her position abreast of the *Hunter* and equal distance between the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*. The *Caledonia* having followed the *Lawrence*, was closely engaged with the *Lady Prevost*, with the *Scorpion* and *Ariel* on the weather bow of the *Lawrence*, using their heavy guns to good advantage. The *Niagara*, however, instead of following the *Lawrence* into close action, kept her wind, with her main topsail aback, using her two long 12's, being completely out of range with the carronades, her broadside battery; consequently the battle for a time was mostly the *Lawrence*, *Caledonia*, *Scorpion* and *Ariel*, fighting the whole British squadron, assisted only by the two 12's of the *Niagara*, and the distant random shots from the headmost gunboats.

At this juncture, the *Queen Charlotte*, finding her carronades would not reach the *Niagara*, ordered the *Hunter* to make room for her to pass and close with the *Detroit*, from which position she could use her short guns to advantage upon the *Lawrence*, which vessel was within range. In this situation, the *Lawrence* sustained the fire of these three vessels, as also most of that from the others, for over two hours, and until every gun was dismantled, two-thirds of her crew either killed or wounded, and so badly cut up aloft as to be unmanageable. The gallant Perry, finding he could do nothing more with the *Lawrence*, ordered the only

boat left alongside, and leaving Lieut. Yarnall to surrender her to the enemy, took his fighting burgee under his arm, pulled for the Niagara, then passing her weather beam to gain the head of the enemy's line.

In the meantime the enemy seeing they had rendered the Lawrence *hors du combat*, and in the act of striking her colors, filled away with their heads to the westward, cheering along their line and feeling certain the day would be theirs; the while, temporarily repairing damages, evidently with the design of getting their vessel on the other tack and gaining the weather gage; or, if not that, to wear and bring their starboard broadside—which was comparatively fresh—to bear upon our vessels.

Perry, on reaching the Niagara, was met at the gangway by Elliott. He was somewhat despondent and out of humor at the gunboats not getting up in time. Elliott spoke encouragingly, and anticipating Perry's wish, offered to take the boat, pull astern, and bring the gunboats up into close action, which proposition was thankfully accepted by Perry. Elliott immediately started on his mission. A breeze at this time, half past two, springing up, both squadrons gradually drew ahead, the Lawrence dropping astern and out of the line. By apparent consent of both parties, for a few moments, there was a general cessation of firing; and as it would appear, both preparing for the desperate and final grapple. Under the freshening breeze the Niagara had obtained a commanding position abreast of the Detroit, the Queen Charlotte following immediately in the wake of the latter vessel. In the meantime the gunboats, using every exertion, were getting up within good range with their heavy guns, using round shot, grape and cannister upon the enemy's two heavy vessels, having been ordered by Elliott to cease firing upon the smaller ones; he taking command of the Somers, the headmost one, himself.

At forty-five minutes past two, the gunboats having got well up, the Caledonia in a good position on the Niagara's lee quarter, and all ready for the final effort, Perry showed the signal for "close action" from the Niagara; then, under fore-and-aft mainsails, fore-and-aft topsails, top-gallant sails,

foresail, and jib, bore up for the enemy's line under a freshening breeze; reserving his fire until close aboard, wore round just before reaching the Detroit, which vessel bore up rapidly to prevent being raked. The enemy in the meantime, having discovered the intention of Perry, to break through their line, the *Queen Charlotte* bore up to pass the Detroit to leeward and meet the *Niagara* broadside on, the Detroit to bear up and follow. However, the *Queen Charlotte* had not taken room enough, and lay becalmed under the lee of the Detroit, which vessel, in paying off, fell foul of the *Queen Charlotte*. While they were in this predicament, the *Niagara* came dashing down, pouring her starboard broadside into these two entangled vessels, within half pistol shot, and her port broadside into the *Lady Prevost*—which vessel had got to the head and leeward of their line and the *Chippewa*; and then rounding to on the starboard tack, with her main-topsail to the mast, under the lee of their heavy vessels, kept throwing broadside after broadside into them. In the meantime the gunboats and *Caledonia* were raking them with their heavy guns. So fierce was this contest, and the destruction so great on board these two vessels particularly, that in fifteen minutes after the *Niagara* bore up, an officer appeared on the taffrail of the *Queen Charlotte*, with a white handkerchief fastened to a boarding-pike, and waved it as a symbol of submission—they had struck. The Detroit followed, the hail was passed from vessel to vessel, and the firing ceased. Two of their smaller vessels, the *Little Belt* and *Chippewa*, attempted to escape, but were promptly pursued and brought back by the *Scorpion* and *Trippe*.

As soon as the smoke cleared away, the two squadrons were found to be intermingled to some extent. The *Niagara* lay close under the lee of the Detroit, *Queen Charlotte* and *Hunter*; the *Caledonia*, *Trippe* and *Scorpion* near the *Niagara*—having followed that vessel through the enemy's line—with the *Lady Prevost* and *Chippewa* a little distance to the westward and leeward, and the *Somers*, *Porcupine* and *Tigress* abreast of the *Hunter*; the shattered and disabled *Lawrence* was some distance to the eastward, drifting like an abandoned hulk with the wind.

At this juncture Perry wrote his laconic notes, so renowned in history, to General Harrison and the Hon. William Jones, Secretary of the Navy, dated on board the Niagara, 4 p. m., and dispatched a boat with them to the mouth of Portage river, distant ten or twelve miles.

Now was to be performed the proud but melancholy duty of taking possession of the captured vessels. On board the Detroit, Commodore Barclay was found to be severely wounded, and her first lieutenant, Garland, mortally, and also Purser Hoffmeister, severely. On board the Queen Charlotte, Captain Finnis, the commander, and Lieut. Gordon of the marines, were killed, with First Lieut. Stokes and Midshipman Foster, wounded; on board the Lady Prevost Lieut. Commandant Buchan and Lieut. Roulette were wounded. On board the Hunter, Lieut. Commandant Bignall and Master's Mate Gateshill were wounded. On board the Chippewa, Master's Mate Campbell, commanding, was slightly wounded. The Little Belt had little or no casualties. The Detroit and Queen Charlotte were much shattered in their hulls, and also badly cut up aloft; and the Lady Prevost had her rudder shot away. Otherwise, their smaller vessels were not materially injured. The list of killed and wounded on board of each vessel was never given to the public, only in sum total—41 killed and 94 wounded, as per Commodore Barclay's report to Sir James Yeo.<sup>1</sup>

The vessels were all anchored and made as secure as circumstances would permit; the wounded of both squadrons cared for to the extent of such surgical force as they could command; and temporary repairs made upon such of the vessels as were necessary in case of emergency.

"The battle o'er, the victory won," Perry returned to the Lawrence. In the words of Dr. Parsons, the surgeon of the Lawrence, "It was a time of conflicting emotions, when the commodore returned to the ship. The battle was won and he was safe. . . . Those of us who were spared, approached him as he came over the ship's side, but the salutation was a silent one—not a word could find utterance."

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1. Capt. Dobbins' papers preserve the names of all killed, wounded and missing and other data, much of it published elsewhere and therefore omitted here.

During the day Perry had worn a round jacket; he now resumed his undress uniform to receive the officers of the captured vessels in tendering their swords. Lieut. O'Keefe of the 41st Regiment was charged by Commodore Barclay with the delivery of his sword. It is said that Lieut. O'Keefe was in full uniform and made a fine appearance. They picked their way among the wreck and carnage of the deck, and on approach, presented their swords to Perry, who, in a bland and low tone, requested them to "retain their side-arms." Perry then inquired with deep concern in regard to the condition of Commodore Barclay and the wounded officers, and offered every assistance within his reach. In the course of the evening Perry visited Barclay on board the *Detroit*, and tendering every sympathy, promised to assist in procuring an early parole, as Barclay was anxious to return to England on account of his health.

It being deemed inadvisable to try to save the killed—more particularly those on board the *Lawrence*—for burial on shore, at night-fall, they were all lashed up in their hammocks, with a 32-pound shot for a companion, and committed to the waters alongside, the Episcopal burial service being read by the chaplain, Thomas Breeze.

"Thus they sank without a moan,  
Unknelled, uncoffined and unknown."

On board the British vessels the dead had been disposed of; they having been thrown overboard as they fell and died.

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## VI. THE WEST REGAINED.

At 9 a. m. on the morning of the 11th, the combined squadrons having made temporary repairs, weighed anchor and stood into Put-in-Bay, where they were all anchored again. After safely mooring the vessels, preparations were made for the interment of the officers who had fallen in battle. The morning of the 12th was clear and calm, all ar-

rangements being complete. At 10 a. m., the colors of both nations being at half mast, the bodies were lowered into boats, and then, with measured stroke and funeral dirge, moved in line to the shore, the while minute guns being fired from the shipping. On landing, a procession was formed in reverse order; the corpse of the youngest and lowest in rank first, and so on, alternately American and British, the body of Captain Finnis coming last. As soon as the several corpses were taken up by the bearers and moved on, the officers fell into line, two American and two British, and marched to the solemn music of the bands of both squadrons. On reaching the spot where the graves were prepared, they were lowered into the earth in the order in which they had been borne and the beautiful and solemn burial service of the Episcopal church gone through with by the chaplains of the respective squadrons. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The volley of musketry followed, and all was over.

The Ohio was at anchor in the roadstead at Erie, taking in additional armament and stores on the day of the battle, and Mr. Dobbins distinctly heard the cannonading; wind light at southwest. On the 13th she returned to Sandusky, and found the squadron absent. Mr. Dobbins felt certain a battle had taken place, and of course was anxious to know the result, and also how to shape his future course. Soon a couple of boats were discovered in shore of him, and chase was made for them. He succeeded in cutting one off, which proved to be an American, and from the men on board learned that there had been a battle, but no details other than that the Americans were supposed to be victorious, as all the vessels had been taken into Put-in-Bay. Mr. Dobbins immediately bore up for that place, where he found the squadron at anchor with its prizes. The arrival of the Ohio with fresh supplies was a godsend to the sick and wounded; which was followed by the arrival of a boat from Cleveland and another from Sandusky with vegetables, adding much to the comfort of the afflicted, as well as of the able-bodied.

Shortly after the victory, a spirit of crimination and re-crimination sprang up, which culminated in a most bitter

feud between Perry and Elliott and their adherents; and which probably would have resulted in a duel between Perry and Elliott, had not the former been ordered to sea, in command of a special expedition to Venezuela, composed of the sloop of war John Adams, and schooner Nonsuch. During the cruise, Perry was taken with the yellow fever and died on board the latter vessel, on her passage from the mouth of the Orinoco river to Port Spain, where his ship, the John Adams, lay.<sup>1</sup>

The trip of Perry from the Lawrence to the Niagara, it appears to me, is not properly comprehended, or rather the act is eulogized instead of the motive. "If a victory is to be gained, I'll gain it," said Perry when he left the shattered Lawrence. Such was his intention, and therein lay the merit. The mere passing from vessel to vessel was nothing but what had been frequently done where squadrons had been engaged, and which had been done that same day. Furthermore, Elliott took the same boat and crew, and twice traversed the entire length of the line, then stepping on board the Somers, of which vessel he took command in person. As for personal danger, it was everywhere on that occasion, and if anything, less in a boat than on the deck of a vessel, particularly the Lawrence.

A popular error has found its way into history—that Perry took his young brother with him on board the Niagara. This is erroneous, and was never asserted by Perry or any of his officers. The fact is, when the victorious commodore returned on board the Lawrence, after the battle, and not seeing the youngster on deck, he made enquiry, a search was made, and the lad was found quietly sleeping in his hammock, being worn out with the excitement and fatigues of the day, and also having received a severe slap from a hammock which a shot had thrown against him.

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1. We omit from Captain Dobbins' narrative a long discussion of certain features of the action, especially of the part borne by Elliott. The records of this action have for three-quarters of a century been overburdened with the Perry-Elliott controversy, and it would not be profitable to enter upon it here, save to note that Captain Dobbins' study of the facts led him to acquit Elliott of the charges alike of cowardice and of treachery. Perry's published letters long since made practically the same acquittal.



There is some discrepancy in the various accounts as to the sail the Niagara was under, and the additional canvas which Perry ordered set after he got on board of her. I have the statement of one of the Niagara's main-top men, viz., Benjamin Fleming. He says: "When Commodore Perry came on board, we were under fore-and-aft mainsail, fore and maintopsails, and jib, the courses were hauled up and the topgallant sails furled. When Commodore Perry came over the side, Capt. Elliott met him and they shook hands. They then had some conversation, which I could not hear from the top. Capt. Elliott then went over the side into the same boat, and pulled astern in the direction of the gunboats. Some little time after he left, and when the gunboats had got pretty well up, as we were now getting a breeze, Commodore Perry set the signal for close action, and immediately gave the order, 'loose top-gallant sails, board the fore-tack, haul in the weather-braces, put the helm up, and keep the brig off.' I helped to loose the maintop-gallant sail myself. We bore up gradually, at first with the wind on our quarter. Just before we got abreast of the Detroit, to the best of my memory, we were before the wind—jibed the fore-and-aft mainfail and brailed it up at the same time, settled the top-gallant sails,—hailed the foresail up and fired our starboard broadside into the Detroit and Queen Charlotte as they lay foul of each other, and our larboard guns into the Lady Prevost and another schooner; and then coming by the wind on the starboard tack, with our maintopsail to the mast under the lee of the Detroit and Queen Charlotte, kept up a brisk fire until they struck."

The day after the battle, some of the British officers enquired, "What has become of our two Indians?" Search was made, and they were discovered stowed snugly away in the cable-tier. When brought on deck they were much alarmed; however, their fears were soon quieted. Some questions were propounded, and in reply they said: "No more come with one-armed captain (Barclay) in big canoe—shoot big gun too much." This sort of warfare did not suit "Neeche." They were evidently taken on board as sharp-shooters, to pick off the officers, and were stationed in

the main-top of the Detroit. When the bullets began to fly aloft, they thought they were all aimed at them, and hastily retreated to the deck, where they found it no better, and then to the hold. I think they were sent to Malden, with some paroled British officers, who had families there.

As the Lawrence was so much injured that she would require extensive repairs to make her fit for service, Commodore Perry transferred his pennant to the Ariel, and made her the flag-ship for the time being. The Lawrence received such temporary repair as time and circumstance would permit, and was converted into a hospital ship, and dispatched to Erie under the command of Lieut. Yarnall, with the badly wounded of both squadrons. The medical officers were Dr. Ushur Parsons of the American and Dr. Kennedy of the British squadron. The Lawrence arrived safely at Erie on the 23d, having lost but two of the invalids on the passage.

All the prisoners able to march were landed at Sandusky, and sent to Chillicothe, O., under the supervision of General Harrison. Commodore Barclay and the other wounded British officers remained on board the Detroit and Queen Charlotte, which vessels were safely moored in Put-in-Bay for the time.

The prisoners being disposed of, the wounded and sick cared for, every exertion was made to put all the vessels of both squadrons fit for active service into a proper condition, and make the necessary arrangements for transporting Harrison's army, then encamped at Portage river and Fort Meigs, to the Canadian shore. The vessels for this service were the Niagara, Caledonia, Somers, Ohio, Trippe, Scorpion, Ariel, Tigress and Porcupine, of the American, and Hunter, Lady Prevost, Little Belt and Chippewa of the British squadron.

On the morning of the 19th, Commodore Perry sailed with the Ariel for Camp Portage in advance of the squadron, to counsel with General Harrison. The result of this conference was to rendezvous the troops and squadron at Put-in-Bay; thence, after the proper arrangements were made, to sail to Middle Sister island, about twelve miles from

Malden; and when the weather favored, via the vessels and boats, to some convenient place of landing to the eastward of Bar Point.

On the 20th, the embarkation commenced, and on the 24th the entire army, consisting of 4,500 men, all safely landed at Put-in-Bay; General Harrison and staff having taken passage in the *Ariel*.

On the passage of the *Ariel* to Put-in-Bay, a little incident occurred which confirms the saying that "A kind heart and a brave one are apt to occupy the same breast." On board the *Ariel* there was a company of young Virginians who had exchanged the comforts and business of home for a camp life and the dangers of a campaign on the western frontier. By the casualties of battle and disease they were reduced to a mere handful; and their gallant record induced Major Chambers, one of the general's aids, with the approbation of both Harrison and Perry, to take them on board the *Ariel*. When tea was served in the cabin, the occupants were much crowded; however, as soon as it was over, they all adjourned to the deck to enjoy the evening breeze. One of the young Virginians, who was but just recovering from a severe illness, approached Major Chambers, with whom he was acquainted, and who was then conversing with Lieut. Packet, the commander of the *Ariel*, and asked in a mild and courteous manner, which showed his refined breeding, if it would be possible to obtain a cup of coffee from the cabin; saying, the cold, coarse and unpalatable food they were confined to in accordance with army regulations, he could not eat. The major being but slightly acquainted with Perry, asked Lieut. Packet how it would do? Packet hesitated, as there was such a crowd of officers on board, and the matter was dropped. Perry happened to be seated near by and overheard the conversation, and without saying anything to either of the party, quietly ordered his steward to prepare supper for the whole squad, and in a few moments they were all seated as best they could in the little cabin, enjoying a warm meal, with Commodore Perry by their side, attending to their wants.

The victory of the 10th gave us command of the lake,

and now Harrison was pushing matters for a victory on land. He had called upon the venerable Governor Shelby of Kentucky, for 1,500 volunteers, and in the true spirit of chivalry, invited the veteran of Kings Mountain to command them in person, to which he responded in the affirmative, though in his sixty-sixth year. The patriotic state of Kentucky was all in a blaze of enthusiasm when the veteran governor issued his proclamation for volunteers, and for them to assemble at Newport. "Huzza for the Old Eagle of Kings Mountain!" was the cry, and twice the required number showed themselves ready for the war-path. Governor Shelby led 3,500 mounted men on their winding way for the banks of Lake Erie. With such men as Henry, Desha, Allen, Caldwell, King, Childs, Trotter, R. M. and J. Johnson, Adin, Crittenden, McDowell, Walker and Barry, such a word as failure was not to be found in their vocabulary. At Fort Ball—now the town of Tiffin—they got the news of Perry's victory, which stimulated them to greater exertion, and on the 15th they arrived at Camp Portage. Harrison had also been joined by about 250 friendly Indians of the Wyandot, Shawnese, Seneca and Delaware tribes, under their chiefs, Lewis, Blackhoof, Blacksnake, Crane and Capt. Tommy. It not being deemed practicable to use the horses of the Kentucky troops, they were mostly left at Camp Portage, except the regiment of Col. Johnson, which was to go round to Detroit by land, and if Harrison succeeded in driving the enemy from Malden, and advanced up the Canada side of the river, to form a junction with him there.

All things being in readiness, the task of transporting the army to Middle Sister commenced, and though somewhat interfered with by bad weather, was completed on the 26th. Commodore Perry, with General Harrison aboard, went with the Ariel to reconnoitre Malden and the shore to the eastward for a suitable point of debarkation, and fixed it at a place about three miles to the eastward of Bar Point. On the return trip, the arrangements for transportation and debarkation were fully completed, and made known to the officers commanding on their arrival. Early on the morning of the 27th, the weather being favorable, the army was em-

barked on vessels or in boats, the vessels taking most of the boats in tow, and at 2 p. m., the squadron having arrived off the place of destination, were moored with springs upon their cables, at the distance of one fourth of a mile from the shore. The line of boats now moved for the beach under the supervision of Capt. Elliott, who had been detached by Commodore Perry for this purpose. It was presumed that the enemy would be found in force behind a small ridge not far from the shore, consequently great precaution as well as celerity was to be used. However, after landing in good order and forming, no enemy was to be seen. News was soon received that General Proctor had evacuated Fort Malden, and with his entire army, was retreating up along the Canadian side of the Detroit river, leaving only a rear guard to destroy the barracks, navy-yard and public stores.

The squadron immediately got under way, and moved round into the mouth of the river with the boats, and landed the remainder of the troops. As the van of Governor Shelby's force reached the town, they were met by a delegation of men and women asking for mercy and protection. Their feelings were soon calmed by a few kind words from the venerable warrior. The loyal portion had left with Proctor. Harrison lost no time in following up the enemy, and his advance had several skirmishes with the rear guard. In the meantime, the vessels moved up the river, keeping abreast of the troops. On the 29th they reached Sandwich, when some of the vessels were dispatched with General McArthur's brigade to take possession of Detroit, and drive off some lurking bands of Indians.

This retrograde movement was strongly condemned by Tecumseh, who, in the severest terms, remonstrated against retreating without a fight; comparing Proctor to a dog running away with his tail between his legs. On the 30th, Col. Johnson, with his mounted regiment and the horses of the field officers of the army, arrived at Detroit. They were immediately taken across the river to join the main army.

The tide of success had now begun to ebb with the British on the western frontier, and the Indians began to see that the Americans were far from being the weaklings which

the British had pictured them. The capture of the one-armed captain with the big canoes, and the retreat of Proctor, who abandoned their conquered territory, as well as the strong post at Malden, convinced the savages that the British promises were all bravado. As the Indians always aimed to be on the strongest side, they now began to desert the British standard. During the short stay of the army at Sandwich, deputations from the Ottawas, Chippewas, Wyandots, Miamis, and two bands of hostile Delawares, who had been induced to join the British standard by presents and pleasing promises, abandoned their cause and sued for peace, with a promise to take up the tomahawk and fight their former friends. At Detroit, also, bands of Ottawas, Chippewas, Pottawatamies, Miamis and Kickapoos, came in for peace and offered their services to General McArthur. However, their offer was not accepted, except so far as to have them return home to their tribes, and remain peaceable for the future.

News having been received that Proctor had made a stand at Dolson's farm on the Thames, with 800 whites, regulars and militia, and from 1,000 to 1,200 Indians, arrangements were made to follow immediately. Perry also sent a portion of the squadron, the Niagara, Lady Prevost, Scorpion, Tigress, and Porcupine, under Capt. Elliott with the artillery and baggage of the army, and also to intercept some vessels of the enemy escaping up Lake St. Clair, to the River Thames with their stores. Perry followed the next day with the Caledonia and Ariel. The vessels of the enemy, however, had too much the start, and escaped up the river. It being found none but the small vessels could pass the bar at the mouth of the river, the Scorpion, Tigress and Porcupine proceeded, leaving the rest of the squadron. The line of Proctor's retreat lay along the river, and the chase continued from day to day, occasionally skirmishing with the rear guard, and capturing several vessels and batteaux laden with stores and arms, the enemy having burnt a number, as well as several houses containing stores. Proctor, finding the Indians deserting him, and also some of the Canadian militia, promised Tecumseh that he would make a

stand and defeat Harrison, or "they would leave their bones on the spot."

He selected a place near the Moravian town, where he had the river on one side and a large swamp on the other of a strip of dry land, which could be easily defended; and posted his troops and Indians. On the 5th, Harrison, having got up with his forces, arranged his order of battle. Commodore Perry and General Cass accompanied General Harrison as aids, the latter's command having been left at Sandwich.

The battle of the Thames and the death of Tecumseh have been so often recorded, it would be idle to attempt another account. The Americans lost fifteen killed and thirty wounded; and the enemy eighteen killed and twenty-six wounded, and 600 prisoners exclusive of the Indians, who left thirty-three dead on the field. General Harrison estimated the amount of arms captured or destroyed, at 5,000 stand, and a number of cannon. Among the number were three pieces captured from the British at Yorktown, in the Revolution, and given up at Hull's surrender. To digress a little, I may state that those three pieces, with inscriptions engraved upon them, relating their history, arrived simultaneously with General Lafayette at Erie, on the 3d of June, 1825, when Lafayette was on his way to the laying of the cornerstone of Bunker Hill monument. The meeting of these relics was a pleasing incident in the general's visit.

Harrison and Perry returned immediately to Detroit, where they arrived on the 7th. Perry at once issued a joint proclamation, dated Oct. 17, 1813, at Sandwich, telling the people of Upper Canada that as all armed resistance had ceased, and the country being now in the quiet possession of the Americans, the laws and customs of the country as they existed previous to the conquest, were hereby declared in force, and the inhabitants guaranteed protection in person and property, as long as the district remained in the possession of the United States.

Immediately after General McArthur took possession of Detroit, General Harrison issued a proclamation, dated

Detroit, Sept. 29, 1813, to the inhabitants of Michigan, establishing the laws in force previous to the surrender of General Hull; also calling upon the officers displaced by General Proctor to again resume their duties. On the 16th of October Harrison issued another proclamation in regard to the Indian bands lately hostile but now at peace with the United States. These bands having left hostages for the faithful performance of their promises, he therefore requested all citizens of the United States, and public officers, not to molest them, leaving the matter of their final disposition with the Government. The death of the great chieftain Tecumseh, and the desertion of Walk-in-the-Water, had so dampened the ardor of the savages, and the rapid and decisive victories of Perry and Harrison so convinced them of the courage and warlike strength of the Americans, that they felt quite humble. The loss of Tecumseh was also a serious blow to the active operations of the enemy on the western frontier. The adjutant general of the British forces, E. Baynes, in his report upon the defeat of Barclay and Proctor, gave great credit to Tecumseh and censured Proctor. Tecumseh held a colonel's commission in his Majesty's forces.

During the time the British held possession of the Territory of Michigan, Proctor, the military governor, ruled with an iron hand. Among the hardships he imposed upon the inhabitants was, requiring all who would not take the oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty, or swear not to serve against him during the war, to leave the territory; with many more impositions, and daily violations of the articles of capitulation. Almost every one of his acts showed him to be a tyrant and a coward.

What a glorious achievement Perry and Harrison had completed in the short space of twenty-five days! They had not only captured the squadron of the British, and defeated them by land, capturing the strongholds of Malden and Detroit, and their armament and supplies, but had driven them with their dusky allies from place to place, until they finally captured them on the river Thames. Nothing now remained in possession of the British in the West, save the



island of Mackinaw; and that would have been retaken but for the lateness of the season, and the difficulty of getting the heavy vessels over the St. Clair flats.

The Canadian inhabitants, particularly those at Malden, were pleased with the change. The Indians and soldiers had been quartered upon them, and they were governed to a great extent by martial law. There was also a great fallacy they were led to believe, viz., that the Kentuckians were greater savages than the Indians; consequently, they had much dread of capture. But when they found that the gallant volunteers under Shelby were as humane as they were brave, they were joyfully disappointed.

General Cass was now installed civil and military governor of Michigan, with his brigade, 1,000 strong, to remain with him and keep the Indians in check, should they become troublesome; and also to hold that portion of Canada just captured. He was also empowered to dispose of the prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

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## VII. SERVICES OF STEPHEN CHAMPLIN AND DANIEL DOBBINS.

The vessels and army having returned from the Thames, arrangements were made to disband the volunteers under

1. The following orders are preserved among the Dobbins papers:

DETROIT, Nov. 5, 1813

I wish Capt. Dobbins to sail with the Ohio to Put in Bay, there to take on board all the men and baggage not belonging to Lieut. Atkins' command, for the purpose of bringing to this place. From put in bay I wish him to sail to the mouth of Portage river, and there take on board as much provision and clothing as he can and then return to this place.

LEW CASS

U. S. S. NIAGARA Nov. 6th 1813

SIR: You will return to Malden and receive Troops on board and land them where Gov. Cass should wish continue on that service until all are conveyed when done repair to this place for winter quarters.

Yrs &c

JESSE D. ELLIOTT

[To Sailing Master Daniel Dobbins.]

DETROIT Nov. 19, 1813

DEAR SIR: I yesterday received your note. I shall in the morning send to you all the British prisoners now here, who are fit to be sent, for the purpose of being transported to Erie. There being no appearance of any change in the wind you can leave all the sick men you brought from the bay at Malden.

I am, Your friend,

LEW CASS

[To Daniel Dobbins at Malden.]

Governor Shelby, and such other portion of the militia as were not needed. A portion of the squadron were now prepared to transport the remainder of the troops to the lower end of the lake, to assist in operations against the enemy on the Niagara frontier. On the 19th of October the army, numbering nearly 2,000, were embarked on the Niagara, Caledonia, Hunter, Lady Prevost, Trippe, Little Belt and Ariel, the latter being the flagship. The Somers, Ohio, Scorpion, Tigress and Porcupine were left under the supervision of General Cass, to transport prisoners to Camp Portage, and return with supplies for the army from Cleveland.

Commodore Perry, while at Detroit, received a letter from the Navy Department, of the most flattering kind, enclosing a notice of his promotion to the grade of post captain, with leave of absence to visit his family in Rhode Island.

Perry took General Harrison and staff with him on board the Ariel, and on their way down the lake called at Put-in-Bay. They found Commodore Barclay much improved and able to be moved. Perry now informed Barclay of his success in having obtained a parole for him to return home. Barclay, with his attending surgeon, was then taken on board the Ariel, when she sailed with the squadron for Erie, where she arrived on the 22d. The Ariel being a fast sailer, arrived some hours in advance of the other vessels. As soon as she made her appearance off the point of the peninsula, the citizens assembled on the bank of the bay and fired a salute, as it was presumed the commodore was on board, and this was the first vessel returned to port since the battle. Perry and Harrison were received with great enthusiasm on landing; and Commodore Perry, with Colonel Gaines, assisted the invalid Barclay up the hill to Perry's quarters at the hotel. In the evening, the village of Erie was in a blaze of rejoicing. Illumination, torchlight procession, transparencies and salutes, manifested the joy the inhabitants felt. Here was where Perry had built, equipped and prepared his vessels; and now he had returned with the laurels of victory upon his brow. Well the citizens knew of the many difficul-

ties he had had to overcome, and the unflagging perseverance with which he surmounted and conquered troublesome obstacles.

Here, again, Perry showed his eminently humane disposition. He had given up his rooms at the hotel to his invalid prisoner, and at his request no illumination was shown at that portion of the building, that the lacerated and melancholy feelings of Barclay should not be annoyed with these demonstrations of joy over his defeat.

The next day they sailed for Buffalo, Perry bidding final adieu to Erie, as he never returned. On the 24th, the squadron all arrived at Buffalo, where the troops were landed. Perry here in an official letter, turned over the command of the upper lakes to Captain Elliott, and then pursued his journey east, receiving the most enthusiastic receptions throughout his journey home to Newport, R. I. General Harrison, with his troops, joined General McClure in the operations along the Niagara.<sup>1</sup>

1. The following letters of this period have been preserved. The first is presumably a copy of one sent to Capt. Elliott:

SIR: According to your orders I have commenced Receiving goods on board the Ohio and find that a number of the citizens have things to put on board which I shall not receive unless you give me positive orders.

For my own part I think it not Right to take the citizens' goods on board when the army is in want of the article flour (and a larger quantity of that article on hand than can be put in the Ohio), and also think in that case that it is not only a violation of a positive law but of the duties assigned me as an officer.

It is the first time that I have heard of the vessels of the United States being turned into a merchantman and the officer commanding her to the skipper. I am always ready and willing to do my duty and obey the commands of my superior officers. I am Respectfully

yours,

DANIEL DOBBINS

ERIE 24th Nov. 1813

DETROIT, Nov. 27, 1813

DEAR SIR: . . . We are here some alarmed from circumstances which has lately occurred in this country—the Loosing the party of [MS. torn] on the River Thames, evacuating Ft. George, &c, makes us feel as tho' we had Reason to expect them back in this Country. If which should be the case God have mercy upon the Poor Devils in this Country, as they have hard work now to live, and if the British and Indians come on them again they must starve.

And I know nothing to prevent them from coming here, as the communication is all the time kept open from this country by the River Thames (or this is my opinion) to Burlington Heights etc. and I presume you know of people here so much of British subjects as to give information to the British of every movement of our Army and arrangements as soon as I can sell off I will get out of this Country for some time at any rate but perhaps the British and Indians may catch me & take off my scalp just in the hight of my making money. I cannot possibly get off for several weeks as I am keeping up my whiskey untill People who has got but a few Barrels has sold of and gone. My why. must if possible bring me three Dollars pr. Gallon. Genl. Cass yesterday started from here for Albany. . . . Pleas make my respects to . . . Mrs. Dobbins and all the Butifull young Girls in Erie, Particularly to \_\_\_\_\_

I am, Sir, Yours &c.

WM. LATTIMORE.

Capt. Daniel Dobbins.

The prizes, *Queen Charlotte* and *Detroit*, were badly cut up in their hulls, and having rolled their masts overboard in a heavy wind while at anchor at Put-in-Bay a few days after the battle, could not be removed to Erie with safety, as the season of navigation was far advanced. Consequently, preparations were made to winter them at Put-in-Bay, and officers and men were sent to protect them from marauding parties from the Canada shore.

The season of heavy storms being at hand, Elliott ordered a portion of the squadron to Erie, there to await further orders. The *Chippewa* parted her cables and went ashore at Buffalo, where she went to pieces. The *Ariel*, *Little Belt* and *Trippe* were sent to Black Rock. The *Tigress*, under Mr. Champlin, was dispatched to Put-in-Bay, where she arrived about the 25th of December, Mr. Champlin assuming command of the prizes and all matters pertaining to the place. He at once commenced preparations for defense, General Cass having sent 200 soldiers from Detroit to assist. As soon as the *Somers* and *Ohio* completed their task of transporting the prisoners to Camp Portage, and supplies from Cleveland to Detroit, the *Somers* went into winter quarters at Put-in-Bay, and the *Ohio* returned to Erie, arriving there late in December.

Cold weather having set in, all the vessels were dismantled, excepting their armament, and moored in a suitable position for defense. Captain Elliott was very active in his preparation for defense, and constructed a large blockhouse on the southeast point of the peninsula, which, from its position, covered the vessels as they lay in the small bay. The troops also constructed another on Garrison Hill, under the supervision of Colonel Miller.<sup>1</sup>

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1. While at Washington in the winter of 1844, Capt. Dobbins wrote to Commodore Jesse D. Elliott, recalling their service together. In this letter he dwells on "what came under my personal observation, after the battle of the 10th September, 1813," and continues:

"You had command of the station at Erie. Information had been received that the British in Canada were fitting out an expedition to attack our fleet, then lying in Erie harbor, on the ice. You immediately went to work and built a block-house on the Peninsula, to repel the contemplated attack, and with what assiduity the work was carried on until completed, is well known to me; the part you bore of the fatigue and exposure, in a cold winter, by acting in person from day to day through the dreadful storms of that winter, not consulting your own ease, but doing things which many others in your situation

Much has been said by some authors in regard to anarchy and insurrection existing on the Erie station during the winter of 1813-1814. This is erroneous. There was some little clashing between the Perry and Elliott adherents, but not in the slightest degree interfering with subordination. There was a duel between Acting-master McDonald and Midshipman Senat, which resulted in the death of the latter. This quarrel, however, originated in a dispute about rank and uniforms, and had nothing to do with the Perry-Elliott controversy. Purser Magrath, late of the Niagara, was a strong adherent of Elliott, and published some strictures in the Erie paper in regard to the dispute; and as the popular current ran strongly in favor of Perry, and as Magrath possessed a very sensitive mind, it worked up his feelings to desperation. The unfortunate man for this—as no other cause could be assigned—committed suicide.

There was an angry dispute between Lieut. Forrest of the Lawrence and Lieut. Edwards of the Niagara, which it was thought would culminate in a duel, had Edwards lived. He, however, was taken with the typhoid fever—prevalent at Erie, that winter—and died. Sailing-master Almy fell a victim to the same disease.

There was much alarm at Erie in the month of January, 1814, caused by the burning of Buffalo, and the well-founded information that the enemy intended to cross the

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would have done by proxy. I have crossed the lake with you from Erie on the ice many times, when it was dangerous thus to cross; and at one time in particular, when you had to make use of your sword to prevent you from drifting to leeward into an airhole in the ice. The exertions made at that time for the defence of our country are not properly appreciated by the present generation, or merged in some sinister object, to serve selfish purposes at the expense of the deserving.

"That block-house in case of attack would have been of infinite use; the logs eighteen inches in thickness, of chestnut and frozen to the heart, would have resisted any shot that could have been beat against it by the enemy.

"You are well acquainted with the part I performed in this business. After having finished the block-house, which was considered shot or shell proof (for the roof was covered with timber to resist shells of small dimensions, the timber was twelve inches thick), you then to make things still more secure, ordered me to cut timber to build another smaller block-house, on a high sand-bank, north of the little bay, to enfilade the sand-bank running west, and to produce a cross-fire from the block-houses between which the fleet lay; but by the time the timber was ready the weather moderated, the ice got weak and finally impassable. With this the danger of an attack ceased. Had not the precautions been taken, and the ice continued to remain strong for two weeks longer than it did, I have not the least doubt that an attempt would have been made. The block-house would have been able to make great resistance, there being of heavy guns, three long 32's, do. 24's, and 32 [?] carronades. . . ."

lake in force, should the ice serve them, and attempt to destroy the shipping at Erie. It appeared, after their signal defeat by Perry and Harrison, that they were determined to rally all their available force and endeavor to regain what they had lost. Every preparation was made and vigilance used, both by the naval and military commanders at Erie. Well-grounded fears were also entertained for the safety of the vessels at Put-in-Bay; and Captain Elliott dispatched Lieut. Packett to Sandusky by land, with orders to cross the ice to Put-in-Bay as soon as it had sufficiently made, and to assume command at that place. However, he did not reach the Bay before late in February. In the meantime Mr. Champlin had discharged his duties faithfully, and had matters in good condition. I will quote a letter of his to Captain Elliott:

PUT-IN-BAY, January 14, 1814.

SIR: I have everything in complete order at this place. I have the guns mounted in the block-house. I have mounted on board the Detroit 21 guns, and on board the Queen Charlotte 19. I have mounted those 32-pounders and 24-pounders that were left on board the Detroit. I can bring 12 guns to bear in every direction. The ice is constantly kept open. I think if they attack us they will meet with a pretty warm reception. The sailors are all well, the soldiers very sickly. We have provisions enough to last till the 1st of April. The beef is very bad.

I have the honor to be

Your Ob'dt Humble Servant

STEPHEN CHAMPLIN.

Captain Jesse D. Elliott,

Commanding U. S. Naval force on Lake Erie.

Whether from fear of this "warm reception" or other causes, it is certain the enemy made no attempt against Put-in-Bay.

Thus the winter passed away, and spring found the vessels of the squadron all safe, except the Ariel, Little Belt and Trippe, they having been burnt at Black Rock, when the enemy took possession of that place; and the Chippewa, which was wrecked at Buffalo, as above stated. Upon the opening of spring, matters were more quiet at Erie. The danger of a heavy force of the enemy making a dash upon

that place by way of the ice, had now passed. Had the attempt been made, however, they would have found ample preparations to receive them; as besides the naval armament, there were about 4,000 troops under Major General Mead, 1,000 of whom were regulars. But upon the advent of spring, danger not being imminent, all but the regulars were disbanded.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Elliott, in order to obtain information of the enemy's movements on the Canada shore, and to prevent their supplies going forward to the West by water, as soon as the ice in the lake would permit, ordered Mr. Dobbins with the Ohio, as per the following:

ERIE, April 10, 1814.

SIR: You will get your vessel over the bar with the quickest possible dispatch, mount your guns, and when ready for action, you will cruise between Erie and Long Point for the purpose of intercepting boats. Be cautious that your vessel is not placed in a situation where boats can overpower you. Cruise with these orders until my further instructions or those of the commanding officer of this place. Major Marlin will furnish you with an officer and guard of 15 men, who will cooperate with you in the defense of your vessel. In a few days you will be joined by the Somers; her commander has had instructions to cruise under your orders. Respectfully yours,

JESSE D. ELLIOTT.

S. M. Daniel Dobbins, U. S. schooner Ohio.

In the discharge of this duty, Mr. Dobbins frequently landed spies on the Canada shore, and arranged to take them off at such times and places as were agreed upon. The adventures of one of these spies were truly marvelous. The name I am not sure of, but think it was Prentice. He had lived in Canada, and been oppressed, for which he was seeking revenge. The object was if possible to capture the

1. The following order is preserved:

U. S. S. NIAGARA,  
ERIE, 18th January 1814.

SIR: You will open a Rendezvous in the village of Erie and if possible Recruit 100 men, as ordinary seamen, who will serve on board the fleet for the term of three months, if not sooner discharged. Stout, able-bodied men will be particularly desired.

Respectfully,

JESSE D. ELLIOTT

S. M. Daniel Dobbins,  
U. S. Navy

mails passing to and fro, and obtain all valuable information. On one occasion, this man landed on the main, inside of Long Point. Being familiar with the country he could avoid the squads of soldiers and Indians on the hunt for him. The inhabitants knew the man, and on his appearance, would stealthily dispatch a courier to some military post with the information, and soon they would be on his track, but never could catch him. On the occasion above mentioned, while waiting for the vessel, which he expected the ensuing night, he lay secreted behind a log surrounded with bushes, when a band of some twenty or thirty Indians passed along a trail between him and the bank of the lake within plain sight, evidently on the hunt for him. When night came, he was safely taken aboard. On the passage to Erie, he described his feelings while looking at the "red-skins," and said, had there been but three or four, he would have drawn a bead upon them, but twenty or thirty was rather strong.

At another time, when taken on board, he had a saddle, bridle, holsters and pistols, and two swords. When asked how he came by them, he said :

"I was prospecting along the bank of the lake the day before I expected the vessel, when I discovered two dragoons riding along the beach towards me. I at once slipped down the bank to a fallen tree, with the root out in the water and the trunk resting on some float-wood. I knew they would ride around the root of the tree, and I could take them both easily with my pistol and rifle. The first one I brought down with the pistol; the other attempted to escape, but I soon emptied his saddle with my rifle, and his horse went scampering off down the beach. The first one had his bridle over his arm, which held his horse. I stripped the horse, got both swords and let the second horse go. I then buried the bodies in the sand and hid away until the vessel came."

I think he never succeeded in capturing a mail which he brought to Erie, although he obtained other valuable information. He, however, took several mails and delivered them to our lines, near Fort Erie. He made several trips from one frontier to the other, and once crossed the Niagara river on a raft made from a panel of fence he had taken from a



grave near Waterloo.<sup>1</sup> He was finally killed in one of his adventures near Grand river, in Canada. This time he had an accomplice, and intended to rob the house of a man who he claimed had done him a great wrong. While they were in the act, there being no man round the house—which they previously knew—and before they had completed their work, a girl of some twelve years stole off and ran to a house-raising some half a mile distant where the man of the house was assisting. Soon they all came running, most of them with arms. Prentice and accomplice attempted to escape in a canoe, but before they got out of range Prentice received a shot from which he died.

Captain Elliott received two letters from Commodore Chauncey, one dated 30th March and another April 1st, stating that he had information of Mackinaw being short of provisions, and but four men to defend the post, and giving instructions to fit out the squadron, and proceed thither to recapture it. Also one from General Harrison, dated Cincinnati, April 3d, urging the movement on Mackinaw.<sup>2</sup>

At last the Navy Department had resolved to make a separate command of the upper lakes; a change which was judicious, though it should have been made one year before:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, April 15, 1814.

SIR: The arduous duties and great increase of force on Lake Ontario together with the interruption of intercourse between the commander-in-chief on that lake and the commander of the squadron on Lake Erie, has rendered it expedient to place the latter under a separate command. Captain Arthur Sinclair is therefore appointed to the command of the squadron on Lake Erie, to whom you will

1. Now the village of Fort Erie, Ont.

2. Relating to this general movement, is the following:

ERIE, 19th April 1814

SIR: You will take on board the Ohio, a half barrel of Pitch, about 300 bbls of oakum, 200 lb. 6 inch spikes, two Compasses, & proceed to Put in Bay, with the quickest possible dispatch, and deliver the accompanying letter to Lieut. Packet, together with those Articles. Receive & act agreeable to his directions.

Respectfully, Yours &c.

JESSE D. ELLIOTT

S. M. Daniel Dobbins  
Comm'nd U. S. Schooner Ohio

communicate all the information you possess and the arrangements you have made for the future operations of the squadron. You will then, sir, agreeable to your wish expressed in your letter to Commodore Chauncey of the 19th December last, proceed to Sackett's Harbor and report yourself to him.

I am respectfully,

Your obd't serv't,

WM. JONES.

Jesse D. Elliott, Esq.,

Com'd U. S. Squadron, Lake Erie.

Captain Sinclair arrived about the 25th April, when Captain Elliott, after turning over the command in compliance with his instructions, repaired at once to Lake Ontario. Captain Sinclair was a thorough seaman, and highly meritorious officer. He at once commenced in good earnest to prepare the squadron for the expedition against Mackinaw, though he found it a tedious job, as the vessels were found much damaged and requiring extensive repairs.

Mr. Dobbins was now relieved from cruising duty and ordered to take on board the Ohio naval stores and other supplies, and proceed immediately to Put-in-Bay and assist in fitting out the prizes Detroit and Queen Charlotte, and navigate them to Erie. They arrived at Erie about the 1st of May, were immediately taken over the bar and moored in the little bay. At the same time the troops stationed at Put-in-Bay, to assist in the defense of the prizes, were removed to Detroit, and this temporary post abandoned.

From some difficulty at Washington in regard to the policy of the expedition, also other delays, Capt. Sinclair was not ready to sail with the squadron until about the 25th of June. The squadron consisted of the following vessels: Niagara, flagship, Capt. Arthur Sinclair; Lawrence, Capt. D. S. Dexter; Caledonia, Capt. Samuel Woodhouse; Scorpion, Lieut. Daniel Turner; Tigress, Sailing-master Stephen Champlin. They arrived at Detroit about the 4th of July, where they embarked the troops under Col. Croghan, to the number of 600, composed of regulars and militia, and sailed for Fort Gratiot. The trouble of getting the large vessels over the St. Clair flats delayed them a week, there being but

seven feet of water on the flats, and they drawing nine.<sup>1</sup> At Fort Gratiot they were joined by about 500 Ohio volunteers, under the command of Capt. Cotgreave and by Capt. Gratiot, an engineer officer. They sailed from Gratiot on the 14th of July, for Matchadash bay, where the British had a small military post, but found the navigation too intricate, so shaped their course for the island of St. Joseph, at the mouth of the St. Mary's river. Upon their arrival they found the post abandoned, and the whole of the fort and barracks burned. Major Holmes and Lieut. Turner, with a force, were sent up the river to the Sault, to destroy or capture the trading post and forwarding establishment of the Northwest Fur Company, in turn for the services this company had rendered the enemy in securing to them the full alliance of the Indian tribes; and also for furnishing boats and men from their hundreds of employes, when occasion required. Holmes and Turner succeeded in reaching the post, but found Johnson, the agent, a renegade Yankee from Michigan, had got wind of their approach, and destroyed everything they could not carry off. This expedition returned to the squadron, and on the 26th they sailed for Mackinaw.

Upon reconsidering the situation, Sinclair and Croghan came to the conclusion that it was not practicable to attempt to storm the fort; and the elevation being too great for the fort to be injured much by the guns of the squadron, they determined to land the troops on the back of the island, under cover of the guns of the squadron, and endeavor to make an attack on the rear of the fortifications. On the 4th of August the landing was effected without molestation; but

1. The following letter to Mrs. Dobbins, written at this time, has been preserved:

DEAR POLLY: We have got over the flats and all difficulty and lay now eight miles below the Rappids nothing has taken place worth Mentioning unless the Settlements on this River which truly look Dismal not a Solitary inhabitant fields of wheat and gardens vacant also the houses open with the furniture in them I have had a little spell of being unwell . . . the Men generally in the fleet are healthy but a very few cases has taken Place since we left Erie you may tell Reed that his vessel now lies at the Rappids we have no news from Makana [Mackinaw] or Machidash take care of your health and write all oportunities

I Remain yours truly

DANIEL DOBBINS

on board the U. S. S. Niagara, July 11th 1814

the troops had advanced only a short distance before they received a volley of shot and shell from a battery planted upon a small eminence surrounded by bushes. Immediately their troops dashed forward at a double-quick, shouting and firing as they advanced, accompanied by a large body of Indians led by "Big Tom," the great Fallsovine chief. A short and savage encounter ensued, which lasted but a few minutes. Croghan, finding himself greatly outnumbered, and the enemy mostly under cover, retreated to the boats and gave up the contest. Our loss was, the gallant and esteemed Major Holmes, with twelve rank and file, killed; wounded, Capts. Van Horn and Desha, and Lieut. Jackson, with fifty-two rank and file, and two missing. The loss of the enemy was not known. Lieut. Hyde, marine officer of the Niagara, the next day was dispatched with a squad of men, bearing a flag of truce, to recover the remains of Major Holmes and the other dead.

Any further attempt upon Mackinaw being abandoned for the present, the squadron sailed for the lower end of the lake; and at Nautawassaga river, attacked a block-house and compelled the enemy to destroy it, and the schooner Nancy, belonging to the Northwest Fur Company—all under the command of Lieut. Worseley of the Royal Navy—to prevent their falling into our hands.

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#### VIII. END OF THE WAR—TRADE RESUMED.

The squadron now sailed for Detroit, except the schooners Scorpion and Tigress, which vessels were detached to blockade this river and those in the neighborhood, this being the route by which supplies were sent to Mackinaw. Lieut. Turner and Sailing-master Champlin were enjoined not to separate but to cruise in company. Bad weather coming on, Turner concluded, as there was no place to make a lee in case of a gale, to run up the coast to the De Tour, or mouth of the St. Mary's river, where he left the Tigress and coasted along the south shore to Canadian river, where the

Northwest Fur Company had a place to store their furs, this being their principal route to Montreal. The enemy were on the lookout for these vessels; and Lieut. Worseley, discovering they had separated, resolved to make an attempt to capture them. He coasted along through the islands to Mackinaw, where he fitted out an expedition of boats, five in number, on some of which were mounted small pieces of ordnance, and manned by some 200 troops, sailors, Canadian *voyageurs*, and Indians—a portion of the Indians being in canoes, acting as scouts; the whole under the command of Lieut. Bulger, Royal Navy, Lieut. Worseley being second.

The *Tigress* was anchored close in shore for a lee, Mr. Champlin not having any suspicion of danger from the enemy, as the post had been abandoned. About 9 o'clock, p. m., of the 3d of September, the night being dark, they stealthily approached round the point of the island, and pounced upon the *Tigress*. A vigorous defense was made, but the small crew were soon overpowered, and the vessel captured. Mr. Champlin was badly wounded, as were also most of his officers and crew, but I believe none was killed. The prisoners were then placed on board the boats, and Lieut. Bulger, with a selected crew, remained on board. The position of the *Tigress* remained unchanged; and in the morning the American colors were set as usual. On the evening of the 5th the *Scorpion* was seen approaching, but the navigation being intricate, she anchored for the night when about two miles distant. At daylight next morning Bulger got under way and ran down under easy sail for the *Scorpion*. On board the latter vessel, they were engaged in washing decks, and had not the slightest suspicion that the character of the *Tigress* had been changed; and when she got quite near warned them to look out or they would get foul of the *Scorpion*. The *Tigress* was immediately alongside, when the enemy rushed from their hiding-places, and carried her by boarding without resistance. The vessels and prisoners were immediately taken to Mackinaw, and created great joy, as the blockade had cut off their supplies. The British authorities made a great flourish over this capture—claiming the vessels and crews were five times as large

as they really were. To use an old adage, they were "thankful for small favors."

The failure to retake Mackinaw, and the capture of these two schooners, made Colonel McDonald, the commandant, who led in the defense, feel quite secure. The British at once opened communication with the lower end of the lake, and received their supplies regularly; in fact, they now had entire control of Lake Huron and St. Mary's river.

On the arrival of the squadron at Detroit, Commodore Sinclair received information of active movements of the enemy on the Niagara frontier, and sailed thither immediately. On his arrival at Buffalo he found that the schooner Somers, Lieut. Conkling, and Ohio, Sailing-master Caldwell, had been captured by the enemy in the night while at anchor at Fort Erie; that place at the time, being in possession of our forces. The schooner Porcupine had escaped, by being anchored close in shore. These vessels had been left by Commodore Sinclair, to look after matters on Lake Erie, while the squadron was absent on the Mackinaw expedition. News was also soon received of the capture of the Scorpion and Tigress on Lake Huron. The loss of these vessels and the failure to retake Mackinaw, much incensed Sinclair. He was losing what Perry had gained, though his advantages were far superior to those of the latter. Since Perry had left the lakes, no less than eight vessels of the squadron had been captured or destroyed by the enemy. The Trippe, Little Belt, and Ariel, were burned at Black Rock, the Chippewa was burned as she lay disabled on the beach at Buffalo, when the enemy destroyed that place; the Scorpion and Tigress were taken on Lake Huron, and the Somers and Ohio at Fort Erie. Though Sinclair could not avoid these temporary reverses, yet they greatly annoyed him.

The season of high winds having come round, and there being nothing in this quarter of the frontier to employ the squadron actively, Commodore Sinclair sailed for Erie, there to await events, and be ready to act as occasion should require.

Much has been said and written in regard to the execution of James Bird, a marine belonging to the squadron;

and much absurd and sensational sympathy manifested by persons ignorant of the true state of the case. I will give a short account of his entering into the service, his subsequent conduct, and the crimes for which he was executed.

Bird came to Erie connected with a volunteer company from Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, I think, as a sergeant. During the building of the vessels of Perry's squadron, at one time, Bird with a squad of men was placed to guard a small block-house at the cascade, where the vessels were on the stocks. At this block-house, a large amount of public property was stored. Some of Bird's men, with his knowledge as it was alleged, pilfered some of the stores; and when Bird was called to account, he with his men mutinied, and not until threats were made of tearing the house down from over their heads, did they succumb.

At the time, Lieut. Brooks of the marine corps was enlisting marines for the squadron. The commanding officers, both military and naval, offered to overlook the crime of these men, provided they would enlist as marines, to which they consented. Bird was attached to the Lawrence, behaved gallantly in the engagement of the 10th September, and was severely wounded. He was then promoted to sergeant. In the spring of 1814, when the squadron was about to start on the expedition to Mackinaw, Bird was left in charge of a warehouse, containing all the stores belonging to the squadron, with a marine named Rankin to assist him in guarding his charge. Bird deserted from his post and took Rankin with him. They were apprehended near Butler, Pennsylvania, by Sailing-master Caldwell, who was on his way to Erie with a draft of seamen. The squadron was delayed for this draft; consequently, Mr. Caldwell with his party and prisoners, were taken immediately on board. There was also another prisoner on board, a seaman by the name of Davis. His crime was, deserting to the enemy. He was taken on board the British squadron on the 10th September, for which offense he was pardoned. Afterwards he deserted from his post on board the schooner *Tigress*, while at anchor in the Erie roadstead, and took the vessel's boat with him. He had also deserted once or twice since his first offense.

On the arrival of the squadron at Detroit, a court martial was convened on board the *Lawrence*, and all three were tried. The finding of the court, was "guilty," and the sentence, death. The proceedings were forwarded to Washington, and on the return of the squadron from Lake Huron, the proceedings and sentence were returned, approved and affirmed by the President; and, notwithstanding that Bird and Rankin were recommended as suitable subjects for executive clemency, "desertion from off post in time of war," the President claimed, "could not be overlooked, therefore, an example must be made."

The execution took place on board the *Niagara* in the roadstead at Erie, where the squadron was at anchor, in the month of October, 1814. Bird and Rankin were placed in front of one of the ports, where they were required to kneel upon their coffins, and were shot by a file of marines from the opposite side of the quarter-deck. Davis was hung at the yard-arm. All three were buried on the sandy flat, at the entrance to the Erie harbor.

The squadron now proceeded to Buffalo, and after remaining some time, with no active duty within reach to employ them on the frontier, Commodore Sinclair sailed for Erie. Here a report was received that a large amount of stores was collecting near Dover, in Canada, to be forwarded westward. Some troops were taken on board the squadron, when it sailed across the lake to the mouth of Ryerson's creek, but, making no discoveries of note they returned to Erie.

In the season of 1814, a schooner, called the *Union*, of ninety-six tons, was built at Maumee by the Martin Brothers, and commanded by Capt. Robert Martin. She was the first merchant vessel of size built after we got control of the lake. At the capitulation of Mackinaw in 1812, private property was to be respected, and vessels in port were to remain with their cargoes in the hands of their owners or managers. Consequently, all the peltries and other property of the American Fur Company at Mackinaw, remained there up to this time, as there was no means of getting them away. By arrangement of the two Governments, this schooner



Union was sent as a cartel, to bring away prisoners, and property of the fur company. On the 8th of November, 1814, the Union arrived at Erie on her way to Buffalo, with some prisoners on board, among whom was Lieut. Stephen Champlin (he having been promoted), still suffering from his wound. There was also a cargo of peltries consigned to John Jacob Astor, New York, to be landed at Buffalo.

Commerce had fully commenced on the lake, as we had entire control of it, and craft of all sizes were being built. The schooner *Champion*, Captain Frazier, arrived at Erie in October, with a full cargo of merchandise from Buffalo, which was the first instance of the kind since the war. The *Champion* also brought a cargo of beef and butter from Grand river, Ohio, in November.

In the early part of the winter of 1814-15, matters along the frontier of the upper lakes became rather quiet, as the people on both sides began to be tired of the war and anxious for peace. The enemy had never fully recovered from their defeat by Perry and Harrison, in the West, though they rallied and disputed the ascendancy of our forces along the Niagara frontier and elsewhere on the lower lake; and, in several instances, achieved small victories. On Lake Ontario, Sir James L. Yeo and Commodore Chauncey appeared disposed to keep up a war of ship-building, each trying to outdo the other in the size and number of his vessels, instead of "trying titles" the first time their respective squadrons met, as did Perry and Barclay on Lake Erie. To such extremes did they carry this ship-building war, that the declaration of peace found each with a three-decker, mounting 120 guns each, on his hands—vessels five times as large as they should be for so small a fighting area as Lake Ontario.

The commissioners on the part of the United States and Great Britain met early in October, 1814, in the ancient city of Ghent, in southern Belgium, and after a protracted session, concluded a treaty of peace between the two belligerent powers on the 24th of December, 1814. The commissioners on the part of the United States were John Q. Adams, James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell and Albert Gallatin; those on the part of Great Britain were Lord

Gambier, Henry Goulburn and Wm. Adams, with Christopher Hughes, Jr., who was *chargé d'affaires* at Stockholm, as secretary.

The news reached New York on the 11th of February, 1815, by the British sloop of war Favorite. Mr. Hughes started with a copy of the treaty, and embarked on board the clipper schooner Transit, at Texel, bound for the Chesapeake Bay, and arrived at her destination about the same time as the Favorite at New York, though Mr. Hughes was in advance with his dispatches at Washington. On the 17th of February, the treaty was unanimously confirmed by the Senate, and a proclamation issued by the President promulgating its confirmation. The authoritative information reached the western frontier about the 25th, and was received on both sides of the line with manifestations of joy.

Thus, after a bloody war of two and a half years' duration, "grim-visaged" Mars had finally sheathed his sword; and again, the mild and genial rule of Concordia, blessed the land. Soon the rancorous spirit, engendered by strife, would be quieted, and finally supplanted by that kind and social intercourse which should always exist between neighbors; the wanton destruction of commerce would be forgotten, and an increasing comity of trade and commercial intercourse spring up. Thus, in a few years, the barbarous relics of the war will have passed away, and a monument of peace be erected upon the border, to stand, it is to be hoped, for all time.

In the spring of 1815, orders were received by Commodore Sinclair to dispose of some of the vessels, and sink others at some suitable place in the harbor of Erie for preservation. The Caledonia was sold to John Dickson of Erie, repaired and called the General Wayne. The Hunter was sold to parties at Black Rock, and navigated the lakes for some years. The Lady Prevost was sold to traders at Fort Erie and employed on the Canadian side. The Lawrence, Detroit and Queen Charlotte were sunk in the Little Bay. There was a singular incident connected with the sinking of these vessels which, though commonplace in itself, is interesting when we remember the relations these vessels once

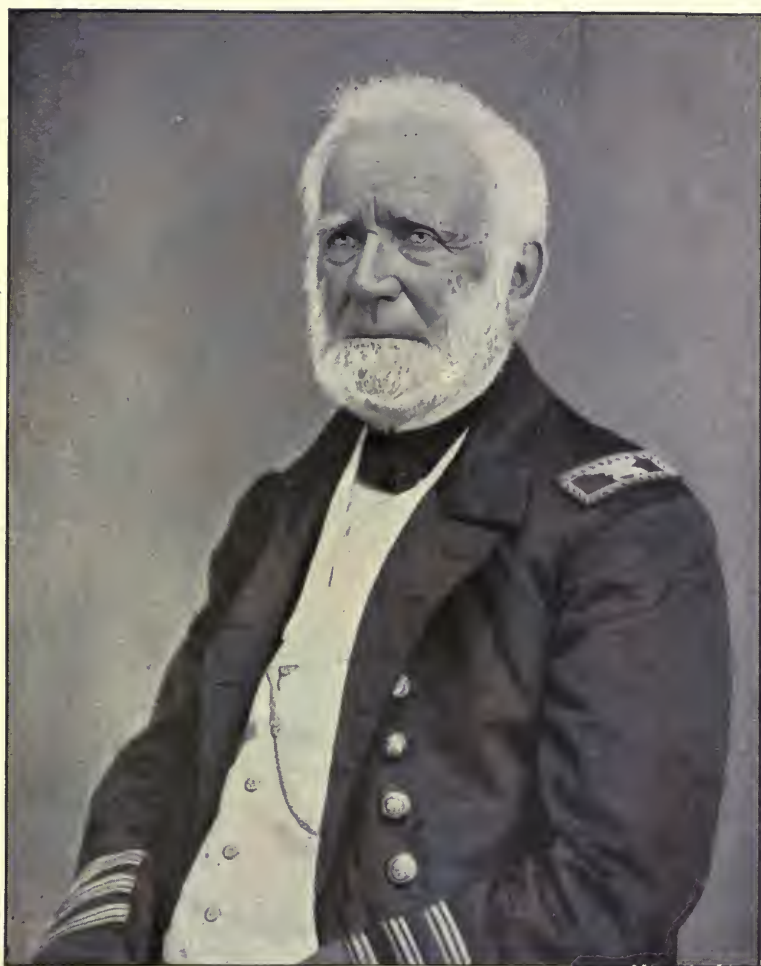
held to each other. They were all three sunk abreast with their heads to the northwest, the Lawrence on the west side. From some cause which never was fully accounted for, the Lawrence, though lying hard upon the bottom, shifted her berth, and got directly across the sterns of the other two vessels which lay quiet in their berths. She was worked back to her place and secured, as was supposed. In the course of a year, she worked round athwart their sterns again. Of course there must have been natural causes for her actions, but they never could be traced. The Porcupine was the only one of the small vessels left; she was kept in commission, and in the season of 1816, took part in running the boundary line between the United States and Canada, under command of Lieut. Champlin. She was subsequently transferred to the revenue cutter service, and finally broken up at Detroit.

In the summer of 1815, the Government built a schooner of sixty tons called the Ghent. She was kept in commission for a number of years, much of the time under the command of Sailing-master Dobbins. She was sold when the naval station at Erie was broken up in 1825. The Niagara had also been kept afloat as a receiving ship, until 1818, when she was laid up and abandoned.

Trade between the lake ports now began to revive, and ship-building commenced. Already we had a few craft, and more were being built, though much of the trade was done in open boats. In addition to those already mentioned, we had the fine, staunch brig Huron of 104 tons, Capt. James Baird, built at Sandusky, which came out in the fall of 1814; the schooner Experiment of thirty tons, Capt. Wm. C. Johnson, built at Buffalo; schooner Eliza of twenty-five tons, Capt. John Randall; schooner Harperfield Packet of twenty-eight tons, Capt. Jonathan Gregory, and several other small craft, the names of which I have not at hand.







*Your old friend  
Stephen Champlin*

FROM A PORTRAIT OWNED BY THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

# LIFE OF STEPHEN CHAMPLIN

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THE MAN WHO FIRED THE FIRST SHOT AND THE LAST  
SHOT IN THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE.

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Paper read before the Buffalo Historical Society, December 5, 1870.

BY HON. GEORGE W. CLINTON

Acting upon impulse, and as a labor of love, I at once undertook, upon the request of our esteemed fellow-citizen, Oliver H. P. Champlin, to prepare for our society a paper in memory of our departed friend, his father; and Mr. Champlin very promptly supplied me, in great abundance, with materials which he deemed important to enable me to lay before you a full and perfect history of the life, public services and character of his venerated father. Those materials (common justice requires me to state it) form the substratum of this paper—prepared in enforced haste and with many misgivings. Had I anticipated the difficulty of satisfying myself, to say nothing of pleasing others, I should have declined this undertaking. What seemed in prospect easy and pleasant of performance, wears, on approach, an aspect of great difficulty. This notice is for you, who knew him as well as I did—for you, not merely as his friends and neighbors, but as a Historical Society; not for you only, but for our archives, for posterity. It becomes necessary

then to guard against one's heart, to temper the warmth of friendship and repress the gushes of eulogy, to measure and weigh one's words so that they may express exact truth, or what is believed such, nor do I deem it proper on this occasion, to discuss mooted questions in our history, or to revive old controversies. The time which I am permitted to consume in the reading of this paper—barely sufficient for the matters I deem germane—would be wholly inadequate for such a discussion. In this memoir I must be, so far as I can, as simple, as plain, as conscientious as was the good man, my subject; I know that I shall not satisfy myself; I fear that I shall not satisfy his family and many most loving friends, whom I would be so pleased to gratify; I have little hope of satisfying your reasonable expectations. Let me say to those who loved him, and who revere his memory, that, while I cannot make him or any man a demigod; that while I must and do shrink from anything like exaggeration, and have no time, if I had ability, to dilate upon the acts and upon the traits of character which made Stephen Champlin estimable, those acts and traits, however simply stated, do prove him, and must prove him, to all posterity, to have been no ordinary man, and to have deserved the estimation in which he was held while living, and the honor paid to him in death.

He was born at South Kingston, R. I., on the 17th of November, 1789; he died in our midst on the 20th of February, 1870. His father, Stephen Champlin, a native of Rhode Island, was a farmer, one who volunteered to fight, and I believe, did fight for freedom in the Revolutionary war. But we have no reason to believe that he was in any respect distinguished among the respectable class to which he belonged. His mother, Elizabeth Perry, was the daughter of Freeman Perry, Esq., and the sister of Christopher Raymond Perry, who was the father of Oliver Hazard Perry, the hero of the battle of Lake Erie, and of Commodore Matthew C. Perry, who has done our country good service. The Perrys won their fame long after their cousin Champlin's character was formed. There was nothing in his truly respectable parentage and connections to thrust



greatness upon him, nor was he born to it. He was what we call a self-made man. Under Providence success did not come to him, but was earned. To his own honest heart, clear intellect, and untiring industry, heaven favoring, he owed all that he enjoyed of honor and prosperity.

He was born and sprung up to manhood with no promise or prospect of distinction. For years before his death his age and infirmities shrouded him from the public. When he died, how we mourned! And you remember the honors that were paid to his remains, not only by this great city in which he dwelt, but by his country. To cold philosophy, this mourning of a country and of its Government may seem chilly and formal; but there were, behind all formal pageantry, fleshly mourners with warm hearts. Such public demonstrations, when, as in this case, enforced by meritorious public service, are grateful to the surviving relatives and friends, and beneficial to the public, but the throbbing hearts of those who were won to love by the warm and well-ordered walk in life, by the kind heart and the liberal hand—these are the true mourners, not without hope, whose tears must be grateful to the disembodied spirit. When all things shall be tried by fire, what will prove golden?

With such a beginning of life, how came so honored and honorable an ending? Heaven, indeed, gave opportunity, but whence the victory? Must not this life of eighty years and upwards, have been, as a whole, well spent? Does not the result show clearly, it being considered that no meanness, indirection or unmanliness led to it, that Stephen Champlin was in all things a well-compacted man, perhaps in no respect rising high above the ordinary average of American manhood, but having every one of the qualities the combination of which leads to true success in life? His history seems to prove that he had them all; and, so far as I can judge, the quality which tempered and bound all together and made the man successful, was persistent will. From the beginning, whatever duty was devolved upon him, he performed it coolly, but with all his might and energetic, unflinching thoroughness.

When Champlin was about five years old, his father

moved to a farm in Lebanon, then in Windham county, Conn. The journey seemed a long one to the child, and it was impressed deeply on his memory, and he loved, in his old age, to tell its incidents; but, as they do not seem to have influenced his character or career, I pass them by. He worked on his father's farm from the time when he became capable of labor, until his sixteenth year, enjoying, I suppose, the ordinary means of education in the country then held out by, in this respect, most admirable Connecticut. And then—how it chanced I know not—he had imbibed so strong an inclination for adventure and what he deemed a sailor's life, that he forgot his duty to his parents, and with a neighboring lad of about his own age, ran, or rather walked away twenty-eight miles to New London, on the river Thames. Though in the gristle, he must have been hardy and resolute. There his companion's courage failed him, or his conscience smote him so that he turned back. But Stephen persevered, and about the 8th of March, 1806, shipped on a schooner bound on a trading voyage with live stock to Demarara. The outward voyage was tempestuous and slow, and they lost their lading; and, very likely, the lad experienced the feeling of fear and remorse which overwhelmed poor Robinson Crusoe on his runaway first trial of the sea. But if so, the return voyage being in every way delightful, such feelings were very transient. At any rate, after returning to New London, and at his father's request and upon his promise that he might go to sea again if he chose, visiting his home, he seems to have made up his mind to follow a seafaring life.

I am afraid that the commodore never took the proper view of this escapade, because, as he told his son Oliver, he frequently told parents whose sons had run off and gone to sea, and who came to him for sympathy, that he had done so himself and had never regretted it, and that any boy who could do it was smart enough to take care of himself.

He shipped again on the same schooner for Demarara; and, on this voyage, an incident occurred which may have had influence upon his subsequent career. Somewhere in the West Indies he was impressed and detained for a few days on a British man-of-war. As a matter of curiosity I

now read you a copy of "The Protection," which in conjunction with the influences his captain brought to bear, procured his release. Thank heaven, the great ocean has become almost free, and such a document is no longer needed for such a purpose:

*"No. 3598. United States of America.*

"I, Jedediah Huntington, Collector of the District of New London, do hereby certify that Stephen Champlin, an American seaman, aged sixteen years or thereabouts, of the height of five feet four inches, light complexion, scar on his head, has this day produced to me proof, in the manner directed in the act entitled 'an act for the relief and protection of American seamen,' and pursuant to the said act, I do hereby certify that the said Stephen Champlin is a citizen of the United States of America.

"In witness thereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal of office this twenty-fifth day of February, 1806.

"JED. HUNTINGTON, *Collector.*"

It would be natural that this arbitrary, gross violation of his own personal rights, and the indignity to the flag of his country, should be remembered by the lad when, having attained a manly age, the War of 1812 occurred. That war was justified if the haughty infliction of repeated injuries by a then far superior power could justify it. And we may thank God that, though the treaty which closed it, vindicated not one of the rights which we claimed, and secured us from not one of the wrongs which we resented, yet, the exhibition of our nascent power insured a respect which has peacefully given us all that we hoped to win by arms, and more.

Pity it is that the hatred excited by the misdoings of those in authority, outlives the doers, and far more than "rivers interposed," makes enemies of nations. Far greater the pity that just revenge cannot distinguish between rulers or governments and their people; that the tyrant and the evil government can be reached only through the bleeding bosom of the people whom they sway. When, oh, when will Christ truly reign, and men discard the phantasms that make them enemies, to act upon the belief of the unity of the human race and replace, by true devotion to the Prince of

Peace, by a love of man, co-extensive with manhood, the blind devotion to their government! Poor Europe! the German and the Frenchman, if they would see it, have no cause for the horrid war which makes both so wretched in the present, and must make them so unhappy in the future. Their governments, rather than they, are in fault, and, but for inveterate habit, misplaced enmity and delusive phantoms, those governments would be destroyed, or chidden and compelled to peace by their own people.

Champlin's next voyage was a fishing one to Newfoundland. There he shipped on an unfortunate schooner, bound to Bordeaux with fish, but which was driven into Ferrol, by stress of weather. He was rising in his calling, for, on this voyage he acted as second mate and kept the captain's watch. On his return in March, 1808, the embargo being in force, he went to work a-farming. In the winter he went to school at Colchester, Conn., and paid for his board and schooling by his work. He then worked by the month on a farm for about six months. In the autumn of 1809, the embargo being removed, he sailed, in what capacity I am not informed, in the ship *Passenger*, commanded by his uncle, Christopher R. Perry, from New York to Rio Janeiro. On the ship's return to Baltimore, in May or June, 1810, he acted as second mate. His cousin Matthew, then a midshipman on leave, took this voyage, and during it the lads contracted a friendship lasting as life. In 1810 he entered upon another voyage in the ship *Latona*, to Buenos Ayres, as second mate. In the summer of 1811, he voyaged to the West Indies, in the brig *Dove*, as mate, and the captain having died of the yellow fever, he performed his duties on the return voyage, which was so tempestuous as to give him full opportunity to display his seamanship; but he brought her safely home and was appointed by her owners, her captain, with more than ordinary privileges, he then being only twenty-two. Before he could purchase and ship a cargo, an embargo of ninety days was declared preparatory to the war. While it was operative he was offered a warrant as sailing-master in the navy and accepted it on condition that war should be declared. When war was declared he was appointed to the

command of a gunboat then lying near Norwich, and he fitted her up and joined with her, Perry's fleet at Newport, of which she was a part. He did not see any fighting, or much that could be called active service on the coast. Twice he was dispatched by Perry to carry important letters to the post-office at New London so as to insure speedy transmission. Both letters were from Hull, one giving the Secretary of the Navy an account of his escape from the British fleet off Boston, the other an account of his capture of the *Guerriere*. Afterwards Perry sent him with a letter to Commodore Rogers, then in command at Boston, informing him that the British fleet was off Newport. Indeed, whenever a service required unflinching energy, Champlin was most likely to be called upon to render it. He performed these services with admirable dispatch. I think the trifling amount of the expenses incurred by him in such journeys, and duly charged to the Government, would surprise you.

In February, 1813, I think it was, Perry was designated to take command on our lake. He was ordered to report to Chauncey at Sackett's Harbor, which he did, before proceeding to Erie. By his order our sailing-master took charge of forty-two men and two officers, and conducted them to Sackett's Harbor. Here, as seems to have been the case with everything he did, Champlin acted with more than ordinary promptitude, discretion and energy. He achieved the distance with his men in two days less time than it took any other draft. The army left Albany twelve hours before, and arrived at Sackett's Harbor twelve hours after him. But I must not dwell upon such details. During the winter he fitted up the schooner *Asp* in preparation for the expedition against Little York (Toronto), and acted in her as second in command in that expedition, and after that took part in the battle of Fort George. Then Perry sent him to Bainbridge at Boston for a draft of men, telling him: "All I ask of you is to use your usual dispatch." Bainbridge could not spare the men. On his return to Sackett's Harbor, Chauncey sent him to Utica to collect a draft of \$36,000, pay \$9,000 to a Mr. Van Rensselaer, and return with the balance. This commission he fully performed in a little over two days.

The distance of the two places was ninety-six miles, and he traversed it, using relays of horses, in about ten hours, each way.

He was the very next morning, directed by Chauncey to take seventy-one men and three officers to Perry, at Erie, and left Sackett's Harbor with them in the evening. At Schlosser he chartered a two-masted boat, which he took up the river by setting-poles. At Buffalo he supplied his men with arms, and by rowing with the enemy in sight the greater part of the way, brought them safely to Perry. A lieutenant with fifty men, left Sackett's Harbor in a schooner about two hours before Champlin, and arrived at Erie ten days after him; and the draft under Elliott was equally long in making that journey. Champlin, with the men, arrived at Erie on the 24th of July, 1813, and the next day was ordered to fit out and take command of the *Scorpion*, which carried a long 32 and a 12-pounder. Then came the hurried fitting out of our fleet in what, in consequence of the bar at its mouth, was little better than a lake.

It has always seemed surprising to me—though perhaps it does not to military men—that no attempt was made by the enemy to destroy it while in embargo. If it had been so destroyed, or if the battle of Lake Erie had ended in a British victory as complete as heaven vouchsafed to us, the whole complexion of the war, in this frontier at least, would have been far different. You remember the disasters which had befallen us; the disgrace that tarnished our arms. Lake Erie and the lakes above, were, for all practical purposes, wholly British. They furnished no highway for our troops, nor for supplies for them. We have reason to surmise that the war was not wholly popular with the then people of our frontier. True patriots there were, probably a large majority of such patriots among them; self-sacrificing men and women, too; but there had been many intermarriages and many close friendships, and intimate business and social ties, to draw our people and the Canadian frontiersmen close together; and it seemed hard to many, undoubtedly, to be barred from a land, foreign though it were, they had been used to tread as freely as their own. Politics, too, ran very

high, and the politics of this state deserved the epithet bestowed on them. They were ferocious. Had that battle been lost, the evil consequences must have been grievous and far-reaching. But it resulted gloriously for us and not ingloriously for the conquered. It was complete—no victory was ever more so. It inspired the whole nation, repressed discontent and heralded and prepared the way for victory everywhere. Surely it was a great privilege to aid in winning that victory. I do not value very highly the fame that flows from such achievements, or any except as a proof of a righteous and discerning heart in the people, whose breath makes fame. It is the great deed, which, for its own sake, is worth the doing. Blessed are they who aided by preparation, for or in the great battle to compel victory to perch upon our standard. Commodore Champlin did much by way of preparation for and much in the battle. His was not, indeed, the great directing mind; his was not the name that infused confidence in the sailors, nor the voice that impelled them to do their duty to the utmost. He had no opportunity to do the heroic act Perry did when in his open boat, under the fire of the enemy, he shifted his flag to the Niagara. But Stephen Champlin did everything he was ordered to do by way of preparation with a zeal and thoroughness which could not be surpassed, and in the battle, played his part with a gallantry which deserved and received the commendation of his commander and of the Government.

As to the preparations at Erie, the crossing of the bar, the search for the enemy's fleet and the encounter which made it "ours," it is not for me to describe or dwell upon them. But it does seem right to me, that I should read that portion of a letter of Champlin, which relates them. The letter was drawn from him in January, 1840, by a communication from the Rhode Island Historical Society, requesting him to furnish it with "a candid and impartial statement of the facts within" his "recollection, respecting the service rendered by Commodore O. H. Perry in creating and equipping the fleet, and the part he sustained as commander of it in the battle of Lake Erie." Captain Champlin in answer writes:

## STEPHEN CHAMPLIN'S OWN NARRATIVE.

"I am able to furnish the following particulars of that memorable event, from a journal kept by me at that time.

"Pursuant to orders, I arrived at Erie, Penn., the station of the United States fleet on Lake Erie, July 24th, 1813, with a draft of seventy men and boys of the most ordinary kind and nearly all new hands. By the almost incredible exertions of the few officers and men upon that station, the vessels composing our little fleet were nearly ready for service. Upon my arrival with recruits, Commodore Perry commenced operations for crossing the bar, upon which there were only four feet of water. The enemy's fleet, at this time, lay off the harbor, with the intention to cut off all supplies from our squadron. A small battery with two or three 12-pounders was therefore erected so as to command the entrance of the harbor as well as to give protection to the vessels that should first cross the bar.

"At daylight, on the 1st of August, the *Scorpion*, under my command, with some of the other small vessels, by lighting and warping, were got over. The *Niagara* and one of the small vessels were then placed as near the bar as possible, to protect the others while on it. A few guns were also left upon the *Lawrence*, to enable her to make some defense in case of an attack. With all the exertion we could make we were nearly two days in getting the *Lawrence* over, and had we then been attacked, the issue must have been most disastrous. Indeed, while she was still on the bar, we discovered the enemy standing in with a leading breeze; but, by renewed and most unparalleled exertions, the *Lawrence* was got into deep water at 9 or 10 a. m., and at 12 m. her guns were aboard, and she was ready for action. To gain time in this emergency, Commodore Perry ordered the *Ariel*, Lieutenant *Packet*, and the *Scorpion*, commanded by myself, to get under weigh and stand out towards the enemy, and annoy them at long shot. We dashed directly at them. Upon seeing the boldness with which they were approached, they changed their course and stood towards Long Point. Late in the afternoon we were recalled. Every officer and



man in the squadron was engaged all night in getting the fleet ready for action. At 3 a. m. the signal was made to get under weigh, and at daylight the whole squadron was in motion. Although, for three days, neither officers nor men had had any sleep, except such as could be snatched upon deck, the greatest anxiety was manifested to pursue the enemy. After a cruise of twenty-four hours off Long Point, without getting sight of the enemy, the fleet returned to Erie for the purpose of taking in supplies for the army under Gen. Harrison.

"We were now reinforced by the arrival of Capt. Elliott with several officers and about ninety men, most of whom he took on board the Niagara, which ship was manned with more experienced, and consequently much better sailors, than the Lawrence. The crew of the Lawrence was made up principally of ordinary seamen and volunteers, many of whom were on the sick list. On the 12th of August we sailed for the head of the lake. On the arrival of the fleet off Sandusky, I was ordered by Commodore Perry to pass up between Sandusky and Put-in-Bay, as a lookout, and if the enemy hove in sight, to make a signal by hoisting the ensign. Soon after passing the point, I discovered a schooner lying at anchor in Put-in-Bay. I made the signal and gave chase, followed by the whole fleet. But darkness and a severe gale compelled us to come to an anchor, to prevent going ashore. The enemy's schooner was driven ashore by the gale.

"On the 10th of September, while lying at anchor in Put-in-Bay, the enemy was discovered, at break of day, in the direction of Malden. The signal was at once made to get under weigh. At this time the Niagara was in a situation to clear the islands before the Lawrence. There was a light breeze from the southwest, and it was with great difficulty that the Lawrence was enabled to clear the islands to windward. At 10 a. m. the wind shifted to southeast and brought our squadron to windward. When the enemy perceived this, he hove to, in a line, with his ships' heads to the westward. The signal was now made by Commodore Perry: 'Engage as you come up, every one against his opponent, in

the line before designated.' The order for our squadron to close was passed by trumpet through Capt. Elliott. The situation of the Niagara should have been abreast of the Queen Charlotte, and of course, as near as she could get; as, previous to the action, I had always understood, from Commodore Perry, that it was his intention to bring the enemy to close action in case of a conflict. About 12 o'clock the enemy commenced action by throwing a 24-pound shot at the Lawrence. At this time the Scorpion was hailed and directed to return the fire with her long guns. The second shot from the Detroit passed through both bulwarks of the Lawrence, and the fire was immediately returned, and kept up in a most gallant style, followed by the Caledonia, under the command of Lieut. Turner, and supported by the Ariel, Lieut. Packet, and the Scorpion, ahead upon her weather-bow. The Queen Charlotte made sail and closed up with the Detroit, shortly after the action commenced, and directed her fire at the Lawrence. It seemed to be the enemy's plan to destroy the commodore's ship, and then cut up the fleet in detail. For this purpose their heaviest fire was directed at the Lawrence. Commodore Perry made every effort to close with the enemy, but the tremendous fire to which he was exposed cut away every brace and bowline, and soon rendered the Lawrence unmanageable. She still, however, held out, for more than two hours, within canister-shot distance, the Niagara remaining a long way astern, firing at long shot from her 12-pounder. A short time before Commodore Perry's going aboard of her, she ranged ahead of the Lawrence, and to windward of her, thus bringing the commodore's ship between her and the enemy, when she might have passed to leeward and relieved the Lawrence from the destructive fire of the enemy; the wind being at that time southeast, when, the American squadron steering large, with the exception of the Lawrence, she being entirely disabled, and lying like a log upon the water, the Caledonia took and maintained her station on a line which was just astern of the commodore during the whole of the action.

"Soon after Commodore Perry got on board of the Niagara, Capt. Elliott left her to bring up the small vessels

that were kept astern by the lightness of the wind. Commodore Perry now made signal for close action. The smaller vessels put out their sweeps and made every exertion to comply with the order. At this time the Niagara bore up with a view to break the enemy's line, which threw them into confusion. In passing the enemy she poured in her starboard and larboard broadsides within half pistol shot, supported by the smaller vessels, which were at that time enabled, with the aid of their sweeps, to get up. The enemy soon struck, with the exception of the Little Belt and Chipewewa, which were brought to by the Scorpion and Trippe—the Little Belt by the former—and so near were they to making their escape that it was 12 p. m. before I came to an anchor under the stern of the Niagara with the Little Belt in tow."

This is the whole of the letter stating facts. Certain comments of the worthy commodore I omit, and I doubt not he would have omitted them had he not written in a heat, and under the influence of what he deemed just indignation. The view which he gives us of this famous battle, though inartistic, has the stirring element of truth, and suffices with our knowledge of other details, to bring the dreadful scene before us—the triumph chastened by sorrow for the fallen—the inevitable and inexpiable slaughter—the agony of the wounded, the spiritual anguish of the noble conquered relieved and soothed so far as might be by the pitying hand and chivalric sympathy of that true gentleman, that christian hero, the noble Perry. May our glorious lakes, fit channels, God-given, for free trade and kindly communication, never more witness such contests!

After the battle, Champlin was engaged in transporting portions of Harrison's army from Portage river to the Middle Sister, from which it was taken in a body, by the fleet, including the Scorpion, and in batteaux, to Malden. His next cruise was on Lake St. Clair and the river Thames. He took the Scorpion forty miles up the river to within three miles of the battle-ground where Col. Johnson won immortal fame by killing Tecumseh, and secured a vessel

loaded with baggage of the British army, and took it, with Col. Johnson, who had been severely wounded, to Detroit. He was then incessantly employed in minor but necessary services, until the 15th of December, when, he being at Erie, Elliott ordered him to Put-in-Bay to take charge of the prizes, the Detroit and the Queen Charlotte. What with being frozen in for four days upon the lake, and baffled by storms, he did not arrive there until Christmas day. He sent back his own vessel, and took judicious and effectual measures to defend the prizes from apprehended attacks; remained there until the spring of 1814, and then rigged them with jury-masts, and in conjunction with Lieut. Packet, sailed them to Erie.

Next he was put in command of the *Tigress*, which formed a portion of the fleet which, under Sinclair, coöperated with Col. Croghan in his unfortunate attempt upon the island of Mackinac. He continued to do good service, in command of the *Tigress*, until the night of the 3d day of September, when, while lying off St. Joseph's Island, she was captured, by boarding, by an overwhelming force in boats, after a resistance which may well be called desperate. In defending his vessel, he and all his officers were wounded. His wound was made by a grape-shot, which, after passing through the flesh of his right thigh, entered the left one, and shattered the bone. Eighteen days thereafter the ball was extracted, at Mackinac, where he had been taken as a prisoner.

He was, not long thereafter, paroled, and sent to Erie, where he remained until January, 1815, when he left for Connecticut, and, traveling by easy stages, reached it in March. Thence, in performance of orders, dated the 28th of that month, he joined Perry's squadron, destined for the Mediterranean, and was attached to his flagship, the *Java*; but, in the autumn, in consideration of the condition of his wound, he was ordered to Erie, whither he went in the spring of 1816, and there underwent a most painful operation—the extraction of splinters of the fractured bone. He was then placed in command of the *Porcupine*, and, with her, assisted the commissioners in their survey of the boun-

dary line along the upper lakes. On his return with the commissioners, his vessel was beached by a strong gale at Buffalo, there being no harbor here. That wind was no ill one: it blew him good luck indeed. During his enforced residence in Buffalo he courted a lady whom many of you will remember as his best blessing—Minerva L. Pomeroy; and they were married, in Buffalo, by the Rev. Miles P. Squier, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, on the 5th day of January, 1817. In the spring following, he was compelled to submit to another operation for the removal of pieces of the fractured bone. In 1818 he was detached from the station at Erie and permitted, for his health's sake, to reside in Connecticut, until November, 1828, when he was ordered to duty on board the receiving-ship *Fulton*, at New York. Being found unfit for subaltern duty, in consequence of his wound, he was detached from her on the 30th of December, only a few days before she blew up. Prior to this, he had undergone three similar operations. He returned to and resided in Connecticut until 1834, when he came to our city, and, with the exception of the two or three years during which, as you will all remember, he commanded the United States steamer *Michigan*, and did good service to our commerce, thenceforth, to the time of his death, he was one of our most noted and respected citizens.

The so-called Patriot War, in 1838, made it incumbent on the United States to restrain, along our frontier, armed aggression upon Canada, and the military arm as well as the revenue service was called to that duty. Champlin at once volunteered, and was put in command of the expedition, consisting of the steamboats *New England* and *Robert Fulton*, which, on the 22d of January, 1838, broke through the ice of the Buffalo Creek and proceeded up the lake. Champlin's steamer was the *New England*; and, if I am not mistaken, he, upon this or some subsequent occasion, rendered good service by vindicating the good faith of the Government, and by extricating some of the deluded men who were bent upon forcing what they deemed freedom upon an unwilling colony.

In the winter of 1842, a naval rendezvous or recruiting

station was opened in Buffalo, principally for recruiting naval apprentices, and Commander Champlin put in command of it, and so conducted it, that, in less than four months, 400 apprentices, seamen and ordinary seamen, were added to the navy. His warrant as sailing-master is dated May 22, 1812; his commission as lieutenant, Dec. 9, 1814; as commander, June 22, 1838; as captain, Aug. 30, 1850; and as commodore, March 12, 1867. On the 13th of September, 1855, upon the recommendation of the board organized under the act of February of that year, he was placed on the reserved list, with leave-of-absence pay. His wound was never perfectly cured and his inability, in consequence of it, to keep the lieutenant's watch, for a long time barred his deserved promotion by reason of a regulation of the Department forbidding the promotion of a lieutenant until after a certain number of years of active service as such. But, despite his sufferings, his heart was in his profession, and he always longed for active service, and more than once applied for it. He was always ready to spend his life for the country he had served with such fidelity and zeal. When the Rebellion broke out he felt that liberty was imperilled, and that it was the duty of every lover of our institutions and of our race to sustain the Union; and so, on the 18th day of April, 1861, he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy: "I am old and shattered, but what there is left of me is at the service of my country," and applied for assignment to active duty.

As to his naval and military career not a stain rests upon it. He was humane, but firm, and a reasonable friend of order and of discipline. His honor was unimpeachable, his bravery beyond question. His gallant conduct in the battle of Lake Erie was attested by Perry, and he, with the midshipmen and other sailing-masters, who, in the language of the act of January 1814, "so nobly distinguished themselves in that memorable battle," was in pursuance of that act presented with a sword by the President, which sword is preserved by Oliver H. P. Champlin, and is rightfully regarded as a most honorable heirloom.

As to his habits and character I have not much to say.

He was, I believe, in all things temperate. Indeed, he is believed to have abstained wholly from the use of spirits and of tobacco in any form from his youth unto his death. His address was not always easy, nor had he in dress or in demeanor any extraordinary polish or refinement. He was, in these respects, simply a gentlemanly sailor. He was an upright, honest man; reasonably shrewd and prudent. In his business he was just and liberal, and, to use the common phrase, his word was as good as his bond. His manners and his virtues had, in the opinion of some politicians, made him so popular in this city, that, in 1842, they desired to present him as a candidate for the mayoralty—a position which he declined as incompatible with his office in the navy. He was not distinguished, in civil or private life, by any extraordinary act or virtue, but kept the even tenor of his way in the quiet discharge of every duty. If one thing which is said of him be true—that he conciliated the affection of every worthy woman who knew him well—then, truly, he must have been a true and admirable gentleman. During his life, he, of course, bore many sorrows; but he was most blessed in all his family relations. He enjoyed the society and counsels of his wife, until her death, on the 8th day of June, 1859. Her mother, Mrs. Pomeroy, resided with him many years before his demise, and still survives, honored and cherished by his family. When Mrs. Champlin died, his son Oliver H. P. Champlin and his newly-married wife were with him, and lived thereafter with him until he left us, cheering and sustaining his declining years.

Although she is yet living, I cannot refrain from thus publicly expressing my respect for Mrs. Champlin's conduct to her infirm and suffering father-in-law. She was to him a most affectionate and loving friend and daughter, anticipating his wishes, and ever ready to soothe his pains by gentle tendance. She was firm and fearless in her treatment of the invalid; for, on one occasion, when his life was endangered by the sudden bleeding of his wound, she applied the tourniquet unflinchingly, and so stayed the hemorrhage until the surgeon could arrive. Five children were born to Oliver in his father's house, and they all loved and were

loved by their grandfather. The two oldest were taken away by diphtheria, at nearly the same time, and the old man mourned for them indeed; but, though bowed with grief, and though his affection followed the lost ones to their tomb, he drew the survivors close to his heart. His last years were painful, his sufferings often intense; but he had troops of friends, books such as he loved, a loving family, and, above all, religious consolation. He was, indeed, a right good man as we count goodness, but he was no saint, and, like all of us, had, I doubt not, committed sins he could not answer for. At any rate, he felt so, and, as his years bowed his body, he erected his mind and dismissed his doubts and drew near unto our Saviour. His was a calm and happy death. Like the patriarch he died with his children by his bed, but he smiled upon and blessed them all, and kissed them, and then gave up the ghost. And so the man who had fired the first gun and the last gun in the battle of Lake Erie, and who had mourned for all his fellow commanders in that battle, as, one by one, they departed from the world, left it, at last, himself, calmly and confidently, like an infant placing its weary head upon its mother's breast.

He left five children: His oldest, Oliver H. P. Champlin; Jane E., the wife of Brigadier General Simpson of the United States engineer corps; Ellen E., wife of John B. Cook of St. Paul, Minnesota; Thomas A. P. Champlin of Cincinnati, Ohio, and William B. Champlin of Attica, N. Y. Alas! one of these children followed him too soon. At the funeral of the good old commodore, when the last solemn rite had been performed, and the mourners had just issued from the cemetery, Mrs. Simpson said: "When mother was buried, father would not leave her until the grave was filled." These were the last words that sainted woman spoke. Death struck her speechless on the instant, and she was borne home to die. No one could be better prepared to die. She was ever active in well-doing, and her life was an humble attempt to imitate that of her Redeemer.

I cannot conclude this paper, which seems to me so unworthy of its subject, without declaring my opinion, formed from such knowledge of his life and actions as I have, that

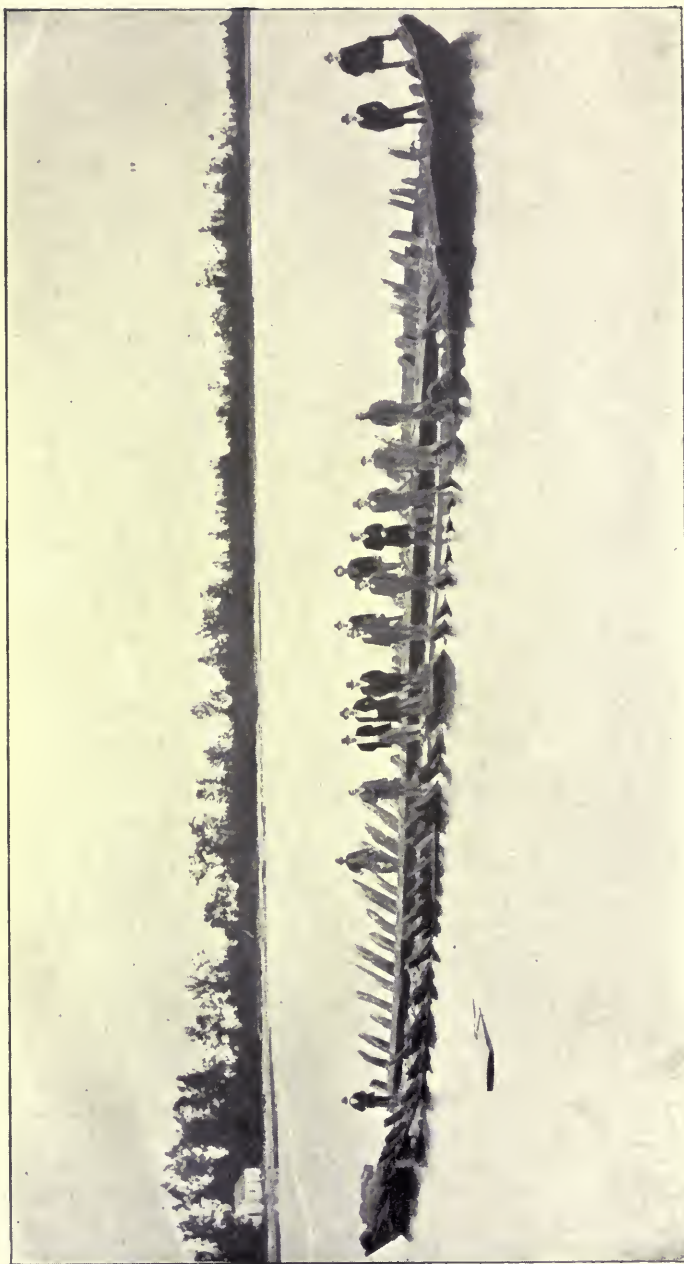


Stephen Champlin deserves a biographer; that his history, fully and simply written, would be replete with interest and instruction. Excuse me, too, for expressing my conviction that the man deserved a monument, and that it would be just and creditable to Buffalo to erect it.

NOTE. Mr. Oliver H. P. Champlin died February 14, 1899. Several other persons, mentioned in the foregoing paper as living, have now passed away.







HULL OF PERRY'S FLAGSHIP, THE LAWRENCE, AS IT WAS RAISED IN MISERY BAY, ERIE, PA., SEPT. 17, 1875. SEE PAGE 403

## WHAT BECAME OF PERRY'S FLEET

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It has been shown in preceding pages that several of the vessels captured by Perry again fell into British hands. It may be well to make record, as far as possible, of the ultimate fate of the prizes and of Perry's own vessels.

As has been stated (p. 374), the Somers and the Ohio were recaptured by the British while anchored off Fort Erie, the fort being then held by the Americans. The Porcupine escaped capture by being anchored close in shore. After the war the Porcupine was taken to Detroit; it is said she was used, in 1817 and 1818, by the commissioners for determining the international boundary line. In 1830, at Detroit, her upper works were rebuilt and her name changed to the Caroline—not to be confused with the steamboat Caroline that furnished a spectacular incident on the Niagara in 1837. The old Porcupine was taken to Grand Haven, and sailed for some years by Captain Harry Miller. In the early '50's she was set adrift in Grand River, near the mouth. The current carried her out into Lake Michigan, but a west wind blew her back after a day or two. She was afterwards refitted, and sailed a season or two. Finally, about 1855, she was allowed to sink, head on, at Ferrysburg, Mich. A few years ago a portion of her hull was raised; it was probably dispersed in relics.

The Scorpion and Tigress were captured by the British on Lake Huron. The Trippe, Little Belt and Ariel were burned by the British at Black Rock. The Chippewa was disabled and beached at Buffalo where she was destroyed when the British burned the town, Dec. 30-31, 1813. The Caledonia was sold to John Dickson and renamed the General Wayne. The Hunter was sold to traders at Black Rock, the Lady Prevost to merchants at Fort Erie, and both vessels sailed the lakes for some years.

The Niagara was used by the Government as a receiving ship at Erie until 1818, when she was abandoned and sunk in Misery Bay, where she still lies. In 1882 Capt. Douglass Ottinger, then senior officer of the U. S. Marine Service on the lakes, Philip Osborne, superintendent of the marine hospital at Erie, and Frank Henry, keeper

of the beacon light at the Erie harbor entrance, made a thorough examination of the remains of the Niagara, with the aid of expert divers, and made the following report on her condition :

"We found the Niagara in Misery Bay, in a depth of about thirteen feet of water. The vessel was careened to one side, and the ribs on the upper side were plainly visible about three feet under water. We were accompanied by an expert diver, one of the crew of the revenue cutter Perry, who made a careful examination of the hull, which was found to be in a comparatively good state of preservation. As the vessel is in deep water, but little pirating has been done, as was the case with the flagship Lawrence, which was in shoal water. The Niagara is in a much better state of preservation than was the Lawrence at the time she was raised. The remains of the cabin and other parts of the vessel that have fallen are in the hold. One of the skylights, in a very good state of preservation, was afterwards brought up with the aid of a boat-hook, and is now in a collection in this vicinity. Owing to the small size of the Niagara, her nearness to the mainland, and the fact that she is in the sheltered waters of a land-locked bay, she could be raised and placed on Garrison Hill, at a small expense."

Since this report was made, there have been numerous projects for raising the Niagara, especially at the time of the Columbian Exposition; but her hull still rests undisturbed.

The Lawrence, the Detroit and the Queen Charlotte were sunk by order of the United States Government, in Misery Bay, in July, 1815. In 1825 they and the Niagara were sold by the Government, as they lay at the bottom of the bay, to Commander Budd of the Navy; and by him sold, Aug. 9, 1825, to Benjamin H. Brown of Rochester, for \$325. Brown appears to have sold them, or a part interest, to A. Q. D. Leech of Erie. It is stated in a letter from Thomas Forster, Collector at Erie, to the Hon. Mahlon Dickerson, Secretary of the Navy, April 7, 1835, that Brown sold the vessels to Leech, that the Queen Charlotte had been raised, and that the Detroit and Lawrence soon would be raised and would require papers. There exists among the Dobbins papers a sworn statement of Benjamin H. Brown to the effect that on June 11, 1835, he sold the four boats "as they now are or were sunk at the date of purchase by A. Q. D. Leech" to Capt. George Miles of Erie. In 1837 the Detroit and Queen Charlotte were raised by Capt. Miles, and were refitted into merchant vessels, but did not long prove serviceable, and were soon laid up. The Detroit lay at Buffalo, dismantled, in 1841, when she was bought by hotel proprietors and others of Niagara Falls, the design being to send her over the falls, thus making a spectacle which in theory at least would draw visitors and make business. It was at first proposed to send her to destruction on September 10th; but either because public senti-

ment did not deem it a suitable celebration of Perry's victory, or for other cause, the exhibition was postponed until September 15th. The *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser and Journal* of the following day said:

"At the appointed hour, 3 p. m., the vessel was towed from the foot of Grand Island into the stream to the very verge of the rapids, and then cut adrift. She took the first plunge gallantly, head on, and for a moment seemed completely engulfed, but almost instantly the hull shot upward from the 'hell of waters,' her main and foremasts went by the board, and on she went. The next descent was passed safely. At the third her mizzen mast gave way, and a few rods further she grounded by the head. Her stern swung slowly round and grounded also. When we left Goat Island she was lying broadside to the current, in its shallowest part, nearly midway between the island and the Canadian shore."

A part of her hull remained there for more than a year. Lossing, in a note on this incident, says that a bear and other animals were aboard. The contemporary accounts do not say so; the historian evidently confused the destruction of the *Detroit* with a similar fate to which the schooner *Michigan* was sent in 1827, she having a number of birds and animals aboard.

On Dec. 9, 1857, Capt. Miles sold his interest in the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* to Leander Dobbins of Erie for "two hundred dollars to me in hand paid," though this may have been a partial payment. For some years the *Lawrence* was the easy prey of relic-hunters. In 1860, at the time of the dedication of the Perry monument in Cleveland, several timbers were taken from the wreck of the *Lawrence*. Handsome armchairs were made from them, one being sent to Dr. Usher Parsons, who had served as surgeon on board the *Lawrence* in the great battle; one was sent to the president of the Perry Monument Association, in Cleveland; and another became the property of Capt. Stephen Champlin at his home in Buffalo. Several large fragments, taken from the hull at this time, are now in the museum of the Buffalo Historical Society. For several years, the making of "Lawrence canes" was a profitable industry in Erie.

In 1875 Mr. Dobbins placed the *Lawrence* in the hands of John Dunlap, Thomas J. Viers and Rush Warner, for exhibition at the Centennial, and ultimate dispersal in souvenirs, but the speculation was unsuccessful. The hull of the old flagship was raised from its long resting-place, Sept. 17, 1875, towed across the bay to the city and again sunk. In the spring of 1876 it was raised, put on the cars and sent to Philadelphia. In subsequent litigation it was alleged that the *Lawrence* was badly placed at the exposition, and not sufficiently advertised. At any rate, the public practically ignored it, so

that the receipts from admissions to view it, and from the sale of canes made from its wood, were trifling. Mr. Dobbins received, when the hull was raised, a cash payment of \$250, by Viers and Dunlap. A one-fifth interest, stated at \$1,000, was bought by Mrs. Anna C. Morrison of Lockport, her husband acting as her agent. The agreement was that as soon as the vessel reached Philadelphia a second payment of \$250 was to be made; but the management of Viers, who had it in charge there, was so disastrous, that in August over \$300 rent for exhibition space was due, and to satisfy the landlord's claim the boat was sold by the sheriff for about \$600. The owners valued it at \$15,000, basing their calculations on what they thought they were going to realize from admissions and the sale of canes, etc. It was bid in by Michael Price; Rush Warner and a Mr. Adams subsequently took the remains off his hands; and in a gradual and ignominious dispersal in fragments, possibly without even the dignity of identified relics, Perry's gallant flagship passed out of existence.



THE EPISODE OF  
THE ADAMS AND CALEDONIA

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BY GEORGE D. EMERSON

The War of 1812 was declared by the United States against Great Britain in June, 1812. Its opening was characterized by a succession of events which were well calculated to dishearten its supporters in this country. Hull's surrender and other disasters followed each other rapidly. The major portion of the after fighting took place, as is well known, on the Niagara River frontier, and in October, 1812, occurred an event which though perhaps not a very great one in view of the stupendous achievements of these later days, was nevertheless a bold and daring project, successfully carried out, and contributing in a measure to dispel the gloom which the then recent disasters had occasioned. Taking place within sight of Buffalo, at that time a scattered country village, its history possesses an unusual interest to the people of this vicinity.

Early in October, 1812, a detachment of sailors arrived at Black Rock from New York, destined for the fleet then organizing on Lake Erie. Under the protecting guns of Fort Erie, directly opposite, two British vessels, the Adams and Caledonia, were lying. The Adams was a brig mounting six guns, with a commanding lieutenant of marines, boatswain, gunner, and fifty-six men; on board were also thirty American prisoners recently captured, muskets, pistols, cutlasses and battle-axes. The Caledonia carried two small guns, blunderbusses, pistols, muskets, cutlasses,

boarding-pikes, and had twelve men including officers; there were also ten prisoners aboard. These vessels although armed, as indicated, were known to have on board valuable cargoes of furs.

A plan was organized to capture the vessels by surprise under cover of night. It was almost entirely an impromptu affair, and was entered into very enthusiastically by the newly-arrived sailors who had had a long, wearisome, overland journey of almost 500 miles, but were ready for anything exciting. Some of the citizens of Buffalo, under the lead of the brave Dr. Chapin, took part in the affair also. The main organizer and commander was Lieutenant Jesse D. Elliott, of the United States navy. On the morning of the 9th of October, the attack upon the vessels took place, and in a few minutes' time the American forces were in complete possession of both, losing in the attack and conflict only one man killed, one officer, and four men wounded.

Owing to the extreme darkness, some two hours elapsed before leaving the American shore before the vessels were reached, and it was then about three o'clock in the morning. The vessels as soon as captured were taken down the river. The Caledonia was anchored near Black Rock, but the Adams was carried by the current to the west side of Squaw Island (about half a mile from Black Rock) where she grounded a short distance from the shore.

So sudden, unexpected and successful was the assault, that the vessels were well under way before any knowledge of what had transpired reached the occupants at the fort. When opposite the Rock a heavy cannonading commenced from the batteries and flying artillery on the Canadian shore, which was soon returned by the vessels. The Adams was much exposed, owing to her situation, but those who had been on board were safely landed on this shore. She was soon after recaptured by a party of British, but they were compelled to abandon her on account of the destructive fire from the island and the American batteries on shore. She was shortly after set on fire and burned to the water's edge, as it was deemed impracticable to retain possession of her.

To cross a stream with a current like that of Niagara, in

open boats, to assault well-armed and equipped war vessels, lying under the protection of powerful batteries, would under ordinary circumstances be deemed madness; but it was not such to the gallant souls who conceived and carried out this bold project, and it will long be remembered as a most gallant and daring exploit.

The following is an extract from Lieut. Elliott's official report :

"BLACK ROCK, October 9th, 1812.

" . . . On the morning of the 8th inst., two British vessels . . . both said to be well-armed and manned came down the lake and anchored under the protection of Fort Erie. . . . On the morning of their arrival I heard that our seamen were but a short distance from this place, and immediately despatched an express to the officers directing them to use all possible dispatch in getting their men to this place as I had an important service to perform. On their arrival, which was about twelve o'clock, I discovered that they only had twenty pistols and neither cutlasses nor battle-axes. But on application to Generals Smyth and Hall, of the regulars and militia, I was supplied with a few arms, and Gen. Smyth was so good, on my request, as immediately to detach fifty men from the regulars armed with muskets. By four o'clock I had my men selected and stationed in two boats which I had previously prepared for the service. With these boats, fifty men in each, and under circumstances very disadvantageous, my men having scarcely had time to refresh themselves after a fatiguing march of 500 miles, I put off from the mouth of Buffalo Creek at one o'clock the following morning, and at three I was alongside the vessels. In the space of about ten minutes I had the prisoners all secured, the topsails sheeted home, and the vessels under way. . . . To my officers and men I feel under great obligation. To Capt. Towson and Lieutenant Roach of the Second Regiment of Artillery, Ensign Prestman of the Infantry, Capt. Chapin, Mr. John McComb, Messrs. John Faver, Thomas Davis, Peter Ovenstock and James Sloan, resident gentlemen of Buffalo, for their soldier and sailor-like conduct. In a word, sir, every man fought as if with their hearts animated only by the interests and honor of their country."

Capt. James Sloan, mentioned above, acted as pilot of the expedition. For many years subsequent to this he resided in Black Rock, an honored and respected citizen, until

March 5, 1868, when, at the ripe age of eighty, he was gathered to his fathers.

Besides those named in the official report of Lieut. Elliott and the gallant commander himself, the following is believed to be an authentic list of all who participated in this daring attack :

George Watts, Alexander Sisson, sailing masters.

William Peckham, J. E. McDonald, John S. Cummings, Edward Wilcox, master's mates.

Lawrence Hanson, John Rack, James Morrell, boatswains.

Benjamin Tallman, John Wheeler, quarter gunners.

Martin Cook, James Rigden, orderly sergeants.

Geo. P. Valentine, William McElroy, Edward Patterson, —— Bird, —— Nolan, —— Vincent, —— Osborn, —— McCobbin, corporals.

#### ACTING SEAMEN.

Edward Police,  
John Wheeler,  
Edward Poline,  
James Williams,  
Robert Craig,  
John McIntyre,  
Peter Brown,  
Elisha Atwood,  
William Edwards,  
Michael L. Brooks,  
William Roe,  
Henry Anderson,  
Christopher Bailey,  
John Exon,  
John Lewis,  
William Barker,  
Peter Davis,  
Peter Deist,

Lemuel Smith,  
Abraham Patch,  
Benjamin Myrick,  
Robert Peterson,  
Gardner Gaskell,  
Anthony DeKruise,  
William Dickson,  
Jacob Ure,  
Daniel Holland,  
Thomas Hill,  
John Reynolds,  
Abraham Fish,  
Jerome Sardie,  
John Tockum,  
Wm. Anderson,  
Joseph Jockins,  
Thomas Bradley,  
Hutton Armstrong,

#### SOLDIERS.

Jacob Weber,  
Jesse Green,  
Henry Thomas,  
George Gladdon,  
James Murray,

Samuel Baldwin,  
John Hendrick,  
Peter Evans,  
William Fortune,  
John Garling,

John Karns,  
 Thomas Wadugan,  
 Thomas Houragan,  
 Peter Perone,  
 Edward Mahoney,  
 Tennis Lisheway,  
 William Fisher,  
 Mathias Weineman,  
 Moses Goodwin,  
 James McGee,  
 Jas. McGrossen,  
 William Weimer,  
 Benjamin Thomas,  
 Thomas Rush,  
 J. Wicklin,  
 W. Richards,  
 James Tomlin,  
 James Boyd,  
 James Neal,  
 James Gubeman,  
 William Knight,  
 M. Parrish,  
 James McCoy,  
 Daniel Frasier,  
 John House,  
 Jacob Stuart,

William Kemp,  
 John Fritch,  
 James Ray,  
 Anson Crosswell,  
 Charles Lewis,  
 John Shields,  
 Charles Le Forge,  
 John Joseph,  
 Henry Bertholds,  
 James Lee,  
 Isaac Munson,  
 George Eaton,  
 Thomas O. Lader,  
 Wm. Crownhoven,  
 John J. Lord,  
 Charles L. Friend,  
 Elisha Cook,  
 Joseph Johnson,  
 John Stewart,  
 William Tryon.  
 Daniel Martin,  
 Daniel Holland,  
 Joseph Davis,  
 Hugh Robb,  
 Cyrenius Chapin,  
 Wm. C. Johnson,

NOTE. No mention is made in the foregoing of John Dickson, unless the "John Exon" in the list of seamen is a misprint for his name. That Dickson's part in the affair was important has been indicated in the narrative by Capt. Dobbins; and is still further shown in the sketch that follows. Benjamin Fleming, whose name does not occur above, was also a participant. The foregoing list differs in several respects from one given in Lossing's "Field-book of the War of 1812," p. 386.



# EXPLOITS OF JOHN DICKSON

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A PARTICIPANT IN THE AFFAIR OF THE ADAMS AND CAL-  
EDONIA. WRITTEN FROM HIS OWN JOURNAL

BY HIS DAUGHTER,  
MRS. JAMES HOSKINSON<sup>1</sup>

John Dickson was born in Baltimore in 1785, of English parents. At eleven years of age he lost both father and mother and was left in the care of an aunt who, he thought, was too strict. He lived with her two years and ran away and shipped on board a merchant brig bound for the Mediterranean. When on their passage they encountered severe storms, which made him tired of a sea life. When the brig arrived at the port of Leghorn and discharged her cargo he absconded. Search was made for him, but he was safely hid in a cellar. For two days he wandered about the city without money, and did not meet with any one who could speak English. On the third day he attracted the attention of an English gentleman who took him to his hotel and told him he was going to make a tour of Italy and said if he chose to go with him he would "give him good pay." He quickly consented and was presented with a new suit of

1. Here printed from the manuscript owned by Major T. J. Hoskinson, paymaster of the U. S. Naval Home at Philadelphia. Dickson's original journal has not been found by the editor of this volume. In 1885 it was in the hands of his daughter, who then prepared her narrative for publication in the *Gazette* of Erie, in which journal it appeared, Feb. 15, 1885. This, the only known record of the exploits of John Dickson, clears up certain allusions to him in the Dobbins papers, and adds another picturesque figure to the history of the Niagara.

clothes. They embarked on board the *Navielle*, on the river Arno. There were several other passengers of different nations. They had a very pleasant voyage, stopping at every place of note on the way. They remained at Pisa two days and were in the Grand Duke's palace, which Dickson describes as very magnificent. They remained at Rome for some time. Young Dickson's employer was very kind to him. In after years he often spoke of the delight he experienced in this journey. The grandeur of Rome, comprised in her palaces, churches, and ruins, left an indelible impression on his memory.

It was fortunate for this poor boy that he took this journey. It was an oasis in the desert. For the next eleven years of his life his sufferings were almost incredible.

The travelers returned to Leghorn and soon after a British man-of-war appeared and anchored in the offing. It was the brig *Speedy*, which had slipped her cable and gone to sea leaving her purser (young Dickson's new friend) on shore. He told him to come on board, and there was no alternative; he had to obey. When on board, the purser said to the captain: "Here is a fine boy I picked up at Leghorn!" He then told Dickson he must part with him as he had another boy on board.

He was then left to the mercy of the sailors and their rough treatment. Their manner of living was extremely disgusting; they had to eat and sleep in the hollup<sup>1</sup> deck of the brig, which was encumbered with cables and rigging, and they had to crowd as near the hatchway as possible. Their victuals were put in a small tub. Each mess consisted of six persons, who were supplied with horn spoons; they all sat cross-legged around the tub, and were obliged to eat as fast as possible. Their beds were old sails.

England, France, and Spain were then at war. Lord Nelson's fleet was in the Mediterranean watching its enemies. Dickson was transferred to the *Hamadryad*, a Spanish frigate, taken off Cadiz, and now an English prize. She immediately took four French prizes, and was soon after-

1. A sailor's perversion of "orlop," the lowest deck in a three-deck vessel, below the water-line.



wards wrecked on the coast of Algiers. It was in the midst of an awful storm and many vessels foundered in their sight. The crew of the *Hamadryad* all escaped from drowning, but were made prisoners by the piratical Algerians. They were treated cruelly by them until the English consul came to their assistance. They were prisoners six months.

This unfortunate young American was then put on board of the *Leander*, a 50-gun ship, one of Admiral Nelson's squadron commanded by Captain Thompson, and was in that memorable battle in Aboukir Bay between the combined fleets of England and France.

The fight commenced Aug. 1, 1798, at 31 minutes after 6 p. m., and lasted three days. During the engagement there was not a breath of wind. Five days after the victory, which obtained so much glory for England, Capt. Berry of the *Vanguard*, Nelson's ship, came on board of the *Leander* as she was off Cadiz, with despatches for Earl St. Vincent. She speedily took her departure and on the morning of the 15th of August, encountered *Le Generoux*, a French 74-gun ship, and after a most desperate battle, which lasted six hours, the *Leander* surrendered. Dickson saw Captains Hood and Berry hide the despatches in an apron of one of the guns, which was thrown overboard.

About thirty English sailors were placed on board of *Le Brune*, a French frigate. They made their escape by night, in a large barge, and landed at the Isle of Quarte, where they sold the barge for about \$200. Dickson left the island in a vessel for Algiers, from which he was taken and placed on the *Alliance*, an old ship which had formerly belonged to John Paul Jones's squadron. He was now again in the British Navy, where he remained more than eight years. He made his escape several times, but was captured by press-gangs or British seamen.

In London he met a Capt. Smith of Baltimore, who had known his parents, and as his vessel was soon to set sail he obtained a protection for him from the American consul. This so elated him that he went with a friend to Greenwich hospital to see the disabled sailors. On his return he was seized by the gang and his protection burnt.

At last he made a safe escape, being assisted by the captain of a merchant vessel belonging to Philadelphia. He told him to get into a berth and feign sickness. He swallowed some tobacco, which made him so very sick that when the vessel was searched for English sailors they thought he was too ill to be removed, and the captain said he would soon die and go to the place where no one wants to go.

After this he made a whaling voyage to Greenland which proved successful. He spent two years in the "Island of Desolation" killing sea-elephants to obtain blubber. The seamen suffered much, the weather being extremely cold. They subsisted on the tongues, hearts, flippers and flukes of the sea-elephants, and when there was a scarcity they had to eat the carcasses they found on the beach.

*[Here follows a period in Dickson's career without record. He was at Erie, and sailing the lakes, as early as 1808.]*

Soon after Mr. Dickson arrived in Erie he was employed by Capt. James Rough as mate of the *Mary*. She was one of the largest vessels on the lakes, and was at Mackinaw when war was declared. She was loaded with furs for the Northwest Fur Company, which were to be delivered at Black Rock. The fort at Mackinaw was unable to stand a siege, being garrisoned by only fifty men, and surrendered to the British. Dickson, the mate of the *Mary*, was making hurried preparations to get her off, when two British armed vessels hove in sight and bore up, and they were obliged to give up. She was made a cartel of to carry the soldiers on parole to Detroit, and those citizens who were not willing to stay on the island. An English officer and ten men were placed on board to guard her. After leaving Detroit, and on reaching Cleveland, the crew and prisoners absconded, leaving only the captain, mate and the guard on board. The mate was obliged to steer all night, and the captain took the helm in the daytime. On arriving at Fort Erie it was decided that the vessel was a lawful prize, and the cargo should be given up to the owners, the Northwest Fur Company. The captain and mate were paroled and landed on the American shore next day.

Soon after Mr. Dickson was paroled he was ordered by Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott to take charge of the navy yard at Black Rock, where some small vessels were being fitted out, intended for the war. His duty was to collect and store the rigging and put things in order.

On Oct. 8, 1812, two British armed brigs arrived at Fort Erie—the *Caledonia* and the *Adams*. Dickson informed Lieut. Elliott that he was well acquainted with those brigs and the number of their men, as they were loading when he was made a prisoner. The *Adams* or *Detroit*, which was taken by the British at the commencement of the war, was loaded with cannon and arms for Fort George. The *Caledonia* was one of the two brigs that took the *Mary*. Lieut. Elliott directed Dickson to fit out two large salt boats for an expedition, which he did. The oars were muffled and everything was put in readiness for action. In the meantime there arrived a draft of eighty seamen from the frigate *Adams* to join Commodore Perry's squadron. They were within a few miles of Buffalo. Lieut. Elliott sent Dickson with an express to the commanding officer of those men to use all possible dispatch to get them to Black Rock. Dickson was obliged to crawl on his hands and knees in some places, for fear of exposure. He directed the officer to take the land road to Black Rock and not expose his men to the view of the enemy. They went on board at night and the boats started to Buffalo at 2 a. m., and steered across below Point Abino to make a safe landing above the brigs for the purpose of boarding them, and also to have the assistance of the current and to prevent the brigs from seeing them. They got within a cable's length (720 feet) of them, when they were discovered by a sentinel, who hailed and fired. The night was very dark. The boats grappled and boarded the brigs, and in a few minutes they were in the possession of the Americans. When they were bringing them to the American side the *Detroit* drifted too far into the stream and dropped down toward Squaw Island, where she ran aground on the Canadian shore. When daylight appeared the enemy had a good chance of raking her, and she was abandoned.

Lieut. Elliott ordered Dickson to land the prisoners in

charge of the squad. It was now daylight, and Dickson was steering the boat. The commanding officer of the Detroit, then in the boat, recognized him and seemed greatly surprised.

"Did I not land you," he said, "about two months ago on the American side as a prisoner on parole? You are now fighting against us. If we ever take you, we will try you for your life! I will report you to our government, as you are an Englishman, and you may thank Capt. Rough for your life. Leave the lines as quickly as possible." As the British were determined to take him, Capt. Elliott gave him his discharge.

Mr. Dickson originally went to Erie in 1808, and was married the next year to Miss Susan Gillespie, a native of Nova Scotia. In 1812 he opened a hotel in the Cowgill house, a large double log house on French Street opposite the old "red store," where he remained five years.

When Gen. Mead's brigade was in Erie the men were quartered in private and public houses. Mr. Dickson's hotel was full. They were mostly raw recruits, and when they arrived many of them had nothing but corn bread in their knapsacks. Mrs. Dickson supplied them with cooking utensils, and there would be a rush by the cook of each mess for the pots, pans and kettles. The frying pans had long handles which were used as weapons, as a fight would generally ensue; and often as the victors were cooking their meat a shovelful of ashes was slyly thrown in. Mrs. Dickson would have to "settle the hash" by telling them that if they did not behave better she would not lend them anything. This would produce quiet for a short time.

Mr. Dickson died in Houston, Texas, in November, 1839. Mrs. Dickson died in March, 1865.<sup>1</sup>

1. It is noted in the Dobbins papers (p. 379), that after the war Dickson became owner of the *Caledonia*, which he renamed the *General Wayne*; she was sailed by Capt. James Rough. (See *Buf. Hist. Soc. Pubs.*, Vol. I, pp. 56-57, 106-108; Vol. V, pp. 293-4.)

On Aug. 27, 1859, at Erie, Benjamin Fleming made a sworn statement, in which the following appears:

"I was in the expedition under the command of Capt. Jesse D. Elliott, that captured the British brigs *Caledonia* and *Detroit* on the 8th or 9th of October, 1812, from under cover of the batteries of Fort Erie. When the draft of men

to which I belonged were on their way from New York to Buffalo—and which said draft of men assisted in capturing said vessels—were within about two miles of Buffalo, a short thick-set man met us and had some conversation with Lieut. Sisson and Mr. Watts. It was rumored among the men that he was an express from Black Rock.

"I afterwards saw the same man have partial charge of the boats we used in the expedition. He acted as pilot of the boat I was in, and which was under the command of Capt. Elliott in person. After we had grounded the Detroit on the foot of Squaw Island, and the British firing rapidly upon us, Capt. Elliott called up this same person, whom he called Dickson, saying, 'Mr. Dickson, haul the boat alongside, get the prisoners in her and land them, and then we will all go on shore, as there is no use of our trying to get the vessel afloat or defend her at present.' Dickson obeyed the order and landed the prisoners. I afterwards saw him at the navy-yard at Black Rock several times. When I was afterwards discharged I met him at Erie, Pa., where we had several conversations in relation to the capture of those vessels. The correctness of his account of the expedition, together with my recollection of his personal appearance, enabled me fully to recognize him as the same man, although I had no personal acquaintance with him until I met him at Erie. . . ."

The name of Benjamin Fleming should be preserved in local annals, for he served his country well on the Niagara, as elsewhere. He was born in Sussex Co., Delaware, July 20, 1782; was brought up a sailor in the coasting trade, and was attached to a pilot-boat on the Delaware bay and off the capes for many years. In 1808 he became a seaman on board the frigate *Essex*, serving on her for a number of years. In 1812, when war was declared he was still attached to the *Essex*, and with others of his shipmates, volunteered for service on the lakes. They came to Buffalo early in October and on the night of the 8th participated in the capture of the British brigs *Caledonia* and *Detroit*. He went with a draft of men to Erie, assisted in fitting out Perry's fleet, was attached to the Niagara as maintop-man, and shared in the battle of the 10th of September; also in the movement of General Harrison and Commodore Perry against Proctor which culminated in the battle of the Thames. After the war he settled in Erie and reared a numerous family, sailing the lakes himself for many years.



NARRATIVE OF  
COLONEL SAMUEL BLAKESLEE

A DEFENDER OF BUFFALO IN THE WAR OF 1812.<sup>1</sup>

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WHEATLAND, COUNTY OF MONROE  
IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.  
December the 30th 1822.

*O Thou before whom Angels Bow Saints adore and Devils tremble, Look down with Holy complacency on thy Very unworthy Servant on this ever memorable morning which is the Ninth Anniversary of his great deliverance in the day of Battle.<sup>2</sup> Give unto me O God the Spirit of Wisdom and understanding that I may write and leave to my children a true history of the first settle and the fore Fathers of and by name of Blakeslee in America—as I have it verbally from men that are dead and gone and from my own experience during sixty three years of Experience and the Praise and the glory shall be ascribed to the tryune Three in heaven Amen.*

SAMUEL BLAKESLEE.

In the early settlement of British America there was two men and brothers by the name of Samuel and John Blakeslee, both blacksmiths by occupation, left England with their anvil, vice, hammer, tongs, and other necessary tools, etc.,

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1. Here printed from the original manuscript, written by Col. Blakeslee in 1822; kindly loaned to the Buffalo Historical Society by Miss Eliza A. Blakeslee of Caledonia, N. Y.

2. At Black Rock in the War of 1812.

fitted to their occupation, and landed in Boston in Massachusetts, and purchased what was then and is since called Boston Neck, a poor barren, narrow strip of land which joins the peninsula of the town of Boston to the main land. Here they lived a few years with their families and labored at blacksmithing for their support. But the then village of Boston was poor and small and the narrow neck which they had purchased was incapable of affording much for the subsistence of their families. But these two brothers being stout robust enterprising men, agreed Dan like to seek an inheritance. They arose with their families left Boston and proceeded by the sea shore to New Haven in Connecticut. Here Samuel bought land and settled himself and family, but John his brother went with his family northwest of New Haven and near the western part of the state.

N. B. It may be remarked that the present state of Connecticut is composed of two provinces, viz., the Province of Connecticut and the Province of New Haven, which hath since been incorporated the state of Connecticut [*break in MS.*] which is now the town of Woodbury in the town of Roxbury. This branch of the family I have not so general knowledge of, although I have conversed with some of them and they all trace their genealogy to the same old father John. However there are many of the descendants that have now given themselves the trouble to know from whence they came. In this family there is and has been a number of remarkable men, both for strength, ambition, courage and enterprise. I saw about twenty years past old Mr. Tilleson Blakeslee in New Haven. He I think removed from Roxbury to New Haven, who had been for a number of years past the sherriff of the county. I saw him at his house in the time of the Revolutionary War; he was then and had been a lieutenant in the army. At the time I saw him in New Haven he was a very old man but retained a firm constitution and a strong mind. At this time I was a Representative at the General Assembly, then holden at New Haven, I frequently went to see him, and he gave me considerable information respecting our genealogy, etc.

He said that when our venerable forefathers left Boston



they did not sell or dispose of their landed property, but left it thinking that in time it might be worth something; but time slipped away and they became old men and died, and the land was not disposed of by them or any of their descendants; and the same little narrow sandy Boston Neck is now covered with an immense block of buildings, and the same ground could not be purchased for many millions of dollars, and if he was sufficiently able to maintain a law suit he would spend one half million to obtain our just and lawful right to the soil.

But to return to the family of Samuel Blakeslee of which I am a descendant. They settled in New Haven. New Haven town, then called, was about twenty miles square, and this family of which I am speaking multiplied fast and were scattered as farmers throughout the town. There was a settlement made about thirteen miles north of what was called the town of New Haven, being what we now call a village, and this thirteen-mile settlement was called New Haven. During a number of years all this tract of twenty miles square was called New Haven, but in process of time this town became divided and subdivided. It was first divided from east to west, and the north part was called Wallingford. Afterwards old New Haven was subdivided into East Haven, North Haven, and West Haven, and a piece more of land set off to the town of Woodbridge and a piece set off to the town of Branford. From the town of Wallingford has since been set off the towns of Cheshin and Meriden. In these towns the descendants of the first Samuel Blakeslee mentioned were to be found, but the most of them were to be found in North Haven.

My father's name was Joseph, my grandfather's Samuel, and my great-grandfather's Ebenezer, and his father was the Samuel who came from England. These accounts I had from my father when I was young, and it is possible I may have missed one generation, which would be between the first Samuel and Ebenezer, but I rather think not.

In the division of the large town of New Haven it so happened that my grandfather was in the town of Wallingford, where he lived and died, as did my father in the same

house and on the same farm. My brother Joseph now lives in an elegant house which he has built near where the old one stood.

There was a family of Blakeslee went to the town of Plymouth, the father was brother to my grandfather; and from this family there arose a number of men. I have seen several of them—Jude, Asher, Abner, Noah and others who of old were men of renown, but are I believe since dead, except Judah, who must be very old. Abner died in Plymouth; he was a physician and of a lively, gay turn of mind. Noah was taken delirious and threw himself into a well nearly fifty years ago. From this family has sprung many others which have gone into the western country. Those Plymouth Blakeslees (it was Plymouth in Connecticut) were generally Episcopalians. The first emigrants were Episcopalians, and their descendants have generally been of the same order, although my father's family was Presbyterian. The numerous families which have sprung from the two first emigrants are so attached to each other that whenever they meet, although separated four or five generations by birth, they feel themselves brothers of the same family. Mr. Asher Blakeslee, who died lately, said on his death bed, as I am informed, that for more than forty years he had not failed of attending divine worship on account of ill health or bad weather. There is living in Plymouth a Col. Micah Blakeslee that I am some acquainted with, said to be a fine officer. It is to be remarked that my father had no brother that lived to be a man.

My grandmother Blakeslee's maiden name was Elizabeth Doolittle and by her my grandfather had two sons and nine daughters. His sons were Joseph my father, and Samuel his brother, who died at the age of nineteen; so my father had no brother that lived to be a man. My grandfather died when I was about two years old. I can now remember his being a corpse, and I can remember nothing any further back. My grandfather requested my father to call me Samuel, as there was no one living that could have the name of Samuel Blakeslee but myself. One of my father's nine sisters died young. The other eight were

named as follows: Elizabeth, Susannah, Abigail, Miriam, Zirviah, Thankful, Phebe. These eight sisters lived to a good age, and all had and raised a numerous family of children which are scattered throughout the United States, but it is to be remarked that none of them, although own first cousins to me, bears the name of Blakeslee.

Abigail married Elijah Ackley; lived and died at East Haddons, Conn. Suzannah married Andrew Parker of Wallingford; removed to Adamstown, Mass.; she died there. Elizabeth married Gamaliel Parker; brother to the above. Miriam married Joshua Howe of Wallingford; removed to Wells, Vt.; her husband died, she afterwards married Esq. Button, but is since dead. She was the last of my father's sisters. Zerviah married Nathaniel Ives of Wallingford, moved to New Hartford; both lived and died there. Thankful married Justis Holt of Wallingford; removed to Adams, where she died. Hannah married James Markes of Wallingford; lived and died there. The most if not all of these women were professors of religion.

My father was born the first day of April, Old Style, and was married to Lois Ives the first day of April, New Style. I have often heard him say that it had constituted him an April fool ever since! The year of his birth I do not know. My mother was the daughter of Stephen Ives of Wallingford. My father had been a non-commissioned officer in the French war, and was in the battle of Lake George; he was married to my mother after his return, by whom he had twelve children. The first two died in infancy before I was born, being a son and daughter.

I was born November 23d, 1759; my sister Lois Jan. 9th, 1761; Asenath Jan. 8th, 1763; Joseph March 11th, 1765; John March 11th, 1767; Thankful May 16th, 1769; Vincy and Asel were the two youngest. My mother died at the age of 55, my father at about the age of 72. My sister Asenath died in her eighteenth year. Joseph married Mary Andrus; John married Ruth Ives; Lois married Nathaniel Andrus; Thankful married Jonathan Moss, who is since dead, and she left a widow; Vincy married Samuel Miller, a Baptist minister in Wallingford. Asel married Hannah

Mattoon. All these marriages were in Wallingford. Brother Asel removed with his family into the state of Ohio, but died last year.

I was married on the 20th of December, 1780, to Phebe Curtis at Wallingford, by whom I had nine children, six sons and three daughters: Ozi, born Nov. 24th, 1781; Samuel, Nov. 17th, 1783; Asenath, June 4th, 1785; Joel, Aug. 13th, 1787; Phebe, Oct. 30th, 1789; Federal, Jan. 25th, 1792; Gad, June 13th, 1794; Lois Ives, Oct. 12th, 1796; John Adams, June 4th, 1799.

My father Joseph Blakeslee was a hard-laboring man, but always in low circumstances, but honest and respectable amongst his acquaintance. My mother was an amiable and good woman and an excellent mother, and at her death her children were ready to rise up and call her blessed. After I was married I lived with my father at Wallingford till May, 1779.<sup>1</sup> His mother died on the same day of the month that he was born, he being 31 years of age.

Here commences a general history of my life for sixty-three years. The Revolutionary War broke out when I was about fifteen years of age, the country being in uproar and confusion. Volunteer companies were raised. The boys caught the military flame, and boy companies with wooden guns were raised. In one of these companies I was chosen captain, this being in the year 1775. The next year I conceived the idea of going into the army. In those days a boy of sixteen was liable to bear arms. The British then lay in Boston, and after many pleadings with my parents they gave me leave to enlist as a soldier, under Capt. Isaac Ford of Wallingford. This was about the month of February, 1776. My father took me to the captain for enlistment. The captain said I looked like a good spry boy, and as he thought a little too small for a soldier, but if I could measure five feet five inches he would take me. To my mortification I measured only five feet four inches and a half, and was of course denied enlistment.

The June following there was a company raising by Capt. John Thacher of New Haven, and Ephraim Chamber-

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1. So in original MS., but should be 1782.

lain, one of his lieutenants, agreed to enlist me as a soldier. I accordingly enlisted under him on the 1st day of July, 1776. I joined my company at New Haven, received my arms and marched on to the northward as far as Skeensborough, Vermont, near White Hall, and joined the army then lying there under the command of General Waterbury. Here our army became sickly with the ague and fever, and other disorders, and many died. I had the fever and ague and suffered everything but death. General Gates and Arnold, with the remnant of the army that fled from Quebec, were stationed down the lake at Ticonderoga, and all the effective men at Skeensborough were ordered there, but those who were unfit for duty were ordered to stay. At that time I was so sick with the ague that I could scarcely help myself, but was determined to go down the lake. My officers gave me liberty and I was helped on board of a new galley, and landed at what was called Old Ty, but the same day crossed the lake to Mount Independence with the rest of our regiment. The Mount at this time was a wild forest.

I lay sick on the ground night and day for some time by a fire which the well soldiers made, until they built a small log hut. At this time the American fleet moved down the lake. Generals Arnold and Waterbury and all the men that had been acquainted with sea-faring, were put on board the fleet. My captain and part of his company were on board. They had a naval engagement and the American fleet was destroyed. My captain and his men were made prisoners and sent home on parole, but those that escaped set fire to Crown Point fort and Bannock's Barracks, which were consumed with a tremendous fire and smoke, which exhibited a grand scenery at Ticonderoga.

Here I stayed until about the 1st of December; was then discharged, and after a long and wearisome journey arrived at my father's house the 16th of December, worn out and sick. There were enlisting orders for two months and a half men to go to the White Plains. I thought I would try another short campaign, and enlisted on the 1st of January, 1777, under Lieutenant Dan Johnson of Wallingford. The company was commanded by Captain Augustus Collins of

Guilford, and joined the regiment at New Rochelle near White Plains, commanded by Col. Cook of Wallingford. In these two campaigns I was too slender and young for a soldier; however I bore them with military fortitude.

In the spring of 1777 I was drafted from the militia, and stationed at New Haven. At this time the standing army was raising, and Connecticut regiments were rendezvousing at that place. The fine regimentals and martial music so raised my feelings that I resolved to become a soldier in the standing army. I obtained a pass from my officer to go home for two days; it was eighteen miles distant. The reason that I obtained this pass was to consult my parents about enlisting. The first time I enlisted as a soldier I promised them that I would never enlist without their consent; but I was secretly determined that I would not leave trying them until I had worn out their patience; which was the case in my two first enlistments. On my arrival at home I candidly told them my errand. I told it to my mother first; but to my surprise my mother told me that my father and herself had been talking on the same subject, and thought, since soldiers must be had, it was likely that I should be called away in the militia, and that I might as well make a business of it first as last, and be receiving pay. My parents were poor but industrious, and found it hard to support their family in the time of war. I was a saving boy, and out of my five months' wages at the northward, which was six dollars a month, making thirty dollars, I brought home to my father twenty dollars one shilling and sixpence; and I saved about all my wages that were paid me for my ten weeks' winter campaign, which was paid my father in New Haven by my captain. I suppose that the distress of the time, and the urgency of their case, was a great inducement to them to make me a soldier.

The next day after my arrival at home, my father took me to Lieut. Chamberlain, the same officer that I went with to the northward, and I enlisted under him for three years' service in the standing army. The bounty paid my father down was from the United States, twenty dollars; and the town, for the encouragement of the recruiting service, paid

each soldier that enlisted forty dollars, amounting in all to sixty dollars, which my father received. At the time of the raising of the standing army, the Legislature, for the encouragement of the war, passed an act that any two men that would hire one man for the service, should be exonerated from being called on themselves during his service. At this time my father and Charles Ives hired Barajah Hall for three years and paid him forty dollars. At my enlistment he sold me to Robert Rice; the other man I have forgotten or never knew, for one hundred and six dollars and two thirds of a dollar, paid in hand, so that my father had cleared himself by hiring for three years, and sold me for the same term of time, with the saving of eighty-six dollars and two thirds of a dollar, in addition to sixty dollars from the State and town.

My enlistment was made on the first day of May, 1777, and I was called to leave home about the first of June with my officer Lieut. Chamberlain, and a number of other soldiers. My father accompanied us with a horse to help along our baggage as far as Danbury, about fifty miles, where he gave me his farewell address, which I shall not do him justice to mention without weeping. The next morning my father returned home, and we took up our march for Peekskill, and joined the army which was collecting at that place. Here the army was taught the military exercise, and had many hard marches as scouting parties. I well recollect that I was on provost guard when John Murray was confined and under sentence of death to be executed next day. I stood sentry over him sixteen hours out of twenty-four. I was taken sick in the night, but did my duty until relieved next morning by a new guard. At the eight o'clock drum the troops were paraded and marched to Gallows Hill, I under arms with the rest, and saw him hanged. After being dismissed I was soon found to be broken out with the measles; however I was fit for duty again in a few days.

About this time Lord Howe landed his army at the head of Elk River, and a part of the troops were called for. Eight regiments were sent to the southward; six from Con-

necticut and two from Rhode Island. My colonel was Hemon Swift. The Battle of Brandywine was before our arrival, but we hastened and joined Washington's grand army. In about a week after our arrival we had marching orders about sunset, and marched all night. About four o'clock in the morning we received information that Lord Howe had the day before marched his army to take possession of Philadelphia, but had left four thousand men as a van guard, and that Gen. Washington was intending to take or destroy them. This information was conveyed from rank to rank by whispers, and aroused my feelings, as I had never seen bloodshed in all my service. However, I was determined to stick and hang. I had at that time sixty-four rounds of cartridges with three buck shot in each.

The battle commenced at daybreak with a tremendous roar, a little on our right by Lord Stirling, and the British gave way. I then belonged to the left wing of the army, commanded by Maj. Gen. Stevens of Carolina, but the fate of the day turned against us, and we had to retrace our steps.

After these events the army took up its winter quarters at a place called Valley Forge, where I was stationed on Gen. Varnum's guard, from whence I was taken and put under the care of a drum-major by the name of William Chandler, and by his instructions and my own exertions I became a good drummer, in which employ I continued during my term of service, which was about two years.

About the last of May, I think, Lord Howe left Philadelphia with his army for New York. General Washington followed himself until he arrived at Monmouth, New Jersey, where he gave him battle, which terminated favorably for the Americans.

After this battle the army marched to Peekskill, from thence to White Plains, from thence to winter quarters, some one way, some another. The Connecticut troops built huts at Danbury in their native state. During this winter provisions, clothing and pay became very scarce, and the troops grew uneasy, the snow was deep and the weather cold. About 600 of the Connecticut troops disbanded and



took their march for Hartford, but were met by Gen. Putnam, and after some conversation returned to their duty, although one man by the name of Crosby was killed.

In the month of February a draft of 150 men was sent to New London. My captain was sent, and I was taken with him as a drummer. My captain was Stephen Hall of Guilford, father of Gen. Amos Hall of Bloomfield; but this captain that went to New London was the same Lieut. Chamberlain that I enlisted under, but had been promoted to be a captain of another company. I was stationed in Groton Fort till the troops were recalled to join the grand army in the May following, at or near Fishkill. About the first week in July following there was a brigade of infantry taken out of the army. Captain Chamberlain was taken from our regiment; I belonged to Col. Swift's regiment. The infantry regiment that I was put into was commanded by Col. Meigs. Gen. Wayne commanded the brigade of infantry, and on the 15th of July marched from Sandy Beach, about six miles below West Point Fort, through the woods back of the Highlands, about fourteen miles down the river to Stony Point Fort; and on the 16th, between twelve and one in the morning, stormed the fort, made prisoners of the garrison, and captured all the contents, which consisted of about 600 men, twelve pieces of artillery, magazines, etc.

This brigade lay in tents until the 31st of December, then it broke up, and the troops from the different states returned to the respective regiments from which they were taken. The Connecticut troops were huted in Morristown wood, New Jersey, where I found my old company. This was a very cold and destroying winter, both on account of the severity of the weather, and want of provisions and clothing for the army. About the last of March I was put on the lines, with a large body of troops, at the town of Springfield, where my term of enlistment expired. Here I received an honorable discharge from the army, and returned home to my father's house in Connecticut, in the year 1780, in the 21st year of my age. But it was not long before I was drafted in the militia for a short time, and my father was drafted again also. He being a non-commissioned officer

in the household band, I thought it my duty to go in his stead, and accordingly I went for him for about two weeks.

The 20th of December I married, and lived with my father, or rather in a part of his house, about eighteen months, when I removed to Colebrook, having a wife and one child. I had previously been there and taken a farm of new land for two years of Mr. Jacob Ogden. He built me a framed house and barn. It was in the agreement to clear and cultivate twenty-five acres, put out an orchard, take care of, pay the taxes, and leave it at the end of ten years. At this time I had little or no property, but was young and ambitious. I had no team, the land was rough and heavily timbered, and about a mile from any road. I cleared and finished my engagements on the farm in five years, and got able to buy thirty-five acres one mile south, on the road near Elijah Rockwell. While I lived on the Ogden farm Samuel, Asenath and Joel were born. On my thirty-five acres I built a small house, barn, and sawmill. Then I exchanged the farm that I first went on to, for the use of another that lay adjoining me, and afterwards bought it. Here Phebe and Federal were born. I stayed here about five years, and sold my thirty-five acres to Hezekiah Woodruff, and bought out Mr. John Rockwell, adjoining me about half a mile west.

The year after I came into Colebrook I was appointed drum-major in the 25th regiment of militia, commanded by Col. Aaron Austin, in which station I served ten or twelve years, I believe. While I lived in this part of the town I was chosen lieutenant of 117 men, commanded by Capt. Samuel Mills, and served one year. Then a light infantry company was raised, and being led to the choice of a captain, I was chosen without a dissenting vote. I toasted my old company, bid them farewell, and took charge of my infantry company six years. During this time I sold my farm and bought a much larger and better one in the north part of the town. While I lived on this farm Gad, Lois Ives and John Adams were born.

About this time there was a difficulty with the British Government, and the Indians in the western country became

troublesome and Gen. St. Clair was defeated by them, and a draft of militia was made out to stand in readiness to go to the westward, if called for. The officers of our regiment were called to attend a draft; there was one company to be made out of the brigade, and a captain to be taken from our regiment. After a long debate, no one was willing to stand the draft for fear they would have to go; but there was one captain that did not intend to fear Indian or white man. I volunteered and a company was raised and annexed to Col. Lyman's regiment; but the affair blew over without my being called for.

About this time a difficulty arose between Eliphalet Austin and myself respecting the rank of our companies. Our two infantry companies were raised at the same time, his from the first battalion, mine from the second. He contended for the right of the regiment on account of being raised from the first battalion. I contended for the right of the regiment as being his senior officer. However, after I had taken the left of the regiment on two field days rather than make disturbance, on the next field day I was determined to have justice done me, and refused to go on to the left of the regiment. The adjutant ordered me on, and so did the major, but I refused to go. The colonel ordered me on, with a peremptory voice, or go off the field. I immediately ordered, "Shoulder arms! Support arms! by platoon to the right wheel, music, forward march!" so left the ground with my whole company to the astonishment of every beholder. The brigade-general's name was Skinner, of Litchfield. He ordered the court martial to be convened the next day. I appeared and had my trial, was justified in my conduct, and myself established with my company on the right, there ever afterward to remain.

Two years after this I received an appointment in the 13th Regiment of the Army of the United States. I accepted the appointment and was stationed at Hebron. There I raised a company of sixty men. My subaltern officers were Lemuel Harrison, and Peter N. Brinsmade. From this place I was ordered to join the regiment at New Haven, commanded by Col. Timothy Taylor, and from thence marched to New Jersey, joined the brigade, and encamped

at or near Cold Plains (?) till the 14th of June after, when the army was disbanded and I returned home to my family. I was now forty years of age.

It is worthy of remark that the Connecticut regiment during fifteen months of service, never lost a man by death, except Roger Alger, a soldier in my company who had such a bruising from another soldier that he finally died, being imprudent and taking cold.

But my military mind was not yet satisfied, and being wholly out of command by reason of my leaving the regiment of militia, and my place being filled there, I applied to Col. Jones, then commanding the regiment, and took upon me the adjutancy for two years; then I was appointed first major, and served two years; then colonel and served two years.

I was then chosen Representative to the General Assembly to be convened at New Haven in October, and after taking into consideration the situation of my family, thought it would be my duty to abandon military life. While I was at the Assembly I handed in my resignation, which was granted me by the Lower House, but refused me in the Upper House. A committee was appointed from both houses to confer with me, and said that there were more honorable stations for me to fill, and the State would support loss in consequence of my dismissal. However I insisted on a dismission, which was granted me on the last day of the session. The next April I was again elected to the Assembly, to be convened at Hartford, and accordingly went.

About this time I sold all my property in Colebrook and removed my family to Avon, Ontario County (now Livingston), New York, where I have since remained. I left Colebrook on the 26th of January and arrived at Avon (then Hartford), on the 12th of February, 1808. My wife died on the 29th of November, 1812, and I was married on the 11th of December, 1814, to the amiable widow Rebecca Pearson, the consort to the late Mr. John Pearson, deceased.

When the late war broke out it was thought best by Maj. Gen. Hall that each town should raise a company from the exempts from military duty, and as I felt a little of the old

Revolutionary spirit enkindled within me, I enlisted a company from the exempts, not to go to war but to defend off in case of distress. After their enlistment I was chosen their captain, and Col. Markham their lieutenant, and the company was filled up with officers by the choice of the soldiers.

The alarm came from the westward, and I started with sixteen of my men in a snow-storm, and gave orders for volunteers to come on without description. Before I left Avon I was joined by Capt. Tyler, with sixteen men from Livonia, and by my old title of Colonel Capt. Tyler chose to put himself under my command. We marched on together as far as Batavia. I acted and expected to act as captain, but on my arrival at Batavia it was ordered that Colonel Blakeslee's men should be mustered, reviewed, and armed. I had at this time but thirty-two men, including Capt. Tyler's.

At this time the road, the taverns, and the stores were crowded with a confused mass of people. A thought struck me that it was possible that I might stick another military feather in my cap. I drew my sword and marched through the streets of Batavia, with martial music, three times, crying out, "Who volunteers with Col. Blakeslee, a short tour to the westward, in defense of the just rights of our country?" Then I dressed my men on parade, and informed the inspector that myself and men were ready for inspection; and at the inspection I found that I had about 230 men brave and gallant. Thus I became lieutenant-colonel of the New York Volunteers.

I took up my march for Buffalo, after receiving a few arms and a little ammunition. I was informed that Capt. Robert Mackay commanding a company of Scotch militia from the town of Caledonia in the county of Genesee (now Livingston), had requested of Maj. Gen. Hall to be annexed with his company to the Ontario Volunteers. This aroused my military feelings, knowing him to be a brave Scotchman by birth, not wanting for courage, and knowing his company to be brave Scotchmen. I thought with this captain and men that I should not be afraid to speak with any enemy in the gates. Accordingly I pressed on my regiment as fast as was

consistent until I had overtaken my brave Scotchman about fifteen or eighteen miles this side of Buffalo. Here he did me the honor of uniting himself and men to my regiment. We took up our march and arrived at Buffalo about sunset.

The troops came in from the eastward, and Gen. Hall directed all the eastern troops to report themselves to Col. Blakeslee that evening, and the next day there was added to my regiment all the troops east of Genesee River. The next day at evening I received orders from the commanding general to organize a regimental band of field and staff officers. Accordingly I collected the officers and after stating to them my general's orders, had them choose for a major, which was done by ballot. Col. Gardner, a volunteer from West Bloomfield, was chosen. Henry Adams, Esq., was chosen adjutant; a brave, active young man from East Bloomfield, who merits well of his country. Capt. Asa Knowland (?) of Avon was chosen quartermaster, and worthy the rank conferred on him. He was a ready scribe.

The next day I received orders to prepare my regiment for a general review, and accordingly I marched my men onto the grand parade and joined the other regiments that had come into Buffalo. The troops that were reviewed were 2,011, including eighty-three Indians, commanded I think by Capt. Gordan. My regiment consisted of ten companies amounting to 433 men commanded by the following captains: Robert Mackay, Caledonia; Ezekiel Wadsworth, Avon; David Bigelow, Avon; — Tyler, Livonia; Thomas Peck, Lima; — Parish, Lima; — Hamdon, East Bloomfield; — Rowley, Victor; — Morehouse, Victor.

Being the largest regiment on the ground, the regiment was filled with staff officers the evening before. The next day there was nothing done worthy of note until evening, when I received orders in case of alarm to repair with my men to the grand parade. About eleven o'clock the alarm gun was fired, the men were quickly in motion and on parade. Here my regiment stood ready about four hours. It was a very cold night; the wind was from the lake, and the men were very uncomfortable. However I did not dismount my horse but once, and then in order to take a little spirits.

During our stay on parade there had been several unsuccessful detachments sent down to Black Rock. A body of British troops and Indians had landed that evening and lay in ambush. These detachments of militia had been sent down at the flash of a few British guns; a few wounded men fled back into the woods.

About four o'clock in the morning, Dec. 30, 1813, I was ordered to march with my regiment down to the Rock, and do the best I could, but be sure to keep good my flanks. I had not ever been at the Rock, and the night was dark. I requested a pilot, and a brave Sergeant Smith volunteered his services, and directed me safely onto the field of slaughter. A little before I halted my regiment I met Col. Chapin, who had been unsuccessful with his detachment. Of him I got information that a small party of British were landed and in ambush, and being by some circumstances convinced there were but few of them, was very urgent that I should destroy them.

We went on till the British fired a few shots on a party of horsemen commanded by Lieut. Boughton, which was about twenty rods in my front. Here I displayed columns and formed my regiment fronting the enemy. The regiment was in two battalions, the first commanded by myself, and the second by Major Gardner. In this situation I called a council of war, consisting of myself, Col. Chapin, Maj. Gardner, and Mr. Adams my adjutant. It was agreed best to attack the British and not wait for them to attack us. The plan of operation was this: That I should march the first battalion with charged bayonets, and not fire until we had landed our bayonets amongst the British soldiers, and as soon as I had left the ground, Major Gardner was to march his battalion onto the ground that I had occupied and stand ready to take the second charge in case I failed in the first.

I gave my orders accordingly; the men being prepared I gave the word "Shoulder arms." This plan had it been pursued would have been very rash, and I should have lost myself and regiment. At the instant that I was about to

give the word "Charge," and march, Capt. Rowley stepped from the ranks to me and very politely said,

"Colonel, we are willing to fight, but would it not be more prudent to wait a few minutes? It is about daybreak, and then we can better know how to fight and what we are fighting."

I thought that his observations were good, and I embraced them and waited for daylight, which soon came; and whilst waiting for light the artillery from both sides of the river began to play. The British threw hot shot, spherical, and bomb-shells, which made a grand military display. I continued my position for about twenty minutes, when an express arrived from Gen. Hall for me to return, for the British boats were discovered to be crossing the river above us, and to meet them if possible at the water's edge. I immediately wheeled off my regiment by platoons, and with a forced march met them a few rods from the shore, and poured in such a shower of balls among them that out of three boat-loads, sixty men in each, there was but about fourteen [*or seventeen; MS. obscure*] left that were not killed or wounded. Here I lost a few men. Capt. Tyler was shot dead. The British and Indians that I had left behind arose from their ambush and followed me to this place. After destroying the men in the boats, I faced the regiment about and attacked them in good earnest. There were, according to the best information I can get, about 800 British and 200 Indians. A number of brave men joined in the action from other regiments that had been scattered in the night. This attack on the British, and their attack on us, continued one hour; but we being overpowered by numbers and discipline, a retreat became necessary, which was made in much confusion.

The British set fire to the village of Black Rock, and marched to Buffalo, which they pillaged and partly burned, and then recrossed to Canada. Thus the fortune of the day was against us. My men being scattered, most of them having gone home, I had no command, and stayed at Eleven-mile creek the next day, having no command, although there were a few men staying about there.



The day following, which was the 1st of January, 1814, the British troops came across and destroyed the remainder of Buffalo. What few men could be collected were marched towards Buffalo, but for want of numbers and ammunition on our part, there was but little fighting done, and but two or three killed on either side. About eleven o'clock in the evening I set out for home, which I reached in safety in about three days.

In the action at Black Rock, Major Gardner was wounded in the thigh and made prisoner. Capt. Robert Mackay and about fifty men were made prisoners and sent to Montreal. These men were made prisoners because they would rather fight than run. During the action, I being on horseback, the commanding officer of the British about eight rods distant, observed me, and ordered a volley of balls to be poured on me, saying,

"If that old devil lives we shall lose the day. Kill him and the day is our own."

His orders were obeyed, and I received the shot without winking, and received no harm except a small wound in the foot of my boot, which was easily mended by a shoemaker.

There were four [*or some? MS. obscure*] females taken over the river from Lewiston. The British officer ordered them to be sent back, and asked them what old man that was that fought so like the devil at Black Rock? And being informed that it was a Col. Blakeslee that commanded a regiment of Federalists from Ontario, "Give my compliments to the old gentleman," said he; "and tell him that I would rather fight three Democrat regiments than one Federal one, for they fight more like devils than men."

The Blakeslees have generally been tall stout men. Among them there have been several men of military fame by sea and land, and several eminent divines, generally of the Episcopalian order. There was a Col. Blakeslee in Vermont that perished with the cold in trying to cross the Green Mountains. In the late war a Capt. Blakeslee distinguished himself in a naval action with the British. I never heard of one being promoted higher than colonel. There

have been a number of eminent physicians in the family and a number of a philosophical turn of mind.

NOTE. Mr. Blakeslee's manuscript continues with a few anecdotes about his father and other members of the family, of no interest or value to the general reader. He mentions as remarkable the fact that the anvil which his forefathers brought from England, had been kept in the family of Blakeslees at Roxbury until about "two years since," or 1820. The journal concludes with the following memoranda, written some ten years after the main portion:

"In August 1832 I was at Wallingford. My brothers Joseph, John and Asel Blakeslee were dead. Lois Andrus and Vincy Miller, my two sisters, were dead, and no one of our original family living except myself and my sister Thankful, the widow of Jonathan Moss, who since the death of my sister Lois Andrus has been married to Mr. Andrus. By the help of my sister Thankful and my brother's widow I enumerated the posterity of my parents that were now living, and found them to be something rising of two hundred."

SOCIAL LIFE IN  
EARLIER BUFFALO

BY

MARTHA FITCH POOLE



## INTRODUCTION

The following chapters were written, but a few months before she passed from earth in 1903, by Mrs. Martha Fitch Poole. Buffalo had been her home since 1835. Throughout her long residence here, she was active in the social, philanthropic and religious life of the city. No one was better qualified than she to record these phases of the community as she knew it in her girlhood and young married life; for as the following pages testify, she ever retained not merely a clear memory, but the young heart that makes one's outlook upon life cheery and cheering, to the end. Happy those who at the end of many years can write, as was her custom, "Yours with pleasant memories."

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Martha Fitch was born at Annsville, Oneida Co., N. Y., Feb. 4, 1818. Her parents, Benjamin Fitch and Phœbe Brown, moved to Le Roy five years later. She was descended from a long line of distinguished ancestors. Among those who came to this country between 1620 and 1640 were Elder William Brewster of Mayflower fame, Rev. James Fitch of Norwich, Conn., and Rev. Henry Whitfield of Guilford, Conn.

At the age of thirteen Martha Fitch was sent to Niagara-on-the-Lake, where she attended school and studied music and French, making her home with an aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Rodman Starkweather, also with an older sister, Mrs. Long, at "The Castle," Fort Niagara, Lieut. E. R. Long, U. S. A., being stationed at this post.

Martha was a noted beauty, gifted with wit and brilliant conversational powers, which with a cultured mind made her rarely attractive to all who knew her. Soon after coming to Buffalo in the spring of 1835 she met Rushmore Poole, one of the best known young business men of that time. They were married in Le Roy by the Rev. Mr. Metcalf, April 13, 1837, departing on their wedding journey to New York by stage coach. Three children were born to them: Anna, Edwin Long and Arthur Augustus. The first only, survives the parents.

Mrs. Poole was identified with Trinity church from its early organization and was a communicant according to the Episcopal faith. Thrift, economy and industry entered into every department of her life, and the fact that she made every garment she ever wore, even to

her dresses, with her own hands (never having owned a sewing machine) proves how well equipped she was for the practical duties of life. With the firm conviction that there was no death, she passed away June 10, 1903, aged 85 years, at the residence of her son-in-law, Dr. Joseph T. Cook.

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Rushmore Poole was born at Herricks, L. I., Sept. 7, 1810. His parents were Samuel Poole and Sarah Cheesman. He came to Buffalo in 1825, at the age of fifteen, under the care of Mr. McIntosh of Albany, N. Y., the first husband of the second Mrs. Millard Fillmore. An uncle, Joseph Cheesman of New York, and a Mr. Weeks had established the first crockery store in these western wilds under the firm name of Weeks & Cheesman, and Rushmore Poole was sent out here to learn the business.

He was taken into the firm as partner in 1833 and at the expiration of the partnership in 1836 he bought out the New York men and carried on the business in his own name. The panic of the early '40's brought disaster to many Buffalo firms and with many others Mr. Poole failed. Seth C. Hawley obtained the position of canal inspector for him under Linus Harris, who was superintendent of the Erie canal for Western New York. This position he held for a few years until an eastern capitalist started a crockery store under the firm name of E. C. Brown & Co., when Mr. Poole became the purchasing manager of this establishment. It was bought out by Homer & Co. of Boston, but continued the employ of Mr. Poole. About 1865 he engaged in business on Seneca Street with his son Arthur, Edwin Long having died several years earlier. In a few years the firm became R. Poole & Son. After the tragic death of Arthur Poole, who was killed while going to a fire, at the age of twenty-eight, Mr. Poole, who never recovered from the effects of this affliction, sold out to a nephew from Long Island, and retired from business.

Rushmore Poole was one of the founders of Trinity Episcopal church. He was one of the earliest members of the Young Men's Association, a member of the fire department and an organizer and performer in one of the early orchestras in Buffalo. He was an accomplished musician and his penmanship was like copper-plate engraving, and elicited great admiration throughout business circles. He was a patron of the best in music, the drama and literature. He possessed a nature of extreme refinement and modesty, while in all matters his integrity was that of the Christian gentleman.

Mr. Poole died suddenly of apoplexy at his home, No. 98 Seventh Street, Oct. 14, 1885, aged 75 years.





RUSHMORE POOLE.



MARTHA FITCH POOLE.



PLEASANT MEMORIES OF  
THE SOCIAL LIFE OF BUFFALO  
IN THE '30'S AND '40'S

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BY MARTHA FITCH POOLE

I. WHEN OLD BUFFALO WAS YOUNG.

I came to Buffalo from Niagara-on-the-Lake to reside, in the spring of 1835, with my aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Rodman Starkweather.

Indians walked the streets in blankets and moccasins, cows were grazing at the roadsides, and pigs roamed at their own sweet will, only kept out of beautiful gardens by stout fences, usually of the picket variety. Yet Buffalo was a very beautiful city, notwithstanding. There was little or nothing to pull down and buildings of the better sort were rapidly filling up the open spaces. The elegance with which the city was laid out, though the area was limited at that time, has ever been admired. It was noted for the magnificent trees that bordered every street and lane, while the views of river and lake, uninterrupted for miles by the smoke of railroads or business structures, were superb. Birds sang from morning till night in the most populous sections of the city, and such gardens of flowers and nurseries of fruit trees in this locality, as could then be seen, are things of the past.

Buffalo was a bustling business place eight months of the year, say from April to December. The other four were

given up quite generally to social enjoyment. The winter of 1836-1837 was the coldest and the longest I have ever experienced. Navigation did not open until the end of May, and the ice did not entirely disappear from the lake until June 10th. We were literally ice-bound that winter, and as there was no means of transportation except by stage coach or sleighing, everybody stayed at home, contributing to the general pleasure. Buffalo was, at this time, preëminently a social center. The guests were often not a few from Batavia, Le Roy, Lewiston, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Falls. It is doubtful if a finer or more genial set of people ever assembled than did those who came to Buffalo in these early days.

A code of good manners and a chivalry among men kept things well within bounds, even though the "flowing bowl" often overran the limits of strict sobriety. There may not have been more drinking then than now in proportion to the population, but it was the universal custom to serve wines on all festive and even other occasions. Drinking was done in the open and drunkenness at a party was considered an insult to the host and hostess.

At the time of which I write, many were the fine mansions already erected, and more were in course of building. In these days of palatial homes with their manifold conveniences, it is quite interesting to contemplate how really commodious and fine were the houses away back in the '30's. The rooms were spacious, the ceilings very high, the windows and folding-door openings were wide, so that for entertaining these residences were unsurpassed. The architecture was elegant, being of the style generally in vogue at that time in New York.

I was much impressed when I first came to Buffalo with the large number of stately blocks of residences. These gave a decidedly citified air to the place, quite beyond its size and population.

Some of these once fashionable homes may still be seen and they stand as examples of many other blocks long since razed to the ground. The Darrow Block<sup>1</sup> on Washington

1. Still standing, though so much changed that there is little hint of its former elegance.

Street, east side, above Eagle Street, was an elegant row of houses built to stand firmly in its aristocratic dignity, long after its projector passed away. Another fine group of houses, similar in construction to the Darrow Block, is still standing on Swan Street. Still another is on Niagara Street, just off of Main Street. One who entered them so often in their palmy days, can but exclaim: "How are the mighty fallen."

Numerous, also, were the mansions which stood more or less isolated, surrounded by the beautiful gardens heretofore alluded to. The circle that had the *entrée* of these homes, in other words, what is termed society, was not so contracted in 1836 as one might imagine. It was not uncommon to write 300 or 400 invitations, even in those days, to a party.

It also required considerable time for my lady to complete her round of calls two or three times a year, even though she had a carriage, which in those days she must have always, else how get to Cold Spring, Black Rock and even to the Hydraulics, where many fashionable people lived?

The Starkweathers, with whom I resided until my marriage in 1837, lived at the northeast corner of Washington and Swan streets, in the house that still stands there very much as it was, so far as its construction is concerned. Many were the card parties (whist was then the rage as now), dinner and supper parties held in this house. If its walls could speak they would indeed give forth plaintive utterance at the changed environment both within and without, that its well-planned endurance has had to encounter. Many times the officers and their ladies from Fort Niagara graced these festive occasions, as they did other notable functions, the former always appearing in full-dress uniform. They and their wives added much to the gaiety and *éclat* of Buffalo society, as so many of their successors have done down to the present time.

The Eagle-street Theatre, as it was called, was new at this time, and it was really a great attraction to the city. The gentleman I married came here a lad in 1825, the year the Erie canal was opened for business. In the course of time

he joined the firemen's organization, and was for years active in getting up the firemen's balls, given annually at this theatre. These were well attended by the fashionable and better class of citizens, being as popular as are our charity balls of today. Mr. Poole owned and furnished a private box at this time in the Eagle-street Theatre, which was draped with curtains of blue damask. The furniture consisted of a sofa and two chairs upholstered with the same material. Later this box was given up, the chairs being brought to our home. They are much cherished as relics of a bygone day. I am wondering if there is another article in existence from this old house, so often the scene of dramatic and social triumphs, in a few years to be a smouldering heap of ruins, never to rise.

Another thing that impressed me deeply when I first came to Buffalo was the bustling activity of Main Street, especially the lower part of it. It was quite solidly built up from Court Street down to the dock with some very substantial buildings. Many of them are still in existence, notably a part of the Kremlin, several blocks of stores between Seneca Street and the dock, and the buildings known as the Granite Block, owned at the time of which I write by my uncles Starkweather and Brown. Mr. Poole established the first crockery store in Buffalo. It was located in the modernized building now occupied by T. & E. Dickinson. It was famous far and near for an enormous blue and white earthenware pitcher which would easily hold four men who could not be discovered unless one climbed up to look in.

This pitcher, which for years stood on the sidewalk in front of the store, was certainly typical of the business Mr. Poole was engaged in; while at the rear, inside the store, was that which more truly represented the taste of the man. It was a piano. It was said at the time that Mr. Poole would never be a rich man on account of his great love for and participation in music. I have never had reason to doubt the truth of these assertions. He was a thorough musician, and as a pianist was far above the average performer of the present day.

Returning to the lively appearance of Main Street: cobblestone pavement, multitudes of carts, drays, wagons, carriages and stage coaches coming and going continually to and from the boat landings, made this part of Buffalo as busy and noisy a scene as it has since become funereal and silent.

I cannot refrain from mentioning the beauty of the view from off the dock. What is known as the Island was a mass of exquisite green with quantities of sweet-smelling shrubs, including wild roses, juniper, sassafras and flowering-currant bushes. Trees and green grass stretched far away to your right, as you stood looking out upon the clear blue of the lake in a cloudless summer day. No smoke thickened the air, no ugly elevators marred the marine view or the adjacent landscape. The song of hundreds of birds and the balmy breezes made a visit to the dock a pleasant pastime of a sultry morning. Tooting whistles and shrieking fog-horns had not come into use and one could look out upon Lake Erie's broad expanse and scarcely count the white-winged vessels as they quietly glided in and out, so numerous were they on the face of the water in these early days.

On the evenings when the steamboat went "up the lake" it was quite the fashionable thing to go down to the dock to "see her off." A band always played from the forward upper deck and the occasion was one of festive excitement and the liveliest interest. I can never forget the flutter of joy I experienced, when at the opening of navigation this same year of 1835, I was a passenger on one of these steamboats bound for Sault Ste. Marie, to make a visit of several months to my oldest sister, whose husband, Lieut. Burnett, U. S. A., was stationed at Fort Brady. It seemed to me when I embarked for this voyage as if the business of the whole world centered at the dock in Buffalo.

It must be remembered that Buffalo in the '30's had the entire trade from the adjacent towns, many of which were much more alive than they are now. Besides this all boats of whatever kind, including canal boats, were equipped and supplied by Buffalo firms.

Strange to say, in later years, in many respects we became more provincial in matters pertaining to municipal affairs, business methods and social customs. Have we entirely worked out of it in the decades that have followed? Has commercialism blinded us to some of the finer courtesies of life?

Still a third phase of life in this city at that time made things appear very gay. It was the apparently countless hotels, taverns, inns and boarding-houses. They were in every block, and turn where you would, the lumbering rattle of the stage coaches accompanied by the tooting of horns, was apt to greet the passer-by at almost any hour of the day. These hotels, taverns, etc., were the club houses of that day. The Mansion House, Eagle Tavern and American Hotel were fine hostelries, with an elegance and luxury of appointments and furniture, that a find in later years in the attic of the first named, by a more recent proprietor, will attest.

On the corner of Washington and Exchange streets was a large and finely-built brick house of the "mansion" class, erected for his own use by Jacob Barker. As he wished to move "up town" into a house he built on the site where President Fillmore's residence<sup>1</sup> now stands, he rented the one first named. It became a fashionable and most popular boarding-house, presided over by Mrs. Sheldon, the mother of the late Judge Sheldon. In this house I spent the first year of my married life.

It may be of interest to some to know who were the boarders there in 1837. They were John Lattimer, who married a daughter of Hezekiah Webster; Mr. Birch, who married a daughter of Erastus Corning of Albany; James Cowing, Ambrose Sterling, R. J. Sherman, John Bull, William Laverack, and George Brown, who married a Miss Buell of Pittsfield, Mass., she having rejected Gzowski of Canadian fame. At this writing I am the only survivor of this once genial and most interesting company.

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1. Niagara Square, north side, now known as Castle Inn.

II. A GAY SLEIGHRIDE.

Gay, brilliant little Buffalo, considered at this time by our New York friends a very provincial city 'way out west, had advantages for true social enjoyment unsurpassed by any other city in the world.

To be sure, we were hemmed in several months in the year by snow-decked forests and an ice-clogged lake. But what of that? The spirit of hospitality and fun made good cheer the order of the times, and no one felt the need of any more change of scene than lay at our very doors. My mind goes back to a very gay sleighride, which for the number that participated and the hilarity of the company was without exception the most enjoyable party of the kind I ever attended.

On similar occasions we often went out to Scott's, a tavern, quite the fashion in old times, on the Williamsville road. But the drive to which I refer was to Niagara Falls, and the Cataract Hotel was the place where we put up for the night. The day before, a quantity of oysters (they came in tiny kegs in those days), several cases of champagne and other drinkables and eatables such as pioneers delight in after a twenty-two mile ride, were sent down. It was between Christmas and New Year's, on a crisp, clear cold day, with plenty of glistening white snow, that the start was made.

The company invited were about one hundred ladies and gentlemen, both married and single. Some thirty sleighs, from the slender cutter to the pretentious one that was supposed to take the lead, were called into requisition.

I shall never forget this last-mentioned gorgeous turnout that drove up to our door. As I think of it now, it seems like some chariot of fire on runners, or like a fairy equipage such as Santa Claus would like. To come down to a practical idea of it, I can compare it to nothing less than a very ornate circus vehicle of the most bewildering style and color. It was like this: Graceful and long, the brightest scarlet imaginable, culminating in a yellow dashboard with golden swans on either side, their long curving necks and slender heads standing out conspicuously in front.

I wonder if our good citizen, C. W. Miller, ever heard of this wonderful sleigh? It came from his father's establishment, I am quite sure, although Efner's was another livery much patronized at that time.

The cushions of this splendid sleigh were of red velvet. On the occasion I allude to, it was drawn by six white horses with the gayest of harness and trappings, and such reverberating, tintinnabulating bells I have never ridden behind since. Foot stoves and plenty of fur robes gave assurance of comfort to the twenty young married people who so merrily went forth for a winter's lark, while, as might be conjectured, many of the single couples preferred the cutters.

We left Buffalo at 2 p. m., arriving at the Cataract a little before dusk. Apparently every Indian and his squaw for miles around had heard that we were "coming to town," for scores of them met us just outside the village, and more were at the hotel offering for sale beadwork, maple sugar in birch boxes, and skins of animals.

The open fireplace filled with crackling logs of wood made us feel at home, and after enjoying for a while the beneficent glow and warmth, none was loth to partake of the fine supper soon announced, for we had not only furnished the supplies, but we had sent forward a colored cook to prepare the same. The gentlemen of those days did nothing by halves.

And such oysters! Does any one think he gets such flavored bivalves now? I quote from my old friend Samuel M. Welch's book, "Recollections of Buffalo," in which he says:

"Alas! Their name is all that is left to us; nor do the multitude who consume the coarse, loose, soft, ill-bred, no-flavored, tasteless oysters of the present, mourn their degeneracy, because they know not the ancestral oyster which the generation of the thirties reveled in with convivial zest."

Supper over, every one repaired to the ballroom, the same that is in use today, all more recent additions in the way of dancing halls in this hotel having been done away with during the last decade. We took the musicians from



Buffalo. A colored man by the name of Hicks was the leader, and he furnished very good music. He was also a dancing master by profession and was well patronized by the fashionable people of Buffalo. He was a unique figure, pursuing either or both vocations at the same time. When teaching his pupils to dance he would glide over the mirror-like floor of the American Hotel in the most graceful and agile manner, playing his violin all the time, calling off the figures or directing their movements as the case might be. He was as black as the ace of spades, but respected and liked by every one.

When he played with others as on this and similar occasions, there was a dash and swing about his music that suggested the most rollicking pirouettes and pigeon-wings, which such merrymaking men as Robert Hollister, A. A. Evstaphieve, Oliver G. Steele, Seth C. Hawley, Col. James McKay and others were not slow to avail themselves of.

The figures were called off this night by a grotesque negro, who created no end of fun, while his stentorian tones were interspersed by the robust laughter of the men and the more musical titter of the girls, like "Charlotte a-comin' down de lane."

Considerable champagne disappeared that night, but no one was really the worse for it, and this particular sleighride has always been a bright spot in my memory, from which the sounds of the jingling bells and the hilarious merriment of the intimate friends of that early day have never been effaced.

Besides those mentioned above and their wives, there were present Mr. and Mrs. John L. Talcott, Mr. and Mrs. George R. Babcock, Mr. and Mrs. Sam. Purdy, Mr. and Mrs. H. K. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Rodman Starkweather, Mr. and Mrs. William Laverack, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Winne, Elizabeth Staats, who married Horatio Seymour, the Misses Townsend, the Wilson girls, Heman B. Potter, Charles Gold, William Lovering, Charles Peck, Charles Pickering, John Wellington Buckland, a charming gallant, and Russell Searle Brown, a banker and financier of note. This goodly company and others with us on this occasion

helped lay the foundations of this now great city and may be said to have represented most of the professional and commercial interests of Buffalo. As one realizes what they did and what they stood for as citizens and gentlemen, one is easily convinced, "there were giants in those days."

The following morning about 9 o'clock the sleighs were again loaded with their human freight and a drive around Goat Island was enjoyed. Nothing could exceed the beauty of this then utterly wild spot in its winter dress of crystals and snow. Grunting Indians followed us all the way, doubtless thinking us as queer as we thought them. The scene was certainly unique.

We arrived home with but a few hours to spare before it was time to attend a concert given that night by the celebrated English singer and composer, Henry Russell. He sang "Some Love to Roam," "Woodman, Spare that Tree," "Wind of the Winter Night," and "John Nott," commencing, "Being of the livery he was a stable man"; also another of his humorous songs which ran in this way:

"There was a little maid  
And she wore a little bonnet,  
She had a little finger  
With a little ring upon it."

This concert was given in the ballroom of the American Hotel, and all Buffalo was there. Did we enjoy ourselves when Buffalo was young?

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### III. IN OLD MANSIONS.

Inconveniences that would be looked upon as insurmountable by the ambitious housekeeper of the present day, were not taken note of at the time of which I write when the entertaining of one's friends was contemplated.

To be sure we had to send a block away to the pump, for water to drink and cook with. Wood, the only fuel then in use, was piled up in an outbuilding often located several

rods from the house. There was no gas with which to illuminate my lady's drawing-room, no furnaces to bring the temperature of our homes up to summer heat when the thermometer registered zero. Kitchens were almost universally in the basement. We had no laundries fitted with stationary tubs, steam-heated drying-rooms, and wringers, etc.; no refrigerators to store food in that it might keep fresh for several days. Yet we lived in great comfort, often elegantly; many of the houses were of pretentious style. A few are still standing, and they will illustrate the many others equally fine that have given place to business blocks.

The one so well known as "the Cottage" was very much handsomer in all respects in the '30's. The gallery was an elegant feature in the arrangement and it did not originally have the cheapened effect that it had after several alterations had taken place.

Its owner, Dr. Ebenezer Johnson, mayor of Buffalo, was most lavish in his hospitality at this time. Garden parties were given frequently during the summer months, and citizens living here now can scarcely imagine the beauty of this place with its acres of well-cultivated lawns studded with luxurious flower beds, majestic elms without number, and in the rear, away back by Prospect Avenue, were fruit orchards, vegetable gardens and outbuildings. These grounds, as I remember them, extended from Chippewa to Tracy Street. In February, 1836, a very elegant ball was given in the Cottage. It was notable for having engraved invitations, a fine band of music and a table that fairly groaned with good things to eat. Dancing was kept up until long after midnight, and people came in considerable numbers from adjacent towns to enjoy the hospitality of the first mayor of Buffalo.

We gossiped in those days very much as we do now. I quote from a note written to me by an intimate friend the day after the ball. The reader will recognize the fact that slang was also known in the most elegant circles; happily it was not common: "What do you think of the way Buckland flirted with Miss S—? I do not think it was very slow. Did

you know they went out sleighriding today? Cutter-riding at that. He is one singular man."

A few years later this fine property was divided, and Philander Hodge built the residence on the northwest corner of Delaware Avenue and Chippewa Street. Many have been the elegant social functions in the way of balls, suppers and receptions given not only by the Hodges, but by the Patchins and Gansons, who occupied it in later years.

It was a universal custom in those good old times to take something home from the supper table to the children. A frosted bit of cake, or two or three mottoes were abstracted and put into papa's dresscoat pocket without the slightest hesitation. Indeed, if nothing was taken to the little ones at home, the hostess felt quite hurt at your suggested inference that she was neither generous nor rich enough. Imagine the fun created when, at one of the largest parties given, Mrs. Hodge, while descending the stairs on her way to her carriage, dropped a well-filled handkerchief, out of which rolled two or three quail, biscuit and other things. I presume papa in this case found it inconvenient to load his pockets to the required extent, so Mrs. Hodge concluded to be the bearer of these dainties. She was dubbed long afterwards as "Mrs. Quail Hodge."

A. A. Evstaphieve built the tall house opposite on the northeast corner. It was built in an awkward style of architecture with its winding steps and high stoop, but the interior was very commodious and stately, and lent itself to many interesting gatherings.

One of these was a beautiful ball, Mr. and Mrs. Evstaphieve having been married but a short time. It was just before a financial panic, but in those days men were not easily dismayed, and although they knew not what misfortunes would soon overtake many who were present that night, they knew that "the signs of the times" boded no good. Mr. Evstaphieve was like many of the rest, too young to borrow trouble, and as it was his temperament to turn even the serious side of life into a huge joke, he went among his friends this night as champagne flowed freely, saying, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow ye die." For the

nonce his guests accepted this rather pagan but well-meant advice and forgot the "handwriting on the wall." The crash, however, soon came and the genial host was one of the many who went down with it.

During these early days, Mr. Evstaphieve's father, the Russian consul and a great friend of the then reigning Czar, visited Buffalo. He was an interesting man and given to writing poetry when the mood seized him. He purchased a summer home near Newport, R. I., and these are the lines he wrote for my album:

"Tiverton! Seat of balmy air and health,  
Open alike to poverty and wealth,  
Where Cholera ne'er shows its Gorgon head  
And doctors find it hard to earn their daily bread,  
I love thee! And my thanks shall never cease  
For thy blest yearly gift of life's new lease."

On Niagara Square the Wilkeson homestead, the Stephen G. Austin mansion, southeast corner of Delaware and Niagara Square, and the Sizer residence, northwest corner of Delaware and the Square, were frequently the scene of most brilliant parties, and as they still remain intact, they illustrate the fact that Buffalo in the '30's and early '40's was a city of wealth and unusual hospitality. In addition to these there was the Burt house, now so merged into the Central High School building that the passer-by would never imagine how elegant a home it was. Here also, the "Four Hundred" were frequently bidden to dance and make merry.

Other beautiful and equally genial homes were those of George R. Babcock, southwest corner of Delaware and the Square, S. G. Haven, on Genesee Street, east of Delaware Avenue, and James Hollister, northeast corner of Delaware and the Square. At these residences the culture of Buffalo society often congregated. Many of these fine homes have disappeared, as have the revered hosts and hostesses who gave to this city for all time the best examples of good citizenship, culture and refinement and never-to-be-excelled hospitality.

Niagara Square at the present day gives no evidence of

its beauties sixty years ago, except the fine arrangement of the streets converging there. Most of the trees have disappeared and the once almost unobstructed view of the lake can no longer be enjoyed. That transition state is now upon it, which is always somewhat pitiful, for it suggests decay, change and possibly death. The home of Mrs. Horatio Seymour still standing on Niagara Street, right side, just above Franklin, was often the scene of gay parties, suppers and sewing societies. How we did sew for the churches in those days!

Pearl Street from Eagle to Seneca was a fashionable residence street and being adjacent to "the Churches," as St. Paul's and the First Church were ordinarily spoken of, it was a most popular location. Pearl Street was very gay, notwithstanding it was "under the eaves of the sanctuaries."

Mr. and Mrs. John L. Talcott lived here just behind St. Paul's church. They entertained lavishly, giving champagne suppers, musicales and card parties frequently. Here one met Col. and Mrs. Henry K. Viele, Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Warren, the Purdys, Sally Ann Thompson, who married a brilliant lawyer, H. K. Smith, the Peacocks, the Hatches, the Rochesters and hosts of others who were among the royal entertainers of Buffalo in these early days. John L. Talcott, with his magnificent figure and brilliant mind, conversing with another elegant-looking man, Col. Viele, stands out as distinctly in my memory on one of these occasions as does the beautiful singing of Mrs. Talcott and the remarkably fresh beauty and sweetness of Mrs. Viele, who was one of my lifelong and most beloved friends.

Mrs. Talcott was a Frenchy little woman, graceful, diplomatic, witty, accomplished and red-haired. She had very fascinating but frivolous ways and both she and her gifted husband contributed much to the enjoyment of their numerous friends, until domestic infelicity crept into their otherwise delightful home. Mrs. Charles Lord, a very beautiful woman and a remarkable soprano singer, was present at one of the Talcott musicales, as was also Miss Fanny Wilson, a sister of Mrs. Evstaphie. Who that heard Miss Wilson sing negro songs, including "Old Dan Tucker," will

ever forget it? Mrs. Lord went to St. Louis soon after, and sang for years in a cathedral of the Roman Catholic Church.

On Pearl Street near Seneca, Seth Grosvenor resided. He was one of the large-hearted, generous, genial men of his day, who gave champagne suppers to his gentlemen friends. On one occasion, when every one was enjoying the merriment of stories, jests and plenty of good cheer, it was discovered that the doors were locked, as Mr. Grosvenor did not wish his guests to depart until the wee hours. Mr. Poole not being in good health at this time, slyly watched his opportunity and climbed out of the window, much to the surprise and amusement of his associates.

Capt. and Mrs. Stephen Champlin lived on Seneca Street, as did many of Buffalo's best citizens, and their house was noted for its suppers and card parties. Whist was a hobby of the captain's. He had a somewhat irascible temper, especially when defeat in whist stared him in the face. It was not an uncommon thing for him to storm at his partner under such circumstances, so that very few ladies were willing to play with him. As Gen. Winfield Scott had taught me to play the game, and I had often played with other army officers, I seemed to be inspired with bravery and was daring enough to play with him. It was like "bearding the lion in his den," for he always came near swearing when my play did not suit him, but he suppressed it and contented himself with something like a growl, which always made me laugh. This relieved the situation and we got on very well. A lovely daughter, Sophia, married Capt. Simpson of the United States army and they graced Buffalo society for a number of years.

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#### IV. GAY BUFFALO SOCIETY IN THE '30's.

It must be difficult for younger generations to realize that prominent families resided on Washington Street as far down as Exchange Street. Among these, noted for their hospitality, were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hollister and Mr. and Mrs. William Laverack. Their houses were stylish

brick three-story buildings, located where the checkered store now stands, below Seneca Street, right hand side. Mr. Hollister built a palatial home a little later, up Main Street above Chippewa, now replaced by a handsome business structure. The entertainments in this beautiful home were brilliant and numerous. I have often wished that the elegant mahogany dining table now in the possession of a kinswoman could talk. How much it could relate of romances, flirtations and possibly broken vows, for this charming home was the rendezvous of lovers of all kinds, who were prone to make Mr. and Mrs. Hollister the bearers of their confidences.

One of the most genial couples when Buffalo was young was Mr. and Mrs. O. G. Steele. They lived on Clinton Street in a simple frame house where many a Virginia reel and sprightly cotillion were enjoyed by their many friends. Here I met Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Sherman, the parents of Mrs. Bradley Martin, who resided in Buffalo a short time. Among the guests one always met, Col. and Mrs. James McKay, the parents of Steele Mackaye of dramatic fame. Mrs. McKay was a sister of Mr. Steele. Col. McKay, a dashing, handsome man, spent money lavishly upon his friends. He built "The Castle" at Fort Porter and entertained frequently there until the United States Government established an army post on this spot.

One of the most charming homes in the '30's was that of Mr. and Mrs. Bela D. Coe, located on Main Street, with elegant grounds extending to Eagle and through to Washington. Garden parties were given here and several fine balls took place in their stately colonial home. In the early '40's they moved into the spacious mansion now occupied by A. Porter Thompson, and here, with its magnificent lawn then extending over an entire block, brilliant parties were given both summer and winter. William A. Moseley, one of the most elegant and courtly of men, was an *habitué* of this house. Mr. Coe died while traveling with his wife in Europe, and a few years later Mr. Moseley married the widow. One could never imagine the dignified, stately Moseley in a position to be laughed at, but on one occasion at a dinner, when he commenced carving a duck, by some



unlucky chance the bird evaded the operation and suddenly as if reanimated, it flew from the platter, landing on the floor. The situation was so funny that every one burst out laughing, in which he joined heartily, exclaiming: "If anyone present can perform that feat as well, I will wager him a case of champagne." The challenge was not accepted.

The Townsend house with its beautiful grounds, now considerably curtailed, at the southeast corner of Main and Tupper streets, is still standing.<sup>1</sup> In this handsome residence many delightful parties took place, the Misses Townsend being much admired. Descendants long maintained its beauty and hospitality.

Nearly opposite is the fine old colonial mansion, now known as the Ensign house, but in the thirties as the Hecox residence, and later the home of John Hollister. The grounds were beautiful and much social favor was dispensed from this house in the early days.

Where the Teck Theatre now stands was the Walden mansion, surrounded by acres of fine lawns, trees and flower beds. Many brilliant functions were given in this spacious residence. The host's daughter, Kittie Walden, was a very pretty and attractive young lady. She married Gen. Meyer of weather-bureau fame. Opposite this fine property on the southeast corner of Main and Goodell streets was the elegant house built by William Hollister, where he took his lovely young wife, Grace Keeler, who enjoyed with him the gay life of those early days. E. G. Spaulding purchased this residence, where he lived until his death.

Further up Main Street on the northeast corner of High, was the aristocratic mansion known as the Guy Goodrich home. It was purely colonial in style and furnished throughout in the most sumptuous manner. Many beautiful balls and receptions were given here. This residence was removed to Amherst Street where it forms the principal part of John C. Glenny's fine home.<sup>2</sup>

1. Torn down, spring of 1905.

2. This house was begun by Joseph Ellicott in 1823-'24, and was occupied in 1825 by him. Now known as Amherst House, it is one of Buffalo's most beautiful residences, and is the only structure in the city directly associated with the founder of Buffalo.

Pierre A. Barker built the handsome house which was known later as the Sidway residence, facing Hudson Street. He entertained munificently. The grounds, which extended far back from Hudson Street, were superb, with the many fine trees which surrounded the entire place.

Mr. and Mrs. Israel T. Hatch, whose house is still standing on Cottage Street, were very hospitable entertainers in the early days.

The stone building on Rhode Island Street, now owned by the Church Charity Foundation, was for years the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Thomas. It was surrounded by beautiful grounds and its host and attractive hostess were noted for their genial hospitality. No gayer parties were given in Buffalo than were enjoyed in this substantial edifice.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Thomas was a Miss Truscott, daughter of Capt. Truscott, one of our best and most honored citizens.

Then there were the charming Colton girls, Mary and Louise, who lived away out Main Street in the Cold Spring district. They were very attractive and fine-looking. At their pleasant home, the best and most genial society congregated and delightful dancing parties were frequently given. During one of these, a quantity of red pepper was spilled on the kitchen stove. The house was soon filled with its fumes to the distraction as well as amusement of the guests, for everybody commenced sneezing so that the house echoed and reëchoed alternately with sneezes and laughter.

No more hospitable entertainers ever lived than Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Kinne, who resided and kept a lavishly open house year after year, in the large frame building on the northwest corner of Pearl and Huron streets. Their parties were among the most delightful ever given in Buffalo.

I might go on indefinitely mentioning the beautiful homes where unstinted hospitality was so frequently offered to society in Buffalo's early days. There were the elegant mansions of Mr. and Mrs. George C. White, Judge and Mrs. Masten, the several Pratt residences on Swan Street, Dr. and Mrs. James P. White's on the southeast corner of South Division and Ellicott streets, William A. Bird's fine house

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1. Demolished to give room to new buildings, spring of 1905.

at Black Rock, and many others. But all dispensed that good old-fashioned home hospitality which carries with it to the end of one's life, influences that warm the heart and memories that seem to bridge over the unknown space that separates us from the dear friends who participated in the social pleasures of early Buffalo.

The gallantry and liberality of the Buffalo beaux in the '30's and early '40's inspired the pleasantest of recollections which time can never efface.

There was the elegant Buckland, a notable figure as he walked on Main Street, followed by his great St. Bernard and dignified Newfoundland. My uncle, Russell Searle Brown, the dilettante, was so fastidious in his dress that he was called by common consent Dandy Brown, and this with no lack of respect. He, with his partner, John Wellington Buckland, occupied a fine suite of apartments, with their servants, steward, butler, etc., in the Granite Block. I quote again from S. M. Welch's "Recollections of Buffalo," concerning these gentlemen:

"They lived in grand style. When the elegant furniture for the rooms was unpacked upon the sidewalk, there was a considerable gathering of interested neighbors expressing their wonder at the reckless extravagance of these young gentlemen. Why, it must have cost \$6,000."

Many were the dinners, suppers and card parties given by these men.

There were three handsome brothers of unusual physique and courtly manners, who came from Canada to reside among us. They were known as the Tall Thompsons, each being over six feet in height. The oldest one, William A. Thompson, built the beautiful residence at Queenston which he named Glen Cairn. There he spent the latter years of his life. While in Buffalo these brothers kept bachelor's hall in a large house on Washington Street near South Division Street, and here they entertained most generously.

Then there were the fascinating and witty William Lovering, the dignified and courteous Ellicott Evans, the charming, chivalrous gentleman, Asher P. Nichols, the gentle, kind-hearted Henry Kip, the gallant and agreeable Samuel

M. Welch, the true-hearted Henry Garrett and many others who added zest and brilliancy to Buffalo society in these good old days. Many were the assemblies given at the American Hotel and the Eagle Tavern by these gentlemen, as well as sleighrides out to Sherwood's, Scott's and down to Niagara Falls.

Carriages were always furnished by the committee which had the management of these assemblies, and an escort went to fetch unmarried ladies who had neither fathers nor brothers to accompany them. It was very bad form to permit any lady to be a wallflower, and not one of the fair sex ever thought of such a thing as not being invited to go out to supper. Has society improved in these respects?

We never heard of a "debutante" or a "bud" in those days. The young ladies were introduced to society incidentally, and always in the midst of their elders. No ball or party was complete without the mature portion of society. It added dignity and prestige to such occasions, often wholly lacking at the present day. Card rooms were always prepared for those who wearied of the maddening throng, so that a game of whist or euchre formed a pleasant pastime for many an older couple at large dancing parties. Entertaining our friends at this time, was never considered a burden or even an obligation. It was always a pleasure made doubly so, by that mutual dependence enforced by the conditions of those early days, which made a community such as I have described from the social standpoint, a band of brothers and sisters, full of consideration and appreciation of every effort made in each other's behalf.

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#### V. A NOTABLE NEIGHBORHOOD.

"The future we know not, but safe is the past,  
 And the first we loved, we love to the last.  
 The dearer gifts, the longer we live,  
 Are the quiet joys our memories give."

Have you, kind reader, after an interim of many years, reappeared upon some scene that was so intimately asso-

ciated with your early life as to have made you feel as if the world had been bounded by this same locality? If you have, perhaps you will better appreciate my sensations when on a bright June day somewhat recently, I strayed out of my usual course and walked down Eagle Street and stood for some time where beautiful linden trees once waved their noble branches against the windows of the house where my husband took me to reside in 1838, at the northeast corner of Ellicott Street. How the sweet and permeating perfume, mingled with dear voices, came back to me despite the awful devastation of this once delightful neighborhood. My little home on this corner was often the scene of such social gatherings, as warm the heart and energize the brain to deeds of kindly import, while the parties given within its walls, will ever remain a mystery, for I cannot now explain how our two or three hundred friends were so often entertained within its limited space. The majestic lindens are gone around which merry children once romped, playing tag, puss-in-the-corner and other noisy but healthful games. Among these, the majority of whom have passed away, was mischievous Susan Flint, daughter of the eminent Dr. Austin Flint, who was our next-door neighbor. I discovered this child one day in that long ago, passing a case of lancets through a hole in the fence which divided our backyards, over to my daughter some years younger than this precocious child. Then there was Lavinia Hawley, who in her maidenhood became engaged to one of Commodore Vanderbilt's sons, but the marriage was never consummated as young Vanderbilt died soon after the engagement was announced. The commodore remembered Miss Hawley handsomely in his will.

Then there was black-eyed Mary Bristol, who, in later years, married the eldest son of the beloved Rev. Dr. Ingersoll. Emily, daughter of George R. Babcock, whose quaint and original sayings are remembered to this day, was one of the children who frolicked in and out of the lindens. Then there were the two sprightly little daughters of William G. Fargo, Georgia and Irene, who little knew at that time what wealth and what sorrow were to be their portion.

The American Hotel was so near Eagle Street on Main, that the families who boarded there were considered our near neighbors. They included Judge and Mrs. George W. Clinton, Mr. and Mrs. Elam R. Jewett, Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Patchin and others. The Patchins lived in very elegant style in a fine suite of rooms, having their private dining-room, butler, and all the accessories that wealth, good taste and refinement suggest. There was no ostentation in their methods of life, but somehow when Mrs. Patchin's coach drove up to one's door and her dainty feet descended the folding steps which her footman was quick to let down, you realized that she was "to the manner born" and that she belonged to that royalty begotten of Christian grace and good breeding that surpasses mere rank of name and pedigree. This charming coterie of residents at the American Hotel were among my dearest and most prized friends to the end of life.

A fine three-story brick house, very much after the New York style, was standing on the southeast corner of Washington and Eagle streets until a few years ago. It was occupied in the thirties and forties by Dr. and Mrs. Winne. They were distinguished citizens, she being a Miss Viele and noted for her handsome figure and generally majestic appearance. This mansion was often the scene of delightful social functions of various descriptions.

A very important contributor to the comfort of this locality, situated midway between Washington and Ellicott streets on the south side of Eagle Street, was the pump. Here, one's maid of all work would often loiter, innocently gossiping with the friends she met who were bound on the same errand, even though the bread was burning in her oven.

Returning again to my home at the corner of Eagle and Ellicott streets, I was impressed with the fact that they built well in those days, perhaps better than they knew. For after nearly seventy years have elapsed since the completion of this block of simple, cozy homes, they stand intact, although so changed in their aspect and environment as to make one

wonder if they had ever been the abodes of prosperous and distinguished citizens.

Oliver G. Steele and Mr. Poole contracted with Benjamin G. Rathbun to build the block of four houses, which was afterwards added to, and the block was completed and ready for occupancy May 1, 1835. Mr. Steele resided in the corner house until we took possession in May, 1838, when he removed to Clinton Street. I have the original contract signed by all three men; the trustfulness which each had for the other, as outlined in this document, gives interesting evidence of the accommodating methods then in use among good business-men. These houses cost \$9,000 complete, part of which was to be paid for in crockery from my husband's store, and part in books from Mr. Steele's store, and the balance as should be "agreed upon later by all the parties."

As I continued my walk a few steps further down Eagle on the same side of the street, I came upon the modest frame house (now entirely changed by a front built of brick and converted into a saloon), where I had enjoyed so many delightful evenings midst many genial spirits, who basked, as I did, in the radiant smiles of "Aunt Kissie" and the jolly wit and good humor of her stalwart husband, the well-known Henry W. Rogers. Can anyone who ever knew this fine-looking couple ever forget them or their kindnesses?

Some, who may read these short sketches, may recall an incident which was a test of quick and brilliant repartee, not to the advantage of Mr. Rogers. It was during some tilt of words between James M. Smith, a very small man, and Mr. Rogers, who was a colossus by the side of him. Finally the latter exclaimed: "Smith, I can put you in my pocket," whereupon Mr. Smith retorted: "Well, if you did, all I have to say is, you would have more brains in your pocket than you ever had in your head."

Mr. Rogers owned at this time a curly black poodle dog. He would say to him: "Which would you rather do, live a loco-foco or die a whig?" Immediately the poodle would lay himself out, and to all intents and purposes become "as dead as a door nail."

The beautiful Jennie Rogers held court in this house. She was an adopted daughter and the most notably beautiful woman that Buffalo has ever had. She was a brunette with such perfection of form and feature, such lustrous black eyes, such luxurious coils of raven black hair as no Juno could surpass. Added to these physical charms was a rare intelligence and a grace of manner that have won for her in the annals of the belles of Buffalo, a lasting and ineffaceable memory. A disappointment in an affair of the heart was fully compensated for a few years later, by the devoted love and admiration of that highly-bred and noble gentleman, Ellicott Evans, whom she married. In the early '40's the Rogers moved from Eagle Street into a vine-covered cottage on Delaware Avenue. It stood very far back in the once beautiful garden that has of late years been known as the Van Vleck property. Roses bloomed by the hundreds around this cosy house, and the same bountiful hospitality was dispensed until they left Buffalo to reside in Ann Arbor.

The little Eagle-street house was soon rented for a season or two, to Mr. and Mrs. John Drew of dramatic fame. At the time of which I write, the Eagle-street Theatre was at the zenith of its popularity, and the Drews were members of its very fine stock company. It was a pleasant sight to see this young couple, both so refined and agreeable in their appearance, always arm in arm and deeply interested in each other's conversation, walking back and forth to their morning rehearsal and to the evening performance.

The Drews were doubtless very popular with their professional friends and scarcely a week passed, but some eminent actor or actress would accompany them home from the morning's rehearsal. Among these, whom I well remember, were Edwin Forrest, Junius Brutus Booth, Davenport, Yankee Hill, Charlotte Cushman, Fanny Kemble, Julia Deane, Laura Keane, Anna Cora Mowatt, and several others who have never been excelled in their several lines of dramatic portraiture.

On the south side of Eagle Street near Oak Street is a block of houses, in one of which resided Rev. Cicero Hawks,



rector of Trinity Church and afterwards bishop of Missouri. Mr. Hawks was a swarthy, medium-sized man, who appeared to have inherited Indian blood. It was said that he was directly descended from Pocahontas. He and Mrs. Hawks did much for the welfare of Trinity parish and they were thoroughly loved and respected by all who knew them. After their departure from Buffalo, Rev. Dr. Ingersoll and family occupied their house. This block still stands very much as it was, at this time of writing, 1903.

As I muse on the familiar forms that regularly traversed this street, one more stately than the rest seems to pass before me. It is Mrs. Lovering, as gentle as she was beautiful; she was a grand specimen of the old-time American lady. Would that her type had never left us! The Lovering house at this time was on the south side of Eagle Street, next to Mr. Hawks'. It was always a social center for the most refined and cultured of our citizens. Three very attractive daughters were magnets, not to be resisted by either their lady or gentlemen friends. Capt. Truscott and his charming family lived in an adjoining house, and retracing our steps to the southeast corner of Eagle and Ellicott streets, we come to the fine brick house at this time occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Stevenson, two of the noblest of friends and citizens. Later, after the Stevensons had removed to Washington Street, C. C. Bristol bought this spacious home. Among the royal entertainers at this time were Mr. and Mrs. John Lay, who lived on Eagle Street below Elm Street, in a handsome house, long since taken down to make room for less spacious buildings. Mr. Lay was a very wealthy man in these early days, and he spent his money on his friends in princely fashion.

Still further down the street on the northeast corner of Pine, was the elegant residence of Judge and Mrs. Philander Bennett. This house was of stone, built in fine colonial style, scarcely surpassed in its arrangement and interior finish by costly houses of the present day. It was surrounded by grounds of extensive beauty with magnificent old trees, many graveled walks, numberless flower beds, and the greenest of lawns, where several deer disported them-

selves, giving this fine domain the appearance of a park. Here, elegant balls were frequently given, and all Buffalo delighted to assemble under Judge Bennett's hospitable roof. A charming daughter married Mr. Rollin Germain, and they kept up the prestige of this stately home for several years after the death of Judge and Mrs. Bennett. This mansion has been razed and the grounds are maintained as Bennett Park, but are less spacious and beautiful than in their original state.

I will mention a strange coincidence in names, which only added to the unique peculiarities of this once notable neighborhood. On the northwest corner of Eagle and Elliott streets was a grocer whose name was Shilling; on the southwest corner another by the name of Penny; next to him on Eagle Street was a blacksmith by the name of Mills; further down, on the corner of Oak Street, was a butcher by the name of Farthing, and on the opposite corner was a grocer by the name of Ruble. It was very evident that we were rapidly approaching the era of the "mighty dollar," and it must have been an oversight of Dame Fortune that the personification of this coveted quantity was left out of our populous and pleasant neighborhood.

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## VI. THE GARRISON.

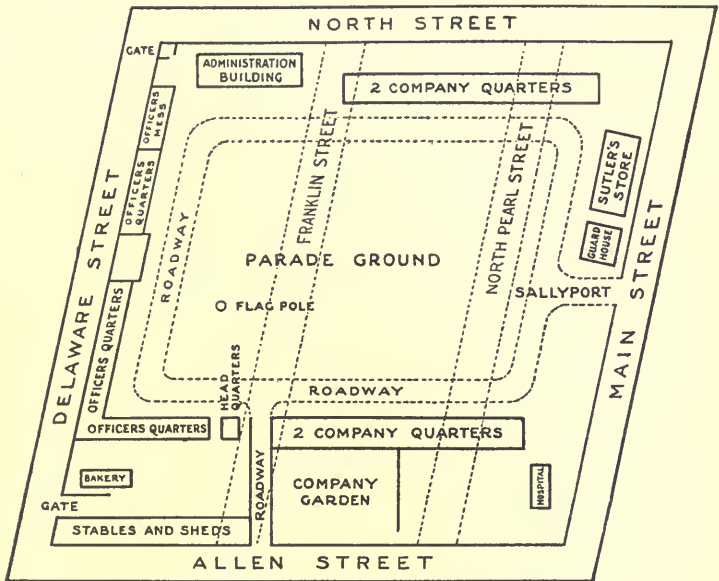
There are probably many persons now residing in Buffalo, who do not know that in the later '30's all the land from North Street running southerly on Main Street to Allen, thence through to Delaware, was utilized by the Government of the United States for a military post. At this time it was beautifully laid out for this purpose and the necessary buildings were constructed, consisting of officers' and soldiers' quarters, guard house, mess rooms, sutler's store and stables.

The center of this large tract was a well-kept lawn as level as a parlor floor, with the historic flag-pole midway,

from the top of which Old Glory waved from sunrise until sunset, for about five years. Surrounding this fine turf-covered ground, which was the parade ground, was a low rail fence painted white, separating it from a wide roadway that extended in front of the houses entirely around this lawn, and leading out to Main Street through an archway, or sally-port, which was the principal entrance to the post.

Around this plot on Allen Street, Delaware Avenue and North Street was a high board fence whitewashed, with a gate opening out upon Delaware Avenue. The houses all faced the parade; all the above streets being scarcely more than lanes, with the exception of Main Street, which was the great thoroughfare that its name implies. It must be understood that this locality was "out in the country," although a very delightful country it was, with its forest trees that have been cut down by the hundreds, and its countless singing birds that the inroads of a great city have driven away forever. The grade of Delaware Street, as it was then called, was very much changed in later years, by being cut down several feet, thus leaving much of the land formerly occupied by the garrison "high and dry," which it remains to this day. A portion of the ground on the west side of Delaware Avenue also attests to this fact. This ground was a cemetery where many of Buffalo's most prominent citizens were buried in the '30's and early '40's.

A very old man with long flowing beard as white as snow, with barely clothing enough to cover him, lived, hermit fashion, in this burying-ground during the summer months. He was perfectly harmless, but had very little intellect from some cause or other, and was known as "Crazy Robinson." It was a weird experience sometimes to look out from this back gate opening out on Delaware Avenue, and see this tall, gaunt figure with beard waving in the breeze, climbing in and out among the tombstones and over the graves, on his way to the garrison to get his meals, for during these months he was fed from the army stores, afterwards returning to the lonely but beautiful graveyard, to repose under its rustling trees.



POINSETT BARRACKS, BUFFALO, IN 1840.

Drawn from data furnished by Mrs. Poole, Mr. E. B. D. Riley and others. Given only as approximately correct. No other diagram of these grounds during the military occupation is known.

From near the corner of North Street, running towards Allen until about two-thirds of the way down, were officers' quarters with their backyards on Delaware Avenue. At about this distance from North Street, the line of houses turned and ran parallel with Allen Street, with quite extensive gardens in the rear. Behind these were soldiers' quarters, mess rooms and a large stable which is still standing on Allen Street, at the corner of Franklin.<sup>1</sup> The guard house was at the Main-street entrance and offices, sutler's store, etc., ran along the North-street side.

I can see this beautiful tract of land with its simple but comfortable buildings, its bristling cannon, the many forms

1. This statement is doubted by old residents to whom it has been submitted. Possibly some of the earlier walls are included in the present structures.

so martial in their bearing, red-sashed, with sword hilts and epaulettes gleaming in the sunshine, as if it were but yesterday.

The Patriot War broke out in the late '30's and for a time there was considerable fear as to the outcome, as Buffalo had no protection but the militia gathered in and around this city. Consternation and fright were beginning to pervade our usually happy and calm community, when the Government came to our relief by sending in 1840, eight companies of the 2d Artillery under command of Col. Ichabod Crane. This contingent was stationed at the garrison, but remained there but a few months. It was succeeded by six companies from the same regiment, commanded by Lieut.-Col. J. W. Bankhead. Lieut. Barry, who during the Civil War became a general and was chief of engineers, belonged to this command. He married Miss McKnight of this city. Lieutenants Simpson and Woodruff were also with this command and later belonged to the engineers' corps. The former married Sophia Champlin, daughter of Commodore Champlin, and the latter carried away from Buffalo one of its loveliest maidens, Miss Mayhew, the daughter of a much esteemed citizen.

About this time Gen. Winfield Scott also appeared upon the scene, and I shall never forget the feeling of security that this yellow-plumed, gold-laced hero inspired every one with. He was a grand looking and appearing man, of large stature and very imposing manners. I had the pleasure of meeting him at this time, as he was dined and wined as such a distinguished man would be likely to be. The six companies of artillery under Lieut.-Col. Bankhead, remained in Buffalo but little more than a year and were relieved by companies "A," "C," "D," "F" and "K," 2d Infantry, under command of that staunch fighter, Gen. Bennett Riley, in the summer of 1842. They remained at the garrison until 1845.

The various companies under this command were drawn from several posts; Gen. Riley's coming from Florida, another from Fort Brady at the Sault Ste. Marie, another from Fort Niagara, and so on. The coming of these troops

meant more to me than to any other resident of Buffalo, for it brought two sisters who had married army officers, respectively, from these two above-mentioned posts; also a bridegroom, Lieut. Hoffman, for my youngest sister. Thus all my sisters resided in this garrison, and as I had spent a year prior to my residence in this city at Fort Brady, and another year I had lived at the castle at Fort Niagara, I was by no means a stranger to many of the officers and their wives when they came for a brief three years to reside in Buffalo.

A fine band accompanied this regiment and many were the opportunities, both social and otherwise, given to our citizens to hear its inspiring music. The invitation to "come and take tea," and hear the band play, was freely given by the officers and their wives. Society here was very much augmented by the arrival of these most agreeable people. Several of the officers were unmarried men and dancing was one of the accomplishments that a West Pointer has always taken pride in. The waltz was just beginning to be very popular in this country, and Buffalo was not backward in copying Paris and Vienna in respect to it and the beautiful Strauss music that seems inseparable from it. Society went wild over both, as well as the officers who added so much dash and brilliancy to every function given.

Again the conquering hero came, for soon after the arrival of these troops, Gen. Scott came on a visit of inspection, and, as all signs of war and rumors of war had ceased, his stay in Buffalo was an ovation both with the military and civilians. Round after round of balls, receptions, card parties and champagne suppers were given in his honor. Among the most delightful entertainments at this time was a whist party, given by Mr. and Mrs. Rodman Starkweather, and I felt exceedingly complimented when Gen. Scott asked me to be his partner. The Starkweathers had recently moved into a new house which they had built on the site now occupied by the Coal & Iron Exchange, Washington Street, near Seneca. It was a large frame house of colonial style, with one especially peculiar feature, and that was an immense locust tree which reared its stately branches aloft





RESIDENCE OF ANSLEY WILCOX, DELAWARE AVENUE, BUFFALO. FORMERLY PART OF THE U. S. MILITARY POST KNOWN AS POINSETT BARRACKS. SEE PAGE 473.

IN THIS HOUSE THEODORE ROOSEVELT TOOK OATH OF OFFICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, SEPT. 14, 1901



over the entire front of the house, the steps to the main entrance being built around it. It seems to me as I look back to this period, that Buffalo society was at the zenith of its glory. There were so many charming women, both married and single, such an array of fine professional and business men, whose chivalry in our behalf could always be relied upon, that with the addition of these officers and their wives, it left nothing to be desired in the way of social brilliancy and *éclat*.

It may be of interest to many readers to know who some of these officers were, and how their houses were situated. The one still standing and now facing Delaware Avenue is the home of Ansley Wilcox, made more historic than ever by the ceremonial of the oath of office taken within its walls by Theodore Roosevelt during Pan-American year. This house was a double one, very simple in construction in 1842, and was the home of Capt. Casey, father of Tom Casey as he was familiarly called, the distinguished engineer of the Public Library building at Washington, D. C. The other half was occupied by Dr. Wood, surgeon, and his family, including two pretty daughters called Puss and Dump. Mrs. Wood was a Miss Taylor, daughter of Zachary Taylor, who was later President of the United States.

Towards North Street on this Delaware-avenue line were the quarters used by Capt. Westcott and wife, Lieut. Isaac Richardson, Douglass Burnett, my brother-in-law, and family, also Lieut. Heintzelman, who married Miss Stuart, a sister of Miss Matilda Stuart, well known in Buffalo. Some distance south of the Wood and Casey houses were the quarters used by the batchelors. Among these were Lieuts. Hayden, Gibson, Murray, Schurman, Martin and others. Lieutenant Martin soon married a Miss Truscott, daughter of Capt. Truscott, already referred to.

At this point the line of houses turned and continued in the direction of Main Street. Along this line lived Lieuts. Day, Anderson, Long, Albertis and the commandant, Gen. Riley.

One of the events of social importance soon after the arrival of the 2d Infantry was the beautiful military wed-

ding of my sister. This occurred at the garrison, at the home of our sister, Mrs. Edwin Ramsey Long, which was connected with the adjoining one thrown open for this occasion. The rooms were decorated with flags in great profusion, soldiers were stationed everywhere to usher in and serve the guests. The fine regiment band played during the evening before a brilliant company from town, interspersed with the officers, all in full dress uniform. The refreshment table was loaded with good things, many of them made by the ladies of the garrison, such as chicken salad, charlotte russe, whip syllabub, jellies and cake. This being the only wedding that took place at the garrison, it was considered a very important event from a social standpoint as well as the sacred union of two very interesting persons. Lieut. Alexander Thompson Hoffman and his bride lived in a house located just south of the Wood and Casey quarters.

It was a most inspiring sight of a Sunday morning to see these troops at the garrison emerge through the great arch on Main Street, and march to the enlivening music of the band, down in front of "the Churches," where they disbanded with orders to go to whatever service they preferred. Scores of them went to St. Paul's and the First Church. After the service was over they formed again and marched up Main Street to their parade ground, where they disbanded once more.

But all too soon orders came from Washington for the removal of the garrison; and for weeks confusion, bustle, and sorrow-laden activity took possession of the once peaceful but gay regiment, whose officers had brought so much of staunch character and so many lasting friendships to our frontier city. It seemed as if all Buffalo was in tears at their departure. For some time after, the grounds where they had, as it were, pitched their tents, were more deserted and avoided than the graveyard directly opposite.

As their coming meant so much to me, so their going did also, for it was decreed that never again was I to see the three noble husbands of my sisters. They passed away soon after their departure from Buffalo, one closely following

the other. Many of the officers, the memory of whom kindles such precious recollection, fell by the wayside from frequent changes of climate and that scourge to the army, death-dealing malaria. Others rose to distinction in the wars that were to follow, notably the Mexican War, conflicts with the Indians and the Civil War. In the first, General Riley fought with unswerving bravery, courting death, as it were, where shot and shell were thickest, as an insidious disease had made its appearance, which to a brave soldier was a thousand times more to be dreaded than death upon the battlefield. But he was proof against bullets and lived to suffer the martyrdom of wasting disease; a hero to the end.

After the Mexican war, General Riley was ordered to California, where he became its first governor, which position he held for two years.

Soon after this he was retired, and having formed lasting friendships with many of our citizens, he and his family returned to this city where they resided on Main Street above Barker until his death. A son, daughter and granddaughter of this distinguished soldier are still residents of Buffalo.

The days that the regiment under General Riley's command was stationed here were among the happiest of my life and the zest, variety and brilliancy it added to our young city were fully appreciated by every one. The changes which were already foreshadowed and were brought about by the introduction of the railroad, brought strangers of every condition and kind to our doors. The departure of the 2d Infantry in 1845 may be said to have marked the end of a most brilliant period in Buffalo society. That exclusiveness which the locality, surroundings, climate and conditions of the times forced upon us, was now at an end never to return. It is pleasant to reflect upon the fact that, however much we have gained in many ways, no more substantial foundation could have been created for the great hospitality for which Buffalo is noted, than that handed down by the society of the '30's and early '40's.

## VII. OLD-TIME TEA PARTIES.

Many Buffalonians must remember the little tea parties that their mothers and grandmothers used to give, when nests of tables were brought out from quaint corners and scattered among the dozen or more favored few who were so fortunate as to be invited. These delightful affairs included the young lady and young man of the family, as there were no lines drawn in those days to mark the difference in ages, when social matters were considered. These nests, very often of beautiful tables made of papier mache, generally consisted of five or six, graduated in size. Two to three persons were accommodated at each table and as the repast was comparatively simple and never later than half-past six, these entertainments were very little trouble to the hostess. A salad with cold tongue, turkey or ham, biscuits and coffee, followed by preserves and delicious cake, were usually served. On these occasions the much prized "tea set" was in evidence, and daughters and granddaughters of the present day consider these heirlooms almost of priceless value. Elegant silver was also much used, and even if there was no butler, as was more often the case, the maid of all work, though she was of the present type, soon learned to be quite an expert at "passing the things," under the constant tuition of her mistress. It must be remembered that domestics were "trained" in those days. At the present time there is no law or order in the rank and file of this service. At the time of which I am writing, I had a Hollandese by the euphonious name of Kazina Taharr; thrifty, industrious and quick of comprehension in every emergency. She could not speak a word of English when I engaged her services, the business being done through an interpreter. She remained with me three years at \$1.00 per week.

I have been asked many times how it was possible to give large parties in the early days of Buffalo, when we had no caterers, few professional cooks, and rarely average good cooks employed in private houses. Really, the giving of a party meant a gala time of a fortnight for the hostess and her intimate friends. In those days we had neighbors; and

the injunction to "love your neighbor as yourself" had an almost literal significance to those who lived on either side of the street, for at least that particular block. They came to the rescue early, to write the invitations. Sometimes this was done by the unmarried young women and occupied two or three evenings, when they were sure to be joined by several beaux, who managed to address the envelopes with commendable correctness, considering the temptations to which they were exposed by these sometimes flirtatious sirens. Then came the congregating of the matrons for cake making, jelly making, turkey roasting, ham and tongue boiling, while the hostess, with such assistance as she could command, would, on the day of the ball, make the custards, whips, floating islands, biscuits, etc., while some good soul, who much preferred being in the background, though glad to partake of the excitement of such an occasion, was always available when the important evening arrived, to stew and fry the oysters and superintend the making of the coffee. In the early forties a colored man, by the name of Thompson, often took charge of this part of the supper with great success. He also would take your order days before hand for *à la mode* beef, which was a very popular *pièce de resistance* in those days. He has never been excelled in this very substantial and imposing dish. And who can forget the boned turkeys, showily garnished with red and amber jellies, the hams gorgeous in their decorations of whole cloves, encircled with rings of cayenne pepper, with extremity decked out with frills of white paper, deftly hiding any trace of a bone.

Then we had a very prince of confectioners, McArthur, of revered and delightful memory, who made charlotte russe the like of which seems to be unobtainable at the present day. In other words the art died with him. From his hands, made with a large proportion of thick cream flavored with the genuine vanilla bean, and with an outer covering of sponge cake that knew no chemicals in the way of baking powder, soda or ammonia, but eggs by the dozen to make it light, a charlotte russe came forth as elaborate as a Swiss chalet, and firm and impressive it stood on the supper table

the entire evening. How different from those of today that so often lop and slop over to the disgust of many a hostess. McArthur's ice cream towered in all manner of fanciful shapes, giving dignity to the bountiful spread, while his decorated loaves of pound, fruit, jelly and sponge cake reposed in frosted magnificence on glass standards, the bases of which were imbedded in beds of mottoes, fruits, nuts and raisins.

It may truly be said that this was the pyramidal age; for no table was considered complete without several of these decorative features from the confectioner's hands. Often there were four of these candied wonders, one at each corner concocted as follows: One made of kisses with a shower of amber sugar over them, another of chocolate drops with a lace work of white frosting, another of oranges cut in quarters, garnished with spun sugar, and a fourth made of macaroons decorated with candied cherries. These pyramids were from two to two and a half feet high, and stood like sentinels guarding the delectable viands generously provided. The centerpiece was either a silver mounted glass epergne, or it was made by graduated glass standards, one piled on top of the other to the height desired, gorgeous mottoes, grapes and oranges being used to fill them; the whole topped off with a small vase of flowers. When the centerpiece was of this last style, it suggested a watch tower and looked defiant enough, until the table of good things was assailed by husbands, brothers and beaux, when all these fine accessories were soon demolished and little left of the decorations to "tell the tale." As I have already written, there were pockets in those days; and no mother returned to her little ones at home, without taking several souvenirs to them from these well-laden supper tables.

Compare one of these old-fashioned spreads with the mixed-up messes now in vogue, and which is the more appetizing menu?

While no American Beauty roses or exquisite lilies could be had for decorating our tables, no southern smilax or delicate ferns, still, as I see them in my mind's eye as they appeared over sixty years ago, with pyramids, turrets, tow-

ers and globes, they pass before me like gorgeous mosques laden with glittering minarets, and I wonder if anything more beautiful has been devised since, in the way of elegantly decorated supper tables.

In these days of natural and illuminating gas, electric lights and several kinds of coal, one may wonder how we managed to keep our homes comfortable and bright, as none of these were to be obtained in the '30's and early '40's. But it was not so difficult a matter as one might suppose. What we know nothing of, and have never had, does not enter into the necessity or comfort of life.

Wood as fuel was all we had with which to heat our large houses or to supply the cook stove. The Dutch oven was still in use, and for baking bread, cake and pies it was as convenient as more modern ovens. We paid from \$2 to \$2.75 a cord for the best wood, and from 25 to 50 cents a cord for sawing and splitting and having it piled up in the cellar or woodshed, ready for use.

The best rooms in all houses were provided with large open fireplaces. These were in constant use when the weather was cold, and I have no recollection of any discomforts from lack of heat in our homes. The several crackling and pleasantly odorous fires gave out a most cheerful light as well as warmth, which was sadly missed when the hideous black stove made its appearance a little later. Our infant children were never known to have their arms and necks covered in those days, when in the house.

As to lighting, the astral lamp with its cut and engraved glass globe set off with brilliant prisms, gave a soft if sometimes odorous light, but no more offensive than the oil lamps of today, and they were much more ornamental. Candles of all grades were universally used, and on occasions of entertainment these astral lamps were supplemented by countless tapers of almost transparent wax, such as cannot ordinarily be obtained at the present day.

One can scarcely imagine how effective and brilliant was the illumination of these spacious rooms, the light emanating from numerous lamps, silver candlesticks, candelabra,

prism-laden girandoles, and often cut glass chandeliers made to hold dozens of wax candles.

As I have said before, we had neighbors in those early days, and the common custom was to borrow anything from an egg to a piano; hence all the accessories needed on grand occasions were easily within reach.

As the walls of these spacious houses were almost invariably white, or papered in delicate tints, and the woodwork except the doors, was always painted white in the grand salons, it was not so difficult to light them well. The doors in handsome houses were often of solid mahogany or rose-wood, and were not hidden by superfluous draperies.

It was the custom to receive calls after 11 a. m. The officers from the garrison and their wives more frequently came "to pay their respects" in the morning, than at any other time. Perhaps this was due to their living "so far out." Cake and madeira or sherry wine were always offered, and to be without these was considered grossly inhospitable. The custom of "dropping in" evenings was universal; one never expected to be without several friends on any evening when there was not an important social affair taking place.

Conversation was an art in these good old days; some of it was doubtless "small talk," but it was entertaining and bound people in undying friendships. In these days of profound study and deep thinking, nervous prostration takes the place of old-fashioned good comradeship. Which is the better?

I shall touch but lightly on the subject of dress. It was not as complex either in style or variety as now, but women of wealth and fashion wore very elegant clothes. Young ladies wore swiss muslins, tarletans and mulls almost exclusively to balls, while the matrons were resplendent in brocades, velvets and satins. Diamonds were frequently worn, and the head was laden on full-dress occasions with feathers, flowers and turbans.

We had a fashionable French milliner in those days who could speak but very little English. She was, however, ambitious to learn and was inclined to imitate all that appealed to her idea of correct usage. One day a well-known citizen



accompanied his wife into Madam Blancon's store, she wishing to purchase a bonnet. The lady tried one on and turned to her husband for his opinion. He exclaimed: "It's devilish ugly!" She replied: "But it's French." The result was the bonnet was bought and paid for. Imagine the astonishment of the next customer who tried on several bonnets, and as each one was being scanned in the mirror, Madam Blancon would exclaim: "It's devilish ugly, but it's French," little knowing that she was running down her own wares.

Our society was full of ceremony and courtly usages; at the same time it was quaintly provincial. There was little false pride in those days. If the front steps needed sweeping and "the girl" was busy with other work, the mistress of the house took the broom in broad daylight and swept them clean, and cared not who saw her do it.

Two unique figures were frequently seen trudging to market with basket on their arms. One was the Hon. Albert H. Tracy, the other was Rodman Starkweather; both accomplished and elegant men and as noble in form and physique as they were strong in intellect. Both were prominent in the business world and were accounted rich. They were too self-respecting to think of any criticism that might be aroused, and as it was a matter of convenience and expediency, they cared not who saw them. As women never did the marketing in these days men were the buyers as well as the providers. I doubt if either Mr. Tracy or Mr. Starkweather could have been induced to trundle a baby carriage, so strictly were the lines drawn between men's and women's work.

I will say that scores of citizens, noted for their prominence and hospitality, are not mentioned in these detached reminiscences, who have equal claim with those that are. With few exceptions I have written of those with whom I was most intimate in my younger days. They in their integrity and civic pride are samples of what constituted good citizenship in those early days.

While grateful for the advances so rapidly coming upon us, I feel that the men and women of society in Buffalo sixty

and seventy years ago, were friends to whom we are lastingly indebted. It behooves those who always cry "forward," to pause and look back for much that may be learned, before "all the former things have passed away."

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### VIII. SOME EARLY SINGERS.

Old Trinity Church was the quaintest, cosiest, homeliest edifice in Buffalo, if not in Western New York, but at Christmas time it was transformed into "a bower of beauty," never to be forgotten by those who worshipped under the odorous evergreen wreaths.

And what a service was held within its walls on Christmas Eve! It was, indeed, a gala time in the church. Preparations were started a month before, by both choir and congregation. The former was usually a sextette, and met at private houses to rehearse anthems and festival compositions that would do credit to any similar choir of the present day. The congregation of Trinity never favored either chorus or congregational singing; but the church was in advance of any in Buffalo in the early '40's on account of the quality of the music produced and the fine voices usually secured.

An Englishman by the name of Barton was organist for two years, after the church at the southeast corner of Washington and Mohawk streets was completed. He was succeeded by Everett L. Baker, whose genius was limited only by his own indifferent appreciation of it. Mr. Poole was chorister, basso, sometimes organist, vestryman and clerk of the vestry, for twenty years from the time Trinity was completed. Before this, services were held by the seceders from old St. Paul's, in a disused building called Duffy's Theatre, located on South Division Street.

It is a singular coincidence that so often a congregation worships in an abandoned theatre, and vice versa, so many disused churches are purchased for sites upon which to

build a theatre. Certain it is, old Trinity had its beginning in a theatre, and ended by having the once hallowed spot pass into hands that projected and commenced the erection of a theatre thereon. This project proved a failure, for which no one who worked to help pay for old Trinity can be sorry. Isaac Sherman held a mortgage on Trinity Church, as sundry papers and receipts among Mr. Poole's records give evidence of.

Mrs. Ambrose Sterling was the first soprano of Trinity Church choir. Illness cut short her valuable services and I found myself a substitute in her place. What I had intended should last but a few weeks, continued for twelve years. My satisfaction in looking back over this period of the struggles, anxieties and work done to pay the debts of the young offshoot from St. Paul's, is that more than \$2,000 was saved to this parish, by the donation of my services, \$200 a year being the regular salary paid to a church soprano in those days.

An Englishman by the name of Pewtress was employed as tenor in Trinity's choir in the early '40's. He had a very remarkable voice and his singing showed experience and cultivation in the best schools of oratorio music. He could sing high "C" as easily as any middle note.

Everett L. Baker wrote the much-admired and ever popular music to the words, "Shout the Glad Tidings," for me; and it was sung every Christmas Eve in Trinity Church, during the time that I was a member of the choir. It has been pronounced the finest musical composition ever written to these inspiring words. It certainly has been the most popular. In the early '40's William Eckley of Boston came to this city to reside, and as he possessed a fine baritone voice and considerable musical culture, he was soon prevailed upon to become a member of Trinity choir. He sang regularly for several years, giving his services, and no one did more for the cause of good church music than did this most Christian gentleman.

Rev. Cicero Hawks entered into the Christmas spirit with most devoted fervor; but his ministrations were of short duration, and Rev. Edward Ingersoll appears before

me as the one most intimately connected with Trinity's early Christmas Eve services.

How many beautiful sermons were preached on these occasions by this handsome and saintly man! No one could, in more touching tones or rhythmic sentences, send joy to the hearts of his hearers that "a child is born," whose every mission brings "peace on earth, good will to men." As I think of him now, I seem to see his stately form surrounded as of old, by so many of Trinity's old parishioners, such as Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Radcliffe, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Clinton, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hollister, Mr. and Mrs. Gibson T. Williams, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Evstaphieve, Mr. and Mrs. William Laverack, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kip, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Patchin, Dr. and Mrs. Winne, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Jewett and scores of old Trinity's beloved ones, who even now unite the Christmas of today with that far-off festival so much enjoyed in the '40's.

To trim the church was a part of the pleasure, and in the basement or Sunday-school room, opening on Mohawk Street, such a genial throng of young and middle-aged men and women as assembled every advent season, it is difficult to equal. To surpass either the enthusiasm or earnestness of the workers, to say nothing of the hilarity, would be impossible.

Mr. Baker, the organist, had a fine sense of the artistic in decoration and made the designs for trimming the church for many years. These were carried out and executed in the most complete manner possible. Harry Daw, just before the great festival, was always at the top of the ladder, working night and day to perfect the plans for the beautiful Christmas decorations. Hundreds and thousands of feet of ever-green wreathing were made by the deft fingers of Trinity's dames amidst laughter, good will and that delightful social converse, which alas for all of us, is almost entirely obliterated from the life of today. Who can forget the fun that Robert Hollister was noted for on such occasions? Who would ever forget the contagious laughter of Jeanette Starkweather when an opportunity like this occurred, Mr. Evstaphieve with his keen and ready wit, Mrs. Seth C.

Hawley with a jolly sense of humor that seemed to have no end, Mr. and Mrs. William B. Peck always agreeable and helpful, Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Rogers and Mr. and Mrs. James M. Smith, all well known in society and Trinity church for their delightful and cheering manners and their hearty support whenever called upon?

After the evening's work was done, how often were both young and old bundled into cumbersome sleighs to be taken for a lively turn before going home! Sometimes we stopped at some hospitable friend's to partake of an oyster supper and other good cheer.

When Christmas Eve came, everyone flocked to church. As there were no chimes, great bells from far and near proclaimed the joyful occasion. How beautiful the old church looked with its countless festoons leading from ceiling to window sills, from pillars to chancel rail, from reredos to pulpit front!

In fitting spaces, shields, mitres and suitable emblems were interspersed that shone and glittered like diamonds; while high up over the chancel gleamed a star, as brilliant as pulverized glass or mica could make it. Under this were the words in evergreen: "Unto us a Child is born," while on the railing of the gallery, which was directly opposite the chancel, was the familiar line of "Shout the glad tidings." How the children gloried in this joyful service!

Everybody was in an exalted state of mind on these occasions. Many were the bundles, boxes and baskets concealed in the pews until service was over. Then such a handshaking, "Merry Christmas" greetings, and exchanges of gifts as is never seen in any city church nowadays. Oh, the pity of it! Shadrake, the good sexton, who served faithfully for many a year, also his son, "the blow boy," as he was called, were both presented with little gifts and it was pleasant to see them, like all the rest of us, so happy and grateful. Lucas Chester was also a "blow boy" in the '40's in Trinity church.

While the new order of things contains much that is an improvement on the old, with the passing away of those who made old Trinity church an abode of "peace and good will"

there seems to have been buried with them a love for the Christmas of the church; the beautiful Christmas Eve of many years ago, when hallelujahs vied with the clanging of the bells, to spread the good news of the Saviour's birth. May the spirits of those who gave such kindly greetings under the masses of twining greens be with us to the end.

I have a valued souvenir of a fair which was given by the ladies of this parish, early in the '40's, to raise a fund to pay for the organ. It is a white satin handkerchief case, handsomely embroidered in greens and browns. The word "souvenir" surrounded by a wreath of oak leaves and acorns is designed on the upper side. The case is bordered with green chenille and lined with quilted white satin. It is in perfect preservation, but the sachet perfume is gone. Mrs. Cyrus Athearn, a devoted worker in the church, made several of these articles for the fair. They sold readily for \$6 each, and a young gentleman named Henry Ogden purchased one and presented it to me. I think his father built and resided in the house on North Street, so long occupied by Josiah Letchworth. We realized a profit of \$600 from the sales at this fair.

Leaving the church most dear to my heart, some allusions to the older ones known as "the Churches" may not be out of place.

Younger generations can scarcely imagine how picturesque and beautiful were the sites upon which St. Paul's and the First Church stood, in the '30's and early '40's. The large structures which have replaced these early buildings and the widening of sidewalks and roadways have curtailed the extent of the lawns considerably, as they appeared originally. The elms and maple trees that cast such grateful shade in summer and gave shelter to hundreds of feathered songsters who piped their canticles of praise, have all disappeared.

The countless Indians who reclined in stolid ease and idleness on steps and grass are no more seen. Among these was the famous orator Red Jacket, who was often a familiar figure on Main Street. He was a noble-looking Indian when sober, and sauntered in and out of various stores when he

was not sullen. Most of the merchants could speak enough of his language to greet him pleasantly, to which he would respond with a grunt. In his latter years he gave little evidence of the great gift with which he had swayed his people, for firewater had reduced a giant to a pigmy.<sup>1</sup> The unobstructed views of Lake Erie have been shut off by huge and ugly buildings in brick and stone, and as one now scents the thick and cloudy atmosphere one realizes how easy it was to retain the grayish blue of pretty St. Paul's, and the pure white of the First Church in the smokeless period.

The breezes of Lake Erie were not always well tempered, especially in this locality of open and unprotected streets. It was nearly as necessary in a gale to strap and lash one's self for safety, as for the sailor to be lashed to the mast when tempest-driven on the seas. As for hats! it was no unusual thing to see a dozen or more at one time wildly careering up, down and across the street, and men rushing from all directions in frantic efforts to rescue their wind-tossed headgear. The sight was comical.

Here in the midst of the bustle and the business of Main Street stood these twin churches, like beacon lights, ministering to the joys and sorrows of the pioneers of Buffalo. My heart goes out in grateful remembrance to the good men and women of these historic churches.

An amusing incident comes to my mind concerning the music of an Easter service at the First Church, which was unusually elaborate for a congregation of the Presbyterian denomination in those early days. A Mr. Stephenson, who was a leading jeweler on Main Street, was conductor of the choir in the early '40's. The music was generally of the congregational kind, supplemented by a chorus on special occasions.

Mr. Stephenson evidently believed in realistic effects, and he took much pride and pleasure in employing a trum-

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1. As Red Jacket died in 1830, five years before the writer of these reminiscences came to Buffalo to live, her impressions of him may have been gained in earlier visits when as a child she came to Buffalo from Le Roy; or perhaps, from Mr. Poole, who came to Buffalo in 1825, and must often have seen Red Jacket as Mrs. Poole has described him.

peter to produce the proper tones at the right times. A fine anthem had been duly rehearsed for weeks and at the words "When the trumpet shall sound," the singers and a few privileged spectators were electrified, as it were, by the stentorian blast that promptly came forth from the sonorous trumpet. Stephenson was in raptures over the success of this additional sensation, which was to be kept a secret from members of the church generally. He rubbed his hands with delight whenever he spoke of the fine anthem his choir was preparing for Easter Sunday, but never a word of the trumpeter.

The long-looked-for day arrived and the church was packed to the doors. Everybody was in a flutter of excitement, as it was noised about that something extra was "in the wind," and so it was. The anthem proceeded without a hitch until the words, "When the trumpet shall sound," an instant's pause—then Stephenson's voice in robust and despairing tones—"Oh, my! whar's that trumpet?" This unexpected climax created the profoundest astonishment.

In looking back to the times of which I have written it is very evident that there was an influence and warmth in our "society" in the '30's and early '40's sadly lacking at the present day. The "heart" that was in it in these good old days, that caused kindness and sympathy to permeate all its ranks, lent an attractiveness and stability to what would otherwise have been frivolous and fleeting. Christian courtesy and unselfishness marked the lady and gentleman of that long ago period.

Society built upon any other foundation, such as culture or wealth alone, becomes—

"The baseless fabric of a vision."

"They soon grow old who grope for gold  
In marts where all is bought and sold;  
Who hire for self and on some shelf  
In darkened vaults hoard up their pelf.  
Cankered and crusted o'er with mold  
For them their youth itself is old."

The day of emotions and chivalry is well nigh past. Is this not a loss that no gain can compensate? It may be wise



to guard against becoming a pent-up and repressed people, lest we Americans, like the grand machines so wonderfully invented year by year, gauge all our actions by scientific calculation.

After a continuous residence in and about Buffalo for more than seventy years, I can exclaim with the psalmist, "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces."

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### IX. NEW YEAR'S DAY IN THE '30's.

"Tonight where mirth with music dwells,  
His wrinkled cheek, his locks of snow  
Gleam near the grandsons of the belles  
He smiled on sixty years ago!"

The holidays were very gay in these long ago times, for married and older people as well as the younger ones, the latter falling in with the general festivities as additions, but not as leaders or monopolizers.

Business was light at this season of the year and most of the stores and offices closed their doors at three or four o'clock during this week. While Christmas was a festival of the church and the occasion for family reunions, New Year's Day was truly a time for friends and acquaintances to celebrate by making and receiving calls, exchanging the "compliments of the season," and such hospitality as our townspeople generally extended at their homes. This day, so fraught with kind wishes, hearty handshaking and good cheer, seemed to give strength and inspiration for the work of those to follow, and it has always seemed a mistake that the good old custom of "keeping open house" on the 1st of January, has passed out of fashion.

There must be many younger men and women who well remember Van Velsor's New Year's cakes. I had almost said that New Year's was ushered in by these famous confections for their popularity in Buffalo was almost universal. They were of various shapes and sizes, some being eighteen

or twenty inches across, and from three quarters to an inch in thickness; the smaller ones were about half an inch thick. They were heart-shaped, or in the form of stars, spheres or diamond-shaped, with flowers, baskets of fruit, cornucopias, birds, etc., stamped on the upper side in very distinct relief. They were redolent with caraway seeds, and fond papas quite generally stopped on their way home on New Year's Eve, to purchase the expected New Year's cake. Van Velsor was as important and necessary to the community in those days in the line of bread, biscuit, rusk and cakes, as McArthur was in ice-creams, charlotte russe and candies. Everything from either firm was made upon honor, and has never been surpassed in excellence.

New Year's Day was ushered in, as now, by much noise and clatter, the difference being in the kind of din and the methods used to produce it. Bells from every steeple and market-place rang the old year out and the new year in. Boys hooted and yelled in the streets and tin bugles, drums, fifes and jewsharps made a jingling jangle that was not altogether unpleasant. It was not an unusual thing to hear the sonorous voice of the town crier on New Year's Eve as he rushed through the streets of the city in search of some lost child who had strayed from home to join the street urchins in making merry. This town crier was an original character, being a burly, kind-hearted negro. It was an impressive sight, especially to the children, to see him on his fleet-footed horse, galloping through the principal streets, ringing a good-sized bell as he came to a halt at various street corners. When silence was secured from the goodly crowd that surrounded him, he would chant in musical but monotonous cadence, "I have lost a little boy, five years old," etc. He would generally find the little boy and bear him home in triumph on his stalwart nag. It was said that many a youngster delighted in getting lost, so that he might have a ride on the town crier's horse.

The preparations, more or less elaborate, that housewives generally took pleasure in, were completed; so that on retiring for a few hours' sleep, they thanked their stars that the cake was light and "done to a turn," and the frost-

ing hardened but not too brittle. On these successful issues depended our ability to sleep, otherwise we must rise at dawn and proceed to redeem our failure of the day before.

"Miss Leslie's Cook-book" was the one *par excellence* most used in those days, and from its oft-studied pages so full of matchless recipes for delicious viands, the up-to-date housekeeper was seldom disappointed by disastrous results, if she followed the rules set forth.

People ate more cake at this time than they have done in late years, and hostesses vied with each other in the making and baking of cake, which was considered an accomplishment. The well-known Misses Strong were noted for their fine cake-making. One of these young women married Samuel Pratt, another Henry M. Kinne, and a third married a Mr. Robinson and lived for years in a house still standing on the west side of Pearl Street, near Chippewa. Later Mrs. Robinson married E. G. Spaulding. When Mrs. Robinson set her table for New Year's callers, the gentlemen coming from her house told wonderful stories about the superior black fruit cake, the excellent pound and sponge cake they were offered.

There was much hurrying and scurrying to get one's house in order on New Year's morn, the children arrayed in their best (for they were supposed to be seen and not heard), the fire lighted and stirred to send out a glowing and welcome heat, the table set in a corner of the parlor, the servant ready to wait upon the door; and last, but not least, the hostess must be attired in her finest silk gown before 10 a. m., that being the hour when callers commenced to arrive. From this hour until seven in the evening, there was scarcely an interval to eat one's dinner. A sandwich and cup of tea or coffee *ad libitum*, were all there was time for.

A few families, including the mayor's, set prodigal tables on New Year's day, but the most approved custom was to offer several kinds of cake, sherry and madeira wines, sometimes port, often brandy. Whiskey was never considered a drawing-room drink. The original bottles were not in evidence, but handsome cut glass decanters contained the

wines, and tiny slender-stemmed wine glasses were always used.

How well I remember one group of merry men as they stood in my pleasant parlor at the corner of Eagle and Elliott streets, with wine glasses raised to wish me and mine a "Happy New Year." They were the "four Charlies" as they were called; Charles Gold, Charles Peck, Charles Pickering and Charles Day. There was Joseph Stringer, Hamlet Scramton, John Macy, Henry Hickox, Seth E. Sill and Carleton Sprague. Scores of others came singly, in pairs, quartettes and even greater numbers.

One who has never lived in an atmosphere of sturdy friendships and dependent conditions such as those early times in young Buffalo brought about, can scarcely imagine the genial and cheerful merriment of our old-fashioned New Year's Day. Kindness and good will seemed to radiate from every eye and the grasp of those firm hands and the words of greeting from the lips and the hearts of those staunch men, have left an impress that makes my soul cry out.

"Oh for a touch of a vanished hand  
And the sound of a voice that is still."

Sleighload after sleighload drove up to our modest door and a lively number would rush into the house and out again in most bewildering succession. As I look back over the years that have elapsed, I seem to hear the kindly wishes interspersed with the tinkling sleighbells outside and the crackling of the logs upon the hearth. Then there is the odor of the Christmas greens, the spruce and the hemlock over doors and windows, that blend with sweet sounds of the singers that often came unannounced to our house on New Year's evening, and before one was aware of their presence, "Sleep, Gentle Lady," "Sparkling and Bright," "The Cough and the Crow" and other beautiful glees would be sung just inside the front door.

In the evening also, it was the custom to congregate at one another's houses for an informal dance. On some of these occasions Mr. Coppock, a well-known musician, would be at the piano while Mr. Poole played the flute. Quadrilles

and waltzes were often arranged in this manner and were enjoyed immensely by the belles and beaux of long ago.

Since those days of genial mirth and jovial friendships, the years have rolled by and from out the visions of the past I hear the "Happy New Year" of that long ago.

As I walk over Buffalo's snow-covered stones or under her wind-tossed trees, I feel the pressure of tightening hands of those who have gone before.

May not sweet thoughts and heartfelt wishes come to us from out the realms of space and through the aisles of time?

Then, "A Happy New Year" to one and all.

Yours with pleasant memories,

MARTHA FITCH POOLE.



## APPENDIX A

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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### FORTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING.

The forty-third annual meeting of the Buffalo Historical Society was held at the Historical Building on the evening of Jan. 10, 1905. Some 300 members were present, and President Andrew Langdon presided. After the reading of the minutes of the forty-second annual meeting, by the Secretary, President Langdon addressed the society, as follows:

#### PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

*Members of the Buffalo Historical Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

It is with more than ordinary pleasure that the officers of the Historical Society make their annual reports to the members, this evening.

We have had a good year; and perhaps the best thing about it is, that we have come to see, more clearly than ever before, in what direction we can make our efforts of greatest pleasure and profit to our members, and to the public.

If we do more now than in former years, it is largely because we have, as never before, the help and the interest of the citizens of Buffalo. Never before was our membership so large. Yet, considering the size of the city and the very moderate cost of membership, the number should be at least twice what it is at present. It is safe to say, no other historical society in the United States gives its members so much, for so nominal a due. The annual membership fee of the Chicago Historical Society is \$25, and the life membership fee is \$500; both five times what they are in this society; yet neither there, nor in any other historical society in the country, is as much done for the members, as we are doing here. We do not propose to do less, but rather more; and we ask our members to lend a hand towards strengthening our membership.

Members should bear in mind that we return to them, in ample measure, what they pay in for dues. None of it has to be diverted to

care for this building, for the maintenance of which there is other and wise provision. The stronger, therefore, our society becomes in numbers, and the greater its revenues from membership dues, the more it can and will do to make membership worth while.

As you know, we are now carrying on one of the best series of historical publications in America. The possibilities of this work are large, and we stand ready to increase it as soon as additional outlay is warranted. Whatever we do by way of publication, goes free to all members.

For them, too, we have arranged a series of high-class entertainments, musical and literary. These will be multiplied according to the encouragement and response given by the members themselves.

Another field, in which we have made notable growth during the year past, and in which we should make still further progress in the present year, is our library. The value of our recent book acquisitions is less to be reckoned by their number, than by their quality and worth to the student. Almost for the first time, we have made progress in the systematic development of our library. While we welcome worthy books in any department of literature, our aim is to build up here a collection that shall be as full as possible on American history and genealogy; and especially on the history of this region. A step in this direction was taken, the past year, by the acquisition of several hundred volumes, most of them rare and valuable, from the large private collection of Frank H. Severance; and the Historical Society now has, of books and pamphlets on such subjects of local importance as the War of 1812; the Upper Canada Rebellion; the anti-Masonic excitement which followed the abduction of William Morgan of Batavia; the engineering and political history of the Erie Canal; and especially the literature of travel and description in this region, a collection of literature probably unrivalled by any library in the country. Such collections cannot be made in a day; this one was some twenty years in being brought together; but its value to the student is permanent; and its intrinsic value steadily increases, for books of this class become scarcer and scarcer every year, and are more and more sought after. And I take this occasion to recommend, if merely as a business proposition, the early acquisition for this institution of books, in which we are now notably lacking, relating to the early French days on the Niagara, the period of British occupancy, and other important phases of Niagara frontier history, which it is an imperative part of our business to collect and preserve.

While on this subject, I may be permitted to relate an incident which illustrates the value to an institution like ours of having a comprehensive collection of the literature of our field. Mr. Severance's collection of books on the Upper Canada Rebellion—or, as it often is called, the Patriot War—had scarcely been added to the shelves of the Historical Society, when a Western scholar, Prof. O. E. Tiffany, learned of it, and wrote to inquire if he could have access to our books. A cordial invitation was, of course, sent him to come and use our library as freely as he liked. Prof. Tiffany came to Buffalo, and spent some days at work here. He was preparing, it seems, a thesis for an advanced degree at the Michigan State University, and had chosen for his subject of research some phases of



this old border disturbance—out of which, as a matter of fact, Canada really got her present liberal form of government. The completed thesis, besides serving its primary purpose of gaining the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for its scholarly author, is probably the most thorough and philosophical history of the subject—at least in some of its aspects—that has been written; and it is with more than common pleasure that I announce that this important contribution to the history of this region, will have its original publication in the next volume of historical Publications, to be issued this year by the Buffalo Historical Society.

We desire that the members shall realize that they, and not the few officers in charge, are the Historical Society. They, as much as any one, are responsible for its success in its field of work; and they and they only, can win for it a larger and nobler part in the life of this community.

The reports of the treasurer and secretary will tell you, in more precise terms than I can, of the work of the past year. What I now particularly wish to speak of briefly, in closing, is the outlook for the future.

If we continue to grow in the future as in the recent past, this building will soon be too small for us. Already its museums suggest crowding—and the systematic development of its museums has hardly begun.

Already, as all who come to our Sunday afternoon talks, well know, our lecture-hall is too small for the accommodation of the public which seeks to use it.

Consider, if you please, that we are located in the heart of a district that in the next decade will probably become thickly populated; that the whole growth of the frontier, from Smoke's Creek to Niagara Falls, is felt here, and its effects shown in the attendance at public resorts. These mere suggestions, which you will readily carry further for yourselves, will bring to every mind the question, How shall we provide for the future?

We are under obligations to the city, and cannot turn the public from our doors. Nor do we wish to. We welcome the public, and seek ampler means for helping them in worthy ways.

The time is coming, too, when the public use of our library will call for larger accommodations.

We do not propose to stand still; and if we grow we must expand.

The President's address was enthusiastically received by the audience.

The annual reports of the treasurer, Mr. Charles J. North, and of the secretary, Mr. Frank H. Severance, were read and approved.

On motion of Mr. Henry R. Howland, Messrs. Robert W. Day, Joseph P. Dudley, Charles W. Goodyear, G. Barrett Rich and Henry A. Richmond, were nominated for members of the Board of Managers, for the term ending January, 1909. No other nominations being made, they were elected without dissenting vote; it being a re-election for all of them.

On the adjournment of the business session, Lt.-Col. W. H. C. Bowen, of the 13th U. S. Infantry, gave an entertaining and instructive lecture on "Custer's Last Fight," with stereopticon views.

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#### ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Pursuant to statute, a meeting of the Board of Managers was held for the election of officers, on the first Thursday following the annual meeting; on Thursday, January 12th, at the office of Robert W. Day, in the Ellicott Square building. Present, Messrs. Bennett, Briggs, Day, Dudley, Larned, Langdon, McWilliams, North, Severance, Sweeney. President Langdon called Mr. McWilliams to the chair. The secretary read the minutes of the last annual meeting, held Jan. 14, 1904. Approved.

Chairman McWilliams announced that an informal ballot would be taken for president. Result, nine votes for Andrew Langdon, one blank. On motion of Mr. Larned, the election of Mr. Langdon was declared unanimous.

A communication was received from Mr. George A. Stringer, requesting that his name be not again presented for vice-president. An informal ballot for vice-president resulted: Dr. A. H. Briggs one, Mr. James Sweeney two, Hon. Henry W. Hill seven. On motion, Senator Hill was declared unanimously elected.

For secretary, Frank H. Severance received nine votes and was declared elected.

For treasurer, Charles J. North received nine votes and was declared elected.

After election of new members, adjourned.

FRANK H. SEVERANCE, *Secretary.*

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#### THE SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The following report of the secretary was made at the annual meeting, Jan. 10, 1905:

The forty-third annual meeting of the Historical Society finds the institution growing with the vigor of youth. I shall here touch briefly on a few phases of our work; the full report of our several activities will be published and placed in the hands of all members within a few months.

*The building.* The troubles of last year, of a leaky roof and dampness in the basement, have been largely overcome. A new roof was laid, during the summer, with a ten years' guarantee. The present winter will test it. Assuming that it is adequate, the way is ready

for completing the decoration of the ceilings of the museum rooms and portrait hall on the upper floor. No elaborate work is contemplated; but by changing the cold hard white of the ceiling to an ivory tint or other suitable tone, the appearance of the whole interior will be much improved. Mahogany settees have been placed in the middle court, and several new showcases provided.

On account of the cut in our maintenance fund for the year, in the hands of his Honor the Mayor, the proposed work of fitting up a room in the basement for newspaper files was indefinitely postponed. It is very desirable that that work be accomplished, this year. Our newspaper collection is large and valuable, and is not now properly arranged or protected; nor can it be without the fitting up of a special room for it. This work is urgently recommended.

*Library.* By purchase, exchange and gift, the number of catalogued volumes in our library has advanced from 13,645 to 14,929. The most notable addition was the acquisition from a private collection of several hundred volumes relating to various phases of the history of Western New York and the Niagara and Lake region. Considerable purchases have also been made in the much-used department of genealogy. Mrs. Anna A. Andrews, who carries on the cataloguing and accession work of the library, has given much time and help to inquirers in this line of research.

The Sunday afternoon meetings have been maintained, and have grown in public favor. For their success the society is greatly indebted to the many friends who have given of their time and ability to this work.

The work of publication has been continued, Vol. VII of the Society's Publications series having been placed in the hands of the members, in November. It has been received with commendation by other institutions, and by literary journals and scholars throughout the country. Another volume is now being prepared.

Nothing the society does seems to give greater pleasure than the entertainment of school children. During favorable weather many teachers, both from the public and the parochial schools, have visited the building, with many hundreds of children. Here the museums have been inspected and talks given to the children. Mr. Shongo's talks to the young people in the Indian Museum have been among the pleasantest and most appreciated features of the year's work.

We desire it to be known, that this institution is for the help of all who can properly use it. The museums and the library are free of access to all, and the earnest student will at any time receive all the help we can give him.

*Gifts.* Three notable gifts, in the order of their receipt, were the marble statue of Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii, the work of the eminent American sculptor, Randolph Rogers, the gift to this society of Mrs. Mary Gridley Bell, formerly of Buffalo, now of Bloomington, Ill.; a set of the Boydell Shakespeare plates, ninety-eight in number, the gift of Mrs. J. I. Prentiss of Buffalo; and the large wall panel, "The Sailing of the Griffon," painted and presented by Mr. Herman T. Koerner.

By the will of the late Dr. Wm. C. Barrett the Historical Society received his small but valuable collection of Etruscan relics, and an interesting collection of guns, pistols, and other weapons. A fine

pier-glass, the gift of Mrs. Wm. Hamlin and Mrs. Chas. W. Pardee, was formerly in the residence of their father, the late George B. Gates, at the corner of Delaware Avenue and Allen Street. From President Langdon, among numerous gifts, was received a handsome black walnut bookcase, with mirror doors; and Mrs. A. L. Benedict, in presenting a miscellaneous collection of books and maps donated also to the society an ancient chest, owned for a century or more by her ancestors.

Among other notable gifts of the year have been the following: An oil portrait of the Rev. Grosvenor W. Heacock, former pastor of the Lafayette-street Presbyterian church, the gift of his son, Mr. Seth G. Heacock of Iliion, N. Y.; framed portrait of Dr. Judson B. Andrews, former Superintendent of the Buffalo State Hospital for the Insane, the gift of his widow, and of his daughter, Mrs. H. G. Matzinger; an oil portrait of Ephraim F. Cook, former Superintendent of Buffalo Schools, the gift of Mrs. Merritt F. Cook; a bust of Ralph Waldo Emerson, by the Buffalo sculptor, the late Sydney Morse, the gift of the Rev. L. M. Powers; framed portrait of the Hon. Conrad Diehl, from himself; framed portrait of William C. Russell, from himself.

Gifts to the library have included considerable donations of books from Mrs. F. C. Humburch, President Andrew Langdon, Mr. Chas. Wells Moulton, Mr. V. B. Whipple of Hamilton, Ont., Mr. S. S. Spaulding, and Mr. Frank H. Severance; and numerous others, who have contributed a few or single volumes. A full record of all gifts, either for library or museums, is kept.

*Membership.* A year ago the total membership of the society was reported as 751. Tonight it is 824, divided as follows: Patron, 1; life members, 136; resident, 540; honorary, 8; and corresponding, 150. It should be borne in mind that the honorary and corresponding memberships are purely complimentary, yielding nothing to the revenues of the society. The real strength of the society is, therefore, more accurately represented by the figures 676, which represent the classes of patron, life and resident membership. One becomes a patron of this society by a gift of \$2,500 or upwards. The class was created in recognition of the gift of \$5,000 from Judge James M. Smith. Since his death there has been no member of this class until Oct. 6, 1904, when the board of managers, in recognition of the many and valuable gifts of President Andrew Langdon, by unanimous vote made him a patron. He should not be allowed to stand alone in that honorable class.

We have gained two new life members, and lost three by death. There should be a decided growth in this class. Life membership is \$100, and all life membership dues go into the permanent fund, only the income from which is available for current expenses of this society. As this small fund is our only substitute for an endowment, the desirability of increasing it is apparent. The principal growth of the year has been in the resident class, where we have gained ninety new members.

*Losses by death.* The losses by death from our membership during 1904 were as follows:

- March 2. Hon. Nelson K. Hopkins, life member.
- April 2. Jacob Uebelhoer, resident member.

- May 25. James R. Smith, resident member.
- June 30. Robert B. Adam, life member.
- Aug. 3. Pierre K. Tyng, resident member.
- Aug. 9. Henry Spayth, life member.
- Nov. 9. Richard Bullymore, resident member.

Mr. Bullymore was the donor of a valuable case of Civil War and other relics, now preserved in our museum.

The principal meetings, gatherings and exercises, season of 1904-'05, were as follows:

#### MEMBERS' MEETINGS.

1904.

- Oct. 28. Musical lecture on Greig, by Rudolph Bismarck von Liebich, assisted by Allene von Liebich.
- Dec. 15. Unveiling of H. T. Koerner's wall panel, "The Sailing of the Griffon." Address by Hon. Peter A. Porter. Singing by Miss Florence Eggmann and Miss Adelaide Grodzinski; Miss Amy Graham, accompanist.

1905.

- Jan. 10. Lecture: "Custer's Last Fight," by Lieut.-Col. W. H. C. Bowen, 13th Infantry, U. S. A. Illustrated with stereopticon views and maps.
- 26. An evening with Wagner's "Parsifal," presented in new form by Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Bismarck von Liebich.
- Mar. 23. Lecture: "Japan's Sanitary and Medical Preparations for War, Lessons to be learned from the Conflict in Manchuria," by Major Louis Livingston Seaman.
- Apr. 14. Lecture: "The Re-conquest of the Egyptian Soudan," by Col. H. G. Prout, formerly of the Egyptian Army, successor of General ("Chinese") Gordon in command of the Provinces of the Equator.

#### SUNDAY AFTERNOON LECTURES.

1904.

- Sept. 25. The Free-Soil Convention in Buffalo in 1848. By the Secretary.
- Oct. 2. The Ojibway performance of the Hiawatha legend. By Cary W. Hartman.
- 9. A Forgotten Political Party and its Buffalo Candidate for President. By the Secretary.
- 16. Party Issues in American History. By the Secretary.
- 23. Adult Education in the Public Schools. By Mr. Frank C. Ferguson.
- 30. Politics in Pictures; a Study of Early Cartoons. By the Secretary.
- Nov. 6. Abraham Lincoln's Religion. By Mr. Harry Earl Montgomery.
- 13. A Trip to Newfoundland. By Miss Elizabeth Hirshfield.
- 20. The Underground Railroad. By Mr. Frank S. Fosdick.
- 27. Health and How to Keep It. By Dr. James H. Jackson of Dansville, N. Y.

- Dec. 4. Russia and her Jews. By Hon. John B. Weber.  
 11. Some Phases of Modern Japan. By the Secretary. Singing by Mrs. J. Leslie Frank; Miss Farr accompanist.  
 18. Violin and piano recital, by Walter and Mildred Saxer.
- 1905.
- Jan. 1. Three Great Questions to be submitted to the Voters of Buffalo. By Mr. Lewis Stockton, President of the Referendum League.  
 8. History of Surgery in America. By Dr. Roswell Park.  
 22. Gambling. By Mr. J. N. Larned.  
 29. Street Forestry. By Dr. M. D. Mann; with remarks by Hon. Henry W. Hill.
- Feb. 5. Impressions of St. Petersburg. By Prof. Irving P. Bishop of the Buffalo State Normal School; with stereopticon views.  
 12. Lincoln. By Hon. Harlan J. Swift.  
 19. In the Time of Washington. By the Secretary.  
 26. The Sanitary Reformation of Havana. By Dr. Walter D. Greene, Health Commissioner of Buffalo.
- Mar. 5. An American in Jamaica. By Mrs. George H. Camehl.  
 12. Tuberculosis. By Dr. Burt J. Maycock.  
 19. The Old Iron Basket of the Niagara Gorge, and the building of the first suspension bridge at Niagara Falls. By the Secretary.
- Apr. 2. Life and Works of Sidney Lanier; lecture-recital by Mr. Allen E. Day. Singing by Mrs. Laura Dietrich Minehan; Miss Ruby Nason, accompanist.  
 9. Palestine and America. By Rev. Israel Aaron, D. D.  
 16. The Child Physical. By Dr. DeWitt G. Wilcox.  
 23. In the Days of the French on the Niagara. By the Secretary.  
 30. Violin recital. By Master Arthur Haendiges; Miss Haendiges, accompanist.
- May 7. Do-ne-ho-geh-weh: Gen. Ely S. Parker; the Story of his Life and Military Career. By the Secretary.  
 14. Piano recital. By Edward Haendiges.  
 21. The Manual Training School. By Daniel S. Upton, director of manual training work in the Buffalo public schools.  
 28. Violin and piano recital. By Misses McCall and Cohen.

## OTHER MEETINGS.

Other lectures and gatherings at the Historical Building, or conducted by the Society, during the season of 1904-'05, include the following:

1904.

- Oct. 1. Excursion for Public School Teachers to Fort George, Niagara, Ont. Address by the Secretary.  
 7. Classes from School 54, Miss Mickle, teacher; talk by Mr. Shongo in Indian Room.  
 28. Four classes from School 31. Talks by Mr. Shongo.

- Oct. 28. Class from Holy Angels Academy. Talk by the Secretary. During the winter and spring, many other classes were similarly entertained.
- Nov. 11. Meeting of Investigating Club.
- 1905.
- May 30. Decoration Day. Dedication of headstone at grave of Gen. Ely S. Parker; address by Capt. Samuel H. Beckwith of Utica. (See following pages for report of exercises.)
- June 7. Reception to delegates to annual convention, Women's Literary and Educational Clubs of Western New York. Lecture on "Japanese Art," by Miss Edwina Spencer.
28. Annual convention of American Park Superintendents.

#### "THE SAILING OF THE GRIFFON."

On the evening of Dec. 15, 1904, members of the society met in the Historical Building for the unveiling of a large painting, the work of an artist of Buffalo, Mr. Herman T. Koerner, who painted it expressly for the place it was to occupy in the building, and presented it to the society. The subject is, "The Sailing of the Griffon." La Salle's famous pioneer vessel is shown with all sails set, stemming the current of the Niagara at the head of Grand Island. In the foreground are Indians with their canoes—splendid, realistic figures. The familiar shores stretch along the horizon, while the vessel looms, large and potential, silhouetted against the brilliant saffron and crimson of an August sunset. The whole canvas glows with color, and is a most effective decoration of the building. It fills one of the four large round-topped wall panels, each some seven by eleven feet in size, at the four corners of the central court, above the gallery. It is proposed to fill each of these spaces with a decorative painting illustrative of a typical period in the history of the Niagara region. The first of these paintings, the work and gift of Mrs. John C. Glenny, occupies the panel at the head of the grand stair, and illustrates the beginning of Christian teaching on the Niagara, the incident depicted being the blessing of the Cross at Fort Niagara in 1688. Mr. Koerner's painting, filling the panel at the left of Mrs. Glenny's, typifies the beginning of commerce on the Niagara and the lakes. Both of these paintings are generous gifts, appropriate and effective decorations. It is hoped that the remaining panels before long may be filled with equally meritorious canvases, their subjects drawn from later periods in the history of the region.

On the evening mentioned, the audience were seated in the portrait gallery, where the new painting could be well seen. The exercises included singing by Miss Florence Eggmann and Miss Adelaide

Grodzinski, Miss Amy Graham, accompanist; and the following address by the Hon. Peter A. Porter. Mr. Porter being detained at home by illness, the address was read by the secretary of the society:

ADDRESS OF HON. PETER A. PORTER.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

There are three special vessels; built respectively by Spanish, English and French artisans, and sailed by men of those respective nationalities; all three built in the days of long ago, before we became a nation, and all of meagre tonnage—whose names shall forever be closely associated with the wonderful story of America, and which shall always hold undisputed places of honor in the history of this continent. Two of them sailed across the North Atlantic Ocean; the other ploughed the waters of the Great American Lakes. Two of them were built in Europe; the third was built within a few miles of where we are assembled tonight. And each of them sailed, on the voyage which made it famous, toward the setting sun.

In the line of our discovery, the carack Santa Maria of Columbus, in 1492, was the real pioneer; for it proved the existence of this great and then unknown land—our own North America.

“While she sailed toward the occident,  
For the orient did she steer;  
But she reached instead a continent  
In an unknown hemisphere.”

In the line of our emigration, the bark Mayflower of the Pilgrims, in 1620, was the real pioneer—for in it came that glorious company, which first founded a permanent colony on American soil:

“And a wintry night hung dark,  
The lands and waters o'er;  
When that band of exiles moored their bark,  
By the wild New England shore.”

In the line of our internal commerce, the brigantine Griffon of La Salle, in 1679, was THE pioneer; for it was the first craft, other than an Indian canoe, that ever floated on the waters of our upper lakes, and it was laden with the first cargo that was ever shipped on those inland seas; and, as she sailed on her maiden and only voyage, La Salle, who stood on her deck, might well have sung:

“Westward, its never ceasing course  
The Star of Empire takes;  
Of boundless wealth to point the source,  
In the Commerce of the Lakes.”

I am asked tonight to tell you “the old, old story.” Not the story of the love of a man for a woman; but the story of the ambitions, of the achievements and of the misfortunes of Robert Cavalier de La Salle, for discovery, for trade and for riches—insofar as they relate to his famous vessel—in this then far-off land—two and a quarter centuries ago.



The story of the building and voyage of the Griffon has been so eloquently, so fully, and so beautifully told in all its entrancing details by the great historian of this frontier, an ex-president of this society, the late honored Orsamus H. Marshall, in a pamphlet which has become a classic in the literature of the Niagara Region, that it would seem almost useless to try and otherwise rehearse it. I attempt it with diffidence, and my few remarks shall be general rather than specific in their nature.

Three hundred and seventy years ago, what is commonly referred to as our great lake region was unknown, even by hearsay, to any white man—to any human being, save the aborigines of North America. Today it embraces the center of population of the greatest nation upon earth.

Three hundred and sixty-nine years ago—in 1535—Jacques Cartier, in his "Brief Recit," the first book relating solely to Canada, made the first reference in literature—and it was embraced in less than two score words—to these lakes. Referring to the St. Lawrence, he said, "And beyond the said Saguenay, runs the above-mentioned river, passing through two or three vast lakes, beyond which there is a sea of fresh water, but no one had ever been heard of who had seen the end thereof." All of which the Indians down at Montreal had told him.

Three centuries ago—in 1603—Samuel de Champlain, later the founder of Quebec, the first Governor of New France, and still the most picturesque figure in all Canadian history; in his "Des Sauvages," next referred to our lakes, at somewhat greater length; all his knowledge of them being also derived from Indian hearsay, for then he had not seen any one of the five. A proper understanding of the history of the commerce of the Great Lakes demands a brief notice of the periods of their respective discoveries by white men. During the years 1608 to 1615, it is not impossible that Ontario, Huron and even Erie may have been seen by French woodsmen, or *coureurs de bois*, though there is no record thereof. In 1615, Champlain himself—led by Indians thereto—discovered both Huron and Ontario, and that same year Le Caron reached Georgian Bay, and established a mission thereon. Etienne Brulé, in 1618, discovered Superior, though little was known about it until nearly two decades later.

Canada was captured by England in 1629, and French exploration in the West came to an end. Soon after its restoration to France, in 1633, her priests again established missions on Lake Huron, at Sault Ste. Marie, and on the south shore of Lake Superior. In 1634, Nicolet discovered Lake Michigan, and priests soon after reached its shores, and traders went there also. But the death of Champlain in 1635 caused the abandonment of the trading posts on both Huron and Michigan. Up to that date, and for fifteen years later, Lake Erie was unknown of record to white men. For the Iroquois, who lived south of Ontario had been hostile to the French in general, and were none too friendly to their missionaries, so exploration to the southwest was practically cut off. On the other hand, the Indians up along the Ottawa river, and on the shores of the upper lakes were friendly to France; they came down to Montreal and Quebec to trade, and at most times were inclined to welcome the

priests to their territory. Hence it came about that Lake Erie, though privately mapped in 1643 and publicly mapped in 1650, was not "discovered" until 1669, when Joliet, returning from the northwest—whither he had gone by the Ottawa route—entered it at its westerly end, from the Detroit river, and soon after made known the existence of the last of our five vast inland seas. And it was the southern shore of Lake Erie that was the very last portion of the entire territory lying along the shores of the five lakes, to become known to white men.

La Salle, destined to be the greatest of all the explorers of the North American continent, had come from France in early manhood, and had secured a seignory, near Montreal—soon named by his opponents, in derision, "La Chine," a name that it bears even until today, because from it he expected to start out to find that great river, of which the Indians had told him, and which he then believed emptied into the Gulf of California, and was, therefore, to be his route to China. His mind had been filled with tales of the Far West, related to him by the savages who had come thence to Montreal, and his imagination had been fired by those stories of the children of the forest, who had come from the lands of the setting sun, bringing with them many and rare furs, to be exchanged for the otherwise unobtainable—by them—goods of the pale faces. He sold his seignory, in order to raise funds with which to lead an expedition for western exploration, in 1669. And, in company with the priests Casson and Gallinee, he reached the western end of Lake Ontario, that being his first visit to this region. Those priests sought only to carry the gospel to the denizens of an unknown wilderness, and to lead those strange peoples to the ways of God; La Salle sought only to discover new lands, where furs were to be had in abundance, and to find that great river which led to Cathay. Near where Hamilton, Ontario, now stands, they met Joliet, on his way eastward from the far Northwest. He told them about it, and drew a map for the priests, pointing out to them a new field for their labors, and for La Salle, he mapped and described Lake Erie.

Joliet's news changed all La Salle's plans. It was now evident to him that the great river he sought lay to the southward. He would no longer voyage with the priests; he would strike for the south, for the lands below this newly-heard-of lake; he would penetrate into a new territory; his discoveries therein should be known to none save himself; his explorations should accrue to his sole benefit. Pleading illness as an excuse for not continuing with the priests, with a few assistants, he retraced his way to the Niagara river, where he built a cabin. He spent some time in this vicinity; he explored this whole frontier; he learned the location of Niagara Falls; he no doubt saw Lake Erie, and then he turned his steps to the southwest and voyaged down a river, either the Ohio, or the Wabash.

In 1671, he was again on Lake Erie; went up the Detroit river, and traveled the whole length of Lake Huron. Western exploration was still luring him on; the thought of the riches that were to be accumulated from the fur trade in the basin of those Great Lakes captivated him. He was even then laying his plans to monopolize that fur trade; even as Champlain had done, on a smaller scale, over half a century before.

He was now familiar with the location of all the great lakes, except Superior, and also, to a large extent, with the territory bordering upon them, and he knew the location of Niagara Falls, which was the one interruption to an all-water route between Michillimackinac and his own Frontenac.

He was the first man to comprehend and to appreciate the commercial possibilities of lake transportation, and a few years later, in the building of the Griffon, he proved the faith that was in him.

He was the first man to seek to monopolize the lake traffic.

His deductions were:

Where there were lakes, there should be vessels;

Where there were vessels, there must be commerce;

Where there is commerce, there shall be riches.

And the course of events, especially along these great lakes, has demonstrated the absolute correctness of his syllogisms.

Giving prominence to the ideas of exploration, of the conquest of the west for France, and of its permanent occupation by means of forts, he enlisted the sympathies of the Governor General at Quebec, and in 1674, under his auspices, he went to France, but there he failed to get the desired help.

On his return to Canada, in furtherance of his plans, he secured the seignory of Frontenac—now Kingston, Ontario—where he rebuilt the fort, which was then the westernmost post of France in Canada, and which was thenceforth to be his headquarters.

In 1677 he again went to France, and this time he succeeded in obtaining royal letters patent, granting to himself, for five years, the exclusive rights of exploration, of building forts (at his own expense) and of the trade in furs, in all the vast West. His plans had at last been successful; all the necessary knowledge had previously been secured by him, and his toil and travel, extending over many years, were now about to bear fruit.

In the fall of 1678 he was ready to start. It was not now exploration—it was purely commerce and its protection—that he sought. He first sent out a party of white men, by the Ottawa route, who were to trade with the Indians, and to collect furs, with instructions to have a cargo of peltries ready, either at Detroit or Michillimackinac, by the midsummer of 1679, when the vessel which he was about to build above the Falls of Niagara, should reach those points and receive the furs for conveyance to Niagara.

And that vessel was projected, not for exploration—La Salie already was familiar with the lake region—it was to be built solely for commerce—for the fur trade.

Next, he sent out a vessel of ten tons, bearing La Motte, Hennepin and a crew of sixteen to proceed to Niagara; there to build a fort, which should keep open his line of westward communication, and also house the furs as they should be brought down in his new vessel, from the lakes, and furthermore to make preparations for the building of that vessel above the falls, at which point, in a few days, he himself would join them.

On December 6th, their boat entered the Niagara river, that "beautiful river which no boat had ever entered before"; and the crew, led by Hennepin, in gratitude for their safe arrival, after a long and tempestuous voyage, chanted the "Te Deum Laudamus."

Hennepin sought, on the Canadian shore, up beyond Chippewa, for a suitable location for a shipyard, but found none. Then they towed their boat up to Lewiston, where they built a "palisaded house," which they called a "habitation." The suspicions of the Indians being aroused by that fortified house, Hennepin and others set out for the Genesee valley, to secure from the Senecas their consent in council, to the erection of their habitation and to the construction of their proposed vessel. Reaching Lewiston, on their return, without having obtained the desired permission, they found La Salle awaiting them. He had sailed from Frontenac, lading his vessel with cordage, anchors and other appurtenances for the proposed vessel. *En route*, he had visited the Senecas, many of whom he had known for years, and had succeeded in getting the permissions which they had denied to Hennepin.

Thus, the inception of our lake commerce was predicated upon the assent of the Seneca Nation of Indians, and that assent was given, but given only to the personality of La Salle.

Reaching this frontier, and searching the western shore of the Niagara river for a suitable shipyard, La Salle found it, five miles above the falls, near the mouth of Cayuga Creek, on the "Little River," just above the hamlet which now bears his name, and that is the only tribute to his memory, along this entire frontier. There—a spot which may justly be termed, "The Cradle of the Commerce of the Continent"—a few days later was laid the keel of the pioneer vessel of the upper lakes, of "sixty tons burthen." And that spot was the first historic site to be marked with a boulder and tablet, by the Niagara Frontier Landmarks Association.

The vessel in which La Salle had come from Frontenac (which was laden with the outfitings for his new boat), and from which he had debarqued some thirty miles east of the Niagara river, in his haste to get the construction of that boat started, had been wrecked through carelessness; practically nothing of her cargo being saved. So La Salle set out on foot for Frontenac, there to procure fresh equipments. But, in his absence, the building of the vessel went on apace; in spite of wintry weather, of ceaseless difficulties, and of its threatened destruction by the savages.

By May, 1679, she was nearly ready to launch. Fearing her destruction by fire, at the hands of the Senecas, it was deemed best to launch her at once, and it was done with due formalities. She was blessed according to the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church; hymns were sung, a salute was fired, brandy was distributed to all, and she slid from the ways, and floated on the little river, and was thence towed out into the Niagara—safe at last from the attacks of the savages, and protected by her small cannon. She was named "Le Griffon," in compliment to Count Frontenac, Le Salle's friend; whose escutcheon bore a winged griffin; a figure of that fabled animal surmounted her prow.

To the Senecas, who flocked to see it, this "great wooden canoe" was a marvel, almost beyond belief—especially considering the brief period of its construction; while of the men who had planned and built this "floating fort," they said, "Ot-kon," which means, "very penetrating minds."

The river was now sounded, up as far as Lake Erie, and an

ample depth of water found; and soon, with a favorable breeze, and under her own sails, the Griffon ascended the stream, and anchored below Squaw Island, to await La Salle and her equipments. It was July before he reached her, bringing the necessary outfittings. It was the end of that month before everything, anchors, stores, merchandise for trade in the West, were all on board. And, then, it was not until August 7th, that a strong northeast wind enabled her, with the aid of her crew on the beach towing, to overcome the rapids and the reach the waters of Lake Erie.

To the Senecas, who stood at the mouth of Buffalo Creek and watched her as she spread her sails to the breezes of the lake, and started off towards the unknown west, she must, indeed, have appeared to "walk the water like a thing of life." She departed, to bring back a cargo of furs, which were to have been collected amongst the savages who dwelt in the recesses of a vast and an unknown wilderness, extending for hundreds of miles along the shores of great waters—furs to be purchased in exchange for comparatively valueless goods; furs, which when taken far across the ocean to the marts of Europe, would return in money many times their cost.

Of the Griffon's narrow escape from being wrecked on Long Point; of her arrival at the Detroit river; of her voyage to Michillimackinac, where some of the men La Salle had sent out the year before were found; or of her trip to Green Bay, it is needless for me to speak; for, in spite of storms, she reached the latter point in safety. There others of La Salle's advance party were found, and, true to their mission, there they had collected peltries, to the amount of some 12,000 pounds. It was the cargo which they had been sent out a year before to gather; the cargo which was to be loaded on a vessel, for whose construction, at that time, not even the location of the shipyard had been definitely decided upon.

The Griffon anchored in what is now known as Detroit harbor, on the south shore of one of the small islands—now called Washington Island—in Green Bay. La Salle was anxious to get the first boat load of peltries to Frontenac. He loaded all that had been collected, on the Griffon, and on September 18th she sailed for Niagara. La Salle himself remained behind. He now had plans for further explorations, and for the collection of furs, for the Griffon's return trip. Vessel and cargo, she represented something over 60,000 francs to her owner—a princely sum, in those days. She fired a signal gun, spread all her sails to the breeze, and sailed away toward the east—alas, never destined to return.

La Salle watched her from the island's shore, and as she disappeared over the horizon, he must have exclaimed, approximately in the later words of Longfellow:

"Sail on; sail on; oh Ship of Fate,  
Sail on; oh, vessel, small, yet great.  
My heart, my hopes, my prayers, my tears,  
My faith, triumphant o'er my fears,  
Are all with thee; are all with thee."

He never saw her again. The second day after her departure a terrific storm arose, which lasted long. The Griffon was reported as having been seen among the islands towards Michillimackinac, by

Indians who advised her pilot to wait for better weather. But he sailed away. They reported that they last saw her, about half a league off shore, driven by the fury of the gale upon a sandy bar, where doubtless she foundered. Vessel, cargo and crew all lost. Wreckage and clothing subsequently found, were said to have been recognized—probably by some of La Salle's companions who remained with him,—as belonging to the ill-fated vessel.

As for La Salle, though the fury of the storm aroused his fears for the worst, it was months before he became convinced that the vessel on whose voyage and success he had built all his hopes, had been destroyed. He at once set out for the southwest, there eventually to meet with other, if not greater misfortunes. And, as in addition to the conviction that his vessel was lost, other checks, to his well-laid plans appeared—in spite, even of his courageous spirit—happiness and hope—long-deferred—died in his breast, and in their place came sorrow and sadness.

“And vanished hopes, and withered smiles  
Now lost forevermore;  
Like ships which sailed for sunny isles,  
But never came to shore”

—Even as was the fate of his own wonderful and fortune-making Griffon.

Robert Cavalier de La Salle is one of the notable figures in the early history of this continent.

He was the greatest of all the explorers of America.

He acquired the West and Southwest for France; and so, ultimately, for the United States.

He built the first white man's fort in the West; at Niagara.

He was the pioneer in our lake commerce.

He was the first, and at one time the only vessel owner, on the lakes.

He built the first lake vessel.

He shipped the first lake cargo.

And yet, along this entire frontier—especially at Buffalo, which that lake commerce has made so great—no memorial of him exists.

His famous bark, the Griffon, was—

The first vessel on all the upper lakes.

The first armed vessel on those lakes.

She shipped the first cargo thereon.

She was the first boat ever wrecked on those lakes.

And, in her wreck, the first white sailors, ever lost thereon, were drowned.

Tonight, my story of La Salle ends with the loss of the Griffon. Today, stand on that same spot on the shores of Green Bay, where La Salle stood in 1679. Stand at any of the great shipping ports on either Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, or Lake Erie—the three lakes on which the Griffon sailed. Stand at Chicago, or Milwaukee—where she never reached. Stand at Michillimackinac—where she once touched. Stand on the banks of the Detroit river—up which she sailed. Stand at Toledo, or Cleveland; or at your own Buffalo, whence she started. Watch the marvelous procession of marvelous craft, that ceaselessly pass to and fro. Let your imagination conjure





**DO-NE-HO-GEH-WEH.**

BRIGADIER-GENERAL ELY S. PARKER. SEE PAGE 511.



up the primeval state of the basin of the Great Lakes, toward the close of the seventeenth century; and, then, compare the advances in civilization and in lake commerce, throughout our wonderful lake region,—between 1679 and 1904—a period of only 225 years.

Then, on all the upper lakes there was but one vessel, and that of small tonnage. Today, on those four lakes, there are over 5,000 vessels of all sizes; and if we include the very smallest craft, there are many more. Instead of a bark of sixty tons, we have a freighter of 10,000 tons; instead of vessel and cargo valued at \$12,000, we have vessels and cargo valued, sometimes, at a million. Over the lakes, in a single year, there are now carried 75,000,000 tons, and millions upon millions of dollars are invested in vessels. Through the Detroit river there annually passes a tonnage greater than that of the Suez Canal. Yes, greater even than the ocean trade of these United States.

Surely it is right that Americans should forever do honor to the memory of La Salle, who may rightly be styled "The Father of our Lake Navigation." And his famous vessel, the Griffon, so beautifully and, we believe, so truthfully pictured by the penetrating mind and by the cunning hand of the artist—that wonderful vessel, which was the pioneer of our enormous Lake Commerce—shall ever be held in grateful and in honorable remembrance, as the earliest craft that ever sailed on these "unsalted seas."

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#### MARKING THE GRAVE OF DO-NE-HO-GEH-WEH.

On Decoration Day, May 30, 1905, the Historical Society unveiled a headstone at the grave of Do-ne-ho-geh-weh, better known to his English-speaking friends as Brig.-Gen. Ely Spencer Parker. Before noting the exercises, a few facts regarding his life, and his burial in Buffalo may be recorded.

On Jan. 20, 1897, under the auspices of the Buffalo Historical Society, the remains of Do-ne-ho-geh-weh were re-interred in the Red Jacket lot at Forest Lawn, Buffalo. This Seneca sachem and Union soldier, better known, except to the Iroquois, as Gen. Ely S. Parker, died at Fairfield, Conn., Aug. 30, 1895. He was a full-blooded Seneca, and it was deemed desirable and appropriate that his remains should lie alongside those of Red Jacket and others of his own race. The Historical Society undertook the removal, with the full sanction of Mrs. Parker, because it was considered fitting that the dead soldier should rest in the land formerly occupied by his people. Here, at the "Western Door" of the "Long House" of the Iroquois Federation, was the fitting place to set up a lasting memorial to one who was not only one of the ablest men of his race, but who won distinction as a soldier and an engineer.

Ely Spencer Parker was born on the Tonawanda Reservation in 1828. He was of pure Seneca descent by both parents, and was a

chief of the Six Nations. He received a good education, became a civil engineer and settled at Galena, Ill. Here he met Grant, and later, during the Civil War, became a member of the general's staff. He was appointed assistant adjutant general with the rank of captain in May, 1863, and was afterward military secretary to General Grant until the close of the war. In that capacity he was present at Lee's surrender, and made the first engrossed copy of the terms of capitulation. He was appointed first lieutenant of United States cavalry in 1866, resigning in 1869. He was brevetted brigadier general of volunteers on April 9, 1865, and captain, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel and brigadier general on March 2, 1867. He became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1869, but retired in 1871 to devote himself to his profession, which he practiced with success for several years thereafter. His home was in New York City, but in the last years of his life he spent his summers at Fairfield, Conn., and there it was he died.

It has been current report that General Parker was the grandson of Red Jacket. The following explanation of the relationship was furnished at the time of his burial by that excellent authority, his intimate friend, Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse :

"By Indian law, all clansmen were brothers. These were arranged in two divisions, viz. : Of the Senecas there were eight clans—Wolf, Bear, Beaver, Turtle—these four were the 'elder brothers' of the Deer, Snipe, Heron and Hawk clans. This distribution of brotherhood relationship was not ideal, but founded upon actual consanguinity. A Hawk could intermarry with Bear, Beaver or Turtle, but a Hawk could not marry a Hawk, and so clan by clan.

"This clanship was one of the reasons of the strength of the allied Five Nations. Had there been a division in any one of the nations the clans would be 'set against each other,' or 'brother taking brothers' blood,' which by Iroquois law, would have been murder even in war. In fact, the whole Iroquois system rested on the tribal clans as an organic division, and the rights of these were jealously guarded, and even to this day the pitifully few who are left to observe this relationship, clan to clan, 'cling' together even in death. Therefore, it is worthy of notice that the request which was received from one of the Tonawanda Seneca chiefs, represents the sentiment of the old Indian law—that the great Do-ne-ho-geh-weh should go to his clan ancestor—the Sa-go-ye-wat-ha at Forest Lawn.

"General Parker was not a blood relative of Red Jacket, but, by the clan relationship, his clan grandson. The inheritances of the Iroquois descended by the mother always. The mother of General Parker was a Wolf, and Red Jacket was a Wolf, and as they name each generation 'grandfather,' so it comes that General Parker was the Wolf grandson of Red Jacket."

When the chiefs attended the funeral of the Do-ne-ho-geh-weh, in 1895, at Fairfield, Conn., it was a sorrow to them that they had to leave him in "the land of the stranger" and the Pequods, who were

the enemy of the Iroquois. It seemed a poetical justice that the remains of General Parker should be returned to his people, and that the death cry of the Wolf clan—faithful even in the hour of its passing away—should still be “the Do-ne-ho-geh-weh is returning to his people!”

The Do-ne-ho-geh-weh, the “Keeper of the Western Door,” therefore, even in death, lies beside his watch-work—by the Western Door! At the organization of the Confederation of the Ho-do-nausau-nee, or League of the Iroquois, the “union chain” extended from Albany—the land of the Mohawks (the “Eastern Door”)—to Buffalo—the “Western Door,” the territory of the Senecas. The Do-ne-ho-geh-weh, by this reason, became one of the most significant of the Seneca sachem names of the Iroquois.

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The burial presented several features of interest. Among the fifty persons or so who gathered at the New York Central station, on January 20th, to receive the remains, were three delegations: One from the Buffalo Historical Society, including President Andrew Langdon, Dr. Joseph C. Greene, Frank H. Severance, Charles J. North, Dr. J. H. Tilden and others; a second committee from the Loyal Legion, to which veteran organization Gen. Parker belonged, included Gen. James E. Curtiss, commander of the Buffalo Division, N. Y. Commandery; Col. James N. Granger, Col. C. E. Walbridge, Capt. Thomas H. Fearey, Capt. E. L. Coe, Major L. Marcus and H. H. Marcus. Some of these gentlemen acted as bearers. The third and most interesting delegation was a party of Seneca Indians, of the Wolf and Snipe clans, from Tonawanda and Akron. Gen. Parker was of the Wolf clan. This party included the venerable sachem, Chauncey H. Abrams, also William Parker—a nephew of Gen. Parker—and wife, Sachem Thomas Poudry, wife and daughter, sub-sachem Jacob Doctor and wife, sub-sachem Howard Hatch, D. W. Shanks and wife, Charles Cloute, Benjamin Ground, Anderson Charles, Alfred Jameson, David Moses, Truman Shanks and Mr. Sky.

The body was in a lead case, which was contained in an oak casket, and this in turn, while being conveyed to Forest Lawn, was draped with a large American flag. At the cemetery brief services were conducted by the Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, and the attending sachems and several other Senecas lowered the body of their famous kinsman into the grave.

The remains were accompanied to Buffalo by Mrs. E. S. Parker and her friend, Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse. After the burial these ladies received the officers of the Historical Society and a

number of the Senecas at the Genesee Hotel. Here Sachem Abrams made an address in Seneca, thanking the officers of the Society for what they had done. The brief speech was delivered and translated a sentence at a time, after the ancient Indian custom, William Parker acting as interpreter. "The people of Do-ne-ho-geh-weh's (Gen. Parker's) own race," said Sachem Abrams, addressing President Langdon, "are grateful for all that you have done today. It pleases us. We are much gratified to know that Do-ne-ho-geh-weh rests among his own people, and not in the land of strangers. We thank you." President Langdon made suitable reply, to be conveyed to all the Senecas, and extended to them a cordial invitation to visit the rooms of the Historical Society and see Red Jacket's tomahawk and other relics of their race.

It was at first proposed that the society mark Gen. Parker's grave with a boulder from the fields, suitably inscribed; but it was finally decided to erect a headstone of Quincy granite, towards the cost of which a contribution was made by Reno Post 44, G. A. R., of New York, of which Gen. Parker was a member. This stone, suitably inscribed, was unveiled at 10 a. m. on May 30, 1905. The exercises were conducted by the Historical Society, President Langdon presiding. There were present delegations from the several Grand Army Posts of Buffalo, and other specially-invited guests, a thousand or more being present.

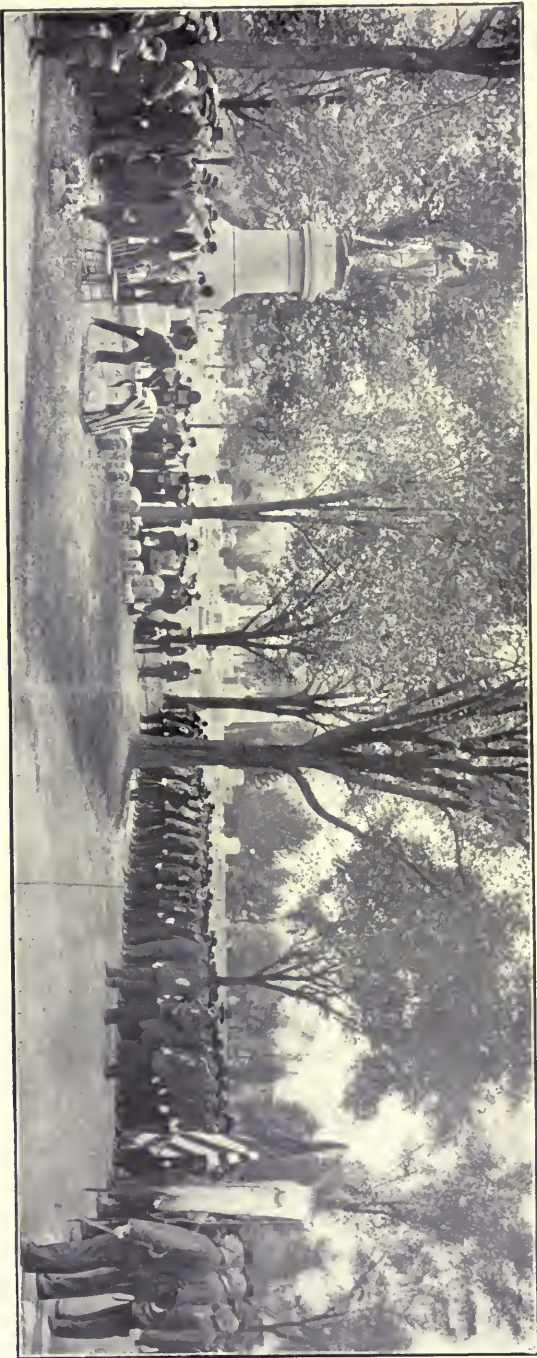
The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. J. Emory Fisher of the Presbyterian mission on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation. Following the prayer, President Langdon said:

*Comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic, Members of the Historical Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

We are gathered here to place a modest headstone at the grave of one who was a credit to his race and an honor to his country—Ely Spencer Parker. This stone is erected to his memory by Reno Post 44, of New York City, and the Buffalo Historical Society, of both of which organizations Gen. Parker was a member at the time of his death.

It is our good fortune to have with us today a former comrade of Gen. Parker, who will tell us of him and of their pleasant association in the midst of war; the one as military secretary on Gen. Grant's staff, the other, who is with us today, as Grant's cipher dispatch operator. I have the honor to present Capt. Samuel H. Beckwith of Utica, who will now unveil the headstone at the grave of his old friend, and will then address you."

Capt. Beckwith drew off the flag which enveloped the headstone, then delivered the following address, the greater part of it, owing to his feeble eyesight, being read for him:



UNVEILING HEADSTONE FOR DO-NE-HO-GEH-WEH (GEN. ELY S. PARKER), FOREST LAWN, BUFFALO, DECORATION DAY, 1905.  
GEN. PARKER'S OLD COMRADE, CAPT. S. H. BECKWITH, REMOVING THE FLAG FROM THE STONE. THE EXERCISES WERE CONDUCTED BY THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE GRAND ARMY POSTS OF BUFFALO. SEE PAGE 514.



## CAPTAIN BECKWITH'S ADDRESS.

*Mr. President, Members of the Buffalo Historical Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

Today marks one of your most praiseworthy historical deeds. History before has never offered a study of character nobility similar to that presented by Ely S. Parker. In years of battle-scarred association each new day seemed to develop grander and more heroic qualities in him.

In the transfer of his noble remains to his native State and County of Erie your society has done a deed of which you may well be proud. By marking his honored resting-place as you have done today you have significantly pointed out the proper place for the handsomest floral tributes of each year.

Gen. Ely S. Parker was a remarkable man, with an exceptional record in his civil and military career. Cast aside, if you will, the charitable race mantle, but observe the daring strides of civilization, and you will only reveal, with more forcible conviction, superior mental faculties.

A full-blooded Seneca Indian, the grandson of Red Jacket,<sup>1</sup> the famous uncivilized oratorical chief, whom he succeeded as chief of the Six Nations, consisting of Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas and Tuscaroras, Parker was led from the wigwam to the school-room door by a friendly hand. When he left the reservation he forsook at the same time his distasteful Indian appellation. Nature's wonderful gift of mental comprehension brought him through the most perfect grammatical teachings without a shadow of accent. His patience in geography and mathematics naturally led in after years to the selection of civil engineering as a chosen profession.

It was not until I had ridden twice by his side to the summit of Lookout Mountain that he seemed inclined to simplify aboriginal conservatism. As an Indian chief he was not voluble; it could not be expected. Parker scarcely uttered a word until we reached the summit of Lookout Mountain, without orderlies or attendants, each caring for his own comfort. On reaching the verge of the precipitous cliff, at an altitude of about 1,400 feet, Parker seemed lost in admiration of the matchless panoramic view. Although silent I could see that his eyes were riveted on the windings of the river up the Tennessee valley, as well as on the far-off mountain ranges exposed southeasterly.

The successful closing of the Vicksburg and Chattanooga campaigns left Captain and Assistant Adjutant General Parker quite free to vacate his desk and take an afternoon airing. On reaching Nashville, Tenn., in January, 1864, there was an extended liberty for horses and men, who were permitted to "champ their bits" almost at will. It was here, while indulging in companionship walks, away from the business streets, that Parker voluntarily, now and then, bubbled a bit concerning his early history. Then we had pleasant games of billiards, of which he was quite fond, but the clicking of the balls and the sliding markers were the only unprecluded methods of communication.

1. The correct explanation of the relationship has been given, p. 512.

After one of these enjoyable little three-game tournaments he invited me to his room on High Street, where he took from his trunk wonderful heirlooms, consisting of presidential gifts to his ancestors. The one most indelibly impressed on my memory was a large 5x8 oval polished silver medal presented by Gen. Washington in 1792.<sup>1</sup> Upon the face of the oval was engraved a bust likeness of Washington, with the name of Red Jacket in a handsome line of Old English, followed by complimentary words. I cannot recall the identity and dates of others which I was permitted to hold in my hands and read. I never knew of an equal concession.

While strolling in the capitol grounds at Nashville, Tenn., he graphically explained to me the topography of Washington and its surroundings, with which he was quite familiar.

"While a mere lad of seventeen," he said in a half-soliloquizing way, "I spent quite a little of my time in Washington, where I was a frequently favored guest of Clay, Webster, Calhoun and other statesmen. I was also flattered by considerate reception at the White House. Mrs. Polk even drew up to the curb to offer me a seat in her carriage!"—and this remarkable statement seemed to come with an involuntary gleam of satisfaction. Then he drifted to his early engineering experiences, when he had been assigned to duty at Fortress Monroe, Va., where on account of the monotony of the evenings he and his party determined to attend a ball at Norfolk, Va. This was the only time in our long acquaintance that he ever alluded to his wonderful strength and athletic qualities. As he and his party were about to enter the ball-room they were confronted and denied admission. Young Parker stepped quickly to the front and with forcible silence, seized the chairman of floor managers by collar and seat, lifting him bodily over the bannister and dropping him at the landing. This closed the incident.

Subsequently he was appointed as civil engineer on the Erie canal, afterwards drifting to his ultimate fate at Galena, Ill., where he formed friendly acquaintanceship with Washburne, Grant, Rawlins and Smith, all of whom recognized his unobtrusive ability. Parker's patient and faithful military career was marked by unvarying acumen. Never disturbed, excited or hurried by passing events, his silent desk yielded its regular quota of handsomely-written sheets at the proper moment. In Virginian field-rifling I was frequently pleased to find Parker's great black horse reined by my side, which was an assurance of comparative freedom of speech or silence. It was on these occasions that I quietly discovered from time to time his remarkably retentive memory. That powerful black horse was each day bearing on his saddle 200 pounds of encyclopedia. On any subject he was equally modest and unassuming, but with me his opinions were always conclusive, since they were verified by the books. It was a comfort to know that the great black horse was equal to the task.

Gen. Parker's field duty culminated in the McLean house parlor at Appomattox, Va., at 4 p. m., on the 9th of April, 1865, when he, as military secretary, was prepared to complete records and memoranda concerning Gen. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. As Gen. Lee was on the point of entering the parlor he

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1. The medal is now owned by the Buffalo Historical Society.



was dismayed and would have drawn the color line but for Gen. Grant's quick perception and assurance that his military secretary required no apology, since his right to American citizenship antedated by many generations their own, long before Plymouth Rock loomed up in the world's eye. Parker was so unemotional in his seat that a stranger might have accused him of deafness. This was race inheritance.

Pleasant field incidents closed the afternoon of April 12, 1865, when Gen. Grant and staff boarded the *Mary Martin* at City Point, Va., for Washington, but our friendly military acquaintance was unbroken. An ovalation trip of the lieutenant general to the great Sanitary Fair at Chicago in June of the same year, with all of its trying aid-de-camp responsibilities, afforded me still further and better opportunities for the discovery of Parker's nobility of character. There were seven in our party. I'm sure of that because I paid the robbing conductor twenty-seven dollars at Poughkeepsie for seven cups of tea and seven chicken sandwiches. At Garret's station, opposite West Point, where I had met Gen. Scott, I found our pleasant selves drifting together again in contention with the auto-graph army, where Parker ever was untroubled and his signature came uniformly like copper-plate. We chatted and indulged in thought until rejoined by the "old man" and the rest of our party. But now patience ceased to be a virtue with Parker and for the first time in our long and quiet acquaintance he actually displayed signs of marked irritation and resentment. Our midnight arrival at Troy, N. Y., found Colonels Bowers and Babcock at the rear end of our special car, with Parker and myself guarding the front door, while Gen. Grant, worn out with New York handshaking, was midway, asleep. Over-enthusiastic firemen, who had the city ablaze with bonfires and red shirts, rudely uncoupled our car from the train and peremptorily declared, through their foreman, that "His Nibs" must appear and "shake" with the boys. Silence prevailed in the darkness of our isolation, until some one more rude than the others, actually hammered in the car window on Parker's side, an act which threatened to be the last straw on the camel's back. He sprang to his feet in momentary agitation, saying: "I have a great notion to fire on that villain!" From my opposite corner of the car front I pleaded restraint and diplomacy in preference to a Trojan firemen's riot. A few conciliatory words and promises to the foreman regained our coupling, but the locomotive engineer, who seemed to know Troy, snatched his west-bound train out lively, under full throttle speed. Parker quietly smiled approval, when I assured him that he as military secretary should drop a line to the foreman from Chicago, advising him not to wait at the station, as Gen. Grant would return by another route.

When Grant became general, Parker was commissioned as aide-de-camp on his staff. How ably and faithfully he served from the beginning to the end is better told by extracts from War Department records, which render comment quite unnecessary. A letter from the Secretary of the Interior, also submitted, establishes the fact of his service as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in that department. After his marriage in Washington to Miss Sackett, the charming daughter of Col. Sackett of the 22d New York Cavalry, Gen. Parker took up his residence in New York City. He died at

his summer home at Fairfield, Conn., Aug. 30, 1895, and his remains were taken to Buffalo, N. Y., for interment near Red Jacket's grave.

The letters referred to in the foregoing address, giving Gen. Parker's military record, are as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON, August 31, 1904.

HON. JAMES S. SHERMAN, M. C.,  
Utica, N. Y.

*Sir:* Referring to your letter of the 29th instant, received today, in which you request to be furnished with the military service of Ely S. Parker, who is said to have entered the army as captain and assistant adjutant general on General John E. Smith's staff; to have been transferred to General Grant's staff in 1863, and promoted to colonel and military secretary in 1864, and who you believe was further promoted by brevet to brigadier general in 1865 or 1866, I have the honor to inform you as follows:

It is shown by the records that Ely S. Parker was appointed captain and assistant adjutant general of volunteers, May 25, 1863, to rank from the same date; that he accepted the appointment June 4, 1863; that he was commissioned second lieutenant, 2d United States Cavalry, April 28, 1866, to rank from March 22, 1866; that he accepted the commission May 2, 1866; that he was mustered out of the volunteer service July 1, 1866; that he was promoted to the grade of first lieutenant, 2d United States Cavalry, June 1, 1867, and that his resignation as of the last-named grade and organization was accepted by the President, April 26, 1869.

It is also shown by the records that he served as division engineer, 7th division, 17th army corps, from July 10, 1863, to Sept. 18, 1863; as assistant adjutant general, Department of the Tennessee, to October 18, 1863; as assistant adjutant general, Military Division of the Mississippi, to April 6, 1864; as assistant adjutant general on the staff of Lieutenant General U. S. Grant to August 30, 1864; as military secretary on the staff of Lieutenant General Grant, with the rank and pay of a lieutenant colonel, to July 25, 1866, and as aid-de-camp on the staff of General Grant, with the rank and pay of a colonel, to March 4, 1869.

The records further show that he was brevetted colonel of United States volunteers February 24, 1865, "for faithful and meritorious services"; brigadier general of United States volunteers April 9, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious services during the campaign terminating with the surrender of the insurgent army under General R. E. Lee," and first lieutenant, captain, major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, and brigadier general, United States Army, to date March 2, 1867, "for faithful and meritorious services during the war."

Very respectfully,

F. E. AINSWORTH,  
*Military Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
WASHINGTON.  
September 14, 1904.

HON. J. S. SHERMAN, Utica, New York.

*Sir:* In reply to your letter of the 8th instant, requesting information as to General E. S. Parker, you are advised that Ely S. Parker of the District of Columbia, was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 21, 1869. His successor was appointed Dec. 16, 1871.

Very respectfully,

THOS. RYAN,  
First Assistant Secretary.

At the close of Capt. Beckwith's address, President Langdon said:

"In behalf of the Historical Society, and of our assembled friends, I wish to thank Captain Beckwith for his kindness in being with us today, and for his tribute to the memory of Gen. Parker.

"In behalf of the Grand Army of the Republic, Comrade Anselm J. Smith has consented to read, here at the grave of this true soldier, whom we all are glad to honor, the memorable words spoken by President Lincoln at Gettysburg."

Mr. Smith, representing the Grand Army posts, then read a portion of the ritual for such occasions, including Lincoln's address at Gettysburg, Nov. 19, 1863; at the close of which, flowers were placed on the grave.

President Langdon then called on Mr. Moses Shongo, representing Gen. Parker's own people, to speak. Mr. Shongo spoke in the Seneca, as follows:

*"Da-dwa-dah-no-onk-gwah:*

"Hes-ga-gont, sa-yoh-gwa-yah-da-yae, neh-ko, hea-oh-weh-neh-oh-deoh-da-goh, Neh-ko he-o-weh oh-dea-gwunt, hea-oh-weh, gug-ga-oooh, neh, hah-dee-yah-dah, a-tee-nooh-gwah-noong, neh-hoh na-eh, koe, heh, ne-to-yuh-nes-yot-deh, neh, hoh-dyan-nok-dah-uh, huh, duyh-heh.

"Neh-huh, aeng-gah-e-wah-yae, oa-dah, ko, nieh, aes-wun-doh, oh-twieeh aes-woh-dan-dih.

"Eah, neh, dyuh-heh, heh, neh-hah, an-jee-dwoy-dos seag, neh-hoh, an-jong-wah-yuh-dah-yaes-seeg, an-dwa-den nohs-seg, doh-gah-ah, nen-jo-dah, oneh-neh-eeh, neh-hoh hen-jee-dyuh-yuh.

"Oh-yah-neh-wah, neh-hoh, des. Huh-dee-dot, weh-suh, dey-yah-gwut-den-noh-oh-nyuh, heh, nes-wah-yeah, gus-daeot, heh-oh-weh, huh-deeh-neh-yuh-gauh, neh, og-he-nooh-gwah, se-gwah-nieh, heh, nee-yote-geah-nee, heh, gus-daeot, day-yoate-tah, da-wah-den-noh-nyuh, heh, ne-swah-yen-noh-weh-oh, heh, huh-de-yah-dah-deeh, nooh-ne-a-yuoh.

"Ah-oooh-a-sut, ah-gwah-noh-neh-dah-nyus, heh, ne-swah-yaeh, oh-yen-dade, heh, gaeh-woh, heh, swen-noh-doh, oh-yen-dade, heh, dah-wen-nis-heh-desh-heh, gaw-gwa-goh, den-dwah-dah-no-ong.

Aeng-ah-wah-yaе, heh, ne-toh-nee-go-deh, neh ten-oh-doh, heh, dyuh-heh.

"Oh-yen-date, heh, do gaes-ooх-weh swah-eeh-wa-no-onk-goh eeh, neh-geh, noh-ooх-gwa-yah-do-teh nyah-weh, neh-neh, wea-suh.

"Ease-ko, neh, nee-swah-yeah, aes-wus-syuh-neeн neh dyut-gont, ae-wun-den-nong-che-yoh-auk. Does-sug-gwun-noh-nyuh-heh, ohs-gwun-nunk-do-tus. *Neh huh.*"

The following is a paraphrase, rather than a literal translation, of the foregoing. The genius of the Seneca tongue makes it impossible to turn it into English, preserving both the sequence of expression and the meaning. In the following, the aim has been to preserve the meaning and spirit of Mr. Shongo's remarks:

"*Dear Brothers:*

"Again we have assembled here on this sacred spot. Here, under these mounds, rest the remains, all that is left, of our loved ones, undergoing the change of nature. What is from earth shall return to earth, and the spiritual shall return to the One who gave life. We who are yet alive, come together in this place, the place where we have laid the remains of these friends, to show our respect. We come together as mourners. A few more suns and we too will join those who have gone before, and those who are coming after us will then come to our graves.

"To you who are instrumental in putting up these monuments, words of praise, the best that we are able to speak, are but a faint expression to show our appreciation for your kindness, your brotherly love and respect. That monument (*pointing to the great statue of Red Jacket*) will stand for ages, speaking louder than words, speaking louder than trumpets, yes, even louder than the voices of many thunders. These are tokens of our nearness to one another. This elegant monument (*indicating the headstone newly set at Gen. Parker's grave*), set over the remains of one who so often represented his people, still fresh in our memories, stands for the same as the monument of the great orator, which also marks the graves of many of his associates.

"Today the floating spirits of the unseen are among us. Would they could give their expressions of appreciation, as they all were gifted to speak far more than I. But I will endeavor to speak for my people, and to say that we extend to you our most sincere and heartfelt thanks, for the noble act that you have done for your brothers, the red men of the forest, the men of nature. The quiet and undisturbed surrounding of this sacred spot shows that those who have gone before, although no more seen, are not forgotten. All this speaks full well for the generous acts of its projectors."

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### WRITINGS OF GENERAL PARKER.

EXTRACTS FROM HIS LETTERS, AND AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF HISTORICAL INTEREST.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Arthur C. Parker of New York City there have been placed at the service of the Buffalo Historical

Society a number of letters and addresses written by General Ely S. Parker. For the most part the letters, though of a certain interest for their revelation of a fine character, are not, as a whole, of sufficient historical consequence to make their publication in the present volume advisable. A few of them were written to relatives of the general, during the Civil War. Others were written, many years later, to his friend, Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse. Of this correspondence Mr. Arthur C. Parker writes:

"More or less has been written of Gen. Ely Spencer Parker, of his services to his own race, of his services to the republic in which he lived, of his position among his own people and of his position as a man among men. However, few have ever heard or read of anything he said or wrote. Gen. Parker never knew or thought much about himself, perhaps, until he met Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse. This was probably about 1881, when she first began to take an active interest in Indians. Their acquaintance ripened into a deep friendship that continued without abatement until the general died. In a letter to her he once wrote that had it not been for her sympathetic interest in him and his people he should have almost forgotten his ancestry. True, he had ever been plied with questions regarding his race and called upon to give his opinion in Indian matters, but this was simply because he was an authority on such matters as any man might have been, and did not serve to draw him to himself. The matter-of-fact world of civilization has a tendency to drive from the mind the memories, the theories and longings of long ago and it was in the matter-of-fact world that Gen. Parker lived, toiling day by day for a livelihood. Constant business pressure left but little time for reflection and introspection. The mind of the Indian had been turned in the channels of the white man and the Indian thought of himself not as such, but simply as a man among a million fellow toilers struggling for bread and dollars. It was then that the poetic mind of Mrs. Converse drew back to its old channels the mind of Gen. Parker. He felt himself an Indian again, he remembered his boyhood, he endured again the dream fast, he plunged into the deep forests and brought back pelts of wildcats and bears, he saw the tall pines sighing in the forest and saw beneath them the long house where his red brothers were wont to meet and sing to the Great Spirit and dance before Him, he thought of the fireside tales of the old storytellers, of the medicine men, of the secret societies that met in isolated lodges in the forest's depths,—the Society of the Bear, the Society of the Birds and the Society of the Otter. All these things flashed as in a vision before him and he was in the midst of all. He was an Indian again. A sympathetic friend had brought it all back and he was ever grateful. Then were the Poetess and the Indian friends in truth, confessing and confiding in each other the innermost secrets of their souls.

"When Mrs. Converse died, among her papers were found a number of letters, only a few of many, that Gen. Parker had written her. These letters reveal the writer, not as the engineer, the architect, the diplomat, the military commandant, but as the Indian, the friend and the man. As I have said, a man might best be known by

what he confided in his friends and it is hoped that something of the true Gen. Parker may be learned from a perusal of what he said, criticized, lamented, praised and confessed in these letters."

A few extracts from this correspondence follow. Gen. Parker usually addresses Mrs. Converse as "Dear Gayaneshahoh," this being her Seneca name, or "The Snipe," in allusion to her clan; while he signs himself "Donehogawa," his name as Seneca sachem, or "The Wolf," his clan totem. "Donehogawa" is of course identical with "Do-ne-ho-geh-weh," the spelling used in preceding pages, the more closely to indicate Seneca pronunciation; but Gen. Parker always wrote it "Donehogawa."

#### EXTRACTS FROM GEN. PARKER'S LETTERS.

Many thanks for permitting me to read Mrs. Wright's interesting letter. It is singular that those who know the Indians the best, either by being one of them or by having close intimate relations with them, should almost always entertain similar views. Mrs. Wright says it is greater to Christianize than to civilize a nation, "especially when they are surrounded by the vices of civilization, and I had almost said of Christianity, and perhaps I might as well, for is not nominal Christianity flooded with vices?"

When I read this I was reminded of a sentence I had written to a lady in Lawrence, Mass., a short time ago, who had plied me with nearly a score of questions on Indian matters. In answer to one question I remarked that "the vices peculiar to Christian civilization are enveloping the remnants of this interesting people and strangling the life out of them with an Archimedean force." To this sentiment she very sweetly replied, "Call it rather a Christless civilization. The blessed Christ had not where to lay His head; and surely most dear to His heart those to whom He gives the privilege of entering into His earthly state through sympathy with like suffering. His many mansions will infinitely repay all wrongs and losses here." This lady is doubtless a good Christian, philanthropic in a useless way, and evidently impracticable. Mrs. Wright is also a good, philanthropic Christian, thoroughly practical, and knows of what she writes. I prefer her sentiments, and honor her for making a plain statement of the truth. A few more such equally conscientious missionaries among the Indians would be of more benefit than all else.

This matter is interjected here simply to show you what variety of views may or can be entertained by good people who are working for the same result. One of these ladies is a member of the "Indian Aid Association," the other is a practical, personal aider, and has given her life thus far to the thankless task of civilizing and Christianizing the Indians, a result that after many years of labor, now seems to her an almost hopeless possibility, for she thinks the tendency of the race is downward.

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It was my intention to have laid before you a letter from Mr. Tripp. . . . It related to the same matter that has made your

"heart sick," viz., the Sessions scheme. It was a pathetic appeal to me to do, or write something, or go to Washington, and help to break up this infamous plan to sink forevermore the Seneca's individuality as well as his nationality. It was almost like the Macedonian call to Paul to "come over" and help us.

My sympathies, feelings and every fibre of my soul are for my people. Yet I do not think Mr. Tripp will like my letter. It was too practical. The fact is, that the Indian question, in Congress and with the American people generally, is no longer one of humanization, but is now purely political, and all interested persons must treat and look at it as such. . . .

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I beg you not to tell me that because the beautiful snow has fallen and covered the lovely bosom of Mother Earth, and because the North Wind howls and screams in every crack and crevice of man's shelter, I should be reveling in legendary and forest lore. No. Dreamland, fairyland and storyland are all good and charming for those who have time and talent that way. For me there is but one world to deal with at present, viz., the world of stern reality, and all other fancies are pushed aside for life's actual strifes.

Do you know, or can you believe, that sometimes the idea obtrudes itself into my obtuse and lethargic brain, whether it has been well that I have sought civilization with its bothersome concomitants, and whether it would not be better, even now, being convinced of my weakness and failure to continue in the gladiatorial contests of modern life, to return to the darkest and most secret wilds (if any such can be found) of our country, and there to vegetate and expire silently, happily and forgotten, as do the birds of the air and the beasts of the fields. The thought is a happy one, but perhaps impracticable. . . .

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I hope that the approaching New Year and the annual recurring milestone in your life may bring the most pleasant reflections, reminiscences and beneficent resolves to live the life to which an all-wise Creator has predestined you. . . .

I sometimes envy people who are gifted with birthdays, and who can proudly point to some day of every year that passes over them, as the day of all days most consequential to them. For remember, I am nearly akin in fate to Topsy, who never had a birthday, never was born, and only "grewed up." My birthday, which occurred sometime "in the course of human events," was never recorded in any book of man; hence I take the liberty of being neither elated nor depressed on any special day of the year, and I know not whether I am old or young. I love all the days of the year alike, and can claim any one or all of them as my birthday. Can any one be more blessed, and more fortunate? I am afraid if I knew the day, I should always be dreading its return, or live in fear of its never returning. . . .

I can never tell whether or not to congratulate one for the return of a birthday. Life may have been a misery and burden to them so far; and to congratulate such, and wish them many returns of the happy day, would only be the most bitter mockery and sarcasm. Again, with others, the pathway of life may have been strewn with

roses and lighted with the brightest sunshine; congratulations to such would be an empty superfluity.

Do you know, your use of the word "milestone" struck an uncanny chamber in my cerebrum. It brought vividly to my mind's eye those old-fashioned milestones once so numerous and important in country districts, and which always remind me of those marble slabs placed at the head of graves in rural cemeteries or "graveyards" as they are called. To some, they marked the buried loves and hopes of families and sometimes of peoples; to others, whose fancies run free and unbridled, they mark the entrance gates to a life of which we know nothing, but which is said to be fraught with happiness or misery according as one has planted on earth. I wonder if the milestones of life have any philosophic semblance to the funereal or "grave" ones. . . .

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The outpouring of your terrific wrath against certain Christian practices, beliefs and propositions for the amelioration and improvement of certain unchristian people who live on reservations where the English language is not spoken, and where "vice and barbarism" are rampant, was duly received yesterday. The Bishop is right in his reference to the remnants of the Six Nations being yet "deplorably subject to individual disability, disadvantages and wrong arising from their tribal condition," in all except the last proposition. The disabilities, disadvantages and wrongs do not result, however, either primarily, consequently or ultimately from their tribal condition and native inheritances, but solely, wholly and absolutely from the unchristian treatment they have always received from Christian white people who speak the English language, who read the English Bible and who are pharisaically divested of all the elements of vice and barbarism. The tenacity with which the remnants of this people have adhered to their tribal organizations and religious traditions is all that has saved them thus far from inevitable extinguishment. When they abandon their birthright for a mess of Christian pottage they will then cease to be a distinctive people. It is useless though to discuss this question, already prejudiced and predetermined by a granitic Christian hierarchy from whose judgments and decisions there seems to be no appeal. . . .

One of the letters—a long one—is such a striking revelation of Gen. Parker's distaste for sham and pretense, such a disclaimer of attributes which small men seek to assume, that it is here printed nearly in full. There are not preserved in literature many documents of purely Seneca authorship; surely none that bespeaks a finer quality of manliness and clear-sightedness, than this:

*Dear Gayaneshah:*

On reading your last note I was greatly amused,—and why? Because what I have written heretofore has been taken *literatim et verbatim* and a character given me to which I am no more entitled than the man in the moon! I am credited or charged with being "great," "powerful" and finally crowned as "*good*"! Oh, my guardian genius, why should I be so burdened with what I am not now



and never expect to be! Oh, indeed, would that I could feel a "kindling touch from that pure flame" which a fair and ministering angel would endow me with in the exuberance of prejudiced enthusiasm, and which compels me to sit in sackcloth and ashes. . . .

And why all this commotion of the spirit? Because I am an ideal or a myth and not my real self. I have lost my identity and I look about me in vain for my original being. I never was "great" and never expect to be. I never was "powerful" and would not know how to exercise power were it placed in my hands for use. And that I am "good" or ever dreamed of attaining that blissful condition of being is simply absurd. . . .

All my life I have occupied a false position. As a youth my people voted me a genius and loudly proclaimed that Hawenneyo had destined me to be their saviour and gave public thanksgiving for the great blessing they believed had been given them, for unfortunately just at this period they were engaged in an almost endless and nearly hopeless litigated contest for their New York homes and consequently for their very existence.

For many years I was a constant visitor at the State and Federal capitals either seeking legislative relief or in attendance at State and Federal courts. Being only a mere lad, the pale-faced officials, with whom I came in contact, flattered me and declared that one so young must be extraordinarily endowed to be charged with the conduct of such weighty affairs. I pleased my people in eventually bringing their troubles to a successful and satisfactory termination. I prepared and had approved by the proper authorities a code of laws and rules for the conduct of affairs among themselves and settled them for all time or for so long as Hawenneyo should let them live.

They saw all this and that it was good. They no longer wanted me nor gave me credit for what had been done. A generation had passed and another grown up since I began to work for them. The young men were confident of their own strength and abilities and needed not the brawny arm of experience to fight their battles for them, nor the wisdom brought about by years of training to guide them any longer. The War of the Rebellion had broken out among the palefaces, a terrible contest between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding sections of the United States. I had, through the Hon. Wm. H. Seward, personally tendered my services for the non-slaveholding interest. Mr. Seward in a short time said to me that the struggle in which I wished to assist, was an affair between white men and one in which the Indian was not called on to act. The fight must be made and settled by the white men alone. He said, "Go home, cultivate your farm, and we will settle our own troubles among ourselves without any Indian aid."

I did go home and planted crops and myself on the farm, sometimes not leaving it for four and six weeks at a time. But the quarrel of the whites was not so easily or quickly settled. It was not a wrangle of boys, but a struggle of giants and the country was being racked to its very foundations.

Then came to me in my forest home a paper bearing the great red seal of the War Department at Washington. It was an officer's commission in the army of the United States. The young Indian community had settled in their untutored minds that because I had settled quietly, willingly and unconcernedly into the earning of my

living by the sweat of my brow, I was not, therefore, a genius or a man of mind. That they were in truth correct, they did not know, jealousy and envy having prompted the idea and utterance. But now this paper coming from the great Government at Washington offering to confer honors for which I had not served an apprenticeship, nor even asked for, revived among the poor Indians the idea that I was after all a genius and great and powerful, though to them not perceptible. They pleaded with me not to leave them, but to remain as their counsellor, adviser and chief, and that they would be powerless and lost without my presence. They tacitly acknowledged my genius, greatness and power, which I did not. When I explained that I was going into the war with a splendid prospect of sacrificing my life, as much for their good as for the maintenance of the principles of the Constitution and laws of the United States, and upholding of the Union flag in its purity, honor and supremacy over this whole country, they silently and wisely bowed their heads and wept in assent as to the inevitable. I bade them farewell, commended them to the care and protection of Hawenneyo and left them, never expecting to return.

I went from the East to the West, and from the West to the East again. They heard of me in great battles and they heard of my association with the great commander of all the Union armies, and how I upheld the right arm of his strength, and they said, "How great and powerful is our chief!"

The quarrel between the white men ended and the great commander with his military family settled in Washington, where the great council fire of his nation was annually lighted and blazed in all its glory and fury. As an humble member of this military family I was the envy of many a pale-faced subordinate embryo general who said in whispers, "Parker must be a genius, he is so great and powerful."

In a few years my military chieftain was made head and front of the whole American people, and in his partiality he placed me at the head of the management of the Indian Affairs of the United States. I was myself an Indian and presumably understood them, their wants and the manipulation of their affairs generally. Then, again went out among the whites and Indians the words, "Parker must be a genius, he is so great and powerful." The Indians were universally pleased, and they all were willing to be quiet and remain at peace, and were even asking to be taught civilization and Christianity. I stopped and put an end to all wars either among themselves or with their white brothers, and I sent professed Christian teachers among them. But these things did not suit that class of whites who waxed rich and fat from the plundering of the poor Indians, nor were there teacherships enough to give places to all the hungry and impecunious Christians. Then was the cry raised by all who believed themselves injured or unprovided for: "Nay! this Parker is an Indian genius; he is grown too great and powerful; he doth injure our business and taketh the bread from the mouths of our families and the money from out of our pockets, now, therefore, let us write and put him out of power, so that we may feast as heretofore."

They made their onslaught on my poor innocent head and made the air foul with their malicious and poisonous accusations. They

were defeated, but it was no longer a pleasure to discharge patriotic duties in the face of foul slander and abuse. I gave up a thankless position to enjoy my declining days in peace and quiet. But my days are not all peace and quiet. I am pursued by a still small voice constantly echoing, "Thou art a genius, great and powerful," and even my little cousin, the restless Snipe, has with her strong, piping voice echoed the refrain, "Thou are great, powerful and good." . . .

Yours cousin,

DONEHOGAWA, THE WOLF.

General Parker was often called upon to address regimental reunions and other public gatherings, especially of the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Loyal Legion, of which he was a member. At his death, the notes and memoranda of several speeches were found in his desk. From these, one only, and that a fragment, is here published, because of its personal and historical character. Regarding it the general's relative, Mr. Arthur C. Parker, writes: "It was evidently intended as an address, though I cannot say where it was delivered, if it ever was." However, it is an interesting autobiography, in which the general frankly states his feelings. This document—perhaps the only autobiography of a Seneca Indian preserved in literature!—follows:

#### GENERAL PARKER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

That I am wholly unknown to you, an entire stranger, is the first difficulty confronting me in appearing before you. On my part I expected to meet strangers and hence cannot pretend a disappointment. But you, perhaps, are entitled to know to whom you are listening. Not certainly to one who in his native or any other element of the physical and intellectual worlds has already made a name famous. This may be a disappointment to you and yet I hope not. Still if it is, I must then perforce open your eyes as to who and what I am. I do this because when we read books we always want to know as much about the authors of them as it is possible to know. Or when we look upon a new machine, instrument or invention of any kind, we want to know all about the inventor, and the more we know of the authors of books and inventions the more or less valuable become their productions in our estimation. I remember that years ago, the names of certain great men were presented to the people of the United States for their suffrages for the office of President of the United States. Among them was one James K. Polk, and as his name was put forth an almost universal cry was put out, "Who is James K. Polk?" It appears that the people found out who he was, for they elected him President of the United States and his administration of the affairs of the nation was perhaps more famous and happier in its ultimate results than that of any President who had preceded him. He endowed us with a war with a sister republic, but bequeathed to us the gold and silver fields of the world.

But I am still away from the question. I am presented to you as General Parker. Well, who is General Parker? He may answer

for himself in a very few words. He may answer because there can be no other person who has been longer associated with the general than he who now addresses you, and he thinks and believes that if anybody can speak with authority he can. That the general is an Indian you can each see for yourself. Some fifty years ago he was born of poor, but honest Indian parents in Genesee County, in the western part of the State of New York. And by the way, Indians are always poor, though not always honest. Such a thing as a rich North American Indian I do not think was ever known. These parents I have spoken of were members of the Seneca Nation of Indians, one of the group of nations which composed the famous Five Nations or Confederacy of Iroquois Indians of New York. Beginning at a very early date after the whites had commenced the settlement of this country, persons who were styled missionaries were sent out among all the Indian tribes that could be reached to Christianize them and teach them in book learning and the mysteries of land agriculture. The Iroquois Indians had their share of these Christian missionaries, whose teachings generally resulted in bloody wars between the Indians and all the whites they could reach.

One of these mission stations existed near the Indian settlement where my parents lived. This station was conducted on the manual labor system, where the boys were taught the rudiments of agriculture and the girls the elementary principles of housewifery. I was at a very early age sent to this mission. We received board and clothing free, and also whatever merits and demerits the institution possessed. I acquired there all the rudiments of reading, geography and arithmetic; that is to say, I became reasonably familiar with Webster's spelling book, Lindley Murray's grammar, Olney's geography and Daboll's arithmetic.

Let me here interject that I am not a believer, notwithstanding all the benefits I may have personally received, in the missionary system as it has generally been practiced up to the present time. The Indians have no written language (except the Cherokees of the Southwest and that is of quite a recent date) and consequently no literature. The habit of deep and logical or scientific thought was never cultivated among them. None of them were ever agriculturists except in a most limited manner, their products being confined to corn or maize, beans and squashes. Their ideas of religion were of the crudest, being simply a general belief in a Supreme Being or Creator without any special attributes, either good or bad. In my judgment, therefore, all attempts to civilize the Indian races by first changing their religious beliefs were radically wrong. Religion has been termed the handmaid of civilization, hence Indian civilization is dependent first upon their being localized and made to abandon their roving habits of hunting and fishing, their love for adventure and the warpath made obnoxious, and they made to feel the enjoyments of localized habitations and the comforts and pleasures resulting from agricultural pursuits even when operated on a small scale. It is a stale old maxim that "tall oaks from little acorns grow," so these Indians from small beginnings could have been made strong and prosperous agricultural communities. The cultivation of the soil, the earning of one's bread by the sweat of the brow, is the first duty enjoined by Divine command upon all mankind. Other wants and necessities follow the execution of this primary command.

All this the Indian would have experienced; more comfortable dwellings, improved agricultural implements, education and a higher and purer religion. Indian civilization has been a failure then, because in his case the cart was placed before the horse. He has been required first to change his religion and then to become civilized, first to walk before he had learned to creep. This system of Indian civilization has been pursued throughout the whole of the United States ever since the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers at Plymouth Rock.

At this late day, however, I think we may safely assert that the doctrine of the Pilgrim Fathers was peculiar. Themselves leaving the old country by reason of religious intolerance, they in turn in the new country became intolerant, and attempted the introduction of an enforced religion. Because the New England Indians did not at once accept the new religion which was spread out before him, he was doomed to extermination. He was a heathen, an encumberer in the Lord's vineyard and was to be dealt with accordingly. Even the good Quakers did not escape the whip of religious intolerance which developed in the new world.

Since that time the General Government has attempted to aid the religious organizations in civilizing the Indians, by placing the Indians upon reservations of their own choosing. But let me ask, how long have these poor Indians been permitted to learn the ways of a civilized life upon these reservations? Only until the avarice and cupidity of the white man required these reservations for his own use, then the strong arm of the Government was invoked to move the poor Indians farther towards the setting sun. If they went willingly, well and good, if they refused they were crushed as an obstruction in the path of progress.

But I was speaking of the error in the methods of Indian civilization. I will add that many young Indian men and women, through the aid of the missionaries, of philanthropic persons and the General Government have, at different times, received an excellent education. Many of the young men were taught useful trades, such as wheelwrights, blacksmiths, carpenters and joiners, tailors, shoemakers, and, perhaps, doctors of medicine. Most of the girls were taught the rudiments of housewifery and a few were taught the arts of dressmaking and fine needle-work. But also, when these graduates returned to their people, the young men found no wagons or carts to be made or mended, no horses or cattle to be shod, no houses, requiring skilled labor, to be built, no fashionable clothes to be made, no shoes to make or mend, as the primitive Indian required but little more than the traditional figleaf to cover his nakedness; and no sick to doctor, as every old woman or squaw, and nearly every family had such an appendage, and all herb doctors could administer every necessary medicine to all sick. The trade of dressmaking was alike unprofitable, for the women, like the men, required but little covering, and that little they could make for themselves without the aid of skilled artisans; and hence all the time, money and patience expended upon these people has generally been a dead loss and has had the effect of retarding their general civilization. And why? Because these people by the education they received had their susceptibilities sharpened and their scope of thought widened, and finding no business awaiting them, no stock on hand to keep them employed and no

congenial society around them to keep their cultivation bright and enjoyable, they, by reason of their superior intelligence, usually became the worst of the bad, and the opponents of Indian civilization have pointed to them as bright or sad examples of the effect of the white man's civilization upon them.

I am giving you no exaggerated idea of these things. They are simple facts, seldom told. I am not telling you that these people are so highly cultivated that they can read books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything. I would rather tell you the truth and tell you that these people could see stones in the running brooks and good in everything only so far as it would conduce to their physical comfort or convenience. But I have wandered a long way from my story. I started to tell you of myself.

Having graduated at the mission school, I returned to the woods to perfect myself in the science of woodcraft, viz., that of hunting and fishing, and also to forget as fast as possible all that had been taught me at the mission. I understood very little of the English language; as the school was composed of purely Indian pupils, they all would persist in speaking their native language when among themselves and the little English they required was not of an adhesive character. It did not, therefore, take long for me to disgorge all the learning with which I had been crammed. To perfect myself in woodcraft, I was taken, though only about ten years of age, into the northern wilds of Canada. Here I made good and rapid progress in gunnery and archery, in the use of the fishing spear, the science of decoying the unsuspecting fish by means of the torch-light and of the handling of the light birch-bark canoe. After one or two years, becoming surfeited with these heavy pursuits and being still very young, I began to yearn for my New York home and the companionship of my own beloved parents, who were not altogether what is termed wild, for my father had been a United States soldier under General Scott in the War of 1812. After the war he had settled and built himself and lived in a square wood house, cultivated some land, owned good horses, a few cows, and also owned and operated a saw mill, making lumber on shares whenever any logs were brought to the mill. But he never lost his love for hunting until many years after this. He was fond of furnishing his table with juicy bear steaks and tender venison chops and steaks, together with the plump quail and dry partridge.

At the age of twelve or thirteen I made, alone, the trip from the Canadian wilds to my New York home. At London, in Canada, two or three English officers were taken up at the fort there and brought on to the city of Hamilton at the head of Lake Ontario. It was natural that these officers should amuse themselves in some way to pass the time and tedium of travel. This they did at my expense, they all the time being under the impression that I did not understand or know the point of their jokes. The fact was that I did know just enough English to understand and know what they said and did, but I could not speak it well enough to enjoy their jokes. It was perhaps just as well that I could not. I was not injured and they had their fun, for nothing they said or did was laid in malice. In this solitary ride, I bethought myself that perhaps it might be good for me did I thoroughly understand and speak the English language as well as to be able to read English books. I came to the de-

termination that I would at least try the experiment, having at the time no ulterior purpose than that of a personal gratification. Upon informing my parents of my wishes, which I lost no time in doing, they readily consented to let me have my way, although they were unable to help me in the least particular. I once more repaired to the mission and reviewed all my studies, qualifying myself as well as possible to enter some advanced school among the whites. This I was successful in doing, being received as a student, tuition free, in an academy in Western New York. Here I progressed irregularly but well, in all my studies, and having no Indian companionship, I advanced perceptibly and rapidly in the use of the English language. The school was eminently respectable and the association was, therefore, good. It was non-sectarian and permitted freedom of religious thought and action. It was a mixed school and the association of the sexes had a refining and elevating tendency. I can recall my stay here as among the happiest days of my youthful existence. Many of my associates of those days have since become eminent either as politicians, lawyers, divines or scientists. Our principal, a graduate of Williams College, was a most able, competent and conscientious teacher. You will all recollect, that the late lamented James A. Garfield was also graduated from this college.

After remaining nearly two years at this institution, I changed my camping ground to Central New York, entering another academy, then venerable in years, viz., Cayuga Academy at Aurora, near Auburn, New York. About this time my people were becoming deeply involved in trouble with their white neighbors. As had already been the case, the Indians were in the way of the march of civilization. The land they occupied was rich and the white man needed it for his own use. In such matters the real interests of the Indians have seldom been consulted. They are not and never have been voters, they consequently had no influence and no friends to protect them when assailed or danger menaced them. All assistance rendered them generally came from philanthropists or whatever religious body had the poor Indians in charge. In this particular case a sentiment had been created that it would be wise and humane to remove all the New York Indians to the west of the Mississippi, or, in other words, to the lands now comprising the states of Kansas and Nebraska. This policy of removal to the then Far West was not confined to the New York Indians alone, but was to embrace all the Indian tribes remaining in any of the states east of the Mississippi river. The policy was settled during the administration of President Jackson, and commissions were sent out by the General Government to visit all the Indian tribes and induce them to accept this beneficent plan. The argument was plausible. The Indians were to be concentrated upon lands which were to be patented to them and to be made inalienable to them and their children forever. Government was to build houses for them, provide them with stock and agricultural implements for farming purposes. School houses and churches were to be built and teachers and missionaries sent among them. The Government in short was to civilize them and when civilized they were to be organized into a territory with all the paraphernalia of a territorial government, with the privilege of seating a Delegate in Congress.

The bait was certainly a tempting one and many swallowed it to

their everlasting damnation. Behind all this plausibility, this plea of humanity and Christian feeling for the Indian, stood an army of land speculators ready to lay greedy hands upon the lands that were to be vacated. As a rule it was the General Government who asked for these reservations from the Indians, but not until very lately did the reservations become public lands, nearly the whole being generally taken by companies of land speculators. It is also a very singular thing in the history of Indian affairs in this country, that Indian reservations have always been considered as embracing the best agricultural, the best timbered, the best watered and the best mining lands of the Indian country. If this was good it only showed the good judgment of the Indians in selecting the lands for their permanent homes, and was no good reason why the white man should have always coveted their possessions.

However, under the governmental policy of removing all the Indians to the west of the Mississippi, nearly all the tribes have been removed from the states east of the Mississippi, except a few in some of the Northeast states, a few reservation Indians in North Carolina, New York, Michigan and Wisconsin and some straggling Seminoles who yet wander about the everglades of Florida. The great majority of the New York Indians objected strongly to this migration west. Months and months were spent by the United States commission and their coadjutors, the land speculators, to enlighten the Indians as to the importance, necessity and great benefit of acceding to so wise a plan. The result was as usual in all Indian matters. A general treaty was signed by a sufficient number of chiefs and headmen to warrant the President in laying it before the United States Senate, the treaty-making power, for their consideration and confirmation. That body considered and confirmed and the President signed and proclaimed the same to be the supreme law of the land.

And just here I may mention the absurdity of the United States Government making treaties with the Indian tribes of the country, tribes that number all the way from 500 souls to 25,000. They have all been declared the wards of the Government, and they all live within its jurisdiction, and yet these dependent people are treated as though they were independent, sovereign nations. Every contract or agreement made with them, whether few or many, is subjected to the same form and ceremony of consideration, ratification and proclamation as is a treaty with Great Britain, France or any other great independent power. I, perhaps, ought to be the last person to find fault with such a condition of things. I suppose that I ought to be very proud, I ought to swell out as a turkey-cock, that, with a few hundred ignorant Indians at my back, I can consider myself the head of a strong, independent sovereignty, and treat with the great United States as if I were Russia, or Germany, or China, or Japan. But I have no such feeling. On the contrary I am humiliated. For I know too well the great wrecks of violated Indian treaties that are strewn in the historical pathway of the United States. I know too well that a violation of a treaty on the part of the Indians means their forcible expulsion from their homes and their extermination. These things are like the handle to a jug. The advantages and the power of execution are all on one side. In the early stages of the settlement of this country, when the whites were few and the In-



dians comparatively numerous, the treaty business may have been just and proper. Still I cannot say that any of them were any better observed than they have been of late years. It has often been stated that the only treaty which was faithfully kept and never violated by the high contracting parties was the one made by William Penn, the Quaker, under some great elm tree on the banks of the Delaware. This statement is possibly true. At the same time I may state that the Indians with whom he treated, had long before been subjugated by the powerful Indian Confederacy of New York, who had forbidden them ever to go again upon the warpath, who had been reduced to the condition of women as burden-bearers, and fit only for servile labor, and who were reprimanded by the Iroquois for making this treaty, though the Iroquois at the same time compelled them to keep it to the very letter and spirit. The Iroquois Confederacy was the most powerful and formidable Indian organization found by the whites in the early history of the country. We are told that the cry of a Mohawk always made the New England Indians tremble and seek their hiding-place. They have been styled by Cadwallader Colden, an early historian of New York, "the Romans of the West," because they were wise in council and successful in war. They carried out fully the theory of "young men for war and old men for council." The early settlers of the States and the Canadas were indefatigable in seeking alliances with them. The Dutch, the English and the French were all bidders for their favor. In the war of the Revolution they were, the Oneidas excepted, the staunch friends of the British, and did incalculable mischief to the colonial cause in New York and Northern Pennsylvania, compelling General Washington to organize a large force under General Sullivan, to invade their country and bring these people under subjection. This General Sullivan most successfully accomplished, burning and devastating all the Indian villages that came in his pathway, cutting down and destroying thousands of acres of their growing crops and in other respects inflicting upon them all the damage possible for being friendly to the British. It was a stigma upon the British name that in concluding her treaty of peace with the American colonies, she never inserted a single clause for the protection of her Indian allies, leaving those poor people to take care of themselves after the fight was over. This was done by the New York Indians who concluded a preliminary treaty of peace with the Government of the United States in 1788 and finally and absolutely confirming the same in 1792, at which time this medal<sup>1</sup> was given by direction of General Washington to one of my ancestors, the celebrated chief and Indian orator, Red Jacket. It is an American badge of nobility.

The Indians fully accepted and acknowledged the justness of the punishment meted out to them by order of General Washington; and appreciating fully the nobility of his character in the manner of his subsequent treatment of them in confirming to them their ancient

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1. This and other allusions that follow indicate that Gen. Parker illustrated his address by exhibiting a few relics to his audience. The medal here referred to was given to Red Jacket by Washington, at Philadelphia in 1792. At Red Jacket's death it passed to his successor as head sachem, Sosewah or James Johnson; and at his death in turn to his successor, Gen. Parker. The medal is now owned by the Buffalo Historical Society.

homes in New York, they have given him a place in the Indians' heaven. He is the only white man that has been or probably ever will be admitted to the happy hunting-grounds of the wild sons of the forests. General Washington is represented as being just within the gates of the Indians' paradise where a fort has been built for him and within which he is to pace eternally as a soldier sentinel on his post. I think it must indeed be very lonely for the poor general to thus do sentinel's duty through all eternity with not a soul to speak to. Yet the Indians have placed him there on account of their belief and reverence for his high character for goodness and humanity and as a true and incorruptible patriot. This was their method of testifying to their untutored children, their belief in his greatness and that to them also he was first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his Indian admirers. From the day of their submission to the flag of the United States they have remained as true to their loyalty as the needle to the pole. They fought side by side with your fathers in the subsequent war with Great Britain in 1812. They fought under General Scott on the Niagara frontier and would have gone to Mexico with him in 1847 had their services been needed. Again in the late internecine contest between the North and South wherein one side fought to maintain the supremacy of one flag over an undivided country and the other for the establishment of a government with human slavery as the cornerstone, I say, again in this deadly contest were these people found battling, as many of you were, for the supremacy of the Constitution and the establishment of liberty and equal rights for all men.

It was in this homicidal contest that I was rewarded for my labors by the shoulder-straps of a full colonel and the brevet of a brigadier general. I was only a staff officer, being an assistant adjutant general and military secretary on the staff of General U. S. Grant. I was at Vicksburg with the chivalric and lamented McPherson. I was with Grant at Chattanooga, in the Wilderness, at Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg and at Appomattox, where the rebellion closed its haggard eyes in death never to open them again. I was present at the meeting of the two generals commanding the two great contending armies, Grant and Lee, the one quiet, modest and reticent, the other dignified, but broken. I saw the one write his terms for surrender and the other his acceptance of the same. Thus in one short hour and in a very few words was settled a question which had cost years of fighting, millions of treasure and rivers of human blood. I hold in my hand an original of General Grant's terms of surrender in his own handwriting, and which I, as military secretary, transferred into ink before it was passed to Lee.

An apple-tree has often been associated with Lee and his surrender. The facts are simply these. General Grant, upon receiving Lee's last note asking for a meeting with a view to surrender, sent General Babcock with a safe conduct into the Confederate lines to escort General Lee to some convenient point for the interview. Babcock found Lee dismounted and resting under the branches of an apple-tree. This was all. The generals met and concluded their business in the parlor of Mr. McLean's house, between the picket lines of the two armies and within a stone's throw of Appomattox Court House. That apple-tree, however, was taken up by the roots and cut up into charms and other ornaments. I have one on my



Lieut. Porter,

Lt. Col. Comstock,

Lt. Dunn,

Lt. Gen. Grant,

Lt. Col. Morgan, Capt. Peter Hudson,

Lt. Col. Barcock,

Asst. Adjt. Gen. Ely S. Parker,

Gen. Grant, Ely S. Parker and other staff officers at Cold Harbor, Va., May, 1864.



watch-chain. General Grant met and conferred with General Pemberton at Vicksburg when that city was surrendered in 1863 under the shade of an oak-tree; that also was taken up and made into canes and other articles as mementoes or souvenirs. I have a cane here from that oak.

You have now heard how it is that I am a general and now you perhaps know as much about General Parker as he knows of himself. I will only mention a few other points. These relics are about all that I have left to remind me of the war. Our pay was small for the risks we ran. As for me, on the one side was life and on the other a paltry sum of money as pay. I have no money from my pay left. I was never wounded, consequently I am not a pensioner upon the bounty of a grateful republic. If I have ever been covered with glory for the humble part I took in preserving the Union of the States, I am not conscious that that glory and fame have ever supplied me with a slice of bread or a piece of meat when I was hungry, or that they have warmed me when I was cold. The ingratitude of republics is nearly proverbial, as I believe many a poor and crippled soldier and many a poor, inconsolable widow and orphan can testify. "Why should our pride make such a stir to be and be forgot?" Before the war I was in the successful practice of an honorable profession, working for rich corporations, for the States and the Federal Government. My service in the war, on duties entirely foreign to my profession and my subsequent civil service for three or four years in the interests of the General Government, broke me entirely in my business. While I was soldiering the profession ran away from me, other and younger men had stepped in and filled the places. Young men were wanted for their activity and the old men were discarded. The war, therefore, practically left me a poor man and there is no small place or corner in the gift of the Government that I have been able to secure. Under the first term of General Grant's presidency I was Commissioner of Indian Affairs for three years and I am proud to say that during that time all Indian wars were suspended. That is to say, the United States Government was at peace with all the Indians within her borders, and the Indians generally expressed themselves as happy.

Such a condition of things was not satisfactory to those who had always profited in the previous conduct of Indian affairs and those who stood ready to profit under the new order of things. General Grant had announced that his Indian policy was to be a peace policy, and to that end invited the religious element of the country to assist him in the great undertaking. At first only a few of the religious bodies responded, and men supposed to possess all the Christian virtues were named to the President to be appointed and sent out by him to act in the dual capacity of Indian Agent and missionary. But religious bigotry, intolerance and jealousies by the various Christian bodies at home and between the agents sent out, robbed all the efforts made of their benevolent and humane character, the Indians became dissatisfied, discontented and morose and the most bloody wars known in the Indian history of this country were and have been the result. Some of the best men of the army have fallen victims in these inglorious wars; notably, General Canby, General Custer and a host of others, not naming many civilians.

It is most sincerely to be regretted that this condition of things

is allowed to exist. By some the cause has been attributed to a divided responsibility towards the Indians permitted by the General Government. First is permitted the management of the Indians by a force composed exclusively of civilians, then when unpleasant complications arise, and for some real or fancied wrong the Indians grow unruly and threaten to right themselves, the military are called in as a last resort. Before all this takes place, the Indians argue and plead before the local authorities for a redress of their grievances and obtaining no satisfaction they appeal to or perhaps go themselves to the authorities at Washington. They make as strong a case as they know how. If they succeed at all it is at the sacrifice of some vital and material interest, they must either change their local habitations or surrender more lands. If they fail altogether in accomplishing anything they perhaps go home with the sting of disappointment rankling in their hearts and with a wicked determination to go on the warpath at the first opportunity. If they do it only hastens their doom of extinction, for the disparity of numbers between the two races is so great, that the absolute annihilation of the weaker race is but a mere question of time. The Indian may struggle against his doom, but his fate is as irresistible as the waters of Niagara. I have remarked that in Indian complications the military are generally called in as a last resort. I can safely say that as a rule this work is not relished by the trained military men. They claim that if the entire Indian Department were entrusted to their management there would rarely be occasion for a conflict of arms. Treaties and agreements they say would be more carefully observed and besides it is claimed that all Indians have a wholesome dread and regard for an organized and well-armed body of troops or even of its representative. The military are regarded as a body of men, who when they make a promise will keep it and when they make a threat will execute it. The civilian managers on the contrary, who though they may disgorge themselves of promises, and though they may talk and bluster in Falstaffian style, having no power whatever at their backs are only laughed at for their pains and derided as men of no weight, and when the civilians have eventually succeeded in making as ridiculous a muss as they well can the poor military are called in either to fight or patch up a quasi peace. I will now drop entirely this branch of the subject as it is neither pleasant to my side of the house to be always found in the wrong nor in my judgment very creditable to yours to have spent so much treasure and time and so many valuable lives to cover this people with an enforced civilization while their existence is gradually and surely melting away like the mists before a morning sun. [*Here ends the unfinished manuscript.*]

## APPENDIX B

# HUNTER LODGES IN 1837-1838

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In Mr. O. E. Tiffany's paper on "The Relations of the United States to the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-'38," in this volume, some account is given (pp. 61-70) of the Hunter lodges, or Hunters, as they are variously called. The student of the subject may find an interest in the following account of these organizations, which is taken from a rather scarce contemporary chronicle, "Three Years' Residence in Canada, from 1837 to 1839," by T. R. Preston. (Two vols., London, 1840.) Much of the work relates to the political and military disturbances of the time. The following extract gives details relating to the Hunters which the editor of this volume has not found elsewhere:

"Though much mystification prevailed regarding the conspiracy against Canada, termed the Hunters' Association, sufficient of it was known, through the voluntary depositions of individuals, and through the emissaries employed by the Canadian Government, to satisfy the most incredulous, that its ramifications were very tortuous and extensive, that its resources were very great, and that it enrolled amongst its members many influential and official persons in the republic. It was even asserted, that military officers high in command in the United States Army, stationed on the northern frontier, were something more than friendly to the Patriot cause, and, while seeking to preserve appearances, were desirous to make their construction of their public duty dovetail as much as possible with their secret views. Of one, it was reported to have been declared at a Hunters' meeting, held at Lockport, that he was not to be feared by the Patriots, who, if they had no greater enemy than he, would get on well enough; while, of another, it was confidently stated, that he had offered to take the command of the Patriot force, and march it into Canada, provided that he were first assured of the services of a certain number of men, on whom he might rely at the fitting moment, and of a certain amount of money. I was myself assured, by more than one individual of respectability, while traveling in the summer of last year, through the State of New York, that no moral doubt existed in the minds of the border community, that what is above stated respecting the two officers in question, was substantially cor-

rect; my informants themselves fairly ridiculing the credulity of those who might think otherwise.

"Affirmations were made on oath by various parties, that the whole number of American citizens enrolled in this unholy league amounted to no less than 200,000, of whom, from 25,000 to 40,000 effective men, including a corps of Kentucky riflemen, and a body of Indians, had pledged themselves to march upon the province, whensoever required. But judging by results, allowance must be made for error or exaggerations in this statement, since in no case of actual invasion did the ascertained number of individuals exceed 400 or 500 men; though on the other hand it must be considered that these were sent forward as a sort of advanced guard, to try what number of Canadians would be disposed to join them when once landed in the province, and that thousands were in readiness on the opposite shore, to follow them across the river, should success attend their first efforts. . . .

"Among the more prominent measures of the conspirators, were the formal appointment of officers to command their army; the nomination of a president and vice-president for the proposed Canadian republic; and the promulgation of the prospectus of an embryo bank, the projected capital whereof, fixed at \$7,500,000, was to be exclusively employed in effecting the conquest of Canada, and reimbursed by the confiscation of Canadian lands, the holder of so much stock, being entitled to its estimated equivalent in land.

"The general proceedings of the association were not conducted with so much secrecy, notwithstanding an affectation of masonic mystification, but they occasionally transpired; and the following sketch, derived from authentic sources, will serve to show the mode of initiating persons to the different degrees of membership of the lodges, into which, as in masonry, the association was divided, and also the nature of the so-called Hunter's obligation.

"Persons about to be initiated as members were introduced into the lodge blind-folded; on which the following oath was administered to them:

"You swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that you will not reveal the secret sign of the snow-shoe to any, not even to members of the society. You will not write, print, mark, engrave, scratch, chalk, or in any conceivable manner whatsoever, make the shape or sign of the snow-shoe to any living being, not even to the members of this society. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will not reveal any of the secrets of this society, which may come to your knowledge, through the president, vice-president, or his cabinet. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will give timely notice to any member or brother, if you know of any evil, plot, or design, that has been carried on against him or the society. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will render all assistance in your power, without injuring yourself or family, to any brother or member of this society, who shall at any time make the sign of distress to you. You, furthermore, solemnly swear that you will attend every meeting of your lodge, if you can do so without injury to yourself or family. This you swear, as you shall answer to God."

"The first degree was called the 'Snow-shoe' degree, and had four signs. The test made use of, upon which most reliance was placed,



in case a stranger should become acquainted with any of the signs, was that of membership, or the snow-shoe. Should all other questions have been satisfactorily answered, the person under examination was asked if he had ever seen a snow-shoe, and required to make such sign upon paper. If he attempted to make any representation of it, he was immediately known not to be a member; since, as above stated, all were sworn not to make that sign.

"The first of the signs used in communication, was to lay the palm of the left hand over the back of the right, with the fingers of both hands extended and apart from each other, and then to let both hands fall carelessly in front of the body.

"The second sign in the snow-shoe degree was used in shaking hands, when the parties took the cuff of each other's coat between the finger and thumb. The third sign consisted in the inquiry—'Are you a Hunter?' The answer was the name of the day succeeding the day of the week on which the question might be asked. The fourth sign was lifting the right hand to the ear, with the palm in front and pressing the ear slightly forward. The signs were answered by the same sign, or by any of the signs.

"The second degree was called the 'Beaver' degree; the oath pertaining thereto being: 'You swear, in the presence of Almighty God, that you will not reveal the sign of the beaver degree to any one who is not a member of the same degree with yourself.' The sign of this degree was as follows: 'Do you know the beaver to be an industrious animal?' No answer was made verbally, but the left hand was lifted to the mouth, the palm nearest the face; the fingers were bent, the forefinger being placed under the chin, and the nail of the thumb between the front teeth, which were closed upon it, to imitate the action of a beaver gnawing a tree.

"The third degree was called the 'Master Hunter's' degree; the oath belonging to it was similar to the last-mentioned. The sign was the interrogation—'Trouble?'—and the answer thereto, 'Calm,' the right hand being at the same time moved from the right to the left side of the body, the back of the hand upwards, and the fingers and hand horizontal.

"The fourth degree was called the 'Patriot Hunter' degree; the oath was similar to that preceding. There were three signs belonging to it; the first of which was comprised in the question—'Do you snuff and chew?' The answer was—'I do.' At the same time, if the party questioned had a snuff-box about him, he took it out, and made upon it three scratches with his nail; but if he had no such article, he put the thumb of his left hand into the left pocket of his waist-coat, and made three scratches with the finger-nail upon the waist-coat. The second sign was—'Have you any news for me?' Answer—'Some.' The third sign of this degree was the sign of distress. The left hand was raised, with the palm forward; the fingers extended, but not apart; the thumb pointing to the coat collar.

"There was a method of gaining admission to the lodge, exclusive of all these signs. You went to the door and gave two raps on the outside, which were answered by two on the inside. You then gave one rap on the outside, which was answered by one on the inside. You then made three scratches on the outside, and were thereupon admitted.

"The first, or 'Snow-shoe' degree, was intended to be universal in the 'army' of the self-styled 'patriots'; the privates took this degree; the commissioned officers, two degrees; the field officers three degrees; the commander-in-chief, four or more degrees. The members of the society, whether enlisted or not, always took four degrees; but they were only to use the first degree in the army, if they enlisted.

"The object of the society was stated after the party initiated had taken the fourth degree, as also some of the plans and operations; but the whole was not communicated except to the grand masters, commander-in-chief, and others in whom implicit confidence was imposed. The general object of the society or association was stated to be, 'the emancipation of the British colonies from British thralldom.'

"The Hunters' signs, as above described, having been more or less divulged during the winter of 1838, underwent some changes in the course of the year following, when a fresh invasion of Canada was in agitation.

"The sign of recognition in the States was now said to be, the moving of the index-finger of the right hand with a circular motion acknowledged by waving the left hand. In Canada, the same object was effected by one party putting either of his hands into his pocket, taking therefrom some change, and saying, 'Times are easier,' the answer being, 'Truly.'

"In 1839, when a person was initiated into a lodge, he beheld, after the removal of the bandage from his eyes, a man, having before him on a table, either a dagger or a pistol, and was told that such weapon was intended to remind him of the manner of his death, should he reveal any secret to the injury of the cause he had espoused, or of a brother. In 1838, the same weapons were also laid upon the table, on similar occasions; but nothing was then said respecting them, unless the party was initiated as a 'Patriot Mason,' or 'Beaver Hunter.' It was indeed said that several persons had been secretly disposed of, for divulging the secrets of the association, or giving information respecting its proceedings.'

APPENDIX C

MEMBERSHIP OF THE  
BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(List revised to June, 1905.)

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