



GENERAL BROWN'S RESIDENCE.

## SCENES IN THE WAR OF 1812.

B. J. Lossing

## V.—THE NORTHERN FRONTIER.

LAKE ONTARIO, the River St. Lawrence, and the 45th parallel formed the "Northern Frontier" in the military expressions of the day. We will now consider the most prominent events on that frontier during the first and second years of the war.

The first seizure of a military post, after the declaration of war, occurred on that frontier. Three miles below Cape Vincent, the most northerly land of the State of New York, embosomed in the waters of the St. Lawrence, and forming one of the famous Thousand Islands, is Carleton Island. The French built fortifications on it in the colonial times, and these were strengthened by the English after their conquest of Canada. The barracks were yet standing in 1812, and the fort was garrisoned by a sergeant, three invalid soldiers, and two women. As soon as the declaration of war was known on the frontier Captain Abner Hubbard, a soldier of the Revolution, started in a boat with a man and boy to capture the fort and garrison. He was successful. On the following day he sent a boat to bring away the stores, and soon afterward the barracks were burnt. The passing traveler may yet see there almost a dozen bare, black chimneys, solitary mementos of the past, and form-

ing a picturesque contrast to the natural scenery of the Thousand Islands.

When the war commenced the United States possessed small means on the northern frontier for offensive or defensive operations. The first warlike measure that was adopted, when the quarrel with Great Britain seemed to be leading to war inevitably, was the construction at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, of the brig *Oneida*, under the direction of Lieutenant Melancthon Woolsey, of the United States navy, in 1808-9. She was intended chiefly for employment in the enforcement of the revenue laws on the frontier, under the early embargo acts. For a similar purpose a company of infantry and some artillery were posted at Sackett's Harbor, at the eastern end of Lake Ontario, in 1808; and in the spring of 1809 detachments were stationed on the southern shores of the St. Lawrence, opposite Kingston, to prevent smuggling. This duty gave rise to many stirring scenes on the frontier, in the violation and vindication of the revenue laws, which were generally evaded or openly defied until the spring of 1812, when a more stringent embargo act was passed.

The vigilant Governor and Legislature of New York took measures early for the enforcement of the revenue laws on the frontier and the defense of the State. Arsenal were estab-

lished; and in the spring of 1812 a regiment of militia, under Colonel Christopher Bellinger, was stationed at Sackett's Harbor, a part of which was kept on duty at Cape Vincent. Jacob Brown, an enterprising farmer from Pennsylvania, who had settled on the borders of the Black River a dozen miles from the Harbor, had been appointed a brigadier-general of militia in 1811, and was then in command of the first detachment of New York's quota of the one hundred thousand militia which Congress had authorized the President of the United States to call out. When war was declared he was charged with the defense of the frontier from Oswego to the Lake St. Francis—a distance of 200 miles.

In May and June, 1812, just before the declaration of war, events occurred on the waters of Lake Ontario which occasioned immediate hostilities when that declaration was promulgated. The British schooner *Lord Nelson*, laden with flour and merchandise, was found in American waters while on her way from Niagara to Kingston. She was captured by the *Oneida*, and regularly condemned as a prize because of her violation of the Embargo Act. About a month later (June 14) the British schooner *Ontario* was captured at St. Vincent, but was afterward discharged; and at about the same time still another British schooner, the *Niagara*, was seized and sold because of a like offense. These events led to retaliation, and when war was declared the small British marine on the lake was made exceedingly active. There was corresponding vigilance and activity on the part of the Americans. Eight of their schooners were lying in the harbor of Ogdensburg, on the St. Lawrence, and attempted to escape into Lake Ontario, freighted with affrighted American families and their effects. They were chased by British vessels. Two of them were captured and destroyed, and the others retreated to Ogdensburg. The Americans were very anxious to get these into the lake and convert them into vessels of war.

The whole northern frontier was now violently agitated by the expectation of an immediate British invasion; and in July the alarm was intensified by a rumor that spread over that region that Commander Woolsey and his brig *Oneida* had been captured by the enemy, and that a squadron of British vessels were on their way from Kingston to recapture the *Lord Nelson* and destroy Sackett's Harbor. General Brown immediately repaired to the Harbor. The rumor was false in fact, yet it foreshadowed in part actual occurrences. On the 29th of the month Woolsey saw from his mast-head, at early dawn, a squadron of five British vessels of war beating toward the Harbor. These were under the command of Commodore Earle, a Canadian, and the *Royal George*, 24, was his flag-ship. He sent a message to Colonel Bellinger that he was coming for the *Lord Nelson* and the *Oneida*; that he wanted nothing more; and that, in the event of his vessels being fired upon while he was taking possession of his

prizes, he would destroy Sackett's Harbor. Woolsey, perceiving the peril of his vessel, weighed anchor and attempted to escape. He failed, returned, and moored his brig just inside of Navy Point, close by the village, in such a position that her broadside of nine guns might be brought to bear on the enemy. The remainder of her heavy guns were taken out to be placed in battery on a bluff at the foot of the main street of the town, on which Fort Tompkins was afterward built. An iron 32-pounder, designed for the *Oneida*, but found to be too heavy, had already been brought up from the mire on the shore, where it had been wallowing for some time, and placed in battery on the bluff, with three 9-pounders. That gun was called "The Old Sow," and presently became famous. These heavy pieces, with two 6's fished out of the lake from the wreck of an English vessel, composed the heavy ordnance then fit for duty at Sackett's Harbor. The soldiers for the defense of the place consisted only of a part of Bellinger's infantry regiment, Camp's Sackett's Harbor Artillery (which promptly volunteered for thirty days' service), the crew of the *Oneida*, and 300 militia.

On the appearance of the enemy alarm-guns were fired, and couriers were sent into the country in all directions to arouse the militia. At sunset nearly three thousand had arrived or were near. They were too late for present service, for victory had been lost and won early in the day. The enemy bore gallantly in and took position within cannon-shot of the town. Woolsey took chief command of the Americans; and the 32-pounder, the Old Sow, was placed in charge of Captain William Vaughan, a sailing-master of eminence, then living at the Harbor. At eight o'clock Vaughan opened the contest by a shot from his big gun. It was harmless,



WILLIAM VAUGHAN.

and drew from the people of the *Royal George*, which lay nearest the shore, such shouts of derisive laughter that they could be distinctly heard by Vaughan and his companions. It was followed by some shots from the enemy, at the distance of a mile, and these were quickly responded to by Vaughan. For two hours the cannonade was kept up, the enemy's vessels standing off and on, meanwhile, and keeping out of the range of the American smaller guns.

Most of the enemy's shot fell short, or struck the rocky face of the shore near the battery. One 32-pound ball came bounding over the bluff, struck the earth not far from Sackett's mansion, then occupied by Vaughan's family, and plowed a deep furrow into the door-yard. It was caught up by a sergeant, who ran with it to Captain Vaughan, exclaiming, "I've been playing ball with the red-coats, and have caught 'em out. See if the British can catch back again." The *Royal George* was wearing at that moment to give a broadside, when Vaughan's gun sent back the captive ball with such force and precision that it struck her stern, raked her completely, sent splinters as high as her mizen top-sail yard, killed 14 men and wounded 18. The flag-ship had already received a shot that went through her sides, and another between wind and water. The *Prince Regent*, the next larger ship of the squadron, had lost her fore-top-gallant mast; and the *Earl Moira* had been hulled. The laughter of the enemy had been turned into wailing. Disaster, quick and unexpected, taught him discretion, and Earle made a signal for retreat as soon as the returned ball had made its fearful passage through his ship. The squadron put about in haste and sailed out of the harbor, while the band on shore played "Yankee Doodle," and the troops and citizens greeted the departure of the unwelcome visitors with loud cheers. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that nothing, animate or inanimate, on shore had been injured by the two hours' cannonading from the squadron. It was a serene Sabbath morning, and the little village was as quiet at evening as if nothing remarkable had happened.

The war had now fairly begun. The command of Lake Ontario was an object of great importance to the respective belligerents. The speedy preparation of armed vessels would be the surest way to obtain it, and to this end great and immediate efforts were made. The British had several vessels afloat already; the Americans only one, the *Oneida*. The only hope of the latter rested upon their ability to convert merchant vessels afloat, ranging from thirty to one hundred tons burden, into warriors. Six of these, as we have seen, were blockaded at Ogdensburg. To capture or destroy these was an important object to the British; to secure and arm them was a more important object to the Americans. The contest for these ob-

jects was immediately begun. The British sent two armed vessels to Prescott, opposite Ogdensburg, to capture or destroy the schooners; the Americans sent the *Julia*, Lieutenant Wells, armed with a long 32 and two long 6's, and bearing about sixty volunteers, to protect them. Wells was accompanied by Captains Vaughan and Dixon, and a Durham boat, that formed a consort for the *Julia*, in which was a rifle corps under Captain Hubbard. Off Morristown, a few miles above Ogdensburg, they were met by the British armed vessels. A very severe engagement ensued, which lasted more than three hours. Night fell intensely black, and under its shadow the *Julia* and her consort made their way to Ogdensburg, their track lighted only by electrical flashes in the far southern horizon. An armistice soon followed, and the *Julia* and *Durham*, leading the six schooners so much coveted, made their way unmolested to Sackett's Harbor. Meanwhile the heavy guns of the two British vessels were landed at Elizabethtown (now Brockville), and placed in battery there. During the armistice both parties made strenuous efforts in preparations for securing the supremacy of Lake Ontario.

Captain Isaac Chauncey, then in command of the Navy-yard at Brooklyn, was chosen to superintend the construction of the navies on Lakes Erie and Ontario, and to command them as chief. He entered upon the duties of his important office in the first week in September. He sent forward mechanics and materials for the fitting out of vessels of war as rapidly as possible, and arrived at Sackett's Harbor himself early in October. Several vessels were purchased and fitted up as warriors; and he found himself, at the beginning of November, in command of a squadron of eight vessels, but having an aggregate of only forty guns and four hun-



ISAAC CHAUNCEY.

dred and thirty effective men. The British had six vessels, carrying, in weight of metal, double the force of the Americans, and a corresponding number of men. Yet Chauncey, whose heart was set on a cruise, did not allow this disparity of strength to discourage him. On a cold, raw, blustery day, the 8th of November, he went out boldly to intercept the British squadron on its return from Fort George on the Niagara frontier. He flung out his broad pennant, as Commodore, over the *Oneida*, and took station in the track of the British vessels bound for Kingston Harbor. On the 9th a part of the enemy's squadron appeared, and were chased into the Bay of Quinté, and on the morning of the 10th he followed the *Royal George* into Kingston Harbor, and fought her and five land batteries for about an hour. He damaged his antagonist severely. She was hulled between wind and water, several of her guns were disabled, and a number of her crew were killed. A severe gale followed; then a heavy snow-storm on the 12th; and yet Chauncey would not give up his cruise so propitiously commenced. He was determined to strike a hard first blow for the supremacy of the lakes. This he accomplished, for the British vessels appeared upon the lake no more that season. During his brief cruise Chauncey had captured three merchant vessels, destroyed one armed schooner (the *Simcoe*), disabled the British flag-ship, and took several prisoners, with a loss on his part of only one man killed and four wounded. Leaving four vessels to blockade Kingston harbor until the ice should do so effectually, he sailed toward the head of the lake. He met with no enemy, and early in December he laid up his vessels for the winter in Sackett's Harbor.

The first regular United States troops that appeared on the Northern Frontier were those of a rifle company commanded by Captain Benjamin Forsyth, who arrived at Sackett's Harbor in August. In September he made a bold dash into Canada by the way of Cape Vincent, with one hundred men, seventy of them his own sharpshooters. He crossed the broad St. Lawrence among the upper group of the Thousand Islands, to Gananoqui, where the British had a considerable quantity of stores. These formed the chief object of the expedition. The voyage was made during the night, with the intention of taking the enemy there by surprise. Morning came too soon. The British, informed, were on the alert, and when Forsyth approached the town he found some regulars and Canadian militia ready to receive him. He pushed forward, drove the British from the village, and returned to Cape Vincent with spoils consisting of sixty stand of arms, two barrels of fixed ammunition, comprising three thousand ball-cartridges, one barrel of gunpowder, one of flints, and some other public property. They also bore away, as living trophies of a gallant exploit, eight British regulars prisoners of war.

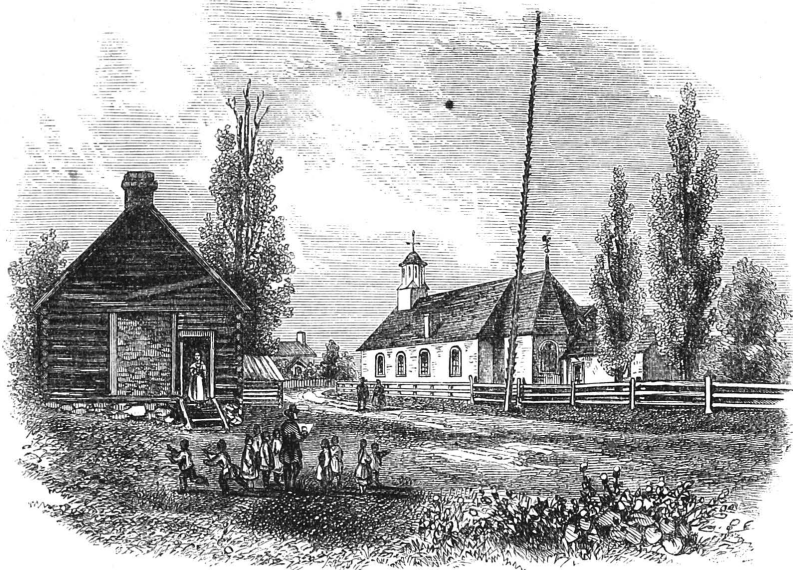
Ogdensburg was a place of considerable military importance, and after Forsyth's return from

his raid into Canada he was sent thither to add strength to the militia force already stationed there.\* There was business enough to do, for Prescott, then a strong British post, was on the opposite shore of the St. Lawrence, and filled with restless spirits who wished to retaliate the exploit of Forsyth. Early in October the first hostile shot passed between the two towns. A flotilla of forty-one British batteaux, laden with stores and escorted by a gun-boat, came up from below. Already the active Adjutant, D. W. Church, and other Americans had given proof that such flotillas were likely to be molested; and as this one neared Prescott, a battery there opened upon Ogdensburg as a covering for the mooring of the batteaux. Two heavy guns at Ogdensburg, in the hands of Adjutant Church and Captain Joseph Yorke, replied to the Prescott battery. On the following day the cannonade was renewed; and on Sunday morning, the 4th of October, two gun-boats and twenty-five batteaux, filled with armed men, proceeded to attack Ogdensburg. Forsyth and his riflemen were at Old Fort Presentation on the west side of the Oswegatchie, and General Brown was in the town with a corps of militia, the combined American force amounting to about twelve hundred effective men. These were arrayed in battle order, and when the enemy was in mid channel, the Americans opened a severe fire upon them with the two cannon, which caused them to fly back to Prescott in confusion. Not an American was injured, but Ogdensburg received some bruises from the shots hurled during the cannonade.

Two or three weeks later there were stirring times at St. Regis—an Indian village at the mouth of the St. Regis River, bisected by the parallel of 45°. The inhabitants were in an embarrassing position, as one half of their village lay in the United States and one half in Canada, and there was, necessarily, a divided allegiance. The American and British commanders agreed to consider this village neutral ground, and not to place any armed force within its borders. This agreement was soon violated by Sir George Prevost, the British commander-in-chief in Canada, who stationed Captain Donelly and a party of armed Canadian *voyageurs* in the British portion of the village. Not content with this violation of a solemn agreement, De Montigny, the British resident agent at St. Regis, endeavored, under the protection of the military, to seduce the Indians from their neutrality to an enlistment under the British flag. In this he was successful. More than eighty St. Regis warriors were afterward found in the British army on the frontier.

Advised of this movement, Major Guilford Dudley Young, a gallant officer in command of troops chiefly from Troy, New York, then stationed at French Mills (now Fort Covington Village), resolved to attempt the surprise and capture of Donelly and his party. He took his command along unfrequented paths, which brought them out suddenly upon the eastern





OLD CHURCH AT ST. REGIS.

bank of the St. Regis River, opposite the village. The stream was too deep to ford, and Young was compelled to abandon the project for a time. The enemy became alarmed and doubly vigilant; but as Young did not soon return, Donnelly considered himself secure. That dream of peace was soon broken. Young crossed the St. Regis at what is now Hogsburg, two miles above St. Regis village, on the night of the 21st of October, and at dawn was behind a sheltering elevation of the ground within half a mile of the post of the British intruders. There the Americans rested and took refreshments unobserved. Then they were separated into three columns, and moved toward Donnelly's headquarters, not far from the ancient St. Regis Church, yet standing in that old Indian town—a quaint and picturesque object, clustered with romantic associations with colonial times. One division under Captain Lyon, editor of the *Troy Budget*, moved along the bank of the St. Regis in order to gain the rear of the dwellings of Donnelly and De Montigny, while Captain Tilden and his company made a *detour* westward for the purpose of reaching the St. Lawrence and securing the boats of the enemy. Major Young, with the companies of Higbee and McNeil, moved through the village directly toward the lodgings of the enemy. Success crowned the enterprise. Forty prisoners, exclusive of the commander and the Catholic priest, with arms, accoutrements, boats and batteaux, baggage and eight hundred blankets, fell into Young's hands. The British flag was captured by the late eminent statesman, William L. Marcy, who was a lieutenant in Lyon's company. He bore it triumphantly to French Mills, where Young and his whole party, with the

prisoners, arrived before noon on the day of the victory. Major Young and his detachment soon afterward returned to Troy; and with his own hand he presented this *first trophy* of the kind that had been taken from the British, on land, during the war, to the people of the State of New York on the 5th of January, 1813. It was borne from Troy to the State capital by a detachment of Young's Volunteers. Governor Tompkins was too ill to meet the escort and procession at the State-house and receive the flag, so Colonels Lamb and Lush acted as his representatives on the occasion.

Early in February, 1813, Ogdensburg and its vicinity again became the theatre of important events. During the few preceding weeks each party had made incursions into the territory of the other, and made a few prisoners. British deserters had fled to the American lines; and parties of troops from Canada had crossed the river, captured some of these, and made prisoners of a number of American soldiers and civilians. Some of these captives were confined in the jail at Elizabethtown (now Brockville), about twelve miles above Prescott. An expedition for their rescue was planned at Ogdensburg by Major (late Captain) Forsyth. At the head of two hundred men—riflemen, volunteers, and some citizens—he left Ogdensburg in sleighs at nine o'clock in the evening of the 6th of February, rode up to Morristown, and there, piloted by Arnold Smith, they made a perilous passage of the river on the ice—perilous because the ice was weak. The force was divided on the Canada shore. Forsyth led one division, and Colonel Benedict of the New York State Militia the other. Flanking parties were thrown out under Wells and Johnson, and took post at

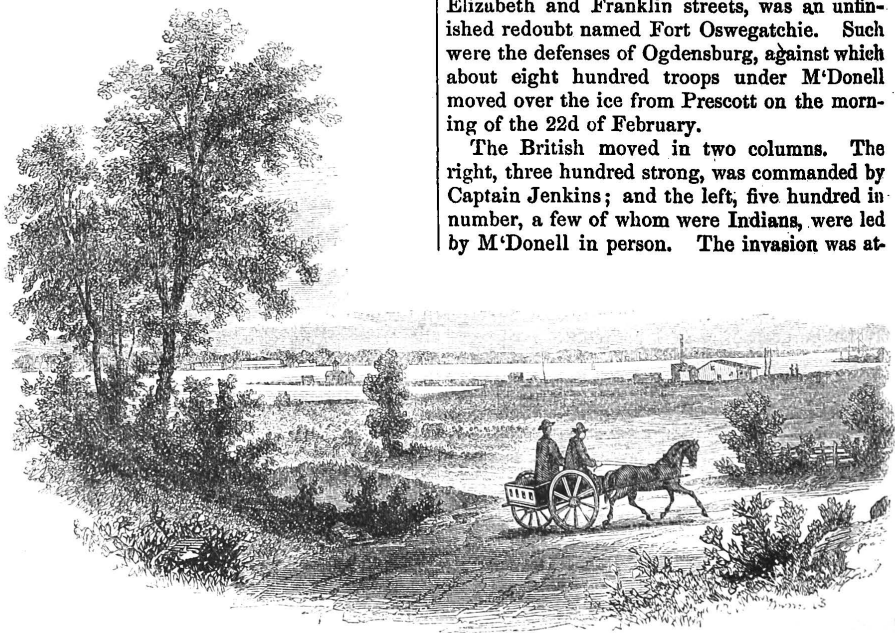
opposite ends of the village to check any attempts at retreat or approaching reinforcements. The jail was "an elegant brick edifice," and toward this Major Forsyth moved through the town, after sending out small detachments to secure the different streets in the village. The keys of the prison were demanded from the jailer, and were immediately surrendered. Every prisoner was released but one, and he was a murderer. The American captives and British deserters, thus set at liberty, joyfully placed the frozen St. Lawrence between themselves and His Majesty's dominions. The only show of resistance was a shot from a window which slightly wounded one man. The commander of the post and more than forty others prisoners, accompanied by some captured citizens, graced the triumphal entry of Forsyth into Ogdensburg before the dawn. The spoils were arms, ammunition, and stores.

This exploit won for Forsyth the universal applause of his countrymen, and the honors of Lieutenant-Colonel by brevet. It led to early retaliation on the part of the enemy. Sir George Prevost had arrived at Prescott at about that time on his way to the capital of the Upper Province; and Lieutenant-Colonel Pierson, commanding there, proposed an attack on Ogdensburg. But the Governor was too much alarmed for his personal safety to consent, except on the condition of being first escorted by Pierson to Kingston. This was done, and to Lieutenant-Colonel M'Donell was left the business of assailing Ogdensburg. British deserters informed Forsyth of the intentions of the enemy, and he dispatched a courier to General Dearborn at Plattsburg to ask for reinforcements. "I can afford you no help," was the disheart-

ening response. "You must do as well as you are able, and if you can not hold the place you are at liberty to abandon it." Dearborn intimated that the sacrifice of Ogdensburg might be a public benefit by arousing the flagging energies of the Americans.

Forsyth called a council of his officers, and it was resolved to defend the place to the last extremity, notwithstanding its defenses and defenders were few and comparatively weak. Near the intersection of Ford and Euphemia (now State) streets stood a trophy-cannon taken from Burgoyne at Saratoga. It was an iron 6-pounder on a wheel-carriage, and was commanded by Captain Kellogg of the Albany volunteers. On the west side of Ford Street, between State and Isabella streets, was a store used as an arsenal, in front of which, likewise on a wheel-carriage, was a brass 6-pounder manned by some volunteers and citizens under Captain Joseph York, the sheriff of the county. On the river bank, a short distance from Parish's huge stone storehouse yet standing, was a rude wooden breast-work, on which was mounted, on a sled-carriage, an iron 12-pounder, also taken from Burgoyne. On the point where the light-house now stands, near the site of old Fort Presentation, was a brass 9-pounder on a sled-carriage; and back of the remains of the old fort, and mounted on sleds, were two old iron 6-pounders, one of them commanded by Adjutant Church, already mentioned, and the other by Lieutenant Baird of Forsyth's company. In front of the huge gateway of the fort, between two stone buildings, was another brass 6-pounder on a sled; and not far from it was an iron cannon of the same weight of metal. Below the town, on the square bounded by Washington and Water, Elizabeth and Franklin streets, was an unfinished redoubt named Fort Oswegatchie. Such were the defenses of Ogdensburg, against which about eight hundred troops under M'Donell moved over the ice from Prescott on the morning of the 22d of February.

The British moved in two columns. The right, three hundred strong, was commanded by Captain Jenkins; and the left, five hundred in number, a few of whom were Indians, were led by M'Donell in person. The invasion was at-



SITE OF OLD FORT PRESENTATION.

tempted at an early hour. Some of the inhabitants were yet in bed, and others were at breakfast. The streets were soon filled, and women and children, with portable effects, fled to the country in the rear.

The British right column moved to attack Forsyth at the remains of the old fort. They were allowed to reach the shore when a full volley of musketry and a discharge of artillery, skillfully delivered, threw the line of the invaders into great confusion. They unsuccessfully attempted to rally, and after losing a considerable number in killed, wounded, and prisoners, they fled over the ice, seriously annoyed by the 9-pounder on the point where the light-house now stands. The British left, meanwhile, had reached the shore without opposition and marched into the town, expecting an easy victory. They were disappointed. They were soon confronted by the big guns of Captains Kellogg and Yorke. But the cannon of the former was speedily disabled by the breaking of its elevator screw, and he and his men fled across the Oswegatchie and joined Forsyth, leaving the indomitable Yorke to fight the invaders alone. Yorke did so until two of his men were mortally wounded, and himself and the remainder of his party were made prisoners.

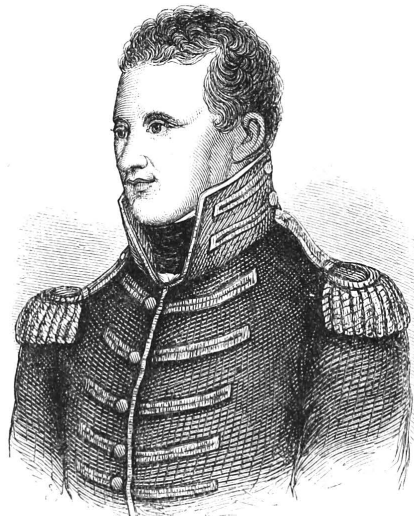
The village was now in possession of the enemy, and a greater portion of the inhabitants had fled. M'Donnell proceeded at once to dislodge Forsyth and his party. He paraded his troops on the northern shore of the Oswegatchie and sent a flag to Forsyth summoning him to surrender instantly. "If you surrender it shall be well," he said; "if not, every man shall be put to the bayonet." The reply to this inhuman threat was, "Tell Colonel M'Donnell there must be more fighting done first." When the bearers of the flag had reached the British line Church and Baird opened their heavy guns upon it. The frightened enemy sought shelter behind Parish's store-house and other buildings, while a party was preparing to dash across the Oswegatchie to storm the old fort. Forsyth comprehended the impending peril. Church and Baird were both wounded; the latter severely. Orders were given for a retreat to Thurber's tavern on Black Lake, where, on the same day, Forsyth wrote a dispatch to the Secretary of War, in which he said, "If you can send me three hundred men all shall be retaken, and Prescott too, or I will lose my life in the attempt."

Indians and camp followers, of both sexes, who came over from Canada, and resident miscreants, now commenced plundering the town, and a great quantity of private property was carried away or destroyed. Every house in the village except three was entered. The public property was all taken to the British side of the St. Lawrence. Two armed schooners and two gun-boats, fast in the ice, were burned; the barracks near the river were laid in ashes; and fifty-two prisoners were conveyed to Prescott. Among them was Sheriff Yorke, whose courageous and

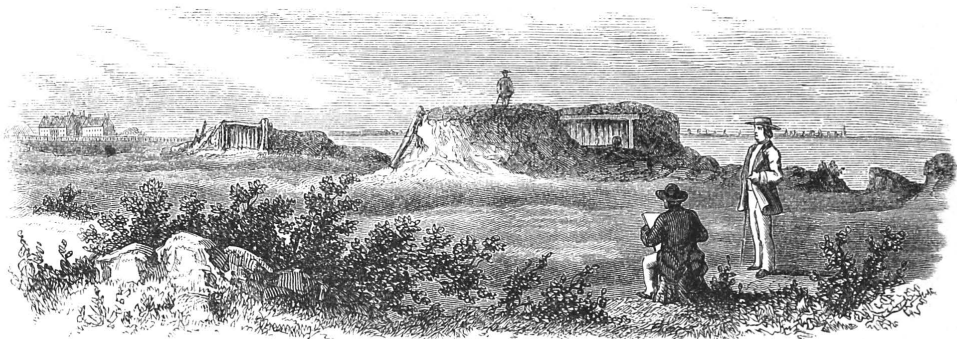
devoted wife followed him to Canada, and soon procured his release. The enemy immediately evacuated the town and recrossed the St. Lawrence. The citizens returned; and from that time until the close of the war Ogdensburg remained in an entirely defenseless state, which exposed the inhabitants to occasional insults from their belligerent neighbors over the river.

A second invasion of Canada was a principal feature in the programme of the campaign of 1813. The possession of Montreal and the entire Upper Province was the prize for which the Army of the North was expected to contend. But the same incapacity on the part of the Cabinet, to which much of the disasters of 1812 were chargeable, now reappeared. Instead of sending a competent force for the capture of Montreal before the ice in the St. Lawrence should move, and permit British transports to bring reinforcements to Halifax, it was determined to first reduce Kingston and York (now Toronto) on Lake Ontario, and Forts George and Erie on the Niagara frontier, recapture Detroit and recover the Michigan Territory. For the purpose of commencing the labor in the order above named, directions were given for the concentration of four thousand troops at Sackett's Harbor during the spring. As early as February Dearborn received a general outline of the plan of invasion; but owing to the detention of Chauncey (who was to co-operate with the land forces), and the arrival of Governor Prevost with reinforcements at Kingston, the attack on that place was abandoned; for the story was current, and generally believed, that Sir George had six or eight thousand troops at his command there, busily engaged in preparations for offensive measures.

At the middle of April Dearborn and Chauncey had matured plans for the joint employment of their respective forces during the campaign of that year. The first movement was to be



ZEBULON M. PIKE.



REMAINS OF OLD FORT TORONTO.

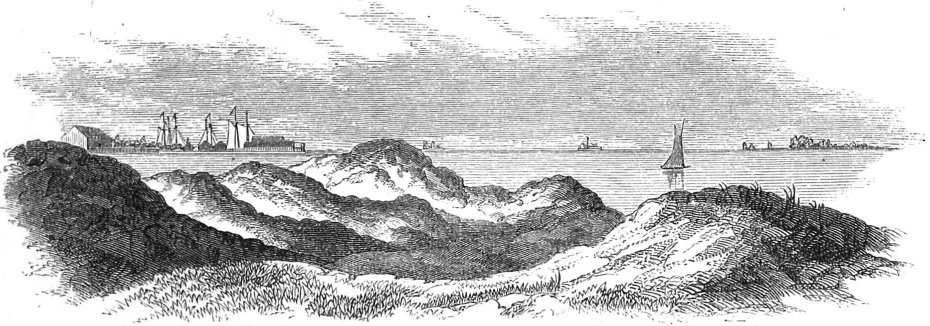
made against York. When every thing was in readiness Dearborn embarked about seventeen hundred men on Chauncey's fleet, at Sackett's Harbor, on the 22d of April, and on the 25th the expedition sailed for York. After a tempestuous voyage they appeared off the doomed town, and prepared to land. Dearborn was suffering from ill-health. He placed Brigadier-General Zebulun M. Pike in the active command of the land troops, and remained on board the flag-ship.

Arrangements were made for landing the troops at a cleared spot near the ruins of old Fort Toronto (a French work), which are yet conspicuous near the shore of the lake; but an easterly wind, blowing with violence, drove the small boats in which the troops left the fleet full half a mile further westward, and beyond an effectual covering of the guns of the navy. Yet this made very little delay. The boats pushed for the shore a little distance below the mouth of the Humber, those bearing Major Forsyth and his riflemen being in the advance. When within rifle-shot of the bank they were met by a terrible volley of bullets from a company of Glengarry Fencibles and a party of Indians, who were concealed in the woods near by. "Rest on your oars. Prime!" said Forsyth, in a low tone. Pike was standing on the deck of the *Madison*, and saw this halting. He impatiently exclaimed, "I can not stay here any longer! Come," he said, addressing his staff, "jump into the boat." He was instantly obeyed; and very soon they and their gallant commander were in the midst of a fight, for Forsyth's men had opened fire, and the enemy on the shore were returning it briskly. The van-guard soon landed, and were followed, in support, by Major King and a battalion of infantry. Pike and the main body followed; and the whole column, consisting of the Sixth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Twenty-first regiments of infantry, and detachments of light and heavy artillery, with Forsyth's riflemen and Lieutenant-Colonel McClure's volunteers as flankers, pressed forward into the woods to confront the enemy.

The British skirmishers meanwhile had been reinforced by two companies of the Eighth or King's Regiment of regulars, two hundred

strong; a company of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment; a large body of Canadian militia, and some Indians. These took position in the woods, and were speedily encountered by the advancing Americans, whose artillery it was difficult to move on account of the gullied earth. Perceiving this, the British, led by General Sheaffe, their chief commander, in person, attacked the American flanks with a 6-pounder and a howitzer. A sharp conflict ensued. Both parties suffered severely. The British were overpowered and fell back, when General Pike, at the head of the American column, ordered his bugles to sound, and at the same time dashed gallantly forward. That bugle blast thrilled like electric fire along the nerves of the Indian allies of the British. They gave one horrid yell, then fled, like frightened deer, to cover, deep into the forest. That bugle blast, given in the face of the wind, was heard in the fleet high above the voices of the gale, and evoked long and loud responsive cheers. At the same time Chauncey was sending to the shore something more effective than huzzas, for he was hurling deadly grape-shot upon the foe, which added to the consternation of the savages, and gave fleetness to their feet. They also hastened the retreat of Sheaffe's white troops to their defenses in the direction of York; while the drum and fife of the pursuers were briskly playing Yankee Doodle.

The Americans now pressed forward as rapidly as possible along the lake shore with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. Their artillery moved slowly, but it being their strong right arm, such great exertions were put forth that it moved steadily with the column. As that column emerged from the woods it was confronted by 24-pounders in what was called the Western Battery, the remains of which are still visible on the lake shore between Toronto and the new barracks. Upon that battery some of Chauncey's guns were pouring heavy shot, and when the Americans rushed forward to storm it it was abandoned. The dismayed enemy had spiked their cannon; and just as the American troops reached the work its magazine exploded, killing several soldiers. Sheaffe and his little army, deserted by the Indians, fled to the



REMAINS OF THE WESTERN BATTERY.

garrison near the Governor's house, and from the block-houses and battery there opened a severe fire of round and grape shot upon the Americans.

This cannonade was soon silenced, and Pike expected every moment to see a white flag displayed from the block-house in token of surrender. The General was sitting upon a stump, conversing with a British subaltern who had been taken prisoner, with some of his staff standing near, when there was a sudden tremor of the ground followed by a tremendous explosion near the British garrison. The enemy, despairing of holding the place, had blown up their chief powder magazine, situated on the edge of the water, and fled eastward through the town toward the River Don. The effects of that explosion were terrible. Fragments of timber and huge stones were scattered in every direction over a space of several hundred yards. When the smoke floated away the scene was appalling. Fifty-two Americans lay dead and eighty others were wounded! General Pike, two of his aids, and his British prisoner were mortally hurt. The enemy did not escape injury. So badly was the affair managed that forty of them lost their lives by the explosion.

General Pike was crushed beneath a mass of heavy stones that struck him in the back. He was conveyed to Chauncey's flag-ship. Soon afterward news came to him of the surrender of York, and with it was brought the captured garrison flag. He made signs for it to be placed under his head, and then expired. In the meantime Colonel Cromwell Pearce, of Pennsylvania, had assumed command of the Americans, and after giving three cheers, had pressed toward the village. He was met by the civil authorities with propositions for a capitulation. During the delay and confusion incident to this measure General Sheaffe and his regulars stole away across the Don, and escaped to Kingston. Dearborn landed and took command after the surrender, and a few days later he and his troops sailed across the Lake to make preparations for an attack upon Fort George, at the mouth of the Niagara River. The remains of Pike were conveyed to Sackett's Harbor and interred with military honors; and over them *leans* only a dilapi-

dated wooden monument, erected jointly to the memory of Pike and other gallant officers.

When the naval and military authorities at Kingston were informed of the weakening of the post at Sackett's Harbor by the withdrawal of troops for the expedition against York they resolved to attempt the capture of the place, or to destroy a new ship of war then on the stocks (afterward named the *General Pike*), and other public property there. The capture of York made them circumspect, for the flushed victors might turn their faces toward Kingston; but when it was known that Dearborn and Chauncey were about to attack Fort George toward the close of May, it was resolved to assail the Harbor. The prize was now more attractive than ever before, for, in addition to the ship just mentioned, and a large quantity of stores, all that the Americans had captured at York was deposited there. The possession or destruction of these would give to the British the command of Lake Ontario and a decided advantage during the whole campaign.

With singular remissness this valuable post was left exposed to the enemy as it never had been before. The guard detailed for the protection of the public stores there, under the com-



PIKE'S MONUMENT.





LIGHT-HOUSE ON HORSE ISLAND.

mand of Colonel Backus, was utterly inadequate for the important service. It consisted of about two hundred and fifty dragoons, fifty or sixty artillerymen, and from eighty to one hundred infantry, chiefly invalids, recruits, and fragments of companies left behind when the expedition sailed for York. On the bluff where the big gun commanded by Vaughan, already mentioned, was stationed a block-house and breast-works had been erected, and named Fort Tompkins. This was in charge of the dragoons, who were dismounted. On the opposite side of the Harbor was a small redoubt, called Fort Volunteer. These constituted the defenses of Sackett's Harbor.

On the evening of the 27th of May (1813) the *Lady of the Lake*, scout-boat, came into the Harbor with the startling information that a strong British squadron under the command of Sir James Yeo, of the Royal Navy, had just put to sea. Colonel Backus sent an express to General Brown, at his home on the Black River, twelve miles distant. That vigilant and energetic officer dispatched messengers in all directions to the militia commanders, with orders to assemble their men and hasten to the Harbor; and before the dawn of the 28th he was there himself, and assumed chief command. He ordered alarm-guns to be fired to arouse the country, and sent out more messages for the militia officers. The effort was effectual. During the day scores of people arrived at head-quarters. Some were armed, and some were not; and all lacked discipline. As fast as they arrived they were armed and sent to Horse Island, on which the Light-house stands, where Colonel Mills and about two hundred and fifty Albany volunteers had been stationed for a week. That island was separated from the main by a narrow and shallow strait fordable at all times. Between it and the village was a thin wood that had been part-

ly cut over and was encumbered with logs, stumps, and brush. On the main land near the island was then, as now, a ridge of gravel that formed a natural breast-work.

At mid-day on the 28th, while the militia of the surrounding country was in motion, a British squadron of six vessels, with the *Wolf*, 24, as the flag-ship, appeared off Sackett's Harbor, accompanied by about forty batteaux, and bearing over a thousand land troops, under the direct personal command of Sir George Prevost, the Governor of Canada. Sir George was with Yeo on the *Wolf*. This formidable force—formidable by comparison—anchored about six miles from the Harbor, and a large number of troops were speedily embarked in the batteaux for the purpose of landing. While anxiously waiting for the signal to pull for shore, the soldiers were perplexed by an order to return to the squadron. They were still more perplexed when the ships spread their sails to the breeze and sailed toward Kingston. The cause of this sudden change of purpose was the appearance of an American flotilla at the westward, bearing troops from Oswego to Sackett's Harbor. The apparition made Sir George nervous. A body of Indians who accompanied the squadron in their canoes were not so easily frightened, and they darted in their light vessels toward the American gun-boats. This bold movement shamed Sir George. He listened to the advice of Sir James, turned the prows of the vessels once more in the direction of Sackett's Harbor, and sent several boats with armed men to join the canoes of the savages. Aspinwall (the American commander) and his party, closely chased, made for the shore. Twelve of his nineteen boats were captured, with seventy of his men. The other seven boats, more fleet than their companions or the pursuers, reached the Harbor in safety. The escaped party on shore made their way thither by

land. They reached the Harbor by nine o'clock in the evening, and added one hundred effective men to the military force there.

The night of the 28th was spent by the Americans in preparations for the expected attack. Toward midnight about forty Indians were landed from the squadron on the shore of Henderson's Bay, for the purpose of attacking the American militia in the rear. They were discovered; an alarm was given, and Colonel Mills and his force, about four hundred strong, were withdrawn from Horse Island and placed behind the gravel ridge on the main, with a 6-pound field-piece. The remainder of the militia, under Colonel Tuttle, were posted in the edge of the woods a little further back, and Colonel Backus and his dismounted dragoons were stationed on the skirt of the same woods nearer the village. Lieutenant-Colonel Aspinwall was posted on the left of Backus, and the artilleryists, under Lieutenant Ketchum, were stationed in Fort Tompkins, whose only armament was the "Old Sow," the famous 32-pounder, mounted on a pivot.

On the morning of the 29th the atmosphere was cloudless and serene. The sails of the squadron could not catch a breeze, and it was impossible for the larger vessels to approach near enough to join in the attack. It was left for the land troops to try the fortunes of war alone; and at dawn thirty-three boats, filled with armed troops, left the British Squadron and made for Horse Island, where they landed under cover of two gun-boats directed by Captain Mulcaster of the Royal Navy. As the flotilla rounded the island the huge pivot gun at Fort Tompkins hurled murderous enfilading shots in their midst; and when they were near the shore they received a scattering fire from the muskets of the militia. This was promptly responded to by Mulcaster's great guns, loaded with grape and canister shot;

and by his first fire Colonel Mills, who was standing near his men, was shot dead.

The British formed in good order on the island, and with grenadiers, commanded by Adjutant-General Baynes, they pressed rapidly across the shallow strait. The rank and file of the American militia had suffered no material injury, but the unusual sound of bullets to raw soldiers as they whistled through the bushes, and the din of the oncoming foe, struck the whole line with an extraordinary panic, and before they had time to give a second fire they rose from their cover behind the gravel bank and fled with precipitation, leaving their 6-pounder behind.

General Brown, who was on the left of his little army, was astonished and perplexed by this disgraceful retreat. He expected the militia would have remained firm, at least until the enemy were fairly on the main. But their movement was so sudden, general, and rapid that he found himself completely alone, not a man standing within several rods of him. Stung by this shameful conduct, he ran after the fugitives and endeavored to arrest their flight. His efforts were unavailing. Forgetful of their promise of courage, and unmindful of the orders they had received to rally in the woods in the event of their being driven back, they continued their flight until they were sure of being out of harm's way. Those under Colonel Tuttle were equally recreant to duty, and joined in the disgraceful flight, although they had not in any way been exposed to the enemy's fire. Captain Samuel M'Nitt was an honorable exception among a few. He stood and blazed away at the enemy after his companions had all fled. With the aid of Lieutenant Mayo he succeeded in rallying almost one hundred of them behind some fallen timbers, and from that cover they annoyed the enemy exceedingly as they marched through the woods in the direction of the village. Meanwhile Colonel Backus and his regulars had advanced, and with the Albany volunteers, who had stood firm when the militia fled, and had retired slowly along a wagon road by the margin of the lake before superior numbers, was disputing the march of the invaders inch by inch. These finally made a stand, and fought the enemy gallantly for an hour, while the gun at Fort Tompkins was playing briskly upon the advancing foe. But so great was the superior weight of the enemy in numbers that the American line was constantly forced back. Lieutenant Fanning, commanding a small detachment at Fort Volunteer, came forward and engaged warmly in the fight. Still the foe bore heavily upon them; and when the Americans were most in want of encouragement a disheartening event occurred. Dense smoke arose in their rear, and it was soon ascertained that the store-houses on the margin of the harbor, filled with the spoils from York and a vast amount of other valuable property, also the new ship *General Pike*, were in flames. Had a portion of the enemy landed in the rear and applied the torch? No. In the almost



JACOB BROWN.

universal panic that prevailed when the militia fled, Lieutenant Chauncey, of the navy, who had the stores in charge, was informed that all was lost, and that the victorious enemy was rapidly marching upon the post. A train prepared for the emergency was lighted, and in a few minutes stores and ship were in flames. The friendly incendiary was soon named to General Brown, much to his relief, and he hastened to reassure Colonel Backus. He arrived just in time to see that gallant officer fall, mortally wounded, and to wipe his pallid brow with his own hand.

Pressed back, back, back, the wearied and worried Americans took refuge in some new log-barracks in an open space near the town. The enemy made a desperate effort to dislodge them. Brown saw that all would be lost should they be driven from that shelter, and he determined to rally the fugitive militia, if possible—who, he was informed, were on the outskirts of the village and in the roads leading from it—and with these make a descent upon the enemy's boats. For this purpose mounted dragoons were employed. They proclaimed a victory; and the cowards supposing danger to be over, full three hundred of them were collected on the flank of the enemy, but in great disorder. Brown briefly addressed them with reproaches and persuasions; and then informed them that measures had been taken to shoot every man of them who should be found attempting to run. They were then led to attack a flanking party under Captain Grey, just as they were about to make a heavy assault upon the log-barracks. Grey was walking backward, waving his sword, and had just shouted, "Come on, boys! Remember York! The day is ours!" when a drummer-boy among the rallied militia cried out, "Perhaps not yet!" and shot him. Grey fell and instantly expired.

Prevost observed the rallying militia, and believing them to be new recruits coming in from the surrounding country, and in great numbers, threatening his boats and his communication with his vessels, sounded a retreat. It was commenced in good order, but became a disorderly flight. It was so precipitate that the fatigued Americans could not overtake them. They reached the squadron in safety, leaving a large portion of their dead and wounded behind. The British lost 50 killed and 211 wounded. The Americans lost 47 killed, 84 wounded, and 36 missing. Notwithstanding all this, Sir George Prevost had the impudence to send a flag from the squadron demanding a surrender of the town! It was treated with deserved contempt. Soon after the return of the flag the whole squadron and flotilla of small boats started for Kingston. Their return without victory or booty created intense disappointment; and the whole affair, on the part of the British, was pronounced at the time, and has been by their own writers ever since, "in a high degree disgraceful." The energy, skill, and bravery of General Brown were highly eulogized by his countrymen. When the battle was ended efforts were made to save the

public property from the flames. The *Pike*, and the *Duke of Gloucester* captured at York, escaped destruction, but other property of the value of half a million of dollars was consumed. No further attempts were made by the enemy during the war to capture Sackett's Harbor.

General James Wilkinson succeeded General Dearborn in the command of the Northern army toward the close of the summer of 1813. He arrived at Sackett's Harbor on the 20th of August, and with the co-operation of a council of officers he formed a plan of operations against the enemy at Kingston and down the St. Lawrence. His first care was to concentrate the forces under his command, which were scattered over an extensive and sparsely-settled country—some on the Niagara frontier, some at the eastern end of Lake Ontario, and some on Lake Champlain. He accordingly directed those on the Niagara and at Sackett's Harbor to rendezvous on Grenadier Island, in the St. Lawrence, and at French Creek (now Clayton), on the southern bank of that river. Those composing the right wing, on Lake Champlain, under General Wade Hampton (who was an active partisan officer in the South during the Revolution), were directed to move at the same time to the Canada border, "at the mouth of the Chateaugay, or other point which would favor the junction of the forces and hold the enemy in check."

Wilkinson and Hampton were personal enemies; and General Armstrong, the Secretary of War (also a soldier of the Revolution), transferred the Department to the Northern frontier, in the person of himself and the Adjutant-General, in order to reconcile all differences between these two commanders, and to have a close oversight of the movements of the campaign in that quarter. He joined Wilkinson at Sackett's Harbor; and after much consultation it was agreed to pass by Kingston, and strike a blow at Montreal. For weeks the bustle of preparation had been seen at Sackett's Harbor, and many armed boats and transports had been built there. Every thing was in readiness by the 1st of October, yet final orders for embarkation were not given until the 12th. In the mean time the right wing of the army, under Hampton, was put in motion in the direction of the St. Lawrence. His forces were assembled at Cumberland Head, on Lake Champlain, near Plattsburg, at the middle of September, about four thousand strong, in effective infantry, a squadron of horse, and a well-appointed train of artillery. On penetrating the flat country beyond the Canada line it was found that a prevailing drought would doubtless make it impossible to procure forage and water in sufficient quantity, in that direction, for the horses and draught-cattle; so Hampton turned westward, and took the road which led to the Chateaugay River, in the direction of Malone. From Chateaugay Four Corners he moved down that stream for the purpose of forming a junction with Wilkinson, coming from above. The vigilant Major De Salaberry was in that region watching him, and placing felled trees in his

way along the obscure road through the forest. He posted Indians and light troops in positions to dispute Hampton's passage; and so formidable did his opposition soon become that the American commander sent General George Izard with a detachment of light troops to gain the rear of the woods and seize the Canadian settlements on the Chateaugay, in the open country beyond, while the remainder of the army should make a circuit in an opposite direction, and avoid the obstructed forest altogether. This movement was successfully executed, and on the following day (October 22) a greater portion of Hampton's army encamped near the confluence of the Outard Creek and the Chateaugay River. There they remained until the artillery and stores came up.

Not far beyond this, in a wood, the enemy was found, ready to dispute the further march of the Americans to guard an important ford and to keep communications open with the St. Lawrence. De Salaberry's force was about a thousand strong; and Sir George Prevost and General De Watteville were within bugle-call, with more troops. To dislodge De Salaberry was Hampton's first care. He was informed of a ford opposite the left flank of the enemy; and on the evening of the 25th (Oct.), he detached Colonel Robert Purdy of the Fourth regular infantry, and Boyd's light troops to force the ford and fall on the British rear at dawn. The crack of Purdy's musketry was to be the signal for the main body of the Americans to attack the enemy's front. Ignorant guides foiled the whole plan. Purdy followed them across the river near the camp in thick darkness, and he and his men were soon bewildered in a hemlock swamp, out of which they could not find their way either back to camp or to the sought-for ford. All night the troops wandered about in that labyrinth; and sometimes different corps would meet each other in the gloom and excite mutual alarm, each mistaking the other for an enemy.

At dawn Purdy found himself within half a mile of the ford, and then the exhausted troops lay down to rest. Hampton, meanwhile, put his army in motion, under Izard, expecting every moment to hear Purdy's guns. But they remained silent, for their bearers were sleeping. Meridian was passed; and at two o'clock Izard moved forward to attack the foe. De Salaberry came out to meet him, but was pressed back to his forest defenses. Firing was now heard on the other side of the stream. Purdy had been surprised by a small detachment of Chasseurs and Canadian militia, who gained his rear while his soldiers were reposing. His troops, utterly discomfited, fled to the river. Several officers and men swam across, and bore to Hampton alarming accounts of the great numbers of the enemy before whom they had been running. Their fears made them give a false account, for the enemy that frightened Purdy so terribly was insignificant in strength. Indeed he had fled after the first encounter with the Americans,

and the ludicrous scene was presented in that hemlock swamp, not only of the two parties running away from each other, but of detachments of Purdy's men having spirited engagements with each other, mistaking themselves for foes.

De Salaberry soon perceived that overwhelming numbers might outflank him, and he resorted to a successful stratagem. He posted buglers at some distance from each other, and when some concealed Provincial militia opened fire almost upon Hampton's flank, these buglers simultaneously sounded a charge. Hampton was alarmed. From the apparent extent of the British line, as indicated by the bugles, he supposed a heavy force was about to fall upon him, front and flank. He immediately sounded a retreat and withdrew from the field; and the whole army fell back to Chateaugay Four Corners, where its inglorious campaign ended. Such was the affair, disgraceful to the American arms, which historians have attempted to dignify with the name of *battle*.

The embarkation, at Sackett's Harbor, of Wilkinson's expedition against Montreal, as we have seen, was ordered to take place on the 12th of October. With a reckless disregard of life, the troops, under the direct command of Major-General Lewis, were placed in scows, batteaux, Durham boats, and common lake sail-boats, at the beginning of a dark night when portents of a storm were seen on every hand. In these frail vessels they were closely packed with ordnance, ammunition, hospital stores, baggage, camp equipage, and two months' provisions. The voyage was among islands, and past numerous points of land whose soundings and currents were known to few. There was a scarcity of pilots; and the whole flotilla seemed to have been sent out with very little of man's wisdom to direct it. The wind was favorable at the beginning, but toward midnight, as the clouds thickened and the darkness deepened, it freshened, and before morning became a gale, with rain and sleet. The flotilla was scattered in every direction, and the gloomy dawn revealed a sad spectacle. The shores of the islands and the main were strewn with wrecks of vessels and property. Fifteen large boats were totally lost, and many were too seriously damaged to be safe. For thirty hours the wind blew fiercely, but on the 20th, there having been a comparative calm for more than a day, a large proportion of the troops, with the sound boats, arrived at Grenadier Island, situated a short distance above Cape Vincent. These were chiefly the brigades of Boyd, Brown, Covington, Swartwout, and Porter.

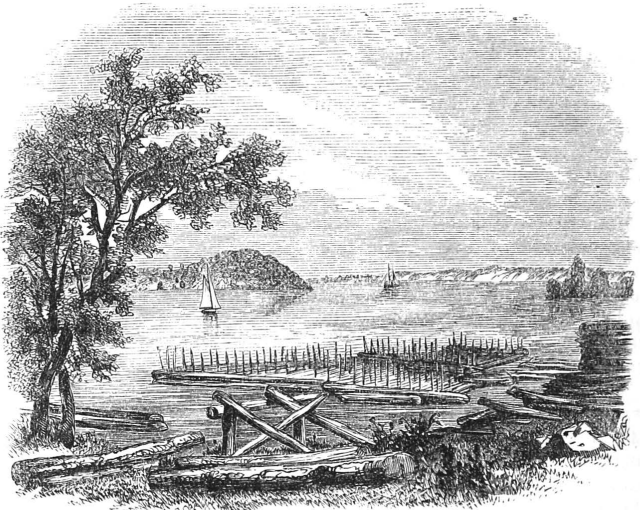
In the mean time General Wilkinson was passing to and fro between the Harbor and Grenadier Island, looking after the smitten expedition. A return made to him on the 22d of October, showed that a large number of troops were still behind in vessels "wrecked or stranded." The weather continued boisterous, and on the 24th he was compelled to write to the

Secretary of War—"The extent of the injury to our craft, clothing, arms, and provisions, greatly exceed our apprehensions, and has subjected us to the necessity of furnishing clothing, and of making repairs and equipments to the flotilla generally. In fact all our hopes have been nearly blasted; but, thanks to the same Providence that placed us in jeopardy, we are surmounting our difficulties, and, God willing, I shall pass Prescott on the night of the first or second proximo."

The troops remained encamped on Grenadier Island until the first of November, except General Brown's brigade, some light troops, and heavy artillery, which went down the St. Lawrence on the 29th, and took post at the mouth of French Creek, where the village of Clayton now stands. Storm had followed storm on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence. Snow fell to the depth of ten inches. The season was too far advanced to admit of further delay on account of weather, and the whole army moved forward as speedily as possible. Chauncey, in the mean time, who had been all the season endeavoring to bring the British squadron into conflict with him, but only partially succeeded on one occasion, attempted to blockade the enemy in Kingston Harbor, or at least to prevent his going down the river, either to pursue the Americans, or to take possession of and fortify the important old military post at the head of Carleton Island, already spoken of. But Chauncey's blockade was ineffectual. British marine scouts were out among the Thousand Islands, and when, on the afternoon of the 1st of November, they discovered Brown encamped in the woods at French Creek, two brigs, two schooners, and eight gun-boats, filled with infantry, were out ready to bear down upon him. They did so at about sunset of the same day.

Fortunately Brown had planted a battery of three 18-pounders on Bartlett's Point, a high, wooded bluff on the western shore of French Creek at its mouth, under the command of Captain M'Pherson of the light artillery. This battery, from its elevation, was very effective; and it was served so skillfully that the enemy were driven away after some cannonading. At dawn the next morning the conflict was renewed with the same result, the enemy in the two engagements having suffered much loss. It was with great difficulty that the British saved one of their brigs from capture.

In the mean time troops were coming down from Grenadier Island and landing on the shore



MOUTH OF FRENCH CREEK.

of French Creek, as far up as the encampment of General Brown, on what has ever since been known as Wilkinson's Point. The commanding general, who was complimented by this name, arrived there on the 3d of November, and on the 4th he issued a general order, preparatory to final embarkation, in which he exhorted his troops to sustain well the character of American citizens, and abstain from rapine and plunder; "The General is determined," he said, "to have the first person who shall be detected in plundering an inhabitant of Canada of the smallest amount of property made an example of."

On the morning of the 5th, a clear, bright, crisp morning, just at dawn, the whole flotilla, comprising almost three hundred boats, moved down the river from French Creek, with banners furled and music silent, for they wished to elude discovery by the British, who, until now, were uncertain whether the expedition was intended for Kingston, Prescott, or Montreal. But the vigilant foe had immediately discovered their course, and with a heavy armed galley and gun-boats filled with troops, started in pursuit. The flotilla arrived at Morristown early that evening, having been annoyed by the enemy, more or less, all the way. The General was conveyed in a barge, under the command of the now venerable William Johnson, of Clayton, better known as "Bill Johnson, the Pirate of the Thousand Islands," or the "Hero of the Thousand Islands," according to the feelings of his friends and foes. Johnson had then been in active service under Chauncey, as a spy, and had rendered his adopted country (he was born in Canada) essential aid. During the war he became filled with bitter feelings against the British; and when, in 1837, there was a revolt in both of the Canadian Provinces against the Government, he became one of the most active of the American sympathizers with the "Pa-





LIGHT-HOUSE KEPT BY JOHNSON.

triot," as the insurgents were called. He was one of the party who destroyed the British packet steamer *Robert Peel*, for which and other acts he was outlawed by his own Government, and a reward of \$500 was offered for his apprehension. He was captured and imprisoned; finally pardoned; and now upon a little rocky island five miles below Clayton, and within sight of the place where the *Peel* was burned, he is the keeper of a light-house, and is paid a salary by the Government which once decreed him an outlaw! Time makes many strange changes.

Several times during the passage of Wilkinson's army that day from French Creek to Morristown, the General was disposed to turn upon the harassing enemy. He did so, at one time, near Bald Island, and was compelled to engage some of the enemy's gun-boats, which shot out of the British channel on the north and attacked his rear. They were beaten off, and Wilkinson determined to run by the formidable batteries at Prescott during the night. It was found to be impracticable, and his boats lay moored at Morristown until morning. A corps of land troops from Kingston had also followed Wilkinson along the Northern shore of the St. Lawrence, and arrived at Prescott before the American flotilla reached Ogdensburg.

For the purpose of avoiding Fort Wellington and other fortifications at Prescott, Wilkinson halted three miles above Ogdensburg, where he debarked his ammunition, and all of his troops except a sufficient number to man the boats. These were to be conveyed by land to the "Red Mill," four miles below Ogdensburg on the American shore, and the boats were to run by the Prescott batteries that night.

At the place of debarkation Wilkinson issued a proclamation to the Canadians, intended to make them passive; and there, at noon on the 6th of November, he was visited by Hampton's Inspector-General, by whom he sent orders for that commander to press forward to the St. Lawrence, and form a junction with

the descending army at St. Regis.

By the skillful management of General Brown the whole flotilla passed Prescott safely that night, with the exception of two large boats heavily laden with prisoners, artillery, and ordnance stores, which ran aground at Ogdensburg. They were taken off under a severe cannonading from Fort Wellington, and soon joined the others at the "Red Mill." Wilkinson was now informed that the Canada shore of the river was lined with posts of musketry and artillery at every eligible point, to dispute the passage of the flotilla. To

meet and remove these impediments Colonel Alexander Macomb was detached with twelve hundred of the *élite* of the army, and on Sunday, the 7th, landed on the Canada shore. He was soon followed by Lieutenant-Colonel Forsyth and his riflemen.

The flotilla arrived abreast "The White House," opposite the Canadian town of Matilda, about eighteen miles below Ogdensburg, on the 8th, and there Wilkinson called a council of his officers, consisting of Generals Lewis, Boyd, Brown, Porter, Covington, and Swartwout. After hearing a report from the acting chief-engineer, Colonel J. G. Swift, concerning the reputed strength of the enemy, the question "Shall the army proceed with all possible rapidity to the attack of Montreal?" was considered, and answered in the affirmative. General Brown was at once ordered to cross the river with his brigade and the dragoons, for the purpose of marching down the Canada side of the stream in connection with Colonel Macomb; and the remainder of the day and night was consumed in the transportation. Meanwhile Wilkinson was informed that a British reinforcement, full one thousand strong, had been sent down from Kingston to Prescott, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Morrison. They had come in the armed schooners *Beresford* and *Sidney Smith*, and several gun-boats and batteaux, under Captain Mulcaster, which had eluded Chauncey's inefficient blockading squadron. They were joined at Prescott by provincial infantry and dragoons, under Lieutenant-Colonel Pearson, and on the morning of the 9th they were close upon Wilkinson with the vessels in which they came down the river; and a large portion of the land troops were debarked at Matilda, for the purpose of pursuing the Americans. General Boyd and his brigade were now detached to reinforce Brown, with orders to cover his march, to attack the pursuing enemy, if necessary, and to co-operate with the other commanders.

Wilkinson now found himself in a perilous position. The British armed vessels were following his flotilla, and a heavy British force was hanging upon the rear of his land troops, ready to co-operate with the water-craft in an attack upon the Americans. They constantly harassed Brown and Boyd, and occasionally attacked the rear of the flotilla. The American forces on the shore also encountered detachments coming up from below, and were compelled to make some long and tedious circuits in their march because of the destruction of the bridges in the front.

On the morning of the 10th, when Wilkinson was approaching the "Longue Saut," a perilous rapid in the St. Lawrence eight miles in extent, he was informed that a considerable body of the enemy had collected near its foot, had constructed a block-house, and were prepared to attack him when he should come down. General Brown was ordered to advance at once and dislodge them, and at noon cannonading was heard in that direction for some time. At the same hour the enemy came pressing upon Wilkinson's rear, and commenced cannonading from the gun-boats. The American gun-barges were so slender that the 18-pounders could not be worked effectively; so they were landed, placed in battery, and brought to bear upon the enemy so skillfully that his vessels fled in haste up the river. In these operations the day was mostly consumed. The pilots were unwilling to enter the rapids at night. It was necessary to hear from Brown; for when the flotilla should once be committed to the swift current of the rapids there could be no retreat. These considerations caused Wilkinson to halt for the night in front of the farm of John Chrystler (a British militia captain, then in the service), a few miles below Williamsburg, while Boyd, with the rear of the land force, encamped near.

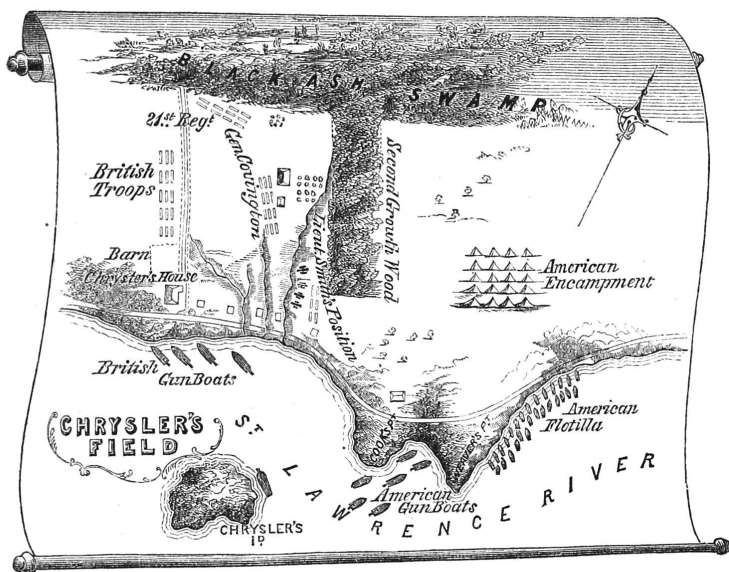
At ten o'clock on the morning of the 11th Wilkinson received a dispatch from Brown, addressed from "Five miles above Cornwall," announcing his success in his attack upon the British fort at the foot of the rapids, informing him of the wounding of Lieutenant-Colonel Forsyth and one of his men, and urging him to come forward with boats and supplies as quickly as possible, because his wearied troops were "without covering in the rain." This dispatch found Wilkinson extremely ill; and his reply, in which he told Brown of the presence of the enemy on his rear, and his apprehensions that he intended to pass him with his gun-boats and strengthen the British forces below, was addressed "From my bed." "It is now," he said, "that I feel the heavy hand of disease—enfeebled and confined to my bed, while the safety of the army intrusted to my command, the honor of our arms, and the greatest interests of our country are at hazard."

Wilkinson now ordered the flotilla to proceed, and Boyd and his command to resume their march. At that moment information reached the commanding general that the enemy were

advancing in column, and that firing from their gun-boats was heard. He immediately sent Colonel Swift with an order for Boyd to form his detachment into three columns, advance upon the enemy, and endeavor to outflank him and capture his cannon. At the same time the flotilla was ordered to be moored on the Canadian shore just below Weaver's Point, while his gun-boats lay off Cook's Point.

The brave Boyd, anxious for battle, gladly obeyed. Swartwout was detailed with the Fourth Brigade to assail the van-guard of the enemy, which was composed of light troops, and Covington was directed to take position at supporting distance from him with the Third Brigade. Swartwout, on a large brown horse, dashed gallantly into woods of second growth, followed by the Twenty-first Regiment, commanded by Colonel E. W. Ripley, and with these drove the light troops of the enemy back upon the main line, in open fields, on Chrystler's farm below his house. That line was well posted, its right resting on the St. Lawrence and covered by Mulcaster's gun-boats, and the left on a black-ash swamp, supported by Indians and gathering militia, under Colonel Thomas Fraser. They were advantageously formed back of a rail-fence and a ravine that intersected the extensive plain, and rendered the advance of the American artillery almost impossible.

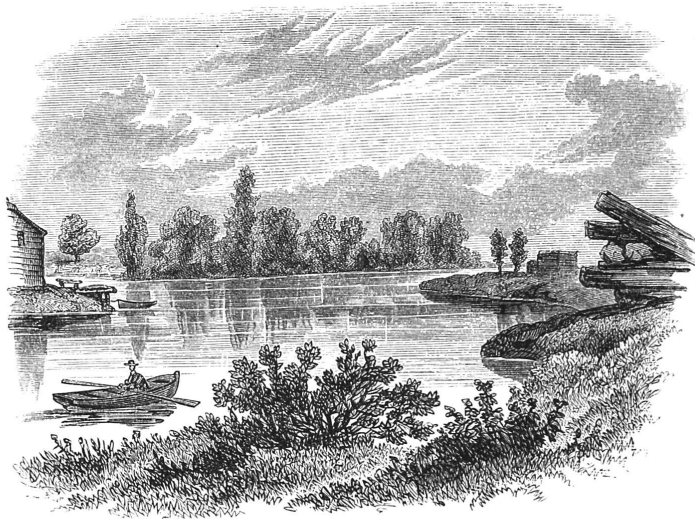
Swartwout's sudden and successful dash was quickly followed by an attack on the enemy's left by the whole of the Fourth Brigade and a part of the First under Colonel Coles, who advanced across plowed fields, knee-deep in mud, in the face of a heavy shower of bullets and shrapnel shell. At the same time General Covington, mounted on a fine white horse, gallantly led the Third Brigade against the enemy's left, near the river, and the battle became general. By charge after charge in the midst of difficulties the British were pushed back almost a mile; and the American cannon, placed in fair position by General Boyd, under the direction of Colonel Swift, did excellent execution for a few minutes. The squadron of the Second Regiment of dragoons was early in the field, and much exposed to the enemy's fire, but, owing to the nature of the ground, was unable to accomplish much. At length Covington fell, severely wounded, and the ammunition of the Americans began to fail. It was soon exhausted, and the Fourth Brigade, hard pushed, fell back, followed by Colonel Coles. This retrograde movement affected the Third Brigade, and it, too, fell back in considerable disorder. The British perceived this, and followed up the advantage gained with great vigor, and were endeavoring, by a flank movement, to capture Boyd's cannon, when a gallant charge of cavalry, led by Adjutant-General Walbach, who had obtained Armstrong's permission to accompany the expedition, drove them back and saved the pieces. The effort was renewed. Lieutenant Smith, who commanded one of the cannon, was mortally wounded, and it fell into the hands of the enemy.



The conflict had lasted about two hours, when the Americans were compelled to fall back. During that time victory had swayed like a pendulum between the combatants, and would doubtless have rested with the Americans had their ammunition held out. Their retreat was promising to be a rout, when the flying troops were met by six hundred men under Lieutenant-Colonel Timothy Upham, of the Twenty-first Regiment of Infantry, and Major Malcolm, whom Wilkinson had sent up to the support of Boyd. These checked the disorderly flight; and taking position on the ground from which Boyd's force had been driven, they gallantly attacked the enemy, seized the principal ravine, and, with a severe fire at short musket range, drove the British back and saved the day. Meanwhile Boyd had re-formed his line in battle order on the edge of the wood from which Swartwout drove the foe at the beginning of the engagement, and there awaited another attack. It was not made. Both parties seemed willing to make the excuse of oncoming darkness a warrant for suspending further fighting. The Americans, under cover of night, retired unmolested to their boats, and the British remained upon the field. Neither party had gained a victory, but the advantage lay with the British.

On the morning after the battle the flotilla and gun-boats passed safely down the Long Rapids without discovering any signs of an enemy, and at the same time the land troops marched in the same direction unmolested. At Barnhart's, three miles above Cornwall, they formed a junction with the forces under General Brown, and Wilkinson expected to hear of the arrival of General Hampton and his division at St. Regis, on the opposite shore of the St. Lawrence. But he was disappointed. Gen-

eral Brown had written to Hampton the day before, informing him of rumors of a battle above, and saying, "My own opinion is you can not be with us too soon," and begging him to inform the writer by the bearer when he might be expected at St. Regis. Soon after Wilkinson's arrival Colonel Atkinson, Hampton's Inspector-General, appeared as the bearer of a letter from his chief, dated the 11th, in which the commander of the left of the grand army of the North, who, as we have seen, had fallen back to Chateaugay Four Corners, declared his intention not to join Wilkinson at all, but to co-operate in the attack on Montreal by returning to Champlain and making a descent from that place. In other words, he was resolved to act independently of his superior, violate his oath, and, with an ambition without sufficient ability to execute its behests, attempt to win glory for himself exclusively by snatching the coveted prize of Montreal from the hands of Wilkinson. The latter was enraged, and declared that he would "arrest Hampton and direct Izard to bring forward the division." But he was too feeble in mind and body to execute his threat, or do any thing that required energy; and after uttering a few curses, he called a council of war, and left the proud old oligarch, whose slaves in South Carolina and Louisiana he counted by thousands, to do as he pleased. That council decided that "the conduct of Major-General Hampton, in refusing to join his division to the troops descending the St. Lawrence, rendered it expedient to remove the army to French Mills, on the Salmon River." "The opinion of the younger members of the council was," says the now venerable General Swift, "that, with Brown as a leader, no character would be lost in going to Montreal;" but the majority said no; and on the following day, at



JUNCTION OF BIG AND LITTLE SALMON.

noon, when information came that there was a considerable British force at Coteau de Lac, the foot-soldiers and artillerymen were all embarked on the transports, under the direction of General Brown, and departed for the Salmon River. The horses of the dragoons, excepting about forty, were made to swim across the cold and rapidly-flowing St. Lawrence, there a thousand yards wide, and the squadron proceeded to Utica. The flotilla passed up the Big Salmon about six miles to its confluence with the Little Salmon, near the French Mills, when it was announced that the boats were to be scuttled, and the army was to go into winter-quarters in huts.

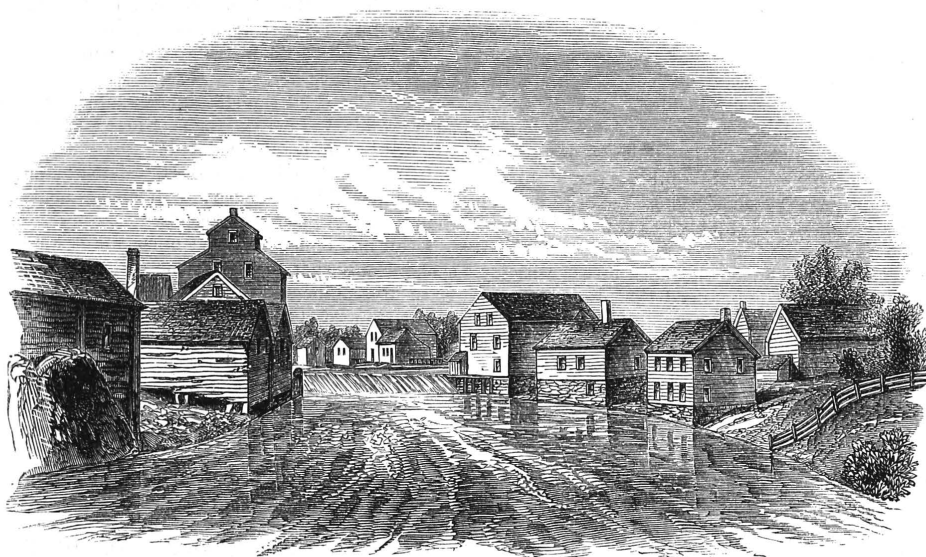
Thus ended, in disaster and disgrace, an expedition which, in its inception, promised great and salutary results. It was composed of brave and patriotic men; and justice to those men requires the humiliating confession from the historian that their failure to achieve complete success is justly chargeable to the incompetency of the chief commanders, and the criminal indulgence, on the part of these commanders, of personal jealousies and animosities. The appointment of Wilkinson to the command of the Northern army was a criminal blunder on the part of the Government. His antecedents were well known, and did not recommend him for a responsible position. The weakness of his patriotism under temptations, and his too free indulgence in intoxicating drinks, were notorious. Hampton was totally unfit for the responsible station in which he was placed; and Armstrong, who was a fellow-soldier with them both in the old war for independence, lacked some of the qualities most essential in the administration of the extraordinary functions of his office in time of war. His presence on the frontier dur-

ing the progress of the expedition was, doubtless, detrimental to the service, and he left for the National Capital at the moment when the counsel and direction of a judicious secretary of war were most needed.

On arriving at the junction of the Big and Little Salmon the army was immediately debarked on the frozen shores, and set to work in the construction of huts for winter-quarters. Their first labor was the sad task of digging a grave for the remains of General Covington. He was shot through the body on the 11th, and died at Barnhart's on the morning of the 13th, just before the flotilla departed for Salmon River. Wilkinson immediately departed for Malone, after transferring the command of the army to General Lewis, who, with General Boyd, made his head-quarters at a long, low building (yet standing in 1860), dingy red in color, on the left bank of the Salmon, near the



BROWN'S HEAD-QUARTERS.



FRENCH MILLS, FORT COVINGTON.

present lower bridge over the river at French Mills, or Fort Covington. These generals soon obtained leave of absence, and the command of the army devolved on the younger and energetic leader, General Brown, who made his head-quarters on the right bank of the river, above the Mills, now on the corner of Water and Chateaugay streets, in Fort Covington. There he received his commission of Major-General in the armies of the United States. Hampton, in the mean time, had retired to Plattsburg, having abandoned all thoughts of entering Canada again. Wilkinson ordered him to join the main army at French Mills, with his four thousand men; but the disobedient leader, leaving General Izard, of South Carolina, in command, abandoned the service, and retired to his immense sugar plantations in Louisiana, followed by the contempt of virtuous and patriotic men.

General Brown at once adopted measures for making the troops as comfortable as possible. Huts were constructed; but this was a work of much labor, and consumed several weeks. Meanwhile severe winter weather came. They were on the 45th parallel, and at the beginning of December the cold became intense. Most of the soldiers had lost their blankets and extra clothing in the disastrous voyage to Grenadier Island, or in the battle on Chrystler's field. Even the sick had no shelter but tents for a while. The country in the vicinity was a wilderness, and provisions were not only scarce but of inferior quality. A great quantity of medicines and hospital stores had been lost through mismanagement, and these could not be procured short of Albany, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles. The mortality among the sick became frightful, and disease prostrated nearly

one-half of the little army before they were fairly housed in well-regulated cantonments.

Taking advantage of this distress among the soldiers, British emissaries tried, by the secret circulation of written and printed placards, to seduce the suffering men from their allegiance. "The American soldiers," said a written placard nailed upon a tree during a dark night, "who may wish to quit the unnatural war in which they are at present engaged will receive the arrears due to them by the American Government, to the extent of five months' pay, on their arrival at the British outposts. No man shall be required to serve against his own country." The lure failed. It is believed that not a single soldier of American birth was enticed away by such promises.

The enemy frequently menaced the cantonment at French Mills, as well as at Plattsburg; and toward the close of January Wilkinson received orders from the War Department to break up the post on Salmon River. Early in February the movement was made. The flotilla was destroyed as fully as the ice in which it was imbedded would permit, and the barracks were consumed. The hospital at Malone was abandoned; and while Brown, with a large portion of the troops, marched up the St. Lawrence and to Sackett's Harbor, the remainder accompanied the Commander-in-Chief to Plattsburg. The enemy at Cornwall was apprised of this movement, and crossed the river on the ice on the day when the last American detachment left French Mills. They were regulars, Canadian militia, and Indians, and plunder seemed to be their chief object. In this they were indulged, and the abandoned frontier suffered much.

Thus closed the events of the Campaign of 1813 on the Northern Frontier.



## JOSEPHINE HERBERT.

AFTER a long fever of suspense and hope I won at last the sweet confession and promise from the lips of Josephine. Swiftly all my doubts and pains forsook me. A heavenly glow overspread my soul. Then followed a month of ineffable happiness, blissful days and nights, when my heart seemed almost ready to burst, it was so full of love and joy! I can not now look back and think of those days but again my heart seems ready to break—not with love or with joy.

After it was understood that Josephine was to be my wife, and her parents had given their consent, I used to spend all my evenings at the cottage. Her mother—a cold, reserved woman, of whom I had always stood somewhat in awe—smiled upon me as I had never believed she could smile, and fondly called me her son. The father told me his most entertaining stories, and talked with me familiarly of politics and of the farm. To think how I loved these old people for her sake!—to remember how happy I was then!

But suddenly a change came over the family. Love made my sense so keen that I perceived it one evening before I entered the house. Josephine ran as usual to welcome me; her mother smiled the same; Mr. Herbert had never appeared so kind to me. Yet I could not be deceived. I knew that something was concealed from me; and after passing an unhappy evening I went home with a heavy heart.

Two or three times I had seen Judge Elmer's horse standing at Mr. Herbert's gate. He was a man of influence and wealth; Mrs. Herbert was ambitious in her choice of friends; and I was glad for her sake, knowing how well his visits would please her. But that night, as I lay awake in my lonely room, tormented with doubts, something whispered, "The Judge's attentions flatter them, and they think that Josephine might have looked higher for a husband."

My misery kept me awake all night. The next day I had work to do which compelled me to stifle my impatience until evening. But as soon as I could get away from my tasks I hastily changed my dress, and ran across the fields to Mr. Herbert's house.

As I approached I saw a cloud of dust in the distance, and the Judge's chaise coming down the road. It had stood at Mr. Herbert's gate only the day before, and the sight of it arriving again so soon filled me with a vague terror and jealousy. I crept through the garden hardly knowing what I should do. As I drew near the house, upon the side opposite the road, I perceived that the door was open, and presently discovered Mrs. Herbert talking with Josephine, who was weeping, while her father walked up and down, smoking, with a troubled air. I felt a devouring anxiety to hear what was said. Passion overcame all sense of honor or shame; a shadowy vine favored my insane wish, and there I stood and listened.

"Don't vex the girl; don't vex her!" said Mr. Herbert. "Let her do as she pleases."

"Of course," said his wife, "she will do as we wish to have her."

"Oh, I can't! I can't!" said Josephine. "I have promised to marry Hugh; I love him! It will kill him to be disappointed!"

"That's it," said Mr. Herbert, walking to the door and smoking violently. "If she has made the promise she ought to keep it."

I can not remember what other words were spoken, only that they filled me with fury and fear. Josephine was speaking when the Judge's chaise stopped at the gate. The arrival brought confusion to the group, and Josephine arose and fled. She ran out at the door. She met me face to face. She uttered a cry and recoiled, guilty and terror-stricken.

"What is the matter?" quickly asked her mother.

Josephine gasped out my name. Mrs. Herbert, who did not see me, hurried her from the door.

"Go and meet him!" she whispered. "Talk to him and keep him in the garden—don't let him know any thing yet!"

The door was closed. I moved toward Josephine as she stood there, white and trembling, and fastened my grasp upon her wrist. She made no resistance as I drew her away, only gasping a little, and looking up at me with wild and frightened looks. I drew her toward the well, thinking I would fling her down into it, and bury her with stones, my heart was so deadly in its wrath. She seemed to read my savage purpose.

"Don't, don't!" she faltered. "I love you, I love you, Hugh!"

"How dare you tell me that?" I said, fiercely.

"Why, Hugh! what have I done?"

"Done! what have you done—perjured, guilty woman?"

"I don't know what you mean," she said. "You are angry without cause. I have done nothing—nothing!"

"Beware," I answered, quite beside myself—"beware how you trifle with me now! I know all. I have heard. Don't dare to speak another lie; for maybe we shall all die soon—the rich man who is coming to marry you, and the wicked woman who is plotting my ruin—and you too, Josephine: you first, and myself last! So beware!"

"Oh, Hugh!" she articulated, sinking upon her knees and clasping mine, and looking up at me with despairing features—"forgive me, spare me, and I will tell you all!"

"Get up," I said, sternly. I lifted her to her feet; but when I saw that she could hardly stand, so great was her fear, a feeling of pity came over me and I put my arm about her waist, supporting her, while I led her to an arbor in the garden.

"Oh, you will not be too cruel with me: you will not, dear, dear Hugh!" she said. "You are kinder than you were! Oh yes, yes: you

