

the river, having its front towards the lake. On the west shore stands the town, consisting of about 30 houses. Its peculiar position for transit by water to New York made it a Naval depot of considerable importance, and a judicious officer entrusted with the defence of Canada would have made it a chief object in his plan of operations exactly what that great General the Marquis of Montcalm did.

On the 3rd of May a detachment of troops numbering altogether 1080 rank and file embarked on board the fleet at Kingston, and on the 4th in the morning it stood out of the harbour, the wind light and variable, so that it did not arrive off Oswego before noon on the 5th. The fort at Oswego had been reinforced by 300 artillery men and several Engineer and Artillery officers; the batteries had been repaired and were fresh picketed, while new platforms had been laid for the guns which were four in number, 24-12 and 6-pounders besides a 12-pdr. placed *en barbette* on the shore, the United States schooner Growler (formerly the British Hamilton) of three heavy guns was lying in the harbour, while arrangements had been made for assembling the Militia of the district amounting to 200 men, thus making the whole force for the defence 640 men. At 3 p.m. the ships lay to within long range of the shore, and the gunboats, 11 in number, were sent in under orders to induce the enemy to show the number and position of his guns—this object being effected by a *distant cannonade of an hour and a half*, preparations were made to disembark the troops but a heavy gale from the Northwest compelled the ships to gain an offing and cut a drift four of the boats. The squadron was obliged to anchor 10 miles to the Northward of the Fort. On the 6th, the ships returned and a division of 770 men including 200 *seamen armed with pikes* embarked in the boats—owing to the shoalness of the water off the harbour the Prince Regent and Princess Charlotte could not approach near enough to cannonade the battery with any effect. After the other vessels had received considerable damage from those *four guns* the troops effecting a landing, drove the American regulars and militia from the hill and fort having lost 18 killed and 64 wounded; the loss of the Americans was six killed, 38 wounded and 60 prisoners. The British carried away with them *seven* long guns, 32 and 24-pounders, a quantity of Ordnance stores and large rope, 2,400 barrels of provisions and three schooners; they destroyed three long 24-pounders, one long 12 and two long six pounders, a schooner, the barracks and all the public buildings; one of the schooners was the Growler; besides those carried away a large quantity was destroyed by the Yankees. With the pardonable partiality of a "brother officer" and the *esprit de corps* which characterises seamen, Captain Brenton in his Naval history says, "Sir Jas. Yeo was an officer of very rare talent for

war and deep laid strategems, in this last, perhaps, he was only excelled by the Indians themselves, as the following little history will show:"—he then goes on to state an attempt on Sackett's Harbour in a very exaggerated style, the particulars of which are as follows:—By the capture of a boat from Oswego containing *two* long 24-pdrs. and 19½ inch cable for the Superior, a new ship building at Sackett's Harbour, Sir James became apprised that eighteen other boats similarly laden were waiting at Sandy Creek for an opportunity of reaching Sackett's Harbour, he accordingly detached 180 seamen and marines to endeavor to cut out the vessels—owing to bad management instead of surprising the Americans the expedition was surprised and captured with a loss of 18 killed and 50 dangerously wounded—so much for Sir J. L. Yeo's deep laid strategems.

On the 11th of June Commodore Chauncey launched at Sackett's Harbour the Mohawk of 1350 tons, mounting 28 long 24-pounders on the main-deck, 3 long 34-pounders and 18 carronades, 42-pounders, on the quarter deck and fore-castle, total 48 guns with a compliment of 460 men. This made the British and American forces on the Lake stand in relation to broadside force and men as follows: British 2752 lbs. and 1517 men; American 4188 lbs. and 2321 men. The latter end of July Sir J. L. Yeo raised the *blockade* of Sackett's Harbour and sailed for Kingston, and on the 1st August Commodore Chauncey sailed out of port.

About the middle of October the British launched the St. Lawrence of 2306 tons, intended to mount 102 guns. Commodore Chauncey having timely notice of this steered to Sackett's Harbour where he had laid down the keels of two 74-gun ships, each of whose broadsides would have equalled that of the St. Lawrence; to meet this Sir J. L. Yeo laid down the keels of a 74-gun ship and a *frigate* like the Princess Charlotte—thus were both those sapient commanders employed during the remainder of the season of navigation, through the winter, till news of peace arrived in early Spring.

It can hardly afford any pleasure to the scientific seaman to read a narrative of such confirmed stupidity and incapacity from officers who were at the head of the naval service in their respective countries. The imbecility of the whole of their proceedings (Commodores Yeo and Chauncey) ought to have been amply proved by the attack on Oswego, where the heavy vessels were of no service, *their draft of water being too great*. Then as now the proper naval defence of the Lakes must be by vessels of *light draft heavily armed*.

The defeat and capture of the British flotilla on Lake Erie had given the Americans command of the upper lakes, but from the same cause which paralysed the British arms—*want of proper strategical knowledge*—they were totally unable to turn this advan-

tage to account. Michilimackinac, an island in the straits connecting Lakes Michigan and Huron, had been captured by Captain Roberts, aided by the Hon. L. Pothier, and a corps of voyageurs of the Northwest Company, acting by instructions from Sir Isaac Brock, and was the *strategical position* which rendered the command of Lakes Erie and Huron useless to the Americans as it enabled the British to retain the North-western Indians in alliance, and those sturdy warriors held all the country in rear of the American forts between Niagara and Detroit, compelling the forces organized for the maintenance of the various forts to act strictly on the defensive, and even enabling the commandant of Michilimackinac to capture the port Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi, so that if the British fleet, instead of frittering away its opportunities by raids on the Potomac had dashed at New Orleans the American defence would have been completely paralysed, as possession of the Mississippi would have reduced the States to the position the English Colonies held in 1755, after General Braddock's defeat.

The imbecility of the American Secretary of War, and the Commander-in-Chief superseded Captain Perry in command of the flotilla on Lake Erie, and sent him to assist Commodore Chauncey in shipbuilding on Lake Ontario, while his successor, on the 4th August, attempted to capture Michilimackinac, but totally failed. On the return from this expedition intelligence was obtained that the Northwest Company's schooner Nancy was lying in the Nottawasaga under protection of a block house situated on the south-east side of the river, which here runs parallel to and forms a narrow peninsula with the shore of Gloucester Bay. The block house mounted two 24-pounder carronades and one 6-pounder. The American squadron was composed of the Niagara, mounting 18 carronades 32-pounders and 2 long 12-pounders; the Tigres and Scorpion, whose armament was one long 12 and two long 24-pounders, with a 5½ inch howitzer, with upwards of 500 men. The Nancy mounted one piece of artillery, and was manned by 23 officers and men—this number included the garrison of the block house. After a spirited contest of some hours, Lieut. Worsley, the officer in command, prepared a train to blow up both vessel and block house, previous to escaping up the river, but one of the enemy's shells burst in the Nancy, blowing up both vessel and block house. A heavily laden fleet of canoes belonging to the Company escaped up French River. The Tigres and Scorpion were left to blockade the Nottawasaga River and prevent supplies being forwarded to the garrison at Michilimackinac.

After cruising for a few days off the Nottawasaga the Tigres and Scorpion sailed for St. Joseph's, the Northwest Company's fort at the mouth of St. Mary's river, the entrance to Lake Superior, hoping to intercept