

by Colonel Harvey and his "green tigers," as the men of the 49th were called. In retaliation, an attack was planned upon Lieutenant Fitzgibbon at Beaver Dams (Thorold). This outpost was guarded by a detachment of the 49th, a few Indians and a squad of militia, in all about two hundred men. An American force of five hundred men, fifty dragoons and two field pieces, under Colonel Boerstler, was to set out from Fort George (Niagara) on June 23rd to take Fitzgibbon's outpost by surprise. The evening before a noisy party of soldiers had supped at the Secords. Mrs. Secord, while giving directions to the maid who waited on the men, was startled by some words dropped by one of the party, and listening attentively she soon heard the whole plan discussed. With a woman's quick decision she determined at once to warn Fitzgibbon of his danger. But how was it to be done? Her husband had been crippled by his wounds. Her brother also was lying seriously wounded at St. David's mill. There was but one way. She herself must undertake the dangerous walk of twenty miles through the forest. After obtaining with some difficulty her husband's consent, she rose before dawn June 23rd, set the breakfast table so that any chance visitor might suppose her at home, took a milk pail on her arm to serve as an excuse to the sentries, and driving the cow away instead of towards the house she escaped suspicion. Her first rest was at St. David's mill where her sister-in-law, the widow of Stephen Secord lived, and where her brother Charles then was. Both tried in vain to dissuade her from her perilous undertaking.

At home, meanwhile, the children were told that their mother had gone to visit their sick uncle, but they noticed and wondered at their father's unusual restlessness and anxiety as the long hours of that weary day dragged on.

After leaving the mill Laura took a path across the meadow and plunged at once into the forest. This nearly doubled the distance; but on the highway she certainly would have been arrested. We can scarcely realize the fatigue, the anxiety, the danger of that long, hot, weary June day. Little rivulets at this time of year were running in every direction, making the mossy ground swampy and the walking heavy; sometimes her feet would stick in a clayey bank and her shoes get clogged with the yellow earth; then she would have to stumble for a short distance over a half-sunken corduroy road. She climbed over trunks of trees fallen across the path and fought her