

# INCIDENTS OF THE WAR OF 1812.

No sound is breathed so potent to coerce  
And to conciliate, as their names who dare  
For that sweet Motherland that gave them birth,  
Nobly to do, nobly to die.

—Tennyson's *Tiresias*.



THE war of 1812 is an episode of our national history to which Canadians of all years to come may look back with pride. Many attempts have been and will be made to win us to the discord that exists under the name of United States, but I think that the decided repulse of the last forcible attempt, and the determined decision just given against legislative attempts will make the "greatest nation on earth" a little chary of approaching us.

What incidents I can relate of the war do not derive their value from any historical merit, but from their warranted truth, for I got them from participants in or unpleasantly close neighbours to the battle of Chrysler's Farm, and can vouch for their truth at first hand at any rate; although the transmission by word of mouth, with memory only as a record, may make them a little inaccurate as to details.

One of my informants, who is still living, took part in the battle, and the other, an old lady of eighty-five, was, as will be seen by a little mathematical calculation, about six years old at the beginning of the war.

Let me give ladies precedence.

About three miles east of the field of battle there stood at the time of the fight the house of one of the early settlers, Mr. L., who was a lumber merchant, sending every year his rafts, as is done now, down to Quebec, then the great business centre. My informant was his daughter.

The house, unfortunately, has since been burned, but the estate is still in the hands of his descendants, the head of the house still bearing the ancestral name.

The approach of the Americans, going up along the highway to make a juncture at Prescott with troops coming down, had been known, and the arrival of the troops was daily expected. Mr. L. being an old man and an invalid was not enrolled, as were all able-bodied men, in the militia, but was in safe hiding, as he was known to have considerable wealth for those days, and would be welcome prey to the scantily provided American troops.

The lares and penates of any value were safely hidden in a plank-lined pit, dug in a field, which was afterwards ploughed over, and the household, consisting of Mrs. L., the women servants and quite a number of small children, awaited the coming of the Americans, the women with alarm and the children with open-eyed wonder.

All the night before the battle the militia patrol rode up and down the road, and Mrs. L. opened all the blinds and placed a light in each room so that they could see that all was well inside.

You may be assured that household woke early on the eventful day of the fight and watched eagerly down the road for signs of the approaching enemy.

The mounted troops of the militia, of whom my other informant was a member, rode down the road and up again, reporting to the officer in command at Chrysler's Farm, where it had been decided to make a stand.

Finally a young neighbour came up the road at full gallop, shouting, "There they are," and close behind him pressed the advance guard of the invading force.

Halting at the house, General Wilkinson, without more ado, made it his headquarters, and his staff and the men with him made short work of the meal which Mrs. L., from motives of policy and perforce set before them.

Like all good householders, she had a large supply of cider in her cellar, and drew some for the tired and thirsty soldiers, being compelled first to drink of it herself, to prove that it was not poisoned.

Wilkinson stayed at the house all day, Colonel or General Brown conducting the battle, and messengers coming every five minutes to tell of the wavering fortunes of the day.

Then came the ubiquitous small boy into play. Not desiring to go outside where the men were gathered, the two little boys, both now grown old and passed into the unknown, went out and playing round heard what news there was, coming into the house to report.

General Wilkinson was very considerate, more so than usually are the commanders of an invading force, and compelled his men to treat the household with the utmost consideration.

Finally, when the firing became desultory and a messenger rode down the road saying that all was lost, the younger of the boys, with a burst of patriotism all too rare in these degenerate days, shouted in sheer elevation of spirit: "Hurrah for King George and all his generation." One of the soldiers, incensed a little and irritable, as was extremely natural under the circumstances, attempted to cuff him, but the officer commanding put a stop to it, saying: "He's his father's son," a remark that could not but be true.

Then down the road pell-mell, not in retreat, but in flight, came the conquering host. Tired and dusty they came, their faces begrimed with powder, many wounded, all crestfallen, and many anxious to relieve their incensed feelings at the expense of the innocent householders on their line of retreat.

Mrs. L., again politic, filled pails and tubs with water, and gathering all the drinking vessels in the house, stood, assisted by all the inmates of the house, handing water to the thirsty and woebegone wayfarers.

One man, incensed at their defeat, and longing to "take it out" of some one, ran into the house, and seizing a brand from the kitchen fire-place, rushed up the kitchen stairs on incendiarism intent. One of the children, who had followed him, followed the usual course of childhood, and called mother, who came post haste, and catching the man by the skirts of his coat, pulled him back and handed him over crestfallen to the general, who had him placed under arrest.

So the stream of men flowed on, and only when all the stragglers had passed did the women find a chance to rest.

The troops recrossed, defeated and dejected, at Dickinson's Landing, and in their retreat threw away their arms, accoutrements, and all what our ancient enemy, *de bellum Gallicum*, would call impedimenta.

Country boys, wandering on their paternal acres, found muskets hidden under logs; one, to my certain knowledge, found three muskets and an officer's horse, which were appropriated, as were Petroleum V. Nasby's clothes, by and for the government.

My other informant had little to tell me; he saw the first shot fired. He, with some of his fellow troopers, was stationed on the extreme left, and seeing some horse making towards them through the woods, began to speculate as to whether they were friends or foes. An Indian with them had more certain vision than theirs, and pronounced them to be the enemy's horse trying to effect a flank movement. The troopers, however, doubted his word, and to prove his assertion he fired. The promptness of the return fire dispelled all doubts, and the engagement became general.

He then became engaged in the *melee*, and can tell little more save that the Americans were at length forced to retreat.

The old gentleman, though very feeble, is still alive, and had, until they were destroyed by fire, a number of relics of the fight, his own sword, a medal, and some captured weapons, but they are all gone, and all he has to remind one of the battle is a sixteen pound shot.

An historian of Canada will find the district worthy of a visit. There are a few old people who remember much of the 1812, and reminiscences of 1837 are every day occurrences.

The old gentleman drove me past the field wherein were buried all the killed, American and Canadian alike, and pointed out the chimney of the old Chrysler house.

With the example of the Canadians of 1812, who appreciated their glorious heritage as children of the British Empire, before us, and the stimulus of our young country's blood, surely we cannot condescend to become renegades to our Motherland, our throne, our flag and ourselves. Let us rather,

Sons be welded, each and all,  
Into one Imperial whole,  
One with Britain, heart and soul,  
One hope, one flag, one fleet, one throne,  
Britons, hold your own.

OVIDA.

## Full of Years and Honours.

Within four days of each other three venerable and familiar figures in New Brunswick life have passed away. On August 5th, Rev. Ingraham E. Bill, D.D., the father of the Baptist ministry in New Brunswick, died at his home in the beautiful village of St. Martins, N.B. He had reached the age of 86 years, and had been in the work of the ministry more than 60 years, though he retired from active labour a few years ago. As a preacher, a writer, and a friend of educational work he had no peer in his own denomination, and was justly loved and honoured.

On August 7th, at St. John, Hon. Charles Watters, Judge of the County Court of St. John, and Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court of New Brunswick, died very suddenly, at the age of 72 years. He had been in his usual health and attending to his duties a day or two before, and the news of his death was a shock to the community. Judge Watters was formerly in the provincial legislature of New Brunswick, a colleague of Sir Leonard Tilley, and a member of the Government. He was the first Roman Catholic to hold a seat in the Government of New Brunswick, and the first of that faith to receive a judgeship in that province. A man of high character and splendid ability, he was held in honour by his fellow citizens of all creeds and classes.

On August 9th occurred the death of Ward Chipman Drury, registrar of deeds and probates in St. John. Mr. Drury was the youngest of the three, being in his 68th year. Mr. Drury was a member of one of the oldest New Brunswick families. He was appointed registrar in 1854, the office having been previously held by his brother. Earlier in life he had been secretary to Chief Justice Chipman, and also to Sir Edmund Head, Her Majesty's representative in the province. He also at one time held the rank of Major in the 8th Cavalry, now the Princess Louise Hussars. Among his surviving children are Major Drury, of "A" Battery, Kingston; Hazen Drury, C.E., now at Calgary; Frances, wife of C. E. L. Porteous, manager of the Bank of Montreal, at Kingston; and Arabella, wife of Captain Curtis, R.N. Another son is an officer in the navy. Mr. Drury's wife, who survives him, was a daughter of Lieut.-Col. Hayne, A.D.C., while he himself was the son of a colonel; so that a strong strain of martial blood runs in the family. Ten children in all survive him.

## The Barnardo Home, Manitoba.

This institution is certainly an honour to the province. Very few have any conception of the amount of labour and money expended here for the good of London's unfortunate children. I would like to speak of the commodious and beautiful buildings, the extensive fields of wheat, oats and barley, of the young men who attend instruction; but I will only try and give a faint idea of what the garden looks like. On entering the gate, I was at once reminded of the public gardens in the east, such as one might see in Montreal or in Boston. The Barnardo garden is certainly more fruitful, while it is also a garden within a garden. It contains twenty-five acres, and is divided off into sections by beautiful walks, adorned on either side with limestone and all kinds of flowers. The visitor need not alight from his carriage, for he can drive along certain avenues that command a good view of the whole garden. It is a grand scene. There is the mangle peach melon, water melon, garden melon, tomato, cucumber, citron, jumbo squash, chinarose, radish, lettuce, tobacco plant, sweet sugar cane, rhubarb, red rufus cabbage; different varieties of all these, along with acres of other ordinary garden produce. All this with a fair sprinkling of fruit trees, maple trees, and flowers, tends not only to make this garden fascinating and useful, but it also demonstrates to us what the Manitoba soil and our climate are capable of producing under the supervision of such men as Mr. Struthers, general manager, and Mr. Wilkinson, gardener of the Barnardo Home.—*Winnipeg Free Press*.

## CHRISTMAS.

It may seem rather premature to talk about Christmas in this hot weather, but we wish to impress on our readers the fact that we intend issuing early in December, the most superb holiday souvenir that has yet been offered to the Canadian public. In supplements, it will be unusually rich, presenting features that have never been approached by any paper, while in general artistic and literary excellence it will be the event of the season.