

Truth's Contributors.

THE BATTLE OF LUNDY'S LANE.

A Visit to the Battle Ground Forty Years Ago.

BY JOHN FRASER, MONTREAL.
No. 5.

On our return from the falls—narrated in TRUTH of last week—we found a card from a Mr. Anderson, or Captain Anderson, waiting at the inn. Anderson was a noted character at the falls and acted as guide or companion to strangers. He had served in the British Artillery on the field of Lundy's Lane.

The card was an intimation that he was at our command, and as a recompense for his services our host informed us that he had arranged that matter. The Captain liked his dram, as all old soldiers did, and our host satisfied him that he and a friend of his would have the honor of drinking to our health every day during our stay.

The Captain proposed a walk to the field of Lundy's Lane, within a mile of the falls, being close by and bordering on the village of Drummondville. Although it was Sunday, we could not resist the temptation, remembering that Waterloo was fought on a Sunday. We noticed that the Captain had fortified himself by a visit to the bar before starting.

"This is the battle field of Lundy's Lane," said our guide, as he took his stand on the front steps of the old church, in which the country people were then at morning service. "There," said our guide, directing our attention to a certain part of the field, "was General Sir Gordon Drummond's position, and there"—pointing to another part—"was where our artillery was posted, on the front of the hill, close to the church where we were then standing. There, to the right in front of the hill," he said, "was the way or road by which the American Colonel Miller advanced with his regiment at a bayonet charge and captured our artillery, bayoneting most of our men and making prisoners of the rest. Hurrah, boys!" he cried, for getting under the excitement of the moment that he was standing on the steps of a church filled with worshippers. The old man was actually carried back some thirty years to the real desperate struggle of that dreadful bayonet charge of which he was an eyewitness on that very spot. "Hurrah, boys!" he cried, "there"—pointing to the left of the British position—"there came the 89th red coats, at a mad charge, with a wild, ringing, British charging cheer." This outburst of enthusiasm soon emptied the church; the people were anxious to learn what was going on outside and to hear the old soldier fight Lundy's Lane over again.

The country people appeared to enjoy it very much; so did we. The whole scene was something new and strange to us. "Just there in front of us," said our guide, "across that road—Lundy's Lane—Colonel Miller, elated by his first success, had advanced to meet the British 89th regiment—bayonet to bayonet; it was a short but bloody struggle. The Americans were repulsed with dreadful slaughter and our artillery recaptured."

It was nearly thirty years before our visit that the battle of Lundy's Lane was fought on this spot during the evening and night of the 25th July, 1814. To make this article more interesting to the young Canadian reader, we shall give a short account of the several affairs and movements of the two armies on the Niagara frontier during the month of July, 1814, preceding Lundy's Lane.

The small British force under General Rial had full possession of the Canadian side of the Niagara frontier, from Fort Erie, opposite Buffalo, down to Fort George, at the mouth of the Niagara river, on Lake Ontario. They also held Fort Niagara, on the American side of the Niagara, opposite Fort George. The British headquarters were at Fort George. The American army of about 6,000 men of all arms, under General Brown, crossed from Buffalo and Black Rock, three miles below Buffalo, on the 3rd of July; part crossed above Fort Erie, the main body below, at Black Rock, completely surrounding and cutting off all communication between the small body of British (less than 200 men) in Fort Erie, and the British advanced post at Chippewa.

On learning that the Americans had crossed the river, General Rial immediately advanced his headquarters to Chippewa, three miles above the falls, and on the 4th, the day after the Americans had crossed, marched up the Canadian bank of the Niagara to relieve Fort Erie. It was then he learned of its surrender. General Rial was forced to fall back on Chippewa before superior numbers, not having over 1,500 men. There, at Chippewa, on the afternoon of the 5th of July, he made a halt and took a stand to arrest the onward progress of the Americans, but after a desperate fight was repulsed with a loss of about 500 men.

After the battle of Chippewa the British retreated to Fort George. The Americans advanced as far as Queenston, having made themselves masters of the whole surrounding country, which they retained for three weeks. During this time they committed ravages which remain a lasting disgrace to the American Army. Besides plundering the farm houses and country homesteads, the whole village of St. David's, containing about forty houses, was burned to the ground.

These three weeks, from the 3rd to the 25th of July, 1814, was the darkest period for the British Arms during the whole war of 1812 to 1815. General Sir Gordon Drummond was then at Kingston, about three hundred miles distant, by land route, from the scene of conflict on the Niagara frontier.

On the first intelligence of the reverses reaching Kingston, Sir Gordon Drummond posted for York (Toronto) from which place he sailed on Sunday the 24th, reaching Fort George on the 25th July, 1814. Previous to his arrival the Americans had retreated from Queenston to Chippewa. General Rial had also, after leaving a force in the two Forts, Forts George and Niagara, retreated or fallen back to form a junction with parts of the 103rd and 104th regiments advancing from Burlington Heights. Having met with the expected reinforcements at the Twenty Mile Creek, he, General Rial, faced about and took up his march on Lundy's Lane, having learned on the road of the American retreat from Queenston to Chippewa.

The American General, having also learned of Rial's retreat from Fort George, advanced again that afternoon, the 25th, from Chippewa. Hence the meeting of the advanced bodies of the now two advancing armies on Monday evening, the 25th of July, on the field of Lundy's Lane.

Lundy's Lane! Ever to be remembered Canadian battle-field! "Is the spot marked with no colossal bust, nor column trophied for triumphal show? None!" Reader, young Canadian reader, have you ever stood on a battle-field of your country—one on which you could claim to have had over a score of relatives doing battle for their King and country, and among them some of your nearest kindred? The writer could claim this, and prided himself, as a boy, while standing on the field of Lundy's

Lane, of having had, besides many distant relatives, two of his mother's brothers foremost in the fight on that ever glorious battle-field! These two—then young soldiers—afterwards became, respectively, the colonel and major of the 1st Regiment of the Glen-garry Highlanders, whom the writer met at the head of their regiment at Beauharnois, on the 11th of November, 1838, as described in our No. 5 article in TRUTH.

General Sir Gordon Drummond, immediately after his arrival at Fort George, took up his line of march by way of Queenston to support the advance of General Rial from the Twenty Mile Creek on Lundy's Lane, (the heat, under a broiling July sun, was excessive), but on his (Drummond's) arriving within three miles of the field, he found that Rial had already decided on a retrograde movement before superior numbers—that he was actually again in retreat. This backward movement was arrested by General Drummond, who ordered a face about and a return to Lundy's Lane. The British force was now increased to a little over 3,000 men. The American force amounted to nearly 5,000. Then began in earnest that fearful struggle on Lundy's Lane. The Americans fought with a sure certainty of victory. They had been successful in every affair during the month. The Canadian Militia fought with a desperation. They were goaded on nearly to madness by the outrages perpetrated on their homes by the Americans. Revenge was their battle cry. We shall not attempt to describe that fearful hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot deadly struggle—the giving and the taking of death! Every man in the British ranks fought as if the fate of the Empire rested on his bayonet. Scattered bands, fighting independently, here, there, and everywhere over the field, were blazing at each other within pistol shot range, and bayoneting or clubbing with the butt end of their muskets or rifles at close quarters in the dark. "It was bloody, butchering work," said an old soldier. There, within a small compass, and in some places in heaps, over 1,700 men lay dead and dying on that fatal field, being over one-fifth of the combatants engaged!

The Americans, worsted at all points, withdrew about midnight to Chippewa, leaving the little British force masters of the field—of a field covered with the dead and the dying of both armies, and on which the victors sank, totally exhausted after their six hours' hard fighting and their long march during the early part of the day from Fort George and the Twenty Mile Creek.

Who can picture that field? The thunders of Niagara, silenced or drowned during the rage of battle, were once more heard, and the still nearer sounds—the groans of the wounded and dying—rang in the ears of the survivors as they sank down exhausted on the won field to seek repose.

At early sunrise on the 26th of July 1814, the field of Lundy's Lane presented a ghastly sight. The dead and the dying lay thick around! The heat was so intense that the bodies had to be disposed of without delay. The dead were collected and placed in two heaps to be burned—the British dead in one, the Americans in the other. The fires were then lighted, and what remained of that mass of "living valour" of yesterday was soon reduced to a smouldering pile of ashes. A fearful necessity! It had to be done. Profanation had set in; a terrible stench arose from all parts of the field! Long before break of day of the 26th, and even before the crowning cheers of the victors had reached the camp followers, the field of Lundy's Lane

presented another sight, perhaps the saddest, the most affecting one, full of hopes and fears, conducted with a battle-field. Close by, in the rear, as camp followers, listening in fearful suspense to every volley and cheer from that fatal field, were hundreds of women and children, the mothers, the wives, the daughters, the sisters of the brave men of the Niagara District. There were early on the field, searching among the living, the dead and the dying for loved ones! Even these forgot for the moment their dead, in the general rejoicings of a great national victory!

The victors had not much time for rest. The British force prepared immediately to advance, to follow up the enemy. The Americans had retreated during the night to Chippewa, but the next day they continued their retreat in great disorder to Fort Erie, throwing all their artillery and heavy baggage into the Niagara. The greater part of them crossed the river at Black Rock and Buffalo, leaving a strong force in Fort Erie.

THE QUEEN AT WINDSOR.

BY CANNIFF HAIGHT, ESQ

In a few days more we shall have the pleasure of celebrating another Queen's birthday. The event has been observed for a long time in Canada, and probably with more favor than in England itself. I do not think the Canadian, as a rule, is a very demonstrative person, but he appreciates progress and stability, and hence the privilege he enjoys as a subject of the most enlightened and progressive nation in the world, and his love for the noble woman, who has long and so ably reigned over it, is deep and earnest. In the Queen we feel that he has an embodiment of those nobler traits which make up the character of true womanhood, and thus it is that the throbbings of his heart towards her are ever real, and the prayer that frequently springs to his lips is truthful and sincere "God save our Queen."

Several years ago I had the gratification of spending some time in England. Immediately after arriving at Liverpool I proceeded to the Northern part of Lancashire to visit some friends there, and from there proceeded to Bristol on a similar errand. My stay in this fine old city was very enjoyable, and particularly the excursions we made from time to time to different points outside. One day it would be to the ruins of an old castle or abbey, or another to a place of historic interest, but nothing delighted me more than the rural scenery of the south and west of England. I can hardly think of anything more enjoyable than bounding at leisure through quiet lanes, beside green hedges redolent with the fragrance of wild rose and honeysuckle, under the shadow of great trees, or through fields ablaze with floral beauty.

After sitting for some time around London, not unlike a moth around a lighted lamp, I was drawn into it and lost in the midst of its millions. My first night was one of oppressive loneliness. It seemed to me that my personality had faded away in the heart of this vast city. This, however, did not last long; the multiplicity of things to be seen soon absorbed attention, and my fits of loneliness were quickly dispelled. My attention was called one morning at breakfast to a grand review that was to take place that day at Windsor in the presence of Her Majesty and Royal family, in honor of the Shah of Persia, then in England, whose entrance into London I had already witnessed. A Toronto friend chanced to be stopping at the same hotel, and after a brief consultation