

Michillimaackinac. She was crowded with twenty-five men—some pigtailed after the fashion of man-o'-warsmen then, some long-haired like bushrangers; all sunburned, powder-blackened, and unshaven. The brass buttons and stained blue and white of the King's uniform marked the man in charge as an officer of the Royal Navy. 'Twas Worsley.

"We had to blow the *Nancy* up," he told the wondering McDouall. "They thought we went to heaven with the bits of the blockhouse when our magazine exploded, but we stood off their whole force with the loss of one killed and one wounded, and escaped into the woods and reached the second blockhouse, four miles up the river, where Livingston's canoe and two batteaux were hidden. They never found us, for a gale of wind gave the schooners left to blockade the river an excuse to go hunting for the brigade of fur canoes, and we slipped out past the obstructions left to block us.

"We rowed and sailed 360 miles around the shores of this lake—and here we are. Only, at St. Joseph's, within thirty-six miles of here, we had to hide the two batteaux and seventy barrels of provisions we brought from the upper blockhouse. For, what do you think? When we reached the Detour we found our old friends the blockaders lying in wait for the fur flotilla. We passed within a hundred yards of one of them in the dark last night. Just give me a hundred Newfoundlanders and I'll bring them both here and square the yards for the poor old *Nancy*!"

"I'd give you half of his Majesty's Kingdom if I had it, seeing that you bring seventy barrels of provisions," said McDouall, "for our belts are pulled in here to the last hole!"

Next day four large rowboats, two of them with field-pieces in the bows, and a score of Indian canoes, set out from Michillimaackinac. By night they were all securely hidden in a bay near the Detour, the narrow

strait between the Island of St. Joseph's and the mainland.

In the gray of the dawn Worsley and Livingston set out in a small canoe, and, with the growing light, discovered one of the schooners anchored six miles away. Paddling back, they told the news and all lay hidden until sunset, when the flotilla rowed quietly to within three miles of the enemy. Here the Indians were told to wait, although three of their chiefs were taken on board the rowboats. With muffled oars the party of ninety-two sailors, soldiers, *voyageurs*, and redskins crept silently through the still darkness to the anchored vessel. Worsley's boat approached her on the starboard side and got within ten yards of her without being discovered.

"Boat ahoy!" suddenly hailed the startled lookout. "Show a light, or we'll sink you!"

There was no answer to the challenge, and the twenty-four-pounder the schooner carried at once roared a red greeting through the startled dark.

The shot went ploughing above the heads of the rowers and was followed immediately by a quick blaze of muskets and pistols. Worsley's boat swept alongside, followed by Lieutenant Bulger's, and then the others, and in a twinkling the assailants were pouring over the schooner's rail from port and starboard, British cheers mingling with French-Canadian warcries and Indian battle screams. The sailing master in charge of the schooner was cut down with his officers and the crew of twenty-eight men driven below decks. From here they kept up a musketry fire which killed one of the boarders and wounded others, but victory seemed secure when a pistol flash revealed a sight which for a second froze the bravest heart. The great twenty-four-pound cannonade had been reloaded, and a huge negro was in the act of pulling the lanyard and sweeping the gangway of friend and foe.