



INTERIOR OF FORT WELLINGTON, PRESCOTT.

The Battle of the Windmill.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE FIGHTING NEAR
PRESCOTT, ONT. IN 1838.

(A. R. Carmen, B. A. in the "Hastings Star.")

The visitor of to-day to Prescott, whether he catches his first glimpse of Fort Wellington from the boat or on the railway car, sees little but a passable green mound apparently capped with a low, square, gun-house, topped with a rather rusty tin roof. But, if he swear in a gamin-guide by the aid of some small currency, he will be conducted down King street, and directed to climb through an opening in the fence into the "Fort Field." True, there is a gate in the rear directly opposite the only entrance to the Fort, but the barefooted guide seems intent on impressing the stranger with the unsurmountable difficulties that would oppose the capture of "our Fort;" hence he walks him across the rising field that slopes gradually up towards the mound until he stands upon the edge of the "ditch," probably ten feet deep and twenty to thirty feet wide. Just beyond the bottom of the ditch where it begins to rise, is planted a heavy cedar stockade, composed of stakes nine to twelve feet in height, sharpened at the points. While this defence could be easily battered down by modern artillery, at the time of its erection it effectually prevented the carrying of the works by storm:—no rifleman could scale that stockade. You have approached the Fort in this way from the left where lies the town; now passing around to the south you will find the ditch shoots out the form of a U directly in front of the Fort proper, into which is thrust from the mound a low stone tongue whose sides are slit with port-holes. This can be filled with troops from inside the mound and would prevent the enemy from surrounding the fort in the shelter of the ditch. At this point if you assure your guide that you seriously doubt whether the entire United States army—and you may as well throw in the navy, it cannot make much difference—could reduce this Prescottonian Gibraltar, he may be appeased and lead you to the vulnerable spot in this harm-

less old monument of past weakness. Once it could stand a siege of months, now the artillery practice of half an hour would silence it forever.

Skirting the Fort, you will find yourself in front of two heavy gates in the stockade, usually defended by a warlike, though harmless, cow. Inside the gate you pass under a heavily guarded archway through the mound into the court around the court proper. This court, probably seventy-five yards by fifty, contains three low, frame buildings that cling about the base of enormous chimneys intended for officers' quarters, and a little to the middle stands the fort itself. It is a heavy block of stone masonry about fifty feet square and twenty feet high, capped with a massive log storey about ten feet high and overlapping the stone base a foot all around. The stone work is pierced with a belt of port holes two-thirds of the way up; inside, the wooden apex could be made to bristle with rifle-barrels. At each of the four corners of the embankment lie what was once a platform to enable the cannon to fire over the edge of the parapet, which could be run up into the mound by a couple of earthen tramways at the northeast and southwest corners.

About the 5th of November, 1838, the meagre township militia was called out and put under charge of Captain Fraser (Edwardsburg), and Captain D. Jones (Augusta.)

These exceedingly raw recruits, not even boasting uniforms, were stationed in a house owned by a Mr. Patton, afterwards County Registrar, which stood near the spot now occupied by the Prescott Market House. These men were mustered in with the Glengarry militia and drilled as thoroughly as circumstances would allow.

On Sunday, the 11th inst., word was received by the officers that the "Patriots" had embarked on a number of boats—variously stated—and were preparing to make a descent on Prescott with a view to capturing Fort Wellington. That night the men retired to their barracks restless with excitement: the officers had told them nothing, but the unusual stir around "headquarters" warned them that there was work ahead. A little before 2 a.m. the colonel's orderly aroused the bugler, and in a few moments the thrilling notes of the "alarm" started through the still night air. The men sprang hastily out of their bunks, and while scrambling for their clothes, many a raw farmer lad trembled and shuddered at the possibilities of the next few hours. Veterans would