

CHAPTER V.

CAPTAIN JOHN LE BRETON

Of Captain John LeBreton who was so active in the early days of Bytown and after whom an important portion of the present City of Ottawa was named, little has hitherto been known. He came of a Jersey Island family and while a young man joined the army. In 1811 he was stationed as a Lieutenant in the Quarter-Master Generals Department at Quebec. In this office he seems to have been active and zealous in the performance of his duties. On the outbreak of the war in 1812, between Great Britain and the United States, he was attached to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry, a regiment which earned an enviable record during the war. He accompanied the regiment on General Brock's expedition to Detroit in 1812 and was present at the capture of the city. In the following Spring he took an active part in a battle with the Americans on the Miami, being mentioned in General Proctor's dispatch in these terms:—

“Lieut. LeBreton of the R.N.F.L. Regiment, Assistant Engineer by his unwearied exertions rendered essential service”.

And later in the same dispatch General Proctor wrote:—

“I have to notice Captain Chambers' gallant conduct in the attack near the batteries at the point of the bayonet, a service in which he was well supported by Lt. LeBreton of the R.N.F. Land Regiment”.

After the disastrous battle at Moraviantown where the British were badly defeated and were obliged to retreat to the Niagara River, giving up the whole western portion of the Province, LeBreton volunteered and was sent with a flag of truce to General Harrison to arrange for an exchange of prisoners. On his way to Harrison's Headquarters he was appealed to by numbers of Canadians who had remained on their farms after the British Army had retired, to assist them to join the British Army, which, to quote his report,—

“I would have done had it not been for two tribes of