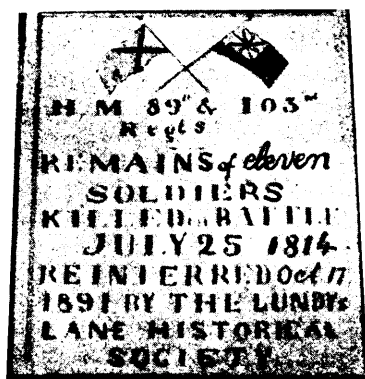


# A HOLY TASK.

THE RE-INTERMENT CEREMONIES AT LUNDY'S LANE, 17TH OCTOBER, 1891.



INSCRIPTION ON THE COFFIN.  
(John England, photo.)



PERHAPS no more unique or touching duty was ever laid upon an association than that which fell to the lot of the Lundy's Lane Historical Society the other day, in the re-interment in consecrated ground of soldiers who fell on the field of battle and were then hastily buried 'at dead of night' by their comrades.

The field of the bloody fight where, on the 25th July, 1814, the deadliest fight of the war of 1812-15 was fought, is a wide hill, up the slope of which runs the road that has for a century given its name to the locality. Seventy-seven years ago it was girt with apple and cherry orchards, some of which still remain, and out of the ancient boles, still standing and bearing fruitful branches, have been taken bullets and pieces of bayonet. On the highest point at that date stood a little wooden Presbyterian church, painted red, and, as Captain Cruikshank says in his *Battle of Lundy's Lane*: "On the right of the church lay a small enclosure, in which a few weather-beaten wooden slabs and rude brown headstones, with sometimes a rude inscription roughly carved upon them by the village blacksmith's chisel, but more often nameless, marked the graves of the fathers of the settlement." Already "brave young Cecil Bisshop" had been laid at rest within the humble graveyard, after the daring feat at Black Rock which cost him his life.

But the 25th of July was to fill it with unnumbered dead. The whole hill was the battle-field, the whole hill became a grave-yard. Nor were the dead laid at rest singly, or with ceremony; trench after trench was dug, here, there, as space could be found; and where the light, sandy soil was the easiest moved, there the burial trenches were thickest. And when all was done, friend and foe lying side by side in a peaceful sleep to wait the judgment of the Lord of Hosts, when the kind arms of mother earth could clasp no more, numbers lay unburied under the hot July atmosphere, and then a solemn funeral pyre threw its heavy pall of blackness over the sad cremation that reduced them all "ashes to ashes and dust to dust," and once more the torn and trampled hill was left to its wonted solitude.

A solitude whose silence should yet again be broken by the tread of military men marching in sad, slow cadence, and the rattle of the muskets of the firing party, for here lie not only Hemphill, lieutenant in the 1st Royal Scots, and young Captain Abram Hull, of the 9th United States Infantry, friend and foe, "in one red burial blent," each of whom fell on the field of Lundy's Lane, but here were brought Patterson, Torrens and Gordon, young and brave officers who, falling in other engagements of that war, were reverently carried hither. Here also lie in humble graves many a veteran and many a veteran's wife, loyal to the heart's core, giving not only their life, but their

life's hard work towards laying the foundations, broad and deep, of the country they loved and have left to their children unsullied by spot or stain of dishonour.

And here lies Laura Secord, that other hero of the war, whose patriotism, unsoothed by prospect of reward, unstimulated by turr of drum, or community of numbers, carried her all alone through the swamp and the virgin forest to warn the little post at De Cew's, where Fitzgibbon held the key that else would have been wrested from even his nervous grasp, and the whole west been laid open to the enemy.

And yet the bounds of Lundy's Lane Cemetery, enlarged as it has been from time to time, and carefully guarded by loyal and reverent hands as it now is, covered not all the slain of that fierce July day. For seventy-seven years there had lain at rest eleven men of the 89th and 103rd regiments, one of them supposed to be an officer, either Captain Spooner or Lieutenant Latham, both of the 89th, who fell in this engagement. But at length, on September 3rd, 1891, their bones were laid open to the light by the pick and spade of the labourer. A sand pit of large dimensions had been worked for some time north of the little Presbyterian church, now become a handsome red brick building, and here the poor remains were found. Bones, a portion of an officer's coat, consisting of the lower part of the back, and flaps of the swallow-tail (regulation pattern), of which the scarlet had become tan-colour, but the lace retaining some of its original bright threads of silver and gold, several buttons stamped 89 and 103, a piece of a shako, pieces of belt with the buckles, a portfire and a knife make up the tale of relics recovered. Indifferent hands had scattered them, but the news soon reached the ears of the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, which at once took the matter up. Procuring the legal right to interfere, the relics were collected, the human remains were reverently coffined and placed in proper keeping and the ceremony of re-interment decided on.

The time of the annual military camp at Niagara being close at hand, Gen. Herbert was requested to allow a detachment of troops to attend at the re-interment, so as to give the dead heroes the honours due to them as soldiers of their country. To the request Gen. Herbert willingly consented, and the date of the ceremony was placed accordingly for the last day of the camp, Saturday, 17th October.

With much consideration and in full sympathy with the occasion, Samuel Patten, Esq., Reeve of the township, issued the following proclamation:

"Saturday, October 17th, 1891, at 1.30 o'clock p.m., being the time appointed for a military interment of the remains recently unearthed at Lundy's Lane, I hereby request the closing of places of business in Niagara Falls Village during the hour of service.

SAMUEL PATTEN, Reeve."

The Reeve's request was readily complied with, and a solemn quiet reigned throughout the village.

For several days previous the casket containing the remains, and two cases exhibiting the relics, were placed in public view at Mr. England's store, on Main street. On the casket was placed the following inscription:—

"H. M. 89TH AND 103RD REGIMENTS.

"Remains of eleven soldiers killed in battle, July 25th, 1814. Re-interred October 17th, 1891, by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society."

The military contingent, furnished by permission of Gen. Herbert for the occasion, consisted of Troop A., St. Catharines; Cavalry Troop D, Queenston, and Troop E, Welland, in all 100 officers and men, and of infantry a large representation from all the companies of the 44th battalion, including its excellent band and a company of the

39th, in all about 250 men. The detachment, in command of Col. Morin and Major Vidal, arrived from camp at Niagara, the cavalry at noon and the infantry at 1.45 p.m. Having partaken of lunch in the town hall the troops marched up to Main street and when opposite the store the pallbearers, Capt. McMicking, No. 6 Co.; Capt. Vandersluys, No. 1 Co., and Adj. Hill, of the 44th, representing the infantry, and Major Currie, Capt. Servos and Capt. Burch, representing the three troops of cavalry, carried the casket out in the procession. It was wrapped in the Union Jack and on top lay some choice bouquets of flowers that had been placed there by the kind hand of Mrs. McFarlane.

When the solemn pageant began to move towards the historical cemetery the procession was in the following order:—

## ORDER OF PROCESSION.

44th Battalion Band, twenty pieces.  
No. 1 Co. 44th Battalion, Capt. Vandersluys, 30 men.  
No. 6, Capt. McMicking, 36 men.  
Pallbearers, carrying casket with remains.  
No. 3, Company, Capt. Greenwood, 30 men.  
No. 4 Co., Capt. Cruikshank, 31 men.  
No. 5 Co., Capt. Cohoe, 36 men.  
No. 7 Co., Capt. Clark, 31 men.  
No. 5 Co., Waterford, 39th Battalion, Maj. York and Capt. Langs, 37 men.  
Co. E., Cavalry Troop, St. Catharines, Capt. Gregory, 35 men.  
Co. D, Queenston, Capt. Servos, 35 men.  
Co. A, Welland, Capt. Burch, 30 men.  
Also Majors Buchner and Currie.  
In command of the infantry were Lieut.-Col. Morin, Majors Vidal, Raymond and Bender, and Adj. Hill and Lieut.-Col. Gregory commanded the cavalry.  
Pupils of the High and Public Schools of the village, numbering 200, in charge of Principals Orr and Morris.  
Members of Lundy's Lane Historical Society, with badges.  
Citizens.

At least 3,000 spectators, not a few of whom were from the other side, witnessed the pageant. At the head of the L.L.H.S. walked the Rev. Canon Bull, its highly respected president, and Mr. William Kirby, the president of the Niagara Historical Society, who has sung in strains that will never die the heroic epic of the United Empire Loyalists; and as the solemn procession wound up Lundy's Lane, bordered by great trees in all their autumn glory, the soft air, the meridian sun, the measured cadence of the Dead March in Saul filled all hearts with gentle feelings, touching memories, and a hope of the blessed resurrection.

Upon the arrival of the procession at the grave, which is situated at the north-east end of the Royal Scots' trench, and upon the site where the battery stood during the bloody battle, the militia formed a square around the grave. In their midst stood Rev. Canon Bull, Rev. Canon Houston, Rev. Mr. Ker, St. Catharines; Rev. Mr. Fessenden, Chippewa; Rev. Mr. Spencer, Thorold; and Rev. G. B. Bull, Stamford.

From the truck of one of the cannon presented to the L.L.H.S. by the courtesy of Sir Adolphe Caron, Minister of Militia, the rev. president of the society delivered a touching and memorable address to the assembly, of which the following is a part:—

To-day, as representatives of Canada's loyal people, and especially of "The Lundy's Lane Historical Society," we are assembled to fulfil a duty of loyalty and Christian respect, which we individually esteem as a high honour committed to us.

The duty of loyalty and respect which we are called upon to fulfil relates to a quiet and reverential re-interment of the mortal remains of eleven soldiers of the 89th and 103rd Regiments, who fell here on the 25th July, 1814. Our proceedings to-day are quiet and reverential: QUIET, I mean, in contrast with the fierce strife and din of warfare then, and REVERENTIAL, in a qualified sense, compared with the hurried work of burial, and the few words said, if any at all, after battle, but not more reverential otherwise than at that first interment, when comrades were hastily called together to bury their dead, and silent tears were shed, just as manly hearts feel most when lips move not. A British poet has given us, with tender feeling, the well known words on the Burial of Sir John Moore, 1809, which also apply to those who fell in 1814:

"Not a drum was heard, nor a funeral note  
As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;  
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero lies buried."