

APPENDIX V

CAPTAIN JOSEPH BIRNEY

Contributed by J. L. Birney, Toronto, Son of Captain Joseph Birney, from whose Narrative these Statements have been Compiled.

Captain Birney was born in Orange County, in the State of New York, on the 1st of February, 1777.

In 1779 his father, William Birney, was killed at the battle of Lackawack, New York, in suppressing an Indian uprising, and upon their bereavement his mother, with his sister, a child in arms, and himself a child two years old, made her way through the forest, sixty miles, to New York City. In the year 1783 or 1784 he was baptized in Trinity Church, New York City. When the British evacuated New York, Captain Birney, with his family and friends, went with the British to where now is situated St. John, New Brunswick, and resided there until 1801, when he came to Upper Canada, and settled where Hamilton is to-day. While in New Brunswick he taught the Duke of Kent to skate, both of them often practising together on St. John's River.

In Upper Canada Captain Birney entered into the military life of the time. He was over six feet in height, powerfully built, and was well fitted for the stirring life then before him.

In 1812 he was Ensign in Captain Hatt's company, which accompanied Sir Isaac Brock to Detroit, and his commission as Ensign, signed by Sir Isaac Brock, is now in possession of his son, John L. Birney, of Toronto. Captain Birney was present when General Brock first met Tecumseh,