

The French Canadian peasant still recurs with pleasure to the affair of Châteauguay, where he showed himself far superior in military qualities to his boastful neighbour. The war of 1812 taught England to appreciate the loyalty of the Canadians, and to consider Canada as her bulwark in North America.

One of the most memorable events of the campaign of 1812 and which reflects a high degree of honour upon the Canadian militia, meriting for them the esteem of the country, a leaf in its history and a monument to their leader, was the battle fought near the present village of Queenston, which is seven miles below the falls, seven miles above Fort Niagara, and twenty miles north by east of Fort Erie, a battle known in our history as the battle of the heights of Queenston. The engagement took place on the 13 October, 1812. The following narrative of the event is from Christie's History of Canada.

"General Brock, who with unwearied diligence had watched the motions of the American forces upon the Niagara frontier, commanded by major general Van Ransalaer, was convinced from the movements he had observed on that shore, that an invasion was premeditated, and kept his slender force upon the alert. On the 4th of October a spy was sent over to the British side, who returned with information that General Brock had moved on to Detroit, with all the force that could be spared. Encouraged by this news, every preparation was taken for a descent upon Queenston. On the morning of the 11th, their forces were concentrated at Lewiston, opposite that place, with a view of making an attack upon the latter; but through the neglect or cowardice of the officer entrusted with preparing and conducting the boats to the place of embarkation, the attack miscarried. Early in the morning of the 13th, their forces were again concentrated at Lewiston, and the troops embarked under cover of a battery of two eighteen and two six pounders. This movement being soon discovered, a brisk fire was opened upon them from the British shore, by the troops, and from three batteries. The Americans commenced a cannonade to sweep the shore, but with little effect. The first division under colonel Van Ransalaer, effected their landing unobserved under the heights a little above Queenston, and mounting the ascent, attacked and carried an eighteen pounder battery, and dislodged the light company of the 49th regiment. The enemy were in the meantime pushing over in boats, and notwithstanding the current and eddies, here rapid and numerous, and a tremendous discharge of artillery which shattered many of their boats, persevered with dauntless resolution, and effected a landing close upon Queenston, where they were opposed by the grenadiers of the 49th regiment and the York volunteer militia, with a determination verging upon desperation. The carnage became terrible. The British being overwhelmed with numbers, were compelled to retire some distance into a hollow. General Brock, who was at Niagara, a short distance below, having heard the cannonade, arriving at that moment, the grey of the morning, with his provincial aid-de-camp, Lt.-Col. M'Donnell, from that place, and having rallied the grenadiers of his favorite 49th, was leading them on to the charge, when he received a musket ball in his breast, which almost immediately terminated his existence. In the interim, the light company, supported by a party of the Yorkers, rallied, and reascended to dislodge the enemy from the heights. They formed and advanced to the charge, exposed to a smart fire, but finding the enemy posted behind trees, so that a charge could have little effect, they desisted, and separating, posted themselves in like manner, and kept up a sharp fire for some time. Lieut.-Col. M'Donnell, who had joined them while forming for the charge, and was encouraging the men, received a ball in his back, as his horse, which had been wounded, was in the act of wheeling. He survived his wound but twenty-four hours, in the most excruciating pain. The Americans having effected their landing with an overwhelming force, the British were obliged to give way, and suspend the fight until the arrival of reinforcements, leaving the Americans in possession of the heights. General Sheaffe soon after came up with a reinforcement of three hundred men of the 41st regiment, two companies of militia, and two hundred and fifty Indians. Reinforcements having also arrived from Chippewa, the general collected his whole force, amounting to upwards of eight hundred men, and leaving two field pieces, with about thirty men under lieutenant Holcroft of the royal artillery, in front of Queenston, as a check to prevent the enemy from occupying the village, proceeded by a circuitous route to gain the rear of the heights upon which the enemy were posted. The Indians, being more alert than the troops, first surmounted the hill, and commenced the attack, but were repulsed and fell back upon the main body, who formed with celerity, and upon the word, advanced to the charge under a heavy shower of musketry. The British set up a shout, accompanied with the war-whoop of the Indians, and advanced

at the double quick pace, when the Americans struck with terror, gave way and fled in all directions, some concealing themselves in the bushes, others precipitating themselves down the precipice and being either killed by the fall or drowned in the attempt to swim the river. A terrible slaughter ensued by the Indians, whose vengeance it was impossible to restrain, until a white flag was observed ascending the hill with offers of unconditional surrender, which were accepted. An armistice of three days was proposed by the American and granted by the British general, in order to take care of their wounded and bury their dead on condition of destroying their batteaux, which was immediately complied with. One general officer (Wadsworth) two lieutenant-colonels, five majors, a multitude of captains and subalterns, with nine hundred men, one field-piece, and a stand of colours, were the fruits of this important victory, the enemy having lost in killed, wounded, missing, and prisoners, upwards of fifteen hundred men. General Van Ransalaer, before the arrival of the reinforcements from Niagara under General Sheaffe, finding the fate of the day still undetermined, his troops almost exhausted with fatigue, and falling short of ammunition, had returned to the American shore, to urge across reinforcements from the embodied militia; but they, notwithstanding every menace and entreaty on his part, unannouncedly refused. In this dilemma, he wrote a note to General Wadsworth, who remained with the Americans on the Queenston heights, informing him of the situation of things, and leaving the course to be pursued much to his own judgment, assuring him if he thought best to retreat he would send as many boats as he could command, and cover his retreat by every fire he could make. But before the latter had time to resolve upon any mode of security or retreat, the spirited advance of the British had decided the fate of the day.

Thus ended, in their total discomfiture, the second attempt of the Americans to invade Upper Canada. The loss of the British is said to have been about twenty killed, including Indians, and between fifty and sixty wounded. The fall of General Brock, the idol of the army and of the people of Upper Canada, was an irreparable loss, and cast a shade over the glory of this dear-bought victory. He was a native of Guernsey, of an ancient and reputable family, distinguished in the profession of arms. He had served for some years in Canada, and in some of the principal campaigns in Europe. He commanded a detachment of his favourite 49th regiment, on the expedition to Copenhagen with Lord Nelson. He was one of those men who seem born to influence mankind, and mark the age in which they live. As a soldier he was brave to a fault, and not less judicious than decisive in his measures. The energy of his character was expressed in his robust and manly person. As a civil governor, he was firm, prudent and equitable. In fine, whether viewed as a man, a statesman, or a soldier, he equally deserves the esteem and respect of his contemporaries and of posterity. The Indians who flocked to his standard were enthusiastically attached to him. He fell at the early age of forty-two years. The remains of this gallant officer were, during the funeral service, honoured with a discharge of minute guns from the American, as well as British batteries, and with those of his aid-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel M'Donnell, interred in the same grave at Fort George on the 16th October, amidst the tears of an affectionate soldiery and a grateful people, who will revere his memory, and hold up to their posterity the imperishable name of Brock."

The Indians who, in 1812, figured for the last time in our history, shewed their gallant spirit when in 1841 they came forward and subscribed the sum of two hundred pounds currency, to rebuild the monument which some sacrilegious hands had destroyed in 1840. The Chippewas, the Hurons, the Mansas, the Oneidas, the Nissis-gas, and the Mohawks, presented addresses to the Government of Upper Canada which breathe that eloquence which can proceed only from the lips of the inhabitant of the forest, and the dweller along the shores of the great lakes. There is a beauty in the Indian diction, a grandeur in its forms of expression, not to be found in the language of any other people; it expresses in simple but apt terms, with natural ornaments, the unaffected feelings of the Indian's heart; for the savage untrammelled with the bonds of society, free from the petty observances of civilized life, has attained, or rather possesses naturally, the most beautiful expressions to render the emotions of the soul. No greater homage has ever been offered to Sir Isaac Brock than the addresses which the few descendants of the once great tribes of the six nations presented when they heard that white men had desecrated the grave of the brave warrior. For the Indians hold sacred the dwellings of the dead, they love to light their fires over the mounds that mark their graves, they smoke the pipe of peace and indulge in visions of the day, when they shall meet their warrior friends in the happy hunting grounds. Brock had acquired a great control over the Indians and was exceedingly beloved by them. They had treasured his mem-