

## THE MIGRATION OF *VOYAGEURS* FROM DRUMMOND ISLAND TO PENETANGUISHENE IN 1828.

BY A. C. OSBORNE.

[The story of the transfer of the British garrison from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828 and the migration of *voyageurs* connected with the post has never been told in print. In the following notes Mr. Osborne has endeavored to gather this story from the lips of the few survivors who migrated at that time. Descendants of French-Canadians largely predominated in this movement, but we also get glimpses of what a strange and heterogeneous people once gathered around Mackinaw and Drummond Island, especially about the time of the coalition of the two fur companies in 1821. The migrant *voyageurs* settled principally near Penetanguishene, in the township of Tiny, Simcoe County. Offshoots of the band settled at Old Fort Ste. Marie, at Fesserton and Coldwater, and another south of Lake Simcoe, near Pefferlaw, York County. These notes will form a useful supplement to Joseph Tasse's "*Les Canadiens de l'Ouest*." They are intended as a chapter in a larger work that will deal with the history of Penetanguishene and vicinity—a work that Mr. Osborne hopes to complete at an early date.]

The British military post at Michilimackinac was transferred to the United States in 1796 by mutual agreement, and the forces stationed there retired to St. Joseph Island, where a fort and blockhouse were erected. From this latter post, at a subsequent period, issued that famous volunteer contingent of one hundred and sixty Canadian *voyageurs*, accompanied by a few (30) British regulars with two field pieces, under Captain Roberts,\* who effected the recapture of Mackinaw for the British. This occurred on the 16th of July, 1812, the first year of the war. In a subsequent attack by the Americans to recover the post the Canadian *voyageurs* gallantly assisted in its defence. Mackinaw was again restored to the United States according to treaty stipulations in 1815, when the British garrison found refuge on Drummond Island, in proximity to the former post of St. Joseph. The Canadian *voyageurs* still preferring to follow the fortunes of the British flag, with one or two exceptions, removed with the forces to Drummond Island. On the completion of the treaty surveys, Drummond Island proved to be in United States territory. Thereupon the British forces, under Lieut. Carson, commanding a detachment of the 68th Regiment, withdrew to the naval

\* This hero of Mackinaw in 1812 was an uncle of Field-Marshal Roberts, who conducted the recent campaign in South Africa.