

To stop this annoying species of warfare, which was rapidly decimating his ranks, to destroy the depot of stores at De Cew's and to open a way to the West, Gen. Dearborn determined upon striking a blow. A column of 600 men with artillery under Col. Boerstler of the 14th U.S. Infantry was detailed to capture Fitzgibbon. At midnight on June 23rd, 1813, this column advanced from old Niagara to Queenston. Silence was enjoined upon those taking part in the movement, no fires nor lights were allowed, and pickets were stationed to prevent information being carried to the men on the hill. A sentry was placed at Laura Secord's own door.

There were those, however, who were straining eye and ear to catch the meaning of the expedition. This was soon ascertained. At Mr. Secord's at Queenston some American officers were billeted. With them Col. Boerstler dined on the 23rd of June. They talked freely of their plans and of the importance of securing Beaver Dams as a base of operations for the capture of Burlington Heights. "That position once taken," said Boerstler, "and Upper Canada is ours."

To this conversation, so pregnant with ill to her own and her country, Laura Secord was a quiet but eager listener. She consulted with her husband and they talked over a plan. Fitzgibbon must be warned of his danger. Somebody must speed to him at once. James Secord was unable, being still invalided from the wounds of Queenston Heights. Moreover, no man could pass the line of American sentries. There was no one else to send. Laura Secord must go herself.

And so this noble-hearted child of the Loyalists pre-