

Hull deceived by false Reports and Appearances.

Escort sent for Brush.

Its Fate.

ness two hundred miles away, was cut off. His provisions, he thought, were becoming too scarce to warrant the risk of a protracted siege, and an intercepted letter from Proctor to Roberts at Mackinack threatened a descent of five thousand Indians from that region. Hemmed in on every side, and his force wasting with disease, disappointment, and death, his kindness of heart, and the growing caution incident to old age, made him timid and fearful. He did not know that the letter from Proctor at Malden had been sent for the purpose of interception to alarm him.¹ He did not know that a large portion of Brock's troops, reported to him as regulars, were only the militia of Long Point and vicinity, dressed in scarlet uniforms to deceive him.² He was too honest (whatever may be said of his military sagacity) to suspect deceptions of this kind, and he sincerely believed that his little army would be exterminated by the savages should he exasperate them by shedding their blood. "A man of another mould, full of resolution and resource," says Ingersoll, "might have triumphed over the time-serving negligence of his own government, and the bold resistance of an enemy who could not fail to perceive that he had a feeble and dismayed antagonist to deal with."³

On the 14th General Hull sent a message to Captain Brush informing him that a sufficient detachment to escort him to head-quarters could not then be spared, and directing him to remain where he was until farther orders, or, if he thought best, to attempt a forward movement by a circuitous and more inland route, after consulting with Colonel Anderson and Captain Jobard, the bearers of the letter.⁴ Toward the evening of the same day, he changed his mind, and concluded to send a detachment to escort Brush to Detroit. He communicated his plan to Colonels M'Arthur and Cass, who not only approved of it, but volunteered to perform the duty. They were permitted to choose three hundred and fifty men from their respective regiments. M'Arthur, as senior officer, took the command; and they left in haste in the evening without a sufficient supply of provisions for a protracted absence, or even of blankets for repose in resting, for they were assured that they would doubtless meet Brush between the Rouge and Huron, and not more than twelve miles distant. When they remonstrated because they were dispatched with a scanty supply of provisions, Hull promised to send more after them on pack-horses. But Brush's orders left it optional with him to remain or move forward. He was *not* found on the way, nor were provisions received from Hull as promised.

The detachment under M'Arthur and Cass crossed the Rouge that evening,⁵ and the next day pushed forward by a circuitous route toward the head waters of the Huron, twenty-four miles from Detroit, when they became entangled in a swamp, and could proceed no farther. Half famished and greatly fatigued by their march through the forest, they had prepared to bivouac for the night, when, just as the evening twilight was fading away, a courier arrived with a summons from Hull to return immediately to Detroit.⁵ The order was obeyed, and they

¹ I was informed by the venerable Robert Reynolds, of Amherstburg, who was a deputy assistant commissary general in the British army in Canada during the war, that Proctor sent a letter to Captain Roberts telling him that his force was considerable, and that he need not send down more than five thousand Indians. This letter, according to instructions, was intercepted, and placed in the hands of Hull, who had visions immediately of an overwhelming force coming down upon his rear, while a superior army should attack him in front.

² I visited the Long Point region at Norwichville in the autumn of 1860, where early settlers were yet living. There I was informed, from the lips of Adam Yeigh, of Burford, who was one of the volunteers, that all of the recruits from his neighborhood were dressed in scarlet uniform at the public expense. When they approached Sandwich he said these raw recruits were mixed with the regulars, each volunteer being placed between two regulars. By this stratagem Hull was deceived into the belief that a large British force was marching against him. Yeigh was an energetic young man, and soon won the confidence of Brock, who gave him the following directions on the day that they marched upon Sandwich from Amherstburg: If your lieutenant falls, take his place; if your captain falls, take his place; if your colonel falls, take his place. As no blood was shed on the occasion, and nobody fell, Yeigh failed of promotion. He cited this circumstance to show how nearly he came to being a British colonel.

³ *Historical Sketches of the Second War*, etc., I., 81.

⁴ Hull's *Memoir of the Campaign of 1812*, page 73.

⁵ Letter of Colonel Cass to the Secretary of War, September 10, 1812.