

some rising balloon. Beneath a range of straining jibs her bowsprit speared defiantly heavenward. Below it, but above the smother of foam that burst and played in wild cataracts at her cleaving bows, showed the vessel's namesake, no nereid nor mermaid, but an eighteenth century belle in hat and feather and all the elaboration of costume of the late seventeen-hundreds. Skelling, the carver, had been at particular pains to make that figurehead, and it had been brought all the way from New York when the schooner was built at Detroit in 1789. From the lady's skirts swept the broadening curve of the headboards, on either bow, beaded and enserolled with the letters of the schooner's name. They widened into a broad white band, which flowed aft, girdling the ship's bulwarks, broken with the black squares of gunports—some real, some only painted, after the fashion of the time, which made every craft look as formidable as possible, for the better effect on pirates and the nation's foe.

A glimpse of the deck gained as the schooner dipped and heeled showed a stretch of holy-stoned planking perhaps twenty feet wide and eighty feet long at the very most, looking narrow and crowded between the high bulwarks, with barrels and bales lashed in every available space between the forecastle head and the raised quarter-deck and cabin aft. A heavy wooden capstan and windlass, brass guns on little wooden carriages, and a long boat stowed on chocks amidships heightened the crowded appearance of her decks and left little room for the movements of her large crew of French-Canadian *voyageurs* and Newfoundland fishermen who had joined the Royal Navy for the war on the freshwater seas. But all were blithe as crickets. Lieutenant Miller Worsley was in charge and he was driving her, under a press of canvas, for the sore beset isle of Mackinac. The enemy might be there—would surely be there ere

long—but the *Nancy's* cargo would be a godsend to the garrison, and of the mosquitoes and blistering heat of the Nottawasaga shore all hands had had more than enough.

Suddenly "Sail ho!" came from the vigilant lookout in the fore top-gallant cross-trees.

There was a racing aloft of blue-jacketed figures, and a concentration of long brass telescopes on a tiny dot that heaved and disappeared far ahead, right in the schooner's track.

"It's a big canoe," said Worsley. "What's she doing in the open lake so far off shore?"

The schooner came up on the craft rapidly, for strong arms were plying the paddles. A man stood up in the canoe and waved.

"Why, that's Mr. Livingston, who piloted us to the Nottawasaga, voyage before last!" exclaimed Captain Alexander McIntosh, the *Nancy's* sailing master—a grim and seasoned veteran of the lakes, who not long before had sailed the *Nancy* past Detroit with a fuse laid to a powder keg, ready to blow her up rather than surrender. 'Twas he, too, who stood at the helm all the while she fought her way out of the St. Clair, escaping gunshot as though he bore a charmed life.

"Heave her to," called Worsley.

"Back the tops and put the helm hard down!" echoed the sailing master, and, with a flailing of loosened jib sheets, the schooner came into the wind, while the canoe swept alongside.

The seaman was right. It was Lieutenant Robert Livingston, the daring officer of the Indian Department, who had been midshipman, fur trader, and leader of Indian warriors, and was always engaged in some desperate and thrilling enterprise which only a man of his pluck could undertake. He had volunteered to carry a warning to the *Nancy*, and here he was, despite the fact that two of four wounds he had received in conflicts with the enemy