

Blanc, which, one mile in length and lashed at its opposite extremity by the waters of Lake Erie, at this precise point, receives into her capacious bosom the vast tribute of the noble river connecting her with the higher lakes. Between this island and the Canadian shore lies the only navigable channel for ships of heavy tonnage, for although the waters of the Detroit are of vast depth every where above the island, they are near their point of junction with the lake, and, in what is called the American channel, so interrupted by shallows and sandbars, that no craft larger than those of a description termed "Durham boats" can effect the passage—on the other hand the channel dividing the island from the Canadian shore is at once deep and rapid, and capable of receiving vessels of the largest size. The importance of such a passage is obvious; but although a state of war necessarily prevented aid from armed vessels to such forts of the Americans as lay to the westward of the lake, it by no means effectually cut off their supplies through the medium of the Durham boats already alluded to. In order to intercept those, a most vigilant watch was kept by the light gun boats despatched into the lesser channel for that purpose.

A blockhouse and battery crowned also the eastern extremity of the island, and both, provided with a flag staff for the purpose of communication by signal with the fort, were far from being wanting in picturesque effect. A subaltern's command of infantry, and a bombardiers of artillery, were the only troops stationed there, and these were there rather to look out for, and report the approach of whatever American boats might be seen stealing along their own channel, than with any view to the serious defence of a post already sufficiently commanded by the adjacent fortress. In every other direction the island was thickly wooded—not a house—not a hut arose to adversify the wild beauty of the scene. Frequently, it is true, along the margin of its sands might be seen a succession of Indian wigwams, and the dusky and sinewy forms of men gliding round their fires, as they danced to the mono-