

used to such good purpose. Irresolution and delay in landing prevented the easy capture which might have been made had the right moment been seized, and gave time for the militia to collect in large numbers. Notwithstanding this, however, the British troops put to flight the American force, and the General commanding, after firing his store-houses, was on the point of capitulating, when Sir George Prevost, who is supposed to have been terrified by the dust raised by the retreating militia,—which he took to signify advancing reinforcements,—gave the command to re-embark. The order was most reluctantly obeyed by the mortified and indignant troops, who saw, with bitter mortification, their hardly won success thrown away; while Sir George Prevost's reputation is said to have sustained, by his action on this occasion, a shock which it never recovered, the unfortunate Plattsburgh expedition of the following year giving it the *coup de grâce*.

Gen. Dearborn, after the advantage gained by the capture of York and Fort George, had made no very vigorous efforts to follow up General Vincent on his retreat towards Burlington Heights. In the beginning of June, however, he sent on a force of about 3,000 strong, including 250 cavalry and nine field-pieces, which came up with Vincent's advanced pickets at Stony Creek, where the Americans took up their quarters for the night. Having reconnoitred the position of the enemy, and discovered its weak points, Col. Harvey proposed to General Vincent a night attack, which, led by him, proved entirely successful. The sleeping troops were surprised and surrounded before they could organize for effective resistance, and Generals Winder and Chandler, with 120 officers and men, and four guns, were captured; the rest of the enemy, who had been fighting on confusedly, being compelled to disperse after a sanguinary contest, the loss on the British side being about 160 men. The Americans, when morning fully revealed

the situation, retreated precipitately towards Fort George, destroying tents and burning stores, accompanied by their flotilla of boats and batteaux, with a valuable cargo of supplies, most of which Sir James Yeo intercepted on the way—securing also a large quantity of spoil from a deserted encampment, suddenly evacuated at his approach. These gallant combined efforts freed the Peninsula from present occupation by the enemy, and threw him back on the edge of the frontier at Fort George. An attempted surprise of Vincent's outpost at the Beaver Dam, a *dépôt* for stores under the charge of Colonel Fitzgibbon, was baffled through the intrepidity and energy of a noble Canadian woman, Mary Secord, who undertook a walk of twenty miles through tangled wilderness, haunted by wolves and rattle-snakes, braving hostile sentries and Indian encampments, in order to warn Fitzgibbon of the intended surprise.

Her warning came just in time. The handful of British troops was prepared, and by a judicious disposition of the thirty regulars, assisted by a few Indians and militiamen, *captured the 542 Americans*, two field-guns, with ammunition waggons, and the colours of the 14th U. S. Regiment—the enemy surrendering under the impression that he was surrounded by a superior force. This exploit, though on a small scale, was one of the most brilliant exploits of the war, hardly less so than the descent of Bishopp and Clark upon Black Rock, near Buffalo, which soon followed it. With a force of 200 regulars and 40 militia, Colonel Bishopp and his friend, Colonel Clark, of the Lincoln militia dashed down upon Black Rock, as the latter had done, a few days before, upon Fort Schlosser, dispersed the American troops there, under General Porter, destroyed the block-house, the barracks, the naval arsenal and a fine schooner, and removed all the stores that could be carried away, scrupulously respecting, however, all private property. The expedition cost the life of