

September 22, 1864: "[The United States] will emerge . . . chafed, angry and entertaining feelings of mortal hatred and revenge towards the Provinces. . . . Let these Provinces, however, be organized into one vast Confederation . . . we should soon possess all the prestige and command all the respect to which our numbers and our position would entitle us."

The Halifax MORNING CHRONICLE, considering the probable results of the United States Civil War.

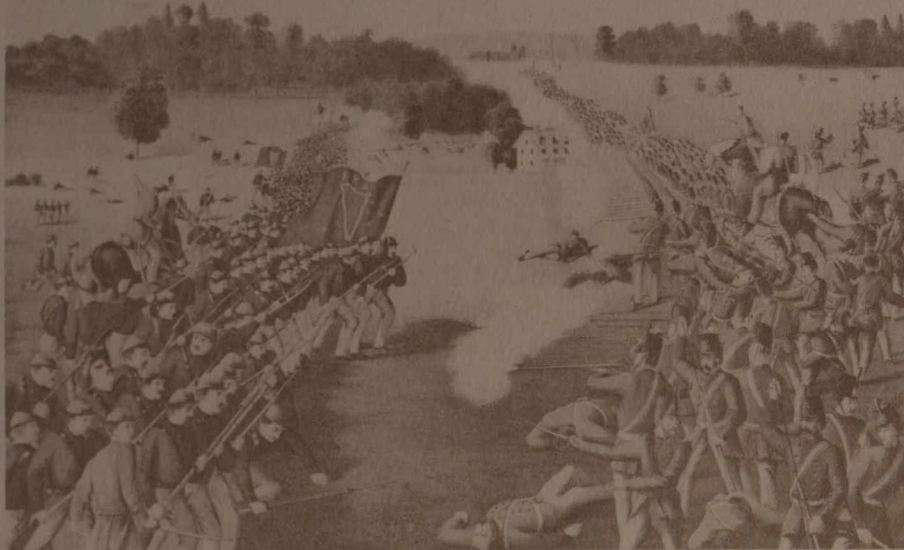
All About The US Civil War & Two Invasions

[ONE TO THE SOUTH AND ONE TO THE NORTH]

In the Civil War, British aristocrats favoured the South. The South supplied cotton for the mills of Man-

chester, and General Robert E. Lee was obviously a gentleman by Southern or British standards. The *Times* of London

Charge of the Fenians under Colonel O'Neill, June 2, 1866



Public Archives of Canada

enjoyed referring to the "fleet-footed veterans of Bull Run."

Canadians at first supported the North, but when Lincoln failed to free the slaves promptly, they began to doubt that the war was purely an abolitionist crusade. Their points of contact and friction had been, historically, with the North, and they were worried. After Gettysburg the Union Army seemed invincible, and Canadians feared that the North might try to annex them when the war was over.

On October 19, 1864, twenty Confederates disguised as hunters and fishermen slipped into St. Albans, Vermont, robbed three banks, tried to burn the town and fled to Canada where six were arrested. There were cries of outrage from Washington when a Canadian magistrate freed the raiders, saying he had no jurisdiction. Henry Adams, at the American Legation in London, wrote that "this Canadian business is suddenly found to be serious, and the prospect of Sherman marching down the St. Lawrence and Farragut sailing up it, doesn't seem just agreeable."

Canada was not ready for an invasion. The British garrisons were small and getting smaller — down from 14,500 to 11,700 in a year — and Whitehall was preoccupied with Napoleon III. Lieutenant Colonel Jervis announced that Canada could be properly defended by building enormously expensive fortifications at Quebec, Montreal and Kingston. The point was moot. Britain was clearly indicating that what it wanted from Canada was

more independence and fewer expenses.

While Irish sympathizers of the Fenian Brotherhood were demonstrating in Toronto, the fathers of Canadian Confederation were meeting in Quebec. It is customary now to treat the Fenian Brotherhood as less than a threat to Canada. In spite of its ineffectiveness, it was a serious organization. Founded in the US in 1859, with branches throughout the world, its purpose was to establish an Irish Republic, and its strategy in the US was to invade Canada. An extraordinary number of Irish immigrants had served in the Union Army. Eighty won Congressional Medals of Honor.

In 1866, the Fenians, under a general on leave from the US Army, assembled in upstate New York. President Andrew Johnson was inclined not to interfere with their plans. Memories of St. Albans were vivid and the Irish vote was large. Some eight hundred men under John O'Neill crossed the Niagara on June 1, 1866 and captured Fort Erie. A second larger force encamped at Pigeon Hill and plundered two towns in Quebec. Then President Johnson announced that the neutrality laws would be enforced and O'Neill went home and surrendered.

When he tried again in 1870, he was arrested by President Grant.

It has been suggested that the whole unpleasantness did have one fortunate result — it hastened the Confederation of Canada which was proclaimed on July 1, 1867, a year after the first Fenian Invasion and three years before the second.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		