

## CHAPTER V

### OPERATIONS ON LAKE ONTARIO: YORK, FORT GEORGE, AND SACKETT'S HARBOUR. 1813

**Y**ORK.—The American plan for 1813 had included an attack on Kingston about the 1st of April. But in March Dearborn became alarmed over the force he imagined Prevost to have collected there. That part of the plan was therefore omitted. Four thousand men had been designated for it. But only 1700 embarked at Sackett's Harbour with Chauncey's squadron on the 25th of April to proceed against York and Fort George.

York was then a mere village in size. But it was the capital of Upper Canada; and it contained the Provincial Parliament buildings and offices. Sheaffe wrote from it on the 5th, saying he hoped to put it into a better state of defence before he left for Fort George, especially as the new ship was then building there. A fatal mistake was made when Gray's suggestion to create a naval yard at York was approved by Prevost. But, once the suggestion had been accepted, the yard ought to have been fortified. Sheaffe had not even mounted all the guns when Chauncey and Dearborn arrived. Then he made another mistake in remaining to fight when there was no chance of success; for he lost a good many men who could ill be spared.

The American squadron stood in at dawn on the 27th. The landing party was put ashore to the west of York under the command of Brigadier-General Pike. There was a skirmish but no effectual resistance at the landing place.