

New England and New York, who, aside from the United Empire Loyalists, had settled in the country.

Canada at this period, apart from the monarchial predilections of the inhabitants themselves, possessed another element of strength in the Northwestern Indian tribes, who had transferred at length the feeling of regard they had once entertained for the French to the British, and cordially disliked the Americans, whom they termed Long Knives. To the important aid they rendered in the outset of the contest, before the militia were properly organized or reinforcements had arrived from England, may, under God, in a great measure be attributed the preservation of Western Canada. The famous confederacy of the Iroquois had been broken up after the Revolutionary War, the Mohawks, and part of the Onondagas and Tuscaroras, attaching themselves to the fortunes of the British, while the rest of the confederates clung to their ancient hunting-grounds, although closely hemmed in by the advancing tide of civilization. Under their famous chief, Red Jacket, the latter gave most important aid to the Americans during the war, in which the Senecas engaged in the fall of 1813, after having issued a formal declaration of hostilities against Upper and Lower Canada. Nor had the Iroquois suffered much diminution in point of numbers. They were very nearly as numerous in 1812 as they were when Count de Frontenac invaded their country, one hundred and sixteen years before. Thus we see that the United States had as little compunction in availing themselves of Indian aid as Canada; but it must be remembered that the latter only used it in self-defence, while the others employed it in a way of conquest and aggression. The hostile feeling against the Americans so sedulously fostered by the Shawnee chief, Tecumseh, and his brother, Elksawatawa, or the Prophet, prevented any part of the Northwest Indians from joining their standard, and the Iroquois of New York State were, therefore, their only important allies.

Sir George Prevost, the Governor, pursued a wise and conciliatory policy, and many of the parties who had been deprived of their commissions in the militia by his predecessor, were now reinstated. The benefit of this course was soon apparent. On the 28th of May, a general order directed the embodiment of four regiments of militia, which were filled up by the habitants with the greatest alacrity. A regiment of Canadian voltigeurs was also raised, the command of which was given to Major de Salaberry, a Canadian gentleman of French extraction.

It was known at Quebec, on the 24th June, that Congress had declared war, so all American citizens were warned to quit the province by the 3d July. On the 30th June, a proclamation was issued imposing an embargo on all vessels in the harbor and convening the Legislature for the 16th July. Parliament acted with the greatest liberality. A bill to legalize the issue of army bills to the amount of £250,000 was passed in order to replenish the public exchequer; and an annual grant of £15,000 made for five years to pay whatever interest might accrue. On the 6th July the whole militia of the province had been directed to hold themselves in readiness to be embodied, while the flank companies of Montreal militia were formed into a battalion and armed.

General Brock, in Upper Canada, had been busily employed for some time in making preparations for the contest which he saw clearly was approaching. He had some little trouble with the Legislature, which he called together on the 3d February, and which refused to pass two of his proposed measures, namely, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus and a Militia Supplementary Act, as they did not think war would take place. No sooner, however, did they perceive their error, than a very effective militia bill was passed and £5,000 granted to pay training expenses. Still Brock had considerable difficulties to encounter. There were but few troops in the province and not sufficient muskets to arm half the militia; while at the same time, the Governor General informed him no aid need be looked for from England for some months, as the idea prevailing there was, that the Orders in Council being repealed, war would not be declared by the United States.

On the surrender of Mackinaw to the Americans, a small military force for the protection of the fur trade had been established forty miles to the northeast, on the Island of St. Joseph in Lake Huron. No sooner had General Brock learned on the 26th June that war had been declared by the United States, than he sent orders to Captain Roberts, commandant of this post, to possess himself of Mackinaw if possible; but if first attacked he was to defend himself to the last extremity, and then retreat upon St. Mary's, a station belonging to the Northwestern Company. By the 15th July, Roberts had prepared his little armament, consisting of forty-two regulars, three artillerymen, one hundred and sixty Canadian voyageurs, half of whom only were armed with muskets or fowling-pieces, and two hundred and fifty Indians. On the following morning he embarked, and landed on the 17th near Mackinaw, garrisoned by sixty regular soldiers, under the command of Lieutenant Hancks. Roberts immediately summoned him to surrender, which was complied with after a few minutes' delay; and thus at the very outset of war a most important post, commanding the entrance into Lake Michigan, was acquired without loss of blood. But apart from the value of the acquisition, the occurrence had an excellent effect in retaining the Northwest Indians in the British interest.

The call to arms was promptly and loyally responded to by the inhabitants of the Midland District, including the militia of Northumberland. The old veterans of former days, who had for so many years been engaged in the peaceful occupation of farming, were aroused to a high degree of indignation that their old enemies, who had in former days driven them away from their old homes in America, should now threaten to do the same thing in regard to their hard-earned new ones.

No wonder that these old sturdy loyalists and their sons quickly obeyed the call to come to the defence of their homes. To a certain extent the bay region was free from immediate danger. Excepting at Kingston the inhabitants were not particularly alarmed by the trumpet blast. There was not here enacted such stirring events as transpired in other parts of the country. Nevertheless there was diligent preparation made for any contingency that might come with the tide of war. The several regiments of militia called out were taken to Kingston and prepared for service, whether it might be offensive or defensive. Kingston being a naval station, and having a dockyard as well as a military depot, and at the same time situated within a short distance of the enemy's territory, it was necessary that it should be well garrisoned, and the surrounding country constantly watched. And here, too, the untrained and raw militiamen were trained for service, while they were ready at all times to defend the place.

The news of the declaration of war reached Kingston by a private letter to Mr. Forsythe from the States, and an hour and a half afterwards, says one who was there, a letter having been conveyed to Colonel Benson, the drum beat to arms, and couriers were on their way, with all haste, to warn out the militia along the bay and elsewhere.

The belief was entertained that Kingston would be attacked at once, and the flank companies were ordered there immediately. Upon the 27th June, 1812, John Ferguson, Colonel commanding 1st Regiment, wrote from Kingston to Lieutenant-Colonel William Bell, of Thurlow, "to cause the volunteers of the battalion who already offered their services, to hold themselves in readiness for actual service, and to apply to the Quartermaster for such arms as are in his possession, to be used by the volunteers until others were got from Kingston. Captain John McIntosh to take command, the other Captain will be J. W. Myers. Notice to be given at once, be it night or day, to meet on the plains and be drilled by their Sergeant-Major." Colonel Bell received the letter at sunset on the 29th by the hands of John Weaver. A postscript to the letter says: "War is declared by the United States against Great Britain."

The militia of Hastings were hurried to Kingston, but after a few weeks, when it was seen that Kingston would not be immediately attacked, they were ordered home.

Two events in connection with Kingston may be referred to here; one was a hostile demonstration against Sackett's Harbor, which had for its chief object the destruction of a man-of-war there building; the other was an attempt on the part of the Americans to destroy the British frigate, Royal George, lying at Kingston.

Sir George Prevost and Sir James L. Yeo arrived at Kingston in May, 1813, where were Captains Barclay, Pring, and Fumes, preparing for service the few vessels stationed there; among them one lately launched, the Sir George Prevost, of thirty guns, greeted them with a salute from the vessels. The American fleet was at the head of the lake, bombarding Fort George. Under these circumstances it was resolved to make an attack upon Sackett's Harbor. "About one thousand men were embarked on board of the Wolfe, of twenty-four guns, the Royal George, of twenty-four guns, the Earl of Moira, of eighteen guns, and four armed schooners, each carrying from ten to twelve guns, with a number of bateaux, so that no time might be lost in the debarkation. Two gunboats were placed in readiness as a landing escort. The boats were under the direction of Captain Mulcaster, of the Royal Navy, and landing under the immediate superintendence of Sir George Prevost and Sir James Yeo. The following account is from A. O. Petrie, Esq., of Belleville, who was present as a volunteer, being then clerk to Captain Gray, Assistant Quartermaster. So quickly was the expedition arranged that Petrie had no knowledge of it until about to start. By permission of Captain Gray, Mr. Petrie formed one of the party, who, although forgetting to procure a red coat, did not forget his gun, was in a bateau with Captain Gray the greater part of the night, which was crowded with men. Captain Gray told Petrie that the object of the expedition was to burn the ship there building, and told him he might have a hand in it. Petrie said he would be there as soon as any one. They landed about four o'clock in the morning, and Mr. Petrie carried Captain Gray on his back to the shore through the water. But before they had landed the Americans fired upon them; they were soon relieved, however, by the gunboat. They then advanced, and were not far from the ship when the bugle sounded the retreat. When he regained the boat he found that his friend Captain Gray had been killed.

Evidence is not wanting to show that the retreat was utterly unnecessary, that the enemy, at the time, was fleeing; it was one of those fearful mistakes by which the British and Canadian troops lost a victory which had actually been won. This expedition exhibited the bravery of the militiamen in the fullest degree, and had the mind of Prevost remained unclouded, due reward would have been ultimately secured. But the precipitate retreat of the Americans was misunderstood by Prevost; he looked upon it as a trap set to ensnare him. "It was true," says a writer, "that Fort Tomkins was about to fall into British hands. Already the officers in charge of Navy Point, agreeably to orders, and supposing the fort to be lost, had set on fire the naval magazine, containing all the stores captured at New York. The hospital and barracks were illuminating the lake by their magnificent conflagration, and the frigate on the stock had been set on fire, only to be extinguished when his mind became unsettled as to the ulterior design of the enemy. In the very moment of fully accomplishing the very purpose of the expedition he ordered a retreat, and the troops reached Kingston in safety."

On the 4th May, in the following year, an expedition left Kingston, which arrived at Oswego on the following day, and took the fort; but the stores had been taken away.

Herkimer's Point is distant from Kingston about five miles, and it was considered not improbable that the Americans might land upon this point, and endeavor to enter Kingston. Here was a telegraph signal, and two cannon had been planted there; afterwards one, a very good one, was removed, lest it should fall into the hands of the enemy. From this point a fair view of the Upper Gap was to be had. At last, one morning, the Yankee fleet, composed of some fourteen sail, large and small, appeared off the Upper Gap. A shot, it is said, was fired from the old windmill by some militiamen there, which was replied to. A schooner, the Simcoe, was chased, but escaped by running over a bar between some islands at Herkimer's Point. She received several shots, and subsequently sank when she had reached Kingston. The inhabitants along the coast were ordered into the interior, with all their stock. The fleet passed along not far from the shore, and the field artillery moved along at an equal pace, and a firing was kept up between them. The learned historian, to whom we have already referred, tells us that his father was present on the occasion. He was sergeant in Captain Dorland's company from Adolphustown, and was this morning on duty with his company at Herkimer's Point. He was standing a short distance from the shore. The brass artillery sent a ball through one of the enemy's vessels; he saw her haul off from the rest. The fleet fired back, and he saw the first ball from them as it passed near him. The Governor's horse being held by a negro near by, while the Governor stood a little off, squatted to the earth, and the ball passed over his back; the ball then struck the top rail of the fence near by him, and went bounding and plowing up the ground. All this he remembers distinctly. The artillery and troops marched along opposite the fleet on their way to Kingston, and were there paraded in a concealed spot behind the jail. It was a general expectation that the enemy would attempt to land, and he fully anticipated going into action; he could see the balls flying over the buildings.

That the enemy would have the assurance to try at least to possess themselves of Kingston, with its garrison and naval depot and dockyard, was the natural expectation. Every legitimate step was taken to frustrate any designs that might be entertained by the Americans against the place.

In the *Gazette* of October 9th, 1813, appears the following: "By all accounts we understand that the Americans are on the eve of attacking this place. It is our province to observe that their intentions have become completely anticipated, and every necessary preparation has been made to give them a warm reception. We are happy to announce the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond, with the first detachment of the 104th Regiment, from Burlington Heights. This regiment, the 49th, and the Corps of the Voltigeurs, may be expected here in the course of to-day or to-morrow. These three gallant regiments, together with our brave militia, who are pouring in from all quarters, and have already assembled in considerable numbers, will be a sufficient reinforcement, and with our present respectable garrison will be able to repel any force which the enemy may bring against us. We are glad to observe that every piece of artillery is most advantageously placed, and we must really congratulate our fellow-citizens on the formidable appearance of every defensible portion in the vicinity of this town. It has been the general rumor for a few days past that six or seven of our small vessels have been taken on their way from the head of the lake to this place, and sent into Sackett's, which rumor we fear is too true."

The woods around Kingston and upon Point Henry were all cut down to prevent a surprise. The enemy, however, did not attack Kingston, but landed lower down the St. Lawrence. With what result, the following notice will show:

"*Kingston Gazette*, Saturday, November 13th, 1813.

"Postscript—Highly important.

"The following important intelligence was received in town this morning:

"CHRYSLER'S, 11th November.

"The enemy attacked us this morning—suppose from 3,000 to 4,000 men in number—and has been completely repulsed and defeated, with a very considerable loss, a number of prisoners, and one General taken by us. The loss of the enemy cannot be less than 400 or 500; ours has been severe. The Americans were commanded by Generals Lears and Boyd.

(Signed)

"WILLIAM MORRISON,
Lieutenant-Colonel 89th Regiment."

The loss of the enemy at Williamsburgh, it is said, exceeded 1,000 in killed, wounded, prisoners, and deserters. Their flight was precipitate during the remainder of the day and night after the action. On the morning of the 12th they regained their own shore in the greatest confusion, and in momentary expectation of being attacked. Several officers of distinction were killed and wounded. Major-General Covender was dangerously wounded, and is since dead. Lieutenant-Colonel Preston, noted for his ridiculous and insulting proclamation at Fort Erie, inviting the inhabitants of Upper Canada to place themselves under his protection, was dangerously wounded. One six-pounder field-piece was taken on the charge, and about 120 prisoners; 350 or 400 stand of arms were collected on and near the field of action.

The militia of Cornwall and the neighboring townships have come forward in the most spirited and loyal manner, and are daily joining the troops, showing a spirit worthy of their ancestors, and a noble example to their countrymen. We sincerely hope it will be followed; and if the inhabitants of Upper Canada are true to themselves, they can have no reason to fear all the efforts of the enemy.

The Midland district, which included Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington, did not merely contribute its quota of men for the incorporated militia, but the fertile soil along the borders of the bay gave abundantly to the commissariat department. During the first year of the war, there was a time when the troops at Kingston had no more than a week's provision. Under these circumstances, the commandant inquired of Colonel Cartwright if he knew of any one who could be depended upon to raise the required supplies, which were known to exist in the district. Colonel Cartwright informed him that the needed person could at once be secured in the person of Captain Robert Wilkins. Captain Wilkins, who had raised a company in the early part of the war, was accordingly sent for, and instructed to prepare to undertake, as chief commissary, the duty. He asked for written instructions and authority, that he might not be hindered in his work; that militia colonels and sub-officers should yield to his demand for men to act as bateaux men, or to do any other required duty, to impress conveyances, etc. He was asked if he would be ready to set out in a day or two. The reply was, "I will start in half an hour." "The devil you will," said the commandant; "so much the better." And Captain Wilkins quickly wrote his resignation as captain to the company, settled his hotel bill, and was on his way up the bay toward Picton. Arrived there he called upon Mr. Cummings, and desired him to act as agent, which request was acceded to. He then pushed on to the head of the bay, at the Carrying Place, and established an agency there, afterwards his headquarters. Proceeding to Myers Creek, he procured as agent the services of Simon McNabb.

His Majesty's ships, Royal George, Earl of Moira, and Prince Regent, arrived at Kingston on the morning of August 29th, 1812, with 400 prisoners and General Hull.

The most of the prisoners taken at the Niagara frontier were carried in bateaux and by the bay; Colonel Scott was included in the number.

The American prisoners, Generals Chandler and Waider, captured at Stony Creek, arrived at a later date. And again: "Arrived at this place yesterday, March 1st, 1813, on their way to Quebec, whither they will proceed to-day, Brigadier-General James Winchester, Colonel William Lewis, and Major George Madison, attached to the American army, captured by General Proctor on the river Rapine."

We copy the following:

"Quebec, November 2d. On Friday and Saturday were escorted by a detachment of Major Bell's Cavalry from their quarters at Bauport to the new gaol twenty-three American officers, and on the latter day were also taken from the prison-ships, and escorted by a detachment of the 103d Regiment to the same prison, a like number of non-commissioned officers, making in all forty-six, conformable to the general orders of the 27th October.

"The conflict presented other sights than prisoners of war. Owing to the exposed state of the Province in the West, after the taking of York, a large number of the wounded were removed from the Niagara region to Kingston, sometimes by ships, sometimes by bateaux. Many of those wounded at Lundy's Lane were taken by schooners to York, and thence by bateaux down the lake shore across the Carrying Place, and along the bay. Among them was Sheriff Rutan, who was left at his father's house to the kind care of his family.

"Space would fail us to enter into lengthy details of this unfortunate, and to the Americans, ignoble conflict; but we must not omit referring to the noble conduct of the Government, in at once adopting measures to secure a just reward to all those who bravely took part in the defence of their country. After a treaty of peace had been signed by the representatives of Great Britain and America in Europe, on the 24th December, 1814, we find the following general order appeared in the *Kingston Gazette*, dated the 17th July, 1815:

"MILITARY SECRETARY'S OFFICE, KINGSTON.

"Each soldier to receive 100 acres of land; officers entitled, in the first instance, to 200; to receive provisions for themselves and families for one year, that is, those who had lost, or who might require it on new land; implements of husbandry and tools to be supplied in sufficient quantities, and other comforts, according to necessity, to cultivate the land. The land thus taken cannot be sold until after three years' cultivation. Superintendent Alexander McDowell and Angus McDowell, of Gleggarry Fencibles, to take charge of the settlers."

The same date was issued the following:

"Acting Military Secretary, William Gibson, issued a notice at Kingston, 29th July, 1815, proclaiming that boards to examine claims for losses met with during the American war, should meet during August and September, at Amherstburgh, Fort George, York, Kingston, and Fort Wellington.

"All discharged soldiers applying for lands are to give in their names to Edward Jones, late of the 9th Regiment, now residing in the old Barrack Square.

(Signed)

"F. P. ROBINSON,
Secretary."

"July 31st.

Again is found:

"LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, YORK, Dec. 10th, 1816.

"His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, has been pleased to appoint Surgeon Anthony, Marshal of Kingston, to examine and grant certificates of disability to militiamen disabled from wounds received on service in defence of the Province during the late war.

(Signed)

"EDWARD McMAHON,
Assistant Secretary."

Among the Militia General Orders issued from the Adjutant-General's Office, appeared the following:

"His Excellency, Sir Frederick P. Robinson, Major-General Commanding and Provincial Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Upper