

CHRONICLES OF CANADA FOR BOYS & GIRLS



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BROCK







CHRONICLES OF CANADA FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

BROCK
THE HERO OF UPPER CANADA

BY
THOMAS GUTHRIE MARQUIS



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BROCK

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

In 1816 a coin intended for circulation in British North America was issued from the Royal Mint. On one side were the words, "Sir Isaac Brock, the Hero of Upper Canada." This was the way the people of Canada had spoken of the great soldier since the capture of Detroit, and the issue of this coin shows in what esteem he was held by the Home Government. It would be more fitting had the words been, "the Hero of Canada." That Brock truly was. His influence was felt not in one province alone, but throughout the whole of British North America. A careful study of the war of 1812 will show that, although he was slain in less than four months after war was declared, he saved Canada to the British Empire. Without his wisdom and daring and

untiring energy it would have fallen into the hands of the troops from the United States. But for his foresight even Quebec, notwithstanding its natural strength, might have been an easy prey to the enemy.

In the public mind General James Wolfe is usually thought of as peculiarly the hero of Canada. But that brave warrior spent only a few months in the country, and during his stay thought merely of driving the French from North America. He took no interest in the country for itself and never dreamt of making Canada his home. Brock, on the other hand, made Canada his country by adoption. For ten years, with but one short holiday to the home land, he had lived within its borders. For a time he had almost complete control of its military affairs, and was latterly in Upper Canada both the political and the military leader. As an inspiring force for Canadians his memory has greater influence than that of either Wolfe, the conqueror of the French, or Guy Carleton, who saved Canada from the American invaders in 1775 and 1776. He was in many ways the greatest maker of the Canadian nation.

On the reverse side of the memorial coin referred to are the words, "Success to Commerce and Peace to the World." These are noteworthy words and truly show for what Brock, Nelson, Wellington, Roberts, and all Britain's distinguished soldiers have fought. They were not "vulgar conquerors" like Napoleon, but drew their swords to help establish the rule of the Prince of Peace on earth. Brock occupies a high place among the world's greatest peacemakers. As a soldier and statesman his life story is worthy of the closest study.

Isaac Brock was born in the little island of Guernsey, October 6th, 1769. In this same year were born likewise two of the most renowned military leaders the world has ever seen, — Napoleon, who with his conquering armies was to sweep Europe from end to end, and Wellington, who was to check the career of the ambitious, selfish Corsican, and finally cause him to be sent a prisoner to the lonely island of St. Helena. All men have not the same chances, and, had Brock been employed

in the European wars of his time, he might have risen to be another Wellington. But it is doubtful if he would have been long spared in battle. He was almost foolhardy in his courage, and ever felt that he must expose himself where the fight was fiercest in order to inspire his followers to noble deeds.

Brock was descended from an ancient family, just how ancient it is hard to tell. The name is so old that it is quite possible that there were Brocks in England at the time of William the Conqueror. A Sir Hugh Brock fought valiantly in Brittany in the days of Edward III; and when the English armies were forced to withdraw from France, it may be that some of Sir Hugh's family settled in the fertile island of Guernsey in the group known as the Channel Islands.

Isaac Brock was the eighth son of John Brock, who had been a midshipman in the navy and had made a journey to distant India. His mother was Elizabeth de Lisle, whose father was lieutenant-bailiff of Guernsey. Brock was also related to the great English admiral, Lord de Saumarez. Many

of his relatives distinguished themselves in Britain's battles both by land and by sea.

Guernsey was a fitting spot to be the birthplace of a military hero. St. Peter's Port, the town in which Brock was born, was a quaint old place with many memories that could not but inspire a lad to valiant deeds. In ancient days the island had been a home of the Druids, and their cromlechs and sepulchral caves remained to thrill the imagination of the Guernsey boys. It had been the birthplace of many heroes. Valiantly the men of Guernsey had defended their homes from French invasion on many occasions, and in the days of the Commonwealth had nobly played their part. The island is rugged, storm-beaten; its very situation and character give its inhabitants strength and courage. Placed as it is in the English Channel, the hundreds of vessels, warships and merchantmen, constantly going forth to win great battles or to bring the riches of the East and the West to England, could not but impress young Brock with the feeling that he was a citizen of the greatest empire on earth. He was a robust boy, who

delighted in manly sports, and was long remembered by his comrades as the best boxer and swimmer amongst them. The ancient stronghold called Castle Cornet is situated a half mile from the mainland of Guernsey; through the passage between runs a swift, treacherous tide. It was a favourite feat of Brock's when a lad to swim to the castle and back to the mainland. While indulging in sports he was not neglectful of his studies, and very early in life learned to like serious books, and spent much of his spare time reading about the deeds of mighty men of the past.

When eleven years old Brock was sent to school at Southampton, and later went to Rotterdam, where he studied for a time under a Protestant clergyman, becoming well acquainted with the French language, a thing that was to be of the greatest service to him in after years in the province of Lower Canada.

Brock had early in life to choose a profession. He had no hesitation in making a choice. The aim of every sturdy Guernsey lad of good family was to enter either the British army or navy. Two of Brock's brothers had al-

ready joined the army. John Brock had entered the 8th Regiment, the King's, as an ensign, and at this time held captain's rank; Ferdinand Brock had joined the 60th, and, in 1779, had died gallantly fighting against the American Revolutionists at the defence of Baton Rouge on the Mississippi.

Isaac Brock had just completed his fifteenth year when he obtained by purchase a commission as ensign in the 8th Regiment, no doubt wishing to be near his brother John, who had had ten years active service in America. Although a mere lad, and as fond as any boy could be of sports and pastimes, Brock was ambitious to be a distinguished soldier. With this end in view he set himself serious tasks, and studied military affairs and general history with eagerness. To prevent being interrupted in his studies he spent a part of every day with his books behind locked doors. These student habits he kept up till the end of his career. He left school at the very early age of fifteen, but his letters to his friends and his official letters were written in a manner which shows him to have made good use of

his leisure hours in barrack and camp. In 1790, after serving five years, he obtained his lieutenancy; and a year later he raised an independent company, and was given command of it, with captain's rank. By this time he was tired of the monotony of a soldier's life in the home land, and exchanged into the 49th Regiment, with which he was to be connected until the time of his death. He joined the 49th in Barbados, and served with it in that island and in Jamaica.

Shortly after joining the 49th Brock was annoyed by the bullying attitude of a brother officer, who, priding himself on being a dead shot, delighted in picking quarrels with other men. Brock, by treating this bully with contempt, roused his enmity and was soon challenged to fight a duel. Without any hesitation he accepted the challenge. Brock was now a young giant, six feet two inches in height, broad-shouldered and athletic, an easy mark for an enemy at twelve paces. His opponent was diminutive in size. Brock, as the challenged party, had the right to name the conditions of the duel. A contest at twelve

paces, under the circumstances, would give his enemy a big advantage, so producing a broad handkerchief he made it a condition that they should fight their duel across it. The challenger, in terror of his life, refused to accept the condition, and Brock was declared the victor. The bullying officer was pronounced a coward, and was treated by his fellow officers in such a way that he was forced to leave the regiment.

While in Jamaica Brock had a narrow escape from death. He was seized with a violent fever, and for days his life hung in the balance; but his splendid constitution and the tender care of a trusty servant named Dobson saved him. He was so grateful to his preserver (Brock was always grateful for any kindness done him) that during the rest of Dobson's life he treated him more like a brother than a servant. Dobson died in Upper Canada shortly before his commander was slain at Queenston Heights. The fever left Brock very weak, and he was allowed to return to England on sick leave. He visited his old home at Guernsey, and the scenes of

his boyhood days and the bracing salt-laden channel breezes soon restored him to health and strength.

For six years Brock remained in England and the Channel Islands, raising recruits, drilling troops, and learning the art of war. Despite the fact that he was not on active service, he was rapidly promoted. In 1795 he became major of the 49th, and two years later, when but twenty-eight years old, was appointed lieutenant-colonel of the regiment.

The former commander of the 49th had been criminally careless in his management of its affairs and neglectful of the men. The regiment was in very bad shape. The men were lacking in discipline; indeed, a worse lot could hardly have been found in the army at the time. Brock, moreover, took over the regiment at a most critical period. The sailors of the British navy were in a state of mutiny, and in several instances had risen against their officers and slain them. The army was in sympathy with the mutineers, and it was feared that it, too, might rise against its officers. The 49th had in it many rebel-

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lions spirits, but Brock was able to cope with the situation. He was ever on his guard and took little rest day or night. He visited the men in barrack at frequent intervals, and with his own hand tore down notices that had been posted with the hope of inflaming the soldiers to rebellion. When he went to rest, it was with loaded pistols under his pillow. During this trying time he was kind to his men. He saw that they had grievances. They had been harshly treated by former commanders. He reasoned with them and was tender towards them, but at the same time maintained the strictest discipline. He soon won their respect and esteem, and the mutinous spirit quickly died down. A few months after Brock had taken charge of the 49th, the commander-in-chief of the British army, the Duke of York, inspected the regiment. After the inspection he declared that, under Brock's management, from one of the worst it had become one of the best regiments in the service.

For a brief period in 1798 the 49th was quartered in Jersey. War clouds were gathering thick and fast. The French Republic

was making disastrous headway in Europe. Among other places, Holland was occupied by the French forces. An invasion of Holland by Britain was decided on, and, in the spring of 1799, Brock's regiment was ordered to England, to become a part of the army of invasion. Brock was soon to have his first experience in battle.

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CHAPTER II

FIRST EXPERIENCE IN BATTLE

The French, with able men at the head of their armies, were slowly but surely bringing all Europe under their sway. Holland was one of the first countries to yield to the armies of the new-formed republic. The stadtholder had fled to England. The ancient constitution had been swept away, and, under the name of the Batavian Republic, the country had formed a close alliance with France. By a treaty between Russia and Britain, in 1798, it was agreed that an army should be sent to Holland to drive the French troops from the land, to reëstablish the former rule, and to form an army on the northern frontier of France, that would check the growing power of the French. Britain agreed to send 25,000 men to help rescue Holland from French rule. During the early part of 1799 the harbours of England

were busy with preparations that were being made for the greatest expedition which, up to that time, had left English shores.

All was ready early in August, and an army of 12,000 men under Sir Ralph Abercromby sailed from the harbour of Southampton between the eighth and the thirteenth of the month. This was the first instalment. More troops were to be sent under the British commander-in-chief, the Duke of York, as soon as it was learned that Sir Ralph's force had gained a footing on the shores of Holland. Brock, as senior lieutenant-colonel of the 49th, accompanied the expedition. The 49th was in the 4th brigade, which was under the immediate command of Sir John Moore, who was afterwards slain at Corunna in Spain, and who was immortalized by the famous poem, *The Burial of Sir John Moore*.

The departure of this fleet bearing the army to Holland was a fine sight. It was composed of fifteen ships of the line, from forty-five to fifty frigates, sloops, and smaller war vessels, and about 130 transports. From the outset the expedition was unfortunate. Adverse

winds and stormy seas buffeted the vessels, and for over two weeks they tossed about, unable to make a landing. It was not until the twenty-sixth of the month that they anchored along the low-lying shores of North Holland. Preparations were at once made to land the troops, and, to cover the landing, the fleet opened fire on the enemy's position. The 49th met with but little opposition. The sandhills were lined with the enemy, and a volley was fired on the boats as they touched the shore; but the British soldiers quickly formed on the beach, and a sharp bayonet charge drove back the foe. On the right the fighting was more severe, and a battle lasting nearly ten hours was waged, costing the British about 1,000 men. The enemy were in the end beaten and the strong batteries at the Helder were occupied by the British troops.

For two days after the landing the British soldiers suffered great hardships, and Brock and his men were without shelter on the sandhills, exposed to a biting wind and pelting rain. There were several sharp fights during the early part of September, but it was only

when the Duke of York arrived with the remainder of the British troops and 16,000 Russians, making in all a force of 35,000 men, that the real campaign began. The elements were still opposing; drenching rain delayed the forward movement, and enabled the enemy to strengthen their forces and positions. Although several important engagements took place in September, it was not until October 2nd that Brock had his baptism of fire.

The populous city of Horn had been occupied, but through a blunder on the part of the Russians, who were badly disciplined, it had to be vacated. The enemy daily grew stronger, and a decisive action could not long be delayed. This took place on October 2nd on the coast near Egmont-op-Zee. The 4th Brigade moved along the coast as the advance guard of a column of 10,000 men. The enemy were drawn up on the sand-hills, and were for the most part concealed from view. Fighting began almost at the commencement of the march, the reserves under Colonel McDonald being subjected to a heavy fire that changed their line of advance. Nothing daunted, the 4th Brigade under Sir

John Moore valiantly moved forward with a stormy sea on their left and rolling sand-hills on their right. They had gone five or six miles before they were molested. Suddenly they were compelled to halt on account of a sharp fire from the sand-hills, which Brock in a letter to his brother John, then lieutenant-colonel of the 81st Regiment at the Cape of Good Hope, compared to a sea in a storm. The 25th Regiment was then ordered to charge, but, as they failed to dislodge the foe, the 79th was likewise sent forward. The 49th was ordered to form up on the left of the 79th, and to hold itself in readiness for a charge. Brock was eager to view the ground over which the men might be sent, and fearlessly rode over the hills to get, if possible, a sight of the enemy. On his return to his regiment, placing himself at the head of six companies, and leaving Lieutenant-Colonel Sheaffe — who many years after was to finish the battle Brock began at Queenston Heights — in command of the remaining four to cover his left, he ordered a charge.

With a ringing cheer Brock's soldiers followed him over the rolling sand-hills. It was a dis-

orderly charge, as the broken ground prevented the men from keeping their formation; but it was done with such dash and courage that the enemy took to their heels and left the British in possession of the field. It was a gallant victory, but it cost the 49th dearly — eight officers and 100 non-commissioned officers and privates were killed or wounded. This was a heavy list of casualties, — over a sixth of the men engaged, — but it shows how gallantly Brock's men fought under his leadership in his first real battle.

On this occasion Brock almost lost his life. When the enemy began their retreat, he was viewing with satisfaction the work his men were doing, when a stray bullet struck him with such force that he was stunned and fell from his horse. It was a bitterly cold day, and for protection from the weather he wore round his neck a stout cotton handkerchief over a silk cravat. The bullet penetrated both the handkerchief and cravat, but did not wound him.

Fighting continued until October 6th, when both the British and the Russians were forced to retreat, although, strange to relate, the

French and their allies were retreating at the same time. The invading army was now in a perilous position. It could obtain supplies only from the vessels. The British commanders had expected that the inhabitants of Holland would welcome them with open arms, but they either held aloof or were actively engaged against them. Winter was drawing on and a winter campaign was out of the question. Defeat and disaster stared the British and Russians in the face, and, after a council of war, it was decided to return to England. Holland was left to the mercy of the French, who for fourteen years continued to overrun and plunder the country.

The costly expedition had been a failure, but it was of much benefit to Brock. He learned lessons of the greatest value from his experience under two such able soldiers as Sir Ralph Abercromby and Sir John Moore.

Brock's younger brother Savery was with him during this campaign in the capacity of paymaster to the 49th. He had the fighting blood of the Brocks in his veins, and, during the whole of the battle of October 2nd, was to be

found where the bullets fell thickest. He was acting as aide-de-camp to Sir John Moore. His brother became alarmed at his reckless courage, and, fearing for his life, summoned him to his side and exclaimed with pretended anger: "By the Lord Harry [a favourite expression of Brock's], Master Savery, did not I order you, unless you remained with the general, to stay with your iron chest? Go back to it, Sir, immediately!" But Savery merely replied with an affectionate laugh: "Mind your regiment, Master Isaac; you would not have me quit the field now." Savery remained in the field and managed to escape without a wound, although he had a horse shot under him. When the campaign was over, Isaac Brock, in writing to his brother John, spoke in most enthusiastic terms of Savery's "activity and gallantry," and declared that "he has become the astonishment of all who saw him." Evidently he was not in very great anger when he ordered him from the field of glory back to his iron chest.

The 49th Regiment, shortly after its return to England, was sent to Jersey, where it re-

mained until the spring of 1801. Brock was for a brief time absent from the regiment, and Lieutenant-Colonel Sheaffe was left in command. The latter was a fine soldier, but a disciplinarian of the old school, who was apt to make mountains out of molehills, and treated the men under him with unnecessary harshness. They longed for the return of their senior lieutenant-colonel, and when he did appear on the parade ground he was greeted with three hearty cheers. It was an outburst of genuine regard, but it was a serious breach of discipline, and, for this unauthorized welcome, Brock ordered the men to be confined to barrack for a week. He no doubt issued this order with an unwilling heart, for he greatly appreciated the love of his men.

Great Britain's foes were now threatening her on all sides. Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Prussia were in alliance with France against her. It was necessary to teach them a lesson. Strong Russian and Danish fleets were in the Baltic. Great Britain decided to make a mighty effort to destroy or capture these fleets, and to humble the Danes. Unless

she remained mistress of the seas she would surely fall a victim to the ambitious designs of Napoleon. A powerful fleet of fifty-three vessels was fitted out for the Baltic expedition. Sir Hyde Parker and Lord Nelson were in command, and Brock went with the fleet as second in command of the land forces. His superior officer was Colonel William Stewart. Brock was fortunate in having a chance to serve under such a commander. Colonel Stewart was a wide-awake soldier. He was not bound by red tape, was even then introducing new methods, and did more than probably any other man of his time to improve the condition of the army. From Stewart, Brock undoubtedly learned much that was to be of great service to him in future years.

The 49th Regiment, 760 strong, embarked on Nelson's squadron. When Nelson attacked Copenhagen, Brock, who was on the *Ganges*, was given the important task of leading the 49th in storming the principal of the Trekroner batteries. In this undertaking he was to be supported by Captain Fremantle of the *Ganges* with 500 seamen. But the

Danes offered such a fierce resistance that the landing had to be abandoned, and during the entire battle the British infantry were to remain unemployed.

The vessels on which were the 49th were subjected to a hot fire from the shore batteries, the floating batteries, and the line of Danish battleships. The infantry, although out of musketry range, apparently remained on the decks of the vessels, and suffered from one of the severest fusilades ever experienced by the British in battle. Brock, on this occasion, was exposed to a heavy fire and had many narrow escapes. His brother Savery was with him, and that irrepressible soldier was once more in the thick of the fight. He was given charge of a gun, and, while in the act of pointing it, a grape-shot whizzed by him with such force as to knock off his cocked hat and cause him to fall to the deck, momentarily stunned. With a cry of anguish, his brother Isaac, who was standing near by, exclaimed: "Ah; poor Savery is dead." But Savery leaped to his feet, rubbed his head, assured his brother that he was still very much alive,

and proved it by firing the gun with the coolness of a Nelson.

Shortly before the fight terminated, Brock went with Captain Fremantle to the *Elephant* and was close to Nelson when he wrote his famous message to the crown prince of Denmark. The message was as follows:

“Lord Nelson has directions to spare Denmark when no longer resisting; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, Lord Nelson will be obliged to set on fire all the floating batteries he has taken, without having the power to save the brave Danes who have defended them.”

Brock may have taken a hint from this famous message. At any rate it closely resembles the message he sent eleven years later to General Hull in Detroit.

Denmark yielded; the courage and skill of Nelson had won the day. Napoleon, by the defeat of his allies at Copenhagen, had his influence greatly weakened in Europe, and Britain was saved from immediate danger of attack. Brock had been a witness of what was in many respects the greatest naval bat-

tle up to that time. He was a personal witness of the audacious courage of Nelson. He saw him practically disobey his commander-in-chief and risk all to win a great victory. It is quite possible that, when later in life Sir George Prevost, his own commander-in-chief, was warning him to refrain from attacking the enemy, he remembered Nelson and Copenhagen and dared all to save his country from the invading army of the United States.

CHAPTER III

FIRST YEARS IN CANADA

During the attack on Copenhagen the 49th Regiment had been scattered throughout the fleet; detachments were on the *Monarch*, the *St. George*, the *Ganges*, and the *Elephant*. It was not until August that the entire force was back in England. When the regiment assembled at Colchester, Brock inspected it, and addressed his soldiers in affectionate terms. He praised both officers and men for the courage they had shown while exposed to the fierce fire from the Danish batteries. He told them, too, that he had learned from the various captains on whose ships they had been stationed, that all had behaved themselves like true British soldiers. By his thoughtful care he had made a new 49th; and the men of the regiment could be trusted to do their duty, even when not under his immediate command.

The winter was spent in England, but with the opening of spring the 49th Regiment was ordered to make ready to go to Canada. This could hardly have been pleasant news to either Brock or his men. Canada was not the rich, prosperous country that the world now knows. It was considered a land of ice and snow; of uncultivated wilderness, for the most part inhabited by savage beasts and more savage men. The voyage there was a long, tedious, and dangerous one, and many soldiers had lost their lives on the stormy Atlantic in journeying to Canada. War, the soldier's hope, seemed far away in North America. To be stationed in Canada was like being buried alive; but Brock uttered no complaint. His duty was clear. If his country had ordered him to go to Greenland, he would uncomplainingly have obeyed the command.

The vessels bearing Brock and his regiment set sail from England in June, and after weeks of unusually stormy weather for the summer season arrived at Quebec. The vast river St. Lawrence, opening into the heart of the continent; the miles and miles of forest grow-

ing thick to the shores; the strong natural fortress at Quebec, crowned by defences that had experienced four protracted sieges,—must have impressed Brock with the vastness of the country to which this was but the gateway. For a brief period he remained at the capital of Canada, enjoying the gay society of the place; but the 49th was destined for Upper Canada, and to that wilderness, as he thought it, it was necessary he should go.

Canada was at this time very thinly populated. There were some 160,000 inhabitants in Lower Canada, and but little more than half that number in the Upper Province. In all, there were fewer than 300,000 people in the vast region under British rule stretching from the Atlantic to the great plains of the West, a population a good deal less than that of the present city of Toronto. A mere handful of soldiers was stationed in the country, barely enough to police the region. The fortified posts, too, were very weak. York, the capital of Upper Canada, was without fortifications; Amherstburg was rudely fortified, but the fortifications were in a ruined

condition; Kingston was in somewhat better shape to resist attack; and Montreal, although the wealthiest point of trade, was feebly defended and without walls. Quebec was really the only point that could have resisted an enemy coming against it with proper siege material.

Brock began his journey to his post at York, as Toronto was then called, in either August or September, 1802. The journey was a slow one. Steamboats and railways had not yet been invented, and the journey had to be made either over rough roads through the forests, or by the water route. Brock chose the latter. The first stage to Montreal was made in a fast-sailing schooner. At Montreal he rested for a time, and no doubt enjoyed the hospitality of the great fur lords who lived there and sent into the far North armies of men who brought back rich stores of furs. From Montreal the journey was made in boats up the St. Lawrence. Past some of the turbulent rapids the crews found it necessary to portage their clumsy vessels; up others they dragged or poled them. With paddle and oar they swept

smoothly up such broad lakes as St. Louis and St. Francis. Through the fairy maze of the Thousand Islands they crept, admiring the beauty of the scene. At last Kingston was reached, and in that fortified place, founded in the days of Frontenac, they once more halted.

By this time Brock's eyes must have been opened to the wonderful possibilities of the great British colony to which he had been sent. Forests alive with game; rivers teeming with fish, fertile soil, and an abundant wealth of timber met him at every turn. From Kingston the journey to York was made in a schooner. How surprised he must have been by Lake Ontario! His idea of lakes was small bodies of water; but here was a vast fresh-water sea, and he learned that above it were other lakes immensely larger. What an empire might yet be built along their fertile shores! He must have suffered disappointment, however, when he reached the capital of Upper Canada. "Muddy York," it was called, and it deserved the name. In his wildest dreams he could not have imagined that, in but little over one hundred years, a

large and beautiful city, one of the finest on the continent of America, with about 400,000 inhabitants, would raise its proud buildings on the site of the tiny village that was struggling into existence on the shore of the bay. His headquarters were to be at York, but the greater part of the 49th was sent on to Fort George, at the mouth of the Niagara River, fronting the United States fort on the opposite shore.

Almost immediately on his arrival in Canada Brock was faced with a problem most trying to any military leader. The monotonous life in the colony was distasteful to soldiers, especially to those who were accustomed to the city life and pleasures of the old land, and desertions were common. The men were frequently tempted to take this course by inducements held out to them by citizens of the United States, and, as it was easy at frontier posts for a deserter to slip across the border unobserved, it was needful to keep a close watch on the men. Brock learned that desertion was common in Canada, and at once took the matter in hand in order to prevent

such a thing happening in the 49th. He tried, by treating his men with exceptional kindness, to make them content with their lot.

Shortly after arriving at York, Brock suspected that a soldier named Carr had made up his mind to desert. He had him brought before him and questioned him carefully. At length he appealed to him with the words, "Tell me the truth like a man — you know I have always treated you kindly!" Carr was so moved by his commander's generous words that he broke down, and confessed that he and a number of others had decided to seek homes in the United States. He expected punishment, but instead of this Brock told him to go and let his comrades know all that had passed between them. "Tell them," he said, "that, notwithstanding what you have told me, I shall still treat you all kindly;" and he added, "let them desert me if they please." His generous act for the time being removed the danger of desertion. He had placed his men on their honour, and they needed but little watching.

The men of the 49th were, however, still

subject to great temptations, and, in the following summer, a corporal of the 41st Regiment induced six of them to flee with him to the United States. When Brock learned of this, he at once ordered an open boat to be manned, and, although it was midnight, determined, without a moment's delay, to pursue the deserters across Lake Ontario. The distance across was about thirty miles; but the long journey by water, in a far from seaworthy boat, had no terrors for a man who had had his early training on the storm-swept coast of Guernsey. Fort George was reached early on the following morning after a hard and exhausting row. As soon as Brock arrived at the fort, he ordered Lieutenant Cheshire to take a party of men and search for the deserters along the United States shore of Lake Ontario. With scarcely any rest, Brock once more entered the boat and turned its head towards York, keeping a sharp lookout along the western end of the lake. The searching party from Fort George succeeded in capturing all the deserters, and they were taken prisoners to the fort. They were caught on the United

States shore, and, had this been known to the American authorities, difficulties might have arisen. Brock's prompt action was a warning to his men, and never again were there desertions where Brock was personally in command.

Lieutenant-General Hunter had at this time authority over the forces in both provinces. He happened to be at York when Brock went on his perilous journey, and, it is said, took Brock to task for risking his life in an open boat across Lake Ontario.

Shortly after this event a more serious affair occurred at Fort George. Mutiny and wholesale desertion were planned. It is difficult to excuse such things; but if ever they were to be excused, it was at Fort George. Lieutenant-Colonel Sheaffe was in command there. In the last chapter it was told how he had earned the hatred of his men in Jersey, while left in command of the 49th during Brock's absence. He seems to have acted in an even harsher manner towards the soldiers in Canada. There were four black holes in Fort George, and these were never empty. He seemed to delight in sending soldiers to the

cells for trifling faults. Men were flogged for offences that another commander would have passed over with a rebuke; one hundred, two hundred, and even three hundred lashes were imposed for such crimes against discipline as being deficient of a frill, a razor, or a shirt, part of their regimental necessaries, or for quitting barrack without leave after tattoo. During the flogging the "cat" was sometimes steeped in brine to make the suffering of the victim more intense. It is little wonder that the men should have hated, with a murderous hatred, the tyrant sentencing them to such punishment.

A sergeant, named Clarke, took a leading part in a conspiracy against the officers. It was planned to seize them and murder all, except one who had recently joined. If the men succeeded in the plot they intended to flee to the United States. The conspiracy was discovered. A meeting of the officers was called and the matter fully discussed. A careful guard was kept, and, meanwhile, a report of the unfortunate affair, as far as it was known, was sent to Brock at York by a swift-sailing schooner.

When Brock received the report, he hastily read it. The bearer of it was well known to him. He was a man of very doubtful character, and Brock believed that if any conspiracy was on foot he would be in it. He turned on him, with anger in his voice, and threatened to shoot him on the spot if he did not give him the names of the ringleaders. The soldier, knowing that Brock was not a man to make threats that he would not fulfil, and fearing for his life, disclosed the whole plot. Brock at once boarded the schooner that had brought the tidings, and, with a favouring wind, hurried to Fort George. He gave no notification that he was coming, and the schooner swept to its anchorage without any one, save the sentry on guard, seeing her.

Brock at once went ashore unaccompanied, and walked to the east gate of the fort. He was recognized, and the guard turned out to salute him. It so happened that Sergeant Clarke, the chief conspirator, was in command of the guard on this occasion. Brock straightway ordered Clarke to lay down his pike, and to take off his sword and sash. He com-

manded Corporal O'Brien, another of the chief conspirators, to bring handcuffs and put them on the sergeant and lock him up in one of the cells. When this was done Corporal O'Brien was taken in hand, and met a similar fate to Clarke's. Brock had acted with such promptness that the two leading culprits were under arrest before the officers in the fort knew of his arrival. Soon all the conspirators, twelve in number, were in irons. These men, with the seven deserters who had been captured a short time before, were sent to York under a guard of the Royal Artillery.

Lieutenant-General Hunter, who was then at Quebec, when he received word of this affair, ordered that all the prisoners should be sent to the ancient fortress for trial. When the trial took place, all were found guilty, and four of the conspirators and three of the deserters were sentenced to death; and on March 2nd, 1804, the sentence was carried out. The execution of these men was one of the severest trials of Brock's life. He loved all his soldiers, and felt that, in a way, some of these poor victims had been goaded into their

criminal course. When news reached York that the sentence had been carried out, he assembled the soldiers, and with a voice full of emotion addressed them.

"Since I have had the honour to wear the British uniform," he said, "I have never felt grief like this. It pains me to the heart to think that any members of my regiment should have engaged in a conspiracy which has led to their being shot like so many dogs."

Deep sorrow filled the hearts of the men who listened. With tearful eyes they recalled the days of Egmont-op-Zee and Copenhagen, and remembered all Brock's acts of kindness towards them; and Brock remembered that the poor fellows who had suffered such disgraceful deaths had followed him bravely into battle in Holland, and endured without flinching the deadly fire that stormed against Nelson's ships.

After this unfortunate affair Brock was directed by Lieutenant-General Hunter to take over the command at Fort George. He instituted a new rule. Greater liberty was given to the men. Harsh punishment ceased, and

even the tempting offers held out to them by the dwellers along the United States frontier could not induce Brock's soldiers to desert. Lieutenant-Colonel Sheaffe seems to have been much affected by the awful results of his tyrannical rule, and for the future treated those under him with greater kindness.

Brock in his leisure moments set himself to study the country and its inhabitants. The land was rich and could support thousands, but few were attracted to it from the old country. Land was likewise cheap. It could be had almost for the asking, and thousands of settlers from the United States were flocking to Upper Canada, as they are flocking to Western Canada at present. They thought only of enriching themselves. They were not loyal citizens, and for the most part would have preferred to see the Stars and Stripes waving over them instead of the Union Jack. Brock proposed to the home government that corps of veterans should be established in Canada. Their length of service would depend on their length of former service. He suggested that after their discharge they should be given land along the

Credit River west of York, and, moreover, for a time supplied with farm implements and rations. He was anxious to have a number of loyal, trustworthy subjects in Canada, bound to the country "by ties of interest and gratitude." There was, it is true, a fine body of United Empire Loyalists in Upper Canada, but so rapidly were the Americans flocking in that there was grave danger that they would prove a menace to British rule.

In 1805 Brock was for a short time quartered at Quebec. In October of this year he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and with his new honours upon him went back to England on leave. While in the home land he was not idle. He had Canada much at heart, and personally laid before the Duke of York, the commander-in-chief, his scheme for improving the army in Canada. He had the satisfaction, before his death, of seeing many of his suggestions carried out.

CHAPTER IV

IN COMMAND IN CANADA

Colonel Brock spent the winter with his friends in London and Guernsey. He was on a visit to the latter place in the spring of 1806, renewing the friendships of his youth. No doubt he told his old comrades of the wonders of Canada, of its great rivers and vast inland seas, its wealth of fish and fur and timber. How he must have enjoyed quaint old St. Peter's Port, with its narrow streets and ancient buildings, after his sojourn in the forests of Upper Canada.

The times were stirring in Europe, and Brock envied his brother officers who were given opportunities to distinguish themselves in the continental wars. He gladly would have been transferred from the 49th Regiment, much as he loved it, to some other regiment in which he might have an opportunity to do valiant deeds and win renown.

Grave danger was threatening Canada. The war spirit ran high in the American Republic. Brock's duty called him back to the St. Lawrence. President Thomas Jefferson of the United States was the enemy of Britain and the friend of France. He had set covetous eyes on Canada, and was endeavouring to provoke a war with Great Britain. He made the orders-in-council, issued by the British government in retaliation for Napoleon's Berlin decree, a pretext for stirring up enmity against Britain in his country. It is quite true these orders fell heavily on the United States and practically ruined what was left of their trade. But Napoleon's decrees had been equally harmful, and England had been forced to issue her orders-in-council in self-defence. Napoleon, moreover, had treated United States vessels in a most high-handed manner, capturing and confiscating them and seizing their cargoes; but Jefferson and his ministers made no threat of taking up arms against the French. In his address to Congress in December, 1806, the President of the United States, after discussing the situa-

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tion brought about by the orders-in-council, said: "It is due to ourselves to provide effective opposition to a doctrine which is as infamous as it is unwarranted."

The "effective opposition" could mean but one thing — war! Brock knew that that was what Jefferson desired. Immediately on a declaration of war an attempt would be made to seize the fortified posts in British North America and overrun the country. He knew, too, how weak these posts were, and how badly the army in Canada needed his services; so in June he decided to return to Quebec. He took a tender farewell of his friends in Guernsey, hastened to London to bid a hurried good-by to his brothers, and then went with all possible speed to Cork, to catch a boat that was leaving that port bound for Quebec. This vessel, named after one of his own relatives, the *Lady Saumarez*, was a well-manned, fast-sailing Guernsey craft, armed with a letter of marque as a privateer.

Canada was without a resident governor-general when Brock arrived. Indeed, it had had no resident governor-general during his

previous sojourn in the country. General Sir Robert Prescott had been appointed to that office in 1797. He remained in the country until 1799, when he returned to Europe, and, although he still nominally held the office, he never revisited the country. Mr. Thomas Dunn, president of the Executive Council, was in charge of the civil government in Lower Canada. Colonel Barnard Foord Bowes had held command of His Majesty's forces in Canada, but he had resigned and gone to seek fame in Europe. He found fame, but he likewise found death there, while leading his men in a gallant charge in Spain in the year 1812. Like Brock, Bowes was honoured with a monument in St. Paul's Cathedral. Brock was the next senior officer to Colonel Bowes, and the duty of commanding the forces in the Canadas and of getting the country into a state of defence fell upon him. Considering the difficulties he had to contend with and the lack of support he had from the home government, he did his work well.

His first thought was to make Quebec strong enough to withstand a siege. Once

before, in 1775-1776, the Americans, under General Montgomery, had overrun the greater part of Canada. Quebec had checked their career of conquest. Its strong walls, with that sturdy warrior Guy Carleton behind them, had kept out the foe till their strength was exhausted. When help arrived to the garrison from England, the enemy were easily driven back with great loss. In the near future Brock thought that there might be a repetition of the Montgomery invasion. Quebec was the only point which could hope to hold out against a large and well-equipped force.

The walls of the city had been neglected for many years. The western side, the part that was most likely to be attacked by a strong force marching down the St. Lawrence, was in a very weak condition. Brock saw the need of making it strong, and appealed to the Council for help. The soldiers he had in the garrison could not do the work, and he asked the Council to provide him with from 600 to 1000 men for a period of six months. He likewise requested that a large number of carts should be supplied. But the Council was lukewarm, and

gave him little assistance. The French peasants could not be expected to give their services with any degree of enthusiasm. It would be necessary, he was told, to call out the militia to do the work. Despite the lack of support he received from the civil government, he energetically set himself to his task, and, Sir James Craig, when he arrived as governor-general, found that much had been done to strengthen the citadel. Sir James continued the good work Brock had begun, and at great expense Quebec was vastly improved as a fortress.

When Wolfe attacked Quebec he had planted batteries on the Levis Heights, batteries which poured shot and shell with destructive effect into the city. To provide against a recurrence of such a thing Brock caused a battery of eight 36-pounders, 16 feet high, to be constructed on the cavalier in the centre of the citadel. This battery completely commanded the opposite heights, and could easily silence any guns that might be placed at that point. The people of Quebec christened this work "Brock's Battery"; but when Sir James

Craig saw it, he, to use Brock's half-humorous words, thought that "anything so preëminent should be distinguished by the most exalted name," and called it, "The King's Battery" — "the greatest compliment," wrote Brock, "that he could pay to my judgment." But the people long continued to call it by its first name.

Brock caused a respectable hospital to be prepared for the troops. He provided proper grounds where the men could drill. He studied the needs of Quebec with the greatest care from every point of view, and did more than any previous commander-in-chief had done to place the city in a position to resist a siege.

If war should be declared, one of the first things to be considered would be control of the lakes and rivers. With this end in view, Brock caused to be built a number of schooners and bateaux, and ordered that these vessels should be stationed at the garrison points and kept in a state of readiness for service. In order to have them properly looked after, he placed an assistant quartermaster-general at Amherstburg to care for the vessels on Lake

Erie, and another at Kingston to attend to those on Lake Ontario.

While this work was being done the threatening war-clouds seemed about to burst. Britain claimed the right to stop and search vessels of other nations for deserters, and her captains frequently acted in a high-handed manner. There were many complaints that American vessels had been stopped on the high seas and American citizens, under the pretext that they were British deserters, taken off by the commanders of British war vessels. It was only too true that this was the case, and on account of it the United States had a real grievance against England.

A very bad case of desertion occurred from the sloop *Halifax*. The deserters enlisted on board the American warship *Chesapeake*. The British frigate *Leopard*, under orders from Admiral Berkeley at Halifax, overhauled the *Chesapeake* and demanded the surrender of the deserters. Commodore Barron, of the *Chesapeake*, refused to give them up, whereupon Captain Humphreys fired a broadside into the American vessel, killing several of the crew

and wounding others. The *Chesapeake* struck her flag without replying to this broadside. She was then boarded, and the deserters seized and taken to Halifax.

When news of this act reached the United States, there was a loud outcry for war; but the matter was settled by the British government expressing regret for the occurrence and promising to make proper reparation.

When Brock heard of this affair, he fully expected war to be declared at once, and renewed his energies to make Quebec as strong as possible in anticipation of invasion. Believing that an attack would be made on the city of Montreal, he had a fleet of boats prepared and placed in a position to hurry troops to that quarter.

During this year Lieutenant-Colonel John Macdonell had suggested the raising of a corps among the Highlanders of Glengarry. Brock entered enthusiastically into his scheme, and recommended to the home government the formation of the Glengarry Fencibles. In time his suggestion bore fruit, and before the war of 1812 broke out that celebrated regi-

ment was ready to take the field, and distinguished itself in many hard-fought fights. Under its commander, Lieutenant-Colonel George Macdonell, it captured Ogdensburg, in what was in many ways the most spectacular and daring engagement of the war.

While Brock was doing such good work, his heart was oppressed with a great fear. At this time the majority of the people in Canada were of French descent. In Lower Canada almost the entire population outside of the official class spoke the French language. Could they be trusted if war broke out? He thought not! They might do good service if the United States alone were concerned; but the United States would enter on the war as an ally of Napoleon. The French Canadian militia drilled, it is true, with a degree of enthusiasm; but Brock feared that they might be learning the art of war only to use their arms against the British. He was convinced that, if the French should invade Lower Canada with 4,000 or 5,000 muskets, they could conquer the province. In his letters he frequently alludes to the lack of loyalty of

the French Canadians and their admiration for Napoleon. They rejoiced over each victory that Napoleon won, and believed that, in the end, he must conquer all Europe, and humiliate the British. In time they began to hold aloof from their English-speaking fellow-citizens. To Brock they seemed ungrateful. Under the French régime they had been plundered and tyrannized over by such men as Bigot and Cadet. Under the British they had enjoyed a freedom that was unknown to their forefathers in Canada — a freedom greater than any other peasantry in the world enjoyed. To his brother William he wrote in this regard: "It may appear surprising that men, petted as they have been and indulged in everything they could desire, should wish for a change, but so it is — and I am inclined to think that were Englishmen placed in the same situation they would show even more impatience to escape from French rule."

How kindly Brock was! Even in this time of great danger he was ready to find an excuse for men who were seemingly disloyal. Had his little Island of Guernsey fallen to the con-

quering arms of France, he knew that he would never have rested, no matter how kindly he was treated, until the flag he loved floated once more over his island home.

Brock, however, had not much reason for fear. There were agents of Napoleon in the province and also friends of the United States, and no doubt many would have welcomed a change of government; but the French in Lower Canada as a general thing were not anxious to get rid of British rule. The seigneurs and the priests were loyal almost to a man; and, had Brock been spared till the end of the war, he would have learned that, not only did the French Canadians remain true in the face of the American invasion, but that the *habitants* fought nobly under such leaders as De Salaberry. Chateauguay was one of the most illustrious fights of the war, and, with the exception of some half-a-dozen men, all the British troops engaged in that affair were French Canadians.

On October 16th, 1807, Brock's reign as commander-in-chief of the forces came to an end. On that day Sir James Craig, who had lately

been appointed commander-in-chief and governor-general, arrived at Quebec.

Early in 1808 Sir James appointed Brock an acting brigadier-general, and this appointment was later confirmed by the home government. Meanwhile, he had been sent to Montreal to take charge of the troops in that district. At Montreal he was quartered in the famous old Château de Ramesay. Montreal was then a gay, rich centre. It was the home of the fur-trade, and many wealthy and hospitable men resided there. Brock, while attending to his military duties, entered with zest into the life of the place, and was a frequent visitor at the mansions of the fur lords and at the celebrated Beaver Club. He spent the summer at Montreal, but in September was superseded in his command by Major-General Sir Gordon Drummond, and returned to Quebec.

He now seems to have suffered from an attack of homesickness. Reports were constantly reaching him of honours won by his early comrades in arms on the battlefields of Europe. He saw nothing but hard work and

little chance for glory ahead of him in Canada, and he had all of a soldier's love for fame. About this time he received word that Brigadier-General Baron de Rottenburg was coming to Canada. De Rottenburg was his senior, and would have the first place in the case of appointment to any important position. He spoke, in a letter to one of his brothers, of Canada as a "remote, inactive corner," and expressed pleasure that his brother Savery was exerting himself to have him appointed to a more active station.

In "remote Canada" Brock seems to have taken a good deal of enjoyment. He had a host of friends at Quebec, and entertained with as much lavishness as his purse would permit. In the summer season, when war vessels were at Quebec, the garrison entertained their visitors with great hospitality. Races, country and water parties were held to while away the time of peace and make the soldiers forget the rumours of war that were in the air. Brock relieved the monotony of barrack life by joining heartily in these amusements. At one time during the summer two

frigates were in the harbour, and Lieutenant-Governor Gore, of Upper Canada, and his wife were on a visit at Quebec. Brock gave a dinner in honour of Mrs. Gore, and, not satisfied with that, entertained them with a ball, at which there was, to use his own words, "a vast assemblage of all descriptions."

He still had hopes that he might have an opportunity to return to Europe to win laurels in Portugal and Spain. But it was not to be! Sir James Craig had learned to appreciate Brock's experience in Canada and his military skill. He could not do without him, and, on the arrival of Baron de Rottenburg, decided to send Brock to Upper Canada to take charge of the forces in that region. It was fortunate that Sir James took this course. The situation there was more critical than Brock or Sir James realized, and Brock was the one man able to cope with it. He did not rejoice in the change. He was afraid his appointment would not be permanent, and that he might have to return to Quebec. Life in Upper Canada was not pleasant. There were but few comforts; only the bare necessities of

life could be obtained. But he had received his orders, and submitted, like the true soldier he was, "without repining." What he regretted most was leaving a garden he cultivated at Quebec: "the most delightful garden," he called it, "with abundance of melons and other good things."

He seems to have moved his library with him to Upper Canada, for at Fort George he had many fine books in both English and French — military works, lives of great men, books of travel and poetry, chief among the latter two highly prized editions of Shakespeare's works. He evidently kept up the practice he began when an ensign, and devoted a part of every day, when he could snatch the time, to reading good books.

CHAPTER V

IN UPPER CANADA

Brock's headquarters in Upper Canada were at first at Fort George. He busied himself in strengthening and building additions to the fortifications there, making tours of inspection through the province, and doing all he could to give confidence to the people and make them loyal. It has been told that he thought that the French-speaking people of the lower province were a danger to British rule. He had what he believed to be as grave a danger in the upper province from the recently arrived settlers from the United States. Thousands had come in to occupy the fertile lands of what is now western Ontario, the garden of Canada, and many of these were little better than agents of the United States.

In June, 1811, Brock was promoted to the rank of major-general. This honour did not

prevent him from wishing to return to England with the hope of being placed on active service. However, the United States was still assuming such a threatening attitude that the authorities did not favour his departure from Canada at such a critical time.

Early in the year Sir James Craig, due to ill health, resigned the position of governor-general and left Canada. When about to set sail for England he gave instructions to have his horse Alfred sent as a gift to Brock. Colonel Baynes wrote to Brock, telling him of what Sir James had done. "He requests," he said, "that you will do him the favour to accept as a legacy and mark of his very sincere regard his favourite horse Alfred, and he is induced to send him to you, not only from wishing to secure for his old favourite a kind and careful master, but from the conviction that the whole continent of America could not furnish you with so safe and excellent a horse."

This act shows how highly Sir James esteemed Brock. The words, "Not only from wishing to secure for his old favourite a kind

and careful master," give a fine insight into the character of Brock.

About this time the war party in the United States had found another grievance against the British. The officers in Canada were accused of inciting the Indians to take up arms against the United States posts and inhabitants on the western frontier. The reverse was the case. There is evidence in Brock's letters that he deplored the thought of the Indians having a chance to practise their cruel warfare. He warned his agents in the Indian country to do all they could to keep the savages peaceful. In doing this he was merely following out Sir James Craig's policy. Sir James had written to him, saying: "Upon every principle of policy our interests should lead us to use all our endeavours to prevent a rupture between the Indians and the subjects of the United States." Of course, in the case of war between Great Britain and the United States, the savage tribes could not be expected to remain neutral, and it was the aim of the British to keep on friendly terms with them. Had the Indians joined with the

Americans the defence of Canada would have been hopeless.

In September, 1811, Sir George Prevost succeeded Sir James Craig as governor-general and commander of the forces in Canada. About this time Lieutenant-Governor Gore returned to England on leave, and Prevost appointed Brock president and administrator of the government of Upper Canada.

It was well that this new office, giving him additional occupation, came when it did. He was weighed down with a great sorrow. No man ever loved his family and friends more dearly, and through a business calamity his brothers William and Irving had become estranged. The Napoleonic wars had brought ruin to many mercantile houses in Great Britain. Among others, a firm of London bankers, of which William Brock was the senior member, failed. William had been very kind to his brother Isaac, and, during the latter's military career had advanced him £3,000. The money was given and accepted as a gift; but, unfortunately, it appeared on the books of the bank, and Major-

General Brock was liable for the amount. His brother Irving, who was likewise a member of the firm, seems to have blamed William for the disaster, and to have turned from him with bitterness in his heart. When Brock received news of the calamity and of the estrangement of his brothers, he wrote to Irving in the following words:

“ Oh, Irving, if you love me, do not by any action or word add to the sorrows of poor unfortunate William. Remember his kindness to me — what pleasure he always found in doing me service. Hang the world! — it is not worth a thought — be generous, and find silent comfort in being so.”

Brock was moved to the depths of his being, not on account of the burden placed upon him by this debt, — that was nothing to a strong man, — but for the sorrow William was suffering.

“ Why refuse him consolation? ” he wrote to Irving. “ Could tears restore him he would soon be happy. . . . I sleep little, but am compelled to assume a smiling face during the day. My thoughts are fixed on you all,

and the last thing that gives me any concern is the call which Savery prepares me to expect from the creditors."

He was ready to make any sacrifice to help his brothers. His own debt he felt he could soon pay off. His new position gave him a greatly increased income. It was worth a thousand pounds a year, and this he offered to make over to Irving to meet his obligations. He was in an office in Canada that might have enabled him to enrich himself by unjust means. Nothing could tempt him to do a dishonourable act. To Irving he wrote, "I shall make all I can out of it [his new office] by any fair means, for be satisfied that even your stern honesty shall have no just cause to censure one of my actions." As will be shown later, his appeals to his brothers and his glorious deeds for his country — deeds that brought renown to the family — were the means of once more uniting William and Irving.

In connection with this trouble an incident occurred which showed what genuine friends Brock had made in Canada. His brother William wrote to him saying:

"It was reported that legal proceedings were commenced against you, and upon this report a young man lately from Canada, a Mr. Ellice, called on Charles Bell to inquire if it were so, and told Bell that rather than anything unpleasant should happen to you, he would contrive to pay the debt [about \$15,000] himself. Besides his attachment to you, he told Bell that you were so beloved in Canada that you would not want friends who would feel pleasure in assisting you to any amount, if necessary."

Fortunately Brock was too busy with affairs in Upper Canada to brood much over this calamity. He had now, as president of the Council, to move his headquarters to York. War he considered inevitable, and during the winter he was busy adding to the strength of every post under his command. He had already planned the course he would pursue if war broke out. As early as December 11th he wrote to Sir George Prevost, giving as his opinion that the first posts that should be seized in case of war were Mackinaw and Detroit. Their occupation would retard the progress of an invading

army, and effectively win the Indians to the British side. How well he had forecast events was proved by the opening acts of the war of 1812. Due to his advice, two additional armed schooners, the *Lady Prevost* and the *Prince Regent*, were built and equipped for Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

In January, 1812, he received word from Colonel Baynes that permission had been given him to return to England for service in Spain. Brock now held a position of great importance in Canada, and he saw that war could not be long delayed; so, instead of hurrying to England, as he would have done a year before, he requested to be allowed to stay with his present command.

On February 3rd, 1812, he delivered his first address to the House of Assembly at York. He pointed out the danger that threatened Canada, and urged the adoption of such measures as would best secure the internal safety of the country and defeat every hostile aggression. His address was an able one, and made him many additional friends. He had proved in the past that he was a good

soldier. He was now proving that he was a wise statesman.

He spent the spring, while not at York, attending to the government of the province, in superintending the defence of the Niagara frontier, forming companies of militia, drilling them, and providing them with arms as best he could. He visited the Six Nations Indians on the Grand River and seems to have won the admiration of that fickle people.

In May he was convinced that war was very close at hand. United States troops were being sent in large numbers to Detroit and the Niagara frontier. All along the Niagara River they were being drilled. Brock was impatient for the declaration of war. It was inevitable, and every day's delay made the condition of his province more critical. He wanted to get at the Americans with what forces he had, capture their strongholds, and drive them back from the frontier of Canada. He had not long to wait. War was declared against Great Britain on June 18th, 1812, and for the next four months all Brock's energies were to be taxed to the full.

Before dealing with the great events through which Brock was now to pass, it might be well to describe the appearance of the man, and to show from some incidents in his career just why he had won the love and confidence of all men with whom he came into contact.

Brock, as was previously stated, was almost a giant in stature, six feet two inches in height, with a massive head — so large that he found it difficult to get in Canada a hat to fit him. He was fair and of a florid complexion. His eyes were small, and gray-blue in colour. His face was ever ready to light up with a kindly smile. His manners were genial. He was, indeed, in every respect a typical English gentleman. He was a man whom few could pass without being attracted by his appearance and bearing. Such, in a general way, is the description of Brock, given by Major Richardson, who, as a lad of sixteen, marched with the volunteers against Detroit under his leadership.

Brock was ever ready to recognize merit. British officers rarely take a personal interest in the individual soldiers under them. They too often view the soldiers as mere parts of a

machine. It was otherwise with Brock. A good example is given in his treatment of FitzGibbon of the 49th, who rose from the ranks to be a trusted officer. FitzGibbon's advancement was due largely to Brock. Brock advised him to train his mind, to fit himself for future promotion, and loaned him books and gave him personal help in his studies. FitzGibbon used to relate an interesting story of what Brock's influence had been to him. At Quebec, in 1805, Brock gave orders to FitzGibbon, who was then his sergeant-major, to perform a difficult task. FitzGibbon reported that he had found it impossible to do it. "By the Lord Harry!" said Brock, "don't tell me it is impossible; nothing should be impossible to a soldier. The word impossible should not be found in a soldier's dictionary."

In 1807, at the time of the *Leopard* and *Chesapeake* affair, Brock ordered FitzGibbon to have some twenty bateaux made ready to transport troops to Montreal. FitzGibbon led a fatigue party to the boats, but found them stranded on the shore with two hundred yards of thick mud between them and the water.

He was about to take his men back to their quarters without attempting to launch the boats, deeming the task impossible. Then he remembered Brock's words. "I think it impossible," he said to his men, "for us to put these bateaux afloat, but you know it will not do to tell the colonel so, unless we try it. Let us try — there are the boats. I am sure if it is possible for men to put them afloat you will do it; go at them!" The men went at them, and within half an hour the boats were in the water.

Brock, by his example, ever nerved the men under his command to surmount seemingly impossible obstacles.

Brock selected his subordinates, not on account of their birth or their social advantages, but for their real value. When he first lived in Upper Canada, he met there a homely little Scotsman named Robert Nichol, who kept a store near Fort George. He found Nichol a most valuable man. When war broke out, Nichol held the rank of colonel in the militia. He had acquired vast and accurate knowledge with regard to the province, its resources and inhabitants, and this knowledge

had been of great service to Brock. As a result Colonel Nichol was given the position of quartermaster-general, much to the indignation of some of the army officers, who felt they should have had the position, and who considered the militia colonel beneath them. During the war Colonel Nichol proved one of the most reliable and efficient officers in the service.

Brock's kindly disposition is proved by many instances in his career. On one occasion he wrote: "For ten months there has not been a desertion in the 49th, save Hogan, Savery's former servant. . . . A fair damsel persuaded him to this act of madness, for the poor fellow cannot possibly gain his bread by labour, as he has half killed himself by excessive drinking, and we know he cannot live upon love alone." Not an angry word: only sorrow for poor, misguided Hogan!

On another occasion he wrote: "I have prevailed upon Sir James to appoint Sergeant Robinson, master of the band, to a situation in the commissariat at Sorel worth 3s. 6d. a day, with subaltern's lodging money and other

allowances. He married a Jersey lass, whose relatives may inquire for him."

That these generous acts of Brock's were common can be judged from a part of a letter written to him in October, 1810, by Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton, military secretary to Sir James Craig: "I have not failed to communicate to Sir James your account and your charity towards the poor fellow formerly of The King's [this was the regiment that Brock joined as a lad]. He has, in consequence, directed the allowance of the rations to be authorized and continued to him; . . . but I am to remind you of the danger of establishing a precedent of this nature, and to request in the general's name that you will refrain as much as possible from indulging the natural benevolence of your disposition in this way, as he has hitherto resisted all applications of this sort."

Brock was one of nature's noblemen. As a leader he inspired courage in those under him; and by his acts in everyday life he brightened the lives of those with whom he was associated.

CHAPTER VI

HOSTILITIES COMMENCE

Even before the declaration of war, United States troops had been sent in large numbers to the Niagara frontier, and an army of over 2,000 men, under General Hull, was on the march to Detroit, intending to invade Canada from that point. The United States authorities entered upon the war confident of an easy conquest. They had evidently forgotten the lesson taught them in 1775-1776, when Guy Carleton defeated their army at Quebec and finally drove them out of British North America. There was now another Guy Carleton in Canada in the person of Major-General Isaac Brock.

The Americans were sure of victory. Dr. Eustis, secretary of war, thought that they could capture Canada without soldiers; they had only to send officers into the provinces, and

the people, discontented with their own government, would rally round the Stars and Stripes. Henry Clay said: "It is absurd to suppose that we will not succeed in our enterprise. We have the Canadas as much under our control as Great Britain has the ocean, and the way to conquer her on the ocean is to drive her from the land. I am not for stopping at Quebec, or anywhere else, but I would take the whole continent from them and ask them no favours."

Ex-President Jefferson, whose enmity against the British and continual scheming were largely responsible for the war, looked upon the campaign merely as a matter of marching through the country from Detroit to Halifax. One General Widgery, a member of Congress, said: "I will engage to take Canada by contract. I will raise a company and take it in six weeks." It was a case of, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." The United States was entering on the war with an empty treasury, with untrained officers and inexperienced soldiers, and with division in the nation. In the New England States sermons were preached against

the wicked declaration of war, and, in detestation of it, flags were flown at half-mast in the city of Boston.

However, the confidence of the Americans was not to be wondered at, for even the governor-general of Canada expressed the belief that Quebec was the only spot that could be held against the enemy. Brock, too, with all his courage, had misgivings. "I talk loud, and look big," he wrote; but in his letters are frequent remarks which show that he quite expected to have to retreat before the invading host.

Canada was in a perilous condition, and it was due solely to Brock's military skill and energy that it was saved from the invader. There were fewer than 1,500 regular troops in Upper Canada, and these were scattered at the posts between Fort St. Joseph, in Lake Huron, and Kingston. They were guarding a frontier of about 1,300 miles.

Brock had a far from loyal House of Assembly at his back, and immediately prior to the war, when he clearly foresaw that it could not be avoided, he found it impossible

to have measures passed which he thought necessary for the safety of the province. It was clear to him that a number of the members of the Assembly were in sympathy with the United States. He called an extra session on July 27th to pass bills which he deemed of the greatest importance in this time of war, but the members, instead of helping him in this crisis, wasted their time in discussing unimportant measures. He dismissed the Assembly, and determined, if the occasion should arise for the exercise of martial law, to put it in force. His speech at the opening of this extra session was one that could not but give hope to those who heard it. It was the ringing speech of a man who would not allow himself to be conquered without a struggle. He closed it with the words:

“We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and despatch in our councils and by vigour in our operations we may teach the enemy this lesson: that a country defended by free men, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their king and constitution, can never be conquered.”



SIR GEORGE PREVOST



Brock likewise distrusted the Indians; and rightly. Agents of the United States had been among them, and for the most part they decided to remain neutral, which meant that they would take up arms and join whichever party first proved victorious. With his small force of regulars he had to depend largely on the militia, but in the militia he had little confidence. When the call to arms was sounded, many of them refused to turn out, and others, he knew, would place themselves under the protection of the United States troops as soon as they arrived in the country. There were in the province, too, many recently arrived Americans who were anxious for a change of government. In the vicinity of Detroit the population was for the most part French Canadian, who were lukewarm towards British rule, or worse. Any other officer in Canada at that time would have been disheartened, but Brock was a man who held that "the word impossible should not be found in a soldier's dictionary," and did not despair.

Major-General Brock received word of the declaration of war through the mercantile house

of John Jacob Astor of New York, even before the United States commanders on the frontier knew of it, and at once prepared to take the aggressive. He was almost daily in receipt of orders from Sir George Prevost to remain on the defensive. But Brock knew how to play the game. For him the best mode of defence was attack. A victory on either side would mean that the Indians of the province and many of the wavering inhabitants would throw in their lot with the victors.

When Brock learned of the declaration of war, he immediately sent word to Captain Charles Roberts, in command of Fort St. Joseph, near Sault Ste. Marie, to seize the American fort on Mackinaw Island. This was contrary to instructions sent to Roberts by the governor-general. He received a letter from Prevost almost simultaneously with the despatch from Brock, in which he was told to make his post as safe as possible against the enemy, and to be ready to retreat. Roberts, however, managed to find a way to carry out Brock's instructions, and captured Mackinaw, in which was an abundant store of guns and ammuni-

tion and rich furs. This success was the means of giving to the western Indians confidence in the prowess of Great Britain. Brock, it will be remembered, feared that on the outbreak of war the French Canadians might prove disloyal. It is worthy of note that in this first important achievement of the war 150 French Canadians took part.

General Hull invaded Canada at Sandwich, opposite Detroit, on July 12th, 1812. He met with no opposition. He at first intended to march against Fort Malden, near Amherstburg; but, as there was a moderately strong force there behind fortifications, supported by several vessels on the river, he postponed his attack. In the meantime he issued a boastful proclamation promising "peace, liberty, and security" to all who would welcome his army or remain neutral, and told them that otherwise their fate would be "war, slavery, and destruction."

This proclamation was not without its influence. When Hull crossed to Sandwich, the people in and about that place welcomed the invading army, displaying flags and waving

handkerchiefs on its approach. At Amherstburg desertions became common, and the garrison was greatly weakened.

Brock was not dismayed at this disloyalty. He issued a counter proclamation, declaring that Great Britain was not only willing, but ready, to avenge all her subjects, whether red or white. He pointed out that this invading army, coming with promises of life and liberty, was from a nation that had driven the majority of the inhabitants of Upper Canada from their former homes, and had pillaged and confiscated their estates.

While Hull was sending out marauding parties along the river Thames, plundering the peaceful farmers and seizing provisions, Brock was making mighty efforts to meet him. He went to York and issued a call for volunteers. He met with a ready response. Sturdy sons of United Empire Loyalist farmers, the few professional men, and the leading legislators all took up arms, and the mothers of Upper Canada put weapons into the hands of their sons and urged them on to the battle. One of these York mothers said to her boy: "Go, my

son, and let me hear of your death rather than of your disgrace;" and the youth "marched off," to use his own words, "with a full heart but with a buoyant spirit."

Brock had no dread of the United States force along the Niagara River, and so determined to put forth his main efforts against Hull's army at Detroit. As soon as he had enrolled the volunteers, he decided to proceed to the Amherstburg district to endeavour to drive Hull out of Canada.

There was no time to be lost. On the very day that Hull entered Canada, Brock wrote to Prevost in no cheerful mood. He had not sufficient tents and blankets for his troops. There was no proper supply of arms; the militia were in a wretched state as regarded clothing, many of them being even without shoes. The war, too, had broken out at a critical time for the farmers. If the harvest were lost, starvation would threaten their wives and children; and many of the militia begged to be allowed to return to their farms. Brock found himself compelled to permit the departure from his force of many men, and he feared that many

more would desert him. It was necessary to strike a decisive blow at once. He depended largely on the United Empire Loyalists and their sons. The strong company he had enrolled at York must, with the few regulars within the province, take the initiative. So he decided to beard the lion in his den — though this lion proved very much of a sheep — and to meet Hull and his strong army at or near Detroit. It was not until August 5th that he was ready to set out on the expedition that was to turn aside the tide of war.

The force destined for Detroit went first to Burlington Bay and then overland to Lake Erie. When passing the Mohawk settlement on the Grand River, on August 7th, Brock held a council of war to learn the feeling of the Indians. He found them far from friendly. Some of their chiefs had recently visited Hull, and the United States agents had been working in their reserves. He received only a half-hearted promise that sixty of them would follow him. He realized now, that, in case of this expedition failing, the Indians, though wards of Great Britain, might be counted as enemies.

On August 8th Brock reached Long Point, where open boats were ready to convey his force on its journey. He here embarked with forty men of the 41st Regiment and 260 militia. They had a stormy and dangerous passage up the lake. The boat Brock was in ran on a rock and oars and poles were unable to move it. Brock, quick to act, leaped into the lake, and the crew followed his example. The boat at once floated, and the men, drenched and shivering, but light-hearted, boarded it, with renewed admiration for their commander. It was not until after five days of rough experience with wind and rain, bravely endured, that the little force, on which so much depended, reached Amherstburg.

Hull had learned of Brock's approach and became alarmed. On the day on which the force reached Amherstburg, he withdrew the last of his troops from Canadian soil, and Sandwich was at once occupied by a British force. Captain Dixon proceeded to erect batteries there, and in two days' time had five guns in position, threatening Fort Detroit.

Some days previous to this an American

force under Major Van Horne had been sent to escort supplies from the river Raisin to Detroit. This force had been ambushed by the Indians under the leadership of Tecumseh, a brave Shawanese chief, and seventeen men, including seven officers, were killed and eight wounded. What was of greater importance to Brock, Hull's mail fell into the hands of Tecumseh. When, on his arrival at Fort Malden, Brock received it from Colonel Procter, he was greatly elated by its contents. He found that Hull was in a dejected mood. As his communications with the rear had been cut, he feared starvation. His supplies were running short, and but for the marauding expeditions that had been made on the Canadians, they would have been exhausted. He despaired of being able to hold out against attack. There was, too, much sickness in his crowded camp. There was nothing in his correspondence in harmony with the boastful proclamation he had issued when he invaded Canada. He no longer meditated a march to Quebec, but thought mainly of saving his own skin.

In the light of Hull's correspondence, Brock determined on the immediate invasion of United States territory. He knew that Hull had a fighting force of some 2,500 men in and about Detroit. He expected no easy or bloodless victory. However, he had rightly estimated Hull's character, and thought that the American leader might be bluffed into surrendering. He sent his aides-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel John Macdonell, the attorney-general of Upper Canada, and Captain Glegg, to Detroit, under a flag of truce, demanding an immediate surrender. The wording of his message to Hull is interesting. It was as follows:

"The force at my disposal authorizes me to require of you the surrender of Fort Detroit. It is far from my inclination to join in a war of extermination, but you must be aware that the numerous body of Indians, who have attached themselves to my troops, will be beyond my control the moment the contest commences."

How much this message is like the one sent by Nelson to the crown prince of Denmark at Copenhagen!

Brock knew that Hull was in mortal terror

of the savages and that he believed that a countless horde was advancing from the west to annihilate his force. The United States commander would, indeed, have gladly surrendered; but he had to make some show of resistance, and so he replied that he was ready to meet any force that might be at Brock's disposal.

The Sandwich batteries then opened fire and the fort replied, but, as little damage was done on either side, Brock, at nightfall, gave orders for the firing to cease. He then decided to lead his army across the river. He consulted his officers, only to find practically all of them opposed to his seemingly mad undertaking. He had, however, the enthusiastic support of Colonel Nichol, his quartermaster-general. There was another individual who looked with favour on his plan, Tecumseh, the bravest and most intelligent Indian that ever led forces into battle. Brock took him into his confidence. He asked the Indian chief if he could give him definite information about the country around Detroit. Tecumseh silently spread a piece of birch bark

on the ground, and with his scalping knife traced on it an excellent military map, showing the streams to be crossed, the groves where shelter might be had, and the approaches to the fort.

Of Tecumseh Brock afterwards wrote: "A more sagacious or a more gallant warrior does not, I believe, exist. He was the admiration of every one who conversed with him." Tecumseh seems to have had equal admiration for Brock. On their first meeting, after listening to a brief speech from the British general, Tecumseh turned to his assembled warriors and said: "This is a *man!*" the highest and most eloquent compliment that Brock was ever paid.

Brock, after examining the map drawn by Tecumseh, despite the instructions of Prevost, the warnings of the War Office, and the dissent of his officers, decided to lead his troops across the river on the morning of August 16th.

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CHAPTER VII

THE CAPTURE OF DETROIT

On the night previous to crossing to the United States shore the troops went to rest with the knowledge that only cowardice on the part of their enemy could prevent a fight. It was the eve of battle, a new experience in the lives of the raw recruits; and probably many of the lads from York lay awake thinking of the loved ones who had sent them forth to try to save their country from the invader, or, if they slept, dreamt of the deeds their fathers had done in the war of the Revolution.

During the night Brock, with wise foresight, had sent across 600 Indians, under Colonel Elliott and Tecumseh, to attack the enemy in front and rear, if any attempt should be made to oppose the crossing.

As dawn broke grey and cool over the calm, misty river, the soldiers were roused and speedy

preparations made for battle. Lieutenant Dewar, of the quartermaster-general's department, had charge of the crossing, and he had made his preparations with great thoroughness. A motley fleet of vessels had been collected — scows, rafts, boats, and canoes. By the time the August sun had risen above the horizon all was in readiness, and in quick succession the vessels left the Canadian shore. In the craft were a few Indians, 30 men of the Royal Artillery, 250 of the 41st Regiment, 50 of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and 400 Canadian militia. They were about to give battle to a force strong in heavy guns, and yet all the artillery they carried with them were three 6-pounders and two 3-pounders, under the command of Lieutenant Troughton.

As the boats set out upon their journey, the batteries at Sandwich and the war vessel *Queen Charlotte* opened fire on the fort. The smoke of battle rolling over the river, the gleam of the bayonets flashing in the morning sunlight, the boats crowded with red-coated figures, presented an imposing picture. As

the fleet moved towards the enemy's territory, the Indians enlivened the journey by shouting their shrill, terrifying war-cries. There was no attempt made to oppose the landing; not a shot fell among the crossing boats. Brock was in the foremost boat, standing erect. He took this position for two reasons. One was to give confidence to the untried soldiers he had with him, and the other, to win the esteem of the Indians, — a bold warrior they would follow anywhere. The landing was made at Springwells, about four miles below Detroit, and, as the boats were beached, the soldiers quickly leaped ashore, the regiments formed up, and all waited the will of their leader.

Brock was now in the enemy's country. Contrary to the advice of the War Office and of the commander-in-chief, Sir George Prevost, he had invaded United States territory and had taken the offensive. He had fewer than 1,400 men; while opposed to him, in and about Detroit, was a force of not less than 2,500. A large part of Brock's army had never heard a gun fired in battle, whereas many of Hull's men had had weeks of experience in the field,

and had long been engaged in cruel war against the Indians on the western frontier of the United States. Moreover, the greater part of the American army was protected by the strong walls of a fortress, from which frowned heavy cannon. The invasion of American soil under the circumstances was, on the face of it, one of the most foolhardy things ever attempted in war. Brock, however, had not taken this step without most carefully considering the situation from every side.

Hull's letters had made him aware that the United States commander was in dread of attack. Hull would go into battle with fear and trembling. Brock was confident that, if he could but meet him in the open, he would beat him as badly as Wolfe did Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham outside the walls of Quebec. He hoped to divide Hull's force. A strong body of men would have to be left within Detroit to defend the fort, and unless Hull could bring his entire force against him, he believed that, with his Indians skilled in border warfare, with his regular troops steadied by experience in battle on European fields,

and with his enthusiastic recruits fighting in defence of their homes, he would win. His aim was to induce Hull to lead his army into the open and give battle. But he was not to wait for that. He was suddenly to decide to attempt a most desperate act — the assault and capture of the fort itself.

Scarcely had Brock reached the United States shore when he learned that a body of picked troops of between 500 and 600 men (the actual number was about 350) was absent from Detroit, attempting to bring in much-needed supplies from the river Raisin. Hull had sent orders to those troops to return immediately to the fort. They were at this critical moment only a few miles in the rear. It was necessary to force the fall of Detroit before they could come up; otherwise Brock might have to beat a retreat across the river, and this could have been done only with great loss. Without a moment's hesitation he drew up his little army and boldly led it against the fortification.

Brock was now attempting a perilous task; a seemingly impossible task with his 600

Indians and his 700 and odd white troops. Fort Detroit was a stronghold of great strength. According to a contemporary account, it was built in the form of a parallelogram, with strong bastions at each corner; a moat or ditch eight feet deep and twelve feet wide surrounded it. It had palisades of hardwood stakes ten feet high, sharpened at the top and firmly set in the escarpment at the base of the rampart, with an incline of forty degrees. The rampart rose perpendicularly twenty-two feet and was pierced with embrasures for cannon. It had a portcullis well ironed on the east front, protected by a projecting framework of huge logs standing over the moat, pierced for small arms. It had a drawbridge, and sally-ports near the southern and northern bastions. Within the fort were abundant stores of ammunition, and over thirty guns, ranging from 24-pounders down. Best of all, from a defensive point of view, to the south for two miles there was an unobstructed country, and to the west for a mile and a half a level common. The defending force was so arranged that it could concentrate on any point where the

attacking army might show itself. The very road along which the British had chosen to advance was guarded by a battery of two 24-pounders, two iron 12-pounders, and two brass 6-pounders. All the guns were loaded and ready to do execution. Had Brock been in Hull's place, he would have annihilated the Canadian force; but Brock was, fortunately, at the head of the British army; and a strong and determined man is often mightier than the most secure fortress.

Brock placed himself at the head of his little army, and so was a conspicuous mark for the foe should they open fire. Colonel Nichol, who had a deep affection for him, begged him not to expose himself unnecessarily. "If we lose you," he said, "we lose all. Let me pray you to allow the troops to pass on, led by their own officers." But Brock had with him many raw recruits who were now about to have their first experience of actual battle. They needed an inspiring example, and to Nichol's kindly words he replied: "Master Nichol, I duly appreciate the advice you give me, but I feel that in addition to their sense of

loyalty and duty, many here follow me from personal regard, and I will never ask them to go where I do not lead them."

This speech recalls an anecdote concerning Tecumseh. He was a most enthusiastic admirer of Brock's and despised General Procter, under whose leadership, or rather lack of leadership, he afterwards lost his life at Moravian town. In giving his opinion of the two generals he said in broken English: "General Brock say, 'Tecumseh, *come*, fight Yankee.' General Procter say, 'Tecumseh, *go*, fight Yankee.'"

As the column moved forward, Lieutenant Bullock led the advance guard. Immediately in rear of the advance guard were the three 6-pounders and two 3-pounders, ludicrous weapons to attempt to assault such a fortress as Detroit. They would have been of about as much service against its high, solid walls, as was Don Quixote's lance when he tilted against the windmill.

Brock led his men along the narrow river road. On the right of the British was the river, on the left a succession of farm-

houses and fences. On account of the narrowness of the road they had to march forward in a compact body. The morning was a beautiful one, and the land through which they were marching fair to the eye. Apples, pears, peaches, and grapes grew in rich profusion along the line of march. It was sad to think that this earthly paradise might soon be turned to ruin by shot and shell.

While the troops were thus advancing, the battery at Sandwich under Captain Hall and the guns on the *Queen Charlotte* kept up a steady cannonade on the fort. Their fire was effective, and one round shot, crashing into a room, killed and wounded several men; among the killed was the unfortunate Lieutenant Hanks, who had been forced to surrender Fort Mackinaw to Captain Roberts, and who was a prisoner on parole at Fort Detroit. It was this shot, combined with the bold advance of Brock, that caused the surrender of Detroit.

Hull had lost heart. The women and children under his care would, he believed, fall victims to the scalping knives and tomahawks

of the savages should the fort be captured after a struggle. He had a greatly exaggerated idea of the number of men Brock had with him. He believed that there were at least 1,800 regulars. Many of the militia had been clothed in the cast-off garments of the 41st Regiment, and this helped to deceive him. He was convinced that thousands of Indians had joined Brock's force. He was no longer the confident boaster who had visions of a triumphant and easy march to Quebec. The storm of heavy metal falling within the walls of Detroit thoroughly frightened him, and he hurriedly sent a white flag to the Sandwich battery. Captain Hall sent back word that Brock was already on the United States shore, and that he was the only person by whom the flag could be received.

The Indians, meanwhile, were advancing through the woods, making the August morning ring with their blood-curdling war-whoops. The York volunteers were getting their first taste of battle by advancing in skirmishing order. When within a mile and a half of the rising ground, immediately in front of them

and close to the fort, the British saw the battery menacing their advance. The gunners were standing by the guns with lighted fuses. Each moment it was expected that the thunder of the cannon would be heard and their ranks shattered by an iron storm. The soldiers in the fort also stood by their guns, impatiently waiting for the command to commence firing; but no order came from Hull to begin action. It is hard to understand why no shot came from the battery commanding the road or from the fort. It is quite possible that it was due to the fact that Hull had already sent out the white flag signifying that he was prepared to surrender. As this had been sent to Captain Hall, it was unknown to Brock or his men.

When the British reached a point about three-quarters of a mile from the fort, they took cover and halted; and Brock ascended a piece of rising ground to reconnoitre. Meanwhile the gunners at the 24-pounder battery had fled to the fort. The return of the flag from Captain Hall had apparently not changed Hull's mind. Brock had scarcely go^d within

sight of the fort, when he saw an American officer approaching with a flag of truce. He could hardly credit the evidence of his own eyes, but he was none the less delighted. He could not afford to lose a man from the wretchedly small force he had to guard Upper Canada. Each moment he had expected the guns to open fire on his ranks. This white flag seemed too good to be true. But it was a fact, and Hull and his force, practically double the strength of Brock's, tamely surrendered. On this beautiful August Sabbath, about noon, the British army marched into the fort.

The prize was a rich one. The whole of the territory of Michigan was surrendered. Besides the prisoners of war, there fell into the hands of the British 39 cannon, 2,500 muskets, innumerable musket cartridges, 60 barrels of gunpowder, 180 tons of lead, and 200 tons of cannon ball, besides other military stores. The troops likewise found abundant food in Detroit. The garrison could easily have held out for several weeks on the supplies they had on hand at the time when the fortress was surrendered. Behind the fort, on a

common, were found hundreds of cattle and about 1,000 sheep and many horses. These had for the most part been stolen from Canadian farms in the thieving raids that Hull's men had been making into Canada for the past month. In addition to these supplies there was at Detroit a brig called the *Adams*. This brig had only recently been finished and was in fine condition. Hull had hoped that with this vessel, he would easily have gained control of Lake Erie. The *Adams* was re-named the *Detroit* in honour of the new-won British fort.

On the following day, August 17th, formal possession was taken of the fortress. One of Brock's first acts was to release Private Dean, a soldier who, a few days before, had gallantly acquitted himself at the bridge crossing the Canard River. He was a prisoner in Detroit, and for his bravery Brock publicly congratulated him before the assembled soldiers. There were in Detroit several brass cannon that had been captured from the British at Saratoga in the Revolutionary War. In honour of the occasion salutes were fired from

one of these cannon. The *Queen Charlotte*, gay with bunting, manœuvred in front of the fort and fired broadsides in reply to the salutes. The British flag was everywhere in evidence, and all along the Detroit River the inhabitants, who less than a month before were for the most part sympathizing with, and even extending a welcome to, Hull and his men, made a great demonstration of enthusiasm for the British.

Hull had intended, when he entered Canada, to make a leisurely march to Quebec, which, of course, he expected would surrender on his approach. He was not to be altogether disappointed. He was to march through a great part of Canada, but he and his regular troops went as prisoners of war under a strong guard.

The capture of Detroit was a splendid piece of work, and most important in its future effects. It filled the United States forces all along the border with dread of the army led by Brock. It gave decision to the wavering among the inhabitants of the province, and made those who were openly friendly to

the United States hide their heads. Brock, by his prompt action, undoubtedly saved Canada from a sweeping invasion in the autumn of 1812, and retarded American operations in the Detroit district for an entire year.

CHAPTER VIII

A DISASTROUS ARMISTICE

The capture of Detroit by General Brock's little army, without the shedding of a drop of British blood, took Canada by surprise. It seemed too good to be true, but it filled all hearts with hope. The people of Canada had been fearing that their small, and, for the most part, untrained army would not be able to make headway against the large forces the Republic was sending into their country. With Brock leading their regiments they felt that Canada might yet be saved.

Had Brock been as bombastic as was Julius Cæsar on one occasion, he might have sent to General Prevost the message, "I came! I saw! I conquered!" He was the hero of the hour. When he returned to York, ten days after taking possession of Detroit, he had a royal welcome. Letters from his many

personal friends and from the leading spirits in the province poured in to congratulate him on his daring and foresight. Sir George Prevost, who, up to this time, had been appealing to him to remain on the defensive, now that victory had crowned Brock's efforts, wrote to him in words of praise, and expressed himself pleased that he had in no way hampered his movements against Detroit. It was not due to any work of his that Detroit had fallen. Indeed, he had sent a staff officer from Montreal with instructions to Brock not to undertake the western expedition; but, due to the rapidity with which Brock moved after making up his mind to force Hull to give him battle, this officer arrived at York too late to prevent the expedition setting out. Lord Bathurst, secretary for war and the colonies, when news of the achievement reached England, wrote in glowing terms of Brock's success. Bathurst praised him for his "firmness, skill, and bravery." Up to this time Bathurst had been sending to Canada instructions which, had Brock obeyed to the letter, would have prevented the fall of Detroit. He, in

despatch after despatch, had notified Prevost to remain on the defensive; to do nothing that would irritate the Americans and make the United States a unit in this war. Now that victory was achieved, he was not unwilling to take some of the credit. He sent word to Brock that His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, had honoured him for his victory by making him an extra Knight of the Order of the Bath. This letter was never to reach Brock. Long before it arrived in Canada he had given his life in an heroic effort to beat back the invaders.

At the time of Brock's victory the British people were experiencing gloomy days. The armies which they were maintaining at heavy cost in Spain were making but little headway. Britain's allies were being ingloriously beaten. Just before the news of Brock's victory arrived in London, word had been received that one of her battleships, the *Guerrière*, had been vanquished by the American ship *Constitution*. This was a crowning shame. Britain beaten on the ocean by her former colony! It seemed impossible. Brock's victory

took away some of the sting of this defeat. When the despatches, giving an account of the fall of Detroit, and the colours of one of the captured regiments arrived in London, the bells of the city rang out in joy, and the guns of the Tower of London thundered the news to the people.

This demonstration, by strange chance, occurred on October 6th, the anniversary of General Brock's birthday. On this very day William Brock and his wife were walking in a London park. The sound of the clanging bells and the thundering guns caused them to wonder what could be the reason. The wife asked her husband why such a demonstration was being made. "Don't you know," he replied, laughingly, "that it is Isaac's birthday? It is in honour of him." On their return home they were to learn that all this rejoicing was indeed in honour of their valiant brother.

The effect of the capture of Detroit and of Hull's army on the United States was tremendous. The people were horrified. It seemed impossible that the soldiers of a coun-

try they had looked upon as an easy prey could have, without loss, achieved such a victory. On the very day that Detroit fell into the hands of the British, by order of President Madison, the churches of the United States held services calling on the God of Battles to give success to the armies of their country; but the prayers of the United Empire Loyalist mothers had likewise been uttered for the protection of the boys they had sent forth to guard their country and their homes.

The prisoners were sent by boat to Fort Erie, and thence marched along the Niagara River to Fort George. As they passed down the river road, the United States army assembled between Black Rock and Fort Niagara caught glimpses of them. The sight of their comrades in arms being marched along under a strong guard made many of them think in their hearts that a similar fate might be theirs. They were badly trained and badly officered, and, due to their inexperience in the field, not a few of them had fallen victims to sickness, so prevalent in armed camps. From Fort George the prisoners were sent down the St. Law-

rence to Montreal, and some of them on to Quebec. The sight of them, as they passed through such centres of population as York and Kingston, taught the people that they need not despair; that in Brock they had a tower of strength guarding their borders, and that if he had but a free hand other victories would quickly follow.

After arranging for the future government of Detroit and leaving Colonel Procter in charge of affairs in Michigan, Brock boarded the schooner *Chippewa*, and set sail for Fort Erie, intending before the snow fell to finish the work he had begun so well and sweep the enemy's armies from the entire frontier. While sailing down the lake he was met with the keenest disappointment of his career. Scarcely was he out of sight of Amherstburg when he was hailed by the schooner *Lady Prevost* which was speeding up the lake. This vessel bore the tidings that Sir George Prevost had concluded an armistice with General Dearborn, commander-in-chief of the United States army, and that all acts of warfare must cease until it was known whether or not

President Madison would agree to this armistice.

Nothing could have been more unfortunate. Brock had laid his plans of future warfare well and would have carried them out with the same rapidity with which he swooped down on Detroit. He had already sent Colonel Procter with a strong force and some Indians against Fort Wayne in the Miami country. This fort was a base of supplies, and its capture would retard American operations in the direction of Detroit. He had another reason for despatching this force to Fort Wayne. The garrison at that point was a small one. They were for the time being cut off from their main force, and were threatened by the Indian hordes that were rejoicing over the defeat of their enemies. There was grave danger that the savages would ruthlessly massacre this garrison. Brock in a letter to Prevost stated that one of the chief reasons for sending this force to Fort Wayne was to save the lives of the garrison. Now, on account of the armistice, he had to send orders for the recall of Procter's force.

Brock had, moreover, planned an immediate raid on Sackett's Harbour. The capture of that lake port would have given the British complete control of Lake Ontario, and prevented supplies from reaching the enemy at Niagara save by the long and difficult land route. The armistice likewise spoiled his plans with regard to Sackett's Harbour.

Brock had a narrow escape from a serious mishap on his way to Fort Erie. As the little *Chippewa* sailed smoothly down the lake a fog arose which concealed both shores. The captain lost his bearings; and when the fog lifted, it was found that the vessel was close to the United States shore. The enemy were at this time probably unaware of the armistice which had been concluded between Prevost and Dearborn, and, had they recognized the situation of the *Chippewa*, would have attempted her capture. They certainly would have done so had they known that Brock was on board. When the general was told of the dangerous position the schooner was in, he suspected that the captain had placed her there with evil intentions. In his anger at the care-

lessness or wickedness of the commander of the vessel he exclaimed: "You scoundrel, you have betrayed me. Let but one shot be fired from the shore, and I will run you up on the instant to that yard arm." As he spoke, he pointed aloft. It had been a pure accident, and the captain was in no way to blame. He was no doubt as sorry for the mishap as any one could have been, and put forth every effort in a vain attempt to get away from the dangerous shore. Meanwhile, the *Queen Charlotte*, which had left Detroit several days before the *Chippewa*, saw the danger threatening the little vessel, and, hearing a shot fired from her as if asking for help, spread her sails and with a favouring light wind bore down on the becalmed schooner. She brought her guns to bear, and was soon in a position to protect the *Chippewa* if any attempt were made to board her. In time she got the unfortunate craft in tow and brought her safely into Fort Erie.

From Fort Erie Brock hastened to York, where he was presented with an enthusiastic address by the grateful inhabitants.

He treated his achievements lightly, and gave much of the credit of his victory to the gallant volunteers from York who had gone out with him to meet Hull's force. After resting for a couple of days in the capital, he journeyed towards Kingston to inspect the troops in that important military town.

While sailing down the calm waters of Lake Ontario he took advantage of his enforced leisure to write a lengthy letter to the brothers he loved so well. He had on the very day of his victory sent a brief note to them, apparently addressed to his brother Irving. In that note he said:

“Rejoice at my good fortune and join with me in prayers to Heaven. I send you a copy of my hasty note to Sir George [about the surrender of Detroit].

“Let me know that you are all united and happy.”

In his hour of victory it can thus be seen his first thoughts were of the loved ones in England. They were disunited: his victory might be the means of reuniting them. This was what first flashed upon his generous mind. To know

that his brothers were once more on friendly terms would give him greater happiness than any honour or reward his country could bestow on him.

On October 13th, the very day of Brock's death, his brother William, with a heart full at the news of Isaac's victory and the knowledge that honours and rewards had been heaped upon him by a grateful country, called upon Irving, and a reconciliation took place. They shook hands and were friends, after which Irving showed his brother the lines he had received from Isaac. His wish had been realized. Through him they were united and happy. How glad they must have been that they had become reconciled before tidings came to them of his death. Perhaps in the moment when General Brock lay dying on Queenston Heights, a vision of the brothers shaking hands may have flashed upon him.

In the letter Brock wrote while sailing down to Kingston he said:

"They say that the value of the articles will amount to 30 or £40,000; in that case my portion will be something considerable. If it

enable me to contribute to your comfort and happiness, I shall esteem it my highest reward. When I returned Heaven thanks for my amazing success, I thought of you all: you appeared to me happy — your late sorrows forgotten; and I felt as if you acknowledged that the many benefits which for a series of years I received from you were not unworthily bestowed. Let me know, my dearest brothers, that you are again united. The want of union was nearly losing this province without even a struggle, and be assured it operates in the same degree in regard to families.”

What a heart Brock had! It is little wonder that he was beloved by all who knew him.

When in Kingston he received a letter from Sir George Prevost congratulating him on his splendid achievement at Detroit; and later, a letter saying that President Madison had refused to ratify the peace Prevost had made with Dearborn, and that, on September 8th, hostilities between the two countries would be renewed.

Prevost had made a serious error of judgment in entering into this armistice; but he

did it with the best of intentions. He knew that the New England States were bitterly opposed to the war; that several other States took only a half-hearted interest in it. The main cause of the declaration of war had been the orders-in-council. These orders had been repealed by Great Britain, and he believed that when news of this repeal got abroad in the United States, the government, at the urgent demand of the people, would be only too glad to conclude a treaty of peace. His desire was to avert bloodshed on this continent, and to enable Great Britain to devote all her energies to curbing the power of Napoleon in Europe.

Meanwhile the Americans had taken advantage of the armistice. Vessels that were penned up in Ogdensburg under the guns of Fort Wellington at Prescott had, unopposed, slipped out of the harbour and been sent to Sackett's Harbour. Supplies were rushed to Niagara, and troops of all kinds were hurried to the Niagara frontier. Before the armistice, Brock, even with the small force he had at his command in Upper Canada, in a few days could

have swept the enemy from the entire region between Buffalo and Fort Niagara, and destroyed their fortifications and earthworks. Now he had opposed to him a force four times as great as his own. Their fortified positions had been greatly strengthened. Heavy guns had been placed at every important point along the American shore, and supplies of flour and beef, sufficient to support a large army for weeks, had been landed in sight of the British at Lewiston.

As soon as Brock learned that the armistice had come to an end, he suggested that an immediate attack should be made from Kingston on Sackett's Harbour, only thirty-five miles away. But Sir George Prevost would not sanction the proposed attack, and Brock had to be content to return to Fort George, and endeavour, with his ridiculously small army, to stem the tide of invasion along the Niagara River.

It was now two months since Brock had taken the field, but in that time, such care had he taken of his men that, to quote his own words "not a single death, either natural or by the

sword," had occurred among those under his command; and he added, with just pride, that there had not been a single desertion.

The Americans now had, along the Niagara River, a force which, had it been properly led, could have swept Upper Canada. Between Fort Niagara and the batteries at Black Rock there were some 6,300 men. To oppose this army Brock had fewer than 1,500 scattered at the posts between Fort Erie and Fort George, a distance of forty miles. His troops, however, had confidence in their leader, while the commanders of the American army were inexperienced men in whom their soldiers had but little confidence. The Canadian militia, too, had now turned out in considerable force, and were much better armed than when the attack had been made on Detroit. The 2,500 stand of arms captured at the fall of that fort Brock now found of the greatest service. He was literally able to fight the Americans with their own weapons

At the beginning of October an invasion of British territory at some point between Fort Erie and Fort George was expected. The

United States authorities had planned the capture of Queenston. At that place they intended to establish a fortified camp, about which they could collect a large army. With this army in the spring they would, they thought, be able to march leisurely on Montreal. Fortunately for Brock there was a lack of harmony between the United States commanders. General Smyth was in command above the Falls and believed the attack should be made in that quarter. General Stephen Van Rensselaer had charge between Lewiston and Niagara, and he had made up his mind that Queenston was the most vulnerable spot. Had the United States generals been of one mind, it would undoubtedly have gone harder with Brock and his brave little army.

On October 9th two British vessels, the *Caledonia* and the *Detroit* — the latter was the *Adams* so lately captured from the Americans — were skilfully seized by a United States force from Black Rock under Lieutenant Elliott. This success to their arms made the American soldiers, tired of camp and drill and taking chance shots at the British on the oppo-

site shore, eager for battle. Van Rensselaer, fearing that he might lose his influence over his men if he denied them their wish, decided immediately to prepare for the invasion of Canada. He sent a spy into the British lines; and when this spy returned, he informed the United States general that Brock had gone to Detroit with a strong force to help Procter's army in that quarter. The spy had been deceived. Brock had left Fort George, but he had gone to Fort Erie to inquire into the loss of the *Detroit* and the *Caledonia*.

On the day after the capture of the British vessels General Van Rensselaer had his boats made ready and his troops mustered for crossing the swift river that swirls deep and narrow between the high banks at Queenston. The night was dark and stormy, and the unsuspecting foe on the Canadian side had no thought that an immediate invasion would be attempted. Brock, too, was convinced that when the attack in force did come, it would be made against Fort George. With the large army that Van Rensselaer had at his disposal, it would have been an easy matter to have crept

along the shores of Lake Ontario, crossed the mouth of the Niagara River, and turned Brock's flank. At three o'clock on the morning of October 11th, when everything was ready, Lieutenant Sims in the leading boat pushed out from the shore. What happened to Sims is not known. According to some authorities, he landed on the Canadian shore; according to others the swift current drew his boats down-stream, and he lost his way and turned back to the American shore. There is no record of him or his doings from the time he started on this expedition. The greater portion of the invading force was drawn up on the shore, waiting to cross, but to their chagrin they found that Sims had taken the oars of the remaining boats along with him. A violent thunderstorm came up, and the American troops waited till daylight by the river bank, and then, soaked and shivering, returned to their camps.

On October 12th Major Evans, under a flag of truce, crossed from Queenston to make an arrangement with Van Rensselaer for an exchange of prisoners. While on the United

States side Evans noticed preparations that convinced him that Queenston was to be attacked immediately. Large boats were drawn up on the shore and partially concealed from view. They could be for but one purpose: to carry troops to the Canadian side. When Evans returned to Queenston, he warned Captain Dennis, who commanded the force there, to keep a watchful lookout. He then went to Fort George and informed Brock of what he had seen.

Major Evans had not been mistaken. The expedition of the eleventh had failed, but as soon as the storm abated another expedition was planned. It was to set out in the darkness of the early morning of October 13th. With every confidence of success, final preparations were made for a descent on the Canadian shore.

CHAPTER IX

THE BATTLE OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

On the night of October 12th Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer, a cousin of the general's, and Colonel Christie were put in command of 300 militia and 300 regulars respectively. It was their intention to attack the village of Queenston immediately opposite Lewiston. They were confident of victory. Brock's main force was at Fort George, seven miles away. There was a battery at Brown's Point, three miles from Queenston; at Vrooman's Point, a mile from the Heights, a 24-pounder gun was stationed; while at Queenston itself was a force not exceeding 300 men. In the village was Captain Dennis's grenadier company of the 49th Regiment, with Chisholm's company of the 2nd York, and Hall's company of the 5th Lincoln militia. Halfway up the mountain there was a redan battery in which

was one 18-pounder gun. The crew of this gun had the support of Captain Williams with a light company of the 49th Regiment.

At three o'clock in the morning, in black darkness and a drizzling rain, the first of the thirteen boats that had been loaded with troops pushed out from the Lewiston landing. Across the treacherous, swiftly eddying stream they rowed with muffled oars. Colonel Van Rensselaer was in the leading boat. The watchful sentries saw them when they were still in midstream, and, firing upon them, alarmed the troops resting with loaded weapons in the village. In an instant Captain Dennis and his men had rushed to the shore and poured a volley into the crowded boats. Colonel Van Rensselaer was severely wounded; the advance on Queenston was checked; and a few American soldiers who succeeded in landing were forced to take shelter along the overhanging banks. Colonel Christie's boats were swept down the stream. They completely lost their reckoning, and were forced to return to the Lewiston side and set out once more. Colonel Fenwick was following Van Rensselaer and Christie

with a supporting force of regulars. The swift water swept his boat past Queenston, and drove it on the Canadian shore below. A strong firing party was watching it. They poured several volleys into the crowded craft. Fenwick was wounded in the face and partially blinded, and he and his whole force were taken prisoners. A second boat was driven ashore at Vrooman's Point, and the men at the battery there captured its occupants.

The rattle of musketry, when the sentries first saw the approaching boats, warned the United States soldiers at Lewiston that the force attempting to cross was being attacked. Above the village of Lewiston were two 18-pounders, two mortars, and two 6-pounders. To cover the landing of the troops these guns immediately opened fire on Queenston and the heights above it; while the batteries along the Canadian shore, the guns in the village of Queenston, and the gun on the heights poured effective volleys into the crossing boats.

Brock was at Fort George. He had been busy, until a late hour the previous night,

writing despatches. He feared for Upper Canada. He had just written a letter to his brother about the threatened invasion, in which he said: "If I should be beaten, the province is inevitably gone." He went to rest that night expecting battle on the morrow. The distant roar of cannon from Fort Grey above Lewiston on the American side, and from Queenston Heights, warned a sentry at Fort George that a fight was in progress. He at once aroused the general. The battle was on sooner than Brock had anticipated. In a moment he was in his regimentals, and, ordering his good horse Alfred to be brought him, without either attendants or his aides-de-camp, he galloped towards Queenston through the darkness and drizzling mist. As the battle thunder grew in volume, he put spurs to his willing steed.

While the firing at Queenston was being watched by the troops under Captain Cameron at Brown's Point, an officer came galloping towards them with the news that an invasion in force was being attempted. This officer requested that a message should at once be

sent to warn Brock of the danger. Young Lieutenant Jarvis was at this time mounted, and he galloped away at full speed with the message. Half way to Fort George he met Brock riding alone, his face grim and stern, his mind oppressed with the fear that Canada might be lost. He was the hope of Canada, and with determined purpose was riding forth on this morning to do all that man could do to save the country. As Jarvis approached Brock, he tried to rein in his steed, but could not. Brock did not stop, but, turning in his saddle, beckoned to Jarvis to follow him. In a few moments Jarvis was by his side, and, as they galloped along, as the first streaks of light were breaking on the horizon, he gave Brock the message he had received from the officer from Queenston. Brock told Jarvis to hurry at once to Fort George and order General Sheaffe to hasten to Queenston with the whole of the reserve. He gave instructions at the same time that the Indians encamped at Fort George should be thrown out on the right to occupy the wood during the advance of Sheaffe's column. Jarvis left him, and on he

galloped. When he reached Brown's Point, he was cheered on his way by the company of York volunteers stationed there, and, as he sped past them, he waved his hand to the lads and ordered their commander, Captain Cameron, to follow after him with all possible speed. Past Vrooman's Point he galloped, giving words of encouragement to the troops there under Captain Heward, and in a few minutes he was at the scene of action. The extensive preparations on the opposite shore and the crowded boats in midstream alarmed him. To get a better view of the situation he at once ascended the hill to the redan battery.

The men under Captains Dennis, Chisholm, and Hall were making a gallant fight against great odds in the village of Queenston. To reinforce them Brock sent down from the Heights Captain Williams with his light company. He was now left at his point of observation by the gun with but eight artillerymen. By this time it was daylight. Suddenly above him on the summit of Queenston Heights a body of some sixty Americans appeared.

From that point of vantage they poured several volleys into the redan battery, and Brock and the crew of the 18-pounder were forced to retreat to the village.

There was a difficult path up the bank of the river to the Heights. It was not thought possible that a body of troops could scale it, and no efforts had been made to guard it. Colonel Van Rensselaer had learned of this path, and had sent Captain Wool, an officer of tried courage, to attempt its ascent with a small force. Wool successfully performed his task, and his action caused the British the most deplorable loss of the war of 1812,—the death of Brock.

As soon as Brock reached Queenston village he found that the battery there and the infantry were keeping the invading force in check, and he determined to put forth a personal effort to recapture the lost gun. He selected two companies of the 49th and one hundred militia; with these he set out on his difficult task. "Follow me, boys!" was his command, as he started for the Heights at a brisk trot. He halted at the foot of the

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THE DEATH OF BROCK



slope to give his troops a short resting spell. He then dismounted, climbed over a high stone wall, and, waving his sword, rushed up the hill at the head of his men. In the meantime, Wool's force had been strengthened, and now a company of fully 400 soldiers was guarding the captured gun. Brock's commanding figure and conspicuous uniform made him an easy target. According to Lieutenant G. S. Jarvis (there were several of this name in Brock's army), who was near Brock when he fell, one of Wool's force stepped in front of his company, took deliberate aim, and shot down the British general. His wound was mortal. His death and the increasing fire from the Heights compelled the British to retire.

The dying words of great men are always interesting. Tradition has it that Brock, immediately before his death, cried out: "Push on, brave York volunteers!" This probably arose from his command to Captain Cameron, as he passed Brown's Point in the early morning, to bring forward his company. According to Captain Glegg, who wrote to William Brock on the day following the fight, the general

as he fell said in a feeble voice, "My fall must not be noticed or impede my brave companions from advancing to victory." However, no man among his followers could fail to have been aware of his fall, and Brock was not one to use senseless words. According to Lieutenant Jarvis, who rushed to his side with the words: "Are you hurt, Sir?" Brock made no reply, but, pressing his hand to his breast, "slowly sank down." His wound was so severe that he was stunned by it, and probably after receiving it uttered no word.

On his death becoming known, the cry went up, "Revenge the General!" That was the slogan used for the remainder of this eventful day. The cry before night reëchoed along the frontier from Fort George to Fort Erie, and caused the death of many of the enemy. When the sad news reached Fort Erie, for a moment the gunners there were dumb with sorrow, but with stern faces they returned to their guns and redoubled their fire with destructive effect on the American force at Black Rock. At Fort George the soldiers turned a concentrated fire on Fort Niagara, and in

short order compelled the evacuation of that position. Brock was dead, but his spirit lived on for the protection of Canada and nerved the troops to perform valorous deeds during the remainder of the battle of Queenston Heights. The great victory won on that day was as much his, though he was not present, as it was Sheaffe's, who led the British army to final victory.

His small force, despite their courage, was compelled to retreat, leaving Wool's men in possession of the gun, but they managed to carry Brock's body with them to Queenston, where it rested during the remainder of this day of battle.

After Brock's fall there was a further attempt to recapture the gun. The force from the village of Queenston had been strengthened by two companies of York volunteers from Brown's Point and Vrooman's Point, and a little before ten o'clock Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell led all the men that could be spared against the Americans on the Heights. But they were unsuccessful. Macdonell was mortally wounded, and his force was compelled to

retreat. This ended the morning battle, save for the struggle that went on between the batteries along the river.

The Americans believed that they had won a decisive victory. Couriers were sent to Albany with tidings of their success and the news of the death of Brock, and of his brilliant aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell. There was great rejoicing in Albany and the city was prematurely illuminated in honour of the victory.

General Van Rensselaer now crossed the river to take in the situation. With Colonel Christie he visited the Heights early in the afternoon, and from the redan battery saw a long line of British redcoats marching towards Queenston. When Brock fled from the gun on the Heights at the break of day, he once more had sent word to General Sheaffe to rush forward his troops with all speed. This force was now approaching. Van Rensselaer recognized that his work was not finished for the day, and that he would have to be prepared for another battle. He crossed to Lewiston to bring over more men to the Ca-

nadian side, but no amount of coaxing or abuse or blows could induce his followers to risk the passage of the river. Many of the dead and wounded had, in the meantime, been carried across to their camps, and the soldiers who had been in the fight brought fearful stories of the prowess of the "Green Tigers," as the men of the 49th were called from the green facings of their uniforms and their reckless courage in battle.

Meanwhile, a party of Indians under young Brant and Chief Norton, a Scotsman who held this rank among the Indians of the Grand River, had advanced from the lake shore near Fort George, stolen round the Heights, and appeared on the left of the American force. It came in touch with a flanking party of the enemy, and besides inflicting somewhat severe punishment upon them, managed, by their savage cries, to terrify the militia, who lived in the greatest fear of the redskins. The Indians were, however, too small a body to make much permanent impression, and were driven back, and waited in the forest for the arrival of Sheaffe's force.

Sheaffe had under his command 380 men of the 41st and 300 militia. As he approached the Heights he concluded that a frontal attack would be unwise. In Mr. Hamilton's courtyard in the village of Queenston he placed two pieces of artillery in charge of Lieutenant Holcroft, to check the crossing of the foe. Having arranged this force satisfactorily in this position, he led his troops round the mountain through woods and across fields to the northern side. He thus brought his army to the rear of Queenston Heights, and was in a position to attack the men on the brow of the hill from an unexpected quarter.

The news of the death of Brock and the critical situation at Queenston roused the heroic spirit of the troops all along the Niagara River. An eager body of British soldiers was advancing along the Chippawa road to join General Sheaffe. About 150 Indians had skirted the village of St. David's, and then stealthily moved eastward until they were concealed in a dense forest on the enemy's right front. Thus the Americans on the hill-top were completely hemmed in.

Sheaffe was now advancing with a body of slightly fewer than 1,000 men — not including the men in the village — every one of whom was determined to do his best to repel the invaders and avenge the death of Brock.

It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. The battle was renewed by the force in Queenston opening fire on the river. At the same time the troops on the British left broke from the forest and sharply attacked the enemy's front. Indian guides, who knew the ground on the west of the hill well, led Sheaffe's men right through the thick forest. The main attack was to be made on this flank. As the enemy were not expecting the British at that quarter, they would be taken unawares. On the right were the companies of the 41st Regiment and the flank companies of the Niagara militia with two 3-pounders. The light companies of the 49th Regiment and the companies of the York and Lincoln militia were in the centre. It is interesting to note that in this battle a company of negroes, refugee slaves from the United States, played a brave part.

There were now over 600 United States soldiers on the Heights. They had been expecting the main attack from down-stream, and were taken completely by surprise. They now turned and courageously faced the new danger on the left. They saw the encompassing troops approach them. They realized that they had no chance of escape. The river rolled swiftly at their backs, and there were no boats to carry them to their own shore. A force of determined men, almost double their number, was rapidly closing in on them. But they were brave men! Courageous Captain Wool was not with them. He had been severely wounded in the morning battle, and Lieutenant-Colonel Winfield Scott was in command. Under his inspiring influence his men awaited the charge of the oncoming British. They poured a volley into the advancing ranks, but there was no stopping the rush. The Indians, yelling and firing, the British, cheering as they charged with fixed bayonets, broke down their ranks. It was save himself who could. The hilltop was already strewn with their dead and dying. They turned their backs on the

foe and rushed to the cliff's edge. Some in their terror threw themselves from the dizzy height and were crushed on the boulders beneath. Others safely reached the river side, and, finding there were no boats there, endeavoured to escape by swimming. A few succeeded in reaching the opposite shore, but many were drowned in the eddying river.

There was nothing left for the United States officers to do but yield. Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, with a handkerchief on his sword, advanced towards the British force and surrendered all the troops on the Canadian side of the river unconditionally into the hands of the British. Canada for the time being was saved, and Brock was avenged.

About 400 men were surrendered on the Heights, but, when the prisoners captured in the morning and those who had landed at other points along the river, were brought in under the terms of surrender, the total number amounted to about 930. Among them were General Wadsworth, who had command of the militia on the mountain side, and some seventy other officers.

During this day of battle the British lost eleven killed and sixty wounded; the Indians, who, despite their small numbers, had played an essential part in the fight, five killed and nine wounded. It is not easy to estimate the number of casualties among the American troops. According to their own report ninety were killed. The killed and wounded could not have been far short of 300.

The battle of Queenston Heights was a glorious victory, but on account of the death of Brock it was viewed in Upper Canada almost in the light of a disaster.

During the battle Brock's body lay in a house in Queenston. When the firing along the Niagara River ceased, it was taken to Fort George and buried under one of the bastions. By his side was laid to rest his gallant and unselfish aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell. During Brock's burial, at the request of Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, a truly noble soldier and brilliant officer, the American flag at Fort Niagara, opposite Fort George, was flown at half-mast, and minute guns were fired, shot for shot with those of the Canadian mourners.

The Americans viewed Brock's death as "equivalent to a victory." President Madison, in his fourth annual message, remarked: "Our loss at Queenston had been considerable and is to be deeply lamented. The enemy's loss, less ascertained, will be the more felt for it includes among the killed the commanding general."

CHAPTER X

TRIBUTES TO A HERO'S MEMORY

The sorrow for the death of Brock was deep, genuine, and widespread. When news of it reached Quebec, the *Gazette* of that city said that his death was received there as a public calamity. Lieutenant George Ridout, who acquitted himself gallantly at Queenston Heights, afterwards wrote that Brock's loss was irreparable under the circumstances; "that his moderation and impartiality had united all parties in pronouncing him the only man worthy to be at the head of affairs." Colonel Robert Nichol, who loved Brock dearly and whose affection Brock returned, said as he wrote of his death: "Our situation has materially changed for the worse. Confidence seems to have vanished, and gloom and despondency has taken its place." When news that Brock had been killed reached England,

Earl Bathurst wrote to Sir George Prevost a letter in which he said: "His Majesty has lost in him not only an able and meritorious officer, but one who . . . displayed qualities admirably adapted to dismay the disloyal, to reconcile the wavering, and to animate the great mass of the inhabitants against successive attempts of the enemy to invade the province."

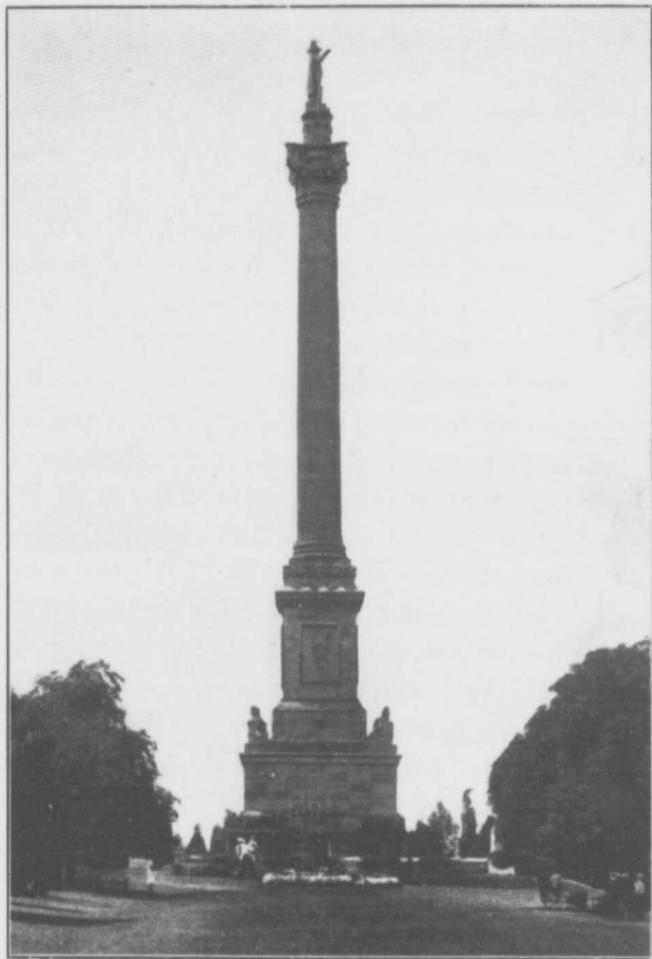
On July 20th, 1813, the British House of Commons voted a monument to Brock as a mark of their gratitude for his achievements. This monument, which cost £1,575, was erected in St. Paul's Cathedral. A grant of 12,000 acres of land in Upper Canada was given to his four brothers, and to each in addition a pension of £200 a year for life.

In the opening chapter of this book the memorial coin, which was struck in Brock's honour, has been referred to. The rulers of Great Britain by these tributes showed how fully they appreciated the work he had done, and the sacrifice he had made — the supreme sacrifice of life itself — for the British Empire.

A magnificent monument was erected to his memory on the site of the battle of Queenston

Heights. This monument was 135 feet from base to summit, and rose 485 feet above the Niagara River. On October 13th, 1824, the remains of General Sir Isaac Brock and his aide-de-camp Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell were removed from Fort George, where they had rested for twelve years, and deposited in a vault beneath the monument. On the occasion of the second burial of the heroic men who fell in the battle of Queenston Heights, thousands were present, among them many Americans who had come to pay respect to the memory of the man who had saved Canada from their armies.

On April 17th, 1840, a wretched creature named Lett exploded a heavy charge of gunpowder under this monument and utterly ruined it. Lett was one of the insurgents of 1837 and was compelled to flee to the United States when the rising was crushed. He thought that by destroying this monument, so dear to every Canadian, he would avenge himself on Canada. His act had the effect of making the memory of Brock more dear to Canadians. A monster meeting was held at Queenston, and



BROCK'S MONUMENT ON QUEENSTON HEIGHTS



it was at once decided to erect a larger and more beautiful monument a short distance from the old one. In 1853 the foundation stone of this monument was laid by Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, a brother of the man whose remains were to rest beneath it by the side of Brock's. This monument was completed in 1856. It is 190 feet from its base to the noble figure of Brock that surmounts it. It stands in magnificent prominence, a mark of inspiration to Canadians. Through it Brock still speaks to them and bids them guard their heritage.

Seldom in British history have more honours been paid to a military hero. Yet Brock had won no great battle, and his work was done in a remote corner of the Empire. Even in Canada, at such battles as Chrystler's Farm and Lundy's Lane, other commanders had achieved more notable victories than Detroit — Brock's only success. Why is it that he was so honoured? All recognized that by his work before the war and the thoroughness with which he had made his plans he had saved Canada. They knew, too, that though his

battle experience in Canada was one swift, futile dash up a hillside to his death, he had by his daring so inspired his men that his example had had as much to do with winning future battles as the commands of the actual leaders. His spirit fought with the Canadian troops all through the war of 1812. His words and his deeds lived long after his life had gone out.

Brock's spirit is still animating Canadians. Should threat of invasion come again, Brock would have greater influence than any other name in Canada's past. The beautiful spot where he lies buried is a Canadian Mecca, and thousands of hero-worshippers visit it yearly. Their patriotism is strengthened as, in the presence of Brock's magnificent tomb, they recall the deeds he performed that they might have a free nation within the great British Empire.

Brock, though dead, still lives. In the Canadian temple of fame his name stands highest. In the hearts of the Canadian people his memory is the one most dearly cherished.

