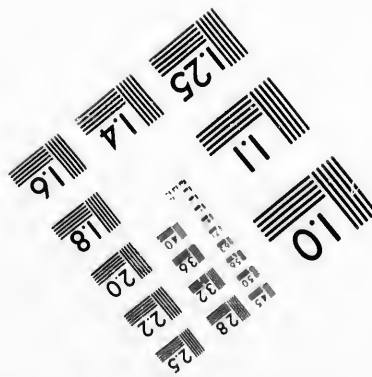
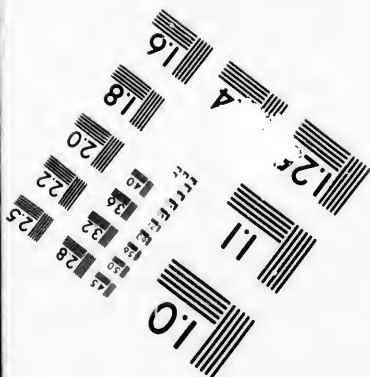
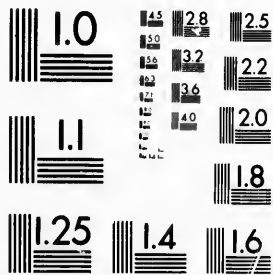


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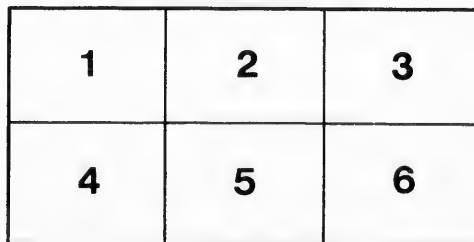
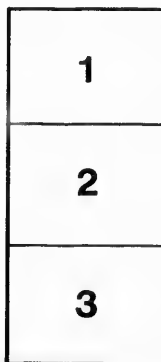
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# The Burning of the Caroline

AND OTHER REMINISCENCES OF

1837-38, BY

REAR ADMIRAL DREW

COMMANDER OF THE EXPEDITION

AND

JUDGE WOODS.

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CHATHAM :

THE BANNER PRINTING COMPANY.  
1896

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# The Burning of the Caroline

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## HER DESCENT OF THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

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The Thrilling Narrative of the Capture and Destruction of the  
Steamer--Some Historical Inaccuracies Pointed Out--  
The True Statement of the Affair.

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By Rear Admiral Drew, the Commander of the Expedition.

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In laying before the public a narrative of events which occurred more than twenty-five years ago, I can hardly make sure it will be acceptable to any reader, as the interest must more or less have passed away; but it has this in favor, that it is not a hackneyed subject, nor am I aware that anyone has attempted a description of the capture and destruction of the steamer Caroline except Sir Francis Bond Head, and then only cursorily, in his narrative of events during his administration as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. Now, as the Caroline will live in history, it seems a duty on my part to give a faithful and authentic account of an event which has been much exaggerated and misrepresented.

When the report reached England it was reported that a vessel had been sent over the Falls of Niagara burning, and with 160 human beings on board. This remaining

uncontradicted, was believed for some time, and I, of course, looked upon as a monster in human shape; whilst the truth was, in my anxiety to ascertain there was not a living soul on board before we turned the vessel adrift, that I very nearly sacrificed my own life in endeavoring to prove this, as will be seen hereafter.

I shall, therefore, take upon myself to draw up an account of the transaction in its true colors, which, coming from me, the principal actor in the drama, will carry with it an air of authenticity which will perhaps be its greatest value. I also embrace this opportunity of making public a correspondence which I have carried on with the heads of the department of her majesty's government, for the very severe pecuniary losses I sustained in being obliged to abandon a country in which all

my wealth and all my hopes were contained. For, had I remained in Canada up to the present time, the value of my property would have been more than double what it was when I left in 1842.

I may be asked what object I have in publishing this narrative at the present time. This I scarcely know myself. There may be two or three reasons. One is a desire that a faithful and true record of so remarkable an event as the sending the Caroline over the Falls of Niagara may be handed down to posterity in an authentic shape. I cannot be accused of vanity, for had I been vain of the exploit I should have published an account of it twenty five years ago, when the event was fresh in everybody's memory, and when the value of the service might have been properly appreciated; but I cannot deny that there be a lurking desire within me for the sympathy of the public when they come to know the hardship of the case, and also a hope (but a very faint one) that her majesty's government, when they are more fully acquainted with the facts which this record will contain, may be induced to come to a different decision to that they have done.

I have been refused redress principally upon the ground that so long a time had elapsed since the losses were sustained. There is no denial of the equity of my claim no other reason for denying me justice than I ought to have made the claim earlier. In making my appeal to the admiralty, who are my legitimate masters. I expected their lordships would have told me I was not serving under their orders when the Caroline was destroyed; but their refusal was simply for the reason that they had no funds at their disposal to meet such a case. This I thought was not unreasonable, and it induced me to apply to the secretary of the state for the colonies, who I thought, might have funds available for such a purpose; but there I was met with the objection that I had suffered too long a time to elapse before making my claim, and also that there were no funds to meet the case.

This led me, as a last resource, to address the prime minister upon the subject; and though only a sort of forlorn hope, I had such a confidence in the knowing goodness of his lordship's heart, that I really did expect something, and pictured to myself the pleasure it might be for his lordship to reflect, when he was relieved from the cares of office, that one of the last acts

of a long political life was doing an act of justice to an old soldier of nearly sixty years' standing in the navy, who had suffered from having served his country too well. The reply which came from the lords of the treasury was, that their lordships saw no reason for departing from the decision already come to by the secretary of the state for the colonies. Thus ended all my hopes of redress.

I will not trouble the reader with an account of my services in the royal navy previous to my going to Canada, as they may be found in O'Bryne's Naval Biography, but at once commence my story.

The year 1834 found me a commander on half pay of eight year's standing, during the whole of which time I had been trying for employment; but from the want of interest I found that I had no chance, so I gave it up, so in the spring of that year I set sail for Canada with my wife, intending to make that country our permanent home. We arrived there in the month of June, and, after looking about, finally decided to settle at Woodstock, in the county of Oxford, about fifty miles from Hamilton, a town situated in the western extremity of Lake Ontario. We had the advantage of being on the high road which leads from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron, a fine healthy part of the country. I soon commenced clearing, for the land I had selected was nearly all forest, and built myself a capital house, with barns, stables and every other convenience, and got 200 acres of land into cultivation, which I turned into a beautiful farm, and used to look upon it with as much satisfaction as if it had been in England—in fact so satisfied was I with it, that I made up my mind there to spend the remainder of my days. But the sequel will prove what poor short sighted mortals we are when we attempt to plan for futurity.

Whilst residing there I had the honor and very great pleasure of a visit from his grace the present Duke of Northumberland, then travelling through the country, who was pleased to say that mine was the prettiest place he had seen in the colony, and if I should be thought partial in my description of it I am sure his grace will bear me out in what I have stated.

I there enjoyed the most uninterrupted happiness for more than five years, when, in the month of December, 1837, the rebellion broke out. As an officer under gov-

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ernment, I felt I could do no less than volunteer to come forward and assist to put down the rebellion, and accordingly, about the middle of December, I shouldered a musket and started off to join Col. Sir Allan Macnab, who had the command of the whole militia force in that part of the colony, and was then on his march from Hamilton to Scotland, a district where the rebels had mustered in considerable force. I joined Sir Allan a few miles from Hamilton, and we halted at Brantford for night. At daybreak the next morning we started for Scotland, about twelve miles distance, with a very respectable force of militia and volunteers; but on our arrival there we found the rebels had left about half an hour, having been informed of our approach, and scattered themselves in all directions, some to the woods, some to their homes, and the leaders, Dr. Duncombe and others, to the United States. We scoured the country for sixty or seventy miles around, but saw no more of them, and a few days after brought us news that the rebels had made head again on the American side of the River Niagara, under Mackenzie and others, and that they had actually taken possession of Navy island, a dependency of her majesty, about half a mile from the Canadian shore. Thither we followed them with the force under Sir Allan Macnab considerably increased by volunteers on the march, and about Dec 20 we arrived at Chippewa, a village a short distance from the falls of Niagara. The rebels were fast collecting on the island, and by the 5th were supposed to muster 700 or 800 men. Our business was to dislodge them from their position, and for this purpose, amongst other preparations, a body of men was to'd off to act as a navy brigade, of which I, as the senior navy officer, assumed the command. We hired three lake schooners for the service, putting a gun on board each of them, and were fitting them out to carry troops to the island; but the principal part of the landing was to be effected by boats and craft belonging to the river navigation.

On Dec. 29, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Sir Allan Macnab and myself were standing together upon the look-out, when, with the aid of a telescope, we observed a steam-vessel standing across the river, from Fort Schlosser to Navy island, full of men and with one or two field pieces on the deck. This was her first appearance. Sir Allan said, "This won't do. I

say; Drew, do you think you can cut that vessel out?" "Oh, yee," I said, "nothing easier, but it must be done at night." "Well, then," said he, "go and do it." These were literally all the orders I ever received to take the Caroline; and although I had said hastily there is nothing easier, yet in reality it was a service of such extreme danger, that it may well be questioned whether anyone could be justified in undertaking. In giving the order to take the Caroline, Sir Allan Macnab, of course, considered it was my duty to judge of the practicability of the scheme as belonging to my profession. It was not a business to hesitate, or scarcely to think upon; it had to be done, and the only question was how to do it.

The current was reported in the charts to be running at the rate of seven miles an hour at that part of the river where we should have to cross, which was not half a mile distant from the mighty Falls of Niagara. We had nothing but a few small boats about twelve feet long, each pulling four oars, to trust to; we had to keep fearfully close to the rapid to prevent the boats being seen from Navy Island, from whence they would have given the alarm. Numerous other difficulties might have been started so as to make the attempt appear impracticable; but I determined not to let one of them enter my head. I had resolved to make the attempt, and that nothing should stop me, well remembering that most of the dashing things of the late war were accomplished in this way.

The first thing to be done was to call for volunteers. "Here we are, sir," cried a hundred voices; "what have we to do?" "Follow me" was all they could get out of me, as Sir Allan and I had determined the secret should be strictly between us, for, had our intentions been suffered to transpire, one hour would have carried the intelligence across the river to the Americans, when we should have been opposed by thousands, but so well was the secret kept that the men knew not where they were going nor what they had to do until they were actually embarked in the boats and had left the shore.

Amongst so many volunteers there was a difficulty in making a selection; but this they settled between themselves, it being an indispensable condition that each should be able to pull a good oar, which narrowed the number to be selected from, and we had no difficulty. The interval between four

o'clock, when the determination was come to, and half-past seven at night, the time proposed for starting, was taken up in preparation. Time dragged on tediously. It was necessary to give the men in the steamer not only time to get to bed, but to sleep; the moon, too, was shining too brightly for our purpose, and we had to wait to let it go down for fear of discovery; the neglect of any of these precautions would have marred our enterprise. The steamer was secured under Fort Schlosser for the night. There was a little difference of opinion between Sir Allan McNab and myself as what we should do with the vessel when we had taken her; he wanted her brought over to Chippawa, but I was altogether against it. I opposed it simply upon the ground that if she was in possession the Americans would never rest until she was given up, but if burnt there was the end of her; our purpose would be answered, and the country saved from a great embarrassment. At last half past eleven o'clock arrived, and we started upon our perilous expedition. We received three cheers from the assembled multitude on the shore, and off we went. I had arranged with Sir Allan Macnab that, as soon as he saw a bright light burning on the other side, he was to make a blazing fire on the spot from whence we started, to serve as a beacon to guide us on our way back.

We pulled a little up along shore, and I called the boats around me to tell the men the service they were going upon, and gave the officers all the precautions I considered necessary—namely that they were not to go too near Navy island, for fear of being seen; that they were to keep as close to me as possible, and on no account to go ahead of me; that they were to endeavor to strike the opposite shore some distance above Fort Schlosser, where the steamer was moored, and there wait for each other. I also said that if any of them disliked the service they were going upon, which was one full of danger, to speak before it was too late, and I would land them at once; but no one took advantage of the offer. We mustered seven boats, each containing four rowers and three or four sitters, and commanded by Lieutenants McCormick, Beer, Elmsley, Batterby, Mr Harris, master, R. N.; Mr. Lapointe, mate, and Mr. Gordon, captain of a steam vessel on the lakes. We then bade adieu to the shore, and commenced to cross the river.

When about a third of the way across,

we heard the firing of musketry from Navy island, and I at once concluded that some of the boats, going too near the island, were discovered and fired upon. This made me very uneasy, and I thought it was all over with us; but the boats retreated, and the firing ceased, and with it all my anxiety for the consequences. It was, as I imagined, with two boats out of the seven; and we did not see them again until we returned to the Canadian shore. We continued crossing, the roar of the falls being awful, and apparently not near half a mile distant, and the farther we got the louder they appeared to roar. Of course, we neared them considerably from the force of the stream, which we were crossing diagonally; nor could we expect to hit the opposite shore in a parallel line with the place from whence we started. This was one of the risks we had to encounter, and upon which we could make no calculation.

When about half way over the river, and having recovered from the alarm of the firing, one of the men in my boat called out, "We are going astern, sir; we shall be over the falls." Just at this moment we saw a light on the American shore, or, as it afterwards proved to be, on board the steamer, from which the men were able to judge that we were dropping down. I was again uneasy, as the lives of the men were all under my charge; but I explained to them that we were unavoidably nearing the falls, but I would at once convince them we would stem the current. I then put the boat's head right up the stream, and watched the effect upon the light. For sometime I could not bring myself to think we are going ahead, and I was a little alarmed; but I urged the men to put out a little extra strength, and then I discovered we did make headway. This reassured them, and I explained we were then in the very strength of the current, and the nearer we got to the shore the less it would be. I got rid of my anxiety, and was in good spirits again; nevertheless I must now admit that it was one of the most anxious moments of my life, as upon this not only depended the success of the enterprise, but the lives of all engaged in it.

After a few minutes we resumed our slanting course, and began to see the light much plainer, which we were then assured was on board the steamer, but we could not make out why we did not see the lower part of her hull; but time proved, as we

neared the shore, that there was a long, low spit of land, which effectually prevented us from being seen. This was a most fortunate circumstance; for, had it not been for this, we must have pulled direct towards the vessel, and as surely we would have been seen a considerable distance off; even the noise of the oars would have betrayed us, and prevented a surprise, which was everything to us. As it was, we were obliged to pull up along the shore of the island, which had put us considerably ahead of the steamer.

When arrived at the point, four other boats soon joined us; but the moon was still shining too brightly, and I judged it most prudent to remain where we were for half an hour. In so doing we ran great risk of discovery, as we were not more than thirty or forty yards from the mainland, nor more than 200 yards from the steamer, which lay as quiet and unsuspecting as if nothing was about to happen. This must have been about half past twelve o'clock; and fortunate it was for us that there was no one walking along the shore, or they could have given notice to the steamer of our approach in five minutes. I directed the boats to move their oars as gently as possible, just enough to stem the current, and not to talk or even whisper. Being able to expend half an hour here unseen was a great event for us, to allow it to become darker, as everything depended upon our being able to search the vessel unseen. At last I judged it dark enough, and we dropped silently down upon our prey literally without moving an oar until we were close alongside her. These were anxious moments for me, knowing how hazardous it is to climb a vessel's side and make good a footing upon the deck without being knocked on the head. However, in this, as in everything else, fortune favored us. When within a boat's length of the vessel, one of the watch (who had apparently just awoke out of a sleep) cried out, "Boat, ahoy! boat, ahoy! Give us the countersign." I answered, in a low tone of voice, "Silence, silence! don't make a noise, and I'll give you the countersign when we get on board." I then mounted the vessel's side, which I had some difficulty in doing for want of a ladder, and when fairly on deck I drew my sword, and found three men lounging over the starboard gangway unarmed, and quite unconcerned. I said to them, "Now I want this vessel and you had better go ashore at once." She was lying alongside a wharf to

which she was secured. I waved my sword over their heads to make them go, and I do not think that until this moment they fairly understood their position. They then moved leisurely over to the port side, I thinking they were going on shore; but as they saw none of my party on deck but myself they took up their fire-arms, which it appeared, had been left on that side of the deck, and the foremost man fired his loaded musket at me. Not more than a yard from him, how the ball missed me I do not know; but he was too close to take aim, and it passed me. I thought this an act of treachery, and that I need show him no mercy, so with the full swing of my arm I gave him a cut with my sword over the left temple, and he dropped at my feet. In another second one of the men put a pistol close to my face and pulled the trigger. Fortunately it flashed in the pan or I should not have been here to tell the story. Why I was so lenient with this man I do not know, for he deserved death by my hand as much as the other, but I merely gave him a sabre cut on the inside of the right arm, which made him drop his pistol, and he was unarmed. The other man I disarmed and drove them both over the side; but as they did not seem to move as fast as I thought they they ought, I gave them about an inch or two of the point of my sword, which quickened their pace wonderfully.

All this did not appear to have taken up more than a minute of time, and we were in complete possession of the after part of the vessel. Three of the boats boarded forward, where there was a good deal of firing going on, and as the quarter deck was clear I mounted the paddle box and gave orders for the firing to cease immediately, fearing from the darkness of the night we might take friends for foes; and Lieut. MacCormick had already received a desperate wound.

The vessel was now entirely in our possession, and, to guard against an attack from the shore, I directed Lieut. Elmsley to head a small party as an advanced guard, to warn us should any attack be meditated. We then aroused everybody out of their beds and sent them on shore, a considerable number of persons having been sleeping on board. After this the vessel was set on fire in four different places, and soon began to burn. The next thing was to cast her off from the jetty, which at one time I feared we should have had great difficulty in doing, as she was made fast with chains

under the water, or rather under ice—for this was the middle of a Canadian winter, where water freezes to the thickness of a foot in a very short time; but a young gentleman of the name of Sullivan, understanding the difficulty, seized hold of an axe, jumped down upon the ice, and in a short time cleared the main and set the vessel adrift.

This done, and the vessel in flames fore and aft, I ordered everyone to the boats, which became the more necessary as the enemy had opened a fire of musketry from the shore, and some shot came disagreeably near to me standing on the paddle-box. The order was soon obeyed, for it was also getting too hot to stand upon the deck. I did not give any particular orders to the officer of my own boat; but I intended to be the last person out of the vessel, and naturally thought they would wait for me, and, when just ready to embark, I saw a man coming up the fore hatchway. I went forward to ascertain whether it was likely anyone else was down below; but the man said it was not possible, for it was so hot he could not have lived there another minute. I then went to get into the boat, when to my horror I found that every boat had left the vessel. I cannot describe my feelings at that moment, nor shall I ever forget the sensation that came over me; the vessel in flames and fast drifting down the stream. I looked around and could just see one boat in the distance; another minute would have been fatal to me. I hailed her to come back, calling as loud as I could that they had left me behind; fortunately they heard me, and returned and took me and the man on board.

Having accomplished our object, we had only to find our way safely back; and when we rounded the point of the island before named we saw a tremendous blazing fire on the Canadian shore, not only enough to guide us, but almost to light us on our way back. It was almost welcome, for by this time it had become quite dark. Not caring about discovery now, and as little for shot from Navy island, we kept much closer to it, and felt safe in so doing. We landed between two and three o'clock in the morning at the spot from whence we started, and found hosts of people to receive us with good hearty British cheers. Sir Allan Macnab was particularly cordial in his welcome, and candidly acknowledged he never expected to see me again, but that our success had

far exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

By this time the burning vessel was fast approaching the Canadian shore, and not far distant. Of all the marvels attending this novel expedition, the course which the steamer took of her own accord was the most wonderful. When free from the wharf at Fort Schlosser, her natural course would have been to follow the stream, which would have taken her along the American shore and over the American falls; but she acted as if she were aware she had changed owners and navigated herself right across the river, clearing the rapids above Goat island, and went as fairly over the centre of the British falls of Niagara as if she had been placed there on purpose.

There were hundreds of people on the banks of the river to witness the splendid sight, for it was perfectly beautiful, and the descent took place within a quarter of an hour after our landing; and no human ingenuity could have accomplished what the vessel had so easily done for herself.

My first care after landing was to look after the wounded and have them attended to. The most serious casualty was that of Lieut. MacCormick, R. N., who was shot through the wrist besides other wounds in his body, from which, although he received the best possible medical attendance, he never recovered, and to my great regret, died some days afterwards from the effects of the wounds; there were also some flesh wounds amongst the young men, but nothing serious.

On the part of the enemy we were also fortunate, for certainly there were not more than two killed, and four or five wounded; less than this could hardly have been expected.

I will here mention a circumstance which happened in the early part of the encounter, and which might have brought me to grief, had I not been on my guard. In my boat was a man named Zealand, a fine specimen of an old British sailor, who had served on the lakes under Sir James Yeo in the late American war. The Caroline had a raised cabin on the quarter deck; with a gangway on each side between it and the bulwark and round the stern; it was here, on the port-side, that the arms were deposited. When I had disposed of the three men, as before related, I thought it prudent to go round this gangway to see whether there was anybody lurking behind to take us in the

rear; and when returning along the starboard-side I met a man rushing along, sword in hand, who made a slashing cut at my head without the least ceremony. The night was dark, so that a little mistake of this kind was pardonable, and fortunately I suspected it was one of my own men; I parried the blow and very successfully pinned his cutlass with mine against the cabin bulk-head, so that he could not move it. This gave me time to look in his face, and I at once made out who it was. "Holloa, Zealand!" said I, "what are you about?" "Oh! I beg your pardon, sir; I didn't know it was you." It was, however, a fortunate discovery, and we parted good friends.

Having cut off the supplies of the rebels by the destruction of the steamboat, our next business was to drive them off the island; and to this we turned our whole attention. We had a large militia force at Chippewa and the neighborhood at this time, all eager to do something. I have before mentioned we had three schooners, which, together with the boats and barges we had, were capable of embarking a large number of men; but we judged that about 500 men would be sufficient to take the island, and accordingly that number was told off for the service. I never saw a finer spirit exhibited in any body of men in my life, though they were only settlers in the backwoods, who had left their farms to put down the rebellion. The officers, too, were very fine fellows, and were ready to lead their men in any attack. I am sorry I cannot mention their names, but in the lapse of time I have forgotten them.

Whilst the preparations were going on, and the day before our intended landing, which it was understood would be principally in boats, I heard a man say to his comrades: "But what shall we do if a shot strikes our boat? We must either be drowned or go over the falls." This led me to do what I have ever considered a very foolish thing. I got a four-oared gig and pulled up the stream round the head of the island, within pistol-shot, with the avowed intention of selecting a proper place to land, but really to place the boat under fire of the enemy's field-pieces, to prove how difficult it was to hit a boat moving fast through the water. I clearly saw the spot to land, and immediately put the boat's head around to return, when they began a fire of musketry, and shortly afterwards with field-pieces. The

firing was not good at first, but improved, and the shot came nearer every time, then ceased for two or three minutes, when I thought we were all safe; but presently another shot came whizzing past, admirably aimed, making ducks and drakes in the water, and just cleared the gunwale of the boat, passing between me and strokesman. The firing of this shot was evidently by a more experienced hand, and I learnt afterwards it was from an amateur, a young American from West Point, a miscreant who had not even the excuse of having joined the rebels, but for mere amusement was trying to sink a boat and possibly to sacrifice the lives of the crew. Had I been able to get hold of his name I would have handed it down to posterity as that of a sanguinary ruffian. They had not another chance of firing, so we got safe into Chippewa creek, and I hoped my purpose was answered.

Our plans for the morrow, when we intended to make our landing, were widely known. Nor could it be otherwise, but it was not of so much consequence as the secret of the *Caroline*, because, the rebels being in large numbers on the island, we naturally thought that they would have had the courage to have waited to receive us; whereas some of their friends told them what was going forward, and they decamped in the night, landing upon Grand island, and from thence made their way to the American side; thereby saving us a great deal of trouble and possibly a great many valuable lives; so that when we landed there was not a soul to be seen. Here our work was finished, and there was an end of the rebellion for the present.

Shortly after this the militia and volunteers returned to their homes, a regiment of the line taking the duty upon the frontier, whilst I was left to arrange about the schooners and boats, and to wind up the affairs of the naval brigade, who were admitted by all hands to have done their duty.

The Americans were astounded at what had taken place, and did not imagine there was energy enough in the colony to have conceived such things as the taking of their steamer and driving the rebels from Navy island, but thought they had nothing to do but pour into Canada as they had previously done into Texas, and annex it; but they found their mistake, and began to look at home.

They held large meetings at Buffalo, a frontier town at the head of River Niagara,



to discuss the outrage of the *Caroline*, and a report was spread that Capt. Drew was to land with 1,000 men by night and burn the town. They organized a large body of men as a volunteer force to protect the city, and turned out a guard of 500 men every night to be ready to receive me; they offered a reward of \$500 to anyone who would assassinate me. This was done by public advertisement in one of their papers. They also did me the very great honor to hang me in effigy, and paid me the same compliment annually on December 20th, for several years afterwards. This was a mighty sum for any rascal to obtain upon such easy terms, and the first attempt to assassinate me was made a few days afterwards. I was staying in the village of Chippawa, at the house of gentleman named Cummins, when in the middle of a certain day, the maid-servant came to her mistress to ask leave to go home. Mrs. Cummins said, "I can't let you go, for Capt. Drew is staying with us and you will be wanted." The girl then said, "Well, mistress, if you won't give me leave, I'll take it, for I am not going to stay here to be murdered." And so she did, without giving any further reason, except that the house was going to be attacked that night. Mr. Cummins and I talked it over, and could not make out what it meant, and after dinner we went into the village to learn if there were any reports about, but could hear of nothing, so we agreed to take no notice of what the girl had said; and about seven o'clock I went to bed; but not so Mr. Cummins, for he sat up. I felt the more secure, as there were two companies of troops close at hand, and within hail of the house. However, about midnight a considerable body of armed men surrounded the house, and walked on the veranda, the floor of which being old and rickety, made a considerable noise, the dogs began to bark, and Mr. Cummins called to me to get up, as the house was attacked; after which he called out of the window, "Turn out the guard, turn out the guard!" I got up, and before I began to dress I saw a man climbing up one of the posts of the veranda opposite the window which opened into my room. I seized hold of my sword, which the ruffian saw, and down he dropped, the sight of it was enough for him, and I never slept without having it in my room. The guards were soon upon the alert, and formed; they were heard by the

scoundrels, who got frightened and retreated. This visit was meant for me, and showed how good their information was to know the room in which I was sleeping. This band of ruffians, about fifty in number, had landed in boats from the American shore just above Navy island, and, being foiled in their attempt upon my life, determined they would have blood, and on their return to their boats stopped at the house of a gentleman by the name of Usher, a captain of militia, who had distinguished himself on the frontier. They knocked at his door, and, unsuspecting, he went himself to open it, when without a word they shot him dead.

I remained upon duty on the frontier for about six or eight weeks after this, not feeling very comfortable; for though I had many friends around the neighborhood, people did not like to take me into their houses, particularly to sleep, fearing another attack would be made upon me. Therefore, having nothing to detain me, I wound up the affairs of the naval brigade and returned to my family at Woodstock.

Here I was not suffered to enjoy myself for more than a few months, for in the latter end of the year 1838 the rebels were organizing another outbreak, which came to open violence in Lower Canada, but was soon put down by Gen. Sir John Colborne. In the upper province they were more wary and took more time to perfect their schemes; they were known to be busy in the United States, meaning to make the winter the season for their operations. Capt. Sandom, the naval officer in command on the lakes, commissioned two or three sailing schooners for service on Lake Erie, and the Canadian government chartered two fine steamers from the Americans, to be fitted out as men-of-war, and I was appointed by the admiralty to assume the command upon that lake.

The steamers were brought to the Grand river, situated at the lower extremity of the lake, to be equipped and manned; the crew consisting of lake seamen and about 200 militiamen, there being no man-of-war's men available for the service, nor could I prevail upon the lieutenant-governor to let me have any regular troops to serve as marines. Having completed our equipment, we started about the latter end of November for Amherstburg, the western part of the province, which I intended to make my headquarters during the winter, but we had not sailed more

than about thirty or forty miles before we were stopped by the ice, the lake having frozen during the previous night. We tried to steam through it, but found the ice impenetrable, and therefore had no alternative but to return to the Grand river, where we remained until the spring.

During the winter the rebels made a landing at Windsor, crossing the river from Detroit, and were very ably dealt with by Col. Prince, a militia officer and magistrate in that part of the country, who proved himself a most suitable substitute for me, and did the work much better than I could have done it, for he put an end to the whole affair in a few hours. Things were going on quietly with us at the Grand river, when an incident occurred to enliven the scene by the arrival of a scoundrel from Buffalo on a pretended mission to me. He was a most daring and impudent fellow. He crossed over from the American side to Niagara, and made his way to Col. Estcourt, then commanding on the frontier, and asked him where I was to be found, as he had something of great importance to communicate to me relative to an intended landing of the rebels in Canada. The colonel at once told him where I was and wrote a note to me, of which he made the man the bearer; and thinking the expected communication was something of importance, begged I would let him know of it should it prove to be so. The man made his way to the Grand river, where I was then, put his horse up at a small tavern, came on board the steamer and asked to see me. The first lieutenant brought him into the cabin, when he said he had something most important to communicate to me. I begged the lieutenant to wait, but the man intimated that what he had to say must not be in the hearing of a third person. I replied that there could be no secrets between me and my first lieutenant and that I had rather he were present. The man then said, if I had no confidence in him there was an end of the matter, and he would go. I thought it very odd, and rather unwillingly I requested the lieutenant to leave the cabin. The man then presented the letter from Col. Estcourt, which lulled my suspicion and I asked him to relate what he had to say. He began talking a parcel of nonsense about the rebellion and what had passed, but no thing about what was to come. I bore with him for some time, when he

said, "I am quite sure we are overheard here, and I propose we should go on shore and walk down the river, where we shall be out of hearing of everybody, and then I'll tell you what I have to say." I accordingly landed, and with the man walked along the bank of the river towards the lake; but still nothing revealed. We had got nearly to the river's mouth and at least a quarter of a mile from the steamer when I turned to go back. Had we continued on we must have made a sharp turn to the right along the lake-shore, where a dense wood would most effectually have shut us out from the sight of the steamer. So the fellow said, "Oh, sir, I thought we were going to walk on where we could not be interrupted." "No," I said, "we will return: if you have anything to say you have had plenty of time to have done so, and I expect it's all humbug." "Oh, sir, if that's it, I see you have no confidence in me, and we'll part." I was glad to find we were getting pretty close to the vessel, for my suspicions were excited, and I thought I had had a lucky escape, but in reality the man had committed no act for which I could detain him, whatever I may have thought of his intentions. I therefore returned on board the steamer and he to the tavern for his horse. Some of the officers had their suspicions of this man from the beginning, and went to the tavern to have a look at him, when, as he was mounting his horse, with one foot in the stirrup, they saw the handle of a great horse pistol protruding from his side-coat pocket. Off he galloped, and, entering a wood, was soon out of sight. The officers wanted me to send after him and have him brought back, but this I declined, as we could prove nothing against him. It was, however, well known afterwards that he was the leader of the gang that attacked Mr. Cummin's house at Chippawa, and murdered Capt. Usher.

Here was a very narrow escape; and had I only continued along the lake shore instead of turning back, the pistol or the bowie knife would have done its work, and earned for the ruffian \$500. This was my second escape from assassination, and most thankful was I for it; but there is another yet to come.

In the spring of the year 1839 it was well known that there was to be another landing of rebels in Upper Canada, and upon a larger scale than hitherto; it was therefore necessary to be preparing accordingly. Lieut.-Gov. Sir George Ar-

thur summoned me down to Toronto to have a conference with him; I therefore waited upon his excellency at the government house, and was ushered into a room, where I found Sir George and Col. Booth, commanding the Forty-third regiment, then stationed at Niagara. The governor, after a little preliminary conversation, said, "I have desired to see you two gentlemen to ask you to undertake, jointly, a piece of service of the utmost consequence to the country. I need not tell you that I am perfectly tired of the frequent landing of the Americans in Upper Canada, and I have come to the determination, should another landing take place, to retaliate and take possession of Fort Niagara, which I think can easily be accomplished, as there are but few troops there at present." But sir," I said, "had you not better communicate with Capt. Sandom? He commands the naval force on the lakes, and I am only his second." "No," said the governor; "I know you, but I do not know Capt. Sandom; if you will not undertake it, I shall give it up." I immediately said, "That shall not be, sir; I will do anything you desire, and stand the consequences." Then he said, "I have already told you what is required to be done, and leave you to carry out the details. I must tell you that what is intended is only known to my exclusive council, and had therefore better be kept strictly secret. You shall have my authority to go to any expense in preparation that may be necessary, and I will inform you at the earliest moment when you will be required to act, which will be the moment the Americans effect another landing in any part of Upper Canada, and the sooner the preparations are completed the better. I will not detain you further, but leave you to settle your own plans, having perfect confidence in you both, and feeling sure that the work will be well done."

It was quite a pleasure to have to cooperate with such an officer as Col. Booth; and our plans were soon arranged. He desired to have the whole regiment transported across the river at one time, if possible, and landed within 200 yards of Fort Niagara. This fort is situated on the left bank of the River Niagara, at the entrance from Lake Ontario, and commands the river. I immediately made arrangements with the Niagara dock company, a building establishment in the neighborhood, to build two roomy flat-bottomed boats, with

shovel noses, capable of carrying each 150 men with their arms and accoutrements. This they were not long in doing, and all was soon ready, only waiting for the word of command, the intention being to land one-half the regiment at first, and the other half would follow in a quarter of an hour. Had the order to land been given, the work would have been well done; for never in my life did I see a finer body of men than the Forty-third were at that time. But the expected did not take place; the rebels altered their minds, and our services were not required.

After this I returned to Lake Erie, and in the month of August was superseded from my command, the rebellion, in fact, having ended here. Thus terminated my public services in the colony, and I rejoined my family at Woodstock.

Here I hoped to find rest and enjoyment, and that I should have been allowed to remain at my happy home in the backwoods for the remainder of my life; but the hand of the assassins followed me even here. I had only been a few months home when a good honest English yeoman, living on the backwoods about ten miles off, rode in from his farm and asked to see me. He said, "Capt. Drew, I have come in to warn you of your danger, and to beg you will not leave your house for two or three weeks to come, as two of my neighbors have left their house this morning, and have taken an oath they will not return until they have shot you." "Oh," I said, "tell me who they are and I will get up a party and go and meet them." "Oh, sir," he said, "that won't do; it might save your life, but it would cost me mine. I cannot tell you their names, but you know you can believe me; so pray take warning, and do not go out until these men have returned, of which I will give you the earliest notice." I felt that if I was to be under the constant apprehension of being murdered, existence was not worth having; and I went on much in my usual way—not, however, remaining in the woods alone, as was my habit when the men went into dinner, but returning with them as they left work. This went on for some days, and nothing happened to cause alarm, and I was beginning to disregard the warning that had been given me; but when ten days had elapsed I allowed the men to go into dinner and I remained out in the woods alone. In a short time I heard the report of a rifle, and at the same time a ball struck the stump of a tree not half a yard from where

I was standing. I made a tremendous halloaing, which must have frightened the scoundrel, who, perhaps, thought I was shouting to someone in sight, as he did not fire again, and I got safely into the house. Two days afterwards my friend came in from the woods to tell me his neighbors had returned—not, however, knowing what had happened; but as no proof could be brought, I took no notice of the matter.

This was the third attempt on my life from which I felt that nothing but the inter position of Providence had saved me, and having a wife and a large family of small children, I felt I ought not to disregard the last warning, so I at once made up my mind to leave the country. At this time, in consequence of the late rebellion, property in Canada was scarcely saleable at any price. I therefore sold mine for what it would fetch. I returned to England in the spring of the year 1842, and have been a poor man ever since.

It not only remains for me to mention the rewards and honors which were bestowed upon me for the destruction of the Caroline; they were highly complimentary, but nothing substantial. I received the thanks of the two houses of the provincial parliament, and a sword of one hundred guineas value was voted to me by the house of assembly. I was made com-

modore of the provincial marine of Upper Canada, an office especially created for me by an act of the legislature; but it was merely honorary, and with no emolument attached to it. A petition from the governor in council was forwarded to her majesty, praying that her majesty would be pleased to confer upon me some special mark of her royal favor for my services to the province of Upper Canada. The only pecuniary emolument I have ever received from the colony was the pay of a major of militia for three or four months during the operations on the frontier in common with the rest of the navy officers employed, who each received pay according to their relative rank, but which did not meet the expenses they were put to for lodging and subsistence at the taverns where they put up. Our object was not a money reward, and all were fully compensated by the inward satisfaction of having served their country in a moment of danger. It was admitted that the emigrants of the previous seven years (of which these officers as well as myself formed a part) had saved the colony in the late crisis. The only substantial reward I ever got was the promotion from commander to captain in the year 1843, when I had been nineteen years a commander, and five years and a half after the events which have here been related.

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# ..The Cutting Out of the Caroline..

And Other Reminiscences of 1837-'38.

## TO THE READER--

Having received several requests for copies of my narrative of "The Cutting out of the Caroline," with which I could not comply; and having through the kindness of my friend, Mr. George H. Mills, of Hamilton, President of the Wentworth Historical Society, procured from the Hamilton Spectator, Admiral Drew's account of it, I have been induced to republish my own, because I could accompany it with so full and reliable a statement from the highest authority.

That it was a most perilous enterprise, from whatsoever standpoint looked at, is made clear from the Admiral's words, and in no respect was it more so, than as an international one.

The Jamieson raid in South Africa revives the memory of this bold assault upon the territory of a friendly state; and my friend, ex-Governor Robinson, in writing recently for a copy of my paper, — which I could not send him, says: "It was greatly worse than Dr. Jamieson's raid, and all of you should have been sent (as he seems to have been), to England to be tried for making war on a friendly nation."

This, in all probability would have followed, but that the British Government at once assumed the responsibility of the act, and among other important results saved Alexander McLeod, the Deputy-Sheriff of the Niagara district, from being hanged as an alleged participator in the affair.

Finding that my humble contribution may safely re-appear under the aegis of the Admiral's flag, I make no further excuse for its republication, just as it appeared eleven years ago.

R. S. WOODS.

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SIRS, It seems to be the thing, just now, to recall the leading events of the country by way of "Personal Recollections." The report of ex-Mayor Harmon, of Detroit, on the battle of Windsor, and the interesting account in your paper of the great naval duel between the Alabama and the Kearsage, in which one of our Chatham boys, William Gouin, was a hero, and the still later very interesting account by James Dongall, Esq., of the battle of Windsor, have led me to recollect some of my recollections of a memorable event that took place during the rebellion of 1837, and I venture to make my contribution to that eventful period by giving you the particulars of the Caroline expedition and some other incidents of the time. I was not on the western frontier at all during the troubles, and can, therefore, say nothing about them up here. Besides, your recent article on the necessity for a more comprehensive Extradition treaty between the States and Canada reminds me that the destruction of the Caroline was the occasion of that treaty; and the enquiry just made in the Dominion Parliament as to the intention of the Government to recognize in some way the services of the men who were engaged in putting down the rebellion of '37, suggests this as an appropriate time for one's statements.

## THE CUTTING OUT.

This steamer was "cut out" on the night of the 29th of December, 1837, at Schlosser, on the Niagara River, in the State of New York. She had been built for salt water sailing, was copper-bottomed, and "a decent little craft," as her owner described her, and had been brought thro' the rivers and the Welland Canal to Buffalo, whence she set out in December, 1837, to do the piratical work of William Lyon McKenzie and the patriots and rebels with him on Navy Island.

The cause, character and consequences of that expedition are scarcely known to those of the present day—such histories as I have seen making scant reference to it.

Most of the actors in the enterprise,

Quorum pars fui,

have, I fear, passed away, or left Canada ; but I am led to think that my recollections of that event will not be without interest to many of your readers, even at this late day. The primary object was to prevent the rebels, patriots, and American sympathizers, brigands or pirates, as they were called, from receiving further aid from the States. The second was to show the American Government that, if it could not control its own people, and keep them from coming into our territory with arms, we would do it for them.

It was a work of great danger, owing to the very rapid current of the Niagara river, our ignorance of the force on the steamer, and the darkness of the night, Schlosser being only two miles above the Falls. I remember it being said that the breaking of an oar that night would be the loss of the boat and her crew.

#### THE COUP DE MAIN.

If not a coup d'etat, it was a coup de main that led to serious consequences, and gave rise to some important questions. The rebel camp on Navy Island was soon broken up ; a fierce state of feeling throughout the States, from Maine to Louisiana, aroused. The two governments of Great Britain and the United States were brought face to face on the question of international rights and obligations. Then came various acts of public violence by American subjects, such as the attempts at invasion at Malden, Windsor and Prescott, blowing up Brock's monument, the cutting out and burning of steamer Sir Robert Peel ; the shooting of Usher, and the threats to shoot Sir Allan McNab, and every one engaged in the work ; the trial of McLeod for murder, at Utica, in 1841 ; the Act of Congress of the 10th of March, 1838, "for the precise purpose of more effectually restraining "military enterprises from the United States "into the British Provinces, by authorizing "the use of more sure and decisive preventive means ;" and the further Act of Congress affecting the rights of the Federal and State Courts, and declaring that, if such cases should arise thereafter, they should immediately be transferred to the Courts of the United States, and tho' last, not least, to the Extradition Treaty, in 1842, between Great Britain and the United States.

The world of that day had not received the fiery baptism in International Law, State rights and Foreign Enlistment Acts, that it has since got through the great civil

war of our neighbors, with its scintillations in the way of the Alabama, St. Albans, etc. ; but the correspondence between Mr. Webster, the Secretary of State in the Cabinet of President Harrison, and Mr. Fox, the British Minister at Washington, shows a very critical state in the diplomatic relations of the two countries ; and there is no doubt that if McLeod had not been released war would have been the immediate result, and the ports of New York and Boston and other harbors would have been made familiar with cutting out operations. Indeed, it was on the floor of the Senate of the United States charged against Mr. Webster, that, as Secretary of State, in writing to the Governor of the State of New York, on the subject of McLeod's trial, he had supported his arguments by saying if McLeod was not released the city of New York would be laid in ashes.

I hardly need tell your readers that a cutting out process like this is a naval one, conducted with great secrecy, consisting of one or more boats, with muffled oars, men armed with cutlasses, pistols and boarding pikes, attacking, under cover of night, a hostile ship lying in port, and effecting her capture or destruction. This torpedo age will somewhat change the character of these visits, but while making them more destructive, will rob them of much of their old prestige, where personal courage and cool determination were the qualities most required in the attacking party.

Our party consisted of seven boats, with nine men each, the boat being the ordinary "yaw" of the schooners and steamers then in port. I cannot do better than give the words of Sir Allan in his evidence in McLeod's trial : "A body of militia was assembled at Chippewa, in the month of December, 1837, and January 1838, to the number of between 2,000 and 3,000, to repel an expected invasion from rebels and American brigands assembled on Navy Island, and on the American Shore, near Schlosser. They were ordered out by the Lieut.-Governor, Sir F. B. Head. I assumed command of the forces there by his directions. I remember the last time when the Caroline came down previous to her destruction. From information I had received I had every reason to believe she came for the express purpose of assisting the rebels on Navy Island with men, arms, ammunition, provisions, stores, etc. To ascertain that fact I sent officers with instructions to watch the movements of the boat and report the same to me. These gentlemen told me they saw her land a

caannon, several men armed and equipped as soldiers, and that she had dropped her anchor under the east side of Navy Island. Upon the information I had previously received from highly respectable sources in Buffalo, together with the report of these gentlemen, I determined to destroy her that night. I entrusted the command of the expedition for the purpose to Captain A. Drew, R. N. I ordered the expedition, and first communicated it to Capt. Drew on the beach when the men embarked. A short time previous to the embarkation Capt. Drew was ordered to take and destroy the Caroline wherever he could find her. Seven boats were equipped and left the shore but I do not know the number of men in each boat. The last five words of that order, "whenever he could find her," nearly fired the continent as well as the Caroline.

As indicated by Sir Allan's testimony there was great secrecy in the movement, and it was supposed the steamer would be found at Navy Island instead of the American shore. I belonged to a company of volunteers which was organized in King street, Hamilton, on our way down, and christened by Sir Allan with his usual love of a joke, "The Elegant Extracts," as it was composed of young gentlemen, chiefly from London, Woodstock, Hamilton and other places some 35 strong.

#### CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS.

Upon our company that night a call was made for as many volunteers as would go in for some work. The invitation was very generally accepted. We were furnished with a cutlass and pistol. I remember saying to the officer who gave me the latter, "Had you not better give me another?" to which he replied, "when you have used that you'll find you don't want another." The pistol was a single barrel and flint lock.

By nine o'clock we were at the beach, having no idea of our destination.

An incident occurred here that I may be pardoned for mentioning. Hearing that my friend John Askin, of London, the eldest son of the late Col. Askin, and brother of our late friend, Dr. Askin of this place, and one of our company had come down to the beach after the boats had got their complements, I foolishly said I would give him my seat and get one in another boat, having no idea of the strict rules of the service at a time like this. After trying to get into another boat without success, I went to Col. McNab and Capt. Drew, who were standing under the trees on Chippewa Creek

and explained my position. Sir Allan's answer was thoroughly characteristic of him, for at fifteen years of age he was an ensign and engaged in the defence of the fort at York, when it was blown up in 1813: "Why, you d—d young scamp, if you want to be shot, give my compliments to Capt. Beer, and tell him to take you in." This was more easily said than done, however, but by the aid of my friends I got into the boat quietly and lay on a pile of wet sand with my knees to my chin until we reached the final point of departure, a mile or so up the river where the last orders were to be given to the officers in command. In due time we reached our rendezvous, but two of the boats failed to put in an appearance, although we waited for them some time near a warehouse, not far from the steamer. Only five boats were present, or some 45 men in all. These were commanded by Captains Drew, R. N., Harris, R. N., (the father of Messrs. Edward and George B. Harris, of London), Beer, R. N., McCormick, R. N., and Zeeand. I can only recall a few names of those present Hamilton, O'Reilly, Frederick Cleverly, John A. Fraser, A. W. Schweigner, John Gordon, and W. S. Light. My old friend, Capt. J. W. Taylor, of the Lake Shore, Raleigh, says he was one of the number, and the captain, as one of the most expert and daring seamen, would find himself at home in this night's work

#### AMERICA'S PRETENCE.

The Americans always claimed that the steamer was not hostilely engaged and not prepared for a visit such as ours. So far from this being the case, as we approached her bow we were challenged by a sentry demanding: "Who goes there?" and on our keeping quiet, he repeated the question, saying: "Answer or I'll fire," and he soon did fire into us. In support of this I give an extract from the evidence of Gilman Appleby of the steamer, at McLeod's trial: "There were 33 men on board, 10 of whom composed the crew, none of whom were armed; the first shot was from the river side near the bow of the boat; heard like two guns, but could not be positive, the next report was that of a gun fired on board the boat." Then one Stewart says, "When we first saw the boats they were nearly abreast the bow of the steamer, and out in the stream. I told Capt. Kennedy that he had better call them (the people on board), up from the lower cabin. The boats were headed towards the steamer. Capt. Kennedy called them from below. A few minutes before a man



by the name of Nichols came on board and remained on deck ; he hailed them, asking who comes there, or something like it, that the answer was 'friends.' They appeared then to spring on their oars ; the boats were four or five rods off. This witness proves the challenge, but suppresses the fact of Nichols firing.

The crews of our boats boarded fore and aft, and on both sides. Captain Stephen McCormick, R. N., was badly wounded, and I supported him for some time before his removal from the steamer. He was given a pension of £100 a year for this. Strange to say, when the trial was made to set the boat on fire nothing would burn, and for some little time the material taken by Capt. Drew for the purpose known as a "carcass," was forgotten, but on being brought forward it soon did its work.

The story of any person being on the steamer when she went over the Falls was not believed by any of us. Even Durfee was not killed on the boat, but on the land, and the evidence of the prosecution showed that the shot was from the land side. I saw no one on her when we left, and the evidence given on McLeod's trial shows that Capt. Drew and his men were anxious to let the men get ashore and simply capture the boat, which was tied to the dock. One of the witnesses for the prosecution at McLeod's trial said, "After setting the Caroline on fire the attacking party got into their boats and rowed up towards the warehouse, which, together with the public house, we expected they would attack, but they did not. Then they went back to the Caroline, took her in tow, and carried her into the stream."

Another witness describes the attempt to set her on fire. He being in the cabin, says, "previous to my going out of the cabin, one of them said, 'What shall we do with this fellow? 'Kill him, said another.' 'No, take him prisoner,' said a third. An officer said, 'we don't want prisoners, let him go ashore.'"

On getting the steamer into the stream we left her and had to run the gauntlet of the batteries on Navy Island, the light from the boat making us a fine target for their guns, and between the current and the batteries, we realized with force, Virgil's well-known verse.

*Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim.*

But the days of "bull's eyes" were not yet, and so we escaped unhurt. I did not see the Caroline go over the Falls, as before this happened we were in bed.

In 1881 I fell in with a fine genial gentle-

manly person at Duluth, who was introduced to me as Col. Waite, who had been at Navy Island in 1837, and he said he was in command of the guns that were fired at us that night as we returned from our work at Schlosser, and we had a hearty laugh over the way in which he DIDN'T HIT US.

#### ARREST AND TRIAL OF M'LEOD.

The trial of McLeod was an absorbing event at the time, and I am sure a fuller reference to it will be welcome to many of your readers. McLeod had been for many years the Deputy Sheriff of the Niagara District.

Mr. Webster, in his defence of the Treaty of Washington, in the Senate in April, 1846, makes the statement: "Being on this side of the line, and making foolish and false boasts of his martial achievements, McLeod was arrested in Nov. 1840, on the charge of the murder in capturing the Caroline, and committed to prison by the authorities of New York. He was bailed; but violence and mobs over-awed the Courts, and he was re-committed. This was an important and very exciting occurrence. Mr. Fox made a demand for his release. The administration of VanBuren roused itself, and looked around to ascertain its position. Mr. Fox again asserted that the destruction of the Caroline was an act of public force, done by public authority, and avowed by the English Government, as the American Government had long before known."

#### THE TRUE RING.

The demand by Mr. Fox, in his dispatch of March, 1841, to Mr. Webster, had the true ring about it, and sounds like that under which Mason and S idell were given up in 1861, both the inspiration of Lord Palmerston. Here it is: "And the undersigned is now instructed to again demand from the Government of the United States, formally in the name of the British Government, the immediate release of Mr. Alexander McLeod," but it sounds strangely to our ears to-day to hear Mr. Fox, among other arguments why McLeod should not be tried, saying, "Neither can Her Majesty's Government admit for a moment the validity of the doctrine advanced by Mr. Forsyth that the Federal Government of the United States has no power to interfere in the matter in question, and that the decision thereof, must rest solely and entirely with the State of New York," and entering into an elaborate argument against the propriety of looking to the State of New York, instead of the Federal Government for redress.

President Harrison was of the opinion that the entering of United States territory by British troops for the purpose of capturing or destroying the *Caroline* was unjustifiable; that the British might have destroyed her if they could have found her on their side of the line; but she could not be followed into a port of the United States and there captured; but he was also of the opinion that the arrest and detention of McLeod were contrary to the Laws of Nations, even if he had been engaged in the destruction of the steamer, for his Government had assumed the responsibility of the deed. And Mr. Webster certainly seems entitled to credit for the prompt and explicit way in which he accepted the views of our Government.

#### HABEAS CORPUS.

The case was carried before the Supreme Court of the State of New York on habeas corpus. That Court decided that McLeod could not have the benefit of the defence that it was a public act on the part of Great Britain, and one for international adjustment, and sent the case down for trial; but the venue was changed to Utica. It is amusing to read Mr. Webster's opinion of that judgment. He says: "On the peril, and at the risk of my professional reputation, I now say that the opinion of the Court of New York, in that case, is not a respectable opinion, either on account of the result at which it arrives, or the reasoning on which it proceeds. This decision has been ably and learnedly reviewed by Judge Talmadge, of the Superior Court of the City of New York. Of this review the late Chief Justice Spencer says: 'It refutes and overthrows the opinion most amply.' Chancellor Kent says of it: 'It is conclusive upon every point. I should have been proud had I been the author of it.'"

#### TRIAL OF McLEOD.

The trial opened at Utica, on the 4th day of October, 1841, and after lasting eight days, a verdict of not guilty was rendered within twenty minutes after the jury left the box. In addition to the defence that it was the act of the Government of Great Britain, an alibi was set up and so clearly established by the evidence of the most respectable witnesses from Canada, who personally attended at Utica, that the jury had no difficulty in deciding upon an acquittal. These witnesses were: Lieut. Col. Gilkison, now Superintendent of Indian Affairs, at Brantford, Mr. Wm. Press, and the several members of Capt. Morrison's family, of Stamford. But even if this result had not been reached there is strong evidence that

the United States Government would not have allowed McLeod to be punished; for in a letter to Governor Seward, of the 17th of March, 1841, Mr. Webster expressed the President's satisfaction at his being prepared to enter a *nolle prosequi* in the case. Mr. Webster, as Secretary of State, had directed that Mr. Crittenden, then United States Attorney-General, should go to Utica and see that McLeod got the full benefit of the position taken by our Government, and accepted by his own, that, being an act of public force, no individual of the expedition should be held responsible. Much of the evidence of this trial was taken by commission and the late Judge Brough, of Goderich, was the commissioner, and I recollect acting as Secretary for him when taking evidence at Hamilton.

The conduct of Judge Gridley, who tried his case, was most impartial, and while accepting as he did, and as he was bound to do, the ruling of the Supreme Court of the State, on that branch of the defence that deprived the prisoner of the position taken by the two Governments, he called special attention to that part of the evidence under commission as shewing that, if McLeod were really there, he would not have sought the evidence of the very men who could have proved him guilty. The only evidence taken by commission, and used at the trial, was that of Sir Allan, Capt's. Drew, Harris, Zealand, Beer, McCormick, Gordon and Light. Then it was that the Act above referred to was passed by Congress, that if such cases should arise thereafter, they should be immediately transferred to the Courts of the United States. McLeod's acquittal put an end to all questions concerning his case. It only remained, as Mr. Webster expressed it, "that a proper explanation and apology, all that a nation of high honor could ask, or a nation of high honor could give, should be obtained for the violation of territorial sovereignty, and that was obtained concurrently with the settlement of other questions in 1842," by the Ashburton Treaty.

#### ASHBURTON TREATY.

Among these, as I have said before, was the Extradition Treaty under which the "Patriot Societies," or "Hunters' Lodges" then in full operation, with companies and officers to carry on war in Canada, were completely broken up. By the way we are apt to forget how important a measure that Extradition Treaty was, for while it was the first of the kind between Great Britain and the United States, it was a provision

that had never before been known in any treaty between European nations, although since adopted by many of them, and Mr. Webster says of it, "I undertake to say that the article for the extradition of offenders has been of more value to this country, and it is of more value to the progress of civilization, the cause of humanity, and the good understanding between nations than can be readily computed." I ought to say, while this trial settled the important international difficulties, it also settled the most momentous question of what constitutes the genus "dead-head," so well known at the present day. One of the witnesses, who had been on the Caroline that day, describes himself as a dead head, and explains to the Court that he did not pay fare, but turned in and gave a lift as occasion required.

The expansion of the criminal code since 1842 shews the necessity of having the basis of the Extradition Treaty extended so as to protect both the United States and Canada from the villains who escape from either side and find asylums here and there. The treaty originally provided for the surrender of seven classes of offenders, viz., persons charged with murder, or assault with intent to commit murder, piracy, arson, robbery, forgery, or the utterance of forged paper. No change has since been made in the crimes for which extradition can be had under it; but this should no longer be delayed, and I am glad to see that the disposition of both Governments is greatly to extend the list of offences, and the mode of procedure, as has been done by statute in England and Canada.

The United States authorities, as remarked by Chief Justice Hagarty not long ago, have always surrendered offenders promptly and without legal quibbling, and in this we should follow their good example, and prevent our border towns from becoming harbors of refuge for the criminals of either country. But ought we to stop with an expanded extradition treaty? Do the times not demand something more? Why should not the Governments of the day, American, European and Asiatic form one great international confraternity, with a view to the suppression and surrender, not of the ordinary criminals only, but the extraordinary ones as well, found in the ranks of the dynamiters, Socialists, Anarchists, Nihilists, etc.?

The Edmunds' Bill, as introduced into the Senate of the United States within an hour after the report had reached Washington of the dynamite attempts upon the British

House of Commons and the Tower of London, is the key note to the legislation, and all honor is due to that gentleman for the bold and noble step thus taken by him. And it is encouraging to see that Senator Bayard who so prominently identified himself with this measure in the Senate, has been made Secretary of State in President Cleveland's cabinet. Why should the United States—the refuge of all the people of the world—whose portals are thrown open to oppressed humanity everywhere, be made the forge and laboratory of all the infernal machines and explosives that the Rossas and Mosts choose to hurl against the innocent and helpless of the world? It is an outrage upon the liberties of a country such as the United States, and I am persuaded the moral sense of that great people will in due time provide a means for the suppression of such practice, and co-operate to the fullest extent with other governments in the extermination of these devils incarnate, and their fiend-like work.

#### OPEN WINTER.

And now, having done with the important events connected with the Caroline, let us recall some of the lighter incidents of that day. The winter was open till February, though there had been sleighing just before Xmas, as we went from Oxford to Chippewa in sleighs. Those were not the days of MacAdam or plank as a rule, although Yonge street was partly macadamized, and a part of the road between Hamilton and Ancaster. I've seen twelve yoke of oxen drawing a 24-pounder on wheels, and literally wading through the mud, rivalling Grip's celebrated cartoon on the Winnipeg streets.

It was so mild that for a week at the beginning of January four or five of us were blockaded in the house of the Hon. Gilbert McMicken at Queenston, owing to the depth of mud and cut up as the only road was by the military operations going on. But our worthy host was a neutral, or as our friends on the other side would say, a copperhead in those days, and we had no scruples about quartering upon his well-filled larder; although from that day to this Canada has had no more loyal subject than Mr. McMicken. Our hostess was my good cousin, and to this day I have visions of her splendid pies and tarts so generously given us with everything else that was good.

By the way I see that this worthy couple have just been keeping their golden wedding in Winnipeg, and are both in the full enjoyment of health, and the many blessings with which they are favored, and I sin-

cerely hope they may yet be permitted to see many happy returns of this gracious anniversary

#### THE "ROSE."

For some days too we were on a schooner in the Niagara River, the "Rose," Captain Graham, R.N., above Navy Island, and a rough time we had of it; straw for our beds in the hold of the ship and cartouch boxes for our pillows. Under a "spring cable" we used to get opposite the Island and exchange shots with the batteries, but nobody that I remember was hurt on our good ship. Killed Armstrongs and Henry-Martinis were not the go in those days. Before the evacuation of the Island many of us, dissatisfied with what was considered too inactive a state of things on the frontier, left for home, and Col. McNab had been relieved of his command, when the Island was taken possession of by our men on the 14th of January. This closed my campaigning life, but one recalls with a shudder the rough experiences and exposure of the young volunteer—the feather bed soldier wholly unprepared for war's rough duties. I may instance some of these. I was among the first volunteers in the City of Hamilton under Col. MacNab and one of the 56 men of Gore who went down that night by the steamer "Gore" and saved Toronto. How we were welcomed. "A man of Gore" was a countersign anywhere and gave us a passe partout throughout this city. That night I went on guard at the city hall where I found the Hon. Chief Justice Robinson and The Hon. Mr. Justice Macaulay, both under arms and doing duty. This was my initiation into the romance of the volunteer and the luxuries of fat pork and dry bread. I can never forget the beauty of the day and the brilliant appearance the forces made that December morning as we marched out of Toronto up Yonge street to 'Montgomery's,' nor shall I forget being so blistered and cut up in my feet that I was forced to take off my boots and walk a part of the way in my stocking feet on our return.

#### MAJOR WELBY, BISHOP OF ST. HELENA

Apropos of this blistering, which I am told is the greatest obstacle to the regular infantry, I remember its leading to an acquaintance and intimacy on my part by which I have felt honored all my life. On marching from Hamilton under Col. MacNab to dislodge Dr. Dunscombe, who was then in Norwich, London District, we found the roads between Hamilton and Brantford fearfully rough, and on getting to Brantford I was almost unable to walk.

Major Welby, formerly of the Dragoons in India, being at a friend's house where I was, came out to the kitchen to see me and then told me what would give me relief, viz: soaping the foot with a lather; this he made in a shaving mug and taking the brush went down on his knee and lathered one of my feet himself. And when we turned out that night at three o'clock to resume our march, I felt the good of the Samaritan's skill. O what an act of kindness and condescension it was. The Major subsequently entered the church, became the Incumbent at Sandwich and stayed in our house for several months. He is now, and for many years past has been Bishop of St. Helena; is the representative of one of the oldest families in England, going back beyond the Conquest, and was the highest type of the Christian soldier and gentleman I ever met. His memory is still warmly cherished by his old parishioners of Sandwich, and his endowment of the parish with a fine parsonage on the banks of the Detroit River has been a blessing to it ever since. I shall never forget in connection with that march the effect of music upon jaded and worn out men. When about a mile out of Ancaster the band of that town came out to meet and welcome us, and the effect of their gay tunes was magical, it seemed to lift us right out of the ruts and make us forget our sufferings. I have often read of the inspiring effect of music, but it is when you are about six inches down between the clay walls of one of our old-fashioned earth roads, carrying a good pack, that you can appreciate it.

On reaching Norwich we found that the Dr. had evidently learned that

He who fights and runs away,  
Will live to fight another day.

We made the most of our disappointment, which was not as great, however, as that of Sir Garnet Woolsey and his brave volunteers on reaching Winnipeg, after 1000 miles march, to find no Riel, and as he may yet do on reaching Khartoum.

I remember well how much that night I enjoyed eating my roast goose at a rebel's fireside, which my good friend the late Mrs. Colonel Racy, of Mount Pleasant, had given me, with her blessing, as we left her loved household that morning.

A gay ball at Col. Ingersoll's hospitable mansion, and it was here I first met the venerable Colonel, and a pleasant week's visit at my late friend, Mr. Peter Carroll's, made a very agreeable diversion for the young soldier. As I said before, from this we went to the Niagara frontier in sleighs,

having a very jolly time of it.

One of the unpleasant consequences of being engaged in the Caroline was the fear of being secretly shot by some of those who had sworn to avenge the destruction of the steamer. At one time in 1858 we were all marked men, and I remember for two or three weeks that all of us who were in or about Hamilton were in constant danger of being shot, and as night came on my friends used to ask me to stay at their houses, so as not to expose myself after dark. Then we were wholly prevented from going into American cities lest it should be known that we had been one of the party. It gives one a lively sympathy with Irish landlord's and bailiffs, and others who are open to the attentions of the dynamite fraternity.

And now, in bringing my recollections to a conclusion, let me indulge in a reflection or two. These are perilous times, and England expects every man to do his duty.

#### ENGLAND'S POWER.

There are those among the prominent journals of the day who think the military power of England is not to-day what it was at the close of the first quarter or half of this century.

It is not to be denied that modern science has done much to remove England from the exceptional advantages enjoyed by her as an insular power, and notably in the sovereignty of the seas.

The resources of civilization are great levellers. But England to-day, in her outlying colonies, like Canada, Australia and others, has made up for this, and largely strengthened herself against any European or other alliance. As I look at passing events, they are tending rapidly to that federation of the empire that will give her irresistible force among the nations of the earth.

I am glad to say I am not among the number of those who see insurmountable difficulties in the way of Imperial Federation. The steam engine and telegraph are the great federators. To-day Winnipeg is nearer London than Edinburgh was fifty years ago.

I see in the rough machinery of war that is now touching if not straining every fibre of the empire, a strong manufactory of opinion in favor of Confederation, and what conservative England might have taken years to bring about, may by the stern logic of necessity, become a matter of a few months.

The recent offers of the colonies to give aid in the Soudan, and the actual participa-

tion of our voyageur contingent in the ascent of the Nile, under Wolseley, tells England that the colonies, like dutiful children, are ready to share in the dangers and the cost of her campaigns, wherever they may be. I have long seen that the Canadian Pacific railway would be a great factor in this proposed union.

#### A MILITARY ROAD.

What led the American Government to aid the building of their first Pacific road? That they might have a MILITARY road across the continent, for without it they could not deal with the hostile Indian tribes, and would lose California; and look at the consolidation in a commercial, military and political light that has followed. Four years ago our Pacific road was in embryo. This time next year India and Australia will be nearer England than they ever were before, and a great deal nearer Canada.

We recall how, in December, 1861, at the time of the Trent difficulty, our troops had great trouble in getting from Halifax to Quebec, taking some twelve days to reach the Grand Trunk railway at Riviere du Loup; and the Red River expedition in 1870, under Wolseley, that took several weeks from Thunder Bay to Winnipeg.

Now, with our Intercolonial and Canada Pacific railways, those troops could leave England and be at Vancouver in less time than it took to get from Halifax to Quebec. Here at once we see the spinal column of Imperial Federation. What may we not expect when we see the grand portage between Asia and Europe covered by our Canadian railway 2,898 miles long, bringing Vancouver within 12 days run from England, and enabling troops from England to reach Calcutta in nearly as possible the same time as troops from England via the Suez Canal. And if from any cause, political or physical, the canal were closed, and the Cape had to be doubled, then many days shorter than by that route. And what of the splendid commerce of the east and west? When Liverpool will find itself ten days nearer Hong Kong, and 22 days nearer Yokohama, than by the Suez Canal. And as compared with the American Pacific road, Yokohama will be 1,100 miles nearer Liverpool by ours.

In a few months hence we shall see the representatives at Ottawa from British Columbia as near the seat of Government as those from Toronto to Quebec were in 1854: and, within a shorter time than I will venture to predict, we shall see the colonial representatives sitting in a Federal

Council in London, and in closer communication with their homes than Scotland's representatives were 40 years ago.

Here is the progress of events, here the development of the federation germ.

#### THE MORAL.

But my recollections would be of little value did I not draw the moral—present the practical thought—that thought is this—**HOLD TO CANADA AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE EMPIRE.** Be strong in loyal attachment to the Crown, and determined to do what in you lies to perfect the bond between the mother country and the colonies. The dethronement of England, with all her present troubles, has not yet taken place. Behind the throne is a greater than Pitt, or Disraeli or Gladstone. She has her destiny yet to fulfill. Towards this every Canadian, young or old, may contribute.

History repeats itself continually. In looking back at the leading events in our history I am amazed to see how small events and almost individual efforts have worked great results. Owing to Sir Francis Head having sent all the regular troops to Lower Canada, Upper Canada in 1837 was nearly lost to Britain. The timely arrival at Toronto that night of Col. McNab in the steamer "Gore," with his 56 men, gave fresh courage to the loyal party, alarmed the rebels and saved the city for the night and until reinforcements could come from other quarters; then the destruction of the Caroline and Col. Prince's summary punishment of the invaders saved Canada at that critical period.

Then look back at the war of 1812-15. Upon how slight a thread did British supremacy then seem to hang when exposed to a hostile frontier of 2,000 miles, and a people whose bitterness to us was that of our own cousins. See what the prompt action of a brook could do in the expulsion of the enemy from the western peninsula and the capture of Detroit. And so at Queens-ton Heights, Chateauguay, etc. Looking further back, but for the combination of American and French forces at Yorktown in 1781 ours might yet be the 13 English colonies and all the splendour of their development into the great nation they are now; and looking still further back to the conquest of Quebec by Wolfe in Sept., 1759, we see the fall of the French on this continent; and but for that victory that day there might have been no United States of America, for the 13 colonies with British power on this continent would in all probability have been forever driven back into the sea.

Motives are great forces. Let the young men and young maidens—the future mothers of loyalists—learn the precious lesson of devotion to our country. Learn to be true—

True as the dial to the sun,  
Although 't be not shone upon!

#### PATRIOTISM.

Let no prospect of social or pecuniary advantages seduce them from their native land. It is large enough and rich enough for all, and is a land more favored with political, educational, commercial, social and christian influences than any other section of the world in proportion to its population.

Why is it that every American youth is radiant with patriotism? Because as a native born he may become the President of the great Republic, and the more humble his birth and life the better his prospects. Here is a motive power, and what is the result? A nation of ardent, intelligent patriots, ready for any sacrifice for the good of their country, and God knows that no nation in the history of the world has ever made so great a sacrifice for truth and liberty as this. And they are prepared to make further sacrifices for their liberties as a christian people. The old puritan fires are yet there and they will flash up yet in defence of truth and right.

Where is the political prophet who can foretell the effect of that Bible incident at the inauguration of Mr. Cleveland, when he was sworn into the high dignity of President of sixty millions of freemen upon the Bible which his good mother gave him when he left home? What a harvest of Bibles will yet be put into the sacks of the youth of America. What an influence for good will that good Christian mother have wrought throughout the world in that gift! O that more Bibles were given by the mothers of America and Canada to their sons as they leave home! Then would there be more patriots—more Clevelands Garfields—Washingtons Havelocks—Gordons and Gladstones!

But as the young American looks forward to the Presidency let the young men of Canada look forward to being the worthy successors of Sir John A. Macdonald and other distinguished colonists—Sir John being now pronounced by Blackwood's Magazine the foremost colonial statesman, and who, as a member of the Privy Council of England, may yet come to enjoy this distinction among Imperial statesmen. Let the young Canadian feel that he has a future before him that would make him the Premier of England, with her empire of 300,000,000 of subjects; and may he feel that every energy of his life shall be given to her unity and supremacy, and his last prayer be **ENGLAND FOREVER.**

'Tis a glorious charter, deny it who can,  
That is breathed in the words I'm an Englishman.'

Yours truly,

R. S. WOODS.

