

"Ducit Amor Patriæ."

# Niagara Historical Society

No. 9

## Campaigns of 1812-14

*Contemporary Narratives by Captain W. H. Merritt, Colonel William  
Claus, Lieut.-Colonel Matthew Elliott and Captain John Norton.*

Edited by Lieut.-Colonel E. Cruikshank

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## PREFACE.

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**W**ILLIAM HAMILTON MERRITT, the author of the following "Personal Narrative," was born at Bedford in the State of New York, on July 3d. 1793. He became a resident of Upper Canada in 1796, and served through the war of 1812, first as lieutenant and subsequently as captain in the Provincial Dragoons. In 1824 he succeeded in forming a company to construct the Welland Canal, of which he became agent and manager. In 1832 he was elected to represent the County of Halton in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, for which he continued to sit until the union of the two Provinces, when he was elected for the north riding of the County of Lincoln. In 1848 he became a member of the Baldwin-Lafontaine Administration as President of the Council, and in 1850 was appointed Commissioner of Public Works, but resigned a few months later. He continued to represent the same constituency in the Legislative Assembly until 1860, when he was elected to the Legislative Council for the Niagara District. He died on July 5th, 1862, near Cornwall, while on his way to the sea shore in the hope of restoring his health.

The Personal Narrative, now printed *verbatim* for the first time, was prepared by him while a prisoner of war in the United States. It is written on foolscap paper and the pages were originally numbered from 1 to 25, but pages 17, 18, 19 and 20 have been lost.

E. C.



## PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

On the 27th June, 1812, a man arrived at Thos. Clark's, Esqr., with the news of war being proclaimed by the Pres[iden]t of [the] U[nited] S[tates]. The news flew like lightning over the country. The flank companies and other volunteer corps were immediately ordered out. We had one Regt. of regulars, the 41st, in the Upper Province, that is, above Kingston, say, York, Ft. George, Queenston, Chippawa, Fort Erie, Amherstburg, Sandwich and St. Joseph. The country was well aware of the strength and population of the U. S. and turned out with a desire and determination of doing their duty. At the same time they were acting under the impression of being eventually conquered. I heard [at] 12 o'clock P. M. on the night of the 27th of the declaration of war, by Mr. Culp.

(I was then carrying on the farm with several hands, everything [was] in great forwardness.) Not believing it, I mounted my horse in the morning [and] had not rode further than Shipman's when, to my great surprise, I met the capt[ain]s of companies assembling their men as fast as possible. What my feelings were at that time cannot easily be described. I had been appointed Lieut. to a m[ilitia] troop of horse a few weeks prior, [and] was confident they would be immediately put on service. I had many powerful and weighty reasons for not entering the ser[vice], tho' not having heard from R.\* since their leaving the country, and fearing the worst, I scarcely cared what became of me. In the course of the morning I received an order from my father, who was appointed Maj[or] com[mandin]g the cavalry in the Upper Province, to assemble the men in my vicinity and march down to Ft. George as soon as possible. (The men I had employed all belonged to the different volunteer comp[anie]s which they joined. My mother was left alone on the farm. Seeing so noble a spirit of resistance spreading among all classes, I determined to give up every other pursuit and devote my life and time solely to the service of my country. For many reasons, at that time no person was more ready to risque it than myself.) On receiving the news the men had all assembled by the next morning. Accordingly we moved off and joined the main body at the Court House in Niagara at 2 P. M., 28th inst. [We] kept patroles up and down the river, momentarily expecting an attack, altho' the Americans had not heard of war being proclaimed till notified by us. Expresses having been sent to him, Gen. Brock arrived this even[ing]. All hands were

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\*Miss Catharine R. Prendergast, afterwards Mrs. Merritt.

busily employed in preparing for our defence. [On the] 29th I had the honor of being presented to him. The troop was under the command of Capt. Alex. Hamilton, my most intimate and particular friend. They were composed of the choicest and best young men in the country. [On] the 30th I received an order to repair to Chippawa with 20 men, and place myself under the command of Col. Clark, 2d Line[oln] Mil[itia]. At this time Capt. Geo. Hamilton was about raising another troop of M[ilitia] Drag[oons] at this place. Wm. Merritt was to have been cornet of the 1st troop, Jno. Secord lieutenant, and Pell Major, cornet of the 2d do. I had the charge of the volunteers at this post, all amounting to about 40 men. Our time was constantly taken up in drilling, patrolling and parading. As we heard of the enemy's collecting a large force opposite we expected an attack nightly, especially on [the] 4th July. On the 3d I attained my 19th year. I remained between this post and Fort Erie till the 20th, when I was relieved by Capt. Geo. Hamilton: some dispute having arisen between him and Col. Clark in respect to the same, his troop fell through. Most of the men were turned over to ours. Major Merritt appointed John Pell Major cornet vice Wm. Merritt. (I am sorry to say by which means the latter became a ruined man.\*) Capt. H[amilton] and myself quartered in my father's house in Niagara. On the 28th July I got leave to visit the 12 M[ile] Creek. [I] had not arrived many hours when I was followed by my father with 6 men, with orders to proceed to Delaware town on River Thames without delay and endeavour to keep up the communication with Amherstburg, as the exterminating Gen. Hull had taken possession of Sandwich [and] sent parties as far as the D[elaware] Town with his proclamations. We were apprehensive Amh[erstburg] would fall. Col. Procter, 41st, had gone up to command. I was well pleased with the excursion, as I wished to see service, since I had commenced—anything new is pleasing. My poor mother was almost distracted at the idea of my going to so dangerous a place, or rather where there was a probability of there being any fighting. I immediately prepared for my departure and set off at 2 A. M., 29th July, with six of the best men in the troop. On the 31st [we] arrived at Oxford. Col. Bostwick was there with the militia, who had just assembled. I heard of Mr. Watson† being at Del[aware] Town with ten or twelve men. I pushed on with a design of surprising him. A few miles before I arrived at the place [I] fell in with Mr. Tiffany, who apprised me of Watson being at Allen's with a number of men well armed, likewise that the country would all join him. I sent

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\*He joined the enemy in 1813 and fled to the United States.—Ed.

†Simon Z. Watson, a surveyor, who had joined the invaders.—Ed.

back for Col. Bost[wick] to send on a few of his men. I took possession of a house about 6 miles from Allen's. [We] called ourselves Amer[ic]ans. The people discovered their sentiments to us. I got a dozen of them prisoners, [and] detained all but one till morning, when B[osiwick] arrived. We moved on [and] took 2 of the party. [We] surrounded old Allen's house but the traitor (Watson) had made his escape. We took old Allen and the two prisoners with us and returned to Oxford. I left a serg[eant] and 4 men there. [I] heard of Maj. Chambers's approach [and] met him at Burford. He desired me to return to Ft. George with the prisoners and apply for more cavalry to join him. On my return Gen. Brock had sailed for York. I followed him in a boat and reported myself. He was very well pleased with my proceedings [and] sent me back with the cornet and 28 men. I was too well satisfied with my command to be long joining Maj. Chamb[ers]. He was at Oxford with 40 reg[ulars] and 100 m[ilitia]. I left Chippawa at 1 a. m. Tuesday, July 28, with 1 off[icer] and 18 [men].

On the 8th August I was going with a party to Del[aware] Town. [I] was countermanded and returned to Burford. [On] the 16th Aug. [I] heard of a party of the enemy's horse being at Long Point. [I] followed them with 20 of mine till we arrived at Dover without hearing of them. Next day [we] proceeded nearly to Port Talbot when we discovered they had not been down, [and] returned, not a little chagrined.

Capt. G. Hamilton, Askin, Rolph, &c., were volunteers with M[ajor] Chambers. On the 9th August the gallant and celebrated Brock arrived with the flank companies of the York Militia, and Capt. Hatt's f[lan]k c[ompany] from the Niag[ara] Dist[ri]ct. He addressed all the militia present [and] told them of his determination of proceeding immediately to Amherstburg and driving the enemy out of the country, requesting all willing to defend their country at the risque of their lives to volunteer their services, which they all did to a man. He selected 350 of the best men [and] sent the rest home, as the boats would hold no more. I was sent by land to Del[aware] Town to prevent any party penetrating by that direction. [I] went by way of Port Talbot [and] was placed under Col. Talbot's com[man]d. After remaining three days there [I] sent an express to C[olonel] Tal[bot], requesting permission to proceed on as far as practicable towards Sandwich. Accordingly, on the 15th inst., I received a discretional order to act as I thought proper, and moved on. Most unfortunately, the day before I reached Sandwich Detroit was captured. I could hardly have met with a more serious disappointment; bein[<sub>g</sub>] the first that was sent on the expedition and having more

fatigue and trouble than any other corps, and being deprived of the glory in sharing in the capture was truly annoying to both the men and myself.

Gen. Brock arrived at Amherstburg on Friday, the 14th Aug. Again addressed the men. [On the] 15th [he] moved up to Sandwich. The enemy retired on his approach. [He] erected a couple of batteries opposite Detroit fort and town, summoned Hull to surrender, which he refused, opened the batteries in the afternoon. [They] had little or no effect. On the 16th, Sunday, with that promptness so very conspicuous in his character, [he] crossed the river with about 700 Indians under the celebrated *Tecumthe*, 350 regulars and about 430 militia. [His] whole force [was] 1480. [The] Indians were sent in[to] the wood. [The] regulars] and militia marched up the plain, or rather road, till within 300 yards of the fort where they filed off to the left in a deep ravine. At the same time our batteries were playing away from the opposite shore with effect. The exterminating General, thinking warm work was about commencing, thought proper to surrender with 2500 men, &c., &c.

I arrived at Sandwich on the 17th. Gen. Brock had left it for the Niagara Frontier. I crossed over and acted under the orders of Col. Procter. [I] was busily engaged in collecting horses, &c., which were concealed about the country. I wrote two letters to R. by Mr. Williams and another. [I] was detained at this place three weeks. On 7th September left it for Fort George, where we arrived on the 15th. We were in momentary expectation of an attack from Gen. Rensselaer, who had collected a large force opposite Queenston and Ft. Erie.

Our duty at this time was very severe. [We were] up all night and slept in the day. Cornet Pell Major was stationed with a party at Ft. Erie. On the 9th October the enemy succeeded in cutting out two schooners near Ft. Erie, the *Caledonia* and *Detroit*. Cornet Major volunteered to bring off the latter with a few men from under the enemy's shore, [but] was mortally wounded and several of his men slightly, some severely. [He] was taken down to Chippawa. I went to see him on the 12th but a few minutes before I arrived he made his exit. I returned to make arrangements for his interment on the following day. Early in the morning Capt. H[amilton] and myself, who slept in the same room, were alarmed by a gun. We had just slipped on our jackets and swords when they were repeated, and a sad scene ensued. Women and children [were] running in all directions and soldiers [were] repairing to their posts. We ran to our barracks and with much difficulty and danger succeeded in getting out our horses, as the stables were in range of the American



guns which were leveled at the court house. We received orders to repair to Queenston as soon as possible, as the enemy had landed. We galloped up as far as Durham's where we met our troops that had been driven from the field and the wounded coming out. Gen. Brock, we heard, was killed a few moments before. In short, for young soldiers we had the most dismal prospects before us that possibly can be conceived. The enemy was magnified to 500<sup>0</sup> men and continually crossing without our being able to annoy them. Our few but gallant fellows that had been beaten back and dispersed over the field were now collecting. The wounded [were] meeting us from the field. Col. McDonald, Prov[incial] A. D. C. to the Gen[eral]\* was brought three miles by two soldiers, mortally wounded. A circumstance that damped our minds most was the loss of our gallant and much lamented Brock. In him we lost a host. All ranks and descriptions of people placed such implicit reliance on his skill, bravery, and good judgment, that led by him they were confident of success. To revenge his death they were determined to make an effort. (The 49th Regt. had arrived while we were at Detroit.) Gen. Sheif<sup>†</sup> arriving from Ft. George at this moment took the command, collected the flank companies of militia, a few of the 41st and the remainder of the 49th companies who had been engaged in the morning. I was sent on the right to prevent their coming down the mountain undiscovered. Capt. Norton with 70 Indians was before me. He crossed the fields, gained the mountain, drove in their flanking parties and attacked their main body. [He] was repulsed with some loss, as he had so few men. G[eneral] Sheif made an oblique movement to the right, gained the mountain and advanced to Phelps's fields. We remained here an hour [waiting] for a detachment of the 41st from Chippawa. Col. Clark arriving with his men the attack was made. I was previously sent to hurry on Capt. Bullock. They came on *double-quick*, gained the field about five minutes after the action commenced [and] pushed on. The enemy fled in a few minutes in the greatest disorder. We made 900 and odd prisoners. Capt. Holcroft behaved with the greatest coolness [and] kept his 6 pounder exposed to [the] fire of the enemy's long guns during the action. Mr. McKenney's conduct was conspicuous for bravery during the day. It would be impossible to describe the feelings of our young soldiers at this moment, having entered the action with the idea, if successful, of two-thirds being killed or wounded, in 10 minutes to have all the enemy in our possession with a loss of not more than 12 or 13 on our side. It was a most fortunate circumstance for us [and] gave new

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\*Lieut.-Col. John Macdonnell, Attorney General of Upper Canada.

†Major General Roger Hale Shraffe.

life to everything. Only the loss of our brave general. On the night before Maj. Merritt and a number of officers were with him. He expected an attack, was round himself giving orders for a strict lookout, was very anxious for it to take place, as he had great confidence in his new raised men. At 4 a. m. a dragoon arrived with the intelligence of an attack having been made at Queenston. He mounted and rode up without an attendant. The morning was breaking as he arrived. Perceiving our shells [were] not reaching the enemy's batteries he rode up [and] ordered more powder. The mortar threw one or two with great effect. At that moment 500 of the enemy appeared within 20 yards of the battery on the mountain in his rear. He ordered the few artillerymen with him to retreat and ran down the mountain exposed to a very heavy fire. Capt. Dennis, 49th, commanding the post with 2 flank companies 46th and part of 4 companies militia, expecting an attack gave orders for the guard to fire on the first boat that was launched. About 1/2 after 3 the enemy launched a boat, the guard fired, the men repaired to their posts and drove them back with immense slaughter [and] took 150 prisoners. About 500 had succeeded in landing above under cover of the darkness and bank and gained the brow of the mountain. The guard at that place had left it and joined their comrades under the hill. They were not perceived till they were in the rear of Gen. Brock's battery. He rallied about 30 of the grenadiers [and] was preparing to charge the 500 when he received a random shot through the left breast. He fell in the act of cheering his men. His last words were, *Push on, my brave fellows.* Col. McDonald, who was near them, called on the men about him to revenge his death, which they were well disposed to do. He succeeded with about 75 militia and regulars in gaining the mountain on their left, exposed to a cross fire all the time. They formed and advanced, drove the enemy to the summit of the hill, when Capt. Williams, 49th, was badly wounded in the head, (Colonel) McDonald had his horse shot and received a mortal wound through his body. The loss of the two commanding officers threw the men in[to] disorder. The enemy took courage [and] advanced. Our men made a precipitate retreat down the mountain and retired to Durham's, where we met them.

Gen. Brock was taken to Niagara and interred with the greatest solemnity. The enemy gave him a salute, which was highly honorable to them. We had drove them out of Ft. Niagara on the 13th, but, as our plan of operations was acting on the defensive, we did not take possession of it. They applied for an unlimited armistice, each to give the other thirty hours notice when it was to be at an end. This was the most ruinous policy that could be adopted for us. The militia were kept out en masse doing nothing, consequently most of

them went home, as their property was suffering and [there was] no appearance of their being wanted on the frontier. The same precaution was taken by us as before. I was sent up to Turkey Point and established a line of communication from there to Fort George via Lake Erie.

On the 20th Oct. I received the long-looked for letter, which had been in the post office between three and four months. My hopes and spirits were not a little raised on the perusal.

In the latter end [of] Nov[ember] we were notified at Ft. Erie of the armistice being at an end. All was bustle and confusion. The militia [were] ordered out, a general alarm spread immediately. (Not to appear so much alarmed as we really were, knowing the immense force [that] would be opposed [to] us under the proclamation [of] General Smith,\*) a general commanding along the whole line, was to commence as soon as the 30 hours expired. It continued the whole day between Fts. George and Niagara, with little effect on either side except damaging a few houses in Niagara (The Court House had been burned on the 13th Oct.)

I was sent up to Detroit [on] the morn[ing] of the 25th Nov. with dispatches, money, &c., &c., with a guard of four men. I arrived there on the fourth day after leaving Ft. George, crossed the ice on the mouth of the River Thames on the 1st Dec. on my return, the earliest ever known. Mr. A. Williams, having been detained at Detroit, returned me the letter I gave him for R.

[I] arrived at Niagara on the 4th December. On the night of the 28th Nov. the American's effected a landing at Trout's Ferry<sup>†</sup> under Capt. King with infantry and sailors. [They] surprised our guard, made most of them prisoners and succeeded in capturing our batteries and dismounting all our guns. Early in the morning of the 29th we moved on from Ft. Erie and made prisoners about 39 men, with Capt. King, who had not time to re-cross. In this encounter we lost a few men killed [and] 2 or 3 militia [officers] wounded. The Norfolk militia behaved exceedingly well. Col. Bishopp, who commanded the right, arriving from Chippawa formed the few men he had with him at Frenchman's Creek. The enemy made their appearance in about 20 boats [and] advanced within half gun-shot. We opened our fire, they wheeled about and returned with some loss. On the 30th we expected an attack most certainly, as Gen. Smith had sent over a flag desiring Col. Bishopp to surrender Fort Erie. He was given to understand it would be defended to the last. At 2 a. m. 1st Dec., Gen. Smith embarked his force, amounting to six thousand,

\*Brigadier General Alexander Smyth.—Et.

†Between Fort Erie and Frenchman's Creek.—Et.

with an intention of attacking. Col. Nichol, who happened to be going the rounds, mistaking the hour, ordered the *revellly*\* to be sounded. Smith, thinking we were on the alert and prepared to receive him, disembarked his men, making no further attempt during the campaign, altho' the militia of the country were kept out and on duty fully as severe as ever.

[In] the latter of December I was sent with a party to Ft. Erie as we expected an attack by means of the ice, and to prevent desertion, &c., &c., where I remained till the middle of February, during which time I wrote R. by a Mr. Willson. [As there was] no appearance of an attack on either side at this time. the militia [were] all sent home: the flank companies' term of service expiring they were dismissed and the most of Captain Hamilton's dragoons. I was recalled to Niagara.

Seeing nothing [was] likely to be done, I applied for leave and went to Kingston on my private concerns. [I] returned about the 10th February, 1813, [and was] kept on duty till the 25th inst., when the troop was dismissed after a faithful and expensive service of 8 months. They embodied themselves purely out of patriotic motives, found their own horses, clothing, appointments, &c., &c., only receiving their rations and 9d per diem. They were likewise on their first formation the most respectable young men in the country. Many afterwards got commissions in militia corps.

I omitted mentioning a brilliant affair at the right division, and a most shameful and disastrous one on the lake. Hearing of Gen. Winchester's approach towards Detroit, Capt. Muir was sent out with a body of Indians and regulars to make an attack upon Fort Wayne up the Miami in the latter part of December. He approached within a few miles of it when some scouts discovered Gen. Winchester's camp within a few miles of them. The force was too small to attack. He therefore destroyed his ammunition and returned to Amherstburgh in three days which (sic) he was fifteen in advancing. Gen. Winchester, taking courage at his retiring, moved on at the rapids. He was met by a detachment of militia and Indians, who behaved in the most gallant manner. On the 20th Gen. Harrison encamped at the Rapids and Gen. W[inchester] advanced to the River Raisin and stockaded himself on the bank in a good position. Brig'd Gen. Procter advanced quietly with all the force he could collect and attacked them at 3 a. m. on 22d January. They defended themselves gallantly. We succeeded in taking the Gen[eral] and his army prisoners. A great part were killed, 500 at least, about 600 taken [and] sent down to Ft. George, where they were paroled and sent

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\*Reveille.

home to their own country, as we had invariably sent home all the militia that fell in our hands. In the latter end of November the American navy, under the command of Commodore Chauncey, drove our fleet into the harbor of Kingston, who a few months prior had complete command of the lake, not apprehending an enemy in that quarter. So ends the campaign of 1812, one of the most disastrous ones to the American arms and a most glorious one for the troops and inhabitants in Upper Canada.

On the 25th Feb. I retired from the service, went home to the 12 Mile Creek [and] entered into business, not wishing or thinking of entering it again. My father and Capt. Hamilton both entered proposals for raising a troop of Prov[incial] Dragoons to serve during the war. The former was accepted of. However, he getting tired of the exertion that attended it and private concerns calling him home, declined persevering in it. I received a note from Lt. Col. Harvey requesting I would undertake it, likewise Major Glegg and others. Thinking it probable we would have an active campaign the ensuing season, I commenced recruiting the 11th March under every possible disadvantage, as the men had to find horses for themselves. Lieut. Ingersoll was appointed by my father, consequently I continued him and appointed Mr. McKenney cornet. (this young man joined the militia dragoons as a private. He was with me during the campaign. His zeal and courage was conspicuous on every occasion. He was raised to the rank of quartermaster, no higher post being vacant) who soon raised his quota. On the 25th we were all in orders, fourteen days after I commenced. Our establishment was 42 r[ank and] file, which was conceived to be sufficient, as appointments could not be procured for them. They were all fine young men but badly mounted and equipped in every respect. My time was taken up in organizing them in the best manner I could. A line of communication was established to Fort Erie with them.

On the 20th April the campaign for 1813 opened with more vigilance than ever. We were reinforced with some of the Glengarries, Newfoundland and King's. [The] militia were again called out. We were apprehensive of a serious attack from some quarters, as we perceived the enemy were collecting a large force on the Niagara Frontier and had a decided superiority on the lake. It was impossible for the duty to be more severe than at this crisis or the privations greater among all ranks. Both militia and regulars done their duty with alacrity and good will.

On 27th April the enemy landed at York and captured it after a most gallant resistance by the grenadier company of the King's and a few others. The former were nearly all killed or wounded. We

had a ship on the stocks, which was destroyed, and a quantity of stores. The magazine was blown up by us [and] killed a number of their men.

We were uncertain as to the fate of the place until the evening of the 29th, when I was sent to Burlington to bring down all the boats in that quarter, which I accomplished in 16 hours, for which service I received Brigd.-Gen. Vincent's thanks. Since Sir R. Hale Shief's retreat from York he commanded the centre division of the army. On the 2d May the enemy's fleet appeared in sight. Alarm guns were fired and every preparation made to give them a warm reception, as we expected an immediate attack at Ft. George since they [had] abandoned York. They anchored off the 4 Mile Creek [on the] American side where their camp was formed. From this till the 27th May every man was turned out at 2 o'clock [and] remained under arms during the night. Some men were 12 nights running on guard. A most laudable example was shewn them by the Gen[eral] Staff and every officer, who equally shared their fatigues. Our small force were forned in three divisions. Col. Myers com[mande]d the left, composed of the Kings and 2 comp[anies] of militia to defend the coast from Ft. George to 4 Mile Creek. Capt. Fowler act[ed] as A. D. C. Col. Harvey [commanded] the right, consisting of 3 comp[anies] N[ew]f[ound]l[an]d and 41st. 3 Gleng[arry], 4 [of] 49th and 3 of militia, from Fort George to Queenston. The remainder of the 49th and militia composed the reserve under Gen. Vincent to act as occasion might require in the rear of Ft. George. We had alarms almost every night. Col. H[arvey] and myself rode to within 2 miles of Queenston and back, nearly all night, and slept in the day.

On the 25th, they commenced cannonading Fort George, which for want of ammunition we were unable to return. They burned all the buildings in it. On the 27th at 4 a. m. they were discovered approaching us under a thick heavy fog off the 4 Mile Creek [on the] Amer[ican] side in a number of boats and scows in three brigades covered by their shipping and Ft. Niagara. Our left division were ordered back in a ravine, as the enemy completely enfiladed the plain and shore with shot and shells from the fleet and fort.

I was sent up to order down part of Lt.-Col. Harvey's division on the right. As the fog was so very heavy we could not discover their movements on the opposite side: the Gen[eral] was apprehensive they meditated an attack likewise on our right by which means only the gren[ad]ier comp[any] [of the] N[ew]f[ound]l[an]d [Regiment] was brought into action of the right division: 3 comp[anies] Glengarry, 2 mil[itia], 1 of N[ew]f[ound]l[an]d, was posted in advance to oppose the landing of the whole Amer[ican] army. At 9 they commenced

landing at Crookston. The major part of our advance was killed. They were supported by the King's, who suffered nearly as much, as the enemy had gained the bank on their approach. They were compelled to fall back on the reserve, which were posted in Gordon's ravine. I was sent for the 49th, which were formed in the centre, our whole force not exceeding eight hundred men. We remained marching and countermarching, retreating and advancing till the enemy had advanced nearly within musket shot, when a retreat was ordered. The 24 p[ou]nde[r] battery was left by its officer after firing one shot, by which means we were totally unable to annoy them. We formed again at the barracks near the Council House when I was sent up to order down the L[igh]t Comp[any] of the King's which we understood was at the 8 Mile Creek. I rode through the woods round the Amer[ic]an right flank [and] followed up the lake till I arrived at the 20 Mile Creek (was two hours on the road) where I met Com[man]d[er] Barclay with his sailors and the King's. We hurried on to Shipman's where I learned the army had retreated to DeCoo's. I took the party through the woods [and] arrived there at 9 o'clock. Next morning the militia were allowed to remain or follow the army. This was a sad day for many besides myself. I went home, prepared my kit and with a heavy heart bid adieu, as I thought, to the place of my nativity for a long time. I was determined to share the fate of the army, which retreated on to Burlington with very little delay. I was ordered to remain at the Fort till driven in by the enemy. They were slow in approaching. I remained about the 12 till the 29th, when they advanced with most of the army. [On] the 1st June I was driven back from the Fort to Stoney Creek. The enemy advanced on the 6th, after many petty skirmishes in which I lost 7 men, to Stoney Creek, where they encamped to the number of 3000 and about 1500 at Jones's on the lake. We were now driven to our last resources. We had retired from Fort Erie on [the] 28th. Our only position was Burlington, which they would have attacked next day. We had no works. Our troops [were] much fatigued and dispirited. In the evening of the 6th they had drove in our piquets, some distance from Stoney Creek. We were all under arms in the night when the bold and daring design of attacking their camp was carried in[to] execution. The 49th and part of the King's were ordered to march, amounting to 500 men. The light companies of each composed the advance, all under the com[man]d of Brigd.-General Vincent. [When] they arrived within a mile of the enemy's camp [they] halted and had the guns examined; none were allowed to be loaded. They moved on, surprised and made prisoners their pickets. [They] charged the front line of the enemy 500 in number double quick [and] routed them without the loss of a

man on our side. The easy dispersion of these men threw ours in confusion, which gave the main body time to form on our right. They poured in a most destructive fire and commenced firing from their artillery, which were posted on an eminence in our front. Col. Plenderleath assembled about 30 men, made a most vigorous and successful charge upon their guns and succeeded in capturing them and making Genls. Chandler and Winder prisoners, which secured us the victory, as the enemy immediately retreated and left us in possession of the field. We could not get off but two guns and limbers for the want of horses; they were all killed. On appearance of day we drew off all our troops fearing [that] when the enemy seen our numbers they would renew the action. Col. Vincent having been thrown off his horse, lost himself in the wood. I was sent back by Col. Harvey to look for him over the field. He supposed he was either killed or wounded. On my return to near Gage's house I fell upon an American sentry. He allowed me to approach him. With my blue jacket [he] took me for one of his own officers. I made him prisoner and discovered they had possession of the house with fifty men. I moved off with the sentry and another prisoner, who made his appearance, and brought them to the main body. The Americans retreated this day as far as the Forty. We were on the point of retreating when Gen. Vincent made his appearance.

On the 7th our fleet made its appearance. I was sent on [in] the advance [and] arrived at the Forty a few minutes after the Amer[ican] rear guard left it. Major Dennis arrived shortly after. We pursued them and made many prisoners. The militia assembled in all quarters and added much to their annoyance.

On the 10th [we] pushed on our advance under Colonel Bisshopp to the 12 and 10 Mile Creeks. Lieut. Fitzgibbon had the command of a party of 50 men on the advance. His principal post was De-Coo's house, Beaver Dams. Cornet McKenney was attached to him. On the 20th Lt. Barnard, Fitzgibbon, Cummings, McKenney and myself were sent to Tice Hone's, nearly falling in with Col. Chapin's party. On the 24th Col. Barstlaer (Boerstler) was sent out with 600 men, 2 field pieces and Chapin's party to engage Fitzgibbon and destroy the house. They came through St. Davids [by] the mountain road. He got information of it, sent to Col. Deharen (De Haren) who was at Brown's, 10 M[ile] Creek, with a party of regulars and Indians, chiefly Cognawagas from Lower Canada, who came up a few days before. He sent them up by the Doctor's (Prendergast's?) They placed themselves in Hover's (Hoover's) fields [and] waited till the army had nearly passed, when they opened a sharp fire from behind the fence and in the wood. It threw the enemy in confusion



for the moment. They rallied and drove the Indians near a mile. They ran back, got on the enemy's left flank and drove them back in turn with loss. The enemy formed in Miller's fields. Fitzgibbon, at this instant arriving, gained the wood exposed to a heavy fire of grape and canister. He perceived the Indians [were] tired of the

(Pages 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the MS. are here missing.)

took the other for Americans, exchanged several and did not find out the mistake till we arrived at the Forty Mile Creek. On our return we gave the necessary information, expecting the army to advance to meet him. However, nothing transpired till the 4th December. (Gen. McClure advanced as far as the 20 and returned.) On the 5th Col. Murray was allowed to advance as far as the 40, with orders not to proceed farther. On the 8th Capt. Martin and myself was sent on to the 20 to secure some flour. Hearing my father was allowed to return home I persuaded Capt. Martin to advance as far as the 12, which he did, brought away my father [and] returned to the 40 that night. [We] reported our proceedings to Col. Murray. We made  $\frac{1}{2}$  doz[en] prisoners and killed one man. He was not well pleased with [our] stretching orders. However, [he] advanced himself to the 20 [and] sent me to the 12 where I fell in with a flag of truce. [I] detained it till I received an order for its release. [I] collected about 40 militia as an advance guard. In the night [I] was sent up to the Beaver Dams. Early in the evening [I] discovered the town on fire. Col. Murray moved on to the 12. In the evening [we] collected all the axes in the neighborhood with a determination of storming F[or]t George. On our arrival they left it. Our troops took up a position on the river. [We] took many prisoners on the line, the movement was so sudden the renegades had not time to make their escape. Gen. Vincent arrived on the 13th with the remainder of the forces. We had been every night up endeavoring to get down boats for crossing the river. Fort Niagara was the great object. I was sent over with a flag to Lewiston to endeavor to ascertain their force. Capt. Kerby was sent up to Burlington to bring down the boats, which he did with the greatest expedition. Gen. Drummond and staff arrived on the 17th. Part of the boats was brought to Wilson's. The troops were assembled there every night for the purpose of crossing. On the 18th I was taken very ill owing to the excessive fatigue we had all undergone for eight nights previous, and was sent home by Gen. Vincent, where I was confined for a fortnight.

On the evening of the 19th the troops were all privately

embarked, surprised the fort and captured it with very little opposition [and] drove them from Lewiston and Schlosser. After delaying till the 1st November (*sic*) our troops crossed at Black Rock. After a sharp engagement with the militia, drove them and took possession of Buffalo. [We] burned every house we came across in retaliation for the town of Niagara. Thus ended the campaign of 1813. In our dash we recovered the whole country excepting Amherstburgh, which was not worth keeping at present, and all owing to the ability of Colonel Murray.

I omitted mentioning a few gallant attempts in the month of July. *Imprimis*, Sir James Yeo formed the bold and daring design of cutting out the enemy's fleet at Sacketts Harbor. Hearing the *Pike* was launched and fitted out, he took about 500 soldiers and sailors [and] arrived near the harbor at 2 a. m. [He] had his boats drawn up in the wood intending attacking the next night. In the day [he] reconnoitred the situation of the fleet [and] came back in high spirits. He was sure of capturing the whole, when he was informed two of his soldiers was missing. He immediately gave up the design, disembarked (*sic*) his men and returned to Kingston.

In the latter end of June Col. Clark crossed at Schlosser with 30 men, took as many prisoners, destroyed a quantity of stores and brought away one or two pieces of cannon,

[In] the beginning of July Col. Bisshopp crossed at Black Rock, burned the navy-yard [and] destroyed an immense quantity of public property. He was repeatedly urged to disembark (*sic*) and return, [but] imagining himself too secure [he] remained till the enemy collected a force. He was mortally wounded and lost a number of men before they could disembark and get out of musket shot. His loss was severely felt in the Upper Province. He was a good officer, an excellent man and a real friend to the country.

The troops were all put in winter quarters [and] the greatest activity prevailed in repairing the forts. I was fortunately stationed at Shipman's, 12 Mile Creek, where I remained till the middle of May, 1814, when I was ordered to Fort George. We erected a new fort at Missasaugua Point, by that name, and one on Queenston Heights by the name of Fort Drummond. The fleet had captured Oswego this month, took a quantity of provisions [and] threw in a good supply to Fts. George and Niagara. Capt. Popham with a party of 200 seamen went up Sandy Creek near Sackett's Harbor after some American boats. They were all captured, and almost every boat belonging to the fleet.

Knowing the large force that was collected at Buffalo was about invading this poor unfortunate frontier again, the duty became very

severe. The enemy had landed at Dover, Long Point, under Col. Camel (Campbell), burned every thing they fell in with and disembarked.

On the third of July (my birthday) they made a landing at Ft. Erie, surrounded the place, which only consisted of 130 men, which of course was obliged to surrender. On the 4th [they] pushed on to Chippawa, skirmishing with our rear-guard, a few dragoons under Cornet Horton. Our troops retired to their position at Chippawa. A few Indians and militia arriving, Gen. Riall thought proper to make a dash at them on the 5th.

I was sent down on the 4th to Ft. George. We expected their fleet hourly to make its appearance and threaten the forts, by which means Gen. R[iall] was under the necessity of dividing his small force. However, he marched out, gave them battle and was beaten. Had the enemy done their duty our whole army must have been taken, as they had five times our numbers. I was ordered up in the evening and detained with part of the troop. Cornet McKenney was attached to Col. Scott's district at Burlington. On the 8th the enemy cut a road, erected a battery and launched some boats, unperceived by our pickets or patrols. Had they crossed it would have effectually cut off our retreat. Gen. Riall left his position and retired to the forts, burning Fort Drummond, &c. Capt. Hamilton and myself remained behind watching the movements of the enemy till night. On the 9th I was sent in the country to watch the movements of the enemy with about 20 dragoons, in the neighborhood of 12 Mile Creek and Beaver Dams, where I kept up the communication with Gen. Riall and Burlington. The militia had all retired to Burlington, driving off their cattle, &c. On the 16th I was sent to Burlington to order Col. Scott down with nearly his whole force, 103d, Indians and militia. On my return Gen. Riall moved out, formed a junction with him at 20 Mile Creek, pushed out pickets of militia to the Four Mile Creek [at] St. Davids, by which means we kept the communication open with Ft. George. The Glengarries arrived on the 18th. Our force under Gen. Riall consisted of 200 Royals, 150 Kings, 600 of 103d, 400 Glengarries, 350 incorp[orated] militia, 1000 sedentary militia and Indians. In the three forts [were] about 600 men. On the 21st Gen. Brown moved down and encamped near Ft. George. We proceeded on [and] took possession of Queenston, making a few prisoners. About 30 officers and men had volunteered under Capt. Fitzgibbon to hover round the enemy's camp and obtain information. Of these I was one. We remained in Queenston all night. Three of us went down to their out pickets at Camp's farm [and] kept a good lookout. Nine officers breakfasted at Smith's in the morning. [We] was

surprised by a party of dragoons. Most of us gained the mountain. Four or five were made prisoners. Here we made a stand and kept in check the 150 dragoons until their infantry had completely out-flanked us. We fired fifty rounds per man. We returned to St. Davids, where about 20 militia were keeping 150 them [in] check. We ran down to support them. After firing a few rounds, as they did not advance, we retired to the wood, where we received an order to move back to the 10 Mile Creek. Four officers of our party remained in the rear, were surrounded, and after a short but gallant resistance, were made prisoners. [We] remained at the 10 that evening. Next day, 24th, our number being reduced to eleven, [we] took an excursion to Mr. Birch's and Roreback's. [We] fell in with a party of 30 horse-men, gave them a volley, [and] they broke. We rushed on [and] gave [them] another fire, when they disappeared, some up and the others down to Queenston. We returned to Bessey's. Next morning, the 25th, I was under the necessity, of returning to headquarters to arrange some matters about the troop. My father was taken very ill. Col. Drummond arrived in the afternoon. [We] heard of the enemy retiring to Chippawa. [I] was ordered to Lundy's Lane in the evening with him. We marched all night [and] arrived there at daylight.

## Editor's Note.

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Colonel William Claus was the eldest son of Colonel Daniel Claus and grandson of Sir William Johnson. After serving for some time as an officer in the 60th Regiment, or Royal Americans, he entered the Indian Department as a lieutenant during the American Revolution. When Lieut.-Colonel John Butler died in 1796, he was strongly recommended as his successor as superintendent at Niagara. He became the senior deputy superintendent of that department upon McKee's death in 1799. On nominating him for this post, in a despatch to the Duke of Portland, Major-General Prescott wrote :

"With respect to the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. McKee, I think it my duty to recommend to your Grace's consideration Captain William Claus, the present senior superintendent. Exclusive of any pretensions which he might be induced to entertain in *his own mind* in consequence of the services of his grandfather, the late Sir Wm. Johnson, of his father, the late Colonel Claus, who served thirty odd years in the Military and Indian Departments, or of his own services of twenty years, the circumstance of the Indians entertaining a very high respect and veneration for the memory of his grandfather and father, together with a great personal regard and attachment to himself, appears to me to be of very considerable weight. His having likewise (in addition to his other qualifications) been born and brought up, as it were, among the Indians, and possessing an activity and disposition peculiarly pleasing to that sort of people will, I have reason to believe, render his succession to the office of the late Mr. McKee more satisfactory to all the Indian Nations and more beneficial to His Majesty's service (especially if the active services of the Indians should become necessary) than that of any other person I could recommend."

He was subsequently appointed Colonel of the Militia of the County of Lincoln and a member of the Legislative Council.

Matthew Elliott was engaged in trading with the Indians beyond the Ohio at the beginning of the American Revolution. He abandoned the whole of his property, which was confiscated, and joined Lieut. Governor Hamilton at Detroit, by whom he was appointed

captain in the Indian Department. He accompanied Captain Bird in his raid into Kentucky in 1780 and subsequently commanded a body of Indians in the actions of Blue Licks and Sandusky in which the frontiersmen of Kentucky and Pennsylvania were defeated with severe loss. In 1790 he was appointed assistant agent for the western Indians and was promoted to be Deputy Superintendent at Amherstburg in 1795. He was hastily dismissed from this office in 1798 in consequence of a quarrel with Captain Maclean, the military commandant, but was reinstated in 1808, when war seemed imminent with the United States, at the urgent request of Lieut. Governor Gore, who declared in his despatch to Sir James Craig on the subject, that "throughout this country (Upper Canada) it is the general sentiment that he is the only man capable of calling forth the energies of the Indians." He was one of the representatives of the County of Essex in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada for nearly twenty years, and Lieutenant Colonel of the First Regiment of Essex Militia. His death in 1814 was probably hastened by fatigue and exposure during the war.

John Norton was the son of a British officer by his marriage with a Miss Anderson. He was born in Canada and at an early age went to live among the Indians of the Six Nations at the Grand River, by whom he was adopted and made a chief. He appears to have been fairly well educated and is stated to have been able to speak English and French with facility, as well as several Indian dialects.

# AN ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE INDIAN CONTINGENT WITH OUR FORCES ON THE NIAGARA FRONTIER IN 1812-13.

BY COLONEL WILLIAM CLAUS.

YORK, 4th December, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,— It has been my wish for a length of time to sit down and give you a detailed account of our transactions since the 13th October, 1812, as far as relates to Indian affairs, at which period I consider the war to have commenced in this part of the country, and much of that I must trust to memory but will answer for its correctness.

On the 13th October, 1812, about 6 o'clock a. m. J. B. Rousseaux, interpreter, knocked at my door and reported the enemy crossing at Queenston in force. I immediately got up and on my way down to my front gate I met Major General Sheaffe, who ordered me to the garrison at Fort George, from whence I despatched every Indian I could collect and a number of militia. Captain Norton had proceeded before I saw him. About 8 o'clock a. m. I received orders from the late Major General Brock, through Brigade Major Glegg, not to cease firing until every stone was down in the American garrison. The events of that day are well known to you, and the death of a man, Major General Brock, that will ever be lamented. On this occasion we lost two Cayuga Chiefs, one Onondaga warrior and two Oneidas killed besides several wounded.

From the 13th [October] until the 21st of November nothing was done. By a letter from General Smyth to General Sheaffe the armistice concluded on the 13th October was to cease on the 19th November. On the 20th at night orders were given to open the batteries upon the garrison at Fort Niagara at daylight of the 21st. The orders I received were to station myself with the militia in a ravine near the English church, where we remained until near sunset, when the firing ceased. We had very few Indians at Fort George, most of them being

at Fort Erie under Major Givins and Capts. Norton and Kerr, where, on the 27th November, they assisted in repelling the second attempt at invading the Province: altho' a good deal of firing none of our Indians were hurt. The attack was made immediately on a house where a party of the 49th lay with Lieut. Lamont and my son of that regiment and Lieut. King of the Royal Artillery, under the command of the former. After a warm struggle they were obliged to give way, being overpowered by numbers and Lieut. Lamont severely wounded, Lieut. King mortally, and my son slightly in the face, and a number of men killed, wounded and made prisoners. Reinforcements coming to our assistance the American party were made prisoners with their commandant, Capt. King, but our people had been sent across the river before.

This ended the campaign.

On the 1st May, [1813.] a Militia General Order was issued calling into actual service 1700 of the Militia: the following is an extract:

"1st Lincoln, Colonel Claus, 300 including those embodied. Distribution — 1st Lincoln, Niagara."

On the 8th May, 1813, I received the following letter:

"Fort George, 8th May, 1813.

SIR.— I am directed by Brigadier General Vincent, commanding the troops on the frontier, to desire you will hold yourself in readiness to assume the command of the garrison at Fort George in the event of the 49th, Lieut.-Colonel Plenderleath, being obliged to move out for the purpose of opposing the attack which there is reason to believe the enemy meditates upon this post.

"The Brigadier General feels the most entire confidence in your best exertions for the defence of this most important post with the limited means which he may be enabled to place at your disposal, and which, I am to assure you, will be as great as circumstances will admit.

"You are to use your discretion in the supply of ammunition and arms to such militiamen as may come in unprovided with them. Of the former you are required to be assparing as possible.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. HARVEY, *Lt.-Col.*,

*D. A. G.*

"Colonel Claus, etc., etc."

I introduce the above extract of an order and letter to show why upon several occasions I was not with the Indians, as represented to Sir George, and which I believe drew forth the order of the 7th



August last. The order to remain in the garrison on the 13th October was verbal and received in the field. After the above order of the 1st of May it became my duty to be in the garrison of Fort George every morning an hour before day with the militia. Nothing occurred until the 24th May at night, when our guns up the river opened upon some boats and scows the enemy were putting into the water at the Five Mile Meadows. This night I was in the garrison with all the militia and about 12 o'clock I detached a part of them up the river to the support of the guns, not knowing what the firing was. The regulars left the fort and went out for the purpose of throwing up some breast-works on the bank. A little before day they returned to their alarm posts and the fire from the enemy opened from all their batteries upon the garrison of Fort George. I had time to fire two rounds from a 24 pounder when I received orders to stop firing, but by the enemy it was kept up till about 2 o'clock p. m., by which time they had set fire to and burnt nearly every building in the fort. At this hour Lieut.-Colonel Williams of the 49th was sent down to relieve me. We had very few Indians at Niagara at this time.

During the remainder of the day we were busily employed in repairing the picketing destroyed by the shells which were thrown in great numbers and admirably served as well as their guns. On the 26th the enemy were observed to be unusually busy. On the 27th, before day, I was on the Cavalier, or Brock's Battery, with Lieut.-Col. Plenderleath. Just as the day broke and reveille beat on both sides, we left it fully persuaded that nothing would be attempted that day. By the time we reached the centre of the square we observed a rocket over our heads, and as it turned every battery opened upon us. The troops, with the exception of one company of the 49th, Captain Ormond, left the garrison. Our force was not 70 men including militia. We were penned up in the fort without being allowed to fire a shot. A little after day the enemy appeared in three divisions of vessels and boats coming from Johnson's Landing. They advanced in very great order and unfortunately for us were allowed to come on shore without being opposed by a 24 pounder which must, if fired, have done immense execution and I am persuaded must have driven the enemy back, but from something unaccountable not a shot was fired from this gun. It was placed near Church's old house. The boats and scows were so close to each other and moved so slow that every shot must have had effect, as they were very little more than half [cannon] shot distance. At 11 o'clock a. m. I received orders to open the mortar battery on the fort, which was done. Shortly after, I saw our troops retiring and a large column of the enemy advancing in rear of my house. I received a second order to turn my guns on the town but had hardly done so when I received the following note:

"12 o'clock.

DEAR SIR,—The General desires that you will immediately evacuate the fort and join him on the Queenston Road.

(Signed,) J. B. GLEGG, Lt.-Col.  
Brigade Major.

"Col Claus,  
Commanding Fort George."

After seeing all the troops and militia out of the fort and blowing up one or two small magazines, I followed and overtook the General about half way to Queenston on a road near the skirt of the wood. In the action of this day we had very few Indians in the field. Two Mohawks were killed and a number wounded. One of the killed was a boy of mine. The poor fellow was too forward and lost his life by a grape shot in the forehead. We continued our retreat over the mountain and the Indians retired by a different route, under Norton. I was despatched with orders to Colonel Bishopp and did not get back to the army until 10 o'clock that night. Our first halt was at DeCon's, about 15 miles from Niagara, (to which place my son of the 49th had been sent a few days before the attack with a depot of ammunition.) From thence we moved to the 40 Mile Creek, where we remained some days. Here Mrs. Claus and my family joined me. Why we left this position God knows! It was the best we could take up, but we moved to the Heights of Burlington, to which place the enemy were pursuing us in much superior force. On the 5th June in the afternoon information was brought that the enemy had attacked our advance and that we had drove them. The whole of the troops were ordered under arms. No Indians being with us I offered my services to Brigadier General Vincent, which he was kind enough to accept, and shortly after sent me to Lieut.-Col. Bishopp. On my way I met some Indians coming from Grand River and hastened them on, but on my return found that they would not move on that night.

When the two regiments, the King's and 49th, moved off at half-past 11 on the night of the 5th of June, I followed and after riding a mile I found that the officer that was riding alongside the general, had rode off. I rode up and took his place. After riding a little way with him, I was again sent off to Lieut.-Col. Bishopp with orders to attach myself to him. I am perhaps too particular, but I wish to show to you the cruelty of the order of the 7th August, which I attribute to Mr. Norton's report that I was never out with the Indians, on which report I believe that order is founded. The event of that morning's business is known to you and unnecessary for me to repeat it, but I

must remark to you that in the general order Capt. Norton is complimented for the handsome manner in which he followed up the enemy with his warriors when not an Indian advanced until after our troops came in and they only went to the field to plunder. About the 10th June our little army advanced. I was ordered to remain in command of the Heights with a few troops and militia, which I refused but afterwards accepted on condition that if they advanced from the 40 Mile Creek I should be relieved. Shortly after, Major Evans of the King's came up and relieved me and I immediately left the Heights and joined the Indians. On my arrival at the 40 I joined the Canada Indians there, who with ours advanced to the 10 Mile Creek near Niagara and encamped there with the light companies of the King's and 104th. We had not been there a day or two when a report reached us that 150 horse were at De Cou's in our rear, making a tour by 12 Mile Creek as we supposed. The two companies were immediately under arms and a message sent to me requiring about 50 Indians to join each company. I ordered Capt. Kerr with the 104th and went myself with the King's, going different routes in hopes of cutting them off. About sunset a runner was sent to me to say they had turned and taken a different route. Just as we got to our camp we heard that the other party had met the enemy, but not those reported in the morning, and engaged them on the mountain near Mrs. Tice's. After two rounds our people retired, the others being too superior in numbers. Had the number of Indians gone with Capt. Kerr that I wished and expected, it would have been a complete business, but unluckily most of the Indians followed the Kings. Only one of the enemy was killed, none of ours hurt.

From the continual applications for flour for the families at home I was obliged to retire from the 10 Mile Creek for the purpose of making out the necessary returns and requisitions, for while I remained with the body of Indians nothing could be done. (This I mention to show why I was not present on the 24th.) I therefore went to Capt. Kerr at the 20 Mile Creek on the 22d June. On the 24th, a little before daylight, one of the Canada Indians went down to St. David's to look for one of their people that had been missing the day before. On his getting there he saw a large body of the enemy advancing towards De Cou's on the mountain and in our rear. He returned immediately and reported to Capt. Kerr, who collected all the Indians he could, not 400. After having reported the circumstance to Major De Haren, he set out in pursuit of them. The same young man went in advance and crossed the same body and returned to Capt. Kerr and the Indians, who left the road and struck across the country and getting into a wood opened a fire upon the enemy, who soon formed and with two fieldpieces, 6 and 12 pounders, obliged our people to retire, but

only to take up another position, which they did and kept up such a warm fire that they were obliged to retire after offering two flags, but whether the Indians understood them or not is not known but they were fired on each time. This I learned from a man by the name of Miller, to whose house they retired. When all firing had ceased Lieut. FitzGibbon of the 49th made his appearance with about 40 men and a flag was immediately sent. Seeing red coats, &c., the surrender followed of Lieut.-Col. Boerstler and his forces with the two fieldpieces, ammunition, etc., for which every notice was taken of the troops and Lieut. FitzGibbon, and nothing said of the Indians who did everything. Well might the general order say that the whole of the business was accomplished without the loss of a drop of British blood, for not a shot was fired by a British soldier that day. Five or six militia officers and men went out with the Indians, who were the only whites except those of the department, but it was not accomplished without the death of one Delaware chief, one Chippewa chief from La Cloche, two Caughnawaga war chiefs, one Nippissing war chief, one warrior from St. Regis, besides a vast number wounded. As soon as the business was reported to Lt.-Col. Bisshopp, who was stationed at the 20, he advanced but we were too late. It was over before we reached the field.

After this the Indians all retired to the 40. I could not stop them. With much difficulty I persuaded the greater part of the Canada Indians to advance again, and we got to the 12 where they halted, and about the first of July we were joined by about 150 of the western Ottawas and Chippewas. I had tried for several days to get our people to advance to the 10 again. Promise after promise was made but I could not get them to go until I got the Western Indians to move, when they could not avoid following, and we took up our old ground at the 10. We had been there many days when I received the following note :

“HEADQUARTERS, 10 o'clock p. m., July 7th.

“DEAR SIR,—I have Major-General De Rottenburg's directions to direct you will move forward a body of Indians to-morrow morning in the direction of Fort George. They must take post in front of [Chorus's] house, where some medicine belonging to the army was deposited, which it is the object of this movement to secure. Capt. Merritt will be sent from hence early to-morrow morning with wag-gons in which to bring off these medicines. A company of the King's will escort them from hence. It is therefore necessary that the officer who accompanies the Indians should point out the necessity of

remaining in front of the house above named until the waggons have returned.

"I am, dear Sir,  
"Your obedient servant.

"(Sgd.) J. HARVEY.

"Col. Claus, D. S. G."

This note was received about 12 at night, and I immediately went to the camp and altho it was an unusual hour for Indians I must do them the justice to say that they most readily turned out about 100 men, and I ordered Capt. Norton, with the Interpreters Lyons, Brisbois and Langlade to accompany the Indians. They went off in the morning as desired. I told them if they were desirous to go on after the waggons were safe they might, which they did, and I believe I reported to you in my letter of the 11th July last. In this affair two Indians and one interpreter were wounded. All credit [was] again given to Norton, when Lyons, Brisbois and Langlade, interpreters, were the men who encouraged the Indians. The lavished praise on Norton caused jealousy. I did not mention to you an occurrence which happened on that occasion. The Blackbird, an Ottawa chief, complained that a person had been very troublesome to him, and insisted upon getting his prisoners from him. He had presented them to me. He only wanted to keep them one night, and gave me his word that nothing should happen to them, but he was obliged to give them up. This he mentioned to General De Rottenburg. The General asked him who it was. He pointed to Colonel Young. When my back was turned I was accused of setting the Indians up to this. An officer was sent privately to the camp, privately to try and find out if I had. I complained and demanded an enquiry, as the department had been too often accused of these doings, but I could get no satisfaction. Shortly after Captain Norton stated that I had given orders that no interpreter should interpret for him. All his reports were, to use an Indian expression, underground, and on his complaint it would be enquired into, and that privately. Three interpreters that he named were sent for without acquainting me, and at General De Rottenburg's two were sworn in the presence of Generals De Rottenburg and Vincent, Lieut.-Col. Harvey and Major Glegg, the third being ill and could not attend. After a very narrow investigation [they] could find nothing out. Thus have I been treated through the machinations of this man. I shall have occasion to speak of him again.

Previous to the 5th of July the Tuscaroras on the opposite side of the river by Queenston appeared several days and conversed across the river and expressed a wish to see our people. A day was fixed and the following was the substance of the conversation :

The Onondagas saluted the old Tuscarora chief and nine others with him.

Katwerota, an Onondaga chief, spoke:—

“We understand that it was your wish to see and speak with us. We have now come to hear what you have to say.”

Te Karchaga, a Mohawk chief, said:—

“Brothers! The Onondagas have spoken and told you we were ready to hear what you have to say. The chiefs of 16 Nations are here to listen.”

Osequirison, the Tuscarora chief, spoke:—

“Brothers! Our desire to see you is to know whether the same sentiments of friendship exist that you expressed at the Standing Stone (Brownstown) two years ago. Notwithstanding we are separated by the contention between the British and Americans, our sentiments are still the same.”

Katwerota spoke again:—

“Brothers! You see, notwithstanding the report that the British are weak, the Great Spirit is with us and we are able to take possession again. As the King has been obliged to give ground at Niagara, we wish to understand from you whether you are induced to take part with the Americans or not? We wish to know what you had to communicate with us in particular?”

Osequirison: “These times have been very hard and we labor under great difficulties, being so near the lines, and we wish to know whether your sentiments are still friendly towards us and if you cross the river whether you will hurt us?”

Katwerota: “This will depend on yourselves. If you take no part with the Americans we shall meet you with the same friendship as we ever did, and we look for the day when you shall see our forces on your side of the water. We have no contention with you. It is the King and the Americans, and we have taken part with the King. We will contend for his rights.”

Te Karchaga: “Brothers! We take leave of you. The head of our army, and your friend, the head of our department, salute you.”

I am very confident it was fully expected that we were going over and they were convinced there was nothing to prevent it. They had not shown themselves nor given any assistance to the enemy, I believe. During this time, and indeed previously, I felt myself unpleasantly situated.

The Government had an opinion of Norton. Everything was done to bring him forward. Altho' I observed the conduct of officers in power towards me nothing was ever said until the beginning of July. In consequence of a very unnecessary expenditure of provisions and, as I considered, a very improper one, which was, issuing on any-

one's order, I issued an order that no requisitions were to be made but by Major Givins and myself, dividing the Indians, giving Major Givins all the Northern and taking the Grand River and Western Indians myself. This gave offence and after dinner one day with General De Rottenburg he took me on one side and said that Norton had been complaining that he could not give provisions to Indians as I had stopped it. The order I gave was shewn to General De Rottenburg and I told him that he had approved of it but if it was his wish that Capt. Norton should have the power of drawing I would readily give up those I drew for, that my object was the interest of the service and that I felt it my duty to tell His Honour that the Government was deceived in the high opinion it had of that man but that it was my duty to obey the wish or direction of the Government, let the consequence be what it would, and an order was issued that in the future Capt. Norton would victual these Indians, which he did. Both in public and private did the Indians speak of him in a most despicable manner and all this [was] attributed to me. With the army there never was such a man.

After this when we took the advanced position at the Four Mile Creek the Indians were to go to the roads in the Centre. While they were getting their packs tied General De Rottenburg arrived in their camp, about 6 a. m., and changed the plan. To try his strength he (Norton) was to go to the left and Major Givins to the right, and those Indians who chose to go with him would go to the left and those that wished to go with Major Givins would go to the right, and I was desired to let the Indians understand clearly that they were to do as they pleased. Not one Indian went to the left, and I assure you, upon my honor, I did all in my power to get 200 to go with him, but no. This was my doing again. I felt myself so unpleasantly situated that I could not help telling General Vincent, in the presence of Lieut.-Col. Plenderleath and other officers, that it was my misfortune that my family's existence depended upon my situation—was that not the case that I should retire at all hazards: that I never concealed my opinion of Capt. Norton: that it most certainly was not the same that the Government had of him: that I could not think well of him, but that I had and was determined, contrary to my opinion, to endeavour all in my power to support him.

Shortly after, meeting this character at dinner at General De Rottenburg's, the old subject of the intrigues and cabals of the Six Nations was brought and my saying that they hated Norton. This I denied but declared what I had always said, and which I said again, that the Six Nations would not be commanded by him, (for this is one of his great objects), and that I was convinced that it was this that caused jealousy among them. The General proposed calling the

Indians together and to declare to them that no one was to command them. I replied that I thought it very proper, but that his time was so very precious at that moment I thought the best way for Captain Norton to try his influence was to say he required 50 or 100 men to go with him, and then we would see his influence. He declined this, and required the Council. This was in the presence of General De Rottenburg. I told Capt. Norton to warn the Indians that the General would meet them at twelve next day. When he went away the General expressed a wish that the Council should not take much of his time. I told him I feared that most of the day would be taken up, but that I would go up to the X roads early in the morning and see what I could do to make it as short as possible. When I arrived at the camp I found Capt. Norton in deep council with a few and said what I had come for, and as usual his reply was, "*The General did not tell me so.*" After a little while I sent for the Indians, that the General when he arrived need not wait. On Capt. Norton's coming he expressed his surprise that any Indians were called except the Grand River Indians. I told him it was the General's desire that all the Indians should be present, but as I had and was determined to give way to him in everything I would now do what was most uncustomary and send away the other nations, which I did. On the Governor's arrival he opened the Council in the usual manner, by saluting them, and afterwards told them that it appeared to him that there was something which caused uneasiness in their minds; that they conceived they were to be commanded; that he repeatedly desired it to be made known to them that no one was to command them; that they were to be led by their own chiefs, but that to make their minds quite easy he had come down to tell them so from his own mouth. Capt. Norton interrupted the interpreter and said that I had told the General that the Indians hated him. I again contradicted him and appealed to the General, but what I have said I will repeat, that they will not be led by you. The General was obliged to interfere, and order him to allow the interpreter to go on. After this each nation spoke, and said they did not hate him but wished he would let them alone; that they did not want him about them, and mentioned some things that were by no means in his favor, which he endeavored to explain away. After this "the Echo," an Onondaga chief, made a very long speech, neither in his favor nor against him, altho' he was brought forward by him to speak, and the day before he told General De Rottenburg that this man was no chief, but as he could speak he was brought forward, and that he was a worthless fellow, and appealed to me if it was not so, and he was the only man he could get to come forward. The Council broke up, and not much to the satisfaction of Capt. Norton. Not many days after this General De Rottenburg



called a Council of all the nations, and before he had finished this man had the audacity to step forward and address the chiefs. I stepped back and told the General I was determined not to interfere or interrupt Capt. Norton, but that he was now interrupting the Council. The General spoke to him [but] he replied that he had not six words to say and persisted. After the Council was over the Mohawk chief, Te-Karchaga, spoke and began by telling when Norton first came among them they were ignorant of the tree he sprung from or any of its branches. That latterly he became a chief and was exposing him a good deal, when Norton got up and addressed the Indians and prevented the chief from proceeding, and turned about to the officers and said that what he had said would be answered in a few words, that he did not come there to hear a long sermon. His conduct, I believe, began to disgust General De Rottenburg and most of his supporters, for most of the officers were present. A few days after this he called at my room and said that I had sent for him. I told him he never was more mistaken; that I should be candid with him, that I had not sent for him, neither did I ever wish to see a man who would under-handedly state falsehoods to prejudice the Commander of the Forces against me. He attempted to explain. I would not allow him, but told him that a day would arrive when I should call on him to make good his representations or suffer, I trusted, for his infamy towards me. He went to General Vincent's tent and, as usual, complained of my treatment of him, and the General's patience. I believe, got exhausted, when he told him he never came to see him but with some grievance or complaint against me and Major Givins: that we often came to see him and sat for hours without even mentioning his name, and that he firmly believed that we never gave ourselves the trouble of thinking about him. He was constantly threatening to leave us and join his friends in the west, and I assure you that one time General De Rottenburg was seriously alarmed about it. Since these people have come down it does not appear that he is known by them, and Elliott confirms the opinion that they do not know him. He had connected himself with the Onondagas, but for what reason I do not know he has left them. He had done the same with the Mohawks, and has two children in that nation. He has now connected himself with a Delaware family, and has married the grand-daughter of an old man or rather the daughter of a deserter from the Queen's Rangers and a common woman. Had the family been of any weight or the least consequence I should not have been surprised, but they are the poorest and least influenced among their people: indeed, they are seldom with their nation, being among the whites making brooms and baskets, and the mother and daughter amusing themselves. This is the connection he has formed. Mr. Addison married them in August

last, since which he has done nothing but ride about the country with madam and a posse of his connections.

The next thing that occurred was a skirmish at Ball's, the farm on which all our little skirmishes or scenes took place last summer. The enemy made their appearance on the 17th of July, and the Indians immediately turned out, and one Cayuga lad was killed by a round shot. I was not with them, as I was stationed at St. Davids, from whence I shortly removed to where the Indians were in the centre at the crossroads.

On the 17th of August the enemy made their appearance, and the troops and Indians were under arms immediately and advanced. Col. Stewart of the Royals desired that Indians should be sent to the right and left that we might not have our flanks turned. I did it with reluctance as I never wished to separate the Indians. This was not enough. When we got to the advanced picquets more parties were required to be sent out, and our number reduced from upwards of 300 to not more than 50. We had not been long here (advanced picquet) when firing commenced on our left in Ball's fields, to which place I went as quick as possible with the few Indians I had remaining, not supported with or by the troops, and met the Senecas, who, after exchanging some shots, led us into a trap, for in the skirts of the wood were laying the riflemen and a number of the troops. We retired to the first field that we engaged them in, and after some firing Capt. Norton observed that it would not do, that we must retire and collect. That was enough. The word was hardly given when all set off from the field, when Major Givins observed to me that we might as well follow. We were then alone in the field on the skirt of the wood. I endeavored to halt them, but all in vain. Our loss was severe this day. I attributed it to dividing us, for our Indians that were detached ran to the spot and met the Senecas whom they took for our own people. Five were killed, three wounded and ten taken prisoners, besides Captain Lorimier and Livingstone, the interpreter who was severely wounded. It was nearly attended with serious consequences. The Western Indians had four of their people killed, and said that the Six Nations were the cause of it. Every Indian moved off from their camp, some eight and ten miles. The next morning the sentries reported that Indians were seen in the skirt of the wood. I collected all the Indians I could and about 50 men of the Glengarry Regiment, under Major De Haren. We advanced in an extended line through a wood to a clearing on the opposite side, (Ball's fields again), when an inhabitant came to me to say that a large column was advancing by Ball's house. I rode to the road and could not see more than 40 or 50 men, but looking to their right I perceived a number of people running towards our left. I immediately went

back to where our people were and we retired into the wood and formed there. We again changed our ground and crossed the road, after which the skirmish began and continued three hours. When we went out Capt. Norton declined to go on such foolish business. After we had been engaged an hour and a half he made his appearance. The troops certainly came to our support this day. We lost one Cayuga chief, killed. The Senecas lost two killed and one taken prisoner. The prisoner was much in liquor. He told me it was the case the day before, that they were made drunk, pushed forward and not supported. After we retired General De Rottenburg met Norton, took him by the hand and complimented him upon his gallant and [meritorious?] conduct, to the mortification of a number of the officers of the department present, when no notice was taken of them. I had the gratification in that part of the field to show him to an officer of the Royals, who called out to me: "For God's sake! Col. Claus, why will you not send somebody to support Capt. Norton?" "Where is he, Sir?" "There in front with only four or five Indians." This was John Brant. I called to John and asked him where Norton was. "There, Sir," pointing to a fence about 50 yards in rear, and Norton at the same time calling out, "Here I am." "I went to the officer and asked him where Norton was. He made no answer but rode off, but such was the opinion of the man that nothing could be done but by him.

On the 20th of August, I believe, Sir George Prevost arrived. On that day two of our Indians, La Serre and a Delaware, prisoners, were sent with a flag to speak to our Indians. It was to say that if they would retire the Nations with the Americans would do the same. Their reply was that their minds were made up; that they were determined to share the fate of the King.

On the 23d I rode up to St. Davids to pay my respects to Sir George. He was closeted with General De Rottenburg, Lieut.-Col. Harvey and Lieut.-Col. Nichol, Quartermaster General of Militia. General De Rottenburg came over to his house for me and I was honored by being admitted and the intended reconnoissance made known to me, or, as I expected, an attack on Fort George. I was told to have the Indians ready. I applied for the *Voltigeurs*, as I was told they were to be attached to me. They were ordered to join us and the arrangement left to me. I returned immediately to camp and sent for Major Heriot, with whom our plan was arranged. I collected all the Indians, gave them distinguishing marks and supplied them with ammunition, telling them that every man would be required before day. My plan was to advance between picquets Nos: 3 and 4, so as to support either of the parties attacking their picquets. All the enemy's picquets were to be attacked at the same time. We

could either have given them support or cut them off in their retreat. While waiting before day for the order to advance, Lieut.-Col. Harvey rode up and asked me my plan. I told him. He said it might interfere with Lieut.-Col. Battersby and defeat his object. "Then what shall I do?" "You had better remain with the reserve." "That will never do for the Indians, but if you will permit me I will advance near Ball's and remain there." This was agreed to. Some time after the firing commenced at daylight, General Vincent advanced to where we were and ordered us to advance and cover the dragoons that were going into town. We went on and a dragoon came to me from Lieut.-Col. Harvey and said that the whole of the American force was in the wood to my right. I waved my hand to the Indians, who were a good way in my rear, to cross a fence and scour the skirts of the wood, upon which Colonel Harvey came up and asked me what was the matter. He was much vexed at the fellow as he had directed him to send some Indians and see if there were no Indians in the wood upon my right. Upon which a party was immediately sent, and Major Givins with another party further to my right, and the main body with myself covered the 19th Dragoons with Lieut.-Col. Harvey, who galloped into town driving the picquets and everything else before them. On getting into town we met the different parties of our troops who had advanced by the left and in the rear of my house. The Indians all assembled and formed a line, and were advancing into town, from whence we received a few shot. Their advance was done of their own accord without any orders, and I am convinced that in twenty minutes we would have been in the middle of the town and silenced the firing, but the following note reached me as we were advancing:—

"Col. Claus will retire with the cavalry to the camp."

This was from Lieut. Barnard, General Vincent's *aide-de-camp*, upon which I drew off the Indians, and on the road Sir George desired that I would pest the Indians in the wood along the road and wait an hour to see if the enemy would come out. We waited till the bugle sounded for our going in. Thus ended the affair of the 24th of August, which we anxiously expected was the day of attack instead of a reconnoissance. On this occasion the Indians were not mentioned, although they did everything that was required of them, but I can only account for it in this way, that Captain Norton was not with them. On the 22d when Sir George left the room we were in I took the opportunity of following him and mentioning the order of the 7th of August, and told him that I felt it as a most severe reflection on me, that I knew Capt. Norton corresponded with headquarters [and] that I had reason to believe he had been making representations against me. Sir George admitted that he had. I told him what I supposed

these representations were; that this was no time for division, but that a day would arrive, I hoped, when I should look for justice, and that I would make it appear under his own handwriting that he had made false representations. I mentioned these instances, when Sir George retired saying, "If what I suspect is true he will dwindle into that insignificance from whence he rose," and I should have said a great deal more had Sir George given me the opportunity, but before he left I gave him my opinion of Captain Norton, and said the same that I did to General De Rottenburg and General Vincent, that I did not think well of him, and not as the Government did, yet it was my duty to support him, although contrary to my opinion. It appears that Sir George spoke to him and very seriously, which, I understood, from an officer at headquarters, was not well received.

A few days after [on] the 6th Sept., a party of our people went to a field of oats belonging to Mr. Ball to cut them. While there they were fired upon. I collected all the Indians immediately and joined our people. Lieut.-Col. Battersby with the Glengarry Regiment went out with us, and after some hours firing we retired. Two Oneidas were killed on the side of the enemy and two wounded. We had two Mohawks wounded and one Cayuga taken. He was drunk and ran into their hands. A Tuscarora chief, who was also very drunk, went forward after we retired and brought on the firing again, by which he lost his life. Seeing the enemy in pursuit of him we returned the fire, and a young Delaware, who was more active than the others, got a shot at the two white men who were taking off his scalp and broke the arm of one. His ammunition was out or he would have killed one of the two men. He received two wounds, one of which lamed him.

On this occasion General De Rottenburg was pleased to issue an order, an extract of which is annexed, although on former occasions no notice of us was taken, particularly on the 18th and 24th of August. I shall say nothing of the 17th August, although it was a severe action and our loss was great, but we ran away, I am sorry to say, shamefully. I have accounted for it in preceding pages of this narrative.

" HEADQUARTERS, FOUR MILE CREEK.

9th September, 1813.

"A report having been made to General De Rottenburg of the gallant and very spirited conduct of a small party of Indians under the direction of Colonel Claus and Captain Kerr, in an affair with the enemy's riflemen near the Cross Roads on Monday last, the Major-General has directed that a communication of his thanks be made to the Indians engaged that day. Their conduct in this affair has

given the Major-General particular satisfaction, inasmuch as it affords proof that their zeal in the cause in which we are engaged is undiminished, as well as their confidence in the support which they are sure always to receive from their white brethren.

About this time desertions became so prevalent that the General wished me to move to the left and induce some of the Indians to go that way. I moved and took about 60, and although we were not successful in taking any of the deserters, yet in some measure it was put a stop to. The Indians both on the left and the centre went out every night a half mile in advance of our picquets and returned after daylight. This they continued until the General desired that I would take them off, as it was too fatiguing. They never complained, but went out every night most cheerfully. From their inactive life in other respects the Indians became very tired, and frequently wished to know when the attack on Fort George would be made, that their people were always on the road going home, but if they knew they would collect all their force. This I could never answer, for I was as much in the dark with respect to the operations of our little army as they were. You are aware of the necessity of having presents to enable us to keep the Indians in good humor. General De Rottenburg directed me to purchase what I could, but the country was so stripped of everything that what I could get was not enough for fifty men, yet I must do them the justice to say that there was very little discontent on that head except among worthless fellows.

I must again bring Mr. Norton forward. One of his great grievances was not having the power of making presents: that I would not allow him. This was one of his complaints, when the storekeepers' accounts will show that of those few articles he gave away more than I did, and even 24 blankets that I put aside for the Western Indians were given away on his order, and my word to those people forfeited. Such is the villainy of this man, for I can call it nothing else. After the order of the 7th August he sent his notes to me as usual, which I refused, saying that if he made a requisition for any quantity agreeably to the order of the 7th August I would submit it to the General for his approval, and he would then get them and distribute them as he pleased. This was a subject of complaint again, and when the General saw me he told me of it, and that he offered to put goods in his hands, which he declined, as he had no storekeeper. I told the General that he must now see his object—a distinct department—however, he did not succeed. Early in September we got a quantity of calico, some serg., sateen, tobacco and several other articles. Such quantity as was required was issued, and a great quantity of calico remaining, which I left in rear at the Twelve Mile Creek.

On the 26th September I perceived an uncommon stir in our

camp, all tents struck, waggons loaded, etc. I was rather anxious but as no order had been communicated to me I remained quiet. The Indians were uneasy, and many went off from an idea we were going to retreat. About 9 o'clock p. m. I received a note to say that the militiamen for the guard-boat had not gone down that night; on the answer sent I received a note from the Deputy-Adjutant-General, Lieut.-Colonel Harvey, saying he supposed I had not seen the General Order of that day. I ordered my horse and rode down to his quarters and begged a sight of the order. It was for the troops to hold themselves in readiness to move at an instant's notice. He observed that there was a probability of an attack in the morning, and everything was to be in readiness to move to the centre, to concentrate our forces there. I replied that I was very sorry, but that the preparations had caused uneasiness among the Indians and that many had gone off, but that I would warn those in camp and have them with me before day, which I did, but they were much dissatisfied, saying that their eyes were always kept shut which was not the case in former days. I did all I could to quiet them and at this time their numbers had dwindled down to eight only, and at the Cross Roads I believe not more than 50. Whenever I mentioned the necessity and propriety of acquainting the Indians with any movement that was likely to take place I was generally asked: "Why are they to be made acquainted with any plan of operations? No! No!"

Seeing that the heavy baggage was moving to the right, I submitted the necessity of sending what Indian goods we had to the Forty Mile Creek, which the General approved of, and desired that I would have it done. I rode from his house to the 12 and directed the storekeeper, Mr. Price, to send a few articles to the Cross Roads and to send the rest to the 40. A few days after this I was ordered to the Heights to forward some presents, which were supposed to have arrived there for the Western Indians. My object in going was to select those I knew were most wanted and to forward them first. On my arrival at the 12 I found none of the goods had been moved and the storekeeper insisting on it that I had not given any directions about them, when nothing took me up the day before but for the express purpose of sending them back. On my arrival at the Heights I had the mortification to hear of the fate of General Procter's small force, and not an article of presents there for the Western Indians but what had been forwarded before. The enclosed letter from Colonel Elliott will more fully explain to you every transaction since the unfortunate capture of our fleet on Lake Erie. The prior transactions in that part of the country you are in possession of. The day after my arrival at Burlington Heights I never was more surprised than to hear of our people retreating on the Heights, and the following night

Major Givins and the officers of the department joined me at Ancaster, except Mr. Price, storekeeper. On account of his neglect all the goods we had were destroyed at the 12, as well as a quantity of provisions and commissariat stores. The unfortunate defeat of General Procter alarmed the Grand River Indians, and on Colonel Elliott and Capt. McKee advising them to move as soon as possible, as General Harrison was in pursuit of General Procter, they immediately abandoned their homes and came down with the army and are now with the Western Indians encamped at the beach in rear of Mr. Brant's. The enclosed return is of the Western Indians and the other paper that of the Grand River [Indians]. For them we have as yet received but a very small proportion of presents. The vast number of horses and cattle that is with the Indians is injuring the country very much. Parties are kept with the advance at Stoney Creek. Colonel Elliott and his officers are there. I have stated all that my memory allows me. Many circumstances have occurred, I am certain, that I have not mentioned. Should any come to recollection I shall let you know. One thing I have to remark, that jealousy certainly exists in respect to orders, in which the troops always get credit for what is done by the Indians, particularly to the westward. I do not believe that Colonel Elliott's name has ever appeared in general orders, and that man has been out with the Indians upon every occasion, and no man has suffered more than he.

I am, dear Sir, with every sentiment of respect and regard,

Your faithful servant and friend,

W. CLAUS,

Deputy Superintendent Gen.

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A LETTER FROM LIEUT.-COLONEL MATTHEW ELLIOTT TO  
COLONEL WM. CLAUS.

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DUNDAS, 24th Oct., 1813.

DEAR SIR,—I have to inform you of the arrival of myself and about 2,000 Indians, (men, women and children,) at this place from the Western District. The causes that led to this event will be best explained by a simple narrative of facts that have occurred since the loss of our fleet on the 10th September.

A few days after that event Major-General Procter gave orders to remove the stores and dismantle the fort preparative to the retreat of the troops. This being done without the Indians being consulted



caused a very great jealousy, from the supposition that their father was about to desert them. This was heightened by the uncertainty they labored under with respect to the fate of the fleet. To obtain an explanation Tecumtha and the other chiefs requested General Procter and myself to meet them in council, which took place on the 17th September, when Tecumtha, in the name of the whole, delivered a speech, the purport of which was to call on the General for information of his intentions, and to urge his making a stand with the Indians and the physical force of the country at Amherstburg before he retreated, stating that until we were beaten it would be inpolitic to give ground. On the 19th the General returned his answer, in which he stated it was not his intention to leave the District but only to fall back to the river Thames at Chatham where he would be out of reach of their shipping. He was determined to make a stand. To this place he invited them to accompany him. Agreeable to the arrangements which took place at the Council the Shawanese, Hurons and other Indians crossed and proceeded to Sandwich. On the 23rd the enemy landed at Amherstburg, and the same day the troops retreated to Levalle's. The Indian goods which had come up I met at Sandwich and sent them back as far as Mrs. McIntosh's, where the next day I distributed part of them to the Indians, with whom I remained, and kept two days march in rear of our troops. On our arrival at the river Thames I had the number of the Indians taken, when it appeared that the Pottawatomes, Miamies, Ottawas, (a part of them,) and Chippewas had remained behind and it was supposed had crossed the river Detroit. This desertion reduced our number to 1000, (the number we should have had, had the stand been made at Amherstburg was 3000.) This number was again lessened on the 2d of October by the desertion of the Hurons and a few of the Shawanese, who, finding from our movements that we did not intend to make a stand at Chatham, as had been agreed at the Council, embraced an opportunity afforded them by a flag borne by the Indians of Sandusky to take the Americans by the hand. The enemy's ships were at this time off the mouth off the River Thames. The inhabitants, who were the bearers of the flag, told the Hurons that General Harrison would, on the 3d at 12 o'clock, make his headquarters at Colonel McKee's farm. This information I communicated to General Procter on the morning of the 3d, shortly after which he proceeded towards the Moravian Town, 28 miles distant, and about an hour after he set off our scouts brought word that the enemy had crossed the forks and were rapidly advancing up the river. An express was immediately sent to apprise the General, (the express overtook him at Shaw's,) and Colonel Warburton made arrangements to meet them at or near McCrae's. A party of Indians attacked and compelled their advance

guard to retire. The Indians, in consequence of the General's absence, drew off across the forks at that time and sent word to Colonel Warburton that they were determined not to fight as the General had deceived them by leaving them. I was enabled to change their minds and they agreed to wait and meet the enemy at Chatham. The troops fell back opposite this place on the morning of the 4th October. The enemy advanced up to Chatham, where a partial skirmish took place between the advance guards. At about 11 o'clock a. m. General Procter arrived and found fault with Colonel Warburton for leaving Dolson's. Yet he very soon after ordered the troops to retreat to Moravian Town. From the manner in which this was conducted the greater part of the provisions and stores fell into the enemy's hands. The Indians kept up a fire across the fork for some time after the troops moved off and then followed, after burning a house in which was a quantity of arms and stores. We halted this evening at Sherman's, five miles from the Moravian Town. The women and most of the baggage had been sent forward a few days previous. Early on the morning of the 5th our scouts brought word that the enemy was advancing on both sides of the river rapidly and in force. The General determined to halt and wait for their arrival, for which purpose the troops were halted about two miles from Jackman's. The troops were posted in two lines on the left, so as to have their flank, covered by the river, supported by a six-pounder which was posted in the road, the Indians in one line on the right. In this position we waited about two hours, when the enemy commenced the attack. Our six-pounder was carried by a few American horse without its being once discharged. The conduct of the troops was shameful in the highest degree; a great part of them never fired one round until they retreated. This threw the Indians in the centre into confusion and they broke. On the right they remained firing and compelled the enemy's left wing to retreat about a mile and a half. I have as yet been unable to ascertain the enemy's loss but judge it must have been considerable. The Indians on their return from the pursuit were much surprised to find that we had not been equally successful on the left, and the unexpectedness threw them into confusion and a retreat ensued, which put the whole of our baggage, both public and private, into the hands of the enemy. At daylight next morning I overtook General Procter at Delaware, and, making every arrangement in my power for the accommodation of the Indians, I proceeded to Burford, from whence Captain Wm. Elliott was by me sent back to Delaware to meet the Indians and to purchase provisions for them on the route. He joined me at Burford on the 22d with the last of the Indians, about 700 in number, when I proceeded with them

to this place. Should there be any more coming in I have made such arrangements as will insure them provisions on the road.

I am, dear Sir, your obedient, humble servant,  
The Hon. W. Claus, Esq.

M. ELLIOTT.

(From the Canadian Archives, C. 681.)

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN JOHN NORTON TO HON. HENRY  
GOULBURN.

LONDON, Jan. 29, 1816.

SIR,—Having presented a memorial petitioning such consideration of rank as might be thought proportionate to the number of warriors I led and services in the field, I now give some instances well known to many officers now in this country.

When the report came to the Niagara frontier that the American General Hull had crossed at Sandwich I proposed to the late Major-General, Sir Isaac Brock, to go with as many warriors as I could collect to endeavour to prevent the enemy from drawing supplies from the River Thames. He acceded to my request, and to strengthen the undertaking he ordered two hundred militia from Long Point to join Major Chambers, with a detachment of the 41st Regiment. The militia refusing to turn out, this officer was recalled with his men to embark at Long Point. We proceeded by the intended route, collecting a body of Ottawa and Chippawa warriors as we advanced.

According to the orders I had received I opened a correspondence with General Procter, and having placed ourselves in advance of the mills, where the enemy had deposited [supplies], as we were constantly gaining additional strength we waited there until I received a letter from the General named to advance and join him at Sandwich. The day after our arrival there Major-General Sir Isaac Brock came with reinforcements.

After summoning General Hull to surrender, without effect, he told me to keep in readiness to cross the river before day, and that he had particularly selected me to precede the troops in marching to the attack of the fort. As we approached the fort a party of the enemy's riflemen retired before us, and soon after we saw the white flag hoisted and a parley commenced which ended in a capitulation.

When General Brock embarked to return to Niagara he urged me to lose no time in taking down my party to that frontier. Every diligence was used and I had soon collected between five and six hundred men. We saw the enemy daily increasing their force on the opposite shore and were constantly employed in watching their motions. After a few weeks the want of supplies and the approach of the season for hunting caused my party to diminish in number.

The attack and capture of some vessels at Fort Erie by the enemy caused us to march to that place in support of the troops stationed there. Perceiving that no further attempts was likely to be made in that quarter we returned to Fort George.

On the morning of the 13th of October we heard firing at Queenston. I saw the General and his staff at a distance riding towards that place. I called upon Major-General Sir R. H. Sheaffe, the second in command. He directed me to get my men in readiness. On my way to the camp Lieut.-Col. Evans of the King's rode up to me and told me that the enemy was in possession of Queenston. We hastened towards that place and when within two miles we heard that General Brock was killed and that the troops and militia stationed there had been compelled to retire.

We saw the enemy on the heights and determined to attack him by inclining to the right to ascend the eminence on the left of his flank. We met several retiring. I told an officer among them that we would assail the enemy in the flank where he least expected it, and that a speedy co-operation of the troops would enable us to give him a speedy overthrow.

We ascended the hill, attacked and drove an advanced party of the enemy into the main body, which we assailed notwithstanding the great odds of numbers. Persevering several hours, when we saw the troops and militia coming by the same route which we had passed, I concentrated my men in a ravine and desisted from assaulting the enemy until the troops could form on our right, at the same time sending notice to Sir R. H. Sheaffe of our position.

He sent Lieut. Kerr to enquire our situation and the strength of the enemy, to whom I fully explained the advantage I expected to derive in assailing them from the quarter we occupied as soon as the troops should advance on the right. The General then sent me a further reinforcement. As soon as all was in readiness and the cannon began we rushed upon them and broke the flank, pursuing them with considerable slaughter till we raised the shout in the rear of the centre, which seemed to throw the whole into confusion, when, in less than half an hour, we had them down the precipice to the river.

General Wadsworth and a great number of officers and upwards of nine hundred men then surrendered to Major-General Sir R. H. Sheaffe. In this last assault His Majesty's troops met with no loss, or at the utmost two or three men. In the morning the 49th flank companies suffered severely in gallantly opposing a very superior force. The enemy acknowledged to have sent twenty-two hundred men across and allege that the militia, who had not yet passed the river, refused to follow the van on seeing the manner in which it was assailed.

The enemy was yet in great force on the opposite shore, which gave us just cause to watch them until after Christmas, when the ice floating in the river prevented the possibility of their crossing. The General acceded to our going home. Soon after, I received instructions to go to Detroit. General Procter, commanding there, being desirous to retain me, obtained the consent of Sir George Prevost, but being necessitated to go home I did not think fit to leave our own frontiers without the assent of Sir R. H. Sheaffe, which he at first declined giving, alleging that he soon expected an attack. Being desirous to overcome General Harrison, that we might concentrate to repel the attack hanging over us, I persisted and he acquiesced. However, it was of no effect, for a few days after, while I was yet collecting my party to go, we heard that the enemy had attacked York.

I then went in that direction with all the men I could raise as far as the Beach of Lake Ontario, when I heard that all was over and that the enemy had re-embarked. At that time, receiving letters from General Vincent and Lieut.-Colonel Myers to repair to Fort George, I went there with all that would follow, for the greater part went home to plant their corn.

On the 27th May at Fort George we did as well as we could and retired among the last, opposing for some time a very superior force. At the Twelve Mile Creek a number joined us from the Grand River.

We stopped there to cover the retreat and attack the enemy if the General should see fit. The army retreated and we followed. At Stoney Creek a few of us risked with His Majesty's troops, and afterwards, by repeatedly attacking every detachment that ventured outside of the fortified encampment at Fort George, we lessened the number of the enemy and so far intimidated them that they became like prisoners at their own expense.

At the battle of Chippawa we were victorious when we fought the volunteer militia, and the aborigines of different tribes aiding the enemy fled before us. We killed many and took some prisoners; among the former was a Lieutenant-Colonel commanding and a Seneca chief, among the latter a major and some other officers. Coming to the enemy's columns we fired on them until we perceived our army to be retreating, overwhelmed by a very superior force. We followed.

At the battle of the Cataract\* we risked with our brother warriors, and afterwards following the enemy to Fort Erie we partook of every bloody encounter in this vicinity.

Tired of enumerating scenes, in which my heart was all engaged

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\* Lundy's Lane.

and its greatest pleasure the defeat of our enemies, I conclude, in confidence, that such a statement will not be taken in any other point of view than having some memorial of the same beloved sovereign that may give satisfaction to my brother warriors.