

warriors who were part of General Roger Hale Sheaffe's ultimately successful retaking of the Redan Battery at Queenston Heights.

Norton refused to abide by the Grand River council's policy of neutrality and went into battle with 60 Grand River warriors, but half of them returned before any action.

Norton had met Brock on September 6, 1812 at Fort George and he sent word to the Grand River for the chiefs and warriors to assemble at the fort with all possible speed because Brock thought the American attack was imminent. Norton stuck his hatchet in a war pole and the warriors, dressed and painted for battle formed around, each man giving the chief a piece of wood painted red as a symbol of his commitment to the coming battle. Songs were sung, war drums beaten, and the war dance followed.

The Events of October 1812

John Norton, of Scottish and Cherokee ancestry, was the adopted nephew of Joseph Brant, and by some accounts was made a Pine Tree Chief at Grand River. Prior to the war Norton was pursuing his uncles' campaign for justice from the Crown for land rights on behalf of the Council at Grand River. He was also at odds with head of the Indian Department William Claus and there was a constant battle within the pro- and anti-Norton factions at Grand River.

Norton and 160 Native warriors who fought at Queenston have been credited by both eyewitnesses and subsequent historians as providing essential support and diversion to hold off the American advance until British reinforcements arrived from Fort Erie.

One eyewitness gave this account:

The Indians were first in advance. As soon as they perceived the enemy they uttered their terrific warwhoop, and rushing rapidly upon them commenced a most destructive fire. Our troops instantly sprung forward from all quarters, joining in the shout. The Americans gave a volley, then tumultuously fled by hundreds down the mountain (towards the river).

Another account:

[Norton's] brilliant tactical decision to take a "circuit" meant an ascent of the escarpment at a considerable distance along the road west of Queenston, and a climb easier than that attempted by Major-General Isaac Brock on the cliff close to the Niagara River. The woods on the right flank of the American force moving westward along the heights were precisely what Norton and his Indians needed for cover as they pinned down the enemy's advance until Major-General Roger Hale Sheaffe and his troops came up to sweep the Americans off the heights. Reinforcements from Chippawa also arrived.

Sheaffe mentioned in his dispatches "the judicious position which Norton and the Indians with him had taken." One week after the battle, on 20 October, Sheaffe honoured Norton by