

# BATTLE OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

## A THRILLING CHAPTER OF CANADIAN HISTORY.

BY EARNEST CRUIKSHANK.

Their secret and persistent efforts to enlist the Indians residing in New York and Pennsylvania actively on their side finally promised to be successful. In July Erastus Granger, the American Indian Agent for the State of New York, held a council with the Senecas at Buffalo, during which he proposed that they should permit two hundred of their young men to join the American army. This they refused to do, but consented to send some of their chiefs to the Grand River to dissuade their confederate tribes from joining the British. In this mission they were unsuccessful, but Granger appears to have represented to his government that they were anxious to be employed themselves, for as early as the 27th of July, the Secretary of War wrote to Dearborn, enclosing a letter to Granger, authorizing him to organize the warriors of the Six Nations conditionally. At this time it was impossible for him to have known that any Indians had joined the British. About the middle of September, Van Rensselaer held a grand council with the Tuscaroras, and advantage was readily taken for the appearance of a British scouting party upon Grand Island, which was still the property of the Senecas, to excite alarm among them lest they should be deprived of these lands. They were then induced to declare war formally, and Red Jacket pompously announced that they would put 3,000 warriors in the field. Several hundred Indians were brought down from the Alleghany River and a great feast and war dance held in the streets of Buffalo. Almost at the moment when these events were taking place, the Secretary again wrote to Dearborn: "By letters received from Erastus Granger it appears that the young men of the Six Nations can no longer be restrained, and that in case of refusal on the part of the United States to accept their services they would join the Indians under the British standard. Mr. Granger has therefore been authorized, after every attempt to secure their neutrality has failed, to employ them." In direct contradiction to the statement contained in this letter stands a speech delivered at Onondaga, the ancient council grounds of the Six Nations, by sixteen chiefs, representing five tribes of the confederacy distributed as far west as Tonawanda, on the 29th of September; "Having been told repeatedly by your agents to remain neutral, we were very much surprised at the council held at Buffalo Creek, at being invited to take up the tomahawk. We are not unfriendly to the United States but are few in number, and can do but little, but are willing to do what we can, and if you say so we will go with your people to battle. We are anxious to know your wishes as soon as possible, because we are afraid some of our young men may disperse among distant tribes and be hostile to you." By the beginning of October it is certain that about 300 warriors had joined Van Rensselaer's army, but they seem to have sent some apologetic message to the allied tribes in the British service, for these assured Brock that they would not act against him with any spirit. "So I imagine," he observed with his accustomed penetration, "if we continue to show a bold front, but in the event of a disaster the love of plunder will prevail in a manner to be most dreaded by the inhabitants of this country." The American militia were constantly in the habit of stealing down to the river and firing at the British sentries, the batteries, and private houses on the opposite bank, and soon excited an intense and almost ferocious feeling of hatred among the troops under Brock's command, but he had the satisfaction of being able to report at the end of two months of incessant annoyance and alarm, that his regulars had not been diminished by a single death at the hands of the enemy, nor by a solitary desertion, and that his entire force was in good health and spirits in spite of their privations. In fact the only loss occasioned by this desultory but harassing warfare, was the death of an unfortunate sentry, Private John Hendershot, of the 5th Lincoln, who was shot on his post at Queenston, on the 4th of September. The British forces were strictly forbidden to make any reply, and their endurance was often tested to its utmost limit in consequence. A letter from a spy, apparently residing near Fort Erie, to general Van Rensselaer, gives a very striking view of the situation and feelings of the people at this time. "General Brock," he remarks, "has paid attention to every particular that can relate to the future resources of the province under his charge as well as to its immediate defence. The harvest has been got in tolerably well and greater preparation is made for sowing fall grain than ever before. The militia law is modified as much as possible to suit the circumstances of the people, and measures taken to prevent them feeling the burden of the war. The women work in the fields, encouragement being given for that purpose. When Hull's proclamation appeared it had its effect, there being security promised for private property, and the people would willingly have submitted, but when it was found that private property was seized without compensation the public sentiment entirely changed. The success of General Brock established the general sentiment; he has since made the most of it, has become personally highly popular; in short, has taken every measure that a judicious officer will take in his circumstances for the security of the province. A determination now prevails among the people to defend the country."

No dread of impending disaster ever dampened his spirits or abated his activity. Irrepressibly sanguine himself, he possessed the rare faculty of imbuing all who came in contact with him with unbounded confidence in his abilities and respect for his character. To maintain his position in the face of the overwhelming numbers gathering in his front must at times have seemed well nigh hopeless, yet no signs of despondency was ever betrayed in his manner or conversation. His wonted sagacity was displayed in the selection of members of his military family. John McDonnell, the Attorney-General of the province and M. P. for Gleggarry, and James Givins, of the Indian department, a man thoroughly familiar with the language and customs of the Indians of the province, were ap-

pointed provincial aides-de-camp. Robert Nichol, a wealthy merchant and miller of Port Dover, who knew intimately every part of the country between the Niagara and Detroit and almost every man in it, was nominated assistant quartermaster-general.

When the assembly was prorogued, an address to the people of the province had been prepared and signed by nearly the whole of the members, urging them to defend their country and pledging their aid and advice in the cause, and most of them had now taken the field in some capacity. Many of the surviving loyalists, too old and feeble to bear the fatigue of a campaign, likewise tendered their services to perform garrison duty.

The weather had been singularly discouraging. July was excessively hot and dry, but August brought floods of rain. Wheat sprouted in the fields after being reaped and much of the harvest was ruined. September as a rule proved cool and pleasant, but October was ushered in by furious storms, and sudden changes of temperature which prevented most of the Indian corn from maturing, and blighted the lingering hopes of the farmers.

Besides several large scows for the transport of cannon, the Americans had begun to build three gun-boats at Black Rock, the destruction of which, Brock frankly confessed he would have attempted had he not been restrained by his instructions. The Indians were strictly prohibited from crossing the river under any pretence, and were closely watched and guarded. A party which arrived from the west to visit Colonel Claus, bringing with them a bundle of scalp, were sharply rebuked and pledged not to offend in that way again. These rigid precautions had the effect of diminishing the number of those with the army until it did not much exceed one hundred.

A variety of motives absolutely forced General Van Rensselaer to assume the offensive. During September six regiments of regular infantry, five of New York militia, a battalion of rifles and several companies of artillery joined his army. The Pennsylvania contingent had assembled at Meadville on the 20th, and was marching to Buffalo. Forage and provisions had already begun to grow scarce, and the rains would undoubtedly increase the ravages of disease already frightfully prevalent among his militia. Dearborn strongly urged him to attempt the passage of the river, as he declared they must reckon upon obtaining possession of Upper Canada before the winter set in, assuring him at the same time that Harrison would invade the province by way of Detroit with six or seven thousand men, while another strong body of troops were already assembled at Sackett's Harbour, where a squadron was fitting out to contest possession of Lake Ontario, and he, in person, promised to menace Montreal from Lake Champlain. The ultimate success of these operations he regarded as almost certain, but he warned Van Rensselaer that much would depend on his movements on the Niagara. Monroe, Secretary of State, openly ascribed the inactivity of the armies in New York to the effects of disaffection, which he declared had paralyzed the efforts of the administration and rendered the measures of Congress ineffectual. The militia now clamored loudly to be led against the enemy, and did not hesitate to accuse their commander of lukewarmness and cowardice, while some of their officers announced their intention of invading Canada without waiting for orders from him, yet a trifling incident served to indicate how very little dependence was to be placed on their assistance. A sentinel near Schlosser was shot at his post in the night by some unknown person, and an entire company instantly threw down its arms and ran away, the fugitives never stopping till they had gained the main camp at Lewiston. Early in October Van Rensselaer summoned a council of war, to which he invited General Smyth, who had just taken command of a brigade of regular troops at Buffalo, General Hall, of the New York militia, and the commandant of each regiment of United States troops. Smyth showed his contempt for the militia general under whom he was forced to serve by neglecting to attend or even to explain his absence. Van Rensselaer had intended to concentrate the whole of his regular troops near Fort Niagara and the militia at Lewiston, and attempt the passage of the river simultaneously at both places, but in consequence of Smyth's misconduct this scheme was abandoned and he determined to cross from the latter place only, as he felt satisfied that the forces he had already assembled there were amply sufficient for the purpose. Staff-officers, under one pretext and another had visited the British lines, and the result of their observations, coupled with information received from his spies had made him pretty thoroughly acquainted with the numbers and composition of the forces opposed to him.

No doubt was entertained of at least partial success. He confidently anticipated being able to secure a foothold in Canada where he could establish his army in winter quarters and prepare for an early campaign next year. The primary object of the invasion was simply described as being to expel the British from Queenston and obtain a shelter from the inclemency of the weather. More than eight thousand troops were assembled under his command, of whom half were regulars. Three hundred artillery and eight hundred regular infantry occupied Fort Niagara, and nine hundred regular soldiers and 2,270 New York militia were encamped near Lewiston. At Buffalo, General Smyth had 1,650 regular troops, three hundred and eighty-six detached militia, two hundred and fifty sailors, and four hundred Indians, besides the local militia. The advance-guard of the Pennsylvania brigade of two thousand men had also arrived at Buffalo, and the remainder was within easy march of that place. Many batteaux and flat-bottomed boats were in readiness at Black Rock, Tonawanda, and Gill's Creek above the Falls, and at Lewiston and Four Mile Creek below, and a sufficient number could be collected at any given point in a few hours to carry over a

thousand men. His train of field artillery was large and well equipped.

To resist this formidable army, Brock had fifteen companies of regular infantry, which may have mustered sixty rank and file each; two officers and thirty men of the Royal artillery, with five guns; a troop of militia drivers, and a troop of Provincial Cavalry, besides the flank companies of the five Lincoln and two York battalions of militia. The fourteen flank companies probably did not average more than thirty-five officers and men each, or less than five hundred in all. The muster rolls of the five Lincoln battalions show a total of nearly two thousand men, but these were scattered over the twenty townships then composing the county, comprising the entire peninsula from Burlington Bay to the mouth of Grand river. Perhaps five hundred of these could be readily assembled at a few hours' notice. Most of the Indians had dispersed to their hunting grounds. The exigencies of the transport service on the lakes had obliged the British general to send away the armed vessels which had formerly secured the flanks of his position, and to guard a frontier which practically extended from the Sugar Loaf on Lake Erie to Four Mile Creek on Lake Ontario, and to occupy the numerous posts and batteries between, and maintain communication over a line of sixty miles, he had actually less than a thousand regular troops and six hundred militia, with a reserve of possibly six hundred militia and Indians. Half of this force was scarcely adequate to garrison Fort George and the adjacent batteries, and a body of troops could hardly be marched from one end of his line to the other in less than two days. The concentration of large bodies of men near Fort Niagara and Buffalo, where great numbers of boats were collected, forced Brock to weaken his centre and strengthen his wings, anticipating that an attempt would be made to turn his flank, and land troops a few miles in rear of the works protecting it. Four companies of the 49th, two of the Royal Newfoundland regiment, four of militia and a small detachment of Royal artillery, occupied Fort Erie and a series of batteries extending as low as Frenchman's Creek; four companies of militia and one company of the 41st were posted along the river between that point and Chippawa; the flank companies of the 49th and two of the York militia held the batteries near Queenston; the earthworks at Brown's and Field's points were each guarded by a militia company, while the remaining companies of the 49th and Lincoln militia and the field guns were quartered in and about Fort George. A chain of outposts and patrols maintained constant communication between all the posts, and the Indians were held in reserve in small parties several miles in rear. As the number of regular artillerymen was quite insufficient to work even the field guns in their possession, a corps of volunteer gunners had been formed partly from the regular infantry and partly from the militia under Captains Kerby and Swazey.

The quality of these troops was unquestionably superior to that of any likely to be brought against them. The 41st contained a large proportion of young recruits, but was a fine body of men, a d although the men of the 49th had been ten years in the country, drinking rum without bounds, they were still respectable and ardent. The flank companies of militia were generally composed of picked men and had attained a very creditable degree of discipline.

General Smyth favoured an attempt to pass the river between Fort Erie and Chippawa, and some intimation of this project may have reached Brock, for he increased the garrison of both places in the beginning of October, and established detachments to watch the river opposite the head of Navy Island and near Black Creek. One-third of the troops of duty were ordered to sleep in their clothing fully accoutred and ready to spring into the saddle. On the 6th of October all the troops were directed to be under arms at four every morning.

The successful result of an attack upon two small armed vessels at Fort Erie served to raise the spirits of Van Rensselaer's army in a remarkable degree, and was actually a serious blow to their opponents, owing to the extreme scarcity of provisions apart from the loss of the vessels. This occurred early on the morning of the 9th October, and Brock arrived on the spot before sunset, but having apparently satisfied himself that no immediate attempt to cross the river was contemplated there, returned to Niagara next day. He turned this disaster to the best advantage by complimenting both regulars and militia on their splendid conduct in his last general order issued on the 12th October, Colonel Pell, Major of the Niagara Dragoons, being distinguished by special mention for conspicuous bravery. This hurried journey had the effect of hastening Van Rensselaer's movements, for a spy returned to his camp with information that Brock had left Niagara in great haste and was supposed to have gone to Detroit. Encouraged by this report, and feeling as he expressed it, "that the national character is degraded and the disgrace will remain, corroding the public feeling and spirit until another campaign, unless it be wiped away by a brilliant exploit in this," he determined to strike while the enthusiasm of his troops was yet at its heat over the recent exploit, and fixed the hour and place for crossing the river for three o'clock next morning at Queenston. The stream was there at its narrowest; a ferry had been established for years, and although the current was swift, the navigation was well ascertained and an indifferent oarsman could pull across in less than ten minutes. His artillery, superior in numbers and calibre, could cover the landing from the high ground above Lewiston, where batteries had already been thrown up for it.

Accordingly the regulars from Fort Niagara, and strong detachments from Buffalo were ordered to join the main-body at Lewiston before midnight, and boats sufficient to contain 500 men were secretly brought overland from Gill's Creek. A furious storm of wind and rain swept over his camp while the troops were drawn up in readiness to enter the boats, and the pilot of the expedition deserted in the darkness. In consequence the attack was indefinitely postponed. The rain continued with unabated violence for twenty-eight hours until the roads became almost impassable. Van Rensselaer then desired to wait a few days in the hope of reverting to his original plan, but the impatience of his troops seemed to be rather increased than diminished by their recent failure, and the pressure brought to bear upon him was too great to be withstood. His force was now still further increased by the arrival of three hun-

dred and fifty regular soldiers, under Lieut.-Col. Chrystie, at Four Mile Creek, east of Fort Niagara. The appearance of these boats, and the detention of a large force near that place, led Brock to believe that an attempt would be made to land to the westward of Niagara, and prevented him from reinforcing the detachments at Queenston, and though he had become aware of the attempt to cross the river there, he regarded it simply as a feint to divert his attention from the true point of attack. The evident activity of the enemy near Buffalo at the same time restrained him from weakening the right of his extended line.

The river as it issues from the gorge at Queenston is barely two hundred yards in width, and flows at the rate of about four miles an hour. The cliffs which wall it in above are almost perpendicular, rising to the height of about 350 feet above the stream, yet on the Canadian side, in many places were so overgrown, and almost concealed, by shrubs and trees which struck their roots into the clefts and crannies of the rocks, as to make it possible for an ordinarily active man to climb up with little difficulty from the water's edge to the summit. A few hundred yards west of the landing stood the village, consisting of a stone barracks and about twenty scattered dwellings surrounded by gardens and orchards. The wagon-road leading from Niagara formed the principal street, and wound up the heights beyond. Another road, commencing at the landing and crossing this at right angles, led to St. David's, throwing off a branch which ascended the heights about a mile to westward, and finally united with the portage road above. In the angle formed by the intersection of these two roads at the south-east corner of the village stood the large stone house of the Hon. Robert Hamilton, with its walled courtyard and substantial out-buildings. The adjacent plain was dotted with many farmhouses near the roads, and the fields were generally enclosed by ordinary rail-fences, diversified near the foot of the heights by an occasional low, stone wall. Half-way up the side of the mountain a small redan battery had been built with its angle fronting the river and armed with an eighteen-pounder, and at Vrooman's or Scott's Point, nearly a mile below, a twenty-four pound gun had been mounted *en barbette* on a crescent-shaped earthwork commanding, although and at very long range, both landings, and the breadth of the river between. Capt. Williams, with the light company of the 49th, was stationed at the redan, and the grenadiers of the same regiment, under Capt. James Dennis, and Chisholm's company of the 2nd York, were quartered in the village. Outposts and sentries watched the river from the landing to Vrooman's Point, which was occupied by Capt. Samuel Hatt's company of the 5th Lincoln. The entire force of regulars and militia distributed about Queenston did not exceed two hundred men. Cameron's and Heward's companies of York militia lay at Brown's Point, three miles distant, but there were no other regular troops nearer than Fort George.

Patigue, duty and frequent alarms had begun to tell upon the health and spirits of the men, and at dark on the evening of the 11th Brock learned with much apprehension that some of the men of the 49th had become insubordinate, wrecked the guard house at Queenston, and even threatened the lives of their officers, but an inquiry showed that their misconduct was caused by drink, and they were liberated with a reprimand.

All that day, and the next, parties of riflemen lined the opposite shore and fired incessantly at any living thing that met their eye on the Queenston side. The houses near the river were riddled by their fire, and even a boat, bearing a flag of truce became a target for their bullets. All communication by flag of truce with the enemy was accordingly strictly forbidden, except when special permission was obtained from headquarters.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### PERSONAL.

It is not generally known that Edison received in one instance a fee of \$40,000 for his opinion as an electrical expert. He was employed by the company organized to bore the Niagara power tunnel to examine the ground, study conditions and plans, and give an opinion as to the feasibility and practicability of the work. He received the fee named. Other experts from various parts of the world were also consulted, and there was concentrated upon the plans an amount of expert knowledge such as has rarely been invoked for any one undertaking.

The Queen of Italy, once one of the most beautiful girls in the kingdom, is now one of its handsomest women. She is bright and witty in conversation, and learned, with a leaning toward blue-stockingism, but without pedantry. She is universally admired and loved by her subjects, and the attachment King Humbert has for her is a rare example of conjugal devotion in a royal household.

Mr. James Payn tells of a lady in Rome who has bequeathed her whole fortune to the editor of an Italian newspaper, "the perusal of which has given her many happy hours." Mrs. Payn who is not the editor of any newspaper, is yet generous enough to say that he hopes this lady's example will be followed. It is now reported, however, that the Italian editor has refused to avail himself of this windfall, and has distributed the legacy among various charitable institutions. It is now Mr. Payn's turn, and he comes forward to say that he does not believe in this report about the conduct of the Italian editor.

Arabi Pasha, the famous and unfortunate leader of the Egyptian insurrection of 1882 since 1883 an exile in the island of Ceylon, is to come into public notice again soon as an advertisement of a brand of tea. He is allowed to do pretty much as he likes in Ceylon, and has recently accepted an offer of \$5,000 a year salary to take nominal charge of a tea garden in the island. Arabi knows nothing of tea growing, and it is fully understood that his post is to be a sinecure, but the owner of the plantation expects to reap great profits in Egypt and England and elsewhere from the sale of genuine warranted Arabi Pasha-grown tea.

Adolphe de la Boussoniere, a Royalist left two million francs to a nephew and cousin, passing over his 80-year-old brother because he was a Republican. Soon after the legates took possession a new will unimpeachable in orthography, was discovered leaving all the money to the brother. This effected a transfer of the property. This will had been brought to the brother by a notary named Guyard, who obtained a promise that he should receive half the fortune. It had been forged by a lithographer named Charpentier, who from a mass of Boussoniere's letters had taken all necessary words and transposed the writing upon a new paper. Nothing would have been discovered had not Guyard, being greedy for some more money, begun to write anonymous black-mailing letters to the brother, who innocently showed them to the police. The case was investigated and the will discovered to be a forgery. The two criminals were sentenced to prison for ten years, and the brother, who was, in fact, wholly guiltless, was merely forced to give the property back to its rightful owners.

Queen Victoria is now seventy-three years old and has reigned fifty-five years. Her excellent, if not robust, health gives every promise that she will round out the century as Queen and Empress. The story of the scene when the news was brought her of her accession to the throne is interesting. The King died at Windsor, and messengers were at once despatched to Kensington to inform her of the event. It was midnight when the sleeping Queen was awakened, and she came at once into the room to meet the messengers, attired in a white night-gown, with a shawl thrown over her shoulders, her night-cap off, and her feet in slippers. She was then a slender girl, pale but pretty. Two years later she became the bride of Prince Albert.

William H. Vanderbilt, who died last month, was the eldest son of Cornelius Vanderbilt, and had recently completed his twenty-first year. At Yale College, where he was a student in high standing, and where he would have graduated in 1893, he had won a deserved popularity. Heartily interested in college athletics, his work in rowing and on the polo field was well known, and in his Sophomore year he had given \$5000 towards the equipment of the new gymnasium at Yale. He was the favorite grandson of the first William H. Vanderbilt, who left him a legacy of \$1,000,000, to be paid to him upon the completion of his thirtieth year, but the income of which he was to receive after attaining his majority.

Mr. Molloy, who arrived recently from Johannesburg, South Africa, says that the Kaffir population there is about 40,000. These natives come to the great mining camp from the different kraals a hundred or two hundred miles away, take service in the mines for three months, and, having earned a few pounds, go home, buy a wife, and settle down. The Kaffir camps around the city are not very well behaved, for there are many low cantenets, where, especially on Sunday evenings, the natives get drunk and indulge in fights, with the result that one or two are killed and a large number wounded nearly every Sunday. The miners are trying to close up the cantenets, but they are meeting with opposition because the liquor stores are a source of profit to the Government.

The idea of advertising articles and trademen in romance by connecting them with the characters is not new. Scott was occasionally asked to do it. M. Besant, in his journal, the *Author*, prints a letter written him by a lover, sent together with a dozen ladies' gloves: "You might perhaps have an opportunity of bringing in my name when writing some of your new works, as being a meeting place in London for ladies, which is really so; my showroom on the first floor where all the Paris, Vienna, Brussels, and other foreign makes of gloves, fans, &c., are kept, is frequently crowded with the very best of London society. I was reading one of your books when this thought occurred to me that it would give a tone of reality to the reading, the name and address of my house being so well known." Besant sent back the gloves.

The Australian colonies have expended about eight millions in promoting emigration.

### A TERRIFIC EXPLOSION.

#### A Cartridge Factory Totally Demolished—Three Men Killed.

A Montreal, despatch says:—At 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon a terrific explosion occurred at the Brownsburg cartridge factory, four miles from here. The explosion took place in a building set apart from the factory for the purpose of loading detonators. Fortunately only four persons were at work in this building at the time, and, although the explosion thoroughly demolished the detonator workshop, the other buildings and their occupants sustained nothing more than a shaking up.

The detonator building was literally blown to atoms, and nothing now remains of it but a mass of ruins. Nobody seemed to know how many people were in the building at the time of the accident, and it was not until William Burke, who was blown through the door, and who was the only one who got out of the building alive, was brought to consciousness, that the real state of the case was known. The first sight that rewarded the work of the searches was a headless trunk. The right leg had been wrenched raggedly from the body. Further search revealed the head, horribly distorted, some yards away, and in a different direction was found the leg. This body was afterwards identified as that of James Kearns, of Montreal, a youth of 17. William Gunn, of North Maisonneuve, was also killed: He was not mangled like Kearns, but when the rescuing party reached him he was stone dead. John Curren, foreman of this department, was in the building at the time of the explosion. The unfortunate man was absolutely blown into unrecognizable atoms. He leaves a young wife, to whom he was only married last Thursday, she, formerly Miss Sutherland, having come out from England to marry him the week previous. William Burke, the only occupant now alive, is very badly injured, but the doctors say that he may recover. Dr. Mayrand, of St. Andrew's, held an inquest and a verdict of accidental death was returned.

### A Merchant's Test.

Merchant (who has advertised for a boy to tenth applicant): "Well, my little man which would you prefer to do—work or eat?"

Tenth Applicant (earnestly): "I'd rather eat, sir, any time."

Merchant (approvingly): "That's right, my lad; you'd be a fool if you wouldn't; and you may have the situation I offer, as you are the first lad who has applied for it that has told the truth."