

Stanley Hatch spoke of him as an “officer of distinction,” and they elaborated on his appearance in these terms: “His personal appearance was commanding; he must have been six feet three or four inches in height; very massive and large boned, though not fleshy, and apparently of immense muscular power.”<sup>2</sup> Later, General George Sanderson used similar words, although an element of personal aversion is detectable in his description of Brock as “a heavily built man, about six feet three inches in height, broad shoulders, large hips and lame, walking with a cane. One of his eyes, the left one I think, was closed, and he was withal the ugliest officer I ever saw.”<sup>3</sup>

Further information about Brock’s appearance was published in 1835 in F.B. Tupper’s first biographical work on him. Tupper lavished these words on his late kinsman: “In stature he was tall, erect, and well proportioned, although in his latter years his figure was perhaps too portly.... His fine and benevolent countenance was a perfect index of his mind, and his manners were courteous, frank and engaging.”<sup>4</sup> There is no real dispute about Brock’s general appearance; witness and biographer described him in similar terms. None, however, say anything about his facial features; indeed, we do not even know the colour of his hair. Nor does it appear that in later years Tupper made an effort to learn from Brock’s surviving brothers and sister what the general’s “countenance” was like because he transferred virtually intact the excerpt quoted above to his full-scale biography *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.*<sup>5</sup>

There are nonetheless two slight but helpful references in Tupper’s work. One of Isaac Brock’s letters, which Tupper reproduced, is dated at Quebec 9 July 1810 and addressed to Irving Brock (1775-1838), the general’s youngest brother. In the letter Isaac Brock speaks of “a most distressing circumstance:” the cocked hat which he had ordered had not arrived, and he anticipated the “utmost difficulty in getting a substitute” in Canada on account of “the enormity” of his head.<sup>6</sup> Brock’s humour may have been a bit heavy-handed, but there is little doubt that he had a large head. The Museum of the Niagara Historical Society has a cocked hat ordered by or for Brock. It arrived in Canada after his death. Internally, the hat measures twenty-four inches and seems to confirm Brock’s own description.<sup>7</sup> The second clue is found in Appendix B of Tupper’s full-scale biography where he dwells on the qualities of Daniel de Lisle Brock (1762-1842), Isaac’s oldest brother and probably Guernsey’s most famous bailiff: “In countenance and robustness of frame, although not so tall, as well as in vigour of intellect and decision of character, the bailiff strongly resembled his brother Sir Isaac Brock.”<sup>8</sup>

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2 William Stanley Hatch, *A Chapter of the History of the War of 1812 in the Northwest* (Cincinnati, 1872), p. 63.

3 *Cleveland Herald Supplement*, Saturday, 18 November 1871. General George Sanderson was born on 10 January 1789 in Lancaster, Ohio. It should be noted that he is not listed in Thomas H.S. Hamersley’s *Complete Army Register of the United States for 100 years (1779 to 1879)*, 2nd edition, (Washington, n.d.). It must be assumed that his was a local rank.

4 Ferdinand Brock Tupper, *Family Records; Containing Memoirs of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B....* (Guernsey, 1835), p. 24.

5 Ferdinand Brock Tupper, *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.*, 2nd edition (London, 1847), p. 345.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 77.

7 Janet Carnochan, “Sir Isaac Brock,” *Niagara Historical Society Paper*, (1907), p. 15.

8 Tupper, *Brock*, p. 467.