



Rescue at Collingwood. (Thunder Bay Research Collection, Alpena County Public Library)

response to the war scare with the United States resulting from the US Navy's seizure of the British steamer *Trent* in November 1861. Wyatt's brigade does not seem to have lasted beyond the winter crisis and was not established under the provincial militia department whose purview included units for naval training. His initiative may have been overtaken by the longer-lived Toronto Naval Brigade, established at the same time and well funded by Captain William Fenton McMaster (1822-1907), a member of the large business enterprises led by his uncle, William McMaster (1811-1887), the founder of the Bank of Commerce and McMaster University. Captain McMaster's naval brigade joined the rolls of the provincial militia in July 1862.⁷⁰

With the news of the Fenian attack on Fort Erie, the Toronto brigade immediately crewed the steamer *Rescue*, armed with a 32-pounder howitzer

⁷⁰ Thomas Richard Melville, "Canada and Sea Power: Canadian Naval Thought and Policy, 1860-1910" (PhD dissertation, Duke University, 1981), 71, 75, 78; Roger Sarty, "The Army Origin of the Royal Canadian Navy: Canada's Maritime Defences, 1855-1918," *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* 30, no. 4 (Winter 2020), 345, n10; "Capt. M'Master Has Passed Away," *Globe*, 8 January 1907, 10. William Fenton McMaster's business was in dry goods, and he had no professional marine connection. The "captain" by which he always liked to be known was in fact a rank in the Canadian militia, which did not use naval ranks. McMaster seems to have liked the naval connotation, and thus continued to term himself captain even after he was promoted major.