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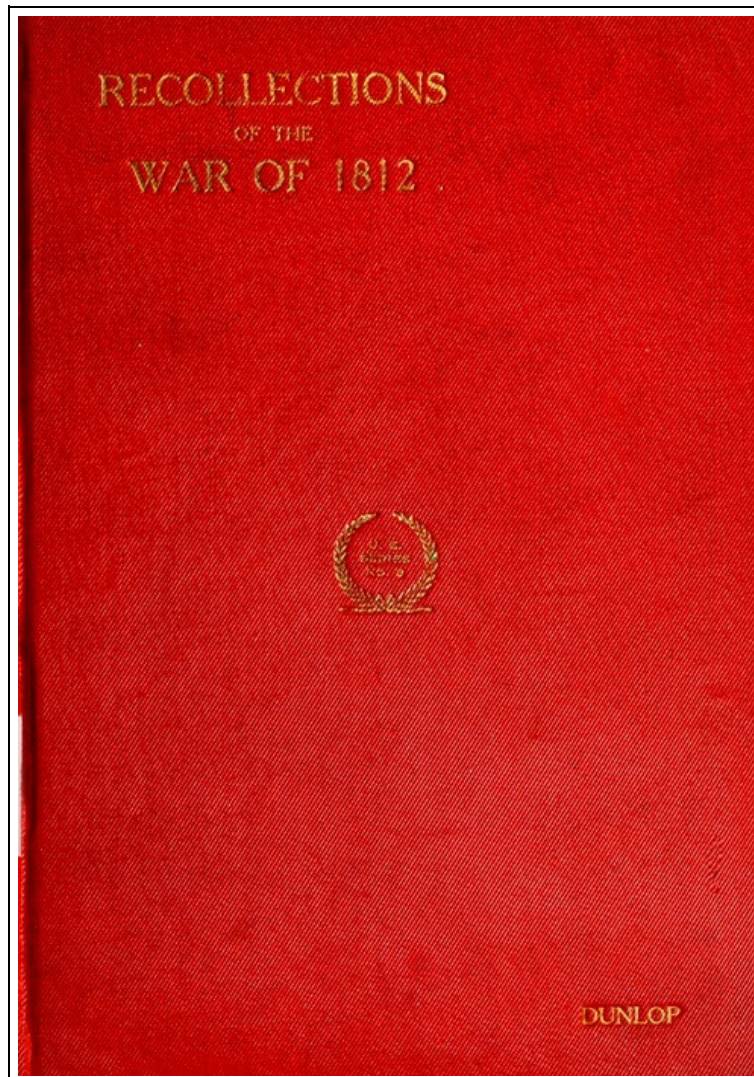
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# Recollections of The American War

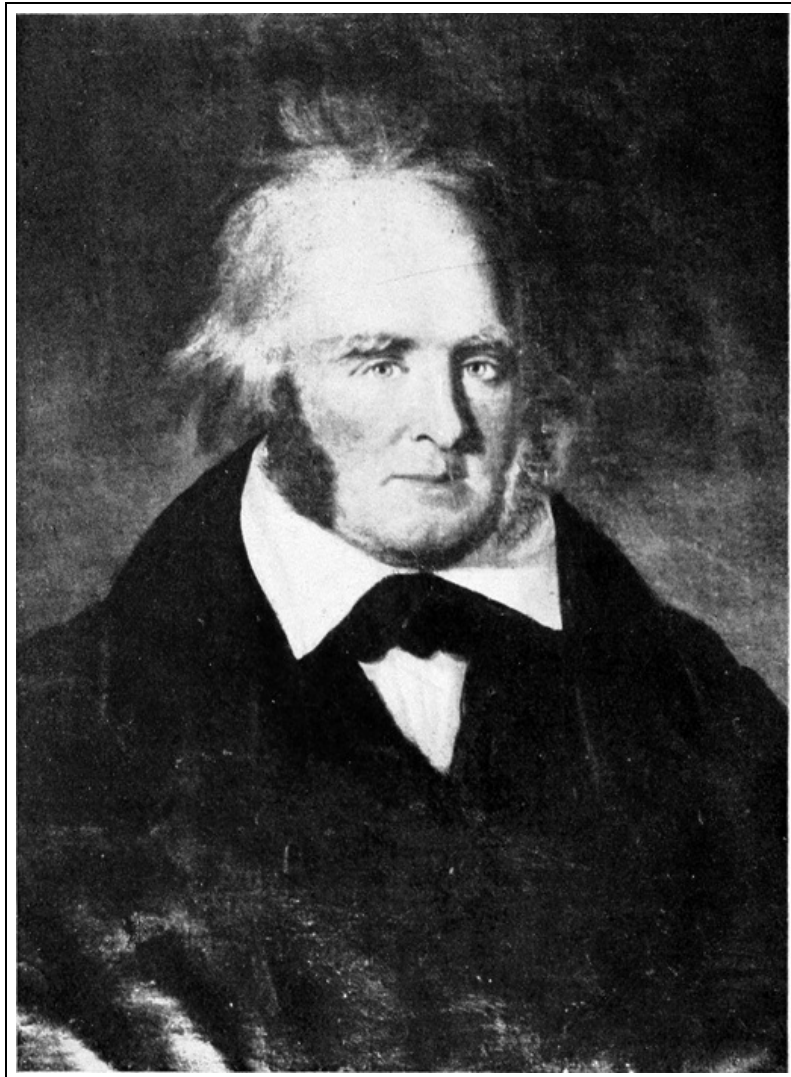
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**WILLIAM DUNLOP, M.D.**

*From original painting in the possession of Mrs. Thos.  
McGaw.*

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By  
DR. WM. DUNLOP

With a Biographical Sketch of the Author by  
A. H. U. Colquhoun, LL.D.  
Deputy Minister of Education, Ontario

SECOND EDITION



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Sketch of

# Dr. William Dunlop



This reprint of an entertaining little narrative of personal experiences in the War of 1812-14 may be appropriately prefaced by a short account of the author. Few of the pioneers of Upper Canada had careers as varied and interesting as that of Dr. William Dunlop, and none possessed a personality quite so striking and original as his. On the Saltfort road, near Goderich, Canada, there is a cairn marking the burial place of two notable worthies of the Huron Tract, and upon it is the following inscription:

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Here lies the body of  
ROBERT GRAHAM DUNLOP, ESQ.  
Commander Royal Navy, M.P.P.

Who after serving his King and country in  
every quarter of the globe, dies at Gairbraid,  
on the 28th Feby., 1841, in  
the 51 year of his age.  
Also to the memory of  
DR. WILLIAM DUNLOP,  
a man of surpassing talent, knowledge,  
and benevolence, born in Scotland  
in 1792.

He served in the army in Canada and in India  
and thereafter distinguished himself  
as an author and man of  
letters.

He settled in Canada permanently in 1825 and  
for more than 20 years was actively  
engaged in public and philanthropic  
affairs.

Succeeding his brother, Capt. Dunlop, as Member  
of the Provincial Parliament and  
taking successful interest in  
the welfare of Canada,  
and died lamented  
by many  
friends  
1848.

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The elder of these two brothers, William Dunlop, was born at Greenock, Scotland, in 1792, and became, when a stripling of scarce 21 years of age, a surgeon in the famous 88th, or, Connaught Rangers. Being ordered to Canada, where the war with the United States was in progress, he made his way to the fighting line in the Niagara Peninsula, and there, serving first as surgeon and afterwards as a combatant, he gave indubitable proofs of courage and capacity. When the "appalling intelligence" of the peace concluded by the Treaty of Ghent reached him, Dunlop embarked with his regiment for England, just missing by a few days a share in the glorious action of Waterloo, and was ordered to India. While there his restless activity occupied itself with his medical and military duties, with the congenial task of editing a newspaper, and with numerous tiger hunts. So successful was he as a slayer of tigers that he earned the name of "Tiger" Dunlop, and in his later Canadian days was familiarly known as "The Tiger." An attack of jungle fever drove him back to England on half-pay, and settling in London he lived for a few years what has been called a most miscellaneous life. He wrote articles for the magazines. He edited for a time a newspaper called the "British Press," until he quarrelled with the publisher for dismissing contemptuously a political upheaval in France in the following brief "leader": "We perceive that there is a change of ministry in France;—we have heard of no earthquakes in consequence!" He edited a work on medical jurisprudence. He started a Sunday newspaper for Anglo-Indians called "The Telescope," the history of which, declared one of his friends, was a comedy of the drollest kind. He founded a club,—being of convivial tastes and a prince of boon companions,—called The Pig and Whistle. Finally,—and this doubtless led to his returning to Canada,—he became interested, as secretary, or, director, in some industrial concerns, notably a salt works in Cheshire. In London he made the acquaintance of Mr. John Galt, and accompanied him to Canada in 1826. He received from the Canada Company the appointment of Warden of the Forests, and for twenty years was a leading figure in what we now call Western Ontario. If one wishes to know "The Tiger" in this period, he must be sought in the charming pages of the Misses Lizars' book "In the Days of the Canada Company." There, his rollicking humour, his broad sympathies, his eccentric jests are excellently depicted. Dunlop represented Huron in Parliament, where he was a veritable "enfant terrible," speaking his mind in his slap dash way and frequently convulsing the House with merriment. The story of his tossing the coin with his brother to settle which of them should marry Lou McColl, the Highland housekeeper and devoted friend, and the terms of his extraordinary will and testament,—one clause of which (typical of all) leaves some property to a sister "because she is married to a minister whom (God help him) she henpecks",—are famous. Dunlop's literary talents were considerable. He wearied of writing as he did of most things that demanded continuous application. But he had an easy style, much shrewd wit, and undoubted ability. These qualities he displayed in his magazine articles, in his book "The Backwoodsman," and in the "Recollections," which are here reprinted from "The Literary Garland," the Montreal periodical of half a century or more ago. They were penned long after the events concerned had occurred and it may be supposed that he fell into some errors of fact. But as a picture of the manner in which this haphazard war was conducted it is singularly vivid and impressive. The unearthing of manuscripts and official documents about this war will not throw into clearer relief than the following pages do, the

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desperate circumstances under which a mere handful of French Canadian and Loyalist colonists emerged from their primitive villages and log cabins and with Spartan courage and hardihood drove back the invader again and again and captured large areas of his territory. There are several readable sketches of these campaigns, but none with the freshness and spirit of Dunlop's. In this lies its value and the justification for preserving it. Dunlop retired from Parliament in 1846, and was appointed Superintendent of the Lachine Canal. He died in the village of Lachine in the Autumn of 1848, and his body was conveyed to its resting place at Goderich.

A. H. U. Colquhoun.

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## INTRODUCTION

The favourable reception of a small work on this colony has emboldened me again to come before the public in the character of an author, and as it is fifteen years since I last obtruded myself in that capacity, I have at least to boast of the merit assumed to himself by the sailor in his prayer, during a hurricane, "Thou knowest it is seldom that I trouble thee," and I may hope on the same grounds to be listened to.

It is now upwards of thirty-three years since I became acquainted with this country, of which I was eleven years absent. During that time I visited the other quarters of the globe. My design in this work is to shew the almost incredible improvement that has taken place during that period. Notwithstanding all that has been written by tourists, &c., very little indeed is known of the value and capabilities of Canada, as a colony, by the people of Great Britain.

I have not arrived at anything like methodical arrangement further than stating in their chronological order, events and scenes of which I was a witness, with occasional anecdotes of parties therein concerned, so that those who do not approve of such a desultory mode of composition, need not, after this fore-warning, read any further. My intention, in fact, is not exclusively either to instruct or amuse, but, if I possibly can accomplish it, to do a little of both. I wish to give an account of the effect of the changes that have taken place in my day in the colony, on my own feelings, rather than to enter into any philosophical enquiry into their causes; and if in this attempt I should sometimes degenerate into what my late lamented friend, the Ettrick Shepherd, would have denominated *havers*, I hope you will remember that this is an infirmity to which even Homer (see Horace,) is liable; and if, like hereditary disease, it is a proof of paternity, every author in verse or prose who has written since his day, has ample grounds whereon to found its pretensions to a most ancient and honourable descent.



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# RECOLLECTIONS OF THE AMERICAN WAR

## CHAPTER I.

"My native land, good night."—*Byron*.

The end of March or the beginning of April, 1813, found me at the Army Depôt in the Isle of Wight. Sir Walter Scott in his *Surgeon's Daughter*, says that no one who has ever visited that

delightful spot can ever forget it, and I fully agree with him, but though perfectly susceptible of the impressions which its numberless beauties leave on the mind, I must confess that the view of a fleet of transports rounding St. Helens to take us to our destination, would have been considered by myself and my comrades, as a pleasanter prospect than all Hampshire could offer to our admiration.

I shall not stay to describe the state of military society in those days at the Army Depôt at Parkhurst barracks and the neighbouring town of Newport. It has been much better done than I could expect to do, by Major Spencer Muggridge, in Blackwood's Magazine; all I can do as a subaltern, is fully to endorse the field officer's statement, and to declare that it is a just, graphic and by no means over-charged description.

I went once, and only once, to the Garrison Mess, in company with two or three officers of my acquaintance, and saw among other novelties of a mess table, one officer *shy* a leg of mutton at another's head, from one end of the table to the other. This we took as notice to quit; so we made our retreat in good order, and never again returned, or associated with a set of gentlemen who had such a vivacious mode of expressing a difference of opinion.

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The fact is, all the worse characters in the army were congregated at the Isle of Wight; men who were afraid to join their regiments from the indifferent estimation they were held in by their brother officers. These stuck to the depôt, and the arrival of a fleet of transports at Spithead or the Mother-bank, was a signal for a general sickness among these worthies. And this was peculiarly the case with those who were bound for Canada, for they knew full well if they could shirk past the month of August, there was no chance of a call on their services until the month of April following. And many scamps took advantage of this. I know one fellow who managed to avoid joining his regiment abroad for no less than three years.

I took my departure from this military paradise for the first time, for this country, in the beginning of August, 1813, in a small, ill-found, undermanned, over-crowded transport, as transports in those days were very apt to be; and after a long, weary, and tempestuous voyage of three months, was landed at Quebec in the beginning of the following November. Next to the tedium of a sea voyage, nothing on earth can be so tiresome as a description of it; the very incidents which a Journal of such a pilgrimage commemorates shew the dreadful state of vacuum and ennui which must have existed in the mind of the patient before such trifles could become of interest sufficient to be thought worthy of notation. A sail in sight,—a bunch of sea-weed floating past the ship,—a log of wood covered with barnacles,—or, better still, one of the numerous tribe of Medusa, with its snake-like feelers and changeable colours—a gull, or a flock of Mother Carey's chickens, paddling in the wake,—are occurrences of sufficient importance to call upon deck all the passengers, even during dinner. Or if they are happy enough to fall in with a shoal of porpoises or dolphins, a flock of flying fish, or a whale blowing and spouting near the ship, such a wonder is quite sufficient to furnish conversation for the happy beholders for the rest of the voyage. For my own part, being familiar with, and also seasoned to, all the wonders of the deep, I make a vow whenever I go on board, that nothing inferior in rank and dignity to a sea-serpent shall ever induce me to mount the companion ladder. On the whole, though it cannot be considered as a very choice bit of reading, I look upon the log-book as by far the best account of a voyage, for it accurately states all that is worthy of note in the fewest possible words. It is the very model of the terse didactic. Who can fail to admire the Caesar-like brevity in an American captain's log: "At noon, light breezes and cloudy weather, wind W.S.W., fell in with a phenomenon—caught a bucket full of it." Under all these circumstances, I think it is highly probable that my readers will readily pardon me for not giving my *experience* on this subject. I met with no seas "mountains high," as many who have gone down unto the sea in ships have done. Indeed, though I have encountered gales of wind in all the favorite playgrounds of Oeolus—the Bay of Biscay—off the Cape of Good Hope—in the Bay of Bengal—the coast of America, and the Gulph of St. Lawrence, yet I never saw a wave high enough to becalm the main-top sail. So that I must suppose that the original inventor of the phrase was a Cockney, who must have had Garlic hill or Snow hill, or some of the other mountainous regions of the metropolis in his mind's eye when he coined it.

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Arrived at Quebec, we reported ourselves, as in duty bound, to the General Commanding, and by his orders we left a subaltern to command the recruits (most of whom, by the way, were mere boys,) and to strengthen the Garrison of Quebec, and the venerable old colonel and myself made all haste to join our regiment up the country. As my worthy old commander was a character, some account of him may not be uninteresting.

Donald McB— was born in the celebrated winter of 1745-46, while his father, an Invernesshire gentleman, was *out* with Prince Charles Edward, who, on the unfortunate issue of that campaign for the Jacobite interest, was fain to flee to France, where he joined his royal master, and where, by the Prince's influence, he received a commission in the Scotch Regiment of Guards, and in due time retired with a small pension from the French King, to the town of Dunkirk, where with his family, he remained the rest of his days.

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Donald, meanwhile, was left with his kindred in the Highlands, where he grew in all the stunted quantity of grace that is to be found in that barren region, until his seventh year, when he was sent to join his family in Dunkirk. Here he was educated, and as his father's military experience had given him no great love for the profession of arms, he was in due time bound apprentice to his

brother-in-law, an eminent surgeon of that town, and might have become a curer instead of inflicter of broken heads, or at least murdered men more scientifically than with the broadsword; but fate ordered it otherwise.

Donald had an objection as strong to the lancet as his father could possibly have to the sword. Had the matter been coolly canvassed, it is hard to say which mode of murder would have obtained the preference, but, always hasty, he did not go philosophically to work, and an accident decided his fate as it has done that of many greater men.

A young nun of great beauty, who had lately taken the veil, had the misfortune to break her leg, and Donald's master, being medical man to the convent, he very reasonably hoped that he would assist in the setting of it—attending upon handsome young nuns might reconcile a man even to being a surgeon of—; but his brother-in-law and the abbess both entered their veto. Piqued at this disappointment, next morning saw him on the tramp, and the next intelligence that was heard of him was that he was serving His Most Christian Majesty in the capacity of a Gentleman Sentinel, (as the Baron of Bradwardine hath it,) in a marching regiment.

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This settled the point. His father, seeing that his aversion to the healing art was insuperable, procured a commission in the Regiment de Dillon or Irish Brigade of the French Service.

In this he served for several years, until he had got pretty well up among the lieutenants, and in due time might have figured among the marshals of Napoleon; but the American Revolution breaking out, and it being pretty apparent that France and Great Britain must come into hostile collision, his father, though utterly abhorring the reigning dynasty, could not bear the idea of a son of his fighting against his country and clan, persuaded him to resign his commission in the French Service, and sent him to Scotland with letters of recommendation to some of his kindred and friends, officers in the newly raised Frazer Highlanders (since the 71st,) whom he joined in Greenock in the year 1776, and soon after embarked with them for America in the capacity of a gentleman volunteer, thus beginning the world once more at the age of thirty.

After serving in this regiment till he obtained his ensigncy, he was promoted to be lieutenant and adjutant in the Cavalry of Tarlton's Legion, in which he served and was several times wounded, till the end of the war, when he was disbanded with the rest of his regiment, and placed on half pay. He exchanged into a regiment about to embark for the West Indies, where in seven or eight years, the yellow fever standing his friend by cutting off many of his brother officers, while it passed over him, he in progress of seniority, contined it up to nearly the head of the lieutenants; the regiment was ordered home in 1790, and after a short time, instead of his company, he received his half-pay as a disbanded lieutenant.

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He now, from motives of economy as well as to be near his surviving relatives, retired to Dunkirk; but the approaching revolution soon called him out again, and his promotion, which, though like that of Dugald Dalgetty, it was "dooms slow at first," did come at last. Now after thirty-seven years' hard service in the British Army, (to say nothing of fourteen in the French) in North America, the West Indies, South America, the Cape of Good Hope, Java and India, he found himself a Lieutenant-Colonel of a second battalion serving in Canada. Such is a brief memoir of my old commanding officer. He was a warm-hearted, hot-tempered, jovial, gentlemanly old veteran, who enjoyed the present and never repined at the past; so it may well be imagined that I was in high good luck with such a *compagnon de voyage*.

Hearing that the American Army, under General Wilkinson, was about to make descent on Canada somewhere about the lower end of Lake Ontario, we were determined to push on with all possible speed.

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The roads, however, were declared impracticable, and the only steamboat the Canadas then rejoiced in, though now they must possess nearly one hundred, had sailed that day, and was not expected to return for nearly a week; so it was determined we should try our luck in one of the wretched river craft which in those days enjoyed the carrying trade between Quebec and Montreal. Into the small cabin, therefore of one of these schooners we stowed ourselves. Though the winds were light, we managed to make some way as long as we could take advantage of the flood-tide, and lay by during the ebb; but after this our progress was slow indeed; not entirely from the want of a fair wind, but from the cursed dilatory habits of Frenchmen and their Canadian descendants in all matters connected with business. At every village (and in Lower Canada there is a village at every three leagues along the banks of the St. Lawrence) our captain had or made business—a cask of wine had to be delivered to "*le digne Curé*" at one place; a box of goods to "*M. le Gentilhomme de Magasin*" at another; the captain's "*parents*" lived within a league, and he had not seen them for six weeks,—so off he must go, and no prospect of seeing him any more for that day. The cottage of the cabin boy's mother unluckily lay on the bank of the river, and we must lay to till madame came off with confitures, cabbages and clean shirts for his regalement; then the embracing, and kissing, and bowing, and taking off red night caps to each other, and the telling the news and hearing it, occupied ten times the space that the real business (if any there was) could possibly require. And all this was gone through on their part, as if it was the natural and necessary consequence of a voyage up the River Saint Lawrence. Haste seemed to them quite out of the question; and it is next to impossible to get into a passion and swear at a Frenchman, as you would at a sulky John Bull, or a saucy Yankee, under similar circumstances, for he is utterly

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unconscious all the time that he is doing anything unworthy; he is so polite, complaisant and good humoured withal, that it is next to impossible to get yourself seriously angry with him. On the fifth day of this tedious voyage, when we had arrived within about fifteen miles of Three Rivers, which is midway between the two cities, we perceived the steamboat passing upwards close under the opposite shore, and we resolved to land, knowing that it was her custom to stop there all night, and proceed in the morning; accordingly we did so, and in a short time were seated in a caleche following at all the speed the roads would admit of—by dint of hard travelling, bribing and coaxing, we managed to get to Three Rivers by moonlight, about one in the morning. So far so good, thought we; but unluckily the moonlight that served us, served the steamboat also, and she had proceeded on her voyage before we came up. As we now, however, had got quite enough of sailing, we determined to proceed by land to Montreal.

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The French, I suspect, have always been before us in Colonial policy. An arbitrary government can do things which a free one may not have the nerve to attempt, particularly among a people whose ignorance permits them to see only one side of the question.

The system of land travelling in Lower Canada was better, when we became master of it, than it is now in any part of the North American Continent. At every three leagues there was a "*Maison de Poste*" kept by a functionary who received his license from government, and denominated a "*Maitre de Poste*." He was bound by his engagement to find caleches and horses for all travellers, and he made engagements with his neighbors to furnish them when his were employed. These were called "*Aides de Poste*"; and they received the pay when they performed the duty, deducting a small commission for the *Maitre*. They were bound to travel when the roads admitted of it, at a rate not less than seven miles an hour, and were not to exceed quarter of an hour in changing horses; and to prevent imposition, in the parlour of each post house, (which was also an inn,) was stuck up a printed paper, giving the distance of each post from the next, and the sum to be charged for each horse and caleche employed, as well as other regulations, with regard to the establishment, which it was necessary for a traveller to know, and any well substantiated charge against these people was sure to call down summary punishment.

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The roads not being, as already remarked, in the best order, we did not arrive at Montreal till the end of the second day, when we were congratulated by our more lucky companions who had left Quebec in the steamboat three days later, and arrived at Montreal two days before us; and we were tantalized by a description of all the luxuries of that then little known conveyance, as contrasted with the fatigues and *désagrémens* of our mode of progression. For the last fifty miles of our route there was not to be seen throughout the country a single man fit to carry arms occupied about his farm or workshop; women, children, or men disabled by age or decrepitude were all that were to be met with.

The news had arrived that the long threatened invasion had at last taken place, and every available man was hurrying to meet it. We came up with several regiments of militia on their line of march. They had all a serviceable effective appearance—had been pretty well drilled, and their arms being direct from the tower, were in perfectly good order, nor had they the mobbish appearance that such a levy in any other country would have had. Their capots and trowsers of home-spun stuff, and their blue *tuques* (night caps) were all of the same cut and color, which gave them an air of uniformity that added much to their military look, for I have always remarked that a body of men's appearance in battalion, depends much less on the fashion of their individual dress and appointments, than on the whole being in strict uniformity.

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They marched merrily along to the music of their voyageur songs, and as they perceived our uniform as we came up, they set up the Indian War-whoop, followed by a shout of *Vive le Roi* along the whole line. Such a body of men in such a temper, and with so perfect a use of their arms as all of them possessed, if posted on such ground as would preclude the possibility of regular troops out-maneuvring them, (and such positions are not hard to find in Canada,) must have been rather a formidable body to have attacked. Finding that the enemy were between us and our regiment, proceeding to join would have been out of the question. The Colonel therefore requested that we might be attached to the militia on the advance. The Commander-in-Chief finding that the old gentleman had a perfect knowledge of the French language, (not by any means so common an accomplishment in the army in those days as it is now,) gave him command of a large brigade of militia, and, like other men who rise to greatness, his friends and followers shared his good fortune, for a subaltern of our regiment who had come out in another ship and joined us at Montreal, was appointed as his Brigade Major; and I was exalted to the dignity of Principal Medical Officer to his command, and we proceeded to Lachine, the head-quarters of the advance, and where it had been determined to make the stand, in order to cover Montreal, the great commercial emporium of the Canadas, and which, moreover, was the avowed object of the American attack.

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Our force here presented rather a motley appearance; besides a small number of the line consisting chiefly of detachments, there was a considerable body of sailors and marines; the former made tolerable Artillery men, and the latter had, I would say, even a more serviceable appearance than an equal body of the line, average it throughout the army.

The fact is that during the war the marines had the best recruits that entered the army. The reason of this, as explained to me by an intelligent non-commissioned officer of that corps, was,



that whereas a soldier of the line, returning on furlough to his native village, had barely enough of money to pay his travelling expenses, and support him while there, and even that with a strict attention to economy, the marine, on the other hand, on returning from a three years' cruise, had all the surplus pay and prize money of that period placed in his hands before he started, and this, with his pay going on at the same rate as that of the soldier of the line, enabled him to expend in a much more gentlemanly style of profusion than the other.

The vulgar of all ranks are apt to form their opinions of things rather from their results than the causes of them, and hence they jump to the conclusion that the marine service must be just so much better than that of the line, as the one has so much more money to spend on his return home than the other. And hence, aspiring—or as our quarter master, Tom Sheridan, used to say when recruiting sergeant, *perspiring*—young heroes, who resolve to gain a field marshal's baton by commencing with a musket, preferred the amphibious path of the jolly to the exclusively terraqueous one of the flat-foot. Besides these and our friends the country militia, there were two corps formed of the gentlemen of Montreal, one of artillery and another of sharpshooters. I think these were in a perfect state of drill, and in their handsome new uniforms had a most imposing appearance. But if their discipline was commendable, their commissariat was beyond all praise. Long lines of carts were to be seen bearing in casks and hampers of the choicest wines, to say nothing of the venison, turkeys, hams, and all other esculents necessary to recruit their strength under the fatigues of war. With them the Indian found a profitable market for his game, and the fisherman for his fish. There can be little doubt that a gourmand would greatly prefer the comfort of dining with a mess of privates of these distinguished corps to the honour and glory of being half starved (of which he ran no small risk) at the table of the Governor General himself. Such a force opposed to an equal number of regulars, it may be said, was no very hopeful prospect for defending a country. But there are many things which, when taken into consideration, will show that the balance was not so very much against them as at first sight may appear. Men who are fighting for their homes and friends, and almost in sight of their wives and children, have an additional incentive over those who fight for pay and glory. Again, the enemy to attack them had to land from a rapid, a thing which precludes regularity under any circumstances, and they would not be rendered more cool by a heavy fire of artillery while they were yawning and whirling in the current. They must have landed in confusion, and would be attacked before they could form, and should they get over all this, there was a plateau of land in the rear ascended by a high steep bank, which, in tolerable hands, could neither be carried nor turned. Add to all this, that the American regulars, if equal, were not superior to our troops in drill and discipline, the great majority of them having been enlisted for a period too short to form a soldier, under the most favorable circumstances. And much even of that short time had been consumed in long and harassing marches through an unsettled country that could not supply the commissariat, and exposed to fatigue and privation that was rapidly spreading disease among them; dispirited too by recent defeat, with a constantly increasing force hanging on their rear. If they even had forced us at Lachine, they must have done it at an enormous loss. In their advance also towards Montreal, they must have fought every inch of the way, harrassed in front, flank and in rear, and their army so diminished that they could not hold Montreal if they had it. On the whole, therefore,—any reflections on the conduct of General Wilkinson by those great military critics, the editors of American newspapers, to the contrary notwithstanding,—every soldier will admit, that in withdrawing with a comparatively unbroken army to his intrenchment on Salmon River, the American commander did the very wisest thing that under all the circumstances he could have done. What the event of a battle might have been it is now impossible to say, for on this ground it was fated we were to show our devotion to our king and country at a cheaper rate, for the news of the battle of Chrysler's Farm, and the subsequent retreat of the Americans across the river, blighted all our hopes of laurels for this turn.

This was a very brilliant little affair. Colonel Morrison of the 89th Regiment, was sent by General de Rotenburg, with a small corp amounting in all to 820 men, Regulars, Militia and Indians, to watch the motions of the American army, when it broke up from Grenadier Island, near Kingston, and to hang on and harass their rear. This was done so effectually that General Covington was detached with a body at least three times our number to drive them back. Morrison retired till he came to a spot he had selected on his downward march, and there gave them battle. Luckily for us, the first volley we fired killed General Covington, who must have been a brave fine fellow; the officer succeeding him brought his undisciplined levies too near our well-drilled troops before he deployed, and in attempting to do so, got thrown into confusion, thus giving our artillery and gun-boats an opportunity of committing dreadful slaughter among their confused and huddled masses. They rallied, however, again, but were driven off by the bayonet; but all this cost us dear, for we were too much weakened to follow up our victory. They retired therefore in comparative safety to about seven miles above the village of Cornwall, where they crossed the river without loss, save from a body of Highland militia, from Glengarry, who made a sudden attack on their cavalry while embarking, and by firing into the boats by which they were swimming over their horses, made them let go their bridles, and the animals swimming to the shore, were seized upon by Donald, who thus came into action a foot soldier, and went out of it a dragoon, no doubt, like his countryman, sorely "*taight wi' ta peast*" on his journey home. [A] The enemy then took up a position and fortified a camp, where they remained during the winter, and when preparations were made to drive them out of it in the spring, they suddenly abandoned their position, leaving behind them their stores and baggage, and retreated, followed by our forces, as far as the village of Malone, in the State of New York. Thus ended the "*partumeius mons*" of the only efficient invasion of Canada during the war. The fact is, the Americans were deceived in all their schemes of conquest in Canada; the disaffected then as now were the loudest in their clamour, and a belief obtained

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among the Americans that they had only to display their colours to have the whole population flock to them. But the reverse of this was the case. They found themselves in a country so decidedly hostile, that their retreating ranks were thinned by the peasantry firing on them from behind fences and stumps; and it was evident that every man they met was an enemy. The militia at Lachine, after being duly thanked for their services, were sent home, and the regulars went into winter quarters; the sailors and marines to Kingston—and we, having enjoyed our newly acquired dignities for a few days, set off to join our regiment then quartered at Fort Wellington, a clumsy, ill-constructed unflanked redoubt, close to which now stands the large and populous village of Prescott, then consisting of five houses, three of which were unfinished. The journey was a most wretched one. The month of November being far advanced, rain and sleet poured down in torrents—the roads at no season good, were now barely fordable, so that we found it the easiest way to let our waggon go on with our baggage, and walk through the fields, and that too, though at every two hundred yards, or oftener, we had to scramble over a rail fence, six feet high; sometimes we got a lift in a boat, sometimes we were dragged by main force in a waggon through the deep mud, in which it was hard to say whether the peril of upsetting or drowning was the most imminent. Sometimes we marched; but all that could be said of any mode of travel was, that it was but a variety of the disagreeable; so, as there was no glory to be gained in such a service, I was anything but sorry when I learned that I was to halt for some time at a snug, comfortable, warm, cleanly, Dutch farm house, to take charge of the wounded who had suffered in the action of Chrysler's Farm.

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[A] The Highlander is no equestrian—he can trot on his feet fifty or sixty miles a day, with much greater ease to himself, and in a shorter space of time, than he could ride the same distance. A gentleman once sent his Highland servant a message on urgent business, and to enable him to execute it sooner, gave him a horse. Donald did not return at the time expected, nor for long after it; at last his master, who was watching anxiously for him, discerned him at a long distance on the road on foot, creeping at a snail's pace, and *towing* the reluctant quadruped by the bridle. On being objurgated for his tardiness, he replied "he could have been here twa three hours, but he has taicht wi' ta peast," *i.e.* delayed, or impeded by the horse.

Washington Irving is the only describer of your "American Teutonic Race," and this, my debut in the New World, put me down in the midst of that worthy people as unsophisticated as possible. It is *refreshing*, as his little Lordship of Craigcrook used to say, in this land where every man is a philosopher, and talks of government as if he had been bred at the feet of Machiavel, to meet with a specimen of genuine simplicity, perfectly aware of his own ignorance in matters which in no way concern him. Your Dutchman is the most unchangeable of all human beings, "*Caelum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*" applies with peculiar force to the Batavian in every clime on the face of the globe. In America, at the Cape of Good Hope, in the congenial marshes of Java, in the West Indies, and at Chinsurhae on the banks of the Ganges, the transmarine Hollander is always the same as in his own native mud of the dams and dykes of Holland,—the same in his house, his dress, his voracious and omniverous appetite, his thrift and his cleanliness.

Among these good, kind, simple people, I spent a month or six weeks very pleasantly. Loyal and warmly attached to the British Crown, they followed our standard in the Revolutionary War, and obtained from government settlements in Canada when driven from their homes on the banks of the Hudson. From what I could learn from them, the Americans had persecuted them and their families with a rancour they displayed to no other race of mankind. When prisoners were taken in action, while the British were treated by them with respect, and even with kindness, the Dutch were deliberately murdered in cold blood. Men without arms in their hands, but suspected of favouring the British cause, were shot before their own doors, or hanged on the apple trees of their own orchards, in presence of their wives and families, who without regard to age or sex, were turned from their homes without remorse or pity. And one old dame told me that she was for six weeks in the woods between Utica and Niagara, unaccompanied by any one but her two infant children, looking for her husband, who she luckily found in the fort of the latter place; at one time she and her poor babes must have perished from hunger, but for some Mohawk Indians, who came up and delivered them, and conducted them to the Fort. The Dutch themselves ascribe this very different treatment of the two races to the fear of the Americans that the British would retaliate in case they were ill used, while the Dutch could not.

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This, however, could not have been the case, for had the Americans feared vengeance on the part of the British for the wrongs they inflicted on their countrymen, they must have equally feared that they would not quietly submit to injuries inflicted on men who were their loyal and faithful fellow subjects. I therefore suspect, that, so far as their statements were correct, and they must have been so in the main, for I have the same stories from the Dutch of the Niagara District, who had no communication whatever with their compatriots of Williamsburg, and though we must allow great latitude for exaggeration in a people who were, no doubt, deeply injured, and had been brooding over their wrongs for a period of upwards of thirty years, during all which time their wrath had gathered force as it went, and their stories having no one to contradict them, must have increased with each subsequent narrator, till they had obtained all the credence of time-honoured truth—allowing for all this, but insisting that the stories had a strong foundation in fact, the rigor of their persecution must be attributed to another feeling, and must have, I should think, arisen from this, that the Americans considered that a British subject born within the realm, and fighting

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for what he believed to be the rights of his country, was only doing what they themselves were doing; whereas, a North American born, whatever his extraction, fighting against what they considered the rights of the people of North America, was a traitor and an apostate, an enemy to the cause of freedom from innate depravity, and therefore, like a noxious animal, was lawfully to be destroyed, "*per fas et nefas*." However this may be, I found their hatred to the Americans was deep rooted and hearty, and their kindness to us and to our wounded, (for I never trusted them near the American wounded,) in proportion strong and unceasing; my only difficulty with them was to prevent them cramming my patients with all manner of Dutch dainties, for their ideas of practice being Batavian, they affirmed that there was infinitely greater danger from inanition than repletion, and that strength must come from nourishment. "Unless you give de wounded man plenty to eat and drink it is quite certain he can never get through."

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Killing with kindness is the commonest cause of death I am aware of, and it is very remiss in the faculty, that it has never yet found a place in the periodical mortuary reports which they publish in great cities in a tabular form—this ought to be amended. *Au reste*—I was very comfortable, for, while I remained under the hospitable roof of my friend old Cobus, I had an upper room for my sleeping apartment, and the show room of the establishment for my sitting parlor, an honour and preferment which nobody of less rank than an actual line officer of the "*riglars*" could have presumed to aspire to; to the rest of mankind it was shut and sealed, saving on high days and holidays. This sacred chamber was furnished and decorated in the purest and most classical style of Dutch taste, the whole woodwork, and that included floor, walls and ceiling, were sedulously washed once a week with hot water and soap, vigorously applied with a scrubbing brush. The floor was nicely sanded, and the walls decorated with a tapestry of innumerable home-spun petticoats, evidently never applied to any other (I won't say meaner) purpose, declaring at once the wealth and housewifery of the gude vrow. On the shelf that ran round the whole room, were exhibited the holiday crockery of the establishment, bright and shining, interspersed with pewter spoons, which were easily mistaken for silver from the excessive brightness of their polish. And to conclude the description of my comforts, I had for breakfast and dinner a variety and profusion of meat, fish, eggs, cakes and preserves, that might have satisfied the grenadier company of the Regiment.

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On the Saturday morning (for this was the grand cleansing day) I never went forth to visit my hospital without taking my fowling piece in my hand, and made a point of never returning until sunset, as during the intervening period no animal not amphibious could possibly have existed in the domicile; after leaving them I never passed their door on the line of march without passing an hour or two with my old friends, and on such occasions I used to be honoured with the chaste salute of the worthy old dame, which was followed by my going through the same ceremony, to a strapping beauty, her niece, who was "comely to be seen," and in stature rather exceeded myself, though I stand six feet in my stocking soles. An irreverent Irish subaltern of ours impiously likened the decorous and fraternal salute with which I greeted her, to the "slap of a wet brogue against a barn door;" and the angel who in her innocence bestowed that civility on me, was known by my brother officers, who had no platonism in their souls, as "The Doctor's Sylph."

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From the end of the first few weeks that I remained here my patients gradually began to diminish,—some died, and these I buried,—some recovered by the remedies employed, or spite of them, and these I forwarded or carried with me to join the Regiment,—and others who from loss of limbs or of the use of them, might be considered as permanently rendered "*hors de combat*," I sent by easy stages to Montreal General Hospital, thence in the spring to be removed to England as occasion offered, thence to enjoy the honours and emoluments of a Chelsea Pension. The few that remained unfit to be removed I committed to the charge of an Hospital Mate, and proceeded with all convenient speed to join the headquarters of my Regiment.



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## CHAPTER II.

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"Cockneys of London, Muscadines of Paris,  
I pray you ponder, what a pastime war is."

—Byron.

I joined my regiment at Fort Wellington, and a fine jovial unsophisticated set of "wild tremendous Irishmen" I found my brother officers to be. To do them justice (and I was upwards of four years with them) a more honest-hearted set of fellows never met round a mess table. No private family ever lived in more concord or unanimity than did "Our Mess."

Irishmen though they mostly were, they never quarrelled among themselves. They sometimes fought, to be sure, with strangers, but never in the Regiment, though we rarely went to bed without a respectable quorum of them getting a *leetle* to the lee side of sobriety.

"Tempora mutantur," says Horace, but I very much doubt if "nos" (that is such as are alive of 'nos') "mutamur in illis." The Army is very different from what it was in my day—sadly changed indeed! It will hardly be believed, but I have dined with officers who, after drinking a few glasses of wine, called for their coffee. If Waterloo was to fight over again, no rational man can suppose that we would gain it after such symptoms of degeneracy. Such lady-like gentlemen would certainly take out vinaigrettes and scream at a charge of the Old Guard, and be horrified at the sight of a set of grim-looking Frenchmen, all grin and gash, whisker and moustache.

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I was not, however, allowed to enjoy the festivities of Fort Wellington, such as they were. The enemy being extended along the line of the right bank of the St. Lawrence, and the Lake of the Thousand Islands, it was necessary that we also should extend and occupy points that might enable us to keep up a communication, and maintain a correspondence with our rear. Besides it was considered highly expedient and necessary, that small bodies of the line should be stationed in defensible positions, to form a nucleus, in case of invasion, for the Indians and Militia to rally round and form upon. Accordingly, a garrison had to be maintained in a block-house in the woods of Gananoque, between Brockville and Kingston, and our Grenadier Company being ordered for that service, I was detached to accompany them. A block-house is a most convenient and easily constructed fort in a new country. The lower story is strongly built of stone, and the upper, which overhangs it about eighteen inches, (so that you can fire from above along the wall without being exposed,) is built of logs about a foot square. Both stories are pierced with loop-holes for musquetry, and in the upper are four portholes, to which are fitted four 24-pounder carronades, mounted naval fashion, the whole being surrounded with a strong loop-holed and flanked stoccade, and this makes a very fair protection for an inferior force, against a superior who are unprovided with a battering train, which of course in a few rounds would knock it to splinters.

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Except in the expectation of a sudden attack, the officers were permitted to sleep out of the block-house, and a small unfinished house was taken for their residence. The captain and senior lieutenant being, as Bardolph hath it, better *accommodated* than with wives, we, that is the junior lieutenant and myself, gave up our share of the quarters to them, and established ourselves in what had been a blacksmith's shop, for our winter quarters. In the ante-room to this enviable abode, a jobbing tailor had formed his shop-board, and his rags and shapings proved highly useful in caulking its seams against the wind. By means of a roaring fire kept up on the forge, and a stove in the outer room, we managed to keep ourselves tolerably comfortable during an unusually rigorous winter; and it being on the road side, and a halting station in the woods, we were often visited by friends coming or going, who partook with great goût of our frozen beef—which had to be cut into steaks with a hand-saw. Being on the banks of a fine stream, we never were at loss for ducks, and in the surrounding pine woods the partridges were abundant, and the Indians brought us venison in exchange for rum, so that we had at least a plentiful, if not an elegant table, and we were enabled to pass the winter nights as pleasantly over our ration rum as ever I did in a place with much more splendid "appliances and means to boot."

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We passed the remainder of the winter as officers are obliged to do in country quarters. We shot, we lounged, we walked and did all the flirtation that the neighborhood of a mill, a shop, a tavern, with two farm houses within a reasonable forenoon's walk, could afford. We were deprived, however, of the luxury of spitting over a bridge, which Dr. Johnston says is the principal amusement of officers in country quarters, for though we had a bridge close at hand, the stream beneath it was frozen. Early in spring we were relieved by two companies of another Regiment, and having received orders to join, we joined accordingly.

I had the good fortune to be quartered with two companies of my Regiment at the then insignificant village of Cornwall. It is now a flourishing town, and sends a Member to the Provincial Parliament, though it then did not contain more than twenty houses. Here we found ourselves in very agreeable society, composed principally of old officers of the revolutionary war, who had obtained grants of land in this neighbourhood, and had *settled down*, as we say in this part of the country and its neighbourhood, with their families. An affectation of style, and set entertainments that follow so rapidly the footsteps of wealth, were then and there unknown, and we immediately became on the best possible terms with the *highest circles* (for these exist in all societies, and the smaller the society, the more distinctly is the circle defined). We walked into their houses as if they had been our own, and no apology was offered, though these were found in such a litter as washing or scrubbing day necessarily implied. The old gentlemen when in town came to Our Mess, and when they had imbibed a sufficient quantity of port, they regaled us with toughish yarns of their military doings during the revolutionary war. And when a tea-drinking party called a sufficient number of the aristocracy together, an extemporaneous dance was got up, a muffled drum and fife furnishing the orchestra.

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Towards the end of June our two companies got the route to join headquarters, the Regiment being ordered to the Niagara frontier. But though the troops were relieved, I was not, but ordered to remain till some one should arrive to fill my place, and in the interval between that and my departure a Field Officer, who was sent to command the Militia of the district, arrived.

He was an old acquaintance of mine, and a real good fellow. He had highly distinguished himself during the war, particularly at the storming of Ogdensburg, where he commanded. He was of Highland extraction, and though he had not the misfortune to be born in that country, he had, by means of the instructions of a Celtic moonshee, (as they say in Bengal,) acquired enough of their language to hammer out a translation of a verse or two of the Gaelic Bible, with nearly as much facility as a boy in the first year of the Grammar School would an equal quantity of his Cordery. To all these good gifts he added the advantage of being of the Catholic persuasion, which rendered him the most proper person that could have been selected to take charge of a district the chief part of whose Militia were Highlanders, Catholics, and soldiers, or the sons of soldiers.

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I have never met with him since the end of the war, though I might have seen him in Edinburgh at the King's visit; but who could be expected to recognize a respectable Field Officer of Light Infantry, masquerading, disguised for the first time in his life in a kilt, and forming a joint in the tail of the chief of his barbarous clan?

It struck this gentleman that supplies of fresh provisions might be got from the American side, and accordingly he sent emissaries over the river, and the result justified the correctness of his views.

While sitting after dinner one day *tete-à-tete* with the Colonel, his servant announced that a gentleman wanted to see him. As the word *gentleman* on this side of the Atlantic conveys no idea of either high birth or high breeding, nor even of a clean shirt, or a whole coat, my friend demanded what kind of a gentleman,—as, like a sensible man as he was, he did not wish to be interrupted in the pleasant occupation of discussing his wine and listening to my agreeable conversation, by a gentleman who possibly might ask him if he wished to buy any eggs, as many species of the *genus* gentleman on this side of the herring pond might possibly deem a good and sufficient reason for intruding on his privacy. His servant said he believed he must be a kind of Yankee gentleman, for he wore his hat in the parlor, and spit on the carpet. The *causa scientiae*, as the lawyers say, seemed conclusive to my Commandant, for he was ordered to be admitted, and the Colonel, telling me that he suspected this must be one of his beef customers, requested I would not leave the room, as he wished a witness to the bargain he was about to make.

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Accordingly, there entered a tall, good-looking, middle-aged man, dressed in a blue something, that might have been a cross between a surtout and a great coat. He was invited to sit down, and fill his glass, when the following dialogue took place:

Yankee.—I'm Major — of Vermont State, and I would like to speak to the Colonel in private, I guess, on particular business.

Colonel.—Anything you may have to say to me, Sir, may be said with perfect safety in presence of this gentleman.

Major.—I'm a little in the smuggling line, I reckon.

Colonel.—Aye, and pray what have you smuggled?

Major.—Kettle, (cattle,) I reckon. I heerd that the Colonel wanted some very bad, so I just brought a hundred on 'em across at St. Regis, as fine critters, Colonel, as ever had hair on 'em. So I drove them right up; the Colonel can look at 'em hisself—they are right at the door here.

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Colonel.—Well, what price do you ask for them?

Major.—Well, Colonel I expect about the same as other folks gets, I conclude.

Colonel.—That is but reasonable, and you shall have it.

The Commissary of the Post was sent for, and having been previously warned not to be very scrupulous in inspecting the drove, as it was of infinitely more importance to get the army supplied than to obtain them at the very lowest rate per head, he soon returned with a bag of half eagles, and paid the Major the sum demanded. The latter, after carefully counting the coin, returned it into the canvas bag, and opening his coat displayed inside the breast of it, a pocket about the size of a haversack, into which he dropped his treasure, and then deliberately buttoning it up from the bottom to the throat, he filled and drank a glass of wine, to our good healths; adding, "Well, Colonel, I must say you are a leetle the genteelest man to deal with ever I met with, and I'll tell all my friends how handsome you behaved to me; and I'm glad of it for their sakes as well as my own, for jist as I was fixing to start from St. Regis, my friend Colonel — arrived with three hundred head more. The kettle arnt his'n; they belong to his father, who is our Senator. They do say that it

is wrong to supply an innimy, and I think so too; but I don't call that man my innimy who buys what I have to sell, and gives a genteel price for it. We have worse innimies than you Britishers. So I hope the Colonel will behave all the same as well to them as he has done to me; but there was no harm in having the first of the market, you know, Colonel." So with a duck that was intended for a bow, and a knowing grin that seemed to say, "It was just as safe to secure my money before giving you this piece of information," he took his leave and departed, evidently much pleased with the success of his negotiation.

At this time the expense of carrying on the war was enormous. Canada, so far from being able to supply an army and navy with the provisions required, was (as a great many of her effective population were employed in the transport of military and naval stores,) not fit to supply her own wants, and it was essential to secure supplies from wherever they could be got soonest and cheapest. Troops acting on the Niagara frontier, 1,000 miles from the ocean, were fed with flour the produce of England, and pork and beef from Cork, which, with the waste inseparable from a state of war, the expense and accidents to which a long voyage expose them, and the enormous cost of internal conveyance, at least doubled the quantity required, and rendered the price of them at least ten times their original cost. Not only provisions, but every kind of Military and Naval Stores, every bolt of canvas, every rope yarn, as well as the heavier articles of guns, shot, cables, anchors, and all the numerous etceteras for furnishing a large squadron, arming forts, supplying arms for the militia and the line, had to be brought from Montreal to Kingston, a distance of nearly 200 miles, by land in winter, and in summer by flat-bottomed boats, which had to tow up the rapids, and sail up the still parts of the river, (in many places not a mile in breadth, between the British and American shores,) exposed to the shot of the enemy without any protection; for with the small body of troops we had in the country, it was utterly impossible that we could detach a force sufficient to protect the numerous *brigades* of boats that were daily proceeding up the river, and we must have been utterly undone, had not the ignorance and inertness of the enemy saved us. Had they stationed four field guns, covered by a corps of riflemen, on the banks of the St. Lawrence, they could have cut off our supplies without risking one man. As it was we had only to station a small party at every fifty miles, to be ready to act in case of alarm; but fortunately for us, they rarely or never troubled us. If they had done so with any kind of spirit, we must have abandoned Upper Canada, Kingston and the fleet on Ontario included, and leaving it to its fate, confined ourselves to the defence of such part of the Lower Province as came within the range of our own empire, the sea.

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I would do gross injustice to my reader, no less than to myself, were I to quit Cornwall without mentioning a most worthy personage, who, though in a humble station, was one of the best and most original characters I ever met with in my progress through life. This was no other than my worthy hostess, of the principal log hotel, Peggy Bruce. If you could conceive Meg Dodds an Irish instead of a Scotch woman, you would have a lively conception of Peggy. She possessed all the virtues of her prototype, all her culinary talents, all her caprice with guests she did not take a fancy for, and all powers, offensive or defensive, by tongue or broom, as the case in hand rendered the one or the other more expedient.

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Peggy was the daughter of a respectable Irish farmer, and had made a runaway match with a handsome young Scotch sergeant. She had accompanied her husband through the various campaigns of the revolutionary war, and at the peace, his regiment being disbanded, they set up a small public house, which, when I knew her as a widow, she still kept. The sign was a long board, decorated by a very formidable likeness of St. Andrew at the one end, and St. Patrick at the other, being the patron saints of the high contracting parties over whose domicile they presided, and the whole surrounded by a splendid wreath of thistles and shamrocks.

Bred in the army, she still retained her old military predeliction, and a scarlet coat was the best recommendation to her good offices. Civilians of whatever rank she deemed an inferior class of the human race, and it would have been a hard task to have convinced her that the Lord Chancellor was equal in dignity or station to a Captain of Dragoons.

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It was my luck, (good or bad as the reader may be inclined to determine,) to be a prodigious favourite with the old lady; but even favour with the ladies has its drawbacks and inconveniences, and one of these with me was being dragged to the bedside of every man, woman and child who was taken ill in or about the village. At first I remonstrated against my being appointed physician-extraordinary to the whole parish, with which I was in no way connected; but Peggy found an argument which, as it seemed perfectly satisfactory to herself, had to content me. "What the d—l does the king pay you for, if you are not to attend to his subjects when they require your assistance?"

I once, and only once, outwitted her. She woke me out of a sound sleep a little after midnight, to go and see one of her patients. Having undergone great fatigue the day before, I felt very unwilling to get up. At first I meditated a flat refusal, but I could see with half a glance, that she anticipated my objections, for I saw her eye fix itself on a large ewer of water in the basin stand, and I knew her too well for a moment to suppose that she would hesitate to call in the aid of the pure element to enforce her arguments. So I feigned compliance, but pleaded the impossibility of my getting up, while there was a lady in the room. This appeared only reasonable, so she lit my candle and withdrew to the kitchen fire, while I was at my toilet. Her back was no sooner turned, than I rose, double-locked and bolted the door, and retired again to rest, leaving her to storm in

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the passage, and ultimately to knock up one of the village doctors, whose skill she was well persuaded was immeasurably inferior to any *Army* medical man who wore His Majesty's uniform. But though I chuckled at my success at the time, I had to be most wary how I approached her, and many days elapsed before I ventured to come within broom's length of her. At last I appeased her wrath by promising never "in like case to offend," and so obtained her forgiveness, and was once more taken into favour; but Peggy was too old a soldier to be taken in twice, or to trust to the promise of a sleepy man that he would get up. After this, when she required my services, she would listen to no apology on the score of modesty, but placing her lantern on the table, waited patiently till I was dressed, when tucking up her gown through her pocketholes and taking my arm, away we paddled through the mud in company.

After reaching the house of the patient, and after the wife and daughters had been duly scolded for their neglect in not calling her in sooner, we entered into consultation, which like many other medical consultations, generally ended in a difference of opinion. To a *military* surgeon, much sooner than to any other surgeon, there were certain great leading principles in the healing art, to all impugning of which Peggy was flint and adamant and when these were mooted I much question if she would have succumbed to even the Director General of the Army Medical Board himself.

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At the head of her medical dicta was that it was essential to "support the strength." That was to cram the patient with every kind of food that by entreaty or importunity he could be prevailed upon to swallow, (a practice by the way of more learned practitioners than Peggy.) A hot bath with herbs infused in it was another favourite remedy, and on this we were more at one, for the bath would most likely do good, and the herbs no harm. Her concluding act at the breaking up of the consultation was generally to dive into the recesses of a pair of pockets of the size and shape of saddle bags, from which, among other miscellaneous contents, would she fish up a couple of bottles of wine which she deemed might be useful to the patient. After we had finished business I escorted the old lady home, where there was always something comfortable kept warm for supper, which when we had discussed together, with something of a stiffish horn of hot brandy and water, we departed to our respective dormitories.

Peggy, like many of her country, possessed a keen vein of sarcastic humor, which often made her both feared and respected. A Colonel, as good a man, and as brave a soldier as ever drew a sword, but too much of a martinet to be a favourite with the militia of whom he was Inspecting Field Officer, received a command in a division that was then going on actual service. Peggy, who respected his military talents at least as much as she disliked his hauteur, meeting him the day before his departure, addressed him with—"Och! Colonel dear, and are ye going to lave us—sure there will be many a dry eye in the town the day you quit it." When the American Army, under Wilkinson, were coming down the St. Lawrence, a company of Glengarry Militia were placed at Cornwall to watch their movements, and act as might be most expedient. The Captain of the band was named John McDonald, a very good and highly respectable name, but of no earthly use to distinguish a Glengarry man, as there were some hundreds in that part of the world—nor would the prefix of his military rank much mend the matter, as there are probably some score Captain John McDonalds. In this emergency therefore, a soubriquet becomes indispensable. This Captain John had in his youth served in the revolutionary war as a corporal, in the same brigade as Peggy's husband, therefore they were very old friends, and to distinguish him from the clan she named him *Captain Corporal John*. When it was known that the invading army had abandoned the attempt, and had crossed the river, the men, wisely considering that their services were no longer required in Cornwall, and would be highly useful on their farms, disbanded themselves during the night without the formality of asking leave, so that at morning parade only six appeared on the ground. Such an unheard-of breach of military discipline could not fail to excite the fierce indignation of the worthy veteran; accordingly he vented his wrath in every oath, Gaelic or English, within the range of his vocabulary. Peggy, who witnessed the scene from her window, consoled the incensed commander with "Och! John, dear, don't let the devil get so great a hould of ye as to be blaspheming like a heathen in that fearful way; things are not so bad with you yet, sure you have twice as many men under your command as you had when I knew you first."

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Having at last been relieved, I proceeded to join on the Niagara frontier, and therefore marched with a detachment of the Canadian Fencibles to Kingston, where I was joined by a friend of mine, an officer of the 100th, who was bound for the same destination. We accordingly waited on the Deputy Quarter Master General, and stated the necessity of being furnished with land conveyance, as the battle which must decide the campaign, was hourly expected; but that gentleman having newly acquired his dignity, it did not sit easy upon him, and with great hauteur he flatly refused us, and unless we chose to march it, (about 200 miles,) we had no shift but to embark in a batteau loaded with gunpowder, and rowed by a party of De Watteville's regiment. This gentleman, by the bye, afterwards distinguished himself as a naturalist in Sir John Ross' first Polar expedition, and as a most appropriate reward had the honor to stand god-father to a nondescript gull, which bears his name unto this day.

In the batteau, therefore, we deposited ourselves, and with six more in company proceeded on our way, with such speed as a set of rowers, who probably had never had an oar before in their hands, could urge us. The wind though light was ahead; but when we got about six hours distance from Kingston, which perhaps might amount to eighteen or twenty miles, all we could do was to make head-way against it, and as it looked as if there would be more of it, sooner than less, I (who,

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from my superior nautical experience, having been born and bred in a sea-port town and acquired considerable dexterity both in stealing boats and managing them when stolen, was voted Commodore,) ordered them under the lee of a little rocky island, and carried their dangerous cargo about a hundred yards from where we encamped, that is to say, put the gunpowder at one end of the island and ourselves at the other, hauled up the batteau, lighted fires, and forming a camp of sails and tarpaulins, waited the event. A squall did come down the lake in very handsome style, embellished with a sufficiency of spindrift to make us thankful that we were under the lee of a rock and covered overhead. The squall subsided into a good steady gale, accompanied by a sea that made it utterly impossible that we could have proceeded even if the wind had been as favourable as it was the contrary; we thus had the advantage of enjoying two days of philosophical reflection on a rock in Lake Ontario. On the third it began to moderate, and my comrade and I took one of the empty batteaus with a strong party, and made us directly in shore as we could, and had the good fortune to land about twelve miles above Kingston, determined to make our way on horseback, *coute qu'il coute*.

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Any one who has only seen the roads of Canada in the present day, can form but a very inadequate idea of what they were then between Kingston and Toronto; for a considerable part of the way we were literally up to our saddle-flaps. In those days all the horses along the roads were taken up for Government, and an officer receiving the *route* gave the proprietor an order for so many horses so many miles, and the nearest Commissary paid it; or he paid it, taking a receipt which, when he showed it to the Commissary at the end of his journey, was refunded. We necessarily took the latter mode, seeing we had no route to show, and therefore paid our way ourselves. The officer who accompanied me being like myself a subaltern, we found we uniformly got the worst horses, as Major A. or Colonel B. or some other "person of worship" was expected, and the best must necessarily be kept for him. It struck me therefore that if "Captain" was a good travelling name, "General" must be a much better; I proposed to my companion that he should have the rank of Major General "for the road only," and I volunteered to act as Aide-de-camp. He liked the plan, but objected that he was too young to look the character, but that as I had a more commanding and dignified presence, I should do General and he Aide-de-camp, and as we were dressed in our surtouts and forage caps, we were well aware that we might easily pass with the uninitiated for any rank we might think proper to assume. Accordingly, when we approached a halt where we were to change horses, he rode briskly forward and began to call lustily about him, as "one having authority," for horses, and pointing to a very active, stout looking pair, peremptorily ordered them to be brought out and saddled; but the man of the house excused himself by saying that he "kept them horses for the sole use of Major B. the Deputy Quarter Master General, and as he had the conducting of the troops on the line of march through which the road lay, and had it in his power to put good jobs in his way, he was not a man whom he could offend on slight grounds."

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"D——n Major B!" exclaimed the irreverent and indignant A.D.C. "Would you set his will, or that of fifty like him, against the positive orders of the great General D. who has been sent out by the Duke of Wellington to instruct Sir Gordon Drummond how he is to conduct the campaign? Sir, if by your neglect he is too late for the battle that must soon be fought, you will be answerable for it, and then hanging on your own sign-post is the very mildest punishment you can expect; it is the way we always settled such matters in Spain." To this argument there could be no answer, so the horses were led out just as I came up—my A.D.C. with his hat in his hand holding my stirrup as I mounted. This to those who knew anything about the service would have appeared a little *de trop*; but to the uninitiated, of whom mine host was one, it only served to inspire him with the higher respect for the great man his horse was about to have the honour to carry.

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So far things went on as well as could have been wished; but in turning a corner in a young pine wood about a mile from where we had started, who should we meet full in the face but Major B., (commonly called Beau B.) who was also a captain in my own regiment. After the first salutation he expressed his surprise that the man should have given me his horses. I assured him that I should not have got them, but that he had a much better pair for him. This pacified him, so after a few minutes' conversation, (the A.D.C. and guide keeping a respectful distance,) I told him I had been made a general since I last saw him. He did not see the point of the joke at the time, but on taking leave he took off his hat and bowing till his well brushed and perfumed locks mixed with the hair of his horse's mane, said, loud enough for the guide to hear him, "General D., I have the honor to wish you a very good morning." If there had been any misgivings in the mind of the guide, this could not fail to remove them. Immediately after he rode up to me, and said that if I had no objections he would ride forward, and make such arrangements that there should be no delay in mounting me at the next stage. To this I acceded with the most gracious affability, so he rode on accordingly. His zeal for the service might account for his eagerness, yet I hope I will not be accounted uncharitable when I suspected that the importance, which attaches to the person who is first to communicate an extraordinary piece of news, may have had something to do with all this alacrity. However this may be, it served my purpose, for at every stage not a moment was lost, the news flying like wild fire. I found horses ready at every house, and never was for one moment delayed.

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With my friend Beau B. the result was somewhat different, for on arriving at the stage there was nothing for him but our exhausted dog-tired horses to mount, which in the state of the roads would have been utter madness; so he had to wait in a roadside inn, consoling himself with what philosophy he could muster till they were sufficiently recruited with food and rest to continue their journey.

On this journey there occurred a circumstance which, as it is intimately connected with the secret history of the Province, deserves to be related. It will be news to most of my neighbors that the Province of Canada has a *secret history* of its own, or they may suppose that it may contain some such tit-bits as the secret history of the Court of St. Petersburg in the days of Catharine; but I am sorry to say that our secret history affords nothing so *piquante*; it only relates to the diplomacy of the Court of St. James, with its effects on the Court of the Chateau St. Louis.

In those days Sir George Prevost filled the vice-regal chair of Her Majesty's dominions in British North America, and a more incompetent Viceroy could hardly have been selected for such trying times. Timid at all times, despairing of his resources, he was afraid to venture anything; and when he did venture, like an unskilful hunter, he spurred his horse spiritedly at the fence, and while the animal rose he suddenly checked him—balked him in the leap he could have easily cleared, and landed himself in the ditch. Thus he acted at Sackett's Harbour and thus at Plattsburg, where he was in possession of the forts when he ordered the retreat to be sounded, and ran away out of one side of the town while the enemy were equally busy in evacuating it at the other. But to my story. Late on the evening of our first day's journey, and therefore somewhere midway between Kingston and Toronto, we overtook an officer of Sir George Prevost's Staff. He asked us why we were riding so fast? We told him, to be present at the coming battle. He told us we might save ourselves the trouble, as there would be no battle till he was there, and hinted perhaps not then; and strongly recommended that, instead of pushing on through such roads during the night, we should stop at a house he pointed out to us, and where he was going. Thinking, however, that a battle was not always at the option of one party, we determined to push on, while he turned up to a good looking two story white framed house on the lake side of the road. Many years after, the late Mr. Galt was employed to advocate the War Losses in Canada with His Majesty's Government. In one of his conferences with the Colonial Secretary, the latter stated that everything that could be done had been done for the defence of the Province, and that it never had been the intention either of the Imperial or Colonial Government to abandon it. Mr. Galt then placed in his hands a paper purporting to be a copy of a despatch from Sir George Prevost to Sir Gordon Drummond, ordering him to withdraw his forces from the upper part of the Province, and to concentrate them to cover Kingston. The Secretary then, turning to Galt, said rather sternly:

"Sir, you could not have come fairly by this copy of a private despatch?"

Galt calmly replied, "My Lord, however this paper was come by at first, I came honestly enough by it, for it was sent to me with other papers to assist me in advocating the claims of those who have suffered in the war; but I thank your Lordship for admitting that it is a copy of a despatch whether private or public."

His Lordship felt that, in his haste to criminate, he had allowed his diplomacy to be taken by surprise.

Galt told me this story, and I then told him my meeting the officer, who undoubtedly was the bearer of the despatch; he confessed to me that it was at that house and on that night that the despatches were abstracted from that Staff Officer's *sabre-tasche*, copied, resealed and returned. Of course he never would tell me who were the perpetrators; but if a certain Colonel of Militia (who was not then present, but attending his duty on the frontier) were now alive,—poor fellow! he came by an untimely end—I have no doubt but he could throw some light on the subject.

We continued to be furnished with good horses till we arrived at Toronto, (then York,) for there being then moonlight we rode twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and it appeared that we had advanced for the two last days (for the first day we only made one stage) at the rate of seventy-five miles per day, which, considering the state of the roads, was far from being amiss.



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### CHAPTER III.

Ah, me! what perils do environ

Luckily the moment we arrived at Toronto, we were informed that a gun-brig was about to sail for Niagara, on board which we were shipped. About sun-set we sailed, and the wind being fair, we arrived in the mouth of the Niagara river at daylight, and lost no time in ordering horses; and while they were getting ready, we were anxiously employed in examining and cross-examining witnesses as to the contradictory reports that were in circulation as to a battle. All we could elicit was, that there had been some fighting, for many had heard from Queenston Heights the noise both of artillery and musketry. Some said we had been defeated, and were in full retreat on Niagara; others that we had cut the enemy to pieces, and that the few that were left were busy crossing to their own side. Of course, as in most matters of rumor, both reports were partly true and partly false. We had obtained a victory, but lost severely in so doing; and the enemy, in consequence of the masterly arrangements of Major General Scott, one of the best soldiers in the American Army, (and one of the most gentlemanly men I ever met with,) had retired on Fort Brie; and a body of our troops, under Major General Convan of the Royals, had pressed hard upon them, and had he not been disabled by a wound, it is the general opinion, would have followed them into the Fort. The first of the particulars we were told by an officer who had come from the field on the spur, with the despatches, and he advised me as a friend (for we were old acquaintances) to stay where I was, and get my hospital in readiness, for, he assured me, that from the manner our Regiment had been handled, I would have quite enough to do at home without going abroad to look for adventures. Accordingly, upon inquiring where my wounded were to be put, I was shown a ruinous fabric, built of logs, called Butler's Barracks, from having been built during the revolutionary war by Butler's Rangers for their temporary accommodation. Nothing could be worse constructed for an hospital for wounded men—not that it was open to every wind that blew, for at midsummer in Canada that is rather an advantage; but there was a great want of room, so that many had to be laid on straw on the floor, and these had the best of it, for their comrades were put into berths one above another as in a transport or packet, where it was impossible to get round them to dress their wounds, and their removal gave them excruciating pain.

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In the course of the morning I had my hands full enough. Our Surgeon had gone to Scotland in a state of health which rendered recovery hopeless, and our senior assistant, naturally of a delicate constitution, and suffering under disease at the time of the action, had the last of his strength exhausted in bringing his wounded down. Waggon after waggon arrived, and before mid-day I found myself in charge of two hundred and twenty wounded, including my own Regiment, prisoners and militia, with no one to assist me but my hospital serjeant, who, luckily for me, was a man of sound sense and great experience, who made a most able second; but with all this the charge was too much for us, and many a poor fellow had to submit to amputation whose limb might have been preserved had there been only time to take reasonable care of it. But under the circumstances of the case it was necessary to convert a troublesome wound into a simple one, or to lose the patient's life from want of time to pay him proper attention.

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One of the many blunders of this blundering war, was that the Staff of the Army was never where it was wanted. The Medical and Commissariat Staffs, for instance, were congregated at the headquarters at Quebec, where they were in redundancy, with nothing for them to do, while a Staff Surgeon and an Hospital Mate were all that was allowed for the Army of the Right,—men who must have been active beyond all precedent if they could keep the office business, the accounts and returns square, without even attempting to interfere with the practice; and all this at a time too, when there was hardly a regiment in the field that had its full complement of medical officers.

There is hardly on the face of the earth a less enviable situation than that of an Army Surgeon after a battle—worn out and fatigued in body and mind, surrounded by suffering, pain and misery, much of which he knows it is not in his power to heal or even to assuage. While the battle lasts these all pass unnoticed, but they come before the medical man afterwards in all their sorrow and horror, stripped of all the excitement of the "heady fight."

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It would be a useful lesson to cold-blooded politicians, who calculate on a war costing so many lives and so many limbs as they would calculate on a horse costing so many pounds—or to the thoughtless at home, whom the excitement of a gazette, or the glare of an illumination, more than reconciles to the expense of a war—to witness such a scene, if only for one hour. This simple and obvious truth was suggested to my mind by the exclamation of a poor woman. I had two hundred and twenty wounded turned in upon me that morning, and among others an American farmer, who had been on the field either as a militia man or a camp follower. He was nearly sixty years of age, but of a most Herculean frame. One ball had shattered his thigh bone, and another lodged in his body, the last obviously mortal. His wife, a respectable elderly looking woman, came over under a flag of truce, and immediately repaired to the hospital, where she found her husband lying on a truss of straw, writhing in agony, for his sufferings were dreadful. Such an accumulation of misery seemed to have stunned her, for she ceased wailing, sat down on the ground, and taking her husband's head on her lap, continued long, moaning and sobbing, while the tears flowed fast down her face; she seemed for a considerable time in a state of stupor, till awakened by a groan from her unfortunate husband, she clasped her hands, and looking wildly around, exclaimed, "O that the King and the President were both here this moment to see the misery their quarrels lead to—they surely would never go to war again without a cause that they could give as a reason to God at the last day, for thus destroying the creatures that He hath made in his own image." In half an hour the poor fellow ceased to suffer.

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I never underwent such fatigue as I did for the first week at Butler's Barracks. The weather was intensely hot, the flies were in myriads, and lighting on the wounds, deposited their eggs, so that maggots were bred in a few hours, producing dreadful irritation, so that long before I could go round dressing the patients, it was necessary to begin again; and as I had no assistant but my serjeant, our toil was incessant. For two days and two nights, I never sat down; when fatigued I sent my servant down to the river for a change of linen, and having dined and dressed, went back to my work quite refreshed. On the morning of the third day, however, I fell asleep on my feet, with my arm embracing the post of one of the berths. It was found impossible to awaken me, so a truss of clean straw was laid on the floor, on which I was deposited, and an hospital rug thrown over me; and there I slept soundly for five hours without ever turning.

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My instructions were, as soon as a man could be safely removed, to ship him for York, and as the whole distance was by water conveyance, and there were ships of war always in readiness, and as my men were eminently uncomfortable where they were, I very soon thinned my hospital, and the few that remained over were sent to a temporary general hospital, and I was despatched to Chippawa in the neighborhood of the Falls of Niagara.

My duty here was to keep a kind of a medical boarding house. The sick and wounded from the Army were forwarded to me in spring waggons, and I took care of them during the night, and in the morning I forwarded them on to Niagara by the same conveyance, so that my duty commenced about sun-set, and terminated at sun-rise. By this arrangement I had the whole of the day to myself, and in the vicinity of the Falls there was no difficulty in employing it agreeably. My first business on my arrival, on a beautiful summer afternoon, was to visit the Table Rock. My first sight of the Falls most woefully disappointed me,—it was certainly grander than any fall I had ever seen, those of the Clyde included; but it was not on that scale of magnificence I had been led to expect, the opposite shore seemed within a stone's throw, and the height of the Fall not very great. I walked to the edge of the rock, and seated myself with my legs dangling over, and blessed my stars that I was not a man to be thrown into ecstasies and raptures merely because other people had been so. After about a quarter of an hour's contemplation I resolved to return to my quarters, and previous to rising, I bent forward and looked straight down. Below me were two men fishing, diminished by the distance—

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"The fishermen that walked upon the beach  
Appeared like mice."

This immediately gave me a notion of the height I was perched upon; a sense of sickness and giddiness came over me, and, like Edgar, I prudently resolved—

"I'll look no more,  
Lest the brain turn, and the deficient sight  
Topple down headlong."

But I did not make my retreat in a manner quite so dignified as could have been wished, for in coming down the bank I had unslung my sword, and was carrying it in my hand; it I pitched backwards over my head, and throwing myself first on the broad of my back, I rolled over half a dozen times, till I thought myself a sufficient distance from the verge of the precipice to get upon my legs, and it will easily be believed I was in no hurry to return to my former position.

I then set on foot a series of experiments to ascertain the width of the Falls, by throwing stones across, but by some extraordinary fatality they seemed to drop from my hand into the enormous cauldron that boiled and smoked below. Next day I came armed with an Indian bow, but the arrows met with no greater success than the stones—they, too, dropt as if impelled by a child's force; and it was not till after I looked at the Falls in every aspect that I convinced myself that they were such a stupendous work of nature as they really are. The fact is, there is nothing at hand to compare them with, and a man must see them often, and from every different point of view, to have any proper conception of the nature of them. I never heard of any one except Mrs. Boyle Corbett who was satisfied with seeing the Falls from her bed-room window while dressing for dinner; but I have often been amused, while staying at the hotel there, to see a succession of respectable people come from Buffalo to Chippawa by steam, take the stage that stops an hour at the Falls, dine, and see them, and start for Queenston, quite convinced that they had seen everything worth seeing in the neighborhood. Getting tired of the inactive life I was leading, I applied to get into the field, and it luckily so happened that another medical man had as great a desire to quit it as I to get into it; accordingly, an exchange was soon agreed upon—he being duly installed in the Chippawa hospital, and I receiving the route to join the Army before Fort Erie.

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The leaguer before Fort Erie had been always called the "Camp," and I certainly expected that, like other camps, it would have been provided with tents; but in this I was mistaken. It was rather a bivouac than a camp, the troops sheltering themselves under some branches of trees that only collected the scattered drops of rain, and sent them down in a stream on the heads of the inhabitants, and as it rained incessantly for two months, neither clothes nor bedding could be kept dry. I, though a young soldier, showed myself an old one, for my friend Tom F— having rather a better hut than his neighbors, I took up my quarters there, and his bed being raised on forked sticks, I placed my own under it, so that the rain had to penetrate through his bed clothes and

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mattress before it could reach me.

This arrangement did admirably for some time, till one night we were visited by the most tremendous thunder storm I ever witnessed in this or any other country, and accompanied with a deluge of rain, that might have done credit to Noah's flood. The hut was very soon swimming, and I was awoke by my bed being overflowed, and started up to get out, but the water that flooded the floor softened the earth in which the forked sticks that supported Tom's bed were driven, and it falling forward jammed me in among the wet bed clothes, where I was nearly drowned, till Tom starting to his feet allowed me to raise the wreck and crawl on all-fours from under it.

I may here remark what has always struck me as a great deficiency in the military education of the British Army—they are too much taken care of by their officers, and never taught to take care of themselves. In quarters their every motion is under the surveillance of their officers—the Captain and Subaltern of the day visit them each twice a day, and the Commanding Officer and one or other of the Majors frequently, to say nothing of the Surgeon and the Captain of their Company, who, if he (as sometimes happens) is a man possessed of a spirit of fidgetty zeal for the service, actually harasses them to death by his kind attention to their wants.

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It must be certified that their room is duly swept and cleaned, their bedding regularly made up and folded, their meals properly dressed, and it is not even left to their own discretion to eat them when dressed, but an officer must see and certify that fact.

Their shaving, their ablutions, their cleaning their shoes and clothes, all come under the same strict supervision, so that at last they get into the notion that their comfort, cleanliness, feeding and clothing, all are the duty and business of their officers, they having no interest in the matter, and that what they are not ordered to do for their own relief they may leave undone. In the sister service this is not so. A sailor will mend his clothes, will leave his hammock properly fitted, his bedding properly made, and his comforts so far as depends upon himself, properly cared for, whether his officers order it or not. The result of all this excessive care and attention is that you make men mere children. When the soldier leaves his clean comfortable barracks in England and is put into the field, where he has few or none of the accommodations he had at home, he is utterly helpless, and his officer on whom he leant, is just as helpless when a new state of things arises, as he can possibly be. All this was most fully illustrated before Fort Erie. The line might nearly as well have slept in the open air. The incorporated Militia, on the contrary, erected shanties, far superior, in warmth, tightness and comfort, to any canvas tent. De Watteville's regiment, which was recruited, chiefly from the prison hulks, consisted of all the nations of Europe, but all of them had served in the armies of Napoleon, and all of them had there learned how to make the best of a bad bargain. These, though they had not the skill in the axe inherent in their brethren of the Militia, took down hemlock boughs (a species of the pine, "*pinus canadensis*," ) and cutting off the tails of them, made thatched wigwams, perfectly weatherproof; and though they could not equal the Canadian Militia in *woodcraft*, they greatly excelled them in gastronomic lore; and thus, while our fellows had no better shift than to frizzle their rations of salt provisions on the ends of their ramrods, these being practical botanists, sent out one soldier from each mess, who gathered a haversack full of wild pot herbs, with which and a little flour their ration was converted into a capital kettle of soup.

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I shall have occasion to show hereafter how easily those camp habits may be acquired; meantime I have only to remark that, were they generally understood, an army might often be kept in the field in an infinitely more serviceable condition than it now is, and the prevalence of ague and dysentery in a body of men exposed to hardship and privation, if not totally arrested, might at least be very much diminished. I lately saw a very clever article on this subject by Sir J. E. Alexander of the 32nd Regt., now quartered at London, U.C., and I wrote him a very long and a very prosy letter thereanent. My positions, if I remember aright, were, first—That every Regiment in Canada should be made a Light Infantry Regiment, insomuch as they ought to be taught to understand and obey the bugle; secondly, that they should be taught the use of the axe, without which a Regiment is absolutely helpless in the woods, and this might be done by making them chop their own firewood, and giving them the money that is otherwise given to the contractor: and thirdly, that they should be taken into the woods for a month every summer, with a party of woodsmen to teach them how to erect shanties, cut fire-wood and provide for themselves in such a situation. Even the Commissariat Department (the most important in modern warfare) may be dispensed with by able woods-men. Sir William Johnson marched his Regiment, who were all woods-men, from the Mohawk River to Fort Niagara, through the woods, requiring no other support, on that long line of march, than their rifles were amply sufficient to supply them with.

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When I arrived at Fort Erie, I found myself appointed to the very service I would have chosen had I had the right of choosing. A corps of six flank companies was organized under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Drummond, of Keltie, then commandant of the 104th Regiment.

Colonel Drummond was everything that could be required in a soldier; brave, generous, open-hearted and good natured, he added to all these the talent of a first-rate tactician; and if at times eccentricities broke out through all these, any one who knew him must have agreed with his clansman, and I believe kinsman, Sir Gordon Drummond, that "all these eccentricities would one day mellow down into sound common sense, and that Keltie would be an honor to the service." Alas! his prophecy was destined never to be fulfilled—that was his last campaign, and he fell in it

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as a brave man and a soldier would wish to fall, a death far less to be pitied than envied. But I am anticipating. We were divided into three brigades—let not the old soldier suppose that these were such brigades as are generally in the army. Our force never amounted to 9,000 men, including artillery, cavalry and militia, and these took their tour of piquet duty in rotation, so that we had one day of duty, were relieved the next, and on the fourth again took our turn. This, all things considered, especially alarms and skirmishes, when we all turned out, was pretty hard work, but we were in high spirits, and it never affected us. One of the great drawbacks of the service in Canada was that we got the rubbish of every department in the army. Any man whom The Duke deemed unfit for the Peninsula was considered as quite good enough for the Canadian market, and in nothing was this more conspicuous than in our Engineer Department. Without the semblance of a battering train, it was deemed expedient to besiege Fort Erie, and the ground was occupied, parties sent in advance, and batteries ordered to be constructed. Our first essay in this line was a battery on the main road leading to the Fort, which was to breach the strong stone building in the centre of it, on which were mounted, if I recollect rightly, one iron 24-pounder, one 18-pounder and two brass field 24-pounders. I have never seen before or since, any like them, but they were of the time of George II., and were admirable guns in the field, though not quite the best that could be used for breaching the wall of a fort. A brass and an iron mortar were afterwards added to this most efficient battering train; the latter, however, having no bed, was placed in one of oak, which it split almost as often as it was fired. After much skirmishing with the enemy and the covering parties, the battery was at last opened, and gentle reader! if ever you saw what is termed hopping bowling at cricket you may have some idea how our fire operated. I very much doubt if one shot in ten reached the rampart at all, and the fortunate exceptions that struck the stone building at which they were aimed, rebounded from its sides as innocuous as tennis balls.

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The fact is the distance had been miscalculated, and we were attempting to breach a wall at a distance that it was scarcely possible to hit it. The enemy knew their distance better, and managed to pitch shot and shell among us in a way that was anything but pleasant.

I remember one day while I was in the battery, admiring our abortive attempts to do any mischief, while a gun of the enemy was practising with the most admirable precision on us, Mr. K., of the Glengarries, lounged into the battery, and casually asked the Commanding Engineer how far we were from the Fort. He replied about seven hundred yards. Mr. K. said he thought double the distance would be nearer the mark;—this brought on a dispute, which Mr. K. offered to settle by either cutting a fuse or laying a gun for the supposed distance. To this it was replied that both the powder and the fuses were bad, and no faith could be had in them. Mr. K. then asked leave to lay the 24-pounder, and the Engineer, with a sneer, looking at his green jacket, observed, that there was some difference between a rifle and a 24-pounder; however, Mr. K. then himself on the trail of the gun, brought out the coign further than it had been before, and from the orders he gave to the artillery even, showed, at least, that he knew the words of command in working a gun. The presiding Engineer, seeing the elevation he was taking, asked him if he was aiming at the truck of the flagstaff of the Fort. He replied, no—the site of the embrasure would be high enough for him. The gun was fired, and the ball entered the sand bags about a foot below the mark. He then asked leave to try a second shot. He laid the gun with great care, and took a long while to do it,—at last he gave the word "fire," away went the ball, and driving the sand up from the site of the embrasure, took the enemy's gun on the transom, and capsized it. "Pray, sir," said the Engineer, "where might you have learned to lay guns?" "At Woolwich," was the reply, "where I was three years Serjeant Major of Artillery."

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It was then resolved that another battery should be erected some hundreds of yards in advance, and to the right of the first. Accordingly, our brigade was sent out to drive the enemy's piquets out of the wood in our front, and establish parties to cover the workmen.

This duty was performed in good style, but with considerable loss on our part, for in a wood the advancing party always acts to disadvantage, as the retreating can fire from under cover, and retreat in the smoke; whereas the advancing party must necessarily expose himself somewhat, the quantum of exposure depending much on his knowledge of his business in advancing in such a way as will give his antagonists as little chance as may be of taking a steady aim at him.

The ground was accordingly chosen, and the third effort commenced. The enemy were aware of what we were about, so they kept up a constant fire of round shot and shells upon the working parties. The direction of their practice was admirable, but they seemed to have altogether lost their knowledge of elevation, for their shot was uniformly over our heads. At last the battery was declared ready to open, but, as it was masked by a considerable belt of trees, these had, of course, to be felled, and that required a strong covering, and an equally strong working party. If the enemy had failed with their round shot against the men in the trenches, they were infinitely more fortunate with their grape against the covering and working party. This was by far the bloodiest bush skirmish we had. The party with which I was, though not 120 strong, had six killed and about thirty wounded; however, we stuck obstinately to it, and at last our object was achieved. The battery was unmasked, and the Lord have mercy on the defenders of the Fort, for we would have none! "Mistakes will creep into the best regulated families." When all this profuse waste of life, time and labor had been gone into, it was discovered that the battery had been erected without taking the levels, and that a rise of ground in front of it prevented us even from seeing the Fort. This at once demonstrated that the battery was useless, and explained the reason why the American shot had been so innocuous. During the whole time we lay before Fort Erie, bush-

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skirmishing was an every day's occurrence, and though the numbers lost in each of these affairs may seem but trifling, yet the aggregate of men put *hors de combat* in a force so small as ours became very serious in the long run. They generally commenced with some accidental rencontre of videttes—their firing brought out the piquet, then the brigade on duty, and then, not unfrequently, the brigade next for duty. I think, on a fair average of three months, I enjoyed this amusement about three times a week.

Excepting only a *melée* of cavalry, a bush skirmish is the only aspect in which modern warfare appears in anything picturesque. Look at all attempts at painting a modern battle, and unless the painter takes such a distance as to render everything indistinct, you have nothing but a series of stiff, hard, regular, straight lines, that might represent a mathematical diagram in uniform. Not so with light infantry in a wood. There a man ceases to be merely a part of a machine, or a point in a long line. Both his personal safety and his efficiency depend on his own knowledge and tact. To stand straight upright and be shot at is no part of his duty; his great object is to annoy the enemy, and keep himself safe; and so far was this carried by the tacticians of the Prussian school, that in a German Contingent, which served on this continent during the revolutionary war, a yager has been flogged for *getting himself wounded*.

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Perhaps there can be no military scene more fit for the pencil than a body of light infantry awaiting an attack. The variety of attitude necessary to obtain cover—the breathless silence—the men attentive by eye and ear—every glance (furtively lowered) directed to the point—some kneeling, some lying down, and some standing straight behind a tree—the officer with his silver whistle in his hand, ready to give the signal to commence firing, and the bugle boy looking earnestly in his officer's face waiting for the next order. This is worth painting, which cannot, by any one having a decent regard for truth, be said of the base reliefs that we see on the tombs of heroes, of a line of men marching in step, each with his bayonet levelled at precisely the same angle, in a manner that would draw forth the enthusiastic approbation of the shade of Sir David Dundas, but which no effort of the genius of sculptor or painter could even render more tolerable, than a well executed representation of the same quantity of park pales.

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This species of warfare necessarily draws forth the individual talent of the soldier. I once saw a soldier of the 32nd take two American sentries prisoners, by placing his cap and great coat on a bush, and while they were busy firing at his image and superscription, he fetch'd a circuit, got behind them, waited till both of their firelocks were discharged, and then drove them before him into the picquet guard.

The Glengarry Regiment being provincials, possessed many excellent shots. They were not armed with the rifle, but with what I greatly prefer to that arm, the double sighted light infantry musket. A rifle is by no means suited for a day's fighting; when it gets foul from repeated firing it is difficult even to hammer the ball down, and the same foulness which clogs the barrel must injure the precision of the ball. The well made smooth barrel on the contrary, is to a certain degree scoured by every discharge, and can stand sixty rounds without the necessity of cleaning. Nor is it in the precision of its aim for any useful purpose inferior to the rifle, that is to say in the hands of a man who knows how to use it. I have seen a Sergeant of the Glengarries who would allow you to pick out a musket from any of the corps, and let him load it, when he would knock the head off a pigeon on the top of the highest tree in the forest.

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In the British Army one would suppose that the only use of a musket was understood to be that it could carry a bayonet at the end of it. The quantity of powder allowed to be expended in teaching the men the use of their principal weapon is fifteen rounds per annum. Now, suppose such a limitation was placed on sportsmen, is it possible to conceive that on the twelfth of August, or the first of September, there could be found one man who could bring down a grouse or a partridge? No; the officers in command of corps should have an unlimited power in the expenditure of ammunition, and should only be made answerable for their Regiment being efficient in their practice when called into the field.

In this regiment there were a father and three sons, American U. E. Loyalists, all of them crack shots. In a covering party one day the father and one of the sons were sentries on the same point. An American rifleman dropped a man to his left, but in so doing exposed himself, and almost as a matter of course, was instantly dropped in his turn by the unerring aim of the father. The enemy were at that moment being driven in, so the old man of course (for it was a ceremony seldom neglected,) went up to rifle his victim. On examining his features he discovered that it was his own brother. Under any circumstances this would have horrified most men, but a Yankee has much of the stoic in him, and is seldom deprived of his equanimity. He took possession of his valuables, consisting of an old silver watch and a clasp knife, his rifle and appointments, coolly remarking, that it "served him right for fighting for the rebels, when all the rest of his family fought for King George." It appeared that during the revolutionary war his father and all his sons had taken arms in the King's cause, save this one, who had joined the Americans. They had never met him from that period till the present moment; but such is the virulence of political rancour, that it can overcome all the ties of nature.

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With all our hardships and privations there was nowhere to be met with a merrier set of fellows than in the camp before Fort Erie. One of the chief promoters of this was worthy Billy R. of the King's, who, to all the qualifications of a most accomplished soldier, added all the



There was in the camp an old thorn, up which a wild vine had climbed, and then descended in long branches to the ground, forming a natural bower impervious to the rays of the sun. The root of this tree was Billy's favourite seat (for he was too much of the Falstaff build to be more peripatetic than was absolutely necessary) and no sooner was he seated than a group of officers was established around him, and to these he would tell funny stories and crack jokes by the hour together. He was appointed to the command of the Incorporated Militia, and a more judicious selection could not have been made, not only on account of his military talents, but his invincible good temper and good humour, which endeared him to the men, and made them take a pleasure and a pride in obeying his orders and attending to his instructions. Some idea may be formed of his talents in this way, when I state that in the course of a very few months, he rendered a body of raw lads from the plough-tail as efficient a corps as any in the field.

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Towards the end of the business, when his men were acting as light infantry, he was knocked off his horse by a ball, which struck him in the forehead and came out over the ear. This would have knocked the life out of most men, but it did knock the wit out of Billy. He was raised and placed in a blanket, his eyes still fixed on his men, who he saw were pushing on in a way to expose themselves. "Stop till I spake to the boys," said he to the men, who were carrying him off the field; "Boys!" shouted he, "I have only one remark to make, and that is, that a stump or a log will stand a leaden bullet better than the best of yeas, and therefore give them the honor to be your front rank men." Poor Billy survived this severe wound many years, but at last its effects began to tell. He became paralytic of the lower extremities, and had to be carried from place to place; but his wit and good humor never forsook him. He died in the Isle of Wight in 1827, on his way to Canada to draw his land.

One day, when relieved from piquet, I announced to Col. P., who commanded our brigade, that I had discovered a short way through the woods to the camp, and accordingly I led the way, he and Captain F., of the Glengarries, following. By some fatality I mistook the path, and took a wrong turn, so that instead of finding the camp we came right on the top of an American piquet, which opened fire upon us at about fifty yards distance. Being use to this we were behind trees in a moment, and the next were scampering in different directions at greater or less angles from the enemy. It may well be supposed I did not wait on our brigadier, during the time we were off duty, to receive thanks for my services as a guide, nor when we did go on duty again was I at all anxious to obtrude myself upon him; indeed I kept as far from him as I could, but in going his rounds at daylight he came up with me seated by a piquet fire at the extreme left of the line. He saluted me most graciously, alluded to our late exploit as a good joke, and asked me to breakfast with him. "Ho, ho," thinks I, "he has forgotten it all, and I'm forgiven—this is as it should be." Lounging about after breakfast, and talking over indifferent matters, a sputtering fire began a little to our left, and the Colonel ordering a look out on the right, proceeded, followed by me, to the scene of action. We soon saw that this was the point of attack, so he sent me to order up the reserve. This done I rejoined him, and found him standing coolly giving his orders in the middle of a whistling of bullets, far too thick to be pleasant. I stood by his side for some minutes, thankful that none of these missiles had a billet on us, when on a sudden I felt a severe sharp pain from my brow to the back of my head at the same moment the Colonel exclaimed: "By G—d! you are shot through the head." I sunk upon one knee, and taking off my forage cap felt along my head for blood, but none was to be found. "It is only a graze," said I. "Colonel, is there any mark?" "Yes," said he, "there is a red mark, but not from a ball, it came from my switch. You gave me a d—l of a fright the other day—now I have given you one, so we are quits."

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Weeks passed at this kind of warfare, that served no purpose to the parties except to harass one another, and mutually to thin our ranks. The enemy determined on a grand attack, that, but for an accident, would have finished the campaign and our army together. They collected all the force they could raise, giving the militia a long exemption from playing at soldiers in their own country for one day's active exertion in ours. They at the same time marched a body of troops down their own side of the river, to cross and take us in rear. The time was altogether well chosen. The principal part of the brigade on duty was De Watteville's regiment, who being foreigners, and formerly soldiers of Napoleon, could not have any very ardent desire for a victory on our side. The day was cloudy, with a continued drizzling rain. In the forenoon the troops from the fort were marched out in small parties, and stationed in rear of the piquets, and towards the afternoon all was in readiness.

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A sudden and unexpected attack was made. The out posts were forced—the battery on the right stormed, and the guns disabled; the second battery was also stormed, and the wheels of one gun cut to pieces, and those of a second injured, when two companies of the 82nd, under Captain Pattison, rushed up to the assistance of the piquet which was guarding it. They poured a volley into the mass of the enemy, who were huddled together into so small a space that they could not return it. Pattison immediately sprung forward, and called out to the American officer in command to surrender, as resistance would only cause loss of life and could do no good. He did give an order to ground arms, and some of his men were in the act of doing so, when an American soldier raised his rifle and shot Pattison through the heart. In one moment a charge was made by the 82nd into the battery, and every soul in it put to the bayonet, amounting, I think, to upwards of two hundred men.

By this time the alarm was given in the camp, and the men, without waiting for orders, rushed out—their officers, who were at dinner, followed at speed. The action became general, and the enemy, finding that their object in destroying the batteries had failed, returned in some confusion.

It is said that in war any new weapon, or any new manoeuvre, strikes the enemy with terror, and here we had an instance of it. A body of the 82nd were opposed to a party of riflemen in the wood. The Captain commanding, to the utter astonishment of all of us old bush-whackers, gave orders to charge, and the order was executed in a very spirited style. This we thought was consigning our men to inevitable destruction; but no such thing: the riflemen had no more idea of a bayonet being pointed at them than they had of being swallowed up by an earthquake; and when the smoke cleared away, and they saw the 82nd within twenty yards of them, moving on at the "pas de charge," it shook their nerves,—they fired, to be sure, but with little effect, and then ran—they were too late, however. The flat-foots got within *their* deadly range, that is, bayonet's length—they *skivered* many of them, and others were shot at two muskets' length, and driven out of the woods to the esplanade of the Fort, where they were treated with a parting volley; and the guns of the Fort immediately opening on us, we took the hint, and withdrew under the cover of the woods.

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I, like the rest of the dining parties, was alarmed by the firing, and ran to the trenches. On my road I met with about twenty of the men of my own Regiment, and took them with me, being guided to where the fire was thickest by the noise. I found myself along with my friend, Mautass, a Soc Chief, and his Indians. I have had an opportunity of seeing bush-fighting in the Indian fashion. It seemed to me to be a point with them at every discharge of their rifle to shift their position, and whenever they knocked a fellow over, their yelling was horrible. I was close to Mautass himself, and whenever he performed this feat, after giving the triumphal yell, he jumped behind a tree, and seemed to be engaged in prayer—perhaps to thank the great Spirit for his success, or as likely to petition him that he might knock over a few more.

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When the enemy retired, the Indians who had shown so much wariness in the fight, and had talked to me of the folly of my young men exposing themselves, suddenly seemed to lose all their caution, and bounded forward with a horrible yell, threw themselves on the retreating enemy with their tomahawks, and were soon out of our sight; but as we advanced, we saw they left their trace behind them in sundry cleft skulls.—They also, when their opponents were from fifteen to twenty yards in advance of them, threw their tomahawks with unerring aim and great force, burying the head of the hatchet up to the eye in the body of their opponents.

I afterwards requested the Chief to show me how he threw the tomahawk. He accordingly cut a small chip out of the bark of a tree, and standing some fourteen yards off, and taking his tomahawk with its pole to the front, he threw it, and it was buried some inches into the oak, with the handle upmost, it having turned round in its flight.

This is analogous to the custom of the Portuguese, who, in throwing the knife, always project it with the handle foremost, but it as uniformly strikes with the point.

These Socs or Sacs were the only genuine unadulterated Indians I ever saw. They were very fine men, few of them under six feet high, and their symmetry perfectly faultless. In action they fought all but naked, which gymnastic undressing gave you the means of seeing their forms to the greatest advantage.

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Their features, too, had not the rounded form or stolid expression of many Indian tribes, particularly those towards the North. They had European features, or, more properly, those of the Asiatic. Their Chief had so strong a resemblance to George the Third that even the tribe called the head on the half penny Mautass, and he certainly might have passed for a bronze statue of that worthy and estimable Monarch.

After the action was over, and it was drawing towards dusk, I rapidly traversed the ground with a strong party to look out for wounded, and finding only a few of the enemy, I ordered them to be carried to the hospital, but I preceded them to make preparations for their reception. When nearing the Camp, I found a party of the band of our Regiment carrying in a blanket an American officer mortally wounded, who was greedily drinking water from one of the soldier's canteens. I ordered them to lay him down, and set myself to dress his wound. He calmly said, "Doctor, it's all in vain—my wound is mortal, and no human skill can help me—leave me here with a canteen of water near me, and save yourself—you are surrounded, and your only chance of escape is to take to the woods in a northerly direction, and then make your way east for Queenston,—there is not a man of your army who can escape by any other means—I am not at liberty to tell you more." I, however, ordered the men to carry him to a hut belonging to an officer of my own Regiment, who undertook to sit by him till my return. After he had been put to bed I left him, and when I returned during the night from my hospital, he was dead. He proved to be Colonel Wood of the American Engineers—a man equally admired for his talents and revered for his virtues. His calmness and courage in the hour of death, with his benevolence and kindness to myself and others, who were doing any little they could to render his last moments easy, convinced me that he deserved the high character which all his brother officers that I afterwards met with uniformly gave him.

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Next morning I discovered what the poor Colonel alluded to. The party sent down the right

bank of the Niagara to take us in rear, on arriving at the place where it was determined they should cross, saw a body of troops cooking their dinners on the bank, and supposing their plan was betrayed, desisted from the attempt.

The fact was, it was a party of men coming up to join their Regiments in the field, who had halted there by chance, and by this accident we were saved, for had a small force landed they must have taken our baggage, ammunition and field guns (for the camp was deserted except by the few guards that were mounted more for show than use), and had they attacked us in rear, must have thrown us into inextricable confusion. I could now see well enough why the enemy were so easily driven in. Had the expected attack on our rear taken place, there is no doubt they would been out again in double their former force; but they had done all that there was any necessity for them to do—they had brought us into a general engagement, made us leave our camp and park of artillery undefended, and had their other column made the proposed attack in rear, their loss, severe as it was under existing circumstances, would have been of no account, compared to the advantages that must have accrued from it.

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We continued this *humbugging* kind of warfare for some time longer, when, finding there was no chance of us breaching strong ramparts, or knocking down stone towers with such artillery as we had to apply, and under the direction of such engineers as it pleased the Lord in His wrath to bestow upon us, it was determined to try the matter by a *coup de main*. Accordingly about a week before the great attempt was to be made, it was known in the camp, from the General to the drum-boy, that it was in contemplation. A worthy old officer of De Watteville's used to salute his friends every morning with—"Well, gentlemen! this would be one very fine day for *de grand object*." As the intelligence was so universal in our camp, it is not well supposable that it should be unknown in that of the enemy, and accordingly they had a full week to prepare for our attack. At last orders were given for the assault. It was to be made in two divisions, one against the Fort, and another against Snake hill, a fortified camp higher up the lake. The troops at sun-set moved on, but before we had started half an hour an express was sent after us to recall us. Had the enemy had the slightest doubt of the information their spies and our deserters had given them as to our intentions, this must have set it at rest. Some three days after we had orders in form to make the attack, and our brigade was to lead. Never were men better pleased than ours were to hear this. We were tired of the wet bivouac they called a camp; we were tired of our busy idleness! which, though fatal to many of our comrades, had as yet produced no military result; and we knew that whatever they might be at a distance, the enemy had no chance with us at a hand-to-hand fight, and therefore we hailed the prospect of an assault as a relief from trouble—a glorious termination to a fatiguing and harassing campaign, where, if we had got some credit by the Battle of the Falls, accounts from that date to the present had been pretty evenly balanced.

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I have said that it was determined that our brigade should lead, and never was honor more highly appreciated. It struck us that the General showed great discrimination and penetration in selecting the very fittest men under his command for such a service, the more so that the corps of flank companies to which I belonged, was to lead immediately after the forlorn hope.

We were the first for duty on that day, and the relief brigade was summoned out at eleven and marched to take up its position at twelve. We breakfasted at eight; Colonel Drummond was in high spirits—it has sometimes struck me since unnaturally high,—but that idea might have proceeded from the result. Be that as it may, certain it is that he had a presentiment that he never would come out of that day's action, and he made no secret of that feeling either from me or several others of his friends.

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We sat apparently by common consent long after breakfast was over. Drummond told some capital stories, which kept us in such a roar that we seemed more like an after dinner than an after breakfast party. At last the bugles sounded the turn-out, and we rose to depart for our stations; Drummond called us back, and his face assuming an unwonted solemnity, he said, "Now boys! we never will all meet together here again; at least I will never again meet you. I feel it and am certain of it; let us all shake hands, and then every man to his duty, and I know you all too well to suppose for a moment that any of you will flinch it." We shook hands accordingly, all round, and with a feeling very different from what we had experienced for the last two hours, fell into our places.

On taking up our several stations on piquet, the weather, which had been clear became suddenly dark and cloudy, and a thick, drizzling rain began to fall, which, towards evening, increased to a heavy shower. Colonel P., Colonel Drummond, and some more of us, were congregated in a hut, anything but rain-tight; Colonel Drummond left the hut, where we were smoking and talking, and stowed himself away in a rocket case, where he soon fell fast asleep. About midnight we were summoned to fall in without noise, and a party of sailors forming the forlorn hope, headed by a midshipman taking the lead, our corps followed close in their rear. When we were yet three hundred yards from the fort their videttes fired on us and immediately retired; soon after the guns of the Fort opened, but with little or no effect. About 200 yards from the fort Drummond halted, and turning to me unbuckled his sword, which he gave to me, telling me to keep it for his sake. It was a regulation sword in a steel scabbard. Thinking that he had no great faith in it, I offered him mine, which was a Ferrara of admirable temper and edge; but he said he had got a boarding pike from the sailors whom he was going to join. He told me to stand where I was and not expose myself; and these were the last words I ever heard him utter.

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The sailors and our corps dashed on and made good their lodgment in fine style, and after standing till the last of the attacking columns was past, I began to feel my situation most particularly unpleasant. A man must possess more courage than I can pretend to, who can stand perfectly cool, while, having nothing to do, he is shot at like a target. Accordingly, I determined to advance at all hazards, and at least have the pleasure of seeing what was doing for my risk of being shot. I had not proceeded many yards when I stumbled over a body, and on feeling, for I could not see, I discovered he was wounded in the arm and the blood flowing copiously. He had fainted and fallen in attempting to get to the rear. I fixed a field tourniquet on his arm, and throwing him over my shoulder like a sack, carried him to a ravine in rear, and delivered him to the care of a Naval Surgeon I met with there. He proved to be Major R. of the Royals, who, but for my lucky stumble, would most probably have given promotion to the senior Captain of that distinguished Regiment.

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When I came up to the fort I found no difficulty in getting on the rampart, for our own men were in full possession; but just as I was scrambling over some dead bodies, an explosion took place. At first I thought it was a shell had burst close to me, for the noise was not greater if so great, as that of a large shell; but the tremendous glare of light and falling of beams and rubbish soon demonstrated that it was something more serious. In a fact a magazine in a bastion had exploded, and on the top of this bastion, through some mistake of their orders, the 103rd Regiment were either posted or scrambling up; all who were on the top were necessarily blown up, and those not killed by the shock fell on the fixed bayonets of their comrades in the ditch, and thus, after we were in possession of the place, in one instant the greater part of our force was annihilated.

All was now confusion, and—d—I take the hindmost! How I got across the ditch, I cannot, nor never could call to my memory; but I found myself scouring along the road at the top of my speed, with a running accompaniment of grape, cannister and musketry whistling about my ears, and tearing the ground at my feet.

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When about half way between the ditch and the ravine, I heard a voice calling on me for help. I found it was a wounded officer; so, calling a drum-boy of the Royals, who had a stretcher, we laid him into it, and carried him after the manner of a hand-barrow; he entreated us to get into the wood, as, on the road, we were likely to be cut to pieces with the shot. Accordingly we turned for that purpose; but just as we were entering, a round shot cut a large bough just above our heads, and down it came on the top of the three of us. I crawled backwards and the drum-boy forwards; and there we were staring at each other; however, there was no time to express our surprise. I ordered him in again, and I crawled in at the other side; and by our joint exertions we got the poor fellow out of his uncomfortable situation, and once in the wood we were safe for the rest of our journey. I handed him over to some medical men in the battery, and went in search of my own men.

Day not being yet fairly broken, I did not know whom I had been the means of saving, but more than twelve months after I met in the streets of Portsmouth with Captain C., of the 103rd, who, after shaking hands with me, thanked me for my kindness to him at Fort Erie, and this was the first time that I ever knew the Regiment to which my man belonged, for in the imperfect light I thought he had dark facings. On my arrival in the battery there was a scene of sad confusion. Sir Gordon Drummond was with great coolness forming the men as they came in, and I, with others, set to work to assist him. Without regard to what corps they belonged, we stuck them behind the breast-work, anticipating an attack. Sir Gordon asked me what officers were killed; I told him all that I knew of, and when I mentioned Colonel Drummond of Keltie, and Colonel Scott, of Brotherton, (both like himself, Perthshire lairds, and neighbors of his,) he seemed deeply affected.

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I sent poor Drummond's sword, by his servant, to his family, and reserved for a memorial, a string of wampum beads which he had got from the Indians, with whom he was an especial favourite. This I wore round my neck six years afterwards in 1820, at the Cape of Good Hope, when his brother, being Field Officer of the day, riding past me observed it, and asked a gentleman who had come from India in the same ship with me the cause of my wearing so extraordinary an ornament. On being told, he waited on me, and as I was the first person he had met with who had been present when his brother fell, he heard from me the circumstances I have here related.

After this it was quite clear that we could get no good by remaining, as we had failed in the main object of the campaign. But remain we did for some time, having an occasional skirmish with the enemy, but nothing decisive. At last it was determined that we should retire behind the Chippawa; this we accordingly did, unfollowed by the enemy, who, when they saw us fairly gone, took themselves across the river, abandoning the fort they had defended so obstinately for three months; in fact it had served all their purposes, which evidently were to keep us busy as long as we could keep the field, preventing us doing mischief on their side by amusing us on our own.

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After the blow up, our little corps was broken up, and the companies composing it joined their respective battalions. My own regiment was wretchedly reduced; little more than three months before it had gone into the Battle of the Falls, five hundred strong, with a full complement of officers. Now we retired about sixty rank and file, commanded by a Captain, two of the senior Lieutenants carrying the colours, and myself marching in rear—*voilà*, His Majesty's 89th Regiment of Foot!



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## CHAPTER IV.

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We took up our ground on the left bank of the Chippawa, in the hope that we would be attacked in that strong position; but nothing was further from the intention of the enemy than such a flagrant absurdity. They, from time to time, sent small parties to look at us; and there was some very distant skirmishing, which proved very harmless amusement; but they withdrew at last, and we were ordered into winter quarters.

Our regiment, with the 100th, took up their quarters at Queenston, where we were soon strengthened by the recovered wounded and sick from the different hospitals. We were particularly happy in a commanding officer. The then young and handsome Marquis of Tweeddale, who was Lieutenant Colonel of the 100th, commanded our brigade: he had been educated in a good school, under the "Great Duke;" and, like his master, with an unceasing regard to the essentials of the service, he had a most sovereign contempt for those adventitious parts of it, which weaker minds are apt to consider as of the highest importance. Should his lordship, in the present high and responsible situation which he occupies, have an opportunity of displaying his talents, I am much deceived if he will not add one more to the numerous band of soldiers who have raised their own and their country's name in the fields of Hindostan; therefore, God send him a good *war!* I have no great faith in him as a politician: he is too honest a man!

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But whatever he may be, as a soldier or a statesman, he was a wretched bad patient; for he was wounded, in a way that I had every fear would result in a permanent lameness; and nothing could save him but rest. I recommended him, therefore, to spend most of his time on a bed—for sofas were rather scarce in Queenston at that time;—but he persisted in riding a pony, with a crutch over his shoulder. Whether his mode of management has induced lameness or not, I do not know, for I have never seen him since; but if he is lame, it is no fault of mine.

Queenston, though in ruins, having, like all the rest of the frontier, been wantonly destroyed by the enemy, was then, as it is now, a very prettily-situated village; and the rest our men obtained, after their severe fatigues, began to have a most salutary effect upon them, so, as my senior colleague had recovered to such an extent as to attend to the diminished duties of the regimental hospital there, I was despatched to York—now Toronto—to take charge of about thirty of my own men, who were in general hospital in that garrison.

Toronto was then a dirty straggling village, containing about sixty houses. The church—the only one—was converted into a general hospital, and I formed my lodge in the wing of the Parliament buildings, which had escaped, when the Americans had burnt the rest of that fabric.

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Our accommodations were comfortable, by comparison with what we had lately been obliged to put up with. At all events, we had a tight roof over our heads, a clean floor under our feet, and the means of fire enough to keep us warm; and a soldier who is not content with this, on a campaign, deserves to want. My own regiment soon came down to form a part of the garrison of Toronto; and there I remained till the month of December, 1814.

At this time, it was proposed to build a large ship on Lake Huron—we having then so many on Lake Erie—that would be able, from her size, and the weight of her metal, to cope with the small vessels that composed the American flotilla on Lake Erie. As there is a channel through Lake Saint Clair, and the Rivers Detroit and Saint Clair, by which she could pass from the one lake into the other, an inlet, called Penetanguishene, was selected as the proper site of a new dock-yard, and a better sight could hardly have been selected, in this, or any other, part of the world. It was a narrow-mouthed, deep bay, with plenty of water for any size of craft, and a fine bold shore, easily defensible against any ships that could approach; but unluckily, at this time, Penetanguishene was in the woods, thirty miles from Lake Simcoe; and before a ship of the line could be built, a road must be cut, and stones broke along it.

This, at mid-winter, in one of the northernmost points of Canada, was no easy matter. But when Government, in the time of war, determine on a measure, the word impossible, as we used to

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say in the army, is not to be found in Dundas—and done it must be.

Accordingly, in the early part of December, I volunteered my services, and, as nobody else envied the job, they were accepted; and a company of the Canadian Fencibles, with about the same number of militia, under the direction of Colonel Cockburn, of the Quarter Master General's Department, was despatched up to the north, with instructions to have the road cut at all hazards.

When we arrived on the banks of Lake Simcoe, we found it just in such a state that it could not possibly be crossed; for the ice was formed, so that a boat could not get through it, but not strong enough to bear a man's weight. But, as there was a keen frost, we knew that this obstacle would soon be overcome; so we took up our quarters in farm-houses along the margin of the lake.

In two days it was considered practicable to cross, and I volunteered to try it. I equipped myself with a long pole, with a chisel at the end of it, to try the ice with, and an axe slung across my shoulder, and skated across, about twelve miles.

The ice, though not very thick, was good, and quite sufficient to bear men at extended order; so, on my return, I reported it practicable. Next morning the men were drawn out at the point at which it was considered the most eligible for getting on the ice; but the moment we were ready to start, a noise, like that of very loud thunder, was heard, which ran round the lake, and across it; and, in an inconceivably short time, the whole ice was broken into fragments, some of some acres in extent, others of only a few yards. What the cause of this phenomenon could be, I never could form even a probable conjecture of, for there was no visible rise or fall of the water; but I was told, by the inhabitants of the neighborhood, that they had more than once seen the same thing before.

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The question now arose what was to be done next? The country people recommended that we should wait till next day, when not only would the broken ice be re-united, but the water which had risen upon it would be frozen into one solid mass, rendering the whole twice as strong as on the day previous, when I had passed it.

All this was undeniable, but the season was so far advanced, and heavy snow storms might be expected, so that even one day was of consequence. After due deliberation, it was resolved, that having a coil of rope with us, it should be stretched along, and each take hold of it, and drag his hand sleigh, on which was his knapsack and provisions, as well as divers tools, implements, and stores, requisite for the expedition. In this guise we proceeded across the lake; the disasters were numerous but none of them serious. A fellow in stepping on a fracture of ice in the shape of the letter V, would plump in and then be dragged out again by his comrades, amidst shouts of laughter. In this mode we progressed for upwards of six hours, until we reached the opposite side, where a huge pile of logs was kindled; a space swept clear of snow, and we sat down to a late dinner. As the night appeared clear, we scattered some hemlock boughs, and raised a few of them to keep us from the wind, but upon learning that the militia, who, being from the neighborhood, had got over three weeks before us, had left a regular shanty, within a mile, we broke up our camp, and, deep as the snow was, and late the hour, we proceeded till we arrived at the spot, where trees were cut down, a fire lighted, and we betook ourselves to rest; our previous fatigue securing us from any apprehension of a sleepless night.

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Next day we started along the road the militia had cut, and in two hours came up with them. As they were sufficiently numerous for one party, it was resolved that we should get on some miles in advance of them, and commence further up the line. The snow was about three feet deep, and made the marching, heavy-laden as we were, toilsome; but like Columbus' egg, everything is comparatively easy when people know how to go about it. One mode of proceeding was this: six or seven men led on snow shoes in Indian file, taking care to tread down the snow equally; then followed the column, also in Indian file. At about every thirty yards, the leader of the column stepped aside, and letting the rest pass him, fell into the rear. By this means, after the fatigue of first breaking the snow, he could march on a beaten path, and thus, alternating labor and rest, the thing was comparatively easy. By sun-set we had made about five miles beyond the militia camp, and it was counted, considering the road, a very fair day's journey.

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It would be tiresome to detail (even if at this distance of time I was able to do so), the journal of a three months' residence in the woods, one day being an exact counterpart of another. I shall, therefore, only mention the mode in which we got on.

Our first care, on coming to our ground, was to shovel away the snow, which latterly was six feet deep; we then cut down as many bass-wood trees (a species of the pine), as we required, and then proceeded to erect our shanty, (*chantié*). This was done by fixing four forked sticks in the ground, the higher in front, from which we constructed our roof. The bass-wood bark was peeled and placed upon the roof, one layer lying in the trough of the other, after the manner of a tile. The trees were then split into rough boards, which formed the back and sides of the mansion, the front being open. The snow was then shovelled up so as to render all secure. Hemlock boughs were then strewed on the frozen ground, and blankets and buffalo skins over that. In front was a long fire, composed of six large logs, three at the bottom, two upon these, and one on the top, on the principle on which shot is piled in a battery; in front, and within a yard of the fire, was placed a log to prevent our feet being scorched by the intense heat, and if, during the night, our feet got cold,

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we had only to place our heels on the top of the log, and in a few seconds they were often more than comfortably warm.

Two shanties were always placed opposite each other, and this had a double advantage; they sheltered the wind from each other, and one fire did for both. In the case of the officers of the party, their servants occupied the opposite one, so they were always within call.

The labor of cutting the road in deep snow was great, and the expense proportionately enormous. Our provisions had to be carried in on men's backs, for the snow had not been broken in time enough to admit of horses or even oxen, so that one half of our men were employed in carrying, or, as it is technically termed, *packing* provisions for the other. The want of oxen produced another enormous source of expenditure; when a log was cut it had to be drawn by drag ropes out of the way, and thirty men could not perform, in the deep snow, what a yoke of oxen could easily have performed in light snow or none at all. When the snow got very deep, too, we had, before felling a tree, to dig a pit round it of sufficient diameter to allow a man to stand in it and swing his axe. The expense of a war surprises John Bull, and he only grumbles; were he to enquire into the causes, it is to be hoped he would be shy of so expensive an amusement, where after all he does not get his fun for his money. I would undertake to-morrow to cut a better road than we could possibly do, for forty pounds a mile, and make money by it,—give me timely warning and a proper season of the year, whereas I am convinced that £2,500 to £3,000 did not pay for the one we cut.

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Our amusements consisted in shooting partridges and snaring the Canadian hare, which, as it comes out of its hiding place chiefly at night, can only be apprehended, as the game laws style it, in that manner. The mode of so doing, being caused by the necessities of the country, is worthy of remark. These animals inhabit the swamps, and make roads through the snow for the purpose of coming out to where they can browse. In these roads a spring is set, by bending down a young sapling, and two pegs are driven into the ground on each side of the path, and notches are cut, in which a yoke is neatly set, from which the noose hangs down, much on the principle of a mole trap. The hare jerking the wire, relieves the yoke, and the sapling resumes its erect position, carrying the hare eight or ten feet above the surface of the snow, and this secures him from becoming the prey of the wolf or the fox, who, if he was within their reach, would inevitably secure him before his legitimate captor arrived in the morning.

In this manner passed the winter, monotonously enough it must be owned, but as we had full employment we had no time to weary. When we were about six or seven miles from the end of our task, I started along the line to view the harbour. In Canada, the line is marked through the forest by what is termed a Surveyor's *blaze*, (a corruption of the French *balise*,) seeing that boughs are stuck in the snow to guide travellers. The blaze consists in marking the trees on the line of the road with an axe, and except to a practised eye, it is easily lost. I had proceeded along it some miles, when a covey of partridges crossed my path; I immediately followed them, and after shooting several and losing sight of the rest, I took off in the direction in which I thought I should again cross the blaze. All my efforts to find it, however, were unavailing, and as the sun was fast declining, I had no other shift than to go back on my own steps in the snow. I had every motive to exertion, and about sun-set I found myself about a mile and a quarter from the camp; but it soon grew so dark that I could trace my way no further. I therefore halted, and having beat a path of about twenty yards in length in the snow, I walked backward and forward, determined to keep moving all night. This resolution I kept for some hours, I believe, but at last I got so sleepy that I could persevere no longer, besides I felt that stupor coming over me which makes men indifferent as to their fate. I therefore determined to use my remaining energies in giving myself every chance of life that circumstances would admit of.

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I took off my snow shoes, and poured a quantity of rum into my moccasins; I buttoned my jacket, secured my fur cap about my ears, drew on my fur gloves, and calling a little dog I had with me, and laying my hands over my face, I made him lie on the top of all.

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I slept most intensely sound, nor did I awake till the morning sun was at least an hour high. After two or three attempts I managed to rise; my feet were frozen, and one of my hands slightly so, but both were so benumbed that I could not fasten on my snow shoes; I therefore had to stick my toes in the holes of them, and shuffle along as best I could. It had snowed about four inches during the night, which was all in my favor. I managed to scramble on towards the camp, but could not manage more than quarter of a mile an hour. On my arrival there, some old French Canadians undertook the medical treatment of my case. They stripped off my moccasins and stockings, and commenced rubbing my feet with snow. If there was any pain in being frozen I was insensible to it, but of all the tortures this world can devise, the resuscitation was the worst I ever experienced. It was that abominable sensation called tingling, in an extreme degree, to such an extent, indeed, that it more than once produced fainting, which unpleasant symptom they combated by pouring down my throat a tin cup full of rum. When the pain abated, they enveloped my feet in poultices of boiled beech leaves, which they conceive "the sovereignest thing in life" in such cases.

I was confined to my bed for three weeks, and then was only able to go abroad by swathing my feet in numerous folds of blanket. In a few weeks more I was as well as ever. The poor little dog, Moses, the companion of my sufferings, was not so fortunate. He reached the camp with difficulty, and died the next day.

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I thought at the time and since, that this was the only instance of a white man sleeping out in a Canadian winter night, without fire or covering of any kind, but whatever it might have been then, we have had an instance here of a Canadian French woman, who slept out under similar circumstances two consecutive nights this winter. She, however, did not get off so cheap as I did, for she has been confined to bed for four months and lost both her feet, and from the extent of the injury it is probable she will be some months yet before she is out of the doctor's hands.

It might be supposed that this kind of life would generate disease, but the very reverse was the case. In this, as well as all my other doings in the woods, I have always found that where it is possible to take proper care of the man, and not expose them to wet, they are more healthy than in quarters. It is only on military duty, or with men who cannot or will not take care of themselves, that disease takes place. I have slept in the woods more than a year, at one time and another, in the course of my life, and with the foregoing provisos, never was better in health or spirits under any circumstances. Except casualties such as cutting feet, (a very common accident, even among experienced choppers,) and bruises from falling trees, I had not a single case worth noticing on this expedition. I ascribe this mainly to the beneficial effects of the open air on the constitution, a cause which, however much has been said about it, seems yet not to be practically understood by the generality of mankind. Things went on pretty much the same till we had nearly completed our business; no labour had been spared in perfecting our work. Bridges had been thrown across streams in the depth of winter, when officers and men had to stand for hours up the middle in ice-cold water: ravines had to be bridged when the logs had to be dragged out of swamps through four feet of snow. The month of March was far advanced when we promised ourselves a pleasant summer in the comfortable quarters that we meant to build for ourselves at Penetanguishene, when all our anticipations were set aside by the arrival of the appalling intelligence that peace had been concluded between His Majesty and the United States. This showed us half pay staring us in the face; however, soldiers have nothing to do but obey—we were withdrawn—all the expenditure incurred went for nothing; we were marched to Toronto, (then York,) and sent to join our respective regiments.

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My regiment had marched down the country on its way to embark for England; I followed it, and after remaining for two months at Sorel, embarked in June, 1815, to go to Waterloo, but so many unnecessary delays had taken place, that though we did not sail till the sixth of June, we might quite as well have left Quebec on the sixth May, in which case we should unquestionably have figured in the greatest action of modern times, and his grace, the great Duke, would have been none the worse of from 15,000 to 20,000 of his veteran troops on whom he could depend. It was fated otherwise, however; thank God he managed to do without us. We heard of his victory at sea, and a frigate was sent out to order us to Portsmouth instead of Antwerp. We were some of us sent to augment the Army of Occupation in France, others to various quarters at home, where, after spending eighteen months to my own great satisfaction, but of which a narration might not interest my readers, I was placed on half-pay, and as I only propose to treat of Canada, I shall leave in oblivion the memorabilia of the next eleven and a half years, and in my next chapter take up Canada as I found it in 1826.

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**Transcriber Notes:**

Errors in punctuation and inconsistent hyphenation were not corrected unless otherwise noted.

On page 9, a comma was added after "the American Army".

On page 13, "désccréments" was replaced with "désagréments?".

On page 18, a comma was removed after "the first volley we fired".

On page 24, "then" was replaced with "than".

On page 35, "that that" was replaced with "that".

On page 44, "Colonal" was replaced with "Colonel".

On page 60, a period was added after "leave undone".

On page 62, "32d" was replaced with "32nd".

On page 75, "82d" was replaced with "82nd".

On page 108, the comma after "French Service, 8" was replaced with a period.

In the index are two references to page 264. No such page existed.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR OF 1812 \*\*\*

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