

said it was due to his “having been called upon by the Governor General of the Canadas to aid him in carrying into effect measures of retaliation against the inhabitants of the United States for the wanton destruction committed by their army in Upper Canada.” Now British torches would be applied to McClure's own capitol. Ross marched to Bladensburg where he encountered Brigadier General William Winder and an impressive looking army that ran away when the British advanced with bayonets. The British dubbed this the 'Bladensburg Races". Ross moved on to Washington where public buildings were burned, including the President's residence (which later would have to be whitewashed to hide the burn marks, thus becoming the White House).

August 25, 1814

Launch of the HMS *Confiance*, 37 guns, from the Ile aux Noix's shipyard.

August 26, 1814

Ross marches his men out of Washington to meet back up with Cochrane, and sail for Baltimore.

August 29, 1814

George Izard leaves Plattsburg with most of his 5000 troops to aid Brown at Fort Erie.

August 31, 1814

A force of just under 2,000 men on ships out of Halifax, Nova Scotia, arrive in Penobscot Bay, Maine. The British commander Sir John Sherbrooke, used minimal force to take the towns of Castine, Hampden, Bangor, and Machias.

September 1, 1814

Sir George Prevost marches an immense army of 12,000 men across the border to attack Plattsburg, which is now only garrisoned by 3,000 troops a number of whom are untried militia.

USS *Wasp* takes HMS *Avon*

September 2, 1814

Captain George Downie from Kingston, arrived at Ile aux Noix to take command of the British Lake Champlain Fleet

September 6, 1814

Prevost halts his army north of Plattsburg to await word from Downie about the British fleet on Lake Champlain.

September 9, 1814

After much scrambling about, with half aware crews, Downie reports to Prevost that he is ready to sail from Ile aux Noix.

September 11, 1814

In what is to be a joint attack by Prevost and Downie on Plattsburg, Downie rounded the point that opened into Plattsburg Bay and fired his guns to alert Prevost. Prevost was supposed to send his men into action against Alexander Macomb's garrison in Plattsburg, he didn't. Downie sailed into the bay to meet a very well prepared Thomas Macdonough and his fleet. A very close range naval battle ensued which ended with Macdonough defeating Downie in a very bloody and hard-fought victory. Prevost had held his men back for hours, only releasing them when victory was already in Macdonough's hands. Upon hearing that the British fleet had struck its colours, however, he immediately recalled the troops, almost before the battle had begun. He further ordered that the attack be abandoned and they return to Canada. He took his army back to Montreal, in near shame. This was the moment when Prevost's career and reputation breathed their last. He would eventually be recalled to Britain under a cloud, and die only short months later, while waiting for a humiliating court martial.

September 12, 1814

Cochrane's ships arrive at Baltimore and attack Fort McHenry. The British would take heavy casualties (including the death of Major General Ross), and not take Fort McHenry from the militia garrisoned there. Francis Scott Key, was detained aboard a British ship during the bombardment of the fort, the image inspiring him to write to The Star-Spangled Banner.

September 15, 1814

Brown sends Peter Porter and James Miller with two columns of men to attack the four British bombardment batteries. They manage to take two batteries and spike the guns before being furiously counterattacked by the British. Drummond lost another 600 men in the attack.

September 21, 1814

Drummond, leaving his encampment intact to deceive the enemy, forms up his men and marches them away into the rain, intending to re-establish himself at the Chippewa camp.

October 11, 1814

George Izard has arrived at Fort Erie and taken over from Brown. He immediately moves north after Drummond with the numbers in his favour (Izard 8,000 men, Drummond 2,500 men). Establishing a camp at Street's Creek, Izard learned that Chauncey had lost control of Lake Ontario. This made him worry.

October 16, 1814

Izard pens a letter to Armstrong expressing his concerns about being cut off from supplies and reinforcements, or the forces which may be brought to bear against him by the British Navy control of the lake.

November 5, 1814

Izard has returned to Fort Erie, mined the fortifications and on this day a series of blasts and explosions destroy the fort. British and Canadian Patrols arrive in time to find the walls destroyed, the buildings ablaze, and Izard's army gone to

winter quarters in Buffalo.

December 24, 1814

In Ghent Belgium, a peace treaty that essentially restored things to the way they were before the war was quietly signed between Great Britain and the United States of America. All occupied lands were returned, all issues set aside for eventual discussion by later governments.

January 8, 1815

Unaware that the war was over British General Sir Edward Pakenham sailed more than 50 ships, carrying 7500 veteran infantry from Europe into the Gulf of Mexico, planning on capturing New Orleans. American Major General Andrew Jackson, backed by 6000 men, hurriedly strengthened his defenses near New Orleans by piling earth, timbers and cotton bales along a canal near the Mississippi River. The British attempted to storm the Americans in a direct assault. The well-aimed, concentrated fire from the Americans, and the foolishness of the British commander, resulted in 2100 British dead or wounded and 500 captured (the survivors withdrew to the ships and departed). The Americans suffered only 13 killed, 58 wounded.

January 15, 1815

USS President taken by HMS Endymion

February 20, 1815

USS Constitution takes HMS Cyane and HMS Levant

March 23, 1815

USS Hornet takes HMS Penguin

Important Places

Adapted from the Online Resources found at:
Ministry of Government Service > Archives of Ontario > Online Exhibits > The War of 1812 > Important Places
(<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/exhibits/1812/places.htm>)



Most of the battlefields of Upper Canada are marked with at least an historical plaque or monument. Where a park or restored wartime facility is present it is noted in the description below.

Amherstburg

A town in Upper Canada on the Detroit River at Lake Erie. It was the main naval base and shipyard for the British on Lake Erie. A replica of the British flag ship at the Battle of Lake Erie, HMS Detroit, is on display at Amherstburg.

Ancaster

Small community in Upper Canada at western end of Lake Ontario, now part of the City of Hamilton. It was the site of the treason trials held in the summer of 1814, 15 men were sentenced to death for aiding the United States, 8 were executed.

Beaver Dams

A small community in Upper Canada, now part of the City of St. Catharines, it was the site of a battle in 1813 which saw the capture of an American detachment. Laura Secord provided the warning to British forces of the approaching Americans.

Blackrock

A small Village in New York state just north of Buffalo. It was burned in 1814 in retaliation for the destruction of Niagara.

Blandensburg

Village near the American capital Washington, it was the site of a battle between British and American forces. The defeat of the Americans led to the partial destruction of Washington in retaliation for the destruction of York the year before.

British North America

That part of North America which did not separate from the British Empire as part of the United States in 1783. The colonies of Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland were the individual components of British North America.

Buffalo

A town in New York state on the Niagara River at Lake Erie. It was burned in 1814 in retaliation for the destruction of Niagara.

Burlington

A town in Upper Canada at the western end of Lake Ontario. After the defeat at Fort George in the Spring of 1813 the British forces in Niagara concentrated at Burlington and built defence works. This position was maintained even after the Niagara area was recaptured late in the year.

Châteauguay

Location of an 1813 battle in Lower Canada that led to the retreat of an American army threatening Montreal.

Chippewa

A small community in Upper Canada on the Niagara River, where the Welland River flows into it, the site of a small British fort. The Battle of Chippewa was fought just south of there. A battlefield park has been established and is open to visitors.

Cooks Mills

Location of an 1814 battle in the Niagara area, the last hostilities in that region.

Cornwall

A town in Upper Canada on the St. Lawrence River near the border with Lower Canada (Quebec). It served as a shipping point to forward supplies to the rest of Upper Canada during the War of 1812.

Chrysler's Farm

Location of an 1813 battle on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence between Gananoque and Cornwall. The actual battlefield was flooded in the 1950s during the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway. The monument was moved to higher ground at that time.

Fort Dearborn

American fort in the Illinois Territory, now Chicago. It was destroyed by the First Nations in 1812.

Fort Detroit

American military post on the Detroit River where it meets Lake St. Clair. A large fort, it was captured by the British early in the war. It was retaken by the United States in 1813 and served as the base for the invasion of western Upper Canada by General Harrison that same year. It served as the headquarters for the various American expeditions sent into the Western District in 1814 to destroy provisions and capture Upper Canadian militia officers.

Fort Erie

A small British military post at the south end of the Niagara River at Lake Erie. It was captured by American forces in 1813 and 1814 and was the scene of a major battle in August of 1814. When the Americans again evacuated the area in November 1814 the fort was blown up. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: <http://www.niagaraparks.com/heritage/forterie.php>



Fort George

British military post at the town of Niagara. It was captured by American forces in 1813, but evacuated late in the year. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge/index_e.asp

Fort Malden

British military post at the town of Amherstburg on the Detroit River where it meets Lake Erie. It protected the naval base and shipyard at the town. It served as Brock's base when he captured Detroit in 1812. The following year it was captured by American forces and remained under occupation until after the signing of the peace treaty in 1814. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/on/malden/index_e.asp

Fort Meigs

An American fort on the Maumee River in the Ohio Territory General Proctor attempted to capture or destroy the fort in 1813 to keep it from being used as a base of operations against Detroit. The attack was repulsed. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: <http://www.ohiohistory.org/places/ftmeigs/>

Fort Michilimackinac

An American military post on the narrows between Lake Superior, Lake Huron and Michigan. It was captured by the British at the beginning of the war and held until after the peace was signed in 1814. It was an important point for sending supplies to the First Nations allies of the British. The post was also known as Fort Mackinac. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: <http://www.mackinacparks.com/parks/fort-mackinac/>

Fort Niagara

American military post on the Niagara River at Lake Ontario. It was the headquarters of American forces in that area in the early stages of the war. It was captured by British forces in December of 1813 and held until the end of the war. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: <http://www.oldfortniagara.org/>

Fort Stephenson

An American fort on the Sandusky River in the Ohio Territory, General Proctor attempted to capture or destroy the fort in 1813 to keep it from being used as a base of operations against Detroit. The attack was repulsed.

Fort Wellington

A British military post on the St. Lawrence River at Prescott. The earthwork fort was built to protect British shipping on the St. Lawrence River. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhnhhs/on/wellington/index_e.asp

Fort York

A British military base at York it was partially destroyed during the American raids and rebuilt after the war. The site has been restored and is open to visitors, web site: http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/culture/fort_york.htm

Frenchman's Creek

A Creek flowing into the Niagara River a few kilometres north of Fort Erie. It was the site of an American landing in the fall of 1812, the attack was repulsed by Upper Canadian militia and British regulars.

Frenchtown

The site of General Winchester's defeat early in 1813, near Fort Detroit.

Gananoque

A town in Upper Canada, on the St. Lawrence River. It served as a supply depot throughout the War of 1812. American raiders burned the warehouse of military supplies in the fall of 1812.

Grand River

Upper Canadian river flowing into Lake Erie from the north, the location of the 6 Nations (Iroquois) Reserve.

Kingston

A town in Upper Canada where Lake Ontario flows into the St. Lawrence River. It served as the main British naval base and shipyard in the province during the war. The fortifications built here were destroyed after the war by the construction of new forts. There are displays relating to the role of Kingston during the War of 1812 at Fort Henry, web site: <http://www.forthenry.com/>

Lake Champlain

A lake primarily in New York State and Vermont south of Montreal.

Long Woods

The location of a battle between British troops and American raiders near the present village of Thamesville on the Thames River west of London, Ontario.

Lower Canada

In 1791 the Province of Quebec was split into two parts, the eastern portion was Lower Canada and the western Upper Canada. Lower Canada was combined with Upper Canada in 1841 to form the United Province of Canada, and in 1867 they split again, the eastern portion became the Province of Quebec.

Lundy's Lane

Site of the 1814 battle near Niagara Falls in Upper Canada.

Mackinaw Island

A small island post on the narrows between Lake Superior, Lake Huron and Michigan. It was the site of Fort Mackinac.

Moraviantown

A small community in the southwestern portion of Upper Canada, the location of the Battle of Moraviantown or Battle of the Thames where Tecumseh was killed.

Newark

See Niagara (Town)

New Orleans

An American city at the southern end of the Mississippi River, it was the location of the bloodiest British defeat of the War of 1812.

Niagara (Town)

A town in Upper Canada, also known as Newark, at the north end of the Niagara River. It was the site of many battles and skirmishes over the course of the War of 1812. When American forces evacuated the area late in 1813 they burned the town to the ground. Now known as the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Niagara District

The part of Upper Canada bounded on the east by the Niagara River, the north by Lake Ontario and the south by Lake Erie. It was a major battlefield during the War of 1812.

Ogdensburg

A town in New York State, on the St. Lawrence River. A major point for smuggling during the War of 1812.

Penetanguishene

A small community in Upper Canada on Lake Huron. In the closing months of the war it was developed as a naval base to replace Amherstburg. It continued to fill this role until the 1840s. The post-war naval establishment has been partially restored and is open to visitors as Discovery Harbour, web site:

<http://www.discoveryharbour.on.ca/>

Plattsburgh

An American town and naval base on Lake Champlain, the location of the Battle of Lake Champlain where the British fleet on the lake was defeated.

Queenston

A small village in Upper Canada north of Niagara Falls, now part of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was the home of Laura Secord. Many historic buildings, including Laura Secord's home, have been preserved in this community.

Queenston Heights

The high ground on the Niagara Escarpment above the Village of Queenston. It was fortified early in the war and was the object of an American attack in 1812. The defeat of the Americans and the death of General Brock had an important affect on the remainder of the war. A battlefield park has been established and is open to visitors, web site: http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhnhhs/on/queenston/index_e.asp

Rideau Canal

A canal system stretching from the St. Lawrence near Kingston to the present city of Ottawa. It was built in the decade after the war to provide a more secure route for the shipment of supplies to Upper Canada. The canal is maintained as a national historic site, web site: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhnhhs/on/rideau/default.asp>

Sackets Harbor

A town in New York State at the eastern end of Lake Ontario. It served as the main American naval base and shipyard during the War of 1812. In 1813 an unsuccessful attack was launched on this place from Kingston under the command of General Prevost.

Sandwich

A small community in Upper Canada on the Detroit River now part of the City of Windsor. It was the place briefly occupied by American forces in 1812 when General Hull launched the first invasion of Upper Canada. It was again occupied in 1813 and remained under American control until the end of the war.

St. Davids

A small village in Upper Canada, now part of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, it was burned by American forces in 1814.

Stoney Creek

A small community in Upper Canada, now part of the City of Hamilton, it was the site of a battle in 1813 that brought the American advance after Fort George to a halt. A battlefield park has been established and is open to visitors, web site: <http://www.battlefieldhouse.ca/nhs.html>

Thames River

Upper Canadian river flowing into Lake St. Clair from the east, it was used as the route for General Procter's forces when he retreated from Detroit in the fall of 1813. The Battle of Moraviantown, or the Battle of the Thames, was fought on its banks.

Upper Canada

In 1791 the Province of Quebec was split into two parts, the eastern portion was Lower Canada and the western Upper Canada. Lower Canada was combined with Upper Canada in 1841 to form the United Province of Canada, and in 1867 they split again, the western portion became the Province of Ontario.

Washington

The capital of the United States, it was partially destroyed in 1814 in retaliation for the destruction of York the year before.

Welland River

Upper Canadian river flowing into the Niagara River from the west, it was frequently the front line between British and American forces during the summer of 1814. Also known as the Chippewa Creek.

Western District

The part of Upper Canada bounded by the Detroit River, Lake St. Clair and St. Clair River to the west, Lake Erie to the South and Lake Huron to the north. The area was the scene of many battles during the war.

York

A town in Upper Canada on the north shore of Lake Ontario, now the City of Toronto. The capital of Upper Canada it was attacked twice by American forces in 1813 and many of the public buildings, including the original parliament building, were destroyed. The charred remains of the Parliament building has been recently excavated by archaeologists.

Important Figures

Adapted from the Online Resources found at:

Ministry of Government Services > Archives of Ontario > Online Exhibits > The War of 1812 > Important Figures
(<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/1812/figures.htm>)



Ahyouwaighs (John Brant)

Ahyouwaighs, a Mohawk leader, supported the British throughout the War of 1812, participating in the Battle of Queenston Heights and encouraging other members of the Six Nations from along Grand River to fight the American invaders.

Lieutenant Robert Barclay



A Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, Barclay was posted to the naval base at Fort Malden to command the naval forces on Lake Erie. His command was defeated by the American flotilla at the Battle of Lake Erie in August 1813. Severely outgunned, and badly wounded in the battle, Barclay was exonerated after the war in a court martial called to examine the causes of the defeat.

George Theodore Berthon



Berthon (1806-1892) originally from Vienna, was a portraitist who created many works on commission from the Government of Ontario to commemorate the major figures in the history of the province. He did portraits of Brock, Prevost and Drummond based on photographs of portraits done during the subject's lifetime in the possession of their families or galleries.

Lieutenant-Colonel C. G. Boerstler



American officer, he surrendered his command to Colonel Fitzgibbon at the Battle of Beaver Dams.



Major General Sir Isaac Brock



Brock was the senior British officer in Upper Canada when the war started. His capture of Detroit, with the support of Tecumseh, boosted Upper Canadian morale at a critical point in the conflict. His death at Queenston Heights was an equally potent symbol for patriotic memories.

John Brant

See Ahyouwaighs

General Jacob Brown

A senior American officer, Brown was the leading figure in the American invasion of the Niagara area in 1814.



Thomas Burrowes

A military engineer and painter, Thomas Burrowes has left many images of the Rideau Canal and St. Lawrence River as they appeared just a few years after the War of 1812. To learn more about the Thomas Burrowes fonds (C 1) at the Archives of Ontario click [here](#), or to see more of his watercolours search under "Burrowes" in our Visual Database.

Corn Planter

Seneca leader, served with the United States during the War of 1812 in the Niagara area.

Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane

British admiral who commanded naval operations against the Atlantic coast of the United States in 1814.



Brigadier General E. A. Cruickshank

Canadian militia officer and historian, Cruickshank was a prolific writer on the War of 1812 and a leading participant in organizations like The Lundy's Lane Historical Society in preserving the memory of the War of 1812. His papers are available at the Library and Archives Canada/Bibliothèque et Archives Canada.

General H. Dearborn

At the beginning of the war General Dearborn was the senior American military commander. He directed operations against York and Fort George in 1813, but was eventually superseded in command by General Wilkinson.



Colonel Charles-Michel de Salaberry

Colonel de Salaberry commanded the Canadian Voltigeurs during the War of 1812 and led them at the Battle of Châteauguay.



General Gordon Drummond

Drummond assumed command of British forces in Upper Canada at the end of 1813. He was wounded at the Battle of Lundy's Lane and directed the unsuccessful siege of Fort Erie.



Colonel James Fitzgibbon

A British officer, Fitzgibbon was in command of the British troops at Beaver Dams and accepted the American surrender.



Nathan Ford

Nathan Ford was a local official in the Ogdensburg area of New York State on the St. Lawrence River. His wartime correspondence provides many details on the life of civilians and the smuggling trade between the U.S. and Canada during wartime. For more information about Ford, consult the Ford family fonds (F 483)



M. O. Hammond

Journalist and amateur photographer, Hammond left many images of battlefields and monuments relating to the War of 1812 taken during the early 20th century. For more information about Hammond, consult the M. O. Hammond fonds (F 1075), or to see more of his photographs search under "Hammond" in our Visual Database.

General William H. Harrison

Harrison was a territorial governor and militia officer who developed an early reputation in campaigns against First Nations. He was the commander of the U.S. forces at the Battle of Moraviantown. He was later elected President of the United States, but died shortly after assuming office.



General William Hull

American officer and veteran of the War of Independence, Hull surrendered to Brock at Detroit in 1812.



C. W. Jefferys

A well know Canadian artist who created many images of historical scenes, including the War of 1812, in the early 20th century. Some of his artwork is included in the Government of Ontario Art Collection.

William Kirby

Author and historian, Kirby was involved in The Lundy's Lane Historical Society in the preservation of the memory of the War of 1812. For more information about Kirby, consult the William Kirby fonds (F 1076).

President James Madison

Madison became President in 1808 and signed the Declaration of War against Great Britain in June 1812. Re-elected that same year, Madison in turn signed the peace treaty that restored the pre-war situation.



General George McClure

An American officer, McClure was in command of the Niagara area during the 1813 occupation. When he ordered the evacuation of the region in December 1813, he ordered the destruction of Fort George and the Village of Niagara.



William Hamilton Merritt

Businessman, politician and militia officer during the War of 1812, Merritt served in the Provincial Dragoons and was captured by the Americans at the Battle of Lundy's Lane. After the war he was the leading figure in the development of the Welland Canal, along with numerous other development projects. For more information about Merritt, consult the William Hamilton Merritt family fonds (F 662).



Napoleon

Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France and the leader of that country in the war with Great Britain.

Mildred Peel

Canadian artist, she prepared a portrait of Laura Secord.

Captain Oliver H. Perry

American naval officer, Perry was in command of the American squadron on Lake Erie at the Battle of Put In Bay, he is best known for the message sent after the victory, "We have met the enemy and they are ours".



General Z. Pike

American officer, Pike was in command of the landing party at the first attack on York in 1813. He was killed in the explosion that destroyed the powder magazine at the fort.



General Sir George Prevost

Prevost served as the senior British military commander in Upper and Lower Canada during the War of 1812. He took a cautious approach to military affairs. The two offensives he led ended unsuccessfully at Sacket's Harbour in 1813 and Plattsburg in 1814. He faced a court martial after the war in relation to the retreat from Plattsburg but died before any hearing.



Colonel Henry Procter

Procter served as the senior officer in the Detroit area in 1813. He attempted to maintain Brock's offensive against American posts in the area but was eventually forced to evacuate the frontier and was defeated at the Battle of Moraviantown.



The Prophet

See Tens-Kwau-Ta-Waw



Red Jacket

A Seneca leader, he supported the United States and participated in several of the battles in the Niagara area in 1814.

General Phinias Rial



Rial assumed command in the Niagara area from General Vincent in late 1813. He was in command of British forces when they were defeated at the Battle of Chippewa. He was second in command under Drummond at Lundy's Lane, but was wounded and captured in that action, ending his participation in the war.

Thomas Ridout



Thomas Ridout was a surveyor and landowner in the Niagara area. During the war he served in the Commissariat or supply department. He has left a large number of letters relating to his experiences during the war. For more information about Ridout, consult the Thomas Ridout family fonds (F 43).



John Beverley Robinson



Upper Canadian militia officer and acting Attorney General through most of the War of 1812, Robinson oversaw the prosecution of those accused of treason at the Ancaster trials in 1814. For more information about Robinson, consult the John Beverley Robinson family fonds (F 44).

General Winfield Scott



Scott began the war as a colonel and eventually rose to command a brigade at the Battle of Lundy's Lane. He was later the commander of U.S. forces during the War with Mexico and in the early stages of the American Civil War, nearly 50 years after the War of 1812.



Laura Secord

Laura Secord, a resident of Queenston, provided a warning to Colonel Fitzgibbon of the American advance on Beaver Dams, leading to the surrender of the American forces when met by First Nations, militia and British regulars.

General Roger H. Sheaffe



At the beginning of the War Sheaffe was second in command to Brock in Upper Canada. He assumed command on the latter's death and defeated the American forces. His defeat at the Battle of York the next year led to his loss of command and transfer away from Upper Canada.

Elizabeth Posthuma Simcoe

The wife of Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor, Elizabeth Simcoe was one of the earliest artists to depict the scenery of Upper Canada. Mrs. Simcoe's only son, Francis, was killed in 1812 while an officer in Wellington's army in Spain. For more information about Simcoe, visit our online exhibit, Travels with Elizabeth Simcoe, or consult the Simcoe family fonds (F 47).

Joel Stone

A businessman and militia officer in the Gananoque area on the St. Lawrence, Stone served through the war in the forwarding of supplies and defending the border. For more information about Stone, consult the Joel Stone family fonds (F 536).



Bishop John Strachan

Strachan was a leading supporter of the British connection during the war and worked to promote patriotism and support for militiamen and their families suffering losses during the conflict. For more information about Strachan, consult the John Strachan fonds (F 983).

Tecumseh

Shawnee leader, ally to the British. His support was instrumental in the capture of Detroit from the United

States in the opening months of the war. His death at the Battle of Moraviantown equalled Brock's as a symbol of the defence of Upper Canada.



Tens-Kwau-Ta-Waw

The Prophet, was Tecumseh's half brother and was active in organizing the First Nations against the Americans.



General John Vincent



General Vincent was in command of the Niagara area when the United States attacked in the spring of 1813. He was defeated at the Battle of Fort George but was able to rebound and establish the new lines at Burlington. He directed the campaign during the summer and fall that eventually forced American forces to abandon the Niagara area in December 1813. Vincent was replaced by General Rial late in the year due to illness.

Sir Arthur Wellesley (Lord Wellington)

British officer, Lord Wellington led the British war effort against Napoleon in Portugal and Spain.



Joseph Wilcocks

An Upper Canadian businessman and politician, Wilcocks joined the American forces and actively served against the British during the war. He was killed at the American sortie from Fort Erie in 1814.



General James Wilkinson

Wilkinson assumed the senior command in the U.S. army in 1813. His failure to continue the offensive against Montreal after the Battle of Chrysler's Farm threw away the remaining American military advantages that year.



General James Winchester

An American officer, Winchester led the first attempt to recapture Detroit from the British in 1813. He was defeated by a combined force of British and First Nations and forced to surrender at the Battle of Frenchtown.



Glossary of Military Terms

Adapted from the Online Resources found at:
Ministry of Government Services > Archives of Ontario > Online Exhibits > The War of 1812 > Glossary
(<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/1812/glossary.htm>)

Aide-de-camp

Senior officers were assisted in the daily management of their command by a more junior officer, the aide-de-camp.

Ancaster Bloody Assize, 1814

See Treason Trials.

Barracks

Building used to house troops, very often in Upper Canada they were blockhouses in the forts.

Bastion

A corner of a fort generally armed with cannon, designed so that it could fire along flanking walls against attackers.



Bateau

A shallow draft boat used to move supplies on the rivers and lakes of the Canadas.

Battalion

A body of soldiers consisting of several companies, generally two battalions made up a regiment.

Battery

Two or more guns, sometimes mounted in a fort's bastion.

Blockade

The use of naval power to prevent an enemy nation from shipping goods from its ports. Generally it involves stationing war vessels off the coast to prevent the departure of commercial or war ships.

Blockhouse

A fortified building, sometimes part of a larger fort, used as a barracks for the troops and as a strong point during an attack.

**British North America**

That part of North America which did not separate from the British Empire as part of the United States in 1783. The colonies of Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland were the individual components of British North America.

Campaign

A military operation with some more or less defined objective that might involve a combination of movement and one or more battles. The most sustained campaign of the War of 1812 followed the American invasion of Niagara in 1814.

Canister

Small iron balls fired from a cannon with the effect of a shotgun, scattering shot in all directions.

Citadel

Large hill top fortifications, the best examples in Canada are at Quebec City and Halifax.

Commissariat

The supply wing of an army.

Commission

The document recognizing an officers rank in the military hierarchy. Ensign-Lieutenant-Captain-Major-Colonel-General, with many gradations within each rank.

Company

A body of soldiers numbering 60-100, generally commanded by a captain.

Dragoons

A type of cavalry that could also fight as infantry.

Flank

The right or left side of a military formation, generally considered the most vulnerable point at which to launch an attack.

French Revolution

The rebellion, 1789, that eventually overthrew the French Monarchy for a republic, which was overthrown by Napoleon Bonaparte.

Garrison

Troops defending a fortification or a town.

Grape Shot

Like canister, small iron balls fired from a cannon with the effect of a shotgun, scattering shot in all directions.

Guns

Smooth bore artillery firing solid shot or various forms of canister.

Habeas Corpus

Legal term, a justice of the peace could issue a writ of habeas corpus requiring that the authorities either release or charge an individual in custody with a specific crime.



Incorporated Militia

Local troops to be trained and equipped like regular forces and to serve for the duration of the War. See also Sedentary Militia.

King's Shilling

A recruit to the British army would receive a shilling on signing up.

Loyalist

Those who supported the British government during the American War of Independence, many of them moved to Upper Canada in the 1780s and 1790s.

Milan Decrees

These were orders issued by Napoleon Bonaparte as Emperor of France closing European ports to trade with Britain and neutral ships that had stopped at British ports.

Militia

The part-time civilian military force used in Great Britain, Upper Canada and the United States. See also Incorporated Militia and Sedentary Militia.

Orders-in-Council

Order issued under the signature of the King of Great Britain, or of a Governor in a British colony, that set regulations on a particular issue. In the case of the War of 1812, the Orders-in-Council restricted trade by neutrals with France.

Ordnance

Artillery and related ammunition and equipment.

Palisades

A line of vertical stakes embedded in the ground used as part of a fortification.

Parole

A written agreement in which a soldier was released from captivity by agreeing not to serve again either for a specific period of time or until the war ended.

Powder Magazine

A building, generally within a fort, designed store gunpowder.

Prize Money

Troops received a share of the proceeds from the sale of goods captured in military campaigns.

Quartermaster

Military officer responsible for distribution of supplies to the troops (from the Commissariat Department) and the provision of quarters in the field.

Rebellion of 1837

A rebellion against British rule in Upper Canada, the rebels were quickly defeated. In 1838-1840 there were several raids from the United States by supporters of the rebellion, including an attack on Brock's Monument.

Rush-Bagot Treaty

A treaty between Great Britain and the United States which limited the size of naval forces both sides could maintain on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain, signed in 1818.

Sedentary Militia

Under the Militia Act all able bodied males in Upper Canada were obligated to serve in the militia. The Sedentary Militia was the part of the eligible force that was only called up in case of emergency and had limited training and little equipment. See also Incorporated Militia.

Squadron

- A. A small naval force.
- B. A small cavalry force.

Stores

Military supplies of all kinds.

Strategy

The use of manoeuvre and movement to obtain an advantage over an opposing army.

Tactics

The use of weapons and men on the battlefield.

Theatre (of operations)

A geographic area defining where military operations occurred. For example, The St. Lawrence, Niagara and Detroit Rivers defined three of the major theatres of the 1812 conflict.

**Treason Trials**

In the spring of 1814 the Government of Upper Canada conducted a series of trials of men accused of aiding the American forces the previous year during the enemy occupation of the Niagara and Western districts. The assize (court hearing) was held at the small community of Ancaster (part of Hamilton today). Fifteen were convicted of treason. The sentences of seven were eventually commuted to expulsion from the province. The remaining eight were hanged at Ancaster in July, 1814.

Treaty of Ghent

The treaty between Great Britain and the United States that brought the War of 1812 to an end. It was finalized early in 1815.

Interesting Facts: From British Troops to American Beef

Numbers: There were more British regular troops in North America when the War of 1812 broke out than there were men in the U.S. Regular army.

Foreigners Welcome: By 1812, after nearly two decades of war against France, Britain was desperate for manpower. Since North America was regarded as a secondary theatre, various units of foreign or mercenary troops were sent there. Two such units were De Watteville's Regiment and DeMeuron's Regiment, nominally Swiss mercenary units which had formerly been in Dutch service but which were actually composed of every nationality in Europe, including not a few French prisoners of war. One small unit, the Independent Companies of Foreigners, were recruited entirely from French POWs. These two companies were used in a raid on Craney Island, Virginia in the spring of 1813, but after they ran riot and committed numerous acts of rape, theft and arson, were sent back to Halifax. Here too they rioted and burned down part of the town.

Canada invaded: It depends on how you count them but, during the war, Lower and Upper Canada were invaded no less than nine times during the war and perhaps ten. All but three of these invasions were directed against Upper Canada.

Frigate-by-Numbers: In order to reduce the incredible cost of warship construction in Canada, the Admiralty had a 32-gun frigate, HMS Psyche, built in the United Kingdom and then knocked down and transported piece by piece across the Atlantic where it was reconstructed at Kingston.

Proud Memorial: When it was completed in the 1850's, the Brock Memorial on Queenston Heights was one of the tallest structures in the world.

The Battle of the Brass: The battle of Bladensburg in August 1814 was the only battle in American history where the President, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of State were all present. The Americans lost.

The Rockets' Red Glare: Although it gave the United States a national anthem, there is no evidence that any of the notoriously inaccurate Congreve rockets fired at Fort McHenry ever hit the fort.

Food Service: The British army in Canada lived largely on American beef smuggled openly across the borders of New York and Vermont.

The 49th Regiment of Foot & the War of 1812

The 49th Regiment of Foot, which was rich in battle honours, first came to Halifax 1776 in response to the "troubles in America." During the revolution the regiment fought with distinction. In 1778 the regiment departed for the West Indies, where it participated in the capture of St. Lucia from the French. Back in Europe once more, it served as a marine unit under Lieutenant-Colonel Isaac Brock at Copenhagen. When English county titles were adopted in 1782, the 49th became the Hertfordshire Regiment of Foot. The uniform of the 49th was scarlet with green facings and white, red and green lace. Its Light Company adopted the red feather rather than the green as a distinctive badge and Grenadiers were permitted to wear a black instead of a white plume.

When Sir George Prevost, Commander-in-Chief in Canada, learned of the American declaration of war in June, 1812, he suspended British government orders to ship the 49th back to England. Instead companies of the regiment were dispersed to Montreal and Kingston. A number were also sent to Fort George where regimental headquarters for Upper Canada was located. On the eve of the outbreak of war, Brock said of the 49th "although the regiment has been ten years in this country drinking rum without bounds, it is still respectable and apparently ardent for an opportunity to acquire distinction." It did not take long in coming for on October 13, 1812 soldiers of the 49th accompanied Brock up the slippery slope at Queenston where their great general was felled by a bullet to the breast. Later that day raging "Revenge the General" the Grenadier Company and the Light Company of the 49th along with their Native allies soundly defeated the American invaders, many of whom died that day because of the fury felt by the 49th at the terrible loss of their leader. For their valor at this victory on Queenston Heights, Queenstown was added to the twenty-one battle honours emblazoned on the colours of the 49th. This honour was granted on January 27th, 1816.

The presence of a detachment of the 49th was sufficient to repulse another invading American force led this time by the eloquent but ineffective American General Alexander Smyth. Smyth, who was a better writer than a fighter, spent most of his time composing ringing declarations: "Ye who have the will to do, the heart to dare! The moment you have wished for has arrived. Think on your country's honours torn! Her rights trampled on! Her sons enslaved! Her infants perishing by the hatchet! Be strong! Be brave! Let the ruffian power of the British king cease on this continent." In the early hours of November 28th, 1812, Smyth and an advance guard of American regulars and militia climbed into their boats and started across the river. Their objective was to destroy batteries opposite Black Rock and a bridge on the road to Chippawa. The expected fight was a fiasco when all suddenly returned to the safety of the other side.

Mutiny At Fort George

In 1802 the 49th Regiment of Foot was ordered to Quebec where it arrived on 23rd of August. Travelling by bateaux the troops reached York the following July and in 1804 they took up garrison duties at Fort George.

A plan to desert by several members of the 49th was foiled by Brock himself. The occasion occurred when Brock was stationed in York and Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Hale Sheaffe was in command of the garrison at Fort George. Driven to the brink by the brutality of Sheaffe, several soldiers decided to murder Sheaffe and then flee to the United States. Their plot was stopped at the beginning by Brock, who immediately assumed command at Fort George and returned good order and discipline to the ranks of the 49th Regiment.

1813

However, an American assault on Fort George in May 1813 was successful. After spiking its cannons and destroying the ammunition, five companies of the 49th Regiment under the command of Brigadier-General John Vincent retreated westward up the peninsula with the enemy in hot pursuit. On June 5th as darkness descended the Americans gave up the chase and settled down for the night at a camp in a field at Stoney Creek.

After scouting the American position the second in command Major-General John Harvey recommended to Vincent that they launch a night attack on the enemy who were located some seven miles distant. At 2:00 a.m. with a force of 700 regulars, Harvey succeeded in catching the Americans off guard and fell upon them. The American pickets were bayoneted before they could give the alarm.

Chaotic fighting followed in the darkness and in less than three-quarters of an hour, despite suffering heavy casualties, Harvey succeeded in capturing two American generals and forcing their troops to beat a hasty retreat leaving their cannons behind. Harvey had taken a calculated risk and succeeded. If he had failed the whole of the Niagara district might have fallen to the Americans. His success buoyed the spirits of British forces throughout Upper Canada and established him as an officer of unusual "zeal, intelligence and gallantry." Vincent missed the melee because he had been thrown off his horse, got lost in the darkness and only found his way to the British lines after the Battle of Stoney Creek was over. Harvey kindly and considerably omitted this from his report on the battle.

From its foes the 49th won the nickname Green Tigers because of the fierceness of their fighting and the colour of their facings. On one occasion a detachment of the 49th under the command of Lieutenant James Fitzbibbon was alerted by Laura Secord that an American force of 600 men was planning a surprise attack on them.

Known as Fitzgibbon's Green Uns the detachment and several hundred Aboriginal warriors turned the tables on the Americans and ambushed them on June 24, 1813. On entering a beech wood, the Americans were set upon by the

Native warriors. By firing at the enemy from widely dispersed positions, the warriors were able to trick the Americans into thinking they were surrounded by vastly superior forces. After the battle had raged for some three hours, Fitzgibbon rode up to the Americans hoisting a white handkerchief and bluffed them into believing they were greatly outnumbered and that more warriors were expected at any time. The American surrendered. By stealth and by craft a victory had been achieved with a small force of fighters. Fitzgibbon was commended for his "most judicious and spirited exploit with '49 rank and file'." which resulted in victory at Battle of Beaver Dams.

"Not a shot was fired on our side by any but the Indians. They beat the Americans into a state of terror, and the only share I claim is taking advantage of a favourable moment to offer them protection from the tomahawk and the scalping knife."

1814 To Home

Later companies of the 49th were ordered to Montreal, St. John and Isle aux Noix, where they remained for the balance of 1813 and all of 1814. After an expedition to Plattsburg, New York, the regiment assembled at Trois Rivieres and embarked for Great Britain on the 25th of May, 1815. Following distinguished service in Asia, Europe, Africa and Asia, the regiment returned to Halifax in 1895. Two years later it sailed for Barbados, then home to England in 1898. Reorganization resulted in the regiment being renamed the Royal Berkshire Regiment, the title 'Royal' bestowed in recognition of its distinguished gallantry.

Only once did the red-coated regulars have an opportunity in Canada to exhibit the training, courage and orchestrated killing that was displayed by British soldiers in set-piece battles in Europe. Major-General John Harvey also led this successful defence of our colony. The battle took place near the head of the Long Sault rapids on the St. Lawrence in eastern Ontario. In a rough clearing in the forest, criss-crossed by gullies, ditches and fences, the Battle of Crysler's Farm occurred on November 11, 1813. The British force numbered 800 men; the Americans numbered 1800 which increased to 2400 during the fight. The Americans charged with fanatical fervor, mistaking the 49th regulars, who on that occasion were wearing grey uniforms, for militiamen. Although mired in mud, the drill and discipline of the men of the thin red line proved its worth. Using manoeuvres of the line and shattering fire, the 49th scattered into the surrounding wood a force that was three times larger. A charge by American dragoons was likewise deflected by infantry that never flinched in the face of thundering hooves. For heroic leadership at this decisive battle, small, gold medals were awarded several officers.

The Green Tiger and the Bloody Boys

It was only a small band of men who were together just a short time during the War of 1812. Nevertheless, its members performed exploits in the Niagara area that became the stuff of legends. They were known as the "Green Tigers or Bloody Boys".

On May 27, 1813, a strong American force captured Fort George at Niagara, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, and soon after had control of the whole Niagara Frontier. The British retreated to Burlington Bay. American troops pursued them, but were checked at the night battle of Stoney Creek on June 6. The invaders were now forced to retreat. They abandoned Fort Erie and other defence posts along the Niagara River, holding onto only Fort George and the adjacent town of Niagara along with, for a time, Queenston.

The British began to reoccupy the Niagara Peninsula, but did not feel strong enough to drive the enemy out of the fort, just as the Americans were not able to mount an offensive. It was a stalemate. However, all was not peaceful. Many inhabitants on this side of the Niagara River now found their homes and farms plundered by American raiding parties. Even worse, many able bodied men were taken prisoner.

Chief among the leaders of these marauders was Dr. Cyrenius Chapin, from Buffalo, who commanded his own troop of 50 mounted riflemen. Chapin saw his job as protecting Canadians from what he felt was British tyranny. For their part, the British became determined to rid the area of his terrorist attacks.

Accordingly, Lieutenant James FitzGibbon of the 49th Regiment asked for and received permission to form a hand picked corps to deal with these raiders. Those chosen were dressed in grey-green uniforms and trained in guerrilla warfare. They were nicknamed the "Green Tigers" or the "Bloody Boys" due to their fierceness in fighting and the colour of their uniforms. Along with having exceptional courage, each man was tireless, quick-witted and skilled at deception.

FitzGibbon was a brilliant tactician and an immensely popular leader. Irish -born and largely self educated, he had advanced in the army by merit rather than in the usual way of purchasing rank. This had been mainly due to one of his first commanding officers, Isaac Brock, who recognized FitzGibbon's abilities and taught him leadership skills.

On June 19, 1813, while attempting to track down the elusive and despised Chapin, FitzGibbon had a narrow escape in what is now Niagara Falls. He and

his men had learned that on that day the American raiders would possibly be travelling from Fort George to Chippawa along the Portage Road. The Green Tiger (FitzGibbon) hoped to ambush them at or near what was called the Crossroads - the junction of Lundy's Lane and Portage Road.

As he came down Lundy's Lane, FitzGibbon decided to leave his men hidden in some woods near what is now the Drummond Road intersection while he went on alone to reconnoitre. As he neared the Crossroads, a Mrs. Kerby, who lived at the corner, ran out to meet him. She told him that Chapin's men along with 150 American infantrymen, had just passed by.

FitzGibbon then noticed a horse, presumably belonging to one of Chapin's raiders, tied to a post in front of Denfield's Inn which was located on Portage Road, near Lundy's Lane. He entered the tavern and was immediately confronted by two Americans, one of whom was pointing a gun directly at him.

FitzGibbon took several steps toward the man extending his hand, pretending that he was an old acquaintance. Then, in a lightning move, he seized the rifle barrel and ordered the soldier to surrender. The American refused. His companion then took aim at FitzGibbon who, while he had the first rifle still clamped in his right hand, somehow managed to grab the second firearm with his left. Now locked in a struggle with both men, he dragged them outside while yelling at each to surrender.

Mrs. Kerby tried unsuccessfully to persuade two passersby to help FitzGibbon, while a small boy threw stones at the Americans. With his free hand, one of the soldiers then pulled FitzGibbon's sword from its scabbard. He was about to thrust it into FitzGibbon's chest when Mrs. Denfield, the innkeeper's wife who had been standing in the door holding her baby, ran up and kicked the sword out of his hand. When the soldier attempted to pick it up, she put her baby down , grabbed the sword and ran with it back to the Inn. Her husband now on the scene had helped FitzGibbon disarm the two Americans and take them prisoner. FitzGibbon the rejoined his men and they rode off.

As for the hated Chapin, he was finally captured at the Battle of Beaverdams five days later.

The Roles Women Played in the War of 1812

by Hellen Ferguson

Throughout history, women's roles in military campaigns have often been overlooked. The War of 1812 is frequently overlooked as well. There were women involved in the War of 1812 on both the American and British sides, and through their reminiscences, letters and journals, we can get a glimpse of what it was like in this war that spanned many acres and took two and a half years. Reading the letters of women who went through the war gives a glimpse of their time in history. Though their stories are seldom told, women did indeed have important roles to play.

There are many ways in which women helped the cause. Women on the battlefield helped pass water to the soldiers. In the camps, they were laundresses, seamstresses, and companions to the soldiers. Women were stationed in forts and garrisons as servants in high-ranking officers' houses and worked as cooks as well as nursemaids and laundresses and of course, at home, where they took care of family and possessions while their men were away at war. In this war, as in many, women took jobs doing war work while the men were away.

Among many women who were in camp was Mrs. Lydia B. Bacon, who was the wife of Lieutenant and Quartermaster Josiah Bacon. She kept a journal of her activities when on the move from camp to camp. In her entry dated August 2nd 1811, she writes:

*"...tents are pitched on the side of the river, & fires made for the Soldiers to prepare their suppers, plenty of business going on--Mrs A is making up her Husbands bed, & reprimanding Mrs. G. who being a little offended will not do the same for hers. I wish you could take a peep at us."*¹

On August 4th she writes of being woken up by the sounds of the drums. They were...*"beating the tune that accompanies these words, 'Don't you hear your General say strike your Tents and march away!'"*² The camp soon departs. Among her more depressing thoughts for this day she writes *"One infant has died today--happy Child, taken from this scene of sin & sorrow--"*³

Her journals are very detailed, telling about the weather, and her travels. They provide yet another view of camp life. Her view on her journey's importance is shown by this journal entry:

*"Altho I wish much to see you yet as my husband was obliged to come, I never have for a moment regretted accompanying him, It is a great source of happiness that we can be together, & I have the satisfaction of knowing I am performing my duty."*⁴

Mrs. Bacon shared the great fear most whites had of Indian massacres, just as many of us have a fear of being the victim of random street violence today. Mrs. Bacon writes of her relief at her husband's survival of an attack by Indians, in which many others were killed or wounded:

" Still new mercies, call for our loudest, songs, of praise and gratitude, to him, who is our constant Benefactor & preserver. My Husband has returned in safety after being exposed in the most horrid of all Battles, an Indian one....."

I do not regret that Josiah was in this Battle, for I trust the kindness of God in thus sparing his life.....While bridling his Horse a ball hit his hoof & his own boot & at another time his hat.....The Indians attacked them a little before day which is their usual method...."5

Mrs. Bacon then further describes the attack on the camp in detail, and the sadness she and others felt when a boy, who was only twelve, searched for his father after the battle and *"found him among the slain"*.⁶ She writes in her journal that, *"Many Widows & Orphans, are made so, by this dreadful fight, when will Brother cease to lift his hand against his Brother, & learn War no more."*⁷

She also writes about her feelings in receiving the news, finally, that her husband is not among the slain. It's revealing to read of her account of what the women in camp did while the Indian attack was going on. She writes:

*"...Our situation was very exposed while the Troops were absent, for every thing went that could carry a musket & left us Women & Children without even a guard, Mrs W. & myselfe had loaded pistols at our bedside but I had some doubt if we should have been able to use them had we found it necessary, had the Indians known our situation a few of them could have Massacred the Inhabitants & burnt the Village, but was not permitted, a kind providence prevented."*⁸

Although Mrs. Bacon was able to stay with her husband, many others were not so fortunate. Depending on the orders of that particular regiment, at times there was a lottery to see how many wives could go with their men on campaigns. Sometimes there were only six wives to 100 soldiers. The women who went were employed as laundresses or servants, even though they still looked after their own families.⁹

Even though life as they knew it at home had vanished, life still went on in the camp. At times, women gave birth. In one account, given in Mrs. Lydia B. Bacon's journal, she describes, in brief, one such happy occasion.

*"...Mrs Weir, one of the Soldiers wives, had a daughter last night, it was born in a tent, on the banks of the Wabash."*¹⁰

There were hard times, but also some light times. In Quebec, Anne Prevost, daughter of Governor General George Prevost, writes in her journal entry on January 10th 1812 that,

"At 2 o'clock walked with Miss Bruyère, Miss Grant and Miss Baley about half way to the River Charles, which is now hard frozen. We had no gentlemen, nor