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A  
 FULL AND CORRECT ACCOUNT  
 OF THE  
**MILITARY OCCURRENCES**  
 OF  
 THE LATE WAR  
 BETWEEN  
**GREAT BRITAIN**  
 AND  
**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA;**  
 WITH  
 AN APPENDIX,  
 AND  
 PLATES.

=====  
 BY WILLIAM JAMES,  
 AUTHOR OF "A FULL AND CORRECT ACCOUNT OF THE CHIEF  
 NAVAL OCCURRENCES, &c."  
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*Alterum alterius auxilio eget.*

SALLUST.

10  $\frac{18}{15}$  34  
 IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# MILITARY OCCURRENCES,

&c. &c.

## CHAPTER XI.

*British force on the Niagara in October, 1813—  
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*Youngstown, Manchester, and Tuscarora—Attack upon Buffalo and Black Rock, and destruction of those villages—American resentment against general M'Clure—Remarks upon the campaign; also upon the burning of Newark, and the measures pursued in retaliation.*

HAVING brought the campaign of 1813 to a close upon the northern, and north-western, Canadian frontiers, the operations along both shores of the Niagara come, next, to be detailed. Major-general Vincent, who again commanded, in the absence of general De Rottenburg, the centre-division, had received, since the middle of September, a reinforcement of the 100th regiment; in order to counter-balance the reduction his force would sustain in the departure of the 49th and 104th regiments, already noticed.\* The general's head-quarters were at the Cross Roads; and the piquets of his advanced corps, which was commanded by colonel Murray, occasionally showed themselves in the town of Newark. From the American accounts only we learn, that, on the 6th of October, "about 500 militia-volunteers and about 150 Indians, commanded by colonel Chapin," attacked the piquet-guard of the British; and, "after an hour and a half's hard-fighting," drove it upon the main-body; when "the whole British army,

\* See Vol. I. p. 261.

consisting of 1100 men, with the great general Vincent, at their head, fled into the woods." The British are declared to have sustained a loss of 32 in killed only, and the Americans of four killed and wounded.\* This is the way the "literary gentlemen" of the United States contrive to fill their "histories." Colonel, or doctor Chapin (for he professes, and is equally mischievous in, both characters) had lately escaped from the British,† and, for that exploit, been promoted; probably by the secretary at war himself, as he was known to have been in the neighbourhood of the Niagara, while the Montreal expedition was preparing.

On the 9th of October intelligence of the disaster that had befallen the right division, reached the head-quarters of the centre-division; and caused general Vincent, after destroying considerable quantities of stores, provisions, and Indian goods, to retreat, with his troops, towards Burlington Heights: where colonel Proctor joined him with the small remnant of his division. As soon as general Vincent and his troops had got well on their way to Burlington, major-general M'Clure, with the whole of his force, numbering 2700 men, besides Indians, marched a few miles along the road, and back. This was not without an object; for we were afterwards told, that

\* Hist. of the War, p. 158.    † See Vol. I. p. 218.

“general M’Clure, with the New York militia, volunteers, and Indians, succeeded in driving the British army from the vicinity of Fort-George, and pursued them as far as the Twelve-mile Creek.”\*

Major-general Proctor’s discomfiture reached the head quarters of the commander in chief about the middle of October; and orders were instantly forwarded to major-general Vincent, directing him to commence upon his retreat without delay, and to evacuate all the British posts beyond Kingston. Some delay did fortunately take place, owing chiefly to counter-orders, not from head-quarters; and a council of war, summoned at Burlington Heights, came to the noble resolution of not moving a step to the rear, in the present conjuncture of affairs on the peninsula. Fatal, indeed, would have been the retreat. There was still a considerable number of sick, both at Burlington Heights and at York; and, considering the season of the year, and the state of the roads, the whole of them must have been left to the protection of the enemy. Nor, for the same reason, could the ordnance, ordnance-stores, baggage, and provisions, have followed the army; and yet the garrison of Kingston, upon which place the troops were directed to retire, had, at this time, scarcely a week’s provision in

\* History of the War, p. 158.

store. This abandonment of territory so soon following up the affair at the Moravian village, what would the Indians have thought of us?—In short, it will not bear reflection.

Towards the end of October, among other sacrifices caused by the dread of general Harrison's zeal and promptitude, two companies of the 100th regiment, which had been stationed at Charlotteville, in the London district of Upper Canada, were ordered to evacuate that post, and join the main body of the centre-division of the army at Burlington, distant 60 miles. Orders were at the same time issued, to disembody and disarm the militia. The officer who had this duty to perform, having ascertained that a large body of traitors and Americans had been plundering the houses of the inhabitants, while the latter were away in the service of their country, left a supply of arms and ammunition with some of the militia officers and privates. These, in number 45, immediately formed themselves into an association; and marched, with lieutenant-colonel Bostwick, of the Oxford militia, at their head, against the marauders; whom they fortunately fell in with on the Lake Erie shore, about nine miles from Dover. An engagement ensued; in which several of the gang were killed and wounded, and 18 taken prisoners. These 18 were afterwards tried at Ancaster for high treason; and all, except three, convicted.

Eight of the 15, so convicted, underwent the penalty of the law. The remaining seven were respited, to await the prince regent's final decision; and have since been transported. How highly, and yet how justly, this well-planned and well-executed enterprise was appreciated by the president of Upper Canada, will be seen in the general orders which he caused to be issued upon the occasion.\*

About the 1st of November general Harrison arrived at Fort-George, with about 1700 of his troops; who, agreeably to Mr. Secretary Armstrong's orders, were immediately quartered upon the inhabitants of Newark. In the course of November, both general Harrison and colonel Scott, with their respective corps, embarked on board commodore Chauncey's fleet for Sackett's Harbor; leaving general M'Clure, with his 2700 militia, and a few regular troops, in charge of Fort-George. General M'Clure, now having the entire command to himself, and being disappointed, notwithstanding all the intrigues of his friend Wilcocks, in his endeavours "to secure the friendship and co-operation of the inhabitants," began sending the most obstinate of the latter across to the American side, and then set about pillaging and destroying the farm-houses and barns in the neighbourhood of Fort-George.

\* App. No. 1.

These atrocities were represented to major-general Vincent, and he was strongly urged to allow a small regular and Indian force to be marched against general M'Clure. Colonel Murray finally gained his point; and, taking with him 379 rank and file of the 100th regiment, about 20 volunteers, and 70 of the western Indians, led by colonel Elliot, moved forward on the road towards the Forty-mile Creek; beyond which point he had been ordered not to proceed. The advance of this small detachment soon reached the ears of general M'Clure, who had taken post at the Twenty-mile Creek, and who now retreated, in haste, to a position somewhat nearer to Fort-George. Colonel Murray obtained fresh permission to extend his march to the Twenty-mile Creek, and subsequently to the Twelve-mile Creek. These movements had driven the American general and his men to Fort-George; and then commenced a scene of devastation and horror, of which no adequate idea can be formed, except by such as had the misery to be spectators. How, then, shall we hope to succeed in describing it?

The winter of 1813, according to general Wilkinson, set in earlier than usual. Lambert, in his account of the climate of Lower Canada, says that Fahrenheit's thermometer is sometimes 36 degrees below 0, and that the mean of the

cold in winter is about 0.\* The climate of Upper, is certainly not quite so rigorous as that of Lower Canada ; but yet the mildest winter of the former, bears no comparison whatever to the severest winter of this country. For several days previous to the 10th of December, the weather in Upper Canada had been unusually severe, and a deep snow lay on the ground. Towards night-fall on that day, general M'Clure gave, about half an hour's notice to the inhabitants of Newark, that he should burn down their village. Few of the poor people believed that the wretch was in earnest. Soon, however, came round the merciless firemen. Out of the 150 houses of which Newark had consisted, 149 were levelled to the dust ! Such articles of furniture and other valuables as the incendiaries could not, and the inhabitants had neglected or been unable to, carry away, shared the general fate. Of counsellor Dickson's library, which had cost him between 5 and 600*l.* sterling, scarcely a book escaped the ravages of the devouring element. Mr. Dickson was, at this time, a prisoner in the enemy's territory ; and his wife lay on a sick bed. The villains—how shall we proceed ?—took up the poor lady, bed and all, and placed her upon the snow before her own door ; where, shivering with cold, she beheld, if she could see at all,

\* Lambert's Travels, Vol. I. p. 107.