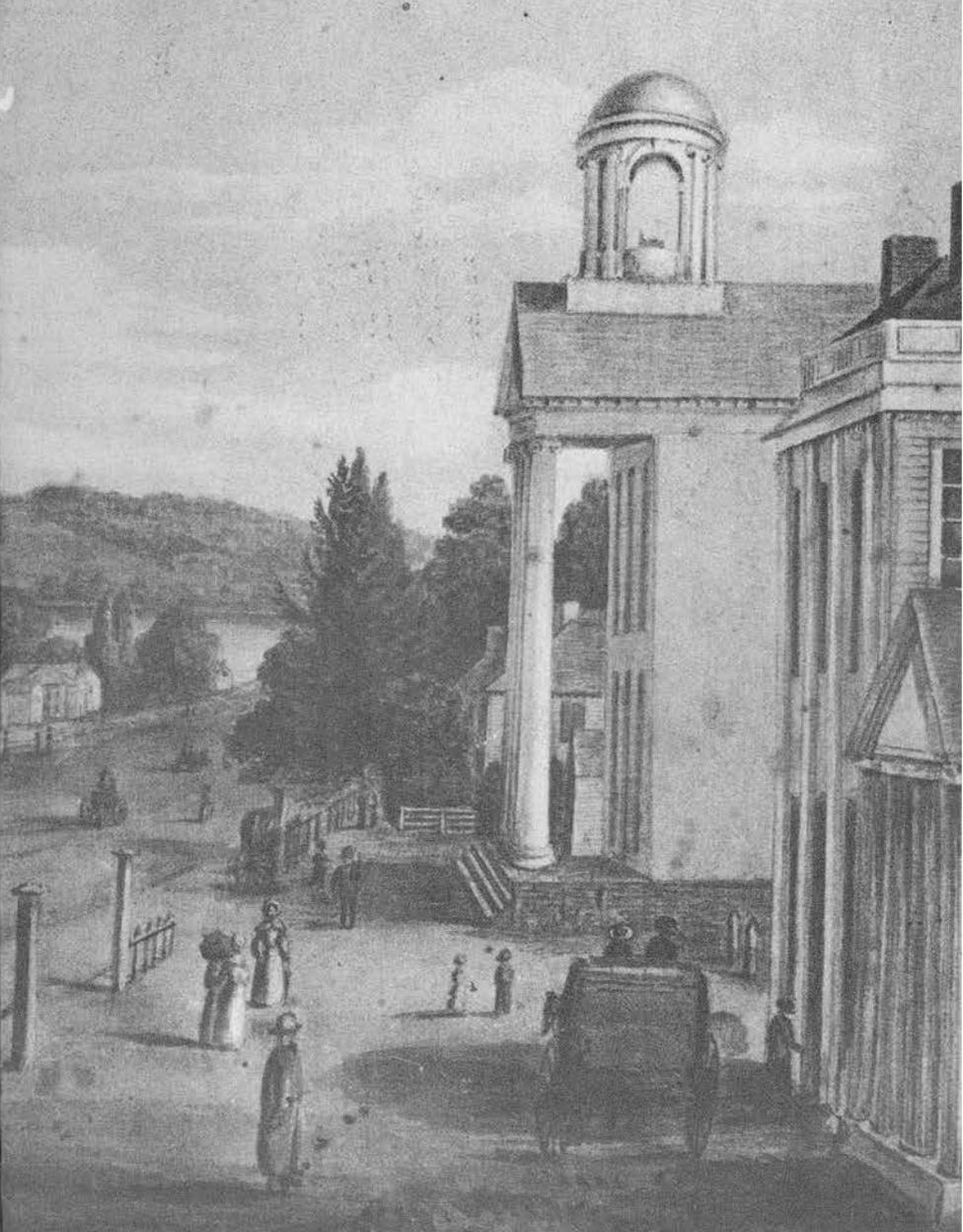


RICHARD BARRETT'S JOURNAL



Wedgestone Press

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Mobile mutatur semper cum principe vulgus.
The fickle mob ever changes with the prince.

Claudian



Courtesy of Edward R. Moulton-Barrett

Richard Barrett

**RICHARD BARRETT'S JOURNAL
NEW YORK AND CANADA 1816**

**CRITIQUE OF THE YOUNG NATION
BY AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD**

*Edited and Introduced by
Thomas Brott and Philip Kelley*

Wedgestone Press

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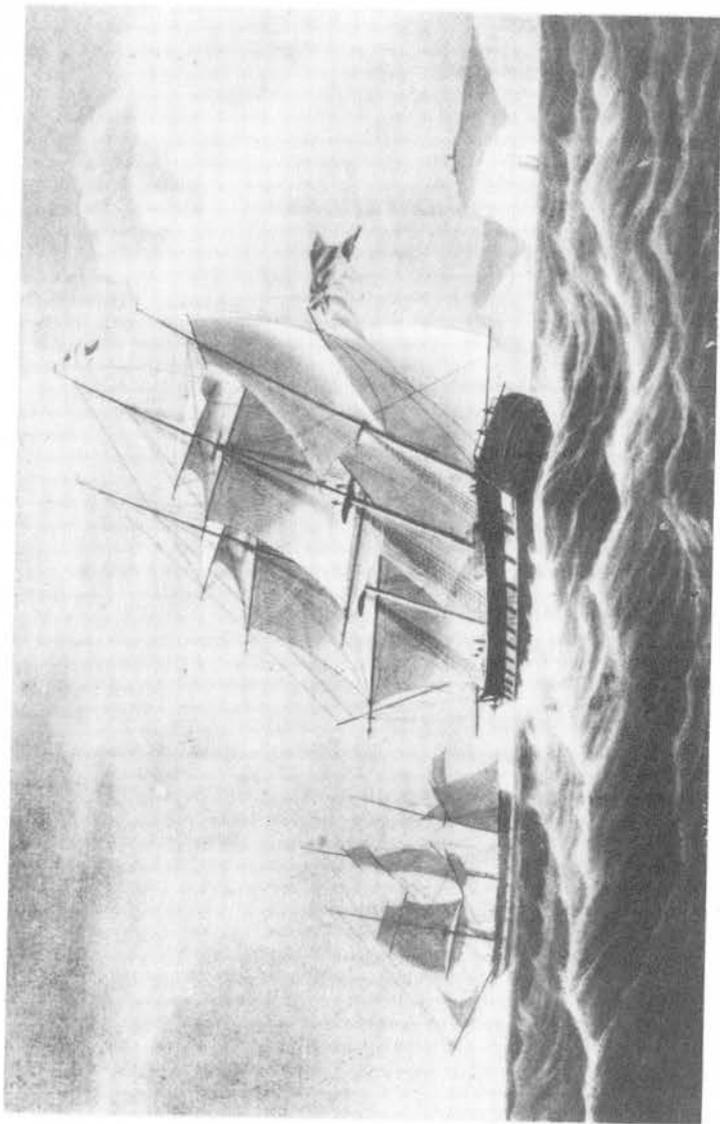
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Lord Wellington

Introduction

As an Englishman reporting on America and Americans, Richard Barrett cannot be regarded as an unbiased authority. However, as a young man with an impeccable education and diverse interests, Barrett proves exceptionally able at depicting the unfolding culture of America in its youth. From the style of his commentary it appears that perhaps he intended to publish his journal for the benefit of fellow Britishers. They would surely want to know whether America was indeed the freest nation under the sun, as her proud citizens claimed. Richard Barrett's viewpoint is definitely one-sided and extremely critical of American attitudes. Yet it is because of this that the journal has merit: Richard Barrett's eye delves and his pen records in an extremely thorough manner. No American institution seems immune from his exacting criticism. His opinion is offered unhesitatingly, and in many cases he anticipates the direction of American affairs.

When Richard Barrett visited the United States in 1816 he was a twenty-six-year-old Jamaican plantation owner who was just beginning his second term in the colony's House of Assembly. Although Richard's surviving documentation of his journey doesn't begin until after his arrival in New York City, details of the earlier part of his trip have been determined from other sources. He embarked from Montego Bay, Jamaica, about July 6, 1816, on the British ship *Lord Wellington*. The ship probably stopped at various ports of call, including Havana, Cuba, and it arrived at New York City about August 4, twenty-

eight days after leaving Jamaica. Its cargo of rum (possibly from one of Barrett's estates) was consigned to Gilbert Robertson, a British subject and New York merchant who conducted business at 76 Washington Street. Robertson aided the Barrett party in their entrance to New York by paying their security bonds and introducing them to the British consul.

Accompanying Richard Barrett on his tour were a relative and two servants. Although he never mentions his companions by name, the relative was probably his elder half-brother Martin Williams. This is only a surmise from the numerous entries to "Mr. W." in the author's expense list and a study of Williams' service records.

The extant journal begins in New York City on August 8. After staying about ten days in the city the author travels up the Hudson River to Albany by steamship, a novel mode of transportation at that time. He then proceeds across New York State, approximately following the route of the future Erie Canal. After visiting Niagara Falls he goes to Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake), Ontario, and boards a ship in order to cross Lake Ontario to Kingston, Ontario. From here he journeys up the St. Lawrence River to Montreal and, after a short stay, begins his return to Jamaica by way of New York City. His last journal entry is made on September 19 aboard a steamship on Lake Champlain, so the recorded part of his trip totaled 43 days.

The journal is distinctive because the author spices his personal experiences (which cannot be referred to as "run-of-the-mill") with interludes of social and political commentary. His review and comparison of the U.S. and British governments is given from a unique viewpoint (to Americans) and his arguments are startlingly well-rounded. The recently-concluded War of 1812 receives frequent *obiter dicta* in the text of the journal as the author visits battle sites and interviews participants and onlookers. Perhaps Barrett is at his finest in recounting with evident distaste the table manners and social habits of Americans.

Adding to the special attributes of the journal is the number of important personages with whom Richard Barrett meets and converses. Among his New York acquaintances were Charles Wilkes and his nephew, also named Charles. The uncle would later become president of the Bank of New York and a founder of the New-York Historical Society. The nephew would become famous for his involvement in the Trent Affair during the U.S. Civil War, and for his polar expedition. Also in New York the author meets the British Consul James Buchanan and Major-General Sir Frederick Robinson. In upstate New York he meets two men who would later serve as members of the U.S. House of Representatives, namely, Stephen Van Rensselaer and John Grieg. The former was one of the wealthiest men in New York State and one of its major landholders. Richard's accounts of his visits with these men enrich the diary.

Also of interest are narratives concerning modes of transportation which the author is compelled to use. In the course of his journey he boards sailing vessels, steamships, bateaux, hackney coaches, stages, and a farmer's wagon. He travels the Hudson and St. Lawrence waterways, the Mohawk and Seneca Turnpikes, as well as roads paved with the trunks of trees. Through a diverse treatment of the American scene Richard Barrett puts forth a vivid picture of a nation on the verge of greatness.

Richard Barrett himself at the time of this writing was at the threshold of success. He was born on October 11, 1789, the second of four sons of Samuel Barrett. Since the late seventeenth century the Barrett family had accumulated plantation estates on the Northside of the British colony of Jamaica. Richard's grandfather Edward Barrett was owner of the large Cinnamon Hill estate. Although Richard's father's official residence was in London, where he was captain of the Royal Horse Guards, he had business in Jamaica and along with Richard's uncle was a member of the House of Assembly. Upon the deaths of his father and grandfather while he was still in his youth, Richard inherited several Jamaican

plantations and his schooling was provided for. He was educated and trained in England as a lawyer.

Shortly after gaining his majority in late 1810, Richard Barrett sailed to Jamaica and assumed control of the property to which he was heir, and soon was recognized as an astute businessman and successful planter. He began a prestigious political career by representing the parish of St. James in the House of Assembly. In 1816, just prior to the commencement of the journal, Richard was elected to a second term. In later years he sat in additional assemblies and was three times elected Speaker of the House. In addition he became *Custos Rotulorum*, editor of the *Jamaica Journal*, and Supreme Court judge. His wealth steadily increased, his plantations flourished, and he was respected by his slaves. In time he was regarded as one of the most influential and important men on the island. He had a natural appeal—one man, after becoming acquainted with Richard, described him as “one of the handsomest and most agreeable men I ever saw.”

Yet others found him unpleasant and distressing, notably, his close relatives the Barretts of Wimpole Street. Richard Barrett engaged his first cousins Edward and Samuel Moulton-Barrett in a legal dispute, seeking to recover property he considered rightfully his. The proceedings were drawn out over many years much to the consternation of both sides. In fact, the conflict was not settled until after Richard's death.

The best known member of the Moulton-Barrett family, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, recorded meeting Richard on one of his frequent visits to England. Writing to her friend Mary Russell Mitford in 1842 Elizabeth described him as “. . . a cousin of ours, between whom and us there was *no* love . . . a man of talent and violence and some malice, who did what he could, at one time, to trample poor Papa down . . . He *was* a handsome man . . . after a fashion—good features and the short upper lip, full, in his case of expression. Still it was a face, that I, as a child, did not care to look upon. The

perpetual scowl spoilt it—and the smile was worse.” From this and other accounts, Richard Barrett emerges in later life as a somewhat ruthless figure, ruthless in achieving his goals and not deficient of the necessary faculties for conquering.

One cause which Richard Barrett championed and which ended in defeat was that of slavery. Although he detested the vices of slavery and the subjugation of a race, as a plantation owner he recognized Jamaica's economic dependence on the Negro slaves. His own slaves received fairer treatment than any others on the island and were respectful toward their owner. Richard strove to keep slavery on the island of Jamaica, and in May 1833 he was chosen to represent his fellow colonists, most of whom shared his conviction, before the House of Commons in London. His speech was described as “one of phenomenal ability, based as it was upon large knowledge of Negro traits, extended political experience and the technique of a brilliant legal mind.” But the mother country was insistent and the British government abolished slavery in December 1833.

Even with changes brought about by abolition, Richard survived and managed to keep his property intact. His distinguished career was at the pinnacle of success when it came to an abrupt and mysterious halt. At Montego Bay, in the midst of conducting business on the morning of May 8, 1839, he suddenly became ill and died. Family tradition is that he was poisoned, probably by political enemies.

From the outline of Richard Barrett's career given above, it appears that at the time of the journal he possessed latent talents necessary to excel in many avocations. Thus he emerges as a well-qualified critic of the various American institutions which he chooses to denounce or uphold in his journal: as a well-bred Englishman he relates the slovenly manners of the Americans; as a legislator and slave-owner he critiques the American stand on slavery; as a lawyer and judge-to-be he acutely compares the American judicial system with

that of the British; and as a future newspaper editor he censures the American press.

Richard Barrett recorded his journey in a small (3 inches by 5 inches) unprinted diary. The manuscript is owned by Edward R. Moulton-Barrett, scion of both Barrett and Moulton-Barrett families (his great-grandfather Alfred Moulton-Barrett married Georgina Elizabeth Barrett in 1855) with whom Jamaican family muniments have come to rest. The journal was preserved until recently in Jamaica. Now in England, it is stored with numerous Barrett family papers, including inscribed books and letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

The present condition of the manuscript is best described as "deteriorated." The first few pages are actually missing; luckily their absence is almost unnoticeable textually. Certain physical characteristics of the manuscript besides its size hindered the transcription process: several pages have worm holes in them; the handwriting varies in size and in most cases is very small; the ink used was often very weak; and in the few places where pencil was used no transcription was possible. The main text of the journal covers forty-nine pages. In the rear of the diary the author recorded an expense list for the trip, plus fifteen pages of random notes which we have entitled "Additional Notes on the Young Nation." The manuscript is unsigned but the provenance, handwriting, and internal references of the journal provide circumstantial and conclusive evidence that the author was Richard Barrett. We have appended another short composition by Richard Barrett—here entitled "A Jamaican Story"—which he gave his cousin Elizabeth Barrett Browning, providing her with a subject for a poem based on slavery.

Some mention must be made of the guidelines used in putting the journal into print. Very few changes from the original manuscript were made. Additions and deletions which were made were done to make the journal more easily understandable for the modern audience,

while retaining the style of the author and the period. In order to make the work easily readable, chapter headings, paragraphs, and scores (at the end of each date's entry) were added. Some misspellings were corrected, redundant words were deleted, and missing words were added in square brackets. Incorrect spellings of proper nouns were maintained in the text but corrected in the footnotes and index. The author's somewhat erratic usage of capitalization and punctuation (including the use of an en dash as a full stop) was kept intact.

A special expression of gratitude is due Edward R. Moulton-Barrett who is directly responsible for bringing the journal to our attention and consenting to its publication. For invaluable assistance in transcribing and editing the document we wish to thank Ronald Hudson, Arthur V. Coyne and Thomas K. Myer. Thanks are also due the principals and staff of the libraries and institutions where much of our research was done: British National Army Museum; British Public Record Office; Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society; McKinney Library, Albany Institute of History and Art; Museum of the City of New York; National Library of Jamaica; New York Genealogical Society; Niagara Falls Public Library; Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library; Ontario County Historical Society; Senate House Museum, Kingston, New York; and the Special Collections Library, Boston College.

New York City

August 8th [1816.] We accompanied my friend Cullen to the country house of M^r Chas Wilkes¹—he having been kind enough to procure us an invitation from this Gentleman's family. M^r Chas Wilkes was not at home, & we were welcomed by his son & two daughters— There was also another young gentleman the son of M^r Chas Wilkes's brother— The two fathers are nephews of the famous John Wilkes—² We soon observed that the two young men were good Americans but not so the young ladies— One of them, the Eldest, a very sensible & accomplished girl, played for us "God Save the King" & "Rule Britannia," but on being asked for the American national tune "Hail Columbia"³ she declared herself unable to play it— We passed a delightful evening & this first specimen of the Ladies of the Country made on us a favourable impression. The two ladies I have mentioned & another, their companion, were quite free from that

1. Charles Wilkes (1764–1833) was a prominent official in the Bank of New York, of which he became president in 1825. Known as "the Habsburg of the Wilkes family," he was also a founder of the New-York Historical Society and was its treasurer for many years. He initially resided in the city at 31 Wall Street but afterwards removed to Greenwich Village. His country place, "Woodlawn," was located in Bloomingdale. Parties he gave there, as well as those at Greenwich Village, were important social events.

2. John Wilkes (1727–97) became famous as an English political leader. He served as lord mayor of London and was a member of Parliament, but he was twice expelled from the House of Commons. After three re-elections which were each annulled he again took his seat in 1774 and remained until 1790.

3. "Hail Columbia," written by Joseph Hopkinson in 1798, was the most notable American national anthem of the time. "The Star-Spangled Banner," although written in 1814, did not become popular until years later during the Civil War.

mauvaise honte which foreigners complain of in English women— We were not annoyed with that reserve which requires so many advances before it can be overcome, & which makes a bashful Stranger so long a Stranger. They, however, on the contrary were easy & affable in their manners & entered with spirit into any subject of conversation that presented itself— We were invited by the son of M^r Chas Wilkes to dine at his Aunt's, M^{rs} McAdams, at Bloomingdale¹ the following Sunday. We accepted the invitation with pleasure—

On the 9th we dined with M^r Gilbert Robertson, a native of Scotland & merchant of N York. He had rendered himself obnoxious to the American government by his faithful attachment to the British, so much so, that when he was appointed by the British Government Commissary General of prisoners in N York, he was not received. It did not require this disappointment to confirm his loyalty to the British crown, but it certainly has not increased his reverence for the American Administration. This Gentleman was of great service to us on our landing—he assisted us thro' the custom house & introduced us to the British Consul, & performed for us other acts of kindness the more grateful to us as we were till then totally unacquainted with him.

We met at his house Major Gen^l Robinson, his lady & family. Sir Fredrick was on his way to Tobago where he had been appointed to the government.² The B. Consul M^r Buchanan³ was also there. He had been but lately in possession of his office. In the course of conversation he informed us that upwards of three thousand British

1. Bloomingdale was located on the west side of Manhattan Island about six miles from the southern tip of the island. In 1816 Bloomingdale was four miles outside New York's city limits.

2. Major-General Sir Frederick Robinson led a battalion at the battle of Plattsburg during the War of 1812. From 1816 to 1821 he commanded troops in the Windward and Leeward islands and for a time served as governor of Tobago.

3. James Buchanan was appointed British Consul to New York in November 1815. He probably assumed his office early in 1816 and soon after began reporting the distressed state of British immigrants in America.

subjects, principally his own countrymen from Ireland, had applied to him either for means of returning to Europe or of proceeding to the B. Colonies. He had already forwarded some ship loads to Canada. M^r Buchanan expressed, with praiseworthy feeling, the strongest compassion for these ill fated wretches—they had perhaps sold all their little property at home to enable them to amend their condition in a strange land, on their arrival there they had found themselves without resources or employment in their different callings. Unhappily for them, N York was already overcrowded with emigrants, & the inhabitants do not willingly employ Irishmen; they preferre [*sic*] the natives of every other part of the globe— This prejudice towards the lower orders of Irish extends over the whole United States.

August 11. We drove, accompanied by my friend Cullen (who is a grandson of the famous D^r Cullen, author of several medical works)¹ to Bloomingdale in a hackney coach. I could not but admire the superior neatness & cleanliness of these carriages over those of the same description in London. They are built very light & contain four or five passengers with ease. The roof is supported by iron pillars, & the sides and front are left open. To exclude the sun they have curtains to be raised or let down at pleasure. This kind of carriage is very airy & pleasant in fine weather, but not at all adapted for wet or blowing weather. They are laid aside in Winter & Sledges are used. The carriages of the gentry are of the same form & scarcely more elegant. The traveller in such vehicles must depend more on his cloathing for protection than on any shelter they can afford. The horses of the hackney coaches are excellent & surpass the hacks in England even more than the coaches do.

We met at the house of M^{rs} McAdams, besides the respectable old lady herself, the same party we had seen at M^r Wilkes's. M^r Chas. Wilkes we were happy to find

1. William Cullen (1710–90) was a Scottish physician and medical teacher. He was a talented lecturer said to have been unrivalled in his day.

had returned from Philadelphia;¹ he was one of the party & was kind enough to express pleasure at seeing two of his countrymen at such a distance from home. The age of this Gentleman appeared to approach 50, he has a daughter married to M^r Jeffries, the Editor of the universally read *Edinburg Review*.² This admirable publication is as much read in America as in England, altho' its rival the *Quarterly Review* has a great circulation.³ They are reprinted at the price of a dollar & a quarter the single number. There was also present Capt Baker of the Royal Navy, a son of Sir R. Baker.⁴

We had a great deal of conversation with the young Americans, one of whom is studying the law— The lawyer was by no means deficient in talent, but full of prejudice towards England. He was kind enough to lament for our sakes that the administration of justice there was so oppressive. He fancied that our judges & inferior magistrates were merely the tools of power, & that the offender against administration or even against the higher classes had little chance of justice in our Courts of Law— We endeavoured to explain to him that we were particularly well guarded on that point, for our judges being appointed for Life, & chosen from the most eminent barristers, & having besides very liberal salaries of which they could not be deprived even on retiring from office, were quite independant both of the crown & the ministry. Nor was any injustice or undue bias to be apprehended from them, unless constitutionally judicious— We told him that the inferior magistrates, called by us justices of the peace, were chosen in general from among the landed

1. According to a public notice in *The New-York Evening Post*, he had been at a banking convention in Philadelphia on August 6, 1816.

2. Francis Lord Jeffrey edited the *Edinburgh Review* from 1803 to 1829. He apparently met Charlotte Wilkes in Europe. In late 1813 he followed her to America and they married soon afterwards.

3. The *Edinburgh Review* was established in 1802 by Francis Lord Jeffrey among others. Though Tories wrote for it, it assumed gradually a completely Whig attitude. It has been acclaimed as the first high-class critical journal. The *Quarterly Review* was founded by John Murray in 1809 as its Tory competitor.

4. Sir Henry Lorraine Baker (1787–1859), son of Sir Robert Baker was a Vice Admiral in the Royal Navy.

interest, & called without profit of any kind. & as the country Gentlemen were generally in opposition to the Court, & had nothing to desire from it, it was to be presumed that in such petty cases as came before them, they decided with impartiality—

I heard afterwards so many extraordinary ideas of the British jurisprudence & constitution expressed by men who ought to have been better informed that I could not but wonder to what point the education of American youth was directed— They acknowledge that their law is the Common Law of England, & that all their 19 constitutions¹ are as closely imitative of the English constitution as the different situations of the two people will admit. Our literature is theirs, as well as our language. & yet with all these inducements to make Great Britain a study, they are as ignorant of manners & customs of the country, its jurisprudence, & of the division of power among the legislature & executive, as they are of the Court of Japan. It appears to me, that little is required of American youths, but to have knowledge enough to fit them for a counting house. As soon as they leave school they are placed with a merchant to learn his trade, & the labours of the school room are forgotten. It was but seldom that we found an American whose knowledge of constitutions extended farther than his own state, indeed we have put a simple question on the General Government when several were present, & have received answers diametrically opposite, & they little guessed the amusement they afforded us by wrangling among themselves about a fact, of which perhaps we were previously well informed. Ornamental education is quite disregarded, & what is useful to every man & necessary to every patriot seems to be confounded in the mass with dead languages & similar accomplishments— It is only by the study of the British constitution that they can discover the beauties or defects of their own & since every American citizen claims to a share of the government, he should as far as

1. The 19 constitutions were those of the federal government and the 18 states that made up the Union in August 1816.



Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York
City Hall in New York

possible render himself competent to judge of his own rights & those of his rulers. He is however satisfied to pin his faith on the misrepresentations of the worst public prints in the world, & as these prints daily contradict themselves & each other, he in a short time has not one distinct idea of either his own country's policy or the policy of foreign states.

But to return to our dinner party— We had when the cloth was removed some conversation on the letters of Junius. I was desirous of knowing from so near a relation of M^r John Wilkes if he had ever heard his uncle give an opinion on this disputed subject.¹ He informed us that he had conversed with his uncle on these famous writings & was told by him that he never could find any clue to discover the author, nor did his suspicion point at any particular person. M^r Cullen gave his opinion in favour of the American revolutionary General [Charles] Lee. He said that the same question once arose in the General's company, & many men being named as the probable author, he said, "And why may not I have been the writer," but on the subject being further pressed, he wrapped himself up in a mysterious silence, leaving his hearers to form their own conclusions. Some other reasons were adduced by Cullen but to me they appeared weak, reasons of a superior force having been offered & rejected respecting other men. The observations of M^r Charles Wilkes, who possesses his Uncle's talents without his vices, confirmed me in my opinion of Gen^l Lee's claims. He thought the Gen^l's talents by no means equal to the compositions of Junius; & as to the words that appeared to decide in his own favour, his excessive vanity might make him not unwilling to accept the honour, if it could be acquired without an absolute untruth, & the fear

1. The letters of Junius were political letters written under the pen name of Junius. These 69 masterful letters, which attacked the leading figures in the British government, appeared in the most popular newspaper in England of the period, the *Public Advertiser*, from 1769 to 1772. When the election of John Wilkes to parliament was annulled, Junius supported Wilkes's case. Speculation as to the authorship of the letters ran rampant for many years; they have been attributed to no fewer than 50 different persons. It is now generally accepted that they were written by Sir Philip Francis.

of detection by the real author stepping forward. He was too regardful of character to boldly assume that to which he had no claim; but M^r W. considered that so vain a man would not have hesitated to establish his right to the papers, when every thing that is most dear to man (posthumous fame) was to be gained & nothing to be lost.

M^r Wilkes pursuing the conversation relating to Gen^l Lee favoured us with an anecdote of that General & Washington— It is well known that when General Washington attained high command he added to the natural austerity of his disposition great haughtiness of demeanour. Even the Generals of his army were kept at a great distance. Lee had hopes of himself heading the revolutionary armies, & the disappointment made him the bitter enemy of Washington— His enmity was not lessened by his rival's want of courtesy. Lee once in speaking of Washington was heard to exclaim, "Damn the fellow, no Gentleman can be intimate with him." In these few words, the private character of Washington is more distinctly drawn, than if pages had been devoted to him.

The fate of Gen^l Lee is a lamentable proof that even successful treason is not always happy— He held high rank in the British army, but the violence of his passions, or the overweening opinion of his own merits soon made him a discontented subject. He joined the Enemies of his country which he had sworn to protect, & gained in the service of Rebels, rank one degree higher than that he before held— Still dissatisfied even with the government he had preferred [to] his own, he continued to intrigue for something more than nominal power— His ambition lost him his subaltern command, & he was dismissed from that army, with the disgrace he deserved for deserting the army of his king. At last this unfortunate man died in poverty at Philadelphia.¹

1. Originally the author confused the details of Charles Lee's death with those of another American Revolutionary general, Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, as he had written of the former: "was killed by the democratic mob of Baltimore" and "fell the victim of a popular tumult, and was murdered by those men in whose cause he had fought against his oath, his allegiance, & his country." Mr. Barrett later realized his error and deleted both of these

Instancing the barbarous customs still prevalent in the back parts of these States, M^r Wilkes related to us the following fact. A successful Member for Tennessee & the toppled candidate fought a duel with knives, till one was so severely wounded as to be carried off the field into a neighbouring house— The wounded man was placed within reach of a rifle, & watching his opportunity when his antagonist turned his back to leave the place, he caught it up & shot him with too fatal an aim—he expired instantly.

I have heard another instance of ferocity, still more horrible, of these people. The act to which I allude was committed by one of that sex to whom softer feelings are attributed in every age & country— A Tennessee & an English woman were travelling in the Stage and stopt [*sic*] at an Inn on the road— The Tennessee woman began to lament the death of some relation or friend who had fallen at N Orleans.¹ The English woman unhappily too partial to her countrymen & also enraged at their defeat, declared her wish that they had all been killed by the English. The Tennessee woman, mad with this retort, snatched up a knife and stabbed her to the heart. The assassin was permitted to resume her seat in the stage, & she proceeded on her journey triumphing in the revenge she had taken—

We remained to a late hour enjoying the society of this amiable family & were happy before we went away to accept M^r Wilkes' invitation to dinner for the following Tuesday. The house where we had been so hospitably & agreeably entertained is situated on the Hudson River. Nature has by a just taste received but little assistance, & the place in consequence is the prettiest we had met with. This sweet little place & M^r Chas Wilkes's residence

statements. Henry Lee was seriously injured by a mob shortly after the War of 1812 began, but did not die as a result of these injuries until 1818. Charles Lee did indeed die in Philadelphia in 1782.

1. The battle of New Orleans took place on January 8, 1815, and was the last battle of the War of 1812. Because of slow communications, it took place over two weeks after the war's outcome had already been determined by the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. Nevertheless, the victory of the United States troops under General Andrew Jackson over a British force of vastly superior number was a source of great pride for Americans.

where we visited him a few days after, are, with few exceptions, more in the style of English gardening, where Nature is only checked in her exuberance, than all the villas of the N York merchants. Straight rows of fruit trees & lanes of frightful poplars are most the objects of admiration & of care from the city of New York to Buffalo; the preference given to the formal poplar, looking more like the emblematic rod of a schoolmaster, than a natural production, must strike the visitor of N York with astonishment— It is indeed most extraordinary that they should choose this foreign & hideous tree rather than so many of real beauty with which their own forests abound— The first object the stranger perceives off this coast is the poplar, the streets are lined with them, they annoy him in the country & on the banks of the river; he crosses over to Jersey, it still presents itself; he travels five hundred miles to the West & he cannot escape it— Thus does Fashion triumph over taste, & thus are the deformities of other climates preferred to the beauties of our own—

On the 13th we dined at the house of M^r Charles Wilkes. He was as before very entertaining & full of anecdotes; he delighted & instructed us at the same time, & did it without an effort. I could not but regret that our short stay at N York made it impossible to improve an acquaintance so happily begun, & from which I had already derived so much pleasure— My esteem for this Gentleman was increased by hearing from my friend Cullen that the Daughter of the late John Wilkes had left him heir to her large property— He nobly divided with his brother M^r John Wilkes. Such acts of generosity are so uncommon that we wonder at while we admire them— Our entertainer had been acquainted with General Moreau when he was in America.¹ The General once said to him, talking of the

1. Jean Victor Marie Moreau was a French Revolutionary general exiled in 1804 for an alleged conspiracy against Napoleon. After his banishment he emigrated to the United States. Eventually he returned to Europe, joined the allied forces against Napoleon, and was killed on the battlefield of Dresden in 1813.

victories of the French—“My countrymen fight badly unless the Plume is in advance; the word of their officers must be ‘*Allons mes Enfants*’ not ‘*Allez Soldats*.’”¹

I was sorry to find that malt liquor is very little drunk by the lower orders in America, & yet there is a vast tract of country on the shores of the Atlantic better adapted for the growth of barley (& hops thrive in all the western country) than of any other grain— Stronger liquors, such as brandy, rum, gin, whisky are liked better— Malt liquors are certainly more wholesome than ardent spirits, & even when taken to excess the consequence is neither so dangerous to the drunkard or to those about him. But Spirits taken but in a proportionate small quantity maddens for the time & renders mischievous the person who indulges in them—& often a total loss of reason ensues— Malt liquors stupify the passions rather than inflame them—

A melancholy circumstance happened at N York a short time before we came there. The story to the best of my recollection was related to us as follows. Major Green of the British army of Canada arrived from thence to view the city, & a quarrel took place between him & a young American at the Playhouse— This quarrel was, however, by the interference of friends & mutual explanation accommodated, & Major Green returned to his regiment. Some time after he again visited New York on his route to England. While there he heard that the Gentleman with whom he had before differed had boasted in Company that Major Green had made him a very humble apology— The British officer who in a foreign country had not only his own character to support, but also that of the Army he belonged to was indignant at this misrepresentation— He complained of the assertion & required it to be contradicted. This being refused by the other party, a meeting took place. The unfortunate American was shot thro’ the head & died instantly— Major Green had taken his passage on a vessel at that very moment under sail for England, he went on

1. Literally: “Let’s go my lads” not “Go, soldiers.”

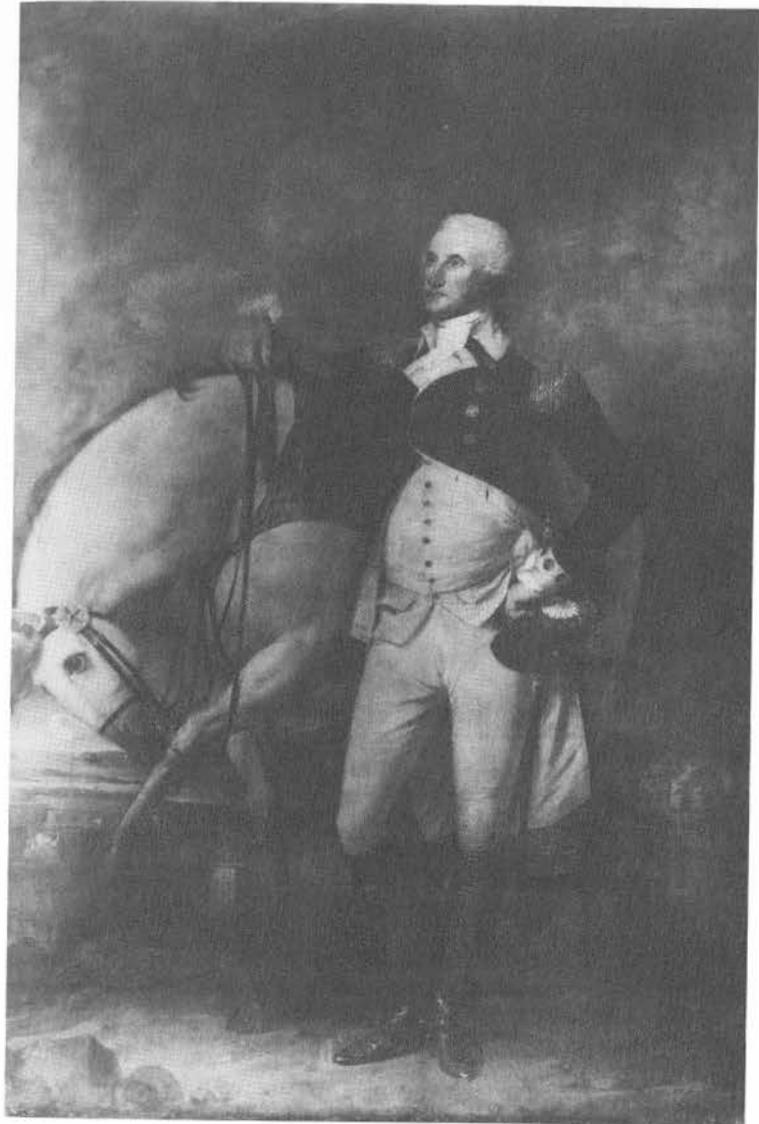
board instantly. I learnt that the unfortunate victim was much esteemed by his associates, but it must be admitted that his fate was due to his own rashness.

We visited during our stay at this city a building said to be the finest in America— It is called by the one party Federal Hall, & by the other the City Hall—¹ It has 19 windows in front very close together & consists of a centre & wings— It is two stories high from the ground— The basement is of a dark free stone & the superstructure of unpolished white marble; it has a portico reaching to the 1st row of windows— The dark basement has a bad effect making the building appear much less lofty than it is— The white marble covers the front & two sides, & the back part is entirely of the same material as the base. Had the whole been raised of marble & the portico reached the whole way to the roof, the beauty would have been greater. But as it stands, it is a fine edifice & does credit to the founders, the Corporation of the city.

We were shewn into the council chamber, a large room furnished with great expense. Among other pictures of American statesmen & warriors, there is a full length portrait of Washington—he is represented at least eight feet high— I could not admire the taste of the Artist, who has put into the back panel of his picture a broken pediment & the surrounding houses, copied from a square of the city— In this square & on this pediment once stood a statue of George 3^d—it was during the revolutionary war taken down by the mob & melted into bullets.² The destruction of a lifeless image by an angry mob could add but little to the fame of the artist's hero—instead of it, he throws a blemish on the man he meant to exalt, for we

1. The City Hall of New York City was completed in 1812 and, despite a fire and several renovations, today appears essentially as it did when the author saw it. Architectural critics have termed it the most handsome city hall in the nation.

2. The portrait of George Washington, which now hangs in the Governor's Room of the same City Hall, was painted by John Trumbull in 1790. In the background of the painting, Trumbull represented the evacuation of British troops from New York and a view of Broadway in ruins including the broken pediment. The statue of George III was pulled down by jubilant patriots on July 9, 1776, the day that the Declaration of Independence was read publicly in New York City for the first time.



Courtesy of the Art Commission of the City of New York
John Trumbull's portrait of George Washington

must consider that no better emblem than a broken pediment offered itself to point out the great actions of the principle figure—

The splendid drapery with which this apartment is ornamented struck me as more appropriate for the audience chamber of an Eastern King, & the raised seat more like a Throne, than fit for the meeting room of the Mayor & Aldermen of a moderate sized city of republican America— There was little worthy of notice in the rest of the building except that a wide marble staircase under a superb dome leads to a miserable wooden paneled passage, & that the rooms where the courts of justice are held were well provided with spitting boxes— Before I left the Hall I found myself near a small room partly underground. “Justices’ court” was inscribed over the door. On entering I saw a shabby looking man divided from a dirty crowd by a wooden railing & his seat raised a foot or two from the ground— He must have been the justice, for a short man was on tiptoe to reach his worship’s ear & was talking with exceeding earnestness— This scene was sufficiently ludicrous, & like any thing but a court of justice—

The city hall is very badly placed—before it is a three cornered piece of land of perhaps an acre or two & on the left is the debtors’ prison, [at] the right there stands the poor house, two ugly brick buildings—behind are some lots of unoccupied land, where all the neighbours deposit the filth of their yards & houses. Opposite the debtor’s prison is an hotel where the Democrats meet¹ & on it is mounted full in the sight of the poor debtors the gilded cap of Liberty—

We went to the State’s prison situated some distance from the city.² The edifice is proper for what it is

1. This hotel was probably Tammany Hall built in 1811 on Frankfort Street. The Tammany Society was a political organization in New York City which claimed to be the regular representative of the Democratic party there. Later, during the 1870’s, the Society became notorious for its illegal activities in the city government.

2. This was the state prison on Washington Street in Greenwich Village. In 1816 Greenwich Village was a suburb of New York City.

intended— The criminals were all at different trades, & are said to maintain themselves by their own labour, & those who are industrious have a balance to receive on being released— Certainly the Philanthropist must rejoice in the opportunity thus given the depraved to amend their habits, instead of cutting them off with all their sins unrepented of. Here if the culprit has not already the Knowledge of a trade, he is compelled to learn one, & supplied with tools & materials, thus when he is again sent back to society he has acquired the means of support, & industrious habits to use them— We learnt that the inhabitants amounted to 675. They are confined from 6 months to the period of their natural lives according to their degrees of guilt. None are put to death, but those who have shed the blood of their fellow creatures— By much the greater part of the prisoners are Irish—

We were much amused during our stay at New York & our journey thro’ the country in seeing how many shifts the tradesmen resort to, to raise their importance above that of an ordinary shopkeeper. This little vanity is so universal, that the Glover, Baker, Hatter, &c is nowhere to be found. There are instead Glove factors, Hat Manufacturers, & dealers in flour— The Stationer & bookbinder writes over his door “Paper makery and Bindery done here—” The Furrier keeps a “Fur Store,” the Grocer a “Grocery Store,” the Blacksmith is an “Iron worker,” Snip is a “Merchant Tailor,” & the Gunsmith keeps a “Gun Smithery—” But these Gentry know very well how to charge for their goods. I paid ten dollars for a hat of American manufacture, ten dollars for a pair of Wellington boots & three dollars for a pair of shoes— If such are the prices to be paid for articles of dress, & provision in proportion and houses of but a moderate size are let from 1,400 to 4,500 dollars, the expenses of residing in New York are greater than a London Establishment— The board of my relation & myself & two servants was 42 dollars per week, every thing was provided but wine & fuel for the bedrooms in Winter— For this money we had one common sitting room with

the other boarders & but one double bedded room— I do not know what accomodations our servants had, but as they did not complain I suppose they liked them.

The city and Island of N York contain by the census of 1816 100,619 inhabitants,¹ about 7000 of which are slaves, but by an act of the legislature they are gradually emancipating— The free people of color have every civil privilege & may vote for members of the state legislature & of congress. The Slaves & free people of colour in the Southern States have neither civil or political privileges nor are the Slaves protected from the cruelty of their masters. Thus we find that in free America the rights of these unfortunate beings are less considered than in the British colony of Jamaica— I was somewhat surprised to hear that by the laws of New York every stranger must on arriving there procure security to the amount of 300 dollars, that he does not within a specified time come upon the parish. Our new friend M^r Robertson entered into this security bond for us.

There being little company in N York at this season of the year & no public amusements we were anxious to begin our journey towards Niagara, but our clothes were detained at the Quarantine pound² where they had been ordered to be washed until the 13 inst.

1. According to a contemporary New York City guide book, the city's population in 1816 was indeed 100,619. However it lists only 617 slaves and 7,774 "coloured inhabitants not slaves." New York State adopted a law in 1799 which provided for the gradual emancipation of slaves and in 1817 an act was passed to free all slaves in the state by 1827.

2. The New York quarantine buildings were located on Staten Island.

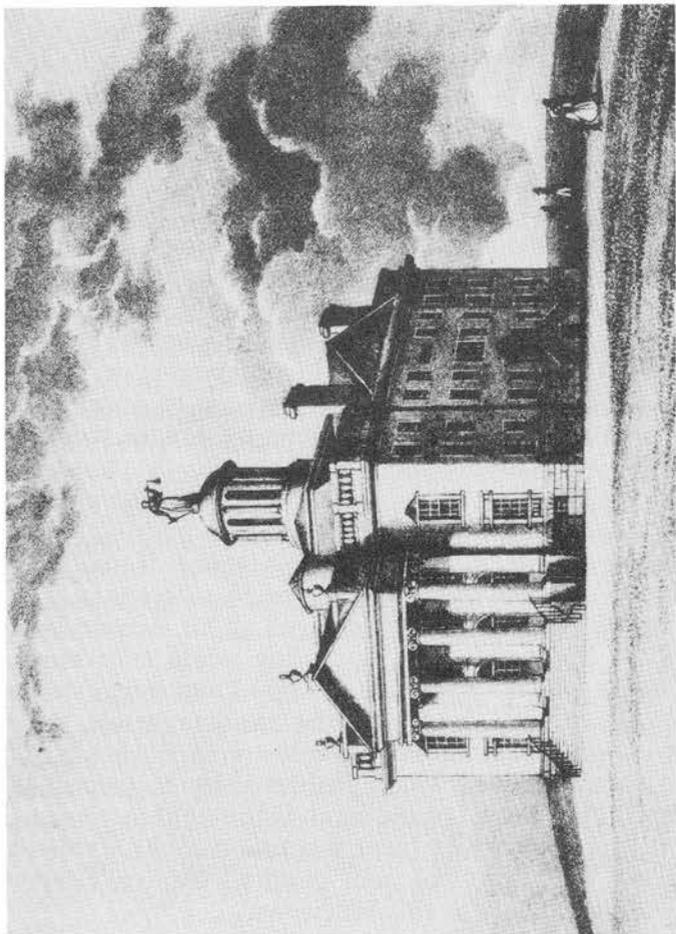
The Hudson

On the 15th we left N York in the steam boat, it was crowded with passengers— No doubt many of them were of the lower orders, yet all were well dressed—indeed I have observed this to be very general— On Sunday scarcely is a labourer's frock or shabby coat to be seen thro' all the country I have seen— I observed many of the passengers had brought books with them, to which they were very attentive—one Irishman had a volume containing the Psalms & proverbs of Solomon.

All the land on the left side of the North river¹ up which we sailed is of the poorest quality & nothing but its neighbourhood to a great city can make it tolerably valuable. I was told that one gentleman who has a large estate in this part of the State derived all his income from the sale of fire wood, corn not being worth cultivation. At Newburg which we reached at night I was informed by our intelligent land lord that the farmers would have deserted their lands had not the plaster of Paris yielded them a cheap manure which enables them to procure a tolerable crop— The left hand bank is too bold to give any prospect into the country but I was told that the whole of this part of the state is of poor quality— Our accomodations were bad indeed at this little town—

Next morning, the 16. We crossed over in a horse boat to the opposite shore called the Landing. There are several

1. At that time the Hudson River was also referred to as the North River.



Courtesy of the New York State Library
New York State Capitol at Albany

of these horse boats employed on the river to cross from one bank to the other. They are not employed as being cheaper to navigate with horses than with steam but because the family of Fulton have a monopoly of the Steam Engine as used on the United States waters¹ & all interlopers must pay the patentee a considerable duty. At the landing we procured a Carriage to proceed to Poughkeepsie, a distance of 15 miles from Newburg & 75 from N York— For this vehicle which was by no means commodious & a pair of horses we paid 5 dollars. The country we passed was of very indifferent soil but had many fine situations for Gentlemen's seats & parks— however, the traveller who expects to meet with them in the U.S. will be sadly disappointed— We were well accommodated at Poughkeepsie which is a pretty & thriving town.

Early next morning we rejoined the Steam boat. We had left it to see something of the more inland part of the Country & to avoid travelling in the dark & thereby losing some fine scenery we were taught to expect in that part of the river we were now sailing up. We had not been deceived—the views in many places were pretty, in some grand—

We passed this day a military college founded by the general government.² I was not able to learn how it is supported, or how the *Art militaire* is here taught. But I saw on a rock on the opposite side of the river evident marks of a correct artillery aim—every ball, & they were numberless, had struck a rock very few yards in diameter. This rock was surrounded by others which did not exhibit the mark of a single ball.

It was dark a short time before we reached Albany distant 160 miles from New York. & vast numbers of

1. Robert Fulton and Robert Livingstone were granted a monopoly in 1808 to navigate the waters of New York State with steam-powered vessels.

2. The author is almost certainly referring to West Point but he would have passed it on the 15th, so his chronology is slightly confused. The United States Military Academy at West Point was established in 1802 by an act approved by President Jefferson.



Courtesy of the Albany Institute of History and Art
Stephen Van Rensselaer

porters were awaiting our arrival in expectation of employment in the way of their trade, & in so great a hurry were these Gentry to give a cast of their office, that scarcely was the board thrown out to the Landing place before it was choaked [*sic*] up with them. We however proved to them the just right the passengers of the boat had to make their escape from it, before others could be admitted, & they harkened to so forcible an appeal.

Albany is the capital of the State— The State Legislature here holds its sittings— The inhabitants are about 12000 & buildings are rising in all directions. Near our hotel were two banks faced with marble—one was lighted by a glass dome in the roof—both buildings are small— The Capitol is built of a dark coloured free stone which at a distance looks like brick—¹ It also exhibits some ornaments of marble & some of wood— To my eye the contrast between brown stone & white marble & wooden pillars also painted white was not pleasing.

Having a letter of introduction to M^r Van Rensselaer the day after our arrival, Sunday the 18, we procured a carriage to wait on that Gentleman— He was not at home— In the afternoon he called on us at our hotel & politely invited us to dine with him the following day. M^r Van Rensselaer's ancestors brought the first settlers from Holland to this place & his common appellation is "the Patron" in his own district; at distant places he is called "the Patron of Albany." We were informed that he possessed a great part of the land on which the city is built & he is possessed of lands 24 miles square running on both sides of Hudson's river.² It is with pleasure I relate the excellent character borne by this Gentleman. All his neighbours seemed happy in praising his good qualities— A Great part of his income is expended in

1. The first of three capitol buildings at Albany, this stately edifice was completed in 1808, served until 1867, and was demolished in 1883.

2. Stephen Van Rensselaer (1764–1829), "last of the patroons," was a political leader and soldier. At the age of five he inherited his father's extensive lands and on reaching maturity was among the wealthiest and most landed persons in the state of New York. "Patroon" was the Dutch colonial title for the landlord of a large estate. However, "Patroon of Albany" was a misleading

private and public acts of beneficence— He possesses considerable Estates in other parts of the union—

On Monday the 19 we dined with M^r Van Rensselaer & we met several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, among them a member of Congress— The dinner was excellent & Champagne, Burgundy, Madeira, &c very fine— I own that on rising from table we were in hopes of again meeting the ladies we had seen at dinner, one of whom, M^{rs} Paterson, was very clever & communicative, but alas! we were woefully disappointed— The ladies did not make their appearance & we followed the example of the males who had all preceded us in their departure & made our bow; highly delighted with the urbanity of our entertainer, but much displeased at a custom that deprived us of the best part of our entertainment, namely female conversation over a cup of tea— It is true we had before known that this was the fashion of the city of N York, where merchants are never happy but in their counting houses, but as neither M^r Robertson or M^r C Wilkes had enforced it towards us, we had a reasonable hope that it did not extend so far into the country.

We were but indifferently lodged at Albany. The house was incommodiously crowded with lawyers & others in attendance on the court then sitting in the town— Our sense of cleanliness was a little alarmed at observing attached to a long string & near a long looking glass a hair brush for the benefit of all who might require its assistance. I must however in justice to the company there assembled allow that I only once saw it used— We walked into the Court of common pleas & heard three lawyers plead but their accent was so very provincial & the causes so dry that we were glad to escape—

title. The Patroon's domain never included the city of Albany despite the efforts of the Van Rensselaers to make it so.

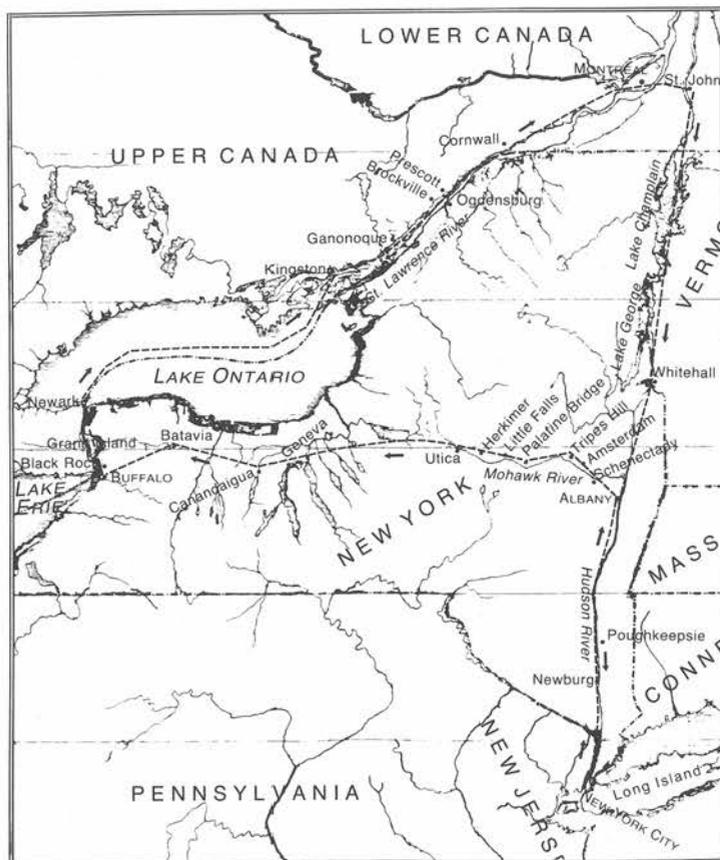
Mr. Van Rensselaer began a distinguished political career as he served in various New York State public offices from 1789 to 1801. He was a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1821 to 1829 where he cast the deciding vote for John Quincy Adams for the presidency. He was a major-general in the War of 1812 but resigned after his defeat at Queenston Heights. He was one of the most ardent supporters of the Erie Canal project.

Upper New York State

We endeavoured to procure a private carriage on the 20th to continue our journey, but failing in this object we left Albany that afternoon on the public stage & arrived in a few hours at Schenectady—

Wednesday the 21. We proceeded on our journey in the same vehicle very much against our inclination for it was by no means a pleasant conveyance— We had room enough for every part but our legs & they were jammed between innumerable boxes & packages in the bottom of the carriage. The bottom is too deep to rest the feet upon with any comfort, & appeared designed to contain the luggage, but the luggage made our case still worse for it raised our knees to our chins. This was not the least of our troubles—some of our fellow passengers had provided themselves with a bottle of Whisky to which they paid their *devoirs* very often, & the odour arising from it was so offensive that I got a severe cold & pain in my neck by keeping my head stretched out of the window to imbibe the fresh air— I am concerned to say that the dram drinkers were not Americans but English mechanics who had left their own country to seek a better condition in this.

This day we passed thro' Amsterdam, Tripes hill, Palatine bridge, Manheim, Little Falls, (where the scenery is most romantic) & Herkimer—all thriving towns or villages—& arrived about 9 pm at Utica. The country along this route is thickly settled; we were never out of



Route of Richard Barrett's journey

sight of houses, all commodiously built— The soil is excellent, far superior to any we observed between N York and Albany— The great number of taverns on this road, almost every house on the road side having a sign, speaks the vast number of emigrations to the Western country & the quantity of commodities that are exchanged between that country & N York— We were now 263 miles from N York & we resolved to remain a day at Utica to rest ourselves & consider our future route.

Never having seen tin so used before I was surprised to find almost every church we passed with a cupola covered with tin & sometimes the whole upper part of the spire— At Albany some houses are entirely roofed with this metal— It is all from the mines of Cornwall [England], & possesses a great brilliancy— On entering Utica we passed over the second wooden bridge we had found covered with a roof of the same material. No doubt this is a necessary precaution to prevent the too rapid decay of the more important parts.

On Friday the 23rd we left Utica in a private carriage very roomy, & comfortable. We felt ourselves in heaven after the horrible punishment of the Stage. We paid for ourselves & two servants from Schenectady to Utica 24 dollars—a distance of 80 miles—& our present vehicle was engaged to carry us to Canandaigua in three days for 48 dollars, the distance 112 miles—

It was on this road that we heard the following story of an adventurer to this part of the country whose neat house we saw from the road— The man was a Dutchman & quite ignorant of reading, writing & of course Arithmetic, but his natural acuteness had supplied this defect & enabled him to realize a considerable property— In all his concerns he used a kind of Hieroglyphics only understood by himself— The anecdote I am about to relate will explain his method. He made application to a neighbour for the repayment of a cheese he professed to have lent him some time before. The neighbour denied

having ever borrowed a cheese from him & the argument grew warm. At last the Dutchman desired him to recollect if he had borrowed any thing of him at such a date, at last the neighbour recollected that he had been accommodated with a grindstone—“Ah,” says the Dutchman, “so it was—I chalked the ring, but forgot to mark the hole in the middle—”

While at Poughkeepsie we were highly diverted with the manners of our Landlord, so different from any thing we had ever known in England. He was a very civil and communicative man, but perhaps his manners may give a better idea of American feeling of independence, now quite involuntary, & by no means intended to be offensive. Finding from our questions that we were inclined to know something of his town he prepared to answer our interrogatories. With his hat on his head & no coat on his back, he seated himself on the table— He smoked his segar, & quite unconscious of any impropriety squirted its saliva to all parts of the room. Yet with all this the man was attentive & obliging & answered our questions with civility—

On the 25th of August we arrived at Canandaigua, a beautiful village situated on a lake of the same name. We had passed thro' a very rich country, thronged with inhabitants; houses & villages rose on either side of the road & the houses, tho of wood, have a character of neatness highly pleasing. They were all painted white, & generally of good size & in excellent repair. We met on one part of this road great crowds of people going to what is called a camp meeting— Old & young men & women & even infants at the breast were hurrying along in carts, wagons, coaches & on horseback & on foot— We also overtook vast numbers going to settle in the back country. These emigrants are principally from the N. England states— The lands in their own country are thickly settled & poor, & the young man may with a few hundred dollars find in the West a fertile piece of land

for sale & if he is industrious in a few years he is comfortably established in a good house & productive farm—

The road was quite as good as could be expected in such a new settled country & the view of the lakes Skaneateles, Owasco, Cayuga, Seneca & Geneva¹ & their cultivated banks gratified us greatly. Our hosts were invariably civil, & our accommodations far better than we had been led to expect— I cannot be supposed to know the state of society & the civility of the lower orders to travellers & strangers in other parts of the union, but so far as we have yet gone we have found the people enter readily into conversation, respecting their particular district, its soil, inhabitants & politics & also into discussions regarding their rulers & general government. In no case did we meet a rebuff to our inquisitiveness—& not only were we agreeably deceived in the good disposition of the inhabitants, but we were surprised to find we had been misinformed in another respect— They did not retort question for question, they satisfied our curiosity freely & demanded no payment in return— They appeared to hear with interest the contrasts we sometimes drew between our country & theirs, & listened to the information we gave, but they expressed no desire to be acquainted with what related only to ourselves—they did not pester us with questions as to where we came from, where we were going to, & what was our business— Every one I had heard, & all the books I had read led me to expect this rudeness, & I was therefore the less prepared for conduct so opposite. Nor is this praise confined to the higher order, it is due to all classes, & having conversed with men of every condition I may be permitted to relate the truth as I found it.

On the 25th of Aug. we dined at Lake Geneva—the Hotel at which we put up belongs to the Heirs of Sir William Pulteny who are the proprietors of a great tract of country round the lake— They have disposed of a great

1. The Finger Lakes of central New York State include Skaneateles, Owasco, Cayuga, and Seneca lakes, but there is no Lake Geneva. The town of Geneva is near Lake Seneca.

deal— We did not enquire the name of their agent, but someone volunteered to tell us that he, like most other representatives of Absentees, was making more money of the lands than the proprietors—¹

Our Host of the Canandaigua was a federalist. He complained loudly of the Government for entirely excluding one part of their fellow citizens from office— It is unfortunately the fact that in this nation so free in theory but in practice so overbearing, one entire part of the people is not only excluded from power but also from every office of honour or emolument under the general government— Such must ever be the case when the head of that government is chosen by one set of citizens— The Federalists are as completely shut out from all office in the United States as the Roman Catholics are in England & Ireland or the Protestants in Spain— The view I have taken of the political disposition of the people, of their party feeling, & of the actual policy & conduct of their rulers, have more than all the books I have read on the subject, compelled me to give a decided preference to the British constitution and of course to a monarchical head—

A King of England is not exalted so high over the ranks of his subjects as to become dizzy with the contemplation of his own grandeur, his power & his splendour rise & fall with the prosperity of the nation, with whose free will he reigns, the interests of the Nation are identified with his— As King he possesses no extraordinary attributes, except those of doing good— Wise laws have placed evil beyond his reach— He beholds himself, not the creation of a faction, but the chief magistrate of a great nation; He is too weak to govern by ministers obnoxious to the people, yet strong enough to resist idle clamour till reason resumes her sway— His reasonable desires are gratified by a generous people almost before they are known; even his partialities are respected. He does not want the means of rewarding personal attach-

1. The Pulteny Estate included 1,200,000 acres along Lake Ontario and the Genesee River. The inheritors referred to were probably members of the family of Sir Frederick Johnstone.

ment. But when the passions of a bad prince may become dangerous to his subjects & himself, the Law & the Constitution oppose a barrier neither to be undermined or leapt over— A Kingly crown so limited, yet so endowed, has no thorns. He, who wears it, is beyond the power of faction to terrify or enslave, the voice of his people is his guide, & the law is sacred to him, popular tumult endangers not his person, & discontented nobles embarrass not his government— Happy is the people who possess such a King, & happy the King who knows his authority & is content.

How different is the situation of the American President! But we will first consider the beautiful part of the Picture— He is elected to rule his fellow citizens & his equals by them whom he is to govern— He is placed over them by their laws, his powers are defined by a written code— The term of his power is limited to four years, when if not reelected, he again sinks into the ranks. His mind has not been poisoned by flattery in his youth, he is, or ought to be chosen for his virtues & his talents, he is not likely to abuse a power which may afterwards be used by another against himself— He will listen to the wishes of the people, because he has been & will again be one of them—his authority not being hereditary he will have no temptation to overrun it—

Such is a President as he should be, but not the President as he is. He is elected to his chair by a great faction, of which he is but one, he is offered to the people by the heads of the faction, not called for by their own unbiased voice. These heads meet together in secret conclave on the eve of an election, the question is which among themselves shall have the support of the party— They know very well that a divided house cannot stand, that their opponents are numerous & active & watching the opportunity to supplant them— Thus whatever may be the pretensions of other candidates, & among so many ambitious men there must be many, as soon as the future president is fixed on by the majority, all opposition ceases— The whole might of the whole party now has but

one object— They succeed, & behold the President of the U States, not the chosen of the people, not the chief magistrate of a nation, but the tool of a faction— He is considered by those who have raised him to the Presidential chair not as a superior, but as a comrade, as a man whom they have chosen rather to be the organ of his party, than the representative of the interests & powers of the people. Woe unto him if he attempts to throw off his trammels or even to assume a larger share of influence than his fellows are inclined to give him, he cannot back down the ladder that he rose by— An authority of 4 years duration cannot be strong, the constitution of the country gives ample prerogatives to its head but the prerogatives can only be safely exercised in conjunction with the leading demagogues.

In a country where wealth & rank have no influence, where the rights of Electors are not confined to those who know how to exercise them, where men who have least to lose have the loudest voice, it is not difficult to guess in whose hands the means of directing this mass will fall. Ambitious & bold men have here a wide field to exercise their talents in— They know well how to stir up the passions of the people, & guide them to their purposes— In America Riches are looked on with an eye of jealousy. Even talent is disregarded except of a certain class. A boisterous & angry eloquence, panegyricizing the virtues of the Americans, exalting their valour & prowess, & debasing their political foes is the only successful talent— The more tumid the praise, & the more horrid the invectives against domestic or foreign enemies, the greater the impression on an ignorant & vain glorious mob— The faction who have by such means acquired an influence among the people possess not solely the ability of raising one of themselves to the Presidential honours, but they have the same power to punish him on the first appearance of resistance to their sovereign mandates— Their eagle eyes are ever on the watch should they discover an effort to strengthen his power by attaching a party to his own person, they would consider it as a

dereliction of duty not to be forgiven, & the whole body of his former friends would instantly be opposed to him. But it is not difficult in the first instance to guard against the election of a man who may afterwards become dangerous. The President of moderate talents is more likely to be grateful for an honour he could not have expected, he will more readily submit to dictation, & have less influence to form a third party in the state; such therefore will be the object of their choice—

It will sometimes happen, that in their management of the people, the party may not always be able to guide the passions they have raised— It is then hurried on in spite of itself to the commission of errors, dangerous to the well being of the Commonwealth. Nor is the party blind to the consequences of its evil policy; but the leaders know not how to retrograde, without confessing their baseness & laying themselves open to the assaults of their political opponents: Their power is dearer to them than their country. They depend on chance to extricate them from their embarrassments, & they depend still more on the suspicion & hatred in which one part of the citizens hold the other. In fact so violent is party spirit in these states that if any measure is proposed on one side it is sure to be reviled on the other; the Editors of newspapers and ruling pamphleteers are enlisted, disputes grow warmer, till at last the measure itself is forgotten in personal altercation— If the measure is successful, the opposers do not confess themselves defeated, if it fails, the cause is attributed to some influence not to be counteracted, or to any thing rather than the imbecility of its supporters: The whole people has identified itself with certain leaders, no man is neuter, & no man let what will happen will admit that his opinions were wrong— The measures of his leaders have been extolled before they were executed, he feels himself pledged to defend them; nor can he distinguish between the passions which have been incited by ambitious demagogues, & the better feelings he would have owned had he been left to his own sober reason: He is desirous of excusing disasters,



Courtesy of Ontario County Historical Society
View of Canandaigua

because he supposes himself in some degree a promoter of the causes that led to them, he forgets from whence he received the first impulse, & is too honest in remembering that with the same power he would have used it to the same end— Nor will this appear surprising to those, who know the fickleness of the lower & more numerous classes of European nations, when they also know that in the United States every man considers himself as individually important to his party— He is one of the sovereign people, he is almost daily called on to give his voice in the election of his rulers, he is courted by those who have need of his vote, & reads in every newspaper (for they can all read) that all authority is lodged in the people, that every government but self government is tyrannical, that he & his compatriots only are free, & that all other nations are slaves— Vain of his fancied importance & taught to hate even his countrymen if out of his own pale, we cannot be surprised, if no bad fortune induces him to forsake his friends, or extorts from him a confession of their fallibility— Besides there is no middle way for the citizen to take, he must be a Democrat, a Federalist or nothing.

If these remarks are just, it follows that it is the power of the party, not the power lodged in the President by the constitution, which governs America— The members of the Public [Offices] must be chosen from that party & all the influence of Government exerted, all its patronage distributed with the view to support & enlarge it.

Aug. 26. Arrived about dark at Canandaigua¹ by much the prettiest village we have seen in America— It is situated on the lake after which it is named.

1. It will be noticed that this is the author's second mention of an arrival at Canandaigua, but a day later. Either chronology was once again confused as earlier with West Point or the author made a short trip around the lakes and did indeed arrive twice in Canandaigua.

Aug. 27th We called on M^r Grieg, a Gentleman of the law, to whom we had a letter of introduction & we accepted his invitation to dine with him— We were much pleased with M^r Grieg's conversation, he is a shrewd, sensible man. He is originally from Scotland, & if I may judge from his hospitality displayed towards us, has succeeded like most other emigrants from his country—¹

We met at his house one of his countrymen, but of a very opposite description to our entertainer. He took pains to inform us that he had an Estate in Scotland, that he had been a great traveller, & that he possessed 5000 acres on Lake Ontario— We pressed him pretty hard on the causes that induced him to forsake his native land, where according to his own confession he had sufficient to maintain himself & family in comfort. He complained of the weight of taxes yet was obliged to acknowledge them necessary, & that England had saved the world by her perseverance in a good cause— At last we succeeded in wringing from him an idle story of a tax gatherer, who had accepted his invitation to drink wine & while the glass was at his lips, asked to whom a pony belonged that was passing by the house, the poor host confessed it to be his son's & that it was not given in for, because when purchased ponies of that height were not taxable. The honest taxgatherer finished his bottle & added the pony to the list of carriages, horses, servants &c before entered. The pomposity with which this story was told & the evident delight he felt in talking of his carriages, horses & servants, &c were exceedingly entertaining—

We afterwards got him to walk with us to a fine house that was building in the same street. The owner's son was there & was kind enough to show us over the rooms— The Scot was in raptures. My relation & myself could not admire it & were too polite to censure, but our commendation was not missed in the profusion of the

1. John Greig (1779–1858) came to the United States from Scotland in 1797. He studied law and after being admitted to the bar in 1804 he began his practice in Canandaigua. He later became president of Ontario Bank and served briefly in the United States House of Representatives in 1841.

Scot's praises of the taste, design, convenience &c &c— but no sooner did we turn our backs on the house & the young gentleman before he lifted up his hands in astonishment that so much money should have been squandered to so little purpose—

We had great difficulty in getting a carriage from Canandaigua, & at last thought ourselves fortunate in procuring a machine somewhat better than a Covent Garden fruit cart,¹ with three seats in what may be called a box—this box rested upon springs placed in the cart & was convenient enough to the owner, as on removing the seats he had a cart to go to market & on replacing them, he had a coach for himself & family to go to church— The driver, who was also the proprietor, altho' on his return home to Batavia 50 miles on our journey, whence he had brought passengers & had as usual been paid already for returning, & altho' he was master of so wretched a machine, would have the stage fare. Finding conveyances so difficult to be had & disliking still more a crowded stage we hired him on to Buffalo a distance of 88 miles for 26 dollars.

Our road lay thro' a low country. The greater part was a causeway formed of trunks of trees & so sparing had the inhabitants been of their soil, that we could by our feelings have counted every tree we jolted over— A coachman had too much love for his horses & vehicle not to wish the road better, & once after a long silence turned round to us & exclaimed, "This road is quite as good as an electurising [*sic*] machine."— We arrived about 10 at night at the house of our driver in Batavia who kept a tavern & it was a tolerably good one, & he the civillest of beings. Altho' on the road he had favoured us with his company at table, as soon as he was in his own house, he kept a due distance, & permitted us to eat alone—

1. Covent Garden was the principal flower, fruit, and vegetable market in London.

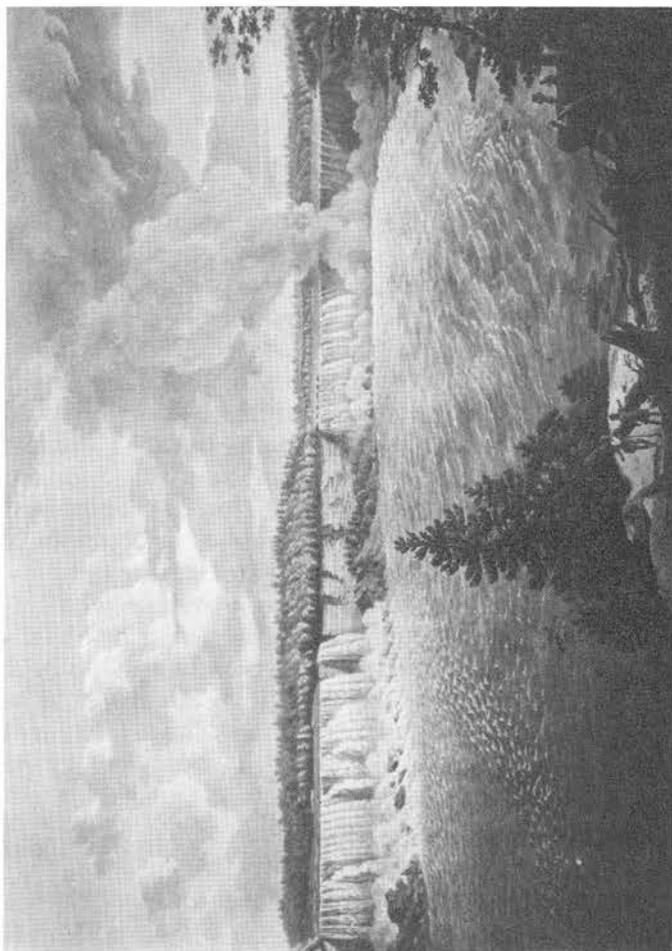
The Niagara Frontier

We proceeded after breakfast, and reached Buffalo about sun set. The road was open on both sides the greater part of the journey & the settlements appeared thicker & more flourishing as we approached the frontier, a proof of the great trade carried on down the St Lawrence- We found allmost [*sic*] the whole crop of oats disposed of to the Canadians & we called at several stores before we could get a feed for our horses- Buffalo was burnt in the last war in revenge for the destruction of Newark.¹ I looked in vain for walls black with fire, & for half-consumed beams, none were to be seen. The town is better built than ever & the houses as numerous & increasing rapidly-

At our inn we were attended by a waiter, who immediately struck us as having once been a British soldier- To our questions he replied that he was from Dublin & with 9 others had deserted the 37th Reg! He also told us that 350 men had deserted the 37 R^t alone. They got nothing from the A[merican] governor nor did he believed any of his companions got any thing- He professed not to like America but to be afraid to return-

We crossed the River Niagara at Black Rock the next morning the 29th The road was very good on the Canada

1. Buffalo and Black Rock, New York, were burned to the ground by the British on December 30, 1813, 20 days after the Americans had burned Newark, Ontario (now Niagara-on-the-Lake), which had previously been the capital of Upper Canada.



Courtesy of Seneca House State Historic Site, Kingston, New York
Niagara Falls by John Vanderlyn

side & the country well cultivated & thickly settled— We passed what had once been a wooden building, the two chimneys alone remained standing, a melancholy memento of the ferocity with which the last war was carried on. Our driver stopped to bait at an Inn, & we took the opportunity of conversing with the first Canadian we had yet met, in the person of the master— He expressed the bitterest animosity against the Americans, & longed for another trial of strength between the two nations— We asked him if he was not afraid of having his house burnt & his crops destroyed, he said they had already burnt one house for him & carried away all he had, but altho' he had built another house, he would hazard a second conflagration to retaliate the injuries he had suffered. We afterwards found among all those with whom we conversed a similar animosity against the Yankees as they call them, & it is to be feared that in case of another war, it will rage in all its horrors—Fire will prove more destructive than the sword.

About five miles from the falls, we saw the dark vapour which marks them in the distance—& shortly after we heard the roar of the waters— Altho' our expectation was wound up to the highest pitch by the numberless accounts we had heard of this great wonder, yet did the reality far exceed the description. Feeling so strongly as I do, that no depicter of this scene has succeeded in his attempt to do justice to the grandeur & sublimity of Niagara, that there [is] nothing in the world with which to compare it, I would be guilty of inexcusable vanity were I to offer a description. None but those who have seen them can form an idea of these cataracts, nor can any one without the ginious [*sic*] of a Shakespeare assist the imagination of the admirer of such scenes. I saw in N York a painting of these falls by M^r Vandilin, an American artist who received from the *Societe D'Artists* in Paris the first prize of painting given by the late Emperor Napoleon for his picture of Marius sitting amidst the ruins of Carthage— This prize picture was admirable, but the falls appeared to me tame, &

wanting the character of Awful greatness my fancy had led me to expect & had as it proved to be of the truth—¹

But at this moment when but few hours have gone by since I stood on the very edge of the precipice & was giddy with the sight of the mighty mass of waters rushing down it, when I saw beneath my feet a thousand whirlpools throwing up a white vapour so dense as to conceal, as with a veil of snow, the torrent before it reached the rocks beneath, I can no longer wonder that his art failed him. I remember the lines of the Poet.

What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbows varied hues
Unless to mortals it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of Heaven.²

Here too the rainbow is to be painted. The reflection of the sun on the foam forms a rainbow as complete, tho' not as extended & as varied in its hues as that which stretches over the arch of heaven— Nature laughs at the efforts of Art, to delineate the brilliant green she gives to this great river when it has reached the edge of the gulph [*sic*] & which she continues to one fourth of the descent— She then exhibits the purest white, & throws her colours & her works into shades & forms such as no pencil can catch, & no imagination equal—

We walked from this glory of the New world, to an Inn kept by a Canadian, M^r Forsythe.³ We found here a large company, who as well as ourselves were also on a visit to the falls. We were comfortably situated, & our host was as communicative as we could desire. He had been in several of the actions, & his house having been

1. John Vanderlyn (1776–1852), portrait and historical painter, rendered various views of the Niagara Falls during his career. Four views of the Falls were done in 1802–03, two of which he had engraved in 1804 and were subsequently exhibited in America. In all of these paintings his choice of including the river and the surrounding landscape above the cataract resulted in unspectacular portrayals which failed to convey the awesome power of the Falls.

For the painting of "Marius sitting amidst the ruins of Carthage," the Emperor Napoleon (who abdicated in June 1815) had presented Vanderlyn with a gold medal in 1808.

2. *Marmion*, canto vi, stanza 5, by Sir Walter Scott, first published in 1808.

3. William Forsyth was an enterprising Canadian who in later years built the famous Pavilion Hotel and attempted to monopolize the view of the falls.

the head quarters several times, & British officers constantly with him, he was able to give a very particular description of the battles. His account agreed so minutely with what I recollected of the official details that I place the utmost reliance on his veracity. He was describing to us the battle of Lundy Lane,¹ when a Quaker of N York, who had come with his pretty wife to visit some "friends" on this side the line observed that the American force advanced the following day & offered battle to the British. This was so promptly denied by our host, who declared that they retreated that night three miles & the following day to Fort Erie 18 miles from the field— He admitted that a few dragoons had next day burnt some mills in the neighbourhood.

"Why," said the honest Canadian, "I must be allowed to know something about it. I had been assured that no fighting was to be apprehended & had gone to the woods to bring home my cattle. In the mean time the Americans advanced & on my return I learnt that the battle was then fighting on my own land— I staid where I was for fear of losing my cattle, but next day hearing we had drubbed the Yankees, I came home & if they had advanced I must have seen them from my windows— Ask my wife there & the women, they were here the whole of the fight, & they will tell you the house was riddled with cannon & musquet balls. Give the devil his due, say I, I confess the Yankees beat us at Chippewa,² but when we have our turn & thresh them I will not allow any man to claim the victory from us without saying it is fib whoever told him so. Why," he continued, "I took two Americans myself the day after the battle & carried them to the Gen!"

The Quaker said it was universally believed thro' the United States that General Ripley had advanced & of-

1. The battle of Lundy's Lane was a fierce confrontation of the War of 1812, which took place a short distance west of the Niagara Falls on July 25, 1814. Although the Americans were in the ascendancy for much of the early part of the battle and many have chronicled it as an American victory, the final outcome is now generally accepted as a British victory.

2. The battle of Chippewa took place on July 5, 1814, less than a month before the battle of Lundy's Lane. The Americans gained an important victory in the attack on the Niagara frontier and the campaign against Canada.

ferred battle the day following the action,¹ & he next observed that the Americans had but 800 men remaining & the British had a force of 5000— I asked him if he thought any General in his sober senses would lead a defeated army of 800 men to the face of 5000 conquerors— The Quaker was silent, but the Canadian said, he wished to God they had advanced, that not a man could have escaped, & that as it was, they would all have been taken, had the British pursued the next morning—but they had marched the day of the battle 13 miles at double quick time, & the General Drummond² thought it advisable to rest his troops— In the mean time the Quaker had stepped out of the room, & interrogated the landlady & two other females of the family—they agreed in their evidence so exactly with the Landlord, that he could no longer deceive himself, & he came back to us candidly confessing his conviction that the American gen^l had given an incorrect report, & had succeeded in blinding the whole people of the U States to the real truth of the matter. After thus on the very spot proving the little dependance that can be placed on American official dispatches, what Englishman or unprejudiced stranger can hesitate where to fix his belief when these dispatches differ in their own favor from those of the British Commanders by sea or by land—

We were desirous of knowing the extent of desertion from the British troops & colonists—Our host did not profess himself able to give any positive information, but on being further asked if the desertions accounted to 3 or 4000 he said certainly not, not half that number—& that many Americans had come over to us. There were desertions on both sides. Some Canadian settlers had gone over to the enemy, among them our poor host's eldest son. He lamented his depravity greatly, said he was a very smart lad of about 15 or 16. He could not guess his in-

1. General Eleazar Wheelock Ripley removed 3 miles to an encampment following the battle. In view of his troops' condition, he retreated to Fort Erie despite his commanding officer's order to renew the attack.

2. Sir Gordon Drummond was the general in command of British troops at Lundy's Lane. Later in the same year he laid siege to and occupied Fort Erie.

ducement for deserting his family & country— He further said he never could forgive him, he had immediately on hearing of the fact, destroyed the will by which he was provided for, & had never enquired what had been his fate. He had 200 acres of fine land in right of his mother, which he should not have if he could help it. He said [he] had never ill-treated him, nor had they any quarrel at the time, & I believed him, for never did I see a more affectionate husband or father— He has eleven children, & one or other of the younger ones was constantly in his arms—

He had a thorough detestation of the Americans & felt strongly the blessings of British protection. He expressed great triumph in comparing the two governments at having learnt from U.S. travellers that the war had been followed by heavy taxes & that they were likely to be increased, their finances being in a disorganised state. He observed that the Canadians had little or nothing to pay to government, while they enjoyed the protection of persons & property & mild laws— He relied with confidence on being remunerated for his losses during the invasion by the Powers at home— He complained that the U.S. Army had robbed his house of every moveable article & even the baby linen of his infant in the cradle was taken. His wife told us (his 2^d wife & a very lively pretty woman) that she had begged the soldiers to leave the property unmolested & that she would give them all she had to eat & drink, but they called her a "damned Canadian bitch" & continued their search. The officers were as bad as the men.

There was a man in the house who had lost his right arm, thinking it might have been shot off in the war we asked him about it. He had lost it by an accident in shooting squirrels— But we were afterwards told that this man had behaved most gallantly, that with his left arm he loaded & discharged his piece as readily as the soundest limbed among them— His property being so considerable as to put him above receiving a pecuniary residence, a fort which was built lately has been called by his name.

He said the honour was dearer to him than any compensation in money.

I have before spoken of a Canadian who expressed great enmity against the Americans & was desirous of another war— It was the first Canadian we conversed with, but I forgot to state a better reason for this animosity than even the destruction of his property. The Americans on their Retreat from the battle of Lundie Lane had taken him & 7 more men prisoners on their march—they carried them into Fort Erie which was shortly afterwards bombarded by the British— Our informant & his unfortunate comrades were exposed to the fire of their own troops equally with the Americans— They repeatedly begged either to be set at liberty or be sent to the opposite shore, for they justly thought it a hard case to run the hazard of death by the hands of their countrymen— Their request was repulsed with great harshness & not complied with. Surely this act is contrary to all the laws of civilised nations. War if not a necessary is an unavoidable evil & he who does not lessen its evils by conforming to the laws of modern warfare, deserves the execration of all good men, whatever may be their country— Gen^l Ripley commanded the Fort. The man from whom I had this account said he had not been taken in arms.

We passed Grand Isle in this day's route, an Island formed by the separation of the Niagara into two branches. It is still undecided to which nation it belongs—& is among the other unsettled points in dispute referred to the Commissioners provided by the treaty of peace—¹ The Niagara is the boundary between the two countries on this part of the line & the question is which of the two branches is to be considered the main channel of the river— The Americans claim it because the stream that flows along the B. coast is deeper & therefore must be the principal channel, the British found their right on

1. The Treaty of Ghent, which officially terminated the War of 1812 on December 24, 1814, designated that boundaries should return to their state before the war began and that commissioners should be appointed to settle boundary disputes. Grand Island is today a part of the state of New York.

the river being much wider on the other side than on theirs. It will be difficult for casuists to determine this knotty case, but in the mean time, the State of N York have proved that they have no doubt about the right, for they have actually purchased the Indian claims, & this while the question is still pending between the two governments. This haste is at least indecent & premature—

Our host informed us that he had entertained the head surgeon of the US Army that fought at Lundie Lane. He learnt from him that the wounds of 1500 men were dressed after the battle—500 men were found dead on the field & some prisoners were taken. He represented our loss at about 700 men in all—¹

August 30. This day we had intended to pay a second visit to the falls, but the morning opened with a heavy [rain] & it continued till the afternoon—

We got our host to show us the field of Battle called by the Americans the Battle of Bridgewater & by us the Battle of Lundie's Lane. I have before stated that the Tavern we are in was struck by many balls, but the hottest of the engagement was some hundred yards distant— We walked to a rising where the British were posted in force & from whence their artillery commanded the ground on their right & front & part of that to the left. The position was well chosen— The Glengary fencibles² were posted in a small ravine in a field of standing oats in advance of the main body on the hill. The Americans pushed on a force towards the hill, but as soon as they came within musquet shot they were checked by a well-directed fire from the Glengarians—eighteen men are said to have fallen by the first volley besides wounded. They then marched round to the right of the Glengarians with the intention of outflanking them, but the latter threw

1. The Americans reported total losses to be 853 men including 171 killed, while General Drummond reported British losses of 878 men including 84 killed.

2. The Glengary (or Glengarry) fencibles were a regiment of Canadian regulars recruited from Scotsmen in Canada.



Courtesy of The Public Archives of Canada

Battle of Lundy's Lane

back their right & gave the enemy a second fire as destructive as the former. The Glengarians were so well covered by the ravine concealed from view by the standing grain, that only 3 or 4 were killed by the American shot. Foiled in this attack, the enemy now marched behind a small rising that lay to the left of the British position & which protected them from the fire, in this attack they succeeded— A party of them got in the rear of the British & took prisoner the gallant Gen^l Riall,¹ who had received a wound and retired to get it dressed— From the commanding position held by the British troops, no doubt there must have been a great slaughter among the Americans before they could reach the cannon, but they did reach them & were for a few minutes in possession of them.²

But Gen^l Drummond had by this time reached the scene of the action— He had been marching that day in an opposite direction & had proceeded three miles, when an order came from Gen^l Riall to join him at the falls, as he intended to make a stand there; he was obliged to countermarch these three miles & was still seven miles from the field of battle. It was late at night when he arrived—the moon gave some light but the roar of the cannon & musquetry was his best guide— Unfortunately in marching up Lundy's Lane the first troops he met were the Glengary fencibles, they were mistaken for enemies & fired upon. Some few were wounded by this mistake, but the brave Glengarians were soon discovered to be friends. The Enemy had not advanced from the spot where the cannon had fallen into their hands, & the British being now equal in number the Americans retreated as fast as they could. Night was favourable to them but out of 3000

1. Sir Phineas Riall was second-in-command of the British troops at Lundy's Lane. He later led the British and Indians in the sack of Buffalo and Black Rock.

2. General Drummond reported that the Americans were in control of the British artillery for a "few minutes." According to historian Henry Adams, "Drummond's 'few minutes' were three hours." The Americans held the guns until they retreated at midnight and left them with the intention of retrieving them later. When men were sent back the next morning, the British were already in possession of the guns.

men only 800 escaped. They carried with them the brave Riall & one piece of brass artillery & left behind three of their own— They pretended to have had the power of carrying off the artillery had they possessed horses, but this is not to be believed—50 men had they been as long in possession of the Guns as they pretend could have carried them off, the fact however is that they had not even time to spike them. Our troops were too much fatigued with their rapid march & the subsequent action to pursue the enemy far & they had but three rounds of ammunition remaining—

Our host pointed out to us the funeral pyres of the American dead. They were consumed in two heaps, & many were thrown into a well & covered with earth— Their countrymen who visit the spot have dug up the bones nearer the surface & carried them away as reliques— On the spot where the well had been we saw several bones that had been dug up this way & left behind to be taken no doubt by the next visitors. This battle took place on the 25 of July— The Americans doubled our number in the early part of the engagement, it began three quarters of an hour before sunset & lasted till 10 at night.

We left Fort Erie to which the enemy retreated the day after the action on the left in passing the Niagara, & we learnt that the fort had not been rebuilt since it was blown up by the US Army¹ & that only a few men were stationed there. A mud fort has been thrown up at Chipeway, where the creek of that name falls into the Niagara, since the war, & a detachment of the 37th is stationed there. The British, Canadians & Indians were defeated here just 20 days before the battle of Lundie's Lane— The Indians ran away after the first fire.

Indeed these savages, who are only terrible to a retreating enemy or a defenceless country are represented to have been of little service during the war— On one occasion only was their assistance important. In the action

1. Fort Erie was occupied for over a year by the United States but on November 5, 1814, the officer-in-command decided to abandon and blow up the fort.

of Beaver dams a few regulars & militia & a large party of Indians took prisoners near seven hundred Americans— The Americans were surrounded in a field enclosed on all sides with woods— The Indians were now quite at home, being concealed behind trees, they were able to take aim at their enemies without being exposed to their shot. The slaughter was dreadful, the Americans were huddled together like a flock of sheep as our host observed, who was in the action. They stood the fire some time, but finding their ranks thinning every moment they hoisted the white flag & submitted to the regulars. Perhaps their surrender was delayed from their fears of the Indian ferocity, for altho' they did not see their enemies their yells informed them what they had to dread, & in laying down their arms, they entreated the British officers to protect them against the Indians—¹

The hill on which the British were posted at the battle of Lundie Lane is the burying ground of the neighbouring districts— Here our host pointed out to us the tomb of the lamented Colonel Bishop who fell at the attack of Black Rock—² He has no stone to mark where he lies, but tradition will point out the spot as long as the British name is respected in Canada, & as long as it is thought noble to die for our country. Lieut Andrew lies near him. He died of his wounds received while gallantly leading his company to the assault of Fort Erie.³

If we lament the death of the brave, even when led by their leaders to unjust war, how much more ought we to regret the fate of those who fall in defence of an unof-

1. The battle of Beaver Dams (also known as the battle of the Beechwoods) occurred on June 24, 1813, in a heavy beech forest west of Queenston, Ontario. About 570 Americans were besieged by about 80 British regulars, 200 militiamen, and 500 Indians. Afterwards, the British officer-in-command gave full credit for the victory to the Indians and stated that his chief contribution had been to prevent them from abusing the surrendered Americans.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Cecil Bisshopp was a British officer with a seemingly promising future whose death was greatly mourned by the British service. It was especially lamentable that his fatal wounds were received in the relatively unimportant raid on Black Rock of July 11, 1813.

3. Lieutenant Andrews of the 6th Foot was listed by the British as severely wounded after their unsuccessful attempt to recover Fort Erie on August 15, 1814.

fending people. The unprovoked invasion of these provinces by their more powerful neighbour, when their protectors were engaged in a tremendous contest at home, lays open to the world the ambitious designs of the American democracy—It is believed that the government of the United States were never serious in their threats of conquering Canada—that war which had been so long the watchword became at length the political Engine of the party. The want of preparation & the feeble force employed to execute their threats warrant this belief. And how long will it be before, to secure the election of another President,¹ it may be necessary a third time to invade Canada, to plunder & destroy the houses of the peasantry, & to lay Newark a second time to ashes? What will that government be in its old age that is so depraved in its youth?²

It is to be feared that only the danger of a terrible retaliation will keep these proud republicans tranquil; their immense frontier of land & sea, & the thin & unwarlike population by which it is defended are the only safeguard of the Canadians against their cruel neighbour. I am humane enough to wish that many Washingtons had been destroyed.³ It is better that the works of man should perish, than that the hands that raised them should be employed against a people who have done them no wrong, & who are too weak to meditate any—In justice to the Canadians, whom England is bound in duty to protect, in gratitude to the people, who so bravely & successfully defended her possessions & their own, the British administration must in the event of another war use the vast means of annoyance she possesses in teaching this new Empire all its horrors. America has many fine cities, she offers more than one Copenhagen to her enemies.—“A long war & a merciful one” is said to have

1. It has frequently been conjectured that James Madison really desired peace but in 1812 opted for war with Great Britain in order to appease the extremists of his party and to secure his renomination for the presidency.

2. This discomfoting question the author later judged to be too severe and the entire sentence was crossed out.

3. The public buildings in Washington were burned by the British in a raid carried out in August 1814, in retaliation for the destruction of Newark by the American forces.

been the common toast at the officers' tables during the revolutionary war, when Sir W Howe had the command, I trust that neither our ministers, nor our commanders will voice this sarcasm.

Let me not be supposed from these observations to wish for another war. Enough of brothers' blood has been shed by two nations descended from our parent stock—But England was not the aggressor last war, & the conditions on which peace was concluded prove her willingness to cultivate friendship with the U States. What those States have once done, they may again do, & the forbearance of England will only encourage new insults:—

England has been too mild & temperate
Unapt to stir at these indignities
& they have found her so—&c. &c

The Canadians are justly dissatisfied with the terms on which the late treaty was made, they have neither indemnity for the past, nor security for the future. They talk however with pleasure of the burnings of Buffalo & Washington, & justly consider them events of more importance to their interests & more conducive to their future safety, than all the battles that were fought. A defeat by land they say, is easily made palatable to American vanity, as was the Slaughter of Lundie's Lane, but the conflagration of their towns & dwellings comes home to all. Then the grim features of war appear in all their terrors, & they learn forbearance to others, from dread of the consequences to themselves—

The 31st Saturday we descended the ladder placed against the precipice by Gov^r Simcoe's lady¹ & walked a considerable distance along a narrow path over rough loose stones. In some parts we were obliged to use both hands & feet. I was surprised to learn that many ladies are bold enough to despise the fatigue & danger & that some have

1. Elizabeth Simcoe (1766–1850), wife of John Graves Simcoe (first lieutenant governor of Upper Canada) visited Niagara Falls in 1795 and had a ladder put in place so visitors could view the cataract from below. This ladder was fastened to a tree at the top and was anchored to a rock at the lower end. It remained in use until 1818.

even ventured under the sheet of water. Altho' the scene viewed so near the bed of the river was amazingly grand & terrific yet I think it still grander from the place we first saw it, the Table rock. We passed under the vast sheet as far as we could penetrate, the Spray fell in torrents on our heads & drenched us in an instant, causing some difficulty of breathing. The spray here is so great as almost to conceal the falling river above us, but every now & then a gust of wind cleared away the mist & displayed to us all the majesty—

That evening we were joined at our Tavern by a Virginian & two Ladies—the patriotism of the Ladies was amusing— One of them thought that the English might possibly be as brave as the Americans, but the other rebuked her for this admission & asked her with evident astonishment if she really thought any people so brave as the Americans? I assured this female patriot that her countrymen in all parts of the world were allowed to be the most valiant race that ever drew the sword. Nothing less would have contented this Southern Lady.

As to their companion the Virginian youth, he was a fiery democrat— Never did the domain of Party & Prejudice so entirely possess a human being. He could not hear with patience the praise of any nation but his own. Still less could he endure that the beauty of her institutions should be called in question— If in support of our argument we quoted the opinion of his own countrymen, he answered, “Oh, they must have been federalists, & we hold them in the utmost contempt & abhorrence. Nothing is true that comes from them.”

Having permitted him to run on some time in praise of the US army & navy during the last war in support of which glory he unfortunately hit on some battles where they had been well drubbed, I replied to him, “Why it is possible that your army & navy may have obtained great honours during the conflict, & I lament that their glory has not spread further. But unfortunately for them the attention and efforts of the British government & people were directed to objects of so much more importance to the world at large, that were then occurring in Europe

that their eyes were scarcely turned for an instant from those stupendous events¹ to the petty skirmishing in a distant & unknown province of the Empire, & I apprehend that the rest of Europe then struggling for Existence, knows but little of the fame of your victories—” The Virginian's pale face reddened at this sarcasm brought on him by his abused nationality, & he endeavoured to retort it by saying—that American affairs must certainly have drawn the attention of England since there was a confession of their fear of America in the universal illuminations that took place in celebration of the *Shannon's* victory over the *Chesapeake*—² Our gravity could not resist this attack, & as soon as we could stifle our laughter, we assured him that the capture of the *Chesapeake* had not caused the increased consumption of a single rushlight— His amazement at our denial of what he considered an undisputable fact was as laughable as the triumph with which he had stated it.

Thus are these poor people deceived by the press they glory in, & I really think that in spite of our assurances, the Virginian yet believes in his illumination in common no doubt with the rest of his compatriots. This man regretted much the overthrow of Buonaparte, it was his opinion & the opinion of all the democrats who had not official situations to connect them close enough with the French Government, to know Napoleon better, that he intended when he had modelled Europe into a republican form, to resign his power & leave the people to the enjoyment of unrestrained liberty. His alliance with Austria, the coronation of the King of Rom[;], his division of Kingdoms amongst his own family prove nothing against this speculation in favor of their hero, their hero in their eyes—

1. Great Britain and her allies struggled against France and Napoleon from 1808 to 1814 in the Peninsular War.

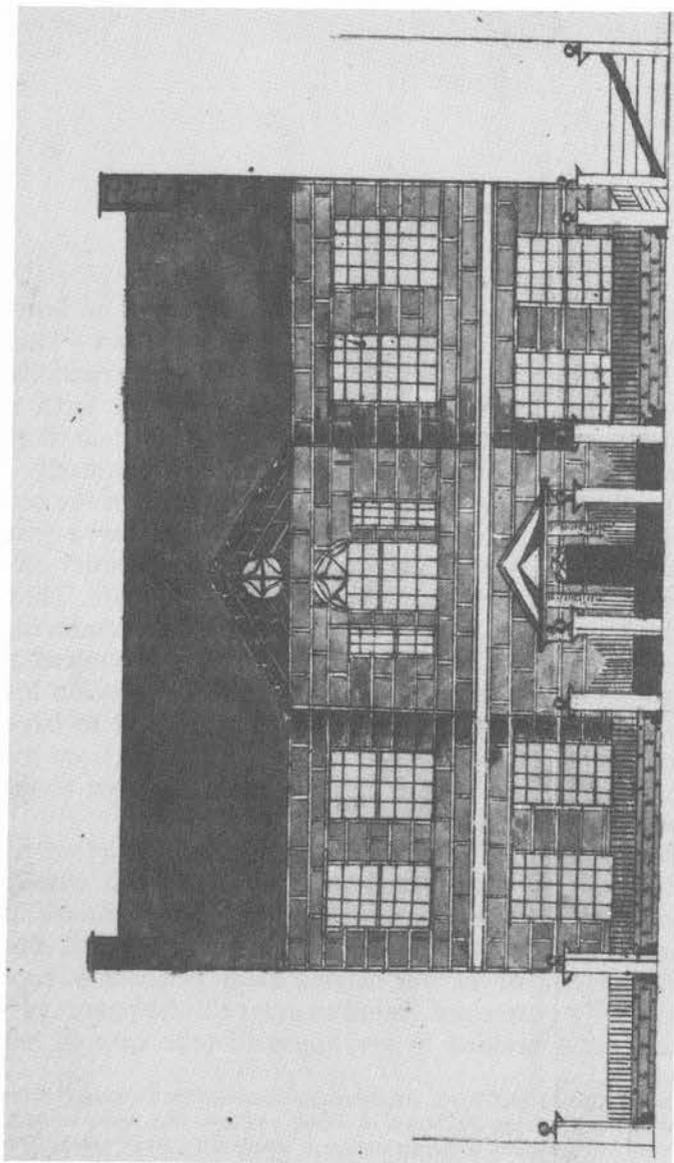
2. The British frigate *Shannon* captured the United States frigate *Chesapeake* on June 1, 1813. After the many American naval victories in the war up to that time, this victory at least helped to offset the moral effect of the previous disasters on the British.

Upper Canada

Leaving the Virginian & Niagara falls on the 1st of Sept^r (Sunday) we proceeded in a cart & pair to Newark- This town is rapidly rising from its ashes, its unwarrantable destruction by the American Gen^l McClure,¹ by birth a N. Briton, gave a destructive character to the war that ultimately proved most injurious to the enemy himself— Buffalo, Washington & much private property on the sea & land frontier followed the fate of Newark by a just retaliation. The Americans on the Canada frontier express the greatest animosity towards Gen^l McClure. They consider him as the Author of the miseries they endured, his person was not safe among them, & he required a body of soldiers to escort him thro' their country on his return home- The U States government are said to have disapproved of his conduct, & he was dismissed from his command. This was all the punishment they dared to inflict on this wanton incendiary.-

We called at M^r Dickson's to whom we had letters of introduction, he was not at home but we saw his wife & two sons. M^r & M^{rs} Dickson remained in their house at the breaking out of the war expecting to be left unmolested. He however was carried away prisoner & kept so with many others not found in arms till the peace. M^{rs} Dickson still remained in her house to take care of her

1. General George McClure's attempted justification for burning Newark was that he was depriving the British of winter quarters. This seems unlikely, since he left enough tents to accommodate a whole army when nearby Fort George was abandoned.



Courtesy of The Public Archives of Canada

The Dickson House

property. When the Americans were firing the town, she hoped that her house would escape being near a mile from the village, but a party advanced with fixed bayonets, & gave her but 10 minutes to remove— She had protection from Gen^l Brown & Col Seal¹ who had lodged in her house, & from Gen^l McClure himself, also one of her self invited guests but they availed nothing. Her house of brick & almost the best in that district,² was committed to the flames & with it her husband's papers, who being a Counsellor at Law, had in his charge many important deeds— A large Library was also consumed. M^{rs} D attributed this misfortune to the malice of Col Wilcox, once the editor of a Newark newspaper & colonel of Canadian militia— He fought on the B side at Queenstown & distinguished himself, but taking disgust at not being promoted as he expected, he deserted to the enemy & held the same rank in their army. He fell in action with the B troops, a fate too fortunate for so vile a traitor—³

We had the pleasure of meeting a party of B Officers of the 37th Reg^t at dinner, & we became acquainted without the formality of an introduction— After having been some weeks in the midst of men, who, tho' speaking the same language have but few ideas in common with Englishmen we were highly delighted at falling into the society of sensible & well informed men, who could enter into our feelings, & whose habits assimilated to ours— The first intimation we had of having English Gentlemen near

1. General Jacob Brown was the commanding officer of the United States campaign against Canada on the Niagara frontier. Col. Seal has not been identified.

2. This house was constructed by the Honourable William Dickson and was probably the first brick structure in Upper Canada. In the *Report of Loyal and Patriotic Society* giving a contemporary account of houses burned by the Americans, the Dickson's brick house was valued at £1000. The house was rebuilt some years after its destruction and is now known as the Randwood and Dickson House, headquarters of the Niagara Institute.

3. Joseph Willcocks was a member of the Upper Canadian legislature, who became sympathetic to the American cause. He went over to the American side along with a group of Canadian volunteers in 1813. One observer of Newark in flames reported that McClure, aided by the renegade Willcocks, led the men through the town, torch in hand.

was the dinner hour they had appointed— Instead of three we sat down to a table between 5 & 6 & we enjoyed tolerably good Madeira & port, & much merriment respecting our neighbours on the other side till eleven o'clock, when we separated mutually satisfied— We gave them an account of our Virginian, & their risibility was moved by a complaint he had made to us—he had said that foreigners came to the States full of prejudice against the manners & customs of the people, & that after remaining some time they returned home with greater prejudices than before— & what was worse they published them to the world. He knew but one correct description of America by a traveller, & that was given by a Frenchman— The Frenchman had represented America as another Arcadia.

We could have told the Virginian that the quid constantly rolling in his mouth & the juice dying the part where mustachios might have grown, & the trouble he took to remove the salt spoon with one hand while he helped himself to salt with a greasy knife in the other were not calculated to do away [with] any prejudice that exists concerning their cleanliness. It is their universal habit to make the knife they are using themselves answer other purposes. We often by means of our own people procured a spoon for salt & a knife for the butter, but they were disregarded. A plate of butter stands on the table, & it is not cut but picked away, each helps himself with his own knife to as much as will butter a mouthful of bread or toast & when he wants another mouthful he returns to the plate, so that by the time the meal is half done what remains exhibits a most forbidding aspect— Other dishes have infrequently a similar fate—

We were told by our new acquaintances some extraordinary traits in the character of the Republican officers— They represented them as generally boorish in their manner & quite ignorant of the little decencies of Life— When some of them have dined at the mess of the B. Officers, they did not follow or perhaps did not know the rule of Horace "Nil admirari" but expressed all the

wonder they felt at the profusion of silver plate, & the regularity & elegance of the dinner. Surely they exclaimed, "you do us too much honour in taking so much trouble to entertain us—" They were however assured that they saw nothing more than the ordinary fare. Every dinner was as well regulated & conducted with as much decorum— "Indeed", they cried, "why we have nothing of the kind among us, we dine where we can get a dinner, & care nothing about its neatness or regularity— But however we guess all that plate is given you by the King." They were answered, no, that every regiment had more or less plate & other table furniture belonging to it, purchased by its own private funds.

A captain was at Amherstburg from Detroit on the American side— Conversing with some B. Officers on the Nature of the military service, "I guess as how," said he, "if I doesn't like the next General orders as comes out, I will get clear of the army—right off. I expect a store of goods at Detroit & I guess as how I'll set up store & turn merchant—" Another Officer happened to be at the same place & the British officers took compassion on him & invited him to dine with them at the Regl mess. He returned many thanks for the honor & consented most readily— Just before dinner came in, when they were all assembled, a note was handed to the American. "Mister," said he addressing his neighbour, "I have got a letter from the merchant over the way with whom I have been Coniacking (dealing in smuggled brandy) to ask me to dine with him. I hope Mister you'll have no objection to my dining with him, as I can then talk over my business with him & eat at the same time." Of course the permission was given him to dine with his Cogniac friend, & he left the Company much amused at the novelty of his excuse—

We were informed by these military Gentlemen that it was only at Lundie's lane the two armies came into contact with the bayonet. In that action the American soldiers galled by the British fire demanded to be led to the charge saying they were of the same case with their

enemy & therefore equal in the exercise of this formidable weapon. They were led to the charge, but it was fatal to them. Our troops had evidently the advantage both in steadiness & power of arm.

We were sorry to learn that great desertion takes place from the B. Troops on the lines to the United States— The temptation held out to labourers & mechanics of all classes is too strong to be resisted— Great numbers deserted from the United States Army since the war— The cause assigned is the long arrears of pay due. Some complained that nothing but Rations had been given them for from 6 to 18 months. Their men did not enter the B. Army but took the first opportunity to recross the frontier & retire to their several homes.

We see from this plain Fort Niagara on the other side of the River. This fort is very strong— It was taken during the war by 800 men altho' garrisoned by 500— This was done by a night surprise, the sentry was seized on & forced by threats of instant death to give up the countersign, & the place & garrison were taken without resistance.¹ When the news of peace arrived in Canada, the Americans did not possess a foot of ground there. The English held Fort Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac & other places on the opposite side—

The only desertion that took place from the B. Army during the war was during the retreat from Plattsburg. The British soldiers who had served in the Peninsula considered themselves disgraced in retiring before a foe so contemptible as they considered the Americans— After having engaged & beaten double & treble their own number of the finest troops on the continent of Europe, they were mad with rage at the conduct of Sir G. Prevost who turned his back on an inferior enemy without firing a shot.² Many of these men threw down their arms on the

1. The British captured Fort Niagara in the early morning of December 19, 1813. The pickets and sentries were seized and, after yielding the password, bayoneted to death. The British dashed into the fort while the unsuspecting Americans were yet asleep and easily took command.

2. Sir George Prevost was commanding general of the British forces in the campaign to invade New York from Lake Champlain at the end of the War of

impulse of the moment, & went into the American fort. De Watteville's regiment composed of foreigners behaved shamefully before Fort Erie & had not the same excuse.¹ They were ordered to charge, & threw down their arms to the great mortification of their officers, who were as willing & able to do their duty as any officers of the service. But the lamentable conduct of Sir Geo. Prevost is most inexcusable, his retreat from Plattsburg lost us the service of men who had become veterans in the Spanish & French campaigns, & gave the enemy a cause of triumph, no event of the contest had before afforded them. It is impossible to conceive the hatred & contempt universally expressed both by officers & by provincials respecting the behavior of this General during the whole war. A layforce was kept in lower Canada where they were useless, except for the pageants of parade while the Commanding officers in the Upper Province² loudly demanded reinforcements— Gen¹ Sheaff³ once requested two additional battalions & the governor sent him a flank company—

It is a fact that just after the Capture of Hulls army by the Gallant Gen¹ Brock,⁴ Gen¹ Brock received orders not to pass the frontier— He expected these orders, & so devoted was he to the service, that he declared he would

1812. After his naval support was defeated at Plattsburg Bay, he withdrew his vastly superior army, to the chagrin of his countrymen. One of his subordinate generals at this encounter was Sir Frederick Robinson with whom the author became acquainted in New York City.

1. The regiment under the command of Major-General Louis Charles De Watteville, which was composed of German, Polish, and Spanish mercenaries, was blamed by General Drummond for the failure of the attack on Fort Erie on August 15, 1814.

2. By the Constitutional Act of 1791, the English province of Quebec was divided; the predominantly English-speaking area became known as Upper Canada while the French-speaking area took the name of Lower Canada.

3. Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe assumed command of British forces in the fall of 1812 after the death of General Brock.

4. General William Hull surrendered the garrison and troops at Detroit to the British general Sir Isaac Brock on August 16, 1812. Brock had used Hull's fear of an Indian massacre to advantage and frightened him into giving up without a fight. The loss was received with disbelief by Americans and abruptly put an end to the offensive campaign in the Northwest. After this achievement, Brock was hailed as the "hero of Upper Canada."



Courtesy of the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board
Caricature of Sir George Prevost

not open them; should they arrive before he had executed the designs he meditated. This brave Commander & humane man is spoken of by the Canadians with the regret of Children for a beloved father, he knew well how to attach this hardy race to the service of his country, he was not too proud to be advised by men, whose long residence among the Canadians had enabled them to judge every individual's character & designs, he respected the local knowledge of Gentlemen whose loyalty was undoubted, & profiting by this information, he distrusted the evil disposed, confirmed the wavering & added spirits to the loyal. Nor was his humanity less than his discrimination & courage- The married men of his regiment had in their colonel a generous benefactor; the paymaster has been heard to declare that one half of his pay was divided among the wives & the children & his soldiers- He had but one fault, an unfortunate one for his country, he was too prodigal of his own life & he fell by the hands of the enemy rather than retreat, altho' his small force was opposed to an army.¹

But so unaccountable was the Conduct of Sir G. Prevost throughout his whole command in the war, that it was at one time thought his known birth at New York & education in that state had encouraged the enemy to tempt him to betray the British cause—that suspicion has subsided into one more reasonable- It is now believed that two causes operated on his mind- He was desirous of protracting the war because of his great emoluments, said to have amounted to 30,000 £ annually & he was destitute of personal courage- It is left for others to judge which of these accusations is true, if both or neither- We may however lament that Sir George disappointed by his death the enquiry into the causes of his failure-²

1. General Brock died on October 13, 1812, at the battle of Queenston Heights while his men were repulsing the Americans under General Van Rensselaer, the same man whom the author met in Albany.

2. Prevost was heavily criticized and charged with treason. He left Canada to meet these charges, but he died in London on January 5, 1816, one week before the court-martial convened.

D^r Kerr made one of our dining party, the third instant. This Gentleman had 4 sons & two sons of Law in arms for his King on this frontier— He himself has been 40 years in the country attached to the medical staff, & was one of the unfortunate army taken at Saratoga in 77— Two of his sons were taken prisoners, one of them made his escape from Boston with another B. officer—partly by force & partly by bribery— He & his companion arrived safe at Ogdensburg & were during this time almost half a day with Gen^l Wilkinson's army.¹ On going down to the sea-side at Ogdensburg they found but one boat, & the boat man refused to take them to the opposite side— Young Kerr offered a considerable bribe in vain, upon which having no time to lose he seized him with great force for he was 6 ft 2¾ inches high, & strong in proportion & threatened him with instant death. The American was intimidated by his threats, & carried them over— Nearly the whole of D^r Kerr's sons were wounded during the war, & all distinguished themselves— The D^r had his house & property destroyed at the conflagration of Newark.

Sept 4th We breakfasted at our Inn, & repaired on board the Boat with transport—² This vessel had brought the 99th reg^t, late the 100th to Fort George (situated near Newark & at the mouth of the Niagara) & had now on board 4 companies of the 37th reg^t— The Officers of the latter Reg^t had been kind enough to invite us to partake of their mess & quarters in our voyage down the Ontario— The offer was pressed on us with so much earnestness, that it needed not our anxiety to proceed, & the uncertainty of an early passage, to induce readily to accept the invitation— It is with the liveliest feeling of

1. James Wilkinson was an American major-general in the War of 1812. He had commands first in the South at New Orleans and Mobile, but later saw action along the St. Lawrence River.

2. The *Beckwith* was probably the ship on which the author and his fellow travellers took passage across Lake Ontario, judging from a later reference in the journal. The ship sailed from Newark to Kingston, Ontario, near the location where Lake Ontario joins the St. Lawrence River.

gratitude & friendship that I recollect the politeness with which we were treated. They deprived themselves of their own bedding & staterooms to accommodate us, & insisted on our compliance with their arrangements so warmly that we were obliged to submit to be better accommodated than we expected or indeed desired. Our passage was of three days.

Sept 7th We moved alongside the wharf at Kingston Dockyard— Towards the afternoon my relation & myself crossed an arm of the lake to Kingston— This place is rising fast into importance, many new buildings are rising, & some few of stone— Indeed the large naval establishment here & the garrisons of the two forts by which the Harbour is defended must cause great sums to be expended here— The fort of William Henry, called after the D[uke]. of Clarence is besides Quebec the only regular fortification in the Canadas. The building commenced during the war & has been continued since, it wants now but little to complete it— I am too little read in the science of fortification to give an opinion of my own on its strength, but I was told that it may bid defiance to a long siege— Two strong towers of stone & bombproof are situated within the walls—1000 or 1200 men are required for its defence— This place has been built by the British soldiers, as have most of the fortifications raised in the provinces. They receive 10^d per day while so employed— Their officers consider the use thus made of the military injurious to their discipline as soldiers but unless it is carried too far, I incline to approve of the plan on many accounts, but more especially on this forcible one, that in no other way can fortifications be raised—the expense of labour would be ruinous, & labourers in sufficient number for a considerable wage cannot be procured.

The bad discipline of the B. Army in Canada is with more justice attributed to the separation of the regiments in small detachments. The young subaltern cannot be supposed to have so much authority over his men as officers of more experience, and discipline must relax and

be imperfect when the troops are not in sufficient number to form a drill— The discipline has also been less rigid of late in hopes of stopping the desertion of soldiers and even of Noncommissioned officers to the opposite side. Unhappily the consequence has been different to what was expected, the desertion has increased, in proportion as discipline has been dispensed with— Sir John Sherbrooke lately appointed to the Government of the B. N. American provinces¹ made a tour thro' part of the upper province while we were there, his Excellency met a party of soldiers on their march many of whom were in a state of intoxication— His displeasure was so decidedly expressed to the commanding officer of the regiment, that it must operate a change, & restore the character of the B. soldier by enforcing the duties of his officers— Certainly it was very mortifying to us, passing as we did thro' the States with scarce a single instance of drunkenness to disgust us, to find in our own province that beastly vice in all its deformity, to see every public house filled with drunken soldiers, & every now & then one carried from the scene of riot by his companions, as lifeless as if actually dead— A good motive, that of attaching the soldier to his colours by indulgence, has caused this unseemly conduct, but it has proved a mistaken one, it has led to insubordination on duty, & has not checked desertion, therefore the sooner it is amended the better—

We went on board, the 8th inst., the *St. Lawrence*—an immense vessel carrying 104 guns, 32 and 68 pounders— It is near 720 ft long and 53 ft 6 i across the beam. Till this ship was built the Americans held the undisputed command of the Lake— Their Squadron almost daily appeared off Kingston harbour & fired guns of defiance— But the *St. Lawrence* was no sooner on the water than they retired to their own port of Sackett's Harbour & resigned without a struggle the sovereignty of Lake Ontario— It was feared that this great mass would not have

1. Sir John Coape Sherbrooke (1764–1830) was governor-general of Canada from 1816 to 1818.

been manageable, & that if by storm or in action she had lost her masts or suffered much injury she would not have answered her helm & must have fallen an easy prey to the enemy. These fears proved unfounded. Great as she is the *St. Lawrence* is the best sailor on the lake— The Americans had boasted they would not yield the lake without a contest, relying perhaps on the supposed unwieldiness of the *St. Lawrence*, but they were wise enough to try the fact with as little danger to themselves as possible. Their fastest sailing vessel *The Lady of the Lake* was thrown in her way, & narrowly escaped capture from the superior swiftness of her mightier foe— But they did not give up the hope of recovering their superiority. The keels of two ships said to be even greater than the *St. Lawrence* were laid down at Sackett's Harbour, & two ships almost as great put on the stocks at Kingston, the peace put an end to these efforts. The four vessels are yet in an unfinished state; each side watches the other with a jealous eye, if a hammer is heard on one part of the Lake it is reechoed on the other. It is doubtful if the war had continued which would have gained the preponderance. The Americans had in the action of Lake Erie a frigate whose keel had only been laid 32 days before, & all their vessels were built with equal activity, but their finances were no match for the resources of England, they were nearly exhausted the last year of the war.

But on the other hand the expense of shipbuilding to the English Government is enormous, the *St. Lawrence* is confidently said to have cost a million sterling, & smaller vessels in the same ratio. The ships are all brought from England, and have to pass a most intricate navigation after reaching Quebec; but above all the ignorance of the B. ministry respecting the Lakes is most surprising & palpable— One or two instances of undeniable truth will be sufficient to demonstrate this— The frigate *Psyche* of 32 guns was built in England for the service of the lakes.¹ She reached Quebec, but could go no farther & was

1. The British frigate *Psyche*, which reportedly carried 55 guns, also had a sister ship which was never put into use because of the great cost of freighting from England to Canada.

obliged to be taken to pieces & carried to her destination over the rapids of the St. Lawrence at an immense expense of time & money— She was provided with abundance of water casks & special orders were given that no salt water should be put in them, a machine was put on board to extract the salt from the Lake water & make it potable— In short the board that fitted out this vessel & her appendages, did not know that only boats could navigate the St. Lawrence up to Lake Ontario & that all the water of all the lakes is as sweet as the river Thames. This ignorance of the quality of the lake water may belong to the builder only, who perhaps was ordered to fit out a frigate of 32 guns with all the usual necessaries, but the mistake has thrown a ridicule on his majesty's ministers, & will not add to the respect the Canadians bear towards the parent state—

One individual of England contracted to convey certain stores from thence to Niagara on Lake Ontario, & it was only on his arrival with them at Quebec that he discovered the magnitude of his undertaking— Had his agreement been fulfilled, the consequences must have been inevitable ruin, but the provincial government absolved him. They justly considered his error to have arisen from the total want of information at home respecting the Canadas & particularly the navigation of the St. Lawrence.

I was happy to learn the probability of an end to this disgraceful ignorance. The late war has forced upon G. Britain the consideration of the present state, the geography, the navigation, the resources & future destination of these important territories— Capt Owen of the R. Navy is appointed Surveyor of the Lakes,¹ & proper persons are named for other objects of importance and projects are talked of for the improvement of internal navigation—great stores of timber are seasoning on the lakes, fortresses are constructing & improving, & settlers are encouraged.

1. Sir Edward Campbell Rich Owen served briefly as commander of British ships on the lakes near the end of the war.

The St. Lawrence

On the 9th Saturday afternoon we took leave of our kind hosts— We had expected to have been allowed to settle with their mess man for the eating & drinking expenses of our passage, & my relation having served 10 years in the army begged to be considered as a brother officer, such when isolated from their own corps being generally permitted to take the advantage of a regimental mess already established, upon bearing their share of the cost— However they would hear of no repayment, & we were obliged to content ourselves with inviting them to our own houses should chance ever bring them near to us: It is our hope that at some future day we may have an opportunity of returning a small part of the attention shown to us, who were entire strangers to them all & had no further claim on their politeness & hospitality than that of being English travellers, but altho' this satisfaction may be denied, we can & surely will return to their brother officers of whatever corps the debt we owe to the gentlemen of the 37th whenever fortune places it in our power.

We left Kingston about sunset in a Batteau. This was a flat bottom'd boat, capable of carrying 24 barrels of flour, some are considerably larger, it was navigated by 4 Canadians— The wind was against us, & the current is not strong at the source of the St. Lawrence— In two hours we had advanced but 4 miles, & our boatmen stopped at a place where there was no other accommodation but fire to cook their suppers. We were at first ignorant of their intention of remaining all night on this dismal spot, for

finding they could not speak a letter of English & we having some difficulty in comprehending their curious French, we had given up all hope of any conversation with them. At last observing that their supper of pork & bread was cooked & disposed of, & that they were laying themselves down to sleep round their fire, we made inquiry of when we were to proceed. We learnt to our surprise that they proposed remaining where we then were till two o'clock, if we had no objection & that if we wished to sleep they would pitch a tent for us. We readily assented to stay where we were altho' the night was frosty, & we were but little used to such lodgings, but our desire to know in what manner these people lived overcame all other objections— They presently pitched a tent for us, made of canvas & supported by four poles. It was open at both ends, & incapable of keeping out either wind or rain— A buffalo hide lent to us by M^r Hammersby, an Officer of the 19 dragoons, & one of our fellow passengers in the *Beckwith*, served us for a mattress, & our great coats were our only covering— Here we slept till morning at intervals, for the cold forbade a sound nap—

As we had provided ourselves with cold provisions at Kingston & had dined in the boat, we were at leisure to examine our travelling companions the French Canadians— They were of the middle stature, of slender make, with countenances not forbidding, altho' harsh & weather beaten. In their manners to each other they were polite. We did not hear any quarrelsome expressions, & no oaths, but *sacré* & *sacré Dieu*— To us, the strangers, all were attentive, making room for us at the fire, & bringing a log of wood as a seat for us. In number there were twelve, the crews of three *Batteaux*, for they seldom sail singly— Their supper consisted of salt pork & ship bread of the coarsest sort, this they cooked together in two or three Iron pots, hung to the fire by means of three poles placed across & meeting in the middle over the fire— The river supplied them with water. This soup was eaten out of wooden platters with wooden spoons & if I may

judge from their appetites, it was very good— A few had wheaten bread— This honest & laborious race of people form a very large part of the Canadian population, very few of them speak any English, & their French is seldom well understood by the best scholars in that language, as now spoken in Europe— Their principle characteristic, common indeed to all classes of the French colonists, is an insurmountable attachment to the customs of their progenitors. Sixty years possession of the country by the English has not sufficed to teach them the language of their conquerors, & the prospect of their acquiring it is as distant as ever. Nor perhaps is it to be wished that they adopt another language—

It is no longer France & Frenchmen that are dangerous to these provinces, it is Americans speaking the English tongue, who are most to be dreaded. The French Canadians have not forgotten the injuries mutually suffered & inflicted in the wars between France and England for the preponderance in N America prior to the Revolution of the B. Colonies. They can have no hopes of rejoining their parent state, & England for the better part of an age has been endeavouring by a mode of Government best suited to their habits, to make them contented under her rule. But by the Americans they have been twice invaded during this period, neither the customs, manners, language or laws of the two people assimilate, & they [have] not a single interest or connection in common— In consequence the Canadian French fear & detest the English Americans, & if they do not love the English, they are at least used to them, & are not oppressed by them— I know of no emigrations of these people to the U. States, nor did any of them join the army of the States in the late war, on the contrary many were engaged in defence of their country, & all were ready to take up arms when called upon. On the other hand many settlers speaking the English language, are from the United States, & it is to be feared would not oppose an invading force of their Countrymen: Many more from the B. Islands would remain neuter, rather than suffer in

their property, should the army of the enemy be decidedly superior: And all would more readily reconcile themselves to forming an independent state of the American Union should the provinces be once overpowered, than would the foreigner, the French Canadian—

In the late war this people readily enlisted among the British troops & formed good soldiers, this I heard from Col. Macdonald who commanded the Glengary fencibles—¹ Their priests take great pains to prevent their learning the English language, dreading perhaps that with the language they may leave their religion— Altho' they perhaps are among the hardest people of the globe, & can endure as much fatigue on land & water, yet are they the least enterprising, the son cultivates the field of his father & in the same manner— The children follow the parent's profession whatever it may be, & seldom quit the spot where they were born— When the proprietor of land dies, his Estate is divided among his children, it makes no difference if it consists of a thousand or of 10 acres, 10 families will continue to exist on what formerly maintained but one— They never admit of new modes or new instruments of cultivation; it is reason enough for them, that their parents did the same, to induce them to continue methods, however injurious, but rendered sacred to them from long usage.

We left our Bivouac early on the morning of the 10th & stopped to breakfast at a place called Gonanoque— Our landlord Brownson was an old A. Loyalist. & very obliging— He procured for our breakfast Eggs, venison, fish, Bread, tea &c &c at the moderate charge of half a dollar each, & something less for our servants. Our next stop was a loghouse where there was nothing to eat, so we brought out our own store. We proceeded with a foul

1. Alexander Macdonnell (1762–1840) raised the regiment of Glengary fencibles which saw action in the War of 1812. He was also the first Roman catholic bishop in Upper Canada.

wind to a second log house, & the boatman informed us that they could proceed no further that night the breeze being strong as well as contrary. Soon after we had taken up our quarters Lt. Col. Wells arrived from the lower Province with his wife a very handsome woman & two lovely children— We were happy to have been the first occupiers of our Loghouse, being thereby enabled to give up the only bedroom in the house to this family— Col. Wells informed us he was appointed to the situation of Inspecting field officer & was repairing to assume its duties at Kingston— The Colonel was conversible & well informed— We were this night somewhat better lodged than the night before, Col. Wells in exchange for the bedroom relinquished lent us a mattress, we placed it in the kitchen before a large fire, & then with our clothes on slept sound enough till the fire went out & the cold awoke us— In the same kitchen in the only bed lay our hostess & her daughter a full grown girl & some dozen of boatmen &c &c. But they did not interrupt our repose—

We were hardly sorry to hear next morning the Colonel called early with to him the gratifying news that the wind was fair & enough of it— We begged him on his departure to send back the wind to us when he had done with it. Altho' the weather was equally unfavourable for us as fair for him, for we were detained at this miserable hovel all day, we could not but rejoice that an amiable man & British officer was on the point of concluding prosperously a voyage tedious & disagreeable at all times, but more especially when encumbered with 4 females, two infants, & a hundred packages all tightly stowed in two open boats— The people with whom we were had neither bread or liquors of any description, but as we had both & they supplied us with good tea & excellent fish & venison we managed very well.

During the day crowds of visitors of all descriptions called going up & down the river; among others Colonel Macdonald on his route to England. We entered into con-

versation with him & found him able & willing to give us much information respecting the inhabitants of the country: from him we learnt that not less than 19000 Canadians (French) were employed on the river & Lakes during the war navigating batteaux & Gun boats here. He spoke of them as to a man well disposed—

In the afternoon we went over to an Island in the river to see a company of Indians, who had chosen it as their fishing place to lay in their winter store of smoked fish— They were all dirty & the women far from inviting— One among them belonging to the 6 nations¹ spoke excellent English. The others spoke English but not so well— One of our company asked if he had scalped any Yankees during the late combat; he said no, that the British gave them 5 dollars for every prisoner they brought in, & his nation were civilised enough to prefer the money to glutting a barbarous revenge— Other nations he admitted had killed & scalped vast numbers—but these he called “wild Indians”—

I here proved one trait of the Indian character which I had heard of. I gave one of the most sensible or at least the most talkative some money, he received it without any emotion or expression of pleasure & handed it to a Squaw— It is never that a gift of any magnitude draws from them more than a smile of satisfaction, they do not return thanks, & seem rather to receive presents as a tribute due them, than as requiring acknowledgment—

The Indians from their general gait would be by a casual observer considered a very inactive race, they are seen to walk most leisurely, indeed with a pace more like a saunter than a walk, yet when employed by the whites as special messengers, & government often so make use of them, their rapidity & caliber are astonishing—80 miles a day is no very uncommon journey— It is true that a hundred miles in 24 hours has been attempted & performed within a quarter of a mile by an Englishman, but what one European will perform out of millions of men

1. A confederation of six North American Indian tribes, namely the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Senecas, Cayugas, and Tuscaroras.

every young & healthy Indian can do with ease to himself— The quarter to which he must direct his steps is pointed out to him, he examines the sun & trees for an instant, & pursues his route in an undeviating line till he reaches it. Roads are useless to him, & his provisions are to be found in almost every tree, the bark of which supplies him with bread.

I knew a young Englishman settled as a merchant at Kingston in upper Canada, & attached I believe to the Commissariat in the late war. This young man had to perform a long journey thro' the woods where Europeans had never trod, & his guides of course were Indians— He had made a false calculation of the length of his journey & provisions failed him & his party at a great distance from any settlement. They had failed to kill any game, & he began to be seriously apprehensive of starving in this wilderness— The Indians however relieved him of his alarm, they stripped a tree of its bark, & he found this food by no means disagreeable. He informed me that neither in this instance nor in any other he had heard of, did these people utter the smallest complaint on the failure of the provision, they did not accuse him of negligence or thrift in not bringing a sufficiency, altho' engaged to do so, but without grumbling, set about supplying his wants & their own in the best way they could—

On the 11th the wind was still foul, but impatient at being detained so long, we assented to the proposal of our boatman to proceed 3½ miles farther to a place called La Rouse's mill, a man of that name keeping a mill there & loghouse tavern. This place is just before the entrance into a part of the river, which here spreads into a lake, upon which the wind has power enough when blowing strong to prevent the passage of boats— As the batteaux must necessarily make very slow progress to La Rouse's, we resolved to walk there along the banks of the River & being put in the road by a son of our host, we pushed on walking fast to keep ourselves warm. Our leader was the person mentioned before, who we considered well used to the woods & an old farmer. We

thought these Gentlemen must know something about such travelling & placed ourselves with confidence under their guidance—

The English merchant having been left to make enquiries at the loghouse took the lead, & in a very short time we were completely lost, we found & lost track after track, they neither led us to the river or to any sight of human habitation— At length after walking at a great rate upwards of an hour we struck into a path, which I knew very well was the one we had taken at first & soon lost, but our guide would not admit it, till we arrived at the end of it, or rather the beginning— At this place we had hesitated at first, there being two roads, one leading from the other towards the river, our guide took the road leading from the river observing he had been warned to avoid a large swamp. When we arrived again at this point we were all quite sure that we had nothing to do but to take the other road this time, & into we entered with as much confidence as we had started with. Alas! We had to meet with greater disappointment, in a short time no path remained, & we found ourselves in the snare of an immense forest without even the sun to guide us— For three hours we wandered about, clambering up high & steep rocks & descending them again to avoid swamps, & look for a road. At length we had been for a long time without a trace of human being having ever penetrated in that direction—

Our situation was now alarming, we hurried on sometimes in one direction & sometimes another, chance was all we had to trust to— Every part where the grass appeared to have been trodden on was pursued with anxiety, they only perplexed us more, the foot of man had never pressed it, but we distinctly perceived the traces of wolves bears & deer— At last one of our number cried out with an exultation that betrayed his former terror “it is cut with an axe.” He had met with a piece of timber evidently felled by man. After a short search we found a track with the marks of human beings & cattle— Our Merchant proposed to march to the left, as he expressed

himself confident that was the way down the river, but the path was little worn in that direction, & we had already been deceived too often to trust ourselves again to an uncertain route. Besides our object was no longer La Rouse’s mill, but extrication from our wilderness, at any trouble & to any place where man was to be found. Marching therefore to the right at a great pace we entered at the end of less than an hour a field bounded by a log house— From the good people inhabiting it, we learnt that we were $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the place we had left 5 hours before, & instead of having gone down the river we were that distance on our journey back to Kingston— We had now to choose whether we would walk over the same ground to overtake the batteau, or make our way to the main road & there procure a carriage to take us to some place on the river where it was likely the batteau would stop & wait for us— We chose the latter plan in preference to again trusting ourselves in the woods— Luckily the road we now took was sufficiently marked & we reached the main road in $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles rapid walking— It lay thro’ a great deal of swamp, up to our ankles in mud & water at every step— Where it would have been otherwise impassable a single tree was laid across requiring a very steady foot to prevent tumbling & being suffocated in the mire— We passed two settlements with loghouses partly destroyed, & on enquiring I found they had belonged to settlers from the States, who had left them on the declaration of war, & had never returned. We stopped at a miserable Inn on the high road, we could procure nothing but bread butter & cheese, these with a little milk composed our dinner, nor was it despicable to people half famished. We here made useless attempts to procure a vehicle of any description—not even a horse was to be procured— We sent a messenger two miles back for a waggon but he returned without it— We had no choice left us but to continue our march till we did meet with one—

I for my part had been a long time completely tired. We had now walked 23 miles by our computation & with

our whole strength, nine tenths of the distance was thro' swamps ankle deep, thick woods & rocky hills- I should have said in the morning that I could not possibly have gone thro' this fatigue, never having in my life walked near so much, & having for the last six years resided in a hot climate where that exercise is unknown among the whites- But wearied as I was, the example of my companions, the inconvenience of having my baggage carried 140 miles from me, & the chance of its being lost, above all the emulation of not being outdone, determined me to proceed. We continued our journey as rapidly as ever without seeing a house for 7 miles, we then came to a saw mill & the loghouse of the proprietor- It was now quite dark, & as it had rained for the last ten miles at intervals we were wet as well as tired- No carriage was to be procured here to the great annoyance of all but myself for I felt totally incapable of going on even in a comfortable vehicle, still less in such a jolting machine as I knew the waggon to be, & which was the only carriage we expected to procure. My companions would readily have walked 2 miles farther to a place where they were assured a waggon could be got, but I was positive in my determination to stay where I was. Our merchant was going to Quebec to buy goods, & had papers of value, & 1200 hard dollars in his trunk, it was therefore with great reluctance that he consented to remain till morning-

I cannot say I felt much pity for the anxiety of this gentleman. He had led us into our error by boldly undertaking to lead us to our destination, & knowing that he had made enquiries respecting the road, & having heard him detail his journeys thro' immense forests we were induced a reliance on his knowledge, not borne out by the event- This self confidence did not forsake him even after we had evidently lost our way, & he continued to bewilder us more & more till we were taught what reliance to place in him as a guide by finding ourselves at the entrance to the two paths I before made mention of. When we made what may be called our second start, he slunk to the rear, & did not again assume his office of

leader. Had we not placed in him this confidence we should have returned to the log house as soon as we lost the road to make more particular enquiries. We ought to have done this before we made the second start, but unluckily my relation was out of temper at the dance we had been led, & as soon as we had retraced our steps, he hastily struck into the other road, which as he said & we all thought must be the right road, as we had observed no other- Whereas had he stopt to make enquiries, our servants would have told him, they had observed another pass that seemed to lead more along the river, somewhat farther behind us. We afterwards learned that was in fact the road we ought to have taken.

The farmer, he appeared to be about 45, accustomed as he was to fatigue was quite overcome with this days journey, & went to bed with an ague- Our landlord was very civil & gave us tea & a tolerable supper- He found beds for us all. I was in a three bedded garret with my companion & the farmer- The merchant & our servants slept in the family room. They told us that as soon as they were between the sheets in came the landlady & her two grown daughters, & undressed before them without an idea that they thereby violated any rule of decorum-

We started early next morning in a drizzling rain, I felt stiff & ill from the preceding day's fatigue, but fortunately at the end of two miles we procured a waggon, to my great joy, for I could not have walked much farther- My companions as if in defiance of fatigue walked on while this vehicle was getting ready, & I did not overtake them till we had gone over six miles of ground. At the end of 13 miles we reached an Inn within sight of the river-13 miles from the spot from whence we had set out the day before- To come these 13 miles we had made a detour of 43 miles- Our landlord's name was Coles, he had 20 children-

We had some fear that our batteau might have passed us, as the wind tho' still from the wrong point,

was much lulled, we had for the last 24 hours been as anxious for a heavy foul wind, as we had before prayed lustily for a fair one— Our anxiety induced us to hire a man & canoe to go up the river to look after our vessel, he soon returned with the joyful news that he had met the batteaux making to that very point in search of us— By this time we had breakfasted & we went exultingly to the landing place— It was doubly fortunate for us that we were not left on this road by the batteaux for among us all there was not money enough left to pay for our breakfast even our pocket books being among our baggage in the boats—

We now expected a period to all our troubles, the wind tho' not favourable was sufficiently lulled to enable us with the current & our oars to make some progress, but we were still doomed to meet with disappointment & vexation. One of our servants was missing— We sent the other back to the Inn we had just left to look for him, he came back saying he had looked everywhere and holla'd, but to no purpose— We had now been standing an hour in a drizzling rain, our boatmen were impatient & so were we— My relation went back himself & at the close of another hour we were once more collected for reembarkation. The poor fellow quite spent with weariness, had retired to a place where he hoped to find least interruption to his slumbers— He was discovered snoring in a barn half covered with hay—

We this day dined at Brockville, a small flourishing town, & got a wretched dinner. We rowed on till quite dark when we reached a small town called Presscott. Here we slept—

Lower Canada

The 15. We set off before breakfast & in a short time reached the first rapid— Whether or not the wind had occasioned a greater swell than usual or our boatmen were careless I do not know, but the boat in an instant had her broadside to the waves, & a large wave broke over her wetting us to the skin, as well as our buffalo skin great coats &c so as to render them useless— Our Canadians were evidently alarmed, they drew in their oars & in another moment would have begun to cross themselves & call on their saints, but the current had already carried us beyond the danger & relieved them from their fears— Fortunately this first rapid was the shortest of all, & it was still more fortunate to meet with our mishap so early in the voyage—it taught our boatmen more caution in others of far greater length & difficulty, & where the same accident or carelessness must inevitably have swamped the boat & cost us all our lives— All the danger to be apprehended in the rapids is having the head of the vessel forced from the direct line with the current— If the broadside of the batteau is opposed to it the vessel fills in an instant & all are hurried away to certain destruction— Accidents of this nature very seldom occur, & were it not for the inconvenience of getting wet, the batteau is full as pleasant & safe a vehicle as the farmer's waggon or the French Canadian's Calash—

It was half past 2 before we stopt to Breakfast. The people were uncivil & the bread half baked. We proceeded in our voyage till dark, having stopt once with the hope of dining at a house on the riverside, but on asking

for a fire to dry our wet clothes the woman said it was not the time of year for fires & that besides it was the business of the man to light them— We asked for the man, but no one was there— At length we discovered that the inhabitants two females, young & not ugly, were somewhat elevated with the bottle. They had perhaps taken advantage of the absence of their lords to sip some of their favorite beverage. As no comfort was to be expected here, we returned to our batteaux, leaving some hearty curses with the ladies—

The next place was a thriving little town called Pt Clair,¹ here we found a good supper & excellent beds. The Inn is kept by an Englishman who quite understands his trade— Instead of immense rooms to contain all the guests in the same apartment both at dinner & in bed, this man's house was properly divided into small & neat parlours & bed rooms— Surely few inconveniences are so much felt by the traveller who has just closed a long & fatiguing journey as being ushered into a large room crowded with strangers of all descriptions, smoking, drinking & quarelling; to sit down to his uncomfortable meal in the same way, obliged to scramble for what he wants, perhaps to help twenty people to some favourite dish, he has indiscreetly placed himself opposite to, & if he has not his own servant, to starve of hunger & thirst because he has less impudence than others in hollaing for the waiter. But it is still worse to occupy a bed surrounded by from three to a dozen more the fumes arising from the pores of their tenants & from gin & tankard breaths amounting almost to suffocation—

Both these horrors, for so they are to the man of delicate nerves, are inevitable to the single traveller; the last may be avoided with good luck by two, most of the Inns are provided with small rooms having two beds, & the traveller may make shift to lodge with his comrade & friend, but one man has but small chance of avoiding the

1. Pointe Claire, Quebec, is a small town about 20 miles southwest of Montreal on the St. Lawrence River.

evil, none of the Inns have single bedded rooms, or will give them to any but married couples & females, he must make one of the litter in the common sty. We were told that in the more thickly settled parts of this continent, & where the inhabitants are less civilised it is as difficult to procure a bed to oneself as thro' the country we travelled to procure a single room— They have sleeping rooms at the public houses into which every stranger is shown to shift for himself, if there are beds enough it is well, if not, two or even three must huddle under the same blankets— The man who has thought himself at night happy in having a bed to himself, will sometimes on waking in the morning find a male companion comfortably lodged beside him. He should ever think himself happy in having had a sound sleep, unconscious of the intrusion, for resistance would have brought on a battle, & unless he had been a better pugilist than his would be chum, he must have got a good drubbing as well as losing half his couch— The Americans give to this double & treble occupancy the expressive name of bundling—

My companion & the merchant were early on the morning of the 16th to continue their voyage in the Batteaux— For my part having had a violent cough & slow fever ever since our 30 miles walk, I was resolved to continue the rest of my journey by land, rather than run the hazard of being again drenched in the rapids, & perhaps of being taken ill in a distant country & obliged to delay my journey homeward—

Having procured a Calash, an indescribable sort of carriage, I left our civil Landlord about 9 on Monday morning the 16. The morning was beautiful & the country very thickly settled— We met a great number of carts taking goods across the portage from Montreal to Pt Clair to avoid the rapids of the St. Lawrence— Every cart had in it a stove, proving as I thought the rapid increase of dwellings & of course inhabitants in the Q. province. I was

much pleased with the politeness of the French, who bowed to me as I passed & wished me "bon jour"—

We drove 3 leagues to the ferry where we had to cross an arm of the river to the Island on which Montreal is situated— I waited here some time, the ferry being on the other side, & walked into the hut of a French family who keep it. The Grandmother of the family placed a chair for me near her fire & in return I offered her my snuffbox. I was highly pleased to see the effect of this cheap civility on the Old Lady, she assured me my snuff was "trés bon, excellent," & she watched with great appearance of interest the return of the ferry— As soon as it came in sight she ran to tell me, & I & my servant being the only arrivals waiting for a passage, she hurried her sons to get ready their canoe, & had my baggage carried to it, even the little children assisting in an instant.

I could not but draw a comparison between this old French woman, who returned so many good offices for my little attention in presenting my box to her & the American boors I had met with. These people the moment they see the box in your hand, introduce their dirty fingers without ceremony, & squeeze the snuff into a yet finer powder before you can get quit of their paws— Of course one of them carries a box yet all take it when they can get it from another's, they dive into it one after another as if one of their democratic privileges, & as they have not the grace to ask for it, so have they not the civility to thank you even by a bend of the neck— These remarks have been drawn from me by having this hour that I am writing been thus annoyed, till I am obliged to take my own snuff by stealth.

It took two stout lads upwards of an hour's rowing or paddling to get our canoe to the opposite shore— The charge only ½ a dollar. I procured a calash without difficulty & in two parts of 9 miles each came to La Chine—¹ Beyond this point to Montreal the river is very little navigated, the rapids being here too dangerous.

1. Lachine, Quebec is now a suburb of Montreal.



Rapids on the St. Lawrence

At La Chine I met my relation, he represented the Cedars as the last rapids are called as much worse than the preceding, they had on board a pilot for this particular part, he had got entirely soaked— I was glad I had escaped it. The Long Su was quite bad enough & quite fine enough to satisfy my curiosity—¹ Certainly it is well worth the inconvenience to the curious traveller to make a voyage down this superb river— Its innumerable Islands in some parts, its broad lakes in others, flowing sometimes in a smooth unruffled stream, at others with amazing swiftness only confined by unshapen masses of rock, presenting at one time a rude uncultivated shore, & at others a fertile country studded with houses & cottages form a scene of grandeur far surpassing any I had hitherto beheld— Altho' well aware that no danger is to [be] apprehended in passing or rather rushing thro' the rapids, yet it is impossible to see yourself hurried along in an immense mass of waters roaring with a tremendous noise on every side of you, with[out] some secret sensation of awe— The boatmen, who have passed them so often without accident, for one accident is fatal, here lose all their gaiety, no voice is heard but that of the "Gouverneur" every eye is fixed with deep attention on his countenance as if they would know his commands before he speaks them, & when at last they have passed the peril the relaxation of the muscles, the return of gaiety & often the shout of joy proves if not an escape from actual danger, a relief from overstrained exertion— We left La Chine & entered Montreal about dusk— Our Inn afforded us anything we wanted.

17th We walked about the city & saw the French church.² There was nothing to admire on the outside of this edifice except the spire—it being covered with tin & gilt in many parts, the effect was light & pleasing— The Interior was

1. The Long Sault (pronounced "soo") Rapids were encountered by the author earlier on his journey down the St. Lawrence River. They are nine miles long and are located twelve miles upriver from Cornwall.

2. Probably the old church on St. Denis Street which was destroyed by fire in 1852 and replaced by the cathedral of St. James.

adorned like other Roman churches, with gilding & pictures. The latter were bad, but the gilding was in far better taste than that of the Havana churches—

The streets of the town are narrow but clean with good houses of stone. New houses were every where rising. This place from its situation must increase in importance, as the upper country becomes settled. It has already considerably [*sic*] trade, ships of large burthen can sail up the St. Lawrence to its port where they must unload. & the produce of the Upper country must also center here, where it is reembarbed on board of Larger vessels to proceed to its ulterior destination—

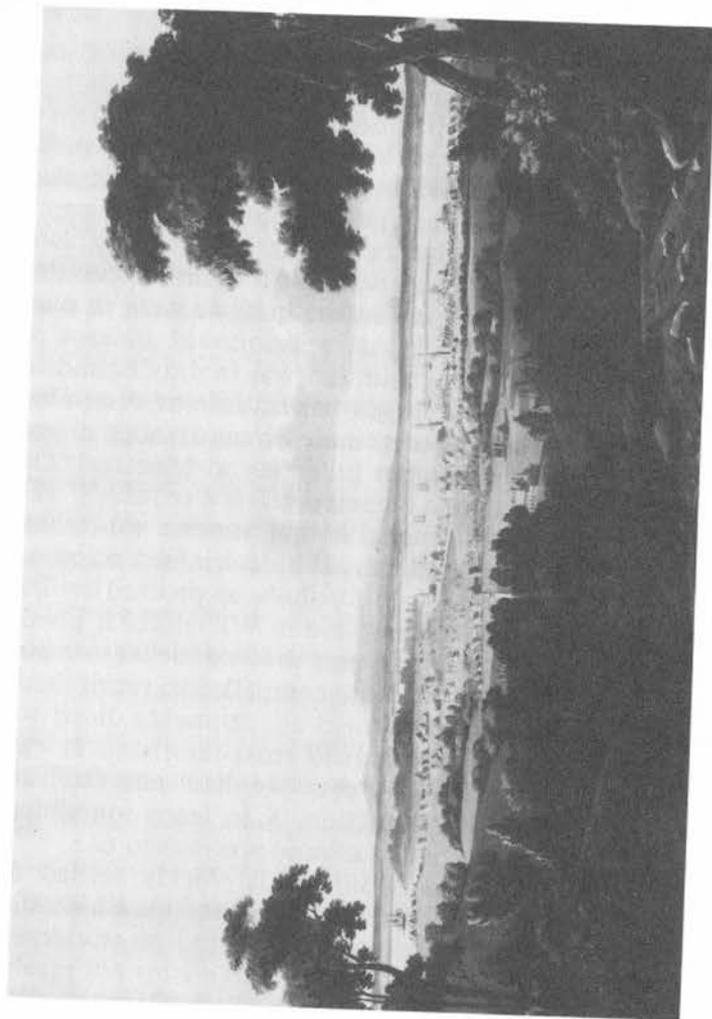
On returning from our walk we began to consider what we ought to have done before how we were to pursue our journey to N York. My relation was anxious to return to his family in England, & I was in duty bound to be in Jamaica at the meeting of the house of Assembly the end of October—¹ Under these circumstances it was necessary for us to make but little stay at Montreal. On Enquiry we found that a steamboat left St. John's² the next day at 8 in the morning, & that another would not sail till the following Saturday. We determined on making the best of our way to St. John's to proceed by the steam boat down Lake Champlain to Whitehill,³ if possible the next day— Our servants having delivered our clothes to the Laundry, we were compelled to recall them & wet as they were to pack them up, & having dined we set off nearly at dusk in a boat to cross the river— It was some disappointment to us that we had not time to deliver our letters of introduction, & to learn something of the inhabitants, but time was now precious to us.

The country round Montreal is thickly settled & about a league before we reached it from La Chine the view is one of the prettiest in America, on suddenly

1. Richard Barrett was a member of the Jamaica House of Assembly which had been dismissed in May 1816, and he had been re-elected to the new Assembly which was to convene in October 1816.

2. An anglicized form of St. Jean, Quebec, a town southeast of Montreal on the Richelieu River.

3. Whitehall, New York, was the destination of Lake Champlain steamboats.



Courtesy of the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board
 Montreal with the St. Lawrence River

descending a hill you see a beautiful plain to the left with several Gentlemen's seats in the English style & to the right is a rising crowded with many more handsome houses- Cottages, villages, & the city of Montreal with its shining tin spires & roofs of the same bright metal glittering in the sun, & the immense St. Lawrence complete the view-

But to return to our voyage on up the river, which I would rather admire from its banks than be tossed about by its waves, we found it by no means so trivial & short a voyage as we expected- After rowing a short distance, our three watermen took to their poles, for we were now in a swift current running with a great noise over a shallow rocky bottom- It was dark & had we not possessed great confidence in our boatmen, should not have thought ourselves quite safe. The boat was urged by the united force of these able men armed with poles, not so much thro' the water, as over rocks that rumbled under her bottom- This exertion was continued upwards of an hour & a half & we were very glad to find ourselves safe on land, without another drenching. It is fortunate for all who are obliged to navigate the river St. Lawrence, that the Canadians are the soberest of people: during the short acquaintance I had with them, I never met with one instance of drunkenness, their profession indeed will not admit of this vice, for one false stroke of the oar will precipitate all to eternity-

To our great satisfaction we found on the Landing place a carriage, ready to carry us immediately to St. John's, we set off in a few minutes & arrived at the end of the Land journey at 1 A.M. The first Inn we drove to there were no beds to be had, we were as unlucky at the 2^d and 3^d, we now began to dread sleeping on the floor, & called to mind our bivouac in the woods under a tent to reconcile ourselves to the evil we apprehended, but at the 4. & last Inn we were more successful & procured a large room & excellent beds with curtains, the third so accommodated in which I had slept during this tour-

Lake Champlain

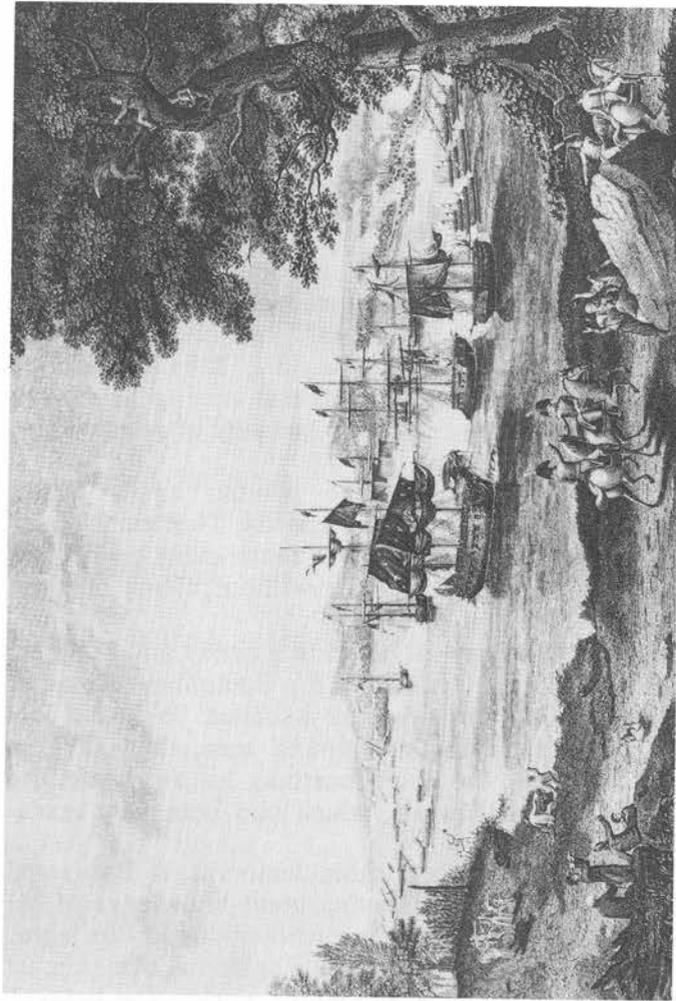
On the 18th Wednesday, we got on board the steam boat after breakfasting, & about 9 were sailing down the Lake Champlain at the rate of 6 miles an hour. We soon passed the naval arsenal of the English,¹ & I observed one large keel laid down, but nothing appeared to have been done to it for some time. A large quantity of guns was on the wharf-

When we approached the frontier an U States custom house officer came on board- The trunks were opened for his inspection, he was remarkably civil & did nothing more than raise the lids without diving into the contents-

At two o'clock we sat down to a pretty good dinner, & with a young Irish Gentleman & a Bostonian federalist, finished two bottles of very fair Madeira. We were fortunate in meeting these two young men, they gave us much information, the one concerning his own state, the other respecting his travels, which had been very extensive thro' the country-

We had on board a furious democrat, & I suffered him to believe he was displaying great knowledge of his native country imparting to me who was ready to learn. He entered into a comparison of England & America or rather between America & the whole world- His beloved States had the superiority in all the arts of war & peace- Gen^l Macomb at Plattsburg would have beaten Gen^l

1. Probably the British defense works on Isle aux Noix in the Richelieu River.



Courtesy of The Public Archives of Canada

Battle of Lake Champlain

Prevost with 1500 men against 10,000-¹ & 10,000 British troops under Gen^l Ross ran away from 3000 militia at Baltimore.² Franklin was a greater man than Sir Isaac Newton, his discovery of the lightning rod was grander & more original than any invention of modern Europe—Fulton the steam boat inventor or patenter, maintained by that invention the American superiority in Science up to the present day, to discover that steam might be applied to machinery was nothing that might be learnt from the force with which it issued thro' the spout of a tea-kettle but to apply the steam to the impulsion of boats thro' the water, was the effort of a mind vast in its comprehension & perfect in execution— This rapsody [*sic*] of nonsense was at first amusing, but one soon tires of the ridiculous, & I was glad to leave him to the windy contemplation of his national importance—

This man I soon learnt was employed in a merchant's office at Montreal, & I heard a B. Canadian tell him, he ought to be ashamed of himself to abuse a Country which supported him when it was evident his own could not, or with such violent predilections in its favor, he would never have left it— He also told him he presumed he had left his employer for a time to have an opportunity of venting his spleen more safely against G Britain on the other side of the line— In truth the young man's zeal was so turbulent that it issued forth with all the violence of a long pent vapour—

After tea & supper we retired to our beds— Those who have never been in a steam boat will hardly be able to conceive how 60 people or more can be lodged in one apartment, leaving room for all the tables chairs &c in the middle necessary for the accommodation of double that number at their meals— There are two tiers of bedplaces divided by partitions of wood looking somewhat like the shelves of an open press— Each passenger has one to

1. Alexander Macomb was the general at Plattsburg where Prevost retreated with his vastly superior troops.

2. Robert Ross was killed in the British attack on Baltimore of September 12, 1814. The attack was a failure.

himself of about 5 ft 10 in in length & two ft in breadth [sic]. These are provided with a mattress, bed blankets & quilt all quite clean—perhaps the whole room so divided, has more the look of a playhouse than anything else familiar to an Englishman— In one of these births [sic] I laid down in my clothes, & in spite of the novelty, & noise of the machinery, I enjoyed a profound sleep. The ladies have always a separate cabin to themselves often fitted up with elegance, as all the cabins are with neatness & cleanliness.

We this morning passed the scene of the famous action (naval) called the Battle of Champlain in which the B. squadron was destroyed— We were told that Macomb would have surrendered Plattsburg had he been surrounded, & that Gen^l Macomb had said so—but I cannot think it likely that a commander would wait for his enemy in an indefensible fort for the purpose of surrendering 1500 men, stores &c to his enemy, while the country was open behind him & great reinforcements advancing to support him.

Expenses

M.B. to N. ¹	88_25	City Hotel	17_0
H.B. to L.P.	44_	Expenses at Falls	28_0
M ^{rs} King	54_0	Guide	1_0
Albany	30_0	Carriage to Newark	6_0
Inn Dinner	1_75	Soldiers Baggage	_25
Utica	9_0	Passage	50
Dinner &c.	2_0	Kingston Hotel	7_60
Bed &c.	4_25	M ^r W	100_0
Dinner	1_0	Breakfast	1_80
Bed	2_50	Servants	1_0
Breakfast	1_37½	Saturday	
Dinner	2_50	M ^r W.	1_0
Coachman	48_00	Youngtown	_80
Canandaigua	7_00	Sunday	
Dinner	1_75	Beds &c	1_60
Tea	75	[illegible word]	8_0
Batavia	2_50	S. Prescott	4_60
Dinner	2_0	Cornwall	2_40
Carriage	28_0	Montreal	12_30
Expenses. Buffalo	3_50	Boat	1_80
Carriage	10_0	to S ^t Johns	12_0
Ferry	4_0	M ^r W	12_0
Expenses of carriage		S ^t Johns	
& horses at Niagara	6_50	St- Boat	27_0
		[illegible word]	2_5

1. The first entry is probably an abbreviation for Montego Bay, Jamaica, to New York with the cost of the passage. It has been determined from correlations with the journal that these expenses are given in dollars. The list was originally written in pencil and later all but a few words were inked over.

The country watered by the Mississippi is of immense extent & great fertility. It is now for the most part in the possession of the Indians, but their rights will be no check to the aggrandizing views of the United States. This great Country is capable of maintaining several hundred millions of inhabitants & affords a field to drain off the bad humours of the States for a thousand generations, & to place at an immense distance the thick population of any part. We were informed by a Virginian that in his native country the inhabitants had diminished of late years a third part from emigrations to the West & it was equalled in other parts. This fine country as yet is reported scarce inhabitable from Mosquitoes. A traveller there wrote to his friend that of 7 horses 6 had already perished by mosquito bites & the last was just expiring - At Albany our eyes were caught by rather a novel object - In the public room of our Inn we perceived a hair brush pendent near a looking glass, nor was it merely ornamental, a decently dressed man while we still admired the convenience, composed his locks with it before the mirror. This was the principal Inn of the place, where Generals, members of Congress & barristers were lodging & actually seated in the room -

Page from the Journal

Additional Notes on the Young Nation

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General Jackson, called by his Countrymen the hero of New Orleans, commanded some time before the attack

on that city an expedition against the Indians.¹ This force was principally composed of Tennessee militia— These men unused to military duties were fatigued by the length of their march & the privation of their usual comforts— & after some days, the Tennesseans refused to proceed. General Jackson enraged at seeing a large part of them face about towards their homes, seized a rifle from one of the malcontents & swore he would shoot the first man who retrograded— instantly a hundred musquets were presented at him.

“Oh, you base scoundrels,” said the General, “you can threaten & put on a bold face when opposed to one man, but when a few trifling difficulties stand in your way, & a parcel of disorderly savages are near you, you begin to think of home & your wives, & would not hesitate to run away over the body of your General— Get along then you cowards, go home & wait quietly in your houses till these barbarians come & burn your fields & dwellings, & massacre your wives & children— It was at your own desire that I have come so far to your assistance & to chastise the cruelties of your enemies, but now your dastardly fears get the better of your prudence, & you choose rather to perish with your families in tortures one by one, than bravely to face your enemies, collected in a body & with arms in your hands. Go you home, & tell your wives & sweethearts that you have left your General in the woods to be scalped by the Indians— Go, & court your girls with the history of your baseness—for my part I will keep onward with the few brave men who accompanied me to your help, it shall not be told that we joined in your panic & ran away before we saw our enemy.”

This kind of discourse enriched with oaths & vulgar expressions in the style of his half civilised Tennesseans had the effect he hoped for. The army continued its march & the Indians were defeated—

1. This expedition took place late in the year of 1813, as part of the war against the Creek Indians in what is now Alabama and western Georgia.

If you look in the American Newspapers for well written discussions on the interests of their country & its relations with foreign powers, or if you expect to see the party adopted by the editor ably defended & its adversaries refuted or ridiculed, you will be generally deceived— The Stranger expects to meet in a conspicuous part of the paper a well digested summary of News or politics, instead of it, he is disgusted day after day with ill written & intemperate attacks on some cotemporary print. This coarse abuse is retorted, & in the heat of argument the rival newsmongers forget how little the public is interested in the dispute, & continue it without end & without aim to the exclusion of more important matter— The popularity of a Newspaper depends very little or not at all, on the literary qualifications of its editor— He has only to secure his share of public patronage to abuse Great Britain & the Royal family—the more virulent & lying these attacks are the better for the paper. I remember an insertion in a Democratic paper, put at the end of a list of marriages—

“Married.

In London on the 2d of May. M^r Leopold George Coburg to Miss Charlotte Louisa Guelph daughter of M^r George Augustus Guelph sometimes called Prince Regent of England.”¹

Another paper observes “We were kicked by England into a war, & we kicked her out of it again—”

It is believed by all but the higher classes & these even on the Democratic side affect to believe that G Britain was terrified into a peace by their victories over our Frigates & on the Lakes— An account appeared while I was in America of a search by a B. Vessel of an American trader on the lakes— It brought forth the following letter—

1. Leopold I, king of the Belgians, was married in May 1816, to Charlotte, the only child of the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV.

“Sir

I see with indignation the conduct of the B. officers on the Western lakes, & as I am of the peace party, I take the liberty to propose my plan for preserving peace, maintaining our national honor & vindicating our national rights— The B. officers have the insolence to overhaul our vessels on Lake Erie & to enforce the right of search even in our own waters, this ought not to be borne— Truly, Sir, the more we bear from these fellows, the more we may— I propose therefore that an armed vessel be sent against the *Tecumseh*, which shall without ceremony sink her, but save her crew. This is my plan & there is no man of sense or spirit who would not justify the retaliation—”

The following appeared in one of these papers—“It is true that our claim to the Floridas is doubtful, but a Spanish war would be popular.”¹ There is every reason to believe that the A. Government would readily go to war with Spain— It would be popular for two reasons. In the first place they have long looked with an eye of desire [*sic*] on Florida lying as that country [*is*] in the midst of their territories, & so situated as to be a powerful engine of annoyance in the hands of an enemy. The war would also be popular, as tending to emancipate the S. Colonies from the control of the Mother country— The Republican vanity would be highly flattered to have it said that they gave liberty to so large a portion of the human race— Perhaps a deeper Policy would wish Sp. America to remain in its present weak state; this immense Country under good government may produce powerful rivals to the U States even on their own continent, but it is a waste of time to seek in the American councils for that science which rules the Statesmen of Europe.

1. The territory of Florida was a Spanish possession before it was ceded to the United States by the Treaty of 1819.

We heard from a Colonel, who was in the town when N Orleans was assaulted that the inhabitants were not inclined to resist the B. troops— The delay of the attack was fatal, had our troops advanced as soon as disembarked, the place must have submitted, the enemy not having organized the means of resistance. But while our commanders were deliberating troops from all quarters were pouring into the town, the Tennesseans arrived & Jackson the Gen^l made everyone work night & day at the fortifications—

We were told by our Landlord of Albany that a Gentleman then in the house consumed regularly half a dollar's worth of segars a day. This habit is said to have taken its rise at New York & Philadelphia to avert the yellow fever¹ & perhaps it would have in some degree that effect— I have seen boys of 12 years of age and younger with segars.

The following Paragraph copied verbatim from an US paper will amuse the Englishman who reads it— “From information which we received from *the highest authority* we should not be surprised if the Princess Charlotte never becomes Queen of England—” If Prince Leopold who intended to marry the heiress of three kingdoms had seen this grave information from the highest authority, we know not what part his Serene Highness would have taken, perhaps our Princess would have still pined in single blessedness—

The Captain of an United States Frigate in high mindedness of spirit caused it to be proclaimed to his crew, that if there was a British Subject on board, who felt reluctant to engage his countrymen, he was free to depart the ship without molestation— One Englishman availed himself of this encouragement to declare himself

1. Yellow fever epidemics occurred in New York City in 1795 and 1798 and in Philadelphia in 1793. These outbreaks were due to the unsanitary conditions of the cities and left thousands dead.

such, & shame to the commander of the frigate, his crew was permitted to tar & feather & otherwise maltreat the unfortunate man.

There is a very brisk traffic in slaves carried on at the Havana. In July 1816, 7 Slave ships arrived in two days— These vessels are for the most part American property manned & commanded by Americans, sailing under the Spanish flag to mask their illegal commerce—¹ We were informed by a Gentleman from N. Orleans that negroes sold there for from 1500 to 3000 dollars— We enquired of several Gentlemen of Virginia, Georgia, &c if the local governments had taken any steps to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, & if the free coloured population enjoyed any civil or political privilege— We were informed that the power of the master over his slave was absolute, he only could not directly put him to death. The punishments to be inflicted on them are not limited, the magistracy of the country have no power to interfere between the master & his slave for the protection of the latter. Altho' by law the owner must not kill his slave & death is the punishment, yet this law has never been executed altho' the crime has been committed— Indeed where the power yet exists to torture the negro to death by chains and lashes, there is little humanity in prohibiting a more immediate murder.

The free people of colour were represented to us as the very dregs of society useless to themselves & the community— They preferred a wretched & precarious existence to labouring either in agriculture or mechanic trades— They possessed no civil or political rights, nor did they desire them— We cannot be surprised that these beings continue in so degraded a state, they have no motive to excite them to exertion— When we are despised by others, we soon lose all respect for ourselves, & what in the first instance was lawless & oppressive, soon finds its excuse in the consequences of the oppression. The Person

1. The participation by American citizens in the slave trade to foreign countries was forbidden by the United States government in 1794.

of the free man of colour is safe from the lash of the master, & he cannot be forced to labour, but his property is at the mercy of every white, who has baseness enough to take advantage of his fair skin— If the black man labours for the white, & the reward is withheld, the black man has no redress, he cannot be evidence even in his own cause in any court of justice against the white man— It naturally follows that men kept so low in the scale of society who are considered unworthy of the protection of the law will give themselves little trouble to amend their condition, or to cultivate their intellectual faculties—

In the British Island of Jamaica, the condition of both Slaves & free people of colour has been improved by many legislative enactments— That Island has drawn the displeasure of many philanthropists at home for what it has not done in favor of these people, but what it has done & is still doing for them does not appear to be at all considered. Let the regulations of that Island for the protection of its coloured population be compared with the system still pursued in a country calling itself the freest under heaven. The master or manager in Jamaica can not exceed the infliction of 39 lashes for any faults. He is obliged by law to cloath & feed his negroes & certain houses are set apart for the cultivation of his own Grounds & for relaxation— If the manager does not comply with these restrictions & regulations, the negro has his redress in an appeal to the magistrate, & the magistrate is bound to attend to & redress his complaint— The Laws are naturally well intended to define the duties of Master & Slave & they are executed with as much strictness & impartiality as laws are executed in any quarter of the world. With respect to the free man of colour, he is not like the Virginian, without any incitement to labour, without any protection for his property or person against the rapacity or violence of the white, but he is free in fact, his property is protected as well as his wealthy neighbour's barns, his evidence is received in all the courts & in consequence the people of color in Jamaica are generally industrious, & many of them well educated & possessors of large property.

At New York a Clergyman of the Episcopal Church published a work called "The Triangle or a series of numbers on three Theological points."¹ A Clergyman should be somewhat more grave than to give a work on divinity so absurd a name, but as the title of a book is often of more importance to the sale than its matter, the Clergyman may have judged wisely in suiting the title to the taste of the public.

I cannot withhold from the Americans the praise to which they justly are entitled for the Virtue of Sobriety— Perhaps no nation in the world indulges less in the pleasures of the bottle among the better orders— It is not their custom to sit after dinner as we do in England, but they dine early, at 2 or 3 o'clock & after dinner return to their counting houses, & pass the evening in visits to their neighbours— It being the general practice to visit in the evening, the young men, who are fond of female society (& few are not) cannot make one at the tea-table of the ladies in a state of intoxication, they would not be endured— This is one great advantage of early hours, & evening visits, it withdraws the American youth from the temptations of the table, & affords the females the society of their friends & lovers, without feeling disgusted with noisy riot & improper conversation. I am not told that this praiseworthy temperance extends to the slave holding states, the wealthy planter has more idle time to fill up than the enterprising merchants of the sea coast, & he best enjoys the company of his friends over a bottle—

It is said that when the famous Cooke first made his appearance on the stage of N York² he was received with the usual honor of clapping and with the national tune of "Hail Columbia". Cooke's patriotism was offended instead of flattered his vanity being better [illegible passage]

1. The author of this work was the Rev. Samuel Whelpley and the three points are those of the Calvinistic Triangle, namely, Original Sin, Liability and Atonement.

2. George Frederick Cooke was an English actor, notorious for his intemperate habits. He visited the United States in 1810, and died in New York in 1811.

expected to play without the tune to which he had been so many years accustomed. The American audience, rather than lose the treat they expected & had paid for, assented to the substitution, "God save the King" was again after a lapse of 33 years heard in the N York theatre— I need not say that it wanted the usual greetings— It is also said that Cooke was requested to keep himself sober for a particular night as one of their great men intended that night to honor the theatre with his presence. Cooke replied that he had been used to play for Nobles & princes & had played while drunk before them, he knew no one in America having an equal claim on his forbearance— This eccentric actor came on the stage more tipsy than usual in spite of the great man & the warnings he had received—

Colonel Wilcox had the command of some American troops stationed at or near Fort Erie— He had placed a sentinel at an outpost, the British having troops at some distance. On going his rounds he met the sentinel retiring from his post, he declared that the Glengarians had fired at him. Wilcox damned him for a coward & ordered him to return declaring that no Glengarian would venture so near the American lines— He rode back to the spot with the sentinel when a second shot struck the traitor, & he died the same night. These Glengarians had the glory of this action, by which they banished a Rebel, & struck terror into the Enemy— A few Glengarians have been known to put ten times their number to flight.

I read in N Y a pamphlet written in answer to an Article which had appeared in the *Quarterly Review*— This pamphlet was intended to punish the Reviewers for some coarse language they had used respecting Commodore Porter¹ & the American government, but while the Author complained of the personality that had been made use of he himself fell into the same strain. Taking

1. Captain David Porter's *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean* was given a harsh review in the July 1815 issue of the *Quarterly Review*. The comments in the pamphlet in response to the review were included in the introduction to the second edition of Porter's *Journal*, published in 1822.

Southey the Laureate for the Author, by a natural transition he laid his rough hand on the Kings of Great Britain & in describing the office & origin of Poet Laureate the Author says that their Majesties originally maintained a buffoon in the court, but that office had become a sinecure, their Majesties generally acting that part themselves— The poet Laureate had therefore been substituted—

It is thought by the Federalists that the Government were never serious in their attempts upon Canada— Had these provinces been conquered, they must have been admitted into the Union & being from their situation already connected with the Eastern states they would have thrown a weight into that scale which would probably have overturned the power of the Democrats whose strength is in the South, & the event would have been the hastening [of] that division already universally apprehended.—¹ There is little doubt but that New York & New Jersey will in case of two powers dividing N America form part of the Eastern government.

While England is exerting all her power & influence to induce the rest of the world to follow her example in the abolition of the Slave trade, it is renewed in a part of the world where perhaps her philanthropists apprehend the least danger— America had the glory of being the first state to throw from her the ignominy of this traffic. She boasts continually of her freedom, & looks down upon every state whose government is different from her own, yet has this new & virtuous nation set the example of a renewal of this abhorred commerce, made still more horrible, as it is not under the sanction & restrictions of law— Slaves are imported into Louisiana if not with the concur-

1. In December 1814, Federalists representing five New England states met at the Hartford Convention to discuss the situation caused by the incompetent handling of the war by the Democratic administration. Although the action of the convention came to nothing as the war soon ended, nine states officially reprimanded the participants at Hartford for sowing the seeds of disunion.

rence at least in defiance of the Government—¹ When we consider the immense extent of that region, we must shudder at the number of miserable beings who will be torn from their country to colonise a strange land—

It is thought that the European constitution is not adapted to the Southern climate of Louisiana that the white man cannot there labour & live. Such being the opinion of Americans can we wonder, that the advantages held out by the cultivation of this region is too tempting to their ambition to be relinquished from feelings of humanity or of shame— Louisiana is adapted for all the productions of the British colonies, & to a greater extent—sugar, Indigo, cotton, tobacco yield vast returns not only promising to enrich the individual adventurer but also to render the whole Empire of N America independent of the British colonies for Sugar and Rum. So profitable are the Estates of the settlers, that I was assured that one gang of Negroes seasoned to the climate & labour of the country was sold for 120,000 dollars. If the landholder can afford such a price, he need not fear that the slave market will be empty. The sugar made in Louisiana is equal to Jamaica sugar, & as the navigation is short to the other American states & the article bears no duty, while the duty on foreign produce is enormous, the profit of the grower must be very great—

We found great attention paid to us as strangers—all such are admitted to the reading room at N York & altho natives must have tickets to see the orations of the young collegians, here called the commencement, we were admitted without them on saying we were Strangers— When we entered the church where the young orators were exhibiting, a young man of about 17 was on a temporary stage— This speech was of his own composition & very verbose & florid as was to be expected from a school boy. His action was by no means ungraceful but his phraseology in England would have been called provin-

1. The importation of slaves from Africa into United States dominions was prohibited by an act which went into effect in 1808.

cial, & many common words were improperly pronounced— These defects are excusable & easily remedied under proper instruction, but I own that I did not so readily make allowance for his monotonous pronunciation & want of animation— I heard another who had more than these defects— I afterwards observed in a Newspaper the list of the orations which had been prepared for this occasion & I observed that each speaker was the author of his own discourse— Perhaps it would shew more attention to the patience of their auditors in the Professors & more good taste in themselves if two prizes were given to the scholars for the best pieces of composition, these pieces might be then introduced at the opening & close of the Exhibition & those of the boys who possessed the talent of speaking would afford more rational entertainment to the company by taking select parts from authors of Established reputation, than they possibly can give by their own & crude attempts at eloquence.

A canal is contemplated by the State of New York in the hope of drawing not only the products of the back part of that State to the city but also of obtaining a large share of the trade of U. Canada.¹ Commissioners have been appointed & besides previous surveys one had been made just before we travelled thro' the Western country. This canal if ever completed will give a boat navigation from Lake Ontario to Schenectady & from thence in Larger vessels to N. York. The canal will be 200 or 300 miles in length & must cost many millions of dollars, nor do I think that the population of the countries thro' which it is to pass is sufficiently dense to secure that first requisite, a sufficiency of Labourers— If this canal is executed no doubt much of the produce which now goes down the St. Lawrence will find its way to N York, but the greater part will continue in its present tract where there will in all probability be always the best market.

1. The Erie Canal was begun in 1817 and did indeed stimulate trade. Soon after its completion in 1825 New York City gained dramatically in population and importance as a center of commerce.

I would not know what may be the final regulations in the other British Colonies, but I know that in Jamaica, United States flour bears a duty of two dollars a barrel & other produce from thence in proportion. That from the British N. A. Provinces pays no duties— Thus this bounty of two dollars on Canadian produce will as long as it continues, & I hope it ever will, must operate to send across the frontiers much of the produce of the neighbouring country, it then passes as of Canadian growth & the duty is evaded. In return the Americans receive British goods— It is not difficult to smuggle them into so extended a frontier, & thus the duties are again eluded which would be levied if introduced thro' the Atlantic ports—

American elections expensive—

A N Englander can cut down the thick timber of an acre in three days & junk it. A Farm was advertised for sale, & among other advantages, that of having a running stream thro' the yard was dwelt upon, it being convenient to carry off the dirt, dung, &c—

The Mayors of State of N Y are named by the Council of Appointment not by the citizens— M^r P. Van Rensselaer was superseded by this council, altho' very & deservedly popular among his fellow citizens.¹ The council of appointment is thus constituted. The State is divided into four districts & the lower house of Legislature elect from the Senate one member for each district— These four with the Governor form the council of appointment. Their duty is to name the Mayors of cities, judges, magistrates, &c.

The judges of the Supreme Court are appointed till they attain the age of 60— Their salary is 4500 dollars & the salary dies with the office— The judge then retires

1. Philip Schuyler Van Rensselaer (1766–1824), brother of Stephen, had been mayor of Albany since 1799 when he was removed in July 1816. He was once again appointed in 1819 but resigned in 1821 because of an act of the New York State Legislature which transferred the power of appointing the mayor from the governor to the common council of the city.

among the citizens— It is difficult to see the possibility of a judge maintaining his rank on an income of about a thousand guineas, for whatever may be thought of it, America is by no means a cheap country, but he must not only do that, but also lay by a provision for the time he may unfortunately live after the age of 60— If he has a family, his case is hard indeed— The reason that is given for the superannuation of its judges at the particular age of 60 by the State of N York, is, that at the latter period of the old Government they had a judge whom they considered in his dotage but whose salary only continuing while he kept his seat on the bench, would not resign— When the N Yorkers came to possess the Sovereign power themselves they provided against this grievance by limiting the sound senses of their judges to the attainment of 60 years. It would perhaps have answered the intended purpose quite as well, if they had continued his salary during life, & placed him on the same footing with the English Judges. A Judge will not willingly resign office & salary together, but the same objection would not exist to resigning the office & retaining the emolument.

The late war was declared on the Eve of an Election. Madison & Clinton were the candidates & the election was doubtful.¹ The mass of the people was known to be in favor of war, & war was declared— It had the effect that was intended— Clinton was averse to a declaration of war & the question was only carried in the Representatives by a majority of 8, & in the Senate by a majority of two— Not only did the favourers of war support Madison, but many who were before doubtful, they considered that to eject their war president would have the appearance of being opposed to the war, & would give cause of triumph & of courage to the enemy— Madison also by this manner acquired all that strength every government must possess in time of war— Additional officers were to be appointed to collect the additional

1. James Madison was re-elected to the presidency in 1812 as he defeated DeWitt Clinton by an electoral vote of 128 to 89.

revenues— He was in immediate possession of the patronage of the Army & Navy—

The Editor of a Federal paper complains that the people have quite forgotten the abuses of their Government altho' at one time they were so glaring as to be noticed by many of the Democratic prints. "There was," he observes, "a trifling affectation of bluster by a Democratic paper, the Editor of which like the sinner mentioned in the Bible, has a throat like an open Sepulchre, & of course can swallow any thing & every thing that is corrupt & tainted—" But it soon died away, & all is now silent & sad, not a breath to be heard on the subject.

Again— At a late meeting of the Democrats in Tennessee, *convened for the purpose of taking into consideration certain public grievances under which the people of that state labour*, a considerable number of persons addressed the meeting in warm & animated speeches, relative to certain proceedings of the government, & they nearly one & all charged them with having made an unconstitutional treaty with the Cherokee Indians, & the language of the Gentlemen on this & other subjects was loud & lofty, calculated we should think, considering the quarter of the country from whence it proceeds to shake the nerves of some of the bold & daring members of the cabinet, who so manfully fled on a certain occasion from the renowned field of Bladensburg.¹ One of them, a Mr Hannum, went very much at length into the catalogue of Tennessee grievances, & among other things, made the remarks which we have subjoined. We should like much to see, whether this does not force some of the Treasury leeches into the field— *Charges about money*, come home to men's business & bosoms—they are easily understood & generally pretty sensibly felt. There follows the speech of Mr Hannum before Alluded to.

1. On August 24, 1814, at Bladensburg, Maryland, American resistance quickly faded as British troops approached Washington. President James Madison and several Cabinet members, present at the scene, had to flee.

“Again M^r Chairman—how have the Tennessee Troops been treated by the Government of the United States? I don’t hesitate to say that their rights have been most unjustly prostrated. I well recollect, that about the time Gen^l Jackson’s army returned from Orleans, when all the United States were animated by their Gallant deeds, that M^r Brent¹ wrote to the then paymaster of this country, that he would soon send out money to pay the troops, & that he wished the army to be paid before they were disbanded— It is true that there was not a single dollar of public money at Nashville, bills were to be sold, & if all the money in Tennessee had been collected in one pile, it would not have been sufficient to pay off one third of the troops— They suffered, but they suffered in silence; many poor fellows were cut down by diseases contracted in the army, therefore they were unable to make a note; many others were in debt or trusted to this country for relief, but their hopes were vain, they were deceived, but still they believed that government was unable to pay, but would do so when the treasury should be replenished. The treasury has been replenished by an augmentation of 10,000,000 of dollars, yet the money is still withheld.”

Some idea may be formed of the poverty of this Government & the distress to which it was reduced at the close of the war, since it appears by this speech that in 1816 the Tennessee Militia, who were so popular for their defence of New Orleans had not received their pay. Great promises were made to induce men to enlist but they [*sic*]

1. Probably William Leigh Brent (1784–1848) who was appointed by President Madison as deputy attorney general for the western district of the Territory of Orleans. He later represented Louisiana from 1823 to 1829 in the United States House of Representatives.

government could not fulfill them in many cases not even the full rations were afforded & for several days the US troops mutinied at Detroit, & refused to obey their officers, till paid up their arrears— Some of these arrears were of 18 months standing— The officers commanding companies are permitted by their military laws to flog the men without the formality of a court martial & 30 & 40 & even more lashes are given at the discretion of an individual— Very few of the B. deserters enter the US army, they detest the service, it promises more but has fewer comforts than their own.

I copy the definition of Democratic freedom from a Federal paper—“In the *Hartford Mercury* of last week is the following paragraph. France thou too once enjoyed the sweets of freedom, But, alas! not even the semblance of Liberty is now left you—

“Thou art no more
Queen of the East! thy land of Liberty,
Thy soil of heroes, & thy seal of Virtues,
Is now in the tomb—”

When did France enjoy the sweets of Freedom? Was it under an unbroken succession of absolute monarchs, or, was it while victorious foreign armies during a short interval, occupied part of the French territory? If so, then France is now free & the *semblance of Liberty* has not left her— For she is governed by her hereditary prince, while the enemies of his authority are kept in awe by the surrounding nations. France then did not enjoy the *sweets of Freedom* under the old line of monarchs— When the Horrors of the Revolution burst forth, & France, like the Volcano of the Apocalypse, fell upon the neighbouring nations, & turned them into blood, was France then a land of Liberty & a seat of virtues? Was this Queen of the East labouring in the benevolent work of sending her liberty & virtues abroad for “the healing of the nations”? When anarchy & wild misrule usurped the Sceptre of lawful authority, when the blood of her butcheries flowed in torrents from the Guillotine, when

her religion was infidelity, & her worship blasphemy, was she enjoying the *sweets of Freedom*— Under Buonaparte, rightly called “The Nightmare of the World” was France “a *Land of Liberty & seat of virtues*”? While her sons were torn from the little happiness that they might have enjoyed in the bosom of their families by a merciless conscription & driven by millions to perish by the plagues of Egypt, the poison of Jaffa, & the frosts of Russia, did they or their relatives enjoy the *sweets of Freedom* & what virtue could the tortured eye of the traveller discover in France, unless sullen submission to the iron rule of a despot whom they dare not resist is accounted a virtue? But France *once* enjoyed the sweets of Freedom. *Now* the semblance of Liberty is not to be found there. Our Connecticut Democrats must therefore find the blessings of liberty either in the anarchy, the carnage, & Blasphemy of the French Revolution, or in the horrors of a Conscription & the tyranny of a military despotism. They doubtless find in both these conditions of France such liberty as they wish their own country to enjoy. In the French revolution they saw the diabolical machinations of vile Jacobinism triumphing over law, order & religion, & the vilest of the vile exalted to wealth & power— Under the Despotism of Buonaparte they saw the same miscreants increasing their wealth & strengthening their power, spreading their conquests & multiplying their trophies, rioting on the spoils of nations, & sporting with the tears & cries of widows & of orphans. Seeing this, they were filled with joy, & their hearts burn with desire to imitate the example— Such is the Spirit & Genius of Democratic Freedom. Altho’ every one must admire & support the true Liberty of the Press in any country, yet it must be feared that the advantages of a Free press are sacrificed when public officers are individually & by name accused of crimes in the performance of their official duties—

I take a few paragraphs from a letter that appeared in an American paper published during the war, & addressed to the Sec^y of the Navy—

“The party in power chose to fill the departments of Government, men whose abilities they need not fear; whose influence they need in no event dread. Sir, they were not embarrassed with doubts in the selection— You, Sir, met with decided preference— & have been permitted to twinkle in the political horizon a star of the fifth magnitude. You are welcome to the unenvied distinction; tis a distinction more likely to suffuse the cheeks of your friends with blushes, than to pale with envy those of your enemies— You have indeed lived to present to the world, an extraordinary instance of modern policy, of a man advanced to power thro’ the naked nothingness of his political character—

You are however possessed of one quality which cannot fail to excite admiration— It is manifested in the selection of your friends— Most of them are men, who mortified by the neglect of those in office, & treated with contempt by the wise & virtuous part of their fellow citizens; feel strongly attached to your patronage, & while your power remains, will give you submissive proof of the aspect they feel for the office you tenant, share with generous audacity in all your carousals, laugh loudly at your inebriated wit, & at assemblies, parties, &c give an opportunity for the charitable to observe that you are not the only person who has unhappily preferred a chaplet of the vine to a laurel wreath. One of these gentlemen seems to have studied your character with peculiar care, & to have

profited by his attention; he has declared that the path to the head of Mr. Jefferson lies thro' his brain; the high road to yours thro' your throat. He has given you many dinners & much wine, you have paid him protection & profitable privileges—

Permit me now Sir, to ask you a few serious questions relative to your conduct as Sec^y of the Navy. Have you not lent the Influence of your office to gratify the friendships & enmities of persons with whom you associate, & disregarded the most solemn compacts entered into between your office & individuals? Did you not disregard all rules of Justice & checks upon abuses, in allowing the Surgeon of the marines to give orders to himself for medicines; making his receipts to himself the vouchers for quantities said to be delivered? And did you not, after having granted him this privilege, permit him to attend to his private business & appoint an additional mate to the Hospital, at a time too when fewer men were in Garrison than had been for years before?" &c, &c—¹

Such accusations as the above against an officer high in the government, applying both in respect to his official duties & private character should not have passed unnoticed in a well ordered state— If such crimes are charged upon men in power, & pass unpunished if false, & unenquired into, if true, must tend to bring their rulers into contempt with the people, & to encourage the defamer & libeller—

I take this paragraph from an A. paper. "If the Militia are to be paid at the rate of one officer for every

1. This letter was probably aimed at Paul Hamilton, who was Madison's Secretary of the Navy at the beginning of the war. Hamilton was known to be a tippler, was attacked as incompetent, and resigned on December 31, 1812.

two & a half men—for that was about the relative proportion of Genl Mooers' division,¹ at the date of our return, & our future progress in the conquest of Canada is to be calculated by the past, how much money & time will be required to effect that operation?" It was proposed to correct this abuse, but Government shrunk from the responsibility of the measure, fearing its effect upon the election for President— I was told that the men of the US regular army receive 8 dollars per month & the ensigns 30, the lieutenants 40 & so on in proportion, besides 150 acres of land at the end of 5 years service & still more for the officers. Such pay which is rendered necessary from the great price of labour & the great allowance of rations far greater than in our service, must render it very difficult for these States to maintain a respectable army. In time of war their revenue is almost annihilated from the interruption of trade, & the fact has been already stated that they could not pay their troops when on actual service, or even give them the full ration—

Tecumseh skin made into razor strops. The Kentuckians the first that scalped. Their horrid brutality to an Indian revenged by the scalping of 70 men & 18 or 20 officers one woman & one child killed at Lewiston, magnified into a massacre of 100 women & 200 children.²

The capture of Fort Niagara was the most dashing enterprise of the late war. The Americans were foiled by their own weapons Cunning & Stratagem, weapons indeed but seldom used by British officers, & when used but rarely successful— The Americans apprehended an at-

1. Major-General Benjamin Mooers commanded the New York Militia involved in the defense of Plattsburg.

2. The great Indian leader Tecumseh, who was allied with the British, died at the battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813. The Kentuckians reportedly found the chief's body and took strips of skin as souvenirs. However, the Indians maintained that Tecumseh was invulnerable to the white men and had instead been raised to the sky. The Lewiston massacre took place on December 19, 1813, when the British were unable to control the Indians who had found much liquor in the conquered town.

tack on Fort Niagara & kept a Schooner sailing up & down the Lake watching the motions of their enemy, & their *whole* garrison of 500 men was kept to their arms for four days & nights. In the mean time the British General watched his opportunity, boats were brought several miles overland unperceived by the enemy & concealed behind a point of land— To deceive the Americans as to the means we had, an excuse was found to send over an officer with a flag of truce in so miserable a canoe that it drew on the officer the derision of the enemy. Completely deceived by this manoeuvre, believing the British to have no means of crossing the river, & seeing no preparations on their part, they resigned themselves to a security as blind as their watchfulness had before been extreme— Their Commandant left his post to visit a new purchase of land at a few miles distance & the soldiers & officers wearied out with four nights successive wakefulness resigned themselves to sleep. Our boats crossed in the night, a sentry was seized before he could fire his piece or give the alarm, threats of instant death extorted from him the countersign & the place was taken with no loss on the part of the conquerors & but little on that of the conquered. The attacking party was scarcely equal to the garrison. On the following morning the commandant entered the fort without suspicion of the change, the US flag being still displayed, & was made prisoner—¹

We observed at Newark a New Fort lately built, called Fort Mississaga— Fort George is commanded by the US Fort Niagara & is of course quite defenceless by any number of men— Sir John Sherbroke rightly considered that a fort so situated could only be of service to an invading enemy or cause a useless sacrifice of men in attempting to defend it: he ordered it to be instantly

1. The official British return of their losses in the assault on Fort Niagara was six killed and five wounded. They also reported sixty-five Americans killed and fourteen wounded. The United States commanding officer, Captain Nathaniel Leonard, was reportedly visiting his family about two miles from the fort. There are several different accounts of his capture.

destroyed & the lines of the new work to be greatly enlarged.

On our route thro' the Canadas we saw several deserted dwellings surrounded with orchards & fields that had once been under cultivation.

Appendix

"A Jamaican Story"

The poetess Elizabeth Barrett Browning was Richard Barrett's (first) cousin once removed. She met him at least once, as a young girl, during one of his visits to England. She recalled this meeting in a letter to Mary Russell Mitford, dated January 12, 1842, and disclosed that "he gave me a subject for a poem about a run away negro which I still have somewhere, in his handwriting." Circumstantial evidence allows that the piece which follows is probably that manuscript. It was amongst the belongings which Elizabeth left at Wimpole Street and the handwriting is unmistakably Richard Barrett's. Although the writing obviously isn't about a runaway, the principal character is a negro Jamaican slave. The original is four quarto pages in length and is printed here in full. It is reproduced with grateful acknowledgement to the owner, The Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

Austin was a creole negro slave, & lived on his master's property in the Island of Jamaica. His good conduct had secured him the confidence of several successive overseers, & he became the head-driver or black overseer of the estate. His authority over his fellow negroes was great both from his office & his determined character: he was faithful to the interests of his owner, without being oppressive to the slaves under his control: they loved and feared him. But the time came, when a new Superintendent of petty mind, became jealous of an influence, which he thought only himself should possess, & he would willingly have degraded Austin had not the master of both known the value of his negro, & that the power he held was beneficially exercised. Austin, however, was compelled to be very cautious in his conduct that the white overseer might have no cause of complaint against him; he was more than ever regular in the performance of his duties, but took care not to exceed them.

To a neighbouring estate there belonged an African negro, whose hardy robberies had procured for him the nick-name of Copperbottom among the other slaves. He was the terror of all the watchmen in the vicinity, & so emboldened by impunity, that he was often known to give notice of his intended depredations long before he committed them—he would even appoint the night & the hour when he might be expected. He had killed & wounded several watchmen who had ventured to defend their yam pieces and plantain walks, till at length, as of by universal consent, he was permitted to take without question, whatever he had a fancy to. One day he made his appearance in the plantain walk of the estate to which Austin was attached, & told the watchman Davy, that the plantains were fit to gather, & that he would sup with him at night when the moon was up. Davy knew very well that to invite himself to supper, was Copperbottom's challenge to protect his master's property if he dared, & not feeling at all disposed to engage hand to hand with so desperate a villain, he made all possible haste to Austin.

Having heard his story, Austin was not long in taking his resolution: he determined to watch the province ground himself. He might have informed the superintendant of Copperbottom's estate, but he feared that means of prevention might be too publicly adopted, & that the marauder, having timely notice, would relinquish his design for the present. This would give the jealous overseer an opportunity of finding fault with, & perhaps of punishing him, as a false alarmist. Besides, Austin may have felt some little ambition to have the honor of contending with & defeating this terror of the country by his single arm.

He kept Davy in his hut the whole day to prevent the news being spread abroad, & when the moon rose, they sallied forth to the scene of action. Austin did not carry with him his reluctant companion from any expectation or even wish of his assistance in the approaching fight. Davy was old, infirm, & by nature a coward. But Austin knew that a witness would be useful should Copperbottom fall in the conflict.

They had not been long concealed in the thick green of plantains, when they heard the plantains falling at a distance from them, as well as the voices of more than one rogue. Davy fell back—Austin crept silently round till he had placed himself between the moon & the enemy, so as to have the full advantage of her light in the battle he was about to wage.

In imitation of the poets we arrest our tale at this awful crisis to describe the persons of the combatants. Austin, like

most Creole negroes, was of smooth skin, & handsome open countenance: his complexion was some shades lighter than jet black; & in common with his race his hair was woolly & black, & his nose broad, tho' less so than the native Africans. His eyes also were black & lively, & his teeth white as the coffee blossom. His height may have reached 5 feet 8 inches, he was well made, his limbs stout & sinewy, & his shoulders as broad, as they ought to be without clumsiness: his spreading chest, ill covered by a light linen frock, displayed great muscular strength. In his right hand he carried a cutlass, useful either for cutting or thrusting, & having been very lately sharpened, it glistened in the rays of the moon.

His antagonist Copperbottom bore the marks of his native country on the cheeks and forehead; they were tattooed, as well as other parts of his body, in divers fantastic figures. These scars on a yellow complexion with a nose in all the African deformity of breadth gave him a fierce and forbidding countenance: otherwise he was of stout make, & full four inches taller than Austin. Copperbottom was forty years of age, Austin scarcely thirty-five.

The latter had now examined the strength of the enemy, there were three persons opposed to him, for their leader had brought two comrades (as notorious depredators tho' less courageous than himself) Ironsides and Brassbottom, to assist in bearing off the plunder. Nothing daunted by these odds, nor by Davy's desertion, the faithful negro challenged the robbers, demanding what was their business. He was answered by their chief, who called out in derision "Do you come for your supper—ha!" "No," replied Austin, "but I come to give you yours" & at the same instant sprang upon Copperbottom, who stood his ground, while his cowardly companions ran away.

The first blow of Austin took effect on the forehead, face & breast of the robber, & partly disabled him, but he was not to be stirred from the post he had taken, & continued to defend himself with his cutlass. The fight was now unequal, the blows of Austin fell so thick, that his opponent could only inflict on him one or two slight wounds, while Austin following up his advantage made hideous gashes in his chest & side. But still with courage worthy of a better cause, Copperbottom refused to yield and even on his knees offered a vain resistance, & spun out the fight till at length the weapon of Austin passed thro' his heart, & he fell and died muttering curses on his destroyer, on the same spot where he had received his first wound.

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