THE CAMPAIGN OF 1814 ON THE NIAGARA
A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND STATISTICAL VIEW

by

ROBERT LAWRENCE PIEPENBRINK

B.A., Indiana University, 1975

A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

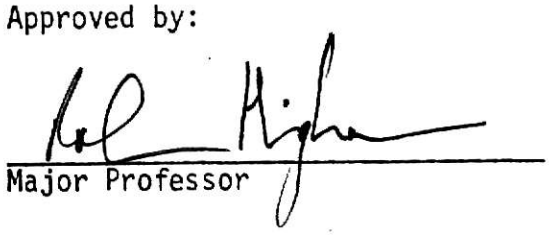
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

Approved by:



Major Professor

THIS BOOK
CONTAINS
NUMEROUS PAGES
WITH THE ORIGINAL
PRINTING BEING
SKEWED
DIFFERENTLY FROM
THE TOP OF THE
PAGE TO THE
BOTTOM.

THIS IS AS RECEIVED
FROM THE
CUSTOMER.

LD
2668
T4
1976
P54
C.2
Document

CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF MAPS AND PLANS iii

LIST OF TABLES iv

AUTHOR'S PREFACE v

INTRODUCTION 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY--THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE 3

THE BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA AND LUNDY'S LANE 19

APPENDIX--Statistics of July 1814; Strength and Losses, Perception and Reality 71

REFERENCES 93

BIBLIOGRAPHY 100

LIST OF MAPS AND PLANS

	Page
The Niagara Frontier in 1814	20
The Battle of Chippewa	35
The Battle of Lundy's Lane--1 and 2	50

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Composition of the First and Second Brigades, 23 July	75
2.	British Strength and Distribution, 8 July	79
3.	British and American Casualties at Chippewa, 5 July	85
4.	British Casualties at Lundy's Lane, 25 July	87
5.	American Casualties at Lundy's Lane, 25 July	89

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It is painfully evident that to this day there is still debate concerning the events of July 1814 on the Niagara Frontier. The passage of more than a century and a half has not sufficed to bring some sort of concensus, especially concerning the climactic battle of Lundy's Lane. This alone would justify my attempt to reexamine the surviving material to arrive at a final opinion on what really happened.

That has not been my sole, or even primary motivation in writing this, however. The battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane have a place in American legend, just as Waterloo does in English, not wholly determined by the importance of the outcome of the battles, but by their significance to the nations concerned. If no controversy surrounded the actual events, the importance of the legend would still justify their retelling from time to time.

I have also attempted to assess the importance of the campaign in the development of the regular army of the United States. It seems to me that entirely too little attention has been paid to this point so far, and my commentary is intended as an initial statement, not a final one.

(NOTE: To reduce the inevitable confusion, British and Canadian units and commanders have been underlined. Thus the American Scott is Brigadier General Winfield Scott, and the British Scott is Colonel Hercules Scott. The same procedure has been followed for types of troops when necessary to avoid confusion.)

INTRODUCTION

In common with all other campaigns of the War of 1812, the Niagara Campaign overthrew no foreign governments, and added no territory to the Republic. As an offensive campaign, it cannot even boast of preserving the United States from loss.

Nonetheless, it had considerable effect on the outcome of the war and the future development of the United States. The war was, after all, fought as much over the question of the status of the United States as over any specific diplomatic or territorial objective. Was the young republic a totally free agent, or was it bound to keep its foreign policy in conformity with that of the mother country?

The ability of the United States to put up a serious fight--even though an unsuccessful one--was a part of this larger question of status, and it was only on the Niagara that the United States Army did anything worthy of record. Let the reader only consider what the Peace of Ghent would have meant to a nation which had no redeeming victories, even had the terms themselves been no harsher.

The effect of the campaign on the United States Army was profound, and too often neglected. Two future Generals-in-Chief of the Army were among the five generals taking part. Ten generals-to-be served as company and field-grade officers under them. At the start of the Mexican War, every general with a line commission would have come from the 1814 Niagara Campaign, and by the end of the Mexican War, there would be 10 Niagara veterans among a fairly limited number of generals.

Other effects are less easily measured. Chippewa was the first victory of the regular army over equal numbers of a civilized opponent. How long could the army have gone without such a victory without a serious effect on its morale and status?

Lundy's Lane, besides proving that Chippewa had not been a fluke, showed that given training and leadership Americans could win hard battles by bravery and endurance, as well as easy ones by superior tactics.

The long-range effects of this are not measurable, but they are discernable. The next war, for the first time, officers would commence the struggle by training the regiments, instead of losing battles for years until a von Steuben, Wayne or Scott turned up to do the work.

In traditions too, in mottoes and in uniforms, the battle has not been forgotten. This paper is presented in the hope that it might be better remembered and better understood.

BIBLIOGRAPHY--THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE

The casual student of the War of 1812 might be forgiven for thinking that no controversy surrounds the Niagara Campaign of 1814--provided, of course, that he only read one book.

He would have a choice of five recent American publications: The War of 1812, by Harry Coles (1965); The War of 1812: A Compact History, by James Ripley Jacobs and Glenn Tucker (1969); The War of 1812, by Reginald Horsman (1969); The War of 1812, by John K. Mahon (1972) and The Scorching of Washington, by Alan Lloyd (1974). When describing the decision of the American army to leave the battlefield of Lundy's Lane on the night of 25 July 1814, none of them note any controversy, but they are by no means in agreement. Lloyd, Jacobs and Tucker write that the American withdrawal was the only possible decision, made necessary by exhaustion and losses.[1] Mahon and Coles report that the withdrawal was decided upon and carried out without British pressure, and indeed that the British Army did not return to the battlefield until early the next morning.[2] Horsman states that the decision was of little importance, since the British Army held the battlefield at the time, and the American was doing nothing but making futile attacks.[3]

Nor are they in closer agreement when these scholars attempt to state the numbers involved. Indeed, they leave one wondering if all historians chose their careers by failing mathematics. Jacobs and Tucker state that the initial British force involved was 1,700 men and five guns, later reinforced by either 1,000 men and two guns or 1,200 and four

depending on the page consulted. In either event, there were 2,800 men on each side, though there were 4,800 available to the British commander.[4]

Alan Lloyd gives the initial British force 1,800 men and seven guns, reinforced by 1,200 and two for a total "in excess of" 3,000. The Americans are said to have had 2,644 effectives available, of whom 1,000 and three guns commenced the battle, to be reinforced (inferrentially) by 1,200 and five, the British being at all times 600-700 stronger.[5]

Horsman gives the initial British strength as 16-1700, reinforced by 1,200. The Americans are stated to have had 2,600 effectives available, to have sent 1,000 men in the initial attack, and to have been outnumbered.[6]

Mahon gives an opinion of 1,600 to 1,800 initial British, reinforced by 1,230 to a total of 3,000. Of 2,600 Americans available, Mahon says 1,070 commenced the battle, to be reinforced by 1,300 to a total of 2,100![7]

Coles makes no estimate concerning the battle itself, merely stating that 3,000 British were in the general area.[8]

Recent American scholarship, then, ranges from 3,000 to 4,800 British available, and from 2,800 to "in excess of 3,000" present on the battlefield. On the other side of the hill, three of the five give 2,600 American effectives available, but the number of the force on the battlefield ranges from 2,200 to 2,800. Even the widespread acceptance of the figures of 2,600 American effectives and 1,000 initial Americans on the battlefield does not result from a concensus of thorough research, but from an uncritical acceptance of Henry Adams' 1889 estimate.

It is a fair measure of British interest in the War of 1812 that I can find no book-length account written after 1906.

Canada, on the other hand, retains a lively interest. One of the best recent works is The Incredible War of 1812, by J. MacKay Hitsman (1965). Hitsman, like Horsman, closely follows the official report of the British commander in his reconstruction of the battle. Apart from the number of narrative sources which contradict this, I believe it can be effectively demolished on the basis of the official casualty figures alone.

On the forces involved, Hitsman gives the British participants at Lundy's Lane as 3,000--1,000 at the start, reinforced by 800, with an ultimate reinforcement of 1,200. Intriguingly enough, he also states that 500 York and Lincoln militiamen participated. This is not itself implausible, but as I hope to demonstrate in the Appendix, it is utterly irreconcilable with a total British strength of 3,000 men. On the American side, no general estimate of participants is made, but the standard counts of 2,644 available effectives and 1,070 men in the first American force are repeated once again.[9]

This brief survey shows a pattern of chaos and conformity. Certain numbers are almost universally accepted, and some vary wildly from author to author. On the actual sequence of events, there is even wider divergence. These disputes are not the result of research and conflicting interpretations, but of a lack of research and an uncritical acceptance of earlier works which are by no means in complete agreement with one another. In order to understand this, a review of the historiography of the Niagara Campaign of 1814 is in order.

Primary Sources

The first written records of the campaign were letters and newspaper accounts. No newspaper had correspondents with the armies, so except for a few isolated incidents such as troops marching through the town to the front, the newspapers too were dependent on the writings of the combatants, and sometimes simply printed letters from the front rather than convert them to third-person narratives.

Fortunately, none of the letters were written for publication. Those written divide into two types: the private correspondence of the combatants with friends and relatives, and the official correspondence of the commanders with their superiors. There appear to have been no prolific writers among the informal class, and in no case are more than two letters from the same person now known. It is notable that no letters of enlisted men are known. The correspondents, mostly American, (remember it was much cheaper and easier to write home to the American northeast than to England) are mostly junior officers and a few attached civilians. The only non-official writings by senior officers are the two letters of Colonel Hercules Scott of the 103rd Foot, and the single letter known of Major MacFarland of the 23rd Infantry. These letters are useful tools, and correct as to general impressions and the locations and movements of the units to which the writers were attached, but it should also be remembered that the temptation to impress one's wife or friend was almost overwhelming. What was written in such letters was never expected to come under public scrutiny, so there doubtless seemed to be little harm in stretching the marches a little, and perhaps slightly exaggerating the casualties.

The official correspondence, especially of Major General Jacob Brown and Lieutenant General Sir George Drummond, was another matter. This was often published, so no blatant errors of fact could escape notice. Within a basically truthful framework, though, the commanders were obliged both to make themselves look as competent as possible, and to avoid offending any politically influential portion of the army. (In this case, for either commander, this meant trying to avoid any criticism of militia and volunteer units and commanders.) This only applies, of course, in the longer official letters, such as accounts of battles. In the shorter letters dealing with particular problems--failures to arrive at a rendezvous, desertion, the absence of needed men and equipment--there could be more openness about the general situation, and the shortcomings of the participants; but at the same time there was the knowledge that persons maligned were unlikely ever to see the letter, and that London or Washington couldn't check very easily if one lied about available guns or ammunition. The third type of official correspondence took the form of records: casualty returns, day states (taken weekly in both armies) and receipts for prisoners of war. I am inclined to regard these as the most accurate of all. Measures had long been instituted to extract an accurate head-count from commanders, and anyway most of the profit had gone out of padded figures. The returns of prisoners of war (available only for the United States Army) involved two commands: if Brown had reported more prisoners of war than were actually handed over to the guards (not under his authority), there would have been a short count somewhere, and a considerable fuss. The casualty returns are, of course, traditionally suspect. By long-standing (not to say ancient) tradition, commanders minimize the size and casualties of their own army, and

maximize those of the enemy. On the other hand these returns were published, and in the free and even contentious atmosphere of the American Army in those years, no blatant falsehood could have survived unchallenged. The British returns too were published openly, and are accepted in a private letter of Colonel Hercules Scott. Scott, who thoroughly disliked his superiors, had no reason to understate losses. It must be remembered though that in counting casualties, as in accounting, various legitimate practices can be used to produce somewhat different results. Is a man who is back in line the next morning "missing" for instance? Mostly not. At what point does one draw the line between severely and lightly wounded? Does one count limited amounts of buckshot as a wound, or simply pluck it out and ignore it? I do feel it necessary to point out, though, that Riall and Drummond both adopted the custom of ignoring certain auxilliary units in preparing casualty returns. While all British regular units are recorded with casualties, at one time or another returns were sent in without losses for provincial militia or Indians known to have been engaged. This is of a piece with the habit of both sides to count strength in regulars and ignore auxilliaries, and seldom or never represents a deliberate effort to deceive.

Primary source material, like gold, is where one finds it, but the vast majority of short works concerning the campaign were gathered up by Ernest Cruikshank in his Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara (see below). Cruikshank covers both sides and both official and unofficial testimony: letters, newspaper accounts, and official correspondence. For the British official records, there is Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812, edited by William Wood; a rather more professional work, but by no means as valuable.

Unpublished material does exist, of course, in British, Canadian and American national archives. Private papers reside with Lilly Library, the Library of Congress, and the Buffalo Historical Society to the author's knowledge. Also it is certain that some material the archives once possessed has been lost.

The letters and newspaper accounts of 1814 are, of course, fragmentary and inevitably contradictory. It is in the immediate post-war period, though, that genuine controversy emerges. For the first time, accounts are given to persuade the general public that some particular view of the campaign is more accurate than others.

The prime example of this sort of document are the records of courts of inquiry held by the United States Army. Four such were held concerning various aspects of the campaign: that of Captain Treat, accused of cowardice in his conduct on July 5th, of Lieutenant Blake for his conduct on the 25th, of Major-General Edmund P. Gaines for slighting Major Trimble in his account of the British attack on Fort Erie, and of Brigadier-General Eleazar W. Ripley for his conduct on the night of 25th July.[10] These trials had no serious military purpose. The officers who had been dismissed from the service--Treat and Blake--had no desire to remain, and, though acquitted by the court, did not do so. Trimble, furious as he might be at the slight, had suffered no material harm. Nor had Ripley, who had demanded the inquiry to clear his name. In all four cases, the courts were held to shore up reputations. (They were successful, too: Treat and Blake were restored, on paper, to the officer corps; Trimble, though he lost the case, got his wisdom and courage on official record; and Ripley was restored to official favor.) This became clear when Treat published the transcript of the trial as The Vindication of Captain Treat.

Ripley had a harder time. He had succeeded in getting a court of inquiry convened, but the President dismissed it after only one witness had given testimony, presumably to avoid the division of the army into "Ripley" and "Brown-Scott" factions. Ripley then collected the testimony of his supporters, and published them along with one official document (a day state for July 23rd) and the "testimony of the" sole witness of his abortive court of inquiry under the title A Narrative of the Campaign on the Niagara. Both Ripley and Treat had thus taken their cases to the public in the most blatant fashion. There was no real interest in Treat, but Ripley's Narrative commenced public controversy on one of the crucial decisions of the campaign: the withdrawal of the American army from the battlefield of Lundy's Lane, and its failure to bring along the captured British artillery.

Ripley thus neatly bridges the gap between court-martial records and later memoirs. While none of the other senior officers rushed into print as Ripley had done--most of them were actively employed in the immediate post-war years--Brown, Major General (later Lieutenant General) Winfield Scott and Brigadier General Peter B. Porter all left behind narratives of their own roles in the campaign of 1814. Porter's, which might be termed a defense of his brigade more than an account of his own actions, was written in 1840 to a biographer of one of the Indians who served on the Niagara frontier. It must be read with his contemporary reports to the Governor of New York, but it must be remembered that in neither case was his account expected to be open to public scrutiny. While Porter's papers are held by the Buffalo Historical Society, the crucial documents have been printed by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society in Cruikshank's excellent Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier

in 1814 (hereafter cited as Documentary History). Similarly, the letters of Jacob Brown were published, together with his third-person "memoranda," by Cruikshank as pamphlet #33 of the Niagara Historical Society (the later name of the Lundy's Lane Historical Society mentioned above). The only one of the three actively to seek to have his view of events in print was, naturally, the disputatious Scott. His account forms a portion of his Memoirs, published in 1864 after his retirement from active service. We might note that it was also after the death of virtually all the other combatants--one of the advantages of reaching high rank at an early age. Both that and the intervening fifty years argue against his account, but we must point out that at least as late as 1861, Scott's mind was clearly keener than those of many men in their prime, and that his account does not conflict with earlier accounts more than is to be expected. Scott, of course, had access both to his earlier writings and to his early biography, Mansfield's Life of Scott, portions of which Scott had ghost-written.[11]

Of the lower officers, at least three left narratives of the stirring events of 1814. Major (later Brigadier General) Thomas S. Jessup, who must be considered a Scott partisan in matters of controversy, left a manuscript which has still escaped publication. The Library of Congress holds it along with all his papers, and it is available in xerox or micro-film for the interested scholar. (I might note that it is extremely difficult to read.) The invaluable Cruikshank, though, does print portions of it, and the complete--though brief--account of Hospital Surgeon Lovell on disease among the United States troops. (It might be noted that in a remarkably healthy army, in the midst of the bloodiest campaign of the

war, the number of wounded was generally "somewhat greater" than the number of sick. What was the normal ratio?)

Unfortunately, after these the remaining accounts fall off rapidly in utility. Murphy's Law applies, and the company-grade officers and enlisted men who have left accounts never seem to have been in the most important units or the crucial engagements. On the United States' side, they are written by militiamen and artillerymen, never Scott's infantry. On the Canadian side even fewer survive, and the only long narrative was written far too late by a veteran of failing memory. It is still to be hoped that a diary or memoir from some of the most important infantry units will be discovered, but one cannot quote (ethically) from as yet undiscovered sources. In all probability, "the authorship of extant documents" reflect the higher level of education in the artillery and the greater novelty of combat among the militia.

It is with the arrival of Benjamin Lossing and his Pictorial Field-book of the War of 1812 that a line may be drawn between the gathering of source material and historical interpretation of the campaign. Unfortunately, Lossing marks the line by sitting on it.

In his earlier work on the American Revolution, Lossing had developed all the tools of historical scholarship which he now sought to use on the more recent conflict. For more than ten years, from the 1850's until 1868, the author of The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution labored to gather material, traveling more than 10,000 miles and stopping only to write The Pictorial Field-Book of the Civil War. The result was a work far ahead of its time in historical method. Lossing consulted public records, private libraries, unpublished manuscripts, the crucial sites of the conflict from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes, and also

accumulated the personal narrations of the last few survivors of the Second War of Independence. He was one of the first historians, especially on these shores, to document his sources. Further, in contrast to the traditional charge that military histories begin with the first shot, Lossing explored the roots of the war from 1783 on. The result of this titanic effort was a work of more than 1,000 pages which may still stand as the finest single narrative of the war.

On the Niagara frontier in 1814, Lossing placed in final form what has remained pretty much the "official" American interpretation of the campaign: that it showed the ability of American regulars to defeat equal numbers of British when properly trained and led, that it showed the superiority of regulars to militia, that the accomplishments were largely the work of Winfield Scott (with a nod to Jacob Brown), and that a glorious victory would have been made useful if, on assuming command, Ripley had either removed the captured artillery or been first to the battlefield the next morning. The superiority of regulars is not a matter often disputed by historians of the campaign. Whatever the political or economic arguments in favor of militia, their disgraceful conduct in three consecutive campaigns on the Niagara convinces most observers of their military worthlessness. The superiority of American regulars to British is a matter often debated, especially in the Nineteenth Century, without any hope of convincing the opposition.

On the matter of the Battle of Lundy's Lane itself, Lossing had a choice of three narrative frameworks, though, and here the dispute continues to the present day. Brown in his official report had indicated that the American army was in possession of the battlefield, including the British artillery, when he was wounded, and that it was only necessary for

Ripley to secure the captured artillery to give the American army a decisive superiority on the Niagara frontier. He was supported in this by Scott, Porter, and most of the lesser American memorists and letter writers--and, indeed, by Hercules Scott of the British army. Ripley, on the other hand, argued that the battle had simply destroyed the American army, and that immediate retreat was really the only viable option. In contrast to all other writers was the official report of Drummond, who refused to admit that the American army had held any British guns for more than a very few minutes, and who spent considerable mental energy explaining how they had succeeded in limbering one up and taking it away. Lossing, feeling--rightly--that Drummond's report was simply not compatable with anything else known about the battle, still had to choose between Brown (supported by Scott) and Ripley. Lossing chose to believe two commanders of the U. S. Army against the obscure Ripley, and the choice was followed by all later American researchers.

The next serious writer to deal with the campaign was Henry Adams in his History of the United States (1889). Adams laid considerable stress on political and military developments, and his account of the War of 1812 has been published as a separate work. Though unsurpassed in style, it contributed little to the understanding of the campaign. Adams was primarily an archivist, and archives were not the place to search for an insight into the combat. Nor was he sufficiently skilled in military matters to use all the material he did find. The outstanding example of this is his handling of the strength of the American army. This had long been a matter of some dispute between British-Canadian and American accounts. Adams, to the benefit of all concerned, unearthed and published day states of the United States Army (since lost), printing the

number of rank and file present and ready for duty, the number of officers, and the aggregate strength of the regiments, all ranks, present and absent. Having performed this valuable scholarly service, though, he then proceeded to treat the American army as if it consisted only of those rank and file of the regular infantry regiments who were free to answer roll call in the morning. At various times his counts neglect fatigue parties, artillery, dragoons and volunteers, thus creating the image of a hopelessly outnumbered band of Americans valiantly engaging hordes of Canadians and Englishmen. His account has been a source of caustic amusement for Canadian and British scholars ever since.

The first of these amused scholars was Captain Ernest Cruikshank, who remains a central figure in the historiography of the war on the Niagara frontier. His major contribution was the accumulation of source material: The Documentary History of the War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier, published in nine volumes under slightly differing titles by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society around the turn of the century. Together with a supplementary pamphlet for the papers of General Brown, this collection includes virtually all the significant short pieces on the campaign. Certain longer narratives were excluded, of course, but a serious work not relying mainly on the material Cruikshank has gathered would be almost unthinkable.

Along with his collection of source material, though, Cruikshank published an analysis of the crucial battle in the form of a pamphlet, "The Battle of Lundy's Lane." Cruikshank, as an honest scholar, was forced to abandon the official British report, but rather than follow Lossing's verdict of an American victory thrown away, he adopted the view of Ripley--that the American army had in fact been crippled by the battle,

and that no alternative existed to a hasty retreat all the way to Fort Erie--if not, indeed, to Buffalo.

As a loyal Canadian, writing in a period of rising nationalism, he was not without goals in his handling of the evidence. In the finest tradition of after-action reports, he attempted to inflate the strength of the enemy as well as his casualties, and to admit to no more friendly strength or casualties than could possibly be helped. In this respect he closely parallels Adams, though with a far greater command of the source material for the campaign.

It is not the place of the bibliographer to argue for a particular interpretation of the event under examination, but something ought to be said about objectivity and scholarship. The whole focus of Cruikshank's study is the demolition of the official United States casualty returns for Lundy's Lane, and he shows deficiencies here in both respects. First, British official returns are accepted without question, though two of his most telling arguments against the American figures apply equally well to the British. Second, while he has done a superb job of gathering evidence, the interpretation fails for lack of a broad understanding of warfare in the period. For instance, he assumes that anyone not present with his unit at the end of a day's fighting is a casualty, and that the absence of an equal number from the official returns is proof of their inaccuracy. Study of other battles of the period, though, indicates that for every man killed, wounded or permanently missing--deserted or captured--another is wandering about in the rear as in The Red Badge of Courage, soon to return to his unit and nowhere considered a casualty. Common sense seems to fail him when he suggests that hundreds of American volunteers--there were only 300 engaged, but never mind--spent the days following the battle wandering

about a countryside where the farmers were shooting at formed units rather than returning to the shelter of the camp at Fort Erie.

After Babcock, research on the campaign ceased for years, and the field was held by the modern historians mentioned above--those writing from 1965 to 1974. These men made no effort to discover for themselves what went on. They simply chose some reasonably clear narrative and embellished it with facts and figures accepted uncritically from the earlier works. Thus the long life of Adams' statistics on the American army, which cannot stand up to close examination, and the resurrection of Drummond's official report, which was never taken seriously by any student of the battle, but which is used by Hitsman and Horsman because neither of the two know enough else about the battle to realize how impossible it is.

Nonetheless, in the middle of this period of undistinguished work, one article of real merit appeared. This was Jeffrey Kimball's "The Battle of Chippewa: Infantry Tactics in the War of 1812" (Military Affairs, vol. XXXI, #4, Winter 1967-68). The article was derived from an unpublished master's thesis at Queen's University which might well reward the interested scholar. The article itself has a narrow focus, but shows a broad understanding of the literature of the campaign and of warfare in the period. The author takes leave to differ with Kimball on some issues, but has nothing but respect for the high standard of the work.

The literature of the Niagara Campaign has gone through three periods. Down to the publication of Scott's Memoirs in 1864, it was a literature of controversies, largely the work of the participants and their partisans. With the publication of Lossing's Pictorial Field-Book in 1869, it became a more formal part of history, and the beneficiary of the careful research in vogue in the late Nineteenth Century. The last

work in this tradition was Babcock's War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier in 1927. It was a fruitful period, but troubled by a belief that patriotism might involve a partisan treatment of documents, accepting returns of one's countrymen, and challenging those of foreigners.

For the past fifty years, there has been little scholarship properly so called, merely unsatisfactory mosaics using bits and pieces of earlier work. It is to be hoped that the Kimball article heralds the beginning of a new period of fresh research into the campaign, hopefully more objective than before, to add to our common English-speaking heritage.

THE BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA AND LUNDY'S LANE

It is apparent that much of the controversy concerning the events of July 1814 boil down to matters of statistics: how many men (particularly regulars) were at the disposal of either commander at various dates, and how many of them were employed in various battles? How many casualties were suffered by this or that unit, and what reinforcements were received?

What follows is an attempt to reconstruct the opening phase of the campaign of 1814 on the Niagara, based on conclusions regarding the strength and losses of the combatants given separately in the Appendix. I have tried to give only sufficient background material to explain the strategic setting of the campaign, without writing a short history of the War of 1812.

The Strategic Situation

The summer of 1814 saw the third American attempt in as many years to seize all or part of Canada by an invasion across the Niagara River. It was becoming apparent that no other point was suitable for an invasion. The eastern or maritime route was closed by British naval supremacy. The northern and eastern approaches used in the colonial and revolutionary wars depended on the cooperation of the New Englanders, which President Madison was not getting. West of the Niagara, an invasion had to draw men from Kentucky and Tennessee, and then transport men and supplies through the almost uninhabited regions of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. In any event, the invasion force would enter Canada far to the west of her principal cities and fortresses.

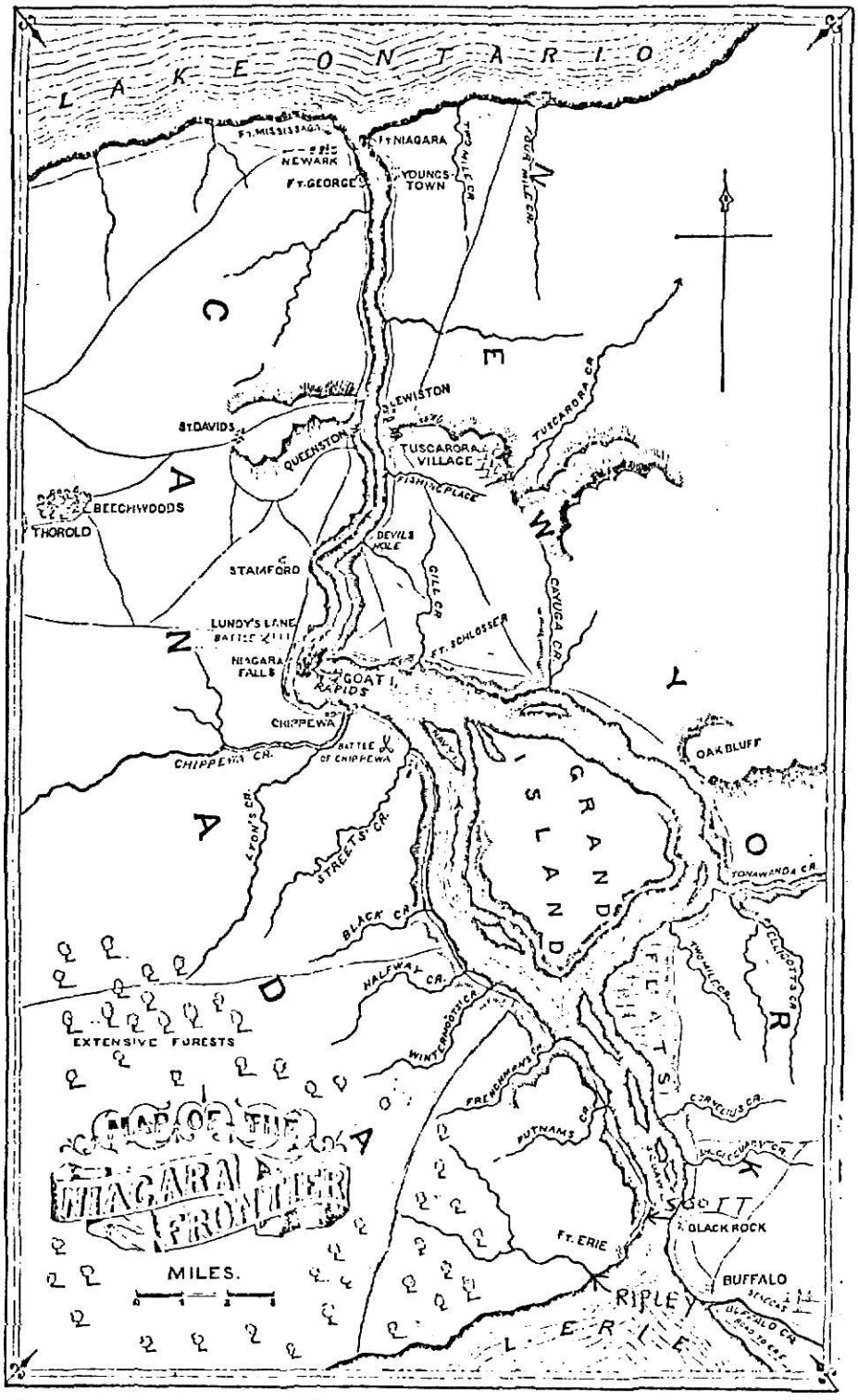
THIS BOOK CONTAINS NUMEROUS PAGES WITH DIAGRAMS THAT ARE CROOKED COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE INFORMATION ON THE PAGE.

THIS IS AS RECEIVED FROM CUSTOMER.

ILLEGIBLE DOCUMENT

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S) IS OF POOR LEGIBILITY IN THE ORIGINAL

THIS IS THE BEST COPY AVAILABLE



From Lossing's Pictorial Fieldbook, p. 382.

The Niagara crossing, then, was Hobson's choice. It was too far to the west and too isolated to be an ideal point, but it was the only one possible. The militia of New York and Pennsylvania could be utilized, and supplies could be sent (with difficulty) up the Hudson, or along the shorelines of the Great Lakes.

By 1814, though, the location had acquired something of a poor reputation. The invasion of 1812 had been thwarted by the sudden insubordination of the militia, when nothing else could possibly have prevented a success. The invasion of 1813 had gradually faded away, devoured by the lack of a sustained driving force and the staying power of the British and Canadian defenders. It had been climaxed by the British seizure of Fort Niagara on the American shore.

Despite all this, another invasion was ordered for 1814, partly for lack of an alternative, and partly because the necessary troops were mostly already on the spot, and might as well be employed actively. Few campaigns ordered by the War Department were more a matter of indifference than the Niagara Campaign of 1814.

The geography of the frontier was as follows: The boundary between the United States and Upper Canada (now Ontario) was the Niagara River, flowing from Lake Erie in the south to Lake Ontario to the north. Roughly dead center were the famous Falls, and north of them the banks of the river were too steep to lend much hope to an amphibious assault. South of the Falls, or on the shores of either lake, the banks at all points permitted landings. On both sides "creeks" or small rivers running east and west flowed into the river--no trouble in peacetime, but in war, given the destruction of the bridges they could be a terrible obstacle to an army with wagons and artillery.

South of the Falls, practically on the shore of Lake Erie, were the city of Buffalo (little more than a village) on the American bank, and the small Fort Erie on the Canadian. From a naval viewpoint, Erie was in American hands, though some Canadian coastal shipping was possible. North of the Falls the situation was more complex. Fort Niagara, on the American bank, was held by the British. On the Canadian bank, Fort George dominated Fort Niagara but not, rather to the builders' chagrin, the entrance to the river. In view of this, a new work--Fort Mississagua--was under construction (indeed now fit for use) which would at once guard the river and provide artillery support for Fort George. On Lake Ontario a naval race was in progress between two rather pacific admirals. Whoever felt himself to be losing would remain in port and build frantically, so it was anyone's guess whose coastal shipping would get through, if either's.

This complex of forts meant that the rather thin-spread British regulars had to provide garrisons for at least four locations, plus whatever reserve was felt necessary. The situation was aggravated by a frightful desertion rate among units stationed at Fort Niagara.[1] Generally, the reliance was on American incompetence, the reserves at Kingston and York and the Provincial militia, roughly in that order.[2] The United States units were less bound to a particular position, but some garrison was required for the base of supply at Schlosser, and some militia and rifles had to remain on the American bank to keep an eye on the Fort Niagara garrison.

The Contending Armies

The forces assembled under the command of Major-General Jacob Brown for the invasion of Canada consisted of three brigades of infantry, an understrength squadron of dragoons and four batteries of artillery. The First Brigade (Brigadier General Winfield Scott commanding) was composed of four understrength regiments of regular infantry, technically composed of two battalions each, but in fact maneuvering as only three or four in the brigade. The regiments were the Ninth (Massachusetts), the Eleventh (Vermont) and the Twenty-fifth (Connecticut) from anti-war New England, and the Twenty-second from Pennsylvania. The Second Brigade (Brigadier-General Eleazar Ripley commanding) was formed of the rather stronger Twenty-first (Massachusetts) and Twenty-third (New York) Infantry Regiments. The third brigade was known as Porter's, after its commander Peter B. Porter, a Brigadier General in the New York Militia. It was as unlikely a command as might be imagined. It consisted of one regiment of volunteers from Pennsylvania, two from New York, one from Canada (renegades, of course) and a somewhat amorphous band of Indians, largely but not exclusively from the Six Nations. Some of the New York militia were mounted. The dragoons and artillerymen were regulars, belonging to the Dragoon Regiment and the Corps of Artillery, but the particular batteries concerned had formerly been part of the Second Regiment of Artillery, and their Colonel had been Winfield Scott.[3]

The key factor in the American officer corps was youthfulness, with the resulting inexperience and enthusiasm. Brown himself was 39. Scott was 28, Ripley 32, and Porter 41. None had been in the regular army before the war save Scott, whose experience stretched all the way back to 1808.

All had seen action earlier in the war, however. Whatever their deficiencies, they were no longer quite green.[4]

As with Brown and his subordinates, so with his staff: Adjutant-General Major Charles K. Gardner had enlisted in 1808, but the assistant Adjutant-General and Brown's aides were all wartime recruits. The only formal military education available was to be found in Majors McRae and Wood, the engineers, and Captain Williams of the Artillery, the only available graduates of the Military Academy at West Point.[5]

In the absence of formal education, officers were chosen on the basis of social standing, age and general education, so that the officer corps of the regular regiments was much the same as that of the volunteers, though rather more experienced. The better documented regulars might serve as an example. Since all six regiments initially engaged in the invasion were raised in 1812, no officer had more than two years' time in grade, and often only two years' time in service (Jessup, enlisted 1808, is an exception). When the new regiments had been raised, no cadre had been sent from the older units. The battalion commanders and most of the company commanders had at least been in uniform two years. Subalterns mostly had enlisted. A very few were promoted sergeants, but direct commissioning remained the rule.[6]

As for the battalion commanders, Scott's Brigade will stand as a sample of the whole. Major (later Brigadier General) Henry Leavenworth (Ninth) was 30. So was Major (later Brigadier General) John McNeil (Eleventh). Major (later Major General) Thomas Sidney Jesup (25th) was 26. The old man was Colonel (later Major General) Hugh Brady of the Twenty-second. He was an ancient 45 years old. He had enlisted in 1792, and served with Wayne at Fallen Timbers (1794). Resigning in 1800, he

rejoined the army with the others in 1812. Thus the regiment (really battalion) commanders were men of local standing, commonly with some military experience in the militia but without formal military education or much experience in the field.[7] The company-grade officers and the enlisted men had even less experience than the senior officers on the average, though most of the men had been with their units since 1812, and thus had acquired whatever military habits come of being beaten in every engagement for two campaigns.[8]

What made this force different from the rest of the United States Army was that from March through June, it had been under the personal supervision of Winfield Scott. He had arrived in Buffalo immediately after his appointment as Brigadier General, armed with two copies of a French drill manual and a ferocious determination. He would need every ounce of it.[9]

The troops he had acquired were typical American soldiers of the time. That is to say, they maneuvered in columns of droves, and used bayonets to hold candles. The officers were too ignorant themselves to do anything about this, and don't seem to have felt any particular urge to.

Scott thus had the work of Baron von Steuben and Anthony Wayne to do all over again, but this time the lesson would stick. He organized the officers into squads and companies and maneuvered them personally, he as a sergeant, they as privates.[10] This was not done easily. At one point the guardhouse contained nine officers and only 17 enlisted men.[11] The day came, though, when the officers could pass on their painfully acquired knowledge, and drill began in earnest. For three months the men drilled 10 hours a day, by squad, company and battalion, and finally by brigade, until they were the best drilled troops ever seen on the continent. After

three months of incessant drill, even combat would look appealing, which might have been part of the idea.[12]

The volunteers arrived while this was in progress, and one of them described it:

> Regulations new to us and very strict were now adopted. We rose at 4 O'clock (reveille beat) and answered to our names. We had fifteen minutes to prepare for drill, which generally lasted one hour. Breakfast being over, the regiment was formed, roll again called, guards detailed, and the regiments dismissed for a short time. The Seargeants' drill came next, which generally lasted until eleven O'clock. At two the Adjutant-General drilled, which was then dismissed till nine, when the roll was again called and we retired to rest.[13]

In the meantime there was more work to be done. Sanitation measures were enforced, and to the amazement of the hospital surgeon, the disease rate plummeted.[14] Military etiquette was introduced and insisted upon, to instill both discipline and pride.[15] Uniforms were found. They were gray rather than the regulation blue, but they were better than the rags they replaced.[16] Pioneers were raised in May. There was no place for them in the official organization, but Scott understood the need. When Porter, Ripley and Brown came to assume their commands, Scott presented them with an army.

Whatever might be the case with Eton and Waterloo, the battles of Chippewa, Lundy's Lane and Fort Erie were won on the drill-fields of Buffalo.

The Anglo-Canadian Army

The senior officers of the British forces in Upper Canada were Lieutenant General Sir George Gordon Drummond, Major General Phineas Riall, and Colonel Hercules Scott.

Drummond was 43 years old, and had been a British officer for 25 of them. In his time he had seen battle in Holland, the West Indies and Egypt. He was an extremely aggressive and confident leader, but in the course of the campaign of 1814 he always proved better at explaining why things had not gone well than at actually doing them as he planned.[17]

Beneath him, and in immediate command of the Niagara frontier at the start of the invasion, was Major General Riall. Riall had seen 20 years' service, but little combat. The invasion of 1814 was his first chance at military glory. Independently wealthy, this "active and intelligent young man" had risen by purchasing every purchasable grade, and so was a Major General at just short of middle age. Of course, the same could be said of the Duke of Wellington. Riall was an extremely brave man, which perhaps made him more aggressive tactically than he might otherwise have been. As he had never seen American troops in battle, he acquired a contempt for them, based on the accounts of his colleagues, which went beyond what more experienced men would have considered safe.[18]

No Brigadier Generals were present, and only one full Colonel--Hercules Scott of the 103rd Foot. Since in normal British practice regiments were commanded by Lieutenant Colonels, Scott was intended to serve as a brigade commander. Scott had served under Abercromby in Egypt, and under Sir Arthur Wellesley (now Duke of Wellington) in his Indian campaigns. This would indicate a minimum of about 15 years' service. Scott was loved by his men, and highly respected by Drummond, a compliment he did not return.[19]

Less is known about the specific officers of the British than the American armies, though more is known about the British officer corps of the period than about its American opposite number. Remembering that we

are speaking in general terms, we may say that the social background of the British Army's officers was very much that of their American opposite numbers, but that the Americans had mostly distinguished themselves in law or land-ownership before their commission, while in the British Army the family was so distinguished and the officer himself (having enlisted very young) had little advanced education or non-military experience. On the other hand, he had much more time in grade and general experience of military life. Most had little more combat experience, since the units involved were not the veterans of Wellington's army who would be coming later in the summer. On the other hand, the experience of the units stationed in Canada was that of victory only. Some of the actions had been fairly hard-fought, but no British force had yet lost an open field battle in the war.

The enlisted men of the British Army had little more combat experience than their American cousins, since the regiments involved had long been stationed in Canada. They did have a tradition of victory, though, and while none of them were acquainted with Winfield Scott, there was an emphasis on drill and discipline in the British Army which had made them incomparably superior to any Americans they had thus far encountered. Their main fault was being incurably desertion-prone, but this could be minimized as long as the army remained on Canadian soil. Garrison duty at Fort Niagara, though, was a nightmare of vanishing soldiers.[20]

The British forces opposing the invasion had no stable brigade structure. They consisted of individual battalions spread out among towns and forts all over Upper Canada. At Fort Niagara, Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton of the 100th commanded 707 men, most of his own regiment. At Fort George and Mississagua were 1,149 men under Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon

of the Royal Scots. The Royal Scots and elements of the 103rd comprised most of the infantry. At Fort Erie, Major Buck of the King's commanded 163 men, mostly of the 6th. Between Fort George and Fort Erie there were garrisons at Queenston (298 men under Major Deane of the Royal Scots) and Chippewa (578 under Colonel Young of the King's). Riall thus had 2,895 men actually on the frontier, almost all of them regulars. The difficulty was that they were dispersed all along the river, and any invasion would have a temporary local superiority.

Behind the front were 344 men at Long Point. At Burlington were 499 under Colonel Hercules Scott and at York, under Colonel Stewart of the Royal Scots were 1,089.[21]

Something close to 4,500 men were thus in the vicinity, all but about 500 of them regulars. In addition to this were perhaps 700 Indians and the Sedentary Militia, totaling perhaps 1,000.

Long-range advantage would thus be with the defender, who could bring more of his power to bear.

The Commencement of the Campaign

On July 1st, Brown received orders from Secretary of War Armstrong to begin the campaign in earnest. Brown was to cross the Niagara, seize Fort Erie and the bridge over the Chippewa, and advance to Queenston. From there he could threaten Fort George, and await the arrival of Commodore Isaac Chauncey with the Lake Ontario Fleet, carrying reinforcements, supplies, and heavy artillery. With these, Brown could clear the entire line of the Niagara of British troops--a necessary preliminary for a drive on York the capital of the Upper Province.[22]

Brown lost no time. On the 2nd, he made a brief reconnaissance of the river, accompanied by the engineers McRae and Wood, and two of his Brigadiers, Scott and Porter. Porter was a native New Yorker, and familiar with the region, and Scott had taken part in the invasions of 1812 and 1813.[23]

Scott wanted to land on Canadian soil and capture Fort Erie on the 4th of July, which would also grant a day for preparations, but Brown insisted that the crossing should take place the next morning.[24]

Scott and his brigade were to land about a mile below (north of) Fort Erie, while Ripley and his men were to land directly across from Buffalo, about a mile south of the Fort. The initial landings were to be completed before sunrise on the 3rd, thus freeing the boats to carry over the remainder of the men and equipment in a second wave.[25]

When the plan was announced on the evening of the 2nd, Ripley protested loudly. He was convinced that he would bear the brunt of the British resistance, and demanded a change of plan. Brown rather coldly informed him that any change of plan would mean postponing the crossing, now scheduled for before daybreak of the 3rd, and that there would be no such postponement. Ripley tendered his resignation, only to have that too refused.[26]

By 2:00 AM July 3rd, Scott and 150 of his men were in the lead boat of the crossing. As they neared the Canadian bank, Scott, anxious to be the first man across, nearly became the first casualty. Thinking the boat about to reach shallow water, he plunged in, sword held high, in full uniform and cocked hat. He had just time enough to shout "TOO DEEP!" before he disappeared into the Niagara, leaving only the tip of his sword visible, with his cocked hat floating on the water. Fortunately he was

recovered by his aides, and a few minutes later was indeed the first man ashore, though in rather less splendor than he had anticipated.[27]

There was no serious resistance. By daybreak Scott's Brigade was entirely across and the boats were picking up Porter's Brigade and the impedimentia. Meanwhile Brown, having seen Scott safely across, went upstream to check on Ripley. That was a different story altogether. Ripley had gotten lost in the fog, and the bulk of the Second Brigade was still on the American side of the Niagara in considerable confusion. Brown used some of Scott's boats to correct the situation, Ripley being nowhere to be found.[28]

To be fair, Ripley did have his problems. His transport consisted of two gunboats and two boats with a capacity of 50 men each. Since the gunboats drew too much water to come closer than 3/4 of a mile away from shore, the landing could only be slow at best.[29]

Brown placed the remainder of the Second Brigade under the orders of Colonel Gardner and sent them to land behind Scott and take their assigned place in the encirclement of Fort Erie. Soon after Gardner was in position, Ripley and the remainder of the Second Brigade joined him--hours late. By this time artillery was already being placed on the heights around Fort Erie, which capitulated at 6:00 PM with 137 officers and men.[30]

Riall was already beginning to react. Elements of three regiments were being assembled to repel the invasion--a totally inadequate force, unless one shared the prevailing British contempt for American fighting qualities. The regiments were the 8th (King's) from York, where it had been resting, the 1st (Royal Scots) with five of ten companies on garrison duty, and the 100th (less detachments) under Lieutenant Colonel the Marquis of Tweeddale.

On July 4th, the Americans began marching north along the Niagara toward the new British fortifications at Chippewa Creek. A small garrison under Lieutenant McDonough was left at Fort Erie. By evening Scott, commanding the van, reached the open plain between Street Creek and Chippewa Creek, and pulled back behind Street Creek to await the rest of the division. The First Brigade had advanced 16 miles, despite the destruction of bridges and continual harassment by the 100th Foot, and they needed rest.

While Scott and the First Brigade remained south of Street Creek, the Marquis of Tweeddale and the 100th Foot withdrew north of Chippewa Creek and awaited Riall with the King's and Royal Scots. Riall was particularly encouraged by the Marquis' observation that his American opponents wore gray rather than the regulation blue of the regulars. Riall, who despised even the regulars, concluded that he was facing the Buffalo Militia, and fully intended to put an end to the impertinence of pitting them against British regulars.

Chippewa

Rarely in history have both sides been so confident the night before an engagement. Riall, an able but by no means brilliant officer, had formed an even lower opinion of the American Army than that prevalent in the British service. In this he had been aided by the advice of Drummond, who informed him that the dispersion of the Niagara force would only seem dangerous to one "unacquainted with the character of the Enemy."[31] The American command, on the other hand, seems to have had no notion that a battle was in the offing. In two days they had taken Fort Erie and advanced through 16 miles of relatively difficult terrain. Now the men

could rest and hold a belated celebration of the Fourth of July while the officers worked on the problem of crossing the Chippewa, a formidable obstacle. None of the American senior officers seems to have contemplated that the British and Canadians would cross over and thus have it blocking their retreat route.

This brings one to consideration of the terrain itself. As the site of Chippewa is rapidly becoming a suburb of Niagara Falls, first-hand observation of the battlefield is limited. However, all contemporary accounts agree with present-day observations that the battle was fought on a plain flat as a table-top. The southern limit of the battle is marked by Street's Creek, and the northern by the Chippewa, sometimes called a creek, but more properly termed a river. It had earlier halted the American advance as it was too broad and deep to be easily forded by infantry, let alone artillery. The sole bridge was guarded by a British battery, and so could not be taken by storm without horrendous losses. The River Road (now Niagara Parkway) ran through a plain extending from the banks of the Niagara to a woods a considerable distance inland. The plain thus formed was two miles long and perhaps 300 yards wide. Both sides were deployed on the "safe" side of their respective streams, and had to cross over to the battlefield on a single bridge.

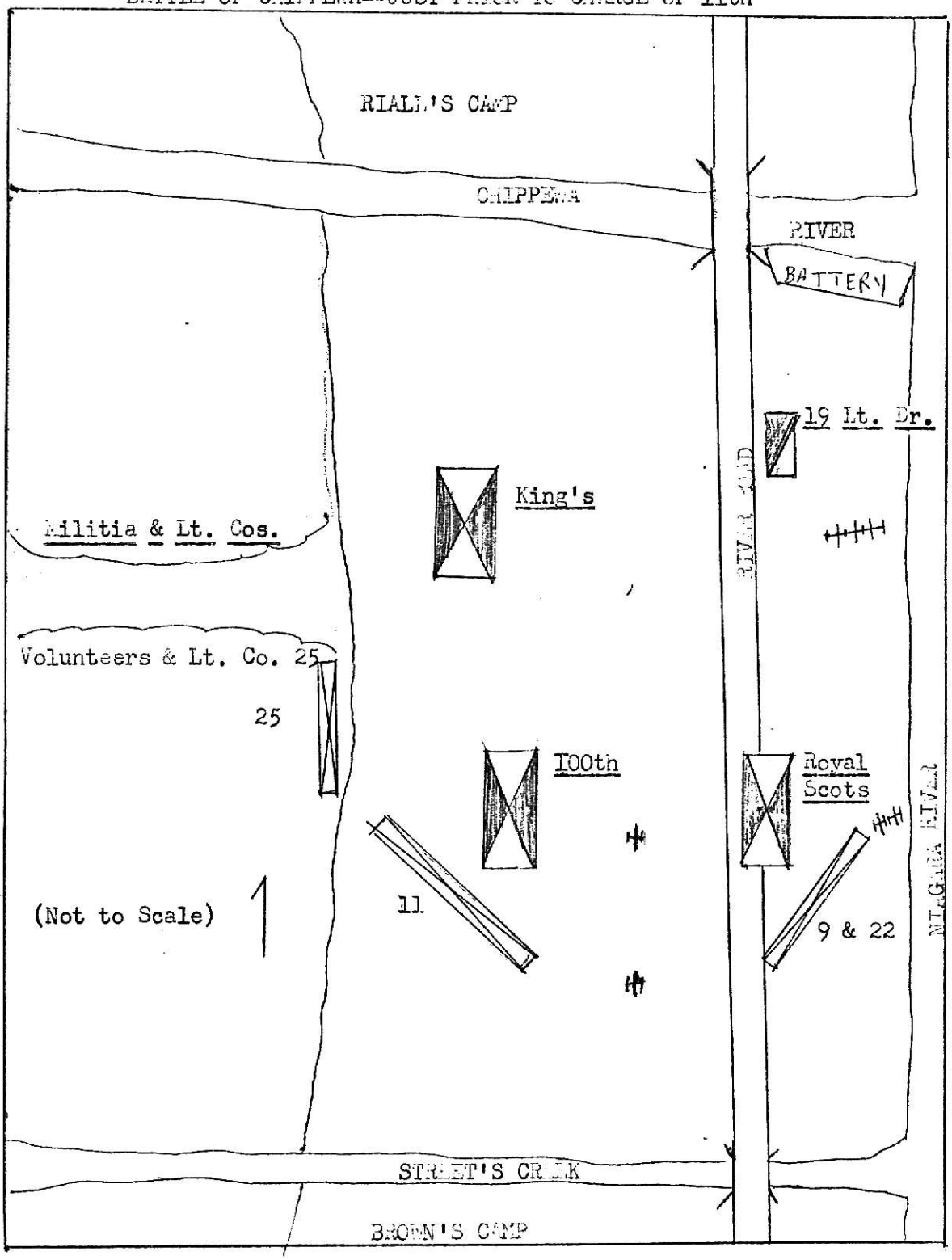
Throughout the morning and afternoon, the Americans endeavored to build a bridge above the British position on the Chippewa, and were harassed by the militia and Indians, who were more adapted to this sort of work than the bulk of the British regulars. Brown then countered by sending out Porter and his volunteers and Indians. (In this case only the Pennsylvania Volunteers, the New Yorkers not yet being up.) This combat continued for some time without serious loss, neither militia nor Indians

feeling any urgent need to close to the effective range of smoothbore musketry. Suddenly, in the midst of these mock-soldiers came the light companies of the three British regular battalions. Porter and his men fled without serious loss, but took no part in the fighting for the rest of the afternoon.[32]

The fighting now began in earnest. The British van advanced in skirmish order, with the light companies of the Royal Scots, King's and 100th, and 300 of the 2nd Lincoln Militia in the woods. To their right were about 300 Indians. To their left, on the plain were elements of three regular battalions; the King's (480 men), Royal Scots (500) and 100th (450). On the extreme left was a battery of two 24's and a 5 1/2" howitzer. In the center of the regulars were three 6's.[33]

When Brown realized that a battle had begun in earnest, he sent Scott's Brigade to engage the enemy in front while Ripley's Brigade forded Street's Creek upstream and outflanked them. Scott already had his men under arms in anticipation of a parade that afternoon, and advanced immediately, accompanied by Towson's Battery of three 12's. He was openly contemptuous of the notion of finding a serious body of the enemy, doubting if he would have as many as 300 of the enemy to face. Nonetheless, Scott ordered his Brigade over the bridge, deployed into line and began to advance.[34] At that moment the first real advantage of the campaign was gained by the Americans. The British officers had only to watch the Americans cross the bridge under fire and deploy with parade-ground precision to realize that these men, despite their gray uniforms, were not the militia they had bargained for. Riall summed it up: "These, by God, are regulars!" If the statement is apocryphal, or at least an improvement on the original, the attitude it betrays is accurate enough.[35]

BATTLE OF CHIPPEWA—JUST PRIOR TO CHARGE OF 11th



> We had never seen those gray jackets before. We supposed it was only a line of militia men and wondered why you did not run at the first fire. We began to doubt when we found you stood firmly three or four rounds and when at length in the midst of our battery blaze we found you "port arms" and advance upon us, we were utterly amazed. It was clear enough we had something besides militia men to deal with.[36]

Disregarding Porter's Indians, who were already out of action, 2,100 British, Canadians and Indians now confronted roughly 1,900 Americans. The numbers of reliable troops on both sides were essentially equal, though, and irregulars had little effect on the battle.

Scott had three battalions of infantry, totaling about 1,400; the 25th, the 11th, and the combined battalion of the 9th and 22nd. He was supported by Towson with three 12's.

Riall had the Royal Scots, King's and 100th; all with companies detached, but fully as strong as Scott's battalions. He was supported by two 24's and a five and one-half inch howitzer, and by a troop of the 19th Light Dragoons.

Scott's deployment is fairly clear. Towson's artillery crossed the bridge first, and deployed on the American right, on the River Road. Leavenworth with the combined battalion of the 9th and 22nd, was immediately to the left of the guns, his right flank thrown forward.[37] There was an interval between Leavenworth and the 11th, which was commanded by McNeil, Colonel Campbell having been mortally wounded by a roundshot while crossing the bridge. The 11th had its left thrown forward, thus forming, with the 9/22nd, a hollow V. The 25th, under Jessup, took the extreme left, going into the woods to protect Scott's left and (hopefully) menace Riall's right.[38]

All three battalions deployed in line to fight: that is, every company was in the firing line. Whether the line was three- or two-deep

is unclear. The manual undoubtedly specified three ranks, but then so did the British manual, and no British battalion had formed in three ranks in years. There is later evidence in favor of a two-rank formation, but nothing directly relating to Chippewa.

The British formation is even more unclear. Riall's militia and Indians, and the Light Companies of the Royal Scots and 100th were in the woods confronting Jessup. Riall formed for attack, with his artillery and dragoons on the River Road, less than 400 yards from Towson, and advanced with the Royal Scots and 100th in the lead, and the King's somewhat to the right and rear. The Royal Scots were on the British left (toward the Niagara) and the 100th on the right (toward the woods). The formation the battalions were in is not known. Kimball believes that each battalion was in line, having a total frontage of 435 files, two ranks deep.[39] It is this author's opinion, though, that the outcome of the battle is more easily understood if the battalions were in column of companies, that is, each company still formed in a two-deep line, but the companies of a battalion formed up one behind the other, to facilitate movement and provide an extra "push" for shock action. It was not the customary British deployment, but it was used from time to time, especially against inferior infantry who could be relied on to break at the threat of cold steel. The use of this formation fits with Riall's known attitude toward Americans and with the disproportionate casualties.[40]

Riall thus crippled himself in a firefight. Only the leading companies of the Royal Scots and 100th (say one man in five) could fire effectively, while the King's was out of action whichever formation the others were in. In contrast, every man of Scott's Brigade could fire, and at a better target than a thin line would have afforded.

An artillery duel was meantime in progress, in which a British 24 succeeded in dismounting one of Towson's guns, but one of Towson's 12's ignited a tumbril containing much of the British artillery ammunition, and effectively silenced the supporting fire for the British attack. The remaining two American guns could now fire cannister at the British infantry.[41]

Heedless of the awkwardness of their formation, the British infantry continued their advance. At a range of 80 paces the 1st and 100th were ordered to charge. This only succeeded in bringing them closer to the murderous American volley-lines, but they could not strike home. Flesh and blood could stand no more. With the attack halted, Scott approached the Eleventh Infantry and roared "They say the Americans fear the bayonet. Give the lie to that slander! Charge!"[42] The voice of the giant (6' 5") General signaled the end of the battle. The 1st and 100th gave way in confusion, covered by the 8th, which had not been seriously engaged. The Light Dragoons, who had been in support, hitched their horses to the limbers to remove the artillery.[43]

It was not a rout. The British succeeded in bringing away all their guns, and destroyed the Chippewa bridge before a light company of the 25th, which led the pursuit, could cross.

The official British casualties were 236 killed, 322 wounded, and 46 missing. The official American casualties were 61 killed, 255 wounded, and 19 missing.[44] In most cases, official casualty returns should be looked on with suspicion, but these seem to be reasonably accurate. Virtually the entire American loss fell on Scott's Brigade--48 of the 61 killed, and 227 of 255 wounded. (See Appendix.) On the British side the worst sufferers by far were the 1st and 100th Foot. Both lost upward of 200

men, thus accounting for 4/5 of the British-Canadian losses between them. In the 100th, 14 of 19 officers became casualties. This Regiment was now unfit for field operations, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon of the 1st and Tweeddale of the 100th were both among the wounded. Riall escaped unscathed, though he exposed himself so recklessly during the retreat that there is some suspicion that he was deliberately seeking a hero's death. A letter by an officer of the 100th (Captain John Stevenson) perhaps summarizes the impact of the battle:

> . . . Our regiment has been cut to pieces. I know not, except under the mercy and kindness of Almighty God, how I escaped. Men were falling beside me like hail . . . thirteen officers killed and wounded and one hundred and eighty men. . . . The enemy must have suffered severely. . . . They must have been at least seven thousand men.[45]

The psychological impact of the battle was immense. British regulars, fighting in daylight on an open plain had been decisively beaten by a force of Americans they outnumbered and outgunned. Not even in the darkest days of the American and Bourbon war had such a thing occurred. The Yankees began to sing of British fleeing before them, and when Riall requested a truce to bury the dead (a formal admission of defeat, if one was needed) Brown gave the grim reply that he could bury all the British he could kill. In the eyes of Americans, a blow had been dealt to British prestige from which the Empire never recovered.[46] There would be no more dispute of America's ability to match the best fighting men of the mother country at their own game.

Interlude

Even winning a battle is no very pleasant fate in some respects. The rest of the Fifth was spent taking care of the wounded of both nationalities. The Sixth was consumed in burying the dead and conveying

the wounded to Buffalo. The day was not wasted otherwise, however. Brown found an old man who could guide him to the old timber road upstream from the British battery guarding the bridge site. Porter and Ripley, accompanied by the engineers, inspected the road on the Seventh, and Ripley and Porter were ordered out to make it passable and build a bridge on the morning of the Eighth. Alas! Ripley's caution again caused difficulties. Despite his improvised pontoon train (barn doors and small boats) he did not cross the Creek before the arrival of a furious Brown who took over himself. Artillery was sited to cover the project. When the British approached the point (evidently Ripley had worked unopposed) the guns soon drove them off and Harris of the dragoons swam across at the head of his troop to secure the crossing. As the British no longer opposed, the remainder of the men came across in boats, save for Captain Line's Company of the Pennsylvania Volunteers who would go no further into Canada. They were sent back to garrison Fort Erie.[47]

The next morning (the Ninth) the Brigades of Scott and Ripley, with the artillery advanced on Fort George. Porter was left behind to guard the baggage and rebuild the Chippewa Bridge. Probably Brown was still seething over the performance of Captain Line. The old flaws of the volunteers were not yet entirely overcome.[48]

Riall, having been outflanked on the Eighth, retired with 836 men to the head of the Lake to await reinforcements. He left 1,554 men guarding the three British-held forts--Niagara, George, and Mississagua. Brown camped on the Queenston Heights and awaited the arrival of the fleet under Chauncey.[49]

Had his orders been adhered to, Chauncey and the Lake Ontario Fleet would have arrived at the mouth of the Niagara on the 10th of July,

carrying supplies, siege artillery and reinforcements. With these, it would prove possible to force the surrender of the British-held forts, and then continue along the shore of the lake to Burlington and York, with the army traveling light and the fleet carrying supplies.

Lake Ontario, though, was still a hotly-contested body of water. In opposition to any such operation there was the British fleet, under the command of Sir Lucas Yeo. Both nations had been engaging in major ship-building programs, and the naval arms race remained remarkably even. Whichever fleet seemed to have a slight advantage at the moment had control of the lake, since neither commander would risk an engagement without a clear superiority. The Secretary of War's order to cross the Niagara and begin the campaign had indicated that the fleet might be expected on July 15th, but Brown himself had challenged Chauncey to meet him at Fort George on the 10th. On Brown's arrival, though, he found nothing but British ships.

By the 13th, Brown was deeply concerned. He wrote Chauncey an almost pleading letter, outlining the conquest of Upper Canada (given naval support) assuring him that the British fleet was dispersed and would not fight, and saying in so many words "for God's sake, let me see you."[50]

Brown's anxiety is understandable. As he waited, a steady stream of British regiments flowed from Bordeaux to Canada, and every week meant more British strength at York, and on the Niagara frontier itself. Yeo's ships carried fresh regiments to Riall, but Brown's riflemen and heavy artillery remained bottled up in Sackett's Harbor with Chauncey's fleet. The trickle of new men reaching Brown could not even replace the losses due to attrition.

The attrition had two causes. First, Brown was suffering severely from desertion. He was in a hostile countryside now, and could hardly attempt to chase down deserters, many of whom went straight to the British camp in any event. Second, the countryside was hostile militarily, and not just in an abstract legal sense. The previous campaigns on the frontier seem to have fostered the growth of a national spirit, and this was aggravated by Brown's need to forage among the already impoverished inhabitants. Stone's mounted New York Volunteers and Wilcoxs' renegade Canadians worsened the situation by wanton destruction, until it reached the point described by Major McFarland of the 23rd:

> The militia and Indians plundered and burnt everything. The whole population is against us; not a foraging party but is fired on, and not unfrequently returns with missing numbers. This state was to be anticipated. The militia have burnt several private dwellings and on the 19th inst. burnt the village of St. Davids, consisting of 30 or 40 houses. This was done within three miles of our camp, and my battalion was sent to cover the retreat, as they had been sent to scour the country, and it was presumed they might be pursued. My God, what a service! I never witnessed such a scene, and had not the commanding officer of the party, Lieut.-Colonel Stone, been disgraced and sent out of the army, I would have resigned.[51]

Even while Brown was composing his letter to Chauncey, Colonel Hercules Scott was leaving Burlington with 600 men of the 103rd. A levy of the Sedentary Militia added 1,000 men to Riall's force, and the Glengarry Light Infantry arrived at about the same time. So did the elite companies of the 104th, and the 89th was rapidly approaching. To add to Brown's difficulties, his Indians went home, while Riall's remained.[52]

Without the arrival of Chauncey, Brown's only method of resolving the situation was to attempt to storm the British-held forts. The question was whether or not that was a practical option. Certainly Riall's

engineers felt that it could be done, when asked for a professional opinion.[53]

The question was largely one of numbers. The British estimate that the forts could be taken was based on the assumption that the American army consisted of five or six thousand men, with plentiful heavy artillery. If Brown had actually had that many, the operation might well have been more attractive. His problem was that he had only about half that many regular infantry, who would take almost all the casualties, and they had to last him all the way to York. The taking of the forts was a preliminary operation, not an end in itself, and he dared not suffer crippling losses in the attempt.

And the losses might well have been crippling. Each fort could be supported by the artillery of at least one of the others, and Riall's growing field force could threaten the flanks and rear of any attack. The only hope of a bloodless conquest was the arrival of Chauncey's fleet, with siege mortars, large-caliber guns, and plentiful ammunition.

On the 23rd of July, the bombshell struck in the form of a letter from Major-General Edmund P. Gaines, commander of the land forces at Sackett's Harbor. It was dated the 20th, and informed Brown that the riflemen and guns he had requested were still bottled up in the harbor for lack of cooperation from Chauncey. It went on to say that Chauncey was sick, and refused to let the fleet (now completely ready) sail without him. In any event, Chauncey intended to seek out Yeo for a decisive battle, rather than assist Brown.[54]

Few would have blamed Brown had he given up the entire campaign at this point, but that was not yet his intention. Since the original plan, involving first the taking of the forts and then the destruction of the

Anglo-Canadian field army, was no longer workable, Brown devised a rather more desperate substitute. He would destroy the British field army in a pitched battle, and then concern himself with the forts. Then he could proceed to subdue Upper Canada.[55]

The first requirement of the plan was that he be able to bring Riall to battle, and then inflict crippling losses on him. This would not be easy, since Riall lost much of his enthusiasm for fighting Americans at Chippewa, and in any event was under no necessity to fight. His object in the campaign was defensive, and could be achieved simply by maintaining his position until the armies went into winter quarters. Besides, Riall was in a much better position to replace casualties.

Nonetheless, Brown was prepared to attempt it, and did so in two ways: first, on the 24th, he withdrew from his camp at Queenston Heights and fell back to Chippewa with every appearance of disorder, to encourage Riall to follow. Second, he began preparing the army for a period of rapid maneuvers by shifting equipment from Chippewa to Fort Schlosser, directly across the Niagara. All but a minimum of baggage was to be stored in Schlosser, while the field army took from there enough food and ammunition to let it act independently for a considerable period of time.[56]

Riall sent forward a small brigade of light troops (Pearson's) to the junction of the Portage or River Road and Lundy's Lane, very near the Falls, and two or three miles from Brown's camp.

The exact strength and composition of the combatants at this point will be dealt with in the Appendix, but a view of their dispositions is needed now. The British van, under Pearson, consisted of the Glengarry Light Infantry and the Incorporated Militia, both native Canadian units

trained as light infantry. A small detachment of Dragoons accompanied this force, and Riall himself joined it on the morning of the 25th.

The three forts were manned by the 41st, 89th and 100th, together with elements of the Royal Scots and King's. These were supplemented by artillerymen, dragoons, the Colored Corps and various small units.

West of the River Road, spread out in at least three small bodies were the remainder of the King's and Royal Scots, the 103rd, the Sedentary Militia, about 700 Indians, and the usual assortment of artillery and dragoons.

All the forces were thus in supporting distance of one another, but there was little unity of command to make sure that they did support one another. The force (including the remainder of the 89th, which arrived that day) was in excess of 6,000, of whom 4,500 were in reliable units, the remainder being Sedentary Militia and Indians.[57]

All the brigades of the American army were together at the Chippewa, but there were nonetheless detachments. Newly-arrived riflemen and elements of Porter's New York Volunteers (about 250 men) were on the American Bank, watching Fort Niagara. A force of 150 regulars had been sent to Schlosser to supervise the transfer of stores to the American Bank: a necessity, for the war of maneuver Brown now intended. A further 20 men, plus perhaps some Pennsylvania Volunteers, garrisoned Fort Erie. Brown's force totaled about 4,300 men, about 3,500 of them regulars, and the remainder considerably better disciplined than the Sedentary Militia and Indians at Riall's disposal.

It is, however, one thing to speak of the strengths of the armies involved in the campaign, and quite another to determine the number of men actually engaged at Lundy's Lane. It must be pointed out that if either

commander had concentrated all his available manpower, his success would have been assured.

In order to perceive the truth of this, and to understand the coming battle, it is necessary to examine the movements of the 25th of July in detail.

Brown neither expected nor desired a decisive battle on that day, though he certainly desired to fight one soon. He was engaged in transferring stores to the American side of the Niagara, and 150 regulars were detached for that purpose. The First Infantry Regiment was marching to join him, but it could not be up before late afternoon or early evening. Since a battle could hardly be forced on him in his fortified camp, and he felt no desire to fight one, he further dispersed a large percentage of the army (especially the regulars) for fatigue duties of various sorts. Thus, while all the units of the army were at hand, they were much weaker than might otherwise have been the case.

The British position was quite different. As may be seen, the dispositions of the 24th were defensive in nature. Riall might well have been justified in this. While his army was larger, it lacked the training and cohesion of the regulars and volunteers of Brown's force. Further, Riall knew that Brown needed a victory in order to accomplish his strategic goal. Riall was under no such pressure.

Lundy's Lane

On the morning of the 25th, though, Lieutenant General Drummond himself arrived with the last of the 89th, and at once ordered operations calculated (as he thought) to place the Yankees on their proper side of the Niagara.

A small force of the 41st, Royal Scots, Indians and seamen (perhaps 600 total, under Lieutenant Colonel Tucker) were assembled at Fort Niagara, and ordered to advance toward Lewiston. Drummond calculated that a threat to his communications would send Brown back across the Niagara. At the same time, the 89th, with small detachments of the Royal Scots and King's were assembled as a reinforcement for the van, now under Riall.[58]

(It should be noted that the river-crossing phase of the operation had been thought of before Drummond could observe local conditions. The orders are dated the 23rd of July.)

To this day it is not clear exactly what happened to the force sent to the American side of the Niagara. The incident was so overshadowed by the coming battle that both sides slighted it in the official reports. It is clear that the force actually crossed over under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Tucker. They were evidently delayed in crossing, and found the American Volunteers and rifles prepared for them. There were few casualties, but Tucker saw little hope of carrying out his instructions, and withdrew to the Canadian bank. Drummond, with the Light Company of the 41st, joined the reinforcement marching to Riall.

While this was going on, though, Colonel Swift of the New York Volunteers, senior American officer on the right bank of the Niagara, sent word to Brown that he was being assailed by large numbers of British, if not by the entire British Army.[59]

It was precisely the impression Drummond had intended to convey, but he had misjudged his man. Brown, on hearing the news, concluded that the British van at Lundy's Lane must be unsupported, and gave the First Brigade permission to attack it. (He had been appealing for such permission all day.)

Brown had earlier forbidden such a move, wishing to have his entire army assembled before risking a major battle. Now, however, due to the exaggerations of the militia commander concerning how many British he faced, it seemed that Pearson was unsupported. Indeed, he might be the only body of English troops between Brown and the undermanned forts.

At roughly 5:00 PM, Scott was given his permission. He was to advance with his brigade, Towson's artillery, and all the mounted troops. His orders were essentially the same as Tucker's had been; to provoke a defensive reaction from the enemy commander. Scott had perhaps 930 regular infantry, 100 artillery and 70 dragoons, with 100 of the mounted volunteers. He had 1,200 men and three guns to Pearson's 900-1,000 men. More men than this were attached to both formations, but Pearson had left behind perhaps 200 sick, and Scott, besides his sick (300), had marched within fifteen minutes of being given permission, and thus left behind 150-200 men on various fatigue duties and 75-100 at Fort Schlosser. As fast as Scott marched, though, the pace of events was moving faster and had already invalidated his orders.

While Scott's column had marched off to the tune of the "Washington March," Tucker's column was already withdrawing from the American bank, frustrated by the militia and rifles. While Scott approached Lundy's Lane from the south, Drummond and the 89th and detachments of the Royal Scots and King's were coming from the north. For artillery support, Drummond had at least two 24's and a troop of rockets. Probably some six-pounder guns were also attached. There were certainly some of them at Lundy's Lane, whether they came with Morrison or Pearson.

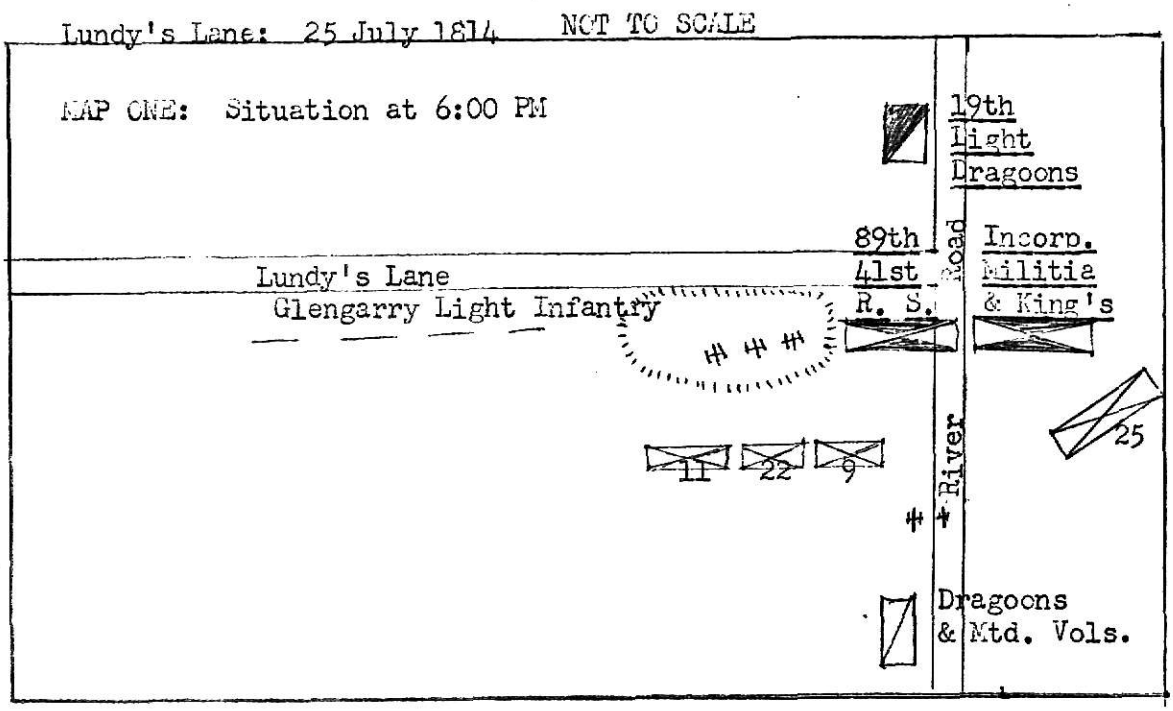
A brief review is in order. At 5:30 Pearson (with Riall) was at the intersection of the Portage road and Lundy's Lane. Scott, with the

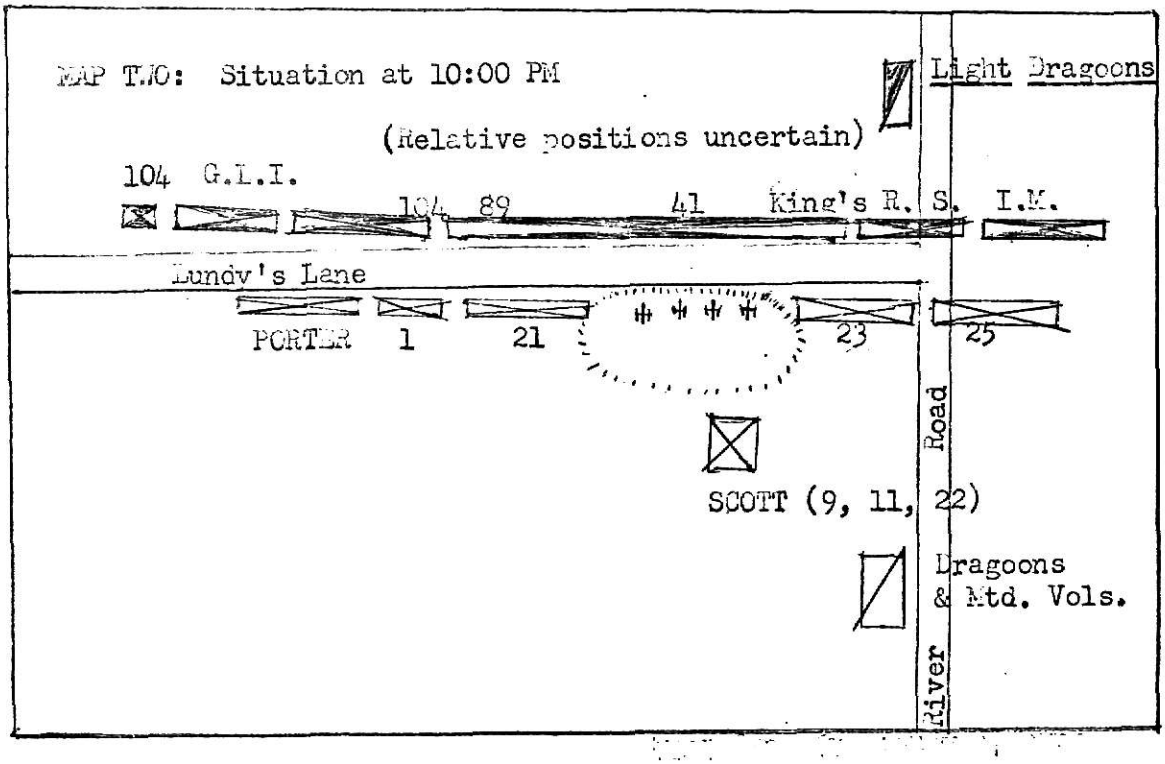
American advance, was on the Portage Road marching northward to Lundy's Lane. Drummond, with about 800 men was approaching the same point from the opposite direction. The rest of the Americans were at Chippewa Creek. The remainder of the British were at the Forts.

About half a mile from the hill which was his objective, Scott halted at a farmhouse and consulted with the occupants. He learned that the British force ahead of him was substantially stronger than he had supposed. The prudent thing to have done would be to withdraw and consult General Brown. Instead, he sent word to Brown of the situation, and requested reinforcements. Scott gives no adequate reason for this decision in his memoirs. He writes of the difficulties of withdrawal at close range, and the demoralizing effect on the army. What is much more likely is that either Scott believed he could probably win anyway, and did not say so in his memoirs because it hadn't happened that way, or that after pressing for permission to advance all day, he couln't bear the humiliation of retreating without firing a shot.[60]

For whatever reason, Scott recommenced the advance, with the Ninth in the van and the 25th sent out wide to the right to attempt to outflank the Canadian position. In advance of the main column were the cavalry and Captain Pentland's Company of the 22nd.

The American advance nearly succeeded unopposed. Riall opted for an immediate withdrawal. Scott outnumbered him, had artillery support, and was better trained. They were actually leaving when Drummond came up with Morrison's column. Despite his alarm, and his inability accurately to measure enemy strength in a woods, Drummond ordered Riall back into position and hurried Morrison's column into line with it.


Lundy's Lane: 25 July 1814 NOT TO SCALE
MAP ONE: Situation at 6:00 PM
19th Light Dragoons
89th
41st
R. S.
Incorp. Militia & King's
Lundy's Lane
Glengarry Light Infantry
Road
11
22
9
River
25
Dragoons & Mtd. Vols.


MAP TWO: Situation at 10:00 PM
(Relative positions uncertain)
Light Dragoons
104 G.I.I.
104
89
41
King's R.
S.
I.M.
Lundy's Lane
PORTER
1
21
23
25
Road
SCOTT (9, 11, 22)
Dragoons & Mtd. Vols.
River

From left to right the British line was: Incorporated Militia and detachment 8th Foot; 89th, detachment 1st, Light Company 41st; Artillery; Glengarry Light Infantry. The 19th Light Dragoons were on the Queenston Road in the rear.[61] (See plan.)

Scott drew up his artillery on the road, with three regiments in line to the left of the guns, the Ninth, the Twenty-second, and the Eleventh. The Twenty-fifth remained in the woods and completely flanked the British left.

It was now 6:00 PM. Scott ordered a general advance of the Ninth (Right), Twenty-Second and Eleventh (Left). He seems to have been out of touch with the Twenty-fifth, but their last orders were also for an advance.

While the fighting began, Major Jones and Captain Douglass sped to the Chippewa with news of the battle. According to the account of Brown, they met an army which was already marching to the sound of the guns. This could not be so. It had taken Scott one hour, including a halt, to march from the main camp to Lundy's Lane. If Brown really marched to the battlefield as soon as he heard the artillery (The guns went into action at 6:00.) then it took him two hours to cover the same ground in such great haste that work details were never called in. Also, Brown's account was not published until years after the event. What seems most likely is that Brown had in fact waited for word from Scott, and then came in great haste, without even making provision for the forwarding of work details. After the event, however, he found such subservience galling, and in his memoirs, if not even in his memory, marched promptly on his own initiative.[62]

At the same time, Drummond, realizing that a serious battle was in the offing, ordered Colonel Hercules Scott to assemble a column and hurry to Lundy's Lane. Scott had his own 103rd, and the headquarters divisions (half-battalions) of the King's and Royal Scots. Evidently small bodies of militia accompanied both this and the earlier column, but no effort was made to bring the bulk of the militia, or Indians to the battle. For that matter, most of the 41st, the remains of the 100th, and about half of both the Royal Scots and the King's stayed on garrison duty throughout the battle.

Numbers present at the battle will be dealt with in detail in the Appendix, but it would appear that the total British force was about 3,100: perhaps 1,800 at the start, and 1,300 under Scott. The American forces were roughly 2,400: 1,000 under Winfield Scott, and 1,400 brought up by Brown.

Scott's advance was a bluff. He simply did not have the manpower necessary to seize the enemy's position. In all probability he should have been annihilated by the waiting British and Canadians, except for the presence of Jessup and the 25th. While Scott commanded the attention of the Anglo-Canadian army, Jessup found a path through the woods by the river that was not watched. While Scott's other units advanced slowly and carefully under fire, the 25th deployed in line at right angles to the opposing armies at the edge of the woods.

In naval warfare of this period, there was a maneuver known as "crossing the T." It consisted of placing one's ship so that one's port or starboard guns could fire while only the enemy's fore or aft guns could reply. Jessup had duplicated this feat on land. His whole battalion could fire enfilade down the ranks of the Incorporated Militia and 8th

Foot, while scarcely a man of them could reply. They broke and fled (rallying behind the 89th), leaving a substantially more even battle. The British left flank was now thrown back to counter him, so he couldn't roll up the line, but he did dominate the Queenston Road, which would be the route of British reinforcement or retreat. Captain Ketchum, with his light company, was sent to keep the road blocked.[63]

After a prolonged exchange of fire, Scott and the three regiments under his immediate command fell back to extreme range and awaited reinforcements. He simply lacked the manpower to wrest the battlefield from the British and Canadian defenders. The most he could do was maintain the contest, and try to avoid serious losses.

Finally, at about nine o'clock, the remainder of the Army of the Niagara began to come into action. The Second Brigade (the 21st and 23rd) led, with the First Regiment immediately behond and the militia somewhat to the rear.

Even in the failing light (sunset was at 8:04, and the moon was half-full), the importance of the central hill was so obvious that there was no hesitation or discussion on the use of the Second Brigade. Every surviving senior officer who wrote memoirs has claimed to be the one who proposed storming the position, and most were probably doing so in all honesty.

The 21st (Miller) went straight for the hill. The 23rd (MacFarland) deployed to the right of the 21st, and the First to the left. On the extreme left was Porter and his militia.[64]

At first glance the effort seems hopeless. Indeed, Miller, when ordered to storm the position replied only "I'll try, sir." The words are remembered because of the action that followed, not for their confidence and optimism. This is understandable. Miller, even with detachments of

the Seventeenth and Nineteenth, had less than 300 men, and the total Brigade 720 in line that evening. In support, the First had perhaps 150. It was not a proper force to take a hill from unshaken infantry and a respectable battery, and Miller knew it.[65]

The advantages are less obvious. The Second Brigade was fresh and well-trained, while the opposition had been under fire for three hours. The growing darkness would also favor an attacker.

One must also bear in mind the lack of alternatives. Brown had to have a victory, and only an attack could get him one. An attack on any point less conspicuous than the hill would almost surely have been lost in the failing light. It was not an easy decision, but it was unquestionably the right one.

Miller deployed in line, with the 23rd (MacFarland) under the personal direction of General Ripley, in column on the right of the 21st. The First was in line on the left of the 21st. As they advanced into the darkness, firing drove back both the 23rd and the First. The 23rd retreated in bad order, but rapidly reformed, "with greater speed than ever on the parade ground, though not with equal precision" and came on again. The First exhibited, by contrast, the virtues of Scott's training. After coming under fire, they withdrew about fifty yards and did not resume their place in the firing line until the crisis was passed.[66]

It is often observed that fortune comes only to those not dependent on her. This may be the general rule, but sometimes her services can be compelled. So it was that dark July night. While units advancing on either side were driven back by the British fire, Miller's handful were able to advance unseen to the bottom of the hill on which was posted the British artillery. The hill exists today much as it stood at the time of

the battle, and at twilight the imaginative observer can still see the gray line of Miller's regiment at the bottom of the hill, and the guns of the British battery where the battle monument now stands. The distance is perhaps fifty yards. Miller knew that there could be no second chance. He had no reserves and no supports. His men fired one volley, and then ran up the steep slope to bayonet the gunners before cannister could be used against them. Within minutes, the remainder of the artillerymen were prisoners and the bulk of the British army was in retreat to avoid flanking fire from the hill.[67]

By itself, the storming of the battery might have ended the battle, but it was accompanied by arrival, only minutes later, of Scott's column of the 103rd Royal Scots and King's, together with two field pieces and some sedentary militia. The Anglo-Canadian forces had lost their advantage of position, and most of their artillery, but they retained their advantage of numbers. Besides, they now had a fresh regiment, while all the Americans had been under fire and some were almost totally spent. The battle would continue.

[At some point in the hour between sunset (8:04) and Miller's charge at 9:00, probably not long before 9:00, Riall was struck in the arm by a musket ball, and was led to the rear by his aide. Dimly seeing infantry on the road ahead, the aide shouted "Make way for General Riall!" and the men quickly parted ranks--until Riall found himself in the middle of Captain Ketchum's Company of the 25th.

Ketchum soon had to withdraw to the American lines, but during his occupation of the River Road he had added substantially to the quantity and quality of the American haul of prisoners of war.][68]

After the storming of the British battery, a lull arose while the roles of attacker and defender were exchanged. From the standpoint of the Americans, the battle had been won. Now they had only to see the British off the field. They would have possession of the battlefield and the enemy's artillery. These were the surest tokens of victory. The reinforced imperial troops, on the other hand, now had to redeem a battle lost.

The immediate concern of both commanders was to regroup and form a continuous line after the storming of the hill and the arrival of reinforcements. On the American left was Porter's Brigade, composed this time of Canadians, Pennsylvanians and New Yorkers. (The Indians had evidently all gone home.) Porter estimated its strength at 300 men, since virtually all garrisons had been drawn from it. That seems something of an underestimate. Next was the 1st, approximately 150 strong, under Colonel Nichols. On its right was the triumphant 21st with detachments of the 19th and 17th. Their right was covered by the massed artillery, British and American. To the right of the guns was the 23rd flanked by the 25th (Jessup). The 25th had found its position on the road to be too warm, and had rejoined the main body. To the rear of the Battery, forming a second line, was the consolidated battalion formed from the remnants of the 9th, 11th and 22nd. The dragoons were useless on this terrain at night, so this was the entire American reserve.[69]

The British deployment is not clear. Obviously all the infantry were drawn up in a single line, and the Glengarry Light Infantry, together with the flank companies of the 104th held the right. In all probability the Incorporated Militia were on the left flank. In the center would have been the 103rd, the 89th, the Light Company of the 41st, and about half of

both the Royal Scots and King's. The Sedentary Militia probably was not employed as a body, but went into the line in small detachments.

Having regrouped and brought up all the men likely to arrive, the imperial forces began to move toward the hill in line, relying on the legendary firepower and discipline of the British Army to tear gaps in the opposing line and weaken the American morale so that a perfunctory bayonet charge could regain the hill and send the Americans down the hill in rout. It didn't quite work that way.[70]

The American units were under strict orders to reserve their fire, partly for accuracy, and partly because ammunition was already a problem for some units. As the British advance commenced, the only sounds to be heard were the voices of the NCOs attempting to keep the ranks dressed in the pitch dark. Finally, at about 60 feet, the order was given to fire. The British halted and returned the volley. For the British army the bayonet was the exploiter of victory, the musket ball the decisive weapon. They could close with the Yankees after they had shattered them with their musketry. The plan was ill-conceived. The American line held firm, and with the artillery their fire was substantially greater. At 20 yards the American artillery could fire cannister (bags of musket balls discharged into the hostile ranks like gigantic shotguns). Likewise the Yankee habit of loading three buckshot along with their musket-ball increased casualties at close range. Even British regulars could endure only a few minutes of this. Slowly the British line began to withdraw, taking their wounded with them, but marking the line with their dead.[71]

After perhaps thirty minutes, the attack began again. So extraordinary was this that the American accounts assume the arrival of British

reinforcements. There were none. The same men were advancing into the murderous fire that had already defeated them once.

While the British and Canadian forces were most probably taking more punishment, the position of Ripley's Brigade was unenviable. The rapid and accurate fire which had beaten Napoleon's veterans was being directed against them, and their ability to return the punishment was little comfort. Finally Ripley requested the commitment of the last reserve of either army. Scott's consolidated battalion, the last remnants of the 9th, 11th and 22nd, charged through the captured artillery into the British center. The move was effective, but not decisive. The British line recoiled. (Probably this was the time referred to in Drummond's report when the 103rd was thrown into temporary disorder.) Scott swung to the left, and regrouped beside Porter.[72]

By this time the American line showed considerable wear and tear. The artillery had started back to camp, having exhausted its ammunition. The 25th was formed in a single-rank line to keep a gap from developing between units.[73] The woods and plain were filled with wounded and stragglers looking for water. Those remaining in line searched the dead and wounded for cartridges. They nervously shared what few there were. Evidently some of the volunteers were already employed in trying to haul away (or over a precipice) the captured artillery.[74]

Despite all this, Scott was in his glory. He formed up his valiant band in column to turn the right flank of the British, roll up the line, and smash Drummond completely. The attack might well have worked, except that the British line extended further to the right than he thought, and so a flanking movement became a frontal attack. Some of Scott's command insisted that they were shot from the rear by elements of Porter's or

Ripley's Brigade, and in the darkness that seems all too possible. The attack was utterly crushed. The remains of Scott's men went east behind the American lines to form with the 25th. Eight platoons were formed. Only 150-200 of Scott's Brigade were still in line.[75]

Among those killed in the charge was Captain Abraham Fuller Hull, the son of Brigadier General William Hull. As A.D.C. to his father, he had been present at the surrender of Detroit (together with Miller of the 21st, surprisingly enough) and, like his cousin Captain Isaac Hull, Abraham gave his life attempting to redeem the family honor.[76]

There now began the third British attack, only a few minutes after the second attack had been repulsed. At first only the monotonous cries of "Halt! Dress! Forward!" broke the silence, then it was shattered by the crash of the remaining muskets of both armies--perhaps 2,000 in all. The hardest-fought of the three attacks had begun. The two armies were exchanging volleys at close range--so close they could shout insults at one another.

The British chain of command had been somewhat shakey throughout. Now the Americans began to break down. There were seven commanders of regular army battalions present. Of these four were wounded and one killed. Leavenworth (9th) was only slightly wounded. McNeil (11th) was shot in the knee by cannister. Brady (22nd) was shot in the side and hip. Major Jessup (25th) was severely wounded with musket balls in his hand and shoulder. Major McFarland (23rd) was killed. Of four battery commanders, Captain Biddle was carried from the field severely wounded and Captain Ritchie was left there, dead.[77]

During the third attack, the American forces suffered their most serious single loss of the battle. Scott, who had already been dismounted

twice, and been badly bruised on the side by a British cannon-ball. While the attack was at its peak, he was with the twenty-fifth, commiserating with Jessup, who had been struck in the hand. As they talked, a cry of cartridges! came from the ranks. (All of the First Brigade was short of ammunition by this time.) Almost immediately, a wounded soldier shouted "Cartridges in my box!" as he fell. Scott himself went over to recover the ammunition, and found the soldier already dead. Before he could distribute the ammunition, he was struck in the left shoulder and lost consciousness.

Scott regained his senses lying against a tree some distance to the rear. He had at first been left for dead, but two of his men, finding that he still lived, had carried him out of harm's way. After the repulse of the second attack, he was carried to Chippewa in an ambulance. Ripley was now the second in command.[78]

Some time previous, Brown had been wounded in the thigh by a musket ball. He had also received a glancing blow to his right side. He began to doubt his ability to continue on horseback. When he told Major Wood of his injuries, so lost was the gallant engineer in the battle that he only said "Never mind, General. You are winning the greatest victory of American arms." Brown realized that he would soon be unfit for command, and sent for Scott (presumably using Austin, since his favorite Aide, Spencer, had already been left for dead). The word came back that Scott was already out of the fight, and was not expected to live. So command devolved on Ripley, the bungler of Fort Erie and the crossing of the Chippewa.[79]

No aspersions should be cast on Ripley's personal bravery. No more gallant officer breathed in either army. Nor was he incompetent in an

absolute sense. Brown himself (with others) had approved his selection for Brigadier-General as the best that could be made.[80] While he was not the equal of Scott, he was a perfectly adequate brigade commander. Placed in a large enough army, he might even have been distinguished. He was simply not adequate for the strains of making strategic decisions. There was a lack of moral courage about him. He was more afraid of not doing the wrong thing than he was desirous of winning a battle.[81]

Indeed, at this point the battle seemed already won. After closing to bayonet point in places, the last British charge slowly receded. It was about 10:30, and some units had been continuously under fire for more than four hours. Brown, going to the rear but still conscious, could see the area filled with slightly wounded, and men "knocked loose" from the ranks, all searching for water. Brown was probably not thinking clearly. He sent off a message to Ripley to retire to camp to get water and ammunition and get the stragglers back into the ranks. The hill could be reoccupied tomorrow. The infantry and cavalry wearily marched homeward, leaving the British artillery for the limbers, which were coming back after taking the American artillery to Chippewa.[82]

The artillerymen barely escaped disaster. Coming on to what they thought was a deserted battlefield, they found it full of red coats. The tattered and torn British army had attempted a fourth charge up the hill, and struck air. As the artillerymen returned to camp with the astounding news, the battle of Lundy's Lane was over.[83]

The next morning saw the battlefield actually deserted, save for the dead and wounded, who were two and three deep in places. The imperial forces were camped a few miles north of the battlefield, while the Yankees were back in their old camp at Chippewa.[84]

The American camp was a place of frenzied activity. Brown, despite his wounds, attempted to resume command, gather every available man, and march back to the battlefield to seize the British artillery. Over Ripley's protests, a column actually began the march, but before long Brown realized that the army was no longer fit for battle. Far too many of his officers and his best men were dead or wounded. Even Porter, who was reluctant to withdraw the night before, objected to a resumption of the battle, now that Drummond had regained the hill and his guns. Brown again handed over command to Ripley, but the conviction grew in Brown's mind that Ripley could not be trusted to fight.[85]

Ripley's analysis of the situation has come down to us, and should be given at length. He estimated the effectives before the battle at 2,549 rank and file. Of these, 723 were killed, wounded or missing. To these must be added Ketchum's Company, 60 strong, who were on their way to Buffalo as escort for the prisoners, and approximately 200 men who had recrossed to Fort Erie with the wounded. This leaves an effective force of only 1,566, of whom 222 were artillery, reducing the army to 1,344 rank and file of infantry.[86] While the figures may well be correct, it is worth nothing that Ripley is continually calculating to arrive at the lowest number possible. The unaltered facts are grim enough. On the morning of the 26th, only one captain and seven subalterns were with the First Brigade, and six of the subalterns were wounded.[87]

(As an example of the degree of disorganization prevailing from the night of the 25th to the morning of the 26th, Lieutenant Tappan's Company of the 23rd might be mentioned. Of 45 men, 17 were killed or wounded. Of the remaining 28, only nine were with the Lieutenant by the time the 23rd

withdrew. It seems doubtful that exhausted men had been able to sort themselves out through the night.)[88]

Thus the British-Canadian forces were left with the doubtful privilege of cleaning up the battlefield. While some of them removed their hard-won guns, others tended the wounded and some disposed of the corpses. In view of their numbers, it was decided that they would have to be burned. One of the soldiers charged with the cremation was Shadrach Byfield of the 89th Foot, who seems to have remembered it more clearly than the battle itself.

> One of the indians persisted in throwing one of the wounded Americans on the fire while living, although prevented several times; one of our men shot him and he was buried himself.[89]

The incident was a reminder that however the sides might be in the present war, the bonds of race outweighed those of politics in the long run. The lesson would be brought home to the Indians again in the final peace treaty.

It was now evident that the American bid for a decisive battle had failed. Brown had a hard-fought draw, when nothing but a decisive victory would have sufficed. The shards of the Army of the Niagara marched back to Fort Erie followed, but not pursued, by the badly mauled Centre Division, under Drummond. On the 27th, the American forces were returned to the fort. On the 29th, Drummond arrived before the gates, having been reinforced by the Regiment of de Watteville, 1,100 strong. The siege of Fort Erie had begun.

A full account of the siege and relief of Fort Erie would be as long as the entire report thus far. Further, it seems unlikely that the impact of the battles would have been substantially different had the campaign ended without additional bloodshed.[90]

To summarize briefly, though, the remnants of the Army of the Niagara sheltered within the extended walls of Fort Erie, while the British regulars and Indians laid siege. (Drummond dismissed the Sedentary Militia to their homes.) Brown, still unfit after his injuries at Lundy's Lane, sent for General Edmund P. Gaines from Sackett's Harbor to assume command.

Drummond attempted a classic siege of the fort, complete with siege lines and batteries: an attempt marred mainly by his own ineptness. The first battery was out of range of the American positions, and others were subject to enfilade fire from Buffalo. Finally, on the night of 14-15 August, Drummond ordered an assault. The preliminary bombardment had not softened the defenses. Indeed, they had grown more formidable while he waited, but Drummond now saw the bayonet as his only hope.

The assault on Fort Erie was perhaps the most one-sided operation of the campaign. Only at one point did British forces succeed in entering the walls, and there too they met with disaster. While they were still penned up in a small section of the original fort, a magazine exploded beneath their feet. In the morning, the stunned survivors surrendered, leaving 360 prisoners (half of them wounded) and 220 dead in American hands. American losses totaled 74.

Among the British dead was Colonel Hercules Scott, mortally wounded in the initial assault. His funeral was attended by the three surviving officers of the 103rd Regiment.

Drummond now reverted to siege tactics. He had, indeed, little choice. Few of his battalions were fit for anything else, if indeed that. He sent off frantic appeals for reinforcements practically in

unison with Gaines. Gaines, though, was soon wounded by a lucky British shot, and Brown resumed command.

The race for reinforcement was won by the American army. Brown received about 1,500 New York Volunteers, and, carefully stiffening them with his remaining regulars, launched a sortie. While casualties were somewhat in the American favor, the major success of the day (September 17) for the Americans was the sabotage of the British batteries. While the American forces returned to Fort Erie, Drummond lifted the siege and withdrew to Chippewa Creek.

The final phase of the campaign was marked by the entry of Major General George Izard, with the Right Division of the Army of the North, 3,500 strong, and all regulars. In July, these men could have conquered Upper Canada. By October, all they could do was engage in futile skirmishes, and supervise the withdrawal of the American forces to the East bank of the Niagara. The campaign of 1814 was over.

The Impact of Lundy's Lane

In terms of strategic impact, it must be stated clearly that the campaign was a dead end. Brown and Izard had neither occupied a substantial portion of Upper Canada nor destroyed the British army they faced. Nor was New York open to a British invasion on the Niagara frontier. In immediate military terms, the campaign merely confirmed the strategic stalemate.

It was not, however without impact on the outcome of the war. Chippewa, Lundy's Lane and the siege of Fort Erie were very substantial blows to the theory under which Britain had conducted the war: that one Englishman was the equal of two or three of the "States people." Thus far,

American bungling had gone far to maintain the initial British illusion. In the summer of 1814 through, it was apparent that what the British leadership had taken for a total lack of fighting ability had been a lack of proper leadership, training and discipline. This was not an advantage Britain could continue to count on in view of the drastic changes in the American military leadership.

There were no doubt other factors behind the British decision to bring the war to a close rather than dispatch Wellington's veterans to crush America. The unsettled situation in Europe, the failure to seize Baltimore, and the discouraging assessment of the Duke of Wellington no doubt all played a part, but it would be unwise to neglect the influence on British minds of the distressing word from Upper Canada: given proper leadership the Americans could fight, and a continuation of the war might well leave other British regiments as badly battered as the Royal Scots and King's.

The impact of the campaign on the future of the American Army is less problematical. It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that the veterans of the Niagara campaign ran the American Army down to the Civil War, and that leadership would in all probability have passed to their handpicked successors, if those men had not joined the Confederate Army instead. While the legacy of the Niagara Campaign might well have lingered until recent years in terms of training and discipline, there is a direct continuity of leadership until the resignation of Winfield Scott in the United States Army, and until the surrender of Lee in the Confederate States Army.

To support this in detail, and to see why it is so, we must return to the immediate post-war period. Small as the American Army had been

during the war, it was about six times larger than the government needed or wished to support in peacetime. Accordingly, a board of six general officers was appointed by the President to oversee the reorganization and reduction of the regular army. These six officers decided by unanimous vote, that they were the six generals the peacetime establishment would require.[91]

It was as neat a deal as the nation had seen since the Yazoo Land Company, though it was probably what the President had intended. What concerns us is the composition of the reorganization board. Madison had been interested in nothing but success: he appointed Jackson, victor of New Orleans, Macomb, hero of Plattsburg, and Scott, Brown and Ripley from Lundy's Lane. The sixth member was Gaines, given the seat for his defense of Fort Erie, and thus a veteran of the Niagara Campaign and a close associate of the victors of Lundy's Lane. In one stroke, within a year of the battle, the men of Lundy's Lane became one-half (or two-thirds, if one counts Gaines) of the general officers of the United States Army.

But their position on the reorganization board did more for the officers of the Niagara Frontier than simply permit their generals to remain in the service. The United States Army was to be cut back to 10,000 men immediately, and further cuts were clearly to be expected. The first blow would mean the elimination of five-sixths of the wartime officer corps, and except for the First Infantry Regiment, none of the units present at Lundy's Lane had any seniority to save them.[92] By regimental number, they weren't saved: this was the massive renumbering which has fouled up seniority ever since. It was at this point that the First Infantry Regiment, consolidated with several other units, became the Third Infantry Regiment, to the everlasting confusion of later generations.

This new numbering, though, was only a smokescreen for Brown et al. When one examines the junior officers of the "Army of the Niagara" (technically the left division of the Army of the North) one sees what really happened. Roughly three-quarters of them were retained in 1815--this with the loss of five-sixths of the total officer corps![93] This does not mean that all these men remained with the army, and still less that they were the whole new army. For one thing, even by the standards of 1815, there were never that many of them. The regiments had been understrength to start with, and they had fought one or two extremely bloody pitched battles, and endured a long siege, fighting off a full-scale assault, and making one major sortie. They were however, a much larger percentage of the peacetime army of the next few years than they had ever been of the wartime regulars. Some, of course, resigned. Peacetime promotions were almost nonexistent, and there was no pension to look forward to. There is no reason, though, to think that this happened more commonly among the Niagara veterans than it did among the other regular officers.

An example might be the 9th Infantry Regiment. Twenty-one officers of this unit are known to have fought on the Niagara Frontier in 1814. (Three were killed, one captured and 14 wounded: fairly typical for the First Brigade.) Of 18 survivors, two resigned their commissions in October 1814. Four were disbanded: two of them men who had lost limbs to wounds, and one of them a third Lieutenant, which was not on the new establishment. Even disregarding the extenuating factors, though, only one quarter of the Ninth was disbanded, while the army as a whole lost five-sixths. The survivors formed much of the officer corps of the new Fifth, and part of that of the new Second. One, Lieutenant (later Lieutenant Colonel) John Fowles, Jr., would be instructor of Infantry

Tactics at the Military Academy from 1833-1838, thus passing on the methods of 1814 to the officers of the Mexican and Civil Wars. Another, Major (later Brigadier General) Henry Leavenworth, would die in harness twenty years later, giving his name to the fort which has become a school and prison--both of them appropriate enough for one of Scott's pupils.

One might also note that those who did leave the service were not forgotten. Lieutenant Colonel Aspinwall, disbanded in 1815 due to the loss of his left arm in a sortie from Fort Erie, became American Consul at London in 1816. Other officers who resigned or were disbanded in various contractions of the army found employment as military storekeepers or sutlers--employment, it might be noted, which put them in contact with the next generation of officers. The army might lack a pension program, but while Brown or Scott commanded it, no veteran of Lundy's Lane would go hungry. Years afterward, for instance, Scott was using his little political influence to secure James Miller a position as revenue agent in a New England port.[94]

The retention of officers and the position of Brown and Scott is, of course, the most easily quantified contribution of the Battle of Lundy's Lane to the United States Army, but by no means the only one. The cadets of the United States Military Academy wear gray yet as a memorial of Scott's Brigade, and the motto: "I'll try, Sir" is still that of the 5th Infantry, successor to Miller's 21st.

More subtle influences might be suggested, though. First, the campaign was <u>the</u> great triumph of the regular army during the war--indeed their only victories not behind walls come from here. If there had been no such victories, what effect would this have had on the regular army, or on America's perception of her fighting capacity? The battles of Chippewa

and Lundy's Lane were also seen as the triumph of discipline and training, and moved the United States toward linear, fire-oriented tactics, rather than the column assaults popular in the French Army. How much was this responsible for the victories of the United States Army during the Mexican War? How much was the notoriously rigid discipline of the United States Army for more than a century afterward the result of Scott's emphasis on it, and his legalistic background? We cannot speak with certainty on this, but it would not appear to have been the legacy of the pre-war army.

In conclusion, then, the Niagara Campaign of 1814 was a matter of little strategic or political significance which became with the years both a proud tradition of the army, and a matter of profound military significance.

APPENDIX

Statistics of July 1814; Strength and Losses, Perception and Reality

"The problem in dealing with the military is that the enemy is always ten feet tall, and never bumps his head on low doorways."

Richard Powell, Don Quixote USA

Strength of the American Army

The real strength of the American Army on 25 July can only be tentatively reconstructed, but the main outlines seem clear. A return of 23 July places the two regular infantry brigades at 2,700 men. Of these, 500 are given as sick or wounded, and 100 are on extra duty, leaving 2,100.[1]

In addition to the two brigades, 150 men of the 1st arrived on the evening of the 25th. Thus, Brown disposed of 2,850 regular infantry, of whom 2,250 could have been placed in line of battle.

No return prior to the battle is available for the Third Brigade, Porter's volunteers. Porter himself tells us that he took 300 men to Lundy's Lane, that 250 were across the Niagara observing Fort Niagara, two companies in camp as guards, one company at Buffalo, and part of a company at Fort Erie. We may also assume that his 300 men at Lundy's Lane did not include the mounted volunteers who were sent forward with Scott. Assuming 100 mounted volunteers, since roughly 150 had commenced the campaign, we are left with the problem of the other detachments. The 250 men across the Niagara are four companies, giving an average of 62 men per company. Assuming this to be true of the others, we arrive at a brigade of 877 men.[2]

The artillery began the campaign with between 330 and 410. Their only losses would have been at Chippewa (20 men) and we have a return placing them between 253 and 364 after Lundy's Lane. These are the Adams returns, which give one a choice between the low figure--number of fit men answering roll call--and the high figure of every person theoretically attached to the unit: recruits being mustered, men on leave, AWOL's, or whatever. A tentative estimate might be 350 men actually with Brown.[3]

The Rifle Regiment and elements of the newly-raised 4th Rifles were on the American Bank of the Niagara. They mustered perhaps 240 men between them, since the 4th was still being raised, and detachments of the Rifle Regiment were all over the frontier. The regular dragoons were a very small detachment. We have no figures prior to July 31, when they totaled 64 present and absent. An estimate of 70 should certainly be high enough.[4]

Forces other than the regular infantry thus total 1,560. Of the regular infantry, 500 were sick or wounded, and those might not be included in the totals for the other corps. Since they total something over half the regular infantry's strength, an estimate of 250 additional might be in order. This brings the absolute maximum strength of Brown's command on 25 July 1814 to 4,460, of whom 3,910 were fit for duty.

The number of men present at Lundy's Lane is a rather more difficult calculation. The first group to arrive was under the command of Winfield Scott, and consisted of his own brigade, Towson's Company of artillery, and all the mounted troops: the mounted volunteers and Harris' regular dragoons. Leavenworth gives the total of the First Brigade as 700 men. Jessup places the total force at 1,200. The 9th brought 150 rank and file, and the 25th 350. This is less than clear. Both regiments were about 30 percent of the brigade. If the 9th was typical, the brigade brought 545 rank and file; if the 25th was typical, 1,250.[5]

To approach the problem from the other end, the two regular brigades totaled 2,200. Typically 100 would have been on extra duty, and due to the unexpected nature of the battle, work details were never called in. The situation was worsened by fighting the battle with laundry details out. The Second Brigade alone left 150-200 men in camp, and it was the

the smaller of the two brigades.† The 2,200 are thus reduced to 1,800-1,900. A further 150 regulars had been sent to the American bank to the depot at Schlosser, to handle the transfer of stores.[6]* The two brigades thus totaled only 1,650 to 1,750 available for battle.

Returning to Scott's Brigade, if we assume that Jessup is correct, and subtract 100 men for the artillery, 100 for the mounted volunteers, and 70 for the regular dragoons, Scott's regular infantry must have been 930 strong. This falls between the estimates based on known regimental strength, and seems otherwise acceptable.

Ripley's Brigade is also commonly given at 700 men, and Miller stated that his regiment (21st) the stronger of the two, was less than 300 strong in battle. Miller's count might not have included elements of the 17th and 19th commonly attached to his regiment. Returning again to our estimate of 1,650 to 1,750 regular infantry, and assuming Scott was indeed 930 strong, Ripley must have had 720 to 820 men in line of battle. The 720 estimate agrees best with other testimony.

Porter, as we have already mentioned, stated that he brought 300 men to the battle. He left two companies in camp which we have estimated already at 120. The camp guard, provided by volunteers and artillerymen, was 200 strong, so 80 artillerymen must have remained in camp. Returning to our calculation of 350 artillerymen, 270 must have been present for the battle. Of these, 100 have already been allotted to Scott's Brigade.[7]

---

†We know that the 11th alone had 50 men detached on fatigues.

*Sixty of them were Foster's Company of the 11th. The unit of the others is not known.

TABLE 1

COMPOSITION OF FIRST AND SECOND BRIGADES, 7/23[8]

	First Bde	Second Bde	Total	
General	1	1	2	
ADC	2	1	3	
Bde-Maj	1	1	2	
Colonel	1	1	2	
Major	3	2	5	
Adjutant	3	2	5	
Qtr-Mstr	3	1	4	
Pay-Mstr	2		2	
Surgeon	4	2	6	
Surgeons Mate	1	3	4	
Captains	8	4	12	
1st Lt	11	7	18	
2nd Lt	8	5	13	
3rd Lt	4	5	9	
Ensign	8	8	16	
Sgt-Major	4	2	6	
Q'Mstr Sgt	4	1	5	
Musicians	37	41	78	
Sergeants	50	48	98	
Corporals	84	63	147	
Privates	909	773	1,682	
Pioneers	12		12	
Co Clerks		6	6	
Hostlers	3		3	
Pay Mstr Sgt	1	1	2	
Music Teacher	6		6	
Learning Music	7	4	11	
Total	1,177	982	2,149	Present for Duty
Subalterns		2	2	
Clerks	8		8	
Sgt	7	3	10	
Corp	4	3	7	
Pvt	19	39	58	
Pioneers		7	7	
Learning Music		3	3	
Total	38	57	95	Extra Duty
Colonel	1		1	
Adjutant	1		1	
Captain	8	2	10	
Subaltern	14	5	19	
Sergeant	24	12	36	
Corporal	17	13	30	
Musician	5	2	7	
Private	218	170	388	
Total	288	204	492	Sick (Including wounded)
Grand Total	1,503	1,243	2,736	

This means that if our calculations are correct, the total American force at Lundy's Lane was just short of 2,400 men, 1,200 commencing the battle under Scott, and 1,190 being brought by Brown himself. A very far cry from the British impression!

The British Army

The strength of Drummond's command on the crucial 25th of July is somewhat less easy to determine, since the latest surviving return seems to be that of 8 July. Using this return, and in all cases assuming that units continued to decline in strength throughout July we arrive at roughly:

19th Lt Dragoons	125
Royal Scots	750
King's	500
2/41st	500
100th (half)	250
89th	600
103rd (8 companies--2 "boy cos?")	550
104 Flank Companies	120
Glengarry Light Infantry	400
Battalion of Incorporated Militia	350
Sedentary Militia (Seven Battalions)	1,000
Artillery	400
Indians	No Combat Value
Total	5,545

This estimate does not include the Provincial Dragoons or the Rocket Troop, neither of which could have added much to the numbers or the combat efficiency of the army. For two units, no figure is available from the 8 July return. These are the Sedentary Militia and the 2/89. The first detachment of the 2/89 to arrive was 400 strong, and the battalion was still 505 strong in mid-November, despite heavy losses at Lundy's Lane. An estimate of 600 is unlikely to be high. Seven battalions of the Sedentary Militia might be expected to have a strength of 200 men each,

for a total of 1,400, but Drummond had sent home the very old and very young, which could conceivably have lowered the total to 1,000 (without, however, much reducing the combat value of the militia). As will be pointed out later, though, it seems quite likely that the militia was next to useless in actual combat, though hardly to be compared with Indians in this respect.

It is, however, much easier to arrive at a satisfactory estimate of all available Englishmen than it is to determine how many were actually present at Lundy's Lane. Drummond gives his total command as 2,800: 800 in the advance, 800 under Morrison brought up by Drummond himself, and 1,200 under Hercules Scott. This may well be correct for the total infantry, if one makes additions for cavalry and artillery.

Roughly, the force consisted of:

PEARSON'S BRIGADE (Advance): The Battalion of Incorporated Militia (350), the Glengarry Light Infantry (400), a "small party" of the 104th and some Lincoln and York militia. Evidently the 19th Light Dragoons and the Provincial Dragoons were also with this force.

MORRISON'S BRIGADE: The Light Company of the 41st, detachments of the Royal Scots and King's, and possibly a small force of the Incorporated Militia. The main body was the 89th. Assuming it to have been 600 strong, the smaller bodies might be estimated at 50 men each.

SCOTT'S BRIGADE: The 103rd (500), the headquarters divisions of the Royal Scots and King's, the Grenadier and Light Companies of the 104th (120) and various small militia units. Estimating the Royal Scots and King's at 250 each, there might have been 80 men in the various militia units.

In addition to this there was an artillery force composed of seven guns, all brass, and a rocket troop. Two of the guns were 24's, the others including at least some 6's. One would expect perhaps 150 artillerymen to be manning the battery.

Drummond thus mustered perhaps 2,800 infantry (2,250 regulars, 350 Incorporated Militia, and 200 Sedentary Militia), 150 cavalry and 150 artillery.

This means that half of three regiments--Royal Scots, King's and 100th--nine-tenths of the 41st, and five-eighths of the artillery spent the crucial battle of the campaign on garrison duty, not counting the Colored Corps, marines and Indians. The showing of the Sedentary Militia was wretched. Seven available battalions ought to have mustered 1,000 to 1,400 men: certainly not anything less than 7-800 for the five battalions which took casualties, yet the total casualties (22) supports the conclusion that only a very small force took part; perhaps only 50 to 100 under Pearson. Also, the fact that roughly every third casualty was an officer shows that while the battalions could have taken part in the battle, for the most part they chose to let the regulars carry the burden unsupported. The absence of any casualty return for the militia arriving with Scott would suggest that they were employed on noncombatant duties.

We might note, though, that the regulars involved include a higher percentage of elite units than might be expected. There is an entire light battalion and at least three elite companies from regiments not present--the Light Company of the 41st and the Light and Grenadier Companies of the 104th--while in no case did a battalion arrive stripped of its elite companies.

TABLE 2

BRITISH STRENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION, 8 JULY 1814[9]

Fort Niagara
Staff: 21
Royal Marine Artillery: 72
41st: 538
100th: 13

Forts George & Missassauga
19th Lt Dragoons: 74 & 4 sick
Provincial Lt Dragoons: 20
Royal Engineers: 2
Militia Artillery: 13
Royal Artillery Drivers: 33 & 1 sick
Royal Scots: 830 & 153 sick & wounded
King's: 587 & 11 sick & wounded
100th: 298 & 121 sick & wounded
Incorporated Militia: 379
Colored Corps: 26 & 4 sick

Long Point & Dependencies
19th Lt Dragoons: 64 & 1 sick
Provincial Lt Dragoons: 14
103rd: 198 & 5 sick

Burlington
Provincial Dragoons: 3
Royal Artillery: 4

York
Royal Artillery: 12
Royal Artillery Drivers: 17
Royal Artillery Drivers: 11
Royal & Provincial Engineers: 17
Royal Scots: 4 & 7 sick
King's: 80 & 49 sick
41st: 6 & 14 sick
89th: 3 & 1 sick
103rd: 2
Royal Newfoundland: 2 & 1 sick
Glengarry Light Infantry: 409 & 35 sick
Incorporated Militia: 19 & 12 sick
Embodied Militia: 19 & 6 sick

We might also note that this is a deliberately low estimate of British strength. Every effort has been made to bring it into accord with Drummond's estimate of 2,800, though the author would otherwise have placed the Royal Scots and Militia at substantially higher figures.

American Perception of British Strength

In contrast to Riall and Drummond, Brown made little or no effort to inform his superiors of the nature and strength of his opposition. In attempting to see the campaign through his eyes, we are forced to rely on a later and undated document found among his papers. With this warning, though, it seems to agree with fragmentary contemporary evidence.[10]

Brown's estimate was that the total British forces in Upper Canada on 1 July 1814 were 6,100 regulars, of whom 5,000 were fit to take the field. The total forces on the Niagara frontier were 2,350. No estimate was made of militia or Indians. This helps explain Brown's anxiety over the timing of naval support. An eventual naval victory did him no good. Brown had to have naval support before the available British forces could be concentrated against him.

On the forces available to Drummond on 25 July, his calculations are more detailed. He estimates the regulars already present with Riall at 3,350 men, and the reinforcements coming with Drummond at 1,300. From this total of 4,650, 700 must be deducted for Fort Erie and Chippewa. Brown assumes that the continual skirmishes since cancel out the recovery of wounded. A further 500 are deducted as sick or garrison, leaving 3,450 regulars in the field at Lundy's Lane.[11]

The estimate of British regular strength we have arrived at above, though, is 2,500 (assuming 50 of the Dragoons to have been Provincial

Dragoons). Brown's error seems to have stemmed from allowing too little for sick and garrison. His estimate of available regulars (3,950) corresponds closely with the author's 3,805. Brown, despite the dispersion of his own strength, never fully realized how much this applied to the British army as well.

Brown makes no detailed estimate of militia and Indians. He merely states that it is "established" that 1,000 such took part in the battle.[12] This figure represents about half of those available: 1,000 Sedentary Militia, 350 Incorporated Militia, 50 Provincial Dragoons, and 7-800 Indians. It would seem a reasonable guess that half of this motley horde reached the battlefield, but the actual figure, arrived at above, was even worse. The Incorporated Militia, the Provincial Dragoons, and perhaps 180 Sedentary Militia are all that can be found; a total of fewer than 600 men. No witness places Indians among the combatants, though they were present the next morning.

Brown thus overstated his irregular foes by 2/3, but he thought so little of their combat utility that it seems unlikely that this seriously distorted his estimate of British strength.

British Perception of the American Army

Senior British officers lost no opportunity to discover more about the American army opposed to them. They interrogated spies, deserters and prisoners, and made their own estimations once the invasion had begun.

By use of all these sources, they soon built up a detailed picture of the opposition. The outline was essentially correct. The scale, however, was wrong.

The first hard information came in April, from a sutler with the appropriate name of Constant Bacon. Bacon informed the British command that the American forces totaled 7,000 men; evidently all regulars, since he mentioned that the militia were expected. He also mentioned one specific regiment, the 25th.[13]

Riall himself, after he saw the invaders at Chippewa, estimated them at 6,000 (later at 5-6,000) and the figure became the established minimum. By this time the names of the American generals were known to Riall and Drummond, and the general organization seems to have been understood.[14]

By mid-July, Riall was interrogating a steady stream of American deserters, and getting the same answers from all of them: the American army was very strong, at least 6,000 regulars, well supported by heavy artillery, and with roughly 1,500 savages and licensed plunderers for skullduggery. Drummond, relying strongly on Riall as the man with local knowledge, seems to have accepted these fantasies as well.

Riall was gaining information by his interrogations. He knew the commanders of the American brigades, and the units assigned to each, though he inserted a 13th Infantry Regiment in Scott's Brigade. His estimate of Volunteers and Indians was essentially correct.[15]

The major failure of the British perception was that Riall and Drummond insisted on being confronted by twice the regulars that Brown had at his disposal. All the statements are variations on the theme of 6,000 regulars, though no one has actually seen the key components. When men of Ripley's Brigade are questioned, they only have 1,500, but Scott's Brigade has the rest. When men of Scott's Brigade are questioned, 2,000 or so regulars are on the American side of the Niagara.[16]

The exaggerated numbers are unsurprising in themselves. After all, the deserters who supplied most of the information were not very sophisticated men, and counting soldiers is not an easy business. What is surprising is that the numbers agreed as well as they did, and that a great deal of accurate detail came through despite the initial distortion. The difficulty seems to have been the interrogators. Riall and Drummond knew they were facing a large American army. They wanted only confirmation of that, and information on other points. Deserters and prisoners had no particular stake in the accuracy of British intelligence: their object was to say things they thought the British wanted to hear, so as to finish the business.

The only thing you cannot learn is something you already know... or think you know.

A possible remedy might be the employment of several interrogators with different preconceptions.

Losses--Perception and Reality

Chippewa and Lundy's Lane produced sufficient losses for the combatants that official casualty returns for them appear, as well as estimates of the casualties suffered by the opposition. In attempting to calculate the losses, I have assumed that they are roughly correct for the units listed. Certainly some units were omitted, but though there was some flexibility in all figures, either commander would have been hard-pressed to slight a regiment in the returns. The officers would know and complain, since casualties were proof that they had fought hard, and were to some degree a matter of pride. I have assumed that the official American returns of British prisoners of war are correct, for here too a

fraud would be detected. I have not paid any attention to statements like: "we took hundreds of prisoners." The detailed reasoning case by case is below.

In the battle of Chippewa, the American casualties would appear to be 325: 60 killed, 246 wounded and 19 missing, of whom five were prisoners of war.[17] Brown states the enemy loss at 208 killed, 95 wounded and 15 prisoners. The Assistant Inspector-General totaled up 111 white men and 87 Indians killed, 75 white regulars wounded, 10 white men and five Indians prisoners. A like number of other uncounted wounded are assumed.[18]

The real British casualties appear to have been 133 killed, 320 wounded and 46 missing--10 of them captured, not counting Indians, who are not included on the British return. Expendable.[19*] No estimate was made of American losses.

The American estimate was thus reasonably accurate on hostile killed (though I am suspicious of the Indian count--there were only 300 engaged) but badly underestimated British wounded, perhaps thus discouraging a more active pursuit.

For the Battle of Lundy's Lane, the official American losses were 175 killed, 573 wounded and 110 missing--mostly from the regulars and presumably captured. No official estimate was made of British losses, but one officer placed them at 12 or 1,300--about 400 prisoners of war. The actual total of prisoners was 169. Brown later placed the loss of the British regulars alone at 1,000.[20]

---

*Hercules Scott gives a total of 700 casualties. If this includes Indians, the American count may be accurate after all.

TABLE 3

BRITISH AND AMERICAN CASUALTIES AT CHIPPEWA

	United States[21]			
Unit	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
Artillery	4	16		20
FIRST BRIGADE				
9th	13	44		57
11th	15	60		75
22nd	8	46		54
25th	5	71		76
SECOND BRIGADE				
19th	3	2	2	7
23rd		1		1
THIRD BRIGADE				
Penn. Vols.	3	2	7	12
Indians	9	4	10	23
Total	60	246	19	325

NOTES: One of the Volunteers described their losses as 2-3 per company, with eight companies present. That would mean a total of 20, but 12--1-2 a company, seems tolerable, if one assumes some exaggeration on the part of a militiaman writing for his friends and neighbors. Another (Captain White) informs us that of the missing four volunteers and one Indian were prisoners.[22]

	British and Provincial[23]			
Unit	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
Royal Artillery	1	4		5
Drivers		1		1
Royal Scots	48	135	30	213
King's	3	24		27
100th	69	134	1	204
2nd Lincoln Militia	12	16	15	43
19th Lt. Dragoons		6		6
Total	133	320	46	499

NOTES: Of the missing, 10 were prisoners of war. Five Indians were also captured, but Indian casualties are not included in this return. They might have been very heavy. American sources claim to have found the bodies of 93 regulars, 18 militia, and 87 Indians. The others are within reason. The Indian count seems high, but Scott gives British losses as 700, presumably including Indians. There were only 300 engaged, so if the body count is correct, their losses must have been frightful.[24]

The real total would appear to be 84 killed, 559 wounded and 235 missing, of whom 169 were prisoners.[25] Some of the others may have been killed, as a number of bodies are known to have been found after the war, having been missed in the burning of the 26th. No general estimate of American casualties was made, but a "body count" of 210 was claimed by a junior officer, as well as "several hundred prisoners."[26]

It would thus appear that neither side formed an accurate picture of the losses of 25th July, both insisting that the enemy was even more badly hurt than was the case. An overestimate of about 50% in either case. Neither commander gains points for accuracy, but an extremely hard-fought night action might be considered extenuating circumstances.

Analysis of Chippewa Casualties

The most striking thing, of course, is the very high percentage losses of the Royal Scots (43%) and 100th (45%) based on the official statement of the numbers present. There were very few battalions anywhere who endured that sort of loss. This confirms Riall's statement that a further advance simply was not possible, and that the troops were in no way to be blamed. The combination of accurate frontal fire, the enfilade fire of the 25th and the cannister fire of Towson's artillery simply shattered the units, and no attempt was made to employ either as a full battalion in the remainder of the campaign.

The high British casualties almost blind one to the severity of the American losses. Using Adams' 30 June strengths, the First Brigade took 19 percent casualties--remarkably high for the winners of a brief engagement. It is also noteworthy that they were distributed evenly among the battalions. The high (22nd) is 22.6%, and the low (9th) 16%. Battalions

TABLE 4

BRITISH CASUALTIES AT LUNDY'S LANE[27]

Regiment	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Prisoners	Total
Staff	1	4		1	6
19th Light Dragoons		2	1		3
Provincial Light Dragoons			2	1	3
Royal Engineers			1		1
Royal Artillery	4	13	7		24
Royal Marine Artillery				2	2
Artillery Drivers		3	1		4
Royal Scots	16	115	41		172
King's	12	60	13		85
41st	3	34			37
89th	29	188	36	1	254
103rd	6	47	1	6	60
104th	1		5		6
Glengarry Light Infantry	4	31	8	14	57
Incorporated Militia	7	43	75	17	142
1st Lincoln Militia	1				1
2nd Lincoln Militia		1			1
4th Lincoln Militia		5	2		7
5th Lincoln Militia		4			4
2nd York Militia		9			9
Total	84	559	193	42	878

NOTES: This return stands pretty well unchallenged. Babcock quotes a letter of Colonel Hercules Scott as giving a total of 939, but examination of the letter shows that Colonel Scott was counting the 61 officer casualties twice, in the belief that they were not included in the total. They are in fact part of the 878. No man is listed twice in the return. Missing or prisoners known to be wounded are listed in the wounded column only.[28]

in company column simply could not have inflicted such losses. If the British were so deployed, as seems probable to me, then most of the American casualties must have been the result of British artillery fire. After all, there were two 24's, three 6's, and a 5 1/2" howitzer employed at close range against a force which had to pass over a single bridge. If most casualties were inflicted by British musketry, one would expect the 25th to have escaped almost unscathed, but it took 21% losses in its enfilade position.

Assuming 3,100 men engaged on the Anglo-Canadian side, and granting the accuracy of the official return, then 28 percent of the men engaged were killed, wounded or captured. The Royal Scots lost 57 percent and the Light Company of the 41st an incredible 74 percent! Both of these might be high due to an understatement of the men engaged, though the regiments certainly have reason for pride regardless. On firmer ground, the 89th and the Incorporated Militia no doubt bore the brunt of the action with 42 and 41 percent casualties respectively. The Incorporated Militia return shows a high percentage of missing. No doubt most of these were prisoners, but it seems likely that some were simply undiscovered bodies. The curator of the local museum has informed the author that "fresh" bodies were discovered as late as the centennial of the battle.

It is noticeable that the units of the British right flank, the Glengarry Light Infantry and the Flank Companies of the 104th were much less hard hit, and that the 103rd could hardly have remained in the second line, where Drummond's report places it.

The army remained, as new regiments were continually being received, but the Royal Scots, 89th and 100th, together with the 41st, were no longer fit for duty in the field, and the King's was in little better condition.

TABLE 5

AMERICAN CASUALTIES AT LUNDY'S LANE[29]

Unit	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
Staff		6	1	7
Lt Drag	1	2		3
Artillery	10	35	1	46
FIRST BRIGADE				
Ninth	16	89	15	120
Eleventh	28	102	3	133
Twenty-second	40*	90	17	148
Twenty-fifth	28	66	15	109
SECOND BRIGADE				
First	11	20	2	33
Twenty-first	15	70	19	104
Twenty-third	10	52	27	89
THIRD BRIGADE				
Canadians	1	2	8	11
Pennsylvanians	11	24	1	36
New Yorkers	4	14	1	19
Total	175	573	110	858

*This corrects an obvious error. Only 36 NCO's and men are listed as killed, but elsewhere four officers are listed by name among the killed.

(On this note we need to mention that Cruikshank states that officers of the 17th, 19th and 2nd Rifles are mentioned, but that no such regiments appear on the returns; the implication being that certain regiments were simply omitted.[30] On comparing named officers with numbers of killed, wounded or missing officers per regiment, though, one discovers that the officers of the unmentioned units are included in the return of the 21st. In fact, small detachments of them were serving with that regiment, but it seems certain that if the officers were included with the 21st, the same was done for any enlisted casualties.)

Analysis of the American Casualties

The first concern here must, of course, be the accuracy of the return, since it has been seriously challenged by Cruikshank, and ought to be challenged by any historian who follows Drummond's account of the battle.

The return of Porter's Brigade is an obvious target, since it represents the smallest loss, and volunteers are notoriously given to turning up "missing." This figure, though--68 casualties--is the only one of the lot confirmed by a written statement of the commander. Porter himself gave the losses of his brigade as 65. I suggested in calculating the American strength that Porter had not included the mounted volunteers in his count. It could be that the difference of 3 represents mounted volunteers struck by stray shots while in reserve.[31]

Of the First Brigade, Leavenworth gives the losses of the 9th as 128, which agrees well enough with the official 121.[32] The 11th had one company 50 strong prior to the battle which had only 13 at roll call on the morning of the 26th.[33] One account says that only 15 or 20 of the 11th survived unharmed.[34] Certainly the losses of the brigade were severe, but the official count of 517 from an estimated 930 is already 56 percent, which is the highest the author knows of for a brigade in the Napoleonic era among men under sustained fire, as opposed to units losing 75 or 80 percent to a sudden ambush or cavalry charge.

The casualties of the Second Brigade again are not confirmed by their commander, but Ripley does accept the complete official return while estimating forces available on the 26th.[35] At the time he was more or less at open war with Brown, and if he could have accused Brown of falsifying the report, Ripley would certainly have done so. Miller of

the 21st wrote his wife that his losses were 126, and the official figure was 104, but this seems to be within the normal variations of such documents.[36] Tappan, a company commander of the 23rd, states that of 45 men who entered the battle, only 9 answered roll the following morning. But Tappan also points out that only 17 were casualties.[37] The remaining 19 were still lost in camp or attending to wounded--a fairly normal ratio in the period, by the way. Applying the same ratio to the shot-up company of the 11th, we would conclude that it had suffered 18 or 19 casualties, and thus escaped almost unscathed by First Brigade standards.

All in all, then, the official casualty count seems to correspond with the other available evidence.

The most striking thing is, as we noted above, the loss of the First Brigade. Few units in history have taken such losses when they could have broken or simply drifted away. What is even more amazing is that 150-200 of the survivors marched back to camp in an organized body. One would not expect <u>any</u> organized group at that point.

The Second Brigade, including the 1st, suffered 26 percent losses, which would be a very good performance in any other company, and probably reflects its late arrival. The casualties of the Volunteers are equally severe, confirming the statements of both Brown and Porter that those who had not already deserted or mutinied fought that night as well as regulars.

The losses of the artillery are somewhat lower, reflecting the superior range of grapeshot to musketry in the period. Civil War artillerymen could be picked off by riflemen outside their effective range, and thus habitually suffered worse losses than infantry.

Officer casualties were especially severe. Even assuming that every fit officer of the First Brigade was present for the battle, there were only 55, and 41, listed by name, were killed, wounded or captured.[38]

We must also note that the acceptance of the official casualty returns (especially the American return) implies the denial of Drummond's account of the battle, and confirms the belief that the United States forces took and held the British artillery for a considerable length of time. If both Drummond's account and the casualty reports were correct, assuming that our estimates of the size of the American army are not grossly in error, it would mean that a badly outnumbered force of Americans attacking uphill, into the muzzles of heavy artillery, inflicted more casualties than it took. All narrative sources aside, if the American force inflicted approximately equal casualties (including Winfield Scott's futile effort) then it must have had the advantage of position, and probably artillery superiority as well, for a considerable period of time. If the attack took place as Drummond described, then there should have been 1,200 or more American killed, wounded and missing.

REFERENCES

Part One: Bibliography

1. Jacobs and Tucker, The War of 1812, p. 139; Lloyd, The Scorching of Washington, p. 151.

2. Mahon, The War of 1812, p. 275; Coles, The War of 1812, p. 160.

3. Horsman, The War of 1812, pp. 178 and 9.

4. Jacobs and Tucker, The War of 1812, pp. 136-139.

5. Lloyd, The Scorching of Washington, pp. 148-151.

6. Horsman, The War of 1812, pp. 177 and 178.

7. Mahon, The War of 1812, pp. 272-274.

8. Coles, The War of 1812, p. 160.

9. Hitsman, The Incredible War of 1812, pp. 196-199.

10. Elliot, Winfield Scott, pp. 208 and 209; Ripley, Facts Relative to the Campaign on the Niagara (hereafter Facts); Cruikshank, Documentary History of the War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier (hereafter Doc. Hist.), Vol. II, pp. 356-358; Treat, Vindication of Captain Treat (hereafter Vindication).

11. Scott, Memoirs, I, 133.

12. Douglass, "Reminiscences"; Byfield, Narrative; McMullen, Doc. Hist., II, pp. 369-379.

Part Two: The Battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane

1. Riall to Drummond, 15 March 1814. Select Documents, III, 1, pp. 97-98.

2. Drummond to Riall, 23 March 1814. Select Documents, III, 1, pp. 99-104.

3. Lossing, p. 823; Adams, War of 1812, pp. 173-175.

4. Brief sketches of all these in Lossing, pp. 607, 826, 838 and 842.

5. This and all biographical data not otherwise ascribed from Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903 (hereafter Heitman).

6. Arrived at by looking up every known officer of the campaign in Heitman.

7. Lossing, pp. 816 and 822.

8. Treat, Vindication, p. 33.

9. Scott, Memoirs, I, p. 119.

10. Scott, Memoirs, I, 120.

11. Return of 23 June 1814, printed in Babcock, War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier, p. 149 (hereafter cited as Babcock).

12. Scott, Memoirs, I, 119.

13. McMullen, in Doc. Hist., II, 372.

14. Lovell, in Doc. Hist., II, 452.

15. Mansfield, Life of Scott, p. 101.

16. Lossing, p. 806.

17. Adams, War of 1812, p. 180.

18. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 19; Lossing, p. 805.

19. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 25.

20. Young to Riall, 14 March 1814, Select Documents, III, 1, p. 95.

21. Return of 22 June 1814, Doc. Hist., I, 28-30.

22. Armstrong to Brown, 10 June 1814, Doc. Hist., II, 404.

23. Porter, in Doc. Hist., II, 361.

24. Scott, Memoirs, I, 121.

25. Brown, Documents, p. 72; Babcock, Siege of Fort Erie, 18.

26. Brown, Documents, p. 72.

27. Scott, Memoirs, I, 122-123.

28. Brown, Documents, pp. 72-73.

29. Ripley, Facts, p. 3.

30. Return of P.O.W.'s, 3 July 1814, Doc. Hist., I, 42.

31. Harvey to Riall, 23 March 1814, Select Documents, III, 1, 101.

32. Porter, in Doc. Hist., II, 358-368.

33. Riall to Drummond, 6 July 1814, Select Documents, III, 1, 115-118.

34. Adams, The War of 1812, pp. 176-178.

35. Scott, Memoirs, I, 129.

36. Babcock, Siege of Fort Erie, p. 19.

37. Scott, in Doc. Hist., I, 44-47.

38. Scott, Memoirs, I, 130-131.

39. Kimball, "The Battle of Chippewa," p. 182.

40. Riall to Drummond, 6 July 1814, Doc. Hist., I, 31.

41. Hindman, in Doc. Hist., I, 44.

42. Scott, Memoirs, I, 134.

43. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 19.

44. Doc. Hist., I, 33 and 42-43.

45. Letter of Captain John Stevenson, Notes on Niagara, p. 37.

46. Smith, Old Fuss and Feathers, pp. 112-119.

47. Brown, Documents, pp. 77-78.

48. Brown, Documents, pp. 48 and 78.

49. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 21.

50. Brown to Chauncey, 13 July 1814, Doc. Hist., I, 64.

51. MacFarland, in Doc. Hist., I, 73.

52. Drummond to Prevost, 15 July 1814, Doc. Hist., I, 59.

53. Select Documents, III, 1, pp. 135-136.

54. Brown, Documents, p. 57.

55. Lossing, p. 815.

56. General Order, 23 July 1814, in Doc. Hist., II, 416-417.

57. A full sketch of the deployment is in Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, pp. 25-26.

58. Drummond, in Select Documents, III, 1, pp. 144-151.

59. Brown, Documents, p. 57.

60. Scott, Memoirs, I, 141.

61. Drummond in Select Documents, III, 1, 144-151.

62. Brown, Documents, pp. 80-81.

63. Jessup, in Doc. Hist., II, 478.

64. Brown, Documents, pp. 58-59.

65. The best evidence on numbers is found in Ripley, Facts, but see the Appendix.

66. McDonald, in Doc. Hist., II, 344-349.

67. McDonald, in Doc. Hist., II, 346.

68. Lossing, 819.

69. Doc. Hist., II, 347. Testimony of McDonald.

70. Any account of Lundy's Lane from 9:00 on must involve the assimilation of a number of accounts. I have tried to indicate the one describing the events in question, but sequence is not always certain. Brown, Documents, pp. 84-86.

71. Scott, Memoirs, I, 143.

72. Brown, Documents, p. 84.

73. Jessup, Doc. Hist., II, 479.

74. McDonald, Doc. Hist., II, 348.

75. Scott, Memoirs, I, 143.

76. Lossing, pp. 827-828.

77. Casualty report of 30 July 1814, in Doc. Hist., II, pp. 420-423.

78. Scott, Memoirs, I, 144-145.

79. Brown, Documents, pp. 84-85.

80. Brown, Documents, p. 86.

81. Leavenworth, in Doc. Hist., II, 341-342.

82. Brown, Documents, p. 61.

83. Hindman, in Ripley, Facts, pp. 43-44; also in Doc. Hist., II, 352-353.

84. Letter of Dr. Bull, in Doc. Hist., I, 104.

85. Brown, Documents, p. 86.

86. Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

87. Ripley, Facts, Appendix. Unfortunately, pages were not numbered in the Appendix.

88. Ripley, Facts, p. 42.

89. Byfield, Narrative, p. 90.

90. This is necessarily a summary. Those interested are advised to consult Babcock's Siege of Fort Erie for a full account.

91. Elliot, Winfield Scott, pp. 192-193.

92. Smith, Old Fuss and Feathers, p. 145.

93. Conclusion laboriously arrived at by listing all American regular officers referred to anywhere as having taken part in the July 1814 campaign on the Niagara, and looking them all up (better than 120 of them) in Heitman. Those who were discharged were commonly unfitted for retention by grade (no 3rd Lieutenants were retained in the infantry) or by their wounds.

94. Elliot, Winfield Scott, p. 413.

Appendix

1. Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

2. Porter, Doc. Hist., I, 103 and II, 417.

3. Adams, War of 1812, p. 174. Ripley (Facts, Appendix) gives a post-battle strength of 272 on 30 July. If the official 46 casualties are correct, then there must have been 318 men on 25 July--close enough to our estimate from Adams.

4. Adams, War of 1812, p. 192.

5. Leavenworth, Doc. Hist., II, 336; Jessup, Doc. Hist., II, 477.

6. McDonald, Doc. Hist., II, 344; Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

7. Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

8. Return of 23 July 1814, printed in Ripley, Facts, Appendix. There is no copy in the National Archives of this, Babcock's return of 23 June, nor any of those quoted in part by Adams.

9. Return of 8 July 1814, printed in Notes on Niagara, pp. 29-30.

10. Brown, Documents, pp. 92-93.

11. Brown, Documents, pp. 92-97.

12. Brown, Documents, p. 97.

13. Riall to Drummond, Doc. Hist., I, 10.

14. Doc. Hist., I, 33.

15. Doc. Hist., I, 76.

16. Doc. Hist., I, 76; I, 80.

17. Doc. Hist., I, 42-43. The prisoners are detailed in White's Narrative.

18. Doc. Hist., I, 42; report of the Assistant Inspector-General.

19. Doc. Hist., I, 33 and 42.

20. Doc. Hist., II, 420-423; I, 101. Brown, Documents, p. 95.

21. Doc. Hist., I, 43.

22. McMullen, Doc. Hist., II, 378, and White, Narrative.

23. Doc. Hist., I, 33.

24. Scott's letter, 12 August 1814, in Doc. Hist., I, 130-133. It would be proper to note that while Scott had opportunity to talk to any number of the participants, he was not himself at Chippewa.

25. Doc. Hist., I, 94-96.

26. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 41.

27. Doc. Hist., I, 94-96.

28. Scott's letter, Doc. Hist., I, 131.

29. Doc. Hist., II, 420-423.

30. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 42.

31. Porter, in Doc. Hist., I, 103.

32. Leavenworth, in Doc. Hist., II, 342.

33. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 34.

34. Ripley, Facts, p. 42.

35. Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

36. Cruikshank, Lundy's Lane, p. 42.

37. Tappan, in Ripley, Facts, p. 37.

38. Return of 23 July 1814, in Ripley, Facts, Appendix.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, Henry. The War of 1812.
Washington: The Infantry Journal, 1944.
This is a selection of the chapters of his nine-volume History of the United States (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889-91) which relate to the War of 1812.

Babcock, Louis L. The War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier.
Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1927.

Brown, Jacob. Documents Relating to the Invasion of the Niagara Peninsula.
Niagara: Niagara Historical Society (1920?).

Byfield, Shadrach. A Narrative of a Light Company Soldier's Service.
New York: William Abbatt, 1910.
Byfield served with the 41st Foot during the campaign.

Coles, Harry L. The War of 1812.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.

Cruikshank, Ernest. The Battle of Lundy's Lane. 3rd ed.
Welland: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1893.

_____ (ed.). Campaigns of 1812-14.
Niagara? Niagara Historical Society?? 1902.
A collection of narratives, in particular Captain Merritt of the Provincial Dragoons.

_____ (ed.). Documentary History of the Campaign Upon the Niagara Frontier. 9 vols.
Welland: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896-1908.
Volumes 1 and 2 cover the campaign of 1814.

Douglass, David B. "Reminiscences of the Campaign of 1814 on the Niagara Frontier." The Historical Magazine, vol. II, #1, July 1873.
Douglass was attached to the artillery of the American Army, and is particularly useful for the latter half of the campaign.

Elliott, Charles Winslow. Winfield Scott: The Soldier and the Man.
New York: MacMillan, 1937.

Heitman, Francis B. Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army.
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903.
Among other things, a biographical dictionary of officers since the Revolution.

Hitsman, J. MacKay. The Incredible War of 1812.
Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1965.

Horsman, Reginald. The War of 1812.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969.

Jacobs, James Ripley, and Tucker, Glenn. The War of 1812: A Compact History.
New York: Hawthorne Books, 1969.

Kimball, Jeffrey. "The Battle of Chippewa: Infantry Tactics in the War of 1812." Military Affairs, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, Winter, 1967-68, pp. 169-186.

Lloyd, Alan. The Scorching of Washington.
Washington: Robert B. Luce Co., 1974.

Lossing, Benson J. The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812.
New York: 1869. Reprinted Glendale New York: Benchmark, 1970.

Mahon, John K. The War of 1812.
Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1972.

Mansfield, Edward D. The Life of General Winfield Scott.
New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1846.

Niagara Historical Society (ed.). Notes on Niagara.
Niagara: Niagara Historical Society, undated.
Letters from the settling of the region, including one from a survivor of Chippewa.

Ripley, Eleazar. A Narrative of the Campaign on the Niagara.
Philadelphia: Privately Published, 1815.

Scott, Winfield. Memoirs of Lieut-General Scott, LLD.
New York: Sheldon & Co., 1864.

Smith, Arthur D. H. Old Fuss and Feathers.
New York: Greystone Press, 1937.
Another life of Scott. Less professional than Elliott, but more enjoyable reading.

Treat, Joseph. The Vindication of Captain Joseph Treat.
Philadelphia: Privately Published, 1815.

White, Samuel. History of the American Troops During the Late War Under the Command of Colonels Fenton and Campbell.
Baltimore: E. Edes, 1829.
White was an officer of the Pennsylvania Volunteers, captured at Chippewa.

Wood, William (ed.). Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812. 3 vols.
Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1926. Reprinted New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.
Volume III, part I contains documents relating to the Niagara Campaign.

(N.B. The titles of several older works have been cut to a reasonable length.)

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1814 ON THE NIAGARA

by

ROBERT LAWRENCE PIEPENBRINK

B.A., Indiana University, 1975

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

From the earliest writings, the Niagara Campaign of 1814, and especially the crucial battle of Lundy's Lane, have been subject to a variety of interpretations. While no controversy surrounds the actual movement of troops, the numbers of officers and men and their casualties have been subject to fierce debate. What might be designated as the "patriotic" school of American historians--Louis Babcock, Benjamin Lossing, and Henry Adams--contend that a relatively small force of Americans crossed over into Canada. (Adams' estimate is roughly 2,600 regulars with 1,200 militia and Indians.) Despite what they consider to have been an overwhelming Anglo-Canadian numerical superiority, they feel that the campaign could have been won, and indeed was almost won on 25 July at Lundy's Lane. Somehow, in their minds, the battle was snatched from the jaws of victory by the actions of the incompetent Brigadier General Eleazar Ripley, who withdrew the American army from the battlefield, leaving behind the captured British artillery.

The Anglo-Canadian school, spearheaded by Captain Ernest Cruikshank, argues that the invading army was substantially larger than American historians will concede. Cruikshank estimates the American Army at 4,500 effectives on 25 July. Allowing for detachments and casualties, this means that the initial invasion force and reinforcements must have totaled 6,000 or more. Building logically on his estimate of the American numbers, Cruikshank argues that the American army was in fact driven from the battlefield, and had already been crippled by its losses. Since the official count (fewer than 900 casualties) would scarcely cripple an army of 5,000 men, Cruikshank goes on to state that the returns were deliberately falsified to conceal the defeat: that the American return not only understated the losses of some units, but omitted three regiments altogether.

It seems evident that any interpretation of the crucial phase of the campaign--that ending with the Battle of Lundy's Lane--must hinge on the strength and losses of the contending forces. It also seems clear that some of the effort expended on understanding the battle might well be diverted to understanding the impact of the campaign, especially on the United States regular Army.

From the surviving returns and the statements of survivors, we may conclude that the total force of Americans on 25 July was 4,050, and that roughly 2,400 of these actually fought at Lundy's Lane. Granted that 750 of the difference were sick or wounded, it is nonetheless apparent that far too many men were dispersed as garrisons or simply neglected in the confusion.

The British and Provincial forces present for the same battle numbered about 3,350 out of a total army of 5,500. In other words, either commander might have won the battle handily by calling up all his forces and leaving fewer men on garrison duty.

The official returns (878 British casualties and 858 American) would appear to be reasonably accurate. There is always a certain flexibility in counts of wounded or missing, but there does not appear to have been any deliberate understatement or omission. Part of the difficulty facing many of the historians seems to be a lack of a general understanding of warfare of the period. Cruikshank in particular make the mistake of assuming that any persons not in ranks at the end of an engagement must be considered casualties, which is by no means in accordance with the realities of Napoleonic warfare.

As to the outcome of the battle, it would seem that the American army withdrew of its own volition, but that its casualties had been so severe that holding the British artillery would not have permitted any further American advance.

Of further importance is the impact of the Niagara Campaign of 1814 on the development of the United States Army; this involves a number of factors. First, it became one of the few real victories in the history of the early regulars, and helped to establish their tradition of iron discipline, attention to drill and marksmanship which would yield substantial dividends in the Mexican War. Second, the campaign had a considerable impact on the officer corps. Through all comissioned ranks, veterans of the campaign survived the postwar dismissals to form a substantial percentage of the remaining regular officers. Until the Civil War, (with the exception of the brief McComb period) the General-in-Chief of the United States Army would be a veteran of the campaign. Among the company and field grade officers would be at least ten future generals, and two instructors at West Point, where the cadets still wear the gray of Chippewa.