

# The Navies on Lake Ontario in the War of 1812

## Notes from the Papers of a Naval Officer Then Serving on His Majesty's Ships

Barlow Cumberland, M.A.

Volume 104, Number 1, Spring 2012

Special Issue: The War of 1812

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1065391ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1065391ar>

[See table of contents](#)

---

Publisher(s)

The Ontario Historical Society

ISSN

0030-2953 (print)

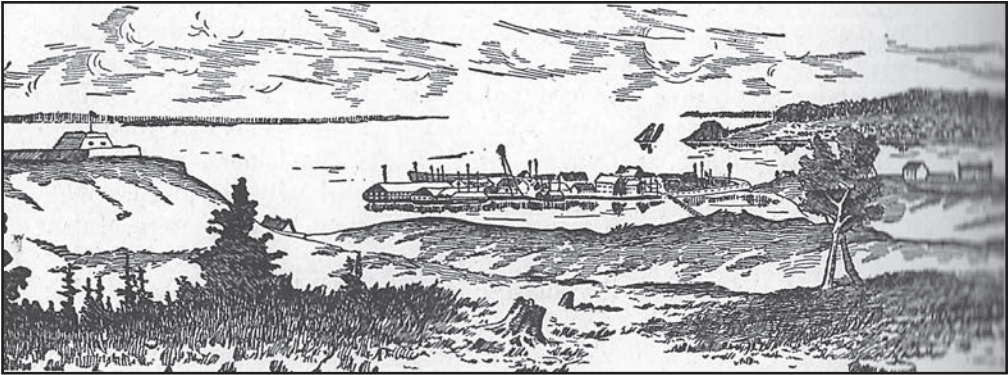
2371-4654 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

Cite this article

Cumberland, B. (2012). The Navies on Lake Ontario in the War of 1812: Notes from the Papers of a Naval Officer Then Serving on His Majesty's Ships. *Ontario History*, 104(1), 123–139. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1065391ar>



*This faithful sketch, recognized of late years by many old residents, was from the pencil of Cadet Bayfield, R.N., afterwards Admiral Bayfield. It came into possession of Major-General Cameron, R.M.C., and was reproduced by Prof. Forshaw Day for the Whig and afterwards engraved as above. The village, for it did not attain the dignity of a town until 1838, is seen to skirt the harbor for about ten blocks, with fringe of trees reaching down to the summit of the hill that now marks the centre of the city. The time honored Cataragui bridge was yet undreamt of, but Navy Bay had a pontoon bridge, to connect the military and naval settlements. At the dockyard several frigates, active in the War of 1812, are shown in permanent quarters out of commission, housed in under wooden roofs. One was the Princess Charlotte, 42 guns. The fortification shown is the first Fort Henry, built in 1818 by the Royal Engineers on the site of the present costly stone pile, erected in 1832. In 1820 barracks were added to the old fort, which led to its enlargement and to its more formidable appearance. The two trees on the right of the foreground can be seen still on Barrefield Heights, sturdy trunks truly.*

# THE NAVIES ON LAKE ONTARIO IN THE WAR OF 1812

**NOTES FROM THE PAPERS OF A NAVAL OFFICER  
THEN SERVING ON HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS**

**by Barlow Cumberland M.A.**

(Read at the Annual Meeting of the O. H. S. at Kingston, July 19th, 1907)

**S**heltered on one side by the ramparts of Fort Henry and under the lee of Point Frederic, now occupied by the buildings and establishment of the Royal Military College, Kingston, lies a little bay, reposeful and placid, as indeed befits its present service, for it is the graveyard of His Majesty's fleet of the War of 1812.

Once the shores were busy with the hauling of huge oaken timbers and resounded to the clank

of massive chains, and munitions of war, the strokes of hammer and calking irons, and cheers rose exultant as ship after ship was launched upon the waters to add strength to the defence and carry defiance to the opposing foe.

Upon the Point had been erected the Royal Naval Dockyards, for the construction and repair of the British Navy upon the Inland Lakes. The ranges of barracks, some of which still remain,

were erected for the artificers and workmen. The large stone building alongside the anchorage, now occupied by the cadets of the college, formed the shored quarters for the sailors, and from then upper three floors being left open for the full length like the decks of a ship and fitted with hammocks, was known as the "Stone Frigate."

Upon this adjacent bay, known as "Navy Bay," the warships then lay at their moorings in all the bravery of their rigging and colors; now all that is left of them is buried deep in the dark waters and remembered only in tradition.

We are so accustomed to seeing great steamers in active passage between the ocean and the far Upper Lakes, and fast express trains speeding by on our railways, that it is difficult for us to comprehend the conditions of land and water transport as it existed nigh 100 years ago. Still more so the character of the armaments which then sailed the lakes when the first war navies made their appearance upon them. A slight excursion into some contemporaneous records may not be without interest.

War between the United States and Great Britain had been declared at Washington on 19th June, 1812, and under the then slow-going methods of communication the news only reached Sir Geo. Prevost at Kingston on the 27th.

Both sides, the American and the British, were equally unprepared for naval operations on the Inland Lakes.

There were some local shipyards on the shores when war was announced, but they were of no magnitude, nor were they provided with the necessary naval supplies for construction or equipment. The bases for obtaining these were at the ocean and far removed by tedious and expensive communication—on the Canadian side by *bateaux* from Montreal, slowly surmounting the dangers of the St. Lawrence; and on the American side from Albany, by the mixed transport of road and river along the courses of the Mohawk and the Oneida Valleys.

There were then no canals by which vessels already constructed could be introduced, no naval stores, except such as were to be brought from the seaboard; no inland depots of seamen trained for gunnery or for discipline on warships in active service. Then navies for the lakes had to be constructed and created.

The garrisons and important centres of population of the belligerents on Lake Ontario were far divided and situated at the far ends of the lakes—on the American side, Sackett's Harbor and Ogdensburg on the east, Lewiston and Fort Niagara to the west; on the Canadian side, Kingston on the east and Fort George (Newark) and York (Toronto) to the west.

On both sides of the lake single roads of primitive and bush-meandering character followed the shores, forming slow and difficult means of communication, particularly for the transport of heavy

supplies and war material.

The command of Lake Ontario was, therefore, of supreme importance to whoever could obtain and hold it.

The local coasting shipping was immediately brought into service with such crews and material as were to hand, some of the small sloops and schooners being fitted to carry guns.

In the winter of 1812-13 strenuous activity reigned along the lines of communication from the sea and in the United States dockyards at Sackett's Harbor, and the Royal Naval Dockyard at Kingston and Point Frederic.

An item in the *Kingston Gazette* of December 19th, 1812, evidences these activities and records: "We are happy to announce that 120 ship carpenters have arrived at this place; more are expected." In the same issue quotation is made from a private letter from the American side, dated Sackett's Harbor, October 10th, 1812, stating,

Every exertion is being made by the Government to get command of the lake. We have a fine ship on the stocks, which will be finished in the last of November, which will mount thirty-six 32-pounders, with the Brig *Oneida*, mounting twenty 32-pounders and five merchant vessels, which are to be converted into gunboats. Another ship, afterwards named the *Pike*, was also being laid down.

On the Canadian side preparations continued in progress. On March 18th, 1813, the Kingston

*Gazette* says: "We are happy to announce the arrival at this place of several distinguished naval officers, together with 400 to 500 seamen, as fine looking fellows as were ever beheld."

These were the men of the Royal Navy who had been sent through overland from Halifax to man the warships on the lakes, which it was expected would be ready for them on their arrival.

In the race for the supremacy by the building of new ships the Americans in this winter surpassed the British. Sir George Prevost, the Governor-General of Canada and "Commander-in-Chief of the Forces," was in headquarters at Kingston. Of courteous and conciliating disposition, his lack of boldness and decision much hampered, and in some instances afterwards destroyed, the more ardent action of his subordinate commanders. It had been arranged that there should be two new 24-gun warships built during this winter on the Canadian side; one of these it had been arranged should be built at Kingston, the other at York. From a naval point of view the separation was indefensible—Kingston was amply fortified and garrisoned, while York was short of guns and naval stores, weakly garrisoned and without any reasonable defences, and, yet worse for expeditious construction, was farther from the base of naval supplies. It may be that in response to representations from the western Constituencies for a

granting to them of a share in the Government Expenditures Governor Prevost, as a politician, had acquiesced in a cry for local winter work, which, as a military commander, did not justify his approval. The result was disastrous.

While the British fleet in Kingston was still unprepared and the new ship still in the stocks, the spring of 1813 found the "fine new ship" at Sackett's Harbor ready for service as the *Madison* and sailing with thirteen other vessels on 25th of April as flagship of Chauncey's fleet for the attack on York.

York was attacked by the Americans and taken on the 27th, the new 24-gun ship being built there, but unfinished, was burned on the stocks and the 10-gun brig *Gloucester*, which had wintered in the port, was captured.

This was a hard blow against the British naval supremacy on the lake and thus early did the yielding of military requirements to political influences reap its usual reward.

While this disaster was in progress and not until the 1st of March, after General Sheaffe had retreated from York, where he left on 27th April, was the other new ship launched at Kingston and named the *Wolfe*.

The naval operations during the autumn and winter had not been expeditiously or satisfactorily conducted and a change was made in the command, Commodore Earle being superseded by Sir James Lucas Yeo.

Sir James arrived at Kingston from the Atlantic squadron about 11th May and was appointed as Com-

modore, to take full "command of His Majesty's ships and vessels on the Lakes of Canada."

Additional batches of seamen had been received from the seaboard and with Sir James another draft of naval officers for service in the Royal ships.

Among these was Lieut John Tucker Williams, E.N., who had served as a midshipman under Nelson at the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801, and from whose papers, among which are his copies of the naval Orders which had been from time to time issued to the ships on which he served, information is obtained and the extracts from the Orders are made.

The season of 1813 for active operations on the lakes had opened, the Americans had made their first successful foray on York, their fleet had remained at that end of the lake, actively occupied in carrying and convoying troops and supplies for General Dearborn's army for the attack on Fort George which, as at York, mainly by the support and covering fire from the guns of the ships, was successfully attacked and taken on 27th May.

Sir James Yeo, immediately on his arrival, had spurred up the energies of the dilatory preparations. The *Wolfe* was pressed forward to readiness for action and on 27th May he sailed out from port in her as flagship of his squadron to deliver a counter-attack on Sackett's Harbor and by destroying the shipping there make a bold stroke for the supremacy of the lake.

Arriving next day off the south shore, the boats from his ships cap-



tured a brigade of bateaux bringing reinforcements to the Americans, but by hesitating orders from Sir George Prevost, who was present and in supreme command, the troops on board the squadron which had been embarked in the boats and lay alongside for immediate landing, were by his orders re-embarked and were not landed until the 29th. Again indecision interfered, the attack was not pushed home, and after setting fire to the new ship *Pike* on the stocks and the *Gloucester*, which after her capture at York had been sent here by Chauncey to be refitted and rearmed, her guns having been taken out for the defence of the old fort at York, the troops were recalled and re-embarked and the expedition returned to Kingston.

Commodore Yeo's object had been only partially obtained, for the fire on the two ships was extinguished, they were immediately repaired and ready for action again in the end of July.

In the meantime Yeo was energetically active, his ships scoured the lake, intercepting supplies, conducting cutting-out expeditions, and supporting the British land forces. By his timely and spirited attack on the American encampment on the shore at Forty Mile Creek on 8th June he dispersed their reinforcements and completed the rout so successfully effected by Colonel Harvey and FitzGibbon on the previous day at Stony Creek: Afterwards, off Niagara and Burlington, he conducted able lake engagements.

But what manner of ships were

these in which the rival contestants were sailing? We learn that they consisted of coasting schooners, altered to carry guns, and of specially constructed warships.

The records given for 1813 are listed in Table 1.

The ships were "three-masters," for naval reports are given of the *Pike* losing her fore top-gallant mast and of the foretop, maintop and mizzentop masts of other ships being carried away. The warships are stated to have had regular quarters for their seamen, as, indeed, the numbers of their crews would indicate. The schooners were cranky and unweatherly, the guns on their decks making it difficult to prevent their upsetting, as several of them in the course of the operations did. In numbers of vessels the Americans exceeded, but they were unequal in size and in their sailing qualities. Yeo's ships, though fewer in number, were more equal in character and therefore better capable of combined evolutions. In number and range of guns and weight of metal the Americans also had greatly the superiority, the long 32's, which were mounted on all of them, being heavier and more effective than the long 24's and short 32's in Yeo's squadron.

By the courtesy of Dr. Jas. Bain, Public Librarian, copy has been made of a rare print, "A Scene on Lake Ontario," published by Shelton & Kensitt, Chesire, Conn., November, 1813, now preserved in the Public Library, Toronto. The size of the sailors has been some-

**TABLE 1: American—Chauncey's Squadron, 1813\***

Name.	Rig.	Tonnage.	Crew.	Guns.	Commander.
Madison.....	Ship —	593	200	24	Com. Chauncey
Oneida.....	Brig	243	100	16	Lieut. Woolsley
Hamilton! .....	Schooner	112	50	10	Lieut McPherson
Scourge! .....	Schooner	110	50	9	Mr. Osgood
Conquest.....	Schooner	82	40	6	Lieut Pettigrew
Tomkins .....	Schooner	96	30	8	Lieut Brown
Julia.....	Schooner	82	35	2	Mr. Trant
Ontario.....	Schooner	53	35	2	Mr. Stevens
Fair American..	Schooner	53	35	2	Lieut Chauncey
Pert .....	Schooner	50	25	1	Lieut Adams
Asp.....	Schooner	57	25	1	Lieut Smith
Pike} .....	Ship....	875	300	28	Flagship

**British—Yeo's Squadron.<sup>§</sup>**

Name.	Rig.	Tonnage.	Crew.	Guns.	Commander.
Wolfe .....	Ship..	637	220	23	Sir Jas. L Yeo
Royal George....	Ship..	510	200	22	Capt. W.H. Mulcaster
Melville .....	Brig ..	279	200	14	Com. E. Spilsbury
Earl Moira .....	Brig...	262	100	14	Mr. H. Hobbs
Sir Sidney Smith...	Schooner..	216	80	12	Lt & Com. H.C. Owen
Beresford.....	Schooner..	187	70	12	Mr. H. Radcliffe

\*Roosevelt, "The Naval War of 1812." !Upset off Niagara August 8th. }Added to fleet July 31st, § Kingston *Gazette*, September 7th, 1813. 9. (Tonnage and crews are as given by Roosevelt.)

what exaggerated by the draughtsman, making it difficult to estimate the exact proportions of the ships, but the general contour is well given and the figureheads and stern lanterns are interesting.

The American ensign on the *Pike* shows sixteen stars, being the three added to the original thirteen of the flag of 1777, to represent the additional states subsequently admitted to the Union—Vermont in 1791, Kentucky in 1792 and Tennessee in 1796.

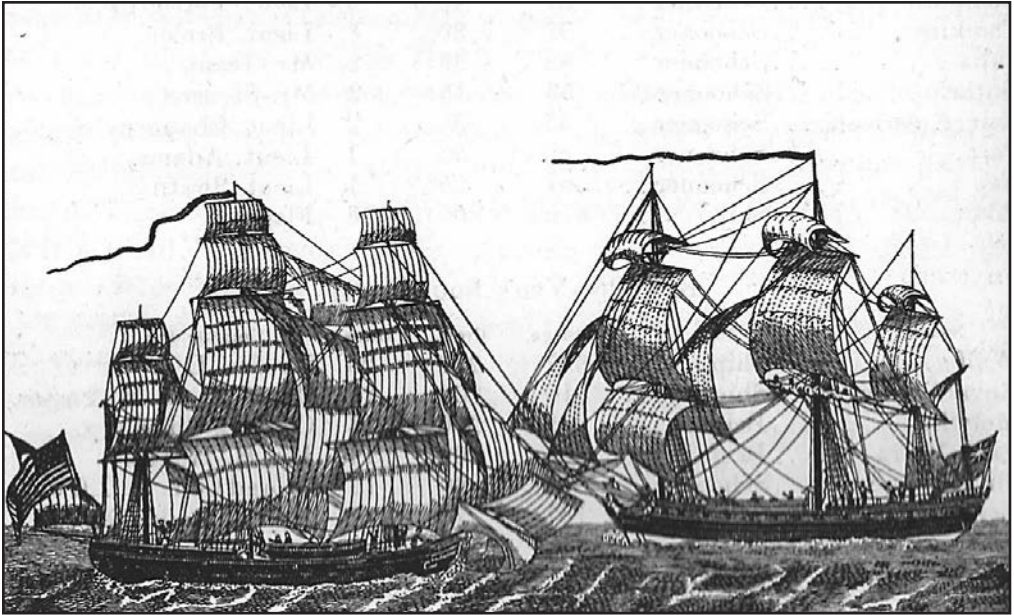
The flag on the *Wolfe* is the three-crossed Union Ensign of George III., 1801.

The incident referred to is an indecisive meeting of the squad-

rons off Burlington Heights, when no captures were effected, but the main topmast and mainyard of the *Wolfe* being carried away, congratulatory report was made to headquarters by Commodore Chauncey, hence, no doubt, the issue of the print.

Both sides seem to have been equally well served by their crews. Being largely manned by officers and seamen of the Royal Navy, strict discipline was maintained on the British ships, as indicated in the report of a court-martial at Portsmouth.\* The proprieties were also observed. One of the orders issued for the guidance of midshipmen states, "the gentlemen of the

\* Robertson's "Landmarks," Vol. II



A SCENE ON LAKE ONTARIO.

*United States Sloop of War "Gen. Pike," Commodore Chauncey, and the British Sloop of War "Wolfe," Sir James Yeo, preparing for action, September 28th, 1813.*

*Published and sold by Shelton & Kensett, Cheshire, Con., Novem'r, 1st, 1818.*

quarter-deck are always to wear a uniform dress appropriate to their stations, and on no account to appear without stockings, but at all times to go on deck with brushed clothes and shoes and be very attentive to cleanliness."

Although rivals at war, the old-time courtesies, which in those early days were exhibited to one another by belligerents, evidently existed between the fleets. After the capture of Port George by the Americans on 27th May, 1813, the *Kingston Gazette* records,

Arrived on Thursday evening, 3rd June, from Sackett's Harbor, with a flag of truce, the American schooner *Lady of the Lake*, bringing the ladies of Major Dennis and Mr. Paymaster Brock, of the 49th

Regiment, who were politely accommodated with a passage from Port George in the *Madison* by Commodore Chauncey.

With the close of the season of navigation for 1813, the contest for the supremacy, by the building of new and larger ships, was energetically continued.

The Americans laid down at Sackett's Harbor two 22-gun brigs, which were launched in 1814, at end of April and May, as the *Jefferson* and the *Jones*, and another ship, the *Mohawk*, 42 guns, was also under construction.

At Kingston similar activity prevailed. The advertisements of the *Kingston Gazette* evidence the call for men and the prices for timber.



All artificers wanting employment will have liberal encouragement on application at the Commandant Office at Point Frederic.

Merchantable timber will be received at His Majesty's Naval Yard.

Oak, squaring not less than 14 per cubic ft, 1s. 6d.

Bock Elm, squaring not less than 14 per cubic ft, 1s. 6d.

Bed Pine, not less than 45 ft. long and 9 in. square, per cubic ft, 2s. 6d.

On the British side two frigates had been laid down at Kingston, the *Prince Regent*, 58 guns, and *Princess Charlotte*, 42 guns, and launched early in April, this time due, no doubt, to Sir James Yeo's energy, in advance of their rivals. The additions of the winter of 1813 and 1814 to the fleets are recorded in Table 2.

In reading the accounts of this period it is well to remember that the names of some of the British vessels of the previous year were changed, the *Wolfe* to *Montreal*, *Royal George* to *Niagara*, *Beresford* to *Netley*.

Another large ship, the *St.*

*Lawrence*, 100 guns, was also laid down, at Kingston, but was not launched until September, 1814, and, on peace being declared, was never sailed.

The advance in the sizes of the ships constructed on both sides in the winter of 1813-14 over those of the previous years is most noticeable, and indicates increased ability on the part of the ship-builders.

It is not within the scope of this paper to enter into or explain the operations of the fleets during 1814. In the race for ship-building the British had this year made earlier gains, but the superior numbers, of guns and range still remained with the Americans.

Previously it would almost appear that each fleet in turn, as additions had been made to the strength of the other, had been held in harbor until, by the completion of another ship, the balance of sea power had been more equalized. This year, the fleets, meeting on the open lake, manoeuvred to obtain the advantage of position, the Americans, under Chauncey, with

**TABLE 2: American—Chauncey's Squadron**

Name.	Rig.	Tonnage.	Crew.	Guns.
Superior .....	Ship .....	1580	500	62
Mohawk .....	Ship .....	1350	350	42
Jefferson .....	Brig .....	500	160	22
Jones Y .....	Brig .....	500	160	22

**British—Yeo's Squadron**

Name.	Rig.	Tonnage.	Crew.	Guns.
Prince Regent .....	Ship .....	1450	435	58
Princess Charlotte .....	Ship .....	1215	315	42

their long-range guns, to engage at long distance in calm weather; the British, under Yeo, being better sailers, but with shorter guns, for the weather-gauge, and to engage at closer quarters. The reports of the commanders, particularly those of Chauncey, vary considerably in the motives assigned for the indecisive meetings, which may reasonably be accounted for by the disparity in armament, but Yeo certainly surpassed in keeping open the communications on the lake, and acting in consort with his land forces.

With much fairness Roosevelt ("Naval War of 1812") sums up the year 1814 on Lake Ontario: "The success of the season was with the British, as they held command over the lake for more than four months, during which time they could co-operate with their army, while the Americans held it for barely two months and a half."

With the conclusion of the war the fleets faded out of existence, a few ships only having been kept in service. The dismantled ships were laid up in port and, having been built of unseasoned timber, cut fresh from the forests, either became victims in two or three years to decay and dry rot, or were sunk to preserve their timbers, so thus their form and appearance were soon forgotten. The illustration of "Kingston in 1819" shows the little bay, the lofty derrick in the shipyard for raising the masts, and warships, dismantled and housed in. If there are any records

of the working plans of the ships, it would be of much interest that they should be brought to light.

Mr. Justice John Hamilton (born 1833, died 1907), eldest son of the Hon. Senator John Hamilton, of Kingston, said that he remembered as a boy fishing from a boat around the hulls of the old sunken war vessels in the anchorage of Point Frederic, some of the timbers still projected and the shape of the hulls could be seen under water, in form very much like half a walnut shell.

The fine ship *Madison*, at Sackett's Harbor, is described in the *Kingston Gazette*, February 16th, 1813, as "A corvette-built ship of the dimensions—112 ft keel, 32 1-2 ft. beam, 11 1-2 ft. hold; she carried 24 32-pound guns and a crew of 200." This would be a very round-shaped vessel, with a beam almost a third of her length, and approximates closely with Judge Hamilton's description of the shape of the British ships.

The *Superior*, of 1814, carried 62 guns, with a crew of 500; the *Prince Regent*, 58 guns, and a crew of 435, and the *St. Lawrence*, which never sailed, was a two-decker, to carry 100 guns, which makes one wonder where they placed such guns and stowed such crews upon a draught which could not, for utility, have exceeded 11 or 12 feet.

Much has been written about the movements of the land forces in the war, but there is here infinite opportunity and an un-

touched chivalrous field for the historic novelist who will revive these ships, man them again with their gallant crews, place his characters on board them and sail them over the lakes in the stirring attacks and adventures, midnight landings and lake engagements, with which the sea story of the War of 1812 abounds.

News of the Treaty of Peace conducted at Ghent on December 24th, 1814, having found its belated way across the ocean and been declared in America on February 15th, 1815, Sir James Yeo and most of his men returned to the sea. Lieut. Williams, then serving on the sloop *Netley*, remained with others to man the few vessels retained in service on Lake Ontario and Lake Huron.

The energies of the neighbouring peoples were now devoted to repairing the ravages of the war and the period of reconciliation had come. The policy of the British was in this direction, and seeing that at the conclusion of the contest, notwithstanding the immense numerical superiority of the United States invading forces, they had been driven back across the frontier, the Canadians had good reasons to be gratified with the results.

That there was dissatisfaction and animosity still existing and being fomented on the southern shores is evidenced by one of the orders.

Commodore Sir E.C.R. Owen, K.C.B., had, in succession to Sir

James Yeo, been appointed "Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's ships and vessels on the lakes of Canada." In again transferring his command, he issued a confidential order to his respective officers on the lakes, dated "On board His Majesty's Ship *Prince Regent* at Kingston, Upper Canada, 5th day November, 1815."

In turning over to another Officer the conduct of the naval service upon the lakes I feel it necessary to apprise the Captains and Commanders of the several ships and vessels of His Majesty's, that acts of vexatious aggression have been committed by some of the Civil Authorities under the Government of the United States, which cannot fail to give great height to the acrimonious publications abounding in their public papers, and made solely with a view to keep alive that spirit of rancorous animosity which it was hoped would have subsided with the war.

Considering these acts as originating with individuals ignorant of the real British character and with passions enflamed by the calumnies and falsehood, which are so boldly fabricated, they may be led to practise further on a forbearance which their arrogance has been too apt to attribute to wrong motives. It is my duty to caution the several Captains and Commanders to continually be upon their guard, and that whilst they meet every disposition which may be manifested by our neighbors with a liberal frankness and endeavor to promote reciprocal good-will by every means within their power, they hold themselves

in readiness on all occasions to repel any act of insult or aggression which may be offered them, remembering that the honor of the British character, as well as of its flag is in their hands, and it is to be maintained with firmness.

The day I hope is far distant when it will be needful to maintain by other means the respect and courtesy which is its due.

As between the regular forces of the navy on both sides we have seen that courtesy, honorable emulation and a seaman's comradeship existed, that these should not be interrupted by the acrimonious publications of a rabid press or the truculence of wordy individuals made this call for forbearance a reasonable act on the part of the retiring Commodore, and one which was entirely in consonance with the high-minded British policy.

With the reduced number of ships the rank of the Naval Command appears to have been reduced. After the retirement of the Commodore, all the subsequent orders to the respective "Captains and Commanders of His Majesty's ships and vessels on the lakes" are signed in succession by the "Senior Captain Commanding" on the flagship stationed at Kingston, at first by Captain W.F. Wm. Owen, from the *Prince Regent*, and afterwards by Captain Robert Hall, from the *Montreal*.

There being no aggressive naval operations in progress, the subsequent orders are mainly directed to internal matters of economy, issue of stores, purchase of ship clothing,

bedding, allowances to pursers, reports of expenditures, etc., etc

Extra allowance of pay is announced by the order dated 20th Sept., 1816, as having been approved by the "Lords' Commissioners of the Admiralty to the Officers, seamen and marines serving on the lakes of Canada during the time they may serve thereon."

The schedule of rates given gives evidence of the completeness of the manning of the crews and makes one still more wonder how the various rankings were accommodated on board the vessels. (See Table 3).

It has been stated by some writers on the period of the War of 1812-1815 that the British government had given higher pay from the beginning and throughout the war, in order to get selected men. This order states that the extra pay accorded is to commence on "16th Sept. inst.," which indicates that the pay up to that time had been the same as on the ocean; and further, it concludes, "as this extra allowance of pay does not extend to any other Foreign Station, I am in hopes that Officers, seamen and marines will fully appreciate the indulgence their Lordships have been pleased to grant them."

The advance of pay was evidently made at this time with the intension of inducing the officers and crews, as subsequent events proved it did, to remain in service on the lakes, and eventually become residents in Canada.

The expenditures of the war period must have been enormous,

**TABLE 3:**

Per diem.		
Commodore.....	£1	0 0
Post Captain, three years .....		7 0
Post Captain, under three years .....		5 0
Lieutenants, Masters, Pursers, Surgeons, and Secretary..		3 6
Assistant Surgeon .....		1 0
Officers of Marines .....	according to their respective ranks.	
Per month.		
Carpenters .....	£2	7 0
Boatswains .....	1	13 6
Gunners.....	1	13 6
Masters, mates, Mids and Clerks.....	1	5 0
Armourers and Masters-at-arms .....	1	5 0
Carpenters mates, Caulkers, Rope-makers, Qt. Masters, Gunsmiths, Sail-makers & Gunners mates .....		15 9
Yeomen of the Powder-room, Corporals, Coxswains, Gunners, Masters mates and Captain Forecastle . . . .		15 9
Armourers, Mates, Yeomen of the sheets, Captains Fore- top, Maintop, Mizzen top, After guard, Trumpeters. .		14 0
Sail makers, mates, Quarter Gunners, Carpenters crew, Sail makers crew, stewards, Cooks, Cooks' mates, Coopers, Ab. Seamen, Ordy Seamen, Landsmen, Boys and Marines.....		12 0

not so much perhaps in maintenance as in the cost of transport and bringing in naval armament and supplies.

A period of strictest scrutiny into every expenditure appears now to have been initiated.

The accounts were ordered to be sent in more frequently and with "fullest particulars." A perquisite of the captains ceased and they were not to expect "Freight" for carrying "public money or specie," which was in future to be "carried free, in charge of a Commissary." Allowances for pilotage were to cease and masters were given "six

navigable months on the lakes" in which to qualify themselves as pilots. The ships' clerks were not any longer to advance cash to officers, but bills could be drawn on the Deputy Commissioners, who were to be stationed inland, one at Holland Landing and one at the Niagara Frontier, as well as at Montreal.

Increased restrictions were placed upon the carriage of passengers on Government ships.

It is recorded\* that the steamer *Bella Gore*, Capt. Sandars, plied in 1810 between Niagara, York and Kingston, and another steamer,

\* Robertson's "Landmarks," Vol. II.



**TABLE 4:**

Captains and Commanders, per day, One Pound, one shilling.
Lieutenants, Masters & Captains of Marines, One Pound, fifteen shillings.
Surgeons, Pursers, Second Masters, Mates, Gunners, Boatswains, Carpenters and subalterns of marines, per day, 10 shs.
Midshipmen, Assistant Surgeons & Captains Clerks, per day, Seven and Sixpence.
Other petty Officers and Non. Com. Officers & Marines, per day, Five Shillings.
Seamen and Private Marines, per day, Two Sh. & Sixpence."

*(It will be noted that in this and the previous order surgeons were not given very high relative rank.)*

jocularly nicknamed "Con's Coffin," between York and Niagara, under the command of Captain Con. During the hostilities, these first steamboats had disappeared and the sailing packets left on the lakes had no doubt deteriorated. The vessels of the navy passing to and fro between, the ports on the lakes formed a convenient and, no doubt, favorite method of conveyance, but differences had arisen in the amounts of the vouchers for the expenses of naval officers and men passing from one station to another, so an order was issued in 1815 for a scale of allowances per day "which was not to be exceeded." (See Table 4)

This allowance was to be "in lieu of rations and lodgings" and "not to be construed into compensation for carriage hire, but that mode of conveyance which is mostly used in the country and which is not expensive will only be allowed, unless particularly ordered."

No longer could the vouchers for travelling vary in detail, for they were to be limited to an amount per diem.

In the conveyance of military officers, the officers of the navy had hitherto been allowed to put

in accounts for "expense incurred in entertaining the officers of the land forces on board the ships." With the proverbial hospitality of the sailor, what jolly conviviality must have accompanied these interchanges of acquaintance between the brother officers of the sister services? But, alas, the period of close scrutiny of accounts interfered. The Admiralty objected to their department being charged with expenses which they considered should be borne by the military departments and at length the privilege was stopped by a general order, dated Quebec, 9th April, 1816, issued by the "Lieut-General Commanding the Forces," directing that "when Military Officers are ordered to embark on board ships of War on duty they must bring on their own mess or make their own private arrangements with the officers of the vessels for the accommodation during their passage."

What chaff there may have been when first the gallant soldiers came alongside, what kindly enquiries as to where is your lunch basket? Have you forgotten your bed and bedding? Have you brought your boot blacking? etc.,

etc., to be followed by a cheery greeting and a hearty welcome.

Lieut. Williams had up to this time been serving on the Lower Lakes and was now transferred from the sloop *Netley* to the Upper Lakes. His appointment as "Commander of His Majesty's Schooner *Surprise* (via Clapperton)" was issued 26th October, 1816, by Capt. Sir Robert Hall, Knight and C.B., "Commander of His Majesty's Ships on the Lakes of Canada," and is dated from "His Majesty's Naval Establishment, Lake Huron."

This was from the then Naval Station at Penetanguishene. Capt. Bonnycastle, who visited the place in 1841, says in a letter, "The Garrison is three miles from the village and is always called the Establishment." At the present day the skeletons of some of the old warships are to be seen sunken beneath the waters in the harbor and the tombstones in the churchyard preserve the names of not a few of the crews who manned them. In the Park at Holland Landing is a huge Ship's Anchor which, having been drawn by eighteen yoke of oxen this far on its journey up "Yonge Street" from York, was dropped there on the "Declaration of Peace."

This visit of the Naval Commander-in-Chief to the interior may have been provocative of a further order recorded, or perhaps it was the increasing activity of scrutinizing auditors.

The order restricting the expenses for travelling had been based on an allowance per diem.

Some of the officers may have moved more expeditiously, some perchance had a large list of friendly acquaintances and dallied by the way in visiting them or in enjoying the hospitalities of their military brothers in return for hospitalities once given on board the ships. A new order (20th November, 1816) was now issued, stating the "Previous order is liable to misconstruction as far as relates to the time occupied in travelling," and a time limit between the stations was set, "which is never to be exceeded, nor can any Officer expect to be paid for a longer period than is herein specified" (Table 5).

But even this limitation was not considered sufficient, for the merciless order goes on to say: "As such service will frequently be performed in a shorter period than is presented by the said scale, the vouchers are to be made out accordingly." No matter what, then, were the difficulties, or delays by head winds or of muddy roads, it was a case with the auditor of "Heads I win, tails you lose," while as for a fast team in a sleigh or a speedy sail with a fair wind, such frivolities were not to be permitted, except upon penalty of a reduction of allowance.

The times allowed for expeditious travel bring vividly before us the wonderful contrast between these early days and ours, and the different conditions under which we live in comparison with the early pioneers.

In 1817 an arrangement or "convention" was arrived at as to

**TABLE 5:**

Between Quebec and Montreal, when passage in steamboat is found by Government .....	no allowance
Quebec and Montreal, by land.....	2 days
Montreal and Isle Aux Noix .....	2 days
Montreal and Lachine .....	1 day
Montreal to Kingston, by bateaux .....	7 days
Montreal to Kingston, by land during winter.....	4 days
Kingston to Montreal, summer and winter .....	4 days
Kingston and York, by land .....	4 days
York and Nottawasaga .....	4 days
York and Burlington, by land .....	2 days
Burlington and Naval Establishment, Grand River .....	2 days
Burlington and Fort George, by land .....	1 day
Fort George and Fort Erie.....	1 day
Fort Erie and the Grand River .....	1 day
Grand River and Amherstburg.....	4 days

the naval force to be maintained by the respective governments upon the Inland Lakes. This was effected in the simple manner of the exchange of identical letters, or diplomatic notes, on 28th April, 1817, between Sir Charles Bagot, British Plenipotentiary at Washington, and Richard Rush, Secretary of State for the United States. The naval force on either side was to be restricted to one vessel each on Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario, and two vessels each on the Upper Lakes, comprising Lakes Erie, Huron, Michigan and Superior; each vessel to be "not exceeding 100 tons burthen and armed with one 18-pound cannon," and their employment to be "restricted to such services as will in no respect interfere with the

proper duties of the armed vessels of the other party." All other armed vessels on these lakes were forthwith to be "dismantled and no other vessels of war shall be there built or armed."\* Orders bringing it into effect were to be forthwith issued, and the convention was to remain in force subject to six months' notice, to be given by either party desiring to annul it.

The disarmament and dispersion of both the Lake Navies immediately followed.

The result of this disarmament is very clearly to be seen in the interesting print of Kingston in 1828, drawn by James Gray and published by Wickett & Stanford, London, 1828, copy of which is in the Archives at Ottawa, and by kind permission of Dr. Doughty, Dominion Archivist, is here

\* These armed vessels of the agreed number have been since employed as revenue or fishery protection gunboats. In 1905 the Americans introduced another, a small gunboat captured from the Spaniards, which is stationed at Duluth and used by the local naval volunteer company.

reproduced.

The view is taken from the parapet of the roadway leading up to Fort Henry. In front, on Navy Bay, are lying, to the right, three dismantled warships, the masts taken out and the decks housed over; one of these, on the side visible, is pierced on the main deck for fifteen portholes; the portholes on the other vessels are not distinguishable. In the centre are the shear legs of the derrick lifting the masts out of the ships, and close beside the four-storied building of the "Stone Frigate." To the left is a two-decker, housed in and pierced on main deck for eleven and on upper deck for twelve portholes, possibly either the *Prince Regent* or the *Princess Charlotte*. Further behind is the largest of all, an unfinished ship, pierced on upper deck for twenty-two guns; the lower deck cannot be seen, as it is hidden behind the other ships; this is probably the *St. Lawrence*. In the distance, on the other side of Point Frederic, is the old town of Kingston. This print gives a fuller idea of the old ships, their huge and unwieldy size, planned more for ocean than for lake service, and approximating to the shape accorded them by tradition.

Many of the men of the British crews took their discharges and settled in the country on Free Grant Lands in Canada, which were given them by the government. Around the shores of the lakes, particularly of Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario, are to be found the descendants of the retired naval officers, who had applied their land grants where in the autumn of their days they could still watch the movements

of the waves and be reminded of the oceans on which they had attained their careers.

When the naval establishment on the lakes was discontinued Commander Williams had returned to England and, having retired from the service on half-pay, returned to Canada in 1818, bearing with him a despatch from the Earl of Bathurst to the Duke of Richmond, authorizing a grant of land to be made him in proportion to his rank. He received as his grant by patent from the Crown a number of properties in the County of Durham and established for himself a homestead near Port Hope and comprising one hundred acres on the shore of Lake Ontario (which he named "Penrhyn Park," after his Welsh associations). Here he settled down and, becoming a large landowner in the district, became quite a personage in the county.

Of good height, portly presence, clad in the breeches, top boots and many folded neck-kerchief of the period, he was familiarly known as "The Squire." He was appointed a magistrate, and from the list of books in his library evidently took his position seriously and had versed himself in the study of law. Subsequently he represented, from 1841 to 1848, the United Counties of Durham and Northumberland in the Parliament of Upper Canada, giving particular attention to the agricultural interests of his constituency. In the hotly contested election in 1843 between himself and



*Naval action on  
Lake Ontario, 1813,  
by C.W. Jeffreys.*

Commander are in His Majesty's service—Lieut-Colonel Victor Williams, of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, who served in South Africa, and Lieut. Stanhope Williams, of the Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.

Mr. G.S. Boulton the polling place for the county was at Newtonville and, under the then system of political elections, was kept open for six days. Excitement ran high, there was much turmoil and many personal encounters, in which the Williams' rallying motto, "New measures, new men, my colors are Naval blue," showed that the Commander had not forgotten the stirring naval service of his early days. He died at "Penrhyn Park" in 1854. His eldest son, Lieut-Colonel Arthur Williams, M.P., was one of the notable figures in the North-West Rebellion of 1885 where, after taking part with his regiment, the Midland Battalion, in the engagement at Batoche, he contracted an illness and died while on service on the banks of the Saskatchewan. A national monument has been erected at Port Hope to his memory in the town square of his birthplace. Two grandsons of the

Since 1817 the convention, subject to revocation on six months' notice, has remained continuously in force for well nigh ninety years. Long may it so continue for the peace of the adjoining nations and an example to the world of the best way of avoiding causes of mistaken or party offence, particularly in these more modern days, when a widespread yellow press and inflammatory speaking individuals have even more power to do damage and arouse animosities than in the days when the restriction was first instituted.

The old vessels and their gallant crews have long been laid at rest, respected in their history, beloved in their memories, each with their record, on both sides, of duty ably done for the Nations then engaged in warring strife, but now only rivals in the arts of promoting the welfare of their peoples and the preservation of peace throughout the world.