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HISTORY.
OF THE
LATE WAR,
BETWEEN
GRREAT BRITAIN
AND THE
United States of America:

*With a retrospective view of the causes from whence it
originated ;*

COLLECTED FROM THE MOST AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

To which is added an Appendix, containing public
documents &c., relating to the subject.

BY DAVID THOMPSON,
LATE OF THE ROYAL SCOTS.

Niagara, U. C.

PRINTED BY T. SEWELL, PRINTER, BOOK BINDER,
AND STATIONER, MARKET SQUARE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE appearance of the History of the War having been delayed long beyond the period at which the author at first intended, he begs leave to assure the Public, that the delay was occasioned by a combination of circumstances which it was not in his power to control. Much of that delay, in fact, arose from the difficulty experienced in procuring paper of a sufficiently good quality to answer the just expectations of the patrons of the work. As much exertion has lately been made in Niagara, to supply the Canadian public with the means of information, and that not without a heavy outlay to those interested in the publishing department, it is confidently hoped, that a generous public will fully appreciate those efforts, and extend that patronage which will ensure success.

PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH many books have been circulated throughout the continent of America, purporting to be histories of the late war between Great Britain and the United States, it must be acknowledged that none has yet appeared, in the British North American Colonies, which could be considered as generally authentic. Whatever other causes may have existed to which such a total want of veracity may be ascribed, there is little doubt but a strong desire on the part of the authors to place every circumstance regarding that contest in a favorable point of view as respected their own country, leaving the adverse party as far in the shade as possible, constituted the most prominent—a propensity confessedly to which, American writers, on this topic, have betrayed themselves uncommonly subject. It may, therefore, be fairly presumed, that an apology for the appearance of the following sheets would be quite superfluous.

A faithful and impartial account of the late war, with a review of the causes from whence it originated, must be hailed with the most exalted enthusiasm by all who can boast the name of a Briton, and are worthy of the title. In such a work, generations yet unborn will trace the footsteps of their ancestors in that glorious struggle for the salvation of their country, and emulate their virtuous example, should they ever be called upon for that purpose.

But in the following detail of the events of the war, the present generation, the majority of whom bore so conspicuous a part, will be enabled to review the ter-

rific glories of those fields of blood and carnage: the widow and the fatherless will survey the transcendent achievements of their husbands and their fathers, and, in ecstasies of triumph, like the sun shedding forth his radiant beams after being obscured for a while by a dense cloud, will smile through their tears. Our British youths, too, whose minds have been endangered by the poisoned shafts of designing malevolence which have been every where discharged through the country, by the many erroneous accounts of the late war with the causes which led to it that have been hitherto published—in perusing a true statement of those events, they will catch that patriotic flame which glowed with an unequalled resplendence in the bosoms of their fathers, and animated to action that noble few who stepped forward to oppose a relentless enemy invading their hitherto peaceful fire sides, and evinced a willingness to endure every privation incidental to the “tented field,” in defence of their King, their laws and their country.

That these momentous objects might be fully consummated, the writer has spared no expense to collect the most authentic materials for the work, neither has he shrunk from any labor (however arduous,) that might contribute thereto: official documents, periodicals and volumes of historical matter on the subject, from both the countries interested, which were marked for settled integrity, have been studiously consulted; and in addition to all this, together with the author’s personal knowledge of most of the transactions detailed, he has acquired much information on the subject from persons of unquestionable veracity who were present on the field of action in several engagements during that struggle.

As regards talent, in the execution of this work, the writer would beg leave to say, that to such he disclaims all pretensions. The humble sphere in which he has moved did not probably afford any of those bright and flowery avenues to the temple of literature to which many more fortunate individuals have had access: his primary aim, through the whole, has been the acquisition of truth to lay before his readers—for this he has incessantly labored, and which he flatters himself he has so far accomplished that a candid and generous public will indulgently overlook every other imperfection; he only laments that a more competent hand had not ere, this period, taken up the subject.

Niagara, April, 1832.

An appeal was made by the representatives in parliament of Upper Canada to their constituents, at the end of the extra session which was convened at the commencement of the war, in which was portrayed in its native coloring the abject and wretched state of vassalage to the ruler of France into which America had descended, and her consequent perfidious conduct towards Great Britain. A most deserved eulogium was in that address passed upon the character of the militia, for the promptitude with which their services were volunteered in defence of the country.

“Already have we the joy to remark,” says that address, “that the spirit of loyalty has burst forth in all its ancient splendor. The militia, in all parts of the Province, have volunteered their service with acclamation, and displayed a degree of energy worthy of the British name. They do not forget the blessings and privileges which they enjoy under the protection and fostering care of the British empire, whose government is only felt in this country by acts of the purest justice and most pleasing and efficacious benevolence. When men are called upon to defend every thing they hold precious—their wives and children, their friends and possessions, they ought to be inspired by the noblest resolution, and they will not be easily frightened with menaces, or conquered by force. And beholding, as we do, the flame of patriotism burning from one end of the Canadas to the other, we cannot but entertain the most pleasing anticipations. Our enemies have indeed said, that they can subdue the country by a proclamation; but it is our part to prove to them that they are sadly mistaken; that the population is determinately hostile, and that the few who might be otherwise inclined, will find it their safety and interest to be faithful.”

As was before observed, a large American force, consisting of regulars and militia, was early in the year 1812 stationed at Detroit, and had been placed under

the command of General Hull, an officer of the Revolution, who, on the 12th of July, crossed the river Detroit with a force of two thousand five hundred of the above troops and a strong park of artillery, and planted the American standard on the shores of Canada. Immediately on the arrival of the American army at Sandwich, General Hull issued the following :

PROCLAMATION.

Head Quarters, Sandwich, 12th July, 1812.

INHABITANTS OF CANADA—

After thirty years of peace and prosperity, the U. States have been driven to arms. The injuries and aggressions, the insults and indignities of Great Britain, have once more left them no alternative but manly resistance, or unconditional submission. The army under my command has invaded your country. The standard of the Union now waves over the territory of Canada. To the peaceable, unoffending inhabitants it brings neither danger nor difficulty. I come to find enemies, not to make them. I come to protect, not to injure you.

Separated by an immense ocean and an extensive wilderness from Great Britain, you have no participation in her councils, no interest in her conduct. You have felt her tyranny; you have seen her injustice; but I do not ask you to avenge the one, or to redress the other. The United States are sufficiently powerful to afford every security, consistent with their rights and your expectations. I tender you the invaluable blessing of civil, religious and political liberty, and their necessary result, individual and general prosperity; that liberty which gave decision to our councils and energy to our conduct, in a struggle for independence, which conducted us safely and triumphantly through the stormy period of the Revolution—the liberty which has raised us to an elevated rank among the nations of the world, and which afforded us a greater measure of peace and securi-

ty, of wealth and improvement, than ever fell to the lot of any people. In the name of my country and the authority of government, I promise you protection to your persons, property and rights. Remain at your homes; pursue your peaceful and customary avocations; raise not your hands against your brethren. Many of your fathers fought for the freedom and independence we now enjoy. Being children, therefore, of the same family with us, and heirs of the same heritage, the arrival of an army of friends must be hailed by you with a cordial welcome. You will be emancipated from tyranny and oppression, and restored to the dignified station of freemen.

Had I any doubt of eventual success, I might ask your assistance; but I do not. I come prepared for every contingency—I have a force which will break down all opposition, and that force is but the vanguard of a much greater. If, contrary to your own interest and the just expectations of my country, you should take part in the approaching contest, you will be considered and treated as enemies, and the horrors and calamities of war will stalk before you.

If the barbarous and savage policy of Great Britain be pursued, and the savages are let loose to murder our citizens and butcher our women and children, this war will be a war of extermination. The first stroke of the tomahawk, the first attempt with the scalping knife, will be the signal of one indiscriminate scene of desolation. No white man, found fighting by the side of an Indian, will be taken prisoner—instant death will be his lot. If the dictates of reason, duty, justice, and humanity, cannot prevent the employment of a force which respects no rights, and knows no wrongs, it will be prevented by a severe and relentless system of retaliation.

I doubt not your courage and firmness; I will not doubt your attachment to liberty. If you tender your

services voluntarily, they will be accepted readily. The United States offer you peace, liberty and security. Your choice lies between these and war, slavery, and destruction. Choose, then, but choose wisely—and may he who knows the justice of our cause, and who holds in his hands the fate of nations, guide you to a result the most compatible with your rights and interests, your peace and happiness.

By the General,
A. P. HULL.

This proclamation of General Hull was full of confidence in the strength of his arms and in the justice of his cause, assuring himself, from that consideration, of a successful termination to the campaign. It threatens, too, of pursuing a war of extermination, in the event of the employment of the Indians on the part of the British, forgetting, it would appear, that already were the Indians engaged co-operating with the forces of the United States against the British army.

General Hull, having crossed into the British dominions with an army which in point of numbers was capable of setting at defiance the whole of the British regular army then in the Canadas, commenced an advance on Fort Malden or Amherstburg. At the time the American army approached that place, the garrison consisted of a subaltern's detachment of royal artillery commanded by Lieutenant Troughton; a detachment of the forty-first regiment, of three hundred men, commanded by Captain Muir; and between three hundred and four hundred militia, the whole under the command of Lieutenant Colonel St. George, inspecting field officer of militia for that district—a force totally inadequate, by its numerical strength, to cope with that of the Americans, to which they were now opposed; but the most vigorous measures were employed by Major General Brock, to secure the fort against an assault, in the aid of which the