

THE ROLE OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER IN CANADIAN
MILITARY HISTORY.

(A STUDY IN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY)

BY

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Introduction.

1.

Anglo America has, since the close of the Second World War, shown a compelling need for joint action, by its two major nations, Canada and the United States, in those matters of foreign policy and military strategy which directly affect the security of the North American Continent. Thus "Hemispherical Defence" seems to be the plan of the present and the future. But what of the past?

In days gone by, Canada and the United States have not always been friendly towards one another. In their respective histories is found, all too often, examples of mistrust and misunderstanding. Indeed, the further one goes back in history, the more one realizes that what is now the longest stretch of undefended international border in the world, has been the scene of many battles.

To study history along the entire length of this boundary would be too extensive an endeavour. Therefore a specific part of it has been chosen in order to study, intensively, the physical and historical events that mark the development of these two great nations from early time up to the present doctrine of "Hemispherical Defence".

One of the best known frontier zones lies along the Niagara River, a stretch of 36 miles from Lake Erie in the south to Lake Ontario in the north. Here, along the Niagara River may be traced the cycle of a frontier through its rise, its peak and its decline. Moreover, since this

1. Anglo-America, as defined by White and Foscoe, in their book - "A Regional Geography of Anglo America", is that portion of the North American continent occupied by the United States, Canada, Alaska and Greenland.

2.
particular Frontier Zone has a varied topography, shaped by wave, river and ice, it affords us ample opportunity to see how the geography has been intricately interwoven into ^{the} history and the lives of its people.

Figures 1(a) and 1(b) place the Niagara Frontier in its Great Lakes and Peninsular settings. It is interesting to note that its Peninsular aspect shows very well the lines of contact between the two great continental American nations; the Great Lakes aspect shows a strategic node presenting an obstacle to water communication between the upper and the lower lakes. Continentally, it lies in the heart of the great North American Manufacturing belt and will therefore merit consideration in Hemispherical Defence. Each of these features is treated in succeeding chapters in an attempt to relate the physical and cultural history of the Niagara region.

2. Frontier Zone - for purposes of this study the boundaries of the Niagara Frontier Zone have been chosen arbitrarily as the Welland Canal on the west, the Erie Canal from Buffalo to Lockport, then the Eighteen Mile Creek to Lake Ontario.

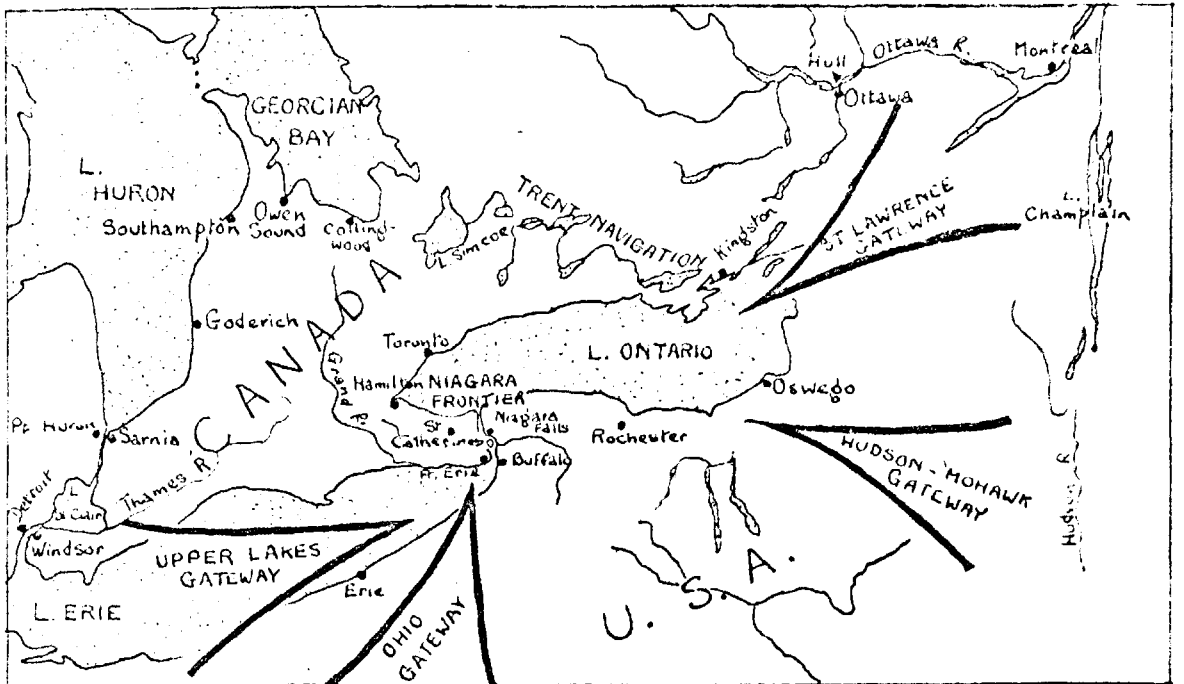


FIG 1(a) THE NIAGARA FRONTIER IN ITS GREAT LAKES SETTING

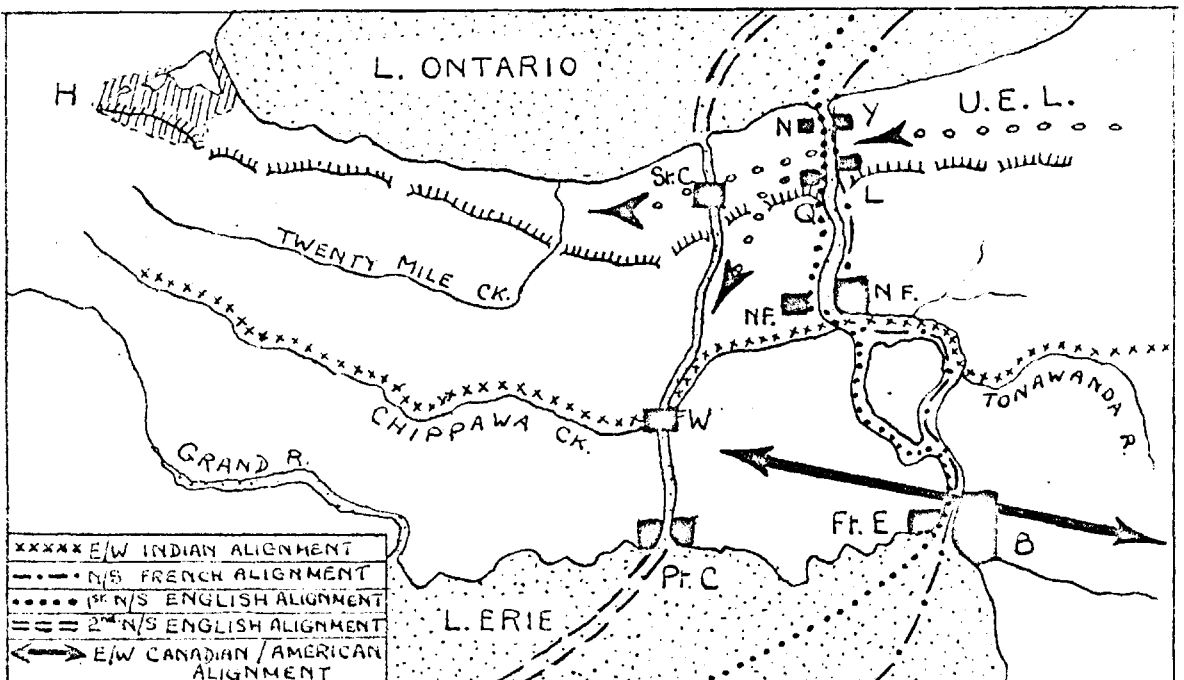


FIG 1(b) THE NIAGARA FRONTIER IN ITS PENINSULAR SETTING. NOTE THE SHIFT IN GEOGRAPHICAL ALIGNMENT.

PART I.

Physical History of the Niagara Frontier.

CHAPTER I.

The Paleozoic Basis of the Frontier.

The Niagara region is located in the Central Lowlands of North America in a zone of transition between the Appalachians and the old eroded land mass of Laurentia. In early Paleozoic times these stood as miniature massifs separated by a huge NE/SW trough known as the Appalachian Geosyncline. With variations of climate the sea-level of the Paleozoic Era fluctuated considerably. Geologic records show seven major periods of marine transgression at this time. Three of these periods, the Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian, show outcrops in the Niagara region as shown in fig. 2. The variety of sediments laid down in these three periods in beds dipping gently to the south has been the reason for the evolution of a belted plain of scarp and vale topography. The hard resistant capping rocks such as Lockport and Onondaga dolomitic limestone dominate the heights of the Niagara and Onondaga scarps while the softer Salina shales occupy the major depression of the Huron plain, the Welland and Tonawanda Vales.

Ordovician Period.

Rocks of the Ordovician age are basal to the Niagara Peninsula. The period opened with general flooding of the Appalachian Geosyncline. The seas extended west and north with a resultant deposition of limestone, sand and silt. During the middle part of the period the seas spread into the Lake Ontario region. The Queenston shale deposits are thought to be the westward extension of a delta formation spreading from the Appalachian borderland in New York.

In the Niagara region, they are the oldest formation and attain a depth of about 1100 feet. They are exposed about 300 feet below the

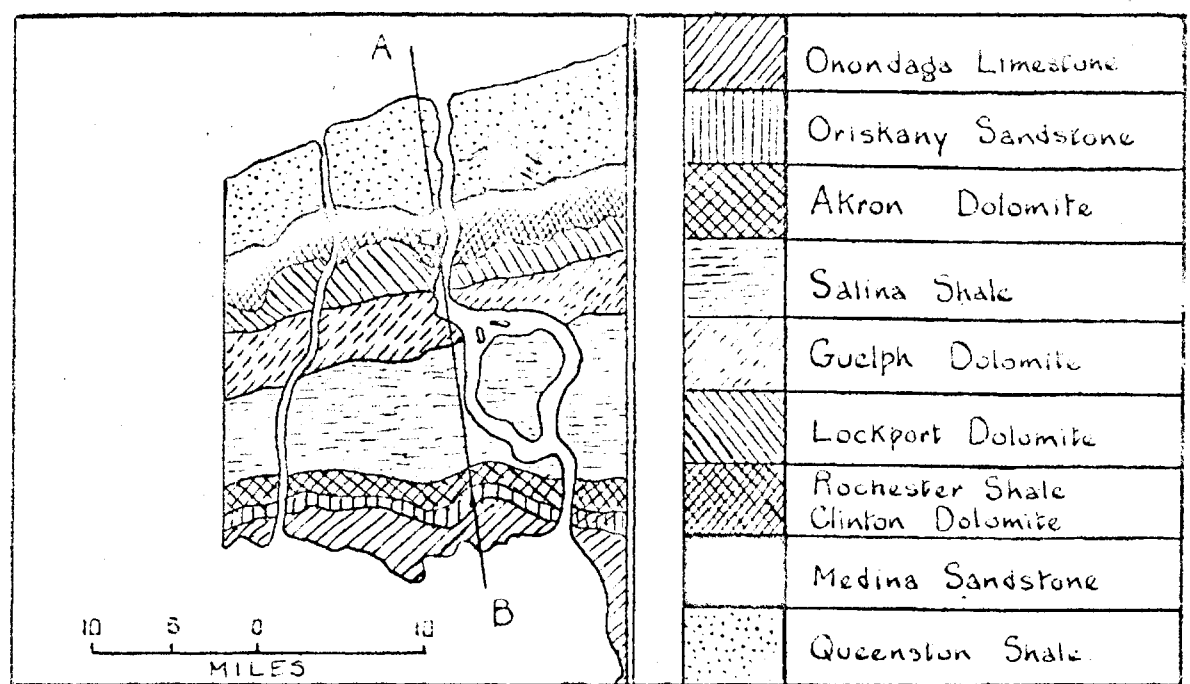


FIG 2(a) GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER. (MODIFIED AFTER J.W.WATSON.)

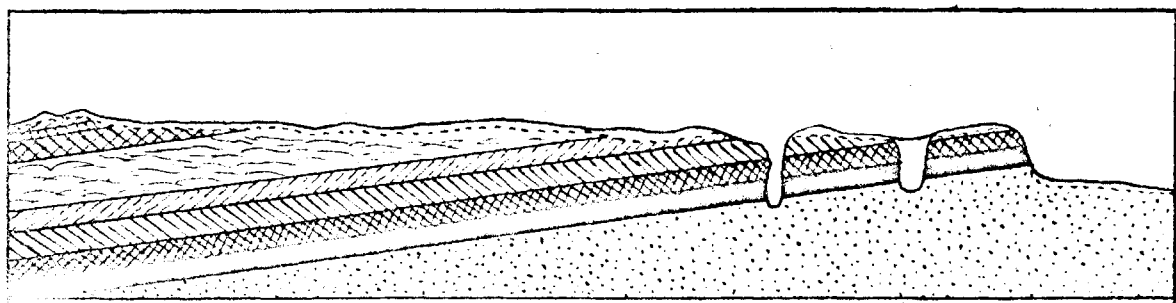


FIG 2(b) GEOLOGIC SECTION ALONG A/B.

contact with the superjacent Albion sandstone. Characteristically they have a bright red colour with even bedding. They are finely laminated with thin beds of green shale. These shales appeared relatively soft to the subsequent streams of pre-glacial drainage and eroded away to form the basis of the present Ontario Lowland.

Silurian Period.

The Silurian period which succeeded to Queenston times opened with a minor marine transgression. Then, towards Middle Silurian times, a great epicontinental sea covered the central part of the continent.

The Albion, Alexandrian or Oswegan Sandstone, characteristic of the Lower Silurian, consists of white, grey and red beds with some red shale. Its basal bed is called the Whirlpool Member while its upper bed is called the Thorold Member. Their sandstone grains are well-rounded to show evidence of wind action and they lie in ripple-marked, cross-bedded formations. The presence of marine fossils would force the observer to conclude that this was a beach deposit.

The influence of these sandstone formations is particularly noticeable along the base of the scarp where they constitute the essentials of the Iroquois terrace and bench formation. Along the Welland Canal, in the Thorold area, they have resisted erosion to a high degree and provide a ramp up the scarp now utilized by man for canal-lock operations.

The next main bed is called the Clinton formation. It was deposited under deeper water conditions than the Albion sandstone and is mixed with sandy argillaceous muds. The effects of the Clinton formation are prominent at Lewiston where the "Three Mountains" are said to exist. The Middle Mountain, or step up the escarpment, is underlain by the Clinton formation which has resisted erosion to some extent because of its dolomitic upper layer. The next member is the Walcott (Renales) dolomitic limestone. It indicates shoreline deposition with its traces

of rippling and channelling. Reef knolls are to be found in the light grey crystalline dolomite of the Irondequoit member. These are represented by irregularly bedded dome-shaped structures of non-crystalline limestone. These knolls tend to persist, in places, on into the next layer of the soft, blue-grey, argillaceous shale of the Rochester member, which tends to become more calcareous towards the top as the intercalations of thin limestone sheets become more numerous.^{1.} The Rochester formation is one of the greatest factors in the method of recession of the Niagara Falls. Its relatively soft shales, lying immediately beneath the capping Lockport formation, are eroded away to leave the latter with little support. This results in the eventual rupture of the suspended layer and huge blocks drop to the bottom of the cataract to act as tools in further mechanical erosion of the lower shales.

The Lockport dolomite of the same formation is dark-grey or chocolate coloured. It is perhaps the greatest factor in the slow retreat of Niagara Falls from Lewiston-Queenston to its present location. The formation is approximately 120 feet thick, is relatively resistant to erosion and forms the cap-rock of the falls.

The upper member of the Lockport formation is a light grey dolomite known as the Guelph Member. It is from 90-140 feet thick. The Lockport dolomite is the guardian of the Niagara Cuesta. Its resistance to erosion has prolonged the life of the escarpment, one of the greatest barriers to men in historic times. The dip-slope of the cuesta is peneplaned to expose a variety of strata from the scarp-face to Lake Erie. This has provided an opportunity for different^{ial} erosion by subsequent streams.

A distinct change in climate, expressed at the close of Lockport time by the presence of minor quantities of gypsum, led to the develop-

1. R.M. Field - Principles of Historical Geology from the Regional Point of View. 1933 Princeton University Press, Chapter 5. p. 125.

ment of the Salina formation where valuable commercial beds of salt and gypsum are found today. The deposits of this formation, corresponding to a distinct stage of aridity, are composed of blue shale and argillaceous limestone.

Differential erosion is most marked by the softer Salina shales lying between the Akron and Guelph dolomite formations. They have been weathered away to form the Welland/Tonawanda Vale drained by the sluggish Chippawa and Tonawanda Creeks. This mediocre drainage accounts for the greatest swamp area along the frontier.

Outcropping roughly in the Fort Erie district the argillaceous dolomite of the Bertie-Akron Series is the last of the Silurian rocks identified in the Niagara region. The resistance to erosion of the Bertie Akron formation is shown by the scarp topography of the region. The Onondaga scarp has, however, been but a minor barrier to human movement along the upper plain west of the Niagara River. East of the river it rises to a considerable height thus becoming a greater obstacle.

Devonian Period.

The devonian rock sequence is not very prominent in the Niagara region but does find outcrops along an east-west axis in the Fort Erie-Tonawanda area. Here, a most striking disconformity appears where, for some considerable distance, the Middle Devonian sediments overlie the Bertie-Akron series of the Silurian. One Canadian writer goes so far as to say that Canada was not involved in the marine transgression of the
2.
Lower Devonian. However, to imply that the disconformity is complete is a fundamental error. Both Map 584A (Toronto-Hamilton, Ontario) Canada Sheet, of the Department of Mines and Resources, Mines and Geology

2. E.S. Moore - Elementary Geology for Canada, 1943, J.M.Dent and Sons Ltd., (Canada), Part II, Chapter XVII, p. 326-327.

branch, Bureau of Geology and Topography, and Fig. 2 of this work, show that a distinguishable outcrop of Oriskany Formation (Lower Devonian) occurs a mile north of Port Colborne in Humberstone Township of Welland County and 4 miles northwest of Ridgeway in Bertie Township of the same county.

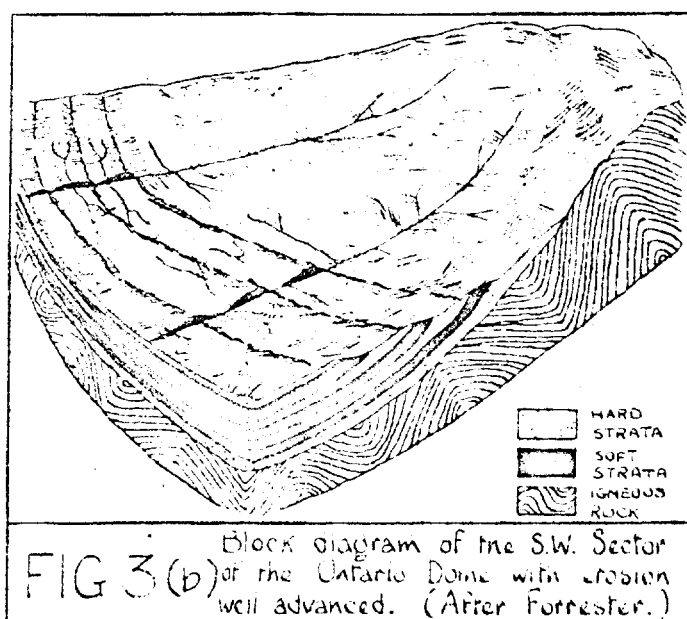
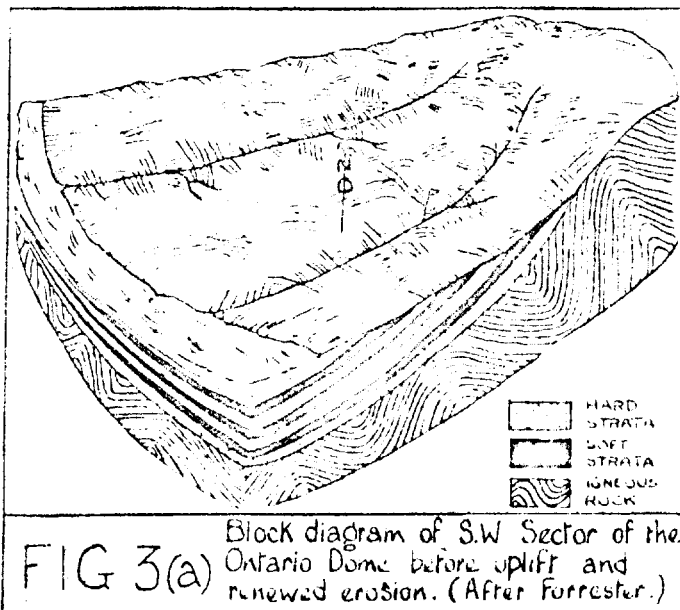
The Oriskany appears as a single light grey sandstone layer from 1 - 40 feet in thickness. Above it lies the Onondaga, made up of the coarse, Springvale sandstone and the more important Onondaga blue grey cherty limestone. This formation is anywhere from 30 - 200 feet in thickness. The influence of the Oriskany sandstone and the Onondaga limestone are shown on the relatively flat, ill-drained dip-slope of the Onondaga Scarp.

Erosional Features.

Following the Devonian period there were several periods of marine transgression but none of them has left any evidence of having been as far north as the Niagara region. It is quite probable that they did barely enter the region but have long since been eroded away. However, the region can be regarded as an emergent fringe to the older Laurentian land mass, that remained above the sea throughout most of subsequent history.

The problems concerning Laurentia's drainage may be of importance since, deciding the pattern of pre-glacial drainage, it influenced present patterns to a certain degree.

In the latter part of the Paleozoic, during the Appalachian orogeny, Ontario was affected by upheaval and tilting, and the formation of the "Ontario Dome". This doming in Ontario led to an increased rate of denudation. River action was very vigorous and soon removed the sedimentary rocks of the dome unveiling the basal primary rocks



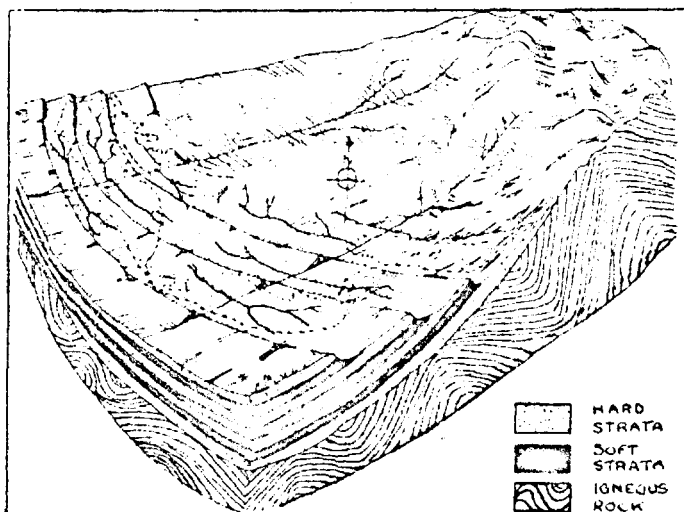


FIG. 3 (c) Block diagram of the S.W. Sector of the Ontario Dome after long continued erosion. (After Forrester.)

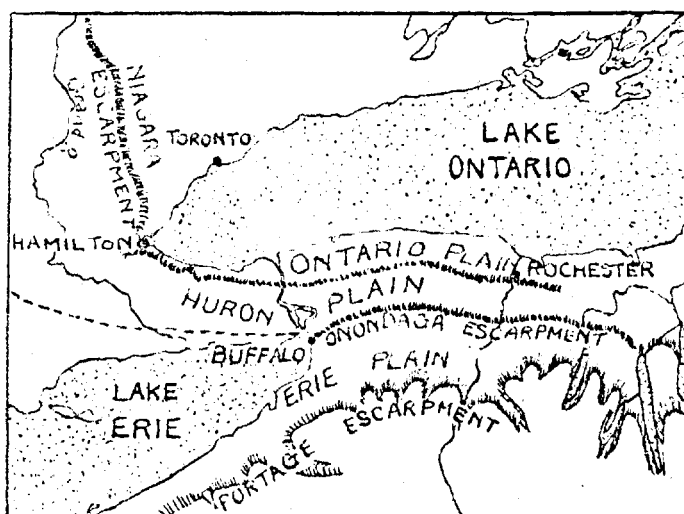


FIG 3 (d) Sketch showing Scarp and Vale Topography of the Niagara Region. (Modified after U.S. Geological Survey, Folio 190.)

"Surrounding this exposure there remained on the flanks of the dome the outcropping sedimentary strata, which once extended up the flanks and over the entire structure. The outcropping of the oldest, and hence the most deeply buried, stratum fringed the granite exposure, while the succeeding layers were exposed in roughly concentric belts consisting of the bevelled edges of the outcropping layers. The widths of the belts depended on the thickness of the strata, and the angle of their inclination to the surface." 3.

With differential erosion, patterns of clay vales and limestone scarps emerged, which can be traced in Figs. 3(a) to 3(c). The resultant outline of the escarpment-and-plain structure is shown in Fig. 3(d).

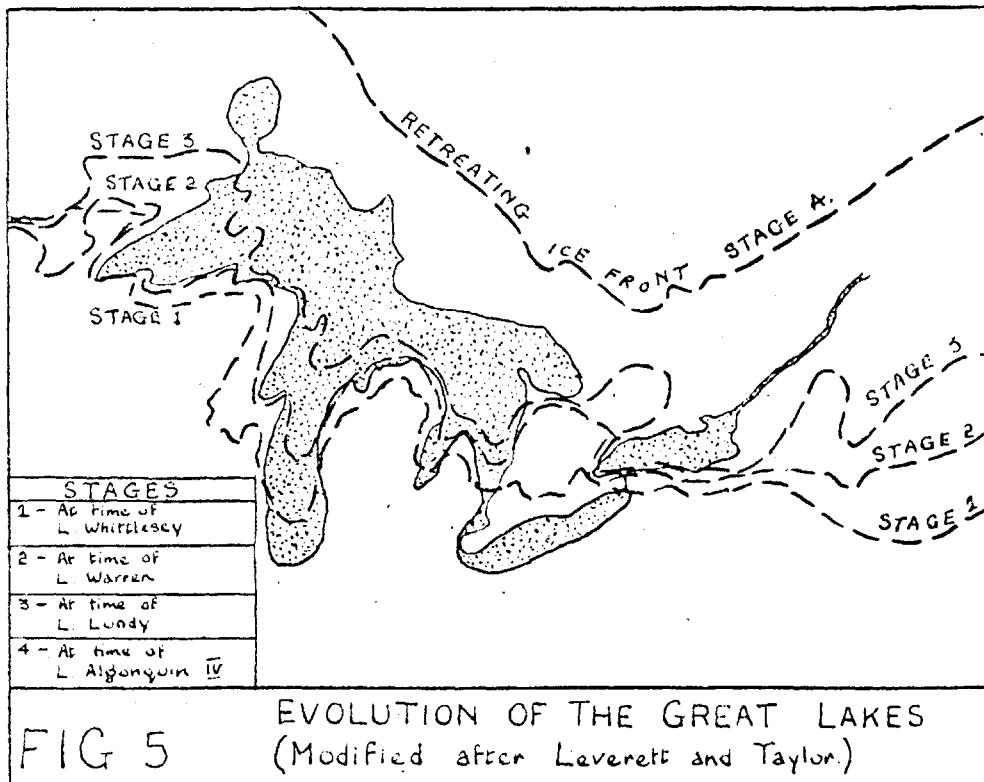
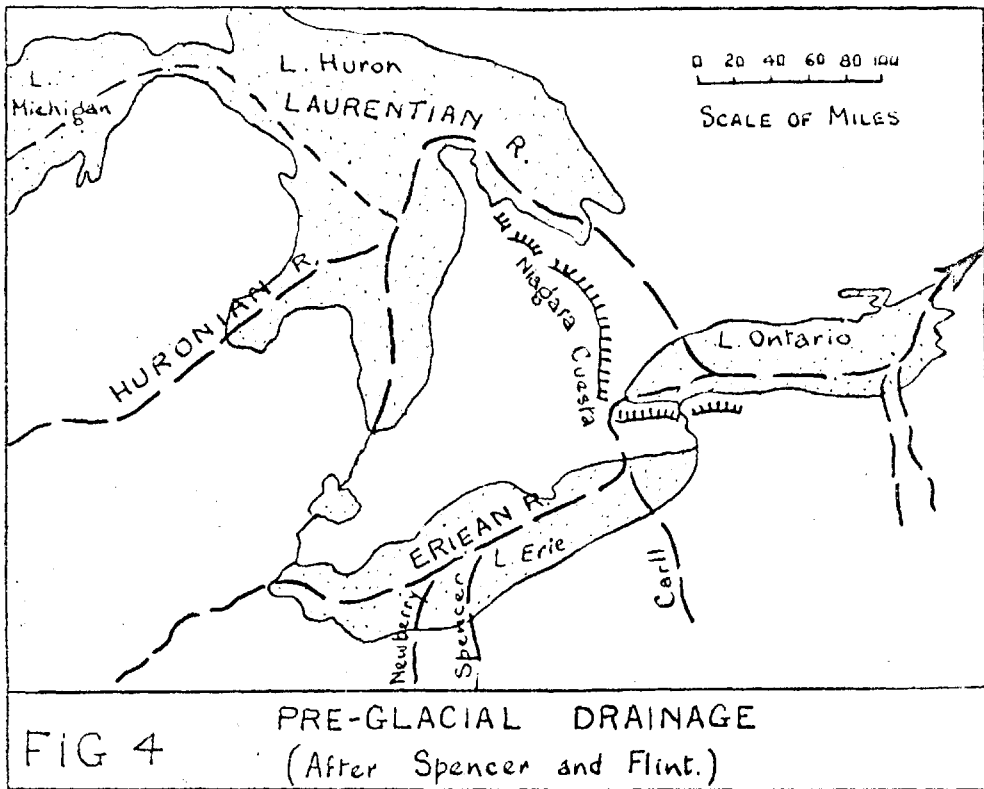
The rivers of the Niagara region are thought to have flown either towards the St. Lawrence Gulf or to the south into the Mississippi Gulf.

The main axis of drainage in either case was the Dundas Valley. The Niagara frontier was made up of three separate drainage systems, as represented by Bloody Run Creek, the Tonawanda Vale and what has been called Buffalo Creek. The development of the present river, as an axial line of Great Lakes' drainage, awaited the ice age. It then completely replaced the Dundas Valley in importance. (Fig. 4.)

Influences of the Paleozoic.

To sum up, the Paleozoic saw the deposition of shales and limestones and their erosion into three plains and two escarpments. To the north on the Ordovician shale lies the Ontario plain. This is bounded on the south by the Niagara escarpment of Silurian limestone. In a step-fashion rising to the south lie the Huron plain of Salina shale, the Onondaga escarpment of Devonian sandstone and limestone, and the Erie plain of argillaceous Devonian limestone. These features lie along an East/West axis. North/South barriers (escarpments) have been created by preglacial erosion. They make the "Natural" or easy lines of

contact, along the plains, not across them.



CHAPTER II.

Pleistocene Sculptoring Along the Frontier.

While the build of the Niagara Region resulted from the Paleozoic its "facial features" were due to the Cenozoic, and in particular, to the Pleistocene Epoch of the Quaternary Period. The pattern of relief and drainage probably remained much the same, throughout Tertiary, as in Paleozoic times. However, it was profoundly changed in Quaternary times, and therefore this period deserves especial attention.

In the relatively cold climate of North America sufficient snow accumulated over three general areas. Glaciation began in the lofty Cordilleran region. Then it started in the northerly plateaux of Keewatin and Labrador. The Labrador Ice Sheet was the master sculptor during the last great advance of ice in the Niagara region in Wisconsin time. The earlier work of the ice was buried by Wisconsin drift, which is responsible for the present glacial relief. It is represented by till, moraines, kames, eskers, outwash aprons, and glacial lake deposits.

The sheet of ice, some 3000 feet thick, exerting a pressure of 84^{1.} tons per square foot, can certainly be pictured removing surface soil which ages of weathering had formed from resident strata and even gouging deeply into the bed rock itself. Thus red, shaley soil from below the Niagara Scarp was carried above it. The top of the scarp was stripped bare of soil, leaving small areas of rock plain. The face of the scarp was deeply gouged, and re-entrants such as those of the

L. G.C. Forrester - Falls of Niagara, 1928, D.Van Nostrand Co. Inc., Chapter I, p. 33.

Twelve Mile Creek and St. David's Gorge were widened and lengthened. The St. David's Gorge, cut by the pre-glacial stream draining the Niagara region, was filled with glacial debris by the earlier ice sheets. The last ice sheet advance is thought to have gouged out some of this fill to form a prominent re-entrant. Here, also is found many striae, "the footprints of a glacier", indicating the southward movement of the ice. The ice then over ran the whole region and continued to advance as far as Indiana.

At length the ice front retreated and, due to irregular variations in climate, stopped long enough at various places to leave recessional moraines. These are prominent in Southern Ontario. In the Niagara region recessional moraines are quite prominent. The first is in the vicinity of Queenston/Lewiston. The second follows a line through Niagara Falls/Tonawanda. The last lies immediately south of the city of Niagara Falls, on the Canadian side of the frontier, along the north bank of Black Creek through the town of Snyder, and through the cities of Fort Erie/Buffalo.

Ground moraine is not very abundant, probably because much of it has been subsequently buried by glacial lake deposits. However, the heavier forms of glacial load often appear at the surface, particularly large granite boulders deposited as erratics. The classic example of such is a huge boulder in Prospect Park on the bank of the Gorge in Niagara Falls, New York.

A most important feature of the ground moraine was the filling of the old St. David's Gorge. The burying of the gorge later deflected the Niagara river to cut the Queenston channel. The buried gorge is important now as an easy incline up the Niagara escarpment, and is no longer an abyssmal obstacle.

Glaciation also includes the many features associated with glacial

lakes. The loading of the Great Lakes region with so much ice caused the crust to subside, while the regions further south, as they became free of ice, resumed an unwarped condition.² This was the key to the formation of our present Great Lakes, which were ponded up between the rising land to the south and the ice front. At first drainage was to the south. The subsequent retreat of the ice east of the Frontenac Axis eventually opened the lowest of drainage ways, the St. Lawrence channel, and thus drew off the water to the North East.

The retreat of the ice led to successive changes in the level of the lakes. These changes are well presented in the Niagara region both by glacial lake beach deposits and by the Niagara Gorge, stretching some seven miles from the face of the Niagara escarpment at Queenston to the present site of the cataract at the cities of Niagara Falls.

The chief glacial lakes in the Frontier region were Lakes Warren and Lundy, Greater Lake Erie and Lake Iroquois. (Fig. 5.) Two of these, formerly occupying the basin of the present Lake Erie, show prominent beaches in the Niagara region. These are Lake Lundy and Great Lake Erie. The former left sandy deposits found south of Lundy's Lane in the city of Niagara Falls, Ontario. Smaller beaches of this age occur in the township of Crowland; also Bethel and Sherkton in the township of Humberstone; near Ridgemount, Garrison Road and Fort Erie in the township of Bertie. The beach deposits of Greater Lake Erie are found somewhat south of these. Erie beach deposits are located mainly from Port Colborne to Gasline via Bethel in Humberstone township and from Windmill Point to Fort Erie in Bertie township. Indeed the whole area from Silver Bay to Crystal Beach on Lake Erie, thence north to Ridgemount could be considered a beach shoal or a delta formation.

2. C. Schuchert - Outlines of Historical Geology, 1931 - J. Wiley and Sons Inc., Part II, Chapter XX, p. 292.

It is interesting to note that in this same general region of Lundy and Erie beach deposits we find the major clay depression of the dip-slope plain. It extends from Lorraine on Lake Erie through the marshlands of the upper Black Creek in Humberstone and Willoughby townships to Chip-pawa on the upper Niagara River. It represents a large lake, remnant of the still larger glacial lakes, which lay between the sandy ridges.

3.

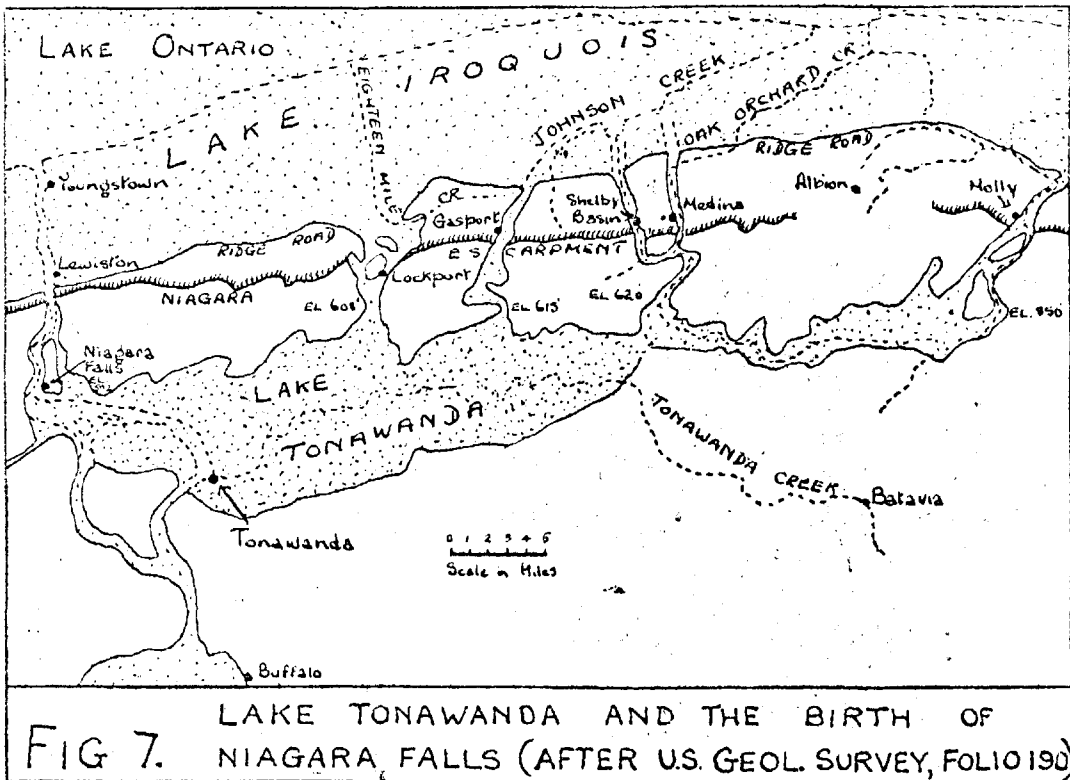
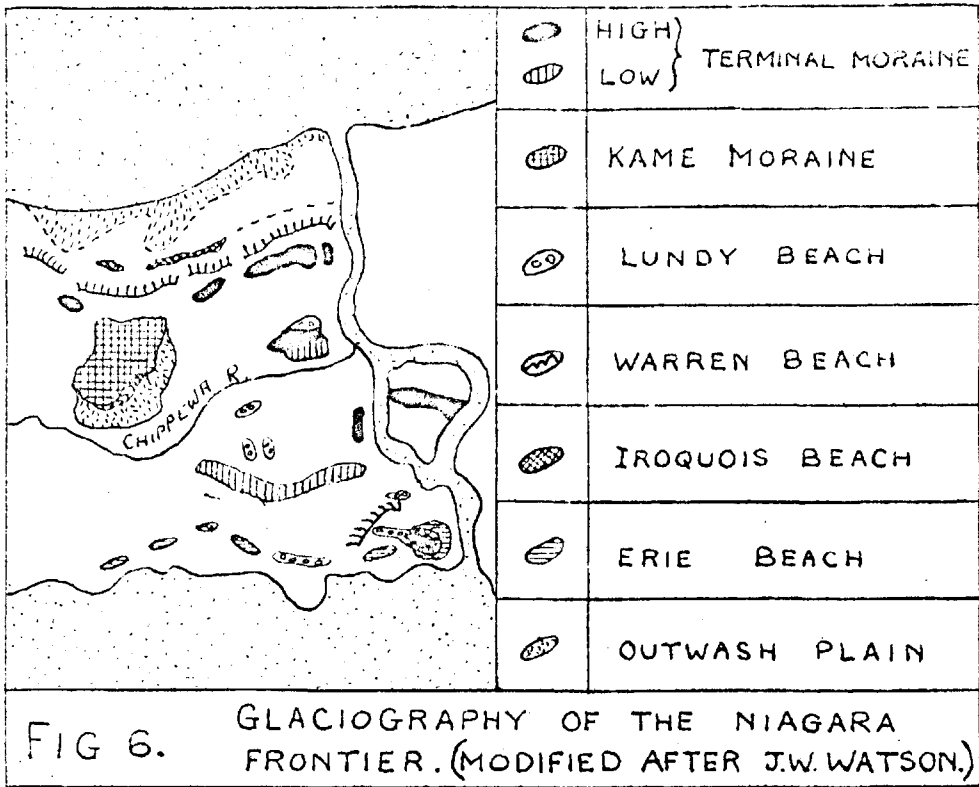
Much of its bottom is still wet and swampy.

With the retreat of the ice front in the Ontario Basin glacial Lake Iroquois formed and extended south from the front of the ice practically to the escarpment. In so doing a distinct wave-cut beach was formed along the foot of the escarpment. This Iroquois beach although cut through in many places, is prominently displayed along the lower plain from Homer to St. Catharines, at Lewiston and at Dickersonville, New York. Another interesting feature in which Lake Iroquois played a part in that if the Iroquois spit formed at Lewiston beyond the old cataract basin. Sloping from the Iroquois terrace to the north are found great stretches of outwash plain bordered by the present wave-cut shoreline of Lake Ontario. (fig. 6.)

The chief feature of glacial origin in the Niagara Falls district is the Niagara river. This developed in the span of 25,000 - 35,000 years since the ice melted from the scarp. Traversing all the more common east-west features of the region it forms a great north-south barrier, ultimately accepted as a human frontier.

Its origin lies in the retreat of the ice front well to the north of the region. With eventual separation of the Lakes of the Ontario and Erie basins a small shallow lake developed between called Lake

3. Glacial Lake Warren, while leaving beaches in other parts of the Niagara peninsula, apparently came up against the ice in the Frontier region producing no clear beach.



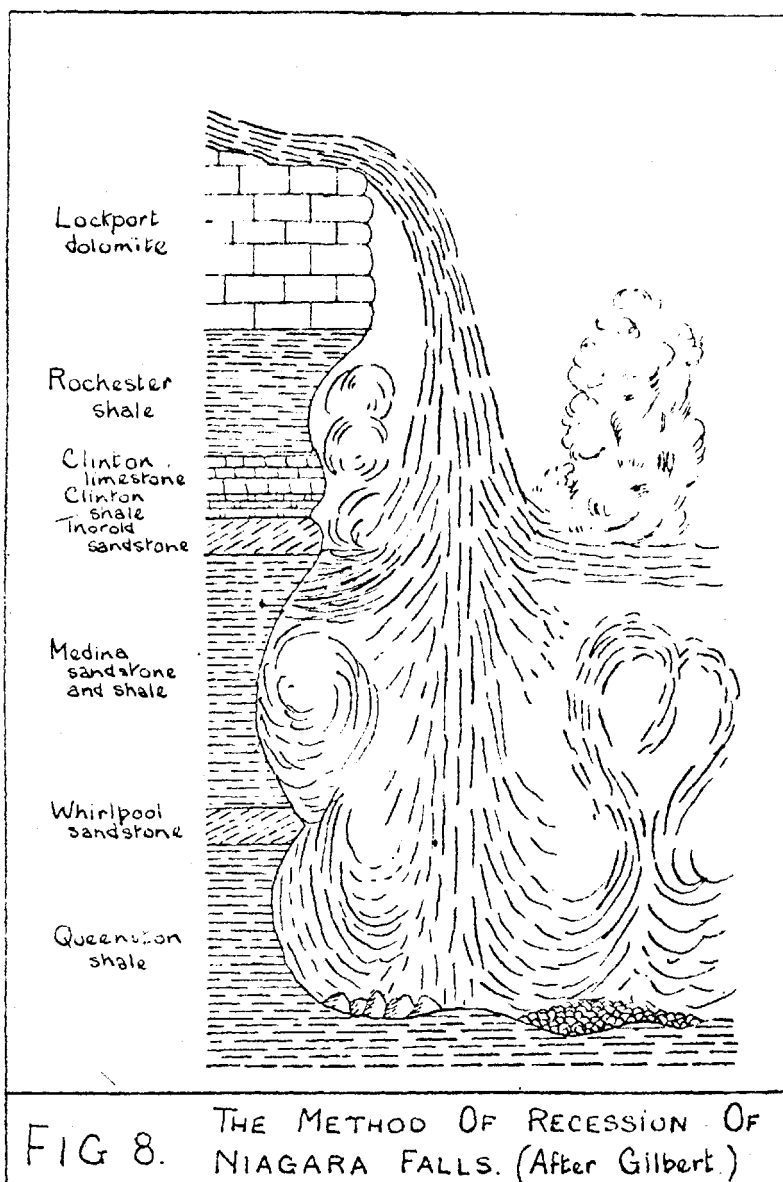
Tonawanda. This filled the preglacial depression of the Tonawanda vale. Into it poured the waters of Lake Erie following the course of the preglacial Buffalo Creek. Its discharge had to cascade over the escarpment to reach the level of receding Lake Iroquois. Lake Tonawanda extended somewhat to the west of the present Niagara River and some 50 miles east of it. It was 10 miles from north to south and seldom exceeded 40 feet in depth. It originally poured water over five cataracts, Queenston/Lewiston, Lockport, Gasport, Shelby Basin/Medina and Halley, but the first had the lowest elevation and eventually became the sole outlet for the diminishing lake. (Fig. 7.)

Gradually the Falls retreated up the river to its present location. The method of retreat is peculiar to the region. It results from a hard capping layer of limestone or dolomite being underlain by softer, weaker shales. The fallen rocks at the base of the falls act like a pestle and churn away at the soft shales. These break up to leave a suspended capping layer. Once the shales are worn back far enough gravity causes the cap to break off by virtue of its own weight - thus the broken piece becomes another tool to carry on the destructive work. (Fig. 8.)

While the layered strata partly determine the rate of recession the complementary factor is undoubtedly the volume of water. This factor is probably the most important in determining the width and depth of the gorge. According to Taylor the fluctuations in volume of the Niagara River due to drainage patterns is definitely recorded in the length of the gorge. Five distinct stages become evident, as shown in Fig. 9(a) and Fig. 9(b) These correspond to the five branches of the gorge.

Lewiston Branch Gorge.

The Lewiston Branch, following the preglacial river, is approximately 1300 feet wide and 500 feet deep. It was cut by the discharge of



Early Lake Algonquin through Lake Tonawanda when the Niagara river was one of five points of discharge over the escarpment. The volume of water involved in cutting this section is calculated to have been about 25 per cent of the present volume.

Old Narrow Gorge.

The Old Narrow Gorge is about one and one-eighth miles long, 1200 feet wide and nearly 400 feet deep. It was formed during the Kirkfield Stage of Lake Algonquin when all but Lake Erie discharged their waters through the Trent river into the Ontario basin. The volume of water thus involved in the formation of this section was some 15 per cent of the present volume.

Lower Great Gorge.

The Lower Great Gorge is about two miles long, nearly 1500 feet wide at Roster's Flats and fairly shallow throughout its length. It was formed during the Port Huron - Chicago stage of Lake Algonquin when all the waters of the upper lakes cascaded over Niagara with the single exception of a small outlet at Chicago. The volume of water involved in scouring out this section is said to range from 90 -110 per cent of the present volume.

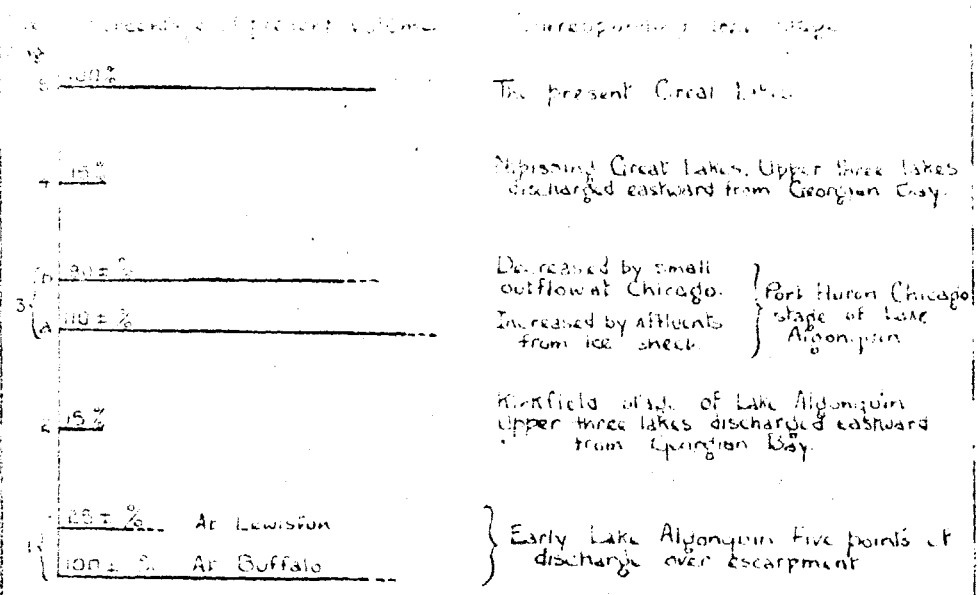
Whirlpool Rapids Gorge.

The Whirlpool Rapids Gorge is about 760 feet wide and was formed in the time of the Nipissing Great Lakes. It was cut by 15 per cent of the present volume of water while the three upper lakes discharge via the North Bay outlet through the Ottawa river.

Upper Great Gorge.

The Upper Great Gorge extends $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the narrow Whirlpool Rapids Gorge to the present site of the falls. It was cut during the Quaternary period with the full discharge of the present Great Lakes.

The Whirlpool has resulted almost by chance. The Niagara river,



Changes in Volume of Niagara River Recorded In
 FIG 9(a) Existing Gorge. (After U.S. Geol. Survey Folio 190.)

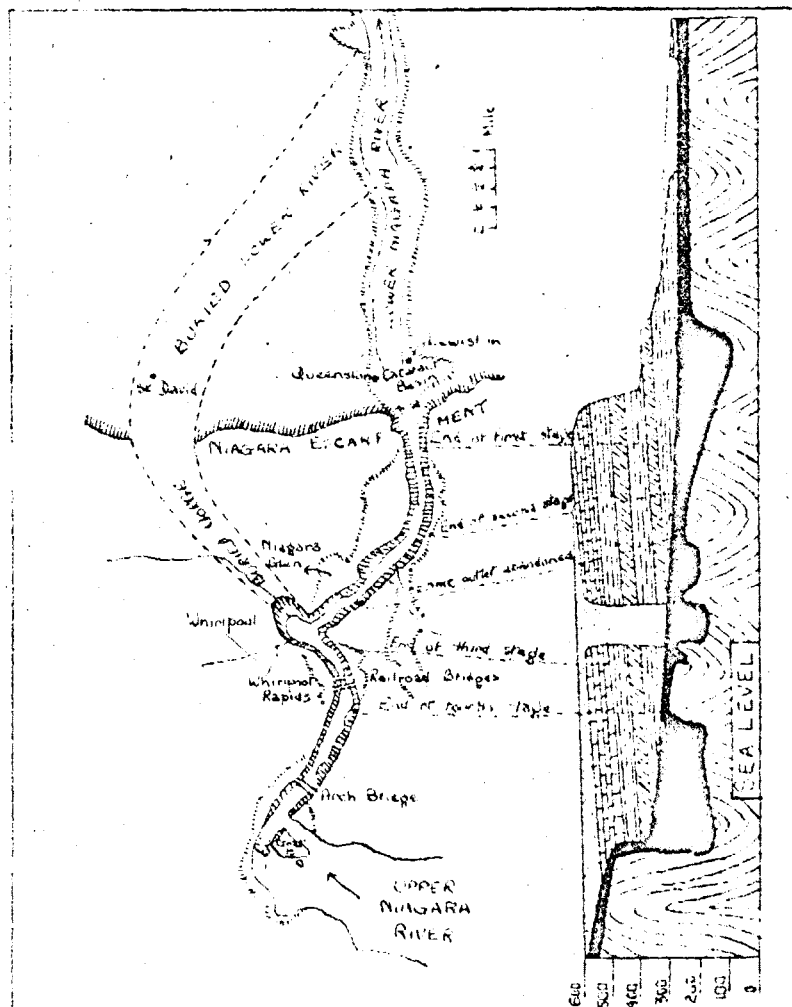


FIG 9(b) NIAGARA GORGE - showing varying width and depth (After U.S. GEOL. SURVEY, Folio 190)

wending its way to Lake Ontario over the upper plain, came upon a relatively soft area of glacial "fill" in the old buried St. David's gorge and scoured it out in preference to the harder strata surrounding it. Thus today, it stands as the halfway point of the gorge distinguished by the complete loop described by the currents of the river seeking the lower reaches of the gorge.

Another feature is that which deals with the evolution of the Niagara Glen and Foster's Flats. When the cataract stood somewhat north of the Flats it was split by an island very similar to Goat Island of the present day. The American side of the Falls developed a horseshoe and quickly passed the smaller Canadian Falls. Eventually the Canadian Falls was forced to go dry after water had cascaded over the side of it for some time. The basal shales of the island crumbled and the foot of the Canadian Falls became a dried up water course.

Influences of the Pleistocene,

From this outline of the present "facial features" of the Niagara region a distinct relationship with the glacial history can be seen. The Niagara river is the pre-eminent change. There still remained, essentially unchanged, the 3 plains and their dividing scarps which make up the fundamental build of the area. They form the chief East-West trends, across which the mighty Niagara Gorge has trenched the North-South frontier.

CHAPTER III.

The Present Terrain.

The evolution of the major geologic features of the Niagara region having been discussed, there remains a brief description of the terrain as known in historic times. This might well be expanded to include drainage patterns, climate, soils and vegetation, to complete the picture of the physical environment.

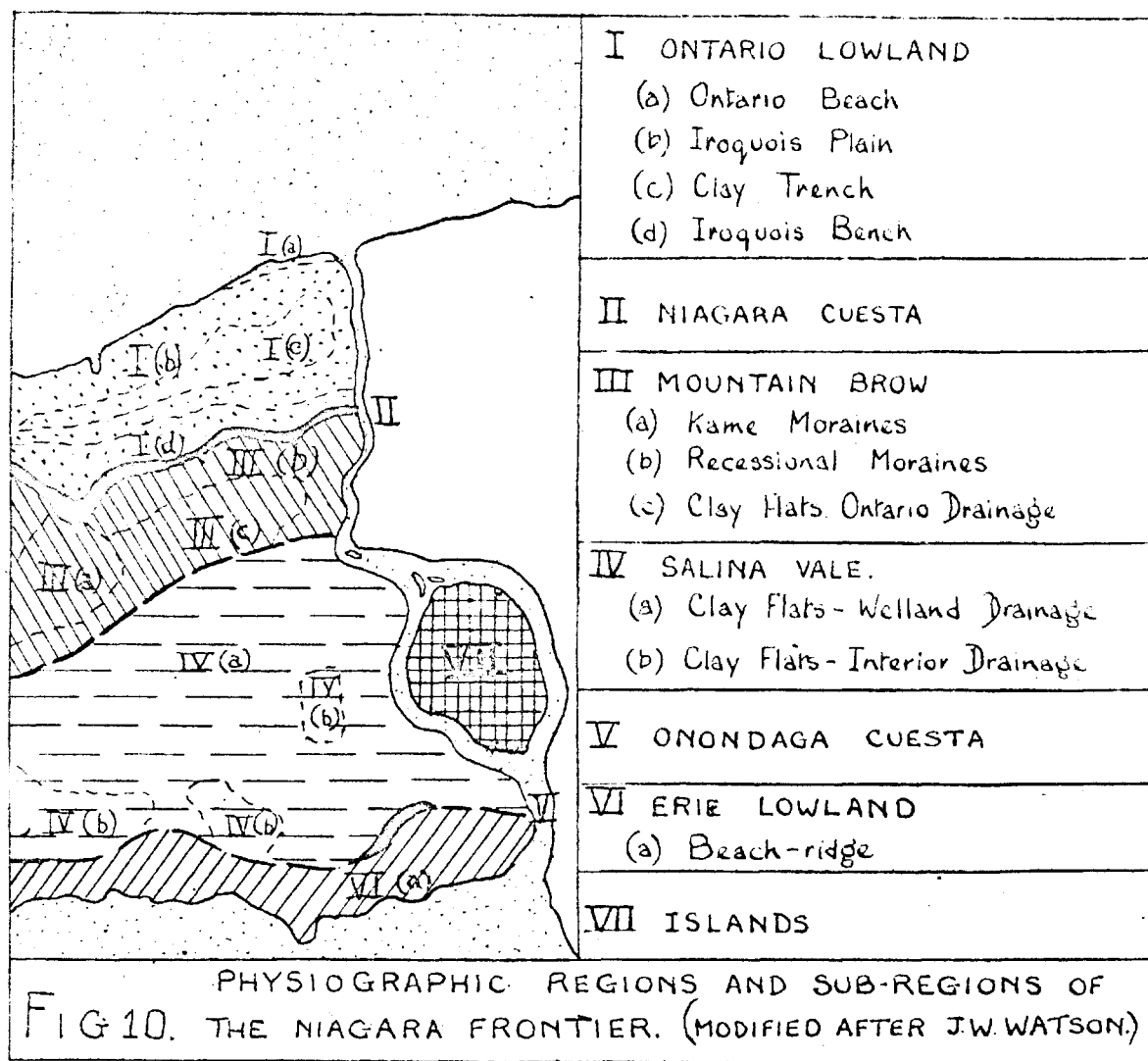
The whole of the Niagara Frontier Zone can be divided into seven
1.
distinct topographic regions as shown in Fig. 10. They will be discussed in the order in which they occur from north to south along the Niagara River. The features discussed are those of the Canadian side of the River, but are, in general, applicable to the American side as well.

I. Ontario Lowland.

The frontier district begins in the north with the Ontario Lowland. This includes all the land lying north of the Niagara escarpment extending from its foot to the present shore of Lake Ontario. It is drained to Lake Ontario by the Two, Four, Six, and Eight Mile Creeks. The only marsh areas are those existing at the mouths of these creeks. They have been drown-ed by the slow subsidence of the southern shores of the Great Lakes, following upon the retreat of the ice. Sheets of sandy loam soils formed on outwash fans, alternate with silt or clay loams on the glacial lake deposits.

While the average elevation is some 325 feet above sea-level this figure cannot be taken as the general level of the region. Several

1. Adapted from J.W. Watson - Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1944.



distinct sub-regions occur based on the retreat of glacial lake Iroquois:

- (a) Iroquois Terrace - 400 - 425 feet.
- (b) Iroquois Beach - 350 - 400 feet.
- (c) Iroquois Plain - 300 - 350 feet.
- (d) Ontario Beach - 246 - 300 feet.

The marshy areas and the heavy clays were avoided by early settlement. The sandy sites and the Iroquois beach were crowded by farms, villages and roads.

II. Niagara Cuesta Region.

The Niagara escarpment is the major east-west feature of the Frontier separating the scarp-foot and dip-slope plains. From Queenston to St. David's it rises some 200 feet above the Iroquois Terrace in a distance of less than a quarter of a mile providing an historic military obstacle. This was reinforced by the heavy forest growing on the thick clays, weathered out of the Rochester shales. In the old St. David's Gorge the slope is much gentler, rising the same height in approximately three quarters of a mile.

III. Mountain Brow Region.

Above the scarp, the land dips gently beneath the Huron Plain. This can be subdivided into a fairly high plateau called the Mountain Brow and a low depression - the Salina Vale. The region of the Mountain Brow extends south from the face of the scarp to Lundy Beach just south of Lundy's Lane in Niagara Falls, Ontario. In the north it is marked by low morainic hills which shed small creeks to both Lake Ontario and the Welland River. Further south the region dips below glacial-lake clay flats. Some of these are drained by obsequents flowing into Lake Ontario. The soils of the region range from light, fertile, sandy loams in the vicinity of the Fonthill Kames, to heavy, poorly drained clays extending to the Welland River. The clays were long

avoided by roads and settlement, and proved difficult for military manoeuvres, except in dry weather. The average elevation of this region is approximately 625 feet above sea-level.

IV. Salina Vale Region.

The most southerly region of the old Huron Plain is the relatively flat land of the Salina Vale. It has an average elevation of 600 feet above sea-level and, for the most part, is well drained by the Welland River. However, two outstanding exceptions to this drainage line exist. Both the area 2 to 3 miles east of Bethel in Humberstone township and the area 2 to 3 miles northwest of Snyder in Willoughby township, in Welland County, have interior drainage and thus have extensive marsh land in their basins. They are the last relics of Lake Humberstone, a lake formed by the lowering of the waters from Greater Lake Erie to the present Lake Erie level.

The soils of the better drained parts of the region consist mainly of Welland and Niagara Clay with isolated patches of Ontario Loam. However, the soil of the low-lying basins is nearly all Jeddo Clay and is the extremely heavy, water-logged type that is almost impassable even in dry weather.

V. Onondaga Cuesta Region.

The Onondaga escarpment is not one of the outstanding features of the Niagara region. Indeed, but for a 15-20 foot bluff extending some 3 miles from Ridgemount to Garrison in Bertie township, of Welland County, it is barely perceptible in the Canadian portion of the Frontier Zone. Nevertheless, the fact that it rises out of ill-drained clay flats to provide well-drained, aerated loam soils is of great importance, and it is followed by a road, with strings of settlements, for its entire length. On the United States side of the frontier it lifts itself to an imposing height above the Tonawanda valley,

VI. Erie Lowland Region.

Extending south from the Onondaga scarp to the present shore of Lake Erie is the Erie Lowland Region. The elevation of the region varies from 650 feet above sea-level on the dip-slope of the Onondaga cuesta to 572 feet, the level of Lake Erie. The major creeks have Erie drainage. They are deeply incised, and require frequent bridging. The soils are varied. In some places they are very thin and the underlying limestone shows through. In other places they are quite deep, with sheets of lacustrine clay lying over uneven till. As glacial Lake Erie dropped in level, shoals and deltas were formed, which clothe the higher parts with fertile sandy loam.

VII. Island Region.

All the regions discussed so far have been located on the mainland. Each of them has its counterpart on the opposite side of the Niagara river. However, one of the most notable features of the Frontier Zone is the number of relatively large islands located in the upper Niagara River. It is interesting to note that all but one of the major islands in this region are now part of the U.S.A. - the sole Canadian island being Navy Island. Undoubtedly, the two most important American owned islands are Goat and Grand Islands.

Grand Island, containing 20,000 acres, some two miles south of Lake Erie, divides the even flowing Niagara River into two narrow branches. The island itself is essentially morainic with an average elevation of 600 feet above sea-level.

Navy Island is located in the west branch of the upper Niagara River north-west of Grand Island. It has an average elevation of just under 575 feet above sea-level.

Goat island is perhaps the best known of all the island group because of its remarkable location. It is the major divide between the

American and Canadian Falls where Niagara cascades an average of 160 feet to the rocky gorge beneath. It is relatively flat but has a river terrace remnant across its western extremity marking the obvious recession of the Horseshoe Falls.

The river itself is navigable from Lake Erie as far as Navy Island. Small boats have made use of the tributary creeks in the vicinity of Chippawa and Tonawanda, to go from Lake Erie into the interior of the Niagara Peninsula and the Peninsula of west New York. There is thus a wider use of the upper river than of the lower river, although from Queenston north to Lake Ontario there has always been active trade.

Climate.

The climate of the region is defined as humid microthermal, with a hot summer phase. The average July temperature is around 70°F as compared to 26°F for January. However, summer temperatures have been recorded up to 104°F, with winter temperatures as low as -20°F.

Militarily, short, very hot summers provide a limited dry period for fast land operations. Long, cold winters, on the other hand, have tended to stalemate warfare, especially that of 1812-15. Sudden spring thaws are undoubtedly the most important climatic feature of the region. Streams are swollen, vales are flooded, and dirt roads become quagmires. Following winter operations such thaws can easily immobilize armies holding seasonally advantageous positions.

From the standpoint of agriculture, the most important feature of the climate is the relatively long growing season, - from 150-175 days free of killing frost. This enables crops from rye to corn, and apples to peaches, to be grown - providing one of the most varied and richest farm belts in Canada. This became increasingly evident in the war of 1812 when commanders were able to billet their troops on various farmsteads where they were provided for out of the abundant crops. Thus the

problem of rations was reduced to a minimum.

The annual rainfall is moderate, being about 30-35 inches. It is not evenly distributed throughout the year due to the shift of the general storm track which overlies the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Belt. Maximum rain falls in spring and autumn with little summer rain and some 60 inches of snowfall in the winter time. The summer droughts are noted for drying up springs and small streams thus creating a fresh-water supply difficulty for military operations. On the other hand, winter storms are known to block roads with sizable drifts tending to immobilize armies.

One other aspect of climate affects the military standpoint. With a January temperature of 26° F most of the shallow bodies of water, such as ponds and marshes are frozen over and can be crossed by fighting men with little trouble. The Niagara river itself has been known to freeze over regularly for a part of every winter, yet for the transport of troops, etc., it would confine operations mainly to foot soldiers. Nevertheless, cyclical pro-longed cold snaps have been recorded and under such conditions cavalry and artillery could undoubtedly cross the Niagara River. The frozen waters of the Welland were regularly used as a winter road as far inland as Welland Port.

Vegetation.

The natural vegetation of the Niagara district has been highly altered with settlement but can still be interpreted. The deciduous forest regions lay mainly in the well-drained clays and sandy loam of the scarpfoot and dip-slope plain. The marshes, on the other hand, lay mainly in the ill-drained clays of the Tonawanda and Welland Vales. A more open type of vegetation like grass, etc., tended to dominate the gravelly moraines. From this it can be seen that the clays presented the greatest vegetative barrier to settlement and military operations

both through the thicker forests and the low marshlands.

Conclusion.

Thus, it can be seen that the topographic regions and terrain features bear a definite relationship to the geologic past. They were the chief factors which confronted the inhabitants of this Frontier Zone and helped to shape its history.

PART II.

Human History of the Niagara Frontier.

CHAPTER IV.

Tomahawks Along the Frontier.

History has yet to reveal the date of man's introduction to the North American Continent, but it is generally accepted that early man migrated to this continent sometime during an interglacial period. It is further believed that he entered by way of the Bering Strait and progressed southward along the west coast. At what period he struck inland is yet to be determined. However, one hypothesis suggests that the civilizations moving into the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley came principally from the Ohio Valley.

The first great influx of peoples to this region was probably that of the "Mound Builders" of whom little is known and practically no trace of their civilization is to be found today. It is as yet impossible to determine whether they were displaced by the succeeding Algonquins or whether their culture died out prior to the invasion of the latter.

The Algonquins, primarily a migratory hunting people, are thought to have inhabited the lower Great Lakes around 1000 A.D. A few archaeological remains, mainly stonework and pottery, give a fairly good representation of their culture as well as a means of distinguishing their old camp sites from those of Iroquoian tribes. A problem facing archaeologists today is one connected chiefly with the northward movement of the peoples away from the Great Lakes. Were they forced to migrate north to secure additional food; forced to migrate north by the Iroquoian invasion; or was some other reason behind their migration? These are questions which will remain unanswered until archaeological research can supply historians with more evidence.

In spite of the indefiniteness of the Iroquoian method of occupation of the Great Lakes region the date of their entry has been set tentatively around 1300 A.D.¹ It is generally conceded also, that the Iroquoians were one group that, upon settling in this area, differentiated into tribes and over the course of years, while maintaining a common trend in their culture, developed tribal variances. Probably the most noticable variation was the dialectic distortion of the old Iroquoian tongue. However, the influence of the Iroquoians was to be felt from Georgian Bay on Lake Huron, along the Lakes to the Hudson-Mohawk Gap.

The picture is complicated still further by the introduction of another culture group, the Neutrals, who wedged their way into what is now Southern Ontario. They then controlled all the land bordering on the north shore of Lake Erie and the whole of the Niagara Peninsula including the land east of the Niagara River to the Genesee River. Thus at the coming of the Europeans to this part of the continent the Indian occupation of the land was an intricate mosaic.

Written knowledge of the military history of the Indian Wars along the Niagara Frontier is limited to that mentioned in documents of Europeans connected directly or indirectly with the region. This is not to suggest, however, that no Indian Wars existed before the coming of the white man. Indeed, we have every right to believe that wars were waged just as fiercely before the coming of white man as after.

The term "Indian Wars" needs some brief explanation. While it is agreed that Indians took part in wars up to and including the War of 1812 it must be conceded that they were not the dominant factors in European wars fought in their territory. For this reason the term "Indian Wars"

1. Diamond Jenness - Indians of Canada - National Museum of Canada, Ottawa - King's Printer, 1932, Chapter XV, p. 224.

is confined exclusively to those occasions when Indian was matched against Indian along the Niagara Frontier. Those occasions when he matched his skill with that of the European are certainly worthy of note, but they will appear in subsequent chapters concerning the chief European contenders for this section of North America.

While it is in the interest of brevity to confine ourselves solely to actions along the Niagara Frontier we must never lose sight of the main trend or strategy behind the European invasion of this, the heart of the continent. It will therefore be wise to glance briefly at the general history of the wider setting of Niagara in order to understand these trends of history having such a direct bearing on Niagara itself.

European settlement in this part of North America began at the turn of the 17th Century. The colonies of France, concentrated on the St. Lawrence Estuary, and those of Holland, centred at the mouth of the Hudson-Mohawk Gap, thrived chiefly on the fur-trade. This quest for furs carried them inland along the "natural" routeways, the rivers, to contact the Indians occupying the region around the lower Great Lakes. It was these Indians who would one day decide the fate of New France, if not that of New Amsterdam. Not only did they control the strategic land-link between the St. Lawrence Lowlands and the Hudson-Mohawk Gap, but they also dominated the Ohio Valley, routeway to the interior plains.

While these Indians were essentially Iroquoians they were distinctly divided into three confederacies - the Hurons, the Neutrals and the Iroquois. fig. 11.

The Hurons.

The Hurons, "bristly unkept knaves" as the French chose to call them, formed a confederacy of four separate tribes, the Bear, the Cord, the Rock and the Deer, together with smaller communities which united with them in matters of defence. They were associated with the Tobacco Nation

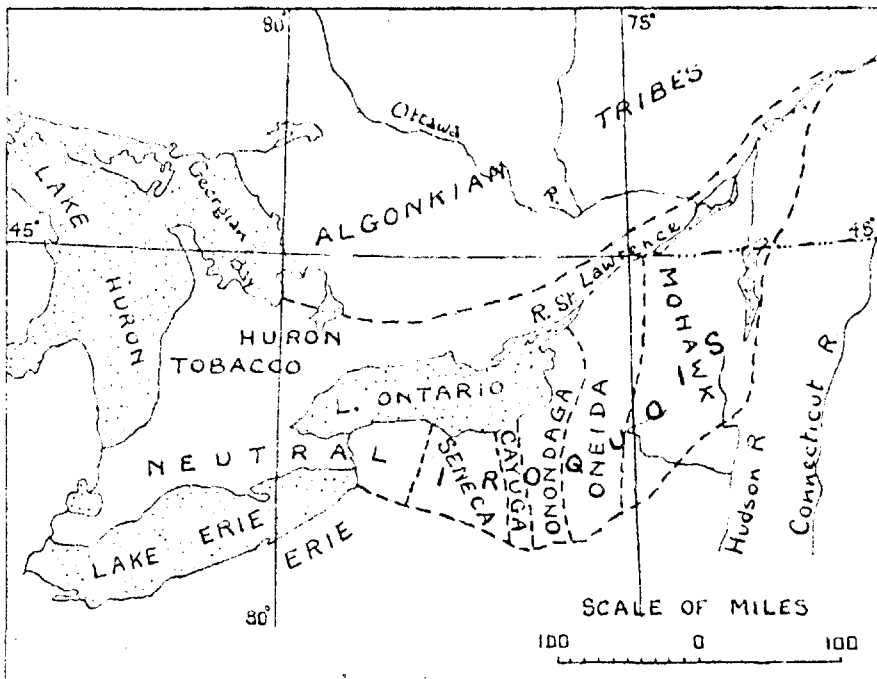


FIG 11 Approximate Distribution of Iroquoian Tribes, 1525 A.D. (After Jenness.)

and were found mainly in the area between Lake Simcoe, Georgian Bay and Lake Huron.

At the time of Champlain's visit to their country in 1815 they lived in 18 villages, 8 of which were fortified with palisades and ramparts. Within the villages were 20 or 30 dwellings each capable of housing from 8 to 24 families.

The land immediately surrounding the village was cleared for agriculture which consisted mainly of maize, bean and pumpkin crops. The women of the tribe tended the crops although men helped with the heavier work. However, this help rarely extended beyond the planting season since the men usually went off on the summer's hunt about this time.^{3.} Thus Huronia was most vulnerable to attack in the summer. The men returned from the hunt in September to go off for another two months, along the rivers and lakes catching a winter's supply of fish. These journeys were relatively short and did not leave the villages in as vulnerable a position as during the summer hunt.

To the Huron the winter time was the time of festival. Medicine-men performed the three functions of rain-making, diagnosing diseases and divining the future of which the last was the most important from a military point of view. Dreams were also very important - "A man would abandon a journey, turn back from the war-trail, or give up some other weighty enterprise, if a dream that came to him in the night seemed to predict misfortune."^{4.} Of the four types of feasts celebrated by the Hurons the so-called "singing feasts" were usually associated with the war path and ranked first in public estimation.^{5.}

2. Diamond Jenness - Indians of Canada - National Museum of Canada, Ottawa - King's Printer, 1932, Chapter XIX, p. 290.

3. Diamond Jenness - as (2) above - Chapter XIV, p. 292.

4. Diamond Jenness - as (2) above - Chapter XIV, p. 295.

5. Diamond Jenness - as (2) above - Chapter XIV, p. 293.

Their offensive weapons were simply bows and arrows, some alight, for relatively long range fighting, while clubs were used for hand to hand fighting. However, with the coming of the white man tomahawks were introduced for the first time. Many warriors used armour consisting of wicker shields, covered with rawhide in an attempt to render them impenetrable to bone and stone-pointed arrows. It is believed that their military organization was very poor but as Iroquoians, they had a signal advantage over Algonquins. Because they were also agriculturalists, they could carry corn, etc., with them on long campaigns. Thus more fighting strength could be mustered from a smaller body of men since they were not occupied in gaining subsistence. Local "captains" were generally responsible for the organization of smaller groups to make up the major war-party. Yet war-parties were not consolidated under a single leader. Individual warriors also had the privilege of dropping out of a raiding party if they so desired but often incurred the loss of public esteem by doing so.^{6.} This poor organization was evidenced in defence as well as on the attack and as one Jesuit puts it, "They take no precautions against surprise, - - - - - their usual recourse, especially when the enemy is powerful, is flight."^{7.}

The Neutrals.

The Neutrals were that confederacy occupying the North shore of Lake Erie and the Niagara Peninsula, the land route connecting the Hurons and the Iroquois. While the Hurons numbered some 16,000 it is thought, by one Jesuit, that the Neutrals had approximately 12,000 people in their nation, and that they lived in forty towns or villages.

6. Diamond Jenness - Indians of Canada - National Museum of Canada, Ottawa - King's Printer, 1932, Chapter XIV, p. 298.

7. Jesuit Relations - Vol. 10, p. 95.

Their culture was very similar to that of the Hurons, being essentially an agricultural people supplementing their crops with fish and meat. Their main crops were corn, beans and pumpkins, The Jesuits hailed the Neutrals as excellent hunters differing from the Hurons in that the majority of their hunting was carried on in the winter time when tracking animals was comparatively easy. While comparing the Neutrals to the Hurons, the Jesuits took pains to point out three essential differences: they were bigger and stronger than the Hurons, they had more affection for their dead and they had a greater percentage of fools amongst their population.

The name Neutrals comes from the fact that they failed to become involved in the early wars between the Hurons and the Iroquois while occupying the strategic land-link between these two confederacies. It is not, however, to be assumed that these people were a peaceful nation. On the contrary, they were known to war constantly with the Fire Nation⁸. The following is a brief account of a raid conducted against the Fire Nation by the Neutrals:

"They went last summer to number 2000 and attacked a village that was well fortified by a palisade, and which was stoutly defended by ninehundred warriors, who sustained their assault. They forced the palisade after a siege of 10 days, killed a large number on the spot and took 800 prisoners - men, women and children. After having burnt seventy of the principal warriors, they put out the eyes and cut off the lips of the old men, round their mouths, so that they might drag out a miserable existence after their departure." 9.

This was definitely a type of warfare where the object was mutual extermination.

As warriors they were as ruthless with women as men since in their own organization the tribal leadership alternated between male and

8. William Kirby - Annals of Niagara - Lundy's Lane Historical Society - 1896, Chapter III, p. 15.

9. William Kirby - as (8) above - Chapter V, p.29. Quoting Jesuit relations.

female. Thus a female was considered as dangerous as a male in this respect. Being of a similar culture to the Hurons they had the same type of offensive weapons and relied chiefly on the palisaded village for defence. It is known that the Neutral nation had considerable flint reserves along the north shore of Lake Erie. This was possibly an economic factor of some import in preserving their neutrality in Huron/Iroquois wars.

The Iroquois.

The Iroquois Confederacy of five nations, the Mohawks, Onodagas, Oneidas, Cayugas and Senecas, occupied what is now the State of New York from the Genesee to the Hudson River. They were known chiefly as the "LongHouse" both because their dwellings were long, narrow communal huts and their territory stretched out in a long, narrow pattern from east to west.

This confederacy, of which the Seneca was by far the largest nation, had a culture remarkably similar to that of the Hurons and Neutrals. They grew the same crops, ate the same fish and meat and practised trapping to a great extent after the coming of the Europeans.

As warriors they were undoubtedly the best of the three confederacies. They were unlike the Hurons and Neutrals in that they readily adapted themselves to changes in tactics. Macleod justly describes the warlike qualities of an Iroquois:

"We see the Iroquois in impenetrable armour and helmets of hide and bark, wielding war clubs in the right hand and javelins in the left, ignoring the bow and arrow in favour of close-up battles - - - they appreciated the fact that their military supremacy was due not alone to their own valour, but to the superior type of equipment and tactics." 10.

While the Iroquois Confederacy consisted of five nations they were not well organised militarily. It is well to note that the war-

10. Wm. Macleod - The American Indian Frontier - A.A. Knopf, New York, 1928 - Chapter XIX, p. 281.

parties they sent against their enemies consisted mainly of sporadic individual raiding parties. One nation within the Confederacy could go to war if it so chose but was not empowered to involve the other member nations. Nevertheless, they usually sent along a representative contingent, thus giving the League its cohesive quality. However, in the event that a nation acted against any member of the League, all nations were obliged to take up the challenge. Such was the cause of the prolonged French struggle. Champlain, while essentially the "Father of New France", was, at the same time, its chief enemy for his action in 1609 against the Mohawks. It reflected seriously on the future dealings of the French with the embittered Iroquois Confederacy.

This brief review of the peoples of the lower Lake Region will help us to understand better the war-potential of the various confederacies. It is, however, extremely difficult to pin down the Indian Wars (1648-54) along the Niagara Frontier to any specific cause. Macleod in his writings visualizes the Indians, the French and the Dutch/English as master strategists in their rivalry for position in the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence and Hudson-Mohawk Region. He sees the French pushing into the heart of the continent via the St. Lawrence, attempting to seduce the Iroquois and thus allow French expansion eastward through the Hudson-Mohawk Gap to crush the Dutch Colony at New Amsterdam. When the Iroquois refused to co-operate they were forced to make a grand scale pincer movement down the Ohio/Mississippi in an attempt to pin the westward-looking English colonies of Virginia to the Atlantic coast. After the English captured New Amsterdam he pictured them making safe passage through Iroquois country to strike at the heart of New France. However, the Iroquois, being the supreme strategists of the day, saw through both European plans and played a cautious game of neutrality between two eager foes. In the meantime, according to Macleod, the French,

realizing their need for native assistance to defeat the Iroquois launched upon the Christianization policy amongst the Hurons. At the same time, the Iroquois were trading their furs for muskets, powder, shot and alcohol at Albany with the Dutch and the the English.

A good deal of Macleod's theory may be accepted with some considerable reserve. It must be conceded, however, in all fairness that one of the contributions to the downfall of the Hurons in these Indian Wars was the Christianity offered by the French Jesuits. The second undoubtedly lies in the supply of firearms by Dutch and English to the Iroquois.

To date it is almost impossible to decide the exact cause of the Iroquois taking the war-path to Huronia in the summer of 1648. whether a specific cause evidences itself or not is of little import. The fire-brand was carried mainly by a band of Seneca to St. Joseph, the chief town of the Hurons, on a day later to be hailed by certain North American peoples as Independence Day. The Iroquois burned the town, committed bloody atrocities and marched off as victors with nearly 700 prisoners.^{11.}

It is thought that the Iroquois spent the winter in local woods and in the month of March 1649 struck a surprise blow at St. Louis, and another at St. Ignace. Although they threatened Ste. Marie they failed to attack. Their campaign had been a success nevertheless. The Hurons scattered to the islands of Georgian Bay, to the Tobacco Nation to form the future Wyandots and to the French settlements along the St. Lawrence. Their Confederacy had been broken forever along with the French missions of Huronia.

The Iroquois, no longer in need of passage through the Neutral

11. Pelham Edgar - *Romance of Canadian History* - Geo. N. Morong and Co. Ltd., 1903, p. 77., Ed. note.

territory to Huronia, turned their warriors against the Neutral villages.

The excuse offered for attacking the Neutrals was based on the alleged shelter of fleeing Huron warriors by the Neutral nation. From 1650-51 the Iroquois carried the fire-brand from village to village until all lay in complete ruins.

The two years immediately following the extermination of the Neutrals were also filled with Indian Wars. The Iroquois, full of a war-spirit and a lust for power, turned south-westward to engage and defeat the Erie Nation bordering on the south shore of Lake Erie. With the defeat of the Eries in 1654 the period of Indian Wars along the Niagara Frontier came to an end.

Minor re-adjustment of positions between Indians and Europeans resulted from these wars. The Chippeways, an Algonquin nation, moved in from the west, presumably with the approval of the Iroquois, to take up the old Neutral position along the west bank of the Niagara River. The all powerful Senecas moved up from the Genesee River to the east bank of the Niagara. They were present here a quarter of a century later when New France became expansionistic under the leadership of Sieur de La Salle.

Thus in retrospect we see that no specific details exist of battles in these Indian Wars affecting the Niagara Frontier, However, it is possible to trace the general trend of military history through this early period and to see the use of the land - link between Southern Ontario and western New York both from the tactical and strategical point of view. This was essentially an E/W interpretation of the geographical alignment of the Niagara region.

12. William Macleod - The American Indian Frontier - A.A. Knopf, New York, 1928 - Chapter XIX, p. 282.

CHAPTER V.

Niagara, the Strategic Key to Greater New France.

Both before the coming of the European to North America and during the first half century of his occupation, the Niagara Frontier played a role confined almost solely to Indian affairs. Few records remain to show European influence along the Niagara prior to the time of the noted French explorer, René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle. From this however, we must not infer that he was the first white-man to see the natural wonders of Niagara. Indeed, it is believed that Champlain's translator and fellow-traveller, Etienne Brulé, returned to Huronia from the south via the Niagara routeway as early as 1615. Eleven years later Father Joseph de la Roche Dallion, a Jesuit missionary, is known to have seen the Falls of Niagara during his visit. Later, in 1640-41 we find Father L'Allemant mentioned in the Jesuit Relations, concerning his work amongst the Neutrals near the Niagara River. A year later, Father Joques was captured by the Iroquois near Lake George and was permitted to work amongst the various nations of the Confederacy. It is believed that he saw the great water cascade. Just prior to the Indian Wars of 1648, Father Raqueneau in writing home to France described it thus:

"North of the Eries is a great lake, about 200 leagues in circumference, called Erie, formed by the discharge of the mer-douce, (Lake Huron), and which falls into a third lake called Ontario, over a cataract of frightful height." 1.

The years immediately following the Indian Wars, discussed in the previous chapters, were years of Indian domination along the Niagara.

1. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter XIII, p. 166.

The Iroquois were supreme; their Confederacy stood out above all others - the veritable "Romans of the West". In 1660 the Iroquois launched a grand scale campaign to dislodge the French from Canada. Meanwhile, a new French spirit of expansionism had been born. Radisson and Grossilliers were approaching the Mississippi, while the Marquis de Tracy stimulated growth in Quebec. Ports were erected along the Richilieu and a French Army invaded the Iroquois country to secure a comparatively

2. lasting peace. Thus in 1669 the spirit of New France renewed activity along the Niagara as La Salle and his Sulpician companion, Father Galinee, made friendly overtures to the Seneca dominating the river. What measure of success he attained is undoubtedly revealed in the fact that French expansion into the Mississippi was still routed through Huronia in 1671-73. This is shown by the journeys of Marquette and Joliet. The French policy now changed to one of "Non-antagonization" towards the Iroquois. La Salle returned to France to convince the court that the Honour of France was at stake in the New World. He secured permission to explore the Ohio and erect trading posts to handle the expected furs with which he hoped to pay for his journey. Thus in 1677 he returned to New France to carry out his policy.

In the meantime, the Comte de Frontenac had been appointed Governor of New France. He introduced the "New Indian Policy" in which he invited the Iroquois to a grand conference. Here he combined lavish hospitality with gross flattery, in the shadow of the new Fort Cataraqui (Frontenac) erected in 1673 at Kingston. Indians had met their match and peace had been secured as long as Frontenac remained governor.

When La Salle returned he found Ft. Frontenac an excellent base for

2. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter XIII, p. 170.

south-west expansion - as Parkman calls it, "a fulcrum for bolder and broader action". He faced three problems: that concerning the security of his base, the building of two ships, one for Lake Ontario and one for Lake Erie, and the picking of a strategic point for the first invoice of furs he hoped to obtain.

On December 6th, 1678, Sieur de la Motte de Lussiere and Father Hennepin reached the mouth of the Niagara River in a brigantine of 10 tons. The latter describes the journey of the following day in these words:

"On the 7th, we went in a Canou two Leagues up the River to look for a convenient Place for Building; but not being able to get the Canou farther, because the Current was too rapid for us to master, we went overland about three Leagues higher, though we found no land fit for culture. We lay that Night near a River, which runs from the Westward, within a League above the great Fall of Niagara -----."

This would indicate a journey along the west bank of the river and a camp site at the mouth of the Welland River. On returning to the lower river they decided to build a settlement at the foot of the escarpment, but on the east bank of the river. The explanation behind this is not apparent but it can probably be inferred that the French did not want to put the Niagara River between themselves and the Iroquois while the English held such good contacts with the latter at their Albany trading post.

La Salle joined the party on the east bank where he proposed to build Fort Conti guarding the northern extremity of the Old Portage. Permission of the Iroquois had been obtained previously by La Motte and Hennepin in their "Embassie de Iroquoise". During this meeting they had smoked the pipe of peace, promised a gun-smith and a black-smith to be stationed at this proposed "Storehouse" to service Indian weapons, and explained that the "Great Woodden Canou" to be built on Lake Erie would bring French commodities to the Iroquois cheaper than those of the English. Thus the first fort on the Niagara Frontier had been est-

abandoned mainly as a trading centre for furs and secondly as an outpost or strategic "Hopping-off" point for future expansion to the south-west. With this point secured the party built the "Great Wooden Canoe", the Griffon, at the mouth of the Cayuga Creek, the southern extremity of the Old Portage. Its subsequent loss by shipwreck is of little importance here, yet the courageous and determined La Salle, its builder, stands in the annals of history as "The Pioneer of Niagara".

With the recall of Frontenac to France and the rise of the Marquis de Nonville as governor, the Iroquois sought the upper hand. The new governor set out from Fort Frontenac, on 4th July, 1687 to reduce the Iroquois to a state of submission. It is thought that he destroyed considerable Seneca property in the hinterland of Irondequoit Bay and that the lightning raid simply incensed the Indians. However, De Nonville withdrew to the mouth of the Niagara River, where, in a space of three days, a fort with four bastions, two large guns and several cabins were built. He garrisoned the fort and returned to Montreal to secure supplies for its maintenance. In September of the same year the smouldering Indian hatred evidenced itself in sporadic killings of Frenchmen hunting in the woods around the fort. After the death of the commander De Troyes, the garrison gave up hope only to be relieved by the Miami Indians warring against the Seneca in March, 1688.

D'esbengeres took command of the fort. He was on the verge of rebuilding both the physical defences of the fort and the morale of his men when Mahent arrived in September with orders to abandon the fort. The defences were destroyed and on the fifteenth of the month the little garrison withdrew to leave Niagara essentially unmolested by Europeans for nearly a generation.³

3. Severence - Old Trails of the Niagara Frontier, 1896.

In 1689 the proud and indomitable old French aristocrat, Frontenac, returned to New France, when nearly 80 years of age, to carry fire and sword through the Iroquois villages to the east. By 1698, at his death, he had reduced the Iroquois villages to their former position where they remained for half a century until they rallied with the English to wrest the control of Canada from the hands of the French.

With the opening of the 18th Century both the French and the English treated the Indians as "independent sovereign nations".^{4.} Yet each made their overtures to the Indian in the half-century to follow. The climax came in the eventful clash of French and English in the Seven Years' War. However, the English did not intermingle and inter-marry with the Indian as did the French. This custom of common association as between equals, carried on by the French, stemmed from an age-old Colonial Policy of France. Indeed, this attempt to civilize the Indian often resulted in precisely the reverse, - as both Charlevoix and Edgar observe, "the savages did not become French, but the French became savages".^{5.}

One of these "adopted sons of the wilderness", Chabert Joncaire, was taken prisoner by the Senecas in 1700. He rose to be a leader amongst the Iroquois and a missionary for the French political cause amongst them.^{6.} In 1719 he approached the Seneca who consented to the erection of a bark cabin at Lewiston called "Magazine Royal".

"The location of this post signifies of itself alone the larger strategic nature of Niagara geographically, for it was not at the mouth of the river but at the beginning of the portage around the Rapids and Falls at Lewiston, just where La Salle's storehouse, built in 1679, had stood".^{7.}

4. W.C. Macleod - The American Indian Frontier - A.A. Knopf - Chapter XXVI, p. 395.

5. P. Edgar - Romance of Canadian History - George N. Morang and Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1903, p. 184.

6. Colonial Documents of New York - vol (ix), p. 773.

7. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter IX, p. 198.

Mr Porter referring to it had this to say:

"The trade in furs was brisk, the Indians from the north west and south coming there to barter. The chain of friendship with the Senecas was kept bright by friendly intercourse with their warriors, who constantly came there; French trading vessels came often to its rude wharf bringing merchandise from Frontenac and returning laden with furs. Thus the English for the first time failed to overcome the French, while the English in New York did not delay their expostulations regarding what they called French incroachment at Niagara; but so far were they from being successful, that the French were able within four years to begin a more important fortification - - - .

Magazine Royal had done good service; it had given the French the desired foot hold on the Niagara River; it had held and fostered the trade in furs; it had established French supremacy in this region, and furnished them with the key to the possession of the Upper Lakes and the Ohio Valley; and last, and most important of all, it had been the means of France obtaining a real fortress at the point where her diplomats and armies had been waiting to erect one; - - - a fort had been built at the mouth of the river - - -." 8.

In 1725 Governor De Vaudreuil started to build the new fort at Niagara including the "Mess House" or the "Castle". On July 14th, the following year the Seneca nation ratified the undertaking over a Council Fire held at Niagara. Kirby, writing in his Annals of Niagara justly summarizes the value of Ft. Miagara as the strategic key to greater New France.

"Fort Niagara stood like a lone rocky island out of the ocean of lakes and forests that surrounded it on every side. It became a great mart for the fur trade with the Indian tribes, a centre for the civilization of the interior of the continent. Out of its gates and into them flowed a constant stream of missionaries, soldiers, traders and voyagers to trade and intrigue for supremacy with the English of New York, and to extend French power over all the west, even down to Louisiana. All the intervening territories were claimed as the possessions of France and Fort Niagara was the gateway that led to them." 9.

Little or no military activity took place around Fort Niagara until 1739 when the Picket Wall fence was rebuilt. Up until 1745 it contained

8. Porter - Brief History of Old Fort Niagara, Niagara Falls, 1896.

9. W. Kirby F.R.S.C. - Annals of Niagara, Lund's Lane Historical Society 1896, - Chapter VI, p. 33.

only 100 men and four guns. However, French prestige waned when the policy of not selling liquor to the Indians was enforced. This had to be done to maintain order in the Indian villages.

The dynamic qualities of the British colonies in the 1740's was undoubtedly due to their larger population, relatively high birth rate and low death rate, as compared to the French. "The French were eager to check the possibility of the overflowing of this human reservoir beyond the natural barriers of the Appalachians and the Ohio River. They wanted to reserve the west for the fur trade." Thus we can see that the cause of the eventual clash of French and British power in North America was basically concerned with the clash of their respective policies concerning the use of land.

In 1747 Celoron was sent from Quebec, via the Niagara to the Ohio River district to bury the leaden plates and thus re-establish La Salle's claim to the land. At the same time the Scots and Irish settlers of western Pennsylvania were gradually encroaching on French trap lines. The Ohio Company, formed by a group of prominent Virginians in 1747, was granted 500,000 acres of land in the Ohio Valley in 1749 by the King of England.

Celoron had also been commissioned to sound out the spirit of the natives in his trip and opened the "administrative eyes" of New France in uttering the following words:

"All that I can say is, that the (Indian) nations of these places are very ill-disposed against the French, and entirely devoted to the English. I do not know by what means they can be reclaimed.

- - - - If violence is employed they (the Indians) would be warned and take to flight - - - if we send to trade with them, our traders can never give our merchandise at the price the English do."

10. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter IX, p. 202.

11. W.C. Macleod - The American Indian Frontier - A.A. Knopf, 1928, Chapter XXVI, p. 396.

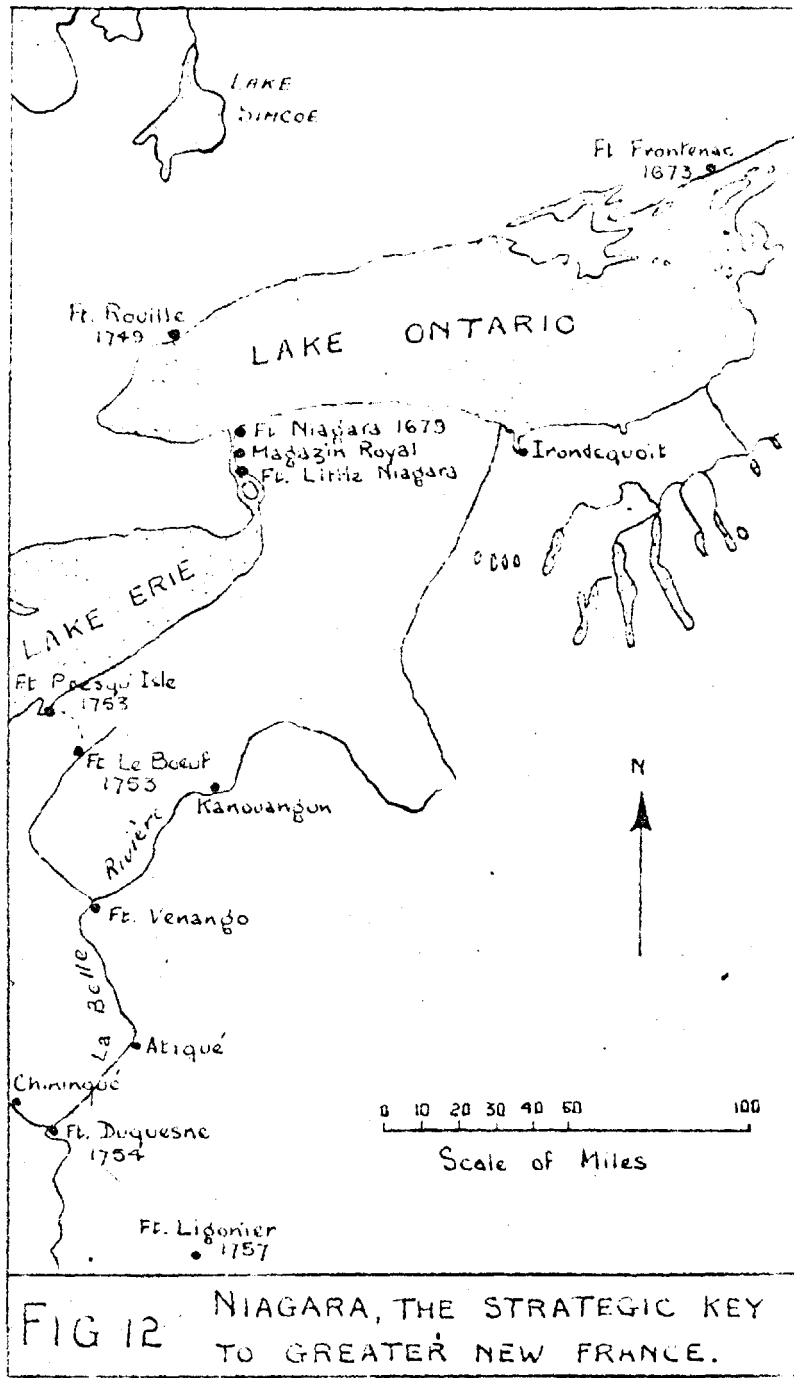
Then followed his suggestion, - - "people our old posts and perpetuate the nations on the Belle Riviere (Ohio-Alleghany) who are within the reach of the English Government".^{12.}

The Government of New France realized the peril it faced if its fur trade was cut off in the Ohio Valley. It launched a bold policy which rendered Niagara the most strategic point in New France. Martin was sent to build a line of forts from Niagara to the junction of the Ohio, Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers. The old line of forts, Quebec, Ft. Frontenac and Ft. Niagara was extended southward to include Ft. Presque Isle (1753) at Erie Pennsylvania, Ft. La Boeuf (1753) at Watertown, Pennsylvania, Ft. Machault (1753) at Franklin, Pennsylvania and Ft. Duquesne (1754) at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Thus, as in the period of Indian Wars, the Niagara Frontier was a gateway, although not in the same alignment as that of Indian days. To the French the strategic link at Niagara lay N/S along the Old Portage whereas in Indian days it lay along the E/W axis of the frontier. They interpreted the geography to suit their immediate needs. (Fig. 12)

To counter this strategy of the French, Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia sent Major Washington to ask the French to leave and to erect forts in their stead. Washington, however, was forcibly repulsed. Thus ^{the} Seven Years' War was precipitated in North America some eighteen months before war was actually declared.^{13.} The British strategy, which aimed at the destruction of this line of French Forts was essentially poor. While something is to be said in favour of dealing a death-blow to Ft. Duquesne, the spearhead of French expansion to the southwest, the more logical plan would have undoubtedly been to concentrate an attack on

12. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter IX, p. 204.

13. W.B. Kirby F.R.S.C. - Annals of Niagara, Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896 - Chapter VI, p: 37.

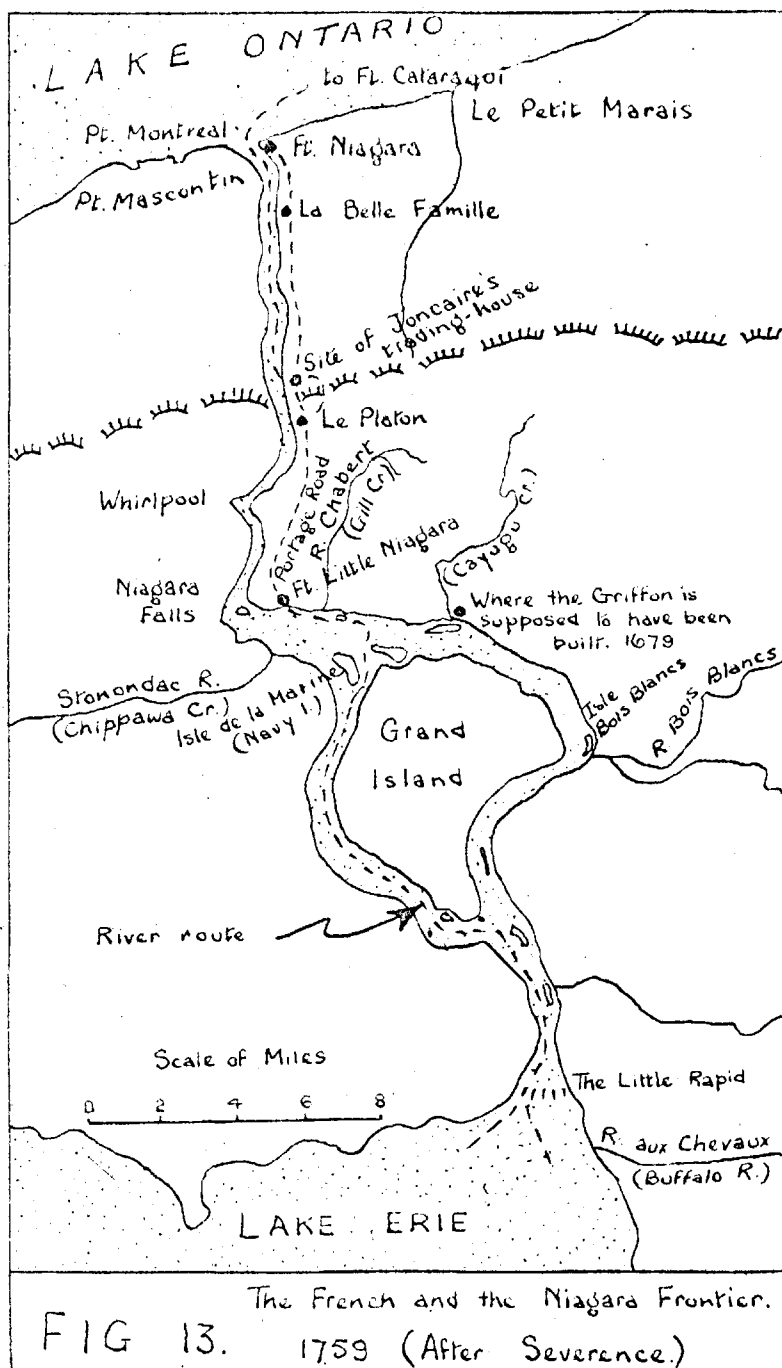


either the initial supply base of Quebec or the strategic link of Niagara. The latter would have been the far more expedient move, yet the British authorities chose to conduct, simultaneously, a three-fold campaign as poorly conceived as it was executed.

General Braddock, by far the leading militarist in British North America, was sent against the forts of the Ohio Valley. After due success, he was to join the supposedly secondary force of Governor Shirley of Mass. against the Forts of Niagara and Oswego. Needless to say, the pages of his story record Braddock's defeat at the hands of the French and their Indian allies. Shirley's forces barely succeeded in capturing Fort Oswego and were completely dissuaded from attacking Ft. Niagara on hearing of Braddock's demoralizing defeat. However, the third front under Johnson against the French forts in the Champlain district was successful but offered little competition to French supremacy in the "Old North West".

While the British nursed their wounds the French had a breathing spell in which they fortified Niagara, fully realizing its strategic position within their far-flung, vulnerable empire. As Porter outlines in his writings, Niagara was re-fortified in October, 1755, and preparations continued all winter. The following spring guns captured from Braddock were mounted on the walls. The work was nearly completed by July, 1756, under Pouchot. That the French still under-estimated the British threat to their empire is shown by Pouchot's statement of 1759 concerning the personnel of Ft. Niagara. While capable of accommodating 1000 men, it had 149 regulars, 183 men of colonial companies, 133 militia and 21 cannoniers, a total of 486 soldiers and 39 employees, of whom 5
14.
were women or children.

14. Porter - Brief History of Old Fort Niagara, Niagara Falls, 1896.



By 1759 the British authorities had changed their strategy. They planned joint attacks on both the citadel of Quebec and the fort at Niagara; a plan which led to the overthrow of French military power in North America. The storming of Quebec was coincidental with General John Prideaux's attack on Ft. Niagara. On the 1st. July, he sailed from Oswego on Lake Ontario with 2200 regulars and provincials and 700 Iroquois who had decided to throw their weight in with the English, to land at Le Petit Marais and march 5 miles to besiege Ft. Niagara. The French commander of the fort sent word to Joncaire, son of the emissary to the Seneca and commander of Fort du Portage or Fort Little Niagara at the southern extremity of the portage, to transport his supplies across the upper Niagara River to the mouth of the Chippawa Creek and make haste for the parent fort. Prideaux was killed while forcing the siege and Sir William Johnson took command. (Fig. 13)

French reinforcements, under De Lignery and D'Aubery who had come from the west awaited further orders at Navy Island. On receiving orders to advance they approached Ft. Niagara via the Portage Road and met Johnson's forces at La Belle Famille, a site now occupied by the town of Youngstown. The English besieging the fort, now ambushed the relief mission. Johnson sent an officer to the fort to demand surrender. After sending a "Confidential Officer" to review the scene of the battle at La Belle famille, Pouchot surrendered to Johnson on the night of 24th July, 1759, and on the following morning the British flag waved over the Niagara frontier for the first time in history.

Thus the strategic key to Greater New France had been captured by the British. After some delay they had come to realize Ft. Niagara's importance as an excellent jumping off point to the Ohio Valley. Its capture did not alter the alignment of the Niagara Frontier. The N/S interpretation of its geography was accepted intact by the British.

CHAPTER VI.

Niagara, from Outpost to Defender of the British Empire.

Whereas the Niagara frontier was at the geographical centre of Greater New France, it became in 1759 but an outpost of the British Colonies in North America. This resulted from their method of expansion into the continent, influenced primarily by geography. The French had used the great St. Lawrence waterway to open up the heart of the continent, while the British, pinned to the Atlantic by the Appalachian Mountains, filtered through the restrictive mountain passes and valleys to become frontiersmen.

The British secured their position along the Niagara River soon after they defeated the French. Fort Niagara was remodelled and Fort Schlosser was erected on the southern extremity of the Old Portage near the site of the destroyed Fort de Portage or Little Niagara. Fort Schlosser was as much a trading post as a bastion along the frontier, with the main concentration of troops at Ft. Niagara under Johnson. While Ft. Niagara guarded the junction of the river and Lake Ontario, Ft. Erie, built by the English in 1764, was its counterpart at the junction of the river and Lake Erie.

Scarcely had the Seven Years' War in America died out when Pontiac, incited to revolt by the renegade French traders in his western country, struck at the British "oppressors" from Michigan to Pennsylvania and New York. The only incident in these "Beaver Wars" of Pontiac's, relevant to military history at Niagara, is the memorable Massacre of Devil's Hole at the mouth of Bloody Run Creek along the Gorge, on 14th. September, 1763. Here a party of 500 Senecas from Chenussio, inspired by Pontiac

struck in retaliation at the English who had replaced them as carriers along the Old Portage. They waylaid a wagon-train of 25 wagons and 100 horses and oxen. Three men escaped to warn a body of troops at Lewiston. These troops experienced a second ambush from which only eight escaped to Ft. Niagara. The commander of the fort sent all the available troops under his command to avenge the attack but the Indians had fled. Eighty scalped corpses and a ravine littered with the tangled mass of humanity, animals and material bore mute witness to the wrath of the warring Indian.^{1.}

At the peace conference following the Massacre, Sir William Johnson obtained deeds from the Senecas for all land bordering the Niagara River and the islands in it. Furthermore, he introduced a new element to the Indian Policy of the British. No longer did he deal with Confederacies but with individual tribes. Thus he initiated dis-unity between Indian nations.

From the close of Pontiac's Wars the next few years saw no serious conflict along the frontier. The "Quebec Act", greatly extended the boundaries of the Province of Quebec beyond those of the "Proclamation of 1763". It came at a time when British Colonial Policy was attempting to extend taxation, for purposes of Empire Defence, to cover the individual colonists. Amongst the fourteen colonies in North America the southern-most thirteen were united by the cry, "No taxation without representation". The failure of the fourteenth Colony to join the agitation invited discrimination against it by the others. For example, in the Declaration of Independence objections were voiced against Quebec for,

"Abolishing the free system of English Laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and en-

1. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter IX, p. 214-215.

larging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule in other colonies." 2.

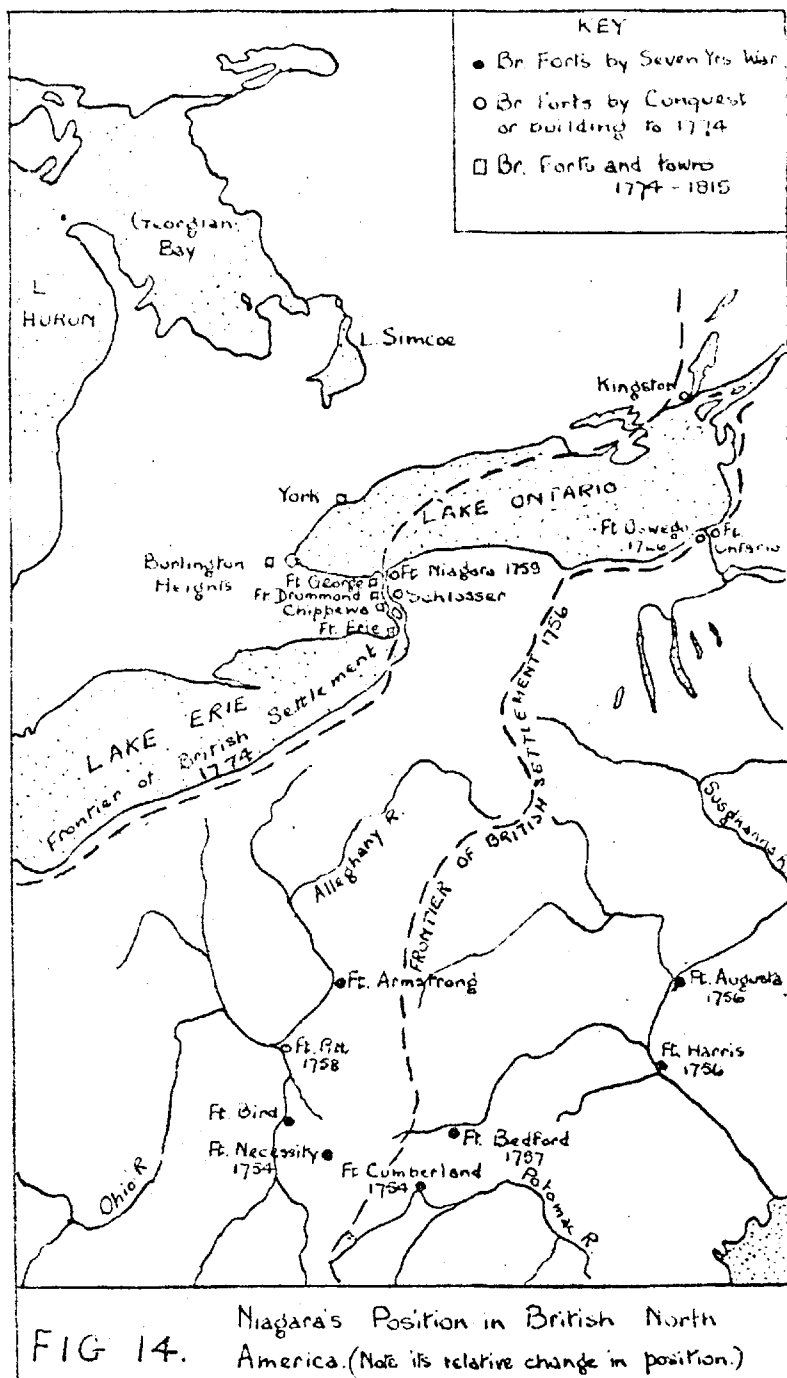
The thirteen colonies had been driven to unite in the Continental Congress of 1774 for the purpose of boycotting British goods in an attempt to convince the British government that it was being unfair over the taxation issue. Compromises were never reached so the American Colonies rose in revolt.

They made insincere overtures to the French in Quebec and then, these having failed, launched a campaign against Canada to drive out the slender British garrison. While the actual war was confined mainly to the Champlain-Richelieu frontier, Ft. Niagara played a very serious role as a "Springboard" for Loyalists and Indians carrying "guerilla warfare" throughout the State of New York. Indeed, General Sullivan, marching through New York State to attack Fort Niagara in 1779, was only stayed by these sporadic forces. Thus the fort at the mouth of the Niagara River still remained an outpost of the British Empire. (Fig.14)

The greatest movement resulting from the American War of Independence was undoubtedly that of the Loyalists. Those members of the Thirteen Colonies who were driven from their homes and had their property confiscated, proudly bore this humiliation to maintain their allegiance to the British King. In thousands they took to the woods, and after enduring all sorts of hardships and suffering, arrived at Fort Niagara. While the women and children were cared for at the fort, the men formed themselves into Loyalists regiments undermen like Sir John Johnson, Colonel Butler, Guy Johnson, the Servoses, Clements, Secords and others.

Not only were certain colonists loyal to the British Crown but approximately 5000 Six Nation Indians fled from their villages to

2. A.B. Hulbert - The Niagara River - G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1908, Chapter IX, P. 219.



shelter under the guns of Niagara. From here daily war parties under their chiefs Brant, Deseronto and Sakoyenwaraghton inflicted much loss on the rebels.^{3.}

One of the most discussed raids carried out by a joint Loyalist/Indian Party was that of 3rd. July, 1778 at Wyoming. Colonel John Butler with a few hundred of his Rangers, a company of the King's Regiment under Captain Bird, a number of Loyalist volunteers and the whole of the Senecas under Sakoyenwaraghton moved against Colonel Zebulon Butler of the Rebel Army. They successfully completed the campaign with the Senecas carrying the brunt of the fighting.^{4.}

With the aid of France the Thirteen Colonies were able to throw off their British ties. During the entire seven years of the war, settlement was restricted to the east bank of the Niagara River with the single exception of Fort Erie. However, on the conclusion of the War of Independence, the Treaty of Versailles, 1783, defined the sites of Ft. Niagara and Ft. Schlosser as being within the territorial limits of the new republic. While some thirteen years elapsed before these sites were garrisoned by American troops, an orderly movement of settlement to the western bank of the river was conducted. A site directly opposite Ft. Niagara was chosen for a town. It has been given various names such as Butlersberg, West Niagara, Newark, Niagara and is at present Niagara-on-the Lake. Settlement spread southward from here along the Niagara River to Queenston westward along the foot of the scarp to St. Davids and around the Four Mile Creek. The entire area was laid out by military surveyors from Ft. Niagara and 200 acres of land were given to every man, woman and child of the U.E. Loyalists. The settlers opened the road from Niagara to the head of the lake, improved the river road to

3. Wm. Kirby F.R.S.C. - Annals of Niagara - Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896, Chapter VIII, p. 53.

4. Wm. Kirby F.R.S.C. - as (3) above, Chapter IX, p. 55.

Queenston and the Falls and built a road through the old Marais Normand (swamp) to St. Davids.

The first few years of settlement required assistance from Ft. Niagara but bountiful crops were soon realized and the settlers became independent of government supplies. However, during the "Hungry Years" of 1787 and 1788 drought threatened the very life of the settlement and saw the military authorities again assuming the responsibility for the welfare of the Loyalists. By 1790 things had righted themselves and by 1792 Butler's Barracks were built near the village of Niagara to relieve the overcrowding at Fort Niagara. These barracks housed the regiments of Butler, Johnson and Green.

With the gradual shift of the British population to the west bank of the river, a new portage developed from Queenston to Chippawa. To protect this portage adequately Ft. Chippawa was built in 1790 at the mouth of the Chippawa Creek at the southern extremity of the portage, while Fort Drummond developed at Queenston.

The political development of Niagara kept pace with the settlement. The village was re-named Newark and became the capital of Upper Canada according to the Constitutional Act of 1791. Governor John Graves Simcoe convened the first Parliament here and made provisions for militia training to be carried out in the Newark vicinity. On the fourth of June all the regulars and militiamen paraded in a grand review on the Newark Common to commemorate the King's birthday. Following this a dinner and grand ball were given in the newly built Navy Hall.

Governor Simcoe realized the vulnerability of his capital, situated, as it was beneath the very guns of Fort Niagara. He therefore conceived a two-fold plan: the shifting of the seat of government to a more advantageous and less vulnerable position and of building Fort George on the west bank of the river as a counterpart to the American Fort Niagara.

Prior to this time, York had been selected as the new capital and the Queen's Rangers had been withdrawn from Newark to fortify the town. Thus with the eventual occupation of Fort George a consolidation of British forces at Newark was achieved once more.

The arrival of Colonel Isaac Brock at Fort George in 1803 with his 49th Regiment adequately marks the turning point in British/American relations along the Niagara Frontier. It was during this period that the American emissaries incited the members of his regiment to mutiny and desertion. An excellent account of Colonel Brock's quick action and gentlemanly rebuke of his regiment is to be found in Kirby's Annals of Niagara.

The "Cold War" intensified - Henry Clay of Kentucky, loudly rattled the sabre in the American Congress while in Canada, war was regarded as imminent on all hands with the appointment of Major-General Brock as Administrator of Upper Canada at the age of 43.

Thus the atmosphere of the Niagara Frontier was tense as the clouds of war grew darker. Preparations were being made by both the Americans and the British. The first real full-scale war ever to be waged along this frontier was, in the offing, Niagara was to become the Defender of the British Empire in North America, situated as it was at the geographical junction of Upper Canada and the Republic of the United States.

CHAPTER VII.

The Canadian War of Independence - 1812-15.

At the opening of the 19th Century, Niagara stood as an important link between Upper Canada and the American Republic. Indeed, its economy was tied to that of Upper Canada by grain products and to that of western New York by meat products. Strategically it was the guardian of the natural gateway to Burlington Heights, key to Dundas Street - the main land artery of Upper Canada.

Events of 1812.

The differences between Canada and the United States were not strong enough to precipitate war. However, the British Orders in Council to blockade Napoleon's European Citadel and their claim to search all neutral shipping, including that of the United States of America, produced a serious crisis. Yet, as the Historical Atlas of the United States of America shows, the New England states were against the war. It was the southern and western states, still smarting over their failure to take Canada in the Revolutionary War, who gave support to the new "War Party". This party guided a bill through Congress on 18th June, 1812, declaring war on Great Britain and her Dependencies. American forces were quickly mustered and a half-hearted attempt was launched against Upper Canada from Detroit under General Hull.

The American strategy involved in this move appears essentially unsound. They were striking at nothing vital to Canada either militarily or economically. They might have done much better by an attack on Montreal, the key centre of British communications. But, fancying themselves as would-be liberators from the British "Yoke", they be-

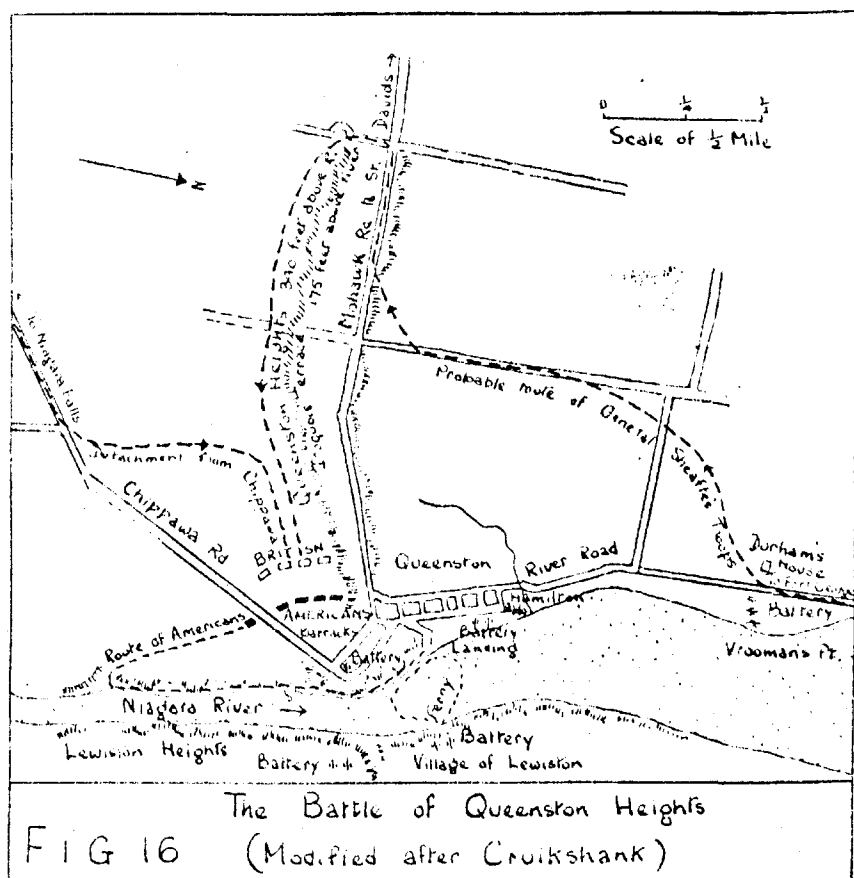
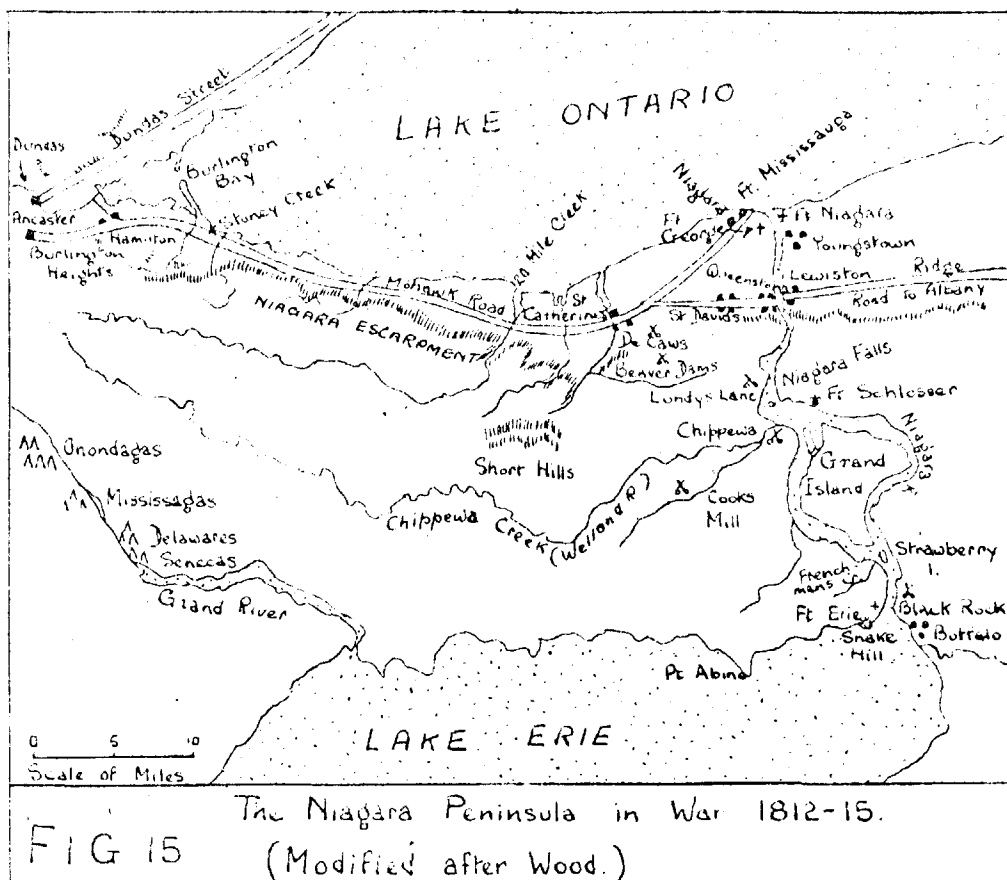
lieved that the settlers of Upper Canada longed for liberation. This belief was equally shared by General Brock. His correspondence to England during the tension period preceding the war, shows that he counted his military strength in terms of Regulars alone, having doubts both as to the loyalty and effectiveness of the militia. If the Americans had met a disaffected population at Detroit, and gained their support, they could have marched to London and so turned the British flank. Fortunately General Brock was a man of bold action and promptly marched to face Hull, forced his back to Detroit and effected his immediate surrender on the 16th August, 1812, with an army of some 2500 men. The blow delivered to American morale was beyond measure.

General Brock, leaving Colonel Proctor in charge on the Detroit Frontier, hastened to Niagara where the American Commander-in-Chief, General Dearborn, had ordered the mustering of troops for another invasion. This was strategically more important, not so much because it opened a short route to the capital of Upper Canada, at York, but because it blocked a possible invasion of British troops down the exceedingly critical Mohawk route to Albany and New York. If the British had succeeded in driving down this route they would have split the United States of America in two, and might have defeated the enemy in one swift blow. Actually Brock, as Frontier Commander, decided to deliver a knock-out blow to Fort Niagara in an attempt to force the Americans to maintain long supply lines from their headquarters at Albany. It was ^{UP}fortunate for Canada at this time that Sir George Prevost was _^Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces. While a soldier by profession, he was not the man to face a military crisis or stem the American tide. He forbade Brock to carry out his bold offensive and negotiated an armistice with the Americans in which all British frontier movements were to cease while those of the Americans continued.

Brock could do no more than dig-in the troops already under his command. He spread them out to cover the entire frontier from Ft. Erie to his Headquarters at Ft. George, yet he consistently believed the attack would come from Ft. Niagara against Ft. George with a possible feint at Queenston. He believed that Ft. George was the key to the Ontario plain and that the successful defence of Dundas Street depended on the security of this fort. (Fig. 15)

In October, General Van Rensselaer, Commander of the American forces at Lewiston, called a council-of-war to plan for a joint attack on Ft. George and Queenston. However, his counterpart, at Ft. Schlosser, General Smyth, refused to co-operate. Van Rensselaer had to change his plans to feint at Ft. George and concentrate an attack on the heights at Queenston. In selecting Queenston for the main attack he was exceptionally wise. It was the strategic junction of the Portage Road to Chippawa, the River Road to Fort George and the Mohawk Road to Burlington Heights, which had resulted from man's adaptation to the local geography. Added to this was the important fact that the river is much narrower here than at its mouth and would take less time to cross - a factor to be considered when under enemy fire. By capturing Queenston, Van Rensselaer would have split the British forces of the upper and lower plain and, while sending detachments to clear their positions, could have advanced to the all-important Dundas Street. (Fig. 16.)

After a bungling attempt to land on the west side of the river some success was gained on 13th October, 1812. The British Major Dennis, defending Queenston, had too small a force at his command to repulse the concerted attack. The Americans, under Captain Wool, scaled the Heights by an old Indian path along the Gorge and attacked the single British gun from the rear. Brock, who had come up from Ft. George to the battle, ordered his men to spike the gun and retreat to the vil-



lage. In the subsequent attempts to charge the Americans up the face of the escarpment both Brock and his aid-de-camp, Colonel Macdonell, fell mortally wounded. Two outstanding leaders lost their lives through tactical inefficiency. It was up to General Sheaffe, Brock's Second-in-Command, to take advantages of the local geography. He marched from Ft. George to Queenston then west to St. Davids to use the easy incline up the escarpment, where, free from enemy fire, he formed line and advanced east on the American left flank. The tide of battle turned in his favour and the second American invasion of the war ended in failure.

Van Rensselaer was removed from his command and Smyth took over. He succeeded in concluding a month's armistice with Sheaffe, as equally immobilizing as that of Prevost. Smyth soon became restless. He gathered his forces at Black Rock, where he felt a successful invasion could be launched against the British positions on the upper plain, distant as they were from their supply base at Ft. George. After a small skirmish attack at Red House and Frenchman's Creek on 28th November, 1812, he demanded the immediate surrender of Ft. Erie "to spare the effusion of blood". After loading his troops in boats to attempt a crossing he held a council-of-war and decided to cancel the whole affair. Confusion reigned in the American forces while Colonel Bishopp kept his small band in readiness for an abrupt change in the enemy's plan.

Meantime the third major attempt at invasion was made on the Montreal frontier near Lake St. Francis. Here General Dearborn advanced within 47 miles of Montreal but, feeling his position untenable, withdrew to winter his forces at Plattsburg. Had this plan succeeded it would have cut off the Niagara Frontier, and made further fighting there practically unnecessary. The Frontier could not have maintained itself long.

Events of 1813.

With the close of the year 1812, there was much heart-searching in the American "War Party". It had committed the armed forces to tasks beyond their measure. Along the Detroit frontier the British held the upper hand until 10th September, 1813, when the American Lt. Perry defeated the British at Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie. The significance of this naval victory becomes evident with the American land successes to follow.

The Niagara frontier lay between the two lower Lakes and afforded the Americans the opportunity for combining land and water operations quite early in the year. Commodore Chauncey successfully transported and American Army from Sacketts Harbour under General Dearborn to storm and burn York, capital of Upper Canada, on 27th April, 1813, and force General Sheaffe to retreat. Sheaffe was found negligent for failing to erect proper defences against a water attack and was replaced by General Vincent.

On 27th May, 1813, the Americans successfully attacked the town of Newark and Ft. George by combining military and naval operations. General Vincent was forced to retreat to Burlington Heights and allow the Americans to enter the gateway to Upper Canada. He was extremely wise in retreating this far. Had he attempted to maintain a line anywhere between Burlington Heights and the Four Mile Creek he could have been cut off by landings near the mouths of any of the peninsular streams entering Lake Ontario.

Vincent regrouped his forces. They attacked the Americans at Stoney Creek on 5th June, 1813, under Colonel Harvey and Major Plenderleath. This attack carried all before it and the Americans retreated in disorganized confusion. The arrival of the British Naval Commander, Yeo, on the scene added to the confusion as Chauncey's ships weighed

anchor and fled to the shelter of Ft. Niagara's guns. The British then advanced east to the Frontier. Practically the entire advance was confined to the scarp-foot plain which had the only arterial road of the peninsula. It was important for a fast march, and had easy access to ships at several points along its length.

The British forces marched to the Twelve Mile Creek near the lake-shore, under Major De Haren and then some of them, under Lt. Fitzgibbon, moved up the scarp to Beaver Dams. (Fig. 17) Thus they prepared to attack the Frontier, diverging towards Ft. George and Ft. Erie. For the second time in this war, the British had used a re-entrant as an easy incline up the escarpment. The Americans marched from Ft. George to Queenston and St. Davids under Colonel Boestler. They were to engage Fitzgibbon and his Indian allies to keep them from interfering with movements along the Queenston-Chippawa Portage. It is alleged that Laura Secord, wife of Lt. James Secord, fore-warned Fitzgibbon of the American advance.¹ As a result the "battle" of Beaver Dams went in favour of the British. As Fitzgibbon described it:

"Not a shot was fired on our side by any but the Indians. They beat the American detachment into a state of terror, and the only share I claim is taking advantage of a favourable moment to offer protection from the tomahawk and scalping knife."²

The British pushed on to Queenston and, in the month of July, swept towards Ft. Erie clearing out the American troops. On the 5th they raided and destroyed Ft. Schlosser and on the 11th, Black Rock met a similar fate. On the lower plain the American forces withdrew to the Newark-Ft. George district. By the 24th July practically all American

1. W.S. Wallace - A Story of Laura Secord: A Study in Historical Evidence, 1932.

2. W. Wood, - War with the United States - Toronto, 1915, Chapter V, p. 116.

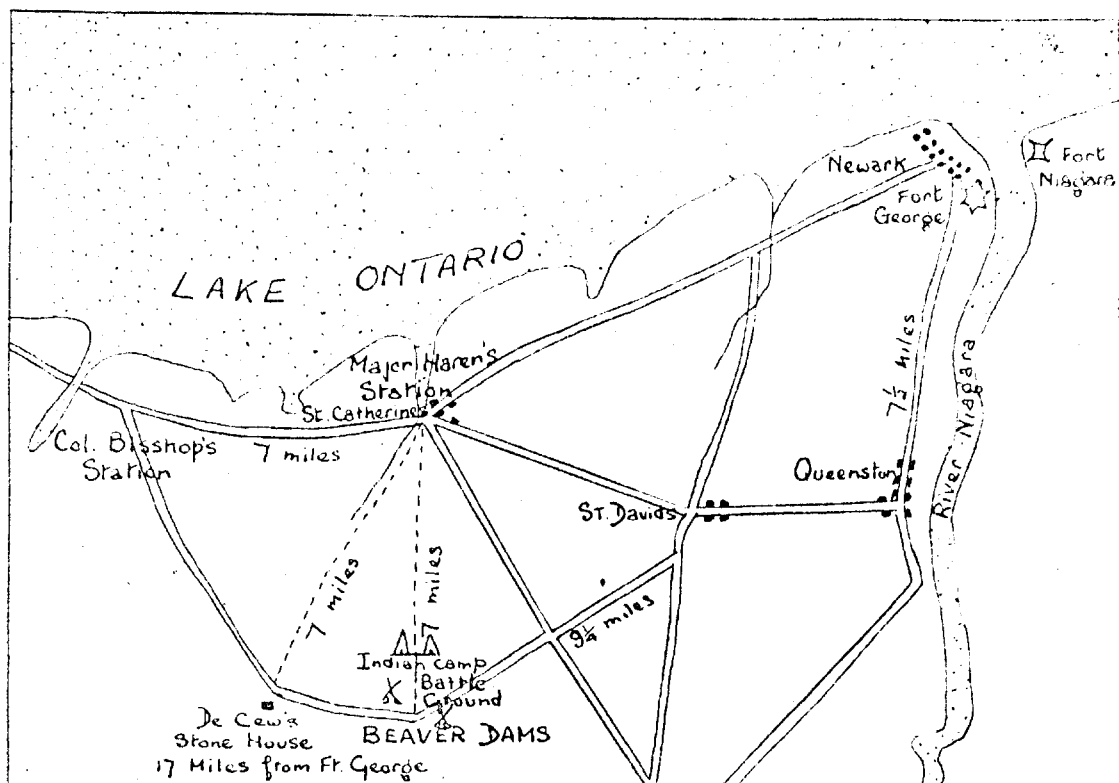


FIG 17 A Contemporary Map of the 'Battle of Beaver Dams' (After Niles' Weekly Register Vol X.)

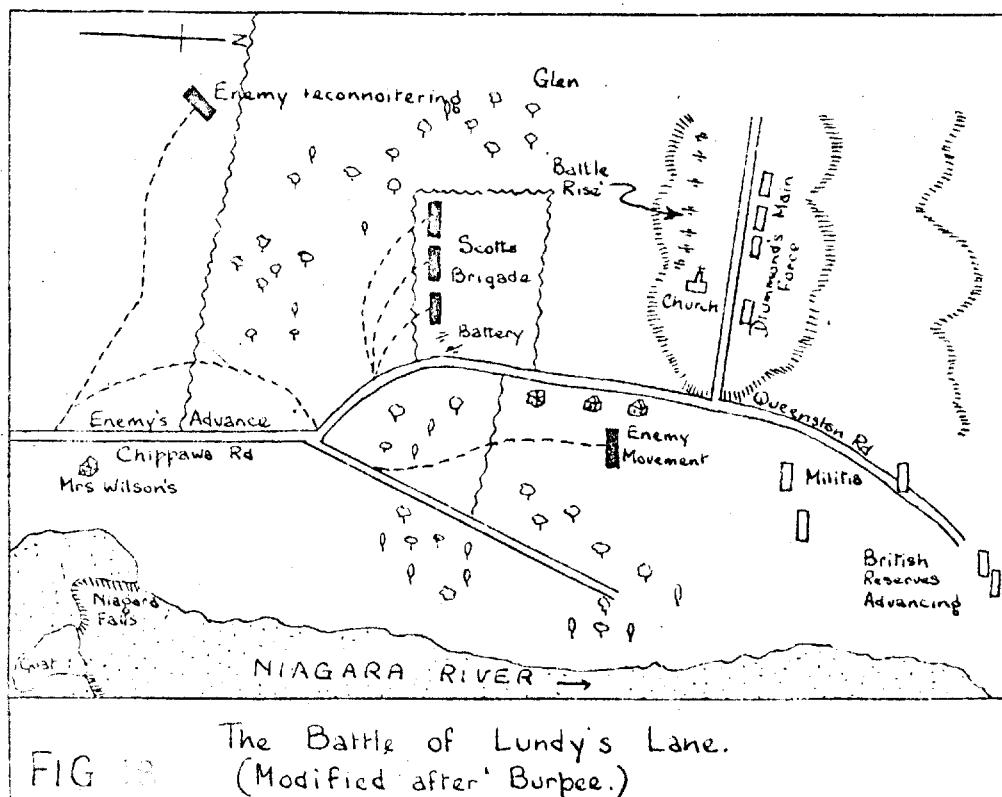


FIG 18 The Battle of Lundy's Lane. (Modified after Burpee.)

soldiers were cleared out of the surrounding farmsteads. It was during this period of siege that the bountiful crops of the Niagara region made it easy to billet not a few soldiers with the settlers.

The siege lasted until the 10th December, when on the provocation of the traitorous "Loyalist", Wilcox, General M'Clure burned the town of Newark and evacuated Ft. George. All was lost. The British were able to occupy Ft. George and Butler's Barracks on the 12th December. Here Colonel Murray, the acting British Frontier Commander, formulated a bold plan for striking at Ft. Niagara to avenge the "Crime of Newark". General Drummond, the new British Commander, arrived to give immediate approval to Murray's plans. This plan was carried out on 18th December, 1813 when Ft. Niagara fell to British hands without a single shot being fired. Never again during the course of the war was the "Stars and Stripes" deigned to fly over Ft. Niagara's mighty walls.

Drummond was a strong man, bent on retaliations for the fate of Newark. He marched south along the eastern bank of the Niagara River, and by 1st. January, 1814, he had razed Lewiston, Ft. Schlosser, Black Rock and Buffalo. When all lay in smouldering ruins he returned to Ft. George to consolidate his gains.

Events of 1814.

Back at the mouth of the Niagara River, Fort Mississauga was built on the point out of the ruins of Newark. It was built so that it was within range of both Ft. Niagara and Ft. George so that any two could protect the approaches of the third. Their position was even stronger when a mobile arm was attached to them. The battleship, the Royal George, anchored off the mouth of the river to make a quadrilateral of strength rendering the area perfectly impregnable to any force the Americans could bring against it.

Drummond was then faced with the difficult problem of defending

the whole of Upper Canada with the Americans rallying in the Niagara district, controlling Lake Erie and dominating the Detroit district. He decided to form his main line of defence from Burlington Heights, his right flank, to Ft. Niagara, his left flank. His advance troops were located near Ft. Erie, Chippawa, Long Point and Moraviantown.

On the other hand, General Brown had been placed in command of the American forces along the Niagara. He had been charged by the "War Party" to avenge the smouldering ruins of the American towns along the river. This policy clearly marks a change of official attitude in the conduct of the war. Both sides were tending towards mutual extermination. Brown, commanding a force equal in numbers to that of Drummond, realized he held the advantage if he kept his force as a single striking body, possessing the full initiative of manoeuvre and attack. He struck at Ft. Erie on 3rd. July, 1814, and carried the fort on the same day. This attack was successful because of reduced numbers in the British garrison and the Fort Erie beach location. It was strategically built to dominate the junction of the river and the lake with little regard to its vulnerability by land, overlooked as it is by the sandy ridge beach of an old glacial lake. The Americans, benefited by more experienced leaders, marched to Streets Creek on the Chippawa River where they met General Riall, Drummond's Second-in-Command, on 5th July, 1814. After an initial British success, Brigadiers Ripley and Scott overran the British flank and won the day. The summer was exceptionally dry and the low Welland clays had dried out considerably. Brown took advantage of the weather and crossed the upper Chippawa to turn Riall's flank. He sent an immediate request to Chauncey to join him in a joint attack against Drummond's main line of defence.

The significance of this inland flank movement is only realized

by an appreciation of the local geography. This lowlying depression, the Welland Vale, is noted for its shallow marshes resulting from the combination of its heavy impermeable clays and considerable rainfall. Had this been a normal year, operations would have been confined more closely to the banks of the Niagara River.

While waiting for Chauncey's reply, Brown advanced to the escarpment. There was no other major barrier, after crossing the Chippawa River, so he could easily gain control of the whole Huron plain. On 19th July, 1814, Colonel Stone, burned the village of St. Davids on the grounds of it being pre-dominantly Tory and that the American militia mistakenly thought Brigadier Swift had been murdered there the previous night by a British prisoner.

On the 23rd. July, 1814, Brown received Chauncey's negative reply and prepared to execute an alternative attack by marching diagonally across the peninsula. This would have been a bold attempt to outflank Drummond's forces maintaining a line along what is now King's Highway No. 8. If this attack on Burlington Heights had taken place, and succeeded, the British cause in Upper Canada would have been lost. The British troops then trapped in the peninsula would have had to call on Yeo to evacuate them. But he was then engaging Chauncey,

Brown mustered his forces at Chippawa the following day. After starting out on the morning of the 25th July, 1814, he found his advance troops contacting the advance units of the British, under Colonel Pearson, south of the present city of Niagara Falls. Pearson, fearing he faced the whole American strength, reported the same to Riall and withdrew. His position was tactically and strategically advantageous. He dominated the recessional moraine by Lundy's Lane. To give up, or ignore this geographical advantage would have shown exceptionally poor leadership. Who dominated this moraine better designated as "Battle

4. Rise" dominated the surrounding region and commanded the interior route to Beaver Dams and ultimately to Burlington Heights. Fortunately for the British, Drummond arrived from Queenston and ordered Pearson to hold Battle Rise and establish his seven field pieces on the crest of the Rise south of Lundy's Lane. (Fig. 18.)

Shortly after 6 p.m. in the evening Brigadier Scott made a strong gain on the British left flank, where the moraine fades out into flat lacustrine terraces, but was later driven back. When Brown arrived with his supporting troops he charged the Rise but failed to gain it. Finally the Americans outflanked the British on their right to gain Battle Rise - but not for long. Back and forth the battle raged over the gun position of Battle Rise. British reinforcements arrived under Colonel Scott, but after a few hours of intense fighting, with four leaders lying wounded, a calm settled over the battlefield.

With the withdrawal of the American Forces to Chippawa the British forces, lying prostrate, in sheer exhaustion, claimed the victory. On the other hand, the Americans, full knowing the damage they had inflicted on the British, also claimed the victory. However, in awarding honours here, one must consider the tactical and strategic aspects. In view of the fact that the Americans aimed at Burlington Heights and that they were engaged and prevented from reaching those heights by the British, the strategic victory was certainly British. Nevertheless, the British had determined to engage the Americans at Lundy's Lane and had defined their line as the crest of Battle Rise by placing their field pieces here. By losing this tactically advantageous position, and 1/3 of their numbers, they suffered a tactical defeat. From this

it is interesting to note that Battle Rise, one of the outstanding geographical features of the region, was, coincidentally, a major factor in determining the British strategical victory and the American tactical success.

General Drummond, after re-aligning his forces, marched to attack the Americans at Fort Erie on 15th. August, 1814. The British troops were thrown back with serious losses. The British lay in waiting outside the fort in an ineffective siege with the Americans supreme on Lake Erie. The American troops broke out on the 15th September, 1814; General Drummond, realizing his army had failed in its attempt and fearing the approach of winter, retired to safer positions at Chippawa. American morale picked up considerably as they re-advanced to Chippawa to re-engage Drummonds troops.

This successful defence of Ft. Erie against the British land attack is based on two essential facts. American supply lines lay across the river and at no time during the siege were they threatened. Further, during the entire siege the Americans maintained advanced pickets to engage British patrols.

General Izard had replaced Brown as commander in the field and led the advance to Chippawa. He proved himself an excellent tactician in taking advantage of local geography. While advancing north along the river to meet the British he realized the exceptionally dry and prolonged summer would facilitate a crossing at the Lyons Creek and the clay flats of the Welland Vale - at Cook's Mills. This he attempted on 19th October, 1814. But after a heavy skirmish in which he failed to turn General Drummond's right flank, he retired defeated.

Meanwhile Brown started to evacuate his forces from Fort Erie to Buffalo. By 5th. November, 1814, he had completed the evacuation of American personnel and blew up the fort on retiring to his winter

quarters. This marked the end of the war on the Niagara Frontier with all of Canada intact and Ft. Niagara in British hands.

Naval Power on the Great Lakes.

Early in the war both sides realized the vital need for naval supremacy on the Great Lakes to support army movements. Actions opened on Lake Erie when Brock captured Detroit together with the brig "Detroit". This brig, along with the Caledonia, was attacked by Commander Elliot lying off Ft. Erie in early October. The bold attack succeeded and one ship was captured. The balance of the year was little more than a stalemate.

Operations of 1813 opened on Lake Ontario with Chauncey supporting the United States' Army storming York in April and Fort George in May. The strategy underlying the sack of York was sound. It was the establishment of a beach-head on Dundas Street, cutting Upper Canada in two. However, it was necessary to capture the peninsula and link up with this beach-head to become effective. American Commanders thus tactically were untimely. Had they attacked and taken Ft. George, key to the Ontario plain, and then immediately struck at York, they could have overrun the whole of Upper Canada. The partial success of the American invasion of the peninsula allowed Perry to get his five vessels out of the Upper Niagara River into Lake Erie. He established a base at Erie and built several ships.

Back on Lake Ontario, Sir James Yeo and General Prevost attacked Sackett's Harbour on 27th May. This raid was primarily of nuisance value. They struck at the American naval stores in an attempt to stem American ship building and thus undermine Chauncey's future operations. Prevost's inability to co-ordinate the military and naval forces caused the mission to end in failure. Yeo later aided the army at Stoney Creek in June by driving Chauncey's fleet away, thus cutting off the water re-

treat of the American forces. He gained some minor successes against Chauncey in August and September. However, later in the month Chauncey engaged and defeated Yeo in York harbour. Yeo was forced to run to Burlington Bay to save his fleet from annihilation. By fleeing from the half-open York harbour to the completely closed Burlington Bay Yeo took advantage of the local geography. He used the low level sand bar stretching across Burlington Bay, except for a small channel easily covered by his guns, to gain a defence in depth and dispersion. The year ended on Lake Ontario with the Americans holding the upper hand.

Meanwhile on Lake Erie, Perry sailed to engage Captain Barclay at Put-in-Bay, on 10th September, 1813. The Americans mustered nine ships, carrying 54 guns and 532 men, capable of delivering a broadside of 936 pounds. On the other hand, the British had six ships, carrying 63 guns⁵ and 440 men, capable of delivering a broadside of only 459 pounds. The Americans carried the day and by so doing gained the decisive victory of Lake Erie. This British defeat was reflected in the strategy of the southwestern frontier. Had the British maintained their advanced position towards the west, they would have exposed a vulnerable left flank to the Americans who dominated Lake Erie and would have run the risk of being outflanked. They withdrew to maintain a line along the east bank of the Thames River, near Moraviantown. While the American control of Lake Erie threatened little more than Ft. Erie on the Niagara frontier, it effectively concentrated British troops into a smaller area, facilitating closer support in the event of an invasion.

Major operations of the next year took place on Lake Ontario. Both Yeo and Chauncey launched extensive ship-building programmes. They

5. J. O. Curwood - The Great Lakes - G.P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y. and London, 1909, Part II, Chapter III, p. 205.

finally floated eight ships each, but the Americans held the greater tonnage, number of guns and men. Fortunately, Yeo got afloat first and on 5th May, 1814, successfully attacked Oswego. Oswego was to the Americans what York was to the British. By successfully carrying this beach-head and linking up with land forces travelling east on the Ridge Road they could have driven a wedge through the Albany thence through the Mohawk-Hudson Gap to split the Republic in two.

Yeo then blockaded Sackett's Harbour from 19th May to 6th June, 1814. By early July, Chauncey had set sail and was prepared to engage Yeo's fleet. However, the balance of the war was confined almost completely to "chase and run tactics" with no decisive actions taking place. During this period, the American Captain Sinclair carried the war to Lake Huron but its influence was not far-reaching.

The Treaty of Ghent, signed 24th December, 1814, virtually ended the war all along the Canadian Frontier. The "War Party" had been induced to seek peace by the "Hartford Convention" who threatened secession. The terms of the Treaty highly favoured the Americans who regained all of their original land and sea forts held by the British.

In Conclusion

It can be seen that many of the major battles of the War were fought along the Niagara Frontier. Indeed, over half of the battles of the war were fought along this frontier, including the majority of the American successes. Many of the individual battles were intimately related to the geography of the region, while tactical and strategic successes were usually gained by those commanders making the most use of terrain and weather conditions.

In analysing the Niagara Frontier it is revealing to see how influential geography has been both in the conduct of the campaigns and individual battles. For instance the geography of river crossings was prob-

ably the greatest single factor influencing the American invasions and retreats. The first invasion at Queenston was at the narrowest point of the navigable portion of the lower river. The Gorge, on the other hand, acted as a complete barrier to all forces concerned.

The geography of the frontier's hinterland actually dictated the defence pattern to be followed by both sides. The fact that no barrier along the Mohawk Road lay between the Niagara River and Burlington Heights, geographical centre of Upper Canada, forced the British to maintain a line of defence along the west bank of the river, while the Americans defended the eastbank. This is shown by the manner in which the Americans exploited their successful rupture of this line by advancing to Hamilton in 1813. However, the geography of the immediate hinterland greatly influenced operations like those of Chippawa, Lundy's Lane and Queenston.

It is interesting to note not only the influence of geography on the strategy of the war but on the tactics of many of the battles. The Battle of Queenston Heights raged over the dominance of the Niagara escarpment along the Portage Road. It was won, as the "Battle" of Beaver Dams by using a re-entrant as an easy incline up the escarpment. The geography of Stoney Creek led the Americans to feel a false sense of security on the opposite bank of a 20 foot gully, where they prepared no defence against a surprise attack, the reason for their defeat. The Battle of Lundy's Lane raged about a recessional moraine, remnant of a glacier. Operations on the Welland Vale were controlled by the marshes resulting from the weather and the impermeable clays, remnant of a glacial lake. Ft. George was captured initially by attacks from the rear made possible by the existence of the One Mile Creek, while Ft. Erie stood some 20 feet below a sandy beach, remnant of Greater Lake Erie. Thus the war along the Niagara Frontier can be truly considered

a war of practical geography.

Yet in over-all military significance Niagara was second to Montreal:

"The American militarists failed to analyse strategically the frontier and thereby passed up the opportunity of early victory. They overlooked the vulnerability of Canada's water link supply line at Montreal which connected Upper and Lower Canada via the Great Lakes: by capturing this point early in the war they would have succeeded in splitting Canada in half, over-running Upper Canada and concentrating their forces against Lower Canada. That the British, on the other hand, were aware of this possibility is shown in the immediate post-war years, when they spent 1,000,000 pounds (sterling) to build the Ottawa-Rideau canal, a less vulnerable route to Upper Canada." 6.

While neither Great Britain nor the United States can look back on the war of 1812 with much pride, Canada can justly claim it as the "Canadian War of Independence". Her people rose in the time of greatest need to aid the British Regulars in defence of that which Canadians held most dear - the right to choose their own affiliations - the right to remain free from American domination while enjoying the pleasure of the British Crown.

6. G.A.Bevan - "Canada, A Power Vacuum of World Politics" - Dalhousie Review, Vol XXVII, No. 2, Halifax, N.S., July, 1947, p. 199.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Patriots of '37.

With the close of the war of 1812-15 patriotism was high along the Niagara Frontier. So much so that the attack on the governing class, led by Robert Gourlay, an eccentric Scottish land-agent, in 1817, died a sudden death when, after a trial of sorts, he was banished from the province of Upper Canada.

The next decade along the Niagara river was one of economic importance and far-reaching military significance. It was the great canal-building decade in which the Erie Canal (1825) was built to link New York and Buffalo, via the Hudson-Mohawk river system. Later in the same decade the Welland Canal (1829) was completed to provide a water-route from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario around the falls of Niagara. As a result of overcoming difficulties of transport by these canals, Niagara grew in economic importance. However, strategically this new development made the Niagara region more vital than ever. Fortunately for Anglo-America no serious clash resulted and the military importance of the canals appeared to dwindle.

Meanwhile, great political changes were proposed by the reform element of the population in the Canadas. In Upper Canada, men gathered under leaders such as Dr. Rolph, Dr. Baldwin, Mr. Bidwell and Mr. Wm. Lyon Mackenzie. They were initially constitutional Reformers seeking to eliminate the political, social and economic mal-administration of the Family Compact. However, the course of events led them to armed rebellion in York in December, 1837.

In so far as the Rebellion broke outside of the Niagara Frontier, the main course is outside our present field of study. Nevertheless, its bitter end is of significance as its leader, Mackenzie, crossed the Niagara Frontier to escape to the United States, there to organize a Provisional Government for Upper Canada and to muster the Patriot Army.

Prior to the arrival of Mackenzie on the Niagara Frontier, only one event of 1837 is worthy of note from a military point of view. This was a serious riot in the town of Niagara. It occurred primarily because of the unstatesmanlike action of the Lt. Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, in interpreting the letter rather than the spirit of the law. Slaves escaping from their owners in the southern states, had been accustomed to finding asylum in Upper Canada. A colony of nearly five hundred such negroes congregated in Niagara. The Lt. Governor sought to extradite one of their number, Mosby by name, to the government of the United States on an alledged charge of horse-thieving. The negro population, encouraged by the local whites, rose to defend Moseby and by so doing effected his release. The government acceptance of this, the will of the people, re-affirmed, for all time, the Canadian stand^{1.} against Slavery.

That these coloured people as a group were not given to thwarting the laws of their adopted land is vindicated by the number of them that voluntarily enlisted in the militia to serve in the rebellion of the same year along the Niagara Frontier.

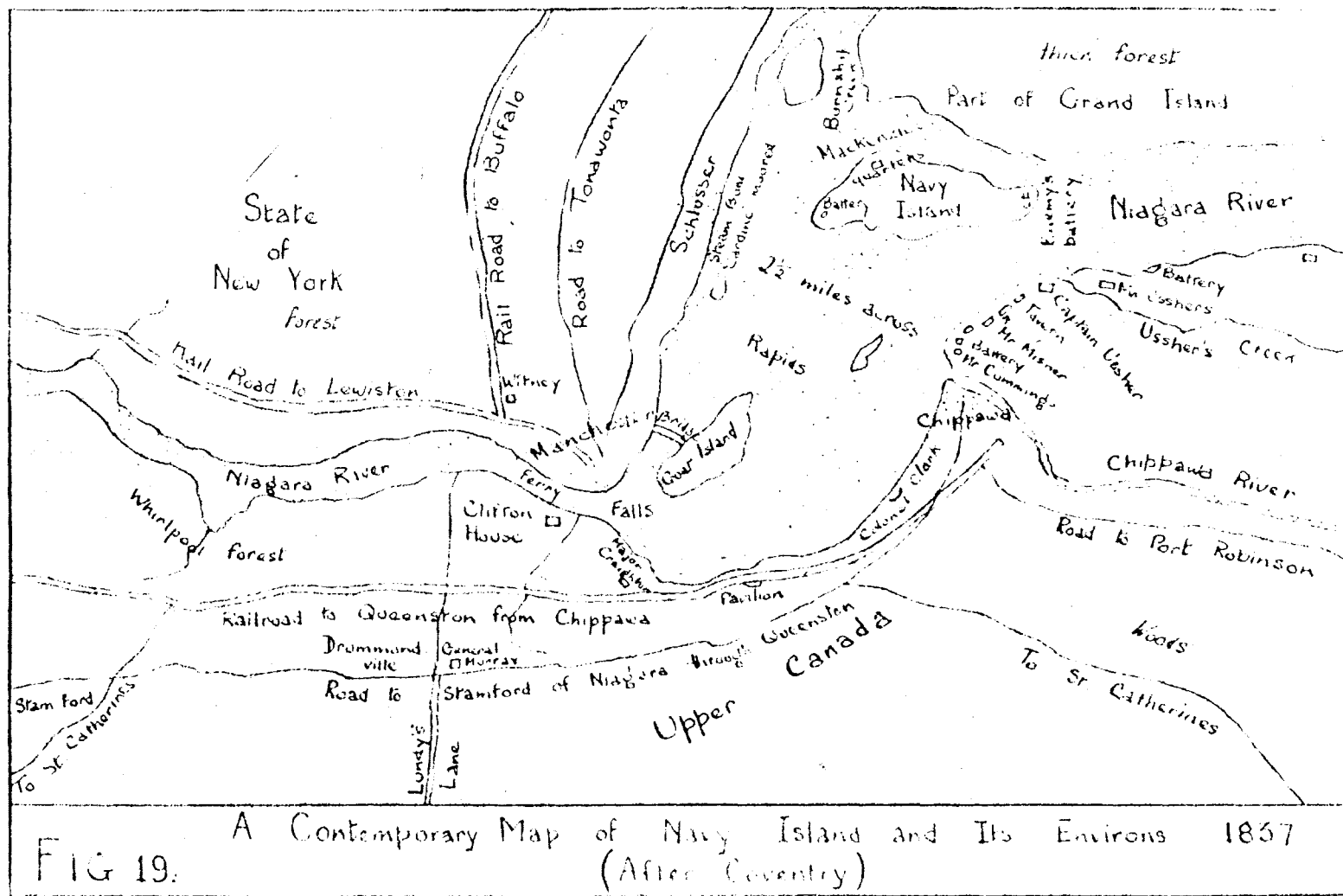
Many writers have attributed the failure of the rebellion to the character of the Loyalists who suppressed it. They have neglected

1. Wm Kirby - Annals of Niagara - Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896, Chapter 33., p. 231.

entirely the climatic factor involved. The unusually mild winter helped the steamer "Transit", on the 7th December, 1837, to cross Lake Ontario from York to Niagara long after the usual closing of navigation. It picked up a large number of Militiamen, mostly veterans of the War 1812-15, and quickly transported them to York where they spear-headed the successful attack on the Rebels at Gallows Hill.

Mackenzie made his escape towards the Niagara Frontier, hiding by day and travelling by night. After several narrow escapes, he reached Buffalo where he organized his Provisional Government. He raised funds by selling bonds in the name of his new government. The ranks of his Patriot Army were soon swelled by the discontents of Buffalo and New York State. After securing arms from the town armoury, he armed his followers and seized the steamer Caroline. Along with the Americans, Sutherland and Van Rensselaer, the Patriots occupied Navy Island, on 13th December, 1837. (Fig. 19)

Navy Island, which was Canadian territory, according to the Treaty of Ghent, was declared the headquarters of the new provisional Government. Here, around 500-600 armed men, mostly British, gathered between 15th and 31st December, 1837. Van Rensselaer was responsible for the military plans for the invasion. This show of strength on the part of the Rebels greatly alarmed the government of Upper Canada. They immediately sent Colonel MacNab of Hamilton to lead the militia against the insurgents. He ordered his artillery and mortars to bombard the island. However, little damage was done to Mackenzie's band. MacNab decided to isolate the Rebels on the island by destroying their means of communication with the mainland. He sent Lt. Drew, R.N., with a body of men on a nocturnal mission to fire the Caroline docked at Schlosser. This mission was accomplished with a high degree of success on 29th December,



1837.

Many have debated the legality of this invasion of American territory and the affront on her sovereignty in a time of peace. Along with the McLeod Affair, which stemmed from this Caroline Case, the indignation it caused almost precipitated a war. However, Britain repaid the losses of America, while America acquitted McLeod of a murder charge to save a rupture between the two nations. In Canada, however, both MacNab and Drew were presented with swords by the Assembly and MacNab was knighted.²

After the turn of the year, Mackenzie was arrested near Buffalo under a breach of the Neutrality Act. Realizing the venture had failed, Van Rensselaer evacuated Navy Island on 13th January, 1838 and General Scott recovered the arms stolen from the Buffalo arsenal.

With the knowledge, but not the support of Mackenzie the Canadian Refugee Relief Association was formed. It was an association, "by means of which their sufferings might be mitigated, and a redress of grievances obtained", and, "to adopt such other measures as, in their discretion, may best conduce to their welfare".³ It is believed that they were intimately associated with the Hunter's Lodges and Sympathizers later to raise havoc along the frontier from Windsor to Kingston. These raids were carried on almost entirely by American nationals eager for Canadian independence.

In June, 1838, another attempt at invading Canada was made along the Niagara Frontier. The Hunters crossed the Niagara River and struck

2. A.B. Corey - The Crisis of 1830-42 in Canadian-American Relations - Ryerson Press - 1941, Chapter 3, p. 37.

3. C. Lindsey - Makers of Canada - Wm. Lyon Mackenzie. Morang and Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1909, Chapter XIV, p. 434.

inland to establish their headquarters in the tamarac swamp of the Chip-pawa district. Here the forest was dense enough to conceal their every movement. Moreau, their leader made his way to the Short Hills (Font-hill name) where his men engaged the Queens Lancers from York at Oster-hout's Tavern. The Rebels had expected aid from Western New York but^{4.} it failed to come and their Short Hills' mission ended in failure.

It is interesting to note that some remarkable degree of military organization and knowledge had been gained by Moreau's Band. Their strategy of gaining and dominating the easily defended name of the Short Hills is essentially sound. The enterprise failed solely because their fellow-travellers in New York did not strike to support the band of rebels established on the Hills.

On 12th March, 1839, Mackenzie took an active part in forming the Association of Canadian Refugees at Rochester. It was aimed at preventing further premature attempts to obtain Canadian independence. Here, Mackenzie made his first open stand against his American Sympathizers. He resolved that the impetus for Canadian independence must come from resident Canadian nationals. However, as an organization it was no more effective than those previously constituted.

The Rebels were guilty of one other act along this frontier. In March, 1840, the rebel, Lett, crossed the Niagara River at Queenston. He scaled the heights, with a party of men, to place gunpowder in the monument erected to General Brock. The explosion resulting damaged it beyond repair. This act was simply the last sting of the rebel cause before the movement ended.

4. E. Cruikshank - Ontario Historical Society - Papers and Records, vol. VIII, "The Insurrection in the Short Hills in 1838" pp. 5 - 23.

The entire rebel movement seemed to die a natural death after Mackenzie published the following statement in his Gazette on 23rd. December, 1840.

"Over three year's residence in the United States, and a closer observation of the condition of society here, have lessened my regrets at the results of the opposition raised to England in Canada in 1837-38. I have beheld the American people give their dearest and most valued rights into the keeping of the worst enemies of free institutions: I have seen monopoly and slavery triumph at their popular elections, and have witnessed with pain 'the bitter fruits of that speculative spirit of enterprise to which', as President Van Buren says in his late excellent message, his 'countrymen are so liable, and upon which the lessons of experience are so unavailing'; and although the leaders of parties here may not say so to their followers, yet the conviction grows daily stronger in my mind that your brethren of this union are rapidly hastening towards a state of society in which President, Senate, and House of Representatives will fulfill the duties of King, Lords and Commons, and the power of the community pass from the democracy of numbers into the hands of an aristocracy, not of noble ancestry and ancient lineage, but of moneyed monopolists, land-jobbers and heartless politicians." 5.

It can be seen that the Niagara Frontier was fast losing importance as a military frontier. It had evolved to that state of civilian hostility which usually follows armed conflict. Its strategic importance lay in the fact that armed rebellion emphasized the proximity of a foreign power to York, capital of Upper Canada. This strategic value did not cease with the last of the rebel movement. Indeed, while the geographical alignment of the frontier was N/S, the Rebellion stressed the E/W contacts, politically, socially and economically between the United States and Upper Canada.

5. C. Lindsey - Makers of Canada - Wm. Lyon Mackenzie, Morang and Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1909, Chapter XIV, p. 434.

CHAPTER IX.

The Fenians of '66.

While the majority of the people of Canada rose to suppress the Patriots of '37 it is not to be assumed that all were content with the political system as it was. Indeed, they were more bent than ever on self-government. But they were determined to obtain it by Constitutional Reform. The Durham Report was followed by the Act of Union, 1840. The free trade policy of Britain in 1846 had its repercussions in Niagara as throughout the rest of the province, However, the Reciprocity Treaty, 1854, with the United States, slightly compensated for this.

Meanwhile military activity was at a low ebb along the frontier. In 1845 the Royal Canadian Rifles was embodied with its headquarters at Niagara under Colonel Elliot. It served along the frontier until 1858, when it was disbanded.

Canada took its first real step in the self-direction of its defences during the Crimean War, when there was a grand scale withdrawal of British Regulars from the Colony. With the total of Imperial troops standing at 3000 the province voted, in 1855, some 25,000 pounds sterling annually to maintain a volunteer force of 5000 men. This force was the initial stage of the Non-Permanent Active Militia of Canada, of a later period. In 1855, the 100th Royal Canadian Regiment was enlisted for Crimean service. A company of this regiment came from Niagara. While the regiment never did reach the Crimea, its personnel saw service in England and Gibraltar.

The Indian Mutiny put another drain on British Regulars in Canada. Many of the new Canadian volunteer regiments offered their services to replace Imperial troops either in Canada or on the Indian Front. The British, however, refused the offer.

The next major event having a bearing on Canadian Military history is that of the American Civil War. C.P. Stacey sums up its influence by saying, "The fierce heat which it generated played a major part in welding the diverse elements of British America into a Dominion and a nation."¹

The causes of the Civil War, 1860-65, are well known. That the "Trent Affair" almost involved Great Britain is also well known. However, the impetus that a sudden threat of war, between Canada and the United States, gave to the Canadian militia, is an important factor of history seldom discussed. The Canadian attitude was, that if the Trent Affair went unatoned it would lead to war. In Niagara a volunteer company under Captain Powell was formed in anticipation of seeing active service against the Northern States. The river bank had been surveyed and places marked for batteries before news was received of America's surrender of the political prisoners in question, Mason and Slidell.² However, a force of 11,000 Imperial troops was ordered to the colony. As the war dragged on, the Canadian people saw the developing strength of the Union Army. The New York press threatened that some day the Union Army would march victoriously through Canada. This caused a substantial increase in the Volunteer Force and, had there been a war, a conscription Bill would have undoubtedly been passed.

1. C.P. Stacey - Canada and the British Army, 1846-71, Imperial Studies, No. 2, Longman's Green and Co. 1936, Chapter VI, p. 117.

2. W. Kirby, Annals of Niagara - Lundy's Lane * Hist. Soc. 1896, Chapter XXXIV, p. 247.

Following the cessation of hostilities in the United States, groups of disbanded soldiers plagued the country demanding subsistence from the people. Essentially, They had an antipathy for all things British after Britain had shown favouritism towards the South. These discontents were given ample opportunity to express this hatred through the newly-founded Fenian Society. This society, organized to spearhead the rebellion of Ireland against Great Britain, split into two camps. One headed by O'Mahony, advocated revolution in Ireland, while the other headed by Roberts and Sweeny, advocated a strike at Britain by invading and conquering Canada.

It was mainly the fear of this latter group which caused so much excitement in Canada. However,

"geography had much to do with the alarm felt in Canada. The province was in effect one long frontier. The land border of Quebec's Eastern Townships and the river frontages of the St. Lawrence, the Niagara and the St. Clair seemed especially exposed and the towns on the Great Lakes, and even on Georgian Bay, suffered from periodical scares. Canadian newspapers agreed that the Fenians were not capable of major operations, but that marauding raids were probable, and there were few communities in Canada that found it difficult to imagine themselves objectives of such enterprise." 3.

Fenian movements had been reported south of the border and Canadian officials were prone to believe that the first attack would come on St. Patrick's Day, 17th March, 1866. However, the day came and passed with no attempt at invasion. The Canadian people assumed a more natural daily life. But, by the end of May, anxiety began to grow in official circles. Inhabitants of the Niagara Frontier were unfortunately unaware of the Fenians gathering in Buffalo under the battle-hardened General O'Neil. The choice of the Niagara Frontier as a

3. C.P. Stacey - Canadian Historical Review, No. 3, Sept. 1931, Fenianism and the Rise of National Feeling in Canada and the time of Confederation". p. 240.

field of operations is probably explained by two reasons. The first would undoubtedly be one of geographic and historic momentum. Niagara had been a major frontier in the lives of the fathers of these present raiders. That they should tend to follow in their fathers' footsteps does not seem unnatural. The second reason lies in the fact that Niagara presented one of the easiest physical means of access to Canada. The Fenians hoped it would also prove the easiest human means of access through a disaffected population.

The first wave of Fenians, 1300 strong, crossed the river to land at Ft. Erie at 3.30 a.m. on 1st. June, 1866. They demanded food from the inhabitants and, after cutting the telegraph and railway lines, marched to Frenchman's Creek where they encamped. They expected reinforcements by dusk, full-knowing that 10,000 of their number were waiting in Buffalo. However, their numbers stood at 2000 by 10 p.m. when O'Neil held a Council-of-war. His scouts had informed him of Canadian troops occupying positions at Chippawa and Pt. Colborne. He decided on prompt action and after disposing of excess arms, etc. marched to engage the Canadians.

Meanwhile the Canadian government had called some 20,000 militiamen to arms. They had placed the strategy of defence in the hands of General Napier. He conceived a plan for the Niagara Frontier which envisaged a concentration of forces at Pt Colborne under Lt. Colonel Booker, and at St. Catharines under Col. Peacocke. The latter was to act as commander. These officers had telegraph, road, rail and canal communication between their headquarters and were initially charged with the defence of this, a strategic communication route in Canada.

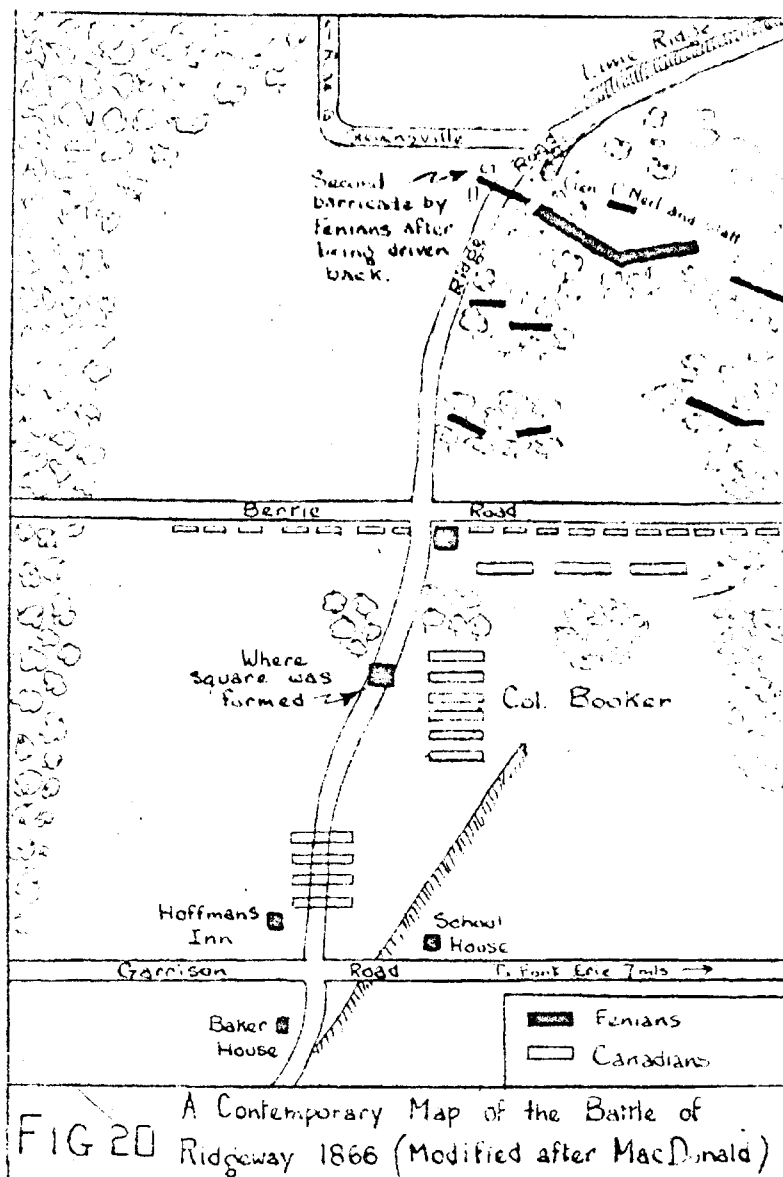
The immediate task facing Peacocke was to organize a plan to engage the Fenians somewhere between the Welland Canal and the Niagara River,

a strip of land an average of some 13 miles wide. He decided to advance to Chippawa, spend the night, and then move south towards Steenville and Ridgeway. Here he would link up with Booker's forces for a concerted attack on the enemy believed to be camping at the mouth of Frenchman's Creek. Peacocke's plan was to confine O'Neil to that area between the Welland Canal and the Niagara River, and between the Chippawa Creek and the north shore of Lake Erie. He then proposed to advance to Frenchman's Creek to engage the enemy with his left flank protected by the Niagara River and his right flank by the marshes of Bertie Township. Booker, on the other side, was to advance on the enemy with his left flank protected by the bog and his right by the Onondaga scarp. Peacocke sent a dispatch to Booker with Captain Akers. Some insubordination followed on the part of Akers and Lt. Col. Dennis who made use of an available boat, the "W.T. Robb", to execute a movement on their own. Booker, however, carried out his orders to move to link up with Peacocke. The latter, through gross inefficiency, left his camp two hours late and took the round-a-bout way by the river road to reach his destination. This rendered him some 4-5 hours late at his rendez-vous. Booker, advancing steadily, encountered the advance pickets of the enemy. This rendered the proposed plan impossible.

The Battle of Ridgeway, 2nd, June, 1866.

General O'Neil being an officer highly skilled in tactics, heard of Booker's advance from his scouts. He immediately deployed his troops to make the most of his advantageous position. Setting up his headquarters on the Onondaga escarpment, standing some 35 feet above the surrounding terrain, he commanded the area. Indeed, he occupied the single strategic height between Port Colborne and rt. Erie. (Fig 20)

All went well with the Canadians advancing from the south, until a



false report of "Cavalry!" On hearing this the Canadians formed "Square for Cavalry". The enemy, seizing the advantage poured volley after volley into the square. Booker's order to "Reform Column" went unheeded, as his troops wavered under the heavy enemy fire. The buglers sounded retreat and all was lost for the Canadians. The Fenians chased them south to Ridgeway and then swung east to re-group at Ft. Erie.^{4.}

The Battle of Fort Erie, 2nd June, 1866.

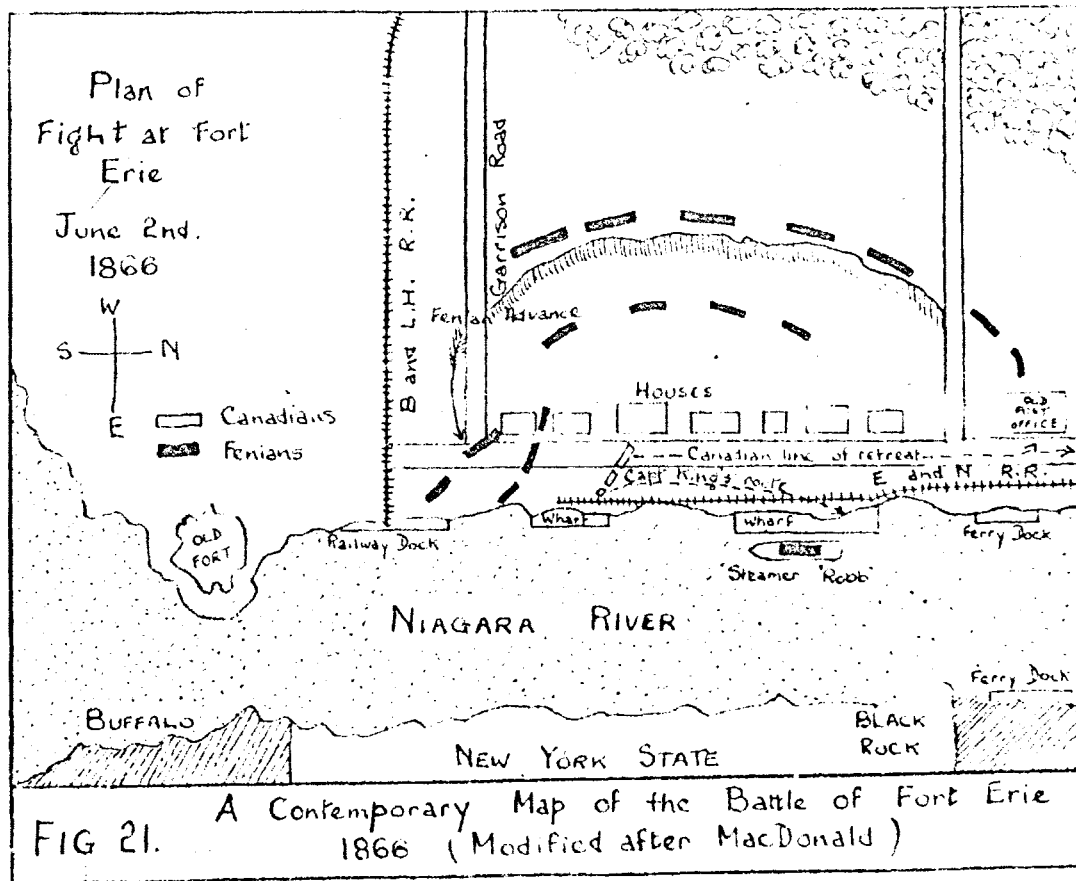
Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Dennis had cruised the shore from Ft. Erie to Chippawa and had made several successful raids on small parties of Fenians with his band of 100 men. He decided to leave Captain King in charge of the prisoners at Ft. Erie while he and Captain Akers went to Port Colborne for further orders. King, hearing the news of the approaching Fenians, refused to be forced into such an unwise situation. The delay resulting from this insubordination was just long enough to prove to Dennis the fallacy of his plan. After firing several volleys into the advancing Fenians, Dennis ordered his troops to retreat and disappear as fast as they could. The questionable conduct of Dennis was partially atoned by the gallant stand of a body of men under Captain King. However, their dock position was finally outflanked and they were taken prisoners. (Fig. 21)

The Fenians made camp that night in Ft. Erie and posted a guard on the high ground west of the town. During the night they attempted to re-cross the Niagara River but were arrested by the American gun-boat "Michigan" for a breach of the Neutrality Laws.^{5.}

It is interesting to note in this affair the influence of the swamp

4. J.A. Macdonald - Troublous Times in Canada - W.S. Johnston and Co, Toronto, 1910, Part I, Chapter VI, pp 46-52.

5. J.A. Macdonald - as (4) above, Chapter VI, pp. 46-52.



areas on the conduct of the campaign. The great tamarac swamps were widely used by the civilian population both to hide themselves and their cattle during these momentous few days.^{6.} On the other hand, the swamps were a disadvantage to military operations. Colonel Booker was forced to proceed east to Ridgeway than north to join Peacocke rather than undertake a more direct cross-country route. It is difficult, however, to estimate if a cross-country manoeuvre would have been any more successful than the railway line approach that was undertaken.

Kirby, writing in his Annals of Niagara, seems to feel that Major Le Caron, a British spy, serving as an officer in the Fenian Army, was instrumental in precipitating General O'Neil's premature invasion and thus his ultimate defeat.

Meanwhile, Fenian preparations for an invasion were being undertaken at Lewiston where some 600 men awaited a boat to cross to Queens-
ton. The boat did not arrive until the 4th June, 1866, by which time the Fenians had dispersed. The following day several Fenians at Youngs-
town near Ft. Niagara, opened fire on the town of Niagara with rifles.
The disturbance soon ended and the Fenian Menace died away.^{7.}

Some considerable amount of military activity took place along other Canadian frontiers following the Niagara campaign. However, it was not until 1870 that the Fenians again threatened the district of Niagara. On 24th May, 1870, the Militia was again called out and Lt. Col. Currie was given command along the Niagara Frontier. He had some 93 officers, 966 men, 147 horses and 4 guns under his command. His

6. W. Kirby - Annals of Niagara - Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896, Chapter XXXV, p. 253.

7. W. Kirby - as (6) above, Chapter, p. 256.

defence was simple but complete. Infantry regiments, supported by artillery, guarded the Welland Canal, while Cavalry Regiments patrolled the banks of the Niagara River. Bridges were guarded by companies of infantry.⁸ In view of these preparations the Fenians did not venture an attack.

In Conclusion.

The Canadian people had once again stood up to face the invasion of their territory. In a moment's notice they sprang to arms to defend their existing institutions and their independence. Nevertheless, this last threat of foreign domination had proved beyond a doubt their need for an active participation in the question of defence. It had further gone to show that defence problems were essentially national problems, shaped by geography. The question must surely have influenced those stalwart Canadians who were charged with the responsibility of making Confederation a success. At Niagara the military frontier finally gave way to ever-expanding lines of contact which, inspite of certain tariff restrictions, led to a high degree of economic integration of the Frontier Zone.

8. J.A. Macdonald - Troublous Times in Canada - W.S. Johnson and Co. Toronto, 1910, Part II, Chapter V, p. 174.

PART III.

An Outline of Canada's Defence Problems.

CHAPTER X.

From Colonial to National Defence.

Niagara had ceased to be a military frontier. The whole problem of Canadian defence had grown. The concept of defence changed from that of isolated frontiers of an old colony, to that of overall defence of a young nation. Thus, Confederation clearly marks both the decline of important activity at Niagara and the opening of a period of transition. A brief survey of the history of Canadian Defence measures will help to place Niagara's human history in its proper place, both in consideration of the past and the future.

Canadian military history can conveniently be divided into four distinct periods:

1.

Colonial Period - up to 1867

Transitional Period - 1867-1918

National Period - 1918-1945

International Period - 1945 to date.

The first three of these periods will be outlined briefly in this chapter, while the last will be dealt with in the last chapter.

The Colonial Period - up to 1867.

At a glance it can be seen that practically the whole of Niagara's history can be treated within this period. It has its origin in the Indian wars and is traceable through Indian and White man struggles to

1. G.A. Bevan - Dalhousie Review, vol XXVII, No.2, July, 1947, "Canada, A Power Vacuum of World Politics", p. 199-203.

Confederation. Essentially a story of the frontier, one can readily observe its beginnings, its peak and its decline. That story opened with the first settlers on the east coast who gradually advanced westward, ever marking the extent of civilization. However, in the course of the westward advance, human factors were balanced by geographical ones. Frontiers like the St. Lawrence, the Niagara and the St. Clair rivers arose, Canada had become British, while the Republic to the south had developed its own way of life. The clashes which followed decided really nothing between Britain and the United States. However, they gave birth to forces in Canada which culminated in the birth of a new nationality.

These forces were quite slow in their development. This is particularly evident in the question of self-defence. Canada, the colony, was defended primarily by British Regulars, some of whom were recruited in Canada. Training, arms, food, clothing, etc., were supplied by the British government. The peculiar contribution of Canada was the bravery and patriotism of volunteer musters. They rallied to the Call-to-Arms in troublous times. They accepted the "Universal Service Bill"; they over subscribed the rolls of the new "Volunteer Force"; but they consistently refused to accept the financial responsibility of defence either in peace or war. Such was the situation on the eve of Confederation.

The Transitional Period - 1867-1913.

Railways carried the nation westward to bind together the diverse elements of Canada. The events of these years greatly increased the vulnerability of the Dominion but Cardwell and Gladstone stood firm on matters of retrenchment in colonial military expenditures, especially those in Canada. British Regulars were withdrawn, even in the face of

the Red River Rebellion, 1870, and the last of Fenian aggression, 1870.

On the 11th November, 1871, the last Regular battalion sailed from Quebec.^{2.}

With the single exception of the organization of batteries of artillery at Quebec and Kingston, the Dominion government seemed content to rely entirely on its new volunteer force and its old, sedentary militia. These, however, were not fit to take the field as an army, since they had a preponderance of infantry and a conspicuous absence of services.

Trouble in the west was so disturbing that the government organized, in 1873, the semi-civilian, semi-military, North West Mounted Police. This small body of men performed the remarkable task of keeping the peace in the great era of westward expansion, broken only by the North West Rebellion, 1885. This incident necessitated the calling out of 6,000 men of the Active Militia (Volunteers) under the leadership of men like General Strange, Major-General Middleton, and Colonel Otter.

By 1874 the Royal Military College at Kingston was founded to train future officers of the Canadian Army along the lines of professional soldiery. Graduates of this college supplied many officers for the Active Militia as well as some for the Imperial Army. A decade later the Dominion Arsenal was erected at Quebec, 1882, and instructional units for infantry and Cavalry were formed in 1883-84. Defence measures were unimpressive until 1895 when the United States championed the cause of Venezuela against British Guiana. War loomed on Canada's southern horizon as the government spent some two million dollars on modern arms. "This was the last Anglo-American crisis which occasioned import-

2. C.P. Stacey - Military problems of Canada - Ryerson Press - Toronto, 1940, Chapter II, p. 62.

3.
ant military preparations in Canada."

The advent of the South African War, 1899-1902, marks another change in Canadian defence policies. Sir W. Laurier was Prime Minister at the time and, while acknowledging that when Britain was at war, Canada was at war, he maintained that the extent of Canada's participation in the war was a matter for the Canadian government to decide. After obtaining government approval, some 8000 troops were committed, a quarter of which reached the front as official representatives of the Canadian government. Even here, however, these troops were supported financially by the British government while at the front.

Laurier's policy of exerting Canada's national sovereignty in imperial matters is reflected again in 1905 when, after a quarrel with the Canadian government, Lord Dundonald resigned as British Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian forces. He was replaced by a Canadian Cabinet Minister and an Army Advisory Council. This same event reflects Laurier's faith in the Monroe Doctrine. He strongly believed that the United States would be forced to protect Canada in sheer self-defence before it would be necessary to call out the Active Militia. Later in the same decade Laurier's government witnessed the withdrawal of the British naval forces at Halifax, 1910, and Esquimalt, 1911. The Naval Service Act was passed to establish the beginnings of the new Canadian Navy with bases at Halifax and Esquimalt and a Naval College at the former. With the defeat of the Liberal government, Sir Robert Borden directed the incoming government and practically negated his predecessor's Naval policy.

On the eve of the First World War, Canada had some 3000 in her Permanent Army and some 60,000 in her Reserve Army. Rather than send the Militia overseas, it was decided to recruit a Canadian Expeditionary Force through the medium of the Militia units. In all, some four divisions were recruited; 2/3rds of those recruited saw overseas service while 10 per cent of the total enlistments were killed. The First Canadian Corps was formed under Sir Julian Byng but eventually came under command of the Canadian, Sir Arthur Currie.

The period of transition was over. Canadian troops were fighting not only in the defence of Canada but in the defence of the Empire and all it stood for. Such was the position assumed by Canada at the Imperial War Conference, 1917, as voiced by Sir Robert Borden.

" - - - a readjustment of relations must be based on the complete recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth, and must fully recognise their right to a voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations".

Canada had won the right to sign the Treaty of Versailles in June, 1919, as a nation of the world.

The National Period , 1918-1945.

With the successful conclusion of the First World War, the Canadian government returned to its pre-war complacency. It reduced its armed services to a mere skeleton, reflecting reliance on the might of the British Navy and the friendly relations enjoyed with the United States.

In 1922, Prime Minister, Wm Lyon Mackenzie King, defended a Bill to centralize the administrative headquarters of the three services in a Department of National Defence, by saying:

"Avowedly it is for the purpose of economy; avowedly for the purpose of retrenchment; if we are ever to have retrenchment in military and naval expenditures this is the one moment in

which it is possible to bring about something of that character."^{4.}

This statement characterizes the whole defence policy of the period up to 1935. The Permanent Army, having an authorized strength of 10,000 men, seldom exceeded 4000 all ranks. The Reserve Army, having a paper strength of 11 divisions and 4 cavalry divisions, had an average strength of 130,000 all ranks. These Reserve Units were occasionally trained at camps like Niagara-on-the-Lake along the old Niagara Frontier. The Canadian Navy was seriously involved in this reduced expenditure. It was for the Conservative government of R.B. Bennett to reduce Air Force expenditures.

By 1935 the world situation had become worse. The incoming Liberal government, with Hon. Ian Mackenzie as Minister of National Defence, undertook the gradual renovation of the services. This has been referred to as the "New Defence Policy" and was "a Canadian defence policy for the direct defence of our Canadian shores and our Canadian homes."^{5.} Mr. Mackenzie encouraged the development of Canada's air arm at the expense of the sea arm. "While all services were improved, the preparations undertaken were nevertheless inadequate on the advent of the Second World War, 1939.

Two distinct trends in the Canadian defence policy became evident during these four years of re-armament. The government sought to maintain a compromise between the efficiency and the economy of modernized services. It insisted on their independent use.

The other trend was shown when the government decided that Canada,

4. Speech in the House of Commons, 16th May, 1922, Canadian Annual Review, 1922, pp. 243-244.

5. Debates - House of Commons, 1937, p. 907.

as a nation, had the right to issue its own Declaration of War. It did so some ten days after Great Britain in September, 1939.

The Second World War, 1939-45, called for the support of the Canadian people. They rallied behind the government's war effort, financially, physically and morally. They supported the conscription issue (National Resources Mobilization Act), the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan and the series of Victory Loans floated to finance the war. Some 1,186,771 served in the armed forces suffering 41,992 killed and 53,145 wounded.^{6.} The war years saw the peoples of HongKong, Dieppe, Pachino, Ortona, Caen, Falaise and the Scheldt pay tribute to the Canadian fighting there to preserve universal liberty. As Lt. General Charles Foulkes accepted the surrender of the German forces in Holland, it was truly realized that Canada had begun to exert a strong influence in the international sphere.

With the successful conclusion of the Second World War, dissention^{7.} between the "Big Four Powers" evidenced itself. The so-called "Cold War" was launched in full scale. Canada faced the opening of a new era in questions of military, political and economic affiliation. This era is one in which Canada will be required to play a dual role - one in Commonwealth Defence and the other in Hemispherical Defence.

6. Toronto Globe and Mail - 9th July, 1947 - quoting the statistical picture of the Second World War presented to Parliament by Defence minister Claxton.

7. The United States of America, The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Republic of France.

CHAPTER XI.

Canada's Dual Defence Role.

With the close of the Second World War, Canada the new strategic junction of the world's great^{circle} air routes, (Figs. 22(a) and 22(b)) justly looked forward to an era of peaceful national development. At the same time, Canada strived to make its contribution in the international sphere. The crying needs of Europe had to be met. Anglo-American nations responded to this call and extended dollar-credits to destitute Europe. The nations in Europe in turn bought goods and services from Canada and the United States. By such programmes as the Marshall Plan, it was estimated that world economy would have recovered within 5 years.

Unfortunately, all has not gone well between the "Western Powers" and the U.S.S.R. Suspicions have surrounded the actions of all parties. Indeed, both sides have been guilty of waging a "Cold War", as in the present "Battle of Berlin". It is the world situation, or world Strategy today which determines Canadian defence measures, rather than local political parties or pressure groups.

A proper understanding of Canada's position in World Strategy cannot be appreciated without a knowledge of Canada's geographical position in a global world. Physically, Canada lies between the two chief nations of the world today, U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. However, politically, militarily, socially and economically Canada does not hold an intermediary position between these two powers. Indeed, Canada champions a way of life similar to that of the U.S.A., yet still retains its national distinctiveness. Even when one considers such factors from the

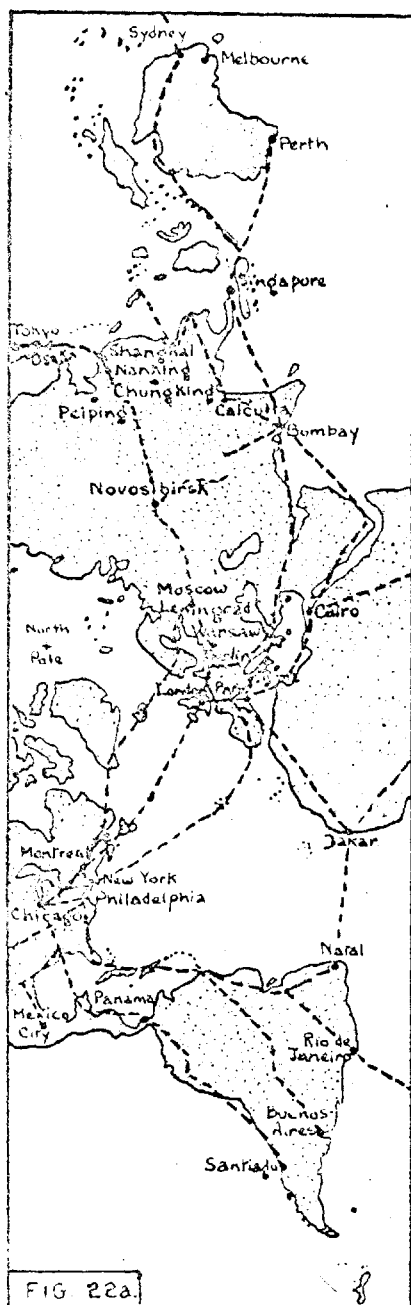


FIG 22a.

Oblique Mercator Strip Map, within which lie all but one (Los Angeles) of the Conurbations with over a million inhabitants. Existing air routes are shown in broken lines. (Modified after E.G.R. Taylor.)

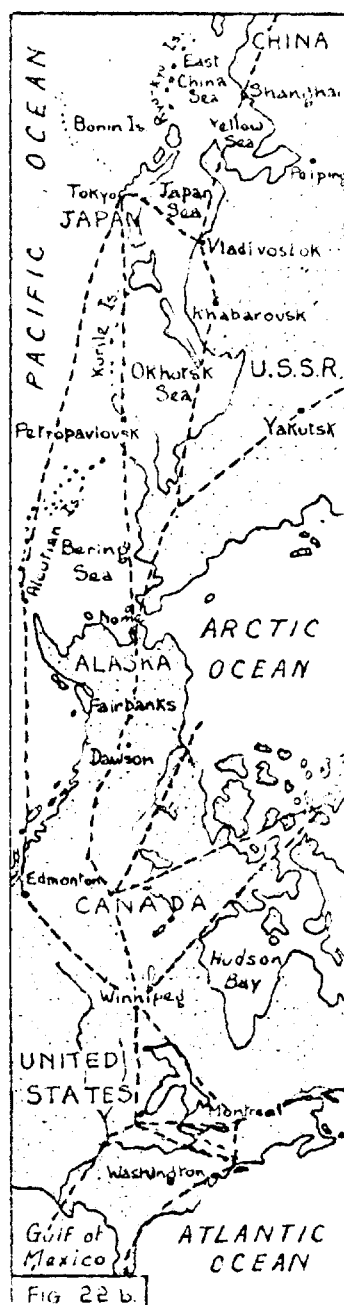


FIG 22b.

Strip Map showing the direct way from Washington to Singapore. Existing air routes are shown in broken lines. (Modified after E.G.R. Taylor.)

standpoint of World Strategy, one is compelled to acknowledge the N/S alignment of the North American continent, both physically and culturally. Yet inspite of this alignment the traditional ties of history involve Canada in one of the largest empires the world has ever known - the British Commonwealth. It can therefore be readily seen that Canada is obliged to take these relationships into account when planning for her defence. Indeed, it is expedient for Canada to plan her defence in conjunction with the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth and by so doing assume a dual defence role.

Canada and British Commonwealth Defence.

Unlike nations without previous political or cultural ties, attempting to negotiate defence plans, nations within the Commonwealth often encounter stumbling blocks when approaching the same issue. Whereas a defence pact is usually recorded in writing between any two nations outside the Commonwealth, and action by each, within the terms of their treaty, is considered obligatory, agreements within the Commonwealth are usually verbal or are simply recorded in the minutes of their meetings. Moreover it is well known that none of the Dominions is bound, morally or otherwise, to participate in a war in which the United Kingdom becomes engaged. Thus we see that but a thread of common interest in the welfare of the world binds the nations of the British Commonwealth together in many matters, including defence. Notwithstanding these ties, individual national distinctiveness is preserved.

In 1946 when Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke advocated a Combined Staff System for dealing with Commonwealth Defence matters Canada raised objections. She felt that her people should have the final say in her national defence pattern rather than a Commonwealth Combined Staff. However, it was agreed that "consultation" should be the by-word of

Commonwealth Defence. Thus evolves a principle of that defence pattern: any defence organization set up in any one of the nations of the Commonwealth will not be acceptable to the other nations if it curtails liberty of action.

Captain Cyril Falls, Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford, mostly sums up the political principle of Commonwealth Defence by saying:

"The principle should be that the military authorities of the United Kingdom and the Dominions come to agreement about the necessary precautions, draw up schemes to meet the various sorts of emergency which may have to be met and then leave discussion and decisions to the Governments concerned. Complete uniformity in the system is less necessary than it should be practical and workable." 1.

In this question of Commonwealth Defence it is to be pointed out that it is necessary for a general policy to be drawn up in a time of peace. All possible plans of attack and defence must be enthusiastically studied by technical experts so that in a period of emergency quick, concentrated and appropriate action can be taken. To quote Captain Falls again:

"All the ablest writers on military theory, founding their doctrine upon the lessons of the history of war, have insisted upon the value of the counter-offensive. To sit in an attitude of expectancy, always waiting for the blow in the hope of blocking it or ducking it, must prove a fatal policy in the long run. It leaves the assailant free to organize his plans of campaign at his leisure, to repair his mistakes and recover from his reverses." 2.

Understanding the principle on which the Commonwealth Defence is based, a study of its defence pattern becomes much easier. Unfortunately, some men today still use a Mercator Map to study and plan

1. Falls C - "Defence of the Commonwealth - Political" - Canadian Army Journal, vol. 1., No. 3, June, 1947, p. 14.

2. Falls C - "Defence of the Commonwealth - Military" - Canadian Army Journal, vol 1. No. 2., May, 1947, p.1.

Commonwealth Defence. It would seem that such men are lured into the false conclusion that the United Kingdom is the heart or geographical centre of the British Commonwealth simply because it happens to straddle the prime meridian. Needless to say such an idea is a misconception. However, it has been widely publicized, even by men as well known as Captain Falls. He states:

"In military power and industrial capacity the Mother Country wounded and fatigued though she is, remains by far the strongest nation of the Commonwealth and the core of its defence."

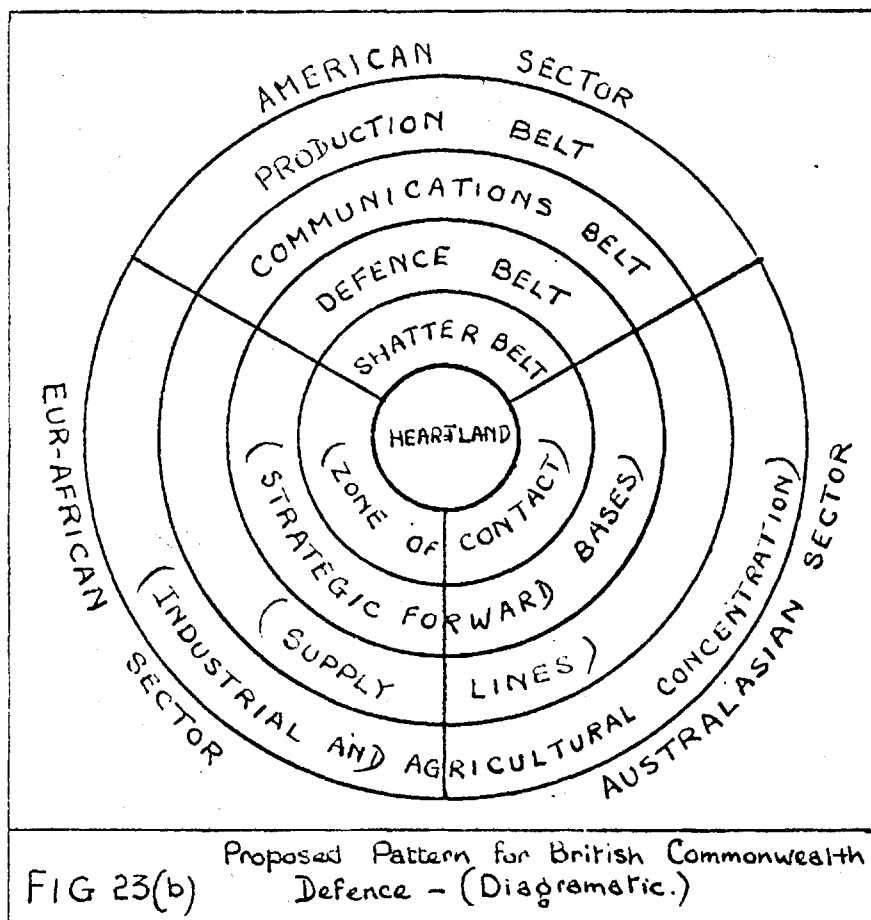
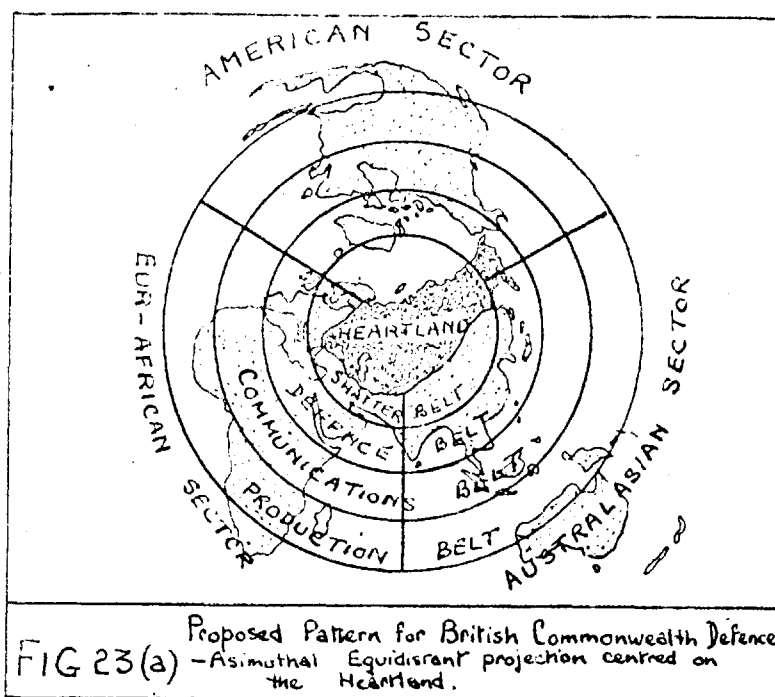
and again;

" - - - - - The United Kingdom forms a central position from which, like the spokes of a wheel, the Communications radiate to the Dominions." 3.

In refuting this misconception one must consider that which may threaten our way of life. From whence cometh our enemy? It is obvious to the author that our most likely enemies are those who foster a communistic philosophy and threaten the very way of life of the capitalistic and socialistic democracies of the world. The nations actively sponsoring such a philosophy at present occupy what is essentially the Heartland of Mackinder's theory. Further, daily newspapers record the outward surge of communism from this very core. In view of the validity of Mackinder's theory, both in the "Heartland concept" such facts is it not logical to accept, and that of the Marginal and Insular Crescents as well. It is the opinion of the writer that therein lies the pattern of true Commonwealth Defence. It can be divided into annular defence zones. The zone, corresponding to Mackinder's Marginal Crescent, would include, Great Britain, a Middle East base,

3. Falls, C. - "Defence of the Commonwealth - Military" - Canadian Army Journal, Vol. 1. No.2, May 1947, p. 1-2.

4. Mackinder, Sir Halford - Democratic Ideals in Reality - Revised New York, 1944.



preferably Egypt, India, Hong Kong, Japan and the Canadian archipelago. It would be separated from the Heartland by the Shatter Belt and it could itself be called the Defence Belt.

The bases strategically located within this belt would be connected, through the Communication Belt to the Production Belt. The latter would include the Canadian/American industrial and agricultural potential, the South African industrial potential and the industrial and agricultural potential of Australia and New Zealand. For simplicity this scheme could be sectorised to give three main divisions through which manpower and resources could reach the Defence Belt - the American, the Eur-African and Australasian Sectors. (Fig, 23(a) and 23(b)) Such a scheme provides concentration yet dispersion and above all, it matches the Heartland's advantage of defence in depth.

Canada can be seen to fall in the American Sector. The Canadian archipelago would provide strategic bases for operations against the Heartland. The vast spaces of the north would provide direct communication between the forward bases and the production line as well as considerable scope for the all-important defence in depth. The most populous strip of Canada, along the American border, would provide, along with their ally the U.S.A., the vital necessities required to stem an advance from the Heartland. Thus Canada would play an exceptionally important role in this new concept of Commonwealth Defence.

Canada and Hemispherical Defence.

"The United States comes into contact with Commonwealth affairs by reason of the understanding with Canada for the defence of the North American continent. The United States and Canada form a natural zone of defence in which the United Kingdom has no particular role beyond that of assuring trans-Atlantic communications, though this in itself is important. Here the geographical factor is decisive, and these two nations one the greatest in the world, the other small by comparison

but with vast territories extending deep into the Arctic, are compelled by circumstances to work out their problems of defence in common." 5.

The brief history of hemispherical defence is very interesting the germ of the scheme is said to have been born in Kingston, Ontario, in 1938 when the late President Roosevelt said:

"The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other Empire."

Canada responded two days later in a speech at Woodbridge, Ontario by Prime Minister King.

"We, too, have our obligations as a good friendly neighbour and one of these is to see that, at our own instance, our country is made as immune from attack or possible invasion as we can reasonably be expected to make it, and that, should the occasion ever arise, enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way, either by land, sea or air, to the United States across Canadian territory."

Some two years later, on the 18th August, 1940, Canada and the United States met at Ugdensburg, New York, and agreed to set up a Permanent Joint Board on Defence. Its duties were mainly to study problems of mutual interest and to make recommendations to both governments. In the words of the joint statement issued: the Permanent Joint Board on Defence "shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land and air problems including personnel and material. It will consider in the broad sense the defence of the north half of the Western Hemisphere."

On 12th February, 1947., Prime Minister King and President Truman issued a joint statement declaring that the Permanent Joint Board on

5. Falls C - "Defence of the Commonwealth - Military" - Canadian Army Journal, vol. 1., No.2, May, 1947, p.3.

Defence would continue in peace-time for joint security purposes. They pointed out, however, that the collaboration between the two Governments will necessarily be limited and will be based on five principles:

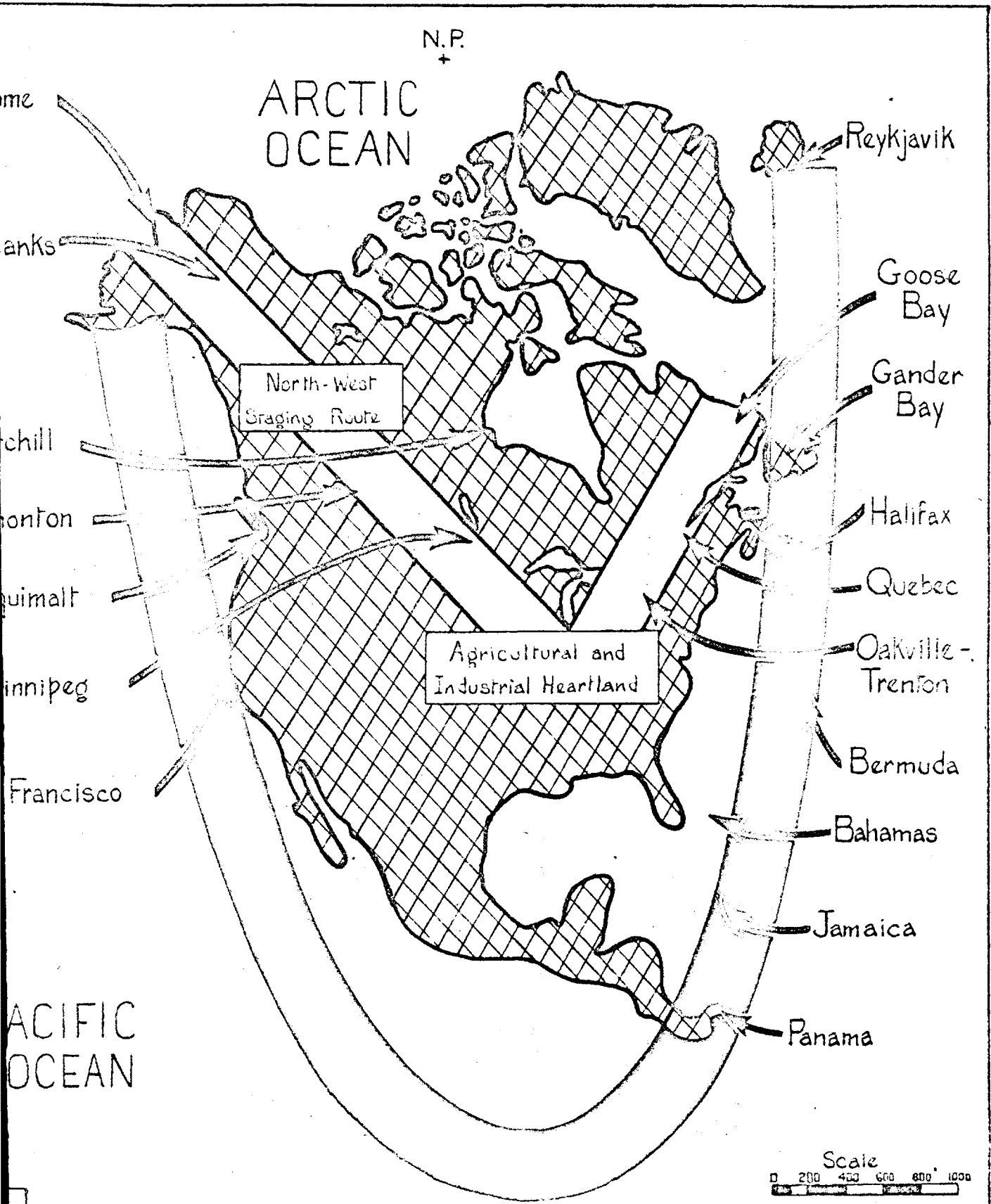
- "1. Interchange of selected individuals so as to increase the familiarity of each country's defence establishment with that of the other country.
2. General co-operation and exchange of observers in connection with exercises and with the development and tests of material of common interest.
3. Encouragement of common designs and standards of arms, equipment, organization, methods of training and new developments. As certain United Kingdom standards have long been in use in Canada, no radical change is contemplated or practicable and the application of this principle will be gradual.
4. Mutual and reciprocal availability of military, naval and air facilities in each country; this principle to be applied as may be agreed in specific instances. Reciprocally each country will continue to provide, with a minimum of formality, for the transit through its territory and its territorial waters of military aircraft and public vessels of the other country.
5. As an underlying principle all co-operative arrangements will be without impairment of the control of either country over all activities in its territory." 6.

Prime Minister King went on to say that,

"No treaty, executive agreement or contractual obligation has been entered into. Each country will determine the extent of its practical collaboration in respect of each and all of the foregoing principles. Either country may at any time discontinue collaboration on any or all of them. Neither country will take any action inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations."

This Charter of the United Nations is the cornerstone of the foreign policy and the defence policy of both Canada and the U.S.A. Both hope for an eventual system of international security which will be adequate to preserve world peace. Thus the ultimate object of hemispherical defence is not joint or regional defence, but collective international defence as the guarantee of national security. (Fig. 24.)

6. King, Wm. Lyon Mackenzie - "Defence Co-operation with the United States" - Canadian Army Journal, vol.1. No. 4. July, 1947, p.10.



STRATEGY OF NORTH AMERICAN DEFENCE

U-FORMATION INDICATES NAVAL/AIR DEFENCES
 V-FORMATION INDICATES ARMY/AIR DEFENCES

Niagara's Position in Canadian Defence.

The preceding chapters have attempted to outline the past role of Niagara including the history of its frontier. That the frontier role of Niagara has disappeared few will dispute. Nevertheless Niagara now plays a greater role than ever, by reason of its position in the heart of the great North American manufacturing Belt. If Niagara is to continue as the chief source of hydro-electric power for the heavy industry of the Canadian and American "power triangles"^{7.} it becomes obvious that some action should be taken to ensure its safety in case of an international emergency. Linked up with similar key sites, between Montreal and Windsor, it will undoubtedly play a strategic part in future patterns of Canadian defence.

The Relations of Geography and History along the Niagara Frontier.

The study of the role played by the Niagara Frontier in Canadian military history has emphasized over and over again the close relationship between geography and history. This has not always been an equal or apparent relationship. At times events might be interpreted almost wholly in the light of history and at other times in the light of geography. However, it becomes evident that the changing role or relative shift of Niagara's position and alignment in military history is to be attributed, in the main, to man's varied interpretation of the geography of the region.

7. Bevan, G.A. - "Canada, A Power Vacuum of World Politics", Dalhousie Review, vol. XXVII, No. 2, July, 1947, - p. 203.

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