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Overlapping Agendas

It was at the end of February 1896, when a small group of Loyalist descendants met in Toronto to discuss the idea of organizing themselves into a hereditary patriotic and historical association. Unlike the multitude of other such entities established along geographical lines in various locales throughout southern Ontario, this one was province-wide and yet restricted to a fairly narrow segment of society. Spearheading the drive for this exclusive new organization were two former militiamen, both of whom were also strong adherents of the Militia Myth.

Physician and militia colonel George Sterling Ryerson, a nephew of Egerton Ryerson, the Ontario educationist, was the Conservative member of provincial parliament for East Toronto. Assisting him was William Hamilton Merritt, the grandson and namesake of the canalizing Merritt and a prominent mining engineer. Eventually, Merritt and Ryerson were able to secure the support necessary for a combination of people who, like themselves, were dedicated to further strengthening Canada's bond with the British Empire. The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario would achieve this goal by glorifying the history and traditions of the Loyalist families who laid the groundwork for a British society in the province during the early formative period in late eighteenth-century Upper Canada. Not content with promoting the empire by merely lionizing the deeds of long-dead ancestors, the members of this new association had a more ambitious agenda in mind—one that was deeply rooted in social engineering. First and foremost, they meant to ensure that the Loyalist tradition maintained some degree of influence over society in Ontario.[1] Exclusivity was a major component of the association and, in a move highly reminiscent of the centennial celebration held at Toronto in 1884, regular membership was strictly limited to those applicants who could prove Loyalist descent through either the male or female lines. Despite

this early nod to women's rights, which had more to do with historical precedence than enlightened attitudes, the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario remained a select club of white, middle-aged professional men with a female auxiliary representing the same racial background, maturity, and socio-economic class.[2]

Traditional and conservative by nature, these Loyalist descendants—or "United Empire Loyalists," as they called themselves—became ever more so during a period of rapid social change beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and lasting well into the first quarter of the twentieth century. In response to these societal pressures, they sought a means of fixing their privileged place withing Ontario's class hierarchy. According to Loyalist historian Norman Knowles, the founders and members of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario "sought to bestow upon themselves 'a further and more enduring mark of honour' that would protect and legitimize their status, values, and beliefs."[3] Fearful of the potential for upheaval and a loss of their identity and influence, they held negative attitudes toward Americans for perceived threats of dominance and a wariness of all those non-Anglo-Saxon peoples seeking to make Canada their new home.[4] The War of 1812 remained an object lesson of the dangers associated with having too many incompatible foreigners.[5] In addition to the overtly racist tendency resulting from this mindset, the United Empire Loyalists also developed a peculiar siege mentality. Being constantly on the defensive, they became extremely militant in safeguarding their heritage. Occasional flare-ups became a defining characteristic of the United Empire Loyalists' Association, and indeed there were times when a strong, uncompromising reaction was warranted.

Such was the case in 1905, when a wealthy Detroit lawyer and historian took it upon himself to expropriate two British vessels dating from the War of 1812.[6] By publicly bragging about his plans to raise these wrecks from the bed of the Thames River above Chatham, Ontario, Clarence M. Burton ruined any chances he might have had for a successful outcome. Instead, the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario, with hastily arranged petitions to the governor general and minister of militia, ensured that the vessels remained securely in place. Later, after reflecting on the situation, the association's legal adviser and fellow member, Edward M. Chadwick, rationalized that Burton's "spoils of war" justification—based on the invading Americans having subsequently defeated

the British at the Battle of Moraviantown—meant that Canadians could theoretically behave in a similarly audacious fashion by removing portions of the White House (given that it had been captured by the British in 1814).[7] The White House had figured prominently in a similar drama several years earlier, when the United Empire Loyalists rose up against a proposed monument for Quebec City. The question, which had become recurring in nature, involved the desire of certain Americans to honour General Richard Montgomery, the patriot hero of the Revolutionary War who was killed during an assault on the capital of the Province of Quebec at the end of 1775. The near apoplectic response of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario helped to quash what its members viewed as a highly reprehensible scheme.[8] As the Toronto *Globe* reported in October 1898, they met, "protested vigorously against the proposal," and took no pains to hide their contempt for Montgomery. After one gentleman angrily likened the American general to something worse than a rebel, an out-and-out traitor, the Loyalists' president interjected with some levity to bring a degree of calm to the proceedings. He did so by suggesting that permission be granted the Americans, provided they allow "the erection in front of the White House, Washington, of a monument to General Brock."[9]

This timely and forceful intervention, along with others like it, demonstrated the considerable influence wielded by the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario at the turn of the twentieth century. The United Empire Loyalists were not entirely reactionary, however; they were also optimistic about the future, and they had grand plans for Canada. Their ambitions closely aligned with those of the Imperial Federation League, a non-partisan organization that promoted the idea of a decentralized British Empire. Founded in London, England, in 1884, the league appealed to proactive United Empire Loyalists like George T. Denison, who desired closer ties with Britain, but without the political interference. In this regard, the United Empire Loyalists were not out of step with the times. Most English-speaking Canadians of the late nineteenth century were proud to be members of the world's greatest empire, and even the relatively few anti-imperialists who rejected the vision of a closer union through economic and military co-operation were not entirely opposed to the idea of an extended British community. They, too, shared the common view that a new and better British Empire, one in which former colonies attained equal rights with the British Parliament,

was preferable to complete independence.[10] Indeed, as Phillip Buckner has shown, when

> John A. Macdonald and the other Fathers of Confederation talked about building a "new nationality," they had in mind the creation of a new national identity, one that would embody the best of British culture and traditions but that was modified to meet the requirements of life in North America. They wanted to create a nation that would remain essentially British but also free to evolve its own national identity while remaining permanently allied with the mother country under the same crown.[11]

A significant difference between Canadian imperialists was their respective attitudes toward Americans. The majority of these imperialists, by virtue of their preference for everything British, were naturally wary of the potential for undue American influence, or continentalism, which they feared would be the consequence of closer economic ties with the United States. While some imperialists were more than willing to engage with their southern neighbours for the sake of business, others were determined to counteract the perceived American threat. The most obsessive among them tended to gravitate to patriotic organizations such as the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario, where they domineered with their anti-American rhetoric. To these individuals, it was vitally important to resist the dangerous republican influences that promised complete Canadian independence, but which were more likely to result in American annexation. The only viable strategy for avoiding such a disaster was imperial federation, but there was also a recognition that political pressure alone could not secure the pro-British future they desired for Canada. As well as politicians, the whole population had to be brought on side, and patriotism was the key to the success of such an endeavour. By emphasizing the continuity of a heroic past, the United Empire Loyalists perpetuated both their Loyalist tradition and the Militia Myth. Brock, in light of his War of 1812 legacy, became the personification of this ideal British nation, and Canadian imperialists—especially Ontario's United Empire Loyalists—seized every opportunity to rebrand his heroic exploits as selfless contributions toward its founding.[12] One such opportunity was a centenary commemoration of Brock's death at Queenston Heights. The extravaganza sponsored by the United Empire

Loyalists proved to be a great success, as well as the high point in their imperial aspirations.

In April of 1912, having determined that neither the federal nor provincial governments had any plans to mark the centenary of Brock's death, the United Empire Loyalists—formerly of Ontario but now representing all of Canada—took the initiative by appointing a committee for the celebration of "Brock's Day."[13] By mid-September, the committee had submitted a long list of recommendations for "a national demonstration that will be in effect only less impressive on the public mind than was the passing away of the man himself at Queenston Heights a hundred years ago."[14] The scope of the recommendations was sweeping, and included a royal salute from every cannon in the land, a memorial service in all the churches (since the anniversary fell on a Sunday), commemorative school exercises leading up to the celebration, and the proclamation of a national holiday on the Monday following.[15] Understandably, given the time required for such elaborate plans, the committee's report was adopted only tentatively.[16] It was also agreed, more realistically, that the centenary of Brock's death should be commemorated on the spot of his final exploit by means of a mass excursion to Queenston Heights, where a series of patriotic speeches were to be augmented by an appropriate military presence.[17] A further meeting was called, with circulars sent to provincial "patriotic and historical societies, clubs and regiments, etc." asking for their participation in the planning of the event.[18] Armed with an enthusiastic response from each of the solicited organizations, which "made [it] abundantly clear that the proposed celebration had touched a tender chord of public feeling," a program was adopted and preparations set in motion.[19] Along with some of the original recommendations, there were also some last-minute suggestions incorporated into the day's activities, including encouragements for the laying of wreaths.[20]

After two additional meetings in advance of the October celebration, and with all the necessary arrangements made, the executive members of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada were fairly confident that they had everything under control—except of course the weather.[21] As was later reported, "The unsettled, rainy weather of the two previous days had caused some misgiving as to the number of people who might venture on an open air demonstration on a cold October day, and the grey looming skies at dawn on Saturday, the 12th, held no hidden hope of

a silver lining. The enthusiasm awakened by the name of Brock, however, was resistless, and betimes the seats in the waiting train were crowded."[22]

Rain or shine, Brock's dedicated admirers were bound and determined to pay homage to his memory. However, as these patriotic pilgrims made their way to Brock's Monument on the day of the celebration, there was a sudden change in the atmospheric conditions. As one observer noted, "During the forenoon the sky had cleared, and now the sun shone out brightly for a space on a landscape unsurpassed anywhere for spacious magnificence and scenic beauty. And crowning the domed escarpment the stately column spoke forth a people's patriotism and love, a memorial to the brave, the scene harmonizing with the feelings of the great gathering."[23] It was, indeed, a great gathering. According to the best estimates, there were approximately two thousand people in attendance, many of them having travelled considerable distances for what amounted to a patriotic rally.[24]

As the then president of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada and chairman of the Brock Centenary Committee, Colonel George Sterling Ryerson set the tone of the proceedings by announcing, "We are not here to glorify war; nor is our object to exult over our brave but defeated adversary."[25] Then, as if Brock was merely a secondary consideration, he went about heaping praise on the Loyalists for having "raised up great, good and brave men who were willing and able to fight for their king and country in order that they might enjoy civil and religious liberty under the British flag, and that they might hand down to their posterity a fair and goodly heritage which they had won from the primeval forests by their labour and sacrifices."[26] In a fashion that would be followed by most of the several speakers who followed him, Ryerson perpetuated the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition. Brock was finally eulogized, and Ryerson, much to his credit, made a point of acknowledging the historical contributions of other ethnic groups. Included were French Canadians, Indigenous peoples, and Scottish highlanders who happened to be Roman Catholic. It was quite an inclusive gesture for the time, and several individuals representing these disparate groups were on hand to deliver speeches of their own. The Scottish Catholic delegation was especially well represented, and there were two Macdonells for what must have seemed an obvious reason to the more astute observers—namely, the militia colonel and provincial aide-de-camp who was mortally wounded soon after Brock fell was their clansman, John

Macdonell of Greenfield. Perhaps the better known of the Macdonells speaking that day was John A. Macdonell of Alexandria, a self-described indifferent lawyer but highly effective Conservative Party organizer.[27] As someone with strong genealogical and historical interests, this particular Macdonell was a natural choice to speak about his famous relative. But while he provided a good narrative overview of the challenges Brock faced during the War of 1812, the other Macdonell did a better job in contextualizing the long-term consequences associated with the ensuing hero worship.

Angus Claude Macdonell, a lawyer from Toronto and Conservative member of Parliament representing Toronto South in Ottawa, spoke about Brock in much the same flattering way as everyone else, but his was the most insightful impression of the general's significance to Canada. Acknowledging that "we have learned and heard altogether too little of this truly great man, and of what he accomplished," Macdonell posited that "it is not too much to say that he preserved Canada to the empire and at the same time created a national sentiment in Canada which has ever grown and expanded to the present day."[28] As Macdonell explained,

> The national importance of the Battle of Queenston Heights, following the capitulation of Detroit, cannot be over-estimated; national sentiment or a feeling of nationhood was even then manifesting itself in this young colony. The peoples who had settled in Canada sprang from races which had always stood out strongly for national identity—the English glory in their historic past; the Scottish race, to which my forefathers belonged and which to some extent I represent, on this occasion, are noted for their love of country; and so with the other races which made up the United Empire Loyalist settlers of Upper Canada at the time of the War of 1812–14. Our national heart was created and stirred in this century-old war, and the heartbeats have ever become stronger down to this day, and we now look back through the mists of one hundred years to Sir Isaac Brock as the first true source of national sentiment which fertilized our country, and stamped it as British and Canadian forever.[29]

These were the well-spoken sentiments of a dyed-in-the-wool imperial federalist, and precisely what an assemblage of like-minded

Canadians—raised on a constant diet of Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition—would have expected to hear on such an occasion. Although a common enough theme for the time, seldom was the concept of Canada as a nation so compellingly articulated. Indeed, other speakers frequently touched upon the interconnected subjects of British imperialism and Canadian nationalism, with references to Brock and the Battle of Queenston Heights interspersed for patriotic effect, and one of the more notable of these elocutionists invited to speak at Queenston Heights was George T. Denison.

After stressing the importance of brave deeds and military victories to a nation, which he did by way of select classical references, Denison carried on with a fairly standard recital of Brock's different burials and various monuments. The speech might have settled into a rather dreary affair, except that Denison took a sudden and defiant tone regarding the current "splendid demonstration of respect and gratitude," whereupon he let loose with a cringeworthy remark that perhaps brought a blush to those attendees trying to avoid the appearance of gloating over a long-settled dispute. It came about when the obdurate Denison blurted out his thinly veiled opinion about the reticence of Canadians in celebrating the British victory at Queenston Heights, and more especially the participation of the Upper Canadian Militia. "I am proud," he declared,

> that our people have done their duty to-day, and I hope that our action will inspire our children a hundred years hence to commemorate the great event. I make no apologies for coming here to glory over the victory. Brock died on this field and our fathers fought here that we should be a free and independent people, and we have enjoyed that position for a hundred years, thanks to their efforts. How can we use that freedom better, than in testifying in the heartiest manner our gratitude and appreciation for the priceless boon which we owe to those who then won it for us![30]

This was Denison at his oratorical best: bold, brash, and completely unapologetic. To anyone who knew him, the patriotism he expressed was completely in keeping with his character. But if Denison had a reputation for being outspoken, he found his match on Queenston Heights that day, and in a speaker from the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario.

Dehkanenraneh, who was also known as Alexander G. Smith, stated his position in a fairly aggressive fashion, apparently out of respect for the warlike reputation of his Iroquois ancestors. "If a Mohawk chief had in his make-up a particle of timidity," he haughtily observed, "I fear that your cheering would have frightened or disconcerted me."[31] Clearly, the chief was about to give the audience a piece of his mind; and, as they soon enough discovered, Brock was not the issue. Smith was aggrieved with the Government of Canada over its treatment of his people, whose complaints dated back to the American Revolution. In recalling a time in "the remote past, when my ancestors could make or unmake nations on this continent," Smith lamented their alliance with the British.[32] In his opinion, they "made a serious mistake in taking sides in the War of American Independence," which resulted in the loss of their traditional lands and removal to Canada. Yet, Smith's pride in their long association with the Crown was reawakened when he declared "that in those troublous times no followers of the illustrious Brock, whose fall and victory we are this afternoon commemorating, fought more bravely than the Six Nations; their very admiration of that great and brave general was as a spur to their bravery."[33] Then, in what could only be interpreted as a swipe against the primacy of the Militia Myth—and by extension the Loyalist tradition—Smith slyly added, "I think I may truthfully say that had it not been for the bravery of the Six Nations, the Union Jack would not to-day be waving over these historic heights."[34]

It was a touché moment, insomuch as Smith very publicly reclaimed his people's participation in the Battle of Queenston Heights, which the Upper Canadian Militia frequently brushed aside for the sake of enhancing their own legacy.[35] Only then did Smith get to the real point of his contention: male suffrage and the Canadian government's restrictive laws governing "status Indians" who wished to vote. To Smith, they were punitive, unfair, and infantilizing. The last injustice was also the most grating, as the brave warriors who "proved to be men on many a battlefield, who fought and won Britain's battles, ceased to be men and became minors after the battles were won and British predominance secure, and therefore are not allowed men's privileges."[36] Convinced that Canada should give the Six Nations "representation on the floor of the House of Commons and also respect the treaty concessions made to them, instead of gradually curtailing their tribal rights and privileges," Smith hoped to bring Brock's enthusiasts on side.[37] After all, it was an influential

gathering, and so Smith hoped to gain recognition for his worthy cause. Confidently, he closed his speech as Denison might have done. "My remarks may not suit everyone," he admitted, "but I cannot help that. I am not courting popularity, for I am getting too old for that, and I am descended from too long a line of brave warriors to be afraid to speak the truth, whether it be pleasant or otherwise!"[38] Despite Smith's bold attempt to win support for his cause, Indigenous people in Canada would not achieve full voting rights for another half century.

Smith's speech was not quite in keeping with the spirit of the day, as it carried an ulterior motive beyond that of shoring up the Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition. And for the many people who attended the celebration expecting a unanimity of purpose—and specifically, an exercise in praise of Brock—the inclusion of Six Nations grievances must have seemed uncomfortably discordant. But it was no more incongruous than the speeches of two educationists who went on at length about teaching methods. Like Smith, Dr. Robert A. Pyne and James L. Hughes had a far grander purpose in mind than merely paying tribute to the Hero of Upper Canada; their concern was nothing less than the preservation of the British Empire. The two gentlemen held considerable sway in their respective fields, with Pyne serving as the minister of education for Ontario and Hughes the chief inspector of public schools in Toronto. Working in close association with the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada, Pyne and Hughes had devised a scheme for promoting patriotism among the students of Ontario and, eventually, the rest of Canada. What they envisioned, however, went well beyond inculcation and amounted to nothing less than indoctrination. It was effectively social engineering through education, and the British Union Jack, which was Canada's official flag at the time, was the symbolic element in this push for a stronger sense of patriotism among young people. Pyne, wanting to recreate the intense loyalty he believed existed in Canada during Brock's time, was prompted to ask his audience, "what are we doing to-day to create a sentiment of patriotism and loyalty to our country and flag?"[39] Then, in a move that must have raised more than a few eyebrows, perhaps none higher than Denison's, Pyne shared the source of his flag-waving inspiration. It was some years earlier, while he

> was in Detroit on a school *fête* day when the children of each school were marshalled together for a march past the Detroit

> City Hall, where they had a large picture of the president surrounded by their national flag, the Stars and Stripes. As each school reached the entrance to the city hall the scholars halted, saluted, and gave three cheers. To a little urchin on the street near me who was selling papers I said, "Why do they stop and cheer?" He replied, "They are cheering for the old flag which we call 'Old Glory,' and, sir, let me tell you that is the flag that was never licked!"[40]

While Pyne questioned the boy's historical accuracy, he "realized the sentiment that had been created in that youngster's mind, a sentiment of loyalty and patriotism."[41] Taking his cue from this American experience, Pyne made it a point to install "the Union Jack, the flag of civilization, over every rural school in the province of Ontario."[42] By emphasizing the rural component of his endeavour, Pyne meant to draw attention to the patriotic inclusion he hoped to achieve by supplying flags to all schools in the province, and not merely those in urban settings. Hughes, for his part, saw the importance of history "for the opportunities it gives to be stirred to deep, true enthusiasm for heroism, for honour, for patriotism, for love of freedom, for devotion to duty, and for sublime self-sacrifice for high ideals."[43] While he doubted that factual history alone could promote a love of country among Canadian youth, Hughes firmly believed "the noble deeds of our ancestors performed for high purposes are the surest sources for the development of the strong and true emotions that make human character vital instead of inert. Emotions form the battery power of character, and among the emotions that give strength and virility and beauty to character, reverence for the dead who wisely struggled and nobly achieved, is surely one of the most productive of dignified and transforming character."[44] Of course, the ancestors Hughes had in mind were Loyalists—the "few determined settlers scattered widely over a new country [who] successfully repelled invading armies coming from a country with a population twenty-fold larger."[45] Hughes was adamant that whatever "else we may neglect in the training of the young, I trust we shall never fail to fill their hearts with profound reverence for the men and women of the past to whom they owe so much."[46] It was especially imperative that they be taught a high regard "for womanhood by recounting the terrible hardships endured willingly by Canadian women

generally, as well as by proudly relating the noble work done by individual women, of whom Laura Secord was so conspicuous an example."[47]

Stressing the importance of lessons from the War of 1812 that featured women was a very progressive view for the time, but interpretations of the past were still largely male-dominated and rather elitist. As such, it is not surprising that Hughes concluded his speech by referring to the "records of such men as Brock, at the foot of whose monument we stand to-day and look with reminiscent glance over the marvellous progress of a hundred glorious years, let us determine that we shall do our part to make the coming century more fruitful than the past."[48] In leading up to Brock, Hughes had mentioned women—but only in passing. Greater emphasis was placed on the patriotic youth movement he envisioned and the promise it held for the future of imperialism in Canada. There was just one glitch, which Pyne's fixation with the Union Jack seemingly brought to mind.

Toward the end of his speech, Hughes spoke out against all those "thoughtless people" who "call us 'flag-wavers' if we strive to give our young people a true conception of the value of national life, and of their duty to have a true love for their country and for their empire."[49] To Hughes, Pyne, and many other Canadians with strong imperial loyalties, flag-waving and other patriotic displays were highly effective in developing a spirit in children expressive of "the highest and broadest and truest ideals that have been revealed to the Anglo-Saxon race."[50] At the same time, however, Hughes acknowledged a negative side effect of the patriotic education he advocated. "We do not wish to make our children quarrelsome or offensive," he assured his docile audience.[51] However, as Hughes continued with his defence of indoctrination for the sake of the empire and Canada's place in it, many of those in attendance might have recalled an exceedingly unpleasant incident that occurred in 1890.

It was in October of that year, during the first Toronto-wide celebration of the Battle of Queenston Heights, when things got out of hand.[52] With the city's public schools decorated in high patriotic style, particularly with chalkboard art depicting the battle and Brock's death, visitors were treated to student recitals and the speeches of visiting dignitaries. The offerings were no different at the Dufferin School, where one of the guest speakers, Methodist minister George J. Bishop, suddenly committed a major faux pas when he "deprecated any feeling of hostility towards the United States and reminded the children that the great bulk of the

people over the line were friendly to Canada and would no more think of warring against us than against themselves."[53] The oblivious minister then remarked that he would have "been glad to have seen an American flag entwined with a Canadian one in order to show that no unfriendly feeling existed."[54] But the suggestion of such a gesture ran counter to what the schoolchildren had been taught, or engineered to think, and they reacted instinctively when someone in the crowd just happened to produce an American flag. As the *Globe* reported, "the storm of apparently involuntary disapproval displayed by the children afforded a striking evidence of the need for carefully guarding against national or class hatred in such celebrations."[55] Amid shouts of "take it down," and "throw it out, etc.," Principal Robert W. Doane called for order while a school trustee, "with a desire to calm down the disturbance," asked for the American flag, which he then inexplicably raised above the Red Ensign (Canada's flag at the time). "Not over," yelled another trustee, "put it under."[56] The Stars and Stripes was accordingly relegated to a subordinate position—appropriate flag etiquette, but still a major controversy for everyone who firmly believed that it should not have been raised at all. Certainly, there were strange doings at Toronto's largest public school on the seventy-eighth anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights, and Rev. Bishop could have avoided much controversy had he simply praised Brock like everyone else on that occasion. But the minister, like many other Canadians, felt uncomfortable with the strong anti-American overtones evident in Toronto's public schools. There were also other concerns as well.

Writing to the *Globe* a few days ahead of the Dufferin School incident, "A Canadian Citizen" condemned the overall celebration for its peculiar offensiveness "in selecting the schools as the scenes of such a demonstration and thus sowing the seeds of international hatred and bitterness in the breasts of children."[57] It was doubly reprehensible

> at a time when the commercial relations of our country with the United States are in the most critical condition, and when Canadian commerce, whatever hot-headed and light-minded declaimers may say, is looking with the deepest anxiety to the result. Though the McKinley Bill has passed, the bonding question and that of the Canadian railways are still open, and a display of hostility to the United States on our part may be fatal to our

> interests in both cases. Besides there is both in Congress and in the country a large party favorable to reciprocity which is doing its best to bring about better relations and which this wanton or worse than wanton outburst of jingoism is sure to discourage and repel.[58]

Obviously, the letter writer's fear of causing offence south of the border had more to do with potential economic ramifications than any concern for a diplomatic rift. Most American newspapers, however, failed to pick up on the story, and those that did treated it as something of a joke. The *Milwaukee Sentinel*, for example, observed how the "McKinley bill increase on Canadian eggs and cabbage seems to have had an irritating effect on the children as well as the statesmen of the dominion."[59] Yet, the state of commercial relations with the United States was no laughing matter to a large segment of the Canadian population. Included was the *Globe*'s "Canadian Citizen," who provided a lengthy postscript criticizing the celebration's "main instigator and contriver"—the same person who, "at the time of the American Civil War came forward as a violent partisan of the slave power."[60] Not surprisingly, perhaps, the person implicated was George T. Denison, whose identity was conveniently exposed in the *Globe*'s editorial section. While the paper's annexationist-minded (and short-lived) editor, Edward Farrer, could abide the maligning of Denison's reputation, his newspaper's Liberal affiliation would not allow him to countenance any criticism of George William Ross, the Liberal minister of education who was blamed by the "Canadian Citizen" for being "weak enough to countenance a proceeding the impropriety of which he can hardly fail to see."[61] As Farrer observed, it was a mistake to assume that the minister of education could somehow be held responsible for the participation of such individuals as Denison in the Toronto school celebrations. Ross, it was pointed out, "is doing his best to promote in the schools throughout the province the growth of a true sentiment and of a pride in our past history, but he is not responsible for Col. Denison's performance and cannot help it if at this critical time that gentleman should take it into his head to frighten or provoke the United States by executing a war-dance."[62]

In defending the minister of education, Farrer was merely behaving in a loyal partisan fashion—even if Ross shared the United Empire Loyalists' conservative attitudes toward patriotism and education.[63] This

seemingly contradictory political behaviour was not particularly unusual for the time, and Ross exemplified the nuanced attitudes toward imperialism during the late nineteenth century in Ontario.[64] Although political affiliation was not a reliable gauge of imperial feeling, the most outspoken proponents of empire tended to be Tory in both their outlook and their vote. But like his counterparts in the provincial legislature and their United Empire Loyalists' lobby group, Ross was interested in developing a deep and abiding appreciation for Brock and the Battle of Queenston Heights among the children of Ontario.[65] Along with their Reform and Tory antecedents, both Liberals and Conservatives shared a common reverence for Brock as a national hero. This high regard, along with the joint recognition for some form of imperialism, encouraged the largely anti-American outlook of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada, whose rhetoric in promoting Brock's contribution to Canadian nationalism advocated a thoroughly British vision of the nation. So, while the American taxation of Canadian eggs and cabbage was no direct threat to the United Empire Loyalists, trade agreements with the United States were seen as economic concessions toward political union and eventual annexation.

With occasional newspaper coverage stoking fears of the United States' territorial ambitions, questions of loyalty and patriotism took on increasingly greater significance for most Canadians. English-speaking imperialists, especially the Conservatives and United Empire Loyalists among them, were extremely sensitive to the slightest suggestion of American manoeuvring. And nothing was more provoking than the dictums of Goldwin Smith, who was well-known for his pro-annexationist views. Certainly, his comments on one of the tenets held most dear by the United Empire Loyalists—loyalty itself—did nothing to mitigate their opinion of him or their extreme doctrinal attitude toward Canadian schoolchildren. In February of 1891, Smith presented the first of three lectures on the subject of loyalty, a segment of which was no doubt inspired by the school celebrations held in honour of the Battle of Queenston Heights the previous October.[66] "Is it loyal," he questioned,

> to turn our public schools into seedplots of international enmity by implanting hatred of the Americans in the breasts of children? The public schools are maintained by all for the benefit of all, and it is an abuse of trust to use them for party purposes. Nor does it

> seem very chivalrous to be inveigling children instead of appealing to men. Celebrations of victories gained in bygone quarrels over people who are now your friends are perhaps not the sort of things to which the bravest are the most prone. Wellington and the men who had fought with him at Waterloo used to dine together on that day. This was very well, especially as those victorious veterans did not crow or bluster. But it forms no precedent for boastful demonstrations by us, who did not fight at Queenston Heights or Lundy's Lane.[67]

Smith, who saw Britons, Canadians, and Americans as members of a worldwide Anglo-Saxon race, thought it inexcusable that war with the United States should be contemplated, much less encouraged among children as was done in Toronto. Exasperated, Smith demanded to know

> when this war spirit is got up, whom are we to fight? The one million of Canadians and their half-million of children now settled on the other side of the line? All the British immigrants who have been pouring into the United States during the last generation? Literally, when we take away from the population of Canada the French and other nationalities, there would be as many men of British blood on the enemy's side as on ours. "Bombard New York!" said a Canadian of my acquaintance; "why, my four sons live there!"[68]

Smith's disgust with the jingoistic indoctrination of schoolchildren was not the irrational overreaction of an uncompromising pacificist, as was charged by the United Empire Loyalists and their allies. To any objective observer of the school celebrations held in honour of the Battle of Queenston Heights in October 1890, the afternoon session was one long exercise in militaristic ideology. After marching from their classrooms to Queen's Park (the site of the Ontario Legislative Building), some eleven hundred boys (most carrying mock wooden guns) arranged themselves for review by the militia district adjutant general, Lieutenant Colonel William D. Otter. As commandant of the Royal School of Infantry at Toronto, Otter took a special interest in the drill corps of that city's schools. So, too, did Toronto's chief inspector of public schools, James L. Hughes—who happened to be a brother of Sam Hughes, a very soldierly

newspaper editor who went on to serve as the minister of militia and defence from 1911 to 1916. Nor did the toy soldiers disappoint the many adults who assembled for the occasion: "They marched like regular troops from the oldest to the youngest—little children, the smallest being no older than seven years. Heads straight, chins up, chests out, they delighted the spectators, and when at the word of command the salutes were made the soldiers in the crowd and Colonel Otter clapped their hands enthusiastically."[69]

After the march past, Otter addressed the boys and pronounced their muster "most creditable." He was sure that the minister of militia, Sir Adolphe-Philippe Caron, would have been equally pleased with their enthusiasm, patriotism, and loyalty—had he been there to witness their performance. In his absence, however, Otter offered his "assistance and encouragement in drilling and uniforming and keeping up such an organization as theirs."[70] There was no hiding his expectations of the boys being raised in Toronto: "They were preparing themselves to be Canada's future defenders," and if ever their services were required, he was "sure they would not be backward in maintaining her Majesty's authority and the integrity of the flag that had floated over so many generations of their sires."[71] In driving home his point, Otter concluded by advising them to join one of the militia corps as soon as they were old enough. Then, after several rounds of cheers, the cadets were dismissed. And despite the vociferous protests that followed, the militarization of their childhood continued.

By the time of the Brock Centenary in 1912, the lives of Canadian boys were becoming increasingly geared to the blind patriotism foisted upon them during school hours. While regimental reviews had begun to wane in popularity within a few years of the controversial school celebrations of 1890, they were soon enough augmented by other means of shaping the hearts and minds of the country's youth, both male and female. The most important of these morale-boosting exercises was Empire Day, the idea for which was claimed by Clementina Fessenden of Ancaster, Ontario. Fessenden, the wife of an Anglican priest, became an ardent imperialist obsessed with Queen Victoria as well as the empire she ruled. In 1896, as Fessenden was organizing support for the implementation of a national flag day, her husband died, and thereafter she devoted herself to a new crusade. As her entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* describes it, this new phase of endeavour was "a vigorous public campaign

to combine imperialism, patriotism, and education through the establishment of an empire day in Canada's schools."[72] Like many of her imperialist contemporaries, Fessenden feared the decline of British influence in Canada and took matters into her own hands to try to prevent it. Despite meeting with indifference and opposition, she was relentless in bringing about her vision for a patriotic school day. She was no less relentless in giving herself full credit for its inspiration. But it was the support of George William Ross, in his capacity as the Ontario minister of education, that made Empire Day an essential annual event in schools throughout the British world for years to come.[73]

The first province-wide Empire Day was held in 1899, with much of the celebration resembling the former school celebrations honouring the Battle of Queenston Heights and Sir Isaac Brock.[74] In addition to commemorations of Canada's flag, whether the official Union Jack or the de facto Red Ensign, there were similarly decorated classrooms, familiar speeches from visiting dignitaries, and hackneyed student recitals on various aspects of the Loyalist tradition and Militia Myth. And thanks to the patriotic urges of Fessenden and Ross, the indoctrination of conservative imperialist values was expanded to schools across the length and breadth of Canada.[75] Toronto being the premier city of English Canada, it was able to develop the most elaborate celebration in the country. Before long, several thousands of that city's schoolchildren—again, both boys and girls—were meeting once a year to march in parades, decorate public monuments, listen to speeches, and otherwise manifest their devotion to the empire. There was also a return to the military activities of former times, and the governor general's review of the cadets was the day's high point. Earl Grey, for one, thoroughly enjoyed this part of his duty. In 1911, after reviewing some three thousand public and high school–aged boys, he was heard to remark, "This is better than all the races."[76] While a tad inappropriate, perhaps, the governor general's remark was well-intentioned. To a reporter covering the event, it was a form of praise "in every way justified and earned by the smart appearance of the boys, who, feeling that the judgment of the king's deputy waited upon them, puffed out their chests to the last possible fraction of an inch, and tried their level best to look the good soldiers in embryo that they are."[77] There was no denying that Empire Day in Toronto had become overly militarized, and its supporters were finding it difficult to argue otherwise. But they

had friends in high places, the most influential of whom happened to be an uncle of the king.

As in previous years, Canada's governor general was the chief guest at Toronto's Empire Day celebration in May of 1912. It differed little from earlier instances, except that on this occasion the governor general happened to be Queen Victoria's last surviving son. Having been appointed the previous October, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, was a major attraction whose presence helped to boost attendance at the event. One of the day's highlights was the ceremonial decoration of his mother's statue, which the governor general undertook himself with flowers he received "from the hands of little girls." Then, after inspecting the assembled cadets, he treated them to a laudatory speech in which he praised Queen Victoria's legacy and then defended the militarism promoted by their Empire Day exercises. There was also an honourable mention for the man who instituted this warrior-in-training style of indoctrination:

> I think you one and all will be proud to feel that you are taking up your responsibilities as citizens at this young age. Great responsibilities follow with it, and if you have a great and free country that you are proud of and are devoted to, the first thing you would want to do would be to be able to defend it in case of need. You cannot defend it unless you are taught, and the instruction that we have seen, for which we owe so much to Mr. Hughes, is one of the finest things we have seen.[78]

As if to absolve the chief inspector of any hint of jingoism, the governor general went on to defend the militarism associated with Toronto's Empire Day—and this he did by denying its obvious military function. Feigning ignorance, he claimed not to know the meaning of those people who sometimes "make very foolish remarks about militarism." But the governor general knew more than he was willing to admit, and also how to contort his words into a vote of confidence. "Militarism," he insisted, "means that all the organizations and laws of a country are subservient to military law and discipline. This is not so here, and never will be, and I see no militarism in your being taught discipline and taught to carry out your duties as citizens."[79]

It was a highly selective interpretation, but it provided James L. Hughes and his United Empire Loyalist friends with high-ranking approval as they set their sights on a patriotic demonstration of national proportions. This, of course, was the Brock Centenary celebration, which was held on Queenston Heights the following October of 1912. While there was no one of the governor general's status to draw in the crowds, and Toronto's schoolchildren could hardly be expected to attend an event on the other side of Lake Ontario, the United Empire Loyalists still managed to attract a large throng of mainly older participants. And like Empire Day in Toronto, there was a pronounced military component to the day's activities, courtesy of several militia units. Another similarity was the decoration of Brock's Monument with wreaths and other floral arrangements, as was done to the statues in Toronto's Queen's Park. Normally, there was no opportunity to bestow this honour on Brock's Monument, as it was located too far afield, and so the Empire Day organizers had to content themselves with the next best thing: festooning his portrait in the Ontario Legislative Building with celebratory garlands. This treatment had become standard practice, but during the centenary celebrations it was Brock's Monument that served as the focal point for the floral tributes of adoring well-wishers, which were "so numerous . . . that they almost covered its huge base."[80] While described in a somewhat exaggerated fashion, the floral component of the Brock Centenary—and, indeed, the affair generally—was hailed as a great success. Of course, as was the case in 1890, not everyone agreed with all the perceived anti-American hero worship, but Newton MacTavish was one of the few Canadians brave enough to risk accusations of treason by opposing the United Empire Loyalists.

At the end of September 1912, when MacTavish was editor of the *Canadian Magazine*, he wrote a strongly worded letter to the *Globe* expressing his pacifist views on the upcoming Brock Centenary.[81] Titled "The Too Zealous Loyalists," MacTavish's piece took direct aim at what he perceived to be an overly assertive form of imperialism. "Surely this is patriotism with a vengeance," he complained,

> so much so that one might be pardoned for asking who are these United Empire Loyalists that they should impose their sense of duty on the whole dominion? Why should those of us who do not favor celebrations of this kind be obliged to keep our children

> away from school, to stay out of church and to stop our ears against the cannon's roar just because a small proportion of our population like to think about war and to glorify the heroes of war? Why not gather in great multitudes in front of every United States city, town and hamlet all along the international border and shout our glory for the edification of our neighbors? If not, what is the sense of it all?[82]

It was a legitimate question, but one to which MacTavish already knew the answer. He was fully aware that the Brock Centenary was not merely the commemoration of an outstanding British soldier; the gathering was also a patriotic exercise meant to reinforce the importance of military preparedness for the defence of Canada and the empire. And the objection raised by MacTavish really had more to do with the inordinate amount of influence the United Empire Loyalists wielded in weaponizing Canadian patriotism, specifically with regard to education in Ontario. Otherwise, he was not opposed to the United Empire Loyalists practising their "patriotism with a vengeance," as long as it was on their own time and in such a way that did not subject other Canadians to their militaristic observances. As MacTavish reminded the *Globe*'s readers, Brock had a monument to perpetuate his memory; this being the case, he had no complaint against some good, old-fashioned idolatry: "let the United Empire Loyalists decorate the monument if they want to; and let the Indians decorate the grave of Tecumseh, if they know where it is. But let the several ministers of education and the minister of militia consider the equanimity of the rest of us when they are considering the zeal of the United Empire Loyalists."[83]

The United Empire Loyalists did decorate Brock's Monument, but they made no effort to limit their patriotic activities. There were both school exercises and church services, suggesting that none of the officials whom MacTavish thought should boycott the Brock Centenary had bothered to take his advice. His counsel might have had greater effect in blunting enthusiasm for some of the celebrations planned around the province, especially at places where the Loyalist tradition was less pervasive, but such was not the case at Brock's Monument. While James L. Hughes did not acknowledge MacTavish's disapproval at the time it was published, the chief inspector of public schools in Toronto made a point of alluding to it a few weeks later at the Brock Centenary. "There

are men," Hughes announced, "who have written to the newspapers objecting to the course we adopted. They seem to think it improper to let our children know that our country was ever in danger, and that it was saved by the unselfish devotion and the brave deeds of our ancestors."[84] Hughes had no need to pursue the matter, as the president of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada had already alerted his fellow Canadians to the grave danger they faced. "Some good people," Colonel George Sterling Ryerson patronizingly began, "seem to think that the time of universal peace is at hand."[85] But it was wishful thinking:

> One has only to look at the state of affairs in Europe on this very day, to perceive how far we are removed from the millennium. In time of peace we must prepare for war; preparation for war is the best insurance policy against it. We wish to live at peace with all nations, but at all costs and at all hazards we must defend our shores. Universal military service is the duty of the Canadian people in the near future. The people will be better for it morally and physically. It will surely come, for the policy of the future is the maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire. We love our country, we believe it has a great future; we must make it secure.[86]

To anyone who could read a newspaper, there was an obvious correlation between what Ryerson had to say about the threat of war and events in Europe, where German imperial ambitions posed a direct military challenge to the dominance of the British Empire. Ryerson, however, was not the only imperialist predicting a war.

Earlier, in August 1912, the Brockville, Ontario, chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire—a woman's organization dedicated to patriotism, loyalty to the Crown, and public service—went to great lengths in fulfilling its mandate by inaugurating a monument to the town's namesake.[87] For a community of some ten thousand people, it was a gala occasion, and the participation of Canada's minister of militia and defence helped to draw a large crowd.[88] The Honourable Sam Hughes, whose self-esteem was later said to have verged on megalomania, was a firm believer in the Loyalist tradition and the Militia Myth.[89] He was also an unabashed champion of the Canadian Militia and a staunch imperialist, which made him a kindred spirit to the ladies of the General Brock

Chapter, not to mention the perfect dignitary to inaugurate their monument with its commemorative bronze bust of Brock.[90] After a welcoming address by Brockville's mayor, and with a regimental band playing "God Save the King," Hughes unveiled a somewhat larger-than-life sculpture.[91] Although not particularly awe-inspiring, it was nonetheless greeted by a patriotic burst of applause that lasted for several minutes. And when the time came for Hughes to recite the speech expected of him, he rose to the occasion with a stirring call to arms. Without the slightest reservation, he declared that "had Brock failed to win the Battle of Queenston Heights the war would have terminated and Canada would have become a portion of the United States."[92] That Brock was killed before the battle was decided, and his successor, Roger Hale Sheaffe, was its real victor, were either facts that escaped Hughes's notice or mere technicalities he adapted to suit himself. As for the unfounded speculation about Canada's acquisition by the United States, which completely disregarded subsequent British generalship during later stages of the War of 1812, it was equally fallacious.

There was method to Hughes's madness, however. In stoking old fears of American annexation, he used Brock's heroic death to justify the idea of similar sacrifice among the Canadian Militia, should it ever become necessary. Hughes remarked that some people might view it as a pity that Brock was killed at Queenston.[93] But for him and other early twentieth century imperialists, Brock's death served an important imperial purpose. In elaborating on his observation about sacrifice, Hughes delivered what was likely a well-rehearsed line: "the life of any man given up in such a noble cause was well spent."[94] In Brock's case, this sacrifice contributed to "a Greater Britain and made possible the good accomplished in the reign of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII and continued by the present sovereign, King George [V]." Although having made his point about the importance of military sacrifice, Hughes was not quite finished talking up the militia, which he was soon placing on an equal footing with the British Army. As someone who was vehemently opposed to the idea of a regular army for Canada, he began by asking, "Could Brock have met a more glorious death leading British regulars and Canadian volunteers?" It went without saying, of course, and so Hughes then directed his audience to a similar union "consummated" in the South African—or Boer—War of little more than a decade earlier.[95] This guerilla war, in which Dutch-descended farmers (the Boers) resisted British domination,

was fought between 1899 and 1902. As a consequence of the Canadian Militia's stellar performance in that conflict, pro-militaristic feelings among the country's English-speaking population were heightened, particularly in Ontario.[96] The effect was especially profound on committed imperialists such as Hughes, who even a decade later punctuated his speech at Brockville with a Boer War–inspired observation: "Should the empire be in peril in the future, the colonials would be found standing shoulder to shoulder taking their full share of the brunt of battle."[97] By "colonials," Hughes meant the Canadian Militia, as opposed to a regular Canadian army, and his meaning was not lost on the crowd. Having emphasized his points about the importance of Brock-like sacrifice and the military efficacy of the militia, Hughes made good use of the occasion to prime the people of Brockville and Canadians generally for the very real possibility of war in the not-too-distant future. This time, however, it was not the same old adversary that Hughes had in mind. Rather than the United States, the threat emanated from a rising power in Europe.

During the unveiling ceremony, the normally outspoken Hughes was diplomatic enough to refrain from pointing fingers as he made veiled references to the British Empire's modern-day enemy. But the Brockville *Evening Recorder* left no doubt as to the source of the threat when it ran with the incriminating subheading "The German Peril."[98] Relations between Germany and Britain had been increasingly strained since 1890, when Kaiser Wilhelm II assumed control over foreign policy in an attempt to expand his nation's influence on the world stage. German support for the Boers, as well as an ongoing naval arms race with the Royal Navy, further raised the spectre of war, particularly among imperialists in Canada. This did not go unnoticed by Hughes in his Brockville speech. Playing up the importance of vigilance, he warned that the

> days have not gone by when Britain has ceased to have enemies. It is recognized throughout the length and breadth of the empire that she has a foe. She is and must control the seas, but we find attempts made by one European nation to arrest this control. The time has arrived when Canadians have determined to do their fair share in the upbuilding of the [Royal] navy. Australia and South Africa point with pride to their contributions but Canadians are not represented and might well feel ashamed that they

have not given one dollar in assisting in increasing the armament of the seas.[99]

Hughes then made a move to garner greater public support by praising the activities of Canadian women, such as those at Brockville, who did their part in "directing the attention of the youths and older ones to imperial sentiments and loyalty."[100] There was no mistaking his meaning when, in closing, Hughes "said that with the memory of General Brock before them, he would ask one and all to take up militarism and be in a position to defend their homes, wives and children."[101]

Hughes was definitely on a war footing, and based on Ryerson's bellicose language during the Brock Centenary several months later, so, too, were the United Empire Loyalists. It was no coincidence that these imperialists saw a looming threat, or that they took advantage of the Brock Centenary to reinforce the Loyalist tradition and Militia Myth in order to promote militarism. Nor did this alarmist behaviour come as a surprise to most Canadians at the time, as the imperialists among them constantly imagined all manner of existential threat. But to give the imperialists their due, they were right about the menace emanating from Europe, and the importance they attached to militarism was vindicated with the outbreak of war in 1914. So, while Hughes tailored his Brockville remarks for a commemoration of Brock, the message he conveyed was intended to drum up support for the Canadian Militia. Like his brother, who would repeat much the same message in the shadow of Brock's Monument, Hughes had Canadian youth and primarily Canadian boys in mind.[102] While the Hughes brothers could argue that the patriotism they promoted was a mechanism for producing good citizens, it was really meant to disguise an elaborate plan to render young Canadians fit for national defence. Education was the means to this end, and imperialism pervaded much of the school experience. Patriotic lessons in the classroom culminated in the annual Empire Day observances, while extracurricular activities such as those hosted by the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides offered practical knowledge combined with patriotic morals, all within regimented frameworks.[103] Like the various chapters of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides furthered the patriotic trend toward a closer relationship with the British Empire. The group dynamics associated with these social networks were

highly successful in recruiting Canadian youth to the imperialist cause, as was another form of indoctrination.

Along with group instruction, schoolchildren in Ontario were exposed to moralizing pedagogy on an individual basis through the textbooks they were made to read. Of all the subjects taught in school curricula at the turn of the twentieth century, history was looked upon as the most effective in shaping impressionable young minds. To William H. Ballard, the public school inspector for Hamilton, Ontario, history provided students with

> "examples of heroism, of self-sacrifice, of love of country, of devotion to principles at the greatest cost." And presented as they are in many cases by our teachers, in an interesting manner, they cannot fail to inspire the pupils with a desire to emulate these lives. And since the characters presented in history are not all good and none of them is faultless, excellent opportunities are afforded the pupils of entering into the motives which promoted the actions of these men, to weigh the right and wrong which those actions present, thus increasing their moral insight and training their moral judgment.[104]

Though progressive, Ballard's views were not entirely his own; he plagiarized most of them from Felix Adler, the German American social reformer. Ballard's transgression is not entirely surprising, however, as Canadian educationists were heavily influenced by developments in American teaching methods. As for the significance Ballard assigned to historical studies, it aligned perfectly with that of Ross the education minister, especially with regard to the importance of role models. And there was no role model more perfectly adapted to the patriotic indoctrination of Ontario schoolchildren than Sir Isaac Brock. Moreover, Brock was a perfect knight and therefore exempt from the moral litmus test that Ballard—or rather Adler—proposed. But there were hurdles in bringing history to the classroom.

Despite Ballard's assertion (presumably his own) that Ontario's teachers taught history in an interesting manner, quite the opposite appears to have been the case. As one of their number himself openly expressed, the "dislike which many teachers have for the subject is owing to the way in which they studied it."[105] William Scott Daniels of

Southcote, near Ancaster, Ontario, spoke from personal experience when he described the old system of teaching history and how "pupils in public schools started with the authorized text-book, began at the beginning and ended at the end, studying each event in order of time, and by all means striving not to forget the date of any event, however trivial. As a result, history was dry mental food. At the close of his school-term, the average pupil could be said to possess only a jumbled collection of ideas, illogically arranged, and hence soon forgotten."[106] Suggestions for improvements were bandied about, but the problem remained—and the type of textbook used to teach history in Ontario was a large part of it. To John A. Cooper, who was then editor of the *Canadian Magazine*, an obvious solution was the development of a Canadian national sentiment, without which teachers would never be able to "give a sympathetic presentation of Canada's striking and romantic history."[107] Cooper was passionate about the importance of Canadian nationalism, and he shared Ross's conviction that it was incumbent upon provincial departments of education "to agree upon certain broad features common to the whole of the dominion with which we can indoctrinate our pupils."[108] To accomplish this grand object, Ross and a committee of like-minded individuals organized a textbook competition in 1893. With prize funding provided by each of the provinces, the committee judged submissions based on how well they represented the broad sweep of Canadian history. The winner was a Toronto lawyer by the name of William Henry Pope Clement, and in 1898 his *History of the Dominion of Canada* was published. Unfortunately, Clement nonetheless failed to win the approval of John A. Cooper.[109]

While Cooper acknowledged the sizeable challenge Clement faced, his review was no less critical. For one thing, the book was "cut and sliced and modified to suit the views of the critics in the different provinces."[110] While the resulting mutilation was not deemed Clement's fault, Cooper still held him responsible. Clement's name, after all, was "on the title-page of a history of Canada which lacks coherence, unity, style, and imagination."[111] Another of Cooper's major complaints dealt with Clement's treatment of heroes: "His characters are wooden effigies, to be wheeled on to his dingy stage for a moment, and then shoved off at the opposite wing. For example, such soldiers as Wolfe and Montcalm are never praised; their characters are not analyzed, no hints given of motives, weaknesses or virtues. A slight attempt is made to describe the brilliant qualities of

Brock, but it is weak and ineffective."[112] Admittedly, Clement's portrayal of Brock is just as wooden as alleged. However, Cooper's expectations were also more than a little unrealistic, considering that Clement had only 341 pages in which to cover four hundred years of Canadian history. A sporadic and superficial consideration of Brock's services was all he could offer. Although Clement's work was no less favourably inclined toward Brock than any other Canadian history textbook of its time, Cooper was not satisfied with the production overall, and he let the world know it: "For a calm, uncritical, lawyer-like presentation of the leading facts in Canada's history it is admirable; as a book to interest the young and the occasional reader of history, it cannot be other than a failure."[113] Cooper wanted to adopt the same method as was fashionable in the United States, where "man-picturing" was all the rage.[114] The originator of this concept, Burke A. Hinsdale, was an American educationist whose preference for what amounted to a historical-biographical approach bolstered Cooper's own belief that textbooks had to be supplemented in order to give students "an insight into Canadian history."[115] By this means, they would become more patriotic and therefore better citizens.

A compelling example of the potential impact of interesting supplementary reading materials was supplied by a citizen of Winnipeg in June of 1901, when Thomas C. Keenleyside proposed a new series of readers (practice books to improve reading proficiency) designed specifically to promote patriotism among Canadian schoolchildren. "In this connection," Keenleyside enthused, "I well remember an account of the battle of Queenston Heights that used to be in one of our old Ontario readers, in my schoolboy days. How it thrilled me whenever I read it then, and the memory of it is still strong within me. How inspiring it was to visit Brock's monument years afterwards."[116]

Boring textbooks had long been recognized as an impediment to both the teaching of history and the indoctrination of patriotism.[117] Occasionally, the problem rated space in the press. Such was the case in January 1894, when the *Educational Journal* came out in support of well-written biography as probably the "most pleasing as well as the most profitable" form of historical work. In a lengthy editorial, James E. Wells conceded that primers "and compends [compendiums] of history, such as the text-books generally used in the schools and colleges, are necessary, perhaps—we are not even sure of that—but no one will ever become

even tolerably versed in history, much less in teaching it, who confines himself to these as his sources of information."[118] As Wells then observed,

> The teacher who limits his historical reading to such compends, cannot hope either to enjoy the study himself, or to arouse any enthusiasm in his pupils, whereas he who has read widely and familiarized himself with the personalities which have had most to do with shaping the history of their respective times and countries, and with their environments, political, social, and material, must be dull indeed if he cannot manage to keep the enthusiasm of the history classes usually up to the boiling point. He will always have at hand a fund of illustrative anecdote and incident which will enable him to give to the events narrated that air of reality which is so important a factor in keeping up the interest of the young.[119]

The importance of biography as an interesting adjunct to the study of history was inestimable, as the former would encourage the latter, or so it was thought by the country's leading educationists.

Whether or not biography alone could actually inspire the average student to embark on a career of historical inquiry, there was a growing belief that biography made history more interesting to young Canadians. Certainly, this was the expressed attitude of the *Globe*'s literary critic after reviewing a Canadian military biography in June of 1894. The book, written by Mary Agnes FitzGibbon of Toronto, was *A Veteran of 1812: The Life of James FitzGibbon*, and it came highly recommended. Much of the appeal had to do with her grandfather's reputed standing as Brock's favourite sergeant, his exploits during the War of 1812, and a long association with Upper Canada. These positive and highly desirable attributes gave the reviewer good reason to believe that the "history of Canada, contrary to the popular opinion fostered by the dullest of text-books, little more than chronological lists, is peculiarly susceptible to realistic and picturesque treatment. The several biographies—of men prominent in political and military circles in the past—which have appeared from time to time, are earnest of the profound interest our history is capable of arousing when the personal element is infused into it."[120] Yet, authorized Canadian history textbooks continued to be rather tedious productions, despite the patently obvious solution. What educationists in Canada

needed was someone who could write such an engaging textbook, and there was no better candidate for the job than Agnes C. Laut.

Although resident in the United States since 1904, Laut was a Canadian-born and devoted nationalist who wrote extensively about her native land.[121] She was also a prolific historian whose books brought generally positive comments from the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada*. And Laut had proved herself capable of writing a captivating history textbook for Canadian students, as the publication of her *Canada: The Empire of the North* demonstrated in 1909. "To re-create the shadowy figures of the heroic past," she confidently began,

> to clothe the dead once more in flesh and blood, to set the puppets of the play in life's great dramas again upon the stage of action, frankly, this may not be formal history, but it is what makes the past most real to the present day. Pictures of men and women, of moving throngs and heroic episodes, stick faster in the mind than lists of governors and arguments on treaties. Such pictures may not be history, but they breathe life into the skeletons of the past.[122]

Laut had a very definite type of book in mind when she began work on her manuscript, and it was not another compendium of data and statistics "as have made Canadian history a nightmare to children."[123] Laut's avowed purpose was to write "a story—*story, not history*—of the romance and adventure in Canada's nation building as will give the casual reader knowledge of the country's past, and how that past led along a trail of great heroism to the destiny of a northern empire."[124] No matter how hesitant she was to admit it, Laut did in fact write history, and a type of history that imperialists could heartily approve. So, too, could educationists, as Laut's storytelling style was well-suited to easily distracted young readers. One such example was her graphic account of Brock's death:

> He had dismounted and was scrambling over a stone wall. "Follow me, boys!" he shouted to the British grenadiers; then at the foot of the hill, waving his sword: "Now take a breath; you will need it! Come on! come on!" and he led the rush of two hundred men in scarlet coats to dislodge the Americans. A shot pieced his wrist. "Push on, York volunteers," he shouted. His portly figure

> in scarlet uniform was easy mark for the sharpshooters hidden in the brush of Queenston Heights. One stepped deliberately out and took aim. Though a dozen Canadian muskets flashed answer, Brock fell, shot through the breast, dying with the words on his lips, "My fall must not be noticed to stop the victory."[125]

With this one vivid passage, Laut proved herself equal to the task of writing a history textbook that would engage Canadian schoolchildren. Yet, despite the obvious need for such a talent, and the fact that she had published several major books prior to the release of *Canada: The Empire of the North*, the opportunity for a textbook commission never presented itself.[126] Laut's femininity might seem the most obvious explanation, especially given that the production of authorized textbooks was a male-dominated enterprise; still, it was not unusual for women of the time to publish histories for the educational market.[127] With the right connections, Laut would have been a strong contender to write an officially sanctioned textbook on Canadian history—this despite having been frequently criticized for a lack of historical accuracy.[128] Greater attention to detail and careful editorial oversight could have remedied her many liberties with the past; not that Laut's factual shortcomings lessened her standing with the fastidious editors of the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada*, whose "benediction" she enjoyed. And it was the uncredited reviewer of Laut's book, perhaps one of these same editors, who got to the heart of the matter with his opinion that "the time is not yet ripe" for "that ideal history of Canada which shall embody in one consistent whole the political, social and romantic story of Canada."[129] Expressed another way, the country's leading educationists had no interest in a popular history textbook, especially one that eliminated the need for supplemental reading materials. As the success of a still relatively new series of children's books devoted to famous Canadian historical figures made crystal clear, it was educational adjuncts such as these that offered the best solution to the problem of boring textbooks.

At the end of the previous year, in October of 1908, William Briggs of Toronto announced the first volume in its Canadian Heroes Series, a new series "of popular biographies of men whose names are renowned in Canadian history."[130] This marked a significant development, as it reflected a broader educational policy adjustment in which the Ontario Department of Education embarked on a two-pronged approach to

the long-standing criticism of boring history textbooks. Retaining the traditional authorized textbooks for class instruction, the ministry also threw its considerable support behind the Briggs Canadian Heroes Series. Recognizing the need to develop a national sentiment by promoting a national literature, the ministry was highly motivated to encourage the publication of these books. Working in conjunction with the affiliated Ontario Library Association, the general plan was to provide copies to public libraries throughout the province and also to its schools as supplementary reading material.[131] By assigning and otherwise enticing students to partake of these biographies, there was no need to integrate heroic lives into the existing textbook format. Neither was it necessary to engage the services of a gifted writer like Laut to rewrite tiresome old history textbooks. Rather, it was left to Ontario's teachers to connect schoolchildren with these extra "helps."[132]

In requesting—essentially requiring—that their students purchase these additional books, teachers saw themselves as the facilitators of a worthy cause. Not only did they promote a greater interest in Canadian history, but they also helped to foster a national sentiment by indoctrinating imperial patriotism through the study and veneration of heroic role models. It was no coincidence that Briggs devoted the first volume in its new series to Brock, as "no greater hero could be selected" (at least not in Ontario).[133] As one reviewer confidently predicted, "Every boy [and girl] who reads the story of Brock's life will be a better Canadian and cannot avoid being stirred by the high patriotism which he exhibited on behalf of the country of which he was [acting lieutenant-]governor and on behalf of an empire in which he was a servant."[134] Such was the thinking at the time, and the minister of education was in full agreement.[135] This same bureaucrat, Robert A. Pyne, was also complicit in the scheme to indoctrinate Ontario's schoolchildren with patriotic extracurricular reading materials.

As the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada* revealed in its annual issue of 1909, the idea of a book series devoted to Canadian heroes was "due, it is understood, to Mr. Leavitt, provincial inspector of public libraries."[136] Thaddeus W. H. Leavitt was a Conservative Party organizer who supported Pyne's political career, and his loyalty was rewarded after the 1905 provincial election with his appointment as head of Ontario's public library system.[137] Two years later, Leavitt did some rewarding of his own when he hired Walter R. Nursey as an assistant.[138]

Another active Conservative Party member, Nursey also had impressive writing credentials to recommend him as the author of the first volume in the series of children's books envisioned by Leavitt and encouraged by Pyne. With the high costs and inferior quality of textbooks having become a major election issue, which the Conservatives under Sir James P. Whitney used to their advantage, Leavitt's series of role model–themed readers suited Pyne's plans for augmenting a new and unified set of history textbooks—and at no cost to the Department of Education. As John A. Cooper, now editor of the *Canadian Courier*, was careful to note, the "Department is not publishing the books but have wisely made arrangements with reputable publishers who will undertake their production."[139] By this method, Pyne managed to reduce government expense while still pursuing his educational objectives.

Surprisingly, the Department of Education's precise involvement in the arrangements with Briggs drew little or no comment, despite Cooper's vague and troubling reference to "a sort of bonus system."[140] Perhaps by that time, early in 1909, it was recognized that there could be no cause for complaint—political or otherwise—as Nursey's *The Story of Isaac Brock* from the year before had proved an unqualified success.[141] Adulation was the order of the day, both for the book and its author. To the editors of the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada*, the positive reaction to the first volume of the Canadian Heroes Series came as no great surprise. "Canada has the heroes," the unnamed reviewer granted; "all that was necessary was some writer with sufficient imagination and descriptive power to clothe their deeds in language that should attract and arrest the attention of the young. Such a writer has been discovered in the person of Mr. Walter R. Nursey. He is master of a vigorous and entertaining style, and has succeeded in telling the story of Isaac Brock's achievements in an alluring way without sacrificing any of the vital facts of history."[142] In what might have been an allusion to writers of Canadian history such as Agnes C. Laut, whose regard for the facts of history were found sadly lacking, the necessity for historical accuracy was subtly reinforced. Nursey was far from a paragon of exactitude himself, but his Conservative connections served him well, as did his colourful life experiences, which seemed to infuse his writing with just the right amount of vim and vigour.[143]

Although Nursey was assistant inspector of Ontario's public libraries when he agreed to write Brock's biography, there was nothing bookish

about him. After coming to Canada in 1865, he had every intention of becoming a farmer. But the young Englishman, who was far too restless for such a routine way of life, soon began dabbling in a wide range of other occupations (from fur trader to bureaucrat). He also found time for literary pursuits, having written or co-written several books. By 1908, the early sexagenarian decided on a new career, this time in librarianship. Along with this position there also came a book deal, and so it was fortunate for Nursey that he never lost his love of adventure or his ability to write a good story.[144] It was these qualities that placed him in good stead with Leavitt and Pyne, who were looking for someone to write a new, action-packed biography of Brock's life.[145] The imperialistic and fiercely patriotic Nursey was a shoo-in for the job, with his Conservative associates entirely convinced that he would succeed in instilling a love of country among youthful readers. Nor did Nursey fail to impress the minister of education. Pyne was absolutely delighted with *The Story of Isaac Brock*, which he praised for being "replete with action, adventure, dauntless courage, perseverance and heroism."[146] With a provincial curriculum advocating patriotic indoctrination, Pyne was adamant that "every boy and girl in Ontario should read the book."[147] Brisk sales followed as public and school libraries across the province obediently placed their orders, and, thanks in large measure to Pyne's wholehearted support for it, *The Story of Isaac Brock* was reprinted twice in 1909.[148] But coercion alone could not account for the more than four thousand copies sold by August of that year, or all the additional sales made beyond Ontario.[149]

Nursey's secret to success was his penchant for writing about the stirring events in Brock's life and his "vigorous and entertaining style," which captivated boys, girls, and even adults.[150] The book's appeal was further enhanced by numerous illustrations, some of which were lavishly reproduced in colour.[151] Thus, a poorly researched biography with mythological overtones developed into nothing less than a publishing sensation.[152] Much of the risk involved was minimized by having reserved the first volume in Briggs's Canadian Hero Series for Brock. As one of Canada's best-known historical figures, and by far the favourite in Ontario, the choice was a sound decision. For the Canadian publishing industry as a whole, Briggs's masterstroke was an important test of the book market, and one that established the economic viability of heroic biography as an educational commodity. Nursey was showered with plaudits for his part in the success, and yet he owed much of his newfound fame to the various

"authorities" he consulted. He was especially indebted to the biographers among them, whose works were used extensively in the writing of his own adventurous take on Brock's life.

The earliest biographies of Brock had come in the form of several effusive but superficial newspaper obituaries, all of which understandably began to appear soon after his death in 1812. However, given that not one of them was quoted or cited by Nursey, it seems that they were well beyond his reach.[153] Upper Canadians suffered from a similar lack of access, as newspapers were in short supply during the early decades of the nineteenth century. So, while Brock's sudden rise to fame had piqued the curiosity of friend and foe alike, much of his life was a deep mystery. But for those individuals fortunate enough to lay their hands on one of the eagerly sought-after newspapers containing an obituary for Brock, even the barest of biographical outlines helped to satisfy the sudden fascination with his life that prevailed across the colony. Tending toward eulogistic tributes, these overviews portrayed a character bathed in heroic light. In an appeal to its readers' imperial sentiments, the *Quebec Mercury* communicated from "a late London paper" that Brock

> was indeed a hero,—a hero, in the only true and in the most extensive sense, resembling what history or fable has represented, rather as the offspring of the imagination, than as a personage that could have real existence; so entirely was every great quality comprehended in his character; brave and undaunted, yet prudent and calculating; devoted to his sovereign, and loving his country with romantic fondness, but gentle and persuasive to those who were impressed with less ardent feelings.[154]

Along with expressions of admiration, there was also a good deal of mythologizing, notably where it involved the nascent but already burgeoning Militia Myth. Another Lower Canadian newspaper, the *Quebec Gazette*, seemed to foretell the rise of this invented tradition when its editor implored his readers to trust that "the recollection of him [Brock] will become a new bond of union: and that as he sacrificed himself for the safety of a community of [British] patriots, they will find a new motive to exertion in the obligation to secure his ashes from the pestilential dominion of the enemy."[155] While laudable, the idea of self-sacrifice was sullied by rumours that Brock's life was recklessly thrown away by means

of an impetuous attack upon the Americans at Queenston Heights. As Brock himself acknowledged, he possessed an overly courageous nature characterized by a dangerous tendency to do "some foolish thing" in the heat of battle.[156] This inability to repress a dangerous impulse was cited as the cause of Brock's untimely demise. But by having died a hero, Brock and his folly had long been viewed as pardonable and even commendable. As John Beverley Robinson, Upper Canada's chief justice, thoughtfully reflected in 1840,

> at the moment when the noble soldier fell, it is true, he fell in discharging a duty which might have been committed to a subordinate hand; true he might have reserved himself for a more deliberate and stronger effort; but he felt that hesitation might be ruin—that all depended upon his example of dauntless courage—of fearless self-devotion. Had it pleased divine providence to spare his invaluable life, who will say that his effort would have failed? It is true his gallant course was arrested by a fatal wound—such is the fortune of war; but the people of Canada did not feel that his precious life was therefore rashly thrown away, deeply as they deplored his fall.[157]

By the time Robinson expressed himself on the fateful command decisions made at the Battle of Queenston Heights, it was well into 1840 and Brock had been the subject of an ongoing hero worship for nearly twenty-eight years—a collective admiration that was only just beginning to be communicated through more substantial published biographies, with the earliest having already been printed in Guernsey by one of his nephews.

In 1835, Ferdinand Brock Tupper published a small book he titled *Family Records*, a collection of biographies dedicated to Brock and several other noteworthy relatives (with the life of Tecumseh thrown in for good measure).[158] Largely written at sea during a voyage off the coast of Brazil in February of 1832, Tupper's *Family Records* was mainly intended for private circulation among family and friends.[159] He might have been content with such a limited edition had it not been for a box of old papers that came to light in Guernsey during the early part of 1844. This cache, including more than 150 letters, comprised a portion of the personal effects returned to Brock's family after his death.[160] By the time Tupper

learned of these papers, they had been in his uncle Savery Brock's possession for nearly thirty years.[161] However, too painful to share and yet too precious to destroy, these sad mementoes of a deceased brother had been hidden away under lock and key, where they were all but forgotten. When Savery became incapacitated by brain disease and lay dying a slow death, his family decided it was time to turn the papers over to the rightful heir: Ferdinand Brock Tupper.[162]

A hasty perusal of this documentation revealed the first hard facts about Brock's life, and also the extent to which Tupper had been ill-prepared to write about it. Guilt-ridden by the injustice he had unwittingly committed against his uncle's memory, Tupper became infatuated with the idea of another book to right the wrong.[163] Rather than starting anew, he simply augmented his *Family Records* with various family letters in what amounted to an expanded documentary history. In 1845, Tupper published *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.*[164] Before long, however, he began to feel self-conscious about the book's lack of breadth.[165] This weakness became obvious soon after publication. Having been generally well-received, Tupper's account of his uncle's life brought numerous contributions of additional material on the subject.[166] Both gratified and encouraged by these positive developments, Tupper was soon gearing up for a second edition. Much of this enthusiasm, he admitted, was also fuelled by his resolve to uphold Brock's rightful claim as the conqueror of Detroit, a title that was then in danger of being ascribed to an undeserving subordinate officer.[167] Bound and determined to honour his uncle's memory with a "literary monument," Tupper turned his hand to another round of revisions.

The second edition, enlarged by nearly a third of the original book's size, was published in 1847 and garnered as much praise as the previous version.[168] Much of this success was due to the Loyalist tradition and the Militia Myth, which celebrated the refugees of the American Revolution as the founders and defenders of Canada.[169] These belief systems also served as strong arguments for imperial unity, and central to this concept was Sir Isaac Brock—both for his defence of the province and for his command of the Upper Canadian Militia.[170] Just as aging militiamen delighted in their association with Brock, so, too, did they happily exaggerate their participation in the War of 1812 until the notion became thoroughly mythologized.[171] Along with this fallacy, there also went an unquestioning acceptance that all Loyalists were highly principled and

therefore morally superior to their patriot counterparts. Of course, as is the case with all such traditional narratives, both the Loyalist tradition and the Militia Myth were based largely on preferential beliefs. But such delusional interpretations of the past worked in Tupper's favour, as his uncle's reputation as the Hero of Upper Canada melded perfectly with the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition. It was a winning combination, and both editions of *The Life and Correspondence* were much touted across British North America. Tupper's own reputation was no less a factor in the success enjoyed by his books. As one of Brock's family, he was seen as a logical and highly credible biographer. In reality, Tupper's weakness for idolizing Brock conformed to the invented history of Upper Canada, and he freely admitted to having committed "that common error of biographers"—namely, a panegyric treatment of his subject. At the same time, however, he excused himself as being scarcely able to avoid eulogizing one who was so well deserving of praise.[172] His daughter, Henrietta Tupper, got to the crux of the matter when she acknowledged that "my father was an intense hero-worshipper, [and] his gallant uncle was his chief hero."[173]

In an era when the biographies of great men were not known for their objectivity, Tupper not surprisingly treated Brock as someone beyond reproach. All of his decisions were sound and judicious, including the one that prompted his ill-fated charge at Queenston. Therefore, Brock's death was no fault of his own. As far as Tupper was concerned, the blame rested squarely with Sir George Prevost. After all, it was the excessively cautious Prevost who ordered the defensive stance that allowed the Americans to orchestrate their invasion at Queenston—an enterprise by which Brock lost his life.[174] Tupper's partiality toward his uncle bordered on deification, and the energy he expended in attacking Prevost's reputation might have been better spent in trying to piece together the story of Brock's childhood. But Tupper glossed over most of his uncle's early life, which he excused by citing a lack of documentation.[175] Certainly, Brock was not much of a record keeper, and neither were any of his relatives—with the partial exception of Savery, who preserved his dead brother's correspondence but little else. Notwithstanding this unfortunate family trait, Tupper had almost exclusive access to another abundant and valuable source of information: the Brock family's oral history. It was an exclusive opportunity, which Tupper seems to have largely ignored.

While Tupper's maternal uncles were either dead or dying by 1844, such was not the case when his *Family Records* was in the works during the early months of 1835. Three of Brock's nine brothers were then still alive, and each of them had an intimate knowledge of young Isaac's halcyon days in Guernsey. Of Brock's sisters, only one lived long enough to participate in Tupper's genealogical endeavours in the early 1830s. Elizabeth Brock, however, must have had many stories to tell about her younger brother. She probably shared everything she knew with Tupper, who was her eldest surviving son and the family's historian.[176] Unfortunately, it appears that he had little inclination to pursue or publish early recollections of Brock, unless they somehow reinforced the legend of a boy destined for greatness.[177] It was for this reason, perhaps, that much of Brock's youth was consigned to obscurity. Tupper was also well positioned to record Brock's early military career, as a number of his old army friends and acquaintances were still living and thus could have been solicited for their reminiscences. And while Tupper did make the effort, he did so in a fairly selective manner and with only mixed results—that is, until he began exchanging letters with James FitzGibbon.

This old veteran of the War of 1812 was reputed to have been one of Brock's favourites, suggesting a source of many interesting anecdotes.[178] Unfortunately, Tupper's line of questioning was largely confined to seeking clarification, which did not allow much room for elaboration on the part of a willingly reminiscent FitzGibbon.[179] In 1855, when he was in his mid-seventies, FitzGibbon reflected on the "long distance of time" and how it enticed him to "say much without reluctance."[180] But earlier, whenever he was pressed to give his version of events connected to the War of 1812, FitzGibbon had to catch himself before his honesty got the better of him. "I could not refrain from telling all the truth," he explained, "and this would expose to public blame, if not shame, some whom I would fain not wound."[181] John B. Glegg shared the same sentiment but never managed to overcome it. Whereas an aging FitzGibbon was eager to impart his martial memories of the past, Glegg became all the more reticent as he grew older.[182] There was a time, however, not long after Brock's death, when Glegg toyed with the idea of publishing a memoir of his general's valuable services. He even went so far as to write a preface.[183] But then he began to feel uneasy about certain "necessary allusions" to Sir George Prevost, who was then governor-in-chief of British North America and captain general commanding the military forces therein. On the advice

of "some military friends in high stations," Glegg decided to lay down his pen.[184] It was a great pity. As Brock's former aide-de-camp, his insights would have been invaluable. Tupper himself had no doubt about it, and he even went so far as to acknowledge that it was Glegg who should have written Brock's memoir.[185]

The task fell instead to Tupper, who had no qualms about casting aspersions in order to safeguard Brock's honour. Prevost was faulted at every turn for his various failings, both real and imagined, and for which there was little repercussion suffered by his detractor.[186] But in similarly criticizing Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe and the officers of the 41st Regiment, Tupper found himself subjected to a severe reprimand.[187] Still, he felt no less duty bound to protect his uncle's good name. It was an obligation he took very seriously, as any perceived impugnation of Brock's character was viewed as an attack upon his entire family, including the Tupper branch. The only defence Tupper could claim for the various attacks he made on his uncle's associates was a skewed allegiance to the principles of an honest and objective historian.[188] Such a claim did little to assuage wounded feelings, and despite his professions of fairness and impartiality, Tupper's overly defensive treatment of his uncle's reputation resulted in a rather slanted biography. This mark against it went largely unnoticed in Canada, where Tupper's eulogistic approach to Brock's life was in keeping with misconceptions arising from the Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition. It proved highly useful in this regard. But had Tupper been less engrossed with glorifying his uncle's reputation, he might have elaborated on the lesser-known aspects of Brock's life for an even greater appreciation of the man. Even so, his *Life and Correspondence* was—and remains—essential reading for Brock scholars and students of the War of 1812.

As Brock's nephew and the author of his uncle's first book-length biography, Tupper was recognized as the leading authority on the Hero of Upper Canada. This perception helped to dissuade other would-be Brock biographers, and continued to do so for nearly half a century after the second edition of Tupper's *Life and Correspondence* was published in 1847.[189] It was a remarkable feat, considering that Tupper died in 1873 and could not possibly object to a new take on his work.[190] But the news of Tupper's death was not widely reported in Canada, which might help to explain why the next full biography of Brock did not appear until the early 1890s. Tupper's books were by then long out of print, and yet his

uncle's accomplishments were no less relevant to Canadians, having been perpetuated in various commemorations and histories of the War of 1812. That Brock's life continued to fascinate Canadians was also evidenced by a number of published biographical sketches. One of the earliest was written by Henry James Morgan for his *Sketches of Celebrated Canadians*, a biographical dictionary he published in 1862.[191] Morgan, who later become a founding member of the Canada First movement, was a young sessional clerk in the Legislative Assembly of the United Province of Canada (the colony that came to encompass pre-Confederation Ontario and Quebec). Conservative, patriotic, and imperialistic, Morgan firmly believed that the biographies of great men were the best gauge of national character.[192] Brock's glorious life was a prime example, and one that called for a likeness to accentuate his important place in Canadian history.[193]

Accordingly, in June of 1861, Morgan sent a letter to Guernsey in hopes of obtaining a copy of Brock's portrait.[194] But Tupper, who was still alive and overly protective of his uncle's legacy, claimed to have no knowledge of the now famous profile portrait by the Dutch itinerant artist Gerrit Schipper.[195] A miniature showing Brock as a young ensign, which Tupper seems to have preferred for some reason, was offered up instead.[196] Morgan, however, was apparently unimpressed with the alternative, which held no particular significance to Canada, and so he went ahead with the publication of his *Sketches of Celebrated Canadians* without a portrait of Brock. Such was the reach of Tupper's influence.[197] As Brock's de facto literary executor, he was able to suppress a portrait of his uncle simply because it was not to his liking. But the inordinate amount of control Tupper exercised over Brock's life story, while it might have deterred full-length biographies, did nothing to discourage shorter accounts.

In April 1877, Brock's life became the subject of a feature article in the Toronto *Globe*.[198] The author was John Charles Dent, the *Globe*'s editor and a reform-minded Liberal who was well-known for his "hankerings after independence."[199] Dent's brand of nationalism had the potential to displease imperial-minded Conservatives, especially as they looked upon Brock as their particular hero.[200] After all, Brock's noble death "saved Canada for the empire."[201] Seizing upon the inspirational effect of this heroic deed, imperialists put Brock's fame to good use in making a diverse population proud to be both Canadian and British.

It was a modus operandi that worked extremely well in Ontario, where young people were taught to be proud of this duality through a school curriculum espousing patriotism and loyalty.[202] As the British hero of the War of 1812, Brock became a role model for the students of Ontario's public school system, and it was no coincidence the deputy minister of education for Ontario was a "staunch Conservative" with strong imperialist leanings.[203] He was also a great admirer of Brock, and during his long tenure, Dr. George John Hodgins never missed an opportunity to extol the virtues of Sir Isaac Brock—most notably in the textbooks and other reading materials he authorized. But Brock was no less a hero to the English-born Dent, whose Whiggish interpretation of history chronicled Canada's rise to greatness through the biographies of its leading citizens. Like Morgan before him, Dent had to rely on Tupper's *Life and Correspondence* for much of his information on Brock. But when it came to style and presentation, Dent was beholden to no one but himself.

With a background in journalism, Dent knew the importance of a lively prose in catering to the masses. He was also alert to new trends in the publishing industry, such as when pictorial books became all the rage. Quick to follow suit, Dent was the first of Brock's biographers to make use of illustrations, an innovation that included the profile portrait, which Hodgins had only recently managed to secure. Having been motivated by a determination to display Brock's portrait in Toronto's Educational Museum, Hodgins made his own inquiries in Guernsey.[204] His request, received not long after Tupper's death in 1873, was well timed for its purpose and brought about the desired result. Hodgins, who was unaware of the peculiar situation involving Brock's likeness, had attained the very thing that Morgan was denied: a photographic copy of the profile portrait by Schipper. Though rendered in a crude line drawing, the facsimile gave many Canadians their first view of the hero's noble visage. What they saw was an officer of the British Army, their country's saviour, and the very embodiment of imperialism. A few years later, Dent published another version of the same portrait in colour. This chromolithograph accompanied a reprint of Dent's article in *The Canadian Portrait Gallery*, a four-volume set he began publishing in 1880 to commemorate the lives of Canada's leading personalities.[205] But in attempting to elaborate upon Brock's life, Dent's write-up fell victim to some dubious oral traditions. Among them was the old story about an engagement to the daughter of an Upper Canadian Militia officer, another myth that served to blend

Brock, the Militia Myth, and the Loyalist tradition.[206] Without the editorial control of later and more authoritative productions, such as the British *Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, all sorts of misconceptions began to taint Brock's life.[207] A degree of original research might have improved Dent's historical accuracy, had Brock been the sole focus of his interest. But for Dent and Brock's other early biographers, there was far more at stake. It was nothing less than the fate of a new nation.

Canada's place in the British Empire was the defining feature of the country's nationalistic ambition in the second half of the nineteenth century, and it was against this backdrop that an aging lawyer from Toronto began researching Brock's life and times. With his retirement in 1881, David Breakenridge Read was free to indulge his passion for Ontario's history.[208] Several books were published as a result, starting with *The Lives of the Judges of Upper Canada and Ontario*.[209] This "judicial history," as he termed it, was published in 1888 and soon became a classic in Canadian legal historiography.[210] Two years later, Read followed up with a book about Ontario's first lieutenant-governor, John Graves Simcoe.[211] A biography of Brock seems to have been a natural progression.[212] Although not a lieutenant-governor per se, Brock acted as such when he served as president of Upper Canada during the absence of Francis Gore. This administrative aspect of Brock's life intrigued Read, coinciding as it did with one of the more interesting phases in the early history of Ontario's governance—namely, the War of 1812. Moreover, the "old regime of toryism" appealed to Read's sense of self-identity, given that he was a lifelong Conservative.[213] Yet, when his *Life and Times of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* was published in 1894, it was remarkably non-partisan.[214] It was also fairly dull, which apparently caused one literati to describe the book as "historical rather than biographical."[215] But Read saw no need for a gripping tale, just an accurate record in "compact form."[216] There was consequently a strict adherence to the facts, and only occasionally did this lawyer-turned-historian share his imperialistic views. The most conspicuous lapse is found in the conclusion, where Read expressed his fears about a repeat of the War of 1812. Emphasizing the necessity for military preparedness, he pointed to Brock's spirited defence of Upper Canada as a valuable lesson for the up-and-coming nation.[217] There was also a special message for the young people of Canada, especially the boys. "Of late years," Read observed, "it has been the custom of the school-boys to

go through military drill, in regimental form, on the anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights."[218] Read thought it

> a good custom this. The meeting together of the boys in this way incites in them a spirit of patriotism, a love of country, obedience, discipline and respect for authority—all essentials for the formation of the grown-up man as a good citizen and loyal subject. There is nothing in it at which anyone should take offence, even though he be a subject of some other land. Every country has days in which the national pride is excited and sometimes exalted, in no country more so than in the United States, who made war on England and Canada in 1812. Canada is a country of peace—may it ever remain so—but that is no reason why her red-letter day should not be duly remembered and patriotically celebrated.[219]

Read certainly toed the line in terms of Conservative, imperialist, and United Empire Loyalist doctrines, although he was not, strictly speaking, a Loyalist descendant himself. And while his book received generally favourable reviews, it did not enjoy a broad popular appeal.[220] This well-meaning attempt to instill patriotism, while at the same time igniting a new spirit of militarism, was lost on most Canadians, and particularly the younger variety. Still, with Tupper's *Life and Correspondence* long out of print, Read's *Life and Times* became the main source of reference on Brock's life. On the surface, this distinction might appear well-deserved, as Read was the first of Brock's biographers to make use of the British military records acquired by Canada's fledgling national archives.[221] Unfortunately, his archival interest did not extend much beyond the records he found concerning the construction of Fort George. To his credit, however, Read saw the importance of historical context, and he wrote with an according degree of inclusiveness, as the space he allotted to Brock's Indigenous allies would attest. Yet, his comprehensive approach made for a rather disjointed text, which precluded any belletristic aspirations he may have entertained.[222] Read's successor was far more adept at writing, and by the deftness of her pen she was able to bring forth the most literary treatment of Brock's life.

Lady Edgar, who began life as Matilda Ridout, was born into a prominent old Toronto family of loyal colonial officials—a conservative

dynasty who took great pride in their imperial preferences and also their associations with Sir Isaac Brock.[223] Edgar's grandfather was the surveyor general of Upper Canada during Brock's administration of the province, and her father served in the York Militia during the War of 1812, as did two of his brothers.[224] Brock's civil and military contributions to Upper Canada were important aspects of the Ridout family history, and the old letters handed down through several generations instilled young Matilda with a strong sense of ancestral pride. This same correspondence would eventually give rise to her writing career. In the late 1880s, after twenty years of marriage and the birth of her last child, she began editing a selection of documents from the Ridout papers.[225] The manuscript arising from this "labour of love" was notable, especially for the fascinating glimpse it offered into the early history of what become Ontario.[226] Published in 1890 as *Ten Years of Upper Canada in Peace and War, 1805–1815*, Edgar's book was soon greeted by positive reviews confirming her proficiency as a writer and historian.[227] The political career of her husband, the Toronto lawyer James D. Edgar—which contributed to his knighthood in 1898—forced a supportive and now titled Lady Edgar into literary hiatus.[228] Bright's disease made her a widow the following year. After some three months of intense mourning, including several seances, Edgar's depression gradually lifted as she resumed her pursuit of genealogical and historical interests. The signing of a book deal in 1901 marked a return to historical publishing.[229] This positive step was largely influenced by one of her sons, who happened to be co-editor of the Makers of Canada series sponsored by the George N. Morang Company of Toronto.[230]

The inspiration for this series originated some eight years earlier, in about 1893, when it occurred to Morang "that Canada had reached the point when it was necessary that some such series should be published."[231] With an idea that the history of Canada should be taught through the "lives of the men who have laid broadly and deeply the foundations of the country," Morang viewed the purpose of his new Makers of Canada series as both national and patriotic in scope and character.[232] Designed for a popular adult readership, it was the first such Canadian attempt, and after the initial title was issued in 1903, hopes were entertained that the series would serve to unify the country by forming "a spiritual bond between the provinces."[233] The decision to include a biography of Brock early in the series was likely inspired by the well-known fascination of

mainly English-speaking Canadians with his storied life. While also possibly influenced to some degree by the favourable if somewhat muted reaction to Read's biography of Brock, the choice of his story for one of the opening volumes was actually something more than a shrewd marketing ploy. There was also a hint of nepotism at play.

As co-editor of the series, Pelham Edgar lobbied for his mother's participation, and there was no question as to which biography she would be assigned. The Ridout family's association with Brock made Edgar the logical choice to write his life story. Accomplished without the need for moral instruction, as was so obviously the case with Read's biography of Brock, the patriotic lessons imparted through Edgar's prose were more subtle, sophisticated, and yet no less imperialistic. With these favourable characteristics, the book was bound to please. Published in 1904 to generally positive reviews, several reprints of *General Brock* confirmed Edgar's flair for writing and her innate ability to skillfully blend biography and history for a narrative steeped in romance.[234] That she did so in a relatively accurate fashion, however, was not the result of any great diligence on Edgar's part.[235] Having gone to England with a view to conducting historical research, she spent much of her time there socializing.[236] She compensated by relying on published sources, and the one most frequently consulted was Ferdinand Brock Tupper's *Life and Correspondence*. Clearly, original research was not a great concern to Edgar. Nor was it much of an issue for Brock's next biographer, or even the biographer's publisher.



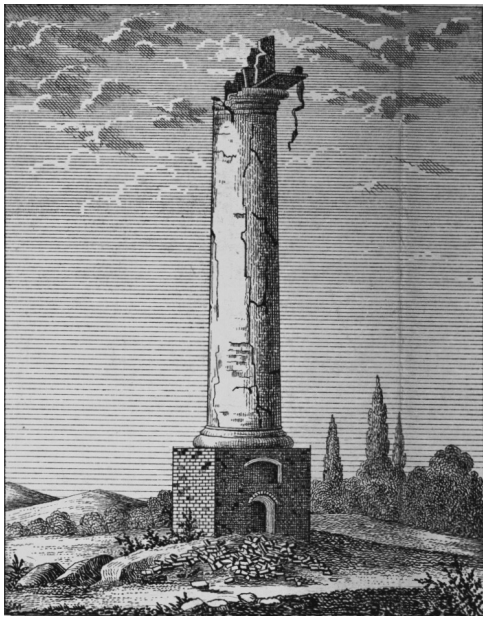
1. Dating to 1816 and long thought to be the numismatic tribute of some patriotic Canadian merchant, the Brock token (or copper) was actually a counterfeit used in a fraudulent scheme that originated in the United States. It passed for a halfpenny token throughout the Canadas, where, if nothing else, the dedication to Brock helped to glorify his memory.



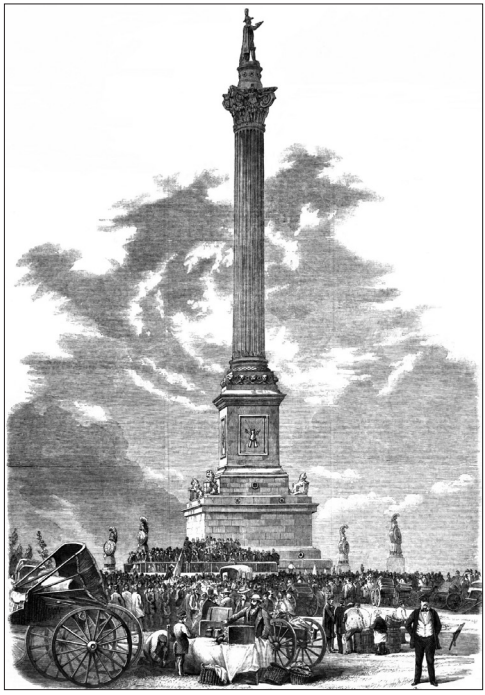
2. Issued by the Home Bank of Canada between 1904 and 1920, this five-dollar note was the only paper currency in Canada to bear Brock's effigy. The positive association was relatively short-lived, however, given that the bank failed in 1923.



3. Completed more or less in 1827, Brock's first monument was featured in a drawing eleven years later by the English artist William H. Bartlett. The detail reproduced here is part of the image that was subsequently engraved, published, and widely distributed.



4. Vandalized with explosives in April of 1840, Brock's Monument presented a very sorry sight and continued to do so until it was finally demolished in 1853—the same year that American cartographer Samuel Geil included this vignette of the ruins in his *Map of the Vicinity of Niagara Falls*.



5. This engraving, depicting the inauguration of Brock's second and current monument on 13 October 1859, appeared in the *Illustrated London News*. It was reproduced from a photograph taken by Robert Milne of Hamilton, Canada West (now Ontario).



6. Many patriotic picnics were held in the shadow of Brock's Monument, and to varying degrees of veneration for the Hero of Upper Canada. Included was an outing of the Toronto-based York Pioneer and Historical Society in July of 1871. This detail is from a photograph taken by William E. Wright, who attended the event from what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario.



7. Based on a drawing by Major James Dennis of the 49th Regiment of Foot, and published in 1816 for James Jenkins's series of engravings entitled *The Martial Achievements of Great Britain and Her Allies*, this print by the British artist and aquatinter Thomas Sutherland illustrates the various stages of what became known as the Battle of Queenston Heights. Apparently sold as individual plates, the image represented Brock's death as an inspirational factor in the British victory and served as an early visual reminder of his heroism.



8. In 1896, eighty years after the Sutherland engraving of the Battle of Queenston Heights was published, a young Canadian artist produced this chromolithograph as a supplement to the Christmas edition of *Toronto Saturday Night*. Although John D. Kelly's portrayal of Brock's death was hopelessly romantic and completely inaccurate, it was also poignantly patriotic and extremely popular.

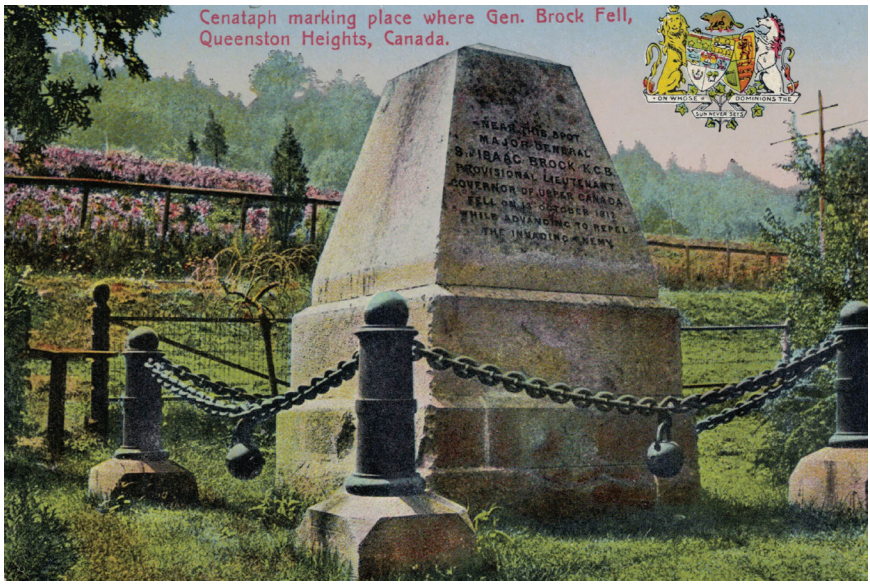


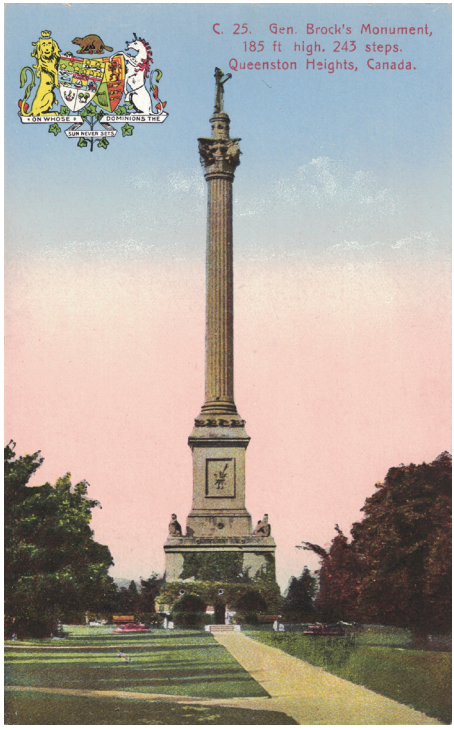
9. Illustrations, such as this watercolour by Canadian artist Charles W. Jefferys, helped to make Walter R. Nursey's 1908 *Story of Isaac Brock* an appealing book for young readers. Such heroic depictions also enhanced Brock's role model status, no matter how much historical liberty was taken with them.





10, 11. Stereoscopic views provided a three-dimensional effect to photographic images of tourist attractions and historic sites, including these scenes dating from early in the twentieth century. The first stereograph illustrates the prospect looking up toward Brock's Monument from the obelisk-style cenotaph that marked the spot, or rather the very general area, where Brock fell. The second shows a portion of the stone house where Brock's body was sequestered during the Battle of Queenston Heights. Despite the misleading caption, Brock actually died on the battlefield nearby. Although frequently inaccurate, the descriptive information provided by stereographic publishers was meant to complement the views they offered. Additional context, no matter how flawed, helped to pique viewer interest in the subject matter—which in these instances was Brock-related.





12, 13. Postcards offered an alternative to stereographs, and in the Niagara tourist region this meant a wider selection of souvenir images commemorating Brock. Views of his monuments at Queenston were frequently produced by local printing entrepreneurs like Frank H. Leslie of Niagara Falls, Ontario, who was responsible for each of the specimens reproduced here. These early views, dating from circa 1910, marked a novel and booming demand for Brock-related postcards.



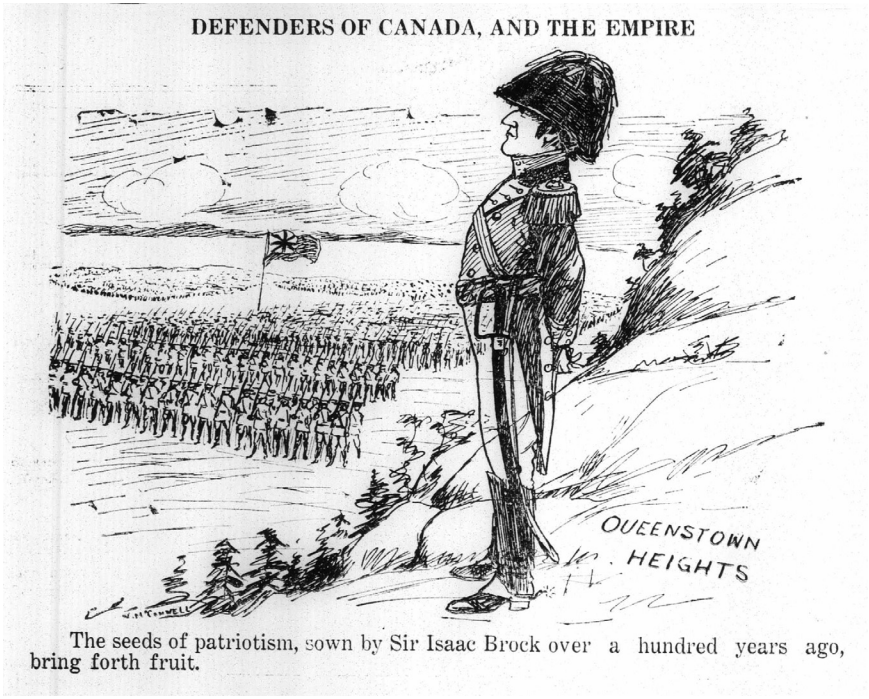




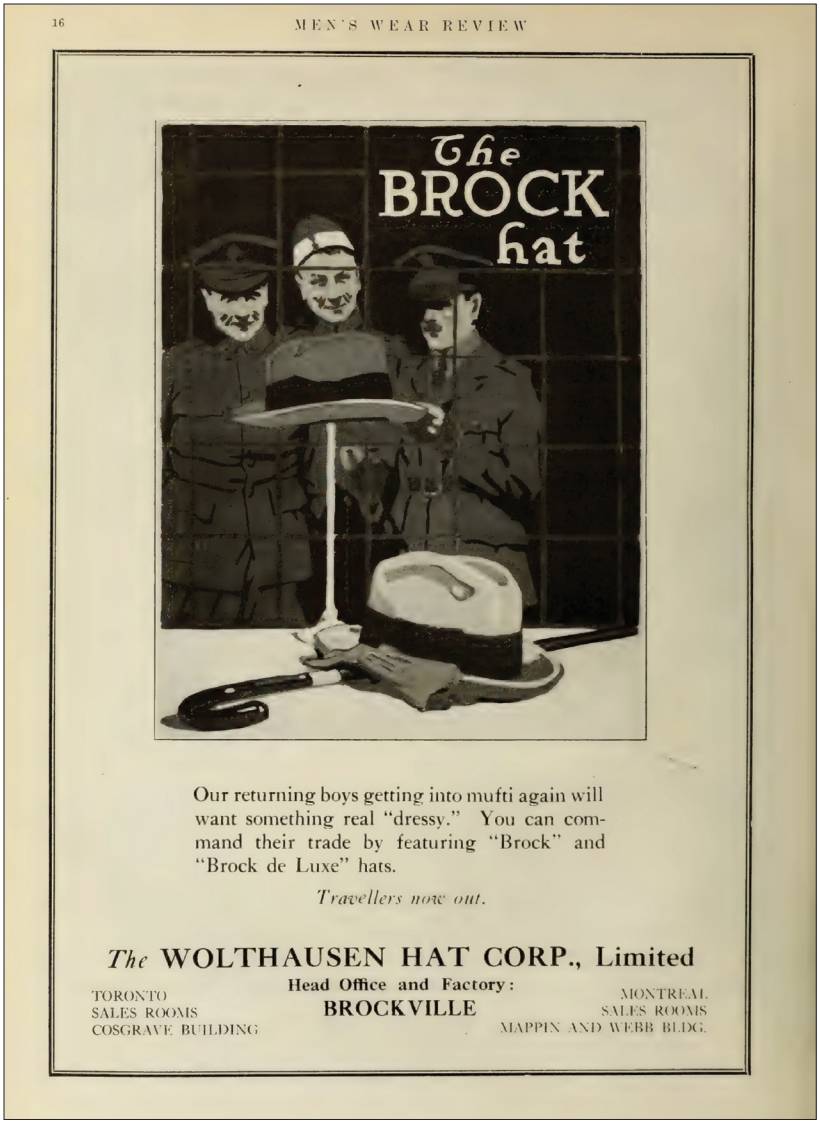
14, 15, 16. Brock's patriotic appeal might have been enhanced from an early date after his death through the use of heroic imagery, except that his sole authentic portrait as a high-ranking British officer was unknown in Canada until the mid-1870s. Portrayed by Gerrit Schipper sometime between 1809 and 1810, Brock (upper left) is shown wearing the uniform of a brigadier general and staff officer. This finely rendered pastel profile was initially replicated with relatively faithful copies, such as Frederick Brigden's engraving, which appeared in an issue of the Toronto *Globe* in 1877 (right), and John Wycliffe Lowes Forster's commissioned oil painting dating to 1894 (lower left). However, artistic licence soon began to transfigure Brock's appearance, and these liberties have long since given Canadians a confusing array of idealized portraits to fuel their love of country.



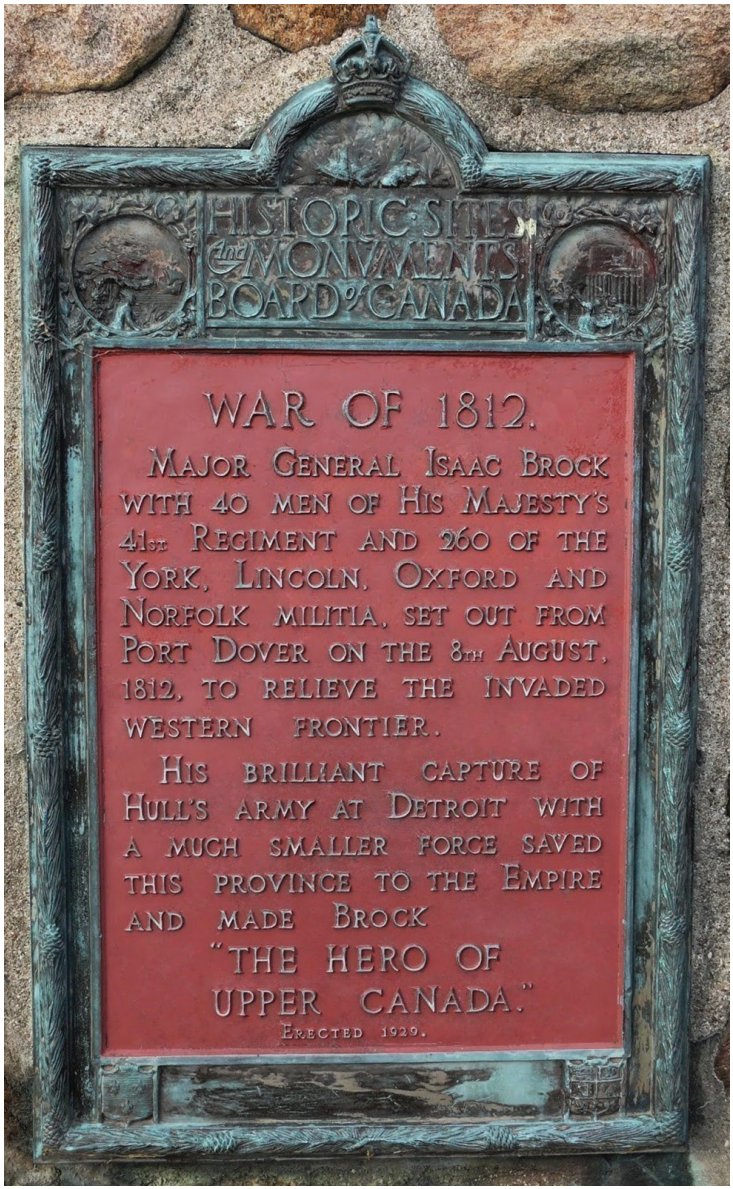
17. Anniversaries of the Battle of Queenston Heights were fitting occasions for the commemoration of Brock's heroic death, especially when they marked an important milestone. Such was the case in 1912, when a centenary celebration of some two thousand attendees was held at Brock's Monument. Patriotic speeches were the main component of the day's activities, and here Toronto lawyer and politician Angus Claude Macdonell—a relative of Brock's provincial aide-de-camp who was killed in the battle—is shown doing his part for Brock.



18. During the First World War, despite Brock's long-established recognition as a patriotic icon to Canadians, particularly those in English-speaking regions of the country, little use was made of his heroic defence of Upper Canada for propaganda purposes. A rare exception was this editorial cartoon from a 1915 issue of the *Brantford Daily Courier*, which utilized Brock's inspirational potential to show support for the British Empire's war effort.



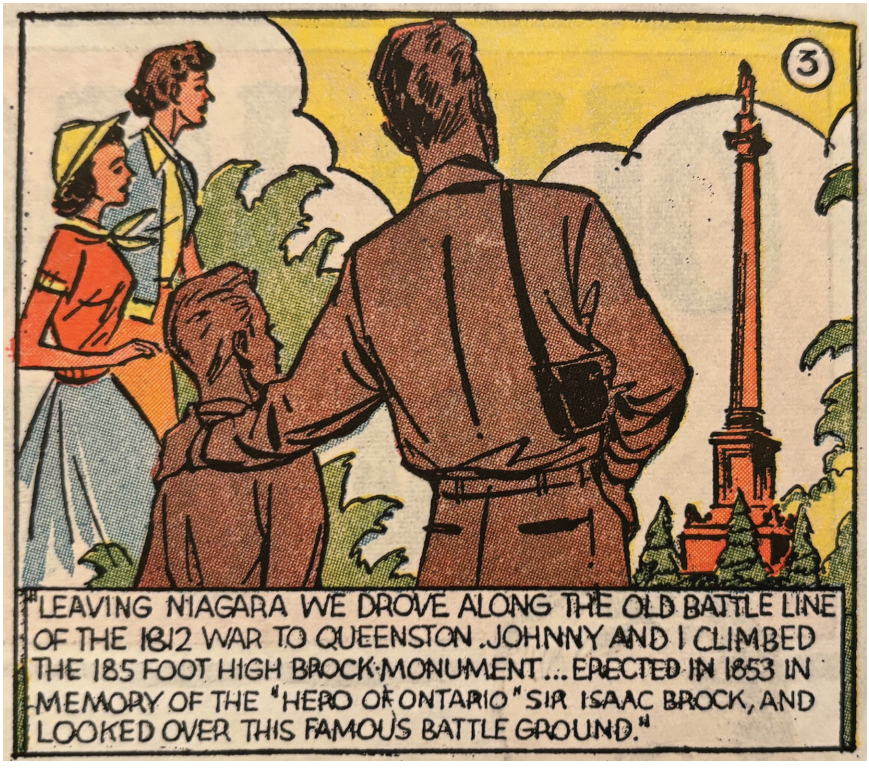
19. Curiously, while the Canadian government failed to take full advantage of Brock's enduring popularity during the First World War, a German immigrant and hat manufacturer operating out of Brockville, Ontario, did just that by naming a new line of men's headgear after the heroic British general. Capitalizing on a form of deceased celebrity branding, Frederick Wolthausen came up with a patriotic series of advertisements to promote his Brock Hats, including this one from 1919 that was directed toward returning war veterans.



20. As chairman of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, an advisory body tasked with recommending heritage designations, historian Ernest A. Cruikshank envisioned this plaque as the first in a series commemorating the audacious expedition that led to Brock's capture of Detroit in August of 1812. Dating to 1929, but unveiled the following year, this elaborately designed bronze marker helped Canadian and other tourists visualize Brock's heroic deeds within the Ontario landscape.



21. As was the case during the First World War, the Canadian government's propaganda messaging during the Second World War made no reference to Brock. To some degree, however, O'Keefe's Brewing Company took up the slack with this patriotic advertisement dating from 1944. One of a series, it utilized Brock's heroic legacy to encourage Canadian support for the war effort through the purchase of war bonds.



22. In the early 1950s, when an imaginative comic book approach was utilized to promote Ontario tourism, Brock's Monument featured prominently in a fictitious autobiographical travelogue.



23. At the time of the sesquicentenary of the Battle of Queenston Heights in October of 1962, a local reservist portrayed Brock in a parade celebrating the event. Major George Greves cut a dashing figure, and while the uniform he wore for the occasion was a reproduction, the cocked hat was reportedly the original on loan from the Niagara Historical Society (now the Niagara-on-the-Lake) Museum.



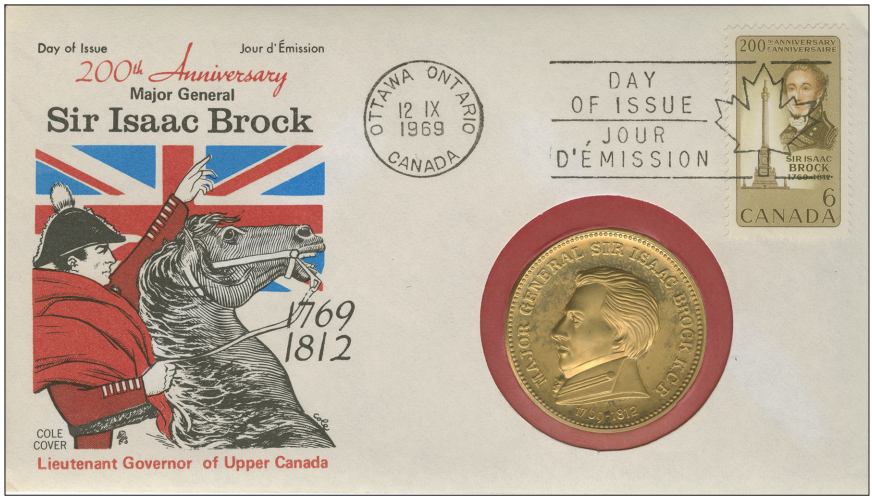
24. In keeping with a long tradition dating back to Brock's first interment on Queenston Heights, solemn speeches were delivered at his monument during the sesquicentenary commemoration in 1962. The keynote speaker was Ontario's lieutenant-governor, J. Keiller Mackay. Flanked by various dignitaries, he addressed several hundred spectators with fitting remarks to remind them of Brock's prominent place in Canadian history.



25. This advertisement for the Toronto-Dominion Bank, which appeared in several issues of *Maclean's* for 1963 and 1964, appears to show a museum display of Brock memorabilia. It was actually part of an elaborate photoshoot meant to promote the bank's commitment to customer service, and one that presented Brock in a very favourable light.



26. During a visit to Canada in 1965, one of Brock's collateral descendants brought along a much-prized family heirloom: the ceremonial war club reputedly presented to Brock by the Shawnee war chief Tecumseh at Detroit in 1812. Although Captain Michael H. T. Mellish (left) and Brock University President Dr. James A. Gibson (right) treated the war club with all the respect and reverence due an important artifact from Canada's colonial past, there is now speculation that it might actually have been presented to one of Brock's brothers by a delegation of Huron-Wendat chiefs that visited England in 1825. In many circles, however, the war club remains a potent reminder of Brock's continued high standing among Indigenous peoples.



27. In anticipation of the 1969 commemorative stamp marking the bicentenary of Brock's birth, an array of specially illustrated "philatelic covers" were produced to coincide with the first day of issue. Ranging in complexity from hand-drawn envelopes to professionally printed cachets, the most elaborate was that designed by Robert Cole of Ottawa. Unaware of the inaccurate likeness of Brock in the stamp, medallion, and vignette, collectors eagerly snapped up these postal souvenirs and in so doing helped to perpetuate Brock's enduring popularity.



28. Thanks to Doug Geddie, who was Brock University's director of marketing, communications, recruitment and liaison during the 1970s and well into the 1980s, this eye-catching poster was commissioned to raise awareness of both the institution and its namesake. Released in 1978 and heavily influenced by both American and British army recruitment posters of the First World War, the poster's artwork was undertaken by Barbara Bedell of the St. Catharines, Ontario, advertising agency Etcetera. After nearly fifty years, it remains a popular and much sought-after souvenir.





29. One of the main events of the War of 1812 bicentenary celebrations was the military re-enactment of the Battle of Queenston Heights, which was held on 13 October 2012. With approximately one thousand re-enactors manoeuvring amidst volleys of musket fire and the occasional blast of a cannon, the hour-and-a-half-long extravaganza proved immensely popular with the audience of some fifteen thousand spectators. A major feature of the entertainment was Brock's ill-fated charge and heroic death, as interpreted by Scott Finlay of Parks Canada.







30. The bicentenary festivities were crowned by a magnificent display of fireworks over Brock's Monument. Despite a rainy and wet evening, the pyrotechnics proved impervious to unfavourable conditions—much like Brock's enduring popularity.