4

Perpetuating Patriotism

As with Lady Edgar and most of the other Brock biographers who followed her, Walter R. Nursey's decision to write about the famous general was mainly publisher driven. In such cases, it was the publisher who went in search of an author, and the resulting deadlines imposed on these contractual Brock biographers further impacted the research limitations that invariably led to literary regurgitations of Tupper's well-worn book. So it was in 1908, with Nursey's *Story of Isaac Brock*. Coming just four years after the phenomenal success enjoyed by Edgar's *General Brock*, specifically, and George N. Morang's Makers of Canada series, generally, William Briggs had decided to follow suit with a similar biographical series—but one that was geared toward children rather than adults.[1]

While textbooks and other reading materials had long been a staple of Canadian publishers, the introduction of supplementary reading materials in the form of historical biographies about heroic figures, and especially those who inspired patriotism in the classroom, offered a new revenue stream. In what, to publishing industry observers, was likely a perfectly understandable business decision, Briggs moved to secure market share by announcing the launch of his Canadian Heroes Series. Starting off with Nursey's biography of Brock was a safe bet, as was having it published under the auspices of the Ontario Library Association and promoting it as part of a series designed for an educational market. Yet, despite its scholastic context, the book's depth of research was of no particular consequence to either Briggs or Nursey; what really mattered was a suitable storyline—something that would resonate with both the sponsoring client and the target audience. For Briggs, this meant solid lessons in patriotism for children, and Nursey's engrossing narrative served to inspire the rising generation that they should do their duty by behaving as good citizens. This responsibility he emphasized by drawing

a comparison between the past and present. Firmly situated within the Loyalist tradition and Militia Myth, Nursey assured his young readers that the influence of Brock's life was more far-reaching than most Upper Canadians could suppose: "It aroused in the people not only the questionable human desire to avenge his death, but an unexpressed resolve to emulate his high manliness, his fixity of purpose, and his well-ordered courage in defence of the right. It remains for the youth of Canada to proudly cherish the memory of Isaac Brock, and to never lose an opportunity to follow the example he set for them by his splendid deeds."[2]

Although Briggs's success with the Canadian Heroes Series did not extend beyond a second volume on the life of Tecumseh, the idea of educational reading materials with a patriotic theme probably inspired Morang to come up with a children's series of his own. In the spring of 1912, with the centenary of Brock's death not far off, Morang launched what he called the Chronicles of Canada for Boys and Girls.[3] Given the advance notice that this new series would glorify the country's greatest heroes, it came as no surprise that Brock's biography would be among the first to be released that same year.[4] Although a successful publishing house, Morang and Company was heavily in debt, and the effect was evident in its new series.[5] Unlike the high-quality books published by Briggs, those in the Morang series were cheap by comparison. But there was no skimping on the contents, and so Thomas Guthrie Marquis was chosen to write Brock's next biography.[6]

Marquis was one of Canada's most gifted authors, and having written a short sketch of Brock's life in 1893, he was well familiar with the subject.[7] He was also an imperial federalist, which was not a particularly unusual frame of mind for the time—except that he was also known to have ardently and publicly hoped for Canadian independence.[8] With much of the country's English-speaking population still fiercely imperial in its outlook, this preference might have led to a controversial backlash. But in acknowledging that Canadian independence required "the consent of the motherland," Marquis managed to moderate his stand to a call for greater self-determination within the British Empire.[9] His revised view of the country's future seemed to imply imperial federalism, which would have been acceptable to most of his fellow English-speaking Canadians. And along with Brock's other biographies—namely, those conceived for young readers with an educational purpose in mind—Marquis's had an appropriately patriotic lesson for the children of Canada. It was on the

importance of Canadian unity, and good use was made of the Brock token as a pedagogical prop:

> In 1816 a coin intended for circulation in British North America was issued from the Royal Mint. On one side were the words, "Sir Isaac Brock, the Hero of Upper Canada." This was the way the people of Canada had spoken of the great soldier since the capture of Detroit, and the issue of this coin shows in what esteem he was held by the home government. It would be more fitting had the words been, "the Hero of Canada." That Brock truly was. His influence was felt not in one province alone, but throughout the whole of British North America.[10]

Of course, the "coin" Marquis used to demonstrate his point is now known to have been an American counterfeit. Even so, the slug's patriotic design strengthened Marquis's conclusion that, thanks to Brock, Canada had been saved to the British Empire. Indeed, without Brock's "wisdom and daring and untiring energy it would have fallen into the hands of the troops from the United States."[11]

Unfortunately for Marquis's well-intentioned attempt to promote the idea of Canadian unity to a junior readership, his book failed to excite much interest. Little notice was taken of *Brock: The Hero of Upper Canada*, except by a disapproving academic at McMaster University (then located in Toronto).[12] In lamenting how a renewed interest in the War of 1812 had failed to produce a "freshet of historical literature" based on original research, William Stewart Wallace made no attempt to hide his disdain for this latest biography of Brock.[13] It gave the appearance of being a "pot-boiler," meaning an uninspired commission piece.[14] Wallace was severely disappointed, and another leading Canadian historian was of a similar mind. Along with Wallace, George M. Wrong was co-editor of the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada*, and together they considered it a pity that Marquis had made "the mistake of glorifying Brock to an excessive degree."[15] This charge was certainly merited, but no one could have glorified Brock more than Nursey himself had done only a few years earlier.[16] However, the blame for a decidedly unpopular book rested squarely with its author. Ironically, by refusing to ply the children of Canada with similar glorifications based on the legends and myths associated with an excessive hero worship, Marquis provided a far

better introduction to Brock's life. But when it came to connecting with a young audience, Marquis the littérateur was no match for Nursey the adventurer.[17] As salt to the wound, Nursey's *Story of Isaac Brock* had been out of print since 1909.[18] Thus, the way was clear for another juvenile account of Brock's life. And the upcoming Brock Centenary was a golden opportunity to promote Marquis's book, as the launching of books tied to important anniversaries helped boost sales. Moreover, the marketing of heroic biographies for educational purposes was still seen as a lucrative business strategy for trade publishers, and it was no less so for a popular adult readership.

While reprints of Lady Edgar's *General Brock* still dominated that sector of the book market in 1912, the situation gradually began to allow for some competition.[19] Six years later, during the final year of the First World War, the Macmillan Company of Canada published a small book entitled *Sir Isaac Brock*.[20] Its author, Hugh S. Eayrs, was a recent immigrant from England and the most ambitious salesman in Macmillan's education department.[21] He was also the most handy with a pen, and while he had no great interest in writing about Brock's life, the assignment was a good opportunity to advance his career. It was really the company's president, Frank Wise, who wanted to publish a biography of Brock, and this for the sake of Macmillan's new Canadian Men of Action series. Ignoring wartime shortages and rising production costs, Wise was determined to take advantage of a booming Canadian book market that developed, in part, as a nationalist response to the conflict raging in Europe.[22] But despite the favourable economic conditions, Eayrs's book failed to generate much interest. With its revision and reissue in 1924, however, it received the *Globe*'s commendation for having "briefly and interestingly sketched" the main incidents of Brock's life, and "with enough anecdote and color to sustain the reader's zest."[23]

A more enthusiastic reaction came with the critique offered by the influential *Canadian Historical Review*, which continued the good work of the recently discontinued *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada*. Although cursory in its treatment, Eayrs's *Sir Isaac Brock* impressed Charles H. J. Snider, a Toronto journalist and noted Great Lakes historian, who gave his hearty approval to this overview of Brock's life. For Snider, the "very fact that most of the narrative, except the closing incident of the general's life, is new to the reader, proves that such a series has been needed."[24] But what Snider saw as new material was merely

additional and not original. Besides giving Eayrs more than his due, Snider used his review to express dissatisfaction with historiographical trends in general: "The preoccupation of historians with constitutional issues, though explicable enough, has too often produced history which to ordinary people, who are not concerned with the origin of institutions, seems dull."[25] But a "sympathetic study of a national military hero," like that produced by Eayrs, "was calculated to make Canadians aware of other aspects of their past."[26] Furthermore, as Snider found, there was "something dramatically complete in this story of an ambitious Englishman, who accepting reluctantly the necessity of passing his time in Canada where professional opportunities were few, protected the country from invasion by his military skill, and ended his career gloriously on the field of battle."[27]

Snider's review was heavily influenced by Brock's heroism, the Militia Myth, and the Loyalist tradition—just as it would have been had he written about Eayrs's biography of Brock prior to the outbreak of the First World War. Despite the psychological fatigue caused by four years of carnage on the battlefields of Europe, Canadians in 1924 were no less receptive to stories about their earlier war heroes.[28] Those written for children were especially important. As the First World War had graphically demonstrated, biographies of role models like Brock were crucial to ensure not only future generations of good citizens, but willing army recruits eager to defend king, country, and empire. Such was very much the case after war was declared in August of 1914. While school cadet training, scouting, and other organized patriotic youth activities played a major role in militarizing the attitudes of boys and girls in the decades leading up to the First World War, the Canadian publishing industry constituted another potent source of indoctrination. It did so with the tacit approval of provincial departments of education, particularly in Ontario as much of the Canadian publishing industry was centred in Toronto.[29] It was also a seamless process, according to Susan R. Fisher, a professor in the Department of English at the University of the Fraser Valley. Fisher's 2011 book *Boys and Girls in No Man's Land* revealed that, as the country's "pre-war curriculum was already suffused with imperial nationalism and a reverence for military heroes, there was no need for drastic change when war broke out. Canadian schools quickly took on the task of teaching the war and of preparing their students to take their place in it."[30] Complementing the approved textbooks and other reading

materials were the innumerable fictional adventure stories, all of which formed a popular niche market in the British trade publishing market well in advance of the war.

When written in the engaging style of George Alfred Henty, the popular English boys' novelist, full-length books and magazine articles were highly effective in priming the empire's children for military service. In *Sons of the Empire*, published in 1993, Robert H. MacDonald, an English professor at Carleton University, encapsulated the relationship between popular culture and patriotic duty:

> Popular imperialism fed on images of heroism and military triumph. It spoke of conquest, it used a myth of history to justify the inevitable progress of empire. This ideology reached into all corners of late-Victorian and Edwardian life, colouring dozens of activities, from big-game hunting to athleticism. Children, and boys in particular, were obvious targets; a vast patriotic literature was directed precisely at them. Healthy boys needed tales of action; stories should be "manly," and "red-blooded." Boys' magazines like *Chums* exploited the excitement of military action, history was presented as a "Romance of Empire," and innumerable fictions detailed a repertoire of heroic deeds.[31]

The extent to which adventure stories could influence impressionable young minds was remarkable, and nowhere was the militarizing potential of children's literature more evident than in the recollections of an old Cape Bretoner. When Howard Reid of Sydney, Nova Scotia, was asked about his participation in the First World War, and specifically his motivation for enlisting, his response came with a degree of hesitancy. "Well, that's a conundrum," Reid answered.[32] But soon enough he supposed it had something to do with the fictional stories he read about boys his age who embarked on various adventures to preserve and protect England and the British Empire.

As MacDonald contextualized, the "language of these stories was xenophobic, masculine, and jingoistic; it is hard not to see it having a powerful effect on a young reader."[33] Reid admitted as much: "I read those stories, and they did something."[34] In his 2014 *Manliness and Militarism*, Mark Moss, a historian at Toronto's Seneca College, provided further evidence of the influence publications like *The Boy's Own Annual*, *Chums*,

and Henty's books had on Canadian boys—particularly those among them who reached manhood in time to be caught up in the horrors of the First World War. One such specimen was Torontonian Larry Nelson. Like Reid, he remembered enlisting for the sake of travel and adventure, his interest in such things inspired mainly by the thrilling stories he read as a boy.[35] Nelson's experience was not unique, juvenile reading material clearly having been designed to provoke a patriotic reaction, especially among boys of the British Empire. Much the same approach was used by those Brock biographers who wrote for the purpose of inculcating children and young adults by way of entertaining narratives. Together with constant reminders of his worth, in school or society generally, Brock remained arguably one of the best-known and most popular military figures in Canadian history.

Brock's heroism was put to good use in promoting the war effort, and most notably at recruitment rallies across the country. Although references to his exploits were verbal and therefore ephemeral, they sometimes appeared in newsprint for the benefit of a wider audience and were thus preserved in the process. Many were typical patriotic bombast, but an especially flagrant example was discovered during an investigation of Torontonians' reactions to the First World War.[36] In *Our Glory and Our Grief*, Ian Hugh Maclean Miller—who when he published the book in 2002 was a policy officer with the Department of National Defence—documented an insidious attempt to coerce enlistments. After one such call to arms, a recruitment rally held in July 1915, Helen Ball used her popularity as a columnist with the *Toronto Daily News* to persuade her women readers that it was incumbent upon them to convince their husbands and sons to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force. As an attendee of the rally, Ball was able to draw a potent parallel for her readers by recalling what she thought during the proceedings: "You knew that men and women were thinking back to those who made Canada a reality, and Brock, the hero, so long dead, yet gave his inspiration to the living to do their part."[37] Just as Brock died while doing his duty in a distant land, Ball expected the same willingness for sacrifice from the men of Toronto—and she was not the least bit conflicted in seeking the coercive support of their wives, mothers, and daughters. In summarizing Ball's lengthy report of the rally, Miller highlighted the role women often played in reinforcing martial masculinity during wartime:

> Women knew that they would be ashamed, she argued, if the men belonging to them were not among those who had upheld the honour of Canada: "Yes, even if they were left lying in rough graves in France, you knew last night you could bear it better than having a shirker by your side." The ultimate sense of pride was felt by a woman at the rally, Ball related, when she could look up and see "her husband or her son, little more than a boy, standing facing that vast throng of people, while they cheered him to the echo." Ball reminded Canadian women that they were of the stock of Laura Secord, could endure hardships unflinchingly, and could not allow their men to be shirkers by tying them to apron strings.[38]

While the frequency with which Brock's memory was invoked to ensnare young recruits can never be known, it was likely frequent given that Ball thought the desired results in terms of recruitment could be achieved by playing on the general's strong popular appeal. And nowhere did this heroic branding become more evident during the war than in Berlin, Ontario.

It was perhaps inevitable that a community bearing the name of an enemy's capital would come to serve as a lightning rod for controversy, especially as news about the First World War became increasingly gruesome. The ethnic German population of Berlin, a city of approximately fifteen thousand people in the hinterlands of southwestern Ontario, reacted to the outbreak of hostilities by throwing their support behind various displays of their community's loyalty to Canada.[39] Time and again, they rose to the occasion with generous financial donations to the local patriotic fund. Despite this and other tangible demonstrations of allegiance, anti-German sentiment (which had existed prior to the war but became more pronounced after its declaration) was directed against symbols of the community's deep attachment to *das Vaterland*. Along with the toppling of a bust of Kaiser Wilhelm I, there was also the ransacking of a German singing society's clubhouse. But the damage inflicted upon these cultural icons paled in comparison with the patriotic vengeance against Berlin's nominal identity. Although calls for the city's renaming had begun as early as November 1914, it was not until reports of German atrocities became rampant that serious consideration was given to the matter of a new moniker.[40] Heightened by British propaganda, the news

of German massacres, gassings, sinkings, and executions reflected badly on Berlin—and its manufacturing sector was especially sensitive to all the bad press. In February of 1916, the Berlin Board of Trade reacted by proposing a name change.[41] What followed was a petition to the Berlin City Council signed by over one thousand ratepayers, which prompted a request for provincial legislation to legitimize the name change. At the same time, a committee was established to investigate a possible amalgamation with the adjacent—and more fortuitously named—town of Waterloo, Ontario.[42] This strategy meant that either way, the controversy over Berlin's name would be resolved.

In April of 1916, after the provincial government refused to intervene, another attempt was made to change Berlin's name, this time by a civic organization known as the British League. The result was sweeping legislation allowing any municipality the right to change its name based on the decision rendered by a majority of its voters.[43] During this same period, upwards of five thousand alternate names were suggested as suitable replacements for Berlin.[44] An early contender was Brock, and Lottie Moyer of Berlin provided the following bare-bones justification for her choice: "He was a noble general and no place has ever been named after such a splendid man."[45] Unfortunately for Moyer, her argument was undermined by the recently incorporated village of Brock, Saskatchewan, as well as a long-established township in Ontario bearing the same name, and also by the historic town of Brockville, Ontario.[46] But it hardly mattered that Moyer had misspoken. Honouring Brock over Berlin was a popular notion among the Anglo-Canadian citizenry, and so minor adjustments were contrived (such as Brockton, Brockhowe, and even Brockwack) to keep his name in the running.[47] In an attempt to reduce the sheer number of submissions, Berlin City Council appointed a special committee to select the most prospective entries. By the end of May, the committee presented council with a list of just six names—none of which, shockingly enough, included Brock or its various incarnations.[48] However, the public reaction to these names (Huronto, Bercana, Dunard, Hydro City, Renoma, Agnoleo) was so negative that Berlin's city councillors usurped the committee's authority and compiled a revised slate.[49] Before they could put their selection to the test, however, the lingering question of amalgamation came to the fore in June of 1916. When it was learned that any such agreement was contingent upon the acceptance of Waterloo's name, the city council promptly voted against amalgamation

and produced a new batch of toponymic choices. Heading the list was Brock, but the last-minute addition of a new name made for some stiff competition.[50]

The death of Britain's secretary of state for war earlier in the month made him a worthy namesake to many of Berlin's pro-British residents, and Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener, 1st Earl Kitchener, was certainly a popular public figure in keeping with the times. Yet, there was at least one Berliner who saw the importance of having a less polarizing source of patriotic inspiration. According to a "Ratepayer," the name Brock was to be preferred, and not solely for his reputation as the defender of Upper Canada. As this person acknowledged, "Kitchener was a world figure," but "the taking of his name by the community, in view of the wish to bridge the present chasm, would be a mistake. Healing ointment ought to be applied. I believe 'Brock' would be the right thing to apply."[51] It was sage advice, in spite of the mixed metaphor. Unfortunately for "Ratepayer," the chasm was already too wide and the ointment not sufficiently efficacious. When the votes were tallied, Brock came in a close second.[52] While it was the lowest vote ever polled in the city's history up to that time, the outcome still attested to the appeal of Brock's name and Brock himself. Had Kitchener not met with an untimely end in June 1916, Berlin's new name might have been far less divisive. As it was, however, opposition to the renaming of Berlin continued until a bylaw enacted at the beginning of September made the change to Kitchener official.[53]

As events in Berlin demonstrated, Brock was still held in high esteem among the city's pro-British population, and a majority of the ethnic German segment of the population likely preferred Brock over Kitchener as well, if only because Kitchener was the man leading the war against their homeland. Beyond Berlin, the high degree of public respect for Brock was no less manifest, and yet, notwithstanding the occasional reminder for recruiting purposes, the heroism that made him famous was underutilized in promoting Canada's war effort. Whereas Kitchener's martyrdom was swiftly and widely exploited for propaganda and recruitment purposes, Brock remained primarily a role model for schoolchildren and a patriotic trope for their elders. The Canadian government's seeming lack of interest in mobilizing Brock's heroic reputation for enlistment purposes was perhaps intentional, given the scope and nature of the conflict raging on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. The First World War was propagandized as a just war in defence of the

British Empire, and the story of Brock's heroism fell somewhat short of that narrative. It was not relevant that he had defended the same empire in North America during a war with the United States just over a hundred years earlier, especially when the former enemy was now a potential ally. Nor was there any point in promoting long-dead colonial heroes, like Brock, when their exploits were limited to one corner of the empire.

While Brock's name was instantly recognizable throughout much of Canada, it counted for less than nothing across the rest of the British Empire—a sad reality that extended to the very heart of imperial military operations in London, England. As one Canadian scholar discovered in 1901, the War Office was completely unaware of Brock. Although a number of its staff were eager to assist, they had to admit that "we never heard of such a person."[54] But even if most Canadians knew of Brock, the finer points of his martial achievements often escaped them. Included among this number was the trolley car driver, or "motorman," who managed to frustrate an American tourist at Queenston back in the summer of 1896. As the trolley rolled past Brock's Monument, the inquisitive tourist—a sightseeing journalist—asked who Brock was. With a wry grin, the tactless motorman simply replied that Brock "licked the Yankees in 1812." When the tourist asked where, he was told, "Darned if I know, but they say he licked 'em."[55] Not unlike the motorman, Canadians generally knew of Brock and held a favourable opinion of him, but the extent of their knowledge was often embarrassingly deficient. There was a far greater awareness of Lord Kitchener, whose own wartime achievements on behalf of the British Empire were not limited to any particular colony. Rather, his fame was far-reaching, and the news of his loss in the sinking of HMS *Hampshire* during a diplomatic mission to Russia sent shock waves throughout Britain's imperial domain. The propaganda value of his sacrifice was soon put to good use in raising troops for the British cause. Although Brock suffered a similar type of sacrifice, the patriotic effect it generated was largely limited to Canada and the country's English-speaking population. Brock's sacrifice was also historical in nature, and after the passage of more than a century, it was not always treated with the same degree of reverence as that afforded Kitchener's more recent passing.

In June of 1917, a party of 160 convalescing soldiers was treated to a day's outing to Queenston Heights. Accompanied by "mothers, wives and lady friends," the veterans enjoyed a steamship voyage across Lake

Ontario as they sang along with an orchestra playing patriotic tunes. With Brock's Monument soon towering high above them, a reporter for the *Globe* fantasized about the general's statue coming to life in response to the heartwarming scene of maimed soldiers, "broken in all but spirits, gathered on the heights to spend the day in boyish freedom with the sky and the green earth."[56] Looking down from its lofty pedestal, the limestone figure "might well have turned its strong heart to flesh and sent the warm blood of life coursing through its cold frame."[57] The veterans, while they could respect and admire Brock, were feeling far too light-hearted for any such romantic notions, and one witty soldier thought nothing of having a good laugh at the dead general's expense. On the trolley car coming up from the wharf and through Queenston, a dilapidated stone house was pointed out as the place where Brock's troops had sequestered his body. By 1917, however, it was commonly and mistakenly thought that Brock had died in this house. Considering that its roof had fallen in, Brock's demise was hardly a surprise to the witty soldier who cleverly remarked, "No one could live in that place."[58] This jest, however, was not indicative of a broader attitude among Canadians toward Brock or his military reputation. Despite the passage of one hundred years and the country's heavy involvement in the First World War, there was no similarly high-ranking Canadian Army officer who garnered as much respect or admiration among the general populace. Included in the mix was Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Currie, head of the Canadian Corps and the soldier now regarded as Canada's greatest military commander. For all his battlefield acumen, the unprepossessing Currie lacked the charismatic attributes of a dashing hero like Brock. In this sense, at least, there was no comparison—even if the Catholic bishop of London, Ontario, tried to force one in October of 1918.

Speaking at a charity event in Windsor, Ontario, Bishop Michael Francis Fallon told an audience of four thousand people that Currie had borrowed the tactics of Brock. Elaborating on the British ruse at Detroit, by which British and Indigenous forces appeared to be massing in greater force than was actually the case, Currie, according to Fallon, used a similar trick to fool the Germans into thinking that he was moving north instead of south to the French city of Amiens.[59] The bishop spoke with great authority, since he was recently at the front and had remained in communication with Currie after his departure. Yet, even if Currie's strategy had in fact been influenced by Brock's victory at Detroit, as the bishop

publicly claimed, there was little or no positive effect on his image back in Canada. Falsely accused of having callously ordered thousands of troops to risk their lives in needless battle, Currie returned from the war under a cloud. After finally taking legal action in 1928 to exonerate himself, and despite having won his case, Currie's reputation remained checkered.[60] And regardless of the generally positive press coverage he received after the trial, Currie failed to win the hearts and minds of the nation. Many Canadians continued to look upon him with contempt and were likely to have rejected any suggestion that Currie's command of the Canadian Corps in Belgium and France was somehow comparable to that of Brock on the Detroit frontier, regardless of what the Catholic bishop of London had to say in the matter. Unfortunately for Currie, he was disadvantaged by the type of battle he was forced to wage.

Unlike Brock, who bluffed his way to victory at Detroit with only minor casualties to the small force of British regulars and Upper Canadian militiamen he commanded, Currie, facing a more determined foe in a series of major actions, suffered heavy troop losses. Ironically, Brock, for all his gallantry on the field, could not have done better under similar circumstances. This is because the First World War was predominantly one of attrition and trench warfare; it was also a war of the common soldier, and one in which generalship had come to be gauged by effective management. For this reason, rather than any display of courage or charisma, Currie would go on to win the respect of his country. But no matter how successfully Currie defended his command during the First World War, Canadians still looked upon Brock as their patriotic idol—just as they had been taught to do from an early age. While his sacrifice on the battlefield had been underutilized for recruitment purposes during the conflict, Brock's heroism still held great appeal to civilians on the home front. Indeed, as one particularly astute captain of industry realized late in the war, the mere mention of Brock's famous name could also be used to turn a tidy profit.

The concept was by no means original, and Canadian manufacturers were known to occasionally promote a given product line by making shameless use of Brock's name. It was all for the sake of boosting sales, and this early form of deceased celebrity branding could be quite effective. It could also be somewhat tortured, as the Thomas Upton Company of Hamilton, Ontario, demonstrated in an advertising campaign dating from 1900: "Those who are familiar with General Brock's Monument,

from a distance, are vastly surprised at its proportions when they get close enough to grasp them. Those who are familiar with the name and high reputation of Upton's Marmalade are equally surprised when they learn how surpassingly good it really is."[61]

Utilizing Brock's name for advertising purposes was a no less attractive proposition nearly two decades later, when Frederick Wolthausen, the astute captain of industry mentioned above, used a similar sales gimmick to introduce a new line of men's hats in 1918.[62] Resembling something between a bowler and fedora, the new design was a gamble. But by naming this hybrid after the ever-popular Brock, Wolthausen probably hoped to reduce the odds of a fashion flop. The fact that this headgear was manufactured in Brockville, Ontario, might have provided some of the inspiration behind Wolthausen's choice of names. More likely, it was an opportunity to tap into heightened patriotic sentiments arising from the First World War. In May 1919, Wolthausen ran a full-page advertisement in the *Men's Wear Review* featuring several soldiers admiring a display of Brock Hats through a store window. There was nothing ambiguous about the target audience, certainly not to those potential wholesale customers who read the advertiser's copy: "Our returning boys getting into mufti again will want something real 'dressy.' You can command their trade by featuring 'Brock' and 'Brock de Luxe' hats."[63] The most compelling rationale behind this bold marketing strategy can be found in the research of a military historian at the University of Western Ontario. In his 1997 book *Death So Noble*, Jonathan F. Vance explained the Canadian soldier's special affinity for Brock:

> The War of 1812, particularly the death of General Isaac Brock at Queenston, was also a popular historical event to provide context to Canadian achievements in Flanders. Like Wolfe, Brock had died "on the field of honour, in the hour of triumph" and, what is more, he had died defending Canada from foreign invaders. These facts made the War of 1812 an obvious analogy. One observer noted that the men of the CEF [Canadian Expeditionary Force] were animated by "just the same fine steadfast courage as carried their forefathers up the hill at Queenston Heights."[64]

Wolthausen was likely motivated by a similar sense of patriotic duty, combined with a healthy desire for financial gain. However, honouring

Brock with a line of hats was perhaps also a means of self-preservation in a potentially hostile environment.

As a German American immigrant who came to Canada in 1904, Wolthausen might have felt a need to demonstrate his loyalty to the British Empire as the First World War dragged on from one year to the next.[65] And it was probably not a coincidence that his patriotic Brock Hats were introduced within two years of Berlin's acrimonious name change debate in 1916—during which proceedings the Brock option remained one of the more popular. Another possibility reveals itself in Wolthausen's style of advertising, which suggests that there was a personal element in his decision to name men's hats after a dead British general: He could identify with Brock. Like the Hero of Upper Canada, Wolthausen had faced his own enormous challenges, and in 1928 he recounted his accomplishments for the *Globe*'s readers: "A small unknown factory . . . fighting doggedly against odds which daily threatened disaster . . . courageously marking their product 'Made in Canada,' at a time when imported hats flooded the market . . . struggling under handicaps of poor equipment and meagre finances . . . this is the early history of the Wolthausen Hat Corporation."[66] Just as Upper Canada had faced an American takeover during the War of 1812, Wolthausen was nearly overwhelmed by foreign competition. But like Brock, he was determined to mount a strong defence. "Armed for the fight," and "with little more than his thorough, practical knowledge of hat manufacturing, pluck and determination to win, Mr. Wolthausen now has the satisfaction of seeing his firm dominating the Canadian market and merchandising their hats to almost every corner of the British Empire . . . to the Orient . . . and to South America."[67]

Patriotism was central to Wolthausen's marketing strategy, and it clearly contributed to the tremendous popularity of his Brock Hats during the 1920s. Of course, strong sales were ultimately dependent on style and quality. Fortunately for Wolthausen, his Brock Hats were well-made fashion statements. The result was a business enterprise that was both a sartorial tour de force and a fitting homage to the man who inspired Wolthausen's new style of hat, which he proudly termed "A Canadian achievement."[68] Looking to further capitalize on this highly profitable business model, Wolthausen's advertisements went beyond mere name recognition to include unmistakable allusions to Brock—the most obvious being images of his monument.[69]

This type of heroic commodification worked as well as it did because a majority of Canadians still maintained a strong imperial attachment, which Brock personified by having saved Upper Canada for the British Empire. Despite the social upheaval caused by the First World War, the Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition continued to influence Canadian society, and not only in Ontario. A telling example of the pervasiveness of these old colonial sentiments can be found in the court proceedings of one of the several men tried for instigating the Winnipeg General Strike. In November of 1919, Robert Boyd Russell, a Scottish immigrant, railway machinist, and fervent socialist, found himself charged with six counts of seditious conspiracy for his part in the strike. Among other things, he was accused of conspiring to instigate unlawful general strikes by enticing workers "to break [their] contracts and desert from their service and duties."[70] The most serious accusation was that Russell intended to foment revolution against the Government of Canada. In his charge, Judge Thomas L. Metcalfe discussed the socialist aspect of the trial. He also led the jury toward a guilty verdict by playing on their sense of moral duty. After assuring them that socialism itself was not illegal, Metcalfe did his best to cast it in a threatening light, and to Russell's detriment. He did so by effectively invoking the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition. "If a man's ideal is socialism," Metcalfe advised, "that is not illegal." But, "after hearing the evidence of what socialism is, may we not remember the words of that illustrious countryman of Mr. Russell [Sir Walter Scott], and ask ourselves, 'Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself has said, this is my own, my native land.'"[71] It was then that the judge reached his peak: "What did our forefathers fight for at Queenstown [*sic*] Heights? For what did they fling back the Americans from the ramparts of the city of Quebec and roll them down the snow clad cliffs? What do you think of patriotism? What do you think of allegiance to your country?"[72] After some further expounding, moralizing, and downright social engineering, Metcalfe asked the jury, "If a man won't fight for his country, as our forefathers fought at Quebec and Queenston Heights, will he fight for his fireside?"[73] There was no need to complicate matters by identifying the leaders of these fighting forefathers, and in the case of Queenston Heights the inference to Brock was obvious.

The outcome of Russell's trial was no less obvious, and the verdict was a two-year prison term. It would seem that Metcalfe's patriotic lecture had the desired effect. Just as the militiamen of Upper Canada had

rallied around Brock to defend their country against American republicanism, a majority of the jurors appear to have been unduly influenced by the comparisons Metcalfe drew between past and present. In their own way, these jurors were defending the country—not against American Manifest Destiny, but against the socialism of disgruntled Canadian workers. Writing about the Russell case many years later, criminal justice historian Desmond H. Brown explained that Metcalfe "was obviously well read in Canadian history and saw himself as a Canadian patriot."[74] This "gave his appeal to the patriotism of the jurors a very authentic ring when he encouraged them to help him to stem the tide of red revolution, which he believed was sweeping down to inundate Canada, with Russell and his co-defendants on the crest of the wave. That his belief was wrong is beside the point; it was the view of the majority, and he reflected it faithfully."[75]

To ensure the prosecution's success, Metcalfe stressed his opinion that if socialist "sentiments are to be brought about by illegal strikes, by force exercised thereby, by terror, by combinations of soldiers and workmen, by speeches at soldiers[']s and workmen[']s councils, or by unlawful means it is a crime and it is seditious."[76] It was certainly made to look as though the conservative and imperial nature of the country was under attack. But the value system perpetuated by the Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition was too firmly entrenched to be quickly or easily overturned. By the time of Russell's trial in 1919, the inherently Anglo-Ontarian and largely protestant world view had come to dominate all segments of Canadian society. Along with it came a high regard for Brock, whose heroism symbolized the country's firm attachment to Britain. It was the same engaging ideology that originated in Upper Canada and, reinforced from one generation to the next through a well-honed process of educational inculcation, was exported to the rest of Canada through a publishing industry centred in Ontario.

The patriotic shaping of young minds had become well-established by the end of the First World War, with Brock's contribution to the Canadian historical narrative formally introduced in the classroom, reinforced in textbooks, and highlighted during school exercises. The same cycle was extended beyond Ontario, supported primarily through the medium of reading materials authorized by that province's Department of Education and adopted for use in other educational jurisdictions across the country.[77] This Ontario-centric influence over

the publishing industry ensured that Brock remained the preferred role model for Canadian children. The only exception to the rule was in the province of Quebec, where the French-speaking population placed greater emphasis on their own heroes (particularly Adam Dollard des Ormeaux).[78] But even so, there was a grudging respect and admiration for Brock—not because he saved Canada for the British Empire, but rather for his having kept the Americans at bay. While Charles de Salaberry, who repulsed an American invasion at Chateauguay in October 1813, was French Canadian and understandably more deserving of their affection, Brock could still be forgiven his unfortunate connection with *les maudits Anglais*. By thwarting American designs on Upper Canada, and by extension Lower Canada, he inadvertently upheld the British Parliament's Quebec Act of 1774 along with its concessions to the conquered inhabitants for the preservation of their religious and legal rights. Regardless, a strong sense of French Canadian nationalism prevented the same level of overt enthusiasm among the Québécois for Brock that permeated the entirety of English-speaking Canada. But an aged seigneur who had actually known Brock felt not the slightest compunction in paying his respects to the British general.

In his *Mémoires*, published in 1866, Philippe-Joseph Aubert de Gaspé recalled an incident that occurred prior to the War of 1812. When a British Army officer was heard to disparage French Canadian manhood by claiming it would be useless to give "Canadiens" (meaning the Lower Canadian Militia) arms, as they lacked the courage to use them, Brock was said to disagree vociferously. Having faced Frenchmen on the battlefield, he could vouch for their bravery. That they were trained regulars as opposed to raw militia had little bearing, and Brock attested to the worth of the French Canadian militiamen by asking rhetorically, "does not French blood flow in their veins?"[79] While this passage suggests a certain tailoring of history, de Gaspé was nonetheless esteemed a reliable source.[80] However, he took considerable liberty by asserting that Brock could just as easily have claimed French blood for himself.[81] Genealogically, it was feasible enough: Brock hailed from Guernsey, one of Britain's Channel Islands, off the coast of France. Indeed, many of his ancestors were of French extraction, and whether or not de Gaspé knew it for an absolute fact, the explanation he provided regarding the source of Brock's heroism tended to resonate with French Canadians. Such was certainly the case with Pierre-Georges Roy, a prominent journalist, historian, and the

soon-to-be first chief archivist of the province of Quebec. Inspired by the insight de Gaspé provided, Roy used the 1919 publication of his *Les petites choses de notre histoire* to definitively state that "General Brock had French blood in his veins and he was proud of it."[82] With a slight rejigging of de Gaspé's original meaning, Roy had transformed the British general into a more relatable hero while also reinforcing the idea that Canada was founded and preserved by people of the same racial stock. In this way, French Canadians were encouraged to look favourably upon Brock, thus fostering an attitude that was consistent with the treatment he received in both the French- and English-language history textbooks read by students throughout *La belle province*.

Beyond Quebec, history textbooks produced in Ontario were also endorsed for use in other provinces. Whether in the Maritimes or the West, these textbooks helped export the story of Brock's heroism from the publishing houses of Toronto to far-distant and remote school boards. Along with Brock's heroism, there also went the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition—sub-themes either inspired by the War of 1812 or fostered by it.[83] Yet, the reaction to the spread of Ontario's historical memory was by no means uniformly accepting. As Canadian historian Keith Walden pointed out, the war was distinctly Upper Canadian or Ontarian in the traditions it created: "Maritimers, for example, took some interest in the war but never ascribed to it the significance that the Upper Canadians did."[84] Brock failed to evoke the same emotional response in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, or Prince Edward Island as he did in Ontario, and the Militia Myth fared no better. The Loyalist tradition, however, melded nicely with the East Coast's own Loyalist legacies and was therefore more germane. In the West, large numbers of migrants from Ontario helped to ensure that the heroics, myths, and traditions of the War of 1812 remained relevant precursors of Canadian Confederation.[85] As the most politically dominant province in Canada, Ontario's history was effectively that of the new nation-state as it expanded across the British North American continent; and the English-speaking diaspora from east of the Great Lakes viewed their history as part of a greater imperial continuum.

Recognized as the man who saved Canada for the empire, Brock was a potent reminder of the burgeoning nation's determination to remain British. Despite the heavy toll in human life exacted by a close alliance with Britain during the First World War, imperialism retained a strong—if unquantifiable—appeal among most Canadians. Phillip Buckner

concluded that "the war did not lead to widespread disillusionment with the empire, though it did greatly increase a sense of Canadian consciousness."[86] Nor was there any apparent contradiction between the two concepts. During a speech to the Imperial Press Conference at Ottawa in 1920, Sir Arthur Currie stressed that it was possible to be thoroughly loyal to the empire while at the same time being intensely Canadian.[87] Evidence of Currie's conviction was especially evident in the country's Empire Day celebrations, with those in Ontario leading the way. The most elaborate patriotic displays were those organized by the schools of Toronto. With over four thousand school cadets parading in 1918 and the same number in 1919, the idea of imperialism obviously remained just as popular there as ever.[88] Despite little if any mention of Brock in the press coverage of this annual event, it was generally assumed that his memory would be prominently commemorated during Empire Day celebrations held across the country—and so it was.

In addition to imperial-themed oral recitals and musical presentations, jingoistic essay-writing contests were also imposed upon student bodies across the nation. It was during the latter of these patriotic exercises that Brock tended to figure most prominently, with excerpts from particularly noteworthy essays occasionally published in the columns of local newspapers. One standout instance involved a London, Ontario, schoolboy by the name of Norman Gilmour, who attended the Simcoe Street School and in June of 1921 won the top prize for best Empire Day essay. Much of his success can be attributed to the patriotic topic he chose for his paper, which focused on the significance of Brock's life. Brief and biased, Gilmour's overview was unabashedly patriotic—especially in the passage where he expressed the rather intolerant opinion that the "person, I cannot say Canadian, who does not hold the name of Brock with respect and reverence has no right to claim himself a citizen of that country for which Brock sacrificed his life."[89] There was no room for differing opinions, just patriotic compliance, and it was a commonly expressed sentiment throughout the rest of the school year. Besides Flag Day, which used vexillology to glorify Canada's connection to the British Empire, class time was also set aside to celebrate historic anniversaries.[90] High on the list were important military victories, with the Battle of Queenston Heights ranking alongside the most notable conflicts of the First World War. And the hero who captured the imagination of most Canadian youth was still Brock, not Kitchener or Currie. Given the high

degree of importance attached to heroism, patriotism, and the British Empire, it is little wonder that Brock remained one of Canada's leading role models for schoolchildren. Yet, for all the high praise he received in the classrooms of the nation, and despite the positive depictions afforded him in various history textbooks, or mandatory Empire Day exercises, children's literature remained one of the more effective methods of what amounted to social engineering through hero worship.

Adventure stories, especially those written in a swashbuckling style, held the attention of young readers and impressed them with the patriotic morals of Brock's heroic life. While textbook passages about it were favourable to a fault, they were also cursory and failed to inspire the imagination. Not until 1908, and the publication of Walter R. Nursey's *The Story of Isaac Brock*, did Brock the Hero of Upper Canada become something akin to a modern-day superhero. Nursey's more active and exciting treatment was immensely popular with readers, but despite two reprints the book became increasingly difficult to find. A new edition was finally released in 1923, but in the meantime a young advertising salesman from Toronto helped to fill the void with a ponderously titled *Young Canada Boys with the S.O.S. on the Frontier*, which was published in 1918.[91] Its author, Harold C. Lowrey, was mainly influenced by the new genre of boy's fiction characterized by the numerous invasion stories that began to appear in the early years of the twentieth century, and especially their clichéd theme of enemy spies whose nefarious plans to commit acts of espionage against the British Empire were thwarted by patriotic boys.[92]

Set against the backdrop of Ontario's Niagara Peninsula during the First World War, Lowrey's book tells the story of a group of boys who join the Soldiers of the Soil agricultural program and, in the course of their mundane duties as farmhands, disrupt a German spy ring's diabolical attempts to sabotage critical infrastructure, including bridges, power plants, and the Welland Canal. During a period when there were no new Brock biographies of a calibre on par with Nursey's, Lowrey's *Young Canada Boys* helped to reinforce Brock's status as a Canadian role model. But there was also an ulterior motive. Infused with occasional but pertinent references to Brock's death and the Battle of Queenston Heights, Lowrey's book aimed to prime Canadian boys for future military service. To achieve this goal, *Young Canada Boys* combined patriotism and duty in a manner that Susan R. Fisher described as alternating "between high adventure and history lessons."[93] Lowrey's penchant for

the past stemmed from his childhood on the family farm at Queenston, where elderly relatives captivated his imagination with thrilling stories from their local history, many of which dwelt on Brock's heroic death. But while the *Globe* gave Lowrey's book a good review, *Young Canada Boys* soon slipped into obscurity.[94]

Part of the reason for Lowrey's short-lived success was a reaction against militarism in Canada. For most anti-militarists, no degree of martial spirit was acceptable in the classroom as it was thought to imbue young minds with an unnatural enthusiasm for war. Both pacifist and passionate, the anti-militarists made no distinction between the militarism of Canada and that of Germany. Anything that smacked of the military, no matter how innocuous, was perceived to be a threat to peace. Included were the patriotic and imperial exercises of schoolchildren, as all such activities were looked upon as symptomatic of a warlike and extremely dangerous trend. While anti-militarist calls for action became more strident over the course of the 1920s, the growing agitation for peace was further hastened by painful remembrances of all the Canadian casualties resulting from the First World War. Well before the outbreak of that horrendous conflict, anti-militarists had raised the alarm over the threat of a society too heavily invested in the warrior ethos. Although the war silenced most of their number, some continued to make their views known as the tally of death and destruction grew ever larger. Anti-militarists lived in hope of achieving a new, more peaceful world order once the war ended. But as the Reverend George B. McLeod of Toronto's Deer Park Presbyterian Church warned in November of 1916, "it will require every atom of the moral strength of the church to prevent the military ideal being fastened upon us at the close of the war."[95] He need not have worried, since it was not long after the victory in 1918 that the anti-militarists resumed their crusade against the slightest perceived attempt to popularize war.

High on the list of priorities was cadet training, especially in Toronto, where the newly organized and pacificist Daughters of Canada (a nationalist counter to the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire) denounced this choreographed aspect of militarism in January 1920.[96] Despite the imposition of a contrarian point of view by a non-member, a woman named Lila Watt, who indelicately pointed out that Canada was a wealthy country with a relatively small population and therefore a "prize for anyone to grab who can," the Daughters of Canada persisted in their

avowed goal of anti-militarism—a progressive movement that continued to gain momentum across the country.[97] A few months later, Ontario's minister of education was met by a deputation from the Hamilton Trades and Labour Council, as well as several members of Parliament from the United Farmers of Ontario government of Ernest C. Drury. After a generalizing statement about the ideals of the people of Ontario, who were all supposedly "against militarism or military preparation from any standpoint," the visiting gentlemen "urged that military training in the public schools be replaced by modified physical culture."[98] The minister of education, Robert H. Grant, was sympathetic but cautious. Although he had come to embrace many of the United Farmers' principles, Grant was formerly a long-time Conservative—which likely explains his half-hearted response. And while the minister promised his consideration of the matter, cadet training remained a contentious issue long after the United Farmers were swept from power in 1923.

Closely aligned with cadet training were the parades and reviews held in conjunction with Empire Day festivities. Militaristic by their very nature, these ceremonial manoeuvres could hardly be passed off as anything else, and the unfortunate comments arising from the reviews held during the First World War did nothing to promote the lame excuse that cadet training was merely a form of physical exercise. In May of 1917, a militia officer verbalized his approval of the parading cadets in Toronto by observing, "they will make soldiers in no time."[99] A year later, the *Globe* echoed a similar sentiment by pronouncing them to be "the nucleus of a future army."[100] This favourable view of militarism continued unabated in 1919, when Toronto Mayor Thomas Langton Church made reference to the ongoing general strike in Winnipeg, which he did in order to justify the importance of military-style discipline for schoolchildren. Upon viewing the cadet parade, the conservative Church smugly observed that "it would do the people of Winnipeg good to see such an inspiring sight."[101] More to the point, it was a good lesson to all those alien malefactors suspected of fomenting civil disobedience. As Church boasted, there was no room for Bolshevism or socialism in Canada. Furthermore, the cadet parade was a sure sign that "we are going to have none [of it] in Toronto."[102] Church had good reason to swagger, since Toronto was the most imperial-minded city in Canada.[103] Elsewhere, the proponents of Empire Day and cadet training managed to hold their own against the anti-militarists, who criticized these blatant displays of martial tradition

without much effect. Most Canadians remained solidly imperial in their attitudes toward nationalism, which helped to stifle much of the rhetoric decrying their cherished patriotic events and institutions. But in the autumn of 1922, the institutions of childhood militarism came under a withering fire—that of a recently elected federal member of Parliament from Ontario's Grey County.[104]

As the country's first federally elected woman politician, Agnes Macphail quickly proved herself to be an uncompromising social reformer with a talent for debate and a deep-seated resentment toward all forms of militarism. Included was her opposition to the Boy Scouts, which was no less vehement. Yet, despite a forceful argument that the organization trained youth for war, Macphail's campaign against the Boy Scouts gradually petered out. However, her sniping at cadet training continued over the next several years, during which time the anti-militarists expanded the scope of their advocacy. In early 1924, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire were taken to task over the war pictures they distributed to Canadian schools, which, as children's activist Lucy L. Woodsworth asserted, "bind the brains of the little ones to think of life in terms of competitive strife, jealousy, hatred, war."[105] The reach of anti-militarist activism became such that by 1930 a Toronto rabbi, speaking on the topic of "Education for Peace," called for an end to the "latest cult of militarism, the worship of the unknown soldier."[106] Chicago-born Maurice Eisendrath was a twenty-seven-year-old pacifist who was extremely outspoken in his beliefs, which included anti-militarism in all its guises. Memorials to the war dead were no exception, and Eisendrath felt not the slightest hesitation in lecturing his audience: "If you let your children gaze on the memorials to fallen soldiers; if you let them learn martial tunes, they will become cannon fodder."[107]

Toward the end of 1930, with the controversy over cadet training still raging, an Anglican rector from Toronto came to the defence of military training for boys. Canon Henry John Cody, of St. Paul's Church on Bloor Street, had been a Conservative member of provincial parliament and the Ontario minister of education from 1918 to 1919. Not surprisingly, he supported the concept of cadet training, and during the annual service of commemoration for the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada he acknowledged that "war is not the ideal of Christ, but there is evil in the world which has to be overcome and resisted. When it came [in 1914], would we have done better for the world, or for womankind, or for human progress, if we had

idly sat and allowed the hosts of wickedness to sweep over the earth?"[108] It was a profoundly obvious insight, but one that was lost on the more fervid anti-militarists.

As their movement became increasingly radical, the fanaticism of some adherents intensified—such as Macphail's unsuccessful attempt to curtail or eliminate federal government expenditures for not only cadet training, but also the Royal Military College of Canada, and the Canadian Militia as well.[109] Then there was John W. Buckley, the Trades and Labour Council secretary in Toronto, who early in the Great Depression, and on behalf of himself and the council's executive, voiced disapproval of the "war machine" atmosphere of the relief work camps proposed for northern Ontario.[110] But as extreme as this social campaigning could occasionally become, it was seldom, if ever, as overtly anti-patriotic as that of a Hamilton Board of Education school trustee. Like other anti-militarists, Agnes Sharpe vigorously objected to cadet training, but in May 1931 she made headlines by openly expressing her opposition to the "flaunting of the Union Jack in connection with Empire Day ceremonies in the schools, and that she did not sing the national anthem ["God Save the King"] and had not done so for many years."[111] Another form of anti-militarism involved the teaching of war, and a notable incident occurred in 1935 when Robert T. Thompson, a candidate for school trustee in Toronto, expressed himself in favour of revising all textbooks that glorified war.[112] Although Thompson failed in his bid for a seat on the school board, the idea of history without a romanticizing emphasis on warfare remained a priority for many anti-militarists, especially in the years immediately following the First World War.[113]

The publication of a new history textbook that more accurately reflected the horrors of that conflict was a major issue for the anti-militarists, who were determined to neutralize the ill effects of unfettered patriotism on Canadian schoolchildren. The concept was nothing new, and one of its early advocates in 1920 was William Loe Smith. A politically active newspaperman and founding member of the United Farmers of Ontario, Smith revealed the danger of allowing education to promote militarism under the cover of patriotism. Much of his knowledge of the subject was based on the findings of Dr. Henri Béland, a French Canadian medical practitioner and federal member of Parliament. Having been incarcerated in a German prison during the First World War, Béland published an account of his experiences in 1919. Included was his impression as to

the root cause of German militarism. According to Smith's reading of Béland's reminiscences, Prussian victories over Denmark, Austria, and France culminated in a dangerous form of German patriotism that was largely directed at children. Quoting Béland, Smith described how "the standard reading books in all the German schools were full of stories of cavalry charges, the taking of cities and so on." In this cunning way, "the intellects of the youth were impregnated with principles of militarism from the first day at school."[114] Sharing Béland's findings with the *Globe*'s readers, Smith expressed his own fear that a German-style of militarism might take hold in Canada, unless a better alternative was found for the teaching of history. Smith's solution was a more social type of history: "Let us see that the schools of this province and of this dominion impregnate the mind of the rising generation with the story of the sacrificial heroism of the pioneers who transformed a forest into fruitful fields; that the services rendered by all those who in any way have made life better worth living are held up for emulation."[115] Smith was not alone in his preference for demilitarized history. Similar concerns over the perceived war-mongering content of Canadian textbooks also found expression, and some of the more effective arguments against militarism of this sort were made by a re-elected federal member of Parliament.

Speaking before a Toronto meeting of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in January of 1926, Agnes Macphail denounced the educational literature used throughout Canada, and especially in her home province. "All history and all textbooks in Ontario have a military bias," she declared, and the result was a form of education that "teaches a strutting nationalism."[116] Macphail proposed to rectify the situation with a complete overhaul: "If we are going to go any further on the road to international harmony, we must houseclean our minds."[117] While she was mainly concerned with the patriotic treatment afforded the First World War, it is conceivable—had Macphail and other anti-militarists been allowed their way—that much of Canada's military history might have been replaced with the stories of pioneer life favoured by Smith. Although the idea of excising the glorification of war from history textbooks was never far removed from the debate over anti-militarism, such a radical proposal had little chance of success. Most Canadians saw no harm in teaching their children to be patriotic, regardless of the degree to which militarism was included in the exercise. But even if the anti-militarists had met with a broad popular support in their efforts to

eradicate the history of conflict from Canada's textbooks, it was not likely to have been a sufficient deterrence against the nation's fascination with military heroism. Brock's popularity during this postwar period of rising anti-militarism would have been sustained regardless, mainly through the reprinting of his more popular biographies—Nursey's *The Story of Isaac Brock* in 1923; Eayrs's *Sir Isaac Brock* in 1924, 1926, and 1927; and Edgar's *General Brock* in 1926, 1927, and 1928.[118] As these various reprints attest, Canadians retained a strong interest in Brock's heroic story. Yet, biographies were not the only printed means by which his popularity was kept alive; novels carried a similar effect, and Canadian writers of fiction had a long tradition of utilizing Brock's patriotic virtues.[119]

As in the case of his textbook and biographical representations, wherein Brock was always treated approvingly, his fictionalized character was only ever given a positive part to play. This favourable bias continued throughout the 1920s, with several novels featuring Brock in a heroic supporting role—mainly to help situate stories in Upper Canada at the time of the War of 1812.[120] While perhaps not as effective as a full-fledged biography in promoting an appreciation for Brock, novels nonetheless contributed to his lingering appeal. The most popular of these fictional treatments was *The Runner: A Romance of the Niagaras*, published in 1929 by a United Church minister who wrote under the name of Ralph Connor. Rev. Charles William Gordon was described by a reviewer for the *Globe* as a "teller of tales that fascinate by action, variety and virility" and whose "dominating purpose is to entertain."[121] Of all the novels Gordon had written up to that point, *The Runner* was judged to be his "most important piece of fictional writing."[122] Among his cast of characters was Brock, who was portrayed in a sympathetic tone and whose death was immortalized with a eulogistic assessment of his military ability. With dramatic flair, Gordon wrote of the great loss that Canadians had sustained in Brock's death. A descriptive account of his funeral was particularly effective in this regard:

> Through a vast throng of weeping citizens the cortege moved to the strains of martial music and the booming of minute guns, the guns of the fort on both sides of the Niagara answering each other in mournful tribute to him who for ten years had been the inspiring genius of his country's defence, hammering into an effective fighting force the farmers, clerks, artisans, and traders of

> Upper Canada, and becoming for all peoples and all ages a shining example of devotion, pure and high, to his country's good.[123]

Engrossing though it was, Gordon's description of the gun salute was not entirely accurate. The British and American cannon were not fired in response to one another, as he seemed to imply. There was no such coordination between the opposing gun crews.[124] While it appears that most of Gordon's readers were willing to forgive his literary licence, this same lack of rigour became a sore point for one of the *Globe*'s more critical correspondents. Journalist and historian Lyman B. Jackes had several complaints with the novel, one of the more egregious being its description of the presentation of a daguerreotype in 1810—some thirty years before that photographic process was invented.[125] Without saying as much, Jackes also pointed out a major shortcoming connected with these fictionalized accounts of Brock's life—namely, the novelist's bias, or the unrealistic impression of a military genius who could do no wrong. Of course, this lack of objectivity was also evident in the biographies written about Brock, as well as in the histories and textbooks outlining his great military master strokes. Nonetheless, the occasional historical novel helped to bolster an appreciation for Brock. Along with shorter fictional stories, serialized in various newspapers and magazines, such novels served to remind Canadians, both young and old, of the immense debt they owed him. These occasional refreshers, especially during the economically depressed 1930s, helped to maintain Brock's enduring popularity—as did other forms of remembrance.

Throughout a decade of severe financial constraint, Brock continued to figure prominently during Empire Day celebrations. These annual school events remained popular, even in larger cities where cost-cutting measures eliminated most cadet parades in the early 1930s.[126] There was also the unbroken reverence of patriotic organizations such as the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and the United Empire Loyalists' Association, all of which were effective to some degree in maintaining Brock's heroic status as the funding limitations imposed by the Depression made other forms of veneration impractical. But this routine approach to celebrating Brock's memory suddenly took a new and exciting turn in 1937, when it was announced that one of his distinguished relatives would soon be making a pilgrimage to Canada.[127] In addition to claiming Brock as her great-uncle, Arabella

Stuart Howell-Jones gave every impression of being an accomplished novelist setting out on a speaking tour to promote her latest book.[128] It was good newspaper copy, and there was a patriotic angle to the story given that Howell-Jones intended to pay a visit to Queenston Heights, the scene of her relative's last battle. Nothing more newsworthy had occurred at Brock's Monument since 1929, when the large stone arm of his statue came crashing down during a violent thunderstorm.[129]

The idea of a celebrity taking time out of her busy schedule to pay familial respects to a celebrated Canadian hero held great appeal, especially among the ladies of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire. Such was the sense of occasion that a number of these patriotic women were eager to open their homes to Brock's great-niece, and Howell-Jones graciously accepted their offers of hospitality at the various stops on her Canadian tour.[130] It was all in the line of duty for the Daughters of the Empire, whose main purpose was to promote British imperialism in Canada.[131] After engagements in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Welland, and Niagara Falls, Howell-Jones finally arrived in Queenston to much anticipation. Being the guest of honour, it had been decided that she should lay the wreath that was specially commissioned for the occasion.[132] By this point, considerable amounts of time, effort, and money had been lavished on Brock's great-niece, and so it was probably just as well that the event's organizers had been misled as to her actual relationship with the hero being honoured. As the granddaughter of one of Brock's first cousins, Howell-Jones was in fact not a great-niece but rather a first cousin, twice removed, and someone who was more distantly related to Brock than she either realized or cared to admit. There was also a sizable discrepancy with regard to her writing career.

Howell-Jones was not the novelist initial reports claimed, and as the subtitle of her book—*A Mother's Psychic Experiences with Her Loved Ones After Their Death*—clarified, Brock's feted relative was actually a spiritualist with an otherworldly message to share.[133] However, if Howell-Jones was not the eminent personage most Canadians were expecting of Brock's descendant, she nonetheless served as the inspiration for a significant open-air tribute in his honour. Together with various dignitaries, both civilian and military, Howell-Jones participated in a well-attended memorial service at Brock's Monument. Like the 1936 veterans' reunion held in conjunction with the unveiling of the memorial at Vimy Ridge, located at the site of a major Canadian victory during the First

World War, the spectacle arranged for Howell-Jones held a significance that extended well beyond Brock and his monument. For the attendees, it was an opportunity to reaffirm the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition, both of which had come under increasingly hostile scrutiny from the anti-militarist movement. Indeed, there were hints of both ideologies in the speech given by a past president of the Ontario Historical Society. In it, Louis Blake Duff began by portraying Brock as a mythical hero. "His greatness was no accident," Duff declared, adding that Brock's efforts penetrated from coast to coast.[134] "The spirit of 1812," he further asserted, "has dominated Canada in every era since. Brock's monument is not here nor at Brockville, nor in St. Paul's, in old London, but rather in the hearts of ten million Canadians. If it had not been for him, you might all be singing 'Yankee Doodle' today."[135]

Perhaps mindful of the visiting contingent of "befeathered chiefs of the Six Nations' Indians," Duff added "that had it not been for their support, no one could prophesy the probable result of the War of 1812."[136] But Chief Elliott Moses sensed a disparity in what Duff said that could not be ignored. First, however, he extended a gracious welcome to Howell-Jones, and in doing so expressed great pride in the alliance between his ancestors and the British as represented by Brock. With his next breath, however, the chief voiced his frustration over the indifference exhibited toward the Six Nations warriors who fought at the Battle of Queenston Heights. Unable to conceal his disappointment, an impassioned Moses expressed himself in the following manner: "I feel we have not received recognition that should have come to our people. There is not, to my knowledge any mention of the part they played anywhere on the monuments in this district."[137] The complaint certainly merited further consideration, and yet a dedicated monument in recognition of the Six Nations was never acted upon during Moses's long lifetime. It was not until 2016, nearly thirty-eight years after he died in 1978, that the Landscape of Nations Memorial was inaugurated on Queenston Heights.[138]

Having laid her wreath at the base of Brock's Monument, Howell-Jones lingered in Canada until mid-September 1937, when she returned to her home in Bristol, England.[139] Although she spent most of her time promoting a career in spiritualist public speaking, Howell-Jones was really no more self-serving than her Canadian hosts. By taking advantage of an opportunity to celebrate Brock, no matter how questionable it began to seem, they reinforced both the Militia Myth and the Loyalist

tradition. The Howell-Jones "pilgrimage" to Brock's Monument, despite having been something of a sham, was put to good use in staging what amounted to an imperial-themed patriotic revival. In this regard, it was a great success that nothing could surpass—not even a royal visit. When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth came to Canada in May 1939, one of their stops was at Brock's Monument, where hundreds of schoolchildren anxiously awaited the empire's ultimate role models. But unlike the hyped-up ceremony held for Howell-Jones, the royal couple's visit to Queenston Heights was a comparatively low-key affair. There was only time enough for a momentary viewing from their limousine.[140] While it was important to include a royal show of respect for Brock, given the great historical significance he held for Canadians, the affair likely had to be tempered to avoid the appearance of gloating over an American defeat. Another war in Europe was looming, and the king and his consort were soon to seek the goodwill of an important ally: the United States.[141] Canadian support could be relied upon, and so there was no particular need for a lavish ceremony at the tomb of the soldier who had become symbolic of Canada's strong attachment to the Crown. Besides which, the royal couple were welcomed with numerous lavish receptions along the route of their Canadian tour, Brock's Monument being just one of several attractions pointed out to them during a scenic drive from St. Catharines to Niagara Falls. A short time later, after a brief visit to the famous cataract, it was on to the aptly named General Brock Hotel and a small dinner party. Later that same night, the royal couple boarded a special train and crossed over the Niagara River into the United States.[142]

The royal visit of 1939 offered a sunny respite from the creeping threat of war, and it was an opportunity to remind Canadians of Brock's continued relevance. Yet, while his monument featured prominently in the royal tour through the Niagara Peninsula, the nation's press took little notice of the importance that Canadians attached to Brock's memory. It was a peculiarity of the times, one in which consideration for a potential wartime ally seemingly combined with financial restraints. The result was an apparent negative impact on the production of print materials regarding Brock. As was the case during the Great Depression, no new Brock biographies were published during the Second World War, and neither were there any additional reprints of those books that had warranted re-release in the 1920s. Rising production costs were a major factor, and like the conflict of a generation earlier, the return of war caused

production difficulties for Canadian publishers. However, increased sales and a new appreciation for the nation's writers presented just as many publishing opportunities.[143] Still, there was no pent-up demand for a new book on Brock. The market was well-saturated with previously published Brock biographies, and the Canadian government had no interest in using Brock's heroism as a propaganda tool. It was almost as though the primary purpose of Brock's heroic legacy had been entirely given over to the patriotic indoctrination of Canadian schoolchildren, but with the familiar old story of Brock's daring deeds being used to reflect a new vision of Canada—one that was more independent than imperial.

Although educational reading materials still retained a nostalgic bond with Brock, especially in textbooks and school readers, a more critical approach toward his memory was beginning to find favour elsewhere. This new development coincided with the increasingly analytical approach of professional historians, but it was more likely to be found in daily newspapers than scholarly journals. While there was little academic interest in Brock, the situation was rather different in the newsrooms of the nation. Like other subject matter that offered a change from constant reports of overseas warfare, the occasional column feature about Brock's exploits helped to relieve the monotony of wartime on the home front. Such articles made for good and patriotic reading, and it was in newsprint that some of the deeper considerations of Brock first began to appear. Included among them was his engagement to a young Upper Canadian woman.

Sophia Shaw was a daughter of Aeneas Shaw, adjutant general of the Upper Canadian Militia as well as a prominent member of the colony's legislative council.[144] With Shaw's homestead located near Fort York, where Brock was domiciled during his last posting to Upper Canada, there was the potential for social interaction that rang true and lent credibility to stories about a tragic love affair involving Shaw's daughter and the dashing British general. Poignantly, they told of Brock accepting a "stirrup cup" from his young fiancée before he rode off to meet his doom at Queenston Heights.[145] Sophia Shaw was left to mourn her loss, and based on her long preference for wearing black dresses, it was generally assumed that she grieved for Brock until the day she died.[146] Stories about this excessively doleful behaviour made their way into Toronto's newspapers with increasing frequency—and for good reason. Here was a touching tale with all the trappings of a Greek tragedy: a brave knight

cut down in his prime and a fair maiden forever bereft. But even if it appeared to have more in common with romantic fantasy than historical fact, there was a tendency among English-speaking Canadians (especially those with Anglo-Ontarian roots) to indulge family traditions with Loyalist overtones. Consequently, Sophia Shaw's engagement always generated a good deal of reader interest. It also commanded a fair amount of sympathy, as a hapless columnist for the *Globe and Mail* discovered late in 1941.

John V. McAree, a native of Toronto and a man well into his seventies, had never heard the story of Sophia Shaw's romance.[147] So, when he came into possession of what he thought was "a hitherto-unpublished bit of Canadiana concerning the hero of the Battle of Queenston Heights," McAree decided to devote the better part of a column to sharing the revelation.[148] Under a suitably enticing title, "Was Brock Betrothed to a Girl in York?," he introduced his readers to Sophia Shaw. "So far as we are aware," McAree trumpeted, "her name has not been mentioned in connection with Brock, though there was a general belief that he had lost his heart to some one."[149] Having failed to find so much as a hint of Brock's intentions "in any contemporary records or in his own family correspondence," McAree decided to take his chances and "blurt it out."[150] Just over a week later, he got a public dressing down for his ignorance of Sophia Shaw's claim to fame. Making use of the jabbing title "Historical Romance Well Known," another popular *Globe and Mail* columnist berated McAree with the facts of the case. Writing under her pen name of Bride Broder, Mary White had no qualms about correcting a male colleague in the pages of the same newspaper. In very frank and slightly condescending language, she set the appropriate tone: "No apprehensiveness need be felt by any one mentioning the fact of the engagement between Miss Sophia Shaw and General Sir Isaac Brock, and our fellow-columnist (Fourth) need have no compunction about blurting out (as he said) the story. It has been spoken of in print a number of times—we have even touched on it ourselves, once or twice, when occasion arose."[151]

Despite the definitive stance White took regarding the factual nature of this important early Upper Canadian engagement, the evidence she produced in support of it was anything but conclusive. Her one and only source was an old journal article describing a charity bazaar held at York in about the year 1830, where "one of the stellar attractions" happened to be "a lady dressed in deep mourning and heavily veiled-Miss Shaw."[152] Of

course, the connection to Shaw's engagement was inferred, and McAree, whose own stance had by now hardened, was not entirely convinced it had anything to do with Brock. Although he was willing to admit his error in assuming that he had scooped everyone in the newspaper world with news of Brock's engagement to Sophia Shaw, McAree tried to save face by making it known that the story White so readily accepted was lacking in proof. He did so in a roundabout fashion, by expressing a belief "no doubt that Norman Shaw of North Hinksey, Oxford, who is writing a book [on the Shaws], will be able to publish original letters fully confirming what heretofore seems to have been little more than a family tradition."[153] It was actually a sly challenge to the myth that McAree rightly suspected.[154] But a far greater challenge to the various long-held and largely unassailable notions of Brock was that involving Roger Hale Sheaffe, and—like Sophia Shaw's engagement—it, too, made fodder for newsprint.

Sheaffe's generalship had become something of an issue several months earlier, when his much-maligned legacy was reviewed in the columns of the *Globe and Mail*. Although Sheaffe was the true victor of the Battle of Queenston Heights, he had long been stigmatized by Torontonians for his failure to defend York during an American attack in 1813. Largely overlooked and forgotten, his sad case was taken up by Fred Williams in mid-July 1941. Williams, an elderly journalist with an interest in history, wrote in recognition of the ninetieth anniversary of Sheaffe's death, bemoaning his neglect and insisting that "it must surely be possible to honor the man who turned the tide of battle and drove the enemy back into the Niagara River after they had possessed the heights all day, without detracting from the pride we all feel in Isaac Brock."[155] As Williams further enlightened his readers,

> Historians and orators write and talk their praises of Brock, but few of them have a word of commendation for the man who won the victory after Brock's death. They pass over the very important fact that if the invaders were routed that day it was due to the strategy and military resource of Roger Hale Sheaffe. Had he lived, Brock might—probably would[—]have achieved the same result, but he died in his gallant but reckless charge at the head of the York Volunteers, and it was Sheaffe who won the victory.[156]

While there was a degree of public support for Williams's radical view of the past, his proposal for a memorial of some kind for Sheaffe was greeted less than enthusiastically, especially in Toronto. Williams expected as much, given that there was still a general perception that the citizens of York had been left to their fate in 1813, but he was surprised by the persistence of this "old-time Toronto antipathy toward Sheaffe."[157] One United Empire Loyalist descendant he encountered "was most vehement in her contention that Sheaffe had 'betrayed the people of York to save his own skin.' I tried to convince her that Sheaffe, with his small force of regulars, had no alternative but to retire towards Kingston, then a much more important military post than York; but all to no avail."[158] What Williams failed to appreciate was how the long-lasting nature of this peculiar displeasure was exacerbated by an intergenerational admiration for Brock, which only served to prolong the disdain felt for Sheaffe. Temperament was often cited to explain the differing leadership styles of these two generals, and it was a local historian from southwestern Ontario who provided *Globe and Mail* readers with an exercise in contrasts that reinforced this view.

Writing from Chatham, Ontario, journalist and freelance writer Victor Lauriston concluded that "Brock was a brilliant, dashing soldier, of a type that even now is rare; Sheaffe was an extreme example of the martinet officer [or strict disciplinarian], who in those days was only too common."[159] While critical of both officers, Lauriston summed up their individual character traits with an assessment that was clearly biased in favour of Brock:

> The glorifying of Brock, the practical ignoring of Sheaffe, seems largely due to the contrasted characters of the two men. Some years before the war, Sheaffe's cruelties led to a serious mutiny at St. George [Fort George]: Brock quieted the mutiny by sheer force of personality. Brock was loved, alike by his soldiers and by the colonists; Sheaffe was merely hated and endured. Brock died gloriously at the head of a forlorn hope; Sheaffe won a methodical battle at the head of adequate forces. Brock's death filled the colony with a sense of bereavement; Sheaffe's departure filled it with a sense of relief. No man could, or did, take Brock's place; Sheaffe's place could be filled by any well-trained, resolute and

> unflinching British officer. And finally, Brock is still an inspiration to Canadians—Sheaffe isn't and never was.[160]

By looking beyond strategic considerations, Lauriston recognized Sheaffe's interpersonal failings as another reason for the snub inflicted upon him. Yet, had Lauriston placed greater emphasis on the importance of his observation about Brock's inspirational leadership, he might also have recognized the significance of the Militia Myth and the Loyalist tradition in defining the historic worth of both Brock and Sheaffe. While these traditional misconceptions promoted a positive remembrance of Brock, they also served to mitigate Sheaffe's victory. A lacklustre performance at York had nullified Sheaffe's heroism and also his usefulness in promoting patriotism for the sake of nation building. But Lauriston did not think about Sheaffe in such nuanced terms, and neither did Williams for that matter. Williams simply wanted to give Sheaffe his due, and Lauriston fancied an opportunity to engage in some military psychoanalysis for the readers of a big-city daily newspaper. Not surprisingly, the critique Lauriston offered did nothing to advance the cause of a memorial to Sheaffe. With the passage of two years, however, there was a new and exciting development in what Williams saw as a high-profile endorsement of his proposal.

In August of 1943, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill paid a flying visit to Niagara Falls in advance of his first military conference at Quebec. Accompanied by an entourage including his youngest daughter, Churchill spent an hour milling about Table Rock before setting out by car for Brock's Monument.[161] It was on the terrace of the nearby Queenston Heights Restaurant that Churchill suddenly put his Canadian attendants on the spot by raising the issue of a monument to Sheaffe. Expressing puzzlement at Brock's decision to launch an attack against the American-held heights with insufficient forces, Churchill then casually inquired as to why no similarly impressive monument had been erected to Sheaffe. The feeble explanation—that he was honoured with a marker somewhere—failed to satisfy Churchill, prompting him to speculate that Sheaffe was denied the honour "because he wasn't killed."[162] Pouncing on the remarks of "that wizard of war strategy and master of military history," Williams conjectured that "this expert opinion upon the historic battle may induce the people of Ontario to, even yet, pay tribute to the man whose brilliant tactics turned defeat into victory."[163] Unfortunately

for Williams, and despite his attempt to put Churchill's innocent or not-so-innocent remarks to good use, they failed to bring about a monument for Sheaffe.[164] Rather, the quip reverberated throughout the country without inviting much comment—except in southern Manitoba. There, a columnist for the influential *Winnipeg Free Press* took umbrage, not only with the British leader's audacity in criticizing Brock, but also his flippancy regarding "the Canadian people's sense of proportion in erecting at Queenston Heights that magnificent memorial column which broods over Niagara peninsula and sends its beneficent shadows east to the farthest tip of Cape Breton, and west to touch the blue Pacific as it laps Vancouver Island. That shadow which travels through the hearts of men."[165] While Kennethe M. Haig was irritated by the prime minister's lack of decorum, she was also willing to concede that "Mr. Churchill could not know that he was treading upon a Canadian dream."[166]

Born on a farm near Brandon, Manitoba, Haig was a middle-aged journalist who was just as outspoken as she was patriotic. And being a proud Canadian, she thought nothing of lecturing Churchill on the inspirational importance of Brock's heroism at Queenston Heights. With the Second World War having become an inescapable fact of life, Brock served as a strong if underutilized symbol of Canadian resolve to defend both country and empire. In Haig's romantic way of expressing it, "he died, but the impress of his spirit remained and fought again, and again, and again. Brock, riding through the mists."[167] It was a popular old notion, the idea that Brock's heroic sacrifice animated his men to fight on to victory, and Haig made full use of the imagery by observing that "Brock still rides. Ah yes, Mr. Churchill. He rode with Canada's airmen over your . . . and our . . . London. He rides with the ships at sea. He rides in far lands where the Canadians go."[168] It was the unmistakable expression of a common bond, and to Haig Brock's Monument was a tangible representation of the interconnectedness between Canadian nationalism and British imperialism. Underlying this sentiment, however, was a strong sense of independence. As far as Haig was concerned, Canada won the War of 1812. "Yes, Canada won the war. True, with Britain's help. But Canada won it. Won it at Queenston Heights . . . where Brock died."[169] After unwittingly paying homage to the Militia Myth, Haig returned to Brock's Monument and in her concluding remarks pleadingly explained, "That's what this memorial column means, Mr. Churchill. That is what it says to Canadians. Please, Mr. Churchill, step softly, because you tread on our

dreams."[170] Despite her highly figurative language, Haig's "dreams" can be safely characterized as dreams of nationhood. And while she assumed to speak on behalf of all Canadians, most of these same Canadians appear to have forgiven the British prime minister his slight indiscretion. After all, Churchill was one of the world's greatest wartime leaders and his mere presence in Canada was an important recognition of the country's contribution to the Allied war effort. Haig, however, was far too principled to let an injustice go unanswered, not that it really mattered. Churchill was either oblivious or indifferent to his diplomatic misstep at Queenston Heights, Haig's protest hardly registered beyond her readership, and the laurel wreath still belonged to Brock.

That Brock's influence could have been as profound as Haig tried to impress upon her readers is difficult to imagine, except when the broader context is considered. Most of Canada's armed forces in the Second World War had been immersed in a Brock cult of personality from an early age, as were their civilian counterparts. This was especially true of the men and women who attended school in Ontario, Western Canada, the Maritimes, and Quebec's Anglo enclaves (less so among the province's French Canadian majority). It was by and large the result of educational indoctrination that Brock remained an important national and military hero, despite having exploits that were rooted in the distant past. Curiously, and as was the case during the First World War, there was no authorized attempt by the federal government to make use of his heroic legacy for recruitment or propaganda purposes. This apparent oversight might seem surprising, given Brock's well-known heroics, but with the exception of Churchill and the royal family, Canada's propaganda apparatus focused much of its output on the bravery of ordinary soldiers and the civilians who supported them. Brock was thus passed over in favour of an unknown but relatable cast of everyday Canadians, and their military leaders fared no better—perhaps because none of them, specifically the country's high-ranking army generals, could match his charisma.[171] But while Brock was far less relevant to the war effort against the Axis powers, there were still patriotic reminders of his enduring popularity, besides those emanating from the classrooms of the nation. They were mainly inconsequential newspaper and magazine human-interest items, stories that recounted the high points of his military career. There was also the occasional story with a new angle. In November of 1942, for example, the *Globe and Mail* reported the presentation of a small travelling

trunk to the University of Toronto. But while the donor thought the trunk had once belonged to Brock's wife, it was soon found to have been the property of a sister-in-law, Lucy (Short) Brock, who was the wife of James Brock, a cousin of the famous general.[172]

It was just as well for Brock's enduring popularity that he remained an important role model for Canadian schoolchildren, whose history textbooks persisted in their fondness toward him. The Militia Myth and Loyalist tradition also continued to be promoted, along with the intrinsic importance of the British Empire. Although the Canadian government had formally exercised its autonomy in foreign affairs since the enactment of the 1931 Statute of Westminster (as evidenced by its delay in declaring war on Germany in 1939), this new status was still largely symbolic. Just as there was no doubt that Canada would join in the fight against the Nazis, its place in the British Empire—while evolving toward greater autonomy—was viewed by many Canadians as no less a given. Most of these same Canadians paid little heed to the rejigged relationship, and Empire Day continued to reinforce the idea among schoolchildren that Canada was a British nation. While Brock might not have been celebrated to quite the same extent during these and other school exercises, he was still highly regarded, and the nation's history textbooks always represented him in a favourable manner. Some of the more popular editions did so well into the 1950s, including several by George W. Brown, a University of Toronto history professor. His Brock was "a gallant officer, quick in decision, bold in action. He had studied every detail of Upper Canada's defences, and made his preparations with the greatest care. Instead of adopting a cautious defensive policy, as ninety-nine generals out of a hundred would have done with his limited forces, Brock took the offensive."[173]

Having written this passage in the early part of the Second World War, Brown presented Canadian high school students with a hero for their times—one whose services were an inspiration, and whose imposing monument recalled "their debt to Sir Isaac Brock."[174] Brown's *Building the Canadian Nation*, first published in 1942, succeeded in textbook popularity by presenting Canadian history in an "easy narrative style" with "clear, straightforward English prose."[175] Reading more like a novel, Brown's textbook turned a potentially "heavy, stupid sort of recital into interesting human drama."[176] By doing so, he helped to secure an

unquestioningly positive view of Brock among young and impressionable Canadian teenagers.

In 1949, Brown followed up with a collaborative effort to produce a history textbook for public school students.[177] *The Story of Canada* was another rewarding exercise in educational publishing, and so, too, was its French version, released in 1952.[178] Having taken the advice they solicited from teachers in every province, and no doubt cognizant of Brown's earlier success with *Building the Canadian Nation*, he and his co-authors decided to write in a similar fashion for their junior school audience. And hoping to replicate the same level of student enthusiasm that supplementary readings generated, they presented Canadian history as a series of adventure stories. "Some are told by those who saw them happen, some are told by the very people to whom they happened. Still others are told as if they were taking place in front of us."[179] Brown and his co-authors had an inkling that engaging storytelling would "make boys and girls hungry for still more stories," while at the same time firing their imaginations so that they might develop a special appreciation of historic events, such as hearing "the cannon roar from Queenston Heights."[180] Despite the apparent novelty of this approach, it was actually reminiscent of Agnes C. Laut's use of popular narrative from nearly forty years earlier, except that she never managed to break into the lucrative textbook market. Still, her refreshing style of writing Canadian history might very well have influenced the format and content utilized by Brown and his collaborators, who perhaps read her books as children. In any case, the success enjoyed by *The Story of Canada* was also a sign of the times.

During the 1940s, the literary editor and critic William Arthur Deacon noticed a steady rise in the output of the Canadian publishing industry, especially in the first year of peace following the end of the Second World War. In 1946 alone, the country's reading public was supplied with books in unprecedented numbers, so that everyone "may find at least one book that suits him, while the average reader has found many."[181] There was also a marked rise in the publication of historically themed novels, and at the apex of this literary trend were stories celebrating the pioneer experience. In English-speaking Canada especially, the Loyalist saga inspired both a novel and a sequel.[182] In *Boughs Bend Over*, published in 1943, Maida Parlow French harkened back to the experiences of those Loyalist émigrés who settled on the St. Lawrence River after the American Revolution, while her 1947 sequel—*All This to*

Keep—carried the saga through to the War of 1812.[183] By making good use of the interplay between the Loyalist tradition and the Militia Myth, French's well-crafted novels enjoyed considerable success.[184] For this reason, it was likely no great surprise when another children's writer decided to make similar good use of Canadian history.

After publishing *Treason at York* in 1949, John F. Hayes was immediately acclaimed a modern-day Henty—the English author whose action-packed stories had enthralled children of earlier generations.[185] In conjuring up the exciting chance encounters of an adolescent boy living near York during the War of 1812, Hayes imagined Brock at the centre of a traitorous assassination attempt.[186] After inadvertently saving the general's life, the book's youthful protagonist lurched from one thrilling wartime experience to another. It was how Hayes set about "trying to adventurize Canada's past," and he was richly rewarded for his efforts by way of congratulatory reviews, one of which pronounced *Treason at York* a "magnificent work in making Canadian history exciting to teen-age readers."[187] The approbation that came with this style of writing encouraged Hayes to continue producing children's adventure stories, two of which subsequently received the Governor General's Award for juvenile fiction.[188]

Speaking to a writers' convention in 1952, Hayes gave his audience some valuable insights into the secret of his literary success. Experience had taught him that young people were not uninterested in their heritage when it involved adventure, and by weaving fact with fiction history became palatable to adolescent tastes. As vice-president and general manager of the Southam Press newspaper chain, Hayes had some familiarity with Canadian book publishing, but he also benefited from having Marsh Jeanneret—one of the co-authors of the popular *Story of Canada* textbook—as his editor at Copp Clark. With this connection, Hayes was able to tap into the support and advice of a well-respected children's author who also happened to be a leading Canadian book publisher.[189] Yet, for all the accolades he received, Hayes was noticeably defensive about his role in using artistic licence to promote the study of Canadian history. In winding down his speech at the writers' convention, he demanded to know how many history books told the true story of Canada. Argumentatively, he asked, "do they properly recognize Sheaffe for his valour at Queenston in the War of 1812?"[190] Despite his testiness, however, Hayes carried on with his secondary career as a writer of historical

fiction for children. And by using adventure to engage the interest of easily bored adolescents, his novels contributed to a revival of historical themes in educational and trade publications. Moreover, *Treason at York* helped to keep Brock alive in the popular imagination of young readers, not only in Ontario but throughout much of Canada and for the better part of a quarter century.[191]

The immediate postwar period was a time of exceptional prosperity for Canada, and also increased production for the Canadian publishing industry. These upturns heralded a renewed interest in Brock's biography. While he had remained an icon of Canadian heroism throughout the Second World War, his relevance was largely confined to the many juvenile biographies that had already been published about him, of which innumerable copies were still to be found in schools and libraries across the country. There was no shortage of reading material attesting to his greatness, but by the mid-1950s the time was finally ripe for a new look at Brock's life. More than twenty-five years had passed since the last children's book on Brock was reprinted in 1927, and something along the lines of a Hayes novel seemed to suggest itself.[192] There was clearly a market for a lively book geared to young readers interested in history, and for one publisher a nominally factual biography of Brock fit the bill quite nicely—even if the publisher in question was headquartered in the United States. In 1954, Random House managed to cajole Samuel Hopkins Adams, a popular writer from upstate New York, into writing a biography of Brock for its series of World Landmark Books. The idea for this children's book originated with the company's co-founder, Bennett Cerf, who was keen to generate sales in Canada.[193] He also felt it was important to "play up" Tecumseh and Niagara Falls for the larger American market.[194] Cerf probably recognized that the biographies of Brock and Tecumseh intersected one another, if only for a brief time at Detroit. What he could not have known, however, was the degree to which Brock was favoured over Tecumseh by most English-speaking Canadians.

Having served the interests of their militia and Loyalist ancestors, Brock was looked upon by this Anglo population as one of their own. Tecumseh, however, was not accorded the same level of acceptance. He remained a curiosity of his race, a "good Indian" they could well appreciate but never fully comprehend. For Adams, this fine distinction was an unknown condition of the Canadian experience, if for no other reason than he was an elderly man in failing health who was less than

enthusiastic about Cerf's proposition. As Adams freely admitted, "his ignorance of Brock was abysmal."[195] Still, having become intrigued by the idea of a new book about Brock, the octogenarian writer signed on for the project. Using whatever secondary source materials he could quickly and easily lay his hands on, Adams soon got to work on a manuscript. After some unavoidable editorial delays, the oddly titled *General Brock and Niagara Falls* was finally published at the end of 1957.[196] At first glance, there was little to recommend it, other than the specially commissioned artwork that was used to illustrate the book. However, the manner in which it was written made this latest biography of Brock exceptional, and not merely because it constituted Canadian social engineering by an American. By putting aside patriotic bias, Adams was able to express himself in a relatively balanced and thoughtful manner. Thus it transpired that the American author of a children's book became the first Brock biographer to rise above all the hagiography that distorted his subject's life.[197] Unfortunately, no matter how much Adams tried to be objective, he still took liberties with the facts. Poetic licence was another common failing among popular writers who dabbled in history, including those who wrote about Brock's life. But while his biography was still firmly rooted in the domain of children's literature, it was beginning to attract the notice of Canadian professional historians—albeit those working in a similarly popular mode.