

Journal of the Campaign – Year 1813

Vocabulary

- Accouterments** – military dress and arms, the devices and equipment worn by soldiers
- Ammunition** – projectiles to be fired from a gun. Information that can be used to attack. Any stock of missiles
- Artillery** – Large but transportable armament (Cannon)
(This word derived from the Latin “artillaria” = equipment of war)
- Auspicious** – Trending to favor or bring good luck
- Battalion** – A body or group of troops
- Centinel** – A soldier, a guard whose job is to stand watch (Sentinel)
- Cessation** – pause or interruption
- Commissary** – A retail store that sells equipment and provisions (usually to military personnel)
- Contempt** – Lack of respect accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike
- Depredations** – a destructive action
- Detachment** – A group of troops on a separate mission
- Dwelling** – Residence
- Encomium** - A speech or piece of writing that praises someone or something highly
- Execution** - carrying out of putting in place a plan
- Express** – that which is sent by an express messenger or message
- Flank** – the side of military or naval formation
- Haughtiness** – Overbearing pride evidenced by a superior manner toward inferiors
- Interspersed** – Scattered among or between other things
- Laurels** – Crowned with or as if with laurel symbolizing victory (honor)
- Mounted** – Equestrian (riding a horse)
- Odium** – general or widespread disgust directed toward a person as a result of their actions
- Pantaloons** – A historical men’s close-fitting breeches fastened below the calf or at the foot

- ❑ **Picketing** – A small body of troop or single soldier sent out to watch the enemy or a pointed wooden stake driven in to the ground.
- ❑ **Post** – A military station; the place at which a soldier or a body of troops is stationed.
- ❑ **Regiment** – Army unit smaller than a division
- ❑ **Reluctance** – a certain degree of unwillingness
- ❑ **Resolutely** – Showing firm determination or purpose
- ❑ **Scalped** – Remove the scalp
- ❑ **Supercilious** – Having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy
- ❑ **Vigorous** – strong and active physically or mentally
- ❑ **Wilderness** – A wild area or region uncultivated by human beings

Journal of the Campaign Year 1813

For a few years, past differences existed between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Great Britain. Every possible means had been used on the part of the Executive and Legislative departments of the general government of the United States, to adjust those differences upon honorable and equitable terms. But Great Britain treated every reasonable proposition with haughtiness and contempt; and still persisted in violating the just rights of the Americans, by committing depredations on the high seas and by impressing the citizens of the United States of America – the service of his majesty, and employing the savages to murder the defenseless inhabitants of the frontiers.

The United States having long borne these outrages with great patience; at length wearied with insults, resorted to the last and painful alternative of declaring war, (which was done on the 18th of June 1812): and the government having called for volunteers, more than gents of this state, rallied around their countries standard, ready to assist in a vigorous prosecution of the war, in order to hasten a speedy and honorable peace.

General Hull having been appointed by the general government to take possession of Canada his forces amounting is about 3,000, three regiments of volunteer Infantry and one United States infantry amounting it all to about 2,300 were called and gathered to assist him. The first regiment was commanded by Colonial John Scott, the 5th regiment was commanded by Colonial William Lewis, the L & M rifle regiment by Samuel Wells, the whole under the command of Brigadier General Payne.

We draw two months pay in advance. There being a general complaint amongst the volunteers respecting 16 dollars, which were expected to be drawn; Major Graves paraded his battalion and gave them choice to go on without the 16 dollars, or return home. Six chose to return, these to fix odium upon them, were drummed out of camp and through town.

We received information of General Hull – having surrendered Detroit and Michigan Territory to General Brock, on the 16th of the September while in possession of the necessary means to hold that post against forces of Upper Canada. This we could not believe until confirmed “as good authority”, when this was confirmed it appeared to make serious impressions on the minds of Officers and Privates. Those high expectations of participating with General Hull in the Laurels to be acquired by the conquest of Malden and Upper Canada were abandoned.

We draw our arms and accouterments and crossed the Ohio on the 27th. Our destiny was thought to be Fort Wayne. We arrived in Fort Wayne, and met with a reinforcement of 500 mounted riflemen and cavalry from Kentucky. General Harrison not being legally authorized by the general government, commander of the Army, devolved to General Winchester. This resignation of general Harrison’s was done with much reluctance as he had placed great confidence in Kentuckians; and found he was their choice – General Winchester being a stranger and having the appearance of a Supercilious Officer. He was generally disliked.

General Orders ~ Fort Wayne September 22nd 1812

The Army will march in the following order, to the guard in 3 lines, 2 deep in the road in Indian file on the flanks, at a distance of 50-100 yards from the center line, when not prevented by obstruction.

Fort Winchester October 27th 1812

With great pleasure the General announces to the Army, the prospect of an early supply of winter clothing amongst which are the following articles exported from Philadelphia sent on the 9th of September: 10,000 pairs of shoes, 5,000 blankets, 5,000 round jackets, 5,000 pairs of pantaloons. Yet a few days, and the General consoles himself with the idea of seeing those whom he honor to command, clad in warm woolen, capable of resisting the Northern Mists of Canada.

These Frenchmen solicited protection and assistance, stating the abuse they received from Indians, and the danger they were in of losing their lives and property.

November 25th Arrived in the camp this morning, clothing from Kentucky – The ladies who sent this clothing deserve the highest encomiums, may they long live under the auspicious protection of a free government; and may heaven reward them unparalleled benevolence! Another Frenchman came to camp confirming what was stated by the others—we now began to recruit after our laborious march. We have her in our possession many large fields of corn. (Ribbon farms) The inhabitants fled, and the Indians or British have burned their houses, leaving some chimneys standing. By every appearance this has been a respectable settlement.

A Frenchman came yesterday from the River Raisin, he said companies of British had arrived from Canada, and the Indians were collecting, and intended to burn Frenchtown in a few days. By the repeated solicitation of the French, being counseled by some Field Officers, the general has been induced to order out detachment of 570 men, destined to the River Raisin; it was said, contrary to the instructions of General Harrison. The detachment started and each proceeded with three-day provisions.

We had been nearly 5 months in the wilderness exposed to every inconvenience and excluded from everything that had the appearance of a civilized country. When the inhabitants of the village discovered us – they met us with a white flag, and expressed friendship. They informed us the British and Indians had left Frenchtown days ago and gone to Brownstown. An express came from the River Raisin informing Colonel Lewis there were 400 Indians and 2 companies of British there, and Colonel Elliot was to start the next morning from Malden with a reinforcement.

December 18th – we started in order to get there before Colonel Elliot. After traveling fifteen miles mostly on the ice we received information of the enemy being they're waiting for us. We were then in three miles of Frenchtown. We proceeded on with no other view than to conquer or die. When we advanced in sight of town, the British saluted us by the firing of a piece of cannon. They fired it three times but no injury was sustained. During this time we _____ the line of battle, and raising a shout "Go down field briskly"; then soon commenced their firing of their small guns, but this did not deter us from a charge; we advanced close and let loose on them, they gave way and soon we had possession of the village, with the loss of a man. 12 of their warriors were slain and scalped. In retreating they kept up some firing. We pursued them half a mile to the woods, which were very brushy and suited to their mode of fighting. As we advanced they were firing the

misgives behind the logs, trees to the best advantages; our troops rushed on them resolutely and gave them Indian play. A length after a battle of three hours and five minutes, we were obliged to stop the pursuit, on the account of the approach of night and retire to the village. We collected our wounded and carried them to the village, leaving our dead on the ground. In this action Kentuckians displayed great bravery, after being much fatigued with marching on Ice. Our loss in action was 11 killed and 55 wounded. Their loss exceeded ours. A Frenchman stated they had 54 killed and 140 wounded; part of who were carried to the house on Sandy Creek.

Some dispute arose between Indians and some of the French, on Sandy Creek; the Indians killed the old man and his wife; in consequence of this, the French were enraged, and resolved to get revenge. They applied to us for assistance, but it was thought improper to leave the village; some of them had assisted us, and fought in the front battle.

January 19th - In going over the battleground. Great signs were seen (by the blood and were they had been dragged through the snow) two of the wounded died. The River Raisin runs an east course through level country; interspersed with well-improved farms is 70 or 80 yards wide the banks are low. Frenchtown situated on the north side of the river that empties into Lake Erie. There is a row of dwelling houses about 20 in number, near the bank, surrounded with a fence made in the form of picketing, with split timber from 4 and 5 feet high.

January 21st, a reinforcement of 230 men arrived in the afternoon, also General Winchester, Colonial Wells, Major McClananhan, Captain, Surgeons Irvin and Montgomery and some other gentlemen. A Frenchman arrived here late in the evening from Malden, and stated that a large number of Indians and British were coming on the Ice with artillery to attack us; he judged their number to be 3,000, this not believed by some of our leading men, but the generality of the troops put great confidence in the Frenchman's report and expected some fatal disaster to befall us; principally because General Winchester had taken up his head quarters nearly half a mile from any part of the encampment, and because the right wing was exposed. Colonial Lewis treated the report with coolness, thinking the persons seen were only some gentlemen from town.

Just as daybreak the revilee (revelry) began to beat as usual; this gave joy to the troops who had passed the night under the apprehensions of being attacked before day. The revile had not been beating more than two minutes before the centinels fired three guns in quick succession. This alarmed our troops who quickly formed and were ready for the enemy before they were near enough to do execution. The British immediately discharged their artillery loaded with balls, bombs, and grapeshot, which did little injury. They then attempted to make a charge on those in the pickets, but were repulsed with great loss. Those on the right being less secure from the want of fortification, were over powered by a superior force, and were ordered and retreat to a more advantageous ground. They got in disorder and could not be formed. The Indians pursued them from all quarters, and surrounded, killed and took most of them. The enemy again charged on the left with redoubled vigor, we were forced to retreat. After a long bloody contest the enemy finding they could not either by strategy or force drive us from our fortification. A sleigh was seen 3 or 4 hundred yards from our lines going toward the right, supposed to be laden with ammunition to supply the cannon; four or five men rose up and fired at once, and killed the man and wounded the horse.

At this time bread from the commissary house was handed round among our troops, who sat composedly eating and watching the enemy at the same time. Being refreshed we discovered a white flag advancing toward us, it was generally supposed to be a cessation of arms, thus our enemy might carry off their dead,

which was numerous, altho' they had been bearing away both dead and wounded during action. But how we were surprised and mortified when we heard that General Winchester with Colonial Lewis had been taken prisoner by the Indians in attempting to rally the right wing, and General Winchester had surrendered us prisoners of war to Colonial Proctor – Major Madison, then the highest command, did not agree to this until Colonial Proctor had promised them prisoners should be protected from Indians, the wounded taken care of – the dead collected and buried and private property protected. It was with extreme reluctance; our troops accepted this proposition – There was scarcely a person that could refrain from shedding tears! Some plead with the Officers not to surrender; saying they would rather die on the field!

In this battle Officers and Privates exhibited the utmost bravery. Whilst the men were at their post firing at the enemy, were passing along the lines supplying them with gartidges Major Graves, passing round the line, was wounded in the knee. He sat down in a tent, banded his wound, and cried " Bors I am wounded, never mind me, but Fight On!