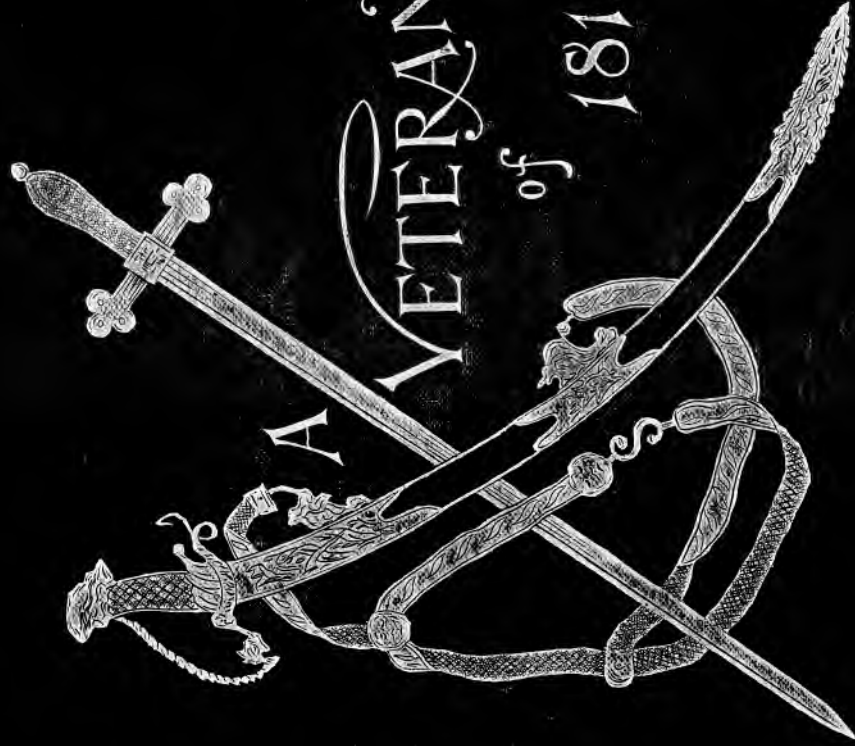


A VETERAN
of 1812.



James FitzGibbon

Entered, according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four, by WILLIAM BRIGGS, Toronto, in the office of the Minister of Agriculture, at Ottawa.

TO
Ube Militia of Canaba
AND TO
Ube TescenOants of the Mot of 1S12v14,
THIS BOOK
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

Inc calculable is the value of a firm purpose, and a determination not to be defeated in one's pursuits. If there be one thing more than another calculated to enoble the human soul it is the high faith in its own power.

When this living principle exists, a cooerous impulse is generated which never calculates on difficulties. - And even when repulsed and defeated, it turns all things to its own advantage, and makes a virtue of necessity, so that its very failures redound to its present glory and ultimate success.

To the above I add - Cultivate this firmness incessantly until it becomes a habit.

P. Z. S

PREFACE.

THE collection of notes for the life story of "A Veteran of 1812 " was suggested to me some three years ago by the enquiries of Mr. Edwards, late editor of the *Dominion Illustrated*, who was then anxious to devote a portion of the columns of that paper to the record of men who had been more or less prominent in Canadian history.

I began with a handful of private letters, a brief epitome of his services, and the cherished recollections of my childhood—stories, told us in the nursery, of the soldier and his early life in Canada. After spending some months in Ireland, visiting what my friends called " the cradle of the race," I devoted long hours to patient research in the Archives at Ottawa, and with the kind help of friends who had valued FitzGibbon's correspondence sufficiently to preserve his letters, I have not only been enabled to verify these early traditions, but have accumulated sufficient material to put together a fairly consecutive biography of a man who lived through one of the most interesting periods of our history.

He was one whose personality was sufficiently pronounced, and whose courage, integrity and singleness of purpose were strong enough to leave an impression on his time. " One," to quote from a letter addressed to Lord Stanley, then Secretary for the Colonies (July 2nd, 1842),

by Sir Augustus d'Este, " whose happy destiny it was to have the opportunity of rendering important services to his adopted country, which services will cause his name to be remembered with respect and admiration by the loyal inhabitants of Upper Canada as long as devotion to the parent state, manly valor and clear-sighted intelligence are admitted to be entitled to places in the catalogue of estimable qualities."

The fac-simile of FitzGibbon's handwriting given on the page facing the frontispiece is taken from- a postscript to one of his many letters to his young nephew Gerald FitzGibbon.

Whether the sentiment it expresses is original or from one or other of his favorite authors, I have no means of ascertaining. It is, however, so indicative of his life and character, so evidently one of which he had proved the value, that it is worth preserving and reproducing as the text of his faith.

My thanks are due to the Right Honorable Gerald FitzGibbon, Lord Justice of the Court of Appeal in Ireland ; to D. B. Read, Esq., Q.C., author of the " Lives of the Judges," and other works ; to Ernest Cruikshank, Esq., author of "Butler's Rangers," the "Battle of the Beechwoods," etc., etc. ; to E. B. Biggar, Esq., whose graphic account of the battle of Stony Creek led to my applying to him ; to Charles Lindsey, Esq., William Lyon Mackenzie's able biographer, and to J. H. Land, Esq., the secretary of the Wentworth Historical Society, for the kindly assistance they have given me, either personally or through their works, in accomplishing the "labor of love" have undertaken,

I am indebted also to J. Ross Robertson, Esq., the enthusiastic Past Grand Master of the Freemasons of Ontario, for much of that portion of the book relating to FitzGibbon's life as a Mason ; also to the kindness of Murray Jarvis, Esq., of Ottawa, for valuable extracts from unedited letters now in his possession, as well as to many friends and well-wishers for aid and encouragement in prosecuting the researches necessary in order to find what one of them aptly designated, " the hinges of my narrative."

If, owing to inferior workmanship, these " hinges " creak, may I hope that an indulgent public will, in their interest in the man, overlook the faults of his biographer.

For the rest, I may add that I have had the book published in Canada rather than in England, preferring it should first see the light in the city whose loyalty and homes he had guarded with so jealous an arm in life, and to which his last conscious thoughts turned in the hour of death.

M. A. F.G.

TORONTO, *May 24th, 1894.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PACK

Birthplace—Its associations—Early recollections—His first salmon—Religious impressions—Enrolment in the Yeomanry—Hated Englishmen—The Devon and Cornwall Fencibles—The Knight of Glin—A bold step—Unexpected promotion—The Tarbert Fencibles—Leaving home—A mother's anxiety—A promise

9

CHAPTER II.

Major-General Whitelock—An extravagant speech—An important step—Bareham Downs—Embarkation for Holland—The Helder—Youthful ideas of battle—A gap in the narrative—Egmont-op-Zee—Taken prisoner—French "ruffles and rags"—Distressing march—Improving the time—Exchange of prisoners—Military discipline—Recruiting—A providential find

21

CHAPTER III.

Hersham Barracks—Sudden orders—Conflicting rumors—Arrival at Spithead—The *St. George*—*The Monarch*—Copenhagen—Lord Nelson—The battle—The Vice-Admiral's flag—Unjust rebuke—An angry officer—Service in the ranks—Return to England—Colonel Brock—An explanation—A soldier's opinion

36

CHAPTER IV.

Winter-quarters—An alarming deficiency—A romantic application—The Duke of York—An interview with Colonel

Brownrigg—The theatre—John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons—Colonel Brock's kindness—Ordered to Canada—A studious soldier—Brock's " favorite Sergeant-Major"—Deserters—Midnight chase—Inhuman treatment—The mutiny—A dramatic arrest—A court-martial—A barrack-room university--Fears of invasion—" Did you try ?"—The Glengarry Fencibles—Colonel Brock's letter—A request	PAGE 46
CHAPTER V.	
Declaration of war—By bateaux up the St. Lawrence—Attempt to intercept—Defeat of the Americans—A winter drive—An advance post—A daring capture—Carrying despatches—Fall of Fort George—Retreat—An excited Irishman—A spy—The battle of Stony Creek—A separate command—The " Green Tigers "—A bold stratagem—A struggle—A brave woman—Desultory warfare—An unsatisfactory check—Orders from American headquarters—Beaver Dam—Chief Kerr's letter--Laura Secord—" Big Knives "—Indian tactics—A bold summons—Negotiations — An unwelcome arrival — A bombastic speech—A soldier's courtesy—Articles of capitulation—Official despatches—Lieut.-Col. Bisshopp's letter—A wrong impression—Return of prisoners taken—Letter from Colonel Dzerstler to General Dearborn—Effect of the capture	63
CHAPTER VI.	
A meagre reward—Attack on Fort Schlosser—Black Rock—An indignant officer—Imprudent delay—A gallant rescue—Death of Colonel Bisshopp—Suffering soldiers—Defective commissariat—Projected attack on Fort Niagara—The pickets at Fort George driven in—Tidings of General Proctor's defeat—A retreat—Close of the campaign—Departure of the 49th	104

CHAPTER VII.

Campaign of 1814--The Glengarry Fencibles at Oswego—Weakened forts—Reconnoitring—The battle of Lundy's Lane—A request for leave—Personal courage—A romantic marriage—The camp before Fort Erie—A sortie—Glengarry men to the front—Hard fighting—A change of camp—Advance of the enemy—Cook's Mills—Retreat of the enemy—Evacuation of Fort Erie—Close of the war—Sir John Harvey's letter	PAGE 119
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------

CHAPTER VIII.

Disbanding of the Glengarry Regiment—A hopeful outlook—Civil appointments—Assistant Adjutant-General—Masonic honors—A manly letter—A good character—Presentation of colors—Irish riots—An influential mediator—Address to the Orangemen—Extracts from the <i>Times</i> —Lord Castlereagh's opinion—A sad quarrel—Press riot—A subscription list—Colonel of 2nd West York Regiment—Incipient rebellion—A stormy meeting—Extract from Mr. Lindsey's "Life of W. L. Mackenzie"—Street riots—A summary arrest—Quiet restored—Reminiscences of an old U. C. College boy—Toronto in 1832—The cholera—A faithful soldier—Orange processions—More riots—Mrs. Jamieson's recollections—A race to college—Definition of a gentleman—Toronto's first Mayor—Meeting in the market-place—An accident—Parental sorrow and counsels—Disturbances near Cornwall—The house on Queen Street—Sir John Colborne's letter	139
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IX.

An eventful year—Reform—A nation of liars—An obstinate governor—Military cadets—Threatened rebellion—Fitz-Gibbon vs. Sir Francis—An offer—Precautionary measures — The Chief-Justice—A generous letter—Secret information—A tardy order—An irrepressible defender—Vice-regal slumbers disturbed—The outbreak—A well-armed governor—Pickets on Yonge Street—Arrival of
