



PREFACE

This study of British plans to defend Canada during the years 1763–1871, and the extent to which they were implemented, is based primarily on manuscript sources now easily accessible to students of military history. Undoubtedly additional information will be discovered from time to time in private collections of documents but, since the subject is one which today would be classified TOP SECRET, the pickings are likely to be thin. Little attention has been directed to what was going on “at the other side of the hill,” an apt phrase coined by the Duke of Wellington, because of a personal conviction that the answer was very little in the way of plans to attack Canada. Next to nothing in this volume relates to tactics, which Cyril Falls has very simply defined as “the art of conducting a battle or section of a battle.” Rather this book is a study of strategy, a word which, in this case, may simply be substituted for “plans” in the opening sentence above.

A word about titles is in order. The last officer of the British Army to hold the appointment of Commander-in-Chief in North America was Sir Guy Carleton in 1783. The first Governor General was Lord Durham in 1838. In between, Sir George Prevost and other soldier-governors held lesser appointments as Commander of the Forces and Governor-in-Chief. The first appointment of Secretary of State for the Colonies was made in 1854, following the outbreak of the Crimean War when it was decided that the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, the Duke of Newcastle, would have enough to do as Secretary of State for War. Yet Canadian historians, obsessed by the importance of the struggle to achieve responsible government and conveniently forgetting that there were potential enemies without, refer to Lord Glenelg and Lord Grey as merely Colonial Secretaries. Their illogical step was to accept, or make, such fatuous statements as the following, which appears in the

*Cambridge History of the British Empire*, VI, *Canada and Newfoundland* (1930, 259) :

At the centre was the Lieutenant-Governor, ruling in spite of legal technicalities, at his little capital, York, as a despot limited only by inexperience and the British Parliament. Such was the position, inevitable in 1815, when colonial posts were not attractive to Englishmen of the first rank, and when the additional pay which soldiers drew made it natural to appoint officers of Wellington's army.

Some explanation of military and naval ranks is also indicated. Officers normally acquired promotion within cavalry and infantry regiments by purchase, whereas artillery and engineer officers were promoted on merit and seniority within their own corps. Captains, majors, and lieutenant-colonels could have a higher army or brevet rank because of distinguished service or employment on staff. Whether a colonel "owned" a regiment or merely had brevet rank, promotion was to major-general. During most of these years, the lesser brigadier-general was only a local rank. This and other local ranks were given to offset an officer's lack of seniority for a particular service. For example, annual *Army Lists* show Guy Carleton as colonel of the 47th Regiment of Foot (April 2, 1772), major-general in the Army (May 25, 1772), and general in North America (January 1, 1776). Field-Marshal was a more senior appointment given for life by the sovereign, as was the corresponding Admiral of the Fleet.

Naval ranks used in this book are those given in *The Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy, 1660-1815* (Greenwich, 1954) and the annual *Navy Lists* which begin with 1816. Prior to 1864, flag officers were Admirals, Vice-Admirals, and Rear-Admirals of the Red, White, and Blue squadrons into which the fleet was still theoretically divided. Promotion was by seniority from Rear-Admiral of the Blue to Admiral of the Red. As Professor Michael Lewis has noted, in *England's Sea Officers* (London, 1939) : "Nelson, who was only forty-seven when he died, had merely got as far as Vice-Admiral of the White." Commodore was an appointment given to the senior captain in command of a small squadron. Captains commanded ships of the line and the larger frigates (or fifth raters). Commanders and lieutenants commanding lesser war vessels were merely called "captain."

My original purpose in undertaking this study was to produce a doctoral dissertation for the University of Ottawa. The subject was suggested by Dr. Arthur R. Vanasse, then Chairman of its History Department. A thesis was completed under his direction and accepted by the University of Ottawa in October, 1964. Extensive revision and expansion of the manuscript to its present form was accelerated by financial assistance from

the Canadian Centennial Commission, making early publication possible. Publication was also assisted by a grant from the Social Science Research Council using funds provided by the Canada Council, and by a subsidy from the Publications Fund of the University of Toronto Press.

My research was facilitated by residence in Ottawa. Members of the staff of the Public Archives of Canada did everything possible to help with my varied problems. Mr. T. E. Layng, Chief of the Map Division, took some pains to ensure that I should gain some knowledge of the work done in Canada by the British officers who compiled Ordnance Maps and Admiralty Charts. Miss Barbara Wilson of the Manuscript Division revised and simplified the Bibliographic Note which follows. Librarians of the National Library, the Parliamentary Library, and the Department of National Defence made available a wide variety of printed material. The state of my health precluded extended travel, but Admiral of the Fleet The Earl Mountbatten of Burma very kindly directed that I might be furnished with xerox copies of relevant letters from among Lord Palmerston's Papers in the Broadlands Archives; the Director of the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan, Mr. Howard Peckham, supplied me with photostat copies of letters from the Gage and Germain Papers; the Librarian of the Royal Military College of Canada, Mr. John W. Spurr, lent me a copy of the letters written by Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., to his relatives in England. Other primary material not available on microfilm in Ottawa was obtained from the British Museum and the Public Record Office in London, and from the National Archives in Washington. Members of these staffs, and of the historical staffs of both the Department of the Army and the Department of the Navy in Washington, were kind enough to supply answers to specific questions.

Quotations from unpublished Crown-copyright material in the Public Record Office have been made by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office. Quotations from Lord Palmerston's Papers have been made by permission of the Broadlands Archives. Similar permission to quote from collections of private papers was given by the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan, the British Museum, and the Royal Military College of Canada.

Illustrations were obtained from the Department of National Defence, the Public Archives of Canada, the Canadian Travel Bureau, the McCord Museum, and the Confederation Life Collection in Toronto. The maps are the work of my long-time friend, Major C. C. J. Bond, who was good enough to make detailed comments about the manuscript as he read.

Major W. A. McDill, Mrs. W. O. Sorby, and Mr. Thor Thorgrimsson were kind enough to read and comment upon the revised manuscript as it progressed, chapter by chapter. Professor R. A. Preston provided detailed comments and criticism. Dr. George F. G. Stanley of the Royal Military College of Canada also read the manuscript. Two readers, whose identity could not be divulged to me by the University of Toronto Press, supplied a number of most interesting comments. My son Tony indexed the book, which is dedicated to my wife. Kitty-Cat insisted on helping. Once again I found the advice given me about the manuscript by the Editorial Department of the University of Toronto Press most stimulating. Responsibility for what now appears in print, however, is mine alone.

*Ottawa, Canada*

J. M. H.