Dedication

To the Country which he loves, and to the Heroes of whom that Country boasts – by him who would gladly better SERVE and better EMULATE,

The following poem is humbly inscribed.

The Author.
Preface

In giving the following poem to the public, the author will not say, he has been influenced by motives altogether disinterested. The satisfaction derived from spending his leisure hours, for a few months, in detailing the deeds of those “whom unseen he has loved,” is a reward, which no ill success of the production can take away. The call for a poetic illustration of those events, which have so much interested the public feeling, has been a further inducement. The attempt has been made, and conscious that, whatever may be the event, a tedious preface cannot now save the performance, with a transient notion of some things which may appear exceptionable in the plan, the author submits it. He is conscious that, mixing fact with fiction, has generally been considered improper in an epic poem. He is not convinced, however, that this objection is founded in nature, and, for reasons which will appear in the work, has hazarded a violation of the rule. The fictions themselves are founded on historical facts, and here it may be proper to add, that in the introduction of personages, in the episodes, character has been aimed at, and not the particular history of their lives.

An anacronism of a few months in the story of Logan, the author hopes may be excused. Of the scenic plan in the caption of the several stanzas of the poem, he does not claim originality. On this subject he has only to say, that he has been pleased with the life and perspicuity which as similar plan has given to a work he is proud to emulate: and if, supported by the popularity of the subject, and the indulgence of a liberal public, the author should be so happy as to be considered as the following “at an awful distance” the author of “The Wanderer of Switzerland” he will feel his best expectations realized.

New-York, 15th December, 1813
“Parting night’s sable-cinctur’d shroud,
Sure morning streaks yon eastern cloud!
Bursting through fogs and gloom its way,
Salutes the world another day!
It is! and lo, where bright it breaks,
In bolder glow and broader streaks!
It is, it is! the heavens grow bright!
The mountain tops are touch’d with light:
And see, in golden waves below,
The glorious Lake reflects the glow!
-Creation rais’d to life again,
I love to contemplate the scene.
On yonder village-steeple’s spire,
To watch the solar glow of fire:
And early, as its echoing chime
Measures the given lapse of time,
Forth issuing at that kind alarm,
To see the busy village swarm:
Or as the forest opens wide,
To catch the mountain's dusky side-
Where dusky wreaths of cottage smoke
O’ertop the towering monarch oak: -
To mark the gurgling of the rill;
To hear the clack of yonder mill-
The soothing murmur of the breeze,
The lowering herd, the hum of bees:
The wood, the mountain, and the vale,
At thy return, O morning! smile.
The wave, the torrent in its course,
The zephyr mild, the tempest hoarse,  
Seem as of peace and love the voice,  
And all, but mortals, to rejoice.”

Thus, as he rose to enjoy the early day,  
A Youth to meditative mood gave way.  
What though to him all nature seem’d to smile!  
And though the warrior had not ceas’d to feel:  
What though his fancy, vigorous and warm,  
Raptur’d, would kindle, Nature, at thy charm:  
What tho’ at scenes like this, his soul would rise,  
And upward mounting, seem to walk the skies!  
Yet oft the pang for fellow-man distrest,  
Midway his towering height, would reach his breast.  
And, struck as now, with sympathising pain,  
Sink him, in sorrow, down to earth again.

“Yes, all but mortals, may rejoice,” he cried,  
“But man – when will his miseries subside?  
Not faster yonder foliage seeks the ground-  
(He paus’d – autumnal blasts were sighing round)  
Not faster yonder bubbles quit the wave,  
Than men, by nature, sink into the grave.  
And yet the mortal hate of man to man,  
As quite impatient of this shorten’d span,  
Lights up the torch of War to stop his breath,  
And aid the work of dilatory death.”

He ceas’d, and shudd’ring, cast a mournful look,  
O’er other scenes, less pleasant, as he spoke –  
Along those shores, whose lovely hills, from far,  
Reflect the marks of desolation war.  
E’en now, yet struggling with the morning beam,  
From yonder hill the Indian watch-fires gleam:  
E’en now, far down yon solitary vale,  
In fancy’s ear is heard the victim’s wail:  
Detroit and Brownstown desolate appear’d,  
And Raisin high a bloody beacon rear’d:  
While many a hamlet, many a cot between,  
In smoking ruins desolate were seen:
The vineyard waste, of husbandman bereft,
The house and field to desolation left:
The workshop silent, tumbling to decay,
The herd run wild, or driven by foes away:
The forest blacken’d with the wasting flame,
The bridge destroy’d, and choak’d the passing stream;
Ruin and poverty, wide spread, were shown,
And, veil’d in sackcloth, seem’d the land to groan.

Nor groan’d alone – the contemplator too,
Heav’d sighs responsive to his country’s wo.
That heart of iron in the tented field,
Touch’d with soft pity, now was seen to yield:
That breast, all marble to his country’s foes,
Now melted at his fellow creature’s woes:
And were’t not for the place in which he stood,
(A fleet’s commander on an island flood)
A tear-drop, stealing down that manly cheek,
In pity shed, had wet the Lawrence’ deck.
Such was the scene – the sentiments proclaim,
I need not tell, the youthful hero’s name.

Scene Second – The Beach

"Indian bold! th' attempt forbear!
'Tis not courage thus to dare.
Think! a tempest on the main,
Can thy feeble bark sustain?
For lo, yon western, fiery streak,
Forebodes a storm upon the lake!
Dark'ning, e'en now, the gathering could,
It spreads, o'er heaven, a sable shroud:
Unusual silence lulls the deep,
Precursor to the whirlwind's sweep,
And, moaning yonder mountain round,
Burdens the air a hollow sound.
It bids thee, Indian bold, beware;
Thou canst not reach the ship – forbear!"

In vain such words, his comrades strive in vain,
To hold the Indian warrior from the main:
In sullen silence, struggling to be free,
At length he burst their barriers away,
And - gain'd his bark by one exulting leap,
Shoots like an arrow o'er the threat'ning deep,
Seem'd as to gain the *Lawrence* he design'd;
But half the distance, ere he left behind,
On board, the gathering blackness of the sky,
Wak'd for his fate a strong anxiety;
They deem'd an Indian boat could not survive,
Where scarce their *ship of war* might hope to live.
But still undaunted as the oar he plies,
The bark light tossing o'er the billows flies:
And when, at length, approach'd the vessel's side,
Thrice dash'd far distant, by the rolling tide,
Thrice, boat and boatman, overwhelming tost,
Seem'd swallow'd in the boiling surge and lost.
As often rising with his boat again,
The Indian strove the vessel to regain;
Till, from her side the rope in pity cast,
Gains him safe footing on the deck at last.
As thus before the astonish'd crew he stood,
And shook his garments from the dripping flood,
The *youthful hero* mark'd his locks of snow,
And face that seem'd to speak of toil and wo.
"Thy message, warrior bold, he said, explain:
Why did'st thou hazard death my ship to gain?
Thy story tell, if aught thou hast t' unfold,
And, if deserv'd, in me a friend behold."

Scene Third – On Board the Lawrence

"Thy pity's vain!" the chieftain said,
"Nor do I need the whiteman's aid:
The Indian warrior's race is run:
To-day is Logan's setting sun\(^2\)
And ere yon rolling god is set,
Beyond the *happy mountain* met,
In everlasting joy complete,
My father's ghost his son shall greet.
Yet ere he goes shall Logan strive
To aid the cause which cost his life,  
Assist to aim one fatal blow,  
On the curs'd author of his wo.  
Hear, whiteman, hear! on yonder shore,  
Where Erie's northern billows roar –  
There lurks a **monster** of the wood,  
More fell than tygers wild for blood.  
His feet are swift, his talons strong,  
His eyes of flame – his teeth are long;  
His opening mouth is poisoned breath,  
And his strong grasp, the gripe of death!  
Pity his bosom never knew,  
And yet this monster *looks* like you!  
He boast his race of Europe's line,  
And wears the human form divine!  
He fir'd our **red men** of the wood,  
With him to drink his brother's blood,  
But ah! my brothers were not wise,  
To listen to his glossing lies!  
And when – the tree of peace cut down,  
They dug the hatchet from the ground,  
I kept my faith, became their foe,  
And rais'd my arm to strike for you.  
'Twas on that day when Raisin's plain,  
In treacherous strife, was heap'd with slain –  
And Raisin's river, swoln and hoarse,  
Ran red with carnage in its course.  
That day this withered arm of age  
Was rais'd amidst the battle's rage,  
And firm as yonder sea-beat rock,  
Sustain'd the combat's hottest shock.  
But, mark my melancholy tale!  
Far sheltered in a mountain vale,  
Of husband, friend and guard bereft,  
My helpless wife and child were left.  
The savage monsters found the prey,  
And bore them both to death away.  
Logan had never shed a tear,  
Nor did his aged heart yield here;  
But, whiteman, when, the battle o'er,
I weary sought my home once more;
The woodland dark, the gloomy vale
Re-echoing to the uwako's wail
With hasty step were overpast,
And reach'd the lovely spot at last –
-Gone!-murder'd all!—Great Spirit, why!
Why slept the red bolt of sky?
Whiteman! can feeble words impart
The feelings of a father’s heart,
When smoking cinders, dropp'd with blood,
Show'd where his little cot had stood!
In wintery age, of all bereft,
Logan alone of all is left:
Without consort, child, or friend,
To mourn his fast-approaching end!
Strange was it then, O leader, say!
That grief should wear my strength away?
And strange this withered arm I held
From mixing in the bloody field?
And yet for this has Logan borne
Unjust reproach! The white man's scorn!
'Logan is turn'd!' your warriors said,
'Perhaps he gives the foeman aid,
For see, he shuns our battles now!
At best, a coward or a foe!'
I'd borne the ambush's loudest yell,
I'd borne the shock of onset fell,
Had waded through a sea of blood,
And stemm'd, unmov'd, the crimson flood:
Had felt grief's arrows at my heart,
And never groan'd beneath the smart;
But, wounds and death, more cruel far,
Suspcion's taunts I could not bear!
Resolv'd to wipe the stain away,
Occasion show'd itself to-day;
When passing through the forest glade,
The ambush'd foe our troop betray'd.
The horrors of the fight to tell,
Little can words of mine avail.
Not louder roars the angry deep,
That thunders down Niag'ra's steep,
Not fiercer rolls yon tempest dread,
That swells in darkness o'er our head,
Than from that dark and narrow dell,
Burst forth at once the battle's yell;
But, soon as flash'd the deadly fire,
Those yells in deeper groans expire –
And mixing bayonet, blade and knife,
Pour shriller horror through the strife!
The mountain, echoing from afar,
Roll'd back to clamorous note of war;
And when the billowing smoke dispell'd,
The horrors of the strife reveal'd,
The hovering spirit, Manitou!
Shriek'd pleasure at the sight below
-Fix'd as the mountain-rooted rock,
Our little band sustain'd the shock,
And every wound, and every blow,
Gave back redoubled on the foe.
Fighting, o'erwhelm'd by twice their host,
Man after man gave up the ghost,
Till, last of all, our troop o'erthrown,
Myself remain'd to fight alone.
'Twas then I felt a glorious zeal,
My wounds of cruel scorn to heal;
And as the thought my bosom swell'd,
My father's ghost in clouds reveal'd,
Display'd the joys that wait the brave,
Beyond the borders of the grave!  
With holy emulation fill'd,
I seiz'd the leader of the field;
And fixing fast the gripe of death,
Choak'd out in agony his breath;
Two others, come to his relief,
This arm laid gasping with their chief;
And still a third, the hatchet's blow,
Sent shrieking to the world below.
And when, at length, I fainting stood,
And bath'd my temples o'er with blood;
Whiteman, I would not did not yield!
But fled, in triumph, from the field!
My poor remains of strength, employ'd
To reach your ship, were nigh destroy'd;
But now my purpose shall prevail,
And end my melancholy tale.
Then witness, leader, Logan's end!
Witness he dies the whiteman's friend!
Say that his wither'd arm of age,
*For them* sustain'd the battle's rage:
Say, that *alone*, a host he stood:
Say, that he brav'd the stormy flood,
*And is no coward!* Witness this,
And Logan shall depart in peace:
My prize is gain'd – my work is done;
My father’s ghost awaits his son –
My heart is faint – my eyes grow dim,
The angel death is cold and grim!
Warrior, he calls! – farewell, I go!
Avenge my wrongs – avenge thy country's too!"
The Indian tore a bandage from his side,
And gush'd his heart's blood in the crimson tide
Now seem'd a moment to revive,
"Oh let me aid thee while I live!
Dying with gift of prophecy, 6
Half in the other world I see,
In fate's dim roll obscure, unfurl'd,
The fortunes of this western world.
Oh warrior bold! be firm, and know,
This, this, shall be a day of wo!
To whom, I cannot now reveal;
But what I see my tongue shall tell.
Mingling amidst the future scene,
Of all that's black, that *wretch* is seen,
Whose standard, dipp'd in human blood,
Still leads the red-men of the wood.
Seek not to learn how long his date;
But know the fix'd decree of fate:
However short – however long,
His force how weak – his power how strong,
His realm, a conqueror shall not know,
Till he to UNION'S flag shall bow."
Again he ceas'd – again the crimson tide
Burst forth – The warrior fainted, sunk, and died.

Scene Fourth – The Deck Continued

"Is it the morning sun gone down?
Or shrouds his beam the Almighty's frown?
Is it some dread eclipse's gloom?
Or bursts the day of gen'ral doom?
What means this flag of crape unfurl'd,
That floats in terror o'er the world?"
'Tis not the sun eclips'd, or sunk at noon:
'Tis not the darkness of the day of doom:
'Tis not these terrors that the fleet alarm:
But 'tis the horrors of the Autumnal Storm!
And see, where down the mountain's rocky steep,
The burdened clouds in eddying whirlwinds sweep!
And hark! as peal on peal the thunders break,
What deafening sounds come doubling o'er the lake!
It comes! In rage the pond'rous billows swell,
And roar to heaven before the growing gale!
It bursts! – a torrent dire of rain and hail,
Prone on the lake the burden'd vessels reel:
The cables crack'd – yards, sails and anchor lost,
Wild o'er the deep the scatter'd fleet is tost –
Red lightings glare – redoubling thunders roll,
And groans the earth from centre to the pole!
What looks of wild despair had then been seen,
And heard what shrieks the thunder's crash between –
But night and tempest o'er the prospect drew,
And veil'd the scene from every human view.
And dreader still must be the tempest's power;
And louder far the thunder's angry roar:
For rose the storm attendant on the sun,
And scarce at mid-day was its fury done.
But long and sore before the tempest tost,
Still not a ship of all the fleet was lost.
Little to this hand skill of man avail'd,
From human hope and human courage fail'd
'Twas then the Almighty ruler of sky
Swept, with a smile, the warring clouds away:
The lightnings cease - the angry waves subside,
And tempest's roar, in distant murmurs, died.

Scene Fifth – The British Fleet on Lake Erie

When o'er the lake that morning darkness drew,
Shrouded it none but Perry's fleet from view?
Or when the tempest's rage had overblown,
Stream'd high for joy Columbia's flag alone?
-Britannia's fleet was there – that flag unfurl'd
Which shakes its terrors o'er the eastern world!
Barclay was there, the unfortunate, the brave:⁸
And six tall ships conducted o'er the wave.
But soon their joy, in terror, sunk again,
When, as the misty tempest left the main,
Freedom's exulting squadron rose to view,
And, short the space between, to battle drew!
The crew in doubt to fight or fly prepare:
At length resolv'd the desperate strife to dare,
While pride and shame to aid their cause combine,
They form with skilful curve the lengthen'd line.
-There are, who say the hero never feels,
That valor's rage alone his breast impels-
From coward fear, the patriot's bosom free,
Alike indifferent to death, must be!
And there are those, whom honor's fleeting breath,
Madly impels to rush on certain death;
Rashness the deed! The sentiment untrue!
And such, my country's hero! was not thou:
He knew "there is an hour whose tremor dread,"
May reach the heart and not affect the head.
But 'tis not when the ambush's loudest cry,
In sudden onset, rolls along the sky:
Or when Columbia's thunder, o'er the deep,
Rolls, as he points, its desolating sweep.
It comes not, mid the battle's mingled roar:⁹
It comes, the silent interval before,
That hour of dread suspense, ere nations meet,
In mortal strife, to seal each other's fate!
Then all the powers that solemnize the soul,
In awful calmness o'er the future roll!
It views, with pain, the unnatural strife of death,
And counts the victims doom'd to yield their breath:
It marks the widow's tears, that o'er them flow,
And hears the helpless orphan's cry of wo!
Nor stops it here: but looks beyond the grave,
Where silent gloom so soon must clasp the grave,
To that dread bar, whose doom is joy or wo,
To thousands thronging from the world below!
-Yes, such there is! – a terror-boding hour!
Nor scorn'd Columbia's pride to own its power:
Yet strove to rid his bosom of the load,
As towering on, to meet the foe, he rode.
Soon, soon that struggle of his breast is o'er!
For sudden bursts the opposing squadron's roar,
And, while remains some interval between,
Through opening smoke the frequent flash is seen.
Unheeded o'er, the random vollies flew,
And near and nearer still the Lawrence drew.
Not answering yet! what, means he thus to yield!
And leave the foe an undisputed field?
"Shout! comrades, shout!" the British seamen cry,
"Our foe is dumb, and yields us victory!"
Fatal delusion! Heaven and earth! it roars!
Blank pistol shot, the iron tempest pours!
Dreadful in flame, through all-involving smoke,
Continuous peals of crashing thunder broke,
And where it fell, with all-resistless force,
Pour'd death and ruin in its wasting course!
Surpris'd, dismay'd, before sudden death,
Ranks, roll'd on ranks, of Britons, yield their breath:
In mingled carnage floats the deck with blood,
And strew her shiver'd fragments o'er the flood
Ruin inevitable! – for aid they cry,
Quick to their side to equal vessels fly.
And now a sight incredible is seen:
Detroit, the Hunter and Charlotia Queen,
While yet no other ship his said can gain,
Scarce with the *Lawrence* equal fight maintain!
Ah, me! such strife has many a freeman cost,
In that unequal struggle nobly lost!
Sons of their father's worth, they bravely stood,
Resolv'd to win the empire of the flood;
And when unmov'd they sunk amidst the dead,
Still wav'd their country's banner o'er their head!
Thus sinking last before the deadly fire,
Their leader saw them, heaps on heaps, expire;
What should he do? when every hand destroy'd,
*Himself* to man the guns had been employ'd,
But these unhing'd, now useless strew'd the deck,
And two hours' fight had made the ship a wreck;
What shall he do? the vessel cannot fly;
And shall he strike? No – rather sink and die!
He is resolv'd – and calling to his side
Yarnall, his second, and his country's pride,
While o'er the stern the ready boat is thrown –
To him the purpose of his heart make known.
"I go to conquer yet!" he nobly cries,
"For see, our squadron into action flies!
If once I gain a second vessel's deck,
Victory is ours, though this one be a wreck.
Meantime be firm, remember where you are:
Think death itself is not the worst to bear:
See that your honor you untarnish'd keep,
And his who cried "O don't give up the ship!"
Him and his flag the ready yawl receives,
(His *country's flag* is all the hero saves)
And while a hail of grape-shot round it play,
Cuts through the hissing showers its onward way;
The foe's astonish'd fury, pour'd in vain,
Resistless braves, and hurries o'er the main:
Till, yet unhurt amidst the gen'ral wreck,
The hero gains the stout Niag'ra's deck!
    His fortitude, through every grade of wo,
Blood, ruin, wreck – the slaughter of his crew,
The tempest's rage – the hail-shot of the foe,
And *all but death*, unmov'd, had borne him through.
Began his bosom now with hope to glow,
But yet remain'd one final, trying blow!
When, looking back, he saw the Lawrence' pride,
Her gallant flag descend to drink the tide!
"Hope, tim'rous fugitive! restrain thy flight!
This darkest hour shall usher in the light.
That gallant streamer sinks to rise again:
The crippled foe shall not his prize retain!
For lo, my sons to double vengeance fly!
Hope stay the flight! they rush to victory!"
Thus cried Columbia, hovering o'er the field,
And with new ardor all her children fill'd,
While gather'd now, his squadron round combine,
Their chief resolves to break the British line,
And, spread his sails for one decisive blow,
Bears swift and terrible upon the foe.
Now scarce a cable's length is left between,
And scenes of death unutt'rable are seen!
"Gloomy as night," beneath a sheet of flame,
They join – they burst, recoil, and join again!
While thro' torn sides, where opening ruin pours,
And high above rebellowing thunder roars,
The fighting host is seen with horror wild,
And less'ning fast, midst heaps of slaughter pil'd.
Despairing shrieks, through thunder's hoarse are driven,
And upward mount with ghosts of mean to heaven!
The wave below, that heaves the dead ashore,
Murmurs astonish'd at the mad'ning roar –
The angle of destruction, from on high,
Flaps his black wings and shrieks along the sky,
While death, delighted road the stormy blast,
In gloomy joy – and shouted as it pass'd!
Not long after the strife when such is mortal rage,
Nor victory doubtful where such hands engage.
Niag'ra, Caledonia, clouds of war,
Ariel and Scorpion thundering from afar,
While Somers, Tygress, Porcupine, and Trippe.
Kindle the flaming line from ship to ship,
A mingled storm of death and ruin pour:
Perry and Elliot brave direct the shower
Forest and Taylor here to fame aspire:
Claxton and Swartwout, sons of martial fire:
Webster and Turner, freedom's cause maintain'd:
Parker and Smith, immortal honors gain'd.
And shall the muse withhold her feeble breath,
To sing their deeds who nobly sunk in death!
Alas, they wear oblivion's cypress bays!
And where they stand recorded, meet their praise.
While names like Brook's, Clark's, and Laue's survive
In freedom's roll their characters shall live:
And o'er the turf, where their lov'd ashes sleep,
Fathers shall teach their infant sons to weep!
Not long the strife! for lo, submissive now,
Charlotia strikes! her red-cross flag is low!
Nor doubtful more-another drinks the main,
And high above Colombia's ensigns stream!
A brig and schooner, hopeless, next resign,
And two a shameful flight attempt in vain.
"Victory, huzza!" the exulting squadron cry,
And "victory, victory!" freedom's hills reply.
"Victory is yours," the humbled foe confess,
And streams the signal for the fight to cease.
Loud, as the dread artillery of heaven,
One breath before the stormy blast was driven-
And face stern with ardour's fiercest glow,
Scowl'd death and ruin o'er the opposing foe:
Instant the storm is hush'd! – its dying roar
Has sunk in distant murmurs down the shore;
And frowns of malice in a foeman's face,
Drop pitying tears for brethren in distress!

Let Europe boast her sons of iron mould:
Let Asia sell her sympathies for gold;
Afric may glory in her serpent guile,
And "on for vengeance" with her Zanga "toil:"
Be it my country's richer glory far,
With deeds of love to blunt the rage of war:
Her sons, dread demons to the opposing foe-
Angles of mercy o'er a chief laid low!
Such are the wreaths Columbia's brows that twine
And much I glory that I call her mine.\footnotemark
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The

Heroes of the Lake

Book II

Scene First – A Prospect of Peace

"Freedom's sons, with general voice. 
Rejoice, with gratitude rejoice! 
Hope, that spread her wings for flight, 
Hope returns to bless your sight: 
Midnight darkness, long unfurl'd, 
Yields to light the western world, 
And war's dread thunder-cloud gone down, 
Bends a bow of promise round! 
Yes, happy land! peace shall return: 
No longer let the nation mourn! 
She comes – and in her shining train, 
Love, Joy, and Plenty, smile again, 
The fields, with desolation spread, 
Shall spring with culture at her tread, 
And yonder plain, with slaughter pil'd, 
Again the golden harvest yield. 
No more, amidst the woodland glade, 
Shall be the deadly ambush laid, 
Or, dying down the darksome vale, 
Echo the tortur'd victim's wail. 
Where, late, war's horrors spread the ground, 
The rustic cots shall rise around; 
And where the cannon's thunder broke, 
Resound the woodman's echoing stroke: – 
Health, joy, content, again abound, 
And spread the frontier circle round! 
Freedom's glad children all shall share 
Alike her bounty and her care. 
War's tempest hush'd upon the main,
The sea-boy sees his home again-
The widow'd parent dries her grief-
The pris'ner hails a sweet relief;
And finish'd now his last campaign,
The soldier homeward turns again,
Where love and joy and rapture meet,
The hero's glad return to greet!
Yes, happy land, thus Peace appears,
She comes to dry a nation's tears:
From Erie's wave she takes her flight
The rose her morn – there broke the night –
She comes; exalt a nation's voice!
Rejoice, with gratitude rejoice!

'Twas thus attendant on Columbia's tread,
Her herald, Fame, the joyful tidings spread.
Long o'er the scene, where deepest battle rung,
With her attendant had the maiden hung.
She views with pain the combat's doubtful fray,
Now sees her sons, and now the foe give way:
Uncertain quite, who victory's wreath shall claim,
Or whose exploit her herald shall proclaim:
At length, as turns the fortune of the day,
She sees it fall, and bids her haste away.
Her herald, flying, wakes the trumpet's voice,
And shouts "Rejoice, with gratitude rejoice!"
And lo, quick following where the goddess flies,
What mingled tokens of rejoicing rise!
Far o'er the land with kindling rapture seen,
A thousand spires with starry ensigns stream:
The bells unusual chimes are taught to know:
Mingles the cannon's proud salute below:
And cities fired with inoffensive flam,
Check night's career, and bring the day again!
'Twas thus, from Georgia to the northern strand,
Spread the glad tidings thro' the happy land.
Scene Second – Northern Bank of Erie.

1st Warrior… "Comrade, why that look of wo?"

2d W… "Brother, I watch our big canoe!
   Why has her pictured blanket fell?
   Why ceas'd the whiteman's fell?
   Brother, I fear the fight is o'er-
   I hear the big-guns burst no more;
   Ah! can it be? our squadron cower!
   Yes! see! They seek the other shore!"

1st W… "Wakon forbid!" Alas, 'tis true!
   And wo's the day – to Britons, wo!
   Treach'ry or fear, they'll rue the day!
   Quick, comrade, let us haste away!"

Such words were heard upon Canadia's shore,
When ceas'd the "battle of the lake" to roar;
Long on the beach the impatient warriors stood.
To hail their allies victors of the flood:
But when they saw the red flag drink the tide,
And o'er the wave their conquer'd vessels ride,
In wonder lost, they, several haste away,
To spread the dismal tidings of the day.
Swift to Detroit the wondering warrior flies;
And lo! new sights of horror meet his eyes!
He sees- as thro' the wood her spires unfold –
The town in darkning smoke of ruin roll'd –
That darkness burst before the struggling flame,
From pitchy Night the red-tongued meteors stream,
And high o'er all, with whirlwind-fury driven,
A fiery storm, roll billowing up to heaven!
And, stranger still! in yonder distant plain,
Retreating fast, the Briton's flag is seen!
What can it mean? He stands in wonder lost,
Till, at his side, a flying soldier pass'd.

"Ho! red-coat, stand! obey my summons quick!
Nay, tremble not, 'tis not thy life I seek!
No harm shall reach thee – thus the redman swears –
Say, who art thou, and why yon sight appears?
Why is the city wrapp'd in wasting flame?
And why this tarnish of our allies' fame?
Why trust no more their boasted arms; but feet!
Soldier, dost see? our coward friends retreat!
Encourag'd thus the youthful soldier smil'd,
And thus the warrior's question answer'd mild.

Scene Third – Continued

"Warrior, wouldst thou know aright,
Why appears so strange a sight?
This day upon the lake, the foe,
Laid our naval honors low!
And swift, as now the tidings came,
Yon ill-starr'd town is wrapp'd in flame.
Our troops about to quit their shore,
Would not increase the foeman's power:
And thus the capital they burn,
Lest it should to their hand return.
Thou seest the reason why they fly: -
And ask'st thou, warrior, who am I?
Alas! a wretch of many woes,
His tale of sorrow shall disclose!
Fortune on me has never smil'd,
Grief was my portion from a child:
Of friends in early life bereft,
Alone one widow'd parent left,
Hardships for her I learn'd to bear,
And onward groan'd from year to year,
Content if she might only smile,
To eat the bitter bread of toil;
For sweet the morsel to my taste,
That made a helpless mother bless'd.
Thus had the seasons, as they roll'd,
My twentieth annivers'ry told:
A ruthless press-gang, on that day,
Tore me from all I lov'd away! –
And when the next curs'd morning rose.
Waking to realize my woes-
-Warrior, dost wonder that I weep?"
My hopeless home was on the deep!
Three months of boisterous peril flown,
At length our destiny was known:
In Lawrence' gulf, our anchor cast,
We landed on this coast at last:
And from that day, when guilt or fear
First gave our troops possession here,
My daily duty I have done,
To guard the walls of yonder town.
My faithful service, thus endur'd,
With smiles, I lately was assur'd,
That "soon my bondage should be o'er,
And I might see my home once more!"
Ah, me! my heart, to trust too prone,
Already made the hour my own,
Which, now lock'd up in Fate's dim roll,
Perhaps shall never bless my soul!
Already Freedom's morning smil'd,
And Fortune seem'd to bless her child!
_Homeward_ my raptur'd spirit flew,
And, oh! the scene that fancy drew!
In vision'd hope, I reach the spot:
The brook, the lawn my native cot,
Scenes where my infant days were pass'd,
And gain a parent's arms at last!
I feel the embrace of raptur'd joy:
I hear her bless her long lost boy –
I kiss the tear-drop from her cheek,
And speechless hang upon her neck!
Ah! cease, my heart! hold, fancy, hold!
And let the cruel truth be told!
Too dear my vision'd joys were bought,
And double wo my raptures wrought!
Eager, my parent's heart to ease,
I wrote my hopes of quick release,
And too imprudently express'd
The indigent feelings of my breast.⁴
My trust, with treachery repaid,
To fiercest vengeance me betray'd:
And, warrior, when that morning rose,
Pledg'd for relief from all my woes,
And big with hopes of joy to come,
-That day, a prison, was my doom!!
There is a grief that cannot weep-
A wound for healing to tears too deep:
There is a wo that cannot feel –
The pang that turns the heart to steel:
And these were mine; for such there are,
The cordial pangs of deep despair!
Yes, such were mine! – as looking round,
I mark'd my gloomy dungeon's bound.
Dark, silent, deep, with dampness hung,
It echoed as the dew drops-rung:
The rough black arch swell'd o'er my head –
Beneath, cold earth my only bed –
The twilight gleam, that just appears,
To show impenetrable bars –
And figures carv'd of horrid sight,
Reflecting transitory light,
That glimmering seem amidst the gloom.
Like monsters of the night to roam!
"Great God! and must I here abide?
(As thus my heart unlock'd, I cried)
These, these, this promis'd day's delight!
This galling chain – this changeless night!
This hopeless solitude to roam!
These inmates of my living tomb?
-No, better thus to die! – I cried,
The blow was rais'd – just when I spied
-As through my grates its flashes gleam-
Yon conflagration's wasting flame.
Expecting now, indeed, to die,
I bless'd the final stroke so nigh:
Rejoic'd that mercy should provide
To save my hand from suicide.
And, nearer still, the ruin roll'd,
My prison's roof the flames enfold,
And suffocating smoke, e'en now,
Had fill'd the dungeon vault below!
'Twas then my prison doors gave way,
And, rushing forth to upper day,
A hand unknown my fetters broke,
And led me on through rolling smoke,
Till snatch'd by darkness from my sight,
His voice still bade me haste my flight!
But, oh! as trembling I obey'd,
Through scenes unutterable I fled!
What mingled deaths around me swell-
What shrieks of wo my ears assail,
I shall not now attempt to tell,
But end my melancholy tale,
I gain'd the wood, thou know'st the rest,
And answer'd now is they request."

"And whither, whiteman, would thy footsteps roam?"
Enquires the chief - "thou canst not reach thy home!
Say, youthful soldier, wither wouldst thou go?"
He quick replies - "That also shalt thou know.
While yet for me a country there remain'd,
That country's honor never have I stain'd.
For her I fac'd the dangers of the field,
And while her cause was just, would never yield!
Those days are past - her character is fled;
And when again the battle-field I tread,
Her sons shall see, and tremble at the sight,
There may be times when e'en revenge is right!
Yes, warrior, hear! nor be thyself afraid
To quit a cause unworthy of thy aid
Long have I mark'd her bloody flag unfurl'd,
That shakes its terrors o'er the eastern world:
Her smiles are poison'd arrows – and her breath
Distils like oil-drops: but corrodes to death!
Her friendship is but cruelty more fell,
Her malice sucks the coldest gall of hell;
And wrath and ruin, since her empire stood,
Have walk'd the earth, and track'd their way with blood!
But soon the period of her crimes shall come:
Already tottering on her wat'ry throne,
She gloomily forestalls her day of doom,
When the full vengeance for her crimes shall come:
Then long-suspended wrath shall burst in flame,
And blast her empire from the roll of fame;
Or, earthquake-rock'd, deep down the centre hurl'd,
Her "sea-girt isle" no more disgrace the world!"
Deep scowl'd the savage as the soldier spoke;
At length, indignant, thus his answer broke:

"Soldier, I've sworn the Britons' arms to aid,
And scorn the wretch that any cause betray'd!
And wer't not that I promis'd thee thy life
Thy blood, for this, should reek upon my knife:
But, soul of trembling fears, in safety go;
Go, sing in maiden's ears thy tale of wo.
To other scenes of pastime I will fly:
I long to hear the battle's mingled cry:
I seek the bloody carnage of the field,
Through there assure'd a glorious life to yield.
And when the world shall wonder at my death,
Tell them, Tecumseh *never broke his faith*!

Sudden the chief departed as he spoke,
And down the wood his way the soldier took.

**Scene Fourth – Sandwich**

The tents were pitch'd, the camp was still;
The watch fires gleam'd upon the hill:
And, doubled, the sentinels guarding the ground,
The soldiers were sleeping in armor around.
And is it for nought that the watch-fires gleam?
Doubles that nightly guard in vain?
In an *enemy's* country those watch-fires are seen:
Columbia's heroes are sleeping between –
And they rest in their armor 'gainst treachery dight,
Or prepar'd on the morrow the foemen to fight.

'Twas silence all – the circling camp around;
But, central of the rest, one tent was found,
Where deep anxiety and counsel wise,
Held soft'ning slumber from a warrior's eyes.
His anxious head was rested on a hand,
Whose prowess oft had bless'd his native land:
On *Wabash's* stream it laid a prophet low,
And foil'd the treachery of savage foe –
Before its vengeance, *Raisin's*, murderers fled –
At *Meigs* 'twas rais'd with righteous slaughter red –
And still more recent, on Canada's shore,
Had turn'd the tide of an invading war:
Quick as the ruins of their fleet they hear,
The foe beheld it threatening from afar:
With terror struck, a shameful flight they haste,
And leave not *Malden*, but a bloody waste!
The blot of heaven, tho' long to vengeance slow,
Lingers, at last, to strike a surer blow.
That arm had thus the enemy pursued,
Unerring still each obstacle subdued;
And now, at midnight, on the tented field,
A forehead pain'd with toil and cares it held.
Close at his side a Youthful Hero stood,
As he on land, the other on the flood –
Scarce needs the muse the chieftains' names make known,
The names of Perry and Harrison.
The warrior, thus, at length the silence broke,
As to the hero of the lake he spoke.
"Indeed, companion of my toils, 'tis true,
A treacherous enemy our troops pursue;
And such their cruelties might well inspire,
A heart less animate than thine, with fire!
But say, what further motive couldst thou find,
To leave thine element of fame behind!
And, quell'd the deep beneath thy conquering band,
To volunteer thy service on land,⁸
Or, jealous of thy mistress, didst thou fear,
Some other brows the wreaths of Fame might wear?"
Here ceas'd the warrior, with a friendly smile,
And thus the youthful hero answer'd mild.
"Little I hope to gain the fickle maid,
While faithful still her arms are round thee spread.
But surely, leader, as thy actions tell,
Good cause there is why freedom's sons should feel;
Should feel and act, and not their sphere confine,
To where forc'd duty, or their fears incline!
And yet, I own, another reason still –
A motive new, perhaps, and strange to tell –
But still, believe me, warrior bold, it's true,
A promise dark has brought me here to you!
You smile - 'tis well; but hear me and forbear:
For superstition has no vot'ry here.
'Twas on the morning of that glorious day,
That saw us triumph n the naval fray –
An Indian warrior on our vessel stood,
Pain't from his wounds and covered o'er with blood:
He told his melancholy story o'er,
And as he clos'd it, sunk to rise no more:
But in the last sad agonies of his death,
He seem'd inspire'd – his last prophetic breath,
The battle of the lake, that day, assur'd,
And more, the monster whom his soul abhorr'd,
The British Proctor, bade me well beware,
Must fall ere Canada our arms could share!
The words - "his realms a conqueror shall not know,
Till he, himself, to union's flag shall bow!"
And when it follow'd as the savage told,
I'd hop'd the promise should at once unfold –
That day's disgrace the monster did not share,
And when I saw him fly before thee here,
-Through this alone has not my steps impell'd-
In hope to reach him yet, I sought the field."

"Indeed! 'tis strange!" the musing chief replies,
"but be content, whate'er the tale implies;
We soon, I think, shall reach the flying foe,
And then, of course, its mystery shall know.
Meantime retire, for nature calls, the while,
To brace the body, for to-morrow's toil."

**Scene Fifth – The Banks of the Thames**

When plastic nature, at its birth,
First form'd this variegated earth,
That all alike her love might share,
She gave each part some special care.
Her torrid climes with beauty glow,
The temperate health and changes know: -
And where eternal winter rules,
She spreads her grandeur, round the poles!
Where Plata's trackless wastes unfold,
Her bowels teem with ribs of gold,
And Afric's sands supply the grain
That feeds the insatiate thirst of gain:
Her spices scent the passing gale,
Where else the life of man would fail:
Poland's deep frosts, her mines conceal,
Sweden is ribb'd on rocks of steel,
And through Canadia's realms of snow,
Her thousand nameless rivers flow.\(^9\)

So thought the *western warrior* as he rode,
Along the banks where Thames' deep current flow'd.
So mus'd or turn'd alternate and survey'd
The lengthen'd movements of the host he led.

Far up the stream as thus they urge their way,
A varying scene of beauty meets the eye:
Prairies out-streach'd to sightless distance wide,
Innum'rous streamlets rolling at their side,
And distant far a circling ridge appears,
White with the winter of a thousand years;
While deep and silent rolling by their side,
Wave after wave the Thames is seen to glide,
And upward winding, like a *coward's* flight,
Some new meander still eludes the sight.

Sudden they lose the prospect of the plain,
High, tow'ring cliffs and rocky mounds are seen:
No more they mark the stillness of the stream,
For rushing now the rocky bluffs between,
It bursts its way in foam and thunder through,
And roars a torrent to the plain below.\(^{10}\)

Still, on the troops pursue their ardent toil,
And hopes of vict'ry all their pains beguile.
So narrow now they see the pass appear,
The foe, they deem, cannot be distant far:
And stores and arms, that strew his shameful flight,
Declare he fears the fortune of the fight.

Lo, down yon steep a swift-wing'd courier flies!
And hark! he shouts with rapture in his eyes!
"The Britons stand! prepare, my friends, prepare!
In yonder glade they from the line with care!
But soon we'll drive them from the dark defile:
Haste, comrades, haste! For now shall end our toil!"

Mark! momentary, as that message rung,
What solemn pause along the line is flung!
-Instant, the trumpet wakes! 'tis fled in air:
A well-known voice, the battle bids prepare!
His standard floats – they recognize his plume!
They hear! – their animation soon resume!
And ready ranged in order deep and slow,
Move on, with confidence, to meet the foe.

Scene Sixth and Last – Continued

When, long of waves and tempest tost,
The sea-boy gains his native coast,
And, distant through the night, is seen
The joyous beacon's trembling beam –
New terrors in his bosom rise,
As meets the port his longing eyes,
Lest some cross mind should strike the main.
And blow him from his hopes again!
Such the anxieties the poet knows,
As winds the historic drama to a close:
When he would rise – he fears at last to fail,
And sink where most his numbers should prevail:
Seizing the transient interval between,
-As move his heroes to the closing scene-
Gladly he's paus'd, and lingers yet to tell,
Who lead that host to battle on so well.
And in the foremost ranks, I need not name,
Those two already favour'd sons of fame.
First on their left a gallant troop is seen,
And Johnson bold conducts them o'er the plain:
Johnson, scarce second in his country's love,
As doom'd that day by combat dire to prove.
Far on the right, where Trotter's legions shine,
Unnumber'd heroes gleam along the line:
Butler was there, and Cass, illustrious name!
Already gilded in the nich of fame:
Desha and Henry held a dreadful post,
And King and Chile and Allen swell the host!
But wherefore strive to givev the honors due,
Where ev'ry soldier moves a hero too?
And yet remains one venerable name,
That more than poesy can give might claim.
Wedg'd in a point the battle's front to try,  
Go, choose the sport where the deepest perils lie! –  
And at that point such peril dread to dare,  
What dauntiess hero, find we moving there?  
Immortal Shelby! thine it was to raise  
The country's wonder and exceed her praise!  
She calls – nor can infirmities restrain,  
Or wither'd age withhold thee from the plain –  
And towering now, thy martial form appears,  
Strong in decay and venerable in years,  
Where whiten'd locks reflect it o'er the field,  
And trembling hands a blade of vengeance wield.  
Alas! to aid his efforts were there none?  
Must age support the doubtful strife alone?  
No! glorious thought! his countrymen were there,  
Kentuckia's sons the post of danger share!  
Kentuckia's sons, in ev'ry peril tried!  
Fist in the field and in their country's pride!  
Bleeding with wounds in ev'ry war supplied,  
Kentuckia's sons were thronging at his side.  
But hark! the direful conflict is begun!  
Already, on the right, the field is won:  
For bursting where the opposing squadrons join,  
-Resistless a whirlwind on the main-  
The shouting horsemen dash exulting through,  
And wheeling fast, complete the overthrow.  
Dread on the left, more doubtful strife is seem,  
Where savage hearts the desp'rate fight maintain;  
Untaught to yield, a horrid strife they join,  
Where mad'ning zeal and cruelty combine:  
Though mow'd like grass, before the wasting fire,  
They roll in blood and gloriously expire!  
Nor sink alone – the whitemen yield their breath,  
Fast as the unerring bullets whirl their death,  
As rain'd in showers, the swampy sedge between,  
From eyes of basilisks the death-shots stream!  
And see, good heavens! The fiendy legions rise,  
And rushing onward with redoubled cries,  
Like wind and hail and light'ning mix'd with rain,  
Pour mad'ning fury on the right, in vain!
In vain; - but much that bloody moment cost,
In mingled ruin swallow'd up and lost!
As! 'twas an hour to try the souls of men!
When mid the musket shower – the grape-shot's rain,
The clash of blades, the thrill of bayonets rung,
And savage shricks the groans of death among!
To feel the ground with slippery carnage spread,
And grope, through smoke, a passage o'r the dead –
To see the flash on painted faces gleam,
Or hear their shouts, the cannon's roar between!
But lo, that trying hour the Hero comes
Wav'd through the smoke is seen his well know plume:
"Shelby, huzza! the victory is won!
Shout, freemen, shout, the strife of death is done!"
The Indians fly, the battle leaves the plain,
And, victory, victory! rends the heavens again!

We said the Indians fled; but one remain'd,
And dreadfully alone the fight maintain'd:
A desperate chief – still unsubdu'd he stood,
Though pierced with wounds and cover'd o'er with blood –
Had spurn'd alike the thoughts to fly or yield,
And kept at bay the conquerors of the field,
Till quite enrag'd, a host were gathering round,
To hew, at once, the stubborn hero down:
Just then a courser through the column broke,
Hot from pursuit – and thus the rider spoke:
"Your bayonets hold!" Their points are upward thrown,
For straight the Hero of the Lake, is known.
"Say, savage chief – your life is safe – declare,
Where is the infernal leader of the war?
Dead or alive, his refuge quick reveal!"
The chief replies, "That will I gladly tell!
Yes, still I'll torture! warrior bold, he's fled!
Thou canst not reach him now with all thy speed!"
-A sudden pang has lower'd the hero's plume,
And hung his brow with momentary gloom:
But soon resum'd - "Savage, he cries, beware!
Fate hangs upon thy words – the truth declare,
Living or dead, but yield him to our hand,
And such reward, as we can give, demand!"
"*This* be my answer!" bold the chief exclaims,
And at his breast a mortal weapon aims –
"Go learn it, treach'rous leader, in the dust,
Tecumseh never yet betray'd his trust!"

"Tecumseh, thou?" an ardent youth replied,
And dash'd the death blow from the hero's side;
"Thou art, no doubt, infernal chief! and know,
I, *thy sworn enemy*, have foil'd thy blow!
'Twas I, who met thee by the *burning town* –
Did I not swear to bring my murderers down?
It is fulfill'd – my curs'd oppressors fly:
Thou seest me *conquer*, scorning chief! – now die!"
"Thou canst not harm me, *now,*" the chief replies,
And fainting, sinks him never more to rise!
"Tecumseh's race is run – my hours are fled,
Eternal night is gathering round my head;
But ere my sun is set in endless night –
And ere you fade forever from my sight.
Listen, O chiefs, to what I now shall tell,
And treasure up my dying precepts well!
Thou, *Youthful Hero*! much of fortune blest!
I know the wish that labors in thy breast,
Our leader's doom of *prophecy* to know,
Which promise'd he to *Union's flag* should bow:
Thou see'st he's fled – his country will not yield,
Nor yet be Logan's dying words fulfill'd:
Ah! cease to hope, thy country's flag unfurl'd,
Can float in triumph o'er this northern world:
While thus *divisions* mar Colombia's fame,
Her flag the name of *union* cannot claim!
-Witness, ye heroes, though I yield my breath
As warriors should, who never shrink at death,
My soul is sick'ning at the sad review
Of what these eyes have witness'd here below!
I've seen the proud oppress the humble poor –
The *good man* begging at the *villain's door*:
I've heard the christian bless his brother's God,
And seen him madly shed that *brother's blood*!
Union and peace, I've heard a land proclaim,  
While faction's torch in ev'ry hand was seen;  
Last, have I trusted to a villain's smile,  
And borne for him the battle's roughest toil.  
But now, abandon'd, while the cowards fly,  
Faithful alone, for my reward, I die!14
- The dew-damps of the grave are falling round,  
Cold is my pillow in the silent ground –  
Darkness and doubt are clouding o'er my brain!  
Ah! from my slumbers shall I wake again?  
One moment more, Great Spirit, shall reveal:  
The gulf appears – I sink! – oh! world, farewell!"

Alas, he's gone! and with that dying groan,  
The spirit of a mighty chief has flown!  
Silent with grief and scarce with tearless eye,  
The musing soldiers turn'd their steps away:  
Scarce with dry eye away the hero drew,  
And, after pausing, turn'd and gaz'd anew,  
Till drawn to distance from the scene away,  
He meets the trophies of the glorious day,  
And on his ear, the shouts of victory swell,  
Yet once he turns – and looks one long farewell!

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'Tis done - the bark has gain'd the wish'd-for shore,  
And fears the chances of the deep no more!  
What if with tackle torn or shatter'd mast?  
She needs them not – she's safely moor'd at last!  
What though her cargo be condemn'd? or find  
The market full, and none to buy inclined?  
Still shall be the adventure smile and bless in peace,  
His glad escape from these poetic seas.  
-Reader, farewell! If, haply to thy heart,  
The historic muse has gain'd one fibrous part –  
And, as with fictions's subtle thread she strove  
To weave a garland for her Hero's love,  
Thy soul has caught the patriot's genial flame,  
And burn'd to share a Perry's deathless name:
Go emulate his deeds! – with him agree,
The noblest virtue is *Humility*!\textsuperscript{15}
Country, farewell! Accept the proffer'd mite,
And O, if aught has gain'd thy ear aright –
-While thy brave sons have wak'd the poet's fire,
Forgive the strain that swell'd their praise no higher!
And if a dying chieftain's words were true –
If *faction's* rage the patriot's breast must rue:
If discord's flame throughout the land appears,
And burns the edifice the hero rears –
If, malice-tortur'd on their *mother's* breast
Thy *twin-born sons* in mutual spite contest,
*And fathers* teach their infant charge to dart
*Detraction's* poison'd arrows at the heart:
Then, hear me, country! O permit the prayer
Of him, who loves, and begs thee to forbear!
Forego the suicide! – *unite* and live!
Disunion's stab thou never canst survive!
Haste, crush the *monster*! Heal the breach, unite,
And banish *discord* to his native night!
Unite, and victory stoops upon your arms!
Unite, and bid adieu to war's alarms!
*Unite*, and *prosper* - ev'ry blessing share –
*Persist*, and wed the spectre of despair!

**End of the Poem**