The Canadian Militia Myth of the War of 1812: Its Origin, Course and Dissolution

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The article by Charles P. Stacey that follows is an important piece of writing in the Canadian historiography of the War of 1812. This is because Stacey, at the time the president of the Ontario Historical Society, was the first historian to directly challenge a long-cherished national belief—that the Canadian militia largely won the war through their own efforts, although they did get some help from regular troops. In his article, Stacey traces the origins of this myth to a sermon preached at York, the capital of Upper Canada, in December 1812 and the author of the sermon was almost certain Dr. John Strachan, the Anglican primate of Upper Canada. Strachan was confident that

_It will be told by the future historian, that the Province of Upper Canada, without the assistant of men or arms, except a handful of regular troops, repelled its invaders, slew or took them all prisoners, and captured from its enemies the greater part of the arms by which it was defended ...... And never, surely was greater activity shewn in any country, than our militia have exhibited, never greater valour, cooler resolution, and more approved conduct; they have emulated the choicest veterans and they have twice saved the country._

According to Strachan, when the call to arms came in 1812, Canadians willingly dropped their ploughs, grabbed their muskets and marched to the border to successfully defend their homes and families against a foreign invader. They were able to do this because the Canadian male—particularly the Canadian male loyal to the Crown—is a natural-born fighting man far superior to any enemy he is likely to encounter. Most simply put, and put in the vernacular, is the firm belief that every red-blooded Canadian male is “half man, half grizzly bear, with just a touch of lightning bolt thrown in.” Of course, all nations have similar myths, or at least they did in the nationalistic 19th century but the Canadian Militia Myth was to have a long life before it was finally put to death by Stacey. To fully understand, however, the longevity of this national legend, it is necessary to go back to the end of the War of 1812.

During the two decades that followed the end of the conflict in 1815, most Canadians did not concern themselves with military matters and the defence organization developed during the war was allowed to disintegrate. This organization was based on a combination of regular British and Canadian units and long-service militia units, armed, equipped, uniformed and trained as regulars. They were

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backed up by the sedentary militia, which was basically every male capable of bearing arms, organized into companies, battalion and regiment by county and political riding in Upper Canada, or by parish in Lower Canada. The British regulars left the country when hostilities ended, the Canadian regular and long-service militia units were disbanded and the sedentary militia lapsed into somnolence.

In 1837 Canadians were rudely awakened when a series of political disturbances in Upper and Lower Canada led to the creation of an American terrorist (for want of a better word) organization: the Patriot Hunters. The Hunters’ goal was to annex Britain’s North American colonies as part of the republic and they went about it by military means, although not with much competence. Many Americans in the northern border states supported the Hunters with funding and weapons—much of it from state militia arsenals. The U.S. federal government deplored the actions of the Hunters but lacked the requisite military force to stop them as much of the American regular army was at that time deployed in Florida fighting the Seminoles. Nonetheless, four distinguished America veterans of the War of 1812—Major General Winfield Scott, Brigadier General Thomas Brady and Colonels John Wool and William J. Worth—were prominent in trying to prevent the Hunters from making cross-border incursions.

Despite their best efforts, the Hunters mounted numerous attacks on Canadian territory, often killing innocent civilians in the process. In December 1837, the Hunters occupied Navy Island in the Niagara River; in January 1838, they occupied Bois Blanc Island in the Detroit River; and in February 1838 they seized Pelee Island on the north shore of Lake Erie, fighting a pitched battle against British regulars and Canadian militia. That same month they occupied Hickory Island in the St. Lawrence River and in May 1838 they captured and burned the steamer, Sir Robert Peel, in the St. Lawrence. One of the worst incidents came in November 1838 when a force of about 300 Hunters seized a stone mill near the Canadian village of Prescott and held it for five days. They repulsed a first attempt by Canadian militia and some Royal Marines to drive them into the St. Lawrence River but a second assault by a force comprised of British regulars, Canadian fencibles and militia, was successful and the Hunters surrendered. Their activities, however, had not ended. In December 1838, a force of about 200 Hunters landed near Windsor, murdered a British army surgeon and a black Canadian who refused to join their cause. The local Canadian militia regiment rallied and fought a pitched battle with the invaders causing them to break and run for the Detroit River, hoping to find some means of crossing to American territory. By this time Canadians were becoming impatient with the seemingly endless Hunter incursions and the Windsor militia deliberately executed five American prisoners after the action, including shooting one in full view of the passengers on an American steamer in the Detroit River.²

The Hunter movement failed but, by 1839, there were 33,000 British regulars and fencible or long-service Canadian militia defending the border, as well as the sedentary or local militia. It appeared that the same defensive system that had been successful during the War of 1812, had triumphed again. As the British army units were regularly rotated in and out of North America, they soon went home and most Canadians forgot or ignored the fact that the regulars had done the greater part of the fighting during the Hunter troubles and came to the belief that it was red-blooded Canadian boys who, again, dropped ploughs and grabbed muskets to fight off foreign invaders.

By now, the Militia Myth was well-entrenched in the national psyche and it reached full bloom by mid-century. William Coffin, writing in 1864, proclaimed that the very words, “1812” were “a sign of solemn portent” that “carries with it the virtue of an incantation” being “a watch-word rather than a war cry” and, with “these words on his lips, the loyal Canadian as a vigilante sentinel, looks forth into the gloom, ready with his challenge, hopeful for a friendly response, but prepared for any other.”

By 1878, William Withrow was claiming that it was the militia “with little help from British regulars who won the brilliant victories” in 1812-1815 and, “throughout the entire conflict,” were “the principal defence of the country.” Two years later, Egerton Ryerson, the Chief Superintendent for Education in Upper Canada, boasted how, during the War of 1812, “the Spartan bands of Canadian Loyalist volunteers, aided by a few hundred English soldiers ... repelled the Persian thousands of democratic American invaders, and maintained the virgin soil of Canada unpolluted by the foot of the plundering invader.”

The latter decades of the century provided no events that shook the firm belief in that myth. In the 1850s, Britain — occupied with a war in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny — began to cut the strength of her garrison in Canada. By this time the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada had confederated into Canada East and Canada West, with a common government. In 1855, to offset the reduction of the Imperial troops, this government passed a new militia act which provided, for the first time, pay, weapons, uniforms and equipment for volunteer militia companies in peacetime. The old sedentary organization, based on counties, remained in existence, but the new volunteer companies proved so popular that they were soon formed into battalions.

By 1861, the Civil War had broken out in the republic and it was not long before it spilled over the border. Late in that year, the captain of an American warship removed two Confederate diplomats

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from the *Trent*, a British flag vessel. This was a clear violation of international law that brought Britain and the United States to the point of war and many Canadians were sure that hostilities would result over this “gross insult committed upon the British flag.” Both the volunteer and sedentary militia were ordered to muster and they did so with considerable enthusiasm. “England expects every man to do his duty,” proclaimed one militia poster, echoing Nelson’s famous signal at Trafalgar. The sedentary militia turned out in good numbers although their effectiveness was somewhat doubtful. A young officer described what ensured when his sedentary militia company was mustered in December 1861:

> The appearance of the new recruits would not give much satisfaction to a regular army officer but the rough material is there, out of which sturdy troops can be made fit for any work. ... Most were in rough homespun grey but others were clothed in the old-fashioned clothes brought by their ancestors from the Motherland, and all had their coats strapped in at the waist with belts of basswood bark, and had springs of green balsam in their hats.

> Colonel Axford was supreme. Dressed in the old uniform he wore in 1837, consisting of long-tailed blue coat, with brass buttons, and gilt-cord shoulder straps, a pair of white duck trousers tucked into his high cavalry boots; while a shako and a pair of spurs completed his attire. For trappings his big sorrel horse “Bob” had a large horse cloth of the American cavalry pattern, as also was the high-pommelled saddle and Mexican stirrups, both of which he had bought from an American horse dealer. His appearance was to me anything but dignified, but to his troops he was the personification of military dignity and glory. His popularity was not diminished by the production of two kegs of whisky, which so long as they lasted, were free to all. ...

> The arms which the men had brought were of all sorts and conditions. Some had old Queen Bess muskets, with flint locks, others shot guns, a few rifles, while others not to be entirely defenceless, had strapped scythe blades on pitch-fork handles, and considered themselves as well equipped as the regular lancers. ...

> After the rolls had been completed and the men sworn in, they were drawn up, and an effort made to dress them in line, and here the democratic relationship between officers and men was at once exemplified. It was, Bob, won’t you move up to Tom, Jim, please step forward; or, Now, men, why don’t you hold on and let the others come up. And, when finally the order to march was given, and the line was halted, after an attempt to wheel with the left as a pivot, the whole formation was found as zigzag as a snake [rail] fence. ...  

Fortunately, the crisis was resolved without fighting but it had shown the weaknesses of the sedentary system, which continued in existence although it was soon overshadowed by the new volunteer units. Throughout the Civil War, Britain maintained a large garrison in North America, amounting by late

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6 Poster, 2nd Battalion, Leeds Country militia, December 1861, in author’s possession.
1864 to about 11,000 troops, backed up by 36,000 volunteers in the two Canadas and the sedentary units. This was a sizeable force but it did not compare well with the nearly one million men, which the U.S. federal government had under arms by 1865.

The Civil War had barely ended when a new threat arose — the Irish Republican Brotherhood, popularly called the Fenian Brotherhood. The Fenians were dedicated to overthrowing British rule in Ireland and were prepared to strike at Britain wherever they could, and her North American possessions provided a tempting target. Toward this end, the Fenians purchased 10,000 .58 calibre Springfield rifles and 2,500,000 rounds of ammunition from war surplus stocks and began to prepare for an active invasion of Canada. It came on 1 June 1866 when a force of 800 Fenians, led by a veteran former Union officer, Lieutenant Colonel John O’Neill crossed the Niagara River and captured the Canadian village of Fort Erie. British and Canadian authorities had long been expecting such a move and the response was swift — a British regular regiment and all the volunteer militia units that could be mustered quickly were dispatched by rail to the threatened area. They managed to drive the Fenians back to American territory (where many were arrested) but not before the Irishmen gained a signal victory on 2 June 1866, which demonstrated that the new volunteer units still had some things to learn. A Canadian force composed largely of two volunteer militia battalions — the 2nd (now the Queen’s Own Rifles) from Toronto and the 13th (now the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry) — engaged O’Neill near the village of Ridgeway. Matters on the Canadian side became confused and unfortunate orders were issued for the 2nd Battalion to form square. The Fenians — most being Union veterans of the Civil War — were amazed to see the Canadians assume a formation which made an excellent target and promptly poured aimed fire into the mass of men. Too late, the Canadian commander tried to re-form the troops into line but confusing orders and bugle calls followed and the bewildered and frightened men began to waver. The Canadians broke and ran but O’Neill, getting nervous, withdrew to Fort Erie and recrossed to the United States. Thus ended one Fenian invasion — subsequent attempts by the Brotherhood were turned back at Eccles Hill in Quebec in 1870 and in Manitoba in 1871.8

The Fenian threat had a number of important results. In the mid 1860s, the separate British colonies in North America began to discuss confederation into a single nation. The Act of Confederation was proclaimed on 1 July 1867, which is the birthday of the modern Dominion of Canada. At the same time, Britain began negotiations with Washington to regularize relations between the two countries to prevent a repetition of the frequent border troubles. These negotiations led to the 1871 Treaty of

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8 A good overview of the Fenian raids and the battle of Ridgeway is in Brian Reid, “‘Prepare for Cavalry!’ The Battle of Ridgeway, 2 June 1866,” in Donald E. Graves, ed., Fighting for Canada, Seven Battles, 1758-1945 (Toronto, 2000), 137-184.
Washington which resulted in the majority of British troops in Canada being withdrawn and garrisons only being maintained at the naval bases of Halifax on the Atlantic and Esquimalt on the Pacific. A British senior officer still retained responsibility for the organization and training of the volunteer militia units and to make this force more effective, the Canadian government raised small “school corps” of cavalry, artillery and infantry as a training cadre. This was the beginning of the regular Canadian army but almost all Canadians interested in military matters held fast to the cherished belief that the best defenders of the country were the citizen soldiers of the militia and that the regulars' purpose was to serve only as training cadres.

The Militia Myth was buttressed in 1885 when Canadian soldiers were again called to serve in the field. This time the theatre was the Northwest Territory, a huge area — approximately 1.5 million acres or 180,000 square miles, about 15% of the land in the North American continent. It had been controlled by the Hudson’s Bay Company but was purchased by the Canadian government in 1867. It was sparsely populated by the aboriginal people and the mixed blood Métis who became very restive about the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the region and the influx of white settlers the rail brought to the west. There had been a small insurrection in 1870 but in the spring of 1885, the Métis and their aboriginal allies rose in rebellion, overwhelmed the detachments of Northwest Mounted Police, threatened some of the major towns in the area, and proclaimed a republic. In response, the Canadian government sent Major General Frederick H. Middleton, the British general officer commanding the Canadian Militia, to Winnipeg to assess the situation and, after he arrived, Middleton telegraphed Ottawa to send the best volunteer units to the west. On 27 March Ottawa called out regular and militia units in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and London for active service.

This was the genesis of the Northwest Campaign of 1885, which was largely fought by the volunteer militia, with some help from the tiny regular units. Utilizing the newly-constructed railway, they moved west and in April and May, fought a series of engagements which brought the conflict to a successful conclusion. Some of the longest military movements in history up to that point were made during this campaign — the Halifax Provisional Battalion travelled from the Atlantic seaboard to Swift Current where, having arrived too late to take part in active campaigning, they occupied their time playing baseball with the local home guard. Middleton was happy to accept eastern militia infantry units into his command, he was less happy about cavalry units as, by this time, many of the urban cavalry units were getting ideas above their station and had blossomed out as gaily-uniformed dragoons, hussars and lancers. Instead he recruited small units of scouts from the western population, many of them being cowboys, who

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were mounted on sturdy quarter horses. They proved very effective during the campaign which ended in July 1885.

For the eastern volunteer militia the Northwest Rebellion was what war was supposed to be — it was short, exciting, incurred minimal casualties and took place among exotic scenery. There was also the enjoyment of a splendid welcome home — the 10th Battalion from Toronto was met with cheering crowds and ceremonial arches across the main streets when it disembarked in that city on 23 July 1885. Male spectators “cheered and cheered again as the troops passed” while women “from every window on the line of route waved their handkerchiefs or small flags” and flowers “by hundreds of bunches were thrown at the passing heroes.” The Militia Myth of the superiority of the citizen soldier was upheld and the veterans of 1885 could feel proud about having emulated the heroic deeds of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers during the War of 1812.

Canadian men were not called to arms again until October 1899 when Ottawa responded to a British request to supply an infantry battalion to take part in the war in South Africa. It was recruited from militia units across Canada and competition to enlist was keen. Within sixteen days, this battalion was clothed, armed, equipped and on its way across the Atlantic. Commanded by a regular officer who trained it rigorously, both on the voyage to South Africa and after its arrival. In February 1900 this battalion played a notable part in the victory at Paardeberg before returning to Canada late in that year. It was followed, in sequence, by six regiments of mounted rifles, recruited from men who were good riders and expert shots. These units quickly acquired a reputation as being the most effective cavalry units in the Imperial forces in the guerilla warfare that ensued for two years after Paardeberg. They were light horsemen, well mounted and equipped with McClellan saddles and well armed with both rifles and Colt revolvers. A total of 8,300 Canadians enlisted during the South African War, many of them being members of the volunteer militia. The war in South Africa was Canada's first overseas experience but it again upheld the Militia Myth. It also increased public interest in military matter — as one commentator noted:

Since the South African War, there has been manifested in Canada a growing disposition to recognize the importance of maintaining an efficient military spirit. The country realizes that its whole life has been stimulated, the standard of its manhood built up, the national character strengthened ...... True, the laurels have been moistened with the tears of Canadian mothers, but a price has to be paid for everything that is worth having. The mother of a coward does not often weep.  

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There was increased government expenditure on the militia — the defence budget nearly quadrupled between 1900 and 1911 and this led to an increase in both the regular and militia component of the Canadian army — by 1911 there were 66,000 men in the militia and they were much better trained.

A century after the War of 1812 commenced, the Militia Myth remained very strongly entrenched. In the centennial celebrations of the battle of Queenston Heights, Dr. James L. Hughes, the Chief Inspector of Public Schools in Ontario (as Upper Canada was now called), noted that the lessons of that far off conflict should be imparted to every school child to fill them “with a splendid courage that can never be dismayed, by telling how a few determined settlers scattered widely across a new country successfully repelled invading armies coming from a country with a population twentyfold larger.”12 Two years later, in July 1914, at the centenary of the battle of Lundy’s Lane, Dr. Alexander Fraser, the Provincial Archivist, re-iterated the theme that American aggression was defeated by a people “with iron in their blood” who “were strong in their faith, strong in our loyalty, and invincible in the defence of our home and country.”13

A few weeks after the centenary of Lundy’s Lane, the First World War broke out. At this time, Canada was automatically at war when Britain was at war and the Canadian government determined to make every effort to maintain “the honour and integrity of the Empire.”14 It approved the creation of a military force for service overseas. Sam Hughes, the somewhat eccentric (if not a little mad) Minister of Defence, scrapped the orderly mobilization plan drawn up by his staff in favour of what he termed “a call to arms, like the fiery cross passing through the Highlands of Scotland or the mountains of Ireland in former days.”15 The result was the creation of an entirely new military organization — the Canadian Expeditionary Force — to consist not of existing militia units but entirely new entities. It was recruited from volunteers only, as Hughes ordered that

Not a man will be accepted or leave Canada on this service but of his own free will, and, if I know it, not a married man shall go without the consent of his wife and family.

And when the Canadian men meet the enemy -- as they are going to do -- and vanquish them -- as they are going to vanquish them -- they are going to do it fighting as free men, as free subjects of His Majesty.16

13 Niagara Falls Historical Society, The Centenary Celebration of the Battle of Lundy’s Lane (Niagara Falls, 1919), 40.
16 Montreal Gazette, 15 Aug 1914.
Hughes’s conviction of the superiority of the volunteer citizen soldier was the living embodiment of the Militia Myth as men, many from existing militia units but also many straight from the civilian world, flocked to the Colours. In a matter of weeks, 37,000 men arrived at Valcartier Camp near Quebec where they remained until early October 1914. To a man, they were all anxious to get to grips with “Billy the Kaiser” and were convinced that the war would not last long and they would march in the victory parade through Berlin. They volunteers underwent very little real training at Valcartier except target shooting on the ranges because Sam Hughes was also a fanatic about marksmanship, wanting “first of all, men who can pink the enemy every time.” The new recruits did not know what to make of the unpredictable Hughes and cheerfully sang:

We are Sam Hughes's army  
Thirty thousand strong are we.  
We cannot march, we cannot shoot,  
What bloody use are we?  
And when we get to Berlin  
The Kaiser he will say,  
“Hoch, Hoch, Mein Gott, what a bloody odd lot  
To get six bob[a] day.”

When the contingent, now renamed the Canadian Division, shipped out for Europe in early October 1914, Hughes assured them that they were “a marvel” and as fine a body of men as “ever faced a foe.” Congratulating them for volunteering to defend the “gigantic power of liberty,” he assured them that, although some would not return, the man “who goes down in the cause of freedom never dies—Immortality is his.” Unfortunately, most of the men in the division gained Hughes’ version of immortality. After training in Britain during the winter of 1914-1915, the division crossed to France and became part of the British forces on the Western Front.

It can be said with considerable certainty that, in historical terms at least, the Militia Myth ended on 22 April 1915. On that day German forces attacked allied forces near the Belgian city of Ypres, using a terrible new weapon—chlorine gas. The brunt of the attack fell on two French divisions which crumbled under its weight. The Canadian Division to their right, although beaten back by numerous German infantry attacks, heavy artillery fire, as well as the gas, managed to hold the line until reinforced.

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18 A “bob” was period slang for a shilling. Privates in the Canadian army received $1.10 a day, the equivalent of five or six shillings.
19 This is a Canadian variant of “Fred Karno’s Army,” a British soldiers’ song that celebrated Army Service Corps, sung to the tune of the hymn, “The Church’s One Foundation.” Fred Karno was a popular music hall entertainer of the period.
As one veteran later remarked, the green Canadians “didn’t know enough about it [war] to know that we were licked” and so kept fighting. The battle was waged for three more days but, at its end, the German offensive was halted and much of the lost ground recovered. The cost, however, was horrendous — the Canadian Division lost 6,036 men killed, wounded, captured or missing, approximately half its strength, and most from the rifle companies of the infantry battalions. As its ranks contained the best and the brightest elements of Canadian manhood, the heavy losses were keenly felt across Canada. The battle of 2nd Ypres gave notice to Canada’s soldiers that war was not a thing to be taken lightly but a savage struggle for survival, particularly when fighting a deadly and professional opponent.

It also demonstrated that, while Canadians might have the basic qualities of good soldiers, they would not automatically be victorious but required proper training and good leadership. The Canadian Expeditionary Force, which ultimately encompassed four division, was to receive both in the 41 months of war that followed 2nd Ypres as it evolved into a first class military organization. By the time of armistice in November 1918, Canadians were widely regarded by all in the Imperial forces as “the shock troops of the British Empire.” The cost of obtaining that reputation was not cheap — nearly 65,000 Canadians were killed in the First World War or died from wounds in the five years that followed. To keep things in perspective, this figure is 20% greater than the casualties suffered by United States in 1917-1918 — but incurred from a population one-tenth that of the republic to the south.

Thus died the Militia Myth in reality but it continued to live on for nearly half a century in the Canadian literature of the War of 1812. Two men — Earnest Albert Cruikshank and William Charles Henry Wood — were largely responsible for its continued half life in print. Born near Fort Erie in 1853, Ernest Cruikshank was an enthusiastic historian who laboured with impressive, but somewhat mindless, industry on the subject of Canadian military history. He completed a series of articles on the Canadian units of the War of 1812 but his major titles were the 9-volume Documentary History of the campaigns of the War of 1812 in the Niagara area, published between 1896 and 1908 and documentary histories of the campaigns on the Detroit in 1812 and the U.S. invasion of the Niagara in 1814. William Wood was born in Quebec City in 1864 and educated in Britain. Although not as prolific as Cruikshank, Wood also produced an important source on the conflict, Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812, which appeared in three volumes in four, from 1920 to 1928. Neither man provide much context or analyses in their work, they simply collected, arranged, transcribed and published documents. The fact that many of these documents contained irrefutable evidence that British and Canadian regulars had done the greater part of the fighting during the war either eluded them, or they ignored it. It should be noted

21 Daniel Dancoks, Welcome to Flanders’ Fields (Toronto, 1988), 240.
that both men were militia officers, Cruikshank ending a 50-year military career as a brigadier general and Wood as a colonel. They were also prominent in local and national historical circles. Cruikshank served as Keeper of Military Record at the national archives from 1908 to 1911 and was, successively, president of the Lundy’s Lane Historical Society, Chairman of the National Historic Sites Board and President of the Ontario Historical Society. Wood was employed as an assistant archivist of the Quebec Provincial Archives and served as President of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, the Historic Landmarks Association and as President of the Army and Navy Veterans of Canada. These two men dominated the 20th century study of military history in Canada until the outbreak of the Second World War and very few historians, academic, local or popular, were prepared to contradict them. Cruikshank died in 1939 and Wood in 1947.22

Those years bracketed the Second World War, a conflict that brought forward a new generation of Canadian military historians, most being employed in the Army Historical Section. This section was supervised by Charles P. Stacey, a militia officer and young academic educated at the University of Toronto and Oxford University. Stacey was lecturing at Princeton when he was asked to take on the task of overseeing the historical record of the Canadian Army in the Second World War. This he did with remarkable success, producing no less than four volumes of official history by 1959 when he left the army to teach at the University of Toronto. Stacey was not only a very professional historian, he had witnessed at firsthand the growth and training of the Canadian Army during the war, when it grew from three battalions of regular infantry and a handful of militia regiments into an impressive overseas force of two armoured divisions, three infantry divisions and two armoured brigades, as well as three home defence divisions. He knew firsthand what was required to produce a professional fighting force and had no patience with a myth that stressed the natural fighting ability of the Canadian fighting man over all other influences.

In 1958 Charles Stacey hammered a stake through the heart of the Militia Myth. His address that year to the annual conference of the Ontario Historical Society is, as I remarked at the beginning of this overlong introduction, a seminal piece of writing in the Canadian historiography of the War of 1812.23

Having examined the evidence, Stacey stressed that a Canadian male “does not become a good soldier merely by putting on a uniform because he is a Canadian” because he “has to learn the business like other

22 Biographical details on Cruikshand from the online Canadian Encyclopedia; details on Wood from wikisource.org.
23 Ironically, Stacey may not even have been aware of the effect his article would eventually have on Canadian historiography. He does not mention either it or his time as President of the Ontario Historical Society in his autobiography, A Date with History: Memoirs of a Canadian Historian (Toronto, 1983).
people.” Stacey’s address was reprinted as an article in the journal of the society and again in 1964 in a very well-received collection of essays on the war, *The Defended Border: Upper Canada and the War of 1812*, edited by Morris Zaslow, which included not only three other articles by Stacey but five by Ernest Cruikshank. This collection also contained work by three other historians -- George G.F.G. Stanley, J.M. Hitsman and Herbert F. Wood — who had worked under Stacey’s supervision in the Army Historical Section. They were members of a new and more professional generation of Canadian military historians who not only had the training and knowledge to be able to discern that a myth was just that — an invention — but to correct it. Canadians owe Charles Stacey and these authors a debt of gratitude.

24 Zaslow, *Defended Border*, 333.

25 Charles Stacey wrote a number of articles on the War of 1812. J.M. Hitsman published what was the first “post Militia Myth” history of the War of 1812, *The Incredible War of 1812* in 1965. A revised edition was published in 1999. Hubert F. Wood published a number of articles on the war as did George Stanley, who also completed a history of the conflict, *The War of 1812: Land Operations* in 1983. Mention should also be made of Donald Goodspeed, a member of the historical section, who published a very creditable children’s biography of Isaac Brock.