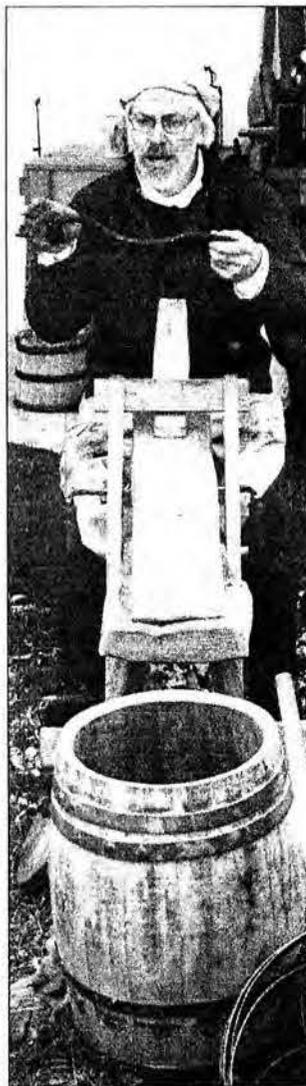
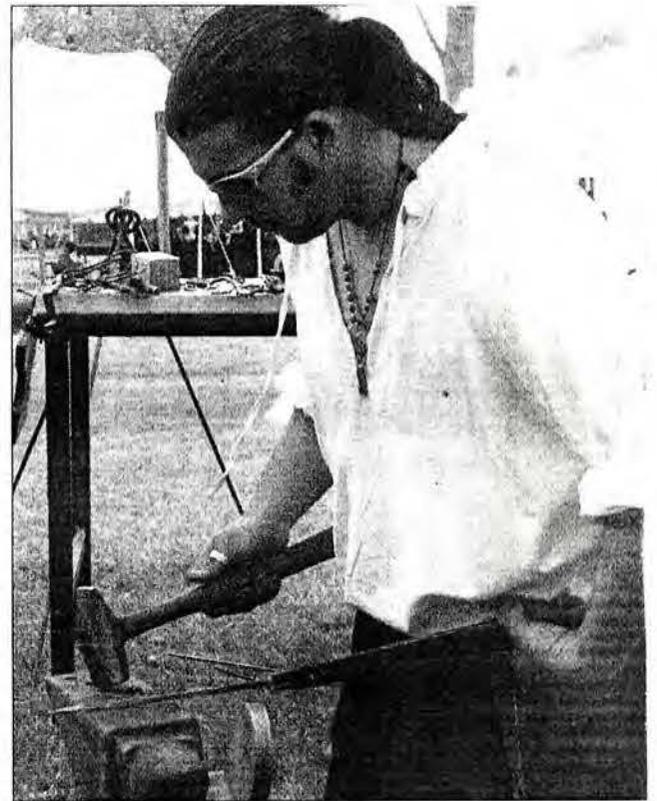




A leather crafter dressed in period costume joined many exhibitors and demonstrators Friday at the Backus-Page House at Tyrconnell. The Tyrconnell Heritage Society hosted an education day for students across the region and on Saturday and Sunday, hosted battlefield re-enactments as part of events celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Talbot Settlement.



Gary Stevens of Neustadt demonstrates barrel making for students on Friday.



Kent Cummings of the Chatham area demonstrates blacksmith work for students during The Tyrconnell Heritage Society's education day Friday.



Anne Verhaller of Thamesville demonstrated weaving to students.

Talbot Settlement brought back to life

The Chronicle May 29th 2003



Tracy Gordon of Wallacetown, left photo, portrays a grieving woman Saturday at the Tyrconnell cemetery where Colonel Talbot, founder of the Talbot Settlement, is buried. Members of the Tyrconnell Heritage Society dressed in period costumes for the event hosted Friday through Sunday.

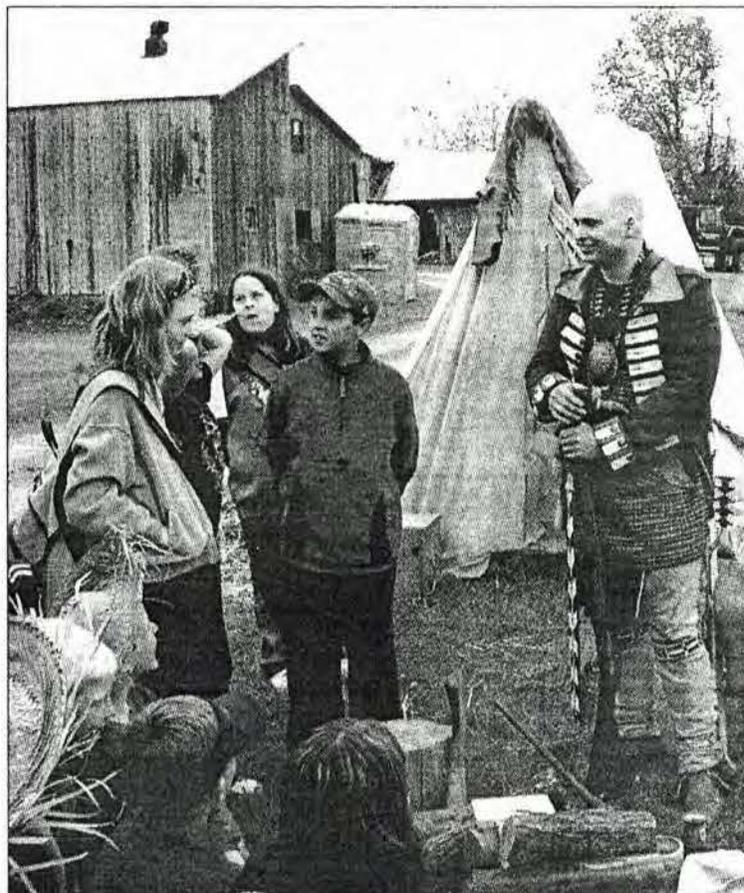


Nathan Smith of Faith Christian School in St. Thomas listens to members of the Tittabawassee Fife and Drum Corp of Michigan. They performed throughout the weekend.
Scott Hilgendorff photos



Donna McKillop, curator of the Backus-Page House Museum, presented this painting titled "The Pearce Family Landing", painted by marine painter Peter Rindlisbacher. The painting was unveiled at a dinner celebrating the Talbot Settlement Bi-Centennial on May 21.

The SunMercury/Terry Heffernan



On Education Day all aspects of the 1800's were present. Here the Grade Fives from Dutton-Dunwich Public School visit one of the native sites set up for the day.

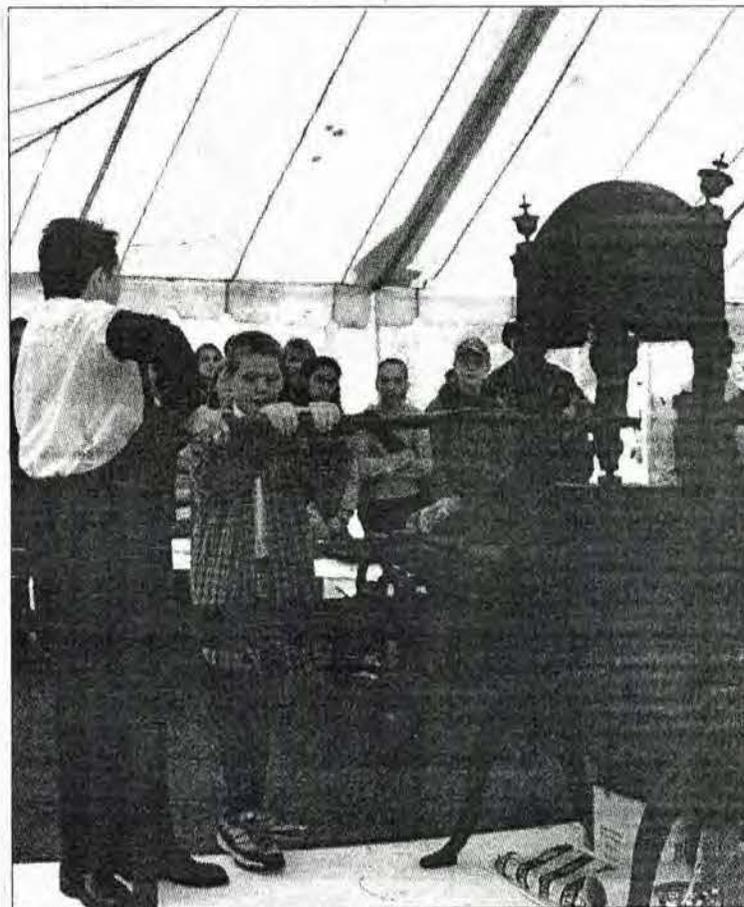
The SunMercury/Tami Sabo



The Chronicle May 29th 2003

A Tittabawassee tune

Eric Keeley of The Tittabawassee Fife and Drum Corp from Michigan joins fellow players in a rendition of 'O Canada' at Friday's education day hosted by the Tyrconnel Heritage Society and the Bicentennial Committee.



At Backus-Page House some of the children took part in producing a piece of newsprint to take back to their school with them at the days end.

The SunMercury/Tami Sabo



First Nations &
Colonel Thomas Talbot
& The painting called "The Pearce
Family landing."



The first Nations tent.
May 24th 2003



Saturday May 24th 2003



Mayor & Rien Van Brank 2 Doreen Wilson 3 John Wilson (Wordan)
 4 Diana Ployer as (Mrs Jeffrey Hunter) 5 Col Thomas Talbot (as Nick Wells)



Talbot Settlement bicentennial re-enactments of 1812.
at Tyrconnell Sunday May 25th 2003





May 25th 2003
Sunday.



THE AMERICANS ARE COMING!



MORRIS LAMONT The London Free Press

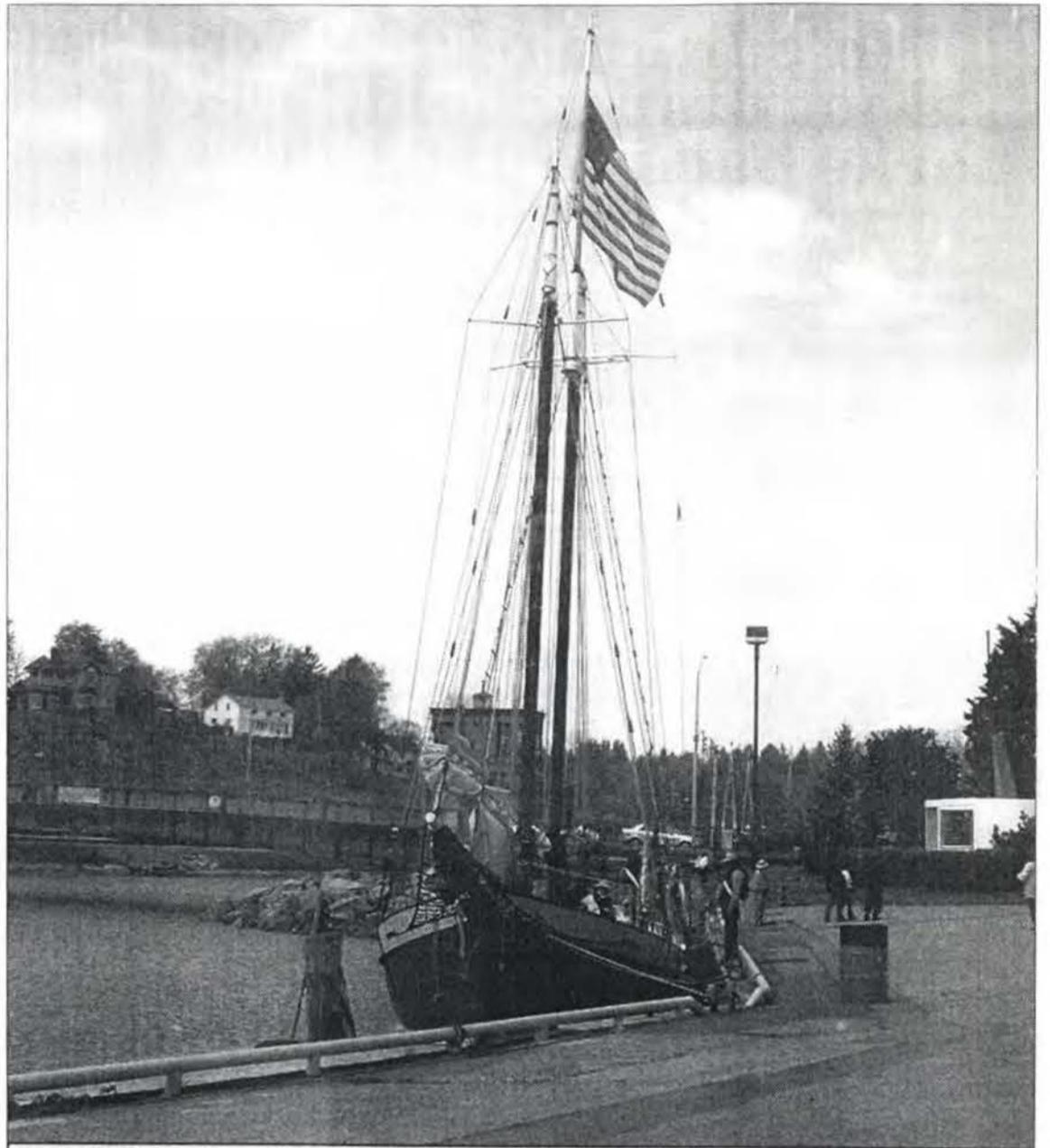
Actors playing frightened settlers run from the advancing Americans during a re-enactment of the American raid on the Talbot Settlement staged at the Backus Page House near Wallacetown Sunday. The re-enactment was part of a two-day celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Talbot settlement staged by the Talbot Settlement Bicentennial Committee on the weekend.

Sunday May 25th 2003.



Vern Coon, a member of the Provincial Marines, prepares a 1 1/2 pound gun for the re-enactment of the evacuation of U.S. soldiers from the shores of Lake Erie in Port Stanley after a failed raid on the Talbot Settlement during the war of 1812. The mock evacuation took place at Little Beach on Sunday May 25 with two of these Longboats used to pick up the retreating soldiers and ferry them to a waiting American warship.

The SunMercury/Terry Heffernan



The Red Witch, a schooner out of Sandusky Ohio, represented the American warship that evacuated the U.S troops from a failed raid on the Talbot Settlement during the War of 1812. The schooner was docked awaiting the start of the evacuation re-enactment from Little Beach in Port Stanley on Sunday May 25.

The SunMercury/Terry Heffernan

Long boats & The Red Witch a schooner.

May 25th 2003.



LOCAL

Thousands enjoy this War of 1812

By TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF

There was no red maple leaf flag — no Canada, in fact — during the War of 1812.

But there it was, flying proudly Sunday while the 'Battle of Port Stanley' raged through a huge crowd as the weekend's Talbot Settlement bicentennial re-enactments drew to a spectacular close.

A police estimate put the crowd that lined the battle route from the King George VI lift bridge to Little Beach at between 5,000 and 6,000.

The British had the home field advantage in this one and most in the crowd were squarely on the side of the Red Coats.

"The Americans retreating, that was the best part. I'm a proud Canadian," said Robert Rennie.

Sunday's Port Stanley battle ended with the U.S. forces scrambling to a pair of long boats and being whisked to the Red Witch, a 77-foot schooner anchored off Little Beach.

Linda Stanley, a village resident said that was her favourite moment.

"When I saw them Yankees get back on the boats ... I saved the last picture on my film for that," she said.

The battle was played out only feet away from spectators, who covered their ears in the wake of musket and cannon fire.

"It's totally different be-

cause we've seen them on the field where they are 600 to 800 feet away from us, but here they are in your face," said Diana Payer, secretary on the Talbot bicentennial committee.

"For a lot of people it was a thrill, and that's good."

Emily McLorn, 12, from Sparta said seeing history first-hand definitely beats learning about it in class.

"Studying in a book, you don't get to do anything," said McLorn, adding her favourite re-enactor was Col. Thomas Talbot himself.

"He's really funny with his accent," she said.

In addition to the Red Witch, the naval aspect of



David May, of the Provincial Marine from Amherstburg, Ont., loads a cannon aboard one of the two long boats his re-enactment group brought to Port Stanley for Sunday's battle. (T-J photo*)

Sunday's battle relied on two long boats courtesy of the Provincial Marine from Amherstburg, Ont.

"It was a lot of fun for

us today ... well organized," said Bob Ferguson, one of the re-enactors on the long boats.

As for those retreating

U.S. troops, Ferguson said, "We were able to rendezvous with the Red Witch ... without getting them too wet."

The War of 1812 - At Port Stanley - Sunday May 25th 2003.



Col Thomas Talbot on Port Stanley Beach.

St. Thomas Times-Journal



Variable clouds, 18

Monday, May 26, 2003

75¢ (incl. GST)

History can be a blast



Cannons sound invitations to War of 1812 re-enactments

By TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF

When cannons are invited to the party, you know it's going to be blast.

It's been 200 years since Col. Thomas Talbot strode ashore on Lake Erie west of St. Thomas and made his first step onto a settlement that would eventually encompass much of present-day southwestern Ontario.

Talbot Settlement Bicentennial Committee members know nothing of carving a settlement from the wilderness, but its members do share some traits with Talbot's settlers.

Like determination, commitment, an old-fashioned work ethic and a dogged desire to get things done.

Three years of work went into this weekend's War of 1812 re-enactment battles, encampments and demonstrations in Port Stanley, St. Thomas and at the Backus-Page House.

With those plans now reality, Diana Player joked it's like giving birth.

"The baby is finally breathing now. I'm proud of the baby," said Player, secretary with the 35-member committee.

Col. Thomas Talbot (Rev. Nick Wells) watches from the shore at Little Beach as retreating U.S. troops make their way to the schooner Red Witch. More than 5,000 people filled the streets of Port Stanley for Sunday's War of 1812 re-enactment battle. More coverage on page 7. (T-J photo*)



TALBOT'S AXE:

It's been 200 years since Col. Thomas Talbot reputedly swung this broad axe to fell the first tree in the Talbot Settlement. Talbot returned in the person of Nick Wells to test its sharpness during Friday's grand opening of the Talbot Bicentennial Exhibit at the Elgin County Pioneer Museum. The exhibit runs through Aug. 30. (T-J photo*)

Monday June 23rd 2003



Prof. Douglas Leighton, middle, of the University of Western Ontario, offers a toast to Col. Thomas Talbot at his gravesite Wednesday during the Talbot anniversary dinner at Tyrconnell. (T-J photo*) July 15/2003

'Not just a settlement

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
and NDP had all represented the area well.

"Any settlement is not just a settlement, but a development," Rev. Mark Sargent quoted Talbot as once saying.

Today's Talbot Settlement residents have aspirations of passing on a greater community to their heirs, Sargent said, urging guests not to forget "where we came from."

At a graveside toast, Prof. Douglas Leighton, of the University of Western Ontario, who has studied Talbot, described him as enigmatic and complex.

He was also intensely

private and a contradictory figure to settlers, Leighton said.

Leighton said that in spite of the limitations on travel available at that time, Talbot travelled regularly to York (Toronto) and at least five times overseas to his homeland in Britain.

The celebration of the Talbot bicentennial continues this weekend. Scheduled events are:

- All weekend, a pioneer camp at the Backus-Page House with historical re-enactors dressed as settlers, soldiers, First Nations and others.
- All weekend, a naval

encampment at Port Talbot with the Red Wing 77-foot schooner.

- Saturday, 11 a.m. raid on the Backus House.

- Saturday, 3 p.m. on St. Thomas, near Jumbo monument.

- Sunday, 11 a.m. on the Backus House.

- Sunday, 3 p.m. on Port Stanley, Carlow Road, Bridge Street, along Street to Little Viewling areas on borne Street and beach.

A rare view of Talbot's home

The imposing structure pictured here with its massive, squared logs, random scattering of outbuildings and carefully fenced trees was "Malahide", home of Colonel Thomas Talbot.

This sketch was based on a watercolour painting done by George Russell Dartnell.

Dartnell was a surgeon and talented artist attached to the Garrison in London in the spring of 1840 and was a frequent visitor to Port Talbot.

In her book, "Posted to Canada", Honor de Pencier, notes that Dartnell did a painting of Talbot's home in January, 1841, which he titled the "Lion's Den."

She continues, "The Compensation was then tidied up and improved in a more finished work, in which the trees were changed and a sleigh placed at the front door, perhaps to please Colonel Talbot."

This painting is housed in the National Archives, Ottawa. The sleigh is omitted from this sketch in order to present a clear view of the house.

Dartnell's painting of the already aging house, complete with sleigh, was recognized by Hughes in a book called, "The Garrison Years" by Jim Burant. In this book it is mistakenly titled, "Barracks, London, Canada West, 1840."

It is perhaps fitting that rare view of the front of Talbot's home should come to light during Talbot's bicentennial year.



Malahide, as sketched by Jane Hughes.

Bi-Centennial Report



The sun was peaking high in the sky. The smell of sulphur, the popping of musket fire, and the clanking of the blacksmiths hammer carried on the late spring breeze. This is just a taste of the action during the Bi-Centennial celebration on May 23rd, 24th, and 25th, 2003. Education Days, held on Friday the 23rd, had approximately 1200 students attend to re-live the early settlers day to day life. The children saw demonstrations ranging from soldiers, surgeons to settlers. On the 24th and 25th the general public was free to roam around the grand encampment taking in the sights and sounds of the past. Each day the public witnessed a war of 1812 re-enactment of a raid on the Talbot Settlement. Smoke shrouded the battle field, the cannon shook the foundation of the house and a good time was had by all. The battle on the 24th ended on an unexpected yet happy note. An American soldier proposed to his girlfriend, and she said yes! It was a once in a life time and unforgettable experience and thank you to all who came.

EARLY CANADA AT WAR The Battle on the Thames: Oct. 5, 1813

By: Andrew Hentz

The note struck General Henry Procter at Amherstburg with a sense of impending doom, and now his head was swirling with the probable dangers now looming over him. Captain Robert Heriot Barclay's fleet had met the American fleet on Lake Erie on Sept 10, 1813 and had been destroyed. The lake was now in American hands, and with that the ability to land troops anywhere along the Canadian shore, surrounding his own army. Just such an invasion was on its way under the command of William Henry Harrison, one more than double the size of his own force, was preparing to cross the Detroit River. This army is filled largely by Kentuckians, a state that views this war as a second war of independence, and takes up its cause religiously.

To Procter, an act of gallantry by digging in and fighting to the last man is out of the question. All save one of his guns from his forts at Amherstburg and Malden have been stripped to arm the fleet, now in the American dockyard at Erie, Pennsylvania. His force would be swept aside and obliterated. He must retreat.

However, attached to his force is a body of Indians that outnumbers his own small corps of red-coated regulars. This force has been an effective one led by the legendary war chief Tecumseh, who has forged an Indian confederacy to oppose the expansion of the Americans "Long Knives", and attached himself to the cause of the British. The previous year, under the dashing and offensive-minded General Isaac Brock, they instilled fear into their American foes. Tecumseh is of the same school of military thought; his enemy is in front of him, and so, here he must fight. On hearing the news of the plan to retreat, Tecumseh in an oratorical fury demands the British leave their arms to the Indians for "We are determined to defend our lands...and we wish to leave our bones upon them."

It is with much cajoling that Procter convinces Tecumseh to lead his Indians up the River Thames into what was to him a foreign land, to prepared defensive works recommended by Colonel Thomas Talbot at Moraviantown. It would be here that they would make their stand.

The retreat column lumbers its way slowly up the Thames. It numbers perhaps ten thousand, many women, children, and civilians are fleeing with all their worldly possessions to escape from the fiery end that is sure to become of their homes under the American torch. This flood of refugees clogs the road, slowing the army, and the American army is hot on their heels. The wagons containing all the army's provisions including food and spare ammunition are captured by the enemy, ensuring any engagement would be undertaken by hungry, tired troops, armed only with the ammunition in the cartridge box attached to their belts.

It is October 5th, and Procter is forced to draw up a battle line. His delay and lack of organization and enthusiasm has resulted in the inability to reach the defenses at Moraviantown. He places his line anchored on the left by the Thames and on the right by a swamp. The British regulars are close to starvation and mutiny. He places them at the left, covering a road that runs along the course of the river. His single artillery piece, a six pounder, he locates on the roadway, so that it may rake the area in front, creating a zone of carnage and flying shrapnel. To the right he positions the local militia, and to the extreme right, interspersed in the swamp, Tecumseh and his increasingly shrinking legion of loyal followers. His plan is for the regulars to hold firm against the American onslaught, and have the Indians move in towards the river, thus outflanking the U.S. troops.

The plan is doomed from the outset. The regulars, with their morale at the lowest ebb, are too few in number and must form the line with more than double the standard space between each man. Also, General Procter has placed his men in copses of trees so that they can hardly see the wave of American troops rolling towards them.

With the order "Damn them! Charge them!", General Harrison commences the battle by sending the Kentuckian cavalymen towards the thin red line. The British line is smashed like a fragile piece of glass, the defense disintegrates as the Kentuckians fire expertly from their mounts, and hack gaps with terrifying precision using their hatchets. The horses attached to the single artillery piece frighten and flee, taking the gun with them. Procter is watching his plan, and his career unravel in a matter of minutes. The American charge then turns to their left, and rolls up the flank against the militia, and subsequently surrounds the Indians.

Here the battle rages fiercely. Brutal volleys of musket fire are exchanged. The trees in which the battle is being fought are reduced to splinters as the hail of withering fire infests the battlefield. Confusion reigns. Smoke shrouds the field, the war cry of the Kentuckians and the whooping of the Indians combine into an apocalyptic pitch. Over all this, Tecumseh's voice can be heard, rallying his warriors in the fight for survival.

All of his life Tecumseh has fought the Americans trying to ensure a true Indian homeland for his people. On this foreign land, the struggle has reached its climax. Will he succeed and forge an Indian land, or will he fall to the American bayonet?

Alas, suddenly his voice falls quiet, and the Indians dissipate into the woods, vanishing like shadows. The great chief and his dream are dead, and the day belongs to the United States. Upper Canada is also now in peril. Her entire western district, including all of the settlements under Colonel Talbot are open to raids which will put the Colonel's own safety into question. The war has been brought from a distant frontier to the settlers' fields, and years of backbreaking toil will go up in flames. It will require more than another year of bloodshed by British and Canadian men-at-arms to halt the remnants of American determination, and end the war.

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Horses, logs and power



BY JEFFREY CARTER

out here - March/April 2008

these trains were not controlled with reins, perhaps explaining the breed's reputation for evenhanded temperament. Unruly horses would not have been tolerated for long.

Laing has several other horse workshops planned for 2008, for both beginners and more experienced participants. These provide another source of income for the farm but Laing sees other economic advantages.

> Ken Laing offers a series of workshops where he shares his nearly 30 years of horse experience.

Muscles bunch. Close to 1,800 pounds surges forward with a burst of energy. A large log in Ken Laing's woodlot breaks loose.

Laing is demonstrating the kind of power a single workhorse can generate during his annual horse-logging workshop at Orchard Hill Farm.

"Their power is subtle. It has to be directed the right way," he explains.

His wealth of experience is evident when others take the reins and his mares fail to respond to their inexperienced hands. Laing, watching from the sideline, provides both the people and horses with words of encouragement.

Participants at the winter workshop near Sparta in Elgin County came from as far away as the Niagara Peninsula and Parry Sound. Many are horse owners hoping to give their animals a purpose beyond the aesthetic grace they bring to their small holdings.

Laing, who operates the 80-acre farm with his wife Martha, bought his first team of horses in 1980. Outside of some PTO and loader jobs, horses provide most of the power for activities that would otherwise require a tractor.

There are now nine Suffolk-Punch horses on the farm. They're built for work – unlike many of today's heavy horses that have been bred for show. Shorter in stature but similar in weight, Suffolk Punch horses are easy to harness and some horsemen feel their stockier frame is better adapted for pulling power.

Laing takes a neutral line on the topic.

"They've always been bred to be workhorses. They're fairly short, less than 17 hands, but they're just as heavy . . . (Their value to a farm) depends on what's between their ears; sometimes little men can outwork big men," Laing says.

The breed originated in England where they were once harnessed single file in order to navigate narrow lanes while pulling heavy loads. The leading horses of