

THE
BEECHWOOD
MAGAZINE

WAY



Napoleonic Wars at
Beechwood

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The Napoleonic Wars transformed nations, redrew borders and altered the course of global history. Fought between 1803 and 1815, these conflicts extended far beyond the battlefields of Europe. Their political, military and economic consequences reached across the Atlantic, contributing to the conditions that led to the War of 1812 and influencing the future development of British North America.

More than two centuries later, this history can still be traced at Beechwood Cemetery. Among those buried here are a small number of soldiers connected to the Napoleonic era, along with descendants whose families carried its experiences, traditions and legacies into Canada.

Their stories reveal the human side of a conflict often remembered through emperors, generals and famous battles. They speak of service and survival, migration and family, and the ways one generation's experiences can shape those that follow.

This ebook explores these remarkable connections. Through the lives preserved at Beechwood, it brings a distant period of history closer to home and demonstrates how the consequences of war continue long after the final battle has ended.

At Beechwood, the Napoleonic Wars are not simply part of Europe's past. They form part of the broader story of the people who helped build Canada.



* Cover: An engraved vintage illustration image of the Duke of Wellington with his army at the Battle of Waterloo, from a Victorian book dated 1886 that is no longer in copyright. (Istock)

Above: The battle of Trafalgar, (part of the Napoleonic Wars), by Clarkson Frederick Stanfield.

GEORGE WILLIAM BAKER Section 50, Lot 44

George William Baker was “a man of varied attainments, ripe scholarship and vigorous intellect,” as his 1862 obituary attested. He served the British Empire as an artillery officer fighting Napoleon’s armies and represented the residents of early Bytown as a colonial official trying to preserve law and order in a pioneer lumber town. Great Britain was locked in a global conflict with France, so its military might was focused on defeating Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte throughout Europe and on preventing foreign countries, such as the United States, from trading with its enemy.

The Napoleonic wars spawned the War of 1812, as the American republic declared war on Britain on June 18, 1812, and tried to conquer its Canadian colonies. The “American War” was just “an annoying sideshow” for the British imperial command, which concentrated most of its troops, supplies and funds towards crushing the French war machine.

Born in Dublin, Ireland in 1790, Baker joined the British army at nearly 16 years of age as a cadet, rising to full lieutenant and later captain of the Third Battery, Royal Regiment of Artillery. His field artillery company fought in the unsuccessful British expedition to Walchern in the Netherlands, from 1809 to 1810, and the artillery unit was posted to strategic British naval bases at Gibraltar from 1810 to 1812, and at Malta from 1812 to 1814.

As the War of 1812 entered its third and final year, many of his British compatriots were shipped out to Canada as reinforcements for the regiments struggling to beat off the American invaders. British and American negotiators signed a peace treaty on Dec. 24, 1814.



After the Napoleonic wars ended, Baker’s foreign service continued with a promotion to captain and a posting from 1826 to 1829 to the Trincomalee fortress in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. Capt. Baker retired from military service in 1832 and emigrated with his family of seven children to Upper Canada. In 1834, at age 44, Capt. Baker became Bytown postmaster, a post he held until 1857 when he resigned.

He was a community leader, serving as reeve of Nepean Township from 1842-1844 and representing Nepean on the Dalhousie District Council from 1842 to 1850, when he was defeated. He also was a leader in various district agricultural societies during the 1840s and 1850s. He was a shareholder in the Bytown and Prescott Railroad Company and a director of the Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Bathurst District.

In 1849, he founded the Bytown Cricket Club whose gentlemen played matches on greens situated on what was then Barrack Hill, later to be the site of Canada's Parliament Buildings. Perhaps his most challenging role was as a leading Bytown police magistrate during the Shiners War from 1835 to 1845, when armed Irish gangs of thugs terrorized French Canadian loggers and ordinary citizens.

The Bytown magistrates were hard-pressed to control the lawlessness and sectarian violence that sullied the reputation of the town of 3,000. Baker showed civic leadership in trying to break the Shiners' "power to keep the whole town and neighbourhood in disorder... "

He pleaded fruitlessly to the British colonial governor for armed soldiers to be stationed in the village, which was still controlled by British military commanders. He wrote that "whole families of unoffending people are obliged to abandon the town and nothing except a military patrol will succeed in arresting the evil and dissipating the general alarm."

When the civilians could not get military aid, they decided to protect themselves. Capt. Baker spearheaded the formation of the Association for the Preservation of the Public Peace, which conducted street patrols drawing on 200 volunteer constables, mostly men from the local militias.

Baker also was at the forefront of the civic movement in the late-1840s to establish Bytown as a municipality with its own police force.

He died in 1862, having retired to his farm, Woodroffe, in the township of Nepean.



WILLIAM BROWN BRADLEY Section 25, Lot 52N

The American Revolution and two wars shaped the life of William Brown Bradley who grew up in a family fiercely loyal to the Crown and fought in His Majesty's Forces to defend the British colonies. On his death in Bytown, Bradley was described as "not only a brave officer but a deserving settler" of Carleton County.

On Whitemarsh Island near Savannah, Georgia, his parents struggled to run their plantation during turbulent times in the 13 colonies while raising young Bradley along with his twin brother and a sister. After their father, employed by the British Army Commissariat, died during the American Revolutionary War, the family got a new father figure: Lieutenant John Jenkins, a professional soldier in the New Jersey Volunteers, who married their mother in 1781. After the eight-year continental war ended, the United States forced a mass exodus of Loyalists so Jenkins moved his adopted family to New Brunswick and started a new life as pioneers. Four more children were born on a farm and a large estate near Fredericton.

In 1793, Jenkins and Bradley joined the militia in the King's New Brunswick Regiment, as colonists worried that the American republic would invade the Maritimes, capitalizing on Britain being embroiled in the Napoleonic wars. Bradley served in two more regiments, rising from the junior rank of ensign to captain in the 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot.

He served with a half-brother in the infantry unit. Capt. Bradley was commanding a 104th company in 1812 when the United States declared war on Britain and invaded Upper Canada. Fortunately, its armies suffered defeats in initial battles.



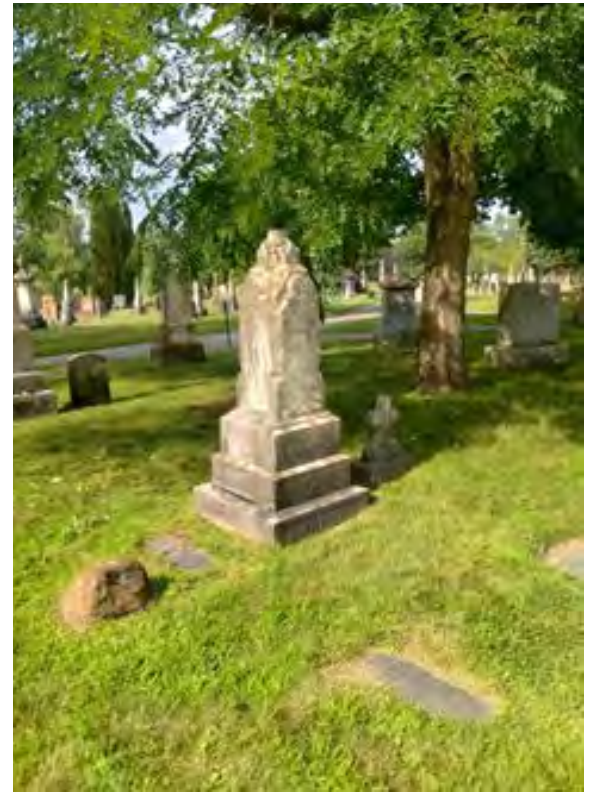
Sir George Prevost feared in 1813 he did not have enough troops to defend Upper Canada from more American invasions so the commander-in-chief ordered a whole regiment, the 104th, to make a winter march 1,125 kilometres from Fredericton to Quebec City and on to Kingston. Six 104th Regiment companies, including Capt. Bradley's unit, took 52 days in February and March for the incredible overland trek of 554 men and supplies through severe cold and heavy snowfalls. While the 104th mostly did garrison duty in Kingston for the war, various detachments were sent on campaigns.

A Montreal Gazette obituary attested that Capt. Bradley participated in the May 29, 1813 raid on the Lake Ontario shipbuilding base at Sackets Harbor where his company sustained casualties. He also was with the 104th detachment at the surrender of nearly 1,000 American soldiers at the battle of Beaver Dams on June 24, 1813 and at the August 15, 1814 assault on American-occupied Fort Erie where his company again suffered losses.

With the War of 1812 ended in the colonies and Napoleon's armies defeated in Europe, Britain disbanded many of its infantry regiments, including the 104th, with Capt. Bradley, aged 46, going into retirement on half-pay and living near Montreal.

By the early 1820s, some of the family was on the move again migrating to the Bytown area where Bradley had additional land grants in March and Huntley Townships as well as along the Rideau River. His leadership skills were put into action as the lieutenant-colonel in the First Carleton Militia and a Justice of the Peace to administer the new judicial district of March and Huntley. Among the settlers, he was known to be "generous, good-hearted and obliging."

Along with his sons, Bradley also ran a wool-carding mill and shingle mill as well as a farm with livestock.



Capt. Bradley died Oct. 2, 1850 and was buried in the Sandy Hill cemetery where his son, Edward Sands Bradley had been interred in 1836. With the closing of the Sandy Hill burying grounds, remains of eight family members were removed in 1876 to the newly-opened Beechwood Cemetery.



HENRY JAMES MORGAN Section 48, Lot 20 SE

Born in Quebec on November 14, 1842, Henry James Morgan was the son of a soldier of the Napoleonic wars. When he was four years old Morgan's father died and at age eleven he secured a job as a page in the Legislative Assembly.

Except for a short period of time as a college student, Morgan held a government position until his retirement in 1895. When the Department of State moved from Montreal to Canada's new capital of Ottawa, Morgan was the department's chief clerk, with the additional title of Keeper of the Records.

Morgan's literary talents were revealed in his early years, when in 1860 (at age 18) his first book was published on the North American tour of the Prince of Wales, later, King Edward VII. It was followed, two years later, by two more books: *Sketches of Celebrated Canadians..* and *The Canadian Parliamentary Companion*. His several biographical books include *Types of Canadian Women, Past and Present*, published in 1903, which sketched the lives of many notable women; a second such volume was planned but not completed. In 1873 Morgan was called to the bars of Ontario and Quebec; publication of *The Canadian Legal Directory* followed. His interest in literary matters led Morgan, in 1867, to publish *Bibliotheca Canadensis*, a reference work on Canadian literature. He wrote, in collaboration with L. J. Burpee, *Canadian Life in Town and Country* and he edited the papers and speeches of Thomas D'Arcy McGee.



His studies of literature, history politics and law brought him honorary degrees and membership in learned societies, including his election as a member of the Royal Society of Canada. Morgan was also one of the founders of the "Canada First" movement of 1868-75 and came up with the idea of a medal for long service in the militia.

Morgan died on December 27, 1913. On his passing, a journalist wrote "Hardly a day passes in which we do not refer to Dr. Morgan's various stores of information and rarely do we refer to them in vain."

Morgan's "stores of information" continue to be consulted by those seeking information about persons of his time, and much of our knowledge of the many eminent Canadians buried in Beechwood Cemetery comes from Morgan's numerous reference books.