

1028/59/49

The old trail over which of your life Peter Pilkey was lapped as a sailor for Peter's adventures

# The Weaver of a Century-Old Mystery

By FRANK MACK

WITH TWO ILLUSTRATIONS BY

FRANK H. JOHNSTON, A.R.C.A.

WHEN Pierre le Pelletier paddled himself ashore at York in a huge brass potash kettle more than a hundred years ago, he little dreamed of what adventurous days the future held in store for him. Before him stretched the quiet village, as peaceful and calm amid its clusters of blooming orchards as the May Day itself; while riding at anchor on a bay so placid that scarcely a ripple broke its even surface, was the sloop which had brought him and his pretty bride from the thriving town of Rivieres Trois on the banks of the far-off St. Lawrence. In those days the picturesque hamlet at the mouth of the Don boasted of no waterfront improvements; its shores were as rough as nature had moulded them. There was a boat that rowed off from a neighbouring landing to take his wife ashore, but Pelletier could not pile therein one of his four great potash kettles, each so big that a man might stand upright inside. So he had them slung one by one, over the ship's side and then lowering himself therein paddled lustily ashore. As he made his way to and from the ship, landing his light consignment of household effects, he could not foresee that just thirteen years later the red torch of war would be set to the sleepy village and that within a few hours all that would remain would be a mass of glowing, blackening wreckage. Neither did he know that he was destined to be the sole survivor of a forlorn hope; that he was to create a century-old war mystery and that, at last, he was to pass from the affairs of men, a man whom history forgot. All these things were concealed from him by the veil of the future.

It is doubtful that even could Pelletier have peered across the chasm of years would these visions of the scarlet flare of war have troubled him. He was of the stuff that pioneers are made. On his wedding day he left friends and loved ones in Three Rivers to hew out a home for himself and his bride in Upper Canada. Light of luggage and lighter of purse he came to the Province of his adoption. He was prepared to wage battle against the forest and its denizens for the home of his desire. He would have wasted no idle thoughts of fighting against a national enemy to preserve his dream of a wilderness Eros.

Once arrived in York he lost little time in hewing out his home. Where the flag-station of Wexford now stands—a stop a few miles East of Toronto—he purchased a lot of one hundred acres, and before the Winter of 1800 had drawn to a close had erected thereon a comfortable log home and the usual enclosures, wherein he kept his scanty stock of chickens, hogs, and a cow. Of that thrifty French-Canadian stock which will allow no waste, he turned his labor of clearing the land to a double advantage. As the trees were felled they were dragged by a yoke of oxen to a spot where the four huge potash kettles were in place on stones. The bush was burned, ashes leached and lye poured into the kettles for boiling. Thus Pelletier established a profitable business in potash, and at the same time made his land ready for seeding.

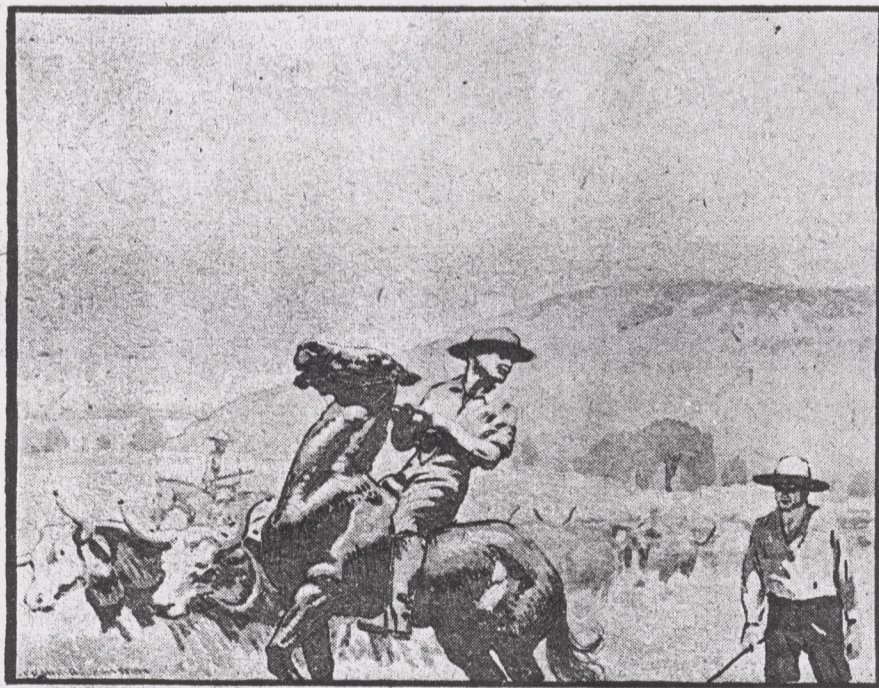
## War Stories of 1812

It was to be expected that such an example of energy and enterprise should prosper and when the first rumblings of war echoed over the struggling colony he was then considered one of the foremost pioneers of Scarboro' Township. His name had also undergone a change as had his fortunes; he was now known as Peter Pilkey. When the call for volunteers came to meet the invading American armies Pilkey bade good-bye to his



GRANDSON OF FAMOUS PIONEER

Mr. Thomas Pilkey, grandson of Peter Pilkey, pioneer settler in Scarboro' Township and hero of the War 1812-14, still lives on the old place. One of the leading members of the community, Mr. Pilkey has been a school trustee for many years, but he steadfastly declined to accept other positions of trust and honor which were offered to him. Mr. Pilkey has often heard his grandfather tell how the great anchor was drawn from York (now Toronto) to near Holland Landing during those red days of war in the far-off first years of last century.



HOW THE ANCHOR WAS LEFT IN THE BUSH

"The nine yoke of oxen had just moved unwillingly on with their unwieldy burden when a despatch rider galloped up. 'War is over,' he cried, pulling his horse almost on its haunches. 'Drop the anchor and report back.'"

wife and two children, turned his back upon his happy little home, his ever-growing herd of stock and his beloved farm; he shouldered his gun to fight for his country. With Brock he fought at Queenston Heights, he also struggled at the bloody battle-rise of Lundy's Lane, and he witnessed the carnage at Fort Detroit. Subsequently he was appointed baker to the garrison at York, and his grandson, Thomas Pilkey, himself now grown old in years, tells many stories of those soldiering days which he heard from the old fighter.

"One story that grandfather delighted to tell," Mr. Pilkey says, "was about a huge bread trough in which he was baking the army's morning rations. A cannon ball from one of Channing's ships came lumbering over and lit right in the centre of the trough. Bread and with it the morning's meal went all over the mud and the men were so mad that the officers had trouble in keeping the regiment from going out to take pot-shots at the ships which had threatened their rations. A short time later he saw a very peculiar accident. He had set up a new trough a little further to the rear, so as to be virtually out of reach of the enemy's cannon. A spent ball, however, came lumbering along the ground toward the trough and one of the soldiers, doubtless remembering the past calamity, stuck out his foot to try and stop the ball. He didn't, of course, but he turned its direction and thereby saved the second trough. His stomach, however, cost him a broken leg; but he said that the result was worth it; and in this statement his comrades quite concurred. Grandfather used to laugh and say that during the few hours the fort was held the man was considered a regular hero by his regiment."

It is to be regretted that while Peter Pilkey talked freely of his war-time incidents, he seldom, if ever, spoke of his great adventure; of how he led a forlorn hope at the command of General Sheaffe during the evacuation of York and of how he was the only man of half a dozen heroes who came through the adventure alive. Owing to his reticence on this point much controversy has already arisen, and although his deeds are not mentioned in history, old records to be found in forgotten trunks in homes of pioneer families, speak of his exploit in various ways. In the history of the Township of Scarboro, written some two decades or so ago, Pilkey is chronicled as the man who destroyed Fort Detroit; in another place he is mentioned as the one who blew up Fort

York; while yet a third writer of that day speaks of him as the one who exploded the arsenal at Newark, now known as Niagara. All these accounts have been proved faulty by accurate historical records. No fort was destroyed during the siege of Detroit; while Fort York was blown up, together with one American general and a number of soldiers, this explosion was stated by Beritas, an eye-witness, to have resulted from a spark of a port fire which fell into an ammunition tumbrel and so exploded the magazine. At Newark the magazine was indeed wrecked under the enemy's bombardment but it did not explode and neither was there any great loss of powder or ball. Both of the latter were rescued by the intrepidity of Captain Vigoreaux and a party of engineers, who fearlessly emptied the magazine while under heavy bombardment.

## How the "Gloucester" was Burned

From such evidence as has been unearthed from old records there is every possibility that the big exploit of Peter Pilkey was performed just as Chauncey and his raiders swooped down upon the unhappy village of

York on that terrorizing eve of May Day, 1813, and that his act was the one responsible for the torch being set to the peaceful village homes. History records that there was then a frigate—the "Gloucester"—building in the stocks and that it was fired by the order of the incompetent Sheaffe, to whose obstinacy and perverseness the village was destroyed; but history, while garrulous in condemning the incompetent general is provokingly silent upon the manner in which the frigate was snatched from the greedy hands of Chauncey, who desired it above everything else. If the indefinite snatches from old records and letters are pieced together it will seem that six men volunteered to set the frigate ablaze. One of these was Peter Pilkey. The manner in which they did it and the method they used is now largely conjecture; but it would appear that on the night of the evacuation of Fort York and just as the Americans poured into the village, the tardy Sheaffe halted long enough on his flight to Kingston to see the six volunteers were ready to begin their forlorn hope. A barrel of powder was broached, a train laid, and then all was ready to touch the match. But only one man lived to do this—he was Peter Pilkey.

"I have often heard grandfather tell part of this story," Mr. Pilkey will say. "But I have yet to hear the beginning. I know that he used to laugh at the way he outwitted the Yankees on that night and he would tell how he crawled into a hollow tree, which lay nearby, and hid there until some American mounted troops rode by. He never knew what became of his other five comrades; but as they all lived in York and as he never saw them again, their death is more a fact and a presumption. In any event grandfather used to tell that two of the enemy horsemen jumped the tree while he was hidden in it and that after they had disappeared into the night, he crept forth, touched a spark to the powder train and then crawled back. Eventually he managed to make good his escape through the bush."

These incidents as outlined by Mr. Pilkey point to the fact that Peter Pilkey was in York when he outwitted the enemy. It is known that as soon as the Americans captured the village they seized such horses as were found and mounted troops on them to raid the surrounding territory in search of arms and munitions. One big cache was found up the Don River; but a small amount of stores were located and burned in the outlying farm houses. As the chief motive for Chauncey's raid was to seize the frigate "Gloucester" which was almost ready for launching, it is obvious that his concern for its safety would be his first thought and that he would despatch a detachment to guard it from harm at the hands of the retreating militia. The fact that he burned the stores and village in retaliation for its loss is sufficient indication of his wrath upon hearing that the prime prize had been snatched from him.

It was a year after the adventure at York that Peter Pilkey was again sent on a commission that should have made him a second place in history, had his deeds not been totally forgotten; and, incidentally, as a result of this neglect he has woven a first-class, historical mystery which has not been cleared up to this day, and it is doubtful now if this generation can ever probe it to the bottom. In the early Spring of 1814, he was ordered to go to Kingston and there meet a ship that was bringing a gigantic anchor from the Chatham Naval Dock Yards. Owing to Canada having lost command of the Upper Lakes, the ship itself did not dare to venture further than the Naval yards at Kingston for fear of capture by an American frigate. The anchor, weighing two tons, was placed upon a small sloop in the Naval Yards, and Pilkey began his hazardous voyage to York. Good luck and fair weather prevailed, and he, escaping raiding frigates, managed to land successfully at York. From then on began a trip through the bushlands, of which the object has never been satisfactorily settled.

Many years later, however, the anchor was discovered abandoned in the bush near



MEDAL WON BY PETER PILKEY

It will be noted that although Peter Pilkey was awarded his medal for bravery during the war of 1812-14, it was not awarded until 34 years later. When the war raged, George III. was reigning sovereign in Great Britain but the medal bears the name of Queen Victoria, who came to the British throne after two other Sovereigns had reigned and passed into history.

Holland Landing and has since been removed to the village park, where, after many vicissitudes of fortunes, it is passing its remaining days as a venerated relic of the stirring times that were. Stories and theories as to how it came to be left so near the shores of Lake Simcoe and for what purpose it was carried so far inland are both many and conflicting. A number of these varying accounts and conjectures formed the basis for an article entitled: "A Century Old Mystery," which appeared in the January issue of THE SAILOR and it was in response to it that Mr. Pilkey supplied the interesting information contained in this article. But although he has solved the mystery of how the anchor was found in the bush, the question of why it was brought there, still remains unanswered.

#### How the Mysterious Anchor Came

"My grandfather has often told me of the trouble he had in bringing that anchor up to the top of York County," Mr. Pilkey relates, "and I tell you he had no easy time of it. The anchor was forged in England, in the Chatham Naval Dock-yards and from there was



THE FLIGHT OF THE RAIDER

"He saw the fox leap to the top of an old snake fence, run along it for about four rods and then take an immense jump into a clump of bush to one side."

brought to Kingston. Grandfather was sent to meet it and to bring the monster to York. It came in a sloop and he had an anxious time coming. It was in the last year of the war and the Americans having wrested the supremacy of the Great Lakes, were raiding British shipping at will. I believe that grandfather was so nervous on that trip that he never closed an eye. At last they sailed into the bay, grandfather and the anchor, and after much trouble the two tons of iron was got ashore. According to instructions it was to be taken to Penetang, and the worst part of the trip was yet to come. A stout wagon was specially built for the purpose and nine yoke of oxen were used. At last everything was ready and the trip started.

"Canada in 1814 was a great deal different to Canada in 1920. There was but a small village of York where the City of Toronto now stands, and there was but a sparsely settled area beyond the modest limits of the village itself. Between Queen Street and what is now Bloor, was then a howling wilderness. Roads were things almost unknown. At the most there was but a trail, along which the settlers used to ride their horses taking wheat to the mills to be ground into flour. And over this blazed trail, hardly broad enough to accommodate a good sized pioneer's cart—honored by the name of a road—my grandfather had to superintend the carting of two thousand pounds of iron and the passing of a broad and heavy wagon!

"From what he told me, he and his gang of men started out on what was called the Old Ridge Road; but so far as I am aware all trace of this pioneer trail has disappeared with the clearing of the country, or else the old name has become merged into that of some street or other. In any event they had not progressed far before their troubles commenced. In many places the underbrush had encroached upon the trail and shut it in completely. This had to be cleared away before the wagon could proceed. At other times a bit of swampy road was reached and the heavy weight of wagon and anchor together made it impassable. Then trees would have to be cut down and a corduroy road made by laying the boles together until the treacherous stretch of oozy roadway had been passed. Owing to the weight of the anchor it was impossible to unload it; therefore, the greatest of care had to be used in selecting the road before the wagon could pass over. Had it ever got mired in the men would have been unable to have rescued wagon or the anchor. Several times grandfather came upon swamps through which the trail run where it would have been impossible to have travelled.

Then the men had to break a new road themselves, and this meant clearing away underbrush, levelling the trail and generally making a passable road before they could proceed.

"As was to be expected the men did not take kindly to the great labor entailed in the effort. It was far harder than the rough work of pioneer farming, and my grandfather had additional difficulties in keeping his gang together. Several times during the three months' trip he had whole gangs leave him on pay day and then he had to scour the country, searching for fresh men. As it was summer time and the majority of labor in the country was required upon the farms his troubles were further increased and much valuable time was lost riding through the bush drumming up sufficient hands to keep the wagon from being hopelessly stalled in the bush for lack of help.

#### Two Tons of Iron in the Bush

"Notwithstanding the lack of adequate help, the clearing of new trails and the repairing of the old road, the progress of the anchor towards its destination was continuous, if slow. Its passage through the bushlands of the County created much excitement, for in those days life was primitive and diversion small. Through every little settlement that it passed there

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# THE WEAVER OF A CENTURY-OLD MYSTERY

(Continued from page 8)

was always the crowd of open-eyed and open-mouthed sightseers and for years afterwards these spectators told of the almost-monumental effort expended in bringing the naval monster from the mouth of the Don to the top of York. Not so very long ago I met an old lady, since deceased, but when I knew her well up toward the century milestone, who told of seeing the huge wagon and its two-ton cargo pass her log home in what is now known as Richmond Hill. Although only a wee child at the time, she lived and died within a stone's throw of where she was born and time and again I have heard of her recite the story of this great event. I presume that it was indelibly stamped upon her mind, owing to its passage being the decade's sensation of its time. Her account of the affair was remarkably accurate, with but one exception. Shortly before the wagon left what is now called York Mills, the gang of men refused to go further owing to the difficulties that beset their way, and grandfather was forced to replace them with a new lot of workers. One of these, a friend of the old lady's, was made foreman, or gang head, and as she saw him giving orders to the men, she naturally assumed that he was transport officer in charge. She could never be persuaded that grandfather, not the man whom she knew, was really commissioned by the military authorities to take the anchor to Penetang.

"In the meantime, and while the anchor was proceeding along its slow way and rough, the war was dragging to its beated close. Finally an armistice was declared and there was no need for further naval activities or attempts to wrest lake supremacy from the Americans by a naval sortie upon the Upper Lakes. A messenger was promptly despatched to search out grandfather in the back end of the County and tell him that there was no further need for transporting his huge cargo. I have often heard him laugh as he told the closing chapter of the adventure. He and the gang—the second one to be engaged after the village of what is now Aurora had been passed—were breaking camp in the bush between where Newmarket and Holland Landing stand to-day. The nine yoke of oxen had just moved unwillingly on with their unweildy load, when the despatch rider galloped up 'War is over,' he cried, pulling his horse almost on its haunches. 'Drop the anchor and report back.' Grandfather said he never heard any news that made such a commotion. The men fairly shouted their glee and within a brief hour after the rider had arrived, the anchor was thrown beside the trail and the whole party, oxen, wagon and all, were on their way back. That as near as I can recall it is the story of the anchor at Holland Landing as retold by my grandfather who took it up county back in Fourteen."

It will be seen that while Peter Pilkey could give a detailed account of the arrival of the naval monster so far from navigatable waters, he mentioned little as to the nature of the object which necessitated such an outlay of brawn and energy. This point has never been satisfactorily settled. Whether the anchor was to be used in a ship yet to be built or was being removed for the purpose of equipping a frigate that was then building in the stocks at Penetang will probably never be known. It is an established fact that

there was a military and naval base at Penetang and Col. J. B. Miller, of Toronto, recently stated to THE SAILOR that old residents at Penetang still tell of four sloops which were sunk off shore and a frigate almost completed which was burnt on the stocks during the war of Twelve-Fourteen for fear that they would fall into the hands of the enemy's raiding squadrons. The skeletons of the sloops can be seen even now, rotting beneath the waters of the Georgian Bay; but nothing definite is known of their destruction. In view of the fact that these ships were probably destroyed before the last days of war, it would seem that another attempt was to be made to establish British supremacy on the Great Lakes and that the anchor was intended for yet another frigate which was to be constructed. Of course, the cessation of hostilities would obviously stop all naval activities of such a nature, and as ordered by the authorities at York, the naval monster was dumped into the bush, a useless relic of a struggle that was closed.

### Pioneers vs. Prowlers

If Peter Pilkey deserves to be remembered as a gallant militiaman, his name is also worthy of being chronicled in the pioneer annals of his own Township of Scarboro. In his early days of farming conditions were far from those that prevail to-day and it needs a wide stretch of imagination to recall those far-off rough times when our forefathers with the most primitive of implements and tools hewed out homes and farms for themselves and their families. In the early eighteens, the Township of Scarboro did not present its miles of smiling meadows, fields golden with ripened grain, and small clusters of thinned woodlands. It was a vast tract of unsurveyed forest, clearings were the exception, bush and underbrush the rule. In its midst wild kindred ran at will. In the summer bears prowled about the wild berry patches, foxes took toll of all small things and bob-cats made the night hideous; in the winter wolves howled their song of the kill from the upland timbers, and deer crept close to the fringes of settlements to escape these savage packs of slayers.

Often Mr. Pilkey has heard his grandfather tell of the cunning, sagacity and fearlessness of the wild kindred. "I once remember him tell of how the deer driven by hunger in the winter months came right down to his clearing and remained there for some days. Grandfather was chopping down some trees and tamed by famine there was soon a small herd of those soft-eyed, pretty forest rovers about him and his men. No sooner had one tree been felled than they would gather about its juicy twigs and proceed to eat. I do not know whether winter cedar makes good eating or not, but as the old saw says 'hunger is good sauce,' and the deer had a regular banquet. In fact, their

natural timidity seemed to be nothing more than a myth on this occasion, for grandfather said that they grew so bold when they saw the men did not mean to harm them, that he actually had to put the boots to a couple of the animals before he could get them to move far enough away to give the men room to chop off some of the outlying limbs. Even then the deer did not leave their feast. They simply gave a startled and somewhat protesting grunt, moved to another spot and continued their meal, the while eyeing him watchfully. At another time he saw no less than seven deer in an oat field during the early summer; but though these petty marauding expeditions bothered him not a little, he would never permit anyone to shoot them on his farm as he loved all deer and protected them as much as he could. I often think that had other farmers taken the same humane viewpoint and only killed for necessity, Ontario to-day would not be so depleted of its wild animals."

### Barnyard Raiders

These are but two of the many stories of those early days which Mr. Pilkey heard from the lips of his grandfather. If he were a Roberts or a McKishnie and his numerous tales of the wilderness romances served up to the public in book form, the literature of the country would be enriched by some of the most entertaining reading. For Mr. Pilkey's grandfather knew animals as did few settlers and his grandson has inherited his love of wild life. His stories are numberless, his observation keen; and he never tires of reciting the battles which his grandfather waged against the bears and foxes of his day. It was cunning pitted against cunning, and more than once the animals won out in the contest. Such a case happened shortly after the close of the war. A fox had been doing a bit of scouting about the clearing fringes for some time and one object in particular fixed his gaze and made his mouth water. This was an open pig enclosure, wherein kept a young litter under the jealous guardianship of a sow of uncertain temper. One afternoon the fox trotted calmly from the bush and totally ignoring Mrs. Pilkey, who stood churning at the kitchen door, made his even way to the enclosure. With a bound he leaped into it, and then leaped out again, just as the old sow charged him furiously. Nine times he leaped back and forth in as many seconds, and then totally bewildering the sow with his antics, he seized one of the cherished morsels and made off with it, before Mrs. Pilkey, who came running to the rescue, could arrive.

Another fox had proved to be a perfect scourge about the barnyard and his insatiable appetite for chicken threatened to deplete seriously the supply of fowl. In an effort to dispose of his marauding propensities two fine hounds were set on

his trail. They scented his trail in the woods and gave him the run of his life through the underbrush. About a mile away was a big swamp and if he could reach that he knew safety was his. But the hounds ran him hard and he emerged from the clearing tongue-hanging and panting hard. It was just at that moment that one of the boys came strolling down the pasture, attracted by the hunting song of the hounds. He saw the fox leap to the top of an old snake fence, run along it for about four rods and then take an immense jump into a clump of bush to one side. About thirty seconds the hounds came into the scene, running heavily but game to the last ounce. The snake-fence antics of the fox puzzled them and they lost much valuable time in smelling out the trail. When at last they discovered the red robber, he was thoroughly rested and streaked it like a flash of lightning to his haven of refuge in the swamp, where the hounds could not follow. Though Reynard got away during that warm afternoon he forever lost his craving for fowl and afterwards the Pilkey chickens lived an uneventful and safe life, save when the necessities of the table or market made inroads upon their numbers.

But though the cunning fox in these two incidents escaped, such luck did not follow the trail of all of them. Many a barnyard raider kicked out his life in the bush or meadows, and more than one bear went down with a hide full of lead. Such was the fate of one enterprising black rascal, which made a bold daylight raid upon the piggery. While the entire Pilkey family were working about the barn Mr. Bear calmly walked over to the enclosure, picked out a nice fat hunk of live pork that weighed no less than a hundred pounds, and proceeded to make hurried tracks to the bush. Upright he walked, hugging his squealing victim with fore-paws; but the series of squeals and grunts that followed in his wake, proved his undoing and he lost a choice morsel for supper. The Pilkey family, father and boys, followed hard in pursuit and they gained on Mr. Bear so rapidly that the black thief was forced to drop his hundred pounds of wriggles and squeaks and make a hurried plunge into the bush. Such an enterprising forest rogue as this could not fail to come to a sudden end; and he met it one night while prowling about the pig pen in an effort to repeat his former escapade. It was expected that his soft tooth for pork would bring him back to old place and it did. But a well aimed musket ball closed all his interest in pigs, honey, and other things which tempt bears to get into trouble.

Peter Pilkey is no more and the land that he once knew has changed from a vast forest to a place of glistening meadows and waving fields. But although he has passed his descendants live after him and two of his great-grandsons fought and won honors in a war far bigger and far greater than that of 1812-14. I refer to Archie and Harold Pilkey, both of whom hold the Mons Star and the Military Medal. Two other sons of Mr. Thomas Pilkey also live in Ontario, Mr. W. P. Pilkey of Toronto, and Rev. P. T. Pilkey, of Knox Manse, Owen Sound, to whose courtesy THE SAILOR is able to publish a reproduction of the medal presented to Mr. Peter Pilkey, his great-grandfather.



1028/59/31

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Instructive Order to the Bishop of Toronto

Tecumseth Parish  
Sept. 12, 1854

My Lord

After much serious and earnest consideration I feel it to be my duty to ask your Lordship to remove me where an opportunity may occur to a change where my children may be reasonably educated and where I may perform my duty without such constant travelling as is necessary here.

The time was when I did not feel this a labour now it is most painful to me and the almost continual pain in my back warns me that if I must continue to exercise my ministry it must be where much less travelling is necessary. Even the appointment of another clergyman to this section of the country which your Lordship has kindly promised though a great relief to my mind will afford very little bodily relief as he ought to reside in Nottawasaga, <sup>an</sup> ~~an~~ <sup>Enc.</sup> but with one to have charge of those places a clergyman ~~able~~ to ride on horseback may readily perform the duties here. While from my inability ~~how~~ to use that mode of travelling during the spring and autumn my duties are painfully and imperfectly done. I cannot describe to your Lordship how heavily this presses upon my mind-- it grieves me to the heart while in another place I might work with comfort to myself and with God's blessing profit to the people.

Another thing which makes it necessary that I should remove to some other place is for the educating my children. Tho the eldest have received good education but there are six others who now require it and I cannot afford to send many from home to school. I had expected to receive a comfortable income from private property at home (the villany of an agent deprived me of it) and ~~though the law~~ condemned him to make good any loss and pay every expense from one who has no visible property nothing could be obtained. Therefore with the exception of £50 or £60 I am entirely dependent on my clerical income Still I am neither in debt or difficulty but I think it right to state to your Lordship who has ever been so kind a friend to me exactly how I am situated. Mrs. Osler's health too is very indifferent and I think a change might be of service to her.

Your Lordship I trust knows me sufficiently to believe that it is not to avoid work that I seek removal but that I may work somewhere more suited to my present ability. I am aware that an appointment such as I require may not for some time be at your Lordship's disposal but I have felt it a duty to state my wish and my circumstances with the hope that where such occurs your Lordship will add another favour to the many I have received at your hands and give the appointment to me.

I have the honour to be

Sir

F. Osler

To the Pi

Copy letter sent to the Bishop of Toronto

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