

**LIFE OF COLONEL TALBOT, AND THE  
TALBOT SETTLEMENT, ITS RISE AND  
PROGRESS, WITH SKETCHES  
OF THE PUBLIC CHARACTERS, AND  
CAREER OF SOME OF THE MOST  
CONSPICUOUS MEN IN UPPER CANADA**

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Life of Colonel Talbot, and the Talbot Settlement, Its Rise and Progress, with Sketches of the Public Characters, and Career of Some of the Most Conspicuous Men in Upper Canada by Edward Ermatinger

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**EDWARD ERMATINGER**

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MOST CONSPICUOUS MEN  
IN UPPER CANADA,  
WHO WERE EITHER FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES  
OF THE SUBJECT OF THESE MEMOIRS.

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BY EDWARD ERMATINGER.

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## PREFACE.

In writing the Life of Colonel Talbot, I have had one object in view, namely, to transmit to posterity, whatever is praiseworthy in his conduct and character, for their imitation and example. The faults of such men as Colonel Talbot do not vary much from those of the bulk of mankind, and require no biographer. But when evil, and not good, is the governing principle of men's lives, then the picture should be reversed. I have sketched instances of both, with impartial hand.

The Life of Colonel Talbot must prove highly interesting to a large population, which has grown up under his auspices, and whose history is identified with his own, in many respects. Such a life would attract attention, from its unusual character, simply as a pioneer of the west. Added to this, Colonel Talbot's name was associated with some of those noble characters, who have contributed to the fame and glory of England.

The principal facts connected with Colonel Talbot's early life, were obtained through a friend, from himself at my request, and although he was very ill at the time, he was very particular, that nothing but the truth should be communicated. When the Colonel was supposed to be on his death bed at Mr. Harris' in London, I visited him, and he spoke in a very feeling manner of his past career, and of his desire and endeavors to do right. Before I left, I told him, I would endeavor to do justice to his memory and this is my chief reason for publishing these memoirs.

Colonel Talbot's life in Canada, does not present to the biographer any of those striking incidents and startling events, which of themselves, are sufficient to command the attention of the world, and excite universal interest. We have nothing but his personal character and a repetition of the same kind of transactions to dwell on; from which, however, much instruction may be derived. But to make this work more generally useful and interesting, I have incorporated the history of the Talbot Settlement, and sketches of the public career and characters, of some of the most prominent men of Upper Canada, friends and acquaintances of the Colonel, and others, whose positions expose them to public notice.

Of the two first Bishops of the Church of England and

Ireland in Upper Canada, whose exalted stations invest them with so much power, for good, when properly exercised, for evil, when contrariwise, I have spoken truly, and with no desire to exaggrate or extenuate their faults. Not only are the members of that Church affected by the conduct of her Bishops, but indirectly it acts on the whole community, and in no part of Upper Canada, has this been more prejudicially felt, than within the limits of the Talbot Settlement. But whether reflecting on the conduct of Bishops, or other prominent men, whose names have been introduced into this work, I have in no instance said all that could be said, with truth and justice, nor have I hazarded my own individual assertions or opinions; but I have carefully weighed every expression, and all that I have written goes forth with the sanction of many friends, whom I have consulted from time to time, during the progress of this work.

With respect to the closing years of Colonel Talbot's life, which were so embittered by the differences which grew up between him and his nephew, Sir Richard Airey, and terminated in such an unfortunate distribution of the Colonel's estate, I have related only as much as may convey to the reader an idea of the causes of these difficulties. But having had conversations separately with both Uncle and Nephew, what I have stated is a fair and impartial view of the whole matter.

I would further remark, that I have been reminded, while writing these memoirs, when speaking of persons, who have departed this life, whose characters or career I have sketched, to bear in mind the old Latin proverb, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, which is interpreted, "Let nothing be said of the dead, but what is favorable,"—to truth, I would add; for in the same collection of proverbs there is another quite as consistent with sound morality, *Bonus nocet, quisquis pepercit malis*. "He injures the good, who spares the bad." To the latter doctrine, I subscribe, whether with reference to the dead or the living; for to record only the virtues of men, would certainly make a very perfect picture, pleasing no doubt to friends and family connections; but at the same time, a very false one; totally valueless to posterity; would falsify all history, and biographers would only set examples which nobody could follow.

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## CHAPTER I.

COLONEL TALBOT'S EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION—  
ENTERS THE ARMY—AIDE-DE-CAMP WITH AR-  
THUR WELLESLEY IN IRELAND—COMES TO CANADA  
1790—BECOMES SECRETARY TO GENERAL SIMCOE  
1791—RETURNS TO ENGLAND, 1794, TO JOIN HIS  
REGIMENT—RAPID PROMOTION.

COLONEL THE HON. THOMAS TALBOT the son of Richard Talbot Esq, and Margaret, Baroness Talbot, was born 17th July, 1771, at Malahide, in the County of Dublin. His ancestry are thus described in Lodge's Genealogy of the British Peerage. "The Talbots of Malahide, are of the same origin as the Earl of Shrewsbury, whose progenitor, Richard de Talbot, was a baron in the reign of William the conqueror. His grandson, Richard, was father of Gilbert, ancestor of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who settled in Ireland in the reign of Henry the II. and was invested with the ancient Baronial Castle of Malahide, and the Estates belonging thereto. The time of its erection is unknown, but supposed to be long antecedent to the Conquest."

Young Talbot was educated at the Manchester public free school, but his education must have been slight, for we find that he obtained a Commission in the army, in the year 1782, at the early age of eleven

years, and was one of the Aide-de-camps to the Marquis of Buckingham, (a relative of the Talbot family,) then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the years 1786 and 88, when he was not more than 16 or 17 years of age. His brother Aide, was Arthur Wellesly, who subsequently became the renowned hero of a hundred fights, the conqueror of the Great Napoleon, on the field of Waterloo.

The two Aides, Arthur Wellesly, better known as the Duke of Wellington, and Thomas Talbot, were not destined to tread in the same fields of glory. While the Iron Duke was reaping honors and glory in the field of battle, Colonel Talbot was occupied in the forests of Canada, while the one was conquering the armies of Napoleon, and wading thro' fields of blood, amidst the groans of the dying and the shrieks of the wounded, the other was combatting the trees of the forest, and marching in triumph over fallen timber. One was armed with the sword, while the other shouldered the axe! which was the most useful occupation and the most consonant to the dictates of humanity, may be left for others to decide.

The acquaintance formed between these two men, destined to become conspicuous in very different ways, continued, tho' not without long intervals of separation, through a long life. And the great Captain of the age, surrounded by everything that is