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### **George Longmore: A New Literary Ancestor**

Because of its early date, and the Canadian birth of the author, literary historians have given some attention to *The Charivari; or, Canadian Poetics*, published in Montreal on April 28, 1824, by "Launcelot Longstaff." It is one of the first volumes of poetry produced by a native Canadian writer. Although the identity of "Launcelot" was probably known to many Montrealers, it was not revealed by any of those who reviewed his book, nor did the author ever come forward to acknowledge the work. Over the years, any publishing records or personal letters which would have passed this information on to twentieth century readers have been lost. An attribution, on textual grounds, to a known author of the period, has long been accepted.<sup>1</sup>

However, only three years after the publication of *The Charivari*, an almost-contemporary attribution did appear in the literary columns of the Montreal Gazette:

We believe the following extract from the London Literary Gazette alludes to a production of Captain Longmore, of the Royal Staff Corps, well known in this province as the author of the "*Fall of Constantinople*," "*Tecumseh*," the "*Charivari*," and other poems which have at various times been published in this city.<sup>2</sup>

The article then goes on to quote a review of "*The War of the Isles; a Poem in Ten Cantos*," by G. Longmore, Esq.," recently published in England.

The name Longmore is associated with the group of Montreal-published works which included "Tecumthé" and *The Charivari* on one other occasion. The *Literary Garland* of July, 1840, contains a poem entitled "The Indian's Chant" by "Major Longmore." The three-stanza chant is identical to three stanzas in Canto II of

"Tecumthé," from which the *Literary Garland's* editor evidently extracted it, adding what he knew to be the author's name.

When *The Charivari* was first published there were only two hints as to the author's identity. The first appeared in S. H. Wilcocke's review in *The Scribbler* of May 27, 1824.

"The title page of the publication does not exhibit this nom de guerre [Launcelot Longstaff] but the advertisements having so announced it, I have made use of it here. Rumour gives this little piece to a gentleman of the staff corps, to whose name the assumed appellation seems to have been made to assimilate. The gentleman alluded to, has several times, been made to make his appearance before the public, in the *Scribbler*; . . . ."

The second appeared in *The Canadian Review* of December, 1824. An editorial footnote to the "argument" of a long poem "Tecumthé. A Poetical Tale, in Three Cantos" states:

"For this interesting article we and our readers are indebted to the pen of the ingenious author of "Euphrosyne," and several other prose and poetical pieces, which appeared in our last number, as well as of that animating production "The Cherivari," (sic) to which we endeavoured to do justice in a Review in the same number; and of another production called "The Fall of Constantinople" which we had the pleasure of introducing to public notice while editing another periodical publication."

Turning to the Introductory Stanzas of "Tecumthé" the reader is provided with some biographical information about its author—and thus about the author of *The Charivari*.

Fair Canada—within whose snowy arms  
 My infant breath was nurtur'd,—yet once more  
 The dark blue sea, hath borne me to thy charms  
 To hail with manhood's voice,—my native shore,  
 For years have glided, since my heart first wore  
 The youthful bright impressions of the scene  
 Still hallow'd fondly in my bosom's core  
 Which Memory's font supplies;—altho' between  
 Those fairer hours, and me, some shadows intervene.

Recalling pastimes, when I lov'd to stray  
 In youth's diversion, smilingly from home,  
 Where the swift Montmorenci pours its spray  
 In the loud cataract's convulsive foam;  
 Or o'er the Diamond Cape, still led to roam;

Bounded along 'midst jocund school-boy train  
 When Summer's beams illumin'd nature's dome  
 And blythely sporting thence, o'er Abraham's Plain  
 Tripp'd o'er its flower crown'd site,—brave Wolfe's immortal fame.

Who was the Captain Longmore mentioned by the *Gazette*, who later appeared as a Major in the *Literary Garland*, and does his biography accord with what we know of the author of *The Charivari* and "Tecumthé": that he was born in Canada, raised in Quebec City, had returned to his native land after an absence of some years, was an officer in the Staff Corps with a name somewhat like Longstaff, and had been mentioned several times in *The Scribbler*?

We can establish that George Longmore, son of Dr. George Longmore and Christina Latitia Longmore, was baptized in the Anglican Cathedral in Quebec City on August 13, 1793. Dr. Longmore, as Apothecary to the Forces and Health Officer of the Port of Quebec, as well as a former Magistrate in the Gaspé District, was well known in Quebec City. When he died, August 9, 1811, his widow and six of her children returned to England.

The Army Lists show that George Longmore Jr. was commissioned as an Ensign in 1809, and entered the Royal Staff Corps. In 1811 he was attached to the Quarter-Master-General's Department and was promoted to Lieutenant. He became a Captain on April 8, 1825. He was promoted to Major on August 24, 1832, on which day he went on to half-pay.

Military records in the Public Archives in Ottawa indicate that Lieutenant George Longmore, Royal Staff Corps, Montreal Garrison, was signatory to a petition, dated December 25, 1820, requesting a higher living allowance for the officers quartered in the city. The records also show that he sailed for England on the 17th of November, 1824.

We have seen that Longmore, as a Staff Corps officer, meets one of the requirements that emerge from *The Scribbler* review. The similarity of "Longmore" to "Longstaff" is also evident. The other requirement can be met as well, since *The Scribbler*, which always disguises a person's name just enough so that it could still be recognized, does indeed refer to a Lieutenant Morelong and a Captain Morelong on December 19, 1822, and on January 1, 1824, respectively. Neither reference tells us much about our poet. One, which occurs in the satirical description of a ball, mentions the white breeches and silk stockings that set off the shapely leg of Captain Morelong, and the other says:

"Mr. Morelong would confer a favour on the ladies whose tea-tables he is in the habit of frequenting by leaving his spurs at home. As a witty wag observed, it seems as if the noble lieutenant was going among a parcel of Flanders mares."

George Longmore was thus born in Quebec and resident in Montreal in the early 1820's. He was an officer in the Royal Staff Corps and had indeed "made his appearance" in *The Scribbler*.

A 1793 birth-date would give Longmore a slight seniority edge over Oliver Goldsmith (1794) and Haliburton, Richardson and Julia Beckwith, all born in 1796. He is not the earliest Canadian-born poet to publish in English in Canada, but he is certainly one of the earliest and, as such, merits our attention. Although writing was never more than an avocation for him, he did publish at least eleven books of poetry, prose, and drama in Canada and England, as well as in Cape Colony, where he died in 1867.

Other than evidence of his baptism, his own poetic account of childhood in Quebec City, and his name among the children listed in his father's several land grant petitions, no documented record of Longmore's existence before he received his Ensign's commission at Hythe, England on July 6, 1809, has come to light. Since commissions were not normally granted to those under sixteen, it is quite possible that July 6 came very soon after the day of his sixteenth birthday.

The Royal Staff Corps which he entered was a field engineering unit specially established by the Duke of York shortly after he took control of the Army in 1800. Its purpose was to fill a gap in the efficient functioning of a wartime army. A commission in the Staff Corps does not seem to have conferred high social status, but it could be achieved without purchase, an added inducement to a young man with ability but little capital. It is significant that the four clasps George Longmore won for his Peninsular War Medal are for the battles of Badajoz, Nive, Nivelle and Toulouse, all of which had presented difficult military engineering problems to Wellington.

From the dates of these battles we know that Longmore was in Spain, Portugal and France between 1812 and 1814. We have seen that he was in Montreal between 1820 and 1824. By his own account he served in "the Peninsula, Flanders, France, America and Mauritius."<sup>3</sup> He was acting Surveyor-General in Mauritius for the three years before he went on half pay. When he sold his majority and resigned from the army in 1839 it was to settle in Cape Colony.<sup>4</sup>

It has not been possible to recover much in the way of personal data about the soldier-poet. Shipping records published in the Montreal newspapers<sup>5</sup> list Lieutenant Longmore, wife and two children sailing

for England in the "Ottawa" on November 17, 1824. His wife's name, the date and place of this marriage, and the date of her death, as well as dates and places of birth of the children, have yet to be established. Two daughters were married in Cape Town; Anne Maria married Charles Garstin, the son of a General, on October 3, 1835,<sup>6</sup> and Cecelia Elizabeth married C. Langford on 22nd of January, 1845.<sup>7</sup> Both grooms were in the Bengal Civil Service.

George Longmore died in Cape Town on August 8, 1867, having remarried three months before his death.<sup>8</sup> Of other Longmore family vital statistics relevant to Canada we know only that his younger brother Edward<sup>9</sup> had settled in Kingsey Twsp., C.E. by 1845, apparently on some of the land originally granted to the family in 1803, and that his mother died at Edward's home on February 1, 1845.<sup>10</sup>

Longmore's career was closely tied to that of General Sir Benjamin D'Urban. When he entered the Staff Corps it was under D'Urban, he served under D'Urban in the Peninsula and he was appointed to the post of Stipendiary Magistrate in Cape Colony in 1834, under the governorship of D'Urban. Some family connection with D'Urban existed because, according to the wedding notices, both his daughters were given in marriage by their uncle, General Sir Benjamin D'Urban. However, the precise nature of that connection remains a mystery. It is unlikely that Longmore could have married a full sister of D'Urban who was sixteen years Longmore's senior and whose father had died when he was five. D'Urban did not marry any of Longmore's many sisters, and it is improbable that Christina Longmore, the mother, would have been a D'Urban sister since no reference, in that name dropping age, was ever made to her having an illustrious connection. Perhaps Longmore's first wife was a younger half-sister of D'Urban, possibly a niece. Whatever the connection, it appears to have furthered Longmore's career in Cape Colony for over a decade, even when D'Urban was no longer Governor.

The stipendiary magistrates were responsible for protecting the freed slaves, now called apprentices. It was a sensitive job, which Longmore performed well. When the apprenticeship system was abolished in 1838, the British government retained the magistrates on the Colonial office payroll and they seem to have continued to perform special functions with regard to former slaves and apprentices. In the mid 1840's the Colonial office, pushed to reduce the size of its budget, terminated many offices which had ceased to have other than a patronage function. If the colonies wished to retain the position, then the colonial governments had to assume responsibility for paying

the office holder. The colonial politicians were not inclined to continue patronage appointments unless they could name the recipient; consequently the positions were terminated. The problem arose in Canada, as well as in Cape Colony. The effect was the same in both countries. One of the casualties was George Longmore who was out of a job at the age of 53. As his Canadian contemporary, John Richardson, was to do, he regretted the sale of his Majority for capital, with the resultant loss of the security of half-pay. The Cape Colony governor's correspondence<sup>12</sup> for the years 1845 and 1846 preserved in the Public Record Office contains increasingly frantic petitions from Longmore; that he was entitled to a pension because of his long service to the British Government, and failing that, that he should be appointed to another post. The covering letters of the Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland,<sup>13</sup> are polite, but firm. The petitioner had performed his duties well, but the Legislative Council had a long list of people eligible for positions and Longmore must wait his turn. The Colonial office decreed that he was not entitled to a pension because the appointment as magistrate had not been a permanent one.

Longmore declared bankruptcy in October, 1846, two months after he ceased to be "Stipendiary Magistrate at Wynberg." His insolvency papers<sup>14</sup> indicate that he had lived beyond his income for years. The sale of his art collection, large library, silver and other possessions did not meet his debt of £1,527 3s 8d.

Although D'Urban had been removed as governor in 1838 he had settled at Wynberg and retained considerable influence with his various successors. This had always been of assistance to Longmore. However, just at this moment of crisis D'Urban was appointed Commander of the Forces in Canada, and left the Cape.<sup>15</sup> Longmore continued to petition for another job and eventually received two appointments in 1848. One of them was as aide-de-camp to Governor Sir Harry Smith and, on his departure, to Sir George Cathcart. An application to rejoin the Civil Service was denied by the Colonial Office because he was an undischarged bankrupt. After much correspondence and assembling of support, Longmore was eventually confirmed as Sergeant-at-arms of the new Legislative Assembly at the Cape in 1854 and in 1857 was also made acting Librarian. He held these two posts until his death.

Throughout his career, Longmore continued to write. In his early years, before 1826, in addition to uncollected short pieces, two anonymous publications, *The Charivari*, and *Tales of Chivalry and Romance* (which includes "Tecumthé" and other works first pub-



lished in Montreal) can definitely be attributed to him, as well as a possible third. *The War of the Isles* appeared under his own name in 1826, as did *Mathilde, or, the Crusaders* in 1827. After a twenty-three year hiatus he began publishing again in Cape Town in 1850. *Don Juan*, 1850; *Byzantium: A poem*, in two cantos, 1855; *Prince Alfred's Welcome*. A Song in commemoration of the Prince's visit to South Africa, 1860; *The Pilgrims of Faith*, in three Cantos, 1860; and *The Missionary* (no date), followed.<sup>16</sup> He is also reported to have published a volume of short stories about the Peninsular War and to have corresponded as a young man with Sir Walter Scott. *Tales of Chivalry and Romance* is dedicated to Scott.

There are certain evident connections between Longmore's early and late periods of work. The influence of Byron and Scott remained strong throughout his life. Byronic forms and subjects, a Scottian preoccupation with chivalry and the crusades, both are evident in late as well as early titles. It is, however, the early works which we, as Canadians, find most interesting. Of these, only two are specifically Canadian in subject matter: *The Charivari*, published as a separate volume in April, 1824, and "Tecumthé", a poem equal in length to *The Charivari*, first published in the *Canadian Review* of December, 1824, and subsequently included in *Tales of Chivalry and Romance*.

*The Charivari*, "after the manner of Beppo" is a mock-heroic account of love and marriage in Montreal in the 1820's. Baptisto, a well-to-do bachelor of fifty, is enamoured of the young widow Annette. They marry and their wedding night is disturbed by a charivari party to which Baptisto good-humouredly submits. This "plot line" is only a framework for the poet's comments on Canadian winters, love, Byron's poetry, the social role of satire, women, colonial society, British and Canadian politics, and human nature in general. The tone, where it applies to Baptisto and Annette, is gentle, where it applies to society, less so.

What is the life of all,—but will of power  
 Or wish of avarice,—filling up the mind,—  
 Pride fires the soul,—whilst Envy is the dower  
 Its never varying prejudices find;—  
 And Charity—that all its means should shower,  
 Alms—aid,—advice,—to benefit mankind,  
 Too often flows from the corrupted stream  
 Of vanity,—its vices to redeem.<sup>17</sup>

The specific Canadian, and more specifically, Montreal, references

are many. S. H. Wilcocke claimed in the *Scribbler*<sup>18</sup> that the originals of the wedding party all lived in Montreal. Other Montreal references are to the cold winter and the indoor jollity which combatted it, sleighs, *cahots*, charivaris, the beauties of Montreal women, and the intricacies of provincial politics. The charivari was a particular point of discussion in the English-speaking community at the time<sup>19</sup> since a charivari party had met with resistance the previous year, with the result that a house was destroyed by a mob, one man was killed, and several individuals on both sides left hastily for the U. S. to avoid prosecution. Longmore seems to suggest that with a little good humour and good sense the whole episode could have been avoided. In the poem Baptisto is crowned with horns and placed on a horse:

And with much ridicule, and jeer assail'd him—  
 But all in Humour's laughter loving sport,  
 And he took all in patience which avail'd him  
 More than inflam'd resistance, or retort,<sup>20</sup>

The charivari is a "sport . . . which custom form'd, not spite."<sup>21</sup> The author also points out to his English readers the long tradition of mob formation in England, particularly at election time.

Annette, Baptisto and their families are middle-class Montrealers. Baptisto is presented as an anti-hero, a "goodly soul" in "easy circumstances" with all a bachelor's foibles, but he does behave in what his contemporaries would have called "a manly fashion" when confronted by the mob. Although he has a pistol handy he puts it aside, dresses and goes outside to meet his late-night callers. Annette, in the crisis, weeps and faints in the best female tradition. Although the author warns us early in the poem that the widow is not the perfect blond young maiden lovers normally apostrophize, she is later described as:

Graceful in form, and charming in each feature,  
 Meekness in mind, and melody in tone<sup>22</sup>

The wedding guests are certainly not as charming as Annette and Baptisto. The doctor, Annette's father

(As it was said) , , , had cheated Death of some later pother  
 In being before-hand with him,—and ending  
 His patient's pains,—which is one way of mending,<sup>23</sup>



Lawyer Shark, a guest "lik'd no law, so well as a good dinner"<sup>24</sup> and spent the evening endeavouring to maneuver a rich "North Wester" into an argument which would enable him to sue for some of "Buffalo's" vast wealth. The best man is the father of several illegitimate children.

Even the mock-heroic style chosen by the writer and his defense of satire as a presentation of the truth that people wish to ignore indicate that he found Montreal and its inhabitants a very mixed blessing. Longmore may, in other contexts, have been proud of his native land. Here he seems more the clear-eyed outside observer pricking the smugness and hypocrisy of mercantile and professional English Montreal.

"Tecumthé", with its forests and battlefields, is far removed from the cozy urban world of Montreal. An Indian chief, not an old bachelor, is the hero, and from human foibles we turn to the grand and cosmic. The events recounted in the poem ensure that no reader could mistake its country of origin. The first Canto puts the young Indian in his forest setting and establishes his character. In the second canto Tecumthé assumes the leadership of his people and in the third he meets his death. A minor theme throughout is the importance of Reason and the futility of war.

A reader in 1824 could reasonably have expected certain traditional literary attitudes to appear in the poem: "savages" either completely noble or completely ignoble; a natural world either conventionally pretty or responding to the pathetic fallacy; praise of war fought in a just and principled cause. Each of these three is either contradicted or considerably modified in "Tecumthé."

The Indians are both good and bad. The Prophet, Tecumthé's brother is initially a "bad man," power-mad and treacherous.

Wrapt in the wilful, wild design  
Of making all his tribe incline  
(And even his brother's loftier soul,)  
To his persuasive art's controul,  
A thrill of fear, or word of ire  
Might turn their thoughts from his desire,  
Of awing their untutor'd sense  
To own his mind's pre-eminence  
Gifted as crafts beguiling scheme  
(By token, tempest, deed or dream,)  
Dispos'd and tried, with treacherous bribe  
To make him, mighty, midst that tribe.<sup>25</sup>

The Prophet controls through superstition. By throwing incense on a fire and interpreting the flames, he makes his followers believe that he can predict the future. When his predictions, despite Tecumthé's opposition, have lured the tribe into a false sense of security, which results in their ambush and destruction by white men, he is penitent, seeks his brother's forgiveness and dies valiantly, becoming, at least in part, a good Indian in exhibiting the appropriate white responses.

Tecumthé, himself, comes close to the idea of a "noble savage." He lives in harmony with nature; he is instinctive and his instincts are all correct; he is not corrupted by civilization; he is a fearless and responsible leader of his people. The first description of him we are given finds him striking a noble attitude:

The sculptor, who, in marble vied  
 To emulate the form, and face  
 Of humankind, or deified  
 Symbol of majesty and grace,  
 In that expressive form might now  
 Have found a model to essay,  
 (In manhood's strength, and manly brow  
 Where Pride and Freedom lent a ray  
 Of dignity,)—the gentler art  
 With which true Genius consecrates  
 The bright inventions of the heart  
 When it aspires and elevates  
 The mind to the ennobled aim  
 Of the competitors, to Fame,  
 Thus to embody form and face  
 With all but life's immortal grace.<sup>26</sup>

According to Longmore, Tecumthé is, however, not the perfect being. He lacks education:

Tecumthé, with that daring force  
 Of energy, (which had it been  
 Enrich'd from learning's genial source  
 To soar, in emulation keen  
 Would brilliantly have shone among  
 The noblest of the aspiring throng  
 Who in the avenues to fame  
 Seek the bright record of a name.)<sup>27</sup>

European intellectuals had glorified this very lack of education, seeing the "natural wisdom" of the "uncivilized" as superior to their own highly developed society. So Longmore, certainly not departing

from the white value system, is nonetheless departing from the tradition by taking, for his time, a more realistic view of the Indian.

The woods in which Tecumthé lives are both verdant and barren, populated more by animals than by humans. Loneliness is one of the characteristics, even though the Indian is not lonely. All the seasons are mentioned: the grey of winter, the green of spring, the warmth of summer, but autumn, surprisingly, has only hints of colour. Niagara Falls, as the scene of the battle at Queenston, comes in for several pages of description. The noise of the falls and the noise of battle are certainly in sympathy, but the "diamond-drop" spray and the dashing water inspiring "grandeur, awe, and gloom" are taken as a "symbol of Eternity."<sup>28</sup>

It is Longmore's view of war, and particularly the War of 1812, which is most striking. It is perhaps not too surprising that a veteran of the storming of Badajoz, probably the bloodiest battle in the Peninsular War, should have considerable reservations about the glory of war.

Destructive war!—ah what avails  
The record of thy gory tales  
Where numbers in contention rife  
Make it more murder than fair strife.<sup>29</sup>

Despite a lengthy tribute to Brock, and mention of other brave individuals, he sees nothing glorious about the War of 1812. If anything, Britain is responsible:

From Albion's shore, the shout arose  
Which deem'd, Columbia's sons,—her foes;  
The blue Atlantic saw its tide  
With streaks of blood, already dyed,—  
And Pride,—whose cause hath ever led  
To populate, the grave with dead,  
Beheld the hosts of either land  
With daring heart, and furious hand  
Upholding with contending might  
By wrongful acts,—the claim of "right."<sup>30</sup>

Longmore must be the only Canadian writer ever to have put this face on one of the great institutions of our mythology.

"Tecumthé" is a remarkably well sustained work. The philosophizing is occasionally tedious, but the description is vivid and precise, the character of Tecumthé is well drawn, and the reader finishes with

some impression of both forest and battlefield as they must have appeared to a sensitive and intelligent mind of the time. "Tecumthé" was included in *Tales of Chivalry and Romance* published anonymously in Edinburgh and London in 1826.<sup>31</sup> This volume also includes "The Fall of Constantinople", which appeared in two installments in the *Canadian Magazine* of December, 1823, and January, 1824. It was the first of the long works subsequently attributed to Longmore to appear in Montreal. The poem was, no doubt, conceived in the spirit of the last stanza of the author's dedication "to the author of *Waverly*":

Within the mysteries of Time, were hid  
 Those costly treasures of Romance,—when, lo!  
 The spell of Genius, rais'd the secret lid,  
 And dazzled Earth with their resplendent glow,  
 And pil'd that golden, glorious pyramid  
 Of an immortal fabric, which altho'  
 Rear'd on the earth, is destin'd to arise,  
 And o'er all former art, soar loftiest in the skies!<sup>32</sup>

"The Fall of Constantinople", romance or not, makes tedious twentieth century reading. It is perhaps best described by the author's own listing of contents:

Canto First. Greece—her former fame and freedom—her subjugation under Philip of Macedon—Rome—her Consular greatness—her Emperors and degeneracy by their luxury—Constantine the Great—oval of the Empire to Byzantium—the Christian religion—final remarks on the fall of Empires.<sup>33</sup>

Canto II. The instability of fate—rise of Mahometanism—its progress—loss of Palestine—Pilgrims—inroad of Tamerlane—reextension of the Ottoman power—Mahomet—his conquests in Greece—design on the City—The Siege—The last Constantine—night previous to the assault—terror of the people—Hope—the assault—success of the Turks—death of the Emperor, and fate of Constantinople.<sup>34</sup>

Complete with valorous Christians, with villainous Turks defiling both maidens and the altar at which they sought refuge, this long work is poetically adequate in terms of rhyme, rhythm, form and imagery. It remains unconvincing: a considerable intellectual exercise which lacks the immediacy of *The Charivari* or "Tecumthé."

"Euphrosyne—A Turkish Tale," the other long poem mentioned

by the editor of the *Canadian Review* as one of Longmore's works, does not appear in *Tales of Chivalry and Romance*. A beautiful young Greek girl, beloved of the Pacha's eldest son, is drowned by that cruel old man. Longmore evidently thought it better to lay to rest a work which begins:

Where for Leucadia's coral caves  
 Laved by the waters of the deep,  
 Echo, their murmurs to the waves,—  
 And, airy wild notes round them sweep,—  
 As if some wandering spirit's strain  
 Wafted the plaintive sound along,—  
 Diffusing o'er the azure main,  
 The mournful cadence of its song;—  
 Hush!—'tis the chord of Sappho's lyre,—  
 Breathing the incense of despair,—  
 (From those wild grottos,—to inspire,)  
 Which floats along the balmy air;—  
 Borne by the genii of the deep,  
 Her tender, love-impassion'd pray'r,—  
 Sighing around that airy steep—  
 Sounds as it were embosom'd there!—<sup>35</sup>

The section of *Tales of Chivalry* labelled "Minor Poems" contains several other works which appeared in the *Canadian Review* and *Canadian Magazine* between March and July, 1824.<sup>36</sup> The anonymous works were evidently sufficiently successful that Longmore's next two publications appeared in his own name and were placed with a more prestigious publisher.

The isles referred to in the title *The War of the Isles* are the British Isles. The subject is the Peninsular campaigns against the forces of Napoleon, undertaken, on behalf of the free world, by the residents of those isles. From the poem itself it is evident that the war had made a strong impression on young George, who was probably eighteen when he arrived in Portugal. Both the text and notes indicate that he was strongly anti-Napoleon. On several occasions, in text and notes, he castigates those Britons who, dissatisfied with the progress of the lengthy war, would have appeased Napoleon.

Peninsula veterans were flooding the literary market with their reminiscences in the 1820s and continued to do so until the last veteran had ceased to breathe. It appears to have been one of those events, like the First World War, which marked its participants forever. While the propriety of a young officer publishing poetic tales of chivalry and romance might have been questioned, there would be

no impropriety in a Captain putting his account of the Peninsula before the public under his own name. In his preface the author refers to his attempt.

“in the work to impress on the mind of the reader, scenes, many of which he was a witness to; and although he may have completely failed in some, may, perchance, awoken by others, a lively recollection of such in the minds of those who were also eye witnesses to them.”<sup>37</sup>

The first canto applauds the British role and brings the history of the Napoleonic Wars up to the moment when Napoleon attempted to put his brother on the Spanish throne:

### IX

All Europe shrunk with fear, save thou alone,  
 Britannia, who, with calm, unshaken form,  
 Felt it was now the hour to strike the tone  
 Of that bold freedom which beat quick and warm  
 Within thy bosom, and defied the storm.  
 And from thine Isle, girt by the dark blue sea,  
 (Nature's strong barrier against sudden harm;)   
 Clad in Minerva's suit of armourye,  
 In lofty accents, this, address'd the good and free:—<sup>38</sup>

### XI

“Sons of the valiant, who on Cressy's day,  
 “With Edward built their monument of fame;  
 “And ye, whose fathers stood in bold array  
 “At Agincourt, by Henry, and o'er came  
 “The race that dare ye now—and darkly aim  
 “To mar the freedom which they cannot gain:  
 “Let energy still bind you to that name,  
 “As yet unsullied—and thus show how vain  
 “The force which tyrants use, 'gainst Honour's wholesome reign.”<sup>39</sup>

A footnote to the lines:

—Where lofty Cintra meets the storm  
 Which struck with majesty my youthful mind.

gives us a touching glimpse of the young author:



It was the first time I had visited any foreign shore, and I cannot describe the sensation I experienced in viewing the shores of Portugal and the heights of Cintra. It was a heavenly evening when the vessel, gliding over the clear calm waters of the ocean, reached the lovely scene; the sun, setting in a blaze of unusual splendor sent forth its brilliant beams on the rock on Cintra, now clothed in Spring's richest mantle; and the contrast of light and shade, occasioned by the depth of the valleys, unpenetrated by the sun's rays, gave a diversity of colouring which heightened the charm of the landscape; behind it were seen the less mountainous hills of Mafra, gradually receding, whilst the peak of some higher and more discernible Serra crowned them in the distance with its darker summits, breaking the line of horizon which otherwise would have appeared too regular and unvaried."<sup>40</sup>

Longmore did not, however, find the realities of war as romantic as his first glimpse of the theatre in which it would be fought. In addition to death and hardship which the military participants encountered, he devotes several long asides to stories supposedly told him by peasants of their own sufferings. Since the armies of Napoleon lived off the land, taking what they wanted without payment and punishing those who resisted, these sufferings were considerable. To Longmore, whose interest in civilian sufferings makes his work a bit unusual for the genre, they add to the list of French *misères* which must be avenged. Since, in *Canto X*, our hero winds up in the army occupying Paris after Napoleon's flight, and since Britain has saved the world for freedom, a triumphant conclusion is attained.

If, as Longmore claims in his preface, the poem was written ten years before it was published, it is a considerable achievement for a twenty-three year old. He handles the Spenserian stanzas with facility over the more than 250 pages of text. The *London Literary Gazette* review, quoted in the *Montreal Gazette* issue which first mentioned Longmore as an author, does not seem unjust:

If considerable talent, evident industry, and much observation, can render a book creditable to its author, this poem will be so; still we question the reputation of any of these extending far; for we much doubt their popularity. There is no interesting narrative to carry on the general reader, no overpowering genius to arrest the attention of the more discerning. It would take even more than a second Byron to give success to an imitation of Childe Harold.

*Mathilde; or, The Crusaders*,<sup>41</sup> Longmore's next published work, may well have been a product of the amateur theatricals of the Garrison at Montreal or some other location. The British Museum's copy is bound in a volume labelled "Dramas." This seemingly accidental

anthology contains plays written by a number of authors, including James Sheridan Knowles, which are dated 1827-32. Whether *Mathilde* ever had a production, professional or amateur, we do not know. In *Mathilde*, Longmore returns to the Crusader theme which appears in "The Fall of Constantinople", and later in *The Pilgrims of Faith*. His preface acknowledges that the plot has been derived from "a Work of the same name written by the celebrated Madame Coffin."<sup>42</sup> The play itself, whose seventeen speaking roles are divided among French, English, and Saracens, deals with the denial of access to the Christian shrines by Saladin, the sultan and with Mathilde, the sister of Richard Coeur-de-Lion, and her sister-in-law Berengere, prisoners of the Saracens. Mathilde is loved by one of her captors, but, of course, does not return his love. Although the author, in his preface, abjures declamation as tedious, some of his lines sound suspiciously like it:

True honour in a public cause, thinks not  
Of private wrangling or of petty wrong,  
And patriotism scorns an office, which  
Must taint the soul with some perfidious part,  
The individual in the world's vast scale,  
Is like the drop to ocean, grain to sand,  
For glory looks to all, and would not stain  
Its gorgeous crest with one poor sacrifice,  
But as its offering tends a prouder pledge,  
And sums its triumphs with immortal views.<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps it is the fault of the borrowed plot and the conventions of Christian-infidel warfare, but the reader, however successful the separate speeches, can sustain no interest in the fate of Mathilde or the Crusaders.

There are other possible works to attribute to Longmore's early period. "Dramfed",<sup>44</sup> an hilarious parody on Byron's "Manfred" is almost certainly by Longmore. Both the source of the inspiration and the wit of the parody point to him. The Watchman's attempt to coax the drunken Dramfed down from a rooftop would give pleasure to any student who has ever suffered from the *sturm und drang* of Manfred on his mountain peak.

Another possibility is the prose series "The Itinerant" which appeared in nine instalments in the *Canadian Magazine*. The possible connection with Longmore comes from his use, when publishing *The Charivari*, of the pseudonym "Launcelot Longstaff," just one letter different from the pseudonym Launcelot Langstaff used by

Washington Irving and J.K. Paulding in publishing *Salmagundi*. "The Itinerant" is the unfinished account of a trip by water from Montreal as far as Pointe-Fortune on the Ottawa River. The voyagers are the narrator, the Major, and Mr. Salmagundi. The attitudes of the narrator, and his style, are consistent with those one would expect from Longmore, but there is no direct evidence to link him to the articles.

An anonymous work published in England in 1823 also has intriguing connections with George Longmore and his work. In *Tales of Chivalry and Romance*, there is a footnote to the Argument of "Tecumthé" which was missing from the earlier version as it appeared in the *Canadian Review*:

This foregoing Argument was extracted from a Periodical Journal:— it has however, been re-published in the "Lucubrations of Humphrey Ravelin," under the head of "Indian Warfare,"—and of course was written by the Author of that work, although previously inserted in the Journal.<sup>45</sup>

The "Lucubrations" are ascribed by the British Museum to "G. Procter, novelist." Dr. Carl Klinck has speculated<sup>46</sup> on the possible relationship of "the only eligible G. or George Procter (spelled "er" or "or") whom the book-lists name as a (sic) active author of the time, that is, concerning Lieutenant-Colonel George Procter (1796-1842) . . ." There is no direct evidence to link Procter with the work, but he certainly could have been the author. While no final answer seems available at present, it is interesting to note Longmore's tie with *Humphrey Ravelin* through the Argument to "Tecumthé." If the "periodical journal" is the *Canadian Review*, then its appearance in that work came after the publication of the *Lucubrations*, not before. On the other hand, Longmore was so much inclined to the tongue-in-cheek that it could be deliberate obfuscation. It is also possible that, with the dates only a year apart, he could have forgotten the sequence. One of the most memorable chapters in *Humphrey Ravelin* is one entitled "The Day of Badajoz". At no point does the narrator say, as he does in some other chapters, that the events were recounted to him by another. George Procter was not present at that battle and George Longmore was. One of the other chapters, "The Disbanding of the Regiment" also appeared in the *Canadian Magazine* in August 1824 when Longmore was living in Montreal and Procter had been back in England since 1815. Textually, it is difficult to come to any

conclusions. The narrator of the various disconnected chapters in *Humphrey Ravelin* adopts the persona of a retired army officer, settled in England, with a secondary persona of a young nephew who visits from time to time. The somewhat cynical older gentleman is certainly not unlike the persona of the narrator of *The Charivari*, but we have no prose which can definitely be attributed to Longmore in his early writing period, so no comparisons can be made. In the science of military fortification, which was George Longmore's profession, a ravelin is an outwork constructed beyond the main fortification as a first line of defence. The name would make a marvellously witty pseudonym for a military engineer. The question must remain open. In the absence of direct evidence, as good a case can be made for Longmore as for Procter. It is equally possible that the author was a third party with whom Longmore had served in the Peninsula.

Although Longmore left Canada for good in 1824, tid-bits of information about him continued to appear in Montreal newspapers through to 1850, indicating that he must have continued to correspond with friends in his native land who then ensured that interesting vital statistics, such as his various promotions and his daughter's marriages, were published. Other than the poem in the *Literary Garland*, there is only one other reference to him as a writer. An editorialist in the *Morning Courier* of December 13, 1839, in discussing the *Literary Garland* and the scarcity of native-born Canadian writers, remarks, "A gentleman, named Longmore, some years since, published some poetry." Even in 1849, someone at the *Courier* still knew of Longmore's connection with Canada. In extracting from the twenty page, double column, published list of recipients of the Peninsula Medal the names of "those who have served in Canada, at some period or other, and are, or have been, well known here, or are at present living in the Colony,"<sup>47</sup> George Longmore's name is included in a short one-and-a-half column list.

Undoubtedly, if Longmore had ultimately settled in Canada he would have been a well-known, rather than a forgotten, Canadian author. Perhaps he really did hate the Canadian winter as much as his comments in *The Charivari* would indicate. More likely, he made his career wherever he could find a job. As Canadian immigration statistics and Governors' correspondence indicate, there were a lot of half-pay officers looking for positions in the 1830's. Longmore's connection with D'Urban provided him with employment after only two years on half-pay. Once established in Cape Colony and having built up his connections, he naturally chose to remain where he had the

greatest chance of procuring a steady income. The Colonial Civil Service all around the world was peopled by individuals like Longmore: capable, intelligent, well connected, but lacking any private gentlemanly income. The countries in which they settled were most often a matter of chance, depending on where their connections had the power to make appointments. In Longmore's case this meant that he lived in at least four countries in the first forty years of his life before finding a home at Cape Town for the last thirty three.

Since, as a young man, he seemed to find his greatest poetic inspiration in the land of his birth, we can only regret that fate prevented his return and thus the Canadian volumes that were never written. However, in "Tecumthé" and *The Charivari* he has left two distinctively Canadian works of considerable merit. These two, and *The War of the Isles*, indicate that he did his best writing where he had some experience of the scene or subject matter and could exercise his fine power of observation in a poetic cause. Always writing within the tradition of Byron and Scott, he was master of many literary forms. Throughout his many works it is rare to find any awkwardness of rhyme or metre, even when the content falters. All the works discussed here were published before he was thirty-four. They represent a very considerable achievement for so young a man and rank him with the best of early nineteenth century Canadian writers.

In the following lines, the last of the Introductory Stanzas to "Tecumthé," addressed to "Fair Canada", George Longmore speaks:

Peace to thy hearths, and Plenty in thy halls,—  
 Could happiness be heard to ask for more?  
 These, and the many which our varied calls  
 On nature seek,—alight upon thy shore;  
 And when this fleeting life, which wanes, is o'er,  
 And Death, hath set its seal, on this, cold frame,  
 Glanc'd on this page, some heart may chance restore  
 A passing thought on him—whose loftiest aim  
 Was to conjoin at last, his memory with thy name.

#### NOTES

1. In "The Charivari and Levi Adams," *Dalhousie Review*. (Spring, 1960), 34-42, Dr. Carl Klinck attributed *The Charivari* to Adams, the acknowledged author of *Jean Baptiste*, a long poem on a similar subject published in Montreal the following year. Aside from the inclusion of *The Charivari* in the canon of Levi Adams' work, Dr. Klinck's analysis of the poem is extremely helpful.

2. *Montreal Gazette*, April 30, 1827. The *Gazette* writer was almost certainly Robert Armour, Jr., editor, son of the owner, and later, owner in his own right, of the *Gazette*. If we are to believe Armour's obituary notice (*Gazette*, October 8, 1845) he was associated with the two literary magazines in which most of Longmore's Montreal publications appeared. Armour would, therefore, have known directly, and not by rumour, the identity of the author of *The Charivari*.
3. P.R.O., C.O. 48, 221, p. 227
4. *Montreal Gazette*, January 11, 1840.
5. *Ibid.*, November 20, 1824.
6. *Ibid.*, March 24, 1836. She is referred to as "the youthful bride."
7. *Ibid.*, August 28, 1845.
8. For information about George Longmore's career after October, 1846, I am indebted to the Editor of the *Dictionary of South African Biography* who furnished me with a copy of a draft article on Longmore, prepared for a forthcoming volume. Except for Army List data, the South Africans had no information about Longmore before his arrival in Cape Colony in 1834.
9. Born Quebec City, February 2, 1800.
10. *Gazette*, February 11, 1845.
11. There is a number of commendations in Colonial Office correspondence.
12. C.O. 48, vol. 221.
13. One wonders if they had met in Canada. The dates of their Canadian residence coincide.
14. Biographical data from the *D.S.A.B.*
15. He died in Canada May 25, 1849, and was buried in the military cemetery in Montreal. A monument was erected by some grateful citizens of Montreal who saw him as the hero who had prevented the Rebellion Losses Riots from turning into civil war. The monument, and D'Urban's remains, were later transferred to the Field of Honour in Pointe-Claire, where the monument may still be seen.
16. It has not been possible to read the later works, copies of which are scattered in South African libraries.
17. *The Charivari, or Canadian Poetics*, (Ottawa: The Golden Dog Press, 1977), p. 28. All further page references are to this edition.
18. *The Scribbler*, June 10, 1824.
19. See this writer's introduction to the Golden Dog Press edition for a more detailed discussion of the specific historical events.
20. *Charivari*, p. 55.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
25. "Tecumthé," in *The Canadian Review and Literary and Historical Journal*, December, 1824, p. 397. All further page references are to this edition. "Tecumthé" merits far more extensive study than it can be given here.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 396.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 422.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 421.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 416.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 420.
31. By James Robertson and Co. in Edinburgh and Baldwin, Craddock and Joy in London.
32. *Tales of Chivalry and Romance*, p. 18.
33. *Canadian Magazine and Literary Repository*, December, 1823, p. 498.
34. *Ibid.*, January, 1824, p. 25.
35. *Canadian Review*, July, 1824, p. 128.
36. These include "Ode to Spain", "Ode on Death and the Pale Horse" and "Essay on Lord Byron".
37. *The War of the Isles*, (London: W. Cadell, Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1826), Preface, p. iii.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 8.



40. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
41. *Mathilde*: or, *The Crusaders*, an Historical Drama, in five acts, by Captain Longmore, Royal Staff Corps. London. Printed for T. Cadell, Strand, and W. Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1827.
42. *Mathilde*, preface, v.
43. *Ibid.*, speech of Saladin, p. 17.
44. *Canadian Review*, July, 1824.
45. *Tales of Chivalry and Romance*, p. 84.
46. "Some Anonymous Literature of the War of 1812," *Ontario History*, Vol. XLIX (1957), No. 2, p. 49.
47. *Montreal Courier*, May 16, 1849.

## AFTERWORD

Since writing the above I have learned that in the South African Library, Cape Town, there is a copy of *The Charivari* in which the facing title page bears the inscription "To J.L. Fitzpatrick Esq. with the author's regards (signed) G. Longmore". I have also been informed that there are three additional Longmore works, not mentioned above, in South African libraries, as well as some poems which were published in Cape periodicals.