

# Narrative of Capt. Thomas G. Anderson

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Thomas Gummersall Anderson, whose name figures conspicuously in connection with the British capture of Prairie du Chien, in 1814, was born at Sorel, in Lower Canada, Nov. 12, 1779. His father, Samuel Anderson, at the commencement of the American Revolution, sympathizing with the mother country, received a commission in the King's Royal Regiment of New York, was wounded at Bunker Hill, and subsequently served under Sir John Johnson. Settling in Cornwall, Upper Canada, after the war, he held many local offices, and died in 1832, at the venerable age of ninety-seven years.

When the son, Thomas, was but a mere child, the father procured for him a commission as a cadet in his father's company, in the King's Royal Regiment. At the age of fifteen, he became a clerk, in 1795, in the store of Thomas Markland, in Kingston, remaining with him five years, when he resolved, as he expressed it, to enter upon "the battle of life" in the wild, and almost trackless forests of the Great Northwest.

His narrative and journal, the former of which, written apparently about the year 1870, give many interesting glimpses of the Indian trade, frontier life, and traits of Indian character in Wisconsin and Minnesota, from sixty-eight to eighty-two years ago; and throw much new light on the British expedition to, and capture of Prairie du Chien, in 1814, and the repulse of the American expedition, designed for its re-capture, at the Sauk Rapids of the Mississippi. They have never before been in print, and our Historical Society is indebted to his daughter, Mrs. Sophia Rowe, for the interesting narrative, and to O. H. Marshall, Esq., of Buffalo, for a copy of the valuable journal. After the removal of the Indian agency from Drummond Island to Penetanguishine and that vicinity, in November, 1828, Capt. Anderson continued in the employ of his government, attending to the wants of the Indians of his charge, providing comfortable houses for their use, and the necessary means of education and civilization. In 1836, the plan of settling the Indians in that part of Canada, on the Great Manitoulin Island on the northern border of Lake Huron, was inaugurated; and Capt. Anderson was placed in charge of the establishment, where he remained until 1845, when he was appointed visiting superintendent of Indian affairs, and payer of annuities, which he held until June 30, 1858—thus serving fifty-eight years on the frontiers, as a trader, and in the Indian department.

His experiences in Indian life were large and various. He thoroughly studied the Indian character, treating the red men with kindness when