

VI

BATTLE OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

The month of October was marked by an event of the most melancholy and disastrous nature—the death of the noble Brock, who fell a victim to the daring and intrepidity of his character, and in the performance of a duty which should have been executed by a captain of a company.

On his arrival at Fort George, which he reached in eight days from the surrender of Detroit, the General found, to his great dismay, that an armistice had been entered into and concluded, during his absence, between Sir George Prevost and General Dearborn, Commander-in-Chief of the American Army, so that the whole of his plans of operation were deranged, and instead of carrying the American fort of Niagara by an instant *coup de main* as he had proposed, and which was to have been a preliminary to more extended offensive demonstrations, he found himself compelled to sit quietly down in presence of his enemy, and watch, without being enabled to interrupt them, his unremitting preparations for defence. From this state of supineness and mortification he was only first actively aroused on the early morning of the 13th of October by an alarm given by the sentinel stationed at the point above Fort George, that he had seen and heard firing in the direction of Queenstown. In a few minutes the General was on his horse, and, unattended even by an Aid-de-Camp, galloped onward to Queenstown to ascertain the cause of the alarm. On arriving about half-way to Brown's Point, he was met by Lieut. Jarvis, of Captain Cameron's Flank Company of York Militia, which, with Captain Heward's, was sta-

QUEENSTON, 1812



tioned there. This officer had been on guard at what was called the half-moon battery, about mid-way between Queenstown and Niagara, and observing on the water, opposite to the former place, numerous and rapid flashes of fire-arms, had alarmed the officer commanding the detachment, who immediately ordered the two companies under arms. An officer was at the same time despatched to Queenstown, to obtain information. Scarcely had the men been turned out, when an officer, who had passed their own messenger on the road, arrived from Queenstown with intelligence that the Americans were crossing in force, and an order for the detachment at Brown's Point to march up immediately, and assist in opposing their landing. He was moreover directed to desire that the officer commanding should instantly despatch a messenger to Fort George, to apprize General Brock of the movement of the enemy. Lieut. Jarvis, who happened to be the only person mounted, was ordered on this service, and he had galloped about half-way to Fort George, when he met General Brock, wholly unattended, cantering his charger up the Queenstown road. As the day had begun to dawn, Lieut. Jarvis had no difficulty in recognizing the General, but such was the spirit of his horse that he could not rein him in, but was borne past, shouting out to his Chief to stop, as he had most important news to communicate. But the General was too impatient to reach the scene of danger to delay a moment, and beckoning the officer to follow him, he still continued his course. After the lapse of a few minutes Lieut. Jarvis succeeded in reining in, and wheeling his restive horse, and soon gaining the General's side, communicated his information. Without in the slightest degree abating his speed even for an instant, the General listened, and then gave his orders. These were that Lieutenant Jarvis should go with all speed to Fort George, and order up General Sheaffe with the whole of the reserve. He moreover particularly directed that the In-

dians, a small party of whom were encamped near Fort George, should be thrown out upon the right, to occupy the woods, during the advance of the reserve to his support.

Scarcely had Lieut. Jarvis lost sight of the General, on his way to execute the order he had received, when he was met by Col. Macdonell, who was following after his Chief, and who, in his hurry to overtake him, had left Fort George without even recollecting that he was unprovided with his sword. Having satisfied himself that the General was not far in advance, he begged Lieut. Jarvis to supply the deficiency, stating at the same time where he would find his own sabre, in his quarters at Fort George, and desiring him to appropriate it to his use for the day. The young officer complied with his request, and hurriedly parted with the gallant Colonel, as he had with the General, for ever.

Having given these brief yet interesting particulars, in regard to the two brave men whose ashes now repose under the same monumental stone, on the heights near which they fell, only a few hours later, it is time to pass to the scene of action to which they were hastening.

The Americans, availing themselves of the armistice entered into by Sir George Prevost, had contrived to push forward a large force to their camp at Lewiston, under General Van Rensselaer, with the view of an invasion of Canada, similar to that of General Hull. Their force was a powerful one, and their plan of operation highly judicious, but fortunately it failed, from want of unanimity and ardor in the irregular portion of their troops. General Van Rensselaer having concerted his mode of attack, caused thirteen boats to be collected in the course of the 12th of October, for the purpose of crossing over his army long before the dawn of the following day. James, who seems to be good authority in this matter, states-

"The embarkation was to have taken place as follows: Col. Van Rensselaer, who commanded, with 300 militia

and Lieut.-Col. Chrystie with 300 regulars ; Lieut.-Col. Fenwick and Major Mullany to follow with about 550 regular troops ; and some pieces of flying Artillery ; and then the militia. It was intended that the embarkation of the regulars and militia should be simultaneous, as far as the boats would suffice to receive them ; but having to descend the bank by a narrow path which had been cut out of it, the regular troops got possession of the boats to the exclusion of the militia ; and the latter were ordered to follow in the return boats.

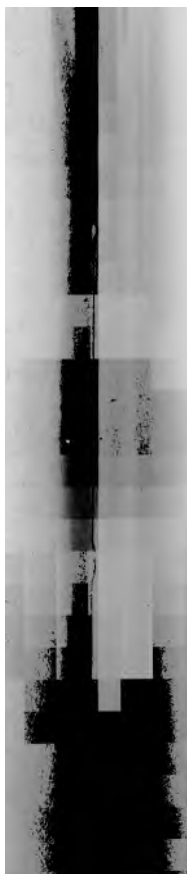
"The only British batteries, from which the troops could be annoyed in the passage, were one, mounting an 18 pounder, upon Queenstown Heights (about half way up), and another mounting a 24-pound carronade, situate a little below the town. The river at Queenstown is scarcely a quarter of a mile in width, and the part chosen for crossing was not fully exposed to either of the British batteries ; while the American batteries of two 18, and two 6 pounders, and the two 6 pounder field pieces, brought up by Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, completely commanded every part of the opposite shore, from which musketry could be effectual in opposing a landing. With these important advantages the troops embarked ; but a grape-shot striking the boat in which Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie was, and wounding him in the hand, the pilot and the boatmen became so alarmed, that they suffered the boat to fall below the point of landing, and were obliged in consequence to put back. Two other boats did the same. The remaining ten with the 225 regulars, besides officers, including the commander of the detachment, Colonel Van Rensselaer, struck the shore ; and, after disembarking the men, returned for more troops.

"The only force at Queenstown (at the landing of the enemy) consisted of the two flank companies of the 49th Regiment and a small detachment of militia ; amounting in all to about 300 rank and file. Of these about 60, taken from the 49th Grenadiers, and Captain Hatt's company of militia, having in charge a 3 pounder, advanced at four o'clock in the morning, with Captain Dennis of the 49th at their head, towards the river, near to which Colonel Van Rensselaer had formed his men, to await the arrival of the next boats. A well-directed and warmly-continued fire killed and wounded several American officers and privates, including, among the wounded

Colonel Van Rensselaer and three Captains, and drove the Americans close to the water's edge. In the meantime a fresh supply of troops had effected a landing ; and remained with the others sheltered behind the bank ; whence they returned the fire of the British, killing one man, and wounding four. The remaining sub-divisions of the 49th Grenadiers and of the militia company had now joined Captain Dennis' ; and the 49th Light Infantry under Captain Williams, with Captain Chisholm's company of militia, stationed on the brow of the hill, were firing down upon the invaders.

"Of five or six boats that attempted to land a body of American regulars under Major Mullany, one was destroyed by a shot from the hill-battery commanded by Lieutenant Crowther of the 41st Regiment ; two others were captured, and the remainder, foiled in their object, returned to the American side. Daylight appeared, and at the same instant General Brock arrived at the hill-battery from Fort George. Observing the strong reinforcements that were crossing over, the General instantly ordered Captain Williams to descend the hill and support Captain Dennis. No sooner were Captain Williams and his men seen to depart, than the Americans formed the resolution of gaining the heights. Accordingly 60 American regulars, headed by Captain Wool, and accompanied by Major Lush, a volunteer, also by a Captain, six Lieutenants and an Ensign of the 13th Regiment, ascended a fisherman's path up the rocks, which had been reported to General Brock as impassable, and therefore was not guarded. The Americans were thus enabled, unseen by our troops, to arrive at a brow, about 30 yards in rear of the hill-battery. Reinforcements kept rapidly arriving by the concealed path ; and the whole formed on the brow, with their front towards the Village of Queens-town.

'Major-General Sir James Dennis, K.C.B., son of John Dennis, an Attorney, was born 1778. He served in the navy as a midshipman, but afterwards joined the 49th Regt. as an ensign, Sept. 2nd, 1796, and rose by promotion through all the grades to a majority in the same regiment on Dec. 1st, 1812. On June 4th, 1833, he was appointed Lieut.-Col: of the 3rd Regiment, and commanded a division of Infantry at the battle of Maharajpore on Dec. 29th, 1843. For his gallantry on this occasion he was made a K.C.B. on Oct. 30th, 1844 ; and was promoted to the rank of Major-General, Nov. 11th, 1851. His death took place at Pall Mall, London, on Jan. 14th, 1855.



From a Silhouette in possession of John Alexander Macdonell, K.C., Alexandria.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN MACDONELL.

Provincial Aid-de-Camp to Major-General Sir Isaac Brock ; M.P. for Glengarry ;
Attorney-General of Upper Canada.

"The moment General Brock discovered the unexpected advance of the American troops, he, with the 12 men stationed at the battery, retired ; and Captain Wool advancing from the rear with his more than tenfold force, took possession of it. Captain Williams and his detachment of regulars and militia were now recalled ; and General Brock putting himself at the head of this force, amounting in all to about 90 men, advanced to meet a detachment of 150 picked American regulars, which Captain Wool had sent forward to attack him. While animating his little band of regulars and militia to a charge up the heights, General Brock received a mortal wound in the breast, and immediately fell.

"At this moment the two flank companies of the York militia, with Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, the General's Provincial Aid-de-Camp at their head, arrived from Brown's Point, three miles distant. By this time also Captain Wool had sent additional reinforcements to Captain Ogilvie ; making the latter's force '320 regulars, supported by a few militia and volunteers,' or on the whole, full 500 men. Colonel Macdonell and his 90 men—more than two-thirds Canadian militia—rushed boldly up the hill, in defiance of the continued stream of musketry pouring down upon them ; compelled the Americans to spike the 18 pounder ; and would have again driven them to the rocks, had not the Colonel and Captain Williams been wounded almost at the same instant ; the former mortally. The loss of their commanders created confusion among the men, and they again retreated. Hearing of the fall of General Brock, Captain Dennis proceeded from the valley, towards the foot of the heights, and mounting the General's horse, rode up, and tried to rally the troops. He succeeded in forming a few ; but the number was so inconsiderable that to persist in a contest would have been madness. A retreat was accordingly ordered, by the ground in the rear of the town ; and the men of the 49th, accompanied by many of the militia, formed in front of Vrooman's battery, there to await the expected reinforcement from Fort George.

"While we had at this period not above 200 unwounded men at Queenstown, the Americans, by their own account, had upwards of 800 and General Van Rensselaer tells us that ' a number of boats now crossed over, unannoyed except by one unsilenced gun,' or that at Vroo-

man's battery ; consequently more troops were hourly arriving. Brigadier-General Wadsworth was left as commanding officer of the Americans on the Queenstown hill; and General Van Rensselaer, considering the victory as complete, had himself crossed over, in order to give directions about fortifying the camp, which he intended to occupy in the British territory."

Thus far, then is, lucidly and accurately enough, explained the nature of the contest, and the relative positions of the two forces, up to the moment of the arrival of the reserve from Fort George. It may not, however, be unimportant to add, that among the officers wounded in the repulse, and of whom no mention is made by James, were Captain Dennis of the 49th Grenadiers, and the present Mr. Justice McLean of Toronto, who was then a brother subaltern with Mr. Jarvis, in Captain Cameron's flank company of militia. The latter was very severely wounded, yet brought off by the retreating party. The former had received a ball in his thigh, yet impatient of the delay of a regular treatment, he, with characteristic *sang froid*, stopped the effusion of blood by thrusting his finger into the wound, and in that manner supported his share in the action to the last. The fall of so many brave officers had naturally the effect of dispiriting the men, and the remains of the detachment continued their retreat to Durham's farm, about two miles and a half below Queenstown, where Colonel Macdonell's almost lifeless body was deposited, preparatory to its final removal to the Government House at Fort George, in

¹Lieut. Archibald McLean, the second son of the Hon. Neil McLean, was born at St. Andrew's, County of Stormont, in 1791. He was present at Ogdensburg in 1813, and at the capture of York carried to a place of safety the colors of the York Volunteers. At the Battle of Lundy's Lane he was taken prisoner and detained until the close of the war. After the war he continued his legal studies, and in 1820 was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly for Stormont, being re-elected on five other occasions, once for the town of Cornwall. For two Parliaments, the eleventh and thirteenth, he was honored by being elected Speaker. He subsequently was appointed Chief Justice of Upper Canada, and afterwards President of the Court of Error and Appeal, an office he held at his death in 1865.

which the gallant officer breathed his last, soon after his arrival. The body of the Hero of Canada had been left behind, in one of the houses in Queenstown, hurriedly covered with a pile of old blankets in order to prevent any recognition by the enemy.

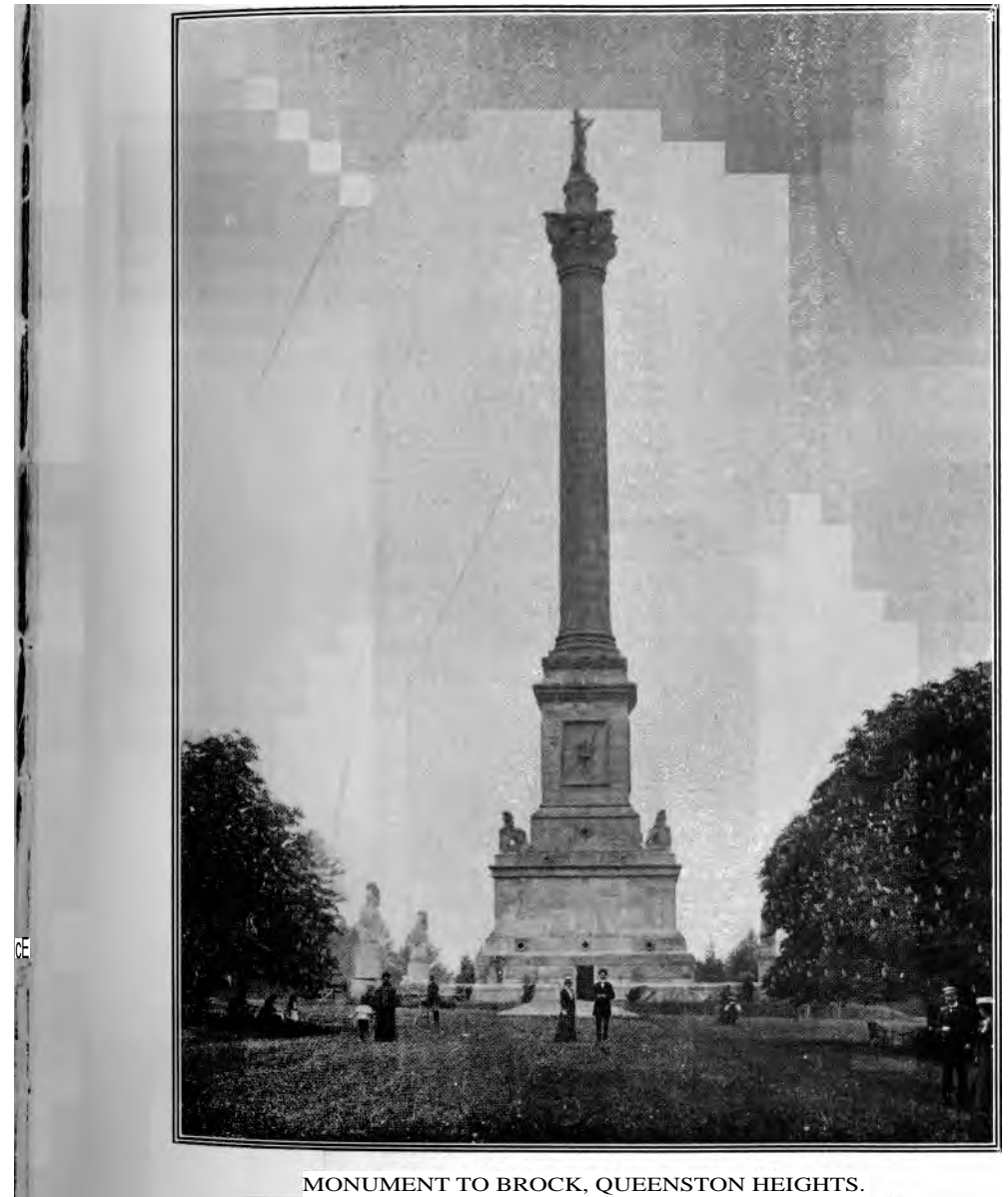
It was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, when the anxiously-expected reserve, under General Sheaffe, consisting principally of the 41st Regiment, made its appearance at Durham's farm. The whole then moved forward in a westerly direction towards the village of St. David's, for the purpose of gaining the rear of the mountain. Here, as might have been expected, the military tact and *prevoyance* of the fallen leader, in urgently desiring the advance of the Indians, to clear a passage for the troops in their ascent of the heights, was made manifest. The column had been halted at the base of the mountain far to the right of the Queenstown road, and inclining towards that which traverses it from St. David's. Profiting by the suggestion of his late superior, General Sheaffe sent forward the Indians, who rapidly ascended the heights, and so well and so gallantly occupied the American pickets, which had been thrown out in that direction, that the little army was enabled to gain the summit of the mountain, by an oblique movement to the right, almost without opposition, and wholly without loss.

And now had arrived the crisis which was to decide, for a brief season at least, the destinies of Canada, and the honor of the British arms.

The height gained on the flank of the enemy, who were discovered drawn up in preparation for the attack, the British line, not exceeding Soo men, was instantly formed. On the extreme left, and resting on the brow of the hill, were the Indians, and next to these the companies of militia who had already borne so honorable a share in the contest of the morning, and a few others just arrived, with General Sheaffe, from Fort George. The

centre was composed of the remnant of the 49th flank companies, and the right of the main body of the 41st Regiment—about 350 bayonets—commanded by Captain Derenzy. At this critical moment, and just as the action was about to commence, Captain Bullock, with the principal portion of the 41st Grenadiers, suddenly made his appearance from Chippawa, followed by Lieut Bullock, of the same company, who hastened from his station opposite Navy Island, with the few men he had under his command, partly grenadiers and partly battalion men. The opportune arrival of these little detachments (numbering together too bayonets) which immediately took their proper stations in the line, the extreme right of the grenadiers resting on the road leading to the Falls, was hailed as an earnest of success by the little band, who were animated by the most eager desire to encounter the enemy, and avenge the fall of their noble and lamented Chief. The moment of their triumph at length arrived. Between the extreme flank of the 41st, and the bold precipice of Queenston Heights, there was a space covered with small trees and stunted pines. Under cover of these, the American left attempted to turn the outer flank of the 41st, but were met by such a warm and destructive fire that they were checked and thrown into confusion. Almost simultaneously with this movement of the enemy, commenced an attack upon their centre, by the light company of the 41st under Lieut. McIntyre, and on their extreme right by the Indians, who were led into action by their Chief Norton'—or Teyoninhokorawen—as he is named in the British Army Lists even of the present **day**. Both these

=Captain John Norton, along with Captain John Brant, had command of the Indians at Queenston Heights. He was a native of Scotland, his Indian name meaning Pale-faced warrior, or Sad-countenanced warrior. Some time after the war he quarrelled with the Indians, went to the State of Georgia and thence to Mississippi, and finally returned to Scotland with his Indian wife Catharine, to whom he was married at Niagara on July 27th, 1813, by Rev. Robert Addison.



MONUMENT TO BROCK, QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

parties commenced the action with great spirit, driving the Americans before them, and when it was perceived that the attempt of the enemy to turn our right had so signally failed, a tremendous shout arose from the British troops, which, mingling with the war whoop of the Indians, staggered the wavering assailants still more. At that instant the advance was sounded, and the whole line rushed eagerly forward upon the enemy, who made little or no resistance, but broke and fled in the utmost consternation, closely followed by the immolating bayonet and tomahawk. Many, in their panic, threw themselves over the precipice, and were of course dashed to pieces in their descent. But quarter having at length been demanded by the American commander, this was given, and goo prisoners, including one General and 72 inferior officers, in some degree atoned for—it was impossible to repay—the grievous loss the country had sustained in the morning of that otherwise glorious day.

The British loss' at Queenstown was I I killed and 60

-Return of killed, wounded and missing of the army under the command of Major-General Isaac Brock, in an action at Queenstown, Niagara, on the 13th October, 1812 :

General staff-2 killed.

Royal Artillery-2 rank and file wounded.

Detachment 41st Regiment-1 sergeant, 1 rank and file killed ; 1 sergeant, 9 rank and file wounded.

Flank Companies, 49th Regiment-8 rank and file killed ; 2 captains, 3 sergeants, 27 rank and file, 1 volunteer wounded ; 5 rank and file, 1 volunteer missing.

Lincoln Artillery-1 rank and file wounded.

Lincoln Militia-1 adjutant, 1 sergeant, 12 rank and file wounded; 10 rank and file missing.

York Militia-2 rank and file killed ; 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 15 rank and file wounded ; 5 rank and file missing.

Total Loss-1 Major-General, 1 aid-de-camp, 1 sergeant, 9 rank and file, line, 2 rank and file, militia, killed ; 2 captains, line ; 1 adjutant, 1 lieutenant, militia ; 4 sergeants, line ; 2 sergeants, militia ; 2 rank and file, artillery ; 1 do., militia artillery ; 36 rank and file, 1 volunteer, line ; 27 rank and file, militia, wounded ; 5 rank and file, 1 volunteer, line ; 15 rank and file, militia, missing.

General Total —2 general staff, 1 sergeant, 11 rank and file. killed ; 2 captains, 1 lieutenant, 1 adjutant, 6 sergeants, 66 rank and file, 1 volunteer, wounded ; 20 rank and file, 1 volunteer, missing.

Officers Killed — Major-General Isaac Brock, commanding ;

wounded of the line and militia ; and 5 killed' and 9 wounded of the brave Indians. The number² of killed and wounded of the Americans is not precisely known. The former has however been admitted by themselves to have been between 90 and too. Independently of those killed upon the field, and dashed over the precipice, a great number perished in two or three boats sunk by the fire from our batteries.

Again, on this occasion, was the present Chief Justice conspicuous for his zeal and his gallantry. In the absence

Lieut.-Colonel Macdonell, Provincial Aid-de-Camp.

Wounded—Captains Dennis and Williams, 49th Regiment, volunteer Shaw, do.; Lieut. McLean, York Light Infantry ; Adjutant McIntyre, Lincoln Militia.

Fort George, 15th October, 1812.

THOMAS EVANS, Major of Brigade.

(Canadian Archives.)

Return of killed, wounded and prisoners of war in the action at Queenstown, Niagara, on the 13th October, 1812 :

Prisoners of War—1 Brigadier-General, 1 major, aid-de-camp, 5 lieutenant-colonels, 3 majors, 19 captains, 32 lieutenants, 10 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 surgeon, 852 non-commissioned officers and privates. Total, 925.

Regulars—Officers, 19 ; non-commissioned officers and privates, 417.

Militia—Officers, 54 ; non-commissioned officers and privates, 435. Total, 925.

Estimated loss of the enemy in officers and men killed and wounded, and in wounded sent over during the engagement, 500 ; supposed total loss, 1,425 ; acknowledged force engaged, 1,600.

Total British force engaged—Regulars and militia, 800 ; Indians, 200-1,000.

Fort George, 15th October, 1812.

THOMAS EVANS, Major of Brigade.

(Canadian Archives.)

The names of the Indians killed at Queenston were—

Ayanete and Kayentatirhon, Cayuga Chiefs, Ta Kanentye, an Onondaga Warrior, Kayarawagor and Sakangonguquate, Oneida Warriors.

From Documentary History of the Campaign by Lieut.-Col. Cruikshank.

²The number of Americans killed and wounded in this battle has never been very accurately ascertained. The most authentic American sources put the number of killed at 90, the wounded at 82, and 764 prisoners, composed of 386 regulars and 378 militia.

of his Captain (Heward) who was upon leave, he commanded the 2nd flank company during the whole of the day. He consequently bore a prominent part in the engagement, from the moment when he arrived at early dawn from Brown's Point where, it has been seen, he was stationed with No. 1, or Captain Cameron's company, to the late hour in the afternoon, when victory finally perched on the British standard. The officers attached to Lieut. Robinson, were Lieut. Stanton,¹ and Lieut. Samuel P. Jarvis. The subalterns of Captain Cameron's company were Lieut. Jarvie,² Lieut. Archibald McLean, and Lieut. Geo. Ridout.³ Captain Hatt's, and Captain

¹Lieutenant Robert Stanton was the son of a British Naval officer, who saw a great deal of active service at the memorable defence of Gibraltar by General Elliot, and with the fleet on the coast of North America and in the West Indies. About the beginning of the last century he came to York with his father, who held several military and civil offices. On the breaking out of the war he was a Lieut. in Captain Stephen Reward's company of York militia, and took part in the battle of Queenston Heights and in the defence of York in 1813. At the latter engagement he was taken prisoner, but released on parole.

In 1825 he became editor and publisher of the Gazette and King's Printer, and in 1843 gave up the publishing business to become Collector of Customs for the port of Toronto, an office he resigned Nov. 10th, 1849. For a time he was manager of the Western Insurance Company, and latterly Clerk of the Process at Osgoode Hall. His death took place in 1866 at the age of 72.

²This is the spelling that is given in the original edition of Richardson. It would be considered merely a typographical error for Lieut. Jarvis but for the fact that in Vol. 1 of the report of the Ontario Historical Society, the roll of Captain Cameron's company of York Militia in 1812 is given ; and the name appears as it does here, Lieut. Jarvie. I am inclined to think that the name should be Jarvis, but which one I am not certain. It is neither Lieut. S. P. Jarvis nor Volunteer G. S. Jarvis who were with other companies. I have not been able to find the name " Jarvie " in any published work on the early history of Toronto.

³Lieut. George Ridout was the son of Thomas Ridout, sometime Surveyor-General of Upper Canada. His brother John, who met his death in a duel in 1817, was a midshipman on the Royal George during the war. Another brother, Thomas G. Ridout, was also a Lieutenant and afterwards Deputy Assistant Commissary-General. The part taken during the war by this family is fully set forth by Lady Edgar, a descendant, in " Ten Years of Upper Canada in Peace and War."

Chisholm's companies were the first to oppose the landing of the enemy.

The victory of Queenstown Heights, although fought at a distance from the principal theatre of their service, the Right Division distinctly claim as their own. The main body of the 41st, who later composed that Division, principally sustained the action, and among these were the grenadiers who had already assisted at the capture of Detroit. Moreover there were there the York volunteers who also had participated in that memorable triumph. True, the 49th flank companies, and especially their leaders, had gallantly done their duty in the morning, but nevertheless they were defeated, and driven back, and the Queenstown Heights had been so completely gained that no impediment was offered to the passage of the American troops who, at the moment when the 41st, under Captain Derenzy, and the detachments of the same corps from Chippawa, made their appearance, numbered not less than 1,400 men. Under these circumstances it is that the Right Division claim, and justly, the laurels won on this day.

As no portrait, public or private, of General Brock, seems to have been preserved in the country, it may not be unimportant here to give a slight written sketch of the hero. In person he was tall, stout and inclining to corpulency : he was of fair and florid complexion, had a large forehead, full face, but not prominent features, rather small, greyish-blue eyes, with a very slight cast in one of them—small mouth, with a pleasing smile, and good teeth. In manner he was exceedingly affable and gentlemanly, of a cheerful and social habit, partial to dancing, and although never married, extremely devoted to female society. Of the chivalry of his nature, and the soundness of his judgment, evidence enough has been given in the foregoing pages to render all comment thereon a matter of supererogation.

The following is the Official account of the Action.

From Major General Sheaffe to Sir George Prevost.
Fort George, 13th October, 1812.

have the honor of informing Your Excellency, that the enemy made an attack, with a considerable force this morning, before day-light, on the position of Queenstown. On receiving intelligence of it, Major-General Brock immediately proceeded to that post ; and I am excessively grieved in having to add, that he fell whilst gallantly cheering his troops to an exertion for maintaining it. With him the position was lost : but the enemy was not allowed to retain it long; reinforcements having been sent up from this post, composed of regular troops, militia, and Indians, a movement was made to turn his left, while some artillery, under the able direction of Captain Holcroft, supported by a body of infantry, engaged his attention in front. This operation was aided, too, by the judicious position which Norton and the Indians with him had taken on the woody brow of the high ground above Queenstown. A communication being thus opened with Chippawa, a junction was formed with succours that had been ordered from that post. The enemy was then attacked, and after a short but spirited conflict, was completely defeated. I had the satisfaction of receiving the sword of their commander Brigadier-General Wadsworth, on the field of battle, and many Officers, with 900 men, were made prisoners, and more may yet be expected. A stand of colors and one 6-pounder, were also taken. The action did not terminate till nearly three o'clock in the afternoon, and their loss, in killed and wounded, must have been considerable. Ours, I believe to have been comparatively small in numbers : no officer was killed besides Major-General Brock, one of the most gallant and zealous officers in His Majesty's service whose loss cannot be too much deplored, and Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, Provincial Aide-de-Camp, whose gallantry and merit render him worthy of his chief.

Captains Dennis and Williams, commanding the flank companies of the 49th Regiment, who were stationed at Queenstown, were wounded, bravely contending at the head of their men against superior numbers ; but I am glad to have it in my power to add, that Captain Dennis

fortunately was able to keep the field, though it was with pain and difficulty ; and Captain Williams's wound is not likely long to deprive me of his services.

I am particularly indebted to Captain Holcroft of the Royal Artillery, for his judicious and skilful co-operation with the guns and howitzers under his immediate superintendence. Their well-directed fire contributed materially to the fortunate result of the day.

Captain Derezny of the 41st Regiment, brought up the reinforcement of that corps from Fort George, and Captain Bullock led that of the same regiment from Chippawa ; and under their commands those detachments acquitted themselves in such a manner, as to sustain the reputation which the 41st Regiment had already acquired in the vicinity of Detroit.

Major-General Brock, soon after his arrival at Queens-town, had sent down orders for battering the American Fort Niagara. Brigade-Major Evans, who was left in charge of Fort George, directed the operations against it with so much effect, as to silence its fire, and to force the troops to abandon it, and by his prudent precautions, he prevented mischief of a most serious nature, which otherwise might have been effected, the enemy having used heated shot in firing at Fort George. In these services he was most effectually aided by Colonel Clause (who remained in the fort, at my desire) and by Captain Vigoreux, of the Royal Engineers. Brigade-Major Evans also mentions the conduct of Captains Powell and Cameron, of the Militia artillery, in terms of commendation.

Lieutenant Crowther, of the 41st Regiment, had charge

Lieut.-Col. William Claus, of the 1st Lincoln Militia, was the son of Col. Daniel Claus, who married a daughter of Sir William Johnson, Bart., and who served his country over thirty years in the Military and Indian Departments. From his youth Lieut.-Col. William Claus was an officer in the Indian Department, and at the death of Col. Alexander McKee rose to be Deputy Superintendent-General and Deputy Inspector-General of Indian Affairs. The Indians had an affection for him equal to that which they had for his father and grandfather, and his thorough knowledge of their language and customs made him a valuable public officer. He was Lieut.-Col. of the 1st Lincoln Militia, and on the breaking out of the war was in command of the militia from Niagara to Queenston. His services to his country, particularly his management of the Indians, were highly commended by every officer commanding in Upper Canada. His descendants reside at Niagara.

of two 3-pounders that had accompanied the movement of our little corps, and they were employed with good effect.

Captain Glegg, of the 49th Regiment, Aide-de-Camp to our lamented friend and general, afforded me the most essential assistance ; and I found the services of Lieutenant Fowler, of the 41st Regiment, Assistant-Deputy-Quarter-Master-General, very useful. I derived much aid, too, from the activity and intelligence of Lieutenant Kerr, of the Glengarry Fencibles, whom I employed in communicating with the Indians and other flanking parties.

I was unfortunately deprived of the aid, experience, and ability of Lieutenant-Colonel Myers, Deputy-Quarter-Master-General, who had been sent up to Fort Erie a few days before on duty, which detained him there.

Lieutenant-Colonels Butler' and Clark² of the Militia; and

Lieut.-Col. Thomas Butler first saw active service as a Lieutenant in the corps of Rangers commanded by his father, Colonel John Butler. His service in the war was cut short by his death from disease in Dec., 1812.

Lieut.-Col. Thomas Clark, of the 2nd Lincoln Militia, was appointed at the beginning of the war to command the militia that were guarding the border from Queenston to Fort Erie. He took part in the battle of Queenston Heights, and was an active and energetic officer. At the defence of Fort Erie, Nov. 28th, 1812, he had command of the right wing, and on the 11th of July, 1813, was second in command to Lieut.-Col. Bisschopp in the attack on Black Rock, when the block houses, barracks and navy yard and a schooner were burnt, and valuable stores and ordnance captured. While conducting the retreat he was slightly wounded.

In the despatches describing the engagements in which he took part he was highly commended for the able manner that he led the troops under his command. He was a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada for many years.

Another officer of this name, that served throughout the war, was Colonel John Clark, son of a soldier of the 8th (King's) Regt. He was born at Kingston in 1783. His father came to Niagara, and was appointed barrack-master and also Sheriff of Lincoln, an office he held till 1803, when he was succeeded by Major Thomas Merritt. When the war commenced the son was appointed Lieut. and Adjutant of the 1st and 4th Lincoln flank companies. In March, 1813, he was promoted to the rank of Captain and Assistant Adjutant-General of Militia by Gen. Sheaffe, and retained in that office till the end of the war. He took part in several engagements, the principal one being Queenston Heights. He was for many years Collector of Customs at Port Dalhousie, but resigned some years before his death, which took place in 1862. For two terms he represented Lincoln in the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, being elected in 1820 and again in 1825.

Captains Hatt, Durand, Rowe, ²Applegarth, James Crooks, ³

=Captain James Durand, who was in command of a flank company of the 5th Lincoln Militia at Queenston Heights, was born in Monmouthshire, Wales, in 1775, and in 1800 came to Upper Canada. During the war he lived on a farm now the site of the city of Hamilton. In 1814 he was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada for Niagara, and in 1817 for Wentworth. He died at Hamilton, March 22nd, 1833.

James Durand, who was elected for the County of Halton to the Legislative Assembly in 1835, was Captain Durand's son. Another son, Mr. Charles Durand, Barrister, is at present living in Toronto at an advanced age, having been born on April 9th, 1811. Miss Laura B. Durand, a well-known writer on the editorial staff of the Toronto Globe, is a daughter of the latter.

²Captain John Rowe was in command of a company of the 2nd Lincoln. He was an officer in that famous corps, Butler's Rangers, and had seen a great deal of active service in the Revolutionary War. He was killed at the head of his company while gallantly contending against a more numerous force at the Battle of Chippawa, July 5th, 1814.

³Captain James Crooks, who commanded a company of the 1st Lincoln Militia at Queenston Heights, was born in Kilmarnock, Scotland, in 1778, and immigrated to Canada in 1791. He engaged in trade and farming, and, soon, by his energy and intelligence combined with his excellence of character, became one of the foremost men of the community. After the war he removed to West Flamboro, and there engaged in milling. Here he built and operated the first paper mill in Upper Canada. In 1820 he was elected to the Legislative Assembly, and afterwards was appointed to the Legislative Council, an office he held till his death in 1860. He married in 1808 Jane Cummings, daughter of Thomas Cummings, a soldier in Butler's Rangers, and raised a large family. The Hon. Adam Crooks, for several years a member of the Ontario Cabinet, was his son. His eldest daughter became the wife of A. N. Bethune, Bishop of Toronto. Two of his grandchildren, Miss Jane Crooks, of the Education Department Library, and Lieut. A. D. Crooks, Barrister, are residents of Toronto.

He wrote a "Reminiscence of the Last War" that appeared in the Niagara Reporter, and afterwards, about the first of the year 1841, in the British Colonist.

Captain William Crooks, although three years older than the preceding, did not come to Upper Canada till a year after his brother. He commanded a company of the 4th Lincoln at Queenston Heights. In 1808 he married Mary Butler, daughter of Colonel John Butler, the celebrated commander of Butler's Rangers.

A younger sister of these two officers, Jean Crooks, was the wife of Lieut. William Procter of the 41st Regt., brother of Gen. Henry Procter; and another sister, Jane, was the wife of Lieut.-Col. William C. Short of the 41st Regt., who was killed at the assault on Fort Stephenson.

It may be interesting to observe here that in the same year that

Cooper, I Robert Hamilton, McEwen, ³ Duncan Cameron; ⁴ and Lieutenants Richardson and Thomas Butler, ⁵ commanding flank companies of the Lincoln and York Militia, led their men into action with great spirit. Major Merritt, ⁶

these two brothers were defending their adopted country from invasion another brother, Ramsay Crooks, was making a difficult and perilous journey overland to Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia river, as a partner in the American Fur Company, of which he became the head after the withdrawal of John Jacob Astor. Mr. Crooks wrote a journal of the trip, which appears in the travels of John Bradbury, an English botanist who accompanied the Crooks party to the head waters of the Missouri. A graphic description of the dangers and hardships encountered by these adventurous traders may be found in Washington Irving's Astoria.

In 1814 when the Americans sent an expedition to retake Fort Mackinac, Mr. Crooks accompanied the fleet to watch the interests of Mr. Astor. It is said that he concentrated, in his reminiscences, the history of the fur trade in America for forty years. He died in New York in 1859.

=Captain Cooper, who commanded a company at this battle, is probably an ancestor of the Coopers now living along the river road in the township of Niagara.

²Captain Robert Hamilton was the son of Hon. Robert Hamilton, of Queenston, and was born at Fort Niagara in 1787. He was in command of a company of the 2nd Lincoln during the war, and took part in several engagements, among them Queenston Heights and the defence of Fort Erie, Nov. 28th, 1812. He was elected to the Legislature of Upper Canada by the County of Lincoln in 1820.

³Captain John McEwen commanded a flank company of the 1st Lincoln Militia at Queenston Heights,

⁴Captain Duncan Cameron, who commanded a company of the York Militia at Queenston Heights, was for many years a prominent citizen of Toronto. He was appointed a member of the Legislative Council, and for a time was Provincial Secretary of Upper Canada.

⁵Lieut. Thomas Butler was the son of Lieut.-Col. Thomas Butler.

⁶Major Thomas Merritt, who raised the Niagara Dragoons and commanded them at the Battle of Queenston Heights, was born in 1759 in Westchester County, New York. He was educated at Harvard College, and on the breaking out of the Revolution was appointed Cornet in the Queen's Rangers, a corps raised by Major Robert Rogers, and afterward commanded by Colonel John Graves Simcoe—the first Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada. At the peace he went to New Brunswick, but returned to New York, and eventually took up his residence in the Niagara Peninsula, where he died on May 12th, 1842. His son, William Hamilton Merritt, who served as a Captain in his father's corps, and who was taken prisoner at Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, was well known as a parliamentarian and as the projector of the Welland Canal.

The present representative of the family is the grandson and namesake of the latter, Major William Hamilton Merritt, who

commanding the Niagara Dragoons, accompanied me, and gave much assistance with part of his corps. Captain A. Hamilton, belonging to it, was disabled from riding, and attached himself to the guns under Captain Holcroft, who speaks highly of his activity and usefulness. I beg leave to add that Volunteers Shaw, Thompson and Jarvis,³ attached to the flank companies of the 49th

served in the Boer war as a Major in Brabant's Horse, and is now second in command of the Second Canadian Mounted Rifles.

Four generations of this family have seen active service in North America in a mounted corps: Thomas, in the command of the Niagara Dragoons in 1812; William Hamilton, a Captain in the same corps; Jedediah, with McGrath's Lancers in 1837; and William Hamilton with the Governor-General's Body Guard in the North West Rebellion in 1885.

Volunteer Richard Shaw was the son of Major-General Ieneas Shaw, so well known in connection with the early history of Upper Canada. Major-General Shaw served as a Captain in the Queen's Rangers during the Revolutionary War. In the winter of 1791-2 he performed the unparalleled feat of marching a detachment of a new corps, also called the Queen's Rangers, from New Brunswick to Montreal on snowshoes. At the beginning of the War of 1812 he proffered his services to Major-General Brock in any capacity that he might be found useful. He was consequently appointed to command the First Division of Militia, with the rank of Colonel, and afterwards served as Adjutant-General of Militia. The hard work and fatigue proved too much for the General at his age, and caused his death in 1815.

All of his sons served in the army. The eldest, Alexander, was a Captain in the 35th and 69th Regiments, and was present at Alexandria, Maida, Calabria, Naples, Corunna, Walchern, Flushing and Waterloo. Charles was a Lieutenant in the 52nd, John a Captain in the 49th, and Ieneas a Lieutenant in the Glengarry Fencibles. Richard and George were Captains in the Militia.

The grandson of Captain Alexander Shaw, Lieut. -Col. George A. Shaw, who was in command of the 10th or Royal Regiment, now Royal Grenadiers, is at present a resident of Toronto.

It may be of some interest to note in this connection that Miss Sophia, daughter of Major-General Shaw, was the fiancee of Major-General Brock.

I have not been able to learn much regarding Volunteer Augustus Thompson. He was well known to, and evidently was a companion of, Volunteer George S. Jarvis, as they were together in the daring affairs with the enemy at Stoney Creek, at Black Rock and at Beaver Dam.

George S. Jarvis was born in Fredericton, N.B., April 21st, 1797, and removed to York (Toronto) in 1808 with his father's family. At Queenston Heights he was attached to the 49th Regt., and at the taking of York was attached to the 8th (King's) Regt. He was present at the battles of Stoney Creek, Beaver Dam and Black Rock, and at the unsuccessful assault of Fort Erie. At



From an original photograph in possession of Miss Ellen F. Sheathe, Lausanne, Switzerland, grandniece of Sir Roger.

SIR ROGER HALE SHEAFFE, BART.

Regiment, conducted themselves with great spirit ; the first having been wounded, and the last having been taken prisoner. I beg leave to recommend these young men to Your Excellency's notice. Norton is wounded, but not badly ; he and the Indians particularly distinguished themselves, and I have very great satisfaction in assuring Your Excellency, that the spirit and good conduct of His Majesty's troops, of the militia, and of the other provincial corps, were eminently conspicuous on this occasion.

I have not been able to ascertain yet the number of our troops, or of those of the enemy engaged ; ours, I believe did not exceed the number of the prisoners we have taken : and their advance, which effected a landing, probably amounted to 1,300 or 1,400 men.

I shall do myself the honor of transmitting to Your Excellency further details, when I shall have received the several reports of the occurrences which did not pass under my own observation, with the return of the casualties, and those of the killed and wounded, and of the ordnance taken.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) R. H. Sheaffe, Maj.-Gen.

To His Excellency Sir George Prevost, Bart., &c.

Lundy's Lane he was a Lieut. of the 8th, and went to England with the second battalion of that regiment in 1815. After the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo several regiments were disbanded, and among them the second battalion of the 8th. Lieut. Jarvis was then after a short interval of five months appointed to the 104th Regiment. Shortly after, he returned to Canada, took up the study of law, and was sworn in as an Attorney in 1820, called to the bar in 1823. In 1820 he went to Cornwall to practice, and in 1842 was appointed County Judge, and in that year organized the Division Courts of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. During the troubles of 1837 he raised and commanded three troops of lancers. His death occurred in 1878. The Rev. Arthur Jarvis, of Napanee, is his son.

=In this report Major-General Sheaffe mentions every officer in command but two. In his letter to Sir George Prevost of November 3rd, 1812, the following passage occurs :

I am much mortified to find that I omitted the names of Captain Chisholm commanding a flank company of the York Militia, and of Lieutenant Ball commanding the Militia Artillery attached to the post of Queenstown ; Captain Dennis's report, since transmitted, has partly supplied that omission ; he commends highly both those officers, and in justice to them I have issued an order acknowledging my omission and their merit.

The American accounts of the action have been so much altered from General Van Rensselaer's original despatch, that it is difficult to know which is the correct one. At this moment I have two before me, one by Captain Fay, of the United States Artillery, the other by James. There is evidently so much of the *suppressio yem'* if not of the *assertio falsi*, in the former, evidently to cloak the national humiliation, that there can be no hesitation in adopting that given by the latter, who seems to have been at some pains to obtain the correct despatch.

From General Van Rensselaer, to General Dearborn.

Head Quarters, Lewiston, Oct. 14th, 1812.

SIR,—As the movements of this Army under my command, since I had last the honor to address you on the 8th, have been of a very important character, producing consequences serious to many individuals ; establishing facts actually connected with the interest of the service and the safety of the army ; and as I stand prominently responsible for some of these consequences, I beg leave to explain to you, sir, and through you to my country, the situation and circumstances in which I have had to act, and the reasons and motives which governed me, and if the result is not all that might have been wished, it is such that, when the whole ground shall be viewed, I shall cheerfully submit myself to the judgment of my country.

In my letter of the 8th instant, I apprised you that the crisis in this campaign was rapidly advancing ; and that (to repeat the same words) " the blow must be soon struck, or all the toil and expense of the campaign go for nothing and worse than nothing, for the whole will be tinged with dishonor."

³Richardson has unfortunately selected the most imperfect copy. I do not know from what source James obtained his copy, but whole paragraphs are missing, and names, as usual with him, incorrectly spelled and otherwise disguised—as Fleming for Fenwick and Christie for Chrystie. James makes the error of saying that Van Rensselaer addressed the letter to the American Secretary of War, when every authority within reach says it was addressed to Gen. Dearborn and by him transmitted to the Secretary of War. I have corrected the whole letter and added the omissions of James without making any reference to them in foot notes.

Under such impressions, I had, on the 5th instant, written to Brig.-General Smyth, of the United States forces, requesting an interview with him, Major-General Hall, and the commandants of the United States regiments, for the purpose of conferring upon the subject of future operations. I wrote Major-General Hall to the same purport. On the 11th I had received no answer from General Smyth ; but in a note to me on the 10th, General Hall mentioned that General Smyth had not yet then agreed upon any day for the consultation.

In the meantime, the partial success of Lieutenant Elliott at Black Rock (of which however, I have received no official information) began to excite a strong disposition in the troops to act. This was expressed to me through various channels, in the shape of an alternative; that they must have orders to act, or at all hazards they would go home. I forbear here commenting upon the obvious consequences, to me personally, of longer withholding my orders under such circumstances.

I had a conference with Lieutenant-Colonel as to the possibility of getting some person to pass over to Canada, and obtain correct information. On the morning of the 4th, he wrote to me that he had procured the man, who bore his letter to go over. Instructions were given him : he passed over, and obtained such information as warranted an immediate attack. This was confidentially communicated to several of my first officers, and produced great zeal to act ; more especially as it might have a controlling effect upon the movements at Detroit, where it was supposed General Brock had gone with all the force he dared spare from the Niagara frontier. The best preparations in my power were therefore made to dislodge the enemy from the heights of Queens-town, and possess ourselves of the village ; where the troops might be sheltered from the distressing inclemency of the weather.

Lieutenant-Colonel Fenwick's flying artillery, and a detachment of regular troops under his command, were ordered to be up in season from Fort Niagara. Orders were also sent General Smyth, to send down from Buffalo, such detachments of his brigade as existing circumstances in that vicinity might warrant. The attack was to have been made at 4 o'clock on the morning of the 11th, by

crossing over in boats at the old ferry opposite the heights. To avoid any embarrassment in crossing the river, (which is here a sheet of violent eddies,) experienced boatmen were procured to take the boats from the landing below to the place of embarkation. Lieutenant Sim was considered the man of greatest skill for this service ; he went ahead, and, in the extreme darkness, passed the intended place far up the river ; and there, in a most extraordinary manner, fastened his boat to the shore, and abandoned the detachment. In this front boat he had carried nearly every oar, which was prepared for all the boats. In this agonizing dilemma stood officers and men, whose ardor had not been cooled by exposure through the night, to one of the most tremendous north-east storms, which continued unabated for 28 hours, and deluged the whole camp. The approach of daylight extinguished every prospect of success and the detachment returned to camp. Colonel Van Rensselaer was to have commanded the detachment.

After this result, I had hoped the patience of the troops would have continued, until I could submit the plan suggested in my letter of the 8th, that I might act under, and in conformity to, the opinion which might be then expressed. But my hope was idle ; the previously excited ardor seemed to have gained new heat from the late miscarriage ; the brave were mortified to stop short of their object, and the timid thought laurels half-won by an attempt.

On the morning of the 12th, such was the pressure upon me from all quarters, that I became satisfied that lily refusal to act might involve me in suspicion, and the service in disgrace.

Viewing affairs at Buffalo as yet unsettled, I had immediately countermanded the march of General Smyth's brigade, upon the failure of the first expedition ; but having now determined to attack Queenstown, I sent new orders to General Smyth to march ; not with the view of his aid in the attack, for I considered the force detached sufficient, but to support the detachment should the conflict be obstinate and long continued.

Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie, who had just arrived at the Four Mile Creek, and had, late in the night of the first contemplated attack, gallantly offered me his own and his men's service : but he got my permission too late. He now again came forward, had a conference with Colonel

Van Rensselaer,' and begged that he might have the honor of a command in the expedition. The arrangement was made, Colonel Van Rensselaer was to command one column of 300 militia; and Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie a column of the same number of regular troops.

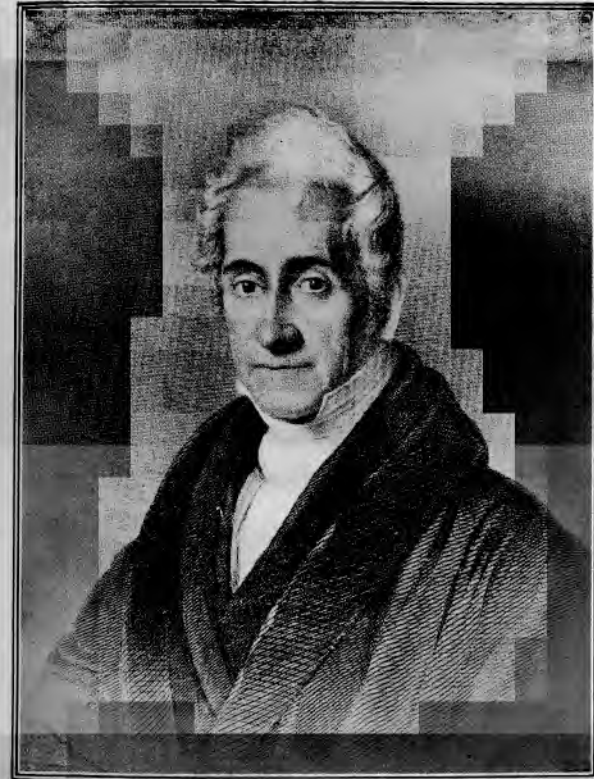
Every precaution was now adopted as to boats, and the most confidential and experienced men to manage them. At an early hour in the night, Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie marched his detachment by the rear road from Niagara to camp. At 7 in the evening Lieutenant-Colonel Stranahan's regiment moved from Niagara Falls ; at 8 o'clock Mead's, and at 9 o'clock Lieutenant-Colonel Bloom's regiment marched from the same place. All were in camp in good season. Agreeably to my orders issued upon this occasion, the two columns were to pass over together ; as soon as the heights should be carried Lieutenant-Colonel Fenwick's flying artillery was to pass over; then Major Mullany's detachment of regulars ; and the other troops to follow in order.

At dawn of day the boats were in readiness, and the troops commenced embarking, under cover of a commanding battery, mounting two eighteen-pounders and two sixes. The movements were soon discovered, and a brisk fire of musketry was poured from the whole line of the Canadian shore. Our battery then opened to sweep the shore ; but it was, for some minutes, too dark to direct much fire with safety. A brisk cannonade was now opened upon the boats from three different batteries. Our battery returned the fire, and occasionally threw grape upon the shore, and was itself served with shells from a small mortar of the enemy's. Colonel Scott, of the Artillery, by hastening his march from Niagara Falls in the night arrived in season to return the enemy's fire with two six-pounders.

The boats were somewhat embarrassed with the eddies, as well as with a shower of shot ; but Colonel Van Rensselaer, with about too men, soon effected his landing

=Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer and Major-General Stephen Van Rensselaer were cousins. The former wrote " A Narrative of the Affair of Queenstown," in which he defends himself and the General from the " strictures on that event in a book entitled ' Notices of the War of 1812,'" by General John Armstrong, who was appointed Secretary of War in January, 1813, but resigned in September, 1814, after the capture of Washington.

amidst a tremendous fire directed upon him from every point ; but to the astonishment of all who witnessed the scene, this van of the column advanced slowly against the fire. It was a serious misfortune to the van, and indeed to the whole expedition, that in a few minutes after landing Colonel Van Rensselaer received four wounds. A ball passed through his right thigh, entering just below the hip bone ; another shot passed through the same thigh a little below ; the third through the calf of the leg ; and a fourth contused his heel. This was quite a crisis in the expedition. Under so severe a fire it was difficult to form raw troops. By some mismanagement of the boatmen, Lieutenant-Colonel Chrystie did not arrive until some time after this, and was wounded in the hand in passing the river. Colonel Van Rensselaer was still able to stand and with great presence of mind ordered his officers to proceed with rapidity and storm the fort. This service was gallantly performed and the enemy driven down the hill in every direction. Soon after this, both parties were considerably reinforced, and the conflict was renewed in various places. Many of the enemy took shelter behind a stone guard-house, where a piece of ordnance was now briskly served. I ordered the fire of our battery to be directed upon the guard-house ; and it was so effectually done, that with eight or ten shot the fire was silenced. The enemy then retreated behind a large store-house ; but in a short time the rout became general, and the enemy's fire was silenced, except from a one-gun battery, so far down the river as to be out of the reach of our heavy ordnance ; and our light pieces could not silence it. A number of boats now passed over unannoyed, except from the one unsilenced gun. For some time after I had passed over, the victory seemed complete ; but in the expectation of further attacks, I was taking measures for fortifying my camp immediately ; the direction of this service I committed to Lieutenant Totten, of the Engineers. But very soon the enemy were reinforced, by a detachment of several hundred Indians from Chippawa ; they commenced a furious attack ; but were promptly met and routed by the rifle and bayonet. By this time I perceived my troops were embarking very slowly. I passed immediately over to accelerate their movements ; but, to my utter astonishment, I found that at the very moment when complete victory was in our hands, the ardor of the



MAJOR-GENERAL STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER.

unengaged troops had entirely subsided. I rode in all directions ; urged the men by every consideration to pass over, but in vain. Lieut.-Col. Bloom, who had been wounded in action, returned, mounted his horse and rode through the camp ; as did also Judge Peck, who happened to be here, exhorting the companies to proceed, but all in vain.

At this time a large reinforcement from Fort George was discovered coming up the river. As the battery on the hill was considered an important check against their ascending the heights, measures were immediately taken to send them a fresh supply of ammunition as I learnt there were left only 20 shot for the 18-pounders. The reinforcement, however, obliqued to the right from the road, and formed a junction with the Indians in the rear of the heights. Finding, to my infinite mortification, that no reinforcement would pass over ; seeing that another severe conflict must soon commence ; and knowing that the brave men on the heights were quite exhausted, and nearly out of ammunition ; all I could do was to send them a fresh supply of cartridges. At this critical moment I despatched a note to General Wadsworth acquainting him with our situation ; leaving the course to be pursued much to his own judgment ; with assurance that if he thought best to retreat, I would endeavor to send as many boats as I could command, and cover his retreat by every fire I could safely make. **But** the boats were dispersed ; many of the boatmen had fled panic struck ; and but few got off. But my note could but little more than have reached General Wadsworth about 4 o'clock, when a most severe and obstinate conflict commenced, and continued for about half an hour, with a tremendous fire of cannon, flying artillery and musketry. The enemy succeeded in re-possessing their battery, and gaining advantage on every side ; the brave men who had gained the victory, exhausted of strength and ammunition, and grieved at the unpardonable neglect of their fellow soldiers, gave up the conflict.

I can only add, that the victory was really won ; but lost for the want of a small reinforcement ; one third part of the idle men might have saved all.

I have been so pressed with the various duties of burying the dead, providing for the wounded, collecting the public property, negotiating an exchange of prisoners,

and all The concerns consequent of such a battle that I have not been able to forward this despatch at as early an hour as I could have wished. I shall soon forward you another despatch in which I shall endeavor to point out to you the conduct of some most gallant and deserving officers. But I cannot in justice close this without impressing the very great obligation I am under to Brigadier-General Wadsworth, Colonel Van Rensselaer, Colonel Scott, Lieutenant-Colonels Chrystie and Fenwick and Captain Gibson. Many others have also behaved most gallantly. As I have reason to believe that many of our troops fled to the woods with the hope of crossing the river, I have not been able to learn the probable number of killed, wounded and prisoners. The slaughter of our troops must have been very considerable and the enemy have suffered severely.

General Brock is among their slain, and his Aid-de-Camp mortally wounded.

I have the honor to be yours, &c., &c.,

Stephen Van Rensselaer,

Maj.-Gen. Dearborn.

Maj.-Gen.

The following is the report of the Officer commanding the detachment (the present Colonel Wool) which obtained possession of the battery, by ascending the concealed fisherman's path, in the early part of the day.

From Captain Wool to Colonel Van Rensselaer.

Buffalo, Oct. 23, 1812.

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to communicate to you the circumstances attending the storming of Queenstown battery on the 13th inst.; with those which happened previously you are already well acquainted.

In pursuance of your order, we proceeded round the point and ascended the rocks, which brought us partly in rear of the battery. We took it without much resistance. I immediately formed the troops in rear of the battery, and fronting the village, when I observed General Brock with his troops formed, consisting of four companies of the 49th Regiment, and a few militia, marching for our left flank. I immediately detached a party of 150 men, to take possession of the heights above Queenstown bat-

tery and to hold General Brock in check ; but in consequence of his superior force they retreated. I sent a reinforcement ; notwithstanding which the enemy drove us to the edge of the bank, when with the greatest exertions we brought the troops to a stand, and I ordered the Officers to bring their men to a charge as soon as the ammunition was expended, which was executed with some confusion, and in a few moments the enemy retreated. We pursued them to the edge of the heights, when Col. Macdonell had his horse shot from under him, and was himself mortally wounded. In the interim, General Brock, in attempting to rally his forces, was killed, when the enemy dispersed in every direction. As soon as it was practicable, I formed the troops in a line on the heights fronting the village, and immediately detached flanking parties, which consisted of Captain Machesney, of the 6th Regiment, Lieutenant Smith, and Ensign Grosvenor with a small detachment of riflemen, who had that moment arrived ; at the same time, I ordered Lieutenant Gansevoort and Lieutenant Randolph, with a detachment of artillery, to drill out an 18-pounder which had been previously spiked, and if possible to bring it to bear upon the village. The wounded and prisoners I ordered to be collected, and sent to the guard-house. About this time, which was about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, Lieutenant-Col. Chrystie arrived, and took the command. He ordered me across the river to get my wounds dressed. I remained a short time. Our flanking parties had been driven in by the Indians but General Wadsworth and other Officers arriving, we had a short skirmish with them, and they retreated, and I crossed the river.

The Officers engaged in storming the battery, were Captains Wool and Ogilvie ; Lieutenants Kearney, Huginin, Carr, and Sammons, of the 43rd Regiment ; Lieutenant Gansevoort and Randolph of the Light Artillery, and Major Lush of the Militia.

I recommend to your particular notice Lieuts. Randolph, Carr, and Kearney, for their brave conduct exhibited during the whole of the action.

I have the honor to be,

Your most obedient humble Servant

John E. Wool, Capt. t3th Regt. Infnt.

Colonel Van Rensselaer.