

ATTACK ON
FORT ERIE



1816

THE PORT FOLIO,

FOURTH SERIES,

CONDUCTED BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various; that the mind
Of desultory man, studious of change,
And pleased with novelty, may be indulged.—COWPER.

IN my papers no man could look for censures of his enemies or praises of himself; and they only were expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity.
DR. JOHNSON.

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FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

NAVAL AND MILITARY CHRONICLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

ATTACK ON FORT ERIE.

OF all the events that have been achieved under the flag of the United States, none is characterized by more fortitude, intrepidity and military skill, or will appear with higher lustre in the page of history, than the defence of fort Erie by the army of the Niagara. Of that memorable scene of suffering and exploit, no account, we think, has yet been communicated to the public so circumstantial and interesting as that which is contained in the following article. The writer, who held himself a conspicuous station, and performed a distinguished part on the occasion, relates, in a plain and unaffected style, what fell under his own notice. The paper, therefore, is not only an authentic, but an original document, and may be safely referred to by the future historian as correct authority. The only source of our regret in relation to it is, that it but simply mentions, and that incidentally, the name of general Ripley, whose conduct, as an officer, during the siege of fort Erie, we believe to have been signally merito-

rious and efficient. The force of the evidence which impels us to this belief is to us irresistible.

As general Ripley received in the sortie a most dangerous wound, the effects of which he will cease to feel, only when he shall have ceased to live, we hold it but justice that he should also receive, in recompense of his valour, his services and his sufferings, at least as much of the "bubble reputation" as may be rightfully his due. Such a recompense we have no doubt he *will* receive from impartial history.

In what we have here said we are far from insinuating even a suspicion that our much-esteemed correspondent intended, by the silence to which we have alluded, to throw a shade over the services or fame of general Ripley. We are confident that he is incapable of disingenuous conduct. The utmost we would charge him with is a literary omission—not an offence against morality or honour. Indeed, although we will not say that his paper would have been rendered thereby more valuable as a military document, we would, notwithstanding, ourselves have derived a higher degree of gratification from it, had it dwelt somewhat more fully on the names and achievements of several individuals, particularly of the engineers and officers of artillery, and of those who unfortunately fell in the conflict. But as his object is history, not biography, we are compelled to acknowledge, even in despite of our feelings, that he has chosen the more proper and legitimate course.

C.

New York, November 15, 1815.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter of the 4th instant, requesting me "to furnish you with such particulars of the siege and defence of fort Erie as came under my observation," has been received. I assure you nothing could give me greater pleasure than to see that memorable scene of military achievement properly noticed; and as the peace now furnishes the historian an opportunity for that purpose, I shall most cheerfully communicate any information in my power that can facilitate his labours. I have thought this object the more desirable as no detailed account of the siege has as yet made its appearance; and the public, with nothing before them but the official accounts of a few leading circumstances, and perhaps some

shreds of miscellaneous information from other quarters, have been very unlikely to form correct ideas of it. An instance of this may be found in the prevailing impression as to the size and structure of the works besieged; of which—although circumstances of no small importance in estimating the defence—very little appears to be correctly known. With respect to the size, for example, it is generally supposed to have been quite small, as the original fort Erie was known to be so, and very few are aware that the name used in the reports of our generals was intended to apply to any other work. This circumstance, I am inclined to think, has had a very considerable negative influence on the public opinion of our siege, and I am more particular to notice it on that account, that I may have an opportunity of correcting the error. With this view therefore I observe, that the *fort Erie which was besieged and defended* was in reality not a fort, but a *camp*; unprotected by any peculiarity of situation, and at the time of its investment, equally so by any effective artificial means. The small unfinished fort Erie, it is true, gave it a shadow of defence on one side; but with only three guns mounted in any direction it was indeed only a shadow. In the course of the siege, however, other more efficient defences were added to it, breastworks and traverses were thrown up and batteries erected, and these works, instead of being beaten down or even retarded in their progress by the fire of the besiegers, grew into strength and importance in the very face of their cannon—a fact, I believe, unprecedented in the history of any war.

Not to trouble you however with any further explanations on this subject, I shall now revert to the condition of the work, as it fell into our hands, and point out in detail the improvements made by us, and the state of our defences at different periods of the siege.

Fort Erie, properly so called, was originally designed for a mere trading post: it was situated about a hundred yards from the lake shore, and laid out with the smallest dimensions that would admit of being regularly fortified. Its form was quadrangular, nearly square, with four bastions; only two of them, however, forming the southeast or water front, had been wrought upon to any extent, at the time the garrison capitulated to general Brown.

These were secured on the land side by a line of pickets extending from gorge to gorge, and to render them more defensible their contiguous faces were prolonged on the line of defence so as to leave a curtain of no more than forty feet, and these continuations raised and completed into two large block-houses. The gateway of the fort was in the intermediate curtain, covered by a sort of ravelin of earth.

After the capture of this work, while general Brown was operating down the streight, lieutenant M'Donough, who had been left in command, was zealously engaged in improving its means of defence: so that the army on its return to the place after the battle of the Falls, found the bastions above named considerably raised; their ditches deepened; the line of pickets by which their gorges had been secured partly removed; and a breastwork of earth commenced for the more effectual accomplishment of that object.

It was on the 27th of July that general Ripley, at that time the commanding general, took up this position; his right flank being supported by the fort, and his left resting on a hillock seven hundred yards distant, upon which a battery (Towson's) was immediately commenced for its protection. On the 31st, however, while this battery was yet unfinished, and the fort itself in a very inefficient state of defence, general Drummond appeared before us with an army of four thousand five hundred men, and, though we had not half that number to make resistance, he *cautiously* opened trenches opposite to our right flank, and commenced the formalities of a regular siege. Inspired by this compliment to their courage and discipline in the field, (for indeed we could construe it in no other light) and determined not to be outdone in any mode of warfare, our men seized their spades, instead of their muskets, and prepared with alacrity for the expected assault. Large working parties were accordingly distributed along our front and flanks to throw up the necessary breastworks and traverses; others were disposed on the two unwrought bastions of the fort; and Towson's battery, upon which two day's works had already been expended, was so far completed in three more, that three guns were placed upon it upwards of twenty feet above the

level of the circumjacent country: two more were added to these soon afterwards—other batteries were also commenced in the various exposed parts of our line, and completed by the exertions of particular corps. Such, for example, were Biddle's and Fountain's in front, between the fort and Towson's; the former of three guns and the latter of two; such also was the Douglass battery of two guns on our right flank, between the fort and the water. On the 2nd of August, while we were yet in the midst of these labours, the first gun of the siege was fired by us; and on the same day the cannonade was partially commenced on the part of the enemy. They did not open a regular battery upon us, however, till about the 7th, on which day all our colours being displayed, and "Yankee Doodle" struck up by the drums, their fire was promptly returned amidst the loud and animated cheers of our whole line. From this date till the 15th the firing was continued on both sides with very little intermission day or night. It was not attended, however, with any very serious loss on our part, and far from retarding the progress of our works seemed rather to accelerate it. On the 14th we stood as follows:—our line in front and on the left, including Towson's and the other batteries nearly completed, and secured by abbatis in the most exposed parts; on the right, however, we were less secure, the space between the Douglass battery and the fort being little more than half closed up, except by a slight abbatis; no abbatis in front, and the fort itself yet in a very feeble state of resistance; added to this, there was a wide opening between the Douglass battery and the water.

On the evening of the 14th, general Gaines (who had taken the command a few days before) having observed some signs of an approaching visit from the enemy, put his force in the best situation for giving them a proper reception. The particulars of this affair are pretty generally known, and have doubtless flowed to you through a great many channels already; it will be necessary, however, for me to notice it, in order to connect the parts of this detail; and as it was a most brilliant achievement, I shall endeavour to do so with some minuteness.

Agreeably to the order of the British general, a copy of which will be found accompanying general Gaines' official let-

ter,* the attack was organized into three columns. The first consisting of detachments to the amount of thirteen hundred men, was

* Lieutenant-general Drummond's arrangement and order for attack.

[Secret.]

*Head-Quarters, camp before fort Erie,
14th August, 1814.*

ARRANGEMENT.

Right column—lieutenant-colonel Fischer, king's regiment.

(Volunteers) De Watteville's.

Light companies, 89th and 100th regiments.

Detachments royal artillery—1 officer, 12 men, and a rocketeer, with a couple of 12-pound rockets.

Captain Eustace's picket of cavalry—captain Powell, deputy-assistant quarter-master-general, will conduct this column, which is to attack the left of the enemy's position. Major Court.

Centre column—lieutenant-colonel Drummond.

Flank companies, 41st regiment.

Do. do. 104th do.

Royal marines 50.

Seamen 90.

Detachments of royal artillery, 1 subaltern, and 12 men—captain Barney, 89th regiment, will guide this column, which is to attack the fort.

Left column—colonel Scott, 103d regiment.

Captain Elliott, deputy quarter-master-general, will conduct this column, which will attack the right of the enemy's position towards the lake, and endeavour to penetrate by the openings betwixt the forts and entrenchments, using the short ladders at the same time, to pass the entrenchment, which is reported to be defended only by the enemy's 9th regiment, 250 strong.

The infantry pickets on Buck's road will be pushed on with the Indians, and attack the enemy's picket on that road. Lieutenant-colonel Nicholl, quarter-master-general of militia, will conduct this column. The rest of the troops, viz.

1st battalion royals.

Remainder of De Watteville's regiment, Glengary light infantry and incorporated militia will remain in reserve, under lieutenant-colonel Tucker, are to be posted on the ground at present occupied by our pickets and covering parties.

Squadron of the 19th light dragoons, in the ravine, in the rear of the battery, nearest to the advance, ready to receive charge of prisoners and conduct them to the rear.

The lieutenant-general will station himself at or near the battery, where reports are to be made to him. Lieutenant-colonel Fischer, commanding the right column, will follow the instruction which he has received: copies

placed under the command of lieutenant-colonel Fischer, of the king's regiment. Seven hundred picked men under lieutenant-colonel Drummond, of the 104th, composed the second or centre column. And the 103d regiment, amounting to upwards of eight hundred, with its own colonel (Scott) at the head of it, constituted the third. The points against which these columns were to move were respectively the left flank; the fort; and the line between the fort and the lake; and the time fixed for the enterprise was an early hour of the following morning (the 15th.) Accordingly, about an hour and a half before day the approach of an enemy was discovered on the road west of Towson's battery, and immediately after the lines on that quarter were furiously assaulted by the enemy's first or right column. The infantry of our left consisted at the time, of the 21st regiment, under the command of major Wood, of the engineers; who instantly drew up his line in the space between the battery and the water, and received the charge in a style suited to its impetuosity. Checked by a seasonable volley from this corps and a shower of grape from Towson's artillery, the enemy sustained the conflict but a few minutes, and fell back to consolidate his ranks for a second attempt. This however proved equally unsuccessful; and though it was followed up by a succession of desperate charges, our column continued firm until the enemy was no longer in a condition to give battle.

By this time the columns of lieutenant-colonel Drummond and colonel Scott, which had been kept back till that of lieutenant-colonel Fischer should have commenced the action, were brought forward on our right flank, and the battle was beginning to grow of which are communicated to colonel Scott and lieutenant-colonel Drummond, for their guidance.

The lieutenant-general most strongly recommends a free use of the bayonet.

The enemy's force does not exceed fifteen hundred fit for duty, and those are represented as much dispirited.

The ground on which the columns of attack are to be formed, will be pointed out; and orders for their advance will be given by the lieutenant-general commanding.

J. HARVEY, D. A. G.

Parole—"Steel." *Countersign*—"Twenty."

considerably warm in that quarter. The object of the British commander in reserving these columns, was undoubtedly to avail himself of the diversion which he *supposed* would be effected by the attack of lieutenant-colonel Fischer, and to render this manœuvre the more effectual, he caused a feint of militia and Indians to *debouche* from the wood upon our centre, at the same time that his centre and left columns advanced upon our right.

The firing had, in some measure, subsided on the left, when the approach of these columns was announced by the fire of our picket-guard in a ravine, at a small distance from our right—and in less than a minute afterwards the direction of the two was plainly distinguishable, by the voices of their officers—one of them appearing to move from the ravine towards the fort, and the other rapidly approaching its point of attack by the margin of the lake. It has already been observed, that this flank was in a very inefficient state of defence, and as this circumstance was doubtless known to the enemy, it became doubly necessary to make timely resistance. Accordingly, the first of the two was promptly met by the fire from the salient bastion of the fort, and the other by that of the Douglass battery, and the musketry on its right and left; that on its right consisting of Boughton's and Harding's volunteers, and that on its left of the 9th regiment—altogether making perhaps one hundred and sixty or one hundred and seventy men. The night was excessively dark; but as near as we could judge through the obscurity the last column did not continue long advancing—it seemed to hesitate at fifty or sixty yards distance—remained stationary for a minute and then began to recoil. At this critical moment loud and repeated calls from the salient bastion of the fort to “cease firing” caused a momentary suspension of operations along the line below—but the threats and confusion with which they were mingled immediately undeceived those to whom they were directed as to the party from which they came, and conveyed the unwelcome intelligence that the enemy had been successful at that point. The deception, though it lasted but for a moment, was sufficient to enable the column that had been repulsed, to recover itself—which it did, and returned a second time to the charge. The enemy's threats were now no longer heard—the action was renewed with more violence than ever, and

though the defenders were exposed to the fire of their own guns, which had been turned upon them along with the enemy's musketry from the captured bastion, the assailing column was again driven back. Its leader, colonel Scott, was killed, and nearly all his party cut to pieces before it had approached near enough to place its ladders, or avail itself of the open places in our line. Such was the result of the attack at this point. In the meantime day had broken, and the enemy, notwithstanding several attempts to dislodge him, was still in possession of the contested bastion. He had not been able, however, to derive any advantage from that circumstance, and still less was he in a condition to do so now, as Drummond himself had fallen and nearly all his party was killed or wounded. The passage from the bastion into the body of the fort was in a great measure closed by the position of one of the block-houses, mentioned in the former part of this letter; this, though in a ruinous condition at the time, had been occupied the evening before by lieutenant-colonel Trimble, with a detachment of the 19th infantry, whose well-directed fire, at the same time that it galled the enemy severely in the bastion, had completely defeated every attempt he made to penetrate farther. A destructive fire also had been maintained upon him by a detachment of riflemen under captain Birdsall, who had posted himself advantageously for that purpose in the ravelin without the fort.

The column of colonel Scott being now routed, the guns of the Douglass battery were so directed as to cut off all communication between the contested bastion and the enemy's reserve—and a party of desperate fellows were about to rush in and finish the work, when a spark being communicated by some means to an ammunition chest under the platform, the bastion, with those who occupied it, were blown into the air together.

This explosion has been assigned by the British general as the cause of the ill success of his enterprise; but, in my opinion, the result was rather favourable to him than otherwise. The force in the bastion was to all intents and purposes defeated before it took place; the explosion could, therefore, give us no advantage over that: while, on the other hand, it caused the precipitate retreat of his reserve, which we should have intercepted in a few minutes more, and in all probability made prisoners.

The losses of the respective armies* on this occasion, (of which you will find very accurate statements accompanying general Gaines' official letters) brought them on a footing, so nearly

* *Report of the killed, wounded and prisoners, taken at the Battle of Erie, U. C. August 15, 1814.*

Killed, left on the field, 222—wounded, left on the field, 174—prisoners, 186. Grand total, 582.

Two hundred supposed to be killed on the left flank, near Snake Hill, (in the water) and permitted to float down the Niagara. The number on the right flank, near the woods, could not be ascertained.

Given at the inspector-general's office, Fort Erie, U. C.

NATHL. N. HALL, *Assist. Ins. General.*

Brig. Gen. E. P. Gaines, &c.

Report of the killed, wounded, and missing of the left division of the United States' army, commanded by brigadier-general Gaines, in the action of the 15th August, 1814, at Fort Erie, U. C.

Adjutant-general's Office, Fort Erie, Aug. 17, 1814:

Corps of Bombardiers—Killed, 1 private.

Artillery—Killed, 1 captain, 1 subaltern, 2 privates—wounded severely, 1 lieutenant, 3 privates; slightly, 6 privates—missing, 1 lieutenant, 3 privates.

1st Brigade—9th Regt. slightly wounded, 1 private.

11th Regt. killed, 3 privates—wounded dangerously, 1 sergeant, 1 private: severely, 4 privates; slightly, 4 privates—missing, 1 private.

19th Regt. killed, 5 privates—wounded dangerously, 1 subaltern; severely, 1 sergeant, 4 privates; slightly, 1 corporal, 8 privates.*

22d Regt. killed, 2 privates—wounded severely, 5 privates.

2d Brigade—21st Regt. killed, 2 privates—wounded severely, 1 subaltern, 3 privates; slightly, 3 privates—missing, 3 privates.

23d Regt. wounded severely, 2 subalterns, 1 private; slightly, 3 privates—missing, 2 privates.

1st and 4th Rifle Corps—wounded severely, 1 captain, 1 private—missing, 1 private.

Grand Total—1 captain, 1 subaltern, 15 privates, killed.

1 subaltern, 1 sergeant, 1 private, dangerously wounded.

1 captain, 4 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 21 privates, severely wounded.

1 corporal, 25 privates, slightly wounded.

1 lieutenant, 10 privates, missing.

NAMES OF OFFICERS.

Artillery—Captain Williams and lieutenant M'Donough killed, defending the bastion.

* This regiment was stationed in the fort.

equal, that the enemy was obliged, for the present, to suspend his operations, and wait quietly the arrival of re-enforcements. This interval was diligently improved by us in restoring the ruined bas-

Lieutenant Watmough wounded severely, defending the bastion.

Lieutenant Fontaine missing, thrown from the bastion.

Infantry—19th Regt. ensign Cisna wounded dangerously, in defence of the fort.

19th Regt. lieutenant Bushnell, do. severely.

23d Regt. lieutenant Brown, do. do.

Do. lieutenant Belknap, do. in defending the picquet guard which he commanded.

4th Rifle regt. captain Birdsall, accidentally wounded, whilst defending the fort, by one of his own soldiers.

Report of the killed and wounded of the left division of the United States' army, commanded by brigadier-general Gaines, during the cannonade and bombardment, commencing at sun-rise on the morning of the 13th inst. and continuing without intermission till 8 o'clock, P. M. re-commenced on the 14th at day-light with increased warmth, and ending one hour before the commencement of the action at Erie on the morning of the 15th.

Adjutant-General's Office, Fort Erie, Aug. 15, 1814.

Corps of Artillery—Wounded severely, 2 privates; slightly, 1 captain, 2 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 3 privates.

11th Regt. Wounded severely, 2 sergeants, 2 privates; slightly, 3 privates.

19th Regt. wounded severely, 1 subaltern.

21st Regt. killed, 4 privates—wounded severely, 3 privates; slightly, 2 privates.

22d Regt. killed, 1 sergeant—wounded severely, 2 corporals, 2 privates; slightly, 3 privates.

23d Regt. killed, 1 private; wounded severely, 1 private.

Rifle Regiments, 1st and 4th.—killed, 1 corporal, 2 privates; wounded severely, 3 privates; slightly, 1 private.

Grand Total—1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 7 privates, killed.

1 subaltern, 2 sergeants, 2 corporals, 14 privates, severely wounded.

1 captain, 2 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 12 privates, slightly wounded.

OFFICERS WOUNDED.

Artillery—Captain Biddle, lieutenant Zantzinger, adjutant-lieutenant Watmough.

Infantry—lieutenant Patterson, 19th regiment.

Killed, George Carryl, 25th infantry, orderly to general Gaines.

ROGER JONES, *Assistant Adj. Genera*

tion; which being soon done, we resumed the completion of our lines, and the unfinished bastions, as before. Four days after the action, the enemy, having had an accession of two full regiments, opened their second battery, and re-commenced the cannonade more vigorously than ever.

BRITISH OFFICIAL ACCOUNT.

Return of killed, wounded and missing of the right division, in the assault of Fort Erie, on the 15th August, 1814:

Killed—1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 51 rank and file.

Wounded—1 major, 9 captains, 11 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 1 master, 20 sergeants, 3 drummers, 262 rank and file.

Missing—2 captains, 3 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 midshipman, 41 sergeants, 3 drummers, 486 rank and file.

Total—1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 12 captains, 15 lieutenants, 4 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 master, 1 midshipman, 62 sergeants, 7 drummers, 799 rank and file.

Officers killed—1st or royal Scots, captain Torrens; 8th or King's regiment, lieutenant Noel; 103d regiment, colonel Scott; 104th regiment, lieutenant-colonel Drummond.

Officers wounded—royal navy, captain Dobbs and lieutenant Stevenson slightly; Mr. Harris, master, severely.

1st or royal Scots, captain Rowan, severely; lieutenant Vaughan slightly.

8th or king's, lieutenant Young, slightly.

41st regiment, flank companies, captains Glew and Bullock, severely; lieutenant Hailes, slightly; ensign Townsend, severely.

89th regiment, captain Barney, acting assistant engineer, severely.

100th regiment, lieutenant Murray, wounded and prisoner; volunteer Fraser, severely.

103d regiment, major Smelt and captain Gardner, severely; captain Colclough and lieutenant Charlton, severely and prisoner; lieutenant Fallon, severely; lieutenant Cappage, jun. dangerously; lieutenant Meagher, slightly; lieutenant Burrows, Hazan, and ensign Nash, severely.

104th flank companies, captain Leonard and lieutenant M'Laughlan, severely.

Officers missing—general staff, captain Elliott, deputy assistant-quarter-master-general.

Royal navy, Mr. Hyde, midshipman.

41st flank company, lieutenant Gardner and ensign Hall.

103d regiment, captain Irwin; lieutenant Kaye; ensign Huoy; lieutenant and adjutant Pettet.

This I consider the commencement of a period by far the most trying of any during the siege. Our men, daily subjected to the most laborious fatigue-duties, were often called out during the night to perform those services which the fire of the enemy would not permit them to do during the course of the day; while, even with this precaution, we had the mortification to see them continually falling around us. I do not know what may have been the average of our daily losses about this time, but among the working parties, particularly those in the face of the enemy, I know it to have been very severe.* But this was not all—The frequent alarms, and constant expectation of another attack, rendered it necessary to put at least one third of our men under arms every night, while the remaining two-thirds lay down with their accoutrements on, their boxes stored with ammunition, their muskets in their hands, and their bayonets fixed.

The effect of these precautions was often witnessed in cases of alarm, and I venture to say, from my own experience on such occasions, that at no time during the continuance of this state, could an enemy have approached within three hundred and fifty yards, before the parapet would have been completely lined, and the men ready to fire.

I think it proper here to mention an additional precaution, designed to be used in case of a charge. At twilight, every evening, a great number of pikes, constructed of the British bayonets which were taken on the 15th, were laid at two feet distance from each other, along the whole extent of our line. These being of a length equal to the thickness of the parapet, would have been used with great effect in the event of an escalade.

This mode of life continued for about thirty days, with very little variation, except what was sometimes occasioned by the skirmishes of our picquets and corps of observation. In the course of this time the army had the misfortune to lose the services of its amiable commander, general Gaines, who was wounded by a shell in the early part of September, in consequence of which ge-

* I have before me a letter, on this subject, from the engineer who had the superintendance of the new bastions, (captain Douglass) in which he states his loss at that point to have been from 1 in 16 to 1 in 10 for several days.

neral Brown, though still labouring under the wounds he had received at the Falls, hastened to the spot, and resumed the command of his division.

At length, about the middle of September, our lines were entirely completed, the new bastions nearly so, and four guns actually placed in the one nearest the enemy. The brigade of general Porter, having been strengthened about the same time by a considerable re-enforcement of New York volunteers, we began to entertain some hopes of relieving ourselves from the confinement to which we had been so long subjected; and some measure appeared to be in agitation at head-quarters for the accomplishment of that object. Accordingly, on the 17th, orders were distributed to the different corps to supply themselves with ammunition, and be in readiness to march.

The order was eagerly obeyed, and at two o'clock P. M. of the same day, the army being formed into two columns, under generals Porter and Miller, filed out of camp by the left, and advanced upon the enemy. The column of general Porter made a considerable *detour* through the woods, in order to gain the enemy's extreme right; while that of general Miller passed along the skirts of the wood, and concealed itself in the ravine mentioned above. While this was taking place, a heavy fall of rain came on, which continued the remainder of the day; it had no effect however upon our operations; the column of general Porter approached its destination with such secrecy and address that he was not discovered by the enemy till he rose upon them within pistol-shot of their lines. As soon as the firing announced this event to general Miller, he left the ravine in which he lay concealed, and charged upon the enemy's third battery, which being carried, their whole line, as far as their second battery inclusive, was in a few minutes completely in our possession.

The object of the enterprise being thus accomplished, the army retreated again within its lines. I have touched very lightly on the particulars of this achievement, as every circumstance relating to it has been happily described in the official letters of generals Brown and Porter; and I should not be able to add a single item to your stock of facts by so doing. Referring you to them,

therefore,* I shall barely observe, that within half an hour after the commencement of the action, the enemy had lost more than a thousand of his number, and nearly all his artillery and military

* *Copy of a letter from major-general Brown to the secretary of war, dated*
Head-quarters, Camp, Fort Erie, September 29th, 1814.

SIR—In my letter of the 18th inst. I briefly informed you of the fortunate issue of the sortie which took place the day preceding. But it is due to the gallant officers and men, to whose bravery we are indebted for our success on this occasion, that I should give you a more circumstantial and detailed account of this affair.

The enemy's camp I had ascertained to be situated in a field surrounded by woods, nearly two miles distant from their batteries and intrenchments, the object of which was to keep the parts of the force which was not upon duty, out of the range of our fire from Fort Erie and Black Rock. Their infantry was formed into three brigades, estimated at twelve or fifteen hundred men each. One of these brigades, with a detail from their artillery, was stationed at their works, (these being about five hundred yards distant from old Fort Erie and the right of our line.) We had already suffered much from the fire of two of their batteries, and were aware that a third was about to open upon us. Under these circumstances I resolved to storm the batteries, destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the brigade upon duty before those in reserve could be brought into action.

On the morning of the 17th the infantry and riflemen, regulars and militia, were ordered to be paraded, and put in readiness to march precisely at twelve o'clock. General Porter with the volunteers, colonel Gibson with the riflemen, and major Brooks with the 23d and 1st infantry, and a few dragoons acting as infantry, were ordered to move from the extreme left of our position upon the enemy's right, by a passage opened through the woods for the occasion. General Miller was directed to station his command in the ravine which lies between Fort Erie and the enemy's batteries, by passing them by detachments through the skirts of the wood—and the 21st infantry, under general Ripley, was posted as a corps of reserve between the new bastions of fort Erie; all under cover, and out of the view of the enemy.

About twenty minutes before two, P. M. I found the left columns, under the command of general Porter, which were destined to turn the enemy's right, within a few rods of the British intrenchments. They were ordered to advance and commence the action. Passing down the ravine, I judged, from the report of musketry, that the action had commenced on our left. I now hastened to general Miller, and directed him to seize the moment, and pierce the enemy's intrenchment between batteries No. 2 and 3. My orders were promptly and ably executed. Within thirty minutes after the first gun was fired, batteries No. 3 and 2, the enemy's line of intrenchments, and his

stores. Many of the British officers, who were present at this affair, pronounced it to have been at least equal, if not superior, to any thing of the kind in military history. The best comment two block-houses, were in our possession. Soon after battery No. 1 was abandoned by the British. The guns in each were spiked by us, or otherwise destroyed, and the magazine of No. 3 was blown up.

A few minutes before the explosion, I had ordered up the reserve under general Ripley. As he passed me at the head of his column, I desired him, as he would be the senior in advance, to ascertain as near as possible, the situation of the troops in general, and to have a care that not more was hazarded than the occasion required: that the object of the sortie effected, the troops would retire in good order, &c. General Ripley passed rapidly on—soon after, I became alarmed for general Miller, and sent an order for the 21st to hasten to his support towards battery No. 1. Colonel Upham received the order, and advanced to the aid of general Miller. General Ripley had inclined to the left, where major Brooks' command was engaged, with a view of making some necessary inquiries of that officer, and in the act of doing so was unfortunately wounded. By this time the object of the sortie was accomplished beyond my most sanguine expectations. General Miller had consequently ordered the troops on the right to fall back—observing this movement, I sent my staff along the line to call in the other corps. Within a few minutes they retired from the ravine, and from thence to camp.

Thus one thousand regulars, and an equal portion of militia, in one hour of close action, blasted the hopes of the enemy, destroyed the fruits of fifty days' labour, and diminished his effective force one thousand men at least. I am at a loss to express my satisfaction at the gallant conduct of the officers and men of this division, whose valour has shone superior to every trial. General Porter, in his official report herein enclosed, has very properly noticed those patriotic citizens, who have done so much honour to themselves, by freely and voluntarily tendering their services at a dangerous and critical period.

As the scene of action was in the wood, in advance of the position I had chosen for directing the movements of the whole, the several reports of the commandants of corps must guide me in noticing individuals.

General Miller mentions lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, lieutenant-colonel Beedle, major Trimble, captain Hull, captain Ingersoll, lieutenant Crawford, lieutenant Lee, and particularly ensign O'Fling as entitled to distinction.

Lieutenant-colonel M'Donald, upon whom the command of the rifle corps devolved, upon the fall of the brave and generous Gibson, names adjutants Shortridge of the 1st, and Ballard of the 4th regiment, as deserving the highest applause for their promptness and gallantry in communicating orders. Of the other officers of the corps, he reports generally, that the

upon it, however, in my view, is the practical one of general Drummond—who broke up his camp three days afterwards, and retired rapidly down the river. Thus ended a siege of fifty-one

bravery and good conduct of all was so conspicuous, as to render it impossible to discriminate.

Major Brooks, to whom much credit is due for the distinguished manner in which he executed the orders he received, speaks in high terms of lieutenants Goodell, Ingersol, Livingston, and ensigns Brant and O'Fling of the 23d—particularly of the *latter*. Also of captain Simms, lieutenants Bissel, Shore and Brinot of the 1st infantry, and lieutenant Watts of the dragoons.

Lieutenant-colonel Upham, who took command of the reserve after general Ripley was disabled, bestows great praise upon major Chambers, of the 4th regiment of riflemen, attached to the 21st infantry, as also upon captain Bradford and lieutenant Holding of that regiment.

My staff, colonel Snelling, colonel Gardner, major Jones, and my aid-de-camp, major Austin and lieutenant Armstrong were, as usual, zealous, intelligent and active—they performed every duty required of them to my entire satisfaction.

Major Hall, assistant inspector-general, led a battalion of militia, and conducted with skill and gallantry. Lieutenant Kirby, aid-de-camp to general Ripley, was extremely active and useful during the time he was in the action.

Lieutenants Frazer and Riddle were in general Porter's staff; their bravery was conspicuous, and no officers of their grade were more useful.

The corps of artillery commanded by major Hindman, which has been so eminently distinguished throughout this campaign, had no opportunity of taking a part in the sortie. The 25th infantry under colonel Jessup, was stationed in fort Erie to hold the key of our position.

Colonel Brady, on whose firmness and good conduct every reliance could be placed, was on command at Buffalo with the remains of the 22d infantry. Lieutenant-colonel M'Ree and lieutenant-colonel Wood of the corps of engineers, having rendered to this army services the most important, I must seize the opportunity of again mentioning them particularly. On every trying occasion I have reaped much benefit from their sound and excellent advice. No two officers of their grade could have contributed more to the safety and honour of this army. Wood, brave, generous and enterprising, died as he had lived without a feeling but for the honour of his country and the glory of her arms. His name and example will live to guide the soldier in the path of duty so long as true heroism is held in estimation. M'Ree lives to enjoy the approbation of every virtuous and generous mind, and to receive the reward due to his services and high military talents.

days, undertaken with the most sanguine hopes, not to say entire confidence, of immediate success. On visiting their works, after they raised the siege, it was astonishing to see the obstruc-

It is proper here to notice that although but one third of the enemy's force was on duty when his works were carried, the whole were brought into action while we were employed in destroying his cannon. We secured prisoners from seven of his regiments, and know that the 6th and 82d suffered severely in killed and wounded, yet these regiments were not upon duty.

Lieutenant-general Drummond broke up his camp during the night of the 21st and retired to his intrenchments behind the Chippewa. A party of our men came up with the rear of his army at Frenchman's creek; the enemy destroyed part of their stores, by setting fire to the buildings from which they were employed in conveying them. We found in and about their camp a considerable quantity of cannon ball, and upwards of one hundred stand of arms.

I send you enclosed herein a return of our loss. The return of prisoners inclosed does not include the stragglers that came in after the action.

I have the honour to be, sir, very respectfully, your most obedient humble servant,

JACOB BROWN.

Honourable secretary of war.

Copy of a letter from brigadier-general Porter to major-general Brown.

Fort Erie, September 22, 1814.

SIR,

In executing the duty you have imposed upon me, of reporting the conduct of the officers and men composing the left column, which you was pleased to place under my command, in the sortie of the 17th instant, the pleasure I derive in representing to you the admirable conduct of the whole, is deeply chastened by sorrow for the loss of many brave and distinguished men.

Being obliged, from the nature of the ground, to act on foot, it was impossible that my personal observation should reach to every officer. Some part of this report must therefore rest upon the information of others.

It is the business of this communication to speak of the conduct of individuals; yet you will permit me to premise, although well known to yourself already, that the object of the left column was to penetrate, by a circuitous route, between the enemy's batteries, where one third of his force was always kept on duty, and his main camp, and that it was subdivided into three divisions—the advance of two hundred riflemen, and a few Indians, commanded by colonel Gibson, and two columns moving parallel to, and thirty yards distant from each other. The right column was commanded by lieutenant-colonel Wood, headed by four hundred infantry, under major Brook of the 23d, and followed by five hundred volunteers and militia, being

tions through which our men had been obliged to penetrate to get at the enemy. All their works were faced with one or more lines of abatis, or felled timber, and you could not move a dozen yards, in any direction, without encountering the same kind of impediment.

I am, &c.

parts of lieutenant-colonel Dobbin's, M'Barney's, and Fleming's regiments, and was intended to attack the batteries. The left column of five hundred militia was commanded by brigadier-general Davis, and comprised the commands of lieutenant-colonel Hopkins, Churchill and Crosby; and was intended to hold in check any re-enforcements from the enemy's camp; or both columns (circumstances requiring it, which frequently happened) to co-operate in the same object.

After carrying by storm in the handsomest style, a strong block-house in rear of the third battery, making its garrison prisoners, destroying the three 24-pounders and their carriages in the third battery, and blowing up the enemy's magazine, and after co-operating with general Miller in taking the second battery, the gallant leaders of the three divisions all fell nearly at the same time; colonel Gibson at the second battery, and general Davis and lieutenant colonel Wood, in an assault upon the first.

Brigadier-general Davis, although a militia officer of little experience, conducted on this occasion with all the coolness and bravery of a veteran, and fell while advancing upon the enemy's intrenchments. His loss as a citizen, as well as a soldier, will be severely felt in the patriotic county of Genessee. Colonel Gibson fully sustained the high military reputation, which he had before so justly acquired. You know how exalted an opinion I have always entertained of lieutenant-colonel Wood of the engineers. His conduct, on this day, was, what it uniformly has been, on every similar occasion, an exhibition of military skill, acute judgment, and heroic valour. Of the other regular officers, lieutenant-colonel Macdonald, and major Brook, senior in command, will report to you in relation to their respective divisions. Permit me, however, to say of these two officers, that much as was left to them by the fall of their distinguished leaders, they were able to sustain their parts in the most admirable manner, and they richly deserve the notice of the government.

Of the militia, I regret that the limits of a report will not permit me even to name all those, who on this occasion established claims to the gratitude of their fellow citizens; much less to particularize individual merit. Lieutenant-colonels Hopkins, M'Burney, Churchill, and Crosby, and majors Lee, Marcle, Wilson, Lawrence, Burr, Dunham, Kellogg, and Ganson, are entitled to the highest praise for their gallant conduct, their steady and persevering exertions. Lieutenant-colonel Dobbin being prevented by se-

In justice to the high style of defence of the Douglass battery, on the 15th of August, and to the general merits of its youthful commander, who it at present, we believe, a professor of military science at West Point, we think it right to publish the following

vere indisposition from taking the field, major Hall, assistant-inspector-general, volunteered his services to join major Lee in the command of the volunteer regiment; and major Lee and every other officer speaks in the highest terms of the gallant and good conduct of this young officer.

Captain Fleming, who commanded the Indians, was, as he always is, in the front of the battle. There is not a more intrepid soldier in the army. I should be ungrateful, were I to omit the names of captains Knapp and Hull of the volunteers, and captain Parker and lieutenant Chatfield of the militia, by whose intrepidity I was, during the action, extricated from the most unpleasant situation. Captains Richardson, Buel, and Kennedy, lieutenants Parkhurst and Brown, and adjutants Dobbin, Bates, and Robinson, particularly distinguished themselves. The patriotic conduct of captain Elliott with twenty young gentlemen, who volunteered from Batavia, and of major Hubbard with fourteen men exempted by age from military duty, should not be omitted. They were conspicuous during the action.

You will excuse me, if I shall seem partial, in speaking of my own family, consisting of my brigade-major Frazer, my volunteer aid-de-camp Riddle, (both 1st lieutenants in the 15th infantry,) captain Bigger of the Canadian volunteers, Messrs. Williams and Delapierre, volunteer aids for the day, all of whom except Mr. Williams were wounded.

Lieutenants Frazer and Riddle were engaged for most of the preceding day with fatigue parties, cutting roads for the advance of the column through the swamp, and falling timber to the rear, and within one hundred and fifty yards of the enemy's right: which service they executed with so much address as to avoid discovery; and on the succeeding day they conducted the two columns to the attack. Frazer was severely wounded by a musket ball whilst spiking a gun on the second battery. Riddle, after the first battery was carried, descended into the enemy's magazine, and after securing (with the assistance of quarter-master Greene of the volunteers, whose good conduct deserves much praise) a quantity of fixed ammunition, blew up the magazine, and suffered severely by the explosion. I must solicit, through you sir, the attention of the general government to these meritorious young men. Captain Bigger is an excellent officer, and rendered me much assistance, but was dangerously wounded. The other young gentlemen are citizens, and deserve much credit for their activity, and for having voluntarily encountered danger. My aid-de-camp, major Dox, was confined at Buffalo by sickness.

Extract of a Letter from Maj. Gen. Gaines, dated Head-Quarters, Augusta, Georgia, October 31, 1815.

“The Douglass battery, and the manner in which it was defended in the battle of Fort Erie, on the morning of the 15th of August, are bright within my recollection. Among the many bril-

On the whole, sir, I can say of the regular troops attached to the left column, and of the veteran volunteers of lieutenant-colonel Dobbin's regiment, that every man did his duty, and their conduct on this occasion reflects a new lustre on their former brilliant achievements. To the militia the compliment is justly due, and I could pay them no greater one than to say, that they were not surpassed by the heroes of Chippewa and Niagara in steadiness and bravery.

The studied intricacy of the enemy's defences, consisting not only of the breast-works connecting their batteries, but of successive lines of intrenchments for a hundred yards in the rear, covering the batteries, and enfilading each other, and the whole obstructed by abbatis, brush, and felled timber, was calculated to produce confusion among the assailants, and led to several contests at the point of the bayonet. But by our double columns, any temporary irregularity in the one was always corrected by the other. Our success would probably have been more complete, but for the rain which unfortunately set in soon after we commenced our march, which rendered the fire of many of our muskets useless, and, by obscuring the sun, led to several unlucky mistakes. As an instance of this, a body of fifty prisoners, who had surrendered, were ordered to the fort, in charge of a subaltern and fourteen volunteers; the officer, mistaking the direction, conducted them towards the British camp, in the route by which we had advanced, and they were retaken with the whole of the guard, excepting the officer and one man, who fought their way back. Several of our stragglers were made prisoners by the same mistake. But, sir, notwithstanding these accidents, we have reason to rejoice at our signal success in inflicting a vastly disproportionate injury on the enemy, and in wholly defeating all his plans of operation against this army.

I have the honour to be, with very great respect, your obedient servant,

P. B. PORTER, *Brigadier-general,*

Commanding Volunteers and Militia.

Major-general Brown, *Com'g &c.*

Report of the killed, wounded, and missing of the left division of the army at Fort Erie, commanded by major-general Brown, in the sortie against the enemy's batteries, on the 17th September, 1814.

TOTAL OF REGULARS.

Killed—1 lieutenant-colonel, 3 captains, 5 sergeants, 7 corporals, 44 privates.

liant scenes which combined to disperse the clouds and darkness, and light up the dawn of that memorable morning, the defence of the Douglass battery stands rivalled by few, and, according to the

Wounded—1 brigadier-general, 1 brigade-major, 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 2 captains, 11 subalterns, 1 principal musician, 12 sergeants, 11 corporals, 94 privates.

Missing—1 adjutant, 1 sergeant, 4 corporals, 1 musician, 36 privates.

TOTAL OF MILITIA, &c.

Killed—1 brigadier-general, 1 captain, 3 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 12 privates.

Wounded—1 major-general, 2 aids-de-camp, 1 brigade-major, 2 captains, 2 subalterns, 4 sergeants, 3 corporals, 65 privates.

Missing—1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 1 quarter-master, 2 captains, 4 subalterns, 9 sergeants, 13 corporals, 6 musicians, 136 privates.

GRAND TOTAL.

Killed—1 brigadier-general, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 4 captains, 3 subalterns, 6 sergeants, 8 corporals, 56 privates.

Wounded—1 major-general, 1 brigadier-general, 2 aids-de-camp, 2 brigade-majors, 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 4 captains, 13 subalterns, 1 principal musician, 16 sergeants, 14 corporals, 159 privates.

Missing—1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 1 adjutant, 1 quarter-master, 2 captains, 4 subalterns, 10 sergeants, 17 corporals, 7 musicians, 172 privates.

Aggregate—officers, 45; non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, 466. Total, 511.

NAMES AND RANK OF OFFICERS.

Killed—lieutenant-colonel E. D. Wood, captain and brevet lieutenant-colonel of engineers.

Captain L. Bradford, 21st infantry.

Captain H. Hale, 11th infantry.

Captain L. G. A. Armistead, 1st riflemen.

Wounded—Staff, brigadier-general Ripley, 2d brigade, dangerously; shot through the neck.

1st Lieutenant Crawford, 11th infantry, brigade-major, 1st brigade, slightly; shot in the arm.

9th Infantry, lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, severely, left arm amputated.

Captain Ingersoll, slightly, in the head.

1st Lieutenant E. Childs, severely, bayonet wound through the thigh.

11th Infantry, 1st lieutenant W. F. Hale, dangerously, shot in the body.

2d Lieutenant J. Clark, severely, in the body.

3d Lieutenant Stevenson, severely, through the thigh.

3d Lieutenant Davis, dangerously, through the body.

19th Infantry—major Trimble, dangerously, shot through the body:

relative number of guns, surpassed by none. The youthful commander of that battery excited my admiration. His constancy and courage, during a brisk cannonade and bombardment for several

Ensign Neely, slightly, shot in the thigh.

21st Infantry—Ensign Cummings, severely, in the arm.

23d Infantry—1st lieutenant Brown, slightly, in the arm.

Ensign O'Fling, mortally, since dead.

1st Riflemen—captain Ramsay, severely, in the groin.

3d Lieutenant Cobb, severely, in the body.

4th Riflemen—colonel James Gibson, mortally, died the 16th instant.

1st Lieutenant Gantt, severe wounds in the arm and side.

Missing—1st lieutenant Ballard, adjutant 4th riflemen, prisoner.

OF THE MILITIA.

Killed—brigadier-general Davis, of volunteer brigade.

Captain Buel, of lieutenant-colonel Crosby's regiment.

Lieutenant Brown, of lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regiment.

Lieutenant W. Belknap, of lieutenant-colonel Fleming's regiment.

Ensign Blakesley, of lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regiment.

Wounded—Staff, major-general P. B. Porter, sword wound in the hand.

1st Lieutenant Frazer, 13th infantry, brigade-major, severely, in the leg.

1st Lieutenant Riddle, 15th infantry, acting aid-de-camp, slight contusion.

Captain Bigger, N. Y. volunteers, acting aid, severely, through the breast and shoulder.

Lieutenant-colonel Dobbin's regiment—captain Knap, in the hip.

Lieutenant Baily, in the side.

Lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regt. capt. Haie, wounded and prisoner.

Lieutenant-colonel Hopkin's regiment—lieut. Gillet, through the thigh.

Missing—Lieutenant-colonel W. L. Churchill, major E. Wilson, quartermaster, O. Willcox, captain Crouch, captain Case, lieutenant Case, ensigns Chambers, Clark, Church, prisoners.

C. K. GARDNER, A. G.

Return of prisoners taken in the sortie from fort Erie, on the 17th of September, 1814.

Regiment of Watteville—2 majors, 3 captains, 3 lieutenants, 1 assistant surgeon, 4 staff sergeants, 7 sergeants, 7 corporals, 1 drummer, and 204 privates. Total, 232.

Royal artillery—9 privates.

1st Regiment royal Scotts—2 sergeants, 16 privates.

6th Regiment—1 sergeant, 9 privates.

8th or King's Regiment—1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 8 sergeants, 9 corporals, 66 privates.

82d Regiment—9 privates.

weeks, often in the night as well as the day—his gallantry and good conduct in the defence, against a vigorous assault, by a vast superiority of numbers, are incidents which can never cease to be cherished in my memory, as among the most heroic and most pleasing I have ever witnessed.”

*References to the Drawing of the Siege, and Defence of
Fort Erie.*

A Fort Erie properly so called.

a a Bastions built by the British before the work was taken by general Brown.

b A Ravelin, and *c c* Block-houses built also by the British.

d d Bastions built by us during the siege.

e e A Redoubt built also by us, for the security of the Bastions, *a a*.—Note. The British had a line of picquets for this purpose.

B Our Camp, in its most perfect state of defence, secured as follows:—On the right, by the line *g*, the Douglass battery *i*, and Fort Erie—on the left, and in front by the lines

89th Regiment—1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 19 privates. Total, 21.

Grand Total—2 majors, 4 captains, 4 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 1 assistant surgeon, 4 staff sergeants, 19 sergeants, 17 corporals, 1 drummer, 33 privates.

Aggregate—385.

J. SNELLING, *Inspector General.*

*Copy of a letter from Major-general Brown to the Secretary of war, dated
Head-quarters, Camp Fort Erie, October 1st, 1814.*

SIR—Looking over my official account of the battle of the 17th ult. I find that the names of the regiments which composed general Miller's command, have not been given. As I believe it even more important to distinguish corps than individuals, I am anxious to correct the mistake. General Miller on that day commanded the remains of the 9th and 11th infantry, and a detachment of the 19th. Of three field officers who were attached to them, two were severely wounded, lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, of the 9th, gallantly leading his men to the attack upon the enemy's intrenchments, and major Trimble, of the 19th, who was shot within their works, conducting with great skill and bravery. A detachment of the 17th regiment was attached to the 21st.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

JACOB BROWN

Honourable Secretary of War.



Drawn by W. H. Whiting, Esq. U.S. Engineer.

Engraved by J. B. Bledlow.

SIEGE & DEFENCE OF FORT ERIE

ff, and the batteries *k*, (Fontaine's, afterwards Fanning's)
l (Biddle's) and *m* (Towson's.)

h h Camp traverses.

n Main traverse.

o Magazine traverse, covering also the head-quarters of general Gaines.

p Hospital traverse.

q Grand parade and provost guard traverse.

r General Brown's head-quarters.

s Drain.

t Road from Chippewa up the Lake.

u Buck's road.

C The ground on which the volunteers encamped, who joined us in September, a few days previous to the sortie.

D D The enemy's works.

1 2 3 His first, second, and third battery.

y y His block-houses.

z z The roads to his camp.

v The route of our left column in the sortie, September 17th.

w That of our right on the same occasion.

x The ravine, in which the latter waited the signal to charge on the enemy's lines.

The following note has just been received from the author of the preceding article.

SIR,

IF it be not too late I would correct an error which I believe has gained admission into the references to my drawing and certainly into my late letter.

The column of colonel Miller did not enter the enemy's lines at the third battery on the 17th September, but between it and the second—That of general Ripley, being the reserve of the army, did enter at the third battery at the instant an explosion of its magazine took place.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

THE AMERICAN LOUNGER, No. 500.

BY SAMUEL SAUNTER, ESQ.

“I should not be surprised to read, ten years hence, *The American Lounger*, No. 500.”

DENNIE.

“WHAT is this,” says one of Mr. Oldschool’s fair readers whose dislike of odious gun-powder has induced her to regard the preceding article with slight attention. “Bless me, *Samuel Saunter* again! Well, I am delighted to see you. You were always entertaining, though sometimes a little saucy. Come, sit down, and tell us where you have been *all this time*. Let us know all about you.”

To talk of self to a fair auditor, who betrays such tender solicitude, such anxious curiosity! What a temptation! But I have little to say that will amuse the idle or detain the curious; I cannot gratify the sympathy of friendship, or warn the steps of inexperience. I feel a sort of gloomy unwillingness to enter upon a subject, that tends only to recall the memory of time misspent, and good counsels unheeded.

I resume my pen, after a Pythagorean silence, to inform the readers of *The Port Folio*, that during the late wars I felt it my duty *to endeavour to do the state some service*. Although no *Tacitus* has ever taken my services into consideration, nor any limner has honoured my phiz by perusing its lineaments, I can assure all my *impartial readers*, that since my absence I have seen some “moving accidents.” If my head were not bald, I would swear that I had had some “hair breadth ’scapes i’ the imminent deadly breach,”—and that I was more than once taken by “the *insolent foe*.” Without entering, at present, into any of these details, I shall simply inform the reader, that as soon as I was rescued from the gripe of the grim buccaneer, by the intrepid Decatur, I hastened home.

Instead of waiting upon my old friend Oliver, I sent him a pocket Shakspeare, which he had presented to me many years since. It was folded down at that part of Hamlet, where the prince informs the king of his return to Denmark, in a letter which is couched in these terms:

