

the reduction of a fort which had been constructed on the west side of the Sandusky river. This fort, about forty miles from the mouth of the river, stood on a rising ground, commanding the river to the east; having a plain to the north and a wood to the west. "The body of the fort was about one hundred yards in length, and fifty in breadth, surrounded, outside of all the other defences, by a row of strong pickets twelve feet high from the ground; each picket armed at the top with a *bayonet*."* Just outside of this fence, with the embankment reaching to the foot of the pickets, was a ditch twelve feet wide, and seven deep, thus forming a glacis of nineteen feet high. The ditch was protected by a bastion and two strong block-houses which completely enfiladed it, thus forming a very sufficient and formidable line of defence. We have no means of ascertaining correctly the number of troops that formed the garrison, but as an American account places them at "an *effective* force of one hundred and sixty rank and file," we may safely and without fear of exaggeration, put the numbers down at two hundred and fifty. Of the British there were three hundred and ninety-one officers and privates. Of the Indians there were but two hundred, and they withdrew to a ravine out of gunshot, almost immediately on the action commencing.

On the first day of August a landing was effected, under an ineffectual discharge from the enemy's guns, and a position taken up in the wood, on the skirt of which the British sixpounders were placed. On the morning of the second a fire was opened on the fort and continued till three, p. m., by which time it having been ascertained that the fire from the light sixes would affect no breach on the stockade, General Proctor resolved to carry the fort by storm. Forming his men accordingly into three columns, about 4 p.m. he began his attack, and although exposed to a most destructive fire, the gallant body reached the ditch. "Not a fascine" says Richardson, "had been provided, and although axes had been distributed among a body of men selected for the purpose, they were so blunt, that it would have been the work of hours to cut through the double line of pickets, even

if an enemy had not been there to interrupt our progress."

In defiance of this difficulty, the axe-men leaped without hesitation into the ditch, and attempted to acquit themselves of their duty; but they were speedily swept away by the guns from the batteries, charged with musket balls and slugs and directed with fatal precision. The troops had established themselves on the edge of the ditch, but it was impossible to scale without the aid of ladders or fascines; and within a few paces of the enemy only, they saw their comrades fall on every hand with no hope of avenging their deaths. The second division had only two officers attached to it. Brevet Lieutenant-colonel Short, of the 41st, was killed while descending the ravine at the head of his column, when, the command devolving on Lieutenant Gordon of the same regiment, that officer encouraging his men, and calling upon them to follow his example, was one of the first in the ditch, and was in the act of cutting the picketing with his sabre, when a ball, fired from a wall-piece, struck him in the breast. Although dangerously wounded, he refused to abandon his post, and continued to animate his men by his example, until a second ball, fired from the same piece, and lodging in his brain, left the division without an officer. The action had continued nearly two hours without producing the slightest impression on the enemy, when the bugles sounded the "cease firing," and the men were ordered to lie flat on the ground on the edge of the ravine. The first division were so near the enemy, that they could distinctly hear the various orders given in the fort, and the faint voices of the wounded and dying in the ditch, calling out for water, which the enemy had the humanity to lower to them on the instant. After continuing in this position until nine o'clock, the columns received an order to effect their retreat in silence, which was done accordingly, the enemy merely firing a few volleys of musketry, producing however no material effect. The troops having been re-embarked the same night, the expedition descended the river, and returned to Amherstburg. Our loss in this affair was severe—three officers, one sergeant, twenty-two rank and file killed; three officers, two sergeants, thirty-six rank and file wounded; and one sergeant, twenty-eight

* History of the War, page 131.