

Lt. Col.) Arthurs particularly distinguished themselves by their attempts to rally what had developed into little better than a retreating crowd.\*

After this digression, let me return to the University Rifles, whom I left standing in the centre of the field, further in advance than any other portion of the Battalion, at such a distance as to be almost isolated, and engaged in driving the Fenians from their last tenable position in the woods at D, but with their ammunition beginning to fail. Owing to our isolation we heard nothing whatever of the famous and disastrous order to form square, and the first intimation of a change in affairs was the order to retire. We retired accordingly at the double, making for the point from which we had extended, about half a mile distant, where we expected to find reserves behind whom to shelter, and wholly unaware not only of the formation of the square at the point indicated, and of the march of the reserves from the original point of extension, but also of the advance of the Fenian right and centre, which had by this time reached a point much further south than our position. We were thus obliged to retire across the whole Fenian front—and this fact explains our comparatively heavy loss, amounting to three killed, four wounded, and two prisoners.

I believe it was in crossing the first road in our retreat, and before reaching the fence on the south side of that road, that poor Tempest was shot through the head. Even I, short-sighted as I was, soon became aware that many of the enemy were already ahead of us, so late were we in retiring, and had the satisfaction of seeing at least one Fenian knocked over as he was climbing a fence. He was rendered conspicuous by his bright green jacket, and by the green flag he carried, and, struck by a righteous bullet, fell off the fence with a horrid yell. The bullets were now whistling by us from both sides—we had got between friend and foe. The left flank, whom we had all but driven from their last post at D, had now also joined in the pursuit. As I was running along I was joined by poor Mewburn, who was so much exhausted that I gave him my hand to help him along. Poor fellow! I never saw him again. His favorite phrase was 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori!' Presently another member of the Company, who was afterwards wounded, joined us, and I continued my retreat in company with a fourth comrade, but was soon alone. In a few minutes, just as I was turning round to look after Mewburn, I was struck in the groin with a Fenian bullet, which passed completely through my leg, and through my tunic behind. I fell to the ground, and rolled over for safety into a furrow in the ploughed field.

I still had my rifle in hand, having remembered Horace's '*relictæ non bene parmula*,' (which I also remembered had once been rendered in the lecture-room by a fellow-undergraduate, 'having left my shield behind, *not feeling very well!*') and not desiring to imitate the poet by lightening myself in this fashion. The hot blood (I knew for the first time how hot it was,) was spouting from both openings of my wound, and I felt as though my life were ebbing away very fast. I know not how long I had lain there, when I was found by one of the Fenians—a tall, powerfully built man, in shirt, trousers, boots and slouched hat, with a water canteen over his shoulder. He was evidently an old soldier, well versed in the customs of war, and treated me very kindly, inquiring after my wound and addressing me as 'Johnny,' the name familiarly given by the Northern soldiers to their Confederate enemies in the field. He gave me a very welcome draught from his canteen, and helped me to remove out of the broiling sun into the shade of an orchard near by. He inquired after our strength, and was very incredulous when I told him we were only volunteers and not regulars, and, when forced to believe the inscription on my buttons, retired a much disgusted man.

In the shade of a tree in this orchard I lay, surrounded by Fenians, who occasionally threatened rough treatment, but finally left me alone, probably thinking me virtually a dead man. I was growing gradually weaker, and had given up the idea of living, when suddenly I heard a loud voice shouting, with an oath, 'Don't shoot that man, he's a friend of mine.' Looking up quickly to where the voice came from, I saw a Fenian officer gesticulating to some one in my rear. All my love of life returned at once, as I made out a prognathous Fenian, of the type familiar to the readers of *Punch*, with hair cropped according to the most unmistakable gaol-pattern, pointing his rifle straight at my head from behind the nearest apple-tree. I moved behind the trunk of my tree with wonderful celerity for a man in my condition, my friend keeping his rifle pointed at me, until the officer covering him with his revolver, shouted—'d—n you, if you don't come away from that man I'll shoot you.' The prognathous one then moved sullenly away, occasionally turning back to see if he could not still manage to leave me a bullet as a mark of his esteem.

After some time, I was carried into a farmhouse on the other side

of the road, where I was laid on the floor. The Fenians then helped themselves to the contents of the larder, and fried some eggs, offering me a share of the food, which I was, however, unable to take. They then adjourned into another room to hold a council of war, and presently left the house. I was lying on the floor of the principal room in the house, with a basket as a pillow, containing some Good Templars' regalia, with which I endeavored to staunch the blood flowing from my wound. I believed myself alone, but presently heard sounds as of some one breathing with difficulty, and occasionally choking. On looking round, I could see nothing; but after a few minutes a man, in the uniform of the Queen's Own, who presented a most ghastly spectacle, dragged himself towards me from behind a door, where he had been lying. His upper jaw had been shot away just below the nose; the bullet, as was afterwards discovered, was lodged back of the palate at the base of the brain. The blood was running down his throat and choking him. He was, of course, unable to speak, but by gestures most piteously besought me to wipe away the blood. I did so as well as I could, but was of course unable to give him any relief. This was Corporal Lackey, of No. 2 Company, who died about a week later. A short while after there arrived at the house a noble old man, who had courageously ventured within the Fenian lines with the object of doing what he could to relieve the sufferings of the wounded. In order to effect his design, he represented himself as a medical man, and immediately on entering the house where we lay, he had poor Lackey and myself put to bed, and our wounds washed and dressed.

Soon others came in, the Fenians having retired; and in the afternoon and all night there was a constant stream of visitors and medical men passing through my room. The owners of the house, Mr. and Mrs. Teal, who had returned in the afternoon, were unremitting in their attentions to us. I was partly unconscious during this time, but had quite recovered my love of life. In the morning, those of the wounded who were able to be moved were taken to Port Dalhousie, and reached Toronto, along with the bodies of their slain comrades, on the same (Sunday) evening, where an immense and excited crowd awaited them. I shall never forget that ride on a stretcher, borne by soldiers of the 47th regiment, from Yonge-street wharf to my home. The bearers marched all the way through a dense crowd, which filled the whole street from side to side, and on reaching the house crowded in with expressions of sympathy and offers of assistance.

That Sunday was one such as Toronto had never seen before. The most contradictory rumors were afloat in the city; the churches presented a most extraordinary spectacle. Instead of the usual attendance of quiet worshippers—of the hymn of praise, the calm discourse—the attendant throng was assembled in deep humiliation and earnest prayer. I doubt whether a single sermon was preached in Toronto that day. Excited people came rushing into the churches and announcing the latest news from the front, then a prayer would be offered up by the pastor, or the congregation would bow their heads in silent supplication. The merchants, on word being received that the volunteers were suffering from want of food, ransacked their warehouses for supplies to send to the front by the steamer that was to go to Port Dalhousie that afternoon for the dead and wounded; and all the young men were hastening to the front. May our good city long be spared the repetition of such scenes!

After the first excitement in Toronto was over, in which the Queen's Own were exalted into heroes, it became much the fashion, owing perhaps partly to the self-depreciation of the 'heroes' themselves, to speak slightly of the action in which they had been engaged, and of their conduct in that action. People felt that what had been magnified into a battle was merely a skirmish, insignificant in comparison with one of the great pitched battles of the American war, free from the terrible carnage caused by shells and cannon-balls, and with no cavalry charges. After the removal of the fear of Fenian invasion, the grace of the defeat and panic began to be felt, the creditable part of the transaction began to be forgotten, and it became the fashion, and is still the fashion, even among those who participated in the engagement, to speak slightly of the behavior of the men. It was forgotten that these men had advanced against an equal, if not a superior number of enemies, who had more than one immense advantage over them. The Fenians were men who had been often under fire, and whom custom had familiarized, not only with military movements and their meaning, but also with the noises and sights of war, and of death in many forms. They were, of course, desperate men, whose every existence, as a body, depended on their success in this engagement; they were commanded by efficient and experienced officers; and finally, they fired from good cover, our men being in the open field. And yet our men, when ordered to extend and advance, executed these movements as steadily and expeditiously as when on parade. The advance was so determined that their experienced adversaries retreated from the first barricade at A A without making any

\* The Adjutant of the 13th Battalion (I believe his name was Kenny) should also be honorably mentioned in this connection.