

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.

Major-General Brown to the Secretary of War.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT ERIE, Sept. 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 entrenchments, the object of which was to keep the part 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 12 or 15 hundred men each. One of these brigades with a detail from their artillery was stationed at their works, (these being about 500 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 12 o'clock. Gen. 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. Gen. 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 Gen. 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 20 minutes before 3 p. m. I found the left columns under the command of Gen. Porter, which were destined to turn the enemy's right, within a few rods of the British entrenchments. They were ordered to advance and commence the action. Passing down the ravine, I judged from the report that the action had