

Americans time to recover from the effect of their reverses, to increase their forces, and to prepare for subsequent successes on the lakes, by building vessels on Lake Erie, under the very eyes of General Brock, who, eager to act, had to remain passively watching the augmentation of the enemy's force, and the equipment of their boats, without being able to fire a shot to prevent it.

The first fruits of this enforced passiveness was the surprise and capture, on the 9th of October, of the brig-of-war *Detroit* and the private brig *Caledonia*, both laden with arms and spoils from Detroit. The former, however, grounded, and was destroyed by its captor, Captain Elliott, who was then fitting out an armed schooner at Black Rock, with a strong force of American seamen under his command.

This stroke of success greatly stimulated the eagerness of the American force under Van Ranselaer—now increased to 6,000 men—to engage in action. General Brock expected this, and issued particular directions to all the outposts where landing might be effected. On the 11th of October a crossing at Queenston was attempted, but failed through unfavourable weather and lack of boats. Before daybreak on the 13th, however, a crossing was effected, and the advance-guard of the American force, protected by a battery commanding every spot where they could be opposed by musketry, had gained the Canadian shore. On landing, they were gallantly opposed by the small outpost force of militia and regulars, aided by the fire of an eighteen-pounder on the heights, and another gun a mile below—a part of the defending force meeting the enemy as they landed, the remainder firing down from the heights above. Both assault and resistance were resolute and brave.

General Brock, at Fort George, having risen, as usual, before daylight, heard the cannonade, and galloped up to the scene of action, where he found himself at once in the midst of a desperate hand-to-hand com-

bat, a detachment of the enemy, who had landed higher up, having gained unobserved a spur of the heights by a secluded and circuitous path. Brock led his men with his usual unflinching valour, unmindful of the circumstance that his height, dress, and bearing made him too conspicuous a mark for the American riflemen. A ball, well and deliberately aimed, struck him down, with the words: "Push on the brave York Volunteers," on his lips. Stung by their loss, his regiment raised a shout of "Avenge the General!" and by a desperate onset, the regulars and militia drove the enemy from the vantage-ground they had gained. But the latter, being strongly reinforced—the little British force of about 300 was compelled to retire towards the village while awaiting the reinforcements that were on their way, hastened by the tidings of the calamity that had befallen the nation. General Sheaffe, Brock's old comrade in arms in other fields, ere long came up, with all the available troops, volunteers and Indians, eager to avenge the death of their commander. By an admirable arrangement of his forces he outflanked the enemy and surrounded them in their dangerous position, from which a determined and successful onset forced them to a headlong and fearful retreat—many being dashed to pieces in descending the precipitous rocks, or drowned in attempting to cross the river. The surviving remnant of the invading force, which had numbered about 1,500 to 800 on the British side, mustered on the brink of the river, and surrendered themselves unconditionally, with their General, Wadsworth, as prisoners of war.\*

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\* It may be noted that two of those who distinguished themselves on their respective sides in this engagement were the late Sir John Beverly Robinson and Colonel Scott, afterwards so well known as General Scott. He it was who carried the flag of truce on this occasion, and of course was one of the prisoners taken. He was subsequently paroled, but broke his parole, as did other American officers.