

the British barracks, carried them by storm after a short but spirited resistance, and then burnt them. In this, our first performance on British soil, we had occasion to rejoice; thirty or forty prisoners fell into our hands, and some sixty or eighty stands of arms.

We now took marching orders for Sandwich. Before leaving for the latter place, however, we burned a steam boat in commemoration of the ill-fated Caroline. Col. Harvell shot one of our own men at the barracks, mistaking him for a British regular from the red overcoat he had on. I have since been informed that he was but slightly wounded, and returned home in safety. On the way to Sandwich our party held sacred the property of the inhabitants; it was not in a single instance violated, to my knowledge. We arrived at an orchard and halted, when we soon discovered about four hundred regulars and militia approaching us, and were soon convinced of the manner in which they intended to make our acquaintance. After the exchange of a few shots we were ordered by our commander to retreat to a wood near by. In this short action, and in our retreat, several of our men were killed and wounded; the exact number I never knew, but among the former was Gen. Putnam and Col. Harwell. I saw Gen. Putnam when he fell.

Some of our party being killed, wounded and taken prisoners, and others having fled in different directions, so few of us reached the woods that it was considered presumption for us to attempt anything further. Mr. Whitaker, who went from my neighborhood, and another young man who reached the woods with us, were both wounded in the skirmish. We brought into requisition the little surgical skill we were possessed of, in dressing their wounds, and recommended them to go to a house a short distance off, and ask for protection, with which advice they reluctantly complied. They were soon after found by their pursuers, taken to Sandwich, had their wounds healed, tried, and sentenced to be hung; but were finally pardoned on the day appointed for their execution, and returned in safety to their homes.

Myself and a number of my comrades, wandered in the woods the remainder of that unfortunate day, and at night, cold weary and hungry, we built a fire and lay down to rest. Some time in the night, when all was silent, and the fire nearly extinguished, a flash of light was seen, followed by a loud report, which brought every man of us from our horizontal posture, with the dexterity of minute men. We at first supposed we had been fired upon by Indians, skulking in the tops of fallen trees; but the true cause of our alarm was soon ascertained. One of our party, who had a large quantity of powder in his pocket, had taken quarters too near the fire, and from some cause these incompatibles were brought in contact, and the noise ensued. This circumstance convinced us fully that "gunpowder will explode." Our comrade's