

halted two and a half miles from Fort Erie, the men sleeping on their arms, due precautions being observed. During the night I sent out scouts to collect information. It appeared that the Fenians on retiring, had posted themselves at once near the old Fort. Some said they had been reinforced, some that they were attempting to re-cross into the United States. I also heard that three companies of the 16th Regiment and three companies of the 60th Rifles had arrived at our vacated camp at New Germany, and that a force had reached Black Creek; also that 10 more companies of volunteer militia had arrived at Port Colborne. The Volunteer Garrison Battery, which I had left at Chippewa, joined me during the night. Anxious to prevent the escape of the Fenians, I sent word to the officers commanding at those places that I was going to attack Fort Erie, and asked when they would be able to co-operate. Subsequently fresh reports of the attempts of the Fenians to escape having reached me, I determined to advance at once. We were about to move when Lieut. Col. the Hon. John Hillyard Cameron came into camp and informed me that the Fenians had escaped. The intelligence caused great mortification in my little force. I desired Major Denison to scour the country and enter the town. He sent me a message that he was informed that there was still a body of Fenians about the old Fort. We at once marched in that direction, skirmishing through the woods. Major Denison soon informed us that they really had escaped. As many scouts and farm people assured us they had not escaped, we took a long sweep through the woods. On our right on Lake Erie, a few stragglers were seen, and four were reported shot. On entering the old Fort, traces were found of its having been recently occupied. During the short operation which extended only over forty hours, the troops under my command underwent very great fatigue, and bore it with the best spirit and with great cheerfulness. I received all possible support and co-operation from the officers of all ranks. The conduct of the men was excellent. A great number of private individuals rendered me service in various ways, and the inhabitants generally displayed a good and loyal feeling. Mr. Swinyard, Manager of the Great Western Railroad, gave me the benefit of his services in person. He placed at my disposal the resources of the railway; and the officials on the line exerted themselves to render these available. I have the honor to enclose a report of Lieut. Col. Booker, of his operations on the 2nd inst.

(Signed) GEO. PEACOCKE,  
Col. and Lieut. Col. 16th Regt.

MAJOR-GEN. G. NAPIER, C.B.,  
Com. First Military District, Toronto, C.W.

#### Lieut.-Col. Booker's Report.

Port Colborne, June 2, 1866.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that, in accordance with instructions received from Colonel Peacocke, through Captain Akers, I proceeded by train at 5 a.m. to day, to Ridgeway station on the Buffalo & Lake Huron R. R., with the Queen's Own, of Toronto, Major Gilmore, say 480 men of all ranks; the York Rifles, Capt. Dennis; the Caledonia Rifles,

Capt. Jackson; and the 13th Battalion of Hamilton—together about 360 men—total of all ranks, say 840 men, in order to form a junction with Col. Peacocke, at Stevensville, at 9 to 9.30 a.m. On arriving at Ridgeway, I sent the Great Western Railway train away; and as I could not obtain a horse or waggon in the place for the conveyance of the force, I was compelled to leave without the stores, and sent them back to Port Colborne at a little before 8 a.m. We were feeling our way on the Stevensville road, and were about three miles from that village, when our advance guard felt the enemy—Major Gilmore extended the Queen's Own in skirmishing order, in admirable style—the men advancing in good spirits. They were supported and relieved, as required, by the 13th Battalion of Hamilton and the Rifle companies from York and Caledonia. After Major Gilmore had expended much ammunition, he reported to me that his ammunition was failing. At 9.30, after being engaged under a hot fire for an hour and a half, I observed the enemy throwing back his right and reinforcing his left flank. I immediately ordered up two companies in support, to counteract the movement. At this moment I received a telegram by the hands of Mr. Stovin, Welland Railway, on the field, informing me that Col. Peacocke could not leave Chippewa before 7 o'clock, instead of 5 a.m., the hour named by Capt. Akers on his behalf. The enemy was strongly posted in the woods on the west of the garrison road, the road forming the entrance as it were to a *cul de sac*. We outflanked him, when he brought up his centre reserves and out-flanked us. We drove them, in the first place, over a mile, and held possession of the rifle pits. A cry of cavalry from the front, and the retreat of a number of men in our centre on the reserves, caused me to form a square and prepare for cavalry. The mistake originated from relieved skirmishers doubling back. I immediately re-formed column, and endeavored to deploy to the right. A panic here seized our men, and I could not bring them again to the front. I regret to say we have lost several valuable officers and men. I estimate the strength of the enemy as greater than ours; and, from the rapid firing, they were evidently armed with repeating rifles.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) A. BOOKER,  
Lieut. Col. Com. Vol. Militia.

#### Rev. Mr. Burwash's Letter.

(To the Editor of the Christian Guardian.)

DEAR BROTHER,—A short account from an eye witness, of the first effort of our brave volunteers, to defend their country and their homes, will, perhaps be acceptable. On Friday evening the Rev. D. Inglis, of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and myself, left Hamilton, to do what we could for the spiritual interests of our men, should they be called to meet the enemy in battle.

By travelling all night we arrived at Port Colborne at 5 a.m., Saturday, just in time to proceed with the army to the scene of conflict. Shortly after six, we arrived at Ridgeway station. Here intelligence was received that the enemy were within two or three miles; and leaving the train at once, our little army was formed in column on the road leading to New Germany and Stevensville. On arriving, at