

the general order of attack. His advice was not taken. The result proved that he was correct, but he himself lost his life on this occasion. M. D'Estaing caused a false attack to be made upon the entrenchments on our right, near a strong battery; at the same time he led the assault upon our left, having to pass through a morass in which our soldiers mired to their knees, at the end of which was an abattis of trees, most difficult to pass through, and swept by the enemy's artillery. It was evident beyond a doubt — and we were advised of the fact soon afterwards — that the enemy had been informed by an American<sup>1</sup> of all our dispositions and of the hour of the attack. We may add to this statement the further circumstance that the British troops had large white cockades and shirts over their coats, which were precisely the prescribed marks by which we were to recognize each other during the conflict.

The General<sup>2</sup> encountered the fire of the enemy's artillery charged with grape-shot, which cut his column to the centre. Perceiving that his column was recoiling, the General passed to its head and, with his bravest men, marched in advance up to the abatis. He was followed by only three or four hundred Grenadiers and many officers. This little troop, led by the General, rushed up to the entrenchments and effected a lodgment in the ditch in such a position that the English could not bring their guns to bear upon us. Here a hand to hand conflict ensued. These brave men were not seconded. The rest of the column, entangled in the swamp, was mowed down by the enemy's artillery, in the face of which it could not advance.

In traversing the abattis, through which he had forced his way with great difficulty, the General received two severe wounds. Nevertheless, he still retained strength and courage sufficient to mount his horse and in person order a retreat. It was in retiring that these brave Grenadiers, who had penetrated even into the ditch, were cut to pieces by the grape-shot from the artillery of the English, who fired packets of

<sup>1</sup> Sergeant Major Curry.

<sup>2</sup> Count D'Estaing.