

larly required water—I was myself extremely sensible of the want of this necessary article. I therefore believed it proper that General Ripley and the troops should return to camp after bringing off the dead, the wounded and the artillery, and in this I saw no difficulty, as the enemy had entirely ceased to act.

Within an hour after my arrival in camp I was informed that General Ripley had returned without annoyance and in good order. I now sent for him, and after giving him my reasons for the measure I was about to adopt, ordered him to put the troops in the very best possible condition, to give to them the necessary refreshment, to take with him the picquets and camp guards and every other description of force; to put himself on the field of battle as the day dawned, and there to meet and beat the enemy if he appeared. To this order he made no objection and I relied upon its execution; *it was not executed*. I feel most sensibly how inadequate are my powers in speaking of the troops to do justice either to their merits or to my own sense of them—*under able direction they might have done more and better*.

The official report of the American losses was as follows: killed, 171; wounded, 570; missing, 117; total, 858. The estimate seems altogether too low, if we are to believe other and apparently reliable statements made by participants in the struggle.

That the Americans were not at all satisfied with the result of this engagement, is shown very clearly by the following extracts from a letter written by Major-General Peter B. Porter (commander of American Militia), to Governor D. D. Tompkins:

Fort Erie, U. C., July 29, 1814.

Sir,—Our Canadian campaign seems drawing to a close, or must at any rate be suspended for want of reinforcements. After a month spent in marching and countermarching we have got back to the point from which we set out, much impaired in strength, but, I hope, not disheartened.

Besides almost daily skirmishing we have had two severe general engagements. . . . In the last (Lundy's Lane) we were most unlucky both as to time and place, the action having been commenced three miles from camp, about sundown, with one-third of our army against a greatly superior force occupying a commanding position. . . . The enemy's battery of seven pieces of artillery was carried by a charge, his commanding position occupied, and four desperate and deliberate attempts to regain it by desperate charges successfully repelled. Our victory was complete, but alas, this victory gained by exhibitions of bravery never surpassed in this country, *was converted into a defeat by a precipitate retreat, leaving the dead, the wounded, and captured artillery, and our hard earned honor, to the enemy*. . . . Do not understand me as intending to cast a heavy censure on General Ripley for *the retreat*