

"There was some maneuvering along the Niagara River with a view to the invasion of Canada and the Battle of Queenston. This, though fought with desperate bravery, was wholly fruitless of practical results. General Stephen Van Renssealaer, a Major-General in the New York Militia, had been placed in command of the troops along the Niagara frontier. On September 1st he had six hundred and ninety-one men, many of whom were without shoes and clamorous for their pay. By the 12th of October his force had increased to nine hundred regulars and two thousand eight hundred and seventy militia. With these he fought the Battle of Queenston. His plan was to begin the action by throwing across the river six hundred regulars and militia under Col. Solomon Van Renssealaer, who had seen service in the regular army. There was only one path leading to the water. The regulars, two hundred and twenty-five strong, went over first and made a bold assault. Their shouts of victory announced the capture of the heights, and the American flag was again on British soil. Col. Van Renssealaer, in giving his account of the "Affair at Queenston," omits telling the further crossing of the invaders, but gives particulars of the death of General Brock. He says Brock heard the canonading before dawn, aroused his aide-de-camp, and hastened to the scene of action. He rallied his troops and led them up the heights which were already in the hands of the Americans. His tall figure was a conspicuous object for the American sharp shooters. First a bullet struck his wrist, wounding it slightly, and a moment afterwards as he shouted 'Push on, brave York Volunteers,' another bullet entered his breast, passed out through his side, and left a mortal wound. He fell from his horse at the foot of the slope, and lived long enough to urge those around him to conceal his death from the troops and to send some token of remembrance to his sister in England. Col. Van Renssealaer was four times wounded, and later in the day was forced to give up the command. Most of the militia and regulars had crossed the Niagara and reached the heights. The New York militia refused to cross under the plea that they could only be called out to resist "invasion." Further on it is said that American troops stood for hours masters of the field, but the British being largely reinforced made another attack about four o'clock in the afternoon, retook the heights and drove the Americans down to the river, where for want of boats they were forced to surrender. Our loss was two hundred and fifty killed and wounded and seven hundred taken prisoners. One hundred and sixty of the killed and wounded were regulars, and ninety militia. The total forces engaged did not exceed a thousand men, but as it was completely wiped out the loss to the American side was very heavy."