

teen hundred to two thousand, and not satisfied even with this amplification, in a note to his memoirs, written long subsequently, the American General actually ventured to state that, "the enemy showed twenty five hundred men in battalion, on the 11th, and this force was beaten back, by seventeen hundred of *undisciplined* troops, upon a reserve of seven hundred men, making the whole strength of the enemy thirty-two hundred men."

To disprove this is easy, and if we take Col. Walbacks evidence, (who was in the action, and swore, at the general's court martial, "That he had a fair view of the enemy, and and that he supposed the whole, regulars, militia, and indians to have been between eleven and twelve hundred men") and compare

it with the testimony of Major-generals Lewis, Boyd, Covington, and Swartwout, who concurred in opinion "that the British force amounted to about five hundred," James's statement may be considered as very nearly correct. By adding as much to the numbers given by the four generals, as we deduct from Walback's, we arrive at James' numbers. This may fairly be done, as at the Court Martial one party was doing his best to support general Wilkinson, while the others were, perhaps, influenced by opposite feelings.

Having settled this point, we will in turn, attempt to fix the numbers of Americans.

It has been truly said that—

"A tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive."

and this is literally the case with General

On the evening of the 9th, the army halted a few miles from the head of Longue Sault. On the morning of the 10th the enclosed order was issued. General Browne marched, agreeably to order, and at noon we were apprised, by the reports of his artillery, that he was engaged some distance below us. At the same time the enemy were observed in our rear, and their galley and gun-boats approached our flotilla, and opened a fire upon us, which obliged me to order a battery of 18-pounders to be planted, and a shot from it compelled the enemy's vessels to retire, together with their troops, after some firing between the advanced parties. By this time, in consequence of his disembarking and re-embarking the heavy guns, the day was so far spent, that our pilots did not dare to enter the Sault (eight miles a continued rapid), and therefore we fell down about two miles, and came to anchor for the night.

Early the next morning everything was in readiness for motion; but having received no intelligence from General Brown, I was still delayed, as sound precaution required I should learn the result of his affair, before I committed the flotilla to the Sault.

At half-past ten A.M., an officer of dragoons arrived with a letter, in which the General informed me he had forced the enemy, and would reach the foot of the Sault early in the day. Orders were immediately given for the flotilla to sail, at which instant the enemy's gun-boats appeared, and began to throw shot among us. Information was at the same time brought me from Brigadier-general Boyd, that the enemy's troops were advancing in column. I immediately gave orders to him to attend them. This report was soon contradicted. Their gun-boats, however, continued to scratch us, and a variety of reports of their movements and counter-movements were brought to me in succession, which convinced me of their determination to hazard an attack, when it could be done to the greatest advantage; and I therefore resolved to anticipate them. Directions were accordingly sent by that distinguished officer, Colonel Swift of the engineers, to "ad-

ier-gen. Boyd, to throw down the detachments of his command, assigned to him in the order of the preceding day, and composed of men of his own, Covington's and Swartwout's brigades, into three columns, to march upon the enemy, outflank them if possible, and take their artillery.

The action soon after commenced with the advanced body of the enemy, and became extremely sharp and galling; and lasted, with occasional pauses, not sustained with great vivacity, in open space, and fair combat, for upwards of two hours and a half, the adverse lines alternately yielding and advancing. It is impossible to say with accuracy what was our number on the field, because it consisted of indefinite detachments, taken from the boats, to render safe the passage of the Sault.

General Covington and Swartwout voluntarily took part in the action, at the head of the detachments from their respective brigades, and exhibited the same courage that was displayed by Brigadier-general Boyd, who happened to be the senior officer on the ground. Our force engaged might have reached 1600 or 1700 men, but actually did not exceed 1800. That of the enemy was estimated from 1200 to 2000, but did not probably amount to more than 1500 or 1600; consisting as I am informed, of detachments from the 49th, 84th, and 104th regiments of the line, with three companies of the voltigeur and Glenary corps, and the militia of the country, who are not included in the estimate.

It would be presumptuous in me to attempt to give you a detailed account of this affair, which certainly reflects high honor on the valor of the American soldiers, as no example can be produced of undisciplined men, with inexperienced officers, braving a fire of two hours and a half, without quitting the field; or yielding to their antagonists. But, sir, the information I now give you is derived from officers in my confidence, who took active parts in the conflict; for, although I was enabled to order the attack, it was my hard fortune not to be able to lead the troops I commanded.