

night was intensely dark, rain was still falling gently, and the winds and the roaring of the river drowned the sound of their movements. Everything seemed to conspire to favor their enterprise.

Col. Van Rensselaer had originally been selected to command the advance-guard, but when Chrystie arrived, he stubbornly refused to waive his rank and it was then agreed that he should lead a column of three hundred regular troops, while Van Rensselaer headed an equal number of militia. The militia composing this detachment were accordingly chosen with great care from among the best drilled men, and by their commander at least, were believed to be superior to the United States troops in point of discipline. Forty picked men of the regular artillery conducted by Lieut. Gausevoort, all of whom had long been quartered at Fort Niagara and knew the river well, were selected to head the other column and were followed by four companies of the 13th United States infantry, which was regarded as one of the crack regiments of their army. Next in succession, Col. Fenwick and Major Mullany were to cross with 550 regulars, then an equal number of militia and so on in order until the entire division consisting of the 6th, 13th, and 23rd United States infantry, detachments of three regular artillery regiments, a battalion of volunteer riflemen, and the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th regiments of New York militia had been passed over. The artillerymen, well provided with matches and rammers to work the captured guns, and a detachment of engineers was detailed to fortify a position as soon as it was taken. The number of officers and men exceeded four thousand of whom at least fifteen hundred were regulars, and barring accidents, the whole force might be ferried over in seven trips. The two largest boats were also fitted with platforms on which a field-piece with its carriage could be loaded.

In less than a quarter of an hour from the time the boats pushed off, ten of them conveying three hundred men, reached the opposite shore at the exact spot selected for effecting a landing, quite unperceived by the sentries. Three others, among them the two largest, were carried down by the current, and of these only the smaller one succeeded in landing below, while the two others were commanded by Col. Chrystie to near own shore to make a fresh start. Most of those who had landed were regular troops, comprising the detachment of artillery and three entire companies of the 13th infantry, and having sent back the boats to bring over the next detachment, Van

Rensselaer assumed the command in the absence of Chrystie, and attempted to form up his men before advancing further. Their presence was then for the first time discovered by a militia sentry, who was so agitated by the fact, that instead of firing his musket at once, he ran into the main guard to give the alarm. In a few minutes Captain Dennis advanced towards the landing with forty-six men of his own company and a few of the militia, and found the enemy still in much confusion. His first volley fell upon them, as it proved, with fatal precision. Van Rensselaer himself was struck down with six wounds, several company officers and a number of men were killed or disabled, and the entire body retired to the water's edge where they were partially sheltered by the steep bank.

The batteries at Lewiston, where the gunners had been waiting with matches burning for the signal, instantly opened fire, the first round from their heavy guns being aimed at the redan, but when the glare of the musketry disclosed the position of a small body of British infantry near the landing, all six guns were turned upon it, and Dennis drew his men back under the shelter of the houses of the village. In this brief encounter the loss of the Americans was subsequently stated to have been eight officers and forty-five men killed or wounded.

The gunners in the redan and at Broome's Point began firing at random in the direction of the Lewiston landing, in the hope of striking some of the boats, and Lieut. Crowther of the 41st, brought up a tiny three-pounder field-piece or grasshopper to sweep the road to the river. Van Rensselaer, being quite disabled by his wounds, was taken back to Lewiston, and the command devolved upon Capt. John E. Wool. of the 13th, a brave but young and inexperienced officer, who for more than two hours seems to have been quite satisfied to retain his foothold beside the river, while the batteries behind him were fast wrecking the village of Queenston. His men, however, maintained a brisk but harmless fire from the shelter of the bank. Reinforcements were pushed over to his assistance, but misfortune still attended them. Two boats loaded with men were swept far out of their course by the current. One of these, commanded by Lieut. Col. Fenwick of the artillery, struggled ashore in the cove below Queenston and attempted to ascend the bank there. They were at once attacked; Fenwick received a pistol-shot in the face which partially blinded him, besides two other wounds, and was taken prisoner with

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