

The main body of the Fenians under Colonel Donnelly kept together for a while, and returned the fire of the volunteers, but only for a few minutes. After Cronan's company was checked near the bridge, their officers yelled and cried to them to advance and support them. The majority would not move. About fifty men advanced a few paces, and opened fire, Cronan's company meanwhile scattering in all directions; a few minutes longer and, despite the imprecations of the commanders, the main column broke in wild disorder and sought the friendly shelter of the adjoining houses and lumber piles. Behind these covers they seemed to regain confidence, and kept up a continued fire upon the Canadian forces.

This was the state of things when Colonel Osborne Smith, D.A.G., Commander of the troops, came galloping along the road and up Eccles Hill, in full view of the Fenians, and was received with loud and enthusiastic cheers from the volunteers and Home Guards, while the enemy's bullets came whistling dangerously through the underbrush, and flattened against the rocks and boulders, from behind which our volunteers returned their fire with interest. The battle proper did not last quite half an hour, but the Fenians continued to keep up a skirmishing fight at long ranges for three hours afterwards. It will be remembered that Colonel Smith had left Eccles Hill about 11 o'clock that forenoon, when there was no immediate prospect of a Fenian attack, to proceed to Stanbridge village to bring up the Montreal volunteers at that place. He was within two miles of Stanbridge when he was overtaken by a mounted messenger from Colonel Chamberlin, informing him that the Fenians were on the point of attacking them in force. Captain Gascoigne, who accompanied Colonel Smith, was instructed to make all haste to Stanbridge, and bring up every available man, while the Colonel galloped back to Eccles Hill, where he arrived, as already stated, and assumed the command of the troops, and the post of danger which Colonel Chamberlin had held during the first attack of the enemy.

In the meantime Captain Gascoigne arrived in Stanbridge village just as the Victorias were sitting down to a sumptuous dinner, specially prepared for them as a compensation for their previous short rations. The next minute, however, Captain Crawford has received his instructions, the bugler is sounding the "assembly and double." The news that fighting has commenced on the frontier is known immediately all over the village, and within three minutes the Victorias, fully accoutred and with sixty rounds of ammunition, parade in front of the Hotel, and while Color-Sergeant Clare is numbering off the company, a miscellaneous string of vehicles are brought up into which the Vics quickly jump. The whip is laid to the horses, and off at a hard trot dash the animals with their armed passengers