

On the 5th, at one o'clock in the afternoon, we were within two miles of the Moravian village, but in defiance of that repeated experience which should have taught us the hopelessness of combating a concealed enemy, the troops were ordered to defile into the heart of a wood, not very close it is true, yet through the interstices of which it was impossible for the view to extend itself beyond a distance of twenty paces, much less to discover objects bearing so close a resemblance to the bark and foliage of the trees and bushes as the costume of the Americans; whereas, on the contrary, the glaring red of the troops formed a point of relief on which the eye could not fail to dwell. In this position, we continued to remain during two hours, our left wing extending to the road, in which a solitary six pounder was posted, and the right flanked by the Indians to the number of 1,000 under Tecumseh, when the bugles of the enemy sounding at length to the attack, the engagement commenced. The result of an affair, against a body of such numerical superiority, and under such circumstances, may easily be anticipated. Closely pressed on every hand, and principally by a strong corps of mounted riflemen, the troops were finally compelled to give way, and completely hemmed in by their assailants, had no other alternative than to lay down their arms—about fifty men only, with a single officer of the regiment, (Lieut. Bullock) contriving, when all was lost, to effect their escape through the wood. General Procter, mounted on an excellent charger, and accompanied by his personal staff, sought safety in flight at the very commencement of the action, and being pursued for some hours by a detachment of mounted Kentucky riflemen, was in imminent danger of falling into their hands.

In this affair, I had an opportunity of witnessing the cruel dexterity and despatch with which the Indians use the tomahawk and scalping knife. A Kentucky rifleman, who had been dismounted within a few yards of the spot where I stood,—and the light company, to which I was attached, touched the left flank of the Indians—was fired at by three warriors of the Delaware tribe. The unfortunate man received their several balls in his body, yet, although faint from loss of blood, he made every exertion to save himself. Never was fear so strongly depicted on the human countenance, and the man's hair (for he was uncovered) absolutely seemed to me to stand on end, as he attempted to double a large fallen tree, in order to elude the weapons of his enemies. The foremost of his pursuers was a tall powerful man—a chief whom I well knew, having, only a few days before we commenced our retreat, obtained from him a saddle in exchange for a regimental coat, purchased at the sale of the effects of Lieut. Sutherland, wounded at Maguaga. When within twelve or fifteen paces of the rifleman, he raised and threw his tomahawk, and with such precision and force, that it immediately opened the skull, and extended him motionless on the earth. Laying down his rifle, he drew forth his knife, and after having removed the hatchet from the brain, proceeded to make a circular incision throughout the scalp. This done, he grasped the bloody instrument between his teeth, and placing his knees on the back of his victim, while at the same time he fastened his fingers in the hair, the scalp was torn off without much apparent difficulty and thrust, still bleeding, into his bosom. The warrior then arose, and after having wiped his knife on the clothes of the unhappy man, returned it to its sheath, grasping at the same time the arms he had abandoned, and hastening to rejoin his comrades. All this was the work of a few minutes.

While this brief scene was enacting, the main body of the enemy, who had by this time succeeded in breaking through our centre, and had wheeled up, in order to take the Indians in flank, moved rapidly upon us in every direction; so that the resistance the light company had hitherto opposed, was now utterly hopeless of any successful result. Persuaded moreover, from the sudden cessation of the firing in that direction, that our centre and left, (for the wood intercepted them from our view) had been overcome, we, at the suggestion and command of Lieutenant Hailes, the only officer with us, prepared to make good our retreat, but, instead of going deeper into the wood as we purposed, we mistook our way, and found ourselves unexpectedly in the road; when on glancing to the right, we beheld, at a distance

of about five hundred yards, the main body of our men disarmed—grouped together, and surrounded by American troops. On turning to the left, as we instinctively did, we saw a strong body of cavalry coming towards us, evidently returning from some short pursuit, and slowly walking their horses. At the head of these, and dressed like his men in Kentucky hunting frocks, was a stout elderly officer whom we subsequently knew to be Governor Shelby, and who, the moment he beheld us emerging from the wood, galloped forward and brandishing his sword over his head, cried out with stentorian lungs "surrender, surrender, it's no use resisting, all your people are taken, and you had better surrender." There was no alternative. The channel to escape had been closed by the horsemen in the wood, as well as those in the road, and a surrender was unavoidable. We accordingly moved down to join our captured comrades, as directed by Governor Shelby, yet I well recollect burying my musket in the mud, which was very deep, in order to avoid giving it up to the enemy. Perfectly also do I recollect the remark made by a tall Kentuckian as I passed by him to the group—"Well I guess now, you tarnation little Britisher, who'd calculate to see such a bit of a chap as you here." But I heeded not the sneer of the Kentuckian. My eye had fallen and rested upon a body of American Indians, about fifty in number, from some one of whose tomahawks, I apprehended the death blow—I had seen their weapons too often exercised (and indeed, as has been seen, only a few minutes before) to feel any thing like security. But my fear was without foundation. As I watched them more narrowly, I found that their countenances wore an expression of concern, and that, so far from seeking to injure us, they seemed rather to regret our fate. Nor is this at all unlikely, as it was well known that the greatest portion of the warriors who had taken up the hatchet in favor of the United States, had been induced to do so from compulsion alone. This little anecdote, otherwise too personal perhaps, affords another in support of the many striking evidences of the strong attachment of the Indians for the British.

The most serious loss we sustained on this occasion was that of the noble and unfortunate Tecumseh. Only a few minutes before the clang of the American bugles was heard ringing through the forest, and inspiring to action, the haughty Chieftain had passed along our line, pleased with the manner in which his left was supported, and seemingly sanguine of success. He was dressed in his usual deer skin dress, which admirably displayed his light yet sinewy figure, and in his handkerchief, rolled as a turban over his brow, was placed a handsome white ostrich feather, which had been given to him by a near relation of the writer of this Narrative, and on which he was ever fond of decorating himself, either for the Hall of Council or the battle field. He pressed the hand of each officer as he passed, made some remark in Shawanee, appropriate to the occasion, which was sufficiently understood by the expressive signs accompanying them, and then passed away for ever from our view. Towards the close of the engagement, he had been personally opposed to Colonel Johnson, commanding the American mounted riflemen, and having severely wounded that officer with a ball from his rifle, was in the act of springing upon him with his tomahawk, when his adversary drew a pistol from his belt, and shot him dead on the spot. It has since been denied by the Americans that the hero met his death from the hand of Colonel Johnson. Such was the statement on the day of the action, nor was it ever contradicted at that period. There is every reason to infer then that the merit, (if any merit could attach to the destruction of all that was noble and generous in savage life) of having killed Tecumseh, rests with Colonel Johnson. The merit of having flayed the body of the fallen brave, and made razor strops of his skin, rests with his immediate followers. This too has been denied, but denial is vain. On the night of the engagement, when seated around a fire kindled in the forest, partaking, on the very battle ground, of the meat which General Harrison's aids de camp were considerably and hospitably toasting for us on long pointed sticks, or skewers, and which, half-famished as we were, we greedily ate without the accompaniment of either salt or bread, the painful subject was discussed, and it is not less an eulogy to the memory of the