
Results of the Battle Jackson encamps, and fortifies himself.

commenced by a raking broadside from the schooner, which was directed by the light of the enemy's fires, and afforded the first intimation of the approach of the Americans. Coffee's men, with their usual impetuosity, now rushed to the attack, and entered the British camp; while the troops in front and on the right, under the immediate command of general Jackson, advanced with equal ardour.

The enemy were taken by surprise, and although they soon extinguished their fires and formed, yet order was not restored before several hundreds of them had been killed or wounded. A thick fog, which arose shortly afterward, and a misunderstanding of instructions by one of the principal officers, producing some confusion in the American ranks, Jackson called off his troops, and lay on the field that night. At four of the following morning, he fell back to a position about two miles nearer the city, where the swamp and the Mississippi approached nearest to each other, and where, therefore, his line of defence would be the shortest and most tenable. In his front was a mill-race which was supplied with water from the river. The American loss in this battle was twenty-four killed, among whom was colonel Lauderdale of Tennessee, a brave soldier, who fell much lamented; one hundred and fifteen wounded, and seventy-four prisoners, of whom were many of the principal inhabitants of the city. That of the British was estimated at four hundred in killed, wounded, and missing. If it was the object of the American general to teach his adversaries caution, and thus retard their advance, he fully succeeded; for during four days, they kept within their intrenchments, contenting themselves with active preparatory occupations. They were probably influenced somewhat to suspend the immediate execution of their intended movement on New Orleans, by the false accounts given by their prisoners, who stated that the American force amounted to fifteen thousand men.

Meanwhile general Jackson set to work immediately to fortify his position. This he effected by the construction of a simple breastwork, extending from the river to the swamp, with a ditch (the mill-race above mentioned) in front. To expedite these works, and to supply the place of earth, of which there was great scarcity owing to the swampy character of the ground, an extraordinary expedient was adopted. Bales of cotton, brought from New Orleans, were placed upon the line, and covered with earth; and of such materials was the rampart formed. As the enemy were still annoyed by the Caroline and the Louisiana, the latter having joined the former, and both being prevented from escaping up the river by a strong wind,