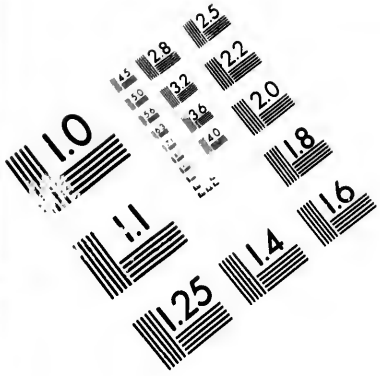

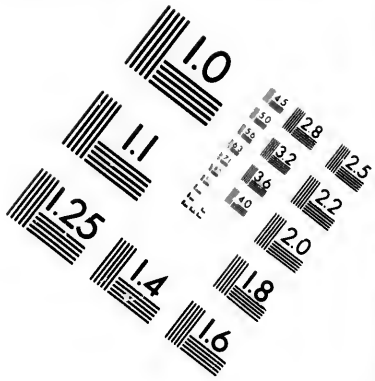

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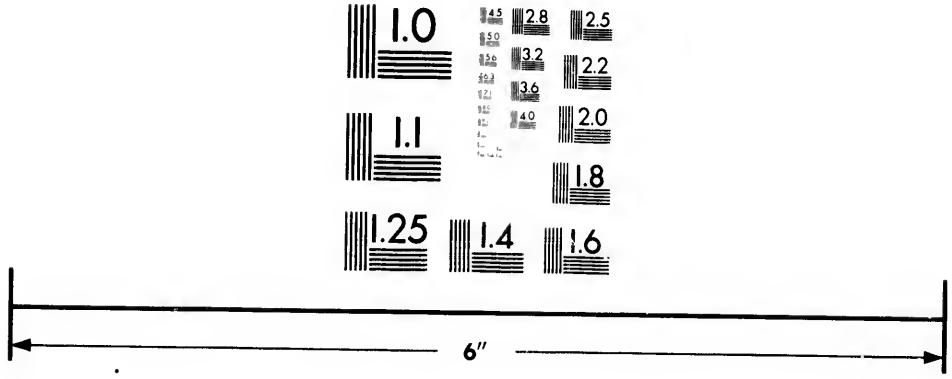

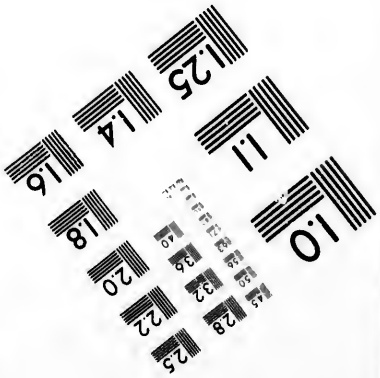

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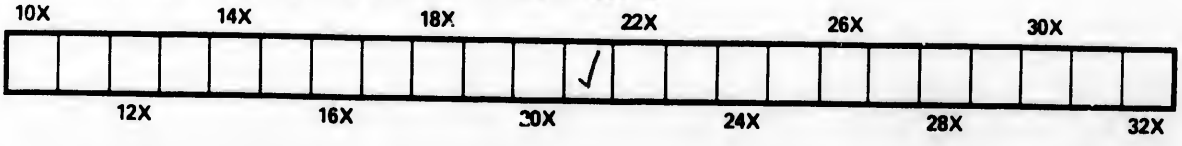

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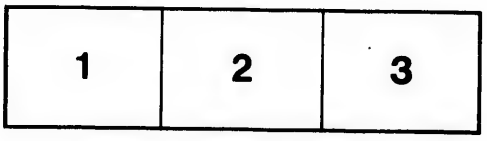

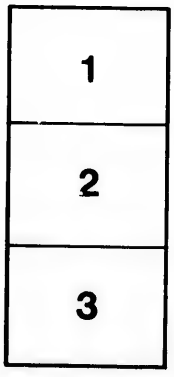

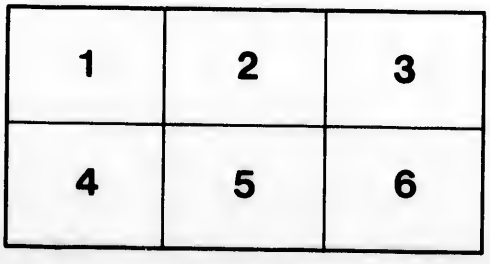

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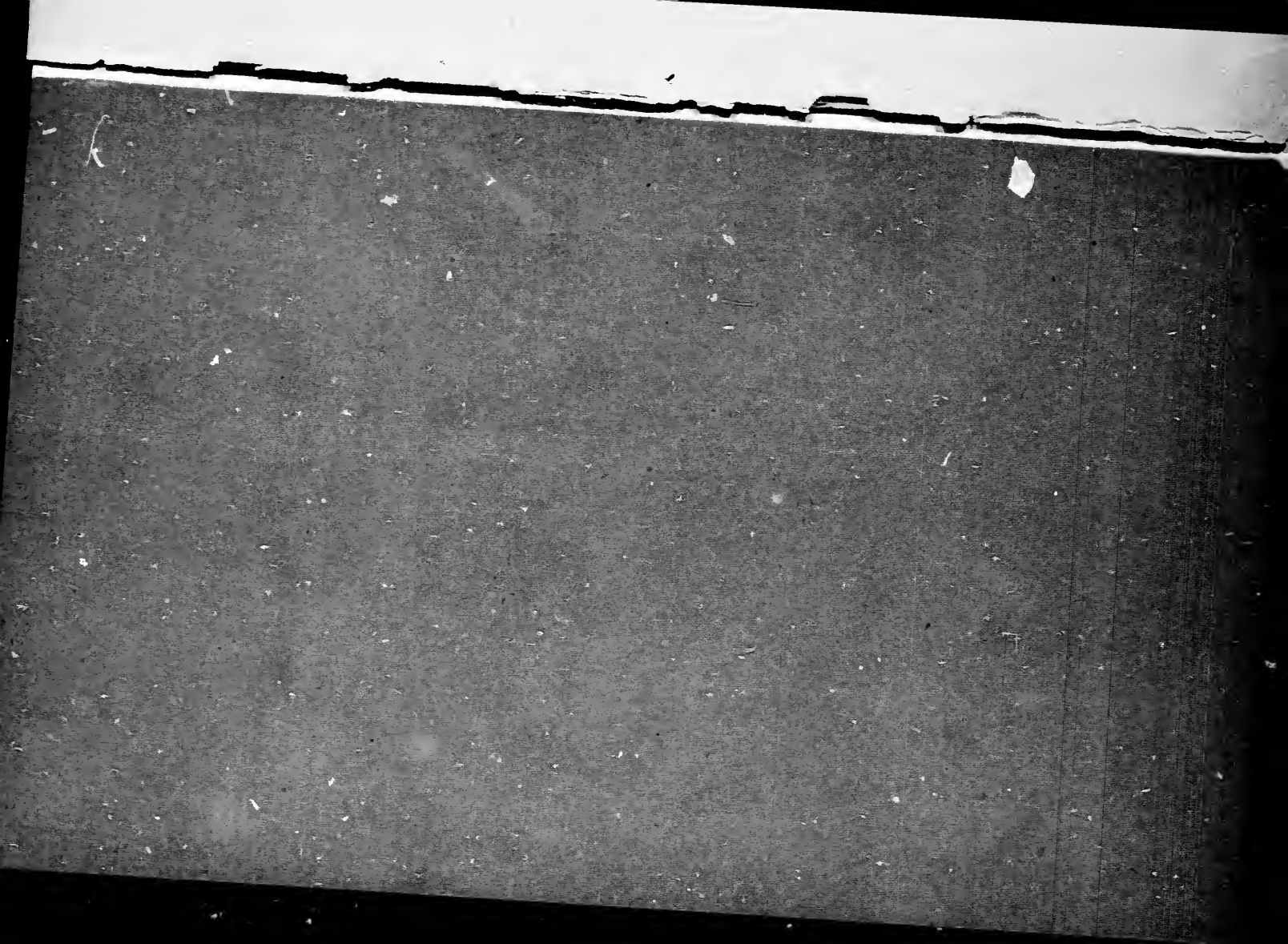
Solon A. Carter

Recollections

of the late

WAR WITH CANADA

By One of the Survivors.



RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE LATE

WAR WITH CANADA

BY ONE OF THE SURVIVORS

Concord, N. H.
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RECOLLECTIONS.

CONCORD, N. H., July 11, 1892.

From my infancy I have been imbued with a love for the military. My earliest recollection is of strutting around with a tin sword and a soldier cap. The step and time of marching soldiers were born within me. A brass band was a thing to be followed for miles, and a drum corps was sweeter music to me than the lingering notes of the dulcimer. As soon as I was big enough to wear knickerbockers I began to organize companies of soldiers, of which, by some underground arrangement, or my natural cheek, I was always captain.

I don't think there was ever any question raised about that office. The lieutenancies and other positions were parcelled out among my friends, but the captaincy belonged to me by prescriptive right. Perhaps the fact that I was born in 1860, and that my childhood was mingled with the tap of the drum and the ringing note of the bugle, as the troops marched and countermarched through our streets while preparing for the field, may account for my passion for military life.

When I grew a little older I got into the drum-corps business, and for a year or two I suppose I was the most unpopular and generally execrated boy in town. I had a little shanty in our yard, perhaps eight feet square,

which I had built, and here our drum corps, consisting of eight or ten snare drums, a base drum, cymbals, and a fife or two which could never be heard, practised constantly day and night when school did not prevent. The roar and rattle and bang swept on incessantly. A presidential campaign was coming, and we wanted to be in fine trim for the torchlight processions. Our repertoire was limited; but never did an opera company rehearse its score more faithfully than we practised those few tunes on our drums.

We could see heads stuck out of neighboring windows in mute supplication to us, and frequent complaints were made to our respective parents, but without avail. You might as well try to dam Niagara. Thumpyty-thump it went on from early morn till late at night. I wonder sometimes that we did not crack the tympanums of our ears. There we were, shut up in a space say eight feet square, and all pounding away for dear life. Well, the din was indescribable. Since I have grown to mature years, some of our former neighbors have told me of the agony they suffered during that period. I can well imagine it, but it did not worry me much at that time. On the contrary, it rather pleased me to think we were making such a stir in the world.

At last the fall came, and with it the torchlight parades. You may well believe we were there. We usually turned out about an hour before the time set for the parade, and marched about, so as to make the most of it. Those were glorious nights! I never expect to have so much fun again. No march was too long, no exertion too severe. The only thing which marred our happiness was the fact that the bands which happened to be in the processions near us wanted to play sometimes, and then we had to stop. This was a great annoyance to us, for we couldn't see how any one could have the poor taste

to prefer a brass band to the delightful strains of a drum corps. Sometimes we could not restrain ourselves, and would break right in while the band was playing, creating an indescribable hubbub. I don't think the gentlemen of the band appreciated us or our efforts.

But the presidential campaign came to an end; the drums were laid away on the shelf, and I was sent away to college. I often think, however, of the solid enjoyment I got out of pounding that old snare drum, and I never see a drum corps without longing to take hold and bang away with them. I think the proudest day of my life was when Blaine visited our city during one of the Grant campaigns, and it was the happy privilege of our drum corps to escort him from the station to the platform in the state-house yard where he was to speak. The oration was to be in the afternoon, and we furbished up in great shape for the parade. Our drums shone, and our uniforms were put on with all the air possible. When we marched up through Main street at the head of the procession, with Blaine behind us in a carriage, every boy pounding as though his life depended on it, *we were proud.* I never have felt so well since, and I never expect to in all the years that may be left to me. I nearly broke my back, I was so straight; and my eyes were tired for a week, I strained them so in trying to keep in line without turning my head.

At that age of my life I was very strongly inclined to go to Annapolis or West Point, and made overtures to my father on the point, which were rather coldly met. He evidently did not appreciate my extreme capacity for military life. The matter was finally compromised by sending me to the Institute of Technology in Boston. I reluctantly consented to this arrangement on learning that it was a military school, and I could wear a uniform and drill three times a week. I thoroughly enjoyed the

Institute, at least the military part of it and the uniform. I wore the latter constantly, and was the most self-satisfied fellow in the world when I could come home and parade round the streets in it. In my second year I was made first lieutenant of the company, and my bliss was complete. At that time the United States government had a regular army officer, Lieutenant Hubbell of the First Artillery, stationed at the Institute to superintend the drill of the students, and I was his firm admirer and follower. I think I admired him above all men at that time, and he was very kind to me.

Sometimes the lieutenant and the captain of the company would both be away, and then it was my duty to command. I don't know that I was always technically correct in my commands, but I gave plenty of them, and when the drill hour was through every boy was glad to sit down for a rest. I made the most of my opportunities. Twice a year we were taken by Lieutenant Hubbell down to Fort Warren, or Fort Constitution, in Boston harbor, for drill and rifle practice. We marched down through Washington street with colors flying, and a file of buglers kindly loaned us from the fort at the head. It was grand!—at least for me. When we arrived at the wharf we embarked on the revenue cutter, which conveyed us quickly to the fort. Those were red letter days!

But, by the time I got through the Institute, advancing years and study had taught me that there were other things in life than military parades; and while I had not lost my relish for martial music and its concomitants, I had somewhat lost my desire to join the army. I turned my attention to the more peaceful employment of studying law.

A number of years rolled by, during which my martial spirit slept, or at least lay dormant; but it needed but the blast of the bugle to arouse it: and when, in 1889, General Patterson, who had been commissioned General of the N. H. National Guard by the governor, offered me the position of judge-advocate-general, with the rank of major, on his staff, I accepted with alacrity. Whether the general had in mind my profound knowledge of the law and my keen legal mind in offering me this position, or whether he felt that my extensive knowledge of tactics and brigade movements would be of service to him, I probably never shall know; but however it was, he did not have a chance to offer the position to any one else. I pounced on the offer like a hawk on a June bug, and was on my way to Boston to order my uniform before twenty-four hours had passed. Such an outfit as I ordered! I had a fatigue uniform, a full-dress uniform, a magnificently braided overcoat, chapeau, cap, shoulder knots, leggings, spurs, sword, and all the paraphernalia of an old soldier in the regular army.

About this time I was presented by my brother, Colonel R——, with a very handsome thoroughbred saddle-horse, which just completed my outfit. Soon after I was commissioned, the annual encampment of the regular army of New Hampshire took place, and I smelt powder for the first time. A great deal of skirmish firing and battery practice was indulged in, and it actually seemed quite real. I made (or thought I did) a great show on parade, for my horse was very intelligent, and supplied my lack of knowledge by his extreme good sense. I believe in horse sense.

This encampment was very delightful. The camp was beautifully laid out, and the Brigade Staff were very comfortably quartered. We had large and spacious tents,

furnished with every necessary, and some that were not necessary. Captain Gannon, our polite and efficient commissary, set for us a luxurious table. During the day we pranced round on our horses and made ourselves conspicuous in the eyes of hundreds of admiring young ladies, and at night we had a big camp-fire and a band concert under the brigade marquet. It was with great sorrow that we broke camp, but we looked forward to the next year and another picnic.

Little did I think that the next time I put my uniform on it would be for a more serious and less satisfactory purpose. It never entered my head that in accepting the position, I was ever to be anything but a tin soldier. Such an idea as actual service did not occur to me. I don't think I am especially a valorous man, and it seems as though the parades were really the most enjoyable part of a soldier's life. The skip of a musket ball, or the ugly whir of a round shot, puts another complexion on the thing.

For a year or two previous to 1889 Canada and the United States had been having more or less trouble about the coast fisheries. Seizures had been made of fishing vessels belonging to citizens of the United States, and many angry diplomatic messages had been exchanged. While Cleveland was president and Bayard secretary of state nothing came of the matter beyond wordy disputes, but when Harrison was elected president and Blaine became secretary of state it was another matter. Blaine was a pugnacious man, and wouldn't stand any funny business. He served notice on Canada that the seizures must stop; but the Canadian government did not realize the difference in the men with whom it had to deal, or else relied too much on the backing given by England, and pursued its outrages. Fishermen who put in for repairs were seized, their vessels

condemned and broken up, and the owners imprisoned; and many other acts of similar nature occurred which greatly exasperated the American people, especially as negotiations were going on at the time to regulate the fishery question in a peaceful manner.

The government, through its secretary of state, protested vigorously, and threatened reprisals if the outrages did not cease; but, in spite of all, the Canadian authorities kept on. At last, goaded to desperation, several of our new armed cruisers were ordered to Canadian waters to protect our interests. They had not been there long before opportunity offered to see what they were made of.

An American fisherman ventured in near shore, owing to stress of weather, and he was immediately seized by a Canadian war vessel. The cruiser Boston, which was in the neighborhood, learning of the seizure, hastened with all speed to the locality, and demanded of the Canadian vessel the immediate surrender of the fisherman. This being refused, the Boston opened fire upon the Canadian, and in less than twenty minutes sunk her with round shot. Twenty of the crew were killed in the attack, and the rest reached the shore in their boats. The Boston took the fisherman under her charge, and returned with her to American waters. This, of course, created wild excitement both in Canada and the United States. War was declared, and both governments began to arm for the fray. Canada's first move, naturally, was to cable the English government for assistance; and in less than twenty-four hours a dozen powerful cruisers and armored gunboats were steaming across the Atlantic for the scene of conflict. All the vessels of Great Britain on the Atlantic station were also ordered to proceed to Canadian waters.

At that time the United States had just begun to build

a modern navy, and but few of the new ships were completed, and those of the light, unarmored cruiser style mostly. We were hardly in condition to cope successfully with England on the seas. Large forces of men were put to work upon those vessels which were in process of construction, and every energy was put forth to get them ready for sea. When war was declared we had perhaps a dozen vessels which were fit for actual service; the remainder of the navy consisted of old hulks past their usefulness, and small dispatch boats and revenue cutters.

What we had most to fear was the bombardment of our sea-coast cities. They were entirely unprotected, and our few men-of-war could hardly prevent the powerful ironclads of England from lying off the coast and planting shells in our most populous seaports at will. Then, too, there was our northern border contiguous to Canada, which must be protected. We did not have so much fear about that, for that was a question of men and numbers; but still we knew that in a very few weeks at the most there would be a vast army of well trained British troops poured into our Northern states.

I lived at that time in an inland city in New Hampshire, and, of course, personally did not fear the gunboats; but we were deeply interested in the movements of the land forces to the north of us. Any invasion from that direction must result in danger to our homes and property. The regular army of the United States consisted of but twenty-five thousand men; and while it is true that in the United States civilians make good soldiers in a very short time, still we could hardly get a well drilled army of any size in the field before England could, by means of her very perfect transport system, throw fifty thousand troops upon our border. The president, at the first sound of war, drew all the available

troops from the West and scattered them along the seaboard. A call was immediately made for volunteers, and the answer was so overwhelming that uniforms and equipments could not be found fast enough to put them in the field. Of course all these preparations took time; and to guard against depredations and expected invasions of the Northern states bordering on the Canada line, the militia of those states was ordered to take the field to protect the northern line until a sufficient body of troops could be got in readiness, not only to repel invasion, but to act on the offensive.

The government was very active, and managed the preparations for war with great skill and energy. But the people immediately realized the truth of the warnings which had been repeatedly given them by competent officers in the army and navy, viz., that it would be impossible at a moment's notice to get together a first-class navy, with modern armament, and to furnish protection to our vastly wealthy seaport cities. However, the English vessels, on their arrival, were rather slow to act, and it gave us a little time to turn round and put ourselves on the offensive.

As I have already said, I was more interested in the movements of the land forces, and particularly because I was a unit in the New Hampshire militia. When it became apparent that the militia was to be put in the field, I was in great trepidation. War was hardly my forte. I didn't long for gore so much as I used to. I was willing to let some one else have all the glory, provided he would do the fighting; but I couldn't find any hole my size to crawl out of, and, like many a man in the Rebellion, and I suppose, for the matter of that, in every war that ever took place, my pride came to the rescue, and I put a bold face on it. The members of the brigade staff resident in C—— held frequent earnest consul-

tations on the subject. It was a time of great excitement. People began to look upon us with interest. Those who had been wont to poke a little quiet fun at us about our titles and holiday parades, now looked at us with more respect.

At last the order came for us to rendezvous at Concord on the twenty-eighth of June. The immediate cause for the order was the report that the Canadian militia with a few regular troops were marching towards the United States border with a view of attacking some of the outlying towns in northern New Hampshire and Vermont. The people of the northern part of the state were terribly excited, and urgent calls were made upon the state and United States governments for protection. Upon learning of this movement Governor Tuttle immediately ordered the militia of the state to prepare for the field.

The response was prompt and energetic, and on the morning of the twenty-eighth every train that came into Concord bore bodies of blue-coated soldiers. Upon arrival they were immediately marched to the campground on the Plains, where a day or two was to be spent in making final preparations. Most of the companies turned out with full ranks, and there was a great deal of enthusiasm.

Immediately upon the arrival of the troops in camp General Patterson took command, and preparations for departure were energetically pushed forward. Blankets, tin plates, cups, knives and forks, and such articles as were absolutely necessary in the field, were issued to the men. General Patterson called all the commissioned officers of the brigade together and made a short, pithy speech to them, in which he reminded them that they were about to put in practice the training which they had been receiving for a number of years, and that he expected

every man to make the cause his own, and see that the New Hampshire militia, in this its crucial test, demonstrate that it was something more than a holiday organization.

On the morning of the thirtieth of June, at eight o'clock, the general assembly was sounded by the brigade bugler, and immediately the final preparations for departure began. In a few moments the troops moved out of their company streets in heavy marching order, their knapsacks packed, their overcoats rolled on top, and their blankets secured in a roll round the shoulder.

The general, mounted on a handsome black horse, took his place at the right of the line, and the word was given to move out. It was indeed a warlike sight. First came the general in command with his staff, all in fatigue uniform, for all extras and fancy trappings had been left behind; then the consolidated band; then the signal corps; then the three regiments of infantry, their gleaming gun-barrels glistening in the bright rays of the morning sun; after them, our crack battery, with Captain Piper at the head, each yellow twelve-pounder rolling along with an ominous rumble; and, finally, our small but lively troop of cavalry, each man of which had a chicken "strapped to the poop of his saddle," as a newspaper correspondent called it. In the rear marched a dozen notaries public with their seals in their hands. We took them along in order to execute affidavits that we actually did fight. These affidavits would also be useful in securing pensions after the war was over.

When we reached the Main street, the band playing "Johnny, get your gun," we were met by tumultuous applause from the thousands of people congregated to see us off. We felt proud, but confoundedly nervous. We realized that this was the best part of it. Major Cilley leaned over to me, and said,—"Wish this was all there was to it!" and every man within hearing nodded assent.

At the depot a long train was awaiting us, with three engines attached, steam all up, and everything in readiness for a start, including Fred Jones, who had heroically volunteered to conduct the train to the seat of war. The work of embarking the troops was quickly accomplished; and with the battery on flat cars and the cavalry in box, we moved slowly out of the station amidst great cheers and excitement.

Our destination was the town of Berlin Falls, as indications pointed to that place as the first objective point of the Canadian troops. This town had grown up within a few years with the mushroom rapidity of a Western place, and had become quite an important centre, indeed, the most important in northern New Hampshire, as a manufacturing town. For this reason it most needed protection. There was nothing to be gained by attacking a farming community, but to capture and destroy a town like Berlin Falls, with all its manufactories and vested interests, would be to strike a serious blow to the state.

General Ayling, the efficient adjutant-general of the state, had been for some days concentrating supplies and ammunition at this point, so as to be ready for us on arrival. Transportation for our baggage, ammunition, etc., had also been obtained.

In order to reach this town we went up over the Concord & Montreal road to Whitefield, and there disembarked, and marched overland through the mountains. At every station we met a perfect ovation, and refreshments were constantly offered us, much to the satisfaction of myself and others. We could hardly refrain from weeping, out of pity for ourselves, when we saw the deep awe and solicitude which were expressed on every face at the thought of the almost certain death into which we were running to save the lives of those

who were left by the fireside. Captain Gienty said to me, as we sat on top of the Baker heater in one corner of the car, "Major, this is a grave responsibility we are taking upon ourselves. Not only the lives of our dependent people, but the future of this state and nation, perhaps, hang upon our efforts. Let us be brave, and go down to death, if necessary, in defence of the right." These comforting and vertiginous words so fittingly expressed my own feelings that I immediately grasped his hand, and we pledged ourselves as indicated in the fifth line above.

At last Whitefield was reached, and after the guns and horses were unloaded and saddles put on, we began our march through the defiles of the mountains to Berlin Falls. This march, though rather hot and long, was not severe, as we followed a water grade all the way, and the umbrageous shade of the sinewy saplings shed shimmering shadow slantingly athwart our course, thus mitigating the extreme rigor of the now zenithward climbing sun. Towards night we debouched upon the town of Berlin Falls, and encamped upon the outskirts, where good water, adulterated and unadulterated, was to be had. We were soon surrounded by the inhabitants of the place, who hailed us as their deliverers, and we all felt like patting ourselves on the back. As soon as camp was pitched routine duty began, guards were posted, and we began to experience what discipline was. Through the forethought of General Ayling we were amply provided with every necessary; and as darkness fell we sat down to a smoking hot supper, which was a great refreshment after the long march. The blazing camp fires were soon gleaming all over the field; and the bustle and stir and the occasional challenge of the sentries impressed the realness of our business upon us.

Gradually the camp fires died out, taps were sounded, and the weary men sank to sleep. Only here and there an occasional light appeared in the tent of some officer. All went to bed with a feeling of restless uncertainty, for none knew, except perhaps the general, just where the Canadian troops were, nor how soon we should be placed in juxtaposition to them. It was generally believed among the men that we might expect an attack any time. Few were at all familiar with the country surrounding the town, and no one knew from what direction the attack would come. Perhaps a short explanation of the location of the town will be serviceable, though one can easily get at it by looking on a map.

Berlin Falls is located upon the Androscoggin river, in the north-eastern part of New Hampshire. This river is the outlet of the Rangely Lake system, and comes out of the lakes some thirty miles north of Berlin Falls. The region between the town and the lakes is almost an unbroken wilderness, with scarcely any habitations. It had been reported by natives and scouts sent out that the Canadian militia were massing on the border just north of Errol Dam, which is at the mouth of the lakes; and in order to attack Berlin Falls it would be necessary for them to follow the river down through the forest, as there was no other feasible way.

We had supposed that we should remain at Berlin Falls and act upon the defensive; but late that night word was sent to the staff officers and commanders of regiments that the march would be taken up again next morning towards Errol Dam, it being the intention of General Patterson to act upon the offensive rather than to wait and allow the enemy to approach the town.

I did n't sleep much that night. I kept waking up to hear shells whizzing by my head and feel the plunk of a minie ball as it buried itself in the fleshy part of my

arm. It was but a few hours, but it seemed days before the *reveille* sounded, and I was glad enough to get up, though it was hardly light. The grey light of early dawn gave everything a misty and indistinct appearance, and for a moment it all seemed a dream to me. A few birds were piping their breakfast call in the neighboring woods, and I could hear the yawns and grumblings of the officers in the adjoining tents, who were disturbed in their last nap. The short, effervescent snorts from the next tent apprised me that Colonel Watson, our genial medical director, was still floating on the peaceful waves of elysium. Thinking that he was getting more than his share of enjoyment I pulled back the flap of his tent, and, after shaking a bottle of Appolinaris water vigorously and taking good aim, I uncorked it so that the contents landed spitefully upon the doctor's unprotected head. He got up.

An amusing incident was reported to me that day. It seems that the colonel of one of the regiments had always been in the habit of having divine service the first thing in the morning, and it was one of the regular things for the bugler to sound the call for such service at a stated time. On this morning, however, by some oversight he forgot to sound it. The colonel noticed the omission, and stepped to the tent of the adjutant. Putting his head inside, he called,—

"Adjutant! has that service call been sounded?"

"No, sir, but I guess it will be in a minute."

The colonel returned to his tent, but no call was sounded. In a moment he stuck his head in at the adjutant's tent again:

"Adjutant!"

"Sir?"

"That d——d service's gone to h——l!"

Just then he looked round, and there stood the chap-

lain who had come out to learn the reason of the omission. Explanations were in order.

As soon as breakfast had been eaten, the order was given to prepare for departure; but before leaving camp ball cartridges were issued to the men, the caissons were furnished with ammunition, and the ammunition wagons and baggage trains were drawn up ready to follow in the wake of the troops. Three days' rations, consisting of mince pie, limburger cheese, and charlotte-russe were issued to each man, as it was not certain when we should again be able to cook a meal. The men grumbled a little at this coarse diet, but quieted down when informed that it would be impossible to carry in their knapsacks anything but the most imperishable food on so long a march; and then another advantage occurred to them as regards the cheese, and that was, that if they got tired carrying it, it was strong enough to walk alone. I have always noticed in my reading of history how much the success of troops in battle depended upon their being properly fed and nourished, and in this celebrated campaign we owed much of our success to Captain Gannon, who so skilfully furnished our *commissariat*. Few would have thought of this strong and nourishing diet for men enduring the fatigues of long marches and hard fought battles. Captain Leavitt, who seldom perpetrated a pun, said that, as Canada had turned loose the dogs of war, Captain Gannon had seized a few for his mince pies.

Just as we were about to leave we were joined by a company of about a hundred lumbermen and wood-choppers, armed with axes, who were to act as sappers and miners. We afterwards found them very valuable.

It was still early in the morning when the bugle sounded the signal for the march to begin, and we moved out of camp and on through the town. After leaving the town, our route lay along the bank of the Androscog-

gin, and a more beautiful country cannot be imagined. The valley is about as broad as the Merrimack valley, bounded on both sides by low hills, generally well wooded, and the river winds its graceful way under arching elms and willows towards the sea. If our errand had been more peaceful we should have enjoyed the scenery, but our thoughts were bent in other directions.

At noon a halt was made for dinner, and then we hurried on. Soon after this halt we came to the unbroken forest which lines both shores of the river clear to the mouth of the lakes at Errol Dam. This country is a perfect wilderness for about fourteen miles, without a single habitation or sign of cultivation. There is, however, a first-class road running along close by the bank of the river. This road was built by the state a few years since, we believe, under the supervision of Dr. C. N. Towle and Col. J. A. White, of Concord. They had no steam-roller, of course, as it was too far away to obtain one, but the doctor and the Colonel walked over it several times, and it is as hard as asphalt.

On either side of the road the dense, unbroken forest stretches away, and the great trees meet overhead, making an almost twilight darkness at midday. When we entered this silence Major Dow was ordered to precede the main column by about half a mile, with a company of the third regiment deployed as skirmishers, to guard against an ambush or surprise. We also made the lumbermen, who were familiar with the region, useful in this capacity.

Slowly the long line of troops, with the rumbling caissons, and the creaking ammunition and forage wagons, wound its way beneath the great trees, from whose branches long creepers and moss hung down. No sound of music broke the stillness,—nothing but the tramp, tramp of the men, and the thud, thud of the horses' hoofs on the hard ground. Now and then the sunlight would

break through some opening in the trees, and glint for a moment upon the burnished accoutrements of the men; or a frightened partridge would whirr across the front of the column and disappear in the underbrush. The men seemed solemn and thoughtful. The darkness and solitude had their effect.

It was nearly dusk when we emerged from the fastnesses of the forest into the opening which surrounds Errol Dam. And glad we were to be safely through. I think the men had a feeling that we were likely to be attacked at any moment. The officers, however, were informed that no attack was to be feared, as our scouts reported the enemy resting quietly some miles from Errol Dam.

The country opens out here, and there are several first-rate farms, and a small hotel which is patronized at certain seasons of the year by sportsmen. This valley can also be approached by way of Dixville Notch. Our first thought when we reached the open was to look for the enemy, but no sign of them could be seen. Every thing was peaceful and quiet. The few farmers who lived in the region had taken their departure for more salubrious climes, and we had the whole place to ourselves. But, evidently, it was not expected that we should be thus left to our own devices long, for no sooner were we well out of the woods than the order was given to halt, and camp was pitched. As we had arrived first on the field we had the choice of position, and the next thing to do was to select and occupy such position. The only approach to Berlin Falls was by the road we had passed over, and, of course, it was necessary to protect that road.

Just a short distance from the edge of the woods a small stream or river runs into the Androscoggin at right angles, and the road crosses it on a wooden bridge.

After crossing the bridge there was a slight hill which commanded the valley. In order to reach the road to Berlin Falls, it was necessary to ascend this hill and cross the bridge, or, at least, the river. It did not take long to decide that the hill was the place to occupy; and as soon as camp had been pitched along the small river spoken of, all hands were set to work to fortify the summit of the hill.

Temporary earthworks were thrown up, and our lumbermen were set to work to fell trees, which were hauled into position by the team horses; and by midnight, working by the light of huge bonfires, we had quite a respectable breastwork extending along our front for a hundred rods, and then making a return at both ends nearly to the river. Having made these hurried preparations and posted a strong guard, the men were allowed to turn in and get what rest they could after their hard day's work.

Our scouts brought us in the report that the enemy were now steadily approaching, and might be expected to arrive by morning. They were estimated to number about five thousand men, principally infantry, though they had a four-gun battery, but no cavalry. Of course they greatly outnumbered us, for, counting our lumbermen, supernumeraries, and all, we could hardly muster fifteen hundred. We had the choice of position, however, and relied a great deal on the superiority of our men. We knew that the Canadian militia, which composed the bulk of the troops advancing against us, were rather poor material. What we most feared was the small body of regular troops, which we knew to be in the approaching column. There were but a few companies of them, but they were veterans who had seen service in foreign lands.

After every precaution had been taken, General Pat-

terson summoned the staff to his tent for a council. The general himself, and Colonel Gould, our assistant adjutant-general, were cool and collected, but the rest of us were a trifle excited, I think. We discussed the matter informally, and then General Patterson requested each man to retire to his quarters and draw up his own scheme or idea of how the battle should be conducted. We were to report again in the course of an hour, when our respective plans would be considered.

In compliance with this direction I went to my tent, and, taking a large sheet of paper, drew out a rough map of the field, showing our present position and the probable position which the enemy would occupy, also showing the weak points in our line, and the places which must be most carefully looked after. I then, after a great deal of study and consultation with my extensive war library, which I had with me, outlined my plan of action on the back of the sheet. I made it as brief as possible, as I knew time was valuable, and I had in mind the energy and brevity of speech of such famous commanders as Grant, Sherman, Von Moltke, Col. Corser, etc.

At the appointed hour we hurried through the darkness and silence of the night to the general's quarters. We found that he had just returned from a *reconnoissance*. A lighted candle sticking in a potato was our only illumination, but, by crowding round the table, we were able to follow the plans as presented.

The general first called upon Colonel Gould. The colonel, who is a man of determination and an old veteran, explained his plan, which was, to move forward the first and second regiments under cover of fire from the battery, holding the third and the cavalry in reserve behind the earthworks. Instead of moving the troops forward in masses or lines, he would throw out successive strong skirmish lines, and, if a favorable opportunity

occurred, he would throw in the cavalry and the band. Of course, in describing these plans of battle, I give but the merest outline. They were all carefully drawn out and illustrated on paper.

Colonel Watson thought we should advance in column of masses, and, at the proper moment, execute rear battalions left front into line, bringing the left battalion on the right of the first division. This would intimidate the enemy, who would be unused to such movements, and while they were watching it we could outflank them.

Major Dow thought that the first and third regiments should move out at the rate of eighty-five steps to the minute, being very careful to keep the cadence, and, when within forty rods of the enemy, face to the rear, load, face about, and fire with precision. This decided stand would naturally have its effect.

Major Cilley was of the opinion that we should form the whole brigade in line, brigade front, then, with himself as the pivot-man, wheel in circle, gradually scooping in the enemy, and when we had them driven into the centre, we should fall upon them and kill them with the butts of our muskets, thus saving ammunition for rifle practice next summer.

Captain Leavitt thought we should form line three or four hundred yards to the rear, and then advance in column of fours in the following manner: At the command, "Forward! March!" the first file advance one step, and resting their hands on their knees, bending their backs at a right angle with their legs; the next file in their rear now advances, and vaults over the backs of the file in front, then they in succession bend down. This is repeated by each succeeding file, the object being to advance upon the enemy, but to so disconcert his aim by constant motion that no casualties should occur.

Captain Gannon thought that every man's gun should

be loaded with commissary biscuit, which kill at four miles, and then they should evolute from a common centre, gradually deploying upon the enemy, executing at the proper moment, "Wings, right forward!" thus gaining a great advantage over the enemy, who would not be expecting any such move. It would be very easy then to mow them down with the aforesaid biscuit, and all that would be left to do would be to count and bury the dead.

Captain Gienty was of the opinion that after every man had been properly way-billed, we should post markers within forty rods of the enemy's line, and then order the entire brigade to dress up on the line so formed, the staff remaining in the rear to see that there was a perfect alignment. After the alignment was made, the order should be given to load, and firing should be kept up till the enemy were all killed, or speechless.

Captain Kimball would form line of battalions on first division, deploying the battery as skirmishers, and using the band as a reserve. He would finesse for position, and when gained would fall upon the enemy with terrible slaughter.

I was the last man to be called on, being the junior officer in time of service present. I spread out my intricate and carefully considered plans on the table, and, after pointing out the positions of vantage and disadvantage, and clearly demonstrating that the weak point of the enemy lay in the fact that they had no lard in their supplies—and no Canadian could live without lard—I stated clearly and succinctly my plan of attack, which was, to creep up as near the enemy as we could get without being exposed, fire, and run like the devil. My plan was received with murmurs of appreciation, and I had the extreme satisfaction of having it adopted over the heads of all my superiors.

Having discussed the matter fully, and arranged all the details, giving each regiment its position in line, and fixing on a safe place of retreat for the staff if there should be any danger, we retired to our quarters to get what little rest we could.

I lay down on my camp-bed, with my clothes on, and tossed and tumbled. I was uneasy. I felt nervous. War wasn't what it was cracked up to be. I never could bear the sight of blood. While I was kicking myself for ever joining the militia, the flap of my tent was raised, and I nearly fainted. I thought it was some blasted Canuck who had got the drop on me, but was greatly relieved when it turned out to be only Major Cilley.

The major was as pale as dish-water, and his mouth had a droop that was pitiful to see. His usually nicely curled moustache was lax and wilted, and had caught between his teeth. He came and sat down on the bedside, and we gazed dolefully at each other. He had not been there long before Colonel Watson appeared, looking as doleful as we did, and he took his seat on the bedside. Then Captain Leavitt and Captain Gienty, Captain Kimball and Major Dow, came sneaking in and took their seats. Not a word was said. There was no use for words. A gloomy silence prevailed, broken only by the half smothered sighs of those present. Finally, Captain Gienty took courage, and spoke out the thoughts of all:

"Boys, what's to be done? We're in a bad mess. We're all scared, and we needn't try and fool each other."

Various suggestions were made, but none of them seemed to at all help our case. We had either to fight or run. Major Cilley suggested that it was customary for the staff to keep well to the rear, as their lives were too valuable to be sacrificed; but the momentary relief

occasioned by this was ruined by Captain Leavitt, who said that more men were killed at the rear than at the front.

I had been in deep meditation for some time. It had occurred to me that strategy was the thing to use. These Canadians were not very brilliant, probably, and we might get the best of them by strategy so as to save our pelts. In my historical readings I had been much interested in the fine strategy employed by Napoleon, Frederick the Great, and our own Washington. The greatest battles had not been won by mere brute force and gunpowder, but by the employment of unusual and unexpected means, the taking advantage of some unlooked-for incident. I had an idea which I thought might be carried out. This idea came to me like an inspiration; but I was not sure we could execute it for want of the necessary material.

"Colonel," I asked, turning to our medical director, "what have you for medicines?"

"Oh! I have a miscellaneous collection. Of course I am well prepared to look after bowel troubles, as they are the most frequent in camp."

"What have you which would be a speedy laxative?"

"I have a large supply of calomel which acts very rapidly."

"But how much have you of it?"

"Enough for an army."

"That's just what I want. Now, captain," turning to Captain Gannon, "how much ginger ale have you?"

"About five hundred bottles. You know it was put in, as it was thought it would be a good thing for the troops. But what the deuce has that got to do with getting us out of this hole? This is no time for fun."

"Never was more in earnest in my life, captain," I replied.

"Well, for heaven's sake, tell us what the scheme is,' said several voices.

"I do not know as it can be carried out," I replied; "but here it is:—I propose to take all the ginger ale we have, and put a big dose of calomel in each bottle, and cork it up again. Then load it on wagons, with some intelligent lumbermen for drivers, and send them into the enemy's lines to-morrow morning just before the battle. Let them think it was intended for us, but these drivers, by some stupid blunder, got into the wrong camp. It will be seized with avidity, and will go the rounds of the army. Five hundred bottles will go a good ways. If it works, there won't be any battle. That's all there is to my scheme. What do you think of it?"

"It's splendid!" cried Colonel Watson; "and I think it can be carried out. Let's go at it at once."

Those present were ready to seize upon any plan which promised escape from their predicament. There was a ray of hope shining dimly through it: it was the drowning man's straw, and all grabbed at it with both hands.

A few moments afterwards a ghostly procession, headed by Colonel Watson, moved towards the commissary tent through the gloom. Each man carried a spoon, and the work began. In about an hour every bottle of ginger ale was carefully doctored, and corked up again. Two trusty men had been found among the lumbermen, who knew the country well. Dressed in overalls and flannel shirts, they mounted the seats of the two wagons loaded with the ale. Their instructions were, to make a detour, and reach the road by which the Canadians had arrived; then to turn back on that road, and drive straight into the enemy's picket line. When halted by the pickets, they were to express great consternation, and indicate by their manner and actions that they supposed they were within the Yankee lines. Of course they would then be

secured, and taken with their loads to head-quarters; and we expected that in due time our ginger ale would be safely deposited for a season in the well larded stomachs of the Canucks.

We timed the departure of the men so that they would arrive within the Canadian lines just about daylight. Having despatched them, we could do nothing more. We felt a trifle better, but not very well, thank you!

As soon as day dawned preparations for the fight began upon both sides. We could see the enemy hastily throwing up earth-works, and companies marching hither and yon. We were not idle. Our own defences were strengthened. Last instructions were given to officers, and every precaution possible taken to insure success. It must be confessed that, except for superiority of position, our chances did not look very bright. We were so heavily outnumbered, and we knew so little of the pluck and endurance of our men, that success seemed rather problematical.

General Patterson had decided that we stood a better chance of beating them if we made the attack, keeping our works in the rear as a last resort and place of retreat; for the Canadian militia were as green as our men, and it was quite possible that a determined attack might demoralize them. We felt quite sure it would us, and did not want to wait for it. Accordingly, as soon as the men had swallowed a light but appropriate breakfast of canvas-back duck and champagne, the general made his dispositions for the battle.

Meanwhile, Sergeant Roby and myself had taken position in the top of an adjacent tree, with a field glass,—not, I assure you, because we feared death, but to better watch the enemy. We had a special object to accomplish. Not one word had been said to any one about our little stratagem of the preceding night, and those who were in the

secret were fearfully anxious to know whether it was going to work.

With our field-glasses we carefully examined the enemy. At first we could not discern the objects of our solicitude, but finally we made them out. The Canadians were drawn up in line, and two wagons were passing slowly down the front. From these wagons, bottles or something of that shape were being handed out to the men. Each man took a drink, and passed it along to the next. We felt glad that it was being fairly and impartially divided. We wanted every man to have his share, and as the wagons went the whole length of the line, not forgetting the battery, we were satisfied.

Having learned all we wanted to know, we joyfully shinned down, much to the surprise of some of our friends, who thought we had gone to roost permanently. I tipped the wink to Major Cilley, who was feeling very ill, and to the rest of our coterie; and the effect was magical. A fierce and war-like expression settled on their stern faces, and I could see that war was their native element. They thirsted for blood—raw, hot, trickling blood—oceans of it. No ordinary massacre would satisfy us. We rushed for our horses, and, with a great clatter and banging of swords, came tearing down to the general's quarters, ready for action. He seemed quite surprised to see us.

Nearly all the commands were now posted, and, after taking a final glance over the field, and stationing the notaries where they could see all and make proper affidavits, the order was given for a strong skirmish line, under command of Captain Rolfe, to advance. The main body was held back for a short time in order to feel the pulse of the enemy.

It was not long before we, who were anxiously listening, heard the crack of a rifle, and then another and another, and then a constant rattle, denoting that our

skirmish line had come in contact with the enemy's. In a few minutes Captain Rolfe hurried back to report that the enemy's pulse was 108 to the minute. We felt reassured to hear this, but just then the boom of a cannon and the shriek of a shot caused a paleness to settle on our faces. It told us that the enemy's battery had opened up. Ours replied, and the battle was fairly under way.

I glanced anxiously round for some kind of shelter, but could see none, and was obliged to keep my position, being busily engaged in swallowing my heart, which kept coming up into my mouth. My heart is rather larger than common, and I have had an enlargement of the œsophagus ever since that battle, for which I draw a pension.

Suddenly an orderly rode up at a furious pace to announce that the enemy were approaching. Upon learning this, the general, in order not to lose the advantage of being the attacking party, directed the bugler to sound the advance. At this signal the First and Third regiments moved out in good order *en echelon*, under cover of fire from the battery. The Second regiment, the cavalry, and the band were held as reserve. Major Cilley was in command of the band, while I had been ordered to bring in the cavalry at the proper moment.

All this time I was watching the enemy narrowly. Would the ginger ale do its work? Were we to fight a body of tough, copper-bottomed Canucks, or were we to fight a diminishing line of disconsolate invalids? That was the question; and it was a vital one to me. The enemy's line seemed firm and impregnable. But, ha! what is that over to the left? A half dozen men have suddenly dropped out and are making for the rear; to the right several more; a group from the centre; more from the extreme left; a man or two all along the line; two gunners from the battery; three of the regulars,—and so it goes on all along the line until there is a steady

stream of men hurrying to the rear. The officers are rushing hither and thither; the file-closers are gesticulating; confusion reigns. This movement is noticed by General Patterson and other officers with great surprise. They thought it was some kind of stratagem or trick—and so it was. The general was not in our secret.

"Major, what does that mean?" he asked, turning to me, who stood near him.

"Wait a moment and you 'll see, general," was my reply, in the usually polite and courteous tones of militiamen.

The number of the stragglers kept increasing. There seemed to be a perfect exodus to the rear. We could see the officers riding furiously up and down the line, expostulating, entreating, threatening, and doing all in their power to stem the tide; but the movement kept on. Men dropped their arms and ran for cover by scores. The lines were growing thin, and wavering. The general wanted no further inducement to attack in earnest. Turning to the bugler, he ordered him to sound the charge, and, after giving me instructions to bring in the cavalry at the right moment, he put spurs to his horse and hurried to the scene of action.

I braced up and rode over to the cavalry, who were sitting impatiently in the saddle behind the earthworks, waiting for the command to go in. I hardly knew when I ought to order them into action, but as soon as I saw that the infantry were nearing the enemy's left I told the captain to have the charge sounded. Without waiting for any further parley the bugle rang out its soul-stirring notes, and we swept over the earthworks at a bound. I was standing by the captain when the order was given, and my horse, catching the infection, leaped to the front with great strides. In less time than it takes to read this I was tearing down the hill at the head of the whole troop. This was not to my taste. I had intended to

remain safely in the rear, and let the captain lead the charge. I knew that officers were generally singled out by sharpshooters, and, besides, the enemy's battery was very likely to turn its attention to a body of cavalry sweeping down upon it.

I pulled and yanked on my horse in vain endeavors to hold him back or turn him aside from the line he was pursuing, but I might as well have tried to hold a ring-tailed tornado. There was fire in his eye, and he had the bit in his teeth; his head was stretched straight to the front, while his stride became longer and fiercer. I glanced behind for some means of escape; but there, within half a dozen rods, was the whole troop of cavalry, with swords drawn, rushing and tearing after me like an avalanche. Had I been able to rein in my horse, it would have been sure death.

The men behind me evidently thought I was leading them, and with hoarse cheers they spurred their horses to accelerated speed. We were now getting dangerously near the main line of the enemy, and I could hear the shots whizzing by my head, and could see the ugly flash of the field pieces as they vomited forth their undesired pellets. My feelings can be better imagined than described; but, seeing there was no escape, I resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible, and, drawing my sword, I fixed myself firmly in my saddle, ready for the shock. On, on we rushed, the thunder of the horses' feet being drowned in the roar and rattle of the musketry. I felt faint, and could hardly see. I felt a shock, heard a crash, struck at something hard with my sword, and then found myself alone, way to the rear of the enemy's line. Finding, after careful examination, that I was not killed, I gradually reined in my panting horse, and turned round to see what had taken place. I sank back in my saddle with a sigh of relief and joy when I saw that we

had completely routed the Canadians, and that the remnant had thrown down their arms. Farther off to the right the infantry had been equally successful, and the day was ours. The victory was complete.

My courage began to return, though my heart was thumping away like a hydraulic pump. I hurried back to the scene of action, and, after exchanging congratulations with the officers, sent the cavalry after the great body of deserters, which we knew could not be far off. They had n't far to go, nor much trouble in making the capture. In the neighboring woods the great mass of the stragglers were found stretched upon the ground, and a more miserable and abject lot of prisoners never were taken. They were driven into camp in droves, scarcely able to walk. When we had them all in, and had made a general round-up, we found that we had captured over three fourths of the whole army, including most of the regulars. In addition to this, we scooped in four thousand stands of arms, twenty-five stands of colors, four field-pieces, and their whole baggage train.

The rejoicings in camp that night were without precedent. We had lost but a few men, though many were severely wounded. Great curiosity was expressed among our men and officers as to the cause of the sudden desertion of so many of the enemy at the beginning of the action. It soon leaked out that these men were taken violently ill, all at about the same time, and were obliged to fall out. No explanation could be given by the sufferers themselves, and those who were in the secret were mum.

When order had been restored, the brigade was turned out and thanked by General Patterson for its noble work. The general spoke very feelingly, and it was really a proud day for the New Hampshire militia. When he had finished addressing the men, he called me out in front of the line and publicly thanked me for the magnificent

manner in which I had led the charge of the cavalry and the unprecedented courage I had displayed. I am a modest man, and I blushed. My undaunted courage was all the more noticeable, as one or two of the staff officers had been a trifle weak-kneed. One had been found after the action stuck in one of the big bass horns belonging to the band. It seems he had crawled in there to get out of danger, and could n't get out again on account of the crook in it.

Thus ended the most memorable battle ever fought on New Hampshire soil. You know the rest,—how we were soon after relieved by United States troops under General Potter, who rushed into the service again at the first sound of war, and how Canada was invaded and Montreal finally captured, and then Quebec. You know, also, how English gunboats lay off Boston, and laid in the dust hundreds of the finest buildings in the city; you know the millions of property that were destroyed; and you know also how, by the intrepidity of a few men and the ingenuity of Edison, an electric torpedo was exploded under each gunboat, and not only the boats, but fourteen hundred men, sent to the bottom; you know how peace was finally declared; and, lastly, you know that to-day the star-spangled banner,—the flag of freedom, of peace, of charity, the most beautiful flag that waves to the breezes of heaven,—floats from the walls of Quebec and the domes of Winnipeg, as well as from the capitol at Washington.