

BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.

WOODSMAN AGAINST A GOLD LACE MAJOR.

As he rose to slay the British Major Ballard was the picture of a bucky rifleman. Six feet high, powerfully built, smooth-shaven face, features that looked as if one of old masters might have carved in out of marble, a mass of curly, chestnut hair falling almost to shoulders, big, resolute blue eyes seemed to look right through you. He was in a buff buckskin hunting shirt, fringed and braided on the collar, cuffs and in front with black and light gray homespun trousers, black welts down the sides, heavy black boots with elkskin leggings nearly to the knees, and on his head a cap of black squirrel skins, with a pair of four tails hanging for tassels on the left side.

His belt, knife sheath, bullet pouch and flint holder were marvels of quaw needlework on buckskin. He was a veteran of battle, taken from the body of a Shawnee whom he had slain in a skirmish at Maumee two years before. He was now (1815) about 28 years old, before the war had studied law and been admitted to the bar. But he had been all through this war, being with Tippecanoe and then going up around the Lakes and on the Canada frontier with Harrison, Johnson and Green Clay. He had been home less than three weeks when Jackson called on Kentucky to help defend New Orleans, and he was the very first to volunteer.

THE RIFLE THAT SET THE PACE.

"His rifle was the finest in our whole force; indeed, the finest I ever saw. It was made in 1808 at Lancaster Pa., for his father, who presented it to him on his twenty-first birthday. It was 40 inches long in the barrel, which was 8-square or octagonal in shape; calibre 45 to the pound. It was full stocked with curly maple and profusely mounted with coin silver; had a Leman waterproof lock, its trigger weighed exactly 16 pounds. He had used it at Tippecanoe and in many other battles and skirmishes with the British and Indians on the Canada frontier. But whatever may have been the previous exploits of this magnificent weapon, by far her greatest service to our country was when, in the hands of Morgan Ballard, she set Kentucky's pace at New Orleans!

"This shot was the signal. As it echoed Ben Hardin called out: 'Start the music, boys!'

"No other orders were given so far as I heard during the rest of the battle. Captain Hardin fell into ranks with us and plied his old rifle as industriously as any and, you can depend on it, as effectively, because he was one of 'Boone's Originals' and not in the habit of wasting lead. The whole breastwork was now ablaze from end to end. The English line broke staggered, then stopped, then broke and fled in the wildest confusion.

"The air was heavy and the smoke trailed low, which bothered us some. General Jackson saw this and promptly ordered the two cannon near the centre of the line to cease firing in order to abate the smoke nuisance as much as possible.

"Still, notwithstanding the smoke, very few bullets actually missed. About the only lead wasted was when several balls hit the same red coat, when one would have been enough. We saw plenty of evidence of this the next day under the flag of truce when we buried their dead within the 300-yard limit and carried their wounded to their lines. Many of them were hit in two or three places. In a few cases their dead were found with two bullets through the head when they got closest to us!"

THE WRECK OF THE BRITISH COLUMN.

Now let us see what the experience of the other side was. Major Burroughs, the British staff officer previously quoted, says in a narrative published in the Royal Military Chronicle, 1816:

"When all was supposed to be ready and the fee began to lift a provoking delay occurred. The parties detailed to carry the fascines and scaling-ladders had by some misunderstanding been halted in the rear. The rocket tubes which should have covered our advance were not up. After a patient waiting General Pakenham ordered the rocket to be fired, the signal of advance. In the midst of the fog the rocket was blown into the river. Then

matism cured.

has had rheumatism at night. His hands of shape and he did of them. He could He began taking and after the use all right and is able Mrs. A. L. Pa. are all liver ills. C. I. Hood & Co.,

another wait. At last a verbal order from General Gibbs put the column in motion. The enemy at once opened a galling fire from several pieces of artillery distributed admirably along his front, but our troops pressed on. No sign as yet from the enemy's infantry.

"Suddenly, when the leading men of the Forty-fourth were about 150 yards from the nearest point on the American line, a single shot rang out and the major of that regiment fell. This was instantly followed by a crackling volley along the front covered by our formation, and this volley was quickly followed by another. Great confusion ensued in our line. The Forty-fourth Regiment had been practically annihilated and the next in columns was the Twenty-first Royal Scots Fusiliers who were broken and demoralized.

MARKSMANSHIP THAT FRIGHTENED EUROPE.

"Every mounted officer was down. All efforts to rally our first line failed. Never before had British troops recoiled in such a manner. They were deaf alike to orders, threats and entreaties. Meantime, the Americans kept up a steady fire, not now by volleys, but at will, and this was, if possible, more deadly than the volleys. No such execution by small arms had ever been seen. On every side men reeled and fell with little jets of blood spurting from their heads! I doubt if as many men were hit in the head in any one of the great battles of the Peninsula as here in the first charge. More than half of those who fell were dead or dying when they struck the ground. The American riflemen seemed able to hit any part of the body they desired. Finding it utterly impossible to rally our men or restore order, and nearly all the officers, foot as well as mounted, having been killed or disabled, the retreat was sounded and the torn and bleeding remnants of what had been the finest corps in the British army recoiled to the bank of the little canal, confused disorganized and as nearly cowed as British soldiers can be.

"No time was to be lost. The die had been cast. We were in for it, and nothing remained but to try it again. General Pakenham in person brought up the Ninety-third Sutherland Highlanders formed to head a new column. Colonel Mullen, who had escaped the tragedy of the first charge with nothing worse than a flesh wound on the side of the neck, said as he looked at the splendid Highlanders: 'What a pity. Must they be numbered too?'

THE ROUT OF ENGLAND'S FINEST.

"Except straggling shots the American fire had ceased. The marksmen behind the breastwork were simply cleaning their rifles. It was their habit at home when not pressed to wipe their rifles after each shot, but here most of them had fired from three to half a dozen rounds without cleaning. Colonel Mullen, who knew them well, said their silence was ominous; that it meant a new deluge of death the moment our advance reached their point blank range.

"The formation being completed General Pakenham rode to the front of the Ninety-third, waved his hat and called to the Lieutenant Colonel, Mackenzie Wallace, 'Come on with the tartan.'

"This time the advance was at quickstep. For the first hundred yards there was no sign from the enemy; neither cannon shot, nor rifle fire. Then a single shot as before, and General Pakenham leaned forward in his saddle with bowed head and grasping the mane of his horse. He was helped off, and found to be mortally wounded by a bullet through the abdomen. Then the American line blazed again. The Ninety-third, as if by instinct, halted, standing fast while the pitiless lead tore through their unshaken ranks. They did not break or fall back, but they couldn't be induced to advance. They simply stood stock still while the American riflemen murdered them in detail. At last General Pakenham, Gibbs and Keane, dead or dying, and more than half the entire command stretched on the ground, Colonel Lambert himself desperately wounded, ordered a general retreat, and the enemy at once ceased firing."

A BATTLE OF MODEST DETAIL.

I have never seen any description of the battle from our side equal to this one from the British side, for cold, accurate detail of the nature and effect of the resistance offered by the Americans.

"The British official reports of the battle of New Orleans were very meagre, though not more so than those of Jackson and his lieutenants. In later life Jackson, Coffee and Adair made some amends for the

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brevity of their reports by details given mostly in private correspondence, which ultimately found its way into print.

The force which Pakenham formed for the actual assault on the morning of January 8, 1815, was officially stated at 5280, and comprised six battalions of infantry, two field batteries, one rocket battery, a battery of howitzers manned from the fleet, and a detachment of marines. This force was all more or less engaged. But besides these General Pakenham had three battalions of infantry, another field battery and a small siege train which remained at Laronde's plantation and took no part in the action, except to furnish details for a small demonstration on the other bank of the river; also two more infantry battalions holding the road to Lake Borgue and the landing place.

The British infantry regiments engaged in the main attacks were as follows: In the first attack the Forty-fourth Essex, the Twenty-first Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Fourth King's Own, in column order as named. In the second attack the Ninety-third Sutherland Highlanders, the Seventh Royal Fusiliers and the Forty-third Monmouth Light Infantry, in order as named.

EVERY BULLET TOOK A LIFE.

The Essex Regiment led the first attack, going in with 804 of all ranks and losing 614, of whom 306 were killed. The Royal Scots Fusiliers followed the Essex with 776 of all ranks and lost 382, of whom 196 were killed. The King's Own brought up the rear of this column, with 760 of all ranks, and though not so much exposed as the others, lost 287, of whom 129 were killed. It is thus seen that the first attack was 2340 strong, or about equal to Jackson's entire force. According to Richard Oglesby, of the Kentucky line, the column "was not actually under fire more than fifteen or twenty minutes!" But it lost 1283 officers and men, of whom 631 were killed.

The second attack was led by the Sutherland Highlanders, with 836 of all ranks, of whom 322 were killed and 360 wounded. The Royal Fusiliers followed the Highlanders, 812 strong, and lost 198 killed and 236 wounded. The Monmouth Light Infantry brought up the rear of the second attack, with 814 of all ranks. They would probably have escaped with comparatively small loss had they kept their place in the column; but when the Highlanders and the Royal Fusiliers halted General Gibbs tried to oblige the Monmouth Regiment past their flank to the front. This maneuver cost General Gibbs his life and the "butcher's bill" of the regiment was 232 killed and 276 wounded. Thus we see that the second attack was 2512 strong, and that it lost 752 killed and 872 wounded, or 1624 in all.

The total infantry force employed in both attacks was 4852, and the total loss was 2907, of whom 1383 were killed outright.

The remainder of the British force actually on the field, consisting of artillery and some seamen and marines from the fleet, did not suffer so much, though their loss must have brought the total up to 3000.

FOUR HUNDRED SHOT IN THE HEAD.

Major Burroughs, who was acting assistant inspector general, says in his narrative:

"It was my painful duty to go over the nominal lists of casualties and compile them for the general return. In these ghastly documents I counted more than 400 cases where the location of the wound was stated to be the head. Nearly all the other wounds were of the abdomen or breast, comparatively few being recorded as of the limbs."

The American loss was officially reported as seven killed and six wounded; two of the former by accidental discharge of their own or a comrade's rifle.

Naturally, when men accomplish such things as they did, the reader of history desires to know of what stuff they were made. Let one of their number describe them.

In 1828, when Jackson was running for the Presidency, Judge Ballard, of Kentucky, published a pamphlet entitled "Kentucky at New Orleans." This was the same Ballard previously mentioned. He was a young lawyer when he volunteered, but in 1828 had risen to the dignity of Judge. Ballard says:

INDIAN VENGEANCE ON THE RED COATS.

"Apart from the ordinary impulses of patriotism actuating men who defend their country's soil against an invader, there was in the heart of hearts

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of these men a deeper feeling almost akin to fanaticism. Most of them had been born while yet the shadow of the Indian tomahawk hung over Kentucky. Their baby eyes had seen the glare of burning cabins, their young ears had heard the savage war-whoop, and not a few of them had gazed upon the mutilated remains of fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters slain and scalped at their own thresholds.

"They knew that all through the dark and bloody infancy of their beloved State British instigation had been at the back of the red demons who wrought all those horrors, and for this they held the British Government responsible. The red coats they now saw in front of them represented that Government. They had had many chances at the savages whom the British instigated, but this was the first chance they had ever had at the British instigators! So here they transferred to the serried ranks before them all the deadly hate, all the pitiless revenge and all the mortal animosity which had been burned into their souls toward the Indians.

MEN TRAINED TO SHOOT.

"Now consider that men so actuated were marksmen among whom it was considered infra dig to shoot at a deer standing still; who lost caste among their fellows if they hit a wild turkey anywhere in the body or broke the skin on a squirrel in "barking" him off a limb. Consider, further, that men so actuated and so endowed with skill in use of deadly weapons were not merely brave, but that courage was their instinct, congenital, imbibed with mother's milk; that in their code no allowance was made for cowardice, even as a remote possibility, and bravery was considered a matter of course, involving no particular merit whatever; that the imminent presence of danger or of death itself never shook their fortitude, disturbed their equanimity, impaired their judgment nor affected their calm deliberation in the slightest degree. One must take account of all these facts before a fair idea can be formed of the character of the obstacle which stood between the British army and its objective point the 8th day of January, 1815. These men were not merely soldiers. They were not soldiers at all in the regular or technical sense of the term. They were not enlisted, not paid, not clothed, not even armed, and not altogether fed or munitioned by any Government.

"They were not organized as that term is understood in the military sense. The only approach to such organization was a grouping in companies, independent of each other, composed of neighbors, and commanded by officers holding no commissions other than the admiration and respect of their men. There were no regulations and no discipline except that of common consent among themselves, based upon the principles of honor and the tenets of manhood.

THE MASTER HAND OF JACKSON.

"Yet the world never saw so orderly and obedient a body of men assembled for warlike purpose. And the world never saw, nor probably ever will see again, such a helpless and pitiable wreck as they, in a few minutes, made of a force more than double their number; the pick and flower of a veteran army hitherto victorious in all lands, irresistible and invincible everywhere!"

When Jackson died Judge Ballard, then a citizen of Texas, pronounced a eulogy at Houston, of which the peroration was as follows:

"The great commander and greater comrade is gone. The men who stood with him are scattered. The current history of our new West, which he and they defended, tells you daily where they are. Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas and Louisiana have claimed many of them as their own, for they are of the breed that creates States and builds empires.

"Wherever you find them you find men high in the esteem of their neighbors; men whose sense of all that is right and fair and just and true is as unerring as their aim was when, led by the patron saint of democratic liberty, they laid the pride of England low on Chalmette plain."


THE DEATH RUSH OF THE BRITISH.

Having now disposed of the "butchery" done by the Americans, we naturally recur to the "clumsiness" exhibited by the British. On this, as on other points, we cannot do better than seek a British authority. In 1833, while Jackson was President, a paper was published by a French officer (Colonel Charles Dupin) reflecting upon the behavior of the British troops at New Orleans. This evoked a response by General Forbes, of the British army, in the columns of the United Service Journal. Forbes was a subaltern in the Ninety-third Sutherland

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land Highlanders in the battle, and was one of the four commissioned officers of that regiment who escaped unhurt. He says:

"The British soldier committed no error and exhibited no fault in the battle of New Orleans. He did there simply what he has always done everywhere—obeyed orders and died if he could not conquer! That there was error, that there was fault the result has proved. But the error and the fault lay in places high above the British soldier, who obeyed and died.

"Our French critic (Colonel Dupin) says that 'every movement of Pakenham's force at New Orleans was erroneously planned by the commander and clumsily executed by the troops.' CLUMSINESS NOT ERROR'S LOSS.

"I admit the error of plan, but I deny the 'clumsiness of execution by the troops.' I invoke Badajos and Ciudad Rodrigo to witness that if French regulars had stood where the American riflemen did, New Orleans must have been ours before sundown the 8th of January. British troops have stormed many strong-holds held by French regulars, every one of which was ten times more defensible by the rules of Vauban than Jackson's log breastwork at New Orleans. Our French critic seems to share the fatal error which brought Gibbs and poor Pakenham and 3000 British veterans to untimely graves. He fails to differentiate adequately between the conditions of assault upon a fortified position, however strong, held by French regulars, and an assault upon a breastwork, however flimsy, held by American riflemen. He fails to draw a sufficient contrast between musketry which requires a hundred-weight of lead to stop one assailant and rifle practice that picks the buttons off your coat! If he does the honor to offer a rejoinder to the foregoing, let him first make a

comparative examination of the military lists of Ciudad Rodrigo and New Orleans.

AMERICAN VALOR AND EFFICIENCY.

"At Ciudad Rodrigo a regular fortification defended by nearly 12,000 men, and took town and destroyed the garrison, losing in the whole 2200 of whom less than 1000 were killed.

"At New Orleans a British force of 15,000 men attempted to storm a breastwork defended by 2500 American riflemen, repulsed at all points with a loss amounting to nearly 3000 more than half were killed or wounded.

"I commend to our French critic the consideration of the fact that British troops employed in the assault were the same. The conclusion seems unavoidable that the difference in the two cases have been due to disparity of the troops attacking.

It has been said of Napoleon that "it was magnificence not war." Be that as it may, certainly lasted the Empire 80 years.

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