

SERVICES OF GRADUATES IN THE WAR OF 1812 AND IN THE MEXICAN WAR.

By Major WILLIAM A. SHUNK,
Eighth U. S. Cavalry, U. S. Military Academy, 1879.

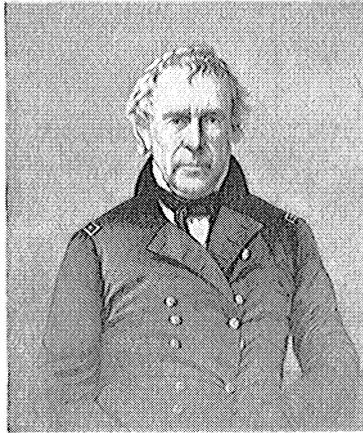
I. IN THE WAR OF 1812.



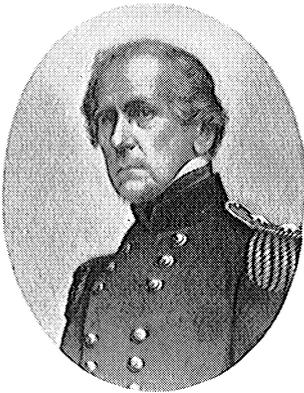
NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER,
LIGHT ARTILLERY, 1856.

THE U. S. Military Academy began its existence in 1802, and when the war against Great Britain was declared in 1812 there were 65 graduates in service. As the country was in a most wretched state of unpreparedness for the conflict, it became necessary to assign many of these young men to the construction of fortifications for the protection of our most important seaports; and it is probably well within the truth to say that in this one line of work they saved the United States far more in money alone (without any reference to loss of prestige) than the Academy has cost during the first century of its existence.

This patient labor and that of others, who during the war were constantly on the alert, prepared to defend works that never were attacked, naturally escaped general notice and attention, which were then and have since remained centered on those who, by good fortune, participate in the stirring scenes of actual strife. At certain periods of our national history the American idea seems to have been to make war first and prepare for it afterwards. This was illustrated in 1812. The experience then acquired, added to that accumulated during the Revolution, ought to have been sufficient to last us to the end of time, or at least to have inspired us to take a wide margin of precaution against any repetitions. The Revolutionary experience was unavoidable, but that of 1812 can not be so charitably dismissed. With Washir.gton



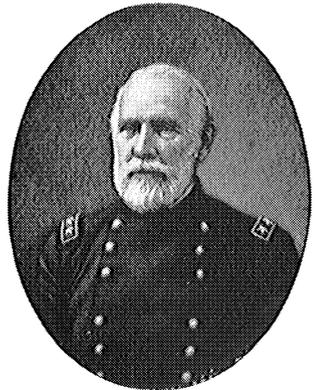
TAYLOR.



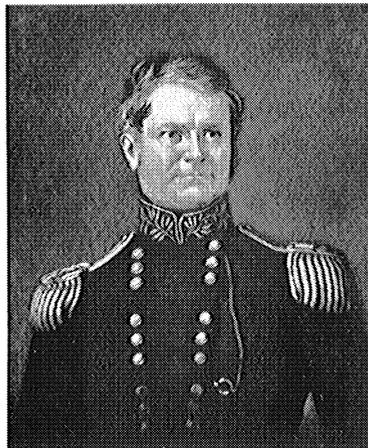
WOOL.



SCOTT.



HARNEY.



WORTH.

GENERALS OF THE MEXICAN WAR.

or Greene in command, risks might be fairly taken which under some of their successors of 1812 would have proved suicidal. Excepting only the rawest militia, it is true, as a general statement, that the rank and file and most of the regimental officers were much nearer their proper military ideals than were most of those who at first held high commands. Of those who directed the general strategy it may be sufficient to say that, with the exploits of Napoleon ringing in their ears for fifteen years, they yet persisted, year after year and campaign after campaign, in trying to conquer the British in Canada by invading on three separate and distinct lines, embracing a front of nearly a thousand miles, and without rapid communication or any concert between the three commanding generals.

The rank and file, as a rule, were hardy men, fine shots, experienced hunters, and more or less accustomed to hardships similar to those of military service—in fact, most excellent material, needing only discipline and a moderate amount of training to become ideal soldiers, such as the regulars in many instances became as the war progressed. The militia, however, seldom remained on duty long enough to make very great improvement.

That young officers, thoroughly trained at a good military school, would be invaluable in armies such as ours were in the war of 1812—always containing a large proportion of comparatively uninstructed men, always deficient in some of the essentials of military science—should require no argument beyond the mere statement of the proposition. It is a matter for deep regret that all of them were so young in years, service, and rank that they were not consulted upon questions of strategy. Had this been done, it is only fair to believe that many of those errors which are pointed out and condemned by all writers on that subject might have been avoided—which certainly would have spared us many defeats and humiliations.

The limits of this paper do not admit of any extended descriptions of campaigns, nor is that considered to be necessary. However, clearness will occasionally require a few remarks upon the operations.

As the easiest means of setting forth the services of our graduates in the war of 1812, it is proposed to give a brief sketch of the parts taken therein by a few of those whose work was most conspicuous, beginning with General Joseph G. Swift, the first graduate of the Military Academy.

Promoted to second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers October 12, 1802, he was engaged almost exclusively in the construction of seacoast fortifications until 1812, when, at the age of 30 years, he became colonel and Chief of Engineers, being at the same time aid de camp to Major-General Pinckney (commanding the southern department) as well as ex-officio Superintendent of the Military Academy. Having completed the southern defenses, he was, in April, 1813, placed in command of a brigade of infantry which constituted the garrison of Staten Island. His chief duty, however, was the repair of the defenses of New York and their extension and enlargement.

This duty completed, he asked for orders for the field, and, in August, was ordered to Sacketts Harbor as chief engineer of the northern army, under command of General Wilkinson, to whom Colonel Swift reported August 31, and at whose headquarters everything was in a most chaotic condition:

No plan of campaign studied or definitely fixed, the Army split into factions with no one to harmonize discord * * *

Nothing having been previously ascertained of the enemy's positions, Colonel Swift made a thorough personal reconnaissance of the upper St. Lawrence, and on the 17th of October General Wilkinson's army embarked for the attack of Montreal. On November 5 this army was at French Creek, having accomplished only a few miles. All the advantages to be expected from rapidity of movement were lost, and the enemy was allowed abundant time for making all his arrangements to oppose and harass the march. The annoyance became so serious that on the 11th of November General Wilkinson detached part of his army to beat off the force that hung upon his flank and rear. This resulted in the indecisive battle of Chryslers Field, in which, according to the General's report, "Colonel Swift took the boldest and

most active part of any individual engaged except Adjutant-General Walbach."

The following day a letter was received from General Hampton refusing to form a junction with Wilkinson. This disobedience of orders made success impossible and terminated the campaign.

The failure of this campaign is in some degree traceable to mistakes, but in far greater measure to the conduct of certain persons of high rank, which conduct deserves and has received the severest condemnation; but as nothing of all this was ever laid to any fault of Colonel Swift it is only necessary to add that a few days after the battle he was sent with dispatches to the seat of Government, where he was at once ordered upon other duty. His requests for further field duty, though strongly backed by General Brown, could not be granted because the "coast defenses required his attention." For his services on the St. Lawrence Colonel Swift was brevetted a brigadier-general.

Concerning the result of this campaign, Lossing says:

Thus ended in disaster and disgrace an expedition which in its inception promised great and salutary results. It was composed of brave and patriotic men, and justice to those men requires the humiliating confession from the historian that their failure to achieve complete success is justly chargeable to the incompetency of the chief commanders, and the criminal indulgence on the part of those commanders of personal jealousies and animosities. * * *

General Swift's next service was rendered in enlarging and extending the defenses of New York and Brooklyn, whose inhabitants were much alarmed by information of the British barbarities along the coasts and in the capital city, and who were determined to make themselves more secure. General Swift was the central figure in this great work, which, by the labor of all able-bodied citizens, was pushed forward with great energy from early in June until late in November. So much was his work appreciated that the corporation of New York "voted him a benefactor to the city, placed his portrait in the City Hall, presented Mrs. Swift with a magnificent service of plate, and himself with a box of silver drawing instruments and a large pleasure barge."

General Swift was in charge of and acquitted himself to

admiration upon a variety of duties of great importance (some of them in no way connected with the engineering art) from this time until the year 1818, when he resigned his commission. He continued to labor in many fields with great success until July 21, 1865, when he died at the age of 82 years.

General Swift was among the most versatile men who have as yet graduated from the Military Academy. In whatsoever he undertook he displayed ability of a very high order, and was most successful in all his multifarious tasks but one—the accumulation of wealth.

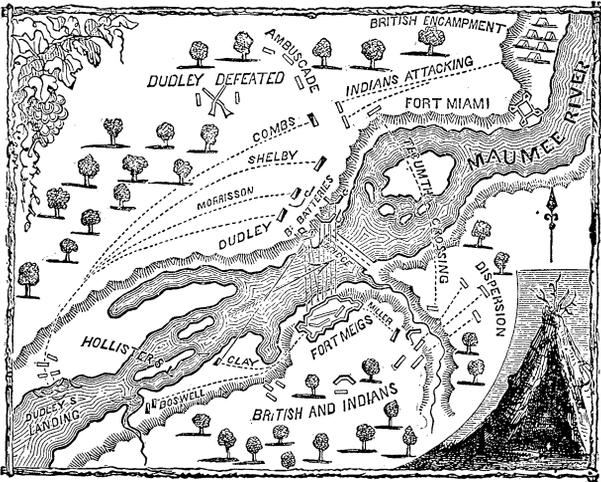
The following is quoted from the order of General Cullum (then Superintendent of the Military Academy) directing, July 30, 1865, honors to be paid to Swift's memory:

Born at the close of the American Revolution, and dying at the termination of the American rebellion, General Swift lived through the most momentous period of history, and was himself a prominent actor in the grand drama of our national existence. His military career began with that of the Military Academy, which he fostered in its feeble infancy, and he lived to see in its developed maturity the sons of his cherished Alma Mater directing the high destinies of his country on victorious fields in Canada, Florida, Mexico, and within the wide domain of our Southern border. He now calmly sleeps after a long and useful life of more than fourscore years.

* * * * *

The personal excellence of General Swift can be only appreciated by those who knew and loved him, and they were all whom he met on his long journey of life. Amiable and sincere, spotless in integrity, stanch in friendship, liberal in charity, General Swift was a model gentleman, a true patriot, and a Christian soldier, worthy of the imitation of all who like him would live honored and revered and die universally regretted.

Among the early graduates of the Military Academy who won laurels in the war of 1812, none stood higher in the good opinions of those with whom they served than Lieut. Colonel Eleazer D. Wood, who graduated in the class of 1806, and was promoted a second lieutenant in the U. S. Corps of Engineers. He was employed until 1813 mostly in the construction of fortifications for the defense of certain seaports, but very early in that year he reported to General Harrison as assistant to the Chief of Engineers (Captain Gratiot, U. S. Engineers). On account of Captain Gratiot's ill health,



BATTLE OF MAUMEE, 1814.

Captain Wood was virtually chief engineer of the army of the Northwest throughout the campaign of 1813. General Harrison was then meditating an attack upon the British and their savage allies at Malden, but after the disaster on the River Raisin, where General Winchester's unauthorized and otherwise remarkable operations ended in his being surprised, defeated, and captured, together with a thousand of our best troops, General Harrison was reduced to the defensive, the enemy having a decided superiority on land and complete control of the lakes and their navigable tributaries. The general fell back at first to the Portage River, a distance of 18 miles; but, being reinforced, returned in a few days, notwithstanding his inferior strength, and took post according to his original design at the Rapids of the Maumee, "the most eligible position to cover the frontier and threaten Detroit and the enemy's headquarters at Malden." On the 3d of February General Harrison and Captain Gratiot selected a position nearly opposite General Wayne's battle ground of 1794, on a bluff which was about 100 feet above the river and completely commanded it.

"It was shortly afterwards directed by the general that a camp for 2,000 men should be laid out and strongly fortified, and that this work might be in a state of progression, the lines of the camp were immediately designated, and a large portion of labor assigned among every corps or regiment in the Army. Each brigade or regiment commenced that particular portion of work which was assigned it with great vigor and spirit.

The camp was about 2,500 yards in circumference, which distance, with the exception of several small intervals left for blockhouses and batteries, was every foot to be picketed with timber 15 feet long, from 10 to 12 inches in diameter, and set 3 feet in the ground. Such were the instructions of the engineer. To complete this picketing, to put up eight blockhouses (the number required) of double timber, to elevate four large batteries, to build all the storehouses and magazines required for the supplies of the Army, together with the ordinary fatigues of the camp, was an undertaking of no small magnitude. Besides, an immense deal of labor was to be performed in excavating ditches, making abatis, and clearing away the wood about camp; and all this to be done, too, at a time when the weather was extremely severe and the ground frozen so hard that it was almost impossible to

open it with a spade and pickax. But in use of the ax, mattock, and spade consisted all the military knowledge of the Army.^a”

On the 4th of March Captain Wood was ordered to Lower Sandusky to complete the works at that place. On the 6th, General Harrison being compelled to go to Chillicothe to hasten supplies and to get drafts of militia to replace those whose time was about to expire, gave particular

“instructions to General Leftwich (of the Virginia militia) relative to the importance of a vigorous prosecution of the lines of defense. * * *

On the 20th of March, when Captain Wood returned from Lower Sandusky, he had the pain and mortification to find several of the men actually employed in pulling the pickets out of the ground and conveying them off for fuel.

* * * * *

They said that “it was a common thing for each mess to take what they wanted and nothing was said about it.”

Was not this most perplexing and vexatious, indeed, to an officer the least acquainted with our situation, and particularly to one intrusted with the important duty of planning and fortifying the camp, and on the success of which, in the event of a siege, his honor and reputation entirely depended? Captains Croghan, Bradford, and Langhorn, of the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Regulars, had remonstrated in the strongest terms against such an abominable and wanton destruction of works which had been erected with so much labor and trouble, and on which they foresaw depended, in a great measure, the future salvation of the Army, but all to no purpose. Captain Wood found great difficulty in stopping the militia from destroying his works, but much greater in getting them to repair the breaches and depredations already made and committed on the lines.^a”

About March 28 information reached Fort Meigs that General Proctor had ordered the Canadian militia to assemble at Malden on April 7 “for the purpose, it was well understood, of aiding in an expedition to be carried into effect against Camp Meigs.”

The investment of the fort was completed on April 27 by General Proctor with 600 Regulars, 800 militia, and 1,800 Indians, together with a train of artillery. General Harrison was present with 1,250 men, half of whom were militia. The works were almost completed, and 850 men of the garrison were reported fit for duty. The savages surrounded the fort

^a Wood's journal.

and the British began to erect batteries on the opposite side of the river. Captain Wood advised the erection of a traverse, 10 or 15 feet high, parallel to the river, and nearly the entire length of the fort, to intercept the enemy's fire. General Harrison approved, and the traverse, the construction of which was screened by the tents, was completed about the same time as the enemy's batteries. The tents were now moved to the opposite side of the traverse and pitched anew. New batteries were promptly begun by the enemy and Captain Wood intercepted their fire also by new traverses, which finally formed a "kind of intrenched citadel," against which the enemy maintained a furious cannonade for five days, all to very little purpose.

On May 5 reinforcements consisting of 1,200 Kentucky militia attempted to fight their way into the fort. Assisted by sorties from the fort they succeeded in this, but with very heavy losses, amounting to more than one-half their strength. The militia also captured the principal batteries and spiked some of the guns, but were unable to hold them. The enemy gave up the attack after this, and on the 9th departed for Malden. An easy victory had been expected, and their failure caused great mortification and much dissension among the allies.

This operation was the turning point of the war in the Northwest. Previous to the siege of Fort Meigs the enemy's success had been almost uninterrupted; afterwards their career of failure was entirely so.

The following is quoted from General Harrison's dispatch to the War Department:

Captain Gratiot, of the Engineers, having been for a long time much indisposed, the task of fortifying the post devolved upon Captain Wood. It could not have been placed in better hands. Permit me to recommend him to the President, and to assure you that any mark of his approbation bestowed on Captain Wood would be highly gratifying to the whole of the troops who witnessed his arduous exertions.

This recommendation secured for Captain Wood the brevet of major "for distinguished services in the defense of Fort Meigs."

The following is quoted from Harrison's order of the day to his command:

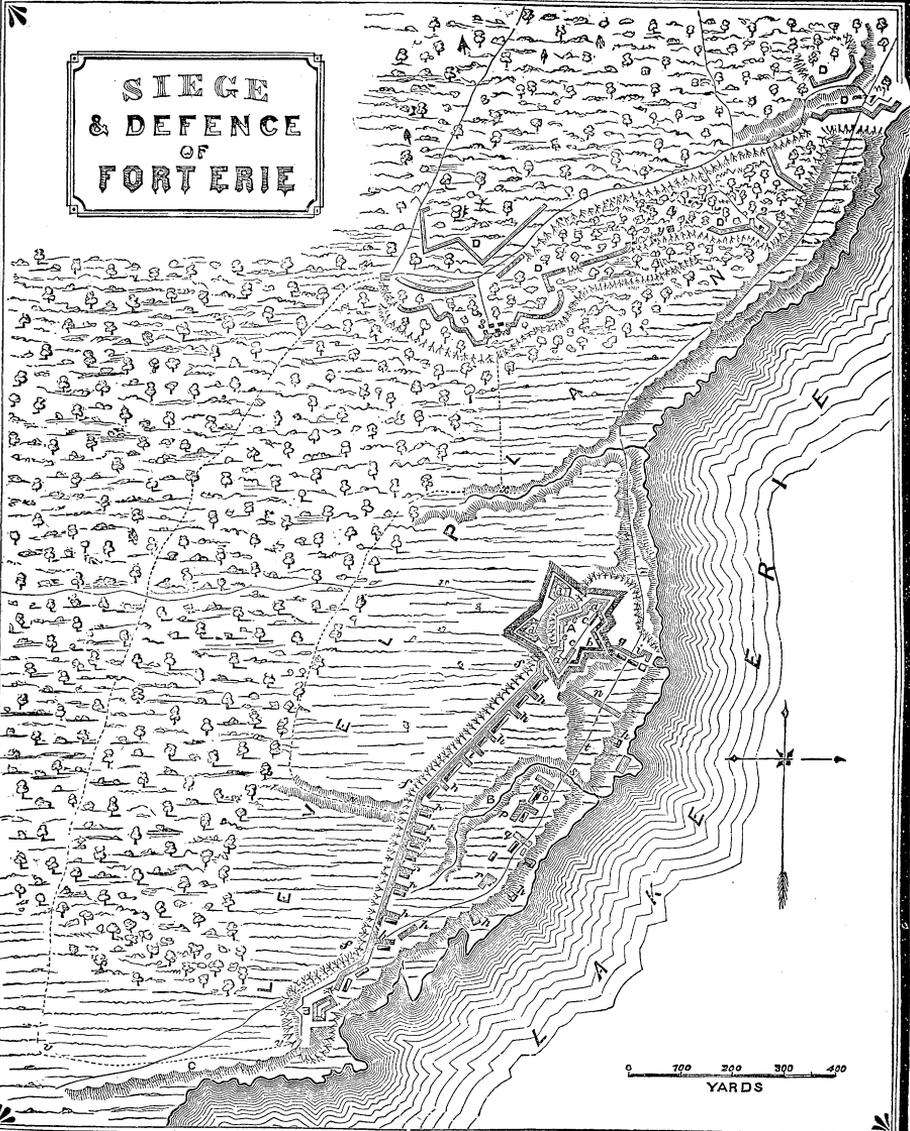
Where merit was so general, indeed, almost universal, it is difficult to discriminate. The general can not, however, omit to mention the names of those whose situation gave them an opportunity of being more particularly useful. From the long illness of Captain Gratiot, of the Corps of Engineers, the arduous and important duties of fortifying the camp devolved on Captain Wood, of that Corps. In assigning to him the first palm of merit as far as relates to the transactions within the works, the general is convinced his decision will be awarded by every individual in the camp who witnessed his indefatigable exertions, his consummate skill in providing for the safety of every point and in foiling any attempt of the enemy, and his undaunted bravery in the performance of his duty in the most exposed situations.

Proctor again approached Fort Meigs late in July, but withdrew in a few days. On the 2d of August he was repulsed by Major Crogan at Fort Stephenson, whereupon he returned to Malden.

For nearly a year a squadron of light vessels had been under construction near Erie, with the intention, perfectly understood by everybody, of disputing the control of the lakes. There is no doubt that the British might have attempted the destruction of those vessels and the shipyards, with excellent prospects of success, at any time during the spring and summer. As the very existence of those vessels was a standing menace of destruction to the enemy, and as no attempt upon them was made, it may be inferred that the Americans did not have a monopoly of bad generalship.

On September 10 Commodore Perry, in command of this flotilla, won his famous victory on Lake Erie, which placed Proctor upon the defensive and gave Harrison the initiative, which he utilized at once. He began the embarkation of his troops September 20, and on the 27th landed them near Malden. Proctor had already destroyed all the public and much private property at that place and was retreating toward the Moravian town on the River Thames, where he was overtaken and his army annihilated on the 5th of October, Major Wood being, as usual, highly complimented in the general's dispatches.

**SIEGE
& DEFENCE
OF
FORT ERIE**



This was General Harrison's last battle. He had shown his capability for high command, had completed his task to admiration, and was the only American general who had as yet conducted a successful campaign during the war. He was given an indefinite leave of absence, for which he had never asked, and shortly resigned his commission.

Major Wood was next engaged in completing the fortifications of Sackett's Harbor. In June, 1814, he reported to General Brown, commanding the army on the Niagara frontier, as assistant to Colonel McRee, the chief engineer. In this capacity he took a prominent part in the operations that led to the surrender of Fort Erie July 3 and in the battle of Chippewa July 5, after which he made a close reconnaissance of the enemy's position beyond Chippewa Creek the same evening, securing important information. Major Wood took an active part in the further pursuit of the enemy and was present at a council of war July 14. He made a daring reconnaissance of the works at Fort George preparatory to its investment, and was an active participant in the battle of Lundy's Lane, July 25.

In his official report of this battle General Brown says: "The engineers, Major McRee and Wood, were greatly distinguished on this day, and their high military talents exerted with great effect; they were much under my eye and near my person, and to their assistance a great deal is to be fairly ascribed. I most earnestly recommend them as worthy of the highest trust and confidence." Both were brevetted lieutenants-colonel "for gallant conduct in the battle of Niagara."

Generals Brown and Scott were wounded at the battle of Lundy's Lane (Niagara), and the command devolved upon General Ripley, who was about to recross the Niagara and was only dissuaded by the very urgent representations of Colonels McRee and Wood.

It having been decided to strengthen Fort Erie and to enlarge it into an intrenched camp for General Brown's entire army, every officer and man present, and especially the engineers, were hard at work day and night (within the limits of endurance) for the fortnight beginning July 27. By this means, on August 7, the works were in a defensible condition.

Having had a week's rest after the battle of Lundy's Lane and strong reinforcements having arrived, the enemy approached the works August 2, and invested them next day. August 7 a heavy fire of artillery was opened by both parties, and continued to the evening of the 14th. The enemy having completed new batteries, their fire was specially severe on the 13th and 14th.

Colonel Wood, in addition to his other duties, was placed in command of the Twenty-first Infantry, the regiment with which Colonel Miller made his famous record at Lundy's Lane.

This regiment, about 300 strong, held the left of the line. General Gaines had taken command of the American forces, both parties had been reinforced, and both had made every preparation for the coming attack on the 14th. General Gaines and his engineers were confident that an assault would be made that night. They accordingly "inspected every part of the works, gave explicit orders to meet all emergencies, kept one-third of the garrison in turn under arms, and made every preparation to guard against the expected blow. Midnight came undisturbed and calm, but it was the lull before the tempest. Already three British assaulting columns were preparing for their deadly errand. One, 1,400 strong, under Lieutenant-Colonel Fisher was to assail our left.

* * * * *

"At half-past 2 on the morning of the 15th the storm first burst upon our left; but no sooner were our pickets driven in than a sheet of flame from Towson's artillery and Wood's infantry disclosed the enemy's advance to within 10 feet of our lines, and soon after, making an effort to turn the abatis by wading breast deep through the lake. After a desperate struggle the enemy was repulsed; but, rallying again and again, the attack was renewed, till five times failing to gain any advantage and being terribly cut up by our murderous fire, Fisher finally abandoned the enterprise."^a

In his report General Ripley says: "Wood has the merit, with the Spartan band, in connection with Captain Towson's artillery, of defeating a vaunted foe of six times his force."

^aCullum's Campaigns of the War of 1812.

General Gaines, in his report, especially commended six officers, one of whom was Colonel Wood.

The siege continued and on the 28th General Gaines was severely wounded, whereupon General Brown, though still suffering from his wound, returned to the Army and resumed command September 2. Realizing that his army was in danger of destruction because of the greatly superior force of the enemy, and ascertaining that the supporting troops were encamped at some distance from the trenches, he formed a plan "to storm the batteries, destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the brigade on duty before the reserve could be brought into action."

This plan was supported by Colonels McRee and Wood but failed of approval by a council of war September 9. Nevertheless, General Brown determined to carry his plan into execution on the first favorable opportunity.

"Everything being favorable, the sky cloudy and the atmosphere thick with drizzling rain, our troops, on the morning of the 17th, were paraded for the daring attack. The left column, in three divisions headed respectively by Gibson, Wood, and Davis, the whole under General Porter, gained, by the circuitous route marked out (through the timbered swamp in front of the American left) the day before, the British right flank; while Miller's column, passing in small detachments through the ravine at right angles to the middle of our front, reached the edge of the woods, under cover of which it marched to the head of another ravine, passing down which it took up its position nearly opposite the enemy's center. * * *

"Before 3 o'clock of the afternoon of the 17th Porter assailed the right of the enemy's works, while Miller, charging from the ravine, pierced the enemy's intrenchments. In a few minutes they had taken possession of the blockhouses, captured the second and third batteries, disabled their guns, blown up a magazine, cleared the siege works of defenders, and, after a short struggle, the first battery was also carried."^a

The American loss was more than 500; that of the enemy

^aCullum: Campaigns of the War of 1812.

more than 600, not including 385 prisoners.^a Napier says this is "the only instance in history where a besieging army was entirely broken up and routed by a single sortie."

"Thus ended the brief and brilliant career of this noble soldier, who had few equals and was surpassed by none of his profession and peers. Young in age, he was a veteran in the art of war. His eight years of army life had 'uniformly been an exhibition of military skill, acute judgment, and heroic valor.'"

* * * * *

"It was Wood's peculiar good fortune to be prominent in every branch of his profession, whether as an engineer, making the daring reconnaissance, or directing defenses; as an artilleryman, pursuing the flying foe to the Thames, or serving in the battery at Chippewa as a paladin cavalier in the final rout of Proctor's last fugitives; or as the accomplished infantry commander, leading the column and charging the besiegers at Fort Erie. While first in battle, he was also first in the estimation of those he so faithfully served. Harrison assigns to him the first palm of merit at Fort Meigs and highly praises his efficiency in the invasion of Canada; Brown reports his marked distinction at Niagara, where his "high military talents were exerted with great effect"—to whose "assistance a great deal is fairly to be ascribed;" Gaines says "in the command of a regiment of infantry he has often proved himself well qualified, but never so conspicuously as in the repulse of the British assault on Fort Erie;" Ripley, on the same occasion, acknowledges his indebtedness to "this officer's merits, so well known that approbation can scarcely add to his reputation;" Porter, under whom he led a column in the sortie from Fort Erie, reports to Brown, "you know how exalted an opinion I have always entertained of him;" and his commanding general, when this pillar of his power lay prostrate in death, pronounced this truthful eulogy to his worth: "Wood, brave, generous, and enterprising, died as he had lived, without a feeling but for the honor of his country and the glory of her arms. His name and example will live to guide the soldier

^a "Among the mortally wounded we had to mourn the three gallant leaders of Porter's divisions—Davis, Gibson, and Wood."

in the path of duty so long as true heroism is held in estimation."

"After the termination of the war, September 12, 1816, Major-General Jacob Brown, then general in chief, addressed the following letter to Brigadier-General Joseph G. Swift, Chief Engineer of the Army:

'I think it proper to express to you, as Chief of the Corps of Engineers, the high sense I entertain of the services of Colonel McRee, Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, Captain Douglass, and Lieutenant Story, who served with my division upon the Niagara in 1814. They were all greatly distinguished, but Colonel McRee and Lieutenant-Colonel Wood have particular claims upon me for the cheerfulness and ardor with which they entered upon the execution of every enterprise, having in view the honor of my command, and for the zeal and talent they uniformly displayed. Lieutenant-Colonel Wood fell! The occasion and the manner of his death secure to him the patriot soldier's best reward—pure and imperishable fame. To this I can add nothing; but, as a tribute of my respect for the hero and the man, I request you to cause a monument to be erected at my expense to his memory. Let it stand near the Military Academy at West Point and, though it can not elevate his name, it may stimulate the soldiers of his school to die like him without a feeling but for the honor of their country and the glory of her arms.'

In compliance with this request, so honorable to General Brown, the Chief Engineer had executed the white marble obelisk now gracing the little knoll north of the West Point Plain, looking up the Hudson upon the most beautiful river view in the world."

The space allotted to this paper does not permit even a slight notice of two other graduates who, in achievements and in the estimation in which they were held by their superiors, were not inferior to those already briefly sketched; nor of others whose achievements were much superior to those of some persons who in later times have been rewarded with the highest honors. Such a one was the brilliant Col. William McRee, who, according to Cullum, was the "bright particular star of the war of 1812;" whom President Monroe desired to appoint Chief of Engineers to succeed General Swift, but to which Colonel McRee would not agree as he did not desire promotion over his senior, although the latter had expressly waived any objection; whom President Adams seriously thought of appointing general in chief to succeed General Jacob Brown, though he finally appointed another; of whom

"Cullum's Campaigns of the War of 1812. (This monument was first erected in the center of the general parade, then moved to the knoll, and is now near the entrance to the cemetery.—Editor.)

General Brown wrote, "McRee's industry and talents were the admiration of the whole Army," and of whom Gen. Winfield Scott wrote in 1843:

"In my opinion, and perhaps in that of all the Army, he (McRee) combined more genius and military science, with high courage, than any other officer who participated in the war of 1812. I know that this was at least a very general opinion. If the treaty of peace had not prevented he could, as I also know, have been made a general officer in 1815, and I am confident that he would in the field have illustrated the highest grade."

The above are a few of the high encomiums lavished upon Colonel McRee by every commander under whom he served.

Another, who, like Colonel McRee, deserves an extended notice, is the clear-brained, far-sighted, level-headed, laborious Major-General Joseph G. Totten, of the United States Engineers. According to Cullum: "He rose from the lowest to the highest grade in his branch of the Army; was five times complimented by advance rank for meritorious and distinguished services; became a brigadier by a special act of Congress in 1863; * * * was brevetted a major-general in the Army and the next day breathed his last * * * terminating his illustrious career at the advanced age of 75."

According to Lossing: "A school for military instruction, especially for the education of engineers, to be established at West Point, on the Hudson, was authorized by Congress in the spring of 1802. * * * The Corps of Engineers, authorized by the law just named, commenced their functions as constructors of new forts, or repairers of old ones, in the year 1808. * * * And that body of young men continued thus employed in a moderate way until the breaking out of the war in 1812, when they were sent to the field and all won military distinction.

"During the brief and brilliant campaigns of 1814 and 1815, when our education in war was anew purchased upon unsuccessful fields of blood, the full tide of triumph flowed on almost uninterruptedly, and the second war of independence closed in a blaze of victory. In these last achievements the youthful sons of the Military Academy nobly performed their

part. Of those serving in the field, one-sixth laid down their lives in the struggle, one-fourth were killed or wounded, and one-fifth of those who survived received one or two brevets each for their distinguished gallantry in that war.”^a

II. IN THE MEXICAN WAR.

“Thirty years of lucrative peace followed before our next contest, but the nation had somewhat profited by its past shortcomings. The Military Academy on the breaking out of the Mexican war had over 500 highly educated graduates in service, and nearly as many more in civil life, ready to resume their swords in the country’s defense. Our Regular Army, mostly officered by them, had acquired experience in fighting savages on our extended frontier and had learned discipline in the swamps of Florida. Our brave volunteers, with high aptitude to form the best of soldiers, wisely sought the élèves of our national school and tendered to them the command of their regiments and battalions. The material of battle had been prepared by skillful hands, and educated minds directed the complicated machinery of war. The consequence of this fortuitous condition of things, despite political machinations, is too well known to require to be detailed here. Suffice it to say that, in comparing this with the preceding war, the fruits of military education are most apparent.

“In Canada, during two and a half years, with much larger forces than the enemy, our defeats outnumbered our victories; our gains in prisoners of war were less than our losses; our trophies were few, and our conquest scarce extended beyond the camps we occupied. In the Mexican war, our small but heroic army, in less than a year and a half, though opposed to the quadruple force of the enemy, won 30 victories, captured 40,000 soldiers, took 1,000 cannon and an immense amount of small arms and munitions of war, carried 10 fortified places and the capital of the enemy, and extended our conquests over the immense territory of Mexico and California. The gain of that war, to say nothing of national reputation, now annually pays more than thrice the total cost of the contest.

^aCullum’s Register, vol. I, p.10.

“The emulator of Cortez, the veteran Scott—one of the most experienced soldiers this nation has produced, and the consummate leader of our armies in Mexico—says, in a letter to the Commission appointed under the act of June 21, 1860, to examine into the organization system of discipline and course of instruction of the Military Academy: ‘I give it as my fixed opinion that but for our graduated cadets the war between the United States and Mexico might, and probably would, have lasted some four or five years, with, in its first half, more defeats than victories falling to our share; whereas in less than two campaigns we conquered a great country and a peace without the loss of a single battle or skirmish.’ The great results of the Mexican war gave the Military Academy an immense reputation.”^a

The Mexican war was caused by the annexation of Texas, and while a large proportion of our citizens professed to seriously doubt the justice of this step, their views were not urged as ordinarily they would have been because of the frequent outrages perpetrated by Mexicans upon American settlers, traders, and travelers, and because of the almost utter impossibility of obtaining redress in such cases, which led to the belief that Mexican authorities connived at such acts, or at least regarded them with entire indifference. Besides this, the barbarous manner in which Mexico prosecuted the war against the Texans caused intense exasperation throughout the United States.

When Texas, after having for ten years maintained her independence, which was duly acknowledged by the powers of the earth, petitioned for admission to the American Union, the protests of the Mexican Government were disregarded and the annexation was duly consummated in spite of oft-repeated threats of war.

During several years the United States Government had been repeatedly warned by that of Mexico that war would certainly result if our course in regard to Texas was continued. The annexation sentiment, however, grew stronger day by day and a crisis was clearly at hand, yet nothing was done

^a Preface to Cullum's Register, p. 10.

that would indicate any expectation that a great contest was impending.

It may be truly said that we were better prepared for war in 1846 than in 1812; a careful study, however, shows that our advantage really consisted more in the unreadiness of our enemy for vigorous and sustained operations than in any merit of foresight or preparation on our own part. In fact "it was the same old story."

The Mexicans, relying upon their superiority in numbers, confidently expected success in the first operations, and it must be admitted that their expectations were not unreasonable. But there were other factors in the calculations which they could not know until too late, and which their vanity never would permit them to consider even after abundant experience.

At the time General Taylor was dispatched to the frontier of Texas the American Army was actually of less strength than it had been in any year since 1808.

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During the Presidency of Mr. Munroe and while Mr. Calhoun was Secretary of War (and, indeed, upon his recommendation), the plan had been adopted of having skeleton regiments, in which all the officers were retained, but the number of privates reduced one-half.

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Accordingly, the regiments of artillery and infantry had but 42 privates in each company, when the number should have been 84. The Military Academy had furnished a large number of valuable officers, many of whom were attached to the regiments by brevet. General Scott proposed to increase the Army simply by filling up these skeleton companies.^a

By means of this increase, or even a much smaller one, "General Taylor's army would have been increased early in the spring (1846) and the Mexican general would, not improbably, have refrained from an attack to which he was tempted and invited by the weakness of the American force."^a Of the situation just before actual hostilities, Mansfield says:

Notwithstanding all these plain indications of war, the movements of the Administration at home exhibited no symptom of anything but unbroken and continued peace. The recommendations of General Scott

^a History of the Mexican War, by E. D. Mansfield, pp. 24-25.

for an increase of the Army were disregarded. The President and Congress moved placidly on as if neither arms nor money, strength or blood were required to secure an easy victory over a weak and effeminate foe. Some preparation had heretofore been deemed necessary by statesmen to meet the exigencies of war, even with very inferior powers. In this instance there was none. The official returns show that one-half the entire Army of the United States was in the corps of General Taylor, while various military posts and forts in the Northwest and on the Atlantic were entirely deprived of their garrisons to make up the forces on the Rio Grande. Even this army was almost totally without the wagons, animals, and drivers necessary for common field transportation.

In 1845, the line of the American Army consisted of only 14 regiments—2 of dragoons, 4 of artillery, and 8 of infantry. The total authorized enlisted strength was 7,883 men. The actual strength at the end of that year was 5,300. Just before Palo Alto, General Taylor's command, including all his garrisons and the sick, numbered, all told, 3,600 men. The Mexicans well knew that this was more than half the United States Army.

About three-fourths of the line officers were graduates of West Point. The officers of the Adjutant-General's, Quartermaster's, and Ordnance departments and also those of the Engineer Corps and of the Topographical Engineers were nearly all graduates, but there were none among the general officers at that time.

The Regular Army of that day gave very little attention to merely showy exercises, but for purposes of campaign and battle was unexcelled, if not unequalled.

The cavalry was well mounted, disciplined, and trained. The artillery was thoroughly instructed—some as light batteries, but most of it as infantry. The infantry also, like the other arms, was thoroughly trained in the drill and battle tactics of that period. The most casual reader can not fail to be impressed with the thorough knowledge of their arm and its possibilities and correct use on the battlefield exhibited by even the junior officers in the very first battle of the war. Such skill and readiness to seize the passing advantages offered by the phases of the fight are doubtless of inestimable value on the battlefield, but they are intuitive with very few if any. Hence the advantage of a good military education,

whether obtained at a military academy or in the school of practical experience. Hence the high estimation in which these men were held by both Generals Scott and Taylor, both of whom were honor graduates of the school of experience as well as men of great natural ability and of the highest character.

For all purposes of active service our Regulars were equal to any in existence, with the exception that they were not accustomed to maneuvering or working in masses, very few of them ever having seen more than a few companies assembled. But the theory of larger operations had been carefully studied by a great majority of the officers, and the troops soon became accustomed to working together in such masses as were necessary. Almost invariably the conduct of all our troops, both Regulars and Volunteers, was above all praise. The skill, and gallantry and dogged determination with which they overcame the tremendous odds of every kind against them—vast numerical superiority, powerful works armed with heavy guns, and the terrors of unfamiliar deadly climates—surpassed all reasonable expectation and are without a parallel in modern times.

After hostilities began, our Army was augmented by volunteers, enlisted at first "for one year," and later, when the folly of this plan was demonstrated, "for the war." Fortunately there was available a great abundance of most excellent material, entirely similar to their predecessors of 1812. Even with the short time possible for organization and training, these volunteers repeatedly showed themselves superior in battle to the enemy's best troops. A number of graduates were given volunteer commissions and their work in organization, discipline, and drill was of great value. That they labored faithfully and effectively is the universal testimony, and while many of the survivors received brevets for gallantry in action, their proportion of killed and wounded is more eloquent of their services on the battlefield than even the encomiums of their fellow-soldiers.

And in, perhaps, the most important of all respects, we were highly favored at this time in having generals of great skill, judgment, courage (both moral and physical), and

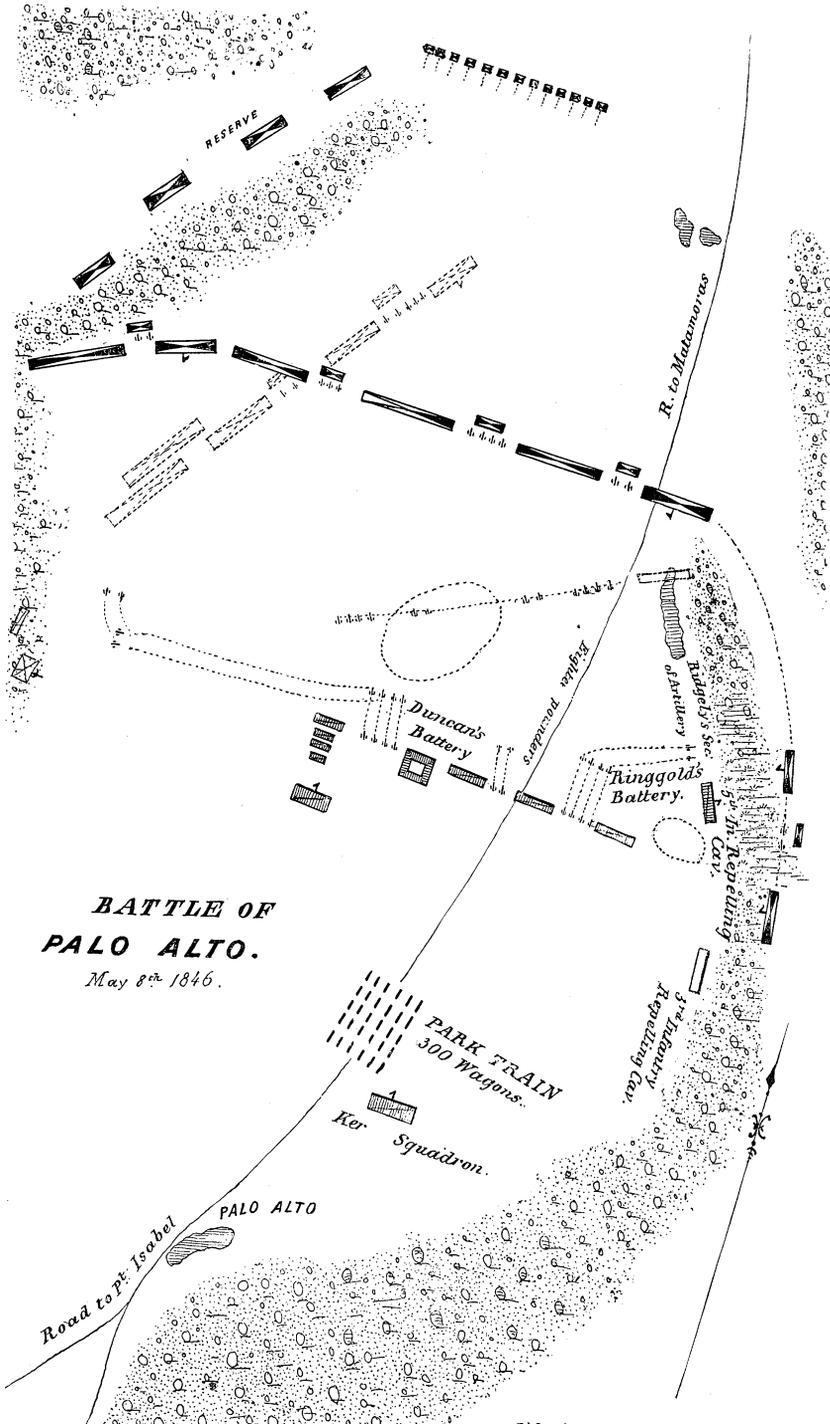
experience. The American generalship was of a high order. Considered tactically, some minor errors, due probably to overconfidence, are perceived; but in most cases the principal dispositions will be approved by all. Considered, strategically, it may be said that General Taylor's dazzling victories could not be decisive because of his theater of operations. But the very cause and origin of the war compelled operations in that theater. Criticisms of General Scott's unbroken record of successful battles are in most cases merely captious. As his Government failed to properly support and supply him with men, animals, clothing, rations, transportation, and money, he was finally compelled to choose either indefinite inaction or the hazardous course which he preferred.

General Grant says:

But General Scott's successes are an answer to all criticism. He invaded a populous country, penetrating 260 miles into the interior, with a force at no time equal to one-half of that opposed to him; he was without a base, the enemy was always intrenched, always on the defensive; yet he won every battle, he captured the capital and conquered the Government. Credit is due to the troops engaged it is true, but the plans and the strategy were the general's.

Our troops were always compelled to fight against odds. Their numbers in some cases were less than one-third those of the enemy, as at Buena Vista and in the valley of Mexico, and they never equaled him even when he occupied carefully fortified positions of great strength well supplied with artillery, such as Monterey, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, and the other powerful works in the valley. The skill of the officers, the tremendous moral force due to a succession of victories, and the sublime faith of the generals in their troops and of the troops in their generals, added to skill and courage, compensated for governmental neglect, the ultimate effect of which has been to make the splendor of their achievements still more dazzling.

The number of graduates who rendered distinguished services in the Mexican war is many times greater than the whole number who had graduated before 1812-13. The list of those who were "brevetted for gallant and meritorious services" on the field of battle runs into the hundreds. Many were



**BATTLE OF
PALO ALTO.**
May 8th 1846.

brevetted twice and a number three times. A large number of these gentlemen afterwards became prominent actors in the greatest of our wars (now happily a thing of the past), and their names are to-day household words, while their biographies are well known to all Americans. It is therefore unnecessary to sketch their Mexican war records at any great length, but it is thought that a few references to some of their exploits in that contest will best elucidate the subject in hand.

It has been stated that the great majority of our officers were thoroughly proficient in handling their own arms in conjunction with the other arms on the battlefield. This may be best illustrated by references to some of the battles of the war.

At Palo Alto, while all the arms certainly did well, yet the battle was won almost entirely by the light artillery. The skill displayed by Major Ringgold, Captain Duncan, and Lieutenants Churchill and Ridgely in handling their guns to the best advantage through all the phases of the action was highly extolled at the time and has been admired ever since.

General Taylor reports:

Our artillery, consisting of two 18-pounders and two light batteries, was the arm chiefly engaged, and to the excellent manner in which it was maneuvered and served our success is mainly due.

Mansfield's *History of the Mexican War*, page 37, says:

The continuous fire of artillery disordered and drove back the enemy's columns. On the left wing of our Army attacks of the Mexicans were met by Duncan's battery and by other troops of that division. The combat on our side was chiefly carried on by artillery, and never was there a more complete demonstration of the superior skill and energy of that arm of the service as conducted by the accomplished graduates of West Point. He who was the life and leader of the Light Artillery—Major Ringgold—was, in this engagement, mortally wounded, and died in a few days.

Very early on the following morning, May 9, 1846, General Arista retired to a strong position at Resaca de la Palma, where he received a reenforcement of 2,000 infantry and "a strong body of cavalry." Having posted his troops with much care, he was attacked by the Americans about

2 o'clock p. m. All arms participated with credit as before, but the chief glory of that day was justly awarded to Captain May and his squadron of dragoons, who charged and captured the Mexican batteries, which were much more effectively handled than on the previous day. Though they could not hold the guns nor bring them away, yet they were silenced, the general in command of them was captured, and, upon the advance of the American line, the whole Mexican army took to flight and was never again assembled north of the Rio Grande.

General Taylor reports:

Perceiving that no decisive advantage could be gained until this artillery was silenced, I ordered Captain May to charge the batteries with his squadron of dragoons. This was gallantly and effectively executed; the enemy was driven from his guns, and General La Vega, who remained alone at one of the batteries, was taken prisoner. The squadron, which suffered much in this charge, not being immediately supported by infantry, could not retain possession of the artillery taken, but it was completely silenced.

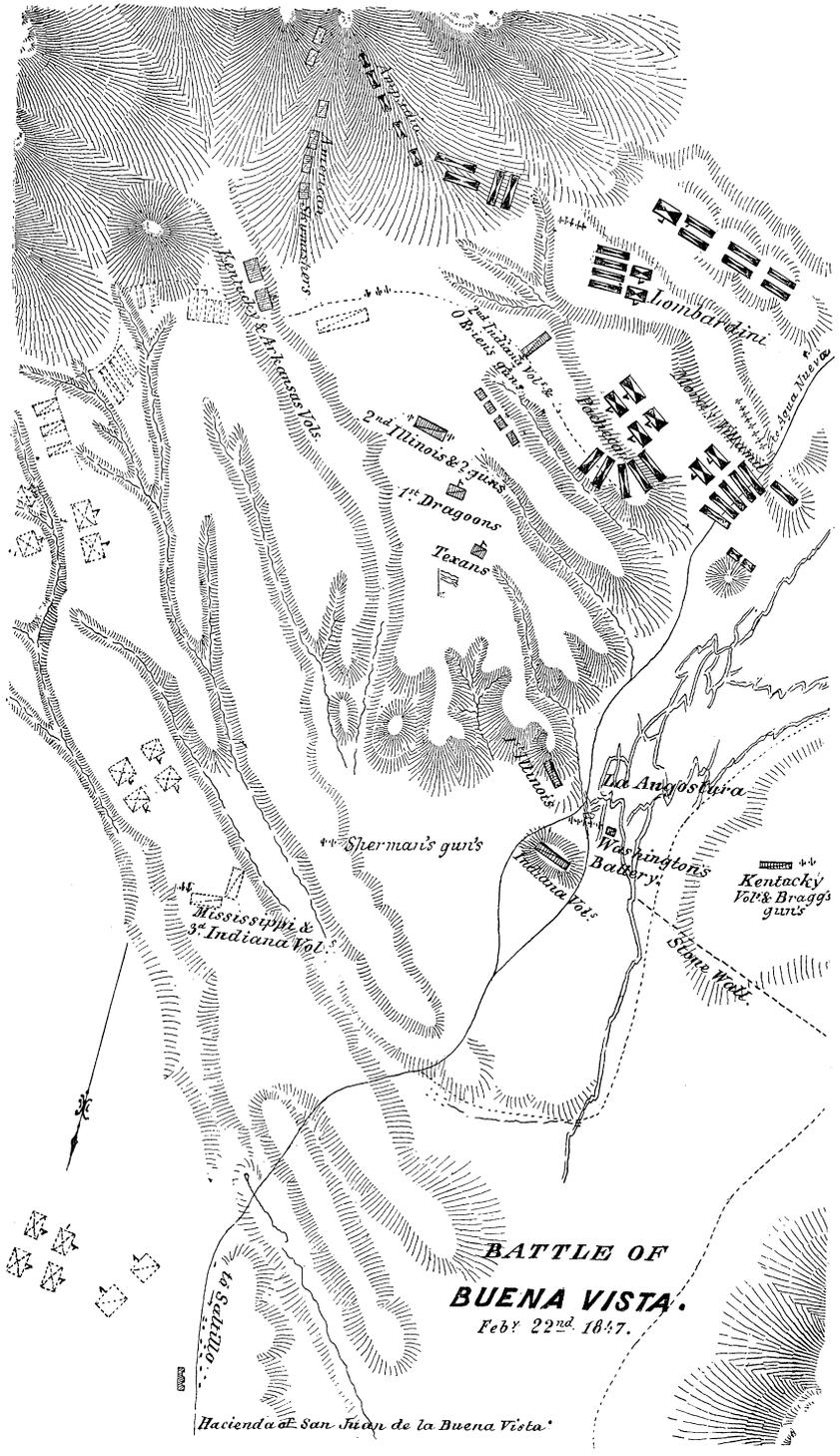
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It affords me peculiar pleasure to report that the fieldwork opposite Matamoras has sustained itself handsomely during a cannonade and bombardment of one hundred and sixty-eight hours.

This fieldwork (Fort Brown) was planned and constructed by Captain Mansfield, of the Engineers, who, together with Major Brown and Captain Hawkins, of the Seventh Infantry, and Captain Bragg, of the Light Artillery, were "greatly distinguished" in the defense.

Captain Mansfield, with others, again distinguished himself in the reconnaissance before the attacks upon the works of Monterey and in the battle also.

The battle of Monterey consisted of a series of severe combats (mostly assaults on the enemy's works) extending over three days, September 21 to 23, inclusive. Here the foot troops won the prize for distinguished and effective work. General Worth, with his division, had been ordered to seize the Saltillo road and to attack the forts to the west of Monterey and to prevent a concentration of forces against him. A strong demonstration by large detachments from the main body was made before the eastern front. This speedily



**BATTLE OF
BUENA VISTA.**
Feb'y 22nd. 1847.

Hacienda of San Juan de la Buena Vista.

developed into an assault upon the forts, fortified houses, and intrenchments in that locality. After a hard fight the main body of the attacking force was repulsed with heavy loss, but two companies of the First Infantry under Captain Backus had captured a solidly constructed building suitable for defense, and being encumbered with wounded, held their ground and did not retreat with their regiment. Being isolated, they were under a heavy fire from all sides, but by superior marksmanship they held their position with great tenacity and silenced most of the fire against them, including that of a light battery, which lost many cannoneers and retired. Soon after, the Americans assaulted a neighboring work called "Fort Teueria." The assaulting troops had already lost a third of their strength and were about to retreat when Captain Backus, having completed a change of position, opened so telling a fire on the rear of Fort Teueria that the enemy wavered, whereupon the assault was renewed with entire success. By this exploit the Americans secured a footing in the fortifications of the east side of Monterey.

During this time and later General Worth's command executed four very gallant attacks against superior numbers in positions of great natural and artificial strength. Colonel Childs carried Independence Hill and the Bishop's Palace, Captain C. F. Smith carried Federacion Hill, and General Persifer Smith carried Fort Soldado. Each of these exploits deserves a full description, but, like many other glorious acts, can not be noticed here.

Many were justly complimented on their soldier-like deeds, but General Howard says: "Capt. Electus Backus, of the First Infantry, with Mansfield, became the brilliant point in these operations."

The light artillery played a highly important part in many of the battles in Mexico, especially at Palo Alto and Buena Vista. In the later engagement General Taylor had no Regulars excepting his light artillery and part of his small force of cavalry. His infantry was composed of the new volunteer regiments, of which the Mississippi Rifles (Colonel Davis) had taken part in the battle of Monterey. The others

had had no experience in fighting, excepting that a few small parties had been engaged in slight skirmishes.

Expecting an attack by Santa Ana with about 20,000 men and 20 guns, General Taylor took post at the Pass of Angostura, near Buena Vista. His force numbered 4,300 Volunteers and 450 Regulars, with 15 guns. After some preliminary skirmishes on the 22d of February, Santa Ana began the battle by launching two columns to the attack at about 8 o'clock the following morning.

The left column, consisting of two regiments and three battalions (about 3,000 infantry and engineers), endeavored to follow the course of the great road in an effort to overwhelm Washington's battery, which was posted directly in its path. The column was defeated, thrown into disorder, and driven into the neighboring ravines by the fire of the battery alone.

The second column, composed of Pacheco's and Lombardini's divisions, numbering about 7,000 men, broke the American left center, cut off the extreme left (which finally reached the trains parked at Buena Vista by a wide detour), and secured possession of the narrow passage along the base of the mountain; and, in obedience to previous instructions, moved by that road to the American left rear. They were immediately joined by Ampudia's division and by a strong force of cavalry from the reserve, thus forming an important array of troops upon Taylor's flank and left rear, and the Americans were at this moment in an unpleasant situation that might easily have become very critical.

The Mexican cavalry presently gained the head of the column and ultimately attacked Buena Vista more than a mile in rear of Taylor's right, but, after a hard fight, they were beaten off and accomplished nothing.

The infantry column, very deep and unwieldy, was opposed in front by Davis's Mississippi Rifles, reenforced after a time by the Third Indiana and a fieldpiece. After a very severe combat the leading regiments were checked and thrown back upon the column, causing much confusion. The ground was cut up by ravines and very unfavorable for rapid deployment and, what was worse, this antiquated formation had been

under artillery fire almost from the moment it broke the American left center.

The batteries of Sherman and Bragg, at a moderate range, had played upon the left flank with such effect that some of the rear battalions were broken and driven back to the Mexican lines.

The result of the check in front, combined with the murderous artillery fire on the flank of the column, to which no adequate reply could be made, was that, after very heavy losses, the remains of Pacheco's, Lombardini's, and Ampudia's divisions lost all semblance of formation and became simply a mass of fugitives. As the artillery had complete command of their position and of the only route by which they could retire, their speedy surrender seemed inevitable, when a ruse of the wily Santa Ana caused the firing to cease and the disordered mass was enabled to drift back to the Mexican lines.

"Certain it is that advantage was taken of the flag to withdraw the compromised troops from their perilous position."^a

While the work of the light artillery at this juncture was highly extolled, the common opinion was that Colonel Davis and his regiment were entitled to the chief credit for the repulse of the ponderous infantry column.

The final effort of Santa Ana consisted in launching his reserve, reenforced by troops that had been rallied to about 12,000 men, in a solid column against the American center.

"I discovered that our infantry (Illinois and Second Kentucky) had engaged a greatly superior force of the enemy—evidently his reserve—and that they had been overwhelmed by numbers. The moment was most critical. Captain O'Brien with two pieces had sustained this heavy charge to the last and was finally obliged to leave his guns on the field—his infantry support being entirely routed. Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the left, was ordered at once into battery. Without any infantry to support him, and at the imminent risk of losing his guns, this officer came rapidly into action, the Mexican line being but a few yards from the muzzle of his pieces. The first discharge of canister caused

^aRipley, vol. 1, p. 415.

the enemy to hesitate; the second and third drove him back in disorder and saved the day.”

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“No further attempt was made by the enemy to force our position.”

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“Our loss has been especially severe in officers, 28 having been killed upon the field.”

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“Colonel Hardin, First Illinois, and Colonel McKee and Lieutenant Colonel Clay, Second Kentucky regiment, fell at this time, while gallantly leading their commands.

“No loss falls more heavily upon the army in the field than that of Colonels Hardin and McKee and Lieutenant Colonel Clay. Possessing in a remarkable degree the confidence of their commands, and the last two having enjoyed the advantage of a military education, I had looked particularly to them for support in case we met the enemy. I need not say that their zeal in engaging the enemy, and the cool and steadfast courage with which they maintained their positions during the day, fully realized my hopes and caused me to feel yet more sensibly their untimely loss.”

“I perform a grateful duty in bringing to the notice of the Government the general good conduct of the troops.

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“The services of the light artillery, always conspicuous, were more than usually distinguished. Moving rapidly over the roughest ground, it was always in action at the right place and the right time, and its well-directed fire dealt destruction in the masses of the enemy. While I recommend to particular favor the gallant conduct and valuable services of Major Munroe, chief of artillery, and captains Washington, Fourth Artillery, and Sherman and Bragg, Third Artillery, commanding batteries, I deem it no more than just to mention all the subordinate officers. They were nearly all detached at different times and in every situation exhibited conspicuous skill and gallantry.

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“Captain Shover, in conjunction with Lieutenant Donaldson, First Artillery, rendered gallant and important service in repulsing the cavalry of General Miñon.

“The regular cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel May, with which was associated Captain Pike’s squadron of Arkansas Horse, rendered useful service in holding the enemy in check and in covering the batteries at several points. Captain Steene, First Dragoons, was severely wounded early in the day while gallantly endeavoring, with my authority, to rally the troops, which were falling to the rear.”

“The Mississippi Riflemen, under Colonel Davis, were highly conspicuous for their gallantry and steadiness, and sustained throughout the engagement the reputation of veteran troops. Brought into action against an immensely superior force, they maintained themselves for a long time unsupported and with heavy loss, and held an important part of the field until reenforced. Colonel Davis, though severely wounded, remained in the saddle until the close of the action. His distinguished coolness and gallantry at the head of his regiment on this day entitled him to the particular notice of the Government.”^a

Ripley’s *History of the War with Mexico*, Vol. I, page 442, says:

The fortunes of that day twice hung in the balance. That they were immediately saved once by the brilliant courage and hard fighting of Davis’s Mississippi regiment, and again by the timely arrival and splendid execution of Bragg’s battery, and that Davis first suggested his own movement, and that Bragg moved without orders in the direction of the plateau, and that both came in at the proper time and were both successful, these facts, while they render any comment upon the conduct of those officers or their commands unnecessary, yet add examples to the many of the supremacy of fortune in war.^b

We will now briefly notice a few of the exploits in another theater. It having been decided to capture Vera Cruz and to advance from that base upon the capital city of the Mexican Republic, General Scott’s army of 12,000 men was landed

^a General Taylor’s report.

^b We humbly suggest that what is here attributed to chance should be ascribed to skill, the result of education, reflection, and experience. In killed and wounded the American loss was nearly 750; that of the enemy was more than 2,000.

near the former place on March 9, and on the 12th the investment was completed. Progress was greatly delayed by violent northers, but the trenches were opened on the 18th, the bombardment began on the 22d, and the city and its famous castle surrendered on the 27th.

“Five thousand prisoners surrendered on parole; near 500 pieces of fine artillery taken; the best port of Mexico captured and possessed; and the famed Castle of San Juan, said to be impregnable, and which had been refitted and equipped in the best possible manner, yielded to the superior skill and energy of the Americans.”^a

“The capture of Vera Cruz was an affair, in the main, of the staff and artillery. The engineers located and constructed the batteries with such good judgment and care that there were few casualties; the fixed ammunition used by the artillery was prepared under the direction of ordnance officers with a skill insured by their education and their experiments and labors in the laboratory. The infantry worked upon the trenches and batteries, and, as guards, gave protection and security day and night, while the latter were used, and, in addition, did picket duty in front and rear of the lines.”^b

It should be said, in addition, that Colonel Harney, with the dragoons, beat off and dispersed the detachments that attempted annoyance from the outside.

In the entire operation the American loss in killed and wounded was 67. A Mexican historian says that their loss was 400 killed and 200 wounded.

General Scott's report contained many compliments, but we will notice only his remarks upon his fellow-soldier of 1812, whose services the General had especially requested, and who, under his orders, conducted the siege:

In consideration of the great services of General Totten in the siege that has just terminated most successfully, and the importance of his presence at Washington as the head of the Engineer Bureau, I intrust this dispatch to his personal care, and beg to commend him to the very favorable consideration of the Department.

On the 8th of April, ten days after the surrender of Veracruz, General Scott's army, though very short of transporta-

^aThe Mexican War, Mansfield, p. 172.

^bHist. of the Mex. War, Gen. C. M. Wilcox, p. 261.

tion, began its march by divisions toward Jalapa. General Twiggs, commanding the leading division, found the enemy at Cerro Gordo in such strength that he halted, April 11, at Plan del Rio to wait for reinforcements. During the six following days reconnaissance was very actively carried on, principally by engineer officers, suitably escorted. Basing himself on their reports, General Scott directed the opening of roads or trails leading through the dense chaparral and very rough broken ground toward several points of the enemy's line, while the latter industriously fortified their positions. On April 17 the general issued his celebrated order, describing the battle of the next day with almost perfect accuracy.

“The plan of the attack, sketched in General Orders III herewith, was finely executed by this gallant army before 2 o'clock p. m. yesterday. We are quite embarrassed with the results of victory—prisoners of war, heavy ordnance, field batteries, small arms, and accouterments. About 3,000 men laid down their arms, with the usual proportion of field and company officers, besides 5 generals, several of them of great distinction—Pinson, Jarrero, La Vega, Noryuga, and Obando. A sixth general, Vasquez, was killed in defending the battery (tower) in the rear of the line of defense, the capture of which gave us those glorious results. Our loss, though comparatively small in number, has been serious.

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“Second Lieutenant Derby, Topographical Engineers, I saw also at the same place (tower) severely wounded; Captain Patten, Second U. S. Infantry, lost his right hand. Major Sumner, Second U. S. Dragoons, was slightly wounded the day before, and Captain Johnston, Topographical Engineers, (now lieutenant-colonel of infantry), was very severely wounded in reconnoitering some days earlier.

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“A portion of the First Artillery under the often-distinguished Brevet-Colonel Childs, the Third Infantry under Captain Alexander, the Seventh Infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Plympton, and the Rifles under Major Loring, all under the temporary command of Colonel Harney, Second Dragoons, composed that detachment. The style of execution which I

had the pleasure to witness was most brilliant and decisive. The brigade ascended the long and difficult slope of Cerro Gordo, without shelter and under the tremendous fire of artillery and musketry, with the utmost steadiness, reached the breastworks, drove the enemy from them, planted the colors of the First Artillery, Third and Seventh Infantry, the enemy's flag still flying, and after some moments of sharp firing, finished the conquest with the bayonet. It is a most pleasing duty to say that the highest praise is due to Harney, Childs, Plympton, Loring, Alexander, their gallant officers and men, for this brilliant service independent of the great service which soon followed.^a

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* * * "Twiggs's division, reinforced by Shields's brigade of volunteers, was thrown into position on the 17th, and was of necessity drawn into action in taking up the ground for its bivouac and the opposing height for our heavy battery. It will be seen that many of our officers and men were killed or wounded in this sharp combat, handsomely commenced by a company of the Seventh Infantry under Brevet First Lieutenant Gardner, who is highly praised by all his commanders for signal services. Colonel Harney, coming up with the Rifle Regiment and First Artillery (also parts of his brigade), brushed away the enemy and occupied the height on which, in the night, was placed a battery of one 24-pounder and two 24-pound howitzers under the supervision of Captain Lee, Engineers, and Lieutenant Hagner, Ordnance. These guns opened next morning, and were served with effect by Captain Steptoe and Lieutenant Brown, Third Artillery, Lieutenant Hagner, Ordnance, and Lieutenant Seymour, First Artillery. The same night, with extreme toil and difficulty, under the superintendence of Lieutenant Tower, Engineers, and Lieutenant Laidley, Ordnance, one 8-inch howitzer was put in position across the river and opposite to the enemy's right battery.

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"Early on the 18th the columns moved to the general attack, and our success was speedy and decisive. * * *

^aGeneral Scott's report of the battle of Cerro Gordo, April 19, 1847.

“The moment the fate of the day was decided the cavalry and Taylor’s and Wall’s field batteries were pushed on toward Jalapa in advance of the pursuing columns of infantry.

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“In the hot pursuit many Mexicans were captured or slain before our men and horses were exhausted by the heat and distance.

“The rout proved to have been complete, the retreating army, except a small body of cavalry, being dispersed and utterly disorganized. The immediate consequences have been our possession of this important city, the abandonment of the works and artillery at La Hoya, the next formidable pass between Vera Cruz and the capital, and the prompt occupation by Worth’s division of the fortress of Perote (second only to San Juan d’Ulloa), with its extensive armament of 66 guns and mortars and its large supply of material.

“I have heretofore endeavored to do justice to the skill and courage with which the heights of Cerro Gordo were attacked, naming the regiments most distinguished, and their commanders, under the lead of Colonel Harney. Lieut. G. W. Smith led the engineer company as part of the storming force, and is noticed with distinction. The reports of this assault make favorable mention of many in which I can well concur, having witnessed the daring advance and perfect steadiness of the whole. Besides those already named, Lieutenant Brooks, Third Infantry; Lieutenant Macdonald, Second Dragoons; Lieutenant Vandorn, Seventh Infantry (all acting staff officers); Captain Magruder, First Artillery; and Lieutenant Gardner, Seventh Infantry, seem to have won special praise.

* * * * *

“In expressing my indebtedness for able assistance—to Lieutenant-Colonel Hitchcock, Acting Inspector-General; to Majors Smith and Turnbull, respective Chiefs of Engineers and Topographical Engineers; to their assistant lieutenants—Lieutenants Mason, Beauregard, Stevens, Tower, G. W. Smith, McClellan, Engineers; and Lieutenants Derby and Hardcastle, Topographical Engineers; to Captain Allen, Chief Quartermaster, and Lieutenant Blair, Chief Commissary, and to Lieutenants Hagner and Laidley, Ordnance, all actively

employed—I am compelled to make special mention of the services of Capt. R. E. Lee, Engineers. This officer greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Vera Cruz, was again indefatigable during these operations, in reconnaissance as daring as laborious, and of the utmost value. Nor was he less conspicuous in planting batteries and in conducting columns to their stations under the heavy fire of the enemy. My personal staff—Lieutenants Scott, Williams, and Lay, and Major Van Buren, who volunteered for the occasion—gave me zealous and efficient assistance. Our whole force present, in action and in reserve, was 8,500. The enemy is estimated at 12,000 or more. About 3,000 prisoners, 4,000 or 5,000 stands of arms, and 43 pieces of artillery are taken. By the accompanying return, I regret to find our losses more severe than at first supposed, amounting in the two days to 33 officers and 398 men—in all, 431, of whom 63 were killed. The enemy's loss is computed to be from 1,000 to 1,200.^a

“Ten thousand men made prisoners of war, 700 splendid cannon, 10,000 stands of arms, 30,000 shells and shot, were the spoils of the triumphant victories which had attended the American Army in a campaign of only two months.”^b

After Cerro Gordo, there was nothing to prevent General Scott from marching to the capital. But for reasons which he considered good and sufficient, he decided upon a different course; among these were the numerical weakness of his Army, the fact that several regiments of volunteers were about to be discharged, thus reducing his strength still further, and the fact that supplies and reinforcements which he had confidently expected were not forthcoming. Leaving garrisons in Vera Cruz, Jalapa, and the Castle of Perote, he advanced with the main Army to Puebla, where, on the 1st of June, his entire force numbered only 5,000 effective men.

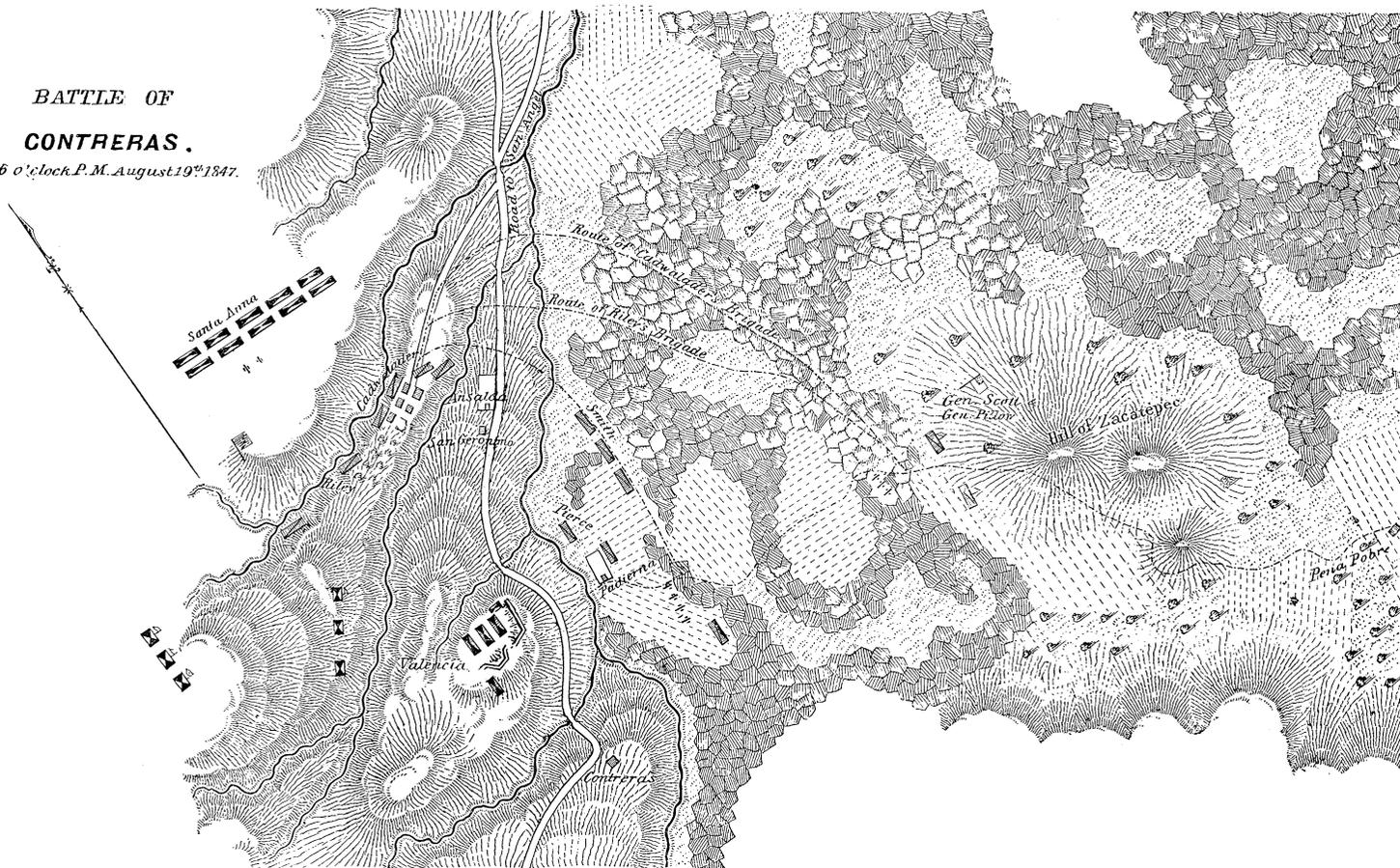
The reinforcements that reached Vera Cruz and all the garrisons, excepting those of Vera Cruz and Perote, were concentrated at Puebla, at which point there were assembled on August 6 about 14,000 men. The sick in hospitals at Puebla and the necessary garrison for that place aggregated 3,261 men.

^a General Scott's supplementary report, April 23, 1847.

^b Mansfield's History of the Mexican War, p. 201.

BATTLE OF
CONTRERAS.

6 o'clock P.M. August 19th 1847.



Thus, by abandoning his line of communications, General Scott was able to advance with 10,738 men, half of them volunteers, to attack 30,000 men behind powerful works, supplied with abundant artillery. Without doubt he had staked everything on the chance of success.

The march upon the capital began August 7, and on the 13th the Army was assembled 15 miles from that city at and in the vicinity of Ayotla. From this point three roads led to the city; and, in exploring the most direct one, the Dragoons and Mounted Rifles, escorting General Smith and Engineers, took such liberties with the powerful and heavily garrisoned works of El Peñon and Mexicalcingo that General Scott pronounced this "the boldest reconnoissance of the war."

It was finally decided to advance by the road south of Lake Chalco to San Augustin, which place was seized August 17, and next day the entire army had arrived in that vicinity.

Within 5 miles of San Augustin were the strong posts of San Antonio and Contreras; the former on the direct road to the capital, very strong and nearly inaccessible excepting by way of a narrow causeway flanked by deep ditches; the latter on the great road from Acapulco to Mexico, also very strong, well fortified, armed with 22 cannon and occupied by General Valencia with 7,000 veterans, said to be the flower of the Mexican army. It was decided to mask San Antonio and to attack Contreras.

A path having been made passable through the pedregal or fields of lava, the brigade of Gen. Persifor Smith was on August 19 directed against Contreras and drove in the enemy's cavalry, skirmishers and advanced posts, but did not attack the main work. Two light batteries, brought forward with great difficulty, were opened against the enemy's works, but after a severe contest they were silenced. Leaving the guns supported by several companies of infantry (later reinforced by two regiments of Pierce's brigade) before the works, General Smith moved the remainder of his brigade to the right upon San Geronimo, to cut Contreras off from the capital and also from communication with Santa Ana, who with

12,000 men had advanced to support Valencia, and who ultimately approached to within 2,000 yards of his works.

The brigade of General Smith was reinforced by those of Riley and Cadwalader, and all three were at San Geronimo, interposed between Valencia and Santa Ana, before dark. The brigade of Shields was toiling through the pedregal and joined the others during the night. The light batteries, having suffered severely, were withdrawn out of range. The situation at this time would seem to have called for immediate and vigorous action of some sort on the part of the enemy. It is asserted by some that the Mexicans did not know the movements of their enemy; but this would seem incredible. Be that as it may, General Valencia spent the precious moments in writing a very extravagant report of his "victory" and in "conferring brevets upon his officers."

Most of the night, which was rainy and very dark, was spent by the Engineer officers in searching for a possible route to the rear of the enemy's works. The movement began at 3 o'clock a. m. on the 20th, with Riley's brigade in the lead. The brigade of Shields remained at San Geronimo to withstand any movement of Santa Ana. The other three brigades did not finish their movement until long after daylight. Yet they remained undiscovered until they were almost ready to assault, the enemy's attention being more particularly devoted to the troops still occupying the first position, near Padierna.

At about 6.30 a. m. Valencia's position was assaulted in rear and on both flanks, and in a few minutes his entire force was utterly routed and "totally destroyed as a military body."

"I doubt whether a more brilliant or decisive victory—taking into view ground, artificial defenses, batteries, and the extreme disparity of numbers, without cavalry or artillery on our side—is to be found on record. Including all our corps directed against the intrenched camp, with Shields's brigade at the hamlet, we positively did not have over 4,500 rank and file, and we know by sight, and more certainly by many captured documents and letters, that the enemy had actually engaged on the spot 7,000, with at least 12,000 more hovering within sight and striking distance, both on the 19th and 20th.

"All not killed or captured now fled with precipitation. Thus was the great victory of Contreras achieved; our road to the capital opened; 700 of the enemy killed; 813 prisoners, including 88 officers, 4 generals, besides various colors and standards, 22 pieces of brass ordnance, half of large caliber, thousands of small arms and accouterments, an immense quantity of shot and shell, powder and cartridges, 700 pack mules and many horses—all in our hands."^a

Two of these guns were Santa Ana's trophies from the field of Buena Vista. They had been "lost without dishonor" by a battery of the Fourth Artillery, Captain O'Brien, at Buena Vista. They were now "recovered with glory" by Capt. Simon Drum's battery of the same regiment.

The fortified post of San Antonio, the bridge head of Churubusco, and the fortified convent of San Pablo adjacent were all captured after hard fighting on the same day. While the battle of Churubusco was in progress the brigades of Shields and Pierce were sent by the commanding general to attack the Mexican reserves in rear of the lines of Churubusco. The resulting combat, called the "battle of Portales," was very severe for a time, but terminated in the fifth American victory on that memorable 20th of August.

"So terminated the series of events which I have but feebly presented. My thanks were freely poured out on the different fields to the abilities and services of generals and other officers, to the zeal and prowess of all, the rank and file included. But a reward infinitely higher, the applause of a grateful country and Government, will, I can not doubt, be accorded in due time to such merit of every sort displayed by this glorious army, which has now overcome all difficulties, distance, climate, ground, fortifications, and numbers.

"It has in a single day in many battles as often defeated 32,000 men, made about 3,000 prisoners, including 8 generals, two of them ex-Presidents, and 205 other officers; killed and wounded 4,000 of all ranks, besides entire corps dispersed and dissolved; captured 37 pieces of ordnance, more than trebling our siege train and field batteries, with a large number of

^a General Scott's report.

small arms and a full supply of ammunition of every kind. These great results have overwhelmed the enemy. Our loss amounts to 1,053; 139, including 16 officers, were killed; 876, with 60 officers, were wounded.

* * * * *

“After so many victories we might with but little additional loss have occupied the capital the same evening.

* * * * *

“I halted our victorious corps at the gates of the city, at least for a time, and have them now quartered” etc.^a

Negotiations were undertaken, but failed, and operations were resumed on the 7th of September. Next day occurred the battle of Molino del Rey, in which 3,250 Americans defeated 14,000 Mexicans, who occupied a very powerful line of works, flanked by the fire of the Castle of Chapultepec. Four thousand lancers, the finest cavalry in the world, were completely bluffed and intimidated by Major Sumner with 270 dragoons, and they took no part in the battle except that of spectators. The enemy was driven from his works with heavy losses, including all his artillery and 800 prisoners; but, as at Buena Vista, Santa Ana proclaimed a great victory won by himself—a “victory” the anniversary of which is celebrated in Mexico to this day.

After the destruction of the powerful stone works of Molino del Rey, including the Casa Mata Fort, there still remained between the American army and the capital only the Castle of Chapultepec. This renowned fortress was battered all day on September 12 and next morning was carried by assault. The Belen and San Cosmo causeways and gates were captured in the afternoon of the same day.

On September 14 the city was occupied with little opposition, and, although minor operations continued for a time, the war was practically at an end.

Among those who were breveted for gallantry in the severe battles of Molino del Rey and Chapultepec was Second Lieut. U. S. Grant, of the Fourth Infantry.

“At the end of another series of arduous and brilliant operations of more than forty-eight hours’ continuance this

^aGeneral Scott’s report.

glorious army hoisted, on the morning of the 14th, the colors of the United States on the walls of this palace.”^a

“The victory of the 8th at the Molino del Rey was followed by daring reconnaissances on the part of our distinguished Engineers—Captain Lee, Lieutenants Beauregard, Stevens, and Tower. Their operations were directed principally to the south—toward the gates of the Piedad, San Angel (Mino Perdido), San Antonio, and the Paseo de la Viga.

“This city stands on a slight swell of ground, near the center of an irregular basin, and is girdled by a ditch in its greater extent—a navigable canal of great breadth and depth—very difficult to bridge in the presence of an enemy, and serving at once for drainage, custom-house purposes, and military defense, leaving eight entrances or gates over arches, each of which we found defended by a system of strong works that seemed to require nothing but some men and guns to be impregnable.

“Outside and within the cross fires of those gates we found to the south other obstacles but little less formidable.

* * * * *

“After a close personal survey of the southern gates, covered by Pillow’s division and Riley’s brigade of Twiggs’s—with four times our numbers concentrated in our immediate front—I determined on the 11th to avoid that network of obstacles, and to seek by a sudden diversion to the southwest and west less unfavorable approaches.”

* * * * *

“The stratagem against the south was admirably executed throughout the 12th and down to the afternoon of the 13th, when it was too late for the enemy to recover from the effects of his delusion. The first step in the new movement was to carry Chapultepec, a natural and isolated mound, of great elevation, strongly fortified at its base, on its acclivities, and heights.

* * * * *

“In the course of the same night (that of the 11th) heavy batteries, within easy ranges, were established. No. 1, on our right, under the command of Captain Drum, Fourth Artillery

^aGeneral Scott’s report written in the National Palace of Mexico September 18, 1847.

(relieved late next day, for some hours, by Lieutenant Andrews of the Third), and No. 2, commanded by Lieutenant Hagner, Ordnance—both supported by Quitman's division. No. 3 and 4 on the opposite side, supported by Pillows division, were commanded, the former by Captain Brooks and Lieut. S. S. Anderson, Second Artillery, alternately, and the latter by Lieutenant Stone, Ordnance. The batteries were traced by Captain Huger and Captain Lee, engineer, and constructed by them with the able assistance of the young officers of those corps and the artillery.

* * * * *

“The bombardment and cannonade, under the direction of Captain Huger, were commenced early in the morning of the 12th.”

Here follows a description of the storm of Chapultepec. The report resumes: “The following are the officers and corps most distinguished in those brilliant operations: The Voltigeur regiment, in two detachments, commanded, respectively, by Colonel Andrews and Lieutenant-Colonel Johnston, the latter mostly in the lead * * * the storming party of Worth's division under Captain McKenzie, Second Artillery, with Lieutenant Selden, Eighth Infantry, early on the ladder and badly wounded; Lieutenant Armistead, Sixth Infantry, the first to leap into a ditch to plant a ladder; Lieutenants Rodgers, of the Fourth, and J. P. Smith, of the Fifth Infantry—both mortally wounded; the Ninth Infantry, under Colonel Ransom, who was killed while gallantly leading that gallant regiment; the Fifteenth Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Howard and Major Woods * * * Colonel Clarke's brigade (Worth's division), consisting of the Fifth, Eighth, and Sixth Regiments of Infantry, commanded, respectively, by Captain Chapman, Major Montgomery, and Lieut. Edward Johnson, the latter specially noticed, with Lieutenants Longstreet (badly wounded, advancing, colors in hand), Pickett, and Merchant, the last three of the Eighth Infantry * * * and another detachment, a portion of the storming party (Twigg's division, serving with Quitman), under Lieutenant Steele, Second Infantry, after the fall of Lieutenant Gantt, Seventh Infantry.

“In this connection it is but just to recall the decisive effect of the heavy batteries Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, commanded by those excellent officers Captain Drum, Fourth Artillery, assisted by Lieutenants Benjamin and Porter, of his own company; Captain Brooks and Lieutenant Anderson, Second Artillery, assisted by Lieutenant Russell, Fourth Infantry, a volunteer; Lieutenants Hagner and Stone, of the Ordnance, and Lieutenant Andrews, Third Artillery, the whole superintended by Captain Huger, Chief of Ordnance with this army, an officer distinguished by every kind of merit. The mountain howitzer battery, under Lieutenant Reno of the Ordnance, deserves also to be particularly mentioned. Attached to the Voltigeurs, it followed the movements of that regiment and again won applause.

“In adding to the list of individuals of conspicuous merit I must limit myself to a few of the many names which might be enumerated: Captain Hooker, assistant adjutant-general, who won special applause successively in the staffs of Pillow and Cadwalader; Lieutenant Lovell, Fourth Artillery (wounded), chief of Quitman’s staff; Captain Page, assistant adjutant-general (wounded), and Lieutenant Hammond, Third Artillery, both of Shield’s staff, and Lieutenant Van Dorn (Seventh Infantry), aid-de-camp to Brigadier-General Smith.

“These operations all occurred on the the west, southeast, and heights of Chapultepec. To the north and at the base of the mound, inaccessible on that side, the Eleventh Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hébert; the Fourteenth, under Colonel Trousdale, and Captain Magruder’s field battery, First Artillery—one section advanced under Lieutenant Jackson—all of Pillow’s division—had at the same time some spirited affairs against superior numbers, driving the enemy from a battery in the road and capturing a gun. In these the officers and corps named gained merited praise.

* * * * *

“Here (at the Belen Gate) of the heavy battery (Fourth Artillery) Captain Drum and Lieutenant Benjamin were mortally wounded and Lieutenant Porter, its third in rank,

slightly. The loss of these two most distinguished officers the Army will long mourn.

* * * * *

“The capital, however, was not taken by any one or two corps, but by the talent, the science, the gallantry, the prowess of this entire army.

* * * * *

“And I reassert, upon accumulated and unquestionable evidence, that in not one of those conflicts (the battles in the Valley of Mexico) was this army opposed by fewer than three and a half times its numbers—in several of them by a yet greater excess.

* * * * *

“In conclusion I beg to enumerate once more, with due commendation and thanks, the distinguished staff officers, general and personal, who, in our last operations in front of the enemy, accompanied me and communicated orders to every point and through every danger. Lieutenant-Colonel Hitchcock, acting Inspector-General; Major Turnbull and Lieutenant Hardcastle, Topographical Engineers; Major Kirby, Chief Paymaster; Captain Irwin, Chief Quartermaster; Captain Grayson, Chief Commissary; Capt. H. L. Scott, Chief in the Adjutant-General’s Department; Lieutenant Williams, Aid-de-camp; Lieutenant Lay, Military Secretary; Major J. P. Gaines, Kentucky Cavalry volunteer Aid-de-camp; Captain Lee, so constantly distinguished, also bore important orders from me (September 13) until he fainted from a wound and the loss of two nights’ sleep at the batteries. Lieutenants Beauregard, Stevens, and Tower, all wounded, were employed with the divisions, and Lieuts. G. W. Smith and G. B. McClellan with the company of Sappers and Miners. Those five lieutenants of Engineers, like their captain, won the admiration of all about them. The Ordnance officers, Captain Huger, Lieutenants Hagner, Stone, and Reno, were highly effective and distinguished at the several batteries; and I must add that Captain McKinstry, assistant quartermaster, at the close of the operations executed several important commissions for me as a special volunteer.”

During the action in front of the San Cosmo Gate, Captain Brooks, in command of a detachment of the Second Artillery, and Lieut. U. S. Grant, with a detachment of the Fourth Infantry, attacked and, after a very hard fight, carried a breastwork defended by a large force of the enemy. To hasten this result it was necessary to bring forward a piece of artillery along the causeway swept by the enemy's fire. This was done by Lieut. H. J. Hunt, Second Artillery, whose detachment lost more than half its numbers; but the move was decisive.

Of this incident General Worth, the division commander, said in his report: "It has never been my fortune to witness a more brilliant exhibition of courage and conduct."^a

Some of the most furious combats of the war were among those of the minor expeditions. The following will serve as a specimen:

On the morning of the 6th (December, 1846) Kearny's command met and defeated at San Pasqual, about 40 miles from San Diego, a body of Mexicans under Gen. Andres Pico. Kearny had at this time about 300 men, composed of Companies B and C, First Dragoons, and volunteers. The action was severe, the First Dragoons losing 3 officers—Captains Moore and Johnston and Lieutenant Hammond—and 14 men killed, and about all the dragoons were wounded, principally with lance thrusts. General Kearny himself received two wounds; Lieutenant Warner, of the Topographical Engineers, three; and Captain Gillespie, of the volunteers, three. Kearny was compelled to remain at San Bernardino until the 11th on account of wounds, but reached and occupied San Diego December 12.^b

The Hon. Randolph B. Marcy, Secretary of War during the administration of President Polk, expressed himself as follows (December, 1848):

Among the considerations which render the U. S. Military Academy at West Point an appropriate depository of the trophies of the successful victories of our arms in Mexico is the admitted fact that the graduates of that institution contributed in an eminent degree to our unexampled career of success.

We have thus briefly noticed some of the exploits of the American Army in the War of 1812-1815, and in the Mex-

^aGeneral Scott's report written in the National Palace of Mexico September 18, 1847.

^bHistorical Sketch of the 1st U. S. Cavalry, by Capt. R. P. P. Wainwright.

ican war with special reference to the work of the graduates of the Military Academy.

While the plans were formed and the orders for the armies were issued by the commanding generals, the information upon which those plans and orders were based was in the latter contest procured almost entirely by graduates or under their personal direction, and the execution of the general's orders was largely in their hands also; and the excellence of all this work is shown not only by its results, but also by the published official opinions of various general officers, not graduates themselves. Such opinions, being the best possible evidence, have been extensively quoted throughout this paper.

While there is no pretense of a monopoly of military talents, virtues, or skill, it may nevertheless be regarded as demonstrated that military education is a useful, natural, and proper means for the development of them all. And when combined with practical experience, more or less extensive, which is really the final course of a thorough military training, the foundation for good officers of any grade is, perhaps, as well laid as can be expected from human wisdom.

Certainly the United States Military Academy can not be regarded as an unprofitable investment. Although for a long time there was much said and written in opposition to it, the "logic of events" seems to have ended that discussion.

The experience of Scott and Taylor has justified the foresight of Washington, and later experience has still further confirmed it.^a

The following table, which relates to the Mexican War and which refers to and includes only graduates, has been compiled with care, and is believed to be very nearly, if not precisely, accurate. It is intended to show their losses and to give an idea of the estimate placed upon their services by the general officers under whom they served. All the brevets

^a "It remains to show that four years is ample to make good officers for the Army, as a body competent to all the demands of the service and to meet all their responsibilities. To this end I have only to cite the career of our Army in the Mexican War, the officers of which mostly entered the Academy between the ages of 14 and 21. And I make no hesitation in the assertion that there was no failure in the undertaking of any military operation or expedition during the war resulting from a want of education in the graduate."—Testimony of J. K. F. Mansfield, Inspector-General, U. S. A., before the commission appointed in 1860 to examine and report upon the U. S. M. A.

but five were conferred for distinguished services upon the field of battle. In a large number of cases one brevet was awarded to cover several acts near together in point of time, any one of which would have earned it, such as: "Bvt. ———, September 23, 1846, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the several conflicts at Monterey, Mexico," or "Bvt. ———, August 20, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, Mexico."

Each brevet is credited to the "regiment or corps" to which the officer belonged and with which he was serving when he performed the service for which it was awarded.

Regiment or corps.	Graduates.	Killed.	Wounded.	Brevets.
First Dragoons	31	3	1	19
Second Dragoons	25	2	2	18
Mounted Rifles	17	0	5	22
Total cavalry	73	5	8	59
First Artillery	34	4	6	34
Second Artillery	37	2	5	41
Third Artillery	43	4	2	34
Fourth Artillery	39	2	3	27
Total	153	12	16	136
First Infantry	18	2	1	7
Second Infantry	26	4	9	21
Third Infantry	31	5	2	28
Fourth Infantry	24	4	3	26
Fifth Infantry	23	7	7	16
Sixth Infantry	16	2	5	20
Seventh Infantry	25	1	7	21
Eighth Infantry	26	4	15	27
Total	189	29	49	166
Engineer Corps	18	0	9	24
Topographical Engineers	22	2	7	23
Ordnance Department	16	0	3	18
Adjutant-General's Department	11	0	0	8
Quartermaster's Department	29	1	0	a 12
Paymaster's Department	8	0	0	2
Subsistence Department	4	0	0	4
Total	108	3	19	91

a Seven of these brevets were for services on the battlefield.

630 *Centennial of United States Military Academy.*

List of officers commanding Volunteers in the war with Mexico who are graduates of the U. S. Military Academy.

[Thirtieth Congress, first session, Executive Document No. 8, Table G; Congressional Document No. 515, pp. 653-654.]

Name.	Rank.	Graduated.	Remarks.
W. R. McKee.....	Colonel ..	1828	Killed while leading his regiment in a charge at Buena Vista.
Jefferson Davis.....	.....do	1829	Highly distinguished at Monterey and Buena Vista—severely wounded at the latter battle.
Alex. M. Mitchell.....	.....do	1835	Highly distinguished at Monterey, where he was severely wounded.
Samuel R. Curtiss.....	.....do	1832	
L. G. DeRussy .....	.....do	1814	Showed great skill in extricating his command from being captured by the Mexicans when wrecked below Tampico, with the loss of most of their arms.
J. F. Hamtramck.....	.....do	1819	
Humphrey Marshall.....	.....do	1832	Marched with General Wool's command from San Antonio de Bexar, in Texas, to Saltillo, and was highly distinguished at the battle of Buena Vista.
W. B. Burnett .....	.....do	1832	Commanded his regiment at the siege of Vera Cruz and battle of Cerro Gordo.
Albert S. Johnson.....	.....do	1826	Distinguished in the staff of General Henderson at Monterey.
Henry Clay, jr.....	Lieutenant-colonel.	1831	Killed in charge of his regiment at Buena Vista.
Thomas B. Randolph .....	.....do	1812	Served with distinction in the war of 1812.
Harry S. Burton.....	.....do	1839	
Jason Rogers.....	.....do	1821	Raised a regiment and went to the succor of General Taylor before receiving the news of the battle of Palo Alto.
Chas. F. Ruff.....	.....do	1838	Went with the expedition to Santa Fe.
William Irwin .....	.....do	1839	Highly distinguished in the defeat of General Urrea.
Jones M. Withers .....	.....do	1835	
James Allen.....	.....do	1829	
Phillip St. George Cook.....	.....do	1827	
Carry H. Fry.....	Major	1834	Highly distinguished at Buena Vista, where he commanded his regiment after the fall of Colonel McKee and Lieutenant-Colonel Clay.
James H. Hardie.....	.....do	1843	
Jubal A. Early .....	.....do	1837	
Goode Bryan.....	.....do	1834	
Meriwether L. Clark.....	.....do	1830	Commanded the artillery with great distinction at Sacramento, etc.
Benjamin W. Brice .....	.....do	1829	
George H. Ringgold .....	.....do	1833	
M. C. M. Hammond.....	.....do	1836	
John E. Brackett.....	Captain ..	1832	
Henry M. Naglee .....	.....do	1835	
M. R. Stevenson.....	.....do	1846	
Franklin Saunders.....	.....do	1837	
A. G. Blanchard.....	.....do	1829	Highly distinguished in command of the Louisiana Volunteers at Monterey; assisted in the siege of Vera Cruz.
G. S. Rousseau .....	.....do	1828	
Hender K. Yaukum .....	.....do	1832	
M. A. Hagues .....	.....do	1838	
Thomas Worthington.....	Adjutant ..	1827	
W. E. Aisquith	Sergeant ..	1827	

Military services of graduates U. S. Military Academy.

[Report of Board of Visitors, 1848.]

Total number of graduates, 1802-1847.....	1,365
Killed in the war with England	10
Killed in Florida war	12
Killed in Mexican war	46
Graduates who have offered their services (not accepted) in Mexican war	23
Graduates brevetted for gallantry or distinguished services, exclusive of those of Buena Vista and the battles from Veracruz to Mexico.....	81
Graduates in the volunteer service during the Mexican war.....	43
Graduates who have held high rank in the militia.....	73

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