

THE BATTLE OF SANDUSKY: JUNE 4-6, 1782

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WHEN preparing his history of Colonel William Crawford's Sandusky expedition, Consul Willshire Butterfield confronted both a challenge and a handicap. The challenge he summarized in the preface of his work: "Crawford's campaign was one of the most notable of the distinct military enterprises of the Western Border War of the Revolution. Nevertheless, it has heretofore found but little space upon the page of American History. This, however, is not surprising, when we consider that its most striking incidents occurred within a brief space of time, and beyond the bounds of western civilization." The handicap — a scarcity of reliable information — was equally real: "On account of the paucity of authoritative published statements relating to the expedition, I have been compelled, from the commencement, to depend, to a considerable extent, upon authorities in manuscript. Nor can this be regretted, as it has caused the pushing of investigations, whenever practicable, to fountain sources. I have relied upon traditions, only when better testimony was wanting."¹

Undaunted by the challenge and handicap, Butterfield produced a military history that is still respected.² His notebook of "plans and notes" shows his diligence.³ One page alone lists twenty-five letters

Mr. Brown published articles on Crawford's Defeat in the October 1981 and January 1982 issues of the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*. This article commemorates the two-hundredth anniversary of the battle in June 1782.—Editor

1 C. W. Butterfield, *An Historical Account of the Expedition Against Sandusky Under Col. William Crawford in 1782* (Cincinnati, 1873), iii.

2 In 1873, Butterfield's campaign history superseded Joseph Doddridge's *Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars* (reprint ed., New York, 1912), 264-75, and now is most commonly cited in footnotes and bibliographies. Since the publication of Butterfield's work, three magazine articles have appeared on the subject of the Sandusky expedition. James H. Anderson, "Colonel William Crawford," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 6 (1897-1898): 1-34, is the best written and documented. The others are: N. N. Hill, Jr., "Crawford's Campaign," *Magazine of Western History* 2 (May 1885): 19-38; and J. J. Bliss, "Crawford's Campaign Against Upper Sandusky," *Ohio Magazine* 3 (Sept. 1907): 121-36.

3 Butterfield, MS Vol. 271, Ohio Historical Center, Columbus, Ohio. A note inside the cover (Butterfield's handwriting) reads: "This blank book I purchased to be used as my bar docket; but relinquishing the practice afterwards, I made use of it as a note-book when writing 'Crawford's Campaign against Sandusky.' The leaves that are pasted up contain a record of my last cases." No date is given for the start of his research on the expedition. The last recorded law case was dated February 25, 1867.

of inquiry, only two of which went unanswered. Other pages refer to histories of the day and such "narratives" of veterans as Butterfield could locate. In addition to the planning book, the published history itself reflects his conscientiousness in footnote references to Indian testimony and useful maps.⁴ Important information, though, eluded Butterfield, and by the 1890s he was busy revising his history.⁵ Butterfield died in 1899; his revision went unpublished.

Today the preservation and indexing of documents assist the researcher in ways Butterfield would have appreciated. Additional recollections are available to interested students of the Crawford campaign. Not only is there much more material, but the quality is better, veterans relating vividly what they thought and felt, saw and smelled during the fighting when death wore feathers and paint.

The journals kept on the expedition illustrate this. One was written by Private Michael Walters of Captain John Beeson's company, and another by Major John Rose (Baron Gustav Heinrich de Rosenthal), aide-de-camp to Colonel Crawford.⁶ These journals supply valuable, firsthand information, and it is a marvel they survived, judging from what Charles Hamilton had to say about journals from Braddock's expedition earlier.

Complete journals . . . from which we can view the action with some perspective, are of extreme rarity. Consider that many of the British and American troops were illiterate. Of those who knew how to write, few had the energy to keep a diary after the exhausting routine of long marches in the wilderness, the daily foraging for food, and the constant guard duty. Most were too busy trying to keep their scalps to cope with a quill and foolscap. . . . The fleeing survivors shed their equipment and personal belongings and even their guns. If the Indians who looted the battlefield and scalped the dead ran across any diaries, they probably grunted in disgust at the "talking leaves" and tossed them down to rot with the bodies of the owners.⁷

With the aim of comparing the Walters and Rose journals with others of the Revolution, I sought a comprehensive study of American

4 William Brown's *Map of the Wyandot Reservation* (n.d.), and the *Wyandot county map of 1870*, 'D. Straw.' See also Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 174, 202, 205.

5 Butterfield, MS 55, "Revision of Original MS," Container 2, Folder 4, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

6 *The Journal of Michael Walters, A Member of the Expedition Against Sandusky in the Year 1782*, edited by J. P. MacLean, was printed in Tract 89, Vol. 14 (1899), by the Western Reserve Historical Society. John Rose's *Journal of a Volunteer Expedition to Sandusky* with attached endnotes was first published in the United States in 1894 in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 18: 128-57, 293-328. The journal with its notes was reprinted by the *New York Times* and Arno Press in 1969. The pagination of subsequent footnotes referring to the Rose journal and endnotes is from the 1969 reprint.

7 Charles Hamilton, ed., *Braddock's Defeat* (Norman, Okla., 1959), x.



Portrait of Gustavus Heinrich Wetter von Rosenthal (1753-1829), n.d.
Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

military journals and diaries. None apparently exists. The best available bibliography is still William Matthews's *American Diaries*, which cites 385 military and civilian writers who produced such literature from 1775 through 1783. The sizable volume of this material is also evident in Ronald M. Gephart's current ten-year survey of sources at the Library of Congress for the study of the American Revolution. In his survey as a member of that library's staff, Gephart found that many diaries and journals survived the Revolution to reach print at a later time. His impression is that the largest number survived from the Arnold (1775-1776) and Sullivan (1779) expeditions.⁸

No comprehensive study of American military journals being available, one is left to draw such conclusions as careful examination of the published copies of the Walters and Rose journals will permit. Michael Walters was born in 1760 (probably in Germany) and settled early in Western Pennsylvania where he lived until his death in 1818. Of his Revolutionary War service nothing is known beyond what his journal and the Militia Loan records provide.⁹ On October 13, 1897, J. P. MacLean, the editor at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, was introduced to James Walters (grandson of Michael Walters) on his farm near Straughn, Indiana. Failing to persuade James to place the journal in an Ohio archives, MacLean photographed one of the manuscript's nine leaves, and copied the rest of the text by hand "exactly." He also recorded precisely the physical appearance of the document.¹⁰ This journal in the form

8 "Regarding published discussions of military journals and their evolutions, I am not aware that any such works exist. A journal, like any diary, is highly individualistic." Col. John B. B. Trussell, Jr., Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, to author, July 9, 1981; William Matthews, *American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of American Diaries Written Prior to the Year 1861* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1945); interviews, Sept. 9, 1981, Jan. 29, 1982. The survey results are available in R. M. Gephart's *Revolutionary America 1763-1789: A Bibliography* (Washington) to be published in late 1982 or early 1983.

9 Under the Militia Loan Act of April 1, 1784, Pennsylvania compensated veteran militiamen for their service by issuing interest-bearing certificates of the funded or militia debt (bonds in the modern sense), which were ultimately redeemable at face value. The Militia Loan records in Harrisburg, by virtue of their individual certificate numbering, in effect provide each listed militiaman with a "dogtag." For example, Michael Walters was paid for his expedition tour (including time in captivity) 102 pounds. His pay certificate for that tour was 3187. His name is listed as a member of Beeson's company in William H. Egle, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 3rd ser. (Harrisburg, 1897), 23: 229 (hereafter cited as *Penn. Arch.*).

10 In the Western Reserve Historical Society Tract 89, the editor states that "The MS. is a fragment, composed of nine leaves; five of these are written on both sides and one is blank. Eight pages are written in full and three only in part. The leaves are six inches long by three and one-half in width. It appears at one time to have been a memorandum book carried in the pocket.

of a continuing narrative opens with Walters's departure from home on May 18, 1782, for the expedition rendezvous and closes on October 28 of the same year when Walters, a captive of the British, was put in a Montreal "jail or provo." A table of distances is then added which indicates that Walters traveled 2,645 miles before reaching home again. Equally impressive is the fact that Walters wrote the journal at all, since by Howard H. Peckham's count, only nine or ten diaries and memoirs written by Revolutionary War privates have survived in print.¹¹

The journal of John Rose covers a twenty-day period from the eve of the army's departure from Mingo Bottom on May 24 until his return there with the main body of troops on June 13. In detail, Major Rose records the army's progress through dark forest over Indian trails and Bouquet's Road, past several springs (two still drinkable) and the ruins of abandoned Delaware and Wyandot settlements. In the endnotes attached to the journal, this officer pictures the arrival of the first contingents at the upper Moravian village of New Schoenbrunn. With his usual precision, he paints the volunteers in Cromwell fashion, "warts and all":

. . . . our Right and Left columns galloped to the opposite ends of the Town, and the Centre speeded it strait forwards. the pencil of a Hogarth is here wanted to immortalize the ludicrous scene. this undaunted party of Clodhoppers seated on their Meal Baggs and Balancing themselves in rope Stirrups, were kicking into a gallop their miserable nags, sweating under a load of at least 150 Weights provisions besides this huge Rider, who kept pulling the panting animal by a hair halter with but one rein — and steered strait for three half burnt Log houses, by Way of a charge upon Warriors — the utility of 3 Columns in charges was expatiated on as soon as we had halted; the main Body marched in 4 as one will recollect, and was not 20 yards behind us. Neither curses nor threats could keep them back in order; so great was the anxiety for plunder. One third at least push'd immediately over the river to hunt for horses &c and others plunged to their armpits into a pond, in search of plunder.¹²

Rose's candor and descriptive power enliven his discussion of the expedition's officers above the rank of captain, and of the problems faced in leading volunteers. Colonel Crawford's orders up to and

The leaves have been detached the one from the other and afterwards sewed together regardless of consecutive order or uniformity of position. . . . The penmanship is excellent." The handwritten copy made by MacLean of the MS journal is in the Western Reserve Historical Society. Currently a search is underway for the original MS in Indiana and points west.

11 Howard H. Peckham in the foreword of John C. Dann, *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), xi-xii.

12 Rose, *Journal*, 312. The reference is to William Hogarth (1687-1764), an English engraver and painter. Rose probably had in mind that illustrator's popular prints, *Gin Lane* and *Beer Street*.

including the night of June 5 are also preserved in the endnotes. Throughout the rest of Rose's notes, captions have been inserted, probably by the Philadelphia editor, which indicate the breadth of Rose's recommendations for another expedition to Sandusky. The captions read: "Hints," "Troops," "Line of March," "Route," "Horses," "Provisions," and "Disposition" (that is, of troops).

The publication of the Rose journal and its endnotes in the United States was accidental. According to Frederick D. Stone, two strangers appeared at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in October 1893 asking questions about Brigadier General William Irvine. One visitor, explaining that his great-grandfather had been Irvine's adjutant during the Revolution, presented his card which read: "Baron George Pilar von Pilchau, Delegate of the Ministry of the Imperial Court and Appanages of Russia to the World's Exhibition at Chicago." Baron von Pilchau finally disclosed that he "had some interesting papers written by the Baron Rosenthal [John Rose], giving partial accounts of his services in America." His offer to send copies for publication was quickly accepted, and thus the journal and endnotes appeared in the July and October 1894 issues of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.

The manuscript (if not lost or destroyed) is in the Soviet Union, most likely the State Archives at Tartu, Estonia.¹³ Because the actual documents have yet to be examined, what follows must of necessity be regarded as a tentative report based upon my investigations thus far.

The language in which the manuscript journal and endnotes were written cannot be determined with certainty. The possibility that the

13 The papers of the nobleman, whose assumed name was John Rose, are listed along with other family genealogical histories in a directory to holdings in Soviet archives (Lichnye arkhivnye fondy v khranilishchakh SSR; Ukazatel'. Moscow, 1962. 2 v.). The pertinent entry reads: (trans. Robt. V. Allen, Library of Congress): Vetter-Rozentali (Rozentali) [Wetter-Rosenthal (Rosenthal)], von: Gustav Heinrich (1753-1829), participation in the war for independence in North America; Gustav Jacob (1789-1853), and others — land-owners of the Estland guberniia [province]. TGI A Est. SSR [Central State Historical Archives of the Estonian SSR] f. 2638 [file number], 92 preservation units, 1630-1885 [dates of material included]. Listings in the guide to the Estonian Historical Archives in Tartu confirm the preservation of that documentary material there. At the same time, Dr. Patricia Kennedy Grimsted of Harvard University's Ukrainian Research Institute, in a June 23, 1981, letter to the author, wrote that the location indicated by Moscow historian Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov in his *Russia and the American Revolution* (Tallahassee, Fla., 1976), 248, is more likely correct. The archives are the same, but the fond (file), as she points out, is different. Currently this investigation is being pursued through conversations with historians at the Department of State and correspondence with Peter de Wetter of Los Angeles, the eldest direct male descendant of John Rose in the United States.

journal was in American English and the endnotes in German cannot be excluded.¹⁴ Throughout the journal, the use of Americanisms is frequent — “bottom,” “creek,” “brushy,” “forks,” “blazes,” and “deer lick.”

Of greater importance is Rose's motivation in keeping so detailed and comprehensive a record. More was surely involved than a literary urge on Rose's part or his wishing to “tell the folks back home.” Rose is silent as to his motive, so that all one can do is read between the lines, consider the circumstances at the time, and make an educated guess.

As a start, it should be recalled that the controversial expedition of Colonel David Williamson was recent history. Less than three months earlier, militia from the western townships of Washington County, Pennsylvania, had bludgeoned to death ninety pacifist Moravian Indians at Gnadenhütten, and the event still stirred arguments between those who approved and those who did not. On March 8, instructions from George Washington sent General Irvine hurrying back to the garrison at Fort Pitt, which he found weakened by confusion and recrimination. Before long he was writing his wife about the Moravian massacre, saying that, “Whatever your private opinion of these matters may be, I conjure you by all the ties of affection, and as you value my reputation, that you keep your mind to yourself. . . .”¹⁵

When the Sandusky expedition was organized, the steps taken by Irvine leave no doubt that he wanted to avoid a repetition of what had occurred at Gnadenhütten. Behind the scenes he used his influence to ensure that a retired Continental Line officer, William Crawford, was elected to command the expedition. This time no questions would be raised afterwards as to whether the campaign was officially authorized or not: written instructions from Irvine were

¹⁴ As his letter to Irvine from Mingo Bottom on May 24, 1782 (Irvine MS, Historical Society of Pennsylvania) demonstrates, Rose's command of English was excellent. This fact alone, however, is not conclusive evidence that the journal and endnotes were originally in English. Other facts point to German. In one letter to F. D. Stone, Baron von Pilchau states that he is “rewriting the history of the campaign executed by my great grandfather.” In another letter he writes that the “copy of that campaign . . . won't be finished before a fortnight” (12/24 Nov. 1893 and 15/27 1893, Hist. Soc. of Pa.). The wording “rewriting” here need not be interpreted literally. Together with the period of time indicated, it suggests that *translation*, not merely transcription, was involved in preparing the printer's copy. The final answer, though, awaits examination of the documents or photocopies of them, both of which are unavailable to the author at the present time.

¹⁵ Mary C. Darlington, *Fort Pitt and Letters From the Frontier* (Pittsburgh, 1892), 239-40.

forwarded to the expedition's commander. Irvine's purpose in assigning John Rose to assist Crawford is also apparent: following the expedition, Irvine wanted a full and clear report. The daily journal was probably John Rose's idea in response to this need. He used it in preparing his official report to Irvine from Mingo Bottom on June 13, 1782.¹⁶

The endnotes are something else. In them the style abruptly changes from the stiff military prose of the journal to a fuller, critical analysis heated now and again by angry outbursts: "But we acted, as if determined to be conquered, not to Beat. I am convinced we should have done better, if it had not been repugnant to —'s opinion to proceed to Sandusky — What! repugnant to —'s opinion? Was not the expedition originally planned for that plan? Was this not publicly known by every Body, that engaged in it? Was not C. himself solicitous about the commands? — Here is the key to the riddle."¹⁷

With the war grinding down and military minds turning to future prospects, such notes could in the wrong hands prove politically sensitive and embarrassing. Whether the use of initials and dashes was Rose's doing, or whether the great-grandson in translating thus attempted to avoid offending descendants of those castigated is impossible to say without seeing the original manuscript material. Beyond question the writing of the endnotes gave Rose a means to blow off steam.

Rose's motive in writing the last sections of the endnotes becomes clear when their content is compared with Irvine's correspondence following the army's return. On June 23, Westmoreland citizens petitioned Irvine to head a second expedition to Sandusky, and by July first he acted. Writing Secretary of War Benjamin Lincoln that the rendezvous would be on August 1, he enclosed a summary of plans for Washington's examination and suggestions. During this period Rose would have participated in the deliberations of his superior, and his recommendations are those at the close of the endnotes. Beginning with, "I shall give my Ideas concisely, how I judge, an expedition might be easiest carried into the Indian settlements on Sandusky river," he lays out a proposal which Irvine received by the end of June. The recommendations close with a sketch showing rivers, marshes, trails, and villages throughout the enemy stronghold as "delineated by a Delaware Indian at Fort Pitt, June 30, 1782."

¹⁶ In Irvine MS at the Hist. Soc. of Pa., are Irvine's orders; Rose's June 13, 1782, letter includes facts and even phrases from his journal.

¹⁷ Rose, *Journal*, 303-4.

From the first journal entry to the final map, the orderly paragraphs reflect Rose's loyalty to Irvine, a devotion that Rose expressed movingly when word reached him in 1806 of his benefactor's death. "How often did his indulgence toward myself excuse many inconsiderate undertakings, whilst I was under his command. . . . It was a happy time, notwithstanding all the buffetings of fortune we underwent. his memory will be forever as dear to me and indelible with my children, as his righteousness and steadiness in the cause of Liberty ought to be the pride of his family and country."¹⁸

Rose had good reason to be loyal to Irvine. With great kindness, the general had encouraged and advised his young protégé throughout much of his American adventure.¹⁹ Born Gustav Heinrich de Rosenthal in 1753 in the Russian Baltic province of Livonia, he attended two German universities in preparation for a diplomatic career. He then killed a nobleman in a duel and was forced to flee his native land to England, and then to the American colonies just as the Revolution was beginning. Assuming the name John Rose, he trained as a hospital steward and joined the Sixth Pennsylvania Battalion at Fort Ticonderoga.²⁰ Commanded by the then Colonel William Irvine, the troops marched north to take part in the operations in Canada, arriving in time to share in the major defeat at Three Rivers on June 9, 1776. Rose went with them to tend the sick and wounded, and probably became acquainted with his regimental commander during that period before Irvine was captured by the British at Three Rivers.

Returning to Ticonderoga, Rose was a surgeon at the fort for

18 C. W. Butterfield, ed., *Washington-Irvine Correspondence* (Madison, Wisc., 1882), 379, 129; Rose, *Journal*, 316, 328; Draper MSS 1 NN 84.

19 John Rose's true name is rarely found given in full. It was Gustav Heinrich Johann, Baron von Rosenthal (b. Jan. 10/22, 1753, d. June 26/July 8, 1829). His name, however, most commonly appears in genealogical works as Gustavus Heinrich von Wetter-Rosenthal. In 1882 the family officially adopted its original name, Wetter, which had been disregarded since an ancestor was elevated to the Swedish nobility in 1652 with the name of von Rosenthal (Imper. Russian Ukaz of Aug. 17, 1882). The Baltic German nobleman whose American pseudonym was John Rose is listed in Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers . . .* (Washington, 1914), 474; and Bryce Metcalf, *Original Members and Other Officers Eligible to the Society of Cincinnati, 1783-1938* (Strasburg, Va., 1938), 271. A representative list of other sources includes the Draper MSS 1 NN; *Der Deutsche Pioneer* (1923) 7: 83-94; O. Welding, ed., *Deutschbaltisches Biographisches Lexikon, 1710-1960* (Köln, 1970), 931; *Genealogisches Handbuch de Baltischen Ritterschaften* (Teil: Estland, Bd. II, Górlitz, 1931), 216; and *Urkunden und Nachrichten*, a MS compilation of family-historical records from the archive in Herkull, Estonia, prepared by Rurik von Wetter-Rosenthal (1888).

20 Butterfield, *Historical Account*, n., 310. See also Rose's statement in Draper MSS 1 NN 92.

some months until going back to eastern Pennsylvania where his battalion was disbanded. When the Sixth Pennsylvania Battalion was reorganized as the Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment, Rose was made a surgeon in it and served for two years with growing frustration as he unsuccessfully sought an officer's commission. The one bright aspect of this otherwise dreary phase in his career was his friendship with Irvine who had returned from Canada in May 1778, their growing rapport arising possibly from Irvine's profession as a physician. Soon Rose was a repeated and welcome guest in Irvine's home at Carlisle. An administrative ax then cruelly chopped Rose's pride. He was judged incompetent, reduced to surgeon's mate, and ordered to a hospital near Valley Forge. To hide his humiliation, he worked there under another assumed name, Gustavus Henderson.²¹

By July 1780, Rose's restlessness had driven him into Philadelphia in search of a ship. Finally securing a surgeon's berth, he sailed happily on the privateer *Revenge*, only to be captured with it and imprisoned in New York until April 1781. Rose then received an appointment as aide-de-camp to Irvine, commanding the Second Pennsylvania Brigade, and with it his coveted commission as an ensign. In September 1781, Irvine was ordered to Fort Pitt to take command of the western department, and before long Rose was with him there.²² Doubtless the general was aware that his friend concealed his pre-American past with a false name, but neither Irvine nor his family asked questions. Rose was an energetic officer who adjusted well to life at the fort and became popular with the frontier populace. When Colonel Crawford asked for help in leading the expedition against Sandusky, Irvine sent Rose.

Besides the Walters and Rose journals, pension declarations filed by Sandusky veterans and preserved in the National Archives in Washington are valuable in reconstructing the battle. The initial pension legislation enacted by Congress early in the Revolution provided half pay in 1776 for officers and servicemen disabled in United States service. This and other pieces of pension legislation that followed during the war were designed largely to encourage enlistment and thus involved relatively few persons. In 1789 the federal government

21 Rose to Potts, Ticonderoga, Sept. 2, 1776, Jonathan Potts Papers, Hist. Soc. of Pa.; Rose to Irvine, Camp Millstone, Feb. 15, 1779, Draper MSS 1 NN 75-77; Heitman, *Historical Register*, 474.

22 Rose to Irvine, Philadelphia, July 27, 1780, Draper MSS 1 NN 77-78; Irvine to Rose, Camp Orange Town, Aug. 18, 1780, Rose to Irvine, Philadelphia, Sept. 19, New York, Nov. 6, 1780, Irvine Papers, Hist. Soc. of Pa.; Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 132. Irvine's Order-Book, July 8, 1781, Hist. Soc. of Pa.

gradually began to take over invalid pensions from the states, and in 1818 (for the first time attempting to reward veterans for their Revolutionary service) Congress granted half pay to all Continental officers and enlisted men, sailors, and marines if they were then in dire financial need. The first comprehensive federal pension act followed in 1832, providing an annual grant to every man who had served for six months or more. A soldier no longer had to be poverty-stricken or disabled to receive a pension, and service in any military organization was sufficient as long as that service could be proved beyond reasonable doubt. Widows married at the time of the Revolution were also made eligible. For the most part, the pension declarations (or narratives) of Sandusky expedition volunteers were recorded in response to this congressional enactment of 1832.

For this study, seventeen out of nearly eighty declarations have been selected. On the whole, these seventeen go far beyond the usual listing of duty tours, units served in, and officers' names. Howard H. Peckham has stated of such declarations that "the articulate always have more to say and usually say it better than the taciturn. They dictated, or wrote without revision, page after page of military experiences. We hear . . . what their children and grandchildren must have heard."²³ While such eyewitness accounts were recorded thirty to fifty years after the events described, they should not be dismissed out of hand as unreliable, for what Donald Dale Jackson discovered during his study of Gold Rush narratives applies equally to federal pension declarations of the same general period. According to Jackson, where reliability is involved, accuracy may be established by checking parallel accounts against each other, and by the accumulation of verifiable detail. While reading myself over a thousand pension declarations, I had the same experience. Embellishment, confusion, or fabrication is quickly sensed, and conversely, "a certain solidity . . . , a sense of overall authority . . . becomes recognizable."²⁴

The same authority is recognizable in testimony available in the Lyman C. Draper (1815-1891) Collection at the Wisconsin State Historical Society Library in Madison, Wisconsin. Draper was keenly interested in the western campaigns of the Revolution and the Indian

²³ Dann, *Revolution Remembered*, xi. For additional information on the military pension records at the National Archives, readers will want to consult the fine introduction to the above source. A discussion in depth of those records is given in Microcopy Booklet M804, *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files*, published by the National Archives and Records Service (Washington, D.C., 1974).

²⁴ D. D. Jackson, *Gold Dust* (New York, 1980), 336ff, 338.

wars that followed. From the early 1840s he corresponded with and (in some instances) personally interviewed Sandusky expedition veterans and their children.²⁵

The average age of soldiers in the sample, drawn from pension declarations and Draper manuscripts, is twenty-four. The youngest was John Clark (sixteen), and the oldest Michael Myers (thirty-seven).²⁶ Their time in service before the expedition and the nature of that service vary greatly.²⁷ Nine soldiers served at Forts Pitt, Mc-

25 The following items from the Draper MSS are illustrative: Stephen Burkarn (2 S 238-46), Francis Dunlavy (11 E 208-09), Thomas Harris (2 U 1203), John Lemon (9 S 190), and Michael Myers (4 S 132-46). The recollections of Stephen Burkarn are found only in the Draper MSS. Born in Berkeley County, Virginia, in 1762, Burkarn settled with his parents near Beeson's Fort (present Uniontown, Pennsylvania) in 1768. Participating in McIntosh's campaign, he helped build the fort bearing that officer's name. He also worked on the construction of Fort Laurens and survived a winter of hunger there. During the Williamson expedition of 1782, Burkarn voted to kill captive Moravian Delawares at Gnadenhütten.

26 Michael Myers (b. Winchester, Va., 1745) was a tall, rawboned, fleet-footed Indian fighter. His nickname, "Auver Mike," arose from his practice of starting sentences with the word "auver" to counteract stammering. J. A. Caldwell, *History of Belmont and Jefferson Counties, Ohio* (Wheeling, W. Va., 1880), 430-31.

John Clark (b. Lancaster County, Pa., 1765) settled with his parents ten miles west of Washington, Pennsylvania, about 1778-1779. Too young for enrollment in a militia company, he was nevertheless permitted to volunteer for tours as a wood ranger to warn settlers of approaching Indian war parties and to guard house-forts.

27 Possibly a distant Maryland relation of Colonel Crawford, David Crawford (b. Harford County, Md., 1764) served militia tours beginning in June 1781. He participated in an expedition led by George Rogers Clark to the Falls of the Ohio (now Louisville) where he served some months in a fort's garrison.

Daniel Leet (b. near Bordentown, N.J., 1749) moved at the age of three with his parents to Henry County, Virginia, where he grew up. In 1773 he moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania. Earning a diploma in surveying at William and Mary College, and having already surveyed George Washington's western lands in Virginia and Kentucky, he was appointed deputy surveyor in Augusta County, Virginia, in 1776. During the Revolution, he served with the Thirtieth Virginia Regiment as quartermaster and paymaster. With the rank of brigade major, he fought in the Battle of Trenton, served at Valley Forge where he courted his wife, and then was stationed at Fort Laurens. After the victory at Yorktown, he resigned his commission and returned to Washington County, Pennsylvania, to protect his father's family from Indian incursions. The roll of the 1782 Williamson expedition in *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 256, includes his name. Other evidence (Draper MSS 2 S 3) and the low rank, however, cast doubt on the reference.

James Williams (b. Chester County, Pa., 1759) originally enlisted in Washington County, Maryland, in 1778. For four months he guarded prisoners at Fort Frederick and then moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania. His son John characterized him as a "woodchopper, farmer and hunter" who "hunted not only the beasts of the forests, but the savages also. He was something of a rover" (source: descendant's transcription in author's files).

William Robinson (b. Bucks County, Pa., 1748), a militiaman in Loudoun County, Virginia, dug trenches and constructed cannon emplacements in July

Intosh, and Laurens as well as lesser-known house-forts scattered through the region. Four men helped construct Fort McIntosh and Fort Laurens.²⁸ Seven patrolled the Virginia-Pennsylvania frontier for three to six summers as wood rangers or "spies."²⁹ Two guarded harvesters from Indian attack.³⁰ John Gunsaula reached Sandusky after a tour guarding the eastern coastline against British landing parties and chasing Tories in New Jersey.³¹ James Morrison joined Morgan's Select Corps of Riflemen and contributed to Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga.³² William Hall, who drummed for Crawford's

1776, and then helped guard the town of Alexandria for three months. In 1781 he moved to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

28 James Collins (b. Lancaster County, Pa., 1761) built forts in 1777 and served in McIntosh's campaign the following year.

Hugh Workman (b. Lancaster County, Pa., 1760) moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1777, where he first served in McIntosh's campaign. He helped construct Fort McIntosh, and later Fort Laurens. He then scouted the frontier widely as a wood ranger until the fall of 1781 when he joined Williamson's first expedition (not the "Moravian Massacre").

29 William Brady (b. Sussex County, N.J., 1760) moved when he was fourteen to Washington County, Pennsylvania. Between 1776 and the Sandusky expedition he served six tours for a total of twenty months as a wood ranger.

William Leet (b. N.J., 1758) was the brother of Brigade Major Daniel Leet. From the winter of 1775 he regularly engaged in frontier duty with a militia company while advancing in rank from sergeant to lieutenant. He scouted for the 1781 Williamson expedition to the Moravian Indian settlements, and in the spring of 1782 commanded at Vance's Fort.

John Walters (b. near Hagerstown, Md., 1763) lived during the Revolution on Laps Creek (now Fayette County, Pennsylvania). Prior to the Sandusky expedition, he served three active-duty militia tours in frontier forts from June 1781 to March 1782.

Robert White (b. eastern Pa., 1760) moved to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, before 1776 where he served numerous tours as a "spy and ranger" and as a blockhouse guard. Early in 1782, he moved with his father to Mickle's station, four miles from Fort Pitt.

30 Francis Dunlavy (b. Winchester, Va., 1762) resettled with his parents near Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1772. From October 1776, he served militia tours protecting harvesters, guarding forts, and scouting as a wood ranger. In 1778-1779 he campaigned under McIntosh and Brodhead, and helped build Forts McIntosh and Laurens. A short while before the Sandusky expedition, Dunlavy was a student in the Rev. Thaddeus Dod's Latin and Mathematical "Log-cabin" School in Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Angus McCoy (b. Scotland, 1760) emigrated to Philadelphia with his widowed mother in 1772. In 1781 he moved to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, where he principally guarded harvesters against Indian attack and scouted on the frontier. His pension declaration is included in Dann, *Revolution Remembered*, 309-15.

31 John Gunsaula (b. near Albany, N.Y., 1755) joined Washington's army as a militiaman during the 1776 retreat across New Jersey and fought in a skirmish at Springfield. In 1778 he served six militia tours, skirmishing with the British and chasing and jailing Tories near Morristown, New Jersey. Subsequently in 1779 he "was attached" to one of the regiments that campaigned with Sullivan against Seneca villages in New York state. He then moved to Washington County, Pennsylvania. Gunsaula is described as tall, bony, and strong enough to straighten a horseshoe with his hands.

32 James Morrison (b. Cumberland County, Pa., 1755), the son of Irish

force, was widely known as the "Little Green Drummer" admired by Washington and Lafayette. Engagements cited in Hall's pension declaration read like a war memorial inscription: Boston, Long Island, White Plains, Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Paoli, and Monmouth. He was especially popular with Continental soldiers he whipped for court-martial offenses; a stubby man who honored Ireland by his "wearing of the green," he strutted and did his duty with a flourish, but his lash fell lightly, causing some officers to grumble.³³

To supplement the information from journals, declarations, and interview notes, independent narratives also have been utilized. Some ring true throughout. Others, like potatoes with soft spots, signal the reader to beware.

Widely popular as captivity narratives, the accounts of surgeon John Knight and guide John Slover possess the ring of authenticity.³⁴ Both had Continental Line experience. Both were captured following the battle.³⁵ The physician witnessed Crawford's death at the stake immigrants, evidently served briefly with a Virginia rifle company under Daniel Morgan at the siege of Boston. Then, following his participation in the defeat of Burgoyne's army at Saratoga, Morrison was an ensign with a detachment of the Eighth Pennsylvania Continental Regiment at Fort Laurens before returning to Fort Pitt [Louise P. Kellogg, ed., *Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio, 1778-1779* (Madison, Wisc., 1916), 312]. Thereafter, for a time, he served with Washington County militia before joining the Sandusky expedition.

33 William Hall (b. Ireland, 1756) emigrated with his father to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1760 where, from the age of ten, he "was taught the science of drumming" which he practiced with the local militia. In 1775 he served with a Continental company raised in Lancaster County, and after six months in the siege lines at Boston was discharged. It then appears that Hall enlisted early in 1776 in one of the two Pennsylvania state units that fought at Long Island and that eventually were combined into the "Pennsylvania State Regiment." During the fighting at Long Island, Hall received a bayonet wound but escaped to participate in the American retreat across New Jersey. He drummed at the Battles of Trenton and Princeton. After his discharge at Valley Forge in December 1777, he returned home.

34 The Pittsburgh lawyer, Hugh Henry Brackenridge, obtained and mailed the narratives to a Philadelphia printer who printed them in the April 30 and May 21, 1783, issues of the *Freeman's Journal* [see A. Loudon's *Narratives* (1808), vi]. After that, various reprintings were made which R. W. G. Vail lists in his *Voice of the Old Frontier* (New York, 1970), 314-15, 443. The printing commonly found in libraries is Brackenridge's *Indian Atrocities: Narratives of the Perils and Sufferings of Dr. Knight and John Slover, Among the Indians During the Revolutionary War . . .* (Cincinnati, 1867).

35 John Knight (b. Scotland, ca. 1751) had a better than average education. About 1773, he emigrated to Philadelphia after living awhile with an apothecary in England. In 1776 he joined the Thirteenth Virginia Regiment as a surgeon's mate. When part of that regiment was led east by Colonel William Crawford, Knight went with it and tended the wounded at the Battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth. From January 1780, he was a surgeon with the Ninth Virginia Regiment at Fort Pitt.

John Slover (b. New River, Va., 1753) served as a Sandusky expedition

and narrowly escaped burning himself. Slover was bound to a stake elsewhere and the wood ignited when a sudden cloudburst extinguished the fire, causing a night's postponement during which Slover escaped.

The recollections about Philip Smith and John McDonald are secondhand. A grandson of Philip Smith, Albert M. Smith of Centreville, Indiana, took down and sent Butterfield what the family remembered. The wounding and death of John McDonald, as described by a nephew, was printed in the *Scioto Gazette* on October 9, 1845.³⁶

An unpublished manuscript "letter" in southwestern Ohio contains the experience of Jonas Sams. Born the son of a Pennsylvania tailor in 1756, Sams was described by his son Nehemiah as a foot-loose woodsman: "he used to hunt in the mountains for deer and turkeys . . . and kept on hunting til his father moved over on this side of the Allegania Mountains. . . ." ³⁷ Accompanied by his brother, Jonathan, he marched with Westmoreland militia from Thorn's tavern ("on the road from Redstone to Catfish camp") to Mingo Bottom. His narration, beginning with his arrival at Sandusky, warrants further attention:

they was met by a party of Indians and the men was commanded to tree and Jonas ran to a large oak tree that stood off to it self and there [in] his own words said I shot 18 times 16 at Indians twist at an English officer and the 2d time I fetcht him to the ground he was a grate way off but I had a gun that carried amost an ounce ball and I raised the hind Site the 2nd time and he fell off his white horse and his dress was all white except his hat and boots I shot one indian and there was another in view and I was in a hurry to kill him that I put down the bullet without powder and I ran into the woud to get the bullet out and there I saw men hiding from the Indians and I got the bullet out by on briching it and ran back to my big tree as soon as I could and began to shoot every opportunity til it got to dark to see them.³⁸

guide. Captured by Miami Indians when he was eight years old, he lived with that tribe in southeastern Ohio for six years and then went as a captive to live with Shawnees for six more years. At the age of twenty he attended a treaty parley at Fort Pitt in 1773. There he met white relatives for the first time who persuaded him to return to Virginia with them. About 1776 he enlisted and served in the Continental army for fifteen months.

³⁶ Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 75, 142-43, 148, 210, 212, 284-87. John McDonald's death is recorded in Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, RG-4, Records of the Comptroller General, Militia Loan Accounts, Militia 1777-84, Wash. and Westm. Co. Operations. "The Wounding of John McDonald," written by a nephew of the soldier, appeared in the *Scioto* (Ohio) *Gazette*, Oct. 9, 1845.

³⁷ Letters to author from Kathryn E. Miller, Winchester, Ohio, Mar. 24, 1981, and Theodora Sintha Sams Wells, Franklin, Ohio, May 14, 1981. A photocopy of Nehemiah Sams's MS "letter" is in the author's files. It is recognized that the document has yet to be authenticated by scientific means. The author's acceptance of it here rests upon corroboration in other primary sources.

³⁸ Pension application, "Sams, Jonathan. Va., R.9168," National Archives. "Redstone" refers to Redstone Old Fort (near modern Brownsville), and

The presence of cowards hiding among the baggage is mentioned by other volunteers.³⁹ The description of the accidental jamming and then "on briching" of a rifle is valuable to those interested in Revolutionary arms.⁴⁰ Even more significant is Sams's assertion that he shot at long range a British officer. The only officer recorded as wounded is Captain William Caldwell, the commander of the British Rangers sent from Detroit to aid the Indians. Soon after the battle, Caldwell wrote his superior, "I received a ball through both my legs which obliged me to leave the field. If I had not been so unlucky I am induced to think . . . the enemy would not have left the place we surrounded them in."⁴¹ The wounding of this officer so early in the battle thus had far-reaching effects.

Of all the independent narratives, those penned by John McCaddon and Robert A. Sherrard require cautious scrutiny.⁴² Mc-

"Catfish camp" to present-day Washington, Pennsylvania. Nehemiah Sams's MS "letter."

39 "Before the retreat, Judge Dunlevy saw very many of the men in the rear crouched behind logs, trees etc, occasionally discharging their pieces, but without the least possible chance of success" (Draper MSS 11 E 208). "The horses & provisions were kept in the centre: some cowardly men would hide among the packsaddles. . . ." (*ibid.*, 4 S 138).

40 In an attempt to understand the "on briching" procedure, the writer consulted Samuel E. Dyke of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, author of *The Pennsylvania Rifle* (1974). In reply, Dyke wrote that Jonas Sams "was shooting a Kentucky or Pennsylvania Rifle of approximately .69-.70 cal. A one ounce ball would be .682 cal. This caliber (.69 Cal) was common bore size for this type of expedition. The size of Ball is propelled with a predetermined amount of powder. . . . The matter of raising the 'hind sight.' — He meant that he adjusted his eye in the rear sight to the front sight, by eye vision, and *not* by mechanically raising the rear sight. In the period of 1782, Rifles such as Jonas used, had a front and rear sight, neither adjustable for any side, or height elevation. The Rear sight as such had a 'V' notch built into it, and the depth of the front sight visioned in the rear 'V' by the gunner permitted the elevating of the ball to be varied. Only the experience of the gunner can determine the correct position. All flint-lock Rifles had front and rear sights. *Not so on muskets*" (letter of Apr. 29, 1981).

And, again, concerning "on briching" as a procedure for extracting a fouled ball from the barrel: "I have consulted with several gunsmiths and knowledgable people on what this term meant. . . . On the facing of the end of the breech plug was formed a concave area by filing or drilling into the original flat surface of the breech plug. This concavity was sufficient to contain enough Powder to force a ball out thru the barrel. This fine powder used as priming powder was forced through the touch hole into this cavity in the end of the breech plug and the fouled ball. Then the usual ignition of the powder via the flint hammer and pan. If this method failed then the breech plug was removed and the fouled charge pushed out" (letter of July 8, 1981).

41 Caldwell to De Peyster from "[Lower] Sandusky, June 11, 1782" in Butterfield, *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, 371.

42 "Mr. John McCaddon's Letter" (May 16, 1842) is in *The American Pioneer* 1 (Nov. 1842): 377-78. Robert A. Sherrard's record of Sandusky expedition recollections is in his papers (MSS 359, Ohio Historical Center, Columbus, Ohio), especially *What I Remember II*, and *The Family Recorder*

Caddon's letter, republished in *The American Pioneer*, originally was sent to a Newark, Ohio, newspaper in 1842. Only eight lines relate to the Sandusky expedition and for the most part they lack the solidity and sense of overall authority found in other narratives. Butterfield called the "brief history . . . singularly erroneous," and the account of "the valorous Longstreet . . . ludicrous."⁴³ Two facts alone may have substance. John McCaddon says that he hired Aaron Longstreet as his substitute, and a soldier of that name did campaign with Beeson's company. McCadden also states that during the army's breakout of the Indian encirclement on June 5, "Mr. Longstreet caught hold of one of the horse's [*sic*] tails, and scampered unhurt through the fire."⁴⁴ A frightened volunteer could indeed have used his horse's tail to guide him over unfamiliar ground at night while under enemy gunfire. Such a means of negotiating rough terrain is by no means unknown in western campaigns. Even so, Butterfield rejected all McCaddon's testimony.

The narratives of John Sherrard and James Paull were another matter. They became major sources of information for Butterfield.⁴⁵ John Sherrard's son, Robert, wrote both. Unfortunately, in the case of the Sherrard narrative, plausible and implausible elements are

VI (which begins in 1825 and ends on April 9, 1851). The recollections of John Sherrard were edited and published by T. J. Sherrard in *The Sherrard Family of Steubenville* (Philadelphia, 1890). James Paull's experience on the expedition appears to have been first printed sometime in 1868 in the *Steubenville* (Ohio) *Herald*, and then in the *Uniontown* (Pennsylvania) *American Standard* on Apr. 8, 1869. Later in 1869, the Paull narrative was published by the Cincinnati printers, Spiller and Gates, with the title, *A Narrative of the Wonderful Escape and Dreadful Sufferings of Colonel James Paul*.

43 Butterfield, "Crawford's Campaign Against Sandusky," 231-32, n. 4. The title above is found in Butterfield's planning book and in his revision. Apparently the longer title of the published history was the publisher's choice, not Butterfield's.

44 McCaddon letter, 378.

45 James Paull (b. Frederick County, Va., 1760) moved to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, in 1772. In August 1778 he enlisted for a month to guard military stores, but by the spring of 1781 was recruiting men for an expedition led by George Rogers Clark down the Ohio River in which Paull served as a lieutenant. A year later he was serving with another Virginia militia company when he volunteered to campaign to Sandusky.

John Sherrard (b. Ireland, 1750) emigrated to America in 1772, finally settling in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. During the summer of 1775, he apparently marched with the "Flying Camp of Pennsylvania" (volunteer companies of riflemen) to join those colonists already besieging the British at Boston. Returning to Lancaster, he appears to have fought later in the Battle of Long Island and, after the retreat across New Jersey, in the Battles of Trenton and Princeton. On April 1, 1778, he arrived at the home of George Paull in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. The head of that household having just died, Sherrard chose to dwell with that family for some time, thereby cementing a lifelong friendship with James, a son, with whom he marched to Sandusky.

interwoven. That this should occur is understandable. Robert A. Sherrard was not born until seven years after the expedition. He was but ten years old when his father suffered a stroke that seriously impaired his memory. And he did not write out the Sherrard or Paull recollections until 1826, nearly forty-four years after the events.⁴⁶

The Sherrard narrative, briefly, is this. John Sherrard, with James Paull and others of the same neighborhood, marched in Captain John Biggs's company to Sandusky. Soon after the outbreak of battle, Sherrard's gun jammed. He therefore went looking for water for his company, and all that afternoon and the next day he refilled and carried canteens to the firing line. When the retreat commenced, Crawford asked for volunteers to search for his son whom he supposed left behind. John Sherrard and a certain Daniel Harbaugh were among twenty who agreed to return to the American campground to look. Finding no wounded or Crawford kin, the group held a council concerning how best to return home. The majority elected to travel east. Sherrard and Harbaugh, though, chose to follow the main body of troops south, and traveled the trail in that direction all night without incident. The next morning, an Indian shot and killed Harbaugh from ambush. Sherrard then trailed the retreating army on horseback the rest of that day, seeing no Indians. By sundown he overtook the retreating troops who welcomed him with cheers amid the "playing of a French March." Each spring thereafter until his death in 1809, John Sherrard reserved the seventh of June — the day of the ambush and his deliverance — as "a day of fasting, thanksgiving and prayer" on which he did no work.

For Robert A. Sherrard, the narrative — "my father's teaching" as he called it — became fixed with all the authority of religious dogma. To distinguish fact from fantasy, therefore, one must peel

⁴⁶ "I had often heard, when very young, my father tell of a very narrow, hair-breadth escapes of himself and others, while out on that volunteer excursion. . . . I was but ten years old at the time my father was stricken down with paralysis, which so impaired his memory, that he could not draw on his memory as formerly unless it was some particular matter that occurred when very young. But what was lacking from my father's inability to detail it, or my inability to retain it, was in a good measure supplied by Col. James Paull, in a free conversation with him at his own house, in the month of January, 1826. At which time Col. Paull gave me a full account of his retreat, narrow escape and journey home. All of this I felt a great interest in, having heard from my father and others, a good deal pro and con about Col. Crawford's defeat, so much so, that soon after my return home and while fresh in my memory, I wrote it down, from whence I draw off the present narrative [that is, the Paull narrative], which may be relied on as correct in every particular, as related to me." Robert A. Sherrard as quoted by Elisabeth M. Paull in *Paull-Irwin: A Family Sketch* (privately printed, 1915, 1936), 104.

away accretions that obscure the original experience of the father, a core-experience later embellished and gilded by the son's obvious veneration.⁴⁷ Hampered by a relative scarcity of narratives on which to base his history, Butterfield may have been tempted to accept all the Sherrard narrative as fact. As it turned out, he wisely chose to be selective. He included in his history the water-carrying episode, skipped over the improbable battlefield council, and resumed with the incident of Harbaugh's death and Sherrard's miraculous "deliverance."⁴⁸ He made no mention of French martial music being played during the retreat.⁴⁹ The Sherrard narrative's chronology of events, which dates everything twenty-four hours late, was ignored.⁵⁰ The

47 "I have followed my fathers teaching not only to the time of Daniel Harbaughs death, but I have seen him take his last look at the Pale face of his friend, Harbaugh, but he road away under a burdin of grief at the loss of his friend and companion Harbaugh and under a good deal . . . of agitation of mind not knowing but the bullit of some sneaking dog of an Indian, and that would drop off his fine horse Spark, and — leave him scalped on the trail of his comrade volunteers, but as he road thus solitary and alone this long day the seventh day of June that his companion and friend Harbaugh was taken and lie was left. And under these solemn feelings he made a vow, if spared longer days and years to live, he would devote the seventh day of June the present year 1782, and also the seventh day of June yearly and every year while he lived and this vow I and all my friends knew that he kept up yearly and every year to save as the seventh day of June came yearly round neither tasting food nor doing any kind of labor, till the sun went down and this was done in commemoration of the day — Daniel Harbaugh was killed and he allowed a longer period to live till the 22^d of April a term of 27 years." Robert A. Sherrard to Butterfield, Nov. 20, 1873, here presented without correction or deletion.

48 Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 219, 225-27, 291. I conclude that the final council, recorded as being held at the American defense position during the retreat on June 5, is a fabrication or misunderstanding by R. A. Sherrard or his father. The orderly deliberation of the council under such circumstances is unrealistic. No other sources document the council, including the narratives of Knight and Slover whom Robert A. Sherrard records being present. Sherrard states that the group numbered twenty. Knight indicates that only after he and Colonel Crawford were traveling "nearly Southwest" away from the battlefield did "an old man" and "a lad" begin to accompany them (Knight, *Narrative*, 15). The single reference found regarding a volunteer responding to Crawford's request for aid in locating his son is in the Draper MSS 2 U 1202-3: "One man Harris . . . went" and soon was fighting hand-to-hand before fleeing for his life. This recollection was not recorded by an Ohio informant until 1883, and, if accurate, refutes the impression Robert A. Sherrard gives of an empty battlefield and Crawford's council there during the retreat to decide how best to return home.

49 While the recollection of John Sherrard of a French March being played "which he had learned . . . as a volunteer . . . in 1775-76" could be ruled a confused transposing of an earlier Boston siege incident to the Sandusky expedition, the statement could rest on fact. Crawford's "orders May 29th 1782" speak of "the playing of the fife" (Rose, *Journal*, 315).

50 The Sherrard and Paull narratives written by Robert A. Sherrard are flawed by an erroneous dating of events, the Sandusky battle being dated June 5-6, 1782, twenty-four hours after the fact [*Wonderful Escape* (1869), 10; and Sherrard, *Sherrard Family*, 11]. The source of this confusion or mis-

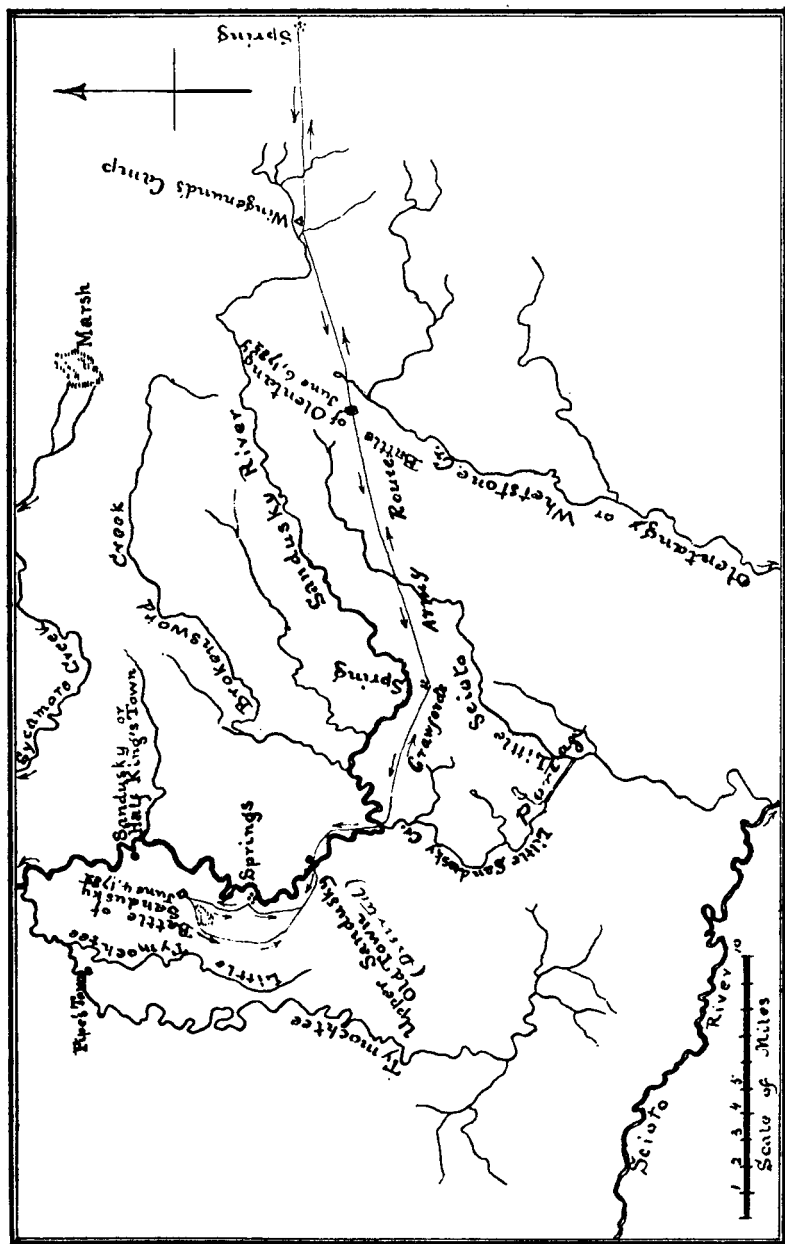
military record of John Sherrard prior to the expedition makes no reference to his alleged participation in the early fighting at Lexington and Concord, a historical impossibility.⁵¹ Even so, for all his caution, Butterfield was misled by the narrative as to the soldier shot from ambush. The man was Conrad Harbaugh, not Daniel.⁵² As for Robert A. Sherrard's stubborn insistence that his father "saw no Indians" after Harbaugh's death and scalping, Butterfield's patience finally gave out. Following the publication of his Sandusky history, he replied to the son that "There is trouble about your father not having reached the army untill after the Second battle [at Olentangy creek] and not having seen a single Indian during the entire day, which it would take me too long to explain."⁵³ The John Sherrard narrative is thus an intriguing example of nineteenth-century family tradition, but even its water-carrying and ambush episodes are not representation — James Paull, John Sherrard, or Robert A. Sherrard — is impossible to determine.

51. The sketch of John Sherrard in Butterfield's campaign history (228-29) omits Robert A. Sherrard's contention that his father fought with the Pennsylvania "Flying Camp" at Lexington and Concord in April 1775 (Sherrard, *Sherrard Family*, 6), which historically was impossible as the grandson, T. J. Sherrard, editorially pointed out later in his printing.

52. *Penn. Arch.*, 6th ser., 2: 387, lists a "David Harbaugh" in the roll of John Biggs's company. This is an error both as to first name and the company. Robert A. Sherrard erroneously gives the man's first name as Daniel, an error which Butterfield includes in his Sandusky history. Later, in his revision of the history, Butterfield omits the first name.

The slain man was Conrad Harbaugh, his company Captain John Beeson's. The Militia Loan records in Harrisburg list a "Conrad Harboh" in Beeson's company; presumably his pay (fifteen pounds, ten shillings) went to his wife, Susannah, and their three sons. In 1854, Daniel Harbaugh of New Lisbon, Ohio — a son of Conrad Harbaugh — wrote: "I presume you have read the history of the defeat and burning of Col. Crawford in the year 1782. I was born in the year 1781, and was about nine or ten months old when my father marched with Crawford, and never returned. . . ." [Rev. H. Harbaugh, *Annals of the Harbaugh Family in America* (Chambersburg, Pa., 1856), 107]. Cora Bell (Harbaugh) Coopridge in her *Harbaugh History* (Evansville, Ind., 1947) makes reference to a deed in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, containing the words: "Jonathan Rowland and Susannah his wife, who was the widow of Conrad Harbaugh who fell on the Expedition against the Sandusky Indians" (17-18).

53. Butterfield copes with the problems involved by saying only that Sherrard "again resumed his journey, overtaking the retreating army soon after, without any further encounter with an enemy, and was cordially greeted by his companions in arms" (227). The fact that Robert A. Sherrard pictures his father in deep shock led me to speculate that perhaps such trauma might have emotionally anesthetized him to the point that he was totally unaware of the presence of Indians around him as he rode in the wake of the retreating army following Harbaugh's death in an ambush. Even when such a solution is posed, however, the "trouble" remains, psychologically speaking. A clinical psychologist, having studied the Sherrard narrative at my request, told me that had John Sherrard been in such an emotional state, not only would the sighting of Indians have been blotted from memory, but he would not have remembered anything of the ambush or Harbaugh's death either.



Map of the "Army Route and Location of Battlefields on the Sandusky Plains, 1782," n.d., prepared by C. W. Butterfield for the manuscript revision of his campaign history. Courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

beyond challenging. Of the two, the water-carrying episode has more the feel of fact and some supporting documentation.⁵⁴

Despite errors in the Sherrard narrative and the fact that Robert A. Sherrard also recorded the recollections of James Paull, the Paull narrative gives every sign of being factual. The dating of events, of course, is mistaken, but the credibility of the narrative is enhanced by its having been taken down from Paull's own lips. The Slover and Paull narratives, moreover, overlap and corroborate one another from the night of June 5 to the morning of the eighth when their group of fugitives was ambushed.⁵⁵

Now that the journals, pension declarations, interview notes, letters, and narratives have been evaluated, we are better able to reconstruct the Battle of Sandusky.⁵⁶ To accomplish this in what follows, I have deliberately added a third day, the so-called Battle of the Olentangy on June 6 being treated as an extension of the earlier fighting.

Tuesday, June 4

To the sound of crickets and birds, the Sandusky Plains awakened, and with it, a nervous army rose to gather about its cooking fires. Added to the sighting of Indian scouts on its flanks in recent days, the booming of distant cannon now sent chills of apprehension through the ranks of men as they hurriedly ate in a shroud of thick morning fog.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Robert A. Sherrard states that John Rodgers told him he personally saw John Sherrard bring Biggs's company water in canteens during the battle (*Sherrard Family*, 11). John Rose (*Journal*, 150) also refers to the same source of water as described in the Sherrard narrative.

⁵⁵ Slover, *Narrative*, 38-41; Paull, *Narrative*, 12-16. See also Draper MSS 9 S 57.

⁵⁶ In order to organize such a body of data for study, I broke down all those sources deemed relevant and reliable into manageable units and wrote summaries of longer narrations. The June 4, 5, and 6 entries from the journal of John Rose were typed double-space first, and placed in a notebook. Using these entries as a time frame, additional sheets were added with hinges so as to fold out flat on either side of the typed journal text. Excerpts from all the other sources were then added where related to the action or strongly indicated.

So as to reduce my being overly influenced by sources used earlier by Butterfield and others, the material from the journals and previously unused sources was entered in the compilation notebook first. For instance, the narratives of Michael Myers and Jonas Sams were added before those of Francis Dunlavy, John Sherrard, and James Paull which figure prominently in Butterfield's reconstruction of the battle.

⁵⁷ In addition to John Rose (June 4 journal entry), two other men heard cannon that morning and left a record of it. Michael Walters mentions "6 Cannons fire" in his journal (182). And on the Indian side of the conflict, John Leeth heard cannons boom from where he was camped at the same time near present-day Tiffin, Ohio [C. W. Butterfield, *A Short Biography of John Leeth*

Reloading rifles, saddling horses, and lashing bulky provisions in place, the companies rode west in parallel columns with Captain William Leet's "light horse" in front to watch for hostiles. Rounding a wide bend in the Sandusky River, the army swept north over rolling prairie following "the common path."⁵⁸ Except for occasional islands of timber, the ocean of grass reached uninterrupted to the western horizon. The grass washed the mounted soldiers to the waist with dew as they rode along dressed mostly in long hunting shirts and soft brimmed hats. Some, though, like John Hays, looked almost Indian in their breechclouts and leggings.⁵⁹

(Cincinnati, 1883), 48]. Leeth, an Indian captive released to act as an agent for British traders, states: "Next morning . . . we heard a cannon fire at Upper Sandusky." In concluding that the sound came from Upper Sandusky he was mistaken. On the night of June 5 when the Americans began retreating, the two cannon and a mortar were still seven miles north of the battleground, and thus unable to contribute to the Indians' victory (Marshall to Irvine, July 20, 1782, Butterfield, *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, 304). Had that armament been present in time, the effects of it would have been immediate, as an informant wrote me in a letter: "The two fieldpieces and mortar are likely to be two 3 Pdr. Grasshoppers and the mortar is likely to be a 4.4" caliber Royal. These mortars are often referred to as Coehorn or Cohorn. . . . If Butler's Companies had managed to deploy the 3 Pounder and Royals [sic] against the rebels in their cover of an island of trees, the results would have been very dramatic and to the entire favour of Butler's personnel" (Gavin K. Watt, King's Royal Yorkers Organization, King City, Ontario, to author, Mar. 11, 1981).

58 In the reconstruction, the route described by Butterfield from the start of the army's march on the morning of June 4 to its arrival at "Old Town" has been set aside in favor of that indicated by Rose in his journal. The two routes are irreconcilable. The route shown on the map at the close of Rose's endnotes (*Journal*, 328) is different from that in Butterfield's revision of his history (Map: "Army Route and Location of Battlefields on the Sandusky Plains, 1782." Butterfield, MSS 55, Container 2, Folder 8, Western Reserve Historical Society). The difference is also obvious in Rose's endnotes where he recommends another route of attack for a subsequent expedition to Sandusky: "the troops would arrive . . . so as to leave me sufficient time to explore the practicality of crossing the Main River with ease, and marching a Body of troops on the East Side of it, which as far as I can learn, is altogether Woodland, to proceed on the common path [that is, the west side of the river] will expose me to be ambushed" (*Journal*, 327). Butterfield in 1873 stated that his informant was William Walker, Jr. (n. 1, 2, pp. 154-55), a quarter-blood member of the Wyandot tribe, who got his information in turn from Delawares and Mohicans living in 1813-1814 in Ashland and Wyandot counties, Ohio (Draper MSS 15 E 66). Butterfield thus shows the army advancing along the eastern side of the Sandusky River to an Old Town located on the east bank. Rose indicates the opposite, and locates Old Town on the west bank and farther south. Checking Rose's description of the terrain and mileage figures on a current topographic map, I found both terrain and mileage agree. The route recorded by Rose (in contrast to Butterfield) does not cross and then recross the Sandusky River, but remains south of it and then, where the river bends, travels up its west side. Above the second crossing which Butterfield mentions, Rose's route then passes over the same trail northward to where present-day Upper Sandusky stands.

59 Joseph Doddridge, *Settlement of Western Country* (Bowling Green, Ohio [1923?], 21). Also Rose, *Journal*, 154.

The Wyandot town, long sought, was found empty. No Indians. No horses. No plunder. Abandoned cabins confirmed what many in the army had guessed for days: They were expected.

Arguments now erupted. Fearful of ambush, Colonel Crawford called an officers' council. Some favored returning home immediately. Others urged going on. The guides were consulted; they replied that the Wyandot stronghold could not be more than a couple miles downriver. Colonel David Williamson, second in command, asked Crawford to turn him loose with fifty volunteers to go burn the town.⁶⁰ Crawford refused to divide his force of less than five hundred. At last it was agreed to go a few more miles, and with this the columns pressed forward again.

Five miles farther the army still had not met any Indians. Halting on a shady bluff near several springs, the companies broke ranks for their noon meal. Preparing to call yet another council, Crawford instructed Major John Rose to gather some men and reconnoiter a few more miles.⁶¹ Rose did, leading twenty-four scouts northward on the trail.

The trail soon passed through a wide grove that spilled across a knoll to the northwest. Dropping extra gear and provisions among the trees, the group rode on. One mile. Two. Three miles. Then, suddenly, as the detachment cleared a low rise in the trail, muskets roared from the undergrowth of a hidden ravine. Immediately, "naked and painted" warriors poured from nearby timber seeking to surround the scouts.⁶² Wheeling about, William Meetkirk and a comrade pounded

⁶⁰ Draper MSS 4 S 135. David Williamson (b. near Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1752) first traveled as a hunter to Western Pennsylvania when a boy and then persuaded his father to settle there. In 1777 he was a captain of Washington County militia, and later a colonel. Highly popular in his county, he led the 1782 expedition against the Moravian Indian settlements on the Muskingum River that ended in a massacre. In the militia election of officers for the Sandusky expedition Williamson lost to Crawford by five votes. He then was elected second in command.

⁶¹ Rose, *Journal*, 149.

⁶² The ambush, which Crawford feared might occur, appears to have been attempted by the Indians. The Draper Collection has two accounts of the start of the battle. In an 1843 memorandum to Draper (1 S 2), Ohio Governor Jeremiah Morrow stated that a "small party of warriors were observed, & were pursued a short distance, when it was suspected of being a decoy — the whites wheeled, & then discovered themselves in the mouth of an ambushcade in the shape of a letter 'V'." The other account is part of a letter from William Walker, Jr., to Draper (11 U 102) in 1857 containing the recollections of aged Wyandots: "The army advanced as *Girty* said, 'Helter Skelter and in the most disorderly manner.' The Indians posted themselves in a deep ravine thickly skirted with underbrush and running nearly at right angles with the usually traveled road: an open and undulating prairie on the left and . . . the Sandusky river three fourths of a mile to the right. On reaching the brow of

back down the trail to warn Crawford while the rest leapfrogged from rise to rise in the prairie, pausing here and there to fire at the advancing line of braves. For more than an hour the withdrawal continued, the scouts staying just ahead of the enemy. At one point, mounted braves neared John Rose, hurling tomahawks at him. Only his coolness and horsemanship saved him.

In time the skirmishers converged on the grove where their supplies lay hidden. Plunging into the trees, they found themselves still in deep trouble. Warriors in strength had already overrun the eastern end of the grove and were closing on the volunteers. With this, the army fortunately arrived. Riding up to the grove, the forward units collided with the Indians and, after a bloody clash, drove them eastward through a glade to another skirt of woods, taking eleven scalps.

By four o'clock, the fighting became general. The Indians began extending their line along the whole northern approach to the "vantage ground" held stubbornly by the invaders. Thundercracks of musket and rifle fire now roared in a deafening crescendo. Captain Joseph Bean and Joseph Edgington collapsed with wounds. John Hoagland was killed outright. Braves crept toward Captain James Munn who lay helpless in the grass. Just in time, William Brady hoisted Munn on a horse and brought him to the surgeon who set his leg and bandaged his face which had been opened by a knife or tomahawk. A ball tore through the right breast of Captain Ezekiel Rose, putting him out of action. Another soldier had his upper lip shot away. Colonel Crawford's powder horn was shattered on his hip by an enemy bullet as he directed the defense from within the grove of trees.

The landscape around the grove had by now filled with smoke. Volunteers therefore began moving out of the protective timber in order to see better. Bent over as they ran through the tall grass, they bobbed up to fire, ducked down to load, and rose to fire again. In contrast, Angus McCoy chose to stand openly as he fired, his clothing "ridled with Balls." In treetops, Daniel Canon and others sniped at Indians who flitted deceptively in the surrounding grass. On the ground below, John Gunsaula sat on a log singing a song while he picked the flint of his rifle.⁶³

the hill which descends into the ravine, not in battle order, *Girty* says, an unexpected and gauling fire was the first intimation the invaders had of a formidable opposition. . . . This threw this undisciplined army into 'noise and confusion,' when a retreat was ordered to an island of timber three miles in their rear. . . ."

63 Draper MSS 11 BB 20-21. See also 19 S 117-18: "He [Gunsaula] sat down to pick his flint & put his gun in proper order, & while doing so sang. . . ." During combat, the flint gripped by the hammer of the rifle was apt

Behind a tree outside the grove, Mike Myers had bark explode in his face from a near miss. Peering around the trunk, he glimpsed his assailant behind a white walnut twenty feet away. The tree forked three feet from the ground. When the brave, rising to shoot, showed his head in the fork, Myers killed him. Afterwards Myers would describe a "large number of squaws" behind the line of braves, "yelling & screaming terribly, & pounding on kettles, evidently designed to intimidate." When they came across dead Americans, they stripped them of clothing. Their own dead and wounded they carried away.⁶⁴

Evening came. With its gradual arrival, the fighting tapered off into ragged exchanges. In the gloom, fires set by the Indians to light up the area flamed in a wide arc around the American position. Soldiers, exhausted, shook canteens and found them nearly empty. Bullet pouches and powder horns also hung light. Spread thin along the edge of the grove, the volunteers prepared to "Stand Gard all night two and two together lest one should fall asleep."⁶⁵

To Hugh Workman of Leet's light horse, the odds against the army were awesome. There were a thousand Indians out there he was sure.

Wednesday, June 5

All night volunteers were kept sleepless by shots and whoops from the enemy encirclement. Sometime after dark, fifteen Washington County men stole off and went home to report that "all in the army was cut to pieces."⁶⁶

At dawn the fighting resumed at long range "by little flirts," as Stephen Burkarn later recalled. The Indians and British rangers could afford to bide their time. Reinforcements and cannon were expected soon with which to drive the invaders into the open.

For the Americans, however, the slow passage of time was no ally. Ammunition was low. The only water within reach was "a pudle of Rain Water at the foot of an old turned up tree." Three men had died during the night. Of the nineteen wounded, three were almost dead. The officers were divided as to what to do. Indians had been observed fifty yards from the perimeter. Williamson wanted to clean

to accumulate a residue of charred powder on its underside which had to be removed if proper ignition of the powder in the pan was to occur. The cleaning process was called "picking the flint."

⁶⁴ Draper MSS 4 S 135-36.

⁶⁵ Pension application, "Williams, James. Md., Penn., Va. S.3590," National Archives.

⁶⁶ Draper MSS 4 S 137.

out the strip of woods. He proposed attacking the woods from the front with fifty men on foot while Major Rose at the same time charged the Indians' left flank with a hundred and fifty men on the best horses. After discussion, the plan was laid aside. All the while the sun bore down, and "the stench of the dead and wounded became almost intolerable."⁶⁷ New casualties fortunately were few, John Orr being one with a ball through his side.

As the afternoon dragged on, the mood of the enemy changed. Indians exposed themselves recklessly as if scornful of the American riflemen. Experienced soldiers declared that some of the warriors acted drunk. Parleying began, the enemy shouting across the intervening glades for the Americans to give up, that those who surrendered would not be harmed. Some volunteers shouted back that they would never surrender to slaves and Indians. Meanwhile other soldiers in the grove baked bread, stuffed bacon in saddlebags, and talked of running off after dark.⁶⁸ Simon Girty, the renegade, also showed himself on his gray horse, carrying a white flag and calling for surrender. When rebuffed, he "suddenly wheeled and dashed off" just as a volunteer was drawing down on him with his rifle.⁶⁹ An Indian in the grass had his thigh broken by a shot. Americans crawled out for his scalp, and brought back his head.

At dusk a hundred and fifty Shawnees arrived from the south, closing the circle except for the trail, and a cranberry marsh to the southwest where a single sentinel was seen.⁷⁰ The Shawnee warriors

⁶⁷ Rose, *Journal*, 150; pension application, "Walters, John. Penn. S.17753," National Archives.

⁶⁸ Rose, *Journal*, endnotes, 305; Walters, *Journal*, 183.

⁶⁹ Draper MSS 4 S 137-38. Michael Myers and Francis Dunlavy, who knew Simon Girty on sight, agree that he attempted to parley with the Americans late in the afternoon of June 5. Apparently there was no respect for a flag of truce on either side as the following indicates: "While fighting, Girty (who before the war had slept under the same blanket with Williamson) called Col. W. to come toward him 7 steps & he wd. advance 7 steps, & tey [sic] effect a truce; Col. W. advanced, when he was fired at by an Indian secreted, doubtless for the purpose, & Col. W jumped behind a small tree which received a whole volley of balls. At that Instant several of the whites seeing the Indians expose themselves full to view to cut off Williamson, fired at them & killed some of them. Col. W. escaped unhurt — never was wounded" (*Ibid.*, 2 S 37 — notes from an 1845 interview of Mrs. McNulty, the eldest child of David Williamson). That Williamson, second in command to Crawford, should be called to negotiate a truce was due to the Indian belief throughout the battle that Williamson commanded the American force at Sandusky as he had three months earlier at Gnadenhütten. See John Heckewelder, *A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians* . . . (Philadelphia, 1820), 337-38.

⁷⁰ Pension application, "McCoy, Angus. Pa., Va., S.22390," National Archives.

tauntingly waved a "red standard" while firing volley after volley into the grove. Then muskets — aimed skyward — roared in succession the length of their line, a flaunting of strength in the waste of powder.

Upon seeing this ceremonial "fire of joy," Crawford called another council.⁷¹ It was decided, over the objections of Brigade Major Daniel Leet, to retreat after dark by the route the army had come. Leet declared the southern trail was a trap, the Indians too alert. Better to launch a surprise attack in the west to break the Indian line there, he argued. The army could then circle in the open prairie, take the Oak Creek trail south to Bouquet's old army road, and thence home. His plan was rejected, leaving Leet disgruntled.

Preparations for retreat now began in earnest. To keep Indians from digging up and scalping the dead afterwards, fires were burned over the graves to disguise them. Horse-litters were made for wounded unable to ride a horse. While this was going on, the unexpected again happened. Ben Newland, escaping his Shawnee captors, succeeded in reaching the grove in time to join the Americans in their retreat.⁷²

71 "Upon the renewal of the fight, the Americans now found themselves surrounded: The Indians bullets flew lively in every direction, & the bark was knocked from the side of many a tree: one man had the breech of his gun shot away. The Indians had a large red flag, which was conspicuously exhibited. They kept up the firing until after dark, yelling terribly." — Michael Myers (Draper MSS 4 S 138-39). The climax of the volleys directed at the American position was a calculated act of defiance called *feu de joie* (literal French for "fire of joy"). This ceremonial assertion of strength was probably mimicked by the arriving Shawnees who had seen it performed elsewhere; in European armies, soldiers formed a line and fired their muskets with one count in between each explosion, thus creating a ripple effect. The private, Angus McCoy, saw it but failed to comprehend its significance, commenting in his pension declaration merely that "a company of Indians coming up to their place in the circle who discharged their pieces at the sun." A European, Major John Rose appreciated the show of strength, raggedly carried out though it may have been. He wrote in his journal that "At Sunset the ennemy fired off their guns all round by way of a *Feu de joie* — this political stroke of theirs had that effect it was intended for, & compleated the Business with us" (Rose, *Journal*, 151-52). The psychological effect ("political stroke") upon the dispirited Americans was that of saying, "Your goose is cooked."

72 "This was a trying scene, for many were so wounded as not to be able to retreat. . . . When night came on fires were kindled for the purpose of making the Indians believe that our men were determined to keep the ground. . . . But all was bustle and stir. . . . The night was dark and the Indian yell was continually falling on the ear, together with the cries and groans of the wounded and dying; all conspired to render a scene distressing and appalling. . . ." (Sherrard, *Sherrard Family*, 12-13).

The Newland incident in the battle reconstruction is based solely on the writer's interpretation of a single sentence in a Draper interview (2 S 244-45). Stephen Burkarn is recorded as saying that "Just at dusk . . . , the enemy was strongly reinforced (*Ben Newland* with them, who shortly after joined the

Finally the various companies lined the trail with those making up Major John McClelland's division in advance. Informed that soldiers led by Captain John Hardin had already left, Colonel Crawford delayed the army's departure and rode after the unruly troops to bring them back into line. It was too late. Hardin's motley bunch, emerging from the grove, were spotted by Indians who fired their muskets, and with this, McClelland's troops stampeded. McClelland, shot and on foot, gave the wounded John Orr his horse and tried to restore order. His men, in panic, rode over him, leaving him to be captured and tortured to death.

Gathering momentum, the forward units galloped south and blundered blindly into warriors running to close the trail.⁷³ Volunteers immediately behind, seeing gun flashes in the surrounding woods,

whites — & made the 'Leap—)." This is the only reference to a person of that name at the battle. In their *Newland (Newlon) Family* (Bedford, Indiana, 1946, 9), R. E. and L. L. Newland discuss a Benjamin Newland who was born in 1763 to William and Hannah (Benson) Newland of York County, Pennsylvania. Testimony from Elijah Newland, Benjamin's son, is included which indicates that Benjamin was undoubtedly a militiaman. A young Quaker, he entered military service in 1779, and after Yorktown helped guard British soldiers at Hagerstown, Maryland. Turned out of the Society of Friends for bearing arms, he chose to settle in Maryland at the close of the war. No other record, official or otherwise, has been found concerning his war experiences.

73 Rose's dislike for Captain John Hardin shows in the journal endnotes. The premature departure of Hardin's group was fortunate for the army's main body, however, as Rose admits: "under these circumstances to save the larger body could have been obtained only by sacrificing a part. But what part of our troops would have obeyed a commander officer to plunge themselves in, between the Shawnoes and Delawares, whilst the main Body would make their escape by a circuitous march. Here let us ascribe to providence and her marvelous interposition the execution of a plan, by which only so large a Body could have been saved. She made use of a superlative Scoundrel for this end. A certain captain Hardin . . . , impelled by fear & rascallity united, spoke largely against the measure adopted, concerning the roads chosen to retreat on. His fear fixed the enemy's number from 700 to 1000. . . . and he easily found a party among the younger Sort, to whom his age & experience were arguments of conviction. He actually moved from the ground W. towards the town with a large gang, when Col. Crawford detained the main Body, just going to march off, and went to turn the Miller and the miller's followers. Hardin was fired on by the enemy on leaving our camp: and this firing was supposed by every man an attack upon our encampment. Every man consequently run off, at the discharge of the very first gun, as if it had been a signal agreed on, to disperse & shift as well as one could for himself. By a secret impulse the whole took pall-mall to the south, collecting as they kick'd along, to some one officer or other; except some few [that is, head of McClelland's division] paraded in the front of the Line. these thinking the Rear was pushing after them and not willing to loose the chance of getting first through — cut & whipp'd at a horrid rate along the path, agreed to retire on. they mostly all, fell a sacrifice to the enemy's fury, who narrowly watched the road. the small part also drew the enemy's attention, whilst the larger body got round unmolested" (Rose, *Journal*, 308-9). That is, the main body of troops got around the northern edge of the cranberry marsh, among them John Rose and David Williamson.

veered westward to the northern shore of the cranberry marsh where many cut their way through to open country. Some, though, became mired in the bog and lost their guns and horses. Those behind struggled to get past them at a clump of willows while "storms of balls" whistled through their ranks. Shadowy figures then closed in, wielding tomahawks and knives to dispatch the fallen.⁷⁴

In and around the fast-emptying grove, the scene was chaotic. Word of the retreat failed to reach the outermost sentinels, leaving them cut off. Some volunteers, exhausted and asleep in the high grass, did not awaken before being found by Indians. Several wounded in the grove were still unmounted. Captain Ezekiel Rose, convinced his wound was mortal, insisted upon reciting the Lord's Prayer without error. In shock, he made mistakes and kept starting over despite the appeals of friends trying to get him on his horse. Daniel Leet, seeing the confusion, simply shoved the praying Rose into the saddle where, with a soldier behind to hold him on, he was led away.⁷⁵

Hostile gunfire broke upon the rear division waiting in line of march. Major John Brinton was wounded. Daniel Leet took command of Brinton's division and ordered it west. Charging the Indian line there, the mounted troops burst through. Many reached home unscathed by the Oak Creek trail as Leet had predicted, among them Colonel Crawford's son, John.⁷⁶ The Indians, milling in the darkness

⁷⁴ Angus McCoy pension declaration; Jonas Sams's "letter"; "The Wounding of John McDonald" in the *Scioto Gazette* (Ohio), Oct. 9, 1845.

⁷⁵ Heckewelder, *Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren*, 338; Draper MSS 2 S 3-4.

⁷⁶ A puzzle left unsolved in Butterfield's history of the campaign is what became of Brigade Major Daniel Leet during the retreat. The statement of Alfred Creigh, *History of Washington County from its First Settlement to the Present Time* . . . (Washington, Pa., 1870), 288, that the retreat was "conducted" by Leet is without foundation, and Leet's absence from the main body which fought at the Olentangy creek is conspicuous. Robert A. Sherrard in writing Butterfield in 1872 (Sherrard Papers, Collection 359, Box 2, *What I Remember*, Vol. 2) confirms this: "Nor have I ever heard any of the returned volunteers say a word about Major Leet having any hand or part of the command on the retreat." Boyd Crumrine, *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1882), 120, n. 2, states that Leet was in command of Brinton's division when the retreat occurred. As quoted by A. J. Baughman, *History of Richland County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1908), 141, and his *Past and Present of Wyandot County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1913), 101, Joshua Crawford — a "kinsman" of Colonel Crawford and for many years a minister in western Holmes County, Ohio — preserved the tradition used in this writer's reconstruction. The Rev. Crawford gave as his source of information "several members of the Dye and Leet families" who intermarried with his mother's ancestors. One of these was Captain William Leet: "Leet, a scout (not the Major)." According to Joshua Crawford, the troops which Brigade Major Daniel Leet led in the breakout were ninety in number (among them John Crawford, the colonel's son) and that they arrived home safely. John Rose, in his June 12 journal entry, states that "another party of 40 had arrived some

and fearing ambush, did not pursue the fleeing Americans.⁷⁷

South of the grove, Colonel Crawford stood beside the trail calling in vain for John and other kinsmen. Assured by the surgeon, Dr. Knight, that all were ahead with the main retreating force, Crawford at last consented to leave. Riding slowly southwest, the two then turned northward to clear the Indian lines.⁷⁸

days since, continuing separated from the main Body since the night of the Retreat" (Rose, *Journal*, 156). In 1845, Draper interviewed the brother of two Crawford volunteers, George Edgington, who said that John Crawford came home separately with a group of forty (Draper MSS 2 S 106). As for the route favored by Daniel Leet at the last officers' council, it was the worn trail used the previous fall when Moravian Indians were forcibly removed by the British from their Tuscarawas settlements to Sandusky (see Butterfield, *Historical Account*, 152).

77 Joshua Crawford as quoted in Baughman, *Past and Present of Wyandot County*, 101: "threw [the Indians] into confusion." See also Draper MSS 4 S 58: "the Indians thought the whites (their friends) with them [i.e., British rangers], were firing on them — & fired on their white allies Black-snake [commander of Shawnees at the battle] mentioned this. . ."

78 If the tradition preserved by Joshua Crawford is accurate concerning the western breakout led by Daniel Leet, it would explain how Crawford and Knight became separated from the main body of troops. Crawford kept expecting more troops to come down the trail behind him when, in fact, they had already charged the Indian line in the west.

Crawford's flight, capture, and death are detailed by Dr. Knight in his narrative which was published (with the recollections of Slover, a guide) in 1783, and circulated widely through subsequent printings. Despite Knight's narrative, a rumor evidently persisted for years that Crawford, Knight, and Slover abandoned the army when most needed. That such a suspicion rooted itself in some quarters is understandable. Just before the panic began, Crawford was seen riding west from the troops lining the trail (Rose, *Journal*, endnotes, 308). Failing to overtake Hardin's contingent before it touched off the Indians' alarm guns, Crawford hurried back to the trail, reaching it a quarter mile south of the grove (Knight, *Narrative*, 14). By then, though, most of the troops were past. The commander, calling for his son and other blood relations, met only stragglers, including Dr. Knight whom he persuaded to stay with him. For most in the army, therefore, Crawford, Knight, and Slover (also left behind in the panic) had simply vanished. In light of various desertions which had occurred since the first night of the battle, some found it convenient to conclude that Crawford had also run out on the army along with Knight and Slover who were missing. The scurrilous opinion may have surfaced during the retreat or certainly soon after when recriminations are known to have occurred to explain the defeat (and panic?). The suspicion of officer abandonment is evident in the pension declaration made by Angus McCoy in Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1833. McCoy said, "While I am on this sickening campaign not wishing to wound or hurt connected or concerned [that is, Crawford descendants], I understand that Col. Crawford the first night of our retreat left our little army taking with him Slover the pilot Harrison his soninlaw and Doct Knight — one thing I know and am certain of is, I never saw Col. Crawford after the first night of our retreat." The Sherrard tradition concerning a battlefield council following the panic (see n. 48) may consequently be viewed as a later attempt by Crawford partisans to neutralize ugly postmortems. Conceivably their anecdote built upon the fact of Crawford's searching for his son to the point that he with others were pictured as actually returning to the grove in search of wounded soldiers who had been abandoned.

By now the retreat had become a dark kaleidoscope of individual desperation. The guide, John Slover, was feeding his horse in a glade when the panic started. Striving to overtake the army, he galloped into the same marsh which had ensnared others. Hearing warriors close behind, he left his horse and waded through mud a mile before reaching dry ground again. Likewise left behind, Francis Dunlavy crouched behind a log with another soldier at the far end of the American perimeter. Dunlavy urged immediate flight on the horse they shared, but the lad was paralyzed with terror. When an Indian with uplifted tomahawk rushed them, Dunlavy sprang on the horse and rode off.⁷⁹

Meanwhile Mike Myers was literally engulfed in enemy braves. Swinging an empty rifle, he clubbed several before receiving a vicious tomahawk cut across his hand that dislocated the thumb. Forced to his knees by the weight of his opponents, he nevertheless rose again to wrench free from clutching hands and, jerking an arrow from his leg, outraced his pursuers to the marsh. Up to his armpits, he wallowed past brush and submerged logs. Midway, he encountered a friend from home, Martin Swigart, and together they floundered through the muck to the other side. On emerging, they found a soldier with a ball lodged in his ankle who pleaded to have it removed. Myers was willing, but when he probed with his knife, the man's screams forced Myers and Swigart to leave him lest his cries bring Indians down on them.⁸⁰

In time, the moon rose. It proved a welcome friend to volunteers lost on the prairie south of the marsh. Jonas Sams with nine other stragglers had abandoned their horses, the brush being too thick to ride through. Only the rising moon enabled them to get their bearings. Half the group turned off on a side trail and were never heard of again. Sams's half reached the Ohio River safely but were so famished they could scarcely crawl.⁸¹

Troops with whom John Rose traveled took a wrong turn in the darkness and had already gone two miles west before the moon showed them their error. They turned back. "We marched all night as fast as the wounded could bear," Angus McCoy was to recall. "The Indians did not annoy us anymore that night, we suppose from [our] taking the wrong road or path from that intended." When able to write

79 Slover, *Narrative*, 37-38; Draper MSS 11 E 208.

80 Draper MSS 4 S 138-42. In addition to these notes from an interview with Myers in 1850, the same episode — possibly embellished — is found in Joseph B. Doyle, *20th Century History of Steubenville and Jefferson County, Ohio* (Chicago, 1910), 105-6.

81 Jonas Sams's "letter."

in his journal, John Rose recorded, "the rise of the moon undeceived us at last and we struck strait across into our proper path 3 miles from the old [i.e., abandoned] Town. Here . . . Williamson & his party joined us, which increased our number to about 250 men."⁸²

Thursday, June 6

From the ruins of the Wyandot Old Town, the Americans — now led by Williamson — straggled eastward over the trail they had come two days before. The springs, scene of their encampment on the eve of battle, gave exhausted men but brief respite from the heat of the rising sun. Before long the column was badly strung out on the trail. Growing sniper fire from nearby woods clawed the flanks while mounted warriors killed or captured all who fell behind. Wounded once already, Thomas Ogle sprawled in the trail a final time, a ball in his spine. "Tell brother Joe," he said, "that he left me here lord of the soil — I'll keep my tomahawk, feign dead, & when they come to take my scalp, I'll fix one of them."⁸³

By noon the attacks at the front of the column increased as well. With Henry (his body servant) and others, John Rose was riding past a woods when mounted enemy broke cover in an obvious attempt to cut them off from the main body. In the race that ensued, Rose again outdistanced determined Indians, Henry dodged some rangers, but Colonel Crawford's nephew and son-in-law were captured and died later of torture. Also overtaken was the "unfortunate Boy," John Hays, in his breechclout. Before American light horse could rescue Hays, a British ranger hacked his head hideously and Indians ripped half his scalp off.⁸⁴

Protective forest now lay but a mile east. Ignoring Rose's warning against delay, Williamson called a halt at a creek to water horses. Companies, riding up, mixed through one another, becoming separated from their officers.⁸⁵

Again Indians and rangers pounced on the rear. Volunteers afoot and terrorized at the sight of charging horsemen, milled in dismay, some deserting. "The smallest body," inspired by Williamson, stood and fought.⁸⁶ The skirmish was a maelstrom with no quarter given, the

⁸² Angus McCoy pension declaration; Rose, *Journal*, 152.

⁸³ Draper MSS 2 S 245-46. See also Rose, *Journal*, 156-57.

⁸⁴ Draper MSS 10 E 79; Angus McCoy pension declaration. See also Rose, *Journal*, 154.

⁸⁵ Rose, *Journal*, endnotes, 309.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 310. No documentation exists for words attributed to John Rose at the Olentangy skirmish by Butterfield in his campaign history (234), or to

combatants firing at close range. For nearly an hour the fighting continued before the enemy backed off.

Three Americans were dead, eight wounded. With no time to lose, the volunteers hurried on. Leet's light horse rode ahead to prevent the enemy from blocking the trail's entrance to the forest. Biggs's company, now reduced to a rear guard of only nine men, asked to be relieved. Other companies took over in rotation the hazardous duty.

Anticipating another attack, John Rose and Private Gunsaula organized an ambush in the timber and grass lining the creek just abandoned by the army. Several "wounded stragglers" were allowed to linger in sight as decoys. The ruse worked. Soon after, Indians and rangers rode headlong into a volley which thinned their force substantially.⁸⁷ Repulsed, the enemy followed just out of rifle range. In any case, shooting became impossible as heavy rain started to fall on both forces.

That night the American encampment was depressed by the groans of its wounded. Captain Charles Bilderback asked Angus McCoy to care for John McDonald whose thigh was broken by an enemy ball, and to look after John Hays whose face and chest were bathed "quite red" by blood. Dr. Knight had disappeared so that the men lay untended on a blanket in the drizzle. McCoy, his gunlock under his arm to keep it dry, trudged about all night.⁸⁸

It is natural to wonder what became of the soldiers pictured in this reconstruction of battle and retreat. What did the future hold for them? The praying Captain Ezekiel Rose survived his chest wound. At Mingo Bottom, he was seen enduring the pain of a silk handker-

David Williamson by N. N. Hill, "Crawford's Campaign," 30. The only description of the skirmish I have found in the pension declarations at the National Archives is in the file of John Clark (R.2003), a private in Captain Timothy Downing's company near the front of the column: "the next day about eleven o'clock this deponent [John Clark], James Allen & Robert McBride of his neighborhood were in advance of the main body & passed through a piece of timber for a [sic] about a quarter of a mile. We had proceeded through the timber without suspecting danger but when the main body got into the timber they were attacked; but they kept up a regular & orderly retreat without much loss & were not pursued beyond the timber. During the skirmish Capt. Downing . . . killed The Half Moon a principal chief of the Shawnese he thinks. This deponent and his two associates was prevented from joining the main body by the Indians between us. We continued our retreat. . . ." The Indian killed by Munn was not Half Moon; see Slover, *Narrative*, 56.

87 The Rev. Joshua Crawford's quoting of Captain William Leet in Baughman, *History of Richland County*, 144.

88 Angus McCoy pension declaration; Rose, *Journal*, 154.

chief's being drawn slowly through the hole to cleanse it.⁸⁹ After some militia tours, William Brady went west to settle in Scioto County, Ohio, where he worked as a blacksmith. John Clark, William Robinson, John Gunsaula, and James Williams joined the tide of hunter-farmers surging into Kentucky and Ohio during the postwar years, and then to Indiana and Illinois. The graves of no less than fifteen Sandusky veterans are in Brown and Adams counties east of Cincinnati, among them that of John Crawford.

Michael Myers limped home without his gun. Obtaining another, he shot Indians on sight for years. For this reason he refused to attend any traveling "Indian Show" passing through his community. In 1794 he floated a flatboat of whiskey downriver to Fort Washington (now Cincinnati), was there drafted into General Anthony Wayne's army and participated in the American victory at Fallen Timbers (near present-day Toledo) which broke forever the grasp of the Indian upon the Old Northwest. Also campaigning with Wayne's army to Fallen Timbers was John Knight, the surgeon present when Colonel Crawford died at the stake. Knight served at Fort Pitt to the end of the Revolution and then married a niece of Crawford. They moved to Shelby County, Kentucky, where Knight became widely esteemed for his medical skill. Prior to 1820, he was already performing successful cancer surgery.⁹⁰

The Irish drummer, William Hall, lived out his life in a remote cabin in Washington County, Pennsylvania. In 1824-1825 when Lafayette toured the United States, Hall went to greet him. The Marquis recognized and greeted him at once. John Orr reached home on Major McClelland's horse, but his wound was to leave him with a severe limp for life. In 1835 he wrote the Washington pension bureau: "I have been hopping on one leg for near fifty years gathering a scanty subsistence on my little farm," but his appeal was denied. He died in Preston County, Virginia, five years later.

⁸⁹ John Walters pension declaration. The medical assistance of Surgeon John Knight was sorely missed. In his letter-report to General Irvine from Mingo Bottom on June 13, 1782, Rose stated that "Several of them are in a dangerous condition, and want immediate assistance of which they have been deprived since the loss of Dr. Knight." Knight's regimental surgeon's trunk doubtless was lost in the panic of the first night of retreat. The silk handkerchief used to cleanse Captain Rose's wound therefore probably came from John Donathy (presumably a physician) who met the returning army at Mingo Bottom. Donathy later received payment from the state of Pennsylvania for "Medicines and Attendance upon wounded Militia." RG-4, Comp. Gen., Militia Loan Accts., Wash. and Westm. Co. Operations, July 17, 1782, entry.

⁹⁰ F. M. Ballard, "Dr. John Knight," 1916 typescript, The Filson Club Library, Louisville, Kentucky. John Knight obituary, *Philadelphia Saturday Courier*, Apr. 7, 1838.

With the gradual return of peace to the frontier, Francis Dunlavy chose to attend Dickinson College and then briefly studied for the ministry until concluding that he lacked sufficient oratorical volume for that vocation. He therefore turned to teaching a classical school in Virginia and later another near Cincinnati before moving north to Lebanon, Ohio, for the rest of his life. In 1795-1796 he paddled a canoe on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, recording his experiences and observations in Latin as was his practice since student days. Thirty years later a tenant farmer threw the yellowed manuscript away as trash, a grievous loss to Dunlavy.⁹¹ After a term in the first Ohio legislature, he was appointed a circuit judge.

Out of a squad of six or seven fugitives, James Paull alone escaped an ambush to return home. In 1794 he was elected sheriff of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, and with the aid of a masked hangman executed the murderer of John Chadwick, another Sandusky expedition volunteer, who was clubbed to death at his house-tavern.⁹²

At the end of the war, Ensign James Morrison settled at Pittsburgh, there to be elected the first sheriff of Allegheny County. Morrison then moved to Fayette County, Kentucky, with his new wife. In Lexington he became a prosperous merchant, especially in the manufacture and sale of hemp rope for the military during the War of 1812. Presidents Adams and Jackson knew him personally, and Henry Clay was a close friend. Today "Old Morrison" stands as an architectural gem on the campus of Transylvania University in Lexington, the result of a bequest left by this illustrious trustee upon his death in 1823.⁹³

The expedition guide, John Slover, outran his Shawnee pursuers. He married and moved to Kentucky where he reared seven children, attended Episcopal worship regularly, and died near Red Banks at an advanced age. Brigade Major Daniel Leet returned to his surveying, helping to lay out the Depreciation Lands in Western Pennsylvania. He and his wife were known to have assisted many poor families with gifts of food and clothes. Colonel David Williamson was elected three successive years as sheriff of Washington County, Pennsylvania. He incurred debts, however, which took from him his home and farm, and in time left him to die in poverty (some say, in the county jail).

Philip Smith moved first to eastern Ohio, and then in 1812 to

⁹¹ Draper MSS 7 NN 13-14.

⁹² Franklin Ellis, *History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1882), 1: 570-71.

⁹³ Draper MSS 1 NN 134. Horace Holley, *A discourse occasioned by the death of Col. James Morrison* (Lexington, Ky., 1823).

Wayne County, Ohio. Stopping with his family en route at "Jones' Spring" in Holmes County, he immediately recognized the site of the first death on the march to Sandusky, and related to his children how he dug a grave with his tomahawk while other soldiers made a puncheon coffin with theirs.⁹⁴

After the Sandusky expedition, Major John Rose returned to Ohio once more. Intelligence reports indicated that the British might be constructing a fort at the mouth of the Cuyahoga (now Cleveland), so Rose and six other scouts went to look. Freezing weather made travel miserable, and Rose was afoot much of the way. More at home on a horse, he seemed to fall over every log and into every creek and ended up losing his rifle.⁹⁵ Early the next year he was sent to Philadelphia to expedite the payment of western troops being mustered out at Fort Pitt. The spring of 1784 found him on the high seas, homeward bound. Back in Estonia he married his mistress of former days, and by her had four children. For his services, Congress gave him tracts of bounty land in Pennsylvania and Ohio. He wanted to return and settle in America, but events and obligations never permitted it. One son died in a duel, another of drowning. His wife and daughters predeceased him, so that his declining years were shadowed by loneliness. In 1829 his body was borne to the vault he built on his family estate. No monument or inscription marks the grave.⁹⁶

Angus McCoy lived to patrol the frontier as a wood ranger for years after peace was declared. The wounded he guarded that dark and rainy night of retreat were less fortunate. John Hays lost his life as well as his scalp when he foolishly lagged behind the army's start the next day, baking bread. John McDonald suffered an arduous ride home on a horse-litter, only to die an excruciating death days later of gangrene.

And what of the battlefield? Today the area may be toured with a minimum of directions.⁹⁷ The rolling farmland still gives a sense of

⁹⁴ *Ohio Archeological and Historical Publications* (1898) 6: 153. Nathan W. Smith, "Pioneer Data," *Wayne Democrat* (Wooster, Ohio), Sept. 7, 1881.

⁹⁵ Draper MSS 1 NN 11; Western Reserve Historical Society, Tract 22.

⁹⁶ Draper MSS 8 E 100-1005.

⁹⁷ To tour the battleground, the visitor would best approach Upper Sandusky from Bucyrus on Route 30N. Crossing the Sandusky River, the visitor will see a low bluff less than a half-mile ahead. At the crest of the bluff is a sign locating the springs. Two blocks beyond on the left is the Wyandot County Courthouse. Turn right on Sandusky Avenue to Route 67 which will lead across a dual highway (Route 23) to the Battle Island monument. To reach the area where the advance scouts were ambushed, continue north on Route 67 to a township road (T-37) on the left side. Turn left and continue on that road less than a mile north to Chief Tarhe's monument on the left side.

what the prairie once looked like before the grass went the way of the pioneer's plow. Another generation of timber makes up the present island woods. Wending its way between low banks, the river flows gently as it has since before the Wyandot Indians named it *Sah-un-dus-kee*, meaning "clear water."

An aura of long-ago Indian towns and cornfields clings to the rural landscape surrounding Upper Sandusky, a community of six thousand with wide streets, lofty elms, a stone courthouse, and fairgrounds. At Third and Wyandot streets, a sign locates the springs (now covered) where the army rested in 1782, held a final officers council, and received word of advancing Indians.

Timber no longer covers the American defense position. The "vantage ground," a low hill, can be seen, however, a half mile northwest of the Battle Island monument.⁹⁸ That small brick monument is at what was the eastern end of the woods from which militia drove the Indians on the first afternoon of battle. Though the cranberry marsh was drained years ago, the low flat area it covered is recognizable a mile southwest of the monument. North of the Battle Island monument, the country searched by army scouts is open and readily viewed. Within a mile beyond Tarhe's monument the road drops into a blind ravine, site of the Indian ambush that opened the battle.

The monument commemorating the Battle of the Olentangy is in Crawford County. It stands halfway between Bucyrus and Galion on State Route 19. The skirmish, though, was not fought there. The slight rise of ground around which fighting raged on June 6, 1782, is nearly out of sight to the northeast.

98 "Battle Island," the name later attached to the American defensive position, did not originate with Butterfield. He simply popularized it in his campaign history. The earliest reference to the name (Draper MSS 11 YY 12) is in the interview notes "taken down from the lips of Colo John Johnston, of Piqua, Ohio . . . 20th & 21st of June, 1843" by Lyman C. Draper. Colonel Johnston was an American Indian agent to the Shawnee and Miami tribes following the Treaty of Greenville in 1795.

IN COMMEMORATION
GIFTS

IN MEMORY OF

MISS ELEANOR P. KELLY

FROM

MR. AND MRS. RALPH H. DEMMLER

MR. AND MRS. RICHARD D. EDWARDS

MRS. PAUL B. ERNST

MISS ELIZABETH MACFARLANE

IN RECOGNITION
GIFTS

IN HONOR OF A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY

EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER, JR.

FROM

HARRIET AND JOHN COHEN

EDIE AND EDDIE DIAMOND

JEANNE F. KANN