

AN ENGAGEMENT

Four hundred men were posted along the hill, facing the fort, to cover the retreat of Captain McDonald's company, who marched with drums beating toward the fort, in order to draw a part out of it, as Major Grant had some reason to believe there were not more than two hundred men there, including Indians; but, as soon as they heard the drums, they sallied out in great numbers, both French and Indians, and fell upon Captain McDonald, and two columns that were posted lower on the hill to receive them. The Highlanders exposed themselves without any covers, and were shot down in great numbers, and soon forced to retreat. The Carolinians, Marylanders, and Lower Country men, concealing themselves behind trees and the brush, made a good defence, but were overpowered by numbers, not being supported, were obliged to follow the rest. Major Grant exposed himself in the thickest of the fire, and endeavored to rally his men, but all to no purpose, as they were by this time flanked on all sides. Major Lewis and his party came up and engaged, but were soon obliged to give way, the enemy having the hill of him, and flanking him every way. A number were driven into the river, most of whom were drowned. Major Grant retreated to the baggage, where Captain Bullet was posted with fifty men, and again endeavored to rally the flying soldiers, by entreating them in the most pathetic manner to stand by him, but all in vain, as the enemy were close at their heels.

As soon as the enemy came up to Captain Bullet, he attacked then very furiously for some time, but not being supported, and most of his men killed, was obliged to give way. However, his attacking them stopped the pursuit, so as to give many an opportunity of escaping. The enemy followed Major Grant, and at last Captain Bullet was obliged to make off. He imagined the Major must be taken, as he was surrounded on all sides, but the enemy would not kill him, and often called to him to surrender. The French gave quarter to all who would accept it.* The loss sustained in the engagement was two hundred and seventy killed, forty-two wounded, and several, including Major grant, taken prisoners.† "It was," says Washington, "a very ill-concerted, or a very ill-executed plan, perhaps both, but it seems to be generally acknowledged that Major Grant exceeded his orders, and that no disposition was made for engaging."

* Craig's History of Pittsburgh, p. 74.

† Early History of Pa. p. 188.