

acting, and possessing the Confidence of the Troops which he commanded.

Being persuaded that his Retreat was not open by Arzo Bispo, he acted right in taking the Road he did, with which he was well acquainted; and although unsuccessful in the Action which he fought, (which may well be accounted for, by the superior Numbers and Description of the Enemy's Troops,) the Action, in my Opinion, does him great Credit.

I have the Honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

SIR, *Miranda de Castenar, Aug. 13, 1809*

I HAVE the Honour to acquaint you, that I was on March Yesterday Morning on the Road of Grenadela from Aldea Nueva, to restore my Communication with the Allied Army, when a Peasant assured us, that a considerable Quantity of Dust which we perceived in the Road of Plasencia, proceeded from the March of a Body of the Enemy.

I immediately returned and took post in Front of Banos, with my Pickets in Advance of Aldea Nueva, selecting such Points for Defence as the Exigency of the Time permitted.

The Enemy's Cavalry advanced on the high Road, and drove back my small Cavalry Posts; but a Picket of Spanish Infantry, which I had concealed, poured in on the Cavalry a steady and well-directed Fire, that killed and wounded many of them.

The Two Hundred Spanish Infantry in Advance of Aldea Nueva, continued, under the Direction of Colonel Grant and their Officers, to maintain their Ground most gallantly, until the Enemy's Cavalry and Chasseurs à Cheval, in considerable Bodies, appeared on both Flanks, when they were obliged to retreat.

The Enemy's Chasseurs à Cheval and Cavalry advanced in great Numbers in every Direction, and pushed to cut off the Legion posted between Aldea Nueva and Banos; but, by the steady Conduct of Officers and Men, the Enemy could only advance gradually, and with a very severe Loss from the commanding Fire thrown on them.

The Merida Battalion, however, having given way on the Right, a Road was laid open, which cut behind our Position, and I was obliged to order a Retreat on the Heights above Banos, when I was again necessitated to detach a Corps, in order to scour the Road of Monte Major, by which I saw the Enemy directing a Column, and which Road turned altogether the Puerto de Banos, a League in our Rear.

At this Time, Don Carlos Marquis de Estragne came up with his Battalion of Light Infantry, and, in the most gallant Manner, took Post along the Heights commanding the Road of Banos, which enabled me to send some of the Merida Battalion on the Mountain on our Left commanding the main Road, and which the Enemy had tried to ascend.

The Battalion of Light Infantry, the Detachment of the Legion on its Right continued, notwithstanding the Enemy's Fire of Artillery and Musketry, to maintain their Ground; but, at Six o'Clock in the Evening, three Columns of the Enemy mounted the Height on our Left, gained it, and poured such a Fire on the Troops below that longer Defence was impracticable, and the Whole

was obliged to retire on the Mountains on our Left, leaving open the main Road, along which a considerable Column of Cavalry immediately poured.

The Battalion of Seville had been left at Bejar with Orders to follow me next Day, but when I was obliged to return, and the Action commenced, I ordered it to Puerto Banos, to watch the Monte Major Road and the Heights in the Rear of our Left.

When the Enemy's Cavalry came near, an Officer and some Dragoons called out to the Commanding Officer to surrender, but a Volley killed him and his Party, and then the Battalion proceeded to mount the Heights, in which Movement it was attacked and surrounded by a Column of Cavalry and a Column of Infantry, but cut its Way and cleared itself, killing a great many of the Enemy, especially of his Cavalry.

The Enemy is now passing to Salamanca with great Expedition; I lament that I could no longer arrest his Progress, but, when the enormous Superiority of the Enemy's Force is considered, and that we had no Artillery, and that the Puerto de Banos on the Estremaduran Side, is not a Pass of such Strength as on the Side of Castile, especially without Guns, I hope that a Resistance for Nine Hours, which must have cost the Enemy a great many Men, will not be deemed inadequate to our Means.

I have to acknowledge the Services rendered me on this Occasion by Colonel Grant, Major Reiman, Don Fermén Marquis, Adjutant-Major of the Dragoons of Pavia, Captain Charles and Mr. Bolman; and to express the greatest Approbation of Two Companies of the Merida Battalions advanced in Front, and of the Commanding Officer and Soldiery of the Battalions of Seville, and the Portuguese Brigade. I have already noticed the distinguished Conduct of Don Carlos, and his Battalion merits the highest Encomiums.

I have not yet been able to collect the Returns of our Loss. From the Nature of Mountain Warfare, many Men are missing who cannot join for a Day or two, but I believe the Enemy will only have to boast that he has achieved his Passage, and his Killed and Wounded will be great Diminution of his Victory.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

ROBERT WILSON.

*Sir A. Wellesley, &c. &c. &c.*

*Truxillo, August 21, 1809.*

GENERAL CUESTA moved his Head Quarters from the Neighbourhood of the Bridge of Arcobispo on the Night of the 7th Instant, to Peraleda de Garbin, leaving an Advanced Guard, consisting of Two Divisions of Infantry, and the Duke D'Albuquerque's Division of Cavalry, for the Defence of the Passage of the Tagus at this Point.

The French Cavalry passed the Tagus at a Ford, immediately above the Bridge, at Half-past One in the Afternoon of the 8th, and surprised this advanced Guard, which retired, leaving behind them all their Cannon, as well as those in the Batteries constructed for the Defence of the Bridge.

The General then moved his Head Quarters to the Mesa d'Ibor on the Evening of the 8th, having his Advanced Guard at Bohoral. He resigned the Command of the Army on the 12th, (on account of the bad State of his Health,) which has devolved