



General Worth.



Worth at Monterey.

GENERAL WILLIAM J. WORTH.

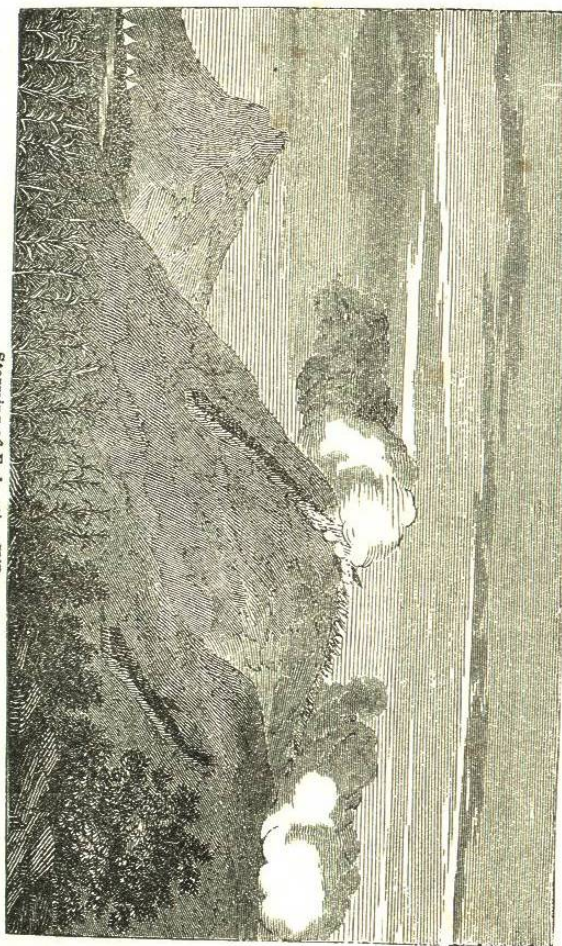
IN his youth, Worth was engaged in a mercantile business in Albany; but just before the commencement of the war of 1812, he left his employment, and entered the service of his country.

The first signal opportunity which occurred for displaying the military talent for which he is now so celebrated, occurred at the battle of Chippewa, July 5th, 1814. In his official account of that battle, General Brown says, "the family of General Scott were conspicuous in the field, Lieutenant Smith, of the 6th infantry, the major of the brigade, and Lieutenants Worth and Watts, his aids."

A captain's commission, dated August 19th, 1814, was the result of this notice. At the battle of Niagara,

or Lundy's Lane, Captain Worth again distinguished himself, and was rewarded by promotion to the rank of a major, but a severe wound received in the battle, compelled him to remain for a time inactive. After the peace, he was some time, military instructor of the West Point Military Academy. He gradually rose in the army, but found no active service until he was employed against the Indians, in the Florida war. In April, 1842, he gained a brilliant victory at Palaklakhaha, which brought the war to a close for a time. He was made brigadier-general by brevet, March 1st, 1842, but some point of military etiquette caused him to resign, when the army of occupation was lying before Matamoras, by which he was deprived, greatly to his regret, of all participation in the glorious conflicts of the 8th and 9th of May. Hearing of these battles, he withdrew his resignation, hastened to join the standard of General Taylor, and gained imperishable renown at Monterey.

General Taylor employed the other divisions of the army in making a diversion on the east side of the city, in order to favour the operations of General Worth, who was directed to gain the Saltillo road at its junction with those leading from the city, and then when the enemy's supplies and retreat should be cut off, to storm the heights overlooking it and the south-western angle of the city. The fortifications were on one height, a large unfinished structure designed for the Bishop's Palace, and known by that name, and opposite the Bishop's Palace, and across the San Juan, (Federation Hill,) two others, one called from the name of the battery on its crest, Federation Hill, the other Soledad, or Soldada.



Storming of Federation Hill

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At daylight, on the morning of the 21st, General Worth put his division in motion, so formed as to present the readiest order of battle at any point at which it might be assailed. As he advanced, he found a large body of lancers drawn up to oppose him, and a spirited engagement ensued between them and McCulloch's Texan rangers, aided by Captains C. F. Smith and Scott, and Duncan's battery. The Mexicans were defeated with heavy loss, and driven beyond the gorge where all the roads from Monterey united, and thereby shut out from the city. When his preparations were completed, at noon, General Worth rode up to the men he had designed for the storming of Federation Hill, and pointing up the hill, said to them as they moved off, "Men, you are to take that hill—and I know you will do it." With one shout they replied, "we will;" and they did. The words of their general had nerved their arms and inspirited their hearts, and they crossed the river amid a shower of grape and musket balls, and advanced up the hill, supported by reinforcements sent in good season by the general, and beating back, inch by inch, the gallant forces who opposed them. At the top of this hill a cannon was captured, remounted, and turned upon the foe. The enemy had retreated to the other peak of the ridge, Fort Soldada, and a perfect race now ensued between the 5th and 7th regiments of infantry, and the Texas rangers, as to which should first enter that fortress. Captain Gillespie, of the rangers, was the first to mount the works, but he was so closely followed by Lieutenant Pitcher, of the 5th, that the two regiments shared equally the honour of having captured a gun, abandoned by the enemy as he was driven from the fort. The

cannon captured in these two places, were immediately turned upon the Bishop's Palace. The generalship exhibited by General Worth in this affair, is deserving of the highest praise. The completion of his labours is not less so. Before day on the morning of the 22d, a detachment moved to assault the fortifications on Independence Hill, an almost inaccessible height, nearly perpendicular, between seven and eight hundred feet high. The party which captured this formidable position, was led by Colonel Childs and Captain John R. Vinton. His loss was few in numbers, but among the slain was the gallant Captain R. A. Gillespie, who had so distinguished himself on the preceding day. The height gained, Lieutenants Roland, McPhail, and Deas succeeded in two hours, in raising a twelve-pound howitzer to the top of this steep and rugged acclivity, and opened a terrible fire upon the Bishop's Palace, not four hundred yards distant. By a brilliant manœuvre, Captain Vinton enticed a party of the defenders to come out of the palace, then defeated them, drove them down the hill beyond it, entered the palace, and overpowered its remaining defenders. Thus, says Mr. Kendall, by a series of brilliant, well-planned, and successful movements, General Worth found himself in full possession of three of the enemy's batteries, the stronghold known as the Bishop's Palace, seven pieces of artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition and intrenching tools, two of their standards, and what was of still greater importance, the entire occupation of the Saltillo road, and a complete command of all the western portion of the city of Monterey.

The street fight in which General Worth participated

largely, will be more particularly described among the achievements of General Quitman. General Worth was soon summoned away from this scene of his triumphs to the siege of Vera Cruz, where, under General Scott, he bore a conspicuous part, and was present at the surrender. He was made commander of the city of Vera Cruz, but was not long employed on garrison duty. Leaving Colonel Wilson to look after the city, he took up his line of march for the city of Mexico, and was so fortunate as to obtain a share with his division in the brilliant victory of Cerro Gordo. With increased reputation he marched onward with Scott to Churubusco, where his brilliant feat, the capture of the *tete du pont*, contributed largely to the success of the day.

For an account of the taking of the Molino del Rey and Chapultepec, we have drawn largely upon the official report of General Worth himself.

"On a reconnoissance of the formidable dispositions of the enemy, near and around the castle of Chapultepec, they were found to exhibit an extended line of cavalry and infantry, sustained by a field battery of four guns—occupying directly, or sustaining, a system of defenses collateral to the castle and summit. This examination gave fair observation of the configuration of the grounds, and the extent of the enemy's lines, but, as appeared in the sequel, an inadequate idea of the nature of his defenses—they being skilfully masked.

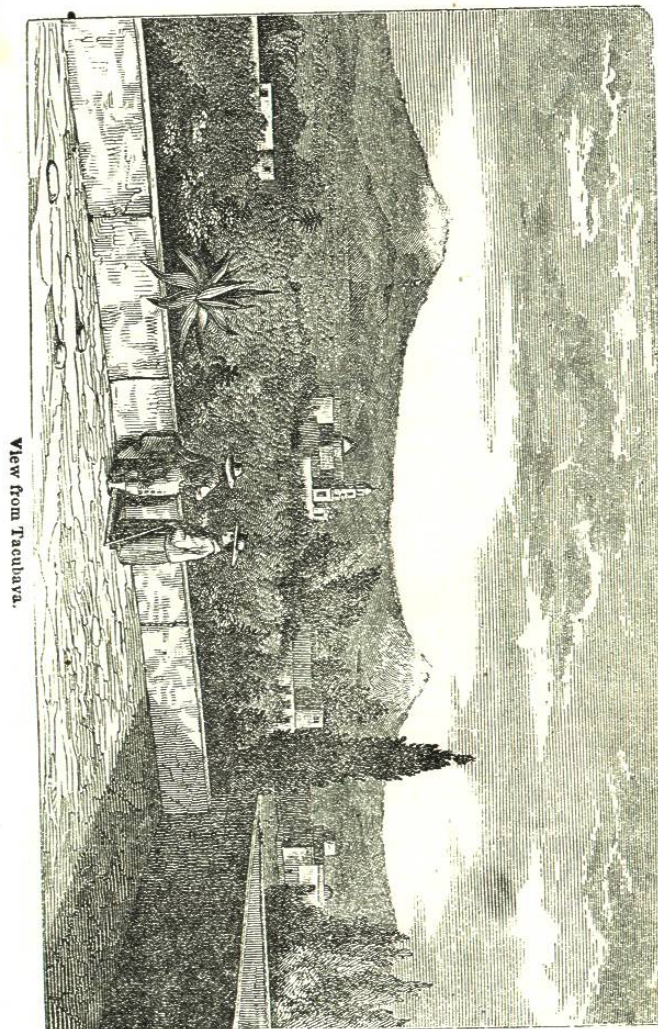
The general-in-chief ordered that General Worth should attack and carry those lines and defenses, capture the enemy's artillery, destroy the machinery and material supposed to be in the foundry, (El Molino del Rey;) but limiting the operations to that extent. After

Reconnoissance of the enemy's positions.

which his command was to be immediately withdrawn to its position in the village of Tucubaya.

A close and daring reconnoissance, by Captain Mason, of the engineers, made on the morning of the 7th, represented the enemy's lines collateral to Chapultepec, to be as follows: His left rested upon and occupied a group of strong stone buildings, called El Molino del Rey, adjoining the grove at the foot of the hill of Chapultepec, and directly under the guns of the castle which crowns the summit. The right of his line rested upon another stone building, called Casa Mata, situated at the foot of the ridge that slopes gradually from the heights above the village of Tacubaya to the plain below. Midway between these buildings was the enemy's field battery, and his infantry forces were disposed on either side to support it. This reconnoissance was verified by Captain Mason and Colonel Duncan, on the afternoon of the same day. The result indicated that the centre was the weak point of the enemy's position; and that his flanks were the strong points, his left flank being the stronger.

Having made the necessary directions, at three o'clock on the morning of the 8th, the several columns were put in motion, on as many different routes; and, when the gray of the morning enabled them to be seen, they were as accurately in position as if posted in midday for review. The early dawn was the moment appointed for the attack, which was announced to our troops by the opening of Huger's guns on El Molino del Rey, upon which they continued to play actively until this point of the enemy's line became sensibly shaken, when the assaulting party, commanded by Captain Wright,



View from Tacubaya.

and guided by that accomplished officer, Captain Mason, of the engineers, assisted by Lieutenant Foster, dashed gallantly forward to the assault. Unshaken by the galling fire of musketry and canister that was showered upon them, on they rushed, driving infantry and artillerymen at the point of the bayonet. The enemy's field battery was taken, and his own guns were trailed upon his retreating masses; before, however, they could be discharged, perceiving that he had been dispossessed of this strong position by comparatively a handful of men, he made a desperate effort to regain it. Accordingly his retiring forces rallied and formed with this object. Aided by the infantry, which covered the house-tops, (within reach of which the battery had been moved during the night,) the enemy's whole line opened upon the assaulting party a terrific fire of musketry which struck down *eleven* out of the *fourteen* officers that composed the command, and non-commissioned officers and men in proportion. This severe shock staggered, for a moment, that gallant band. The light battalion, held to cover Huger's battery, under Captain E. Kirby Smith, (Lieutenant-Colonel Smith being sick,) and the right wing of Cadwalader's brigade, were promptly ordered forward to support, which order was executed in the most gallant style; the enemy was again routed, and this point of his line carried, and fully possessed by our troops. In the mean time Garland's (1st) brigade, ably sustained by Captain Drum's artillery, assaulted the enemy's left, and, after an obstinate and very severe contest, drove him from this apparently impregnable position, immediately under the guns of the castle of Chapultepec. Drum's section, and the battering

guns under Captain Huger, advanced to the enemy's position, and the captured guns of the enemy were now opened on his retreating forces, on which they continued to fire until beyond their reach. While this work was in progress of accomplishment, by our centre and right, our troops on the left were not idle. Duncan's battery opened on the right of the enemy's line, up to this time engaged; and the 2d brigade, under Colonel McIntosh, was now ordered to assault the extreme right of the enemy's line. The direction of this brigade soon caused it to mask Duncan's battery—the fire of which, for the moment, was discontinued—and the brigade moved steadily on to the assault of Casa Mata, which, instead of an ordinary field intrenchment, as was supposed, proved to be a strong stone citadel, surrounded with bastioned intrenchments and impassable ditches—an old Spanish work, recently repaired and enlarged. When within easy musket range, the enemy opened a most deadly fire upon our advancing troops, which was kept up, without intermission, until our gallant men reached the very slope of the parapet of the work that surrounded the citadel. By this time, a large proportion of the command was either killed or wounded, amongst whom were the three senior officers present—Brevet-Colonel McIntosh, Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, of the 5th infantry, and Major Waite, 8th infantry; the second killed, and the first and last desperately wounded. Still the fire from the citadel was unabated. In this crisis of the attack, the command was, momentarily, thrown into disorder, and fell back on the left of Duncan's battery, where they rallied. As the 2d brigade moved to the assault, a very large cavalry and

infantry force was discovered approaching rapidly upon our left flank, to reinforce the enemy's right. As soon as Duncan's battery was masked, as before mentioned, supported by Andrews's voltigeurs, of Cadwalader's brigade, it moved promptly to the extreme left of our line, to check the threatened assault on this point. The enemy's cavalry came rapidly within canister range, when the whole battery opened a most effective fire, which soon broke the squadrons, and drove them back in disorder. During this fire upon the enemy's cavalry, Major Sumner's command moved to the front, and changed direction in admirable order, under a most appalling fire from the Casa Mata. This movement enabled his command to cross the ravine immediately on the left of Duncan's battery, where it remained, doing noble service until the close of the action. At the very moment the cavalry were driven beyond reach, our own troops drew back from before the Casa Mata, and enabled the guns of Duncan's battery to reopen upon this position; which, after a short and well-directed fire, the enemy abandoned. The guns of the battery were now turned upon his retreating columns, and continued to play upon them until beyond reach.

He was now driven from every point of the field, and his strong lines, which had certainly been defended well, were in our possession. In fulfilment of the instructions of the commander-in-chief, the *Casa Mata* was blown up, and such of the captured ammunition as was useless to us, as well as the cannon moulds found in El Molino del Rey, were destroyed. After which my command, under the reiterated orders of the general-in-chief, returned to quarters at Tacubaya, with three of the enemy's

Mexican loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

four guns, (the fourth, having been spiked, was rendered unserviceable;) as also a large quantity of small arms, with gun and musket ammunition, and exceeding eight hundred prisoners, including fifty-two commissioned officers.

By concurrent testimony of prisoners the enemy's force exceeded fourteen thousand men commanded by General Santa Anna in person. His total loss killed, (including the second and third in command, Generals Valdarez and Leon,) wounded and prisoners, amounts to three thousand, exclusive of some two thousand who deserted after the rout.

My command, reinforced as before stated, only reached three thousand one hundred men of all arms. The contest continued two hours, and its severity is painfully attested by our heavy loss of officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, including in the first two classes some of the brightest ornaments in the service.

It will be seen that subordinate commanders speak in the warmest terms of the conduct of their officers and men, to which I beg leave to add my cordial testimony. There can be no higher exhibition of courage, constancy, and devotion to duty and to country.

These operations occurring under the observation of the general-in-chief, gives assurance that justice will be done to the noble officers and soldiers whose valour achieved this glorious but dear-bought victory. Commending the gallant dead, the wounded, and the few unscathed to the respectful memory of their countrymen, and the rewards due to valour and conduct, I present the names of those especially noticed by the subordinate

His achievements at Monterey.

commanders, uniting in all they have said, and extending the same testimony to those not named."

The history of the terrible conflict at Chapultepec, where none but the invincible were fit to fight, we have already given in the words of General Scott. The general's whole account is a tribute to the skill and bravery of General Worth.

We cannot better close this sketch of General Worth's achievements, than by the following extract from the eloquent work of Samuel C. Reid, Esq., "Scouting Expeditions with McCulloch's Texas Rangers." Speaking of General Worth and his position at Monterey, after the cavalry fight on the 21st, by which the gorge of the Saltillo road was taken, he says, "the position General Worth then occupied might have been considered as critical as it was dangerous. Separated from the main body of the army—his communication cut off, and no possible route less than eight miles to regain it—with but scanty supplies of provision for only four days—surrounded by gorges and passes of the mountains from whose summits belched forth the destructive shot, shell, and grape; he was liable at any moment to be attacked by an overwhelming force in the direction of Saltillo, which had been reported to be daily expected, and which would have placed his command in the very jaws of the enemy. For although holding the passes and gorges of the Saltillo road, yet a superior force from the advance would certainly have forced him back to, and have turned upon him, the very passes which he then held. It was feared, too, from his impetuous nature that he would rush his command into unnecessary danger by some rash and desperate attempt. But it was not so.

His achievements at Monterey.

He was collected, calm, and cool, and bore himself with that proud, resolute and commanding mien, giving his orders with promptness and decision which inspired men and officer alike with confidence. He never appeared better than on that day; and all felt that with **WORTH** they were sure of *victory*."



GENERAL JOHN E. WOOL.



JOHN E. WOOL was born in Orange county, New York, and resided at the commencement of the war of 1812 at Troy, New York, where he assisted in organizing a volunteer corps. He was, soon after, appointed to a captaincy in the 13th infantry. At the battle of Queens-town he bore a conspicuous part. The destruction of the American officers by the terrible fire of the enemy, caused the duty of charging their battery to devolve upon Captain Wool, and it could not have been committed to better hands. Rallied by General Brock, the defeated British advanced to retake the battery, but Captain Wool tearing down with his own hands a white flag raised by one of his men, charged them a second