

To the Committee of the Association sitting at Cambridge.

Huntingdon, 31st July, 1643.

GENTLEMEN,

It hath pleased the Lord to give your servant and soldiers a notable victory now at Gainsborough. I marched after the taking of Burleigh House upon Wednesday to Grantham, where I met about 300 horse and dragoons of Nottingham. With these, by agreement, we met the Lincolners at North Scarle, which is about ten miles from Gainsborough, upon Thursday in the evening; where we tarried until two of the clock in the morning; and then with our whole body advanced towards Gainsborough.

About a mile and a half from the Town, we met a forlorn-hope of the enemy of near 100 horse. Our dragoons laboured to beat them back; but not alighting off their horses, the enemy charged them, and made them retire unto the main body. We advanced, and came to the bottom of a steep hill: we could not well get up but by some tracks; which our men essaying to do, the body of the enemy endeavoured to hinder; wherein we prevailed, and got the top of the hill. This was done by the Lincolners, who had the vanguard.

When we all recovered the top of the hill, we saw a great body of the enemy's horse facing us, at about a musket-shot or less distance; and a good Reserve of a full regiment of horse behind it. We endeavoured to put our men into as good order as we could. The enemy in the mean time advanced towards us, to take us at disadvantage; but in such order as we were, we charged their great body, I having the right wing; we came up horse to horse; where we disputed it with our swords and pistols a pretty time; all keeping close order, so that one could not break the other. At last, they a little shrinking, our men perceiving it, pressed in upon them, and immediately routed this whole body; some flying on one side and others on the other of the enemy's Reserve; and our men, pursuing them, had chase and execution about five or six miles.

I perceiving this body which was the Reserve standing still unbroken, kept back my Major, Whalley, from the chase; and with my own troop and the other of my regiment, in all being three troops, we got into a body. In this Reserve stood General Cavendish; who one while faced me, another while faced four of the Lincoln troops, which was all of ours that stood upon the place, the rest being engaged in the chase. At last General Cavendish charged the Lincolners, and routed them. Immediately I fell on his rear with my three troops; which did so astonish him, that he did give over the chase, and would fain have delivered himself from me. But I pressing on forced 'them' down a hill, having good execution of them; and below the hill, drove the General with some of his soldiers into a quagmire; where my Captain-lieutenant slew him with a thrust under his short ribs. The rest of the body was wholly routed, not one man staying upon the place.

After the defeat which was so total, we relieved the Town with such powder and provision as we brought with us. We had notice that there were six

troops of horse and 300 foot on the other side of the Town, about a mile off us: we desired some foot of my Lord Willoughby's, about 400; and, with our horse and these foot, marched towards them: when we came towards the place where their horse stood, we went back with my troops to follow two or three troops of the enemy's who retired into a small village at the bottom of the hill. When we recovered the hill, we saw in the bottom, about a quarter of a mile from us, a regiment of foot; after that another; after that the Marquis of Newcastle's own regiment; consisting in all of about 50 foot colours, and a great body of horse;-which indeed was Newcastle's Army. Which, coming so unexpectedly, put us to new consultations. My Lord Willoughby and I, being in the Town, agreed to call off our foot. I went to bring them off: but before I returned, divers of the foot were engaged; the enemy advancing with his whole body. Our foot retreated in disorder; and with some loss got the Town; where now they are. Our horse also came off with some trouble; being wearied with the long fight, and their horses tired; yet faced the enemy's fresh horse, and by several removes got off without the loss of one man; the enemy following the rear with a great body.

The honour of this retreat is due to God, as also all the rest: Major Whalley did in this carry himself with all gallantry becoming a gentleman and a Christian. Thus you have this true relation, as short as I could. What you are to do upon it, is next to be considered. The Lord direct you what to do.

Gentlemen, I am
Your faithful servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.