

The sound of a heavy cannonade from the mouth of the river excited the worst apprehensions in the minds of the little band that continued to occupy Queenston village, until they were reassured by the arrival of Captain Derenzy with several companies of the 41st and militia, a detachment of Royal Artillery with two field guns under Captain Holcroft, and a party of Indians led by Captain John Norton and Lieut. John Brant. Stragglers from the field whom these reinforcements encountered on the road, reported that Dennis' entire command had been cut to pieces, and that five thousand men had landed. Accordingly they had advanced much of the distance at the double, and when they reached Queenston they were out of breath and quite exhausted.* Under these circumstances it would have been folly to attempt the recovery of the heights, where the numbers of the enemy could have been seen momentarily increasing, but Holcroft promptly planted his guns on the high ground below the village, and endeavored to interrupt the passage of the river.

Small parties of the enemy had entered the upper part of the village, where they plundered some of the houses, but they made no effort to occupy it in force. After a few shots, finding that his pieces were too far away to reach their boats, Holcroft again limbered up, and, guided by Captain Archibald Hamilton, to whom every inch of ground was familiar from boyhood, dashed boldly across the ravine and through the village until he reached Hamilton's house, where he took up a position within the courtyard partly sheltered by the ruins of the wall. Derenzy at once supported him with a company of the 41st, and his fire soon became effective, although he lost several of his best men. A few spherical case-shot drove away the enemy's riflemen, and he then engaged the batteries opposite, firing also, when an opportunity offered, at boats on the river. The battery on Lewiston Heights was still out of range, but the guns at the landing were three times silenced, and a scow, and at least two other boats, sunk in the act of crossing. Such was the pre-

* Expresses now went down to Fort George, eight miles, and the sound was on the float—"Hurry! boys, or else our dear General will be killed," and others cried—"He is wounded, he is wounded! Hurry! Hurry! save our Governor!" Such sounds filled every bosom with martial fire. —*Smith's Complete History, 6th Ed.*