

thus have presented his antagonist with the opportunity of attacking him in the rear as well as in front, if only a section of the British troops could safely be hurried across the river by way of the upper ford, while the Grenadiers and the Royal Americans were forcing their way up the nearest Montmorency slopes to the west of the ford below the Falls. But the impetuosity of these detachments was an immediate mistake that ruined the prospect of such a general fore-and-aft engagement. And while Wolfe lectured these reckless fighters for their heedlessness, he had to confess on his own part, in his dispatches, that even had the attack below the Falls been successful, the loss of life on the British side would have been very great, and that even had the projected attack on the rear been likewise successful, the River St. Charles would still have had to be crossed, before the town itself could have been invested in a close siege.

Before Wolfe had been fully seized with the idea of the advantage there was to him in the French not fortifying the Levis heights as they had the Beauport shore, thus leaving the way open to the invader should he make up his mind to remove his Levis camp from the bend of the St. Lawrence further up that river, his thoughts seem to have been busied over two alternatives, as a means of immediate success. Admiral Saunders and he were of one mind as to the necessity of forcing Montcalm out into the open, there to pit army against army; and even after his repulse at the Falls, he still kept pondering the problem of future attack, with the north shore in his eye as the scene of his efforts. Even after he had examined the St. Lawrence above, and some of the Admiral's ships had