

possible to set it on fire. Colonel Arnold at the head of a strong force was to march round by the way of the suburb of St. Roch; while General Montgomery took upon himself the almost foolhardy task of leading a band round the base of the cliff, in face of the fact that a strong guard was posted in this position. If he and Arnold were successful, they were to unite their forces at the foot of Mountain Hill, and the forcing of Prescott Gate, and the taking of the Upper Town would be a comparatively easy task.

Shortly before daybreak they moved to the attack. Colonel Livingstone's command, for some unexplained reason, was altogether unsuccessful, and retreated without even attempting to carry out their orders. Some ascribe it to the depth of the snow, that made their advance impossible, while others say that the Canadian mercenaries failed the Americans at the critical moment.

Montgomery and his men crept slowly along the St. Lawrence from Wolfe's Cove, till they reached the base of the cliff on which stands the modern citadel. Here, under the frowning heights that loomed up threateningly through the piercing storm, they found the narrow passage, known as *Près-de-ville*, protected by pickets, and they were compelled to halt and reconnoitre.

The British had expected an attack from this side, and had not only protected the pass by pickets, but had erected in it a blockhouse in which was a battery of three guns. Here a force of about fifty men was stationed under Captain Barnsfare, a master of a transport. On this fateful morning the men were on the alert, and the presence of the Americans soon became known.

Montgomery went forward with his carpenters to cut away the palisades, and helped pull them down with his own hands. This work completed, he and several of his officers, with great foolhardiness, advanced along the pass towards the blockhouse. As they saw no light they took it for granted that the soldiers there were not watchful. But this was what the British had hoped for. Captain Barnsfare gave the command to fire, and Sergeant Hugh McQuarters, who was in charge of the guns, sent a shower of grape-shot hurtling along the pass. At the same time the small-arms of the guard rang out with telling effect. Through the storm several men were seen to plunge forward and fall, never to rise again. They were General Montgomery, his two aides-de-camp, and a

