

a sharp conflict. What decided the affair was the rain of bullets showered down from the opposite bank by Macdonell's men. Purdy, with exhausted and discouraged men, shrank from giving the order to storm the ford. He withdrew his force to what he considered a safe knoll in the woods, and, having sent a messenger to Hampton to tell of his situation, awaited his orders. While thus resting, Hampton's movements need to be described.

The order to advance had been given early in the morning of the 26th and, leaving baggage and tents in the camp at Spears, the troops began their march. On the advance guard nearing Allan's Corners, the French Canadian company that held the outpost, abandoned their blockhouse and fled to the breastwork behind. This encouraged the Americans, who yelled and cheered. On the main body arriving the order to halt was given, and spreading out on the clearings the men lit fires and cooked dinner. Hampton confidently counted on Purdy's success, and therefore until he should hear from him refrained from ordering an assault on the enemy in his front. Time passed with no word from Purdy. Dinner over the men fell in and at 2 p.m. Brig.-General Izard was ordered to bring his brigade to the front. The Americans marched along the road, turned into the clearing at Allan's Corners and extended in line within gunshot of the breastwork behind which the British force was hid. Then there was a pause. While chafing at not hearing from Purdy, there suddenly came the rattle of musketry from the opposite side of the river. Hampton's suspense was ended, for he rashly concluded Purdy was pushing the enemy. He sent the order to Izard to begin firing. With regularity that did credit to their drill, the companies in turn fired. These platoon volleys were responded to from the breastwork in a sputtering fashion. The shooting was at long range and with the musket of that time such shooting was almost harmless. Nobody was killed, but it was different with a party of American skirmishers who tried to flank the breastwork at its north end. They encountered a band of Indians. There was hot work for a few minutes, ending in the flight of the Americans. At this juncture a messenger, who had swam the Chateauguay, about a hundred feet wide, hurried to Hampton to tell him that the firing he heard was caused by an attack of the British on Purdy's brigade, which he