

Holcroft, and a party of Indians led by Captain John Norton and Lieut. John Brant. Stragglers from the field, whom they 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, 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 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 had plundered some of the houses, but they had 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 there his fire soon became effective, although he lost several of his best men. A few 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 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 precision of his fire, that from that time forward very few men attempted to pass the river.

In the meantime Scott had thrown out pickets to the edge of the woods on the left of his position, and the Indians were detached in that direction to engage them and annoy their working parties. This was accomplished in fine style, as their approach through the woods was undetected, and the outposts were surprised and completely routed with considerable loss. A large body of infantry then advanced to repel them, and the Indians instantly ran to the woods again, whence they kept up an incessant fire, accompanied with shrill whoops. The suddenness of the attack and the character of the assailants produced a genuine panic, which extended itself even to Lewiston, where a militia company on the point of entering the boats abruptly

halted and refused to move. Norton continued to skirmish with, and annoy their outposts, and although several times attacked, always eluded his antagonists by plunging into the woods, where they dared not follow. Numbers of the American militia deserted their companies, and attempted to regain their own shore, and thenceforth their force continued to diminish. Besides the serious annoyance and loss inflicted upon the enemy by this movement, direct communication was again opened with the garrison at Chippawa.

Upon reaching Queenston Derenzy had at once sent a message to General Sheaffe, describing the situation of affairs, and the latter soon afterward arrived and assumed command. He lost no time in ordering every man that could be spared from the garrisons of Port George and Chippawa, to join him without delay. By two o'clock the detachments from the former post had all arrived, leaving it occupied only by a few men of the Royal Artillery and the Lincoln militia, and those from Chippawa were known to be rapidly approaching. The force already assembled consisted of Holcroft's detachment of Royal Artillery with two six-pounders, a squad of Swayze's provincial artillery with two three pounders, under Lieut. Crowther, five companies of the 41st regiment, Capt. James Crookes' and John McEwen's companies of the 1st Lincoln, William Crookes' and Nelles' companies of the 4th Lincoln, Applegarth's, Hatts' and Durand's companies of the 5th Lincoln, a few troopers of Merritt's provincial dragoons, and the remnants of the two companies of the 49th and three of York militia, engaged in the morning, probably numbering in all rather more than 800 of all ranks, exclusive of the Indians; who certainly did not exceed one hundred.

As the enemy's force appeared to be still considerably more numerous than his own, and they were busily engaged in fortifying their position in evident anticipation of another direct attack from below, the British commander determined to leave Holcroft's two guns supported by a detachment of infantry to occupy the village, and prevent the passage of reinforcements, while, with the remainder of his troops, he moved around their flank, ascending the heights in rear of the woods already occupied by the Indians, and formed a junction with the column advancing from Chippawa, which would increase his numerical strength by 150 men. In this way he would at once escape the enfilading fire of the batteries at Lewiston, avoid the steep ascent in the face of the enemy, render their fieldworks use-

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