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the plan. The roads and weather proved much worse than was expected; the officer sent from one column to the other, with orders and intelligence which might have served to regulate the movement, was taken and cruelly murdered by the enemy; and the steam-boat, ordered up the Richelieu river with provisions and supplies for Colonel Gore's detachment, was fired upon and compelled to return.

Lieut.-Colonel Wetherell was delayed, and for a time arrested in his progress, by the unforeseen difficulties he encountered, while Colonel Gore, entirely ignorant of this detention, made a night march on St. Denis, exposed to a pelting storm of snow and sleet, and during which the men were up to their knees in half frozen mud. In a state of absolute exhaustion these brave fellows reached the village of St. Denis on the following morning, and found the enemy so strongly posted and protected as to preclude all hope of getting at them. The attempt was, however, made with the usual intrepidity of British soldiers; the howitzer was pointed at a large stone house that formed the key of the position, but no impression was made upon it; and after many brave and persevering efforts to penetrate this formidable barrier, the enterprise was given up as hopeless, and the troops returned to Sorel, worn out with cold, hunger, and fatigue, but with the proud consciousness of having done their duty. On the way back the howitzer was frozen in the mud, and resisted every effort made to extricate it.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wetherell's column did not reach St. Charles until the morning of the 25th:—

"They found M. Debatsch's house, and part of the village, strongly stockaded and defended by 1400 or 1500 men, inspired by the recent repulse of Colonel Gore's detachment, well armed, and having two guns commanding the principal approaches. Colonel Wetherell halted when within musket range, and displayed his force, from a humane desire to spare life; but perceiving that his forbearance was construed into fear, and that a sharp and well-sustained fire was opened upon him, he enfiladed and knocked over the palisades with his artillery, after silencing the enemy's guns, formed line, and charged with the bayonet under the old British cheer. Though four or five to one in number, the poor wretches, who had hitherto withstood fire well, soon broke, but not before the troops were amongst them. Between 200 and 300 were killed, and the remainder fled in all directions, spreading terror and dismay far and near. Colonel Wetherell had three killed and seventeen wounded, only, for the Canadians fired badly.

"The route at St. Charles produced such consternation in the neighbourhood that Nelson's people at St. Denis, although flushed with the late success, abandoned that post immediately; but finding that Colonel Wetherell did not advance, Mr. Nelson was able to collect a few of them again in two or three days, and was beginning to reinspire them with some degree of confidence. This, however, did not last long, for Colonel Gore, with a stronger force, three guns, and a supply of Congreve rockets, moved again upon Sorel on the 1st instant, took St. Denis without opposition, regained his howitzer, and burned Mr. Nelson's house and distillery, with all the other houses from whence the soldiers had been fired upon. He then proceeded to St. Charles, and scoured the country as far as the neighbourhood of St. Hyacinth, on the Yamaska river, without seeing the face of a rebel."*

* Narrative published in the New York Albion.