

ing over his command to Wilkinson, who, on learning Hampton had returned to Four Corners, sent an order to him to march to St Regis, where the flotilla would take his army on board on the 9th of November. St Regis was less than three days' march from Four Corners, and the road to it was entirely within the United States, so could be covered without opposition. Hampton treated the order with indignation. Wilkinson, he said, was not his superior officer, and he would do as he deemed best. He wrote Armstrong that he would not go to St Regis and was retiring to winter-quarters at Plattsburg. The reasons he gave were, that the supply of forage for the animals was exhausted at Four Corners and that only half of his men were effective, and they were dispirited and worn by fatigue. From Plattsburg, he said, he would make a demonstration on the Canadian frontier to divert attention from Wilkinson. Paroling all his officers who so desired, Hampton hastened to Washington, and tendered his resignation, which was accepted. Among the subalterns who served in the campaign was John E. Wool, who afterwards achieved celebrity. He said, "No officer who had any regard for his reputation would voluntarily acknowledge himself as having been engaged in the Chateauguay encounter."

Wilkinson

The desertion of Hampton did not necessarily make the plan to capture Montreal abortive. The purpose of his command was more to distract the British attention than to be essential in the final attack. His movements, as a feint to conceal the American plans, had kept Prevost on tenter-hooks for three months and had been successful in causing him to deplete the garrison of Montreal to strengthen that of Kingston. Hampton's retreat to Four Corners did more to help the American cause than had he persevered in reaching the St Lawrence, for it confirmed the commander of the King's forces in his belief that the army in waiting at Sackett's Harbor had Kingston for its goal. Acting on that impression Prevost left Montreal practically defenceless. His final guess of the enemy's intentions, was that Wilkinson would attack Kingston and Hampton, at the same time, march towards Montreal. Knowing the weakness of Hampton's force he considered it could be easily baffled and he would attend to it himself, waiting for it at Lachine. It was a rare opportunity for Wilkinson, which, however, he did not realize. He whined