

victory. The men in arms before him were where they had no right to be, they had come to seize a country to which they had no claim, they had been sent by a government that had broken the peace by declaring war against Britain. If ever a righteous cause was to be upheld at risk of life, it now faced him. His sense of justice impelled him to drive back the invader whence he came, his love of independence to scorn to yield to men intent on forcing a foreign allegiance on Canada. Satisfied in conscience of the justice of the cause whose flag he bore, his knowledge as a soldier told him of the risk he ran in offering battle against such fearful odds. With 800 men he was challenging a General who had it in his power to hurl eight thousand against him.

The field upon which the impending battle was to be fought, was a stretch of clearings along the north bank of the St Lawrence. The plain, broken by stumps and snake-fences, with occasional trees, was nowhere of any great width, for it dropped into an ash swamp that ran alongside it. Morrison had chosen for his position the part of the clearance where it was narrowest, his left resting on the swamp and his right on the St Lawrence, where Mulcaster with his gunboats secured that flank. For the security of his left flank he trusted to the impassability of the swamp. Narrow as the field was there were not men enough, spread thinly as possible, to form a line across, so that there was a wide gap between the 49th and Crysler's buildings, in and around which were posted the militia and a party of sailors. In front of the column ran a ravine, shallow where the creek issued from the swamp, but deepening as it neared the St Lawrence. It was this gully which made Morrison select his ground, for it would be an obstacle in a charge and to the passage of cavalry. Morrison had three field-guns, 6-pounders, he posted one at each end of his line, and one in the center. It was nearing 2 o'clock on that raw and gusty afternoon when the British saw six columns advancing towards them across the plain that lay between them and the flotilla, fully two thousand strong. That was not all Morrison had to encounter with his 800. Behind the columns sweeping towards him were the several thousands held in reserve on the flotilla or encamped on the river bank. He was face to face with the entire force Wilkinson had at his command. Allowing for the detachments sent to Cornwall that