

ferry his army across to Isle Perrot. The purpose of his movement was gone, for there was no use in pushing for the St Lawrence when he knew there would be no boats to meet him. He called a council-of-war, which met on the afternoon of the 27th. He had obtained full information of the British force that was waiting to obstruct his farther advance and it was agreed it was too weak to be considered, it could be brushed aside. The question the general asked them to answer was, Is it advisable to push on knowing we will meet no flotilla? The point was considered in its several lights. Thus, after we have swept aside the enemy now in front of us and resumed our forward march, what would the army do when it reached the St Lawrence? While waiting the arrival of the boats, how were 4000 men and fully 1000 animals to be fed, seeing the country they occupied yielded nothing and they would be separated by a road of forty miles, through a wilderness, from Four Corners, their nearest base of supply? It was agreed that to go on would be to court disaster, therefore the army should return to Four Corners and await advices of the flotilla having sailed. When the officers rose to leave, they had the general order to begin the retreat at once, and the march began to their old camp at Spears. Next morning preparations were made for the longer march before them, and the baggage-train and artillery was started. In the afternoon the last corps got under way and the Spears camp abandoned. These movements met with no hindrance from the British force, which clung to its lines of defence. The Indians, however, kept near, and on the night of the 28th surprised a picket and added to the number of their scalps. The condition of the road made the movement of the army slow, so that a week passed before it regained its former camp at Four Corners. The discontent that prevailed before the incursion into Canada was increased by the hardships of its futile marchings, and the men spoke their minds in a way that would not have been tolerated in any other than a republican army. The officers sympathized with the rank-and-file. They had lost all confidence in their general and were eager to go into winter quarters, which, indeed, the increasing cold was making imperative. The supply of overcoats was so small that they were reserved for the men who stood sentry.

Soon after Armstrong had sent his despatch ordering Hampton to advance into Canada, telling him he would find the flotilla waiting at the mouth of the Chateauguay to ferry his army to Isle Perrot, he left Sackett's Harbor for Albany, hand-