

enemy, offering half the contents of their cargoes in case they did not destroy any part, but they answered that they were determined to defend their ships and would sink rather than surrender. An immediate attack was made and one of the ships which was fired upon by the Rangers, with musketry, and one boat's crew that was trying to escape, surrendered to Lieut. Spencer. Lieut. Fitzpatrick of Capt. Kerr's company and volunteer Andrew Armstrong, with 12 of the Rangers, took the boat and boarded the ship, of which he took possession. The Highland Company were then sent on board the captured frigate and Fitzpatrick immediately rowed to the most distant ship of the fleet. A scene of great confusion followed. The enemy had scuttled several of their ships; others boarded by the intrepid Fitzpatrick were on fire, and though cannon and musketry from the opposite shore kept up a smart fire upon him, he still rowed on. He put three men on board one ship and cut her cable and he left. Volunteer Armstrong with three men in another, while he himself attended the headmost, the guns of which he turned upon the enemy. One ship was blown up and set fire to the frigate "Tempest," the ship first taken; the Highlanders with difficulty extinguishing the flames. "To add to the horror," says Simcoe, "Volunteer Armstrong finding the ship he was on board of in flames, beyond his power to master, had swam on shore to procure a boat to bring off the men he had with him; and the only one in the possession of the troops was despatched for that purpose; he had just time to save his men when the vessel blew up." The whole of the enemy's fleet

was either taken or destroyed. The vessels safely secured consisted of one ship of 20 guns, one brig of 16 guns, two smaller brigs and a sloop. The vessels destroyed consisted of one 20 gun ship and several smaller armed vessels. This is Simcoe's statement, but American historians put down the number of vessels captured at twelve and the number destroyed at fifteen. They also say that two thousand hogsheads of tobacco were taken or destroyed, and that four hundred hogsheads were destroyed at Petersburg.

The troops remained in the same vicinity until the 29th, when they marched towards Manchester, from which they had a view of Lafayette's army encamped on the heights of Richmond. At Bermuda Hundreds the Rangers collected a quantity of cattle for the army, and on the evening of May 2nd the whole army embarked, the captured ships being conveyed down the river by the Queen's Rangers.

On May 6th, when the British were a little below Burwell's ferry, they were met by a boat from Port mouth, bearing a messenger with intelligence for General Phillips that Cornwallis was on his way north and wished to form a junction with him at Petersburg. The army immediately returned up James river and late at night on the 9th again entered Petersburg. So secret was their entrance that ten American officers who were there to prepare boats for Lafayette were captured. General Phillips who had been taken ill with bilious fever, on this march was taken to the house of a Mrs. Balling where he died four days afterwards. The day after the arrival of the British, Lafayette's army appeared on the other side of the river