

picked men of picked battalions. They had been hurried to Upper Canada when the danger of invasion seemed greatest there. Now they were even more urgently needed among their own people. "When can you start?" Prevost is reported to have asked Macdonell. "When the men have finished their dinner, Sir." Prevost then left, in all haste, for Châteauguay, telling Macdonell to follow at once. The battalion was ready when Macdonell said it could be. But a day was lost in collecting enough boats to take it down the St. Lawrence. The difficulties were unusually great, especially at the rapids where Amherst had lost so many men in 1760. These dangerous rapids safely passed the men had to row all day against a gale on Lake St. Francis. This gale finally rose to such a height that Macdonell was forced to lose yet another day at the Cedars. He then crossed over to the south shore, marched for miles along it, struck inland late in the afternoon, marched all night by a bad trail through the dense forest, and arrived at the scene of action on the Châteauguay an hour before dawn. He had covered 170 miles by water and 40 by land since Prevost had left him, four days and a half before. Yet he had reached the rendezvous first and was able to greet Prevost's arrival with the satisfactory report: "All here, Sir: not one man absent."

Macdonell's march was a consummate move, admirably executed at a critical moment. But the situation was still extremely dangerous. Hampton was advancing with 7500 men, including both cavalry and artillery. Prevost had nothing like half these numbers between the invaders and Montreal; and De Watteville could not collect anything like half of Prevost's total in the immediate neighbourhood. The 25th was passed in collecting all the available men in the strong position that De Salaberry had chosen beside the Châteauguay in advance of the blockhouse. On the holding of this position all depended, because once the Americans passed that point in overwhelming numbers there was no