

The north shore of Isle aux Noix, on the opposite side of the river, was marshy to the distance of three hundred paces from the river, covered with small trees where there was a rising ground, and there was no English post nearer to it than at the Prairie de Boileau, distant half a mile down the river, so that the locality where the river was fordable was a little below the north staccados. De Bougainville adopted every prudent measure imaginable to achieve success. He ordered all the boats to be mended and put in condition to be used at a moment's warning. He also ordained that the boats, bark canoes, and punts hewn out of a large tree, be removed a certain distance from the river side, lest some soldier should desert and apprise the English of his design, such as had happened from the posts near Quebec. He commanded that all the garrison should be in order of battle at ten at night, all observing a profound silence, without the least clashing of arms or other noise, and be in readiness to march. He ordered M. le Borgne, an officer in the colonial troops, to remain on the island with a detachment of forty men, to keep up a smart fire from our battery, which consisted of seven or eight pieces of cannon, during the time we were employed in passing the river, in order to hinder the English from hearing us in our operations, and to continue firing whilst ammunition lasted, and to conceal our retreat as long as it was possible to do so.

We began to cross the river in two lighters, with some small boats, about ten at night. They plied continually to and fro until midnight, when all had crossed the river without the enemy perceiving or even suspecting our operation, although so near to us were their posts on their left that we heard distinctly their voices. All was executed without the least noise, disorder, or confusion—a rare occurrence on such an occasion. Le Borgne acted well, and at the same time economized his ammunition so well