

awaiting the dark. When the moon set they rowed rapidly down the stream, when it was proved the fear of the guns of Fort Wellington had been unwarranted. As the long procession of boats began to steal past it, hugging the south shore as closely as possible, a noisy cannonade was opened, but the guns were either badly pointed or the range was too long for their caliber, for not a boat was hit, though one chance shot killed a sailor and wounded two. Two boats, laden with artillery and provisions, ran aground, and were with difficulty got off next morning. Having ascertained the British had planted batteries wherever the river was narrow, Colonel Macomb was landed on the Canadian side with 1200 men to clear the bank of them. This caused skirmishes, which invariably ended in the fleeing of the gunners into the bush after spiking or concealing their guns. That night the flotilla tied up at the narrows, 6 miles below Hamilton, having made only 8 miles. Here the cavalry and artillery, who had kept moving onwards on finding the flotilla did not overtake them at Bush creek, was found waiting, and it took much time to ferry the cavalry to the Canadian bank; the guns were taken on board. The farmers living along the north side of the St Lawrence, when questioned by their unwelcome visitors, magnified the dangers they would meet—the terrors of the rapids, the batteries that would rake their boats wherever the river was narrow, the bands of Indians prowling in the woods, the lack of forage. These stories so impressed the Americans that it was decided to strengthen the cavalry, and so next morning General Brown with his brigade of infantry was detailed to accompany them along with two companies of artillery.

This formidable force found few obstructions in their march along the road that skirted the north shore of the St Lawrence. Shots were occasionally exchanged with riflemen hid in the woods and two or three rude block-houses, erected to shelter the relief guards, were burned. Trifling as their losses were, they confirmed the Americans in their delusion that redcoats were concealed in the bush and were there in force. Wilkinson scattered, by means of the troops he landed, a proclamation assuring the Canadian farmers he had not come to make war upon them but to subdue the King's forces, and if they would remain quietly at home, they would be protected in their persons and property. This had no effect. The farms that lined the Canadian bank of the St Lawrence were owned by