

“Sainte-Thérèse, Battle of (1760)”, in *Colonial Wars of North America 1512-1763: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan Gallay (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996): 659-60.

Early in May 1760, Major General Jeffery Amherst, First Baron Amherst (1717-1797), learned that Major General François-Gaston de Lévis, chevalier de Lévis (1719-1787) had marched on Quebec with all available troops, including sizeable contingents from the Richelieu River forts at Chambly, Saint-Jean, and Isle-aux-Noix. On 27 May, Amherst ordered Major Robert Rogers (1731-1795) to lead 275 rangers and 28 British regulars from the light infantry regiments past Colonel Louis-Antoine de Bougainville’s (1729-1811) garrison on Isle-aux-Noix to attack the forts at Saint-Jean and Chambly and destroy as many supplies and *bateaux* as possible. Amherst hoped that this would weaken local French strength and even persuade Lévis to divert troops from his operations against Brigadier General James Murray (1721/22-1794) at Quebec.

Rogers and 250 men left Crown Point in four vessels and a number of *bateaux* at the beginning of June 1760. On 3 June, Rogers landed 50 rangers under Lieutenant Robert Holmes at Missisquoi Bay with orders to attack the French post at “Wigwam Martinique” on the Yamaska River west of the Richelieu. Four rangers were also dispatched overland to Quebec with a letter for Murray. Rogers and the remaining 200 rangers crossed to the northwest shore of Lake Champlain the next day and landed near the Chazy River. Despite a diversion by several vessels commanded by Captain Alexander Grant (1734-1813) of the 77th Highlanders, Bougainville’s patrols discovered the rangers’ whereabouts and he sent out a party of about 350 French, Canadians, and Indians under a Canadian officer, Pierre Pépin *dit* La Force (b. 1725). At 11:30 in the morning on 6 June, La Force attacked the rangers’ left and attempted to drive them toward the lakeshore. Rogers, however, sent 70 men through a bog by the lake, and when this party fell on the French rear, he led the main body of rangers forward. The French retreated for a mile and took refuge in a cedar swamp. La Force was wounded and his men carried off up to 40 casualties, while Rogers’s losses amounted to 14 dead and 10 wounded.

The Anglo-Americans regrouped on nearby Isle La Motte and were reinforced by a company of Stockbridge Indians. On 9 June, 220 rangers landed at the mouth of the Chazy River and marched north parallel to the west bank of the Richelieu to Fort Saint-Jean. After a reconnaissance of the fort at about midnight on 15 June, and being fired on by the sentries, Roger decided that the fort was too well guarded for a successful assault. Accordingly, he led a night march further downriver to Sainte-Thérèse, a village and stockade post with two storehouses at the upper end of the Chambly rapids, five miles south of Fort Chambly. Supplies for the forts on the upper Richelieu were unloaded at Chambly, moved by road past the rapids, and then reloaded on *bateaux* at Sainte-Thérèse.

At daybreak on 16 June, Rogers and a few of his men rushed the gates while a hay cart was passing through them and captured the 24 soldiers inside without a shot being fired. Simultaneously, rangers seized 78 soldiers and civilians in the outlying houses. Only a few young men escaped to warn Fort Chambly. Rogers had the village, fort, *bateaux*, canoes, wagons, supplies, and livestock burned or destroyed and set the women and children free on the road to Montreal. After interrogating the prisoners, Rogers decided that there was little point trying to surprise Fort Chambly, so the force crossed the Richelieu and returned to Lake Champlain by a route to the east of the river. As they marched along the shores of Missisquoi Bay on 20 June, the rangers were attacked by the advance guard of a force of 800 men dispatched by Bougainville to intercept them. The French were driven off, and Rogers reached

the rendezvous later that day. After Holmes arrived on 21 June, the last of the rangers embarked on the waiting vessels.

Rogers failed to destroy Chambly or Saint-Jean, and Harris's 50 men lost their way while trying to attack Wigwam Martinique, but Amherst considered the audacious raid a success. The rangers and light infantry destroyed some of Bougainville's valuable supplies and transport, and the prisoners provided Amherst with valuable information about the state of Lévis's army, the exact strength of the garrisons on the Richelieu, and the lack of French troops at Montreal. In addition, the local *habitants* were shaken by this unexpected attack, and Lévis himself was obliged to leave his headquarters outside of Quebec in order to inspect the Richelieu River forts and revive Canadian morale.

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References

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See also AMHERST, JEFFERY; BOUGAINVILLE, LOUIS-ANTOINE DE; FORT CHAMBLY (QUEBEC, CANADA); ISLE-AUX-NOIX; LAKE CHAMPLAIN; MURRAY, JAMES; RANGERS; ROGERS, ROBERT