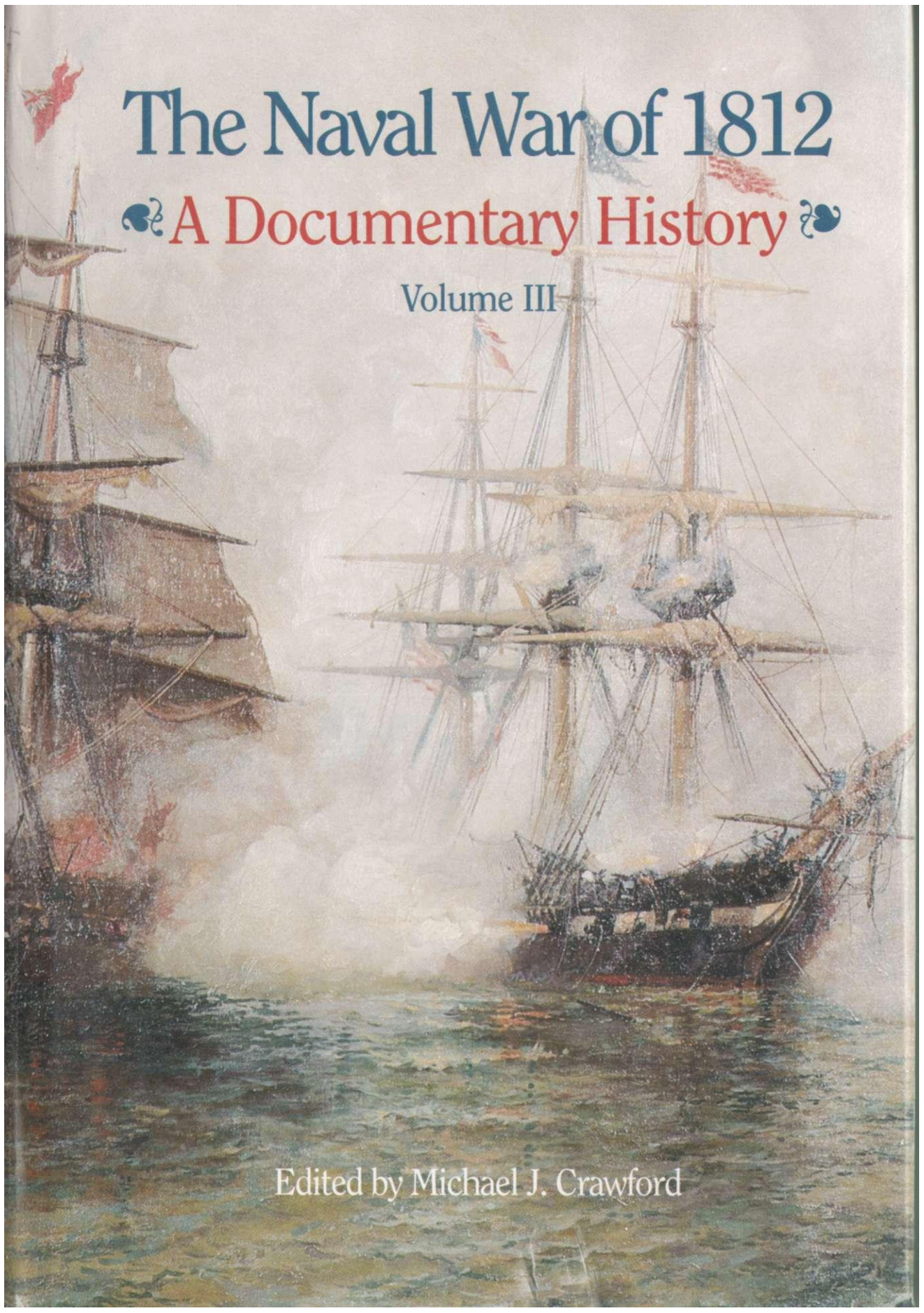
The Naval War of 1812

A Documentary History

Volume III



Edited by Michael J. Crawford

The Naval War of 1812

A Documentary History



"Macdonough's Victory on Lake Champlain"

THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812

A Documentary History

Volume III
1814–1815

Chesapeake Bay, Northern Lakes, and Pacific Ocean

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Foreword

The history of the United States Navy during the years 1814 and 1815 illustrates many of the principles—tactical, strategic, and logistical—of naval warfare. Perhaps the most valuable principle that the naval history of those years underscores, however, is *moral:* the value of perseverance.

During the final year and some months of the war, the nation reached the limits of its naval resources. The treasury was empty and the nation's credit strained to the breaking point. Ships of the line of the largest class were rising on shipways on the shores of Lake Ontario, even though the shipwrights went unpaid, and even though there was serious doubt that they could be manned. With ten thousand sailors on the muster rolls, the pool of experienced seamen available and willing to enlist had dried up. Policymakers had to choose among priorities: continuing to contend for naval mastery of the northern lakes; protecting ocean harbors and the seacoast; and cruising the high seas. Men could not be found for all these purposes.

At the same time, the war-fighting resources of the enemy expanded rapidly, seemingly almost without bounds. With Napoleon's exile to Elba, peace came temporarily to Europe. The British blockade of the Continent was lifted, freeing ships for the already highly effective blockade of the United States. Thousands of British soldiers, veterans of the Napoleonic campaigns, went home; but thousands of others were transported to America. In Canada, the British, previously on the defensive, now reinforced, marched into U.S. territory in strength. In the Chesapeake, a campaign of hit and run raids transformed into an invasion of the nation's capital and an attack on a major port city. In the Gulf of Mexico, an invading army threatened to capture New Orleans and deny the use of the Mississippi River for the exporting of the agricultural produce of the transappalachian West.

In each of the three theaters of operations treated in the present volume, the Chesapeake Bay, the Northern Lakes, and the Pacific Ocean, a U.S. naval force found itself confronting a superior British naval force. Blockaded in tributaries by a significant British squadron, Commodore Joshua Barney's gunboat flotilla held out for ten weeks, engaging in several pitched battles, until Barney ordered its destruction. Barney's sailors then became foot soldiers and maintained the nation's honor in facing the red-coated foe marching on Washington, when other troops broke and ran at the battle that wits derided as the "Bladensburg Races."

Commodore Thomas Macdonough's Lake Champlain squadron opposed a British squadron possessing significant advantages over his own. The British had a large preponderance of long guns, with the long guns on their flagship alone nearly equaling those of the entire American force. Macdonough's superior seamanship nullified the British advantage, enabling the Americans to throw their heavy short-range carronades into the equation. Still, it was only after enduring one of the deadliest naval battles of the war, that the American sailors were able to claim victory. The sacrifice of American lives and limbs resulted in the retreat of an invading enemy army and led to satisfactory terms at the peace table.

For six weeks, a British navy frigate and sloop of war watched Commodore David Porter's frigate USS *Essex* in the neutral harbor of Valparaiso, Chile. When *Essex* finally sailed, a gust of wind blew its topmast overboard, and the American frigate took refuge in a bay near the harbor. There, the British warships stood out of range of *Essex*'s carronades, which were its main armament, and, disregarding the neutrality of the Chilean waters, began a long-distance cannonade of the disabled ship. For two and a half hours the Americans resisted the enemy's superior firepower. At long range, the two British vessels enjoyed an advantage of 273 pounds in weight of metal thrown per broadside compared to *Essex*'s mere 63 pounds. Porter looked for a shift of wind that would enable him to bring *Essex*'s guns into range, or perhaps to take one of the enemy warships by boarding. *Essex*'s flag came down only after the loss of 155 men eliminated any chance of victory. "Contemporary history," wrote Theodore Roosevelt, "does not afford a single instance of so determined a defence against such frightful odds."

In each of these instances, officers and men of the U.S. Navy demonstrated the courage, honor, and commitment that are the core values of the American naval service. They faced the foe without flinching and refused to give up the fight until conquered by overwhelming force. On Lake Champlain, the outcome was unequivocal American victory. In the Chesapeake Bay flotilla and on board USS *Essex,* stubborn resistance forced the enemy to commit disproportionate resources and held up the application of those resources to other enemy purposes while the resistance lasted.

The present volume is the culmination of years of intense labor by the able and dedicated Christine F. Hughes, Charles E. Brodine, Jr., and Carolyn M. Stallings, historian-editors of the Early History Branch, and of the skilled editorial leadership of Dr. Michael J. Crawford, branch head. The volume's preface identifies other branch members who contributed their talents to various stages of the process, as well as many additional historians, editors, librarians, archivists, and officials who supported the project in a multitude of ways. All who contributed to this valuable work have my gratitude.

The series reflects the Navy's historical commitment to making its operational record accessible through documentary publications and the Navy's faith that the fuller understanding of its history, facilitated by such publications, benefits both the naval service and the American people. Sharing that commitment and that faith, I commend the study of these documents to all readers interested in the role sea power has played in the evolution of the American nation.

WILLIAM S. DUDLEY
Director of Naval History

Preface

In view of the variegated and geographic extent of naval warfare between the forces of the United States of America and those of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland during the years 1814 and 1815, the editors of *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History* determined that to cover the naval war of those years in an adequate, even if selective, fashion requires two volumes. The volume in hand, then, is the third in a four-volume series of selected contemporary texts documenting the naval aspects of the War of 1812. Volume 1 treats the origins of the conflict, beginning with events in 1805, continuing to the beginning of the war and subsequent events through December 1812; Volume 2 treats the events of the year 1813. Volumes 3 and 4 divide geographically and thematically, rather than chronologically. The present volume treats the events of 1814 and 1815 on the inland waters of North America and on the Pacific Ocean. Volume 4 will treat the same years on the Atlantic Ocean, in the Gulf of Mexico, and on the Indian Ocean, and general themes that do not confine themselves to specific operational theaters.

An introductory essay to each theater provides the overarching context for the documents that follow. Within each theater, we group documents by topic. A head note for each topical section provides more particular context. Under each topic, documents appear in chronological order. The exhaustive, sub-topical index can guide readers to content of relevance to specific interests.

This documentary history is more than a recounting of battles from eyewitness reports. Many documentary works have dealt with the War of 1812, but few have focused solely on naval affairs as this series does. The objective of this work is to display the underpinnings of the U.S. Navy during the war. In this way, we hope to explain its successes and failures at a formative period in its institutional history. While battles are the stuff of war and cannot be ignored, this volume also attempts to explain through documents the concerns of policymakers as well as commanding officers, of ordinary sailors and marines, and of common citizens affected by the conflict. We hope that the documents in this volume will provide glimpses of a U.S. Navy long forgotten or perhaps unknown to a majority of its readers. Specialists will be familiar with much of the material, but its variety should stimulate research in new directions.

In 1978, when this documents project got under way, one could accurately refer to the War of 1812 as one of America's "Forgotten Wars." Such is the umbrella title under which the War of 1812 exhibit in the United States Navy Museum in Washington, D.C., appears, while the subtitle of Donald R. Hickey's general history *The War of 1812* is *A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). Since this project's beginning, a remarkable resurgence of interest in the War of 1812 has caused the sobriquet "Forgotten" to become outmoded. During the last score of years, a host of books, general overviews as well as specialized studies, has appeared, and publishers are finding that War of 1812 titles do well on the market. (See Donald R. Hickey, "The War of 1812: Still a Forgotten Conflict?" *Journal of Military History* 65 (July 2001): 741–69, for an overview of scholarly work on the War of 1812 since 1989.) A group of historians, writers, reenactors, archaeologists, and book publishers has joined efforts

through the War of 1812 Consortium, based in Baltimore, Maryland, to promote public awareness of the War of 1812. In 1995 the Consortium took over publication of the *Journal of 1800–1840,* renaming it *The Journal of the War of 1812 and the Era 1800 to 1840.* The Consortium's annual National War of 1812 Symposium, first held in 1997, has attracted an increasing number of attendees. The state of Maryland, believing that it can stimulate heritage tourism through a focus on the War of 1812, has received a grant from the National Park Service to study sites relating to the War of 1812 within its borders. War of 1812 era historic ships such as the U.S. Navy's USS *Constitution,* berthed at Charlestown, Massachusetts, and the state of Pennsylvania's brig *Niagara,* home ported at Erie, Pennsylvania, educate hundreds of thousands of visitors about the war each year. The frequent citations to the first two volumes in *The Naval War of 1812* series that one finds in recent scholarly works suggest that this series has played a positive role in the unmistakable revival of interest in the war.

The efforts of many dedicated individuals, within and outside the Naval Historical Center, have contributed to this documents project over the years. A former director of naval history, Rear Admiral John D. H. Kane, Jr., made the decision to commence the project in keeping with the wishes of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who had urged an earlier director, Captain Dudley W. Knox, to print the naval manuscripts of the War of 1812. The first volume of these documents was in distribution when Dr. Ronald Spector became director of naval history. His support of the project was constant and appreciative. Dr. Dean C. Allard, director when the second volume was published, enthusiastically urged completion of this project. The series is close to the heart of the current director, Dr. William S. Dudley, editor of the first two volumes, who continues to advise on the project as series editor. Dr. William J. Morgan, senior historian emeritus of the Naval Historical Center, has lent his wisdom and experience from years as editor of *Naval Documents of the American Revolution* in offering welcome advice to a younger project.

Of the Early History Branch staff, I am most indebted to our superb War of 1812 editorial team, led by associate editor Christine F. Hughes, and aided by assistant editors Carolyn M. Stallings and Charles E. Brodine, Jr. These are the individuals who did the principal work of selection, transcription, annotation, and writing of head notes for the documents printed in this volume. They also shared the arduous work of copy editing before final submission to the printer, correcting galleys, and page proofs, selecting illustrations, and indexing the volume. Staff historians E. Gordon Bowen-Hassell, Dennis M. Conrad, and Mark L. Hayes contributed their expert knowledge of early American naval history and offered their assistance whenever it was needed. Charlotte Marie Knowles, the branch program assistant, quietly and patiently took care of many details essential to the smooth running of the office, in addition to making many of the initial transcriptions from handwritten copy to typed manuscript.

As usual in publishing a book such as this, many Naval Historical Center employees gave assistance. To Jean Hort, director of the Navy Department Library, Tonya Simpson, the library's interlibrary loan officer, and others on the library staff, we are indebted for efficient service and willing cooperation with the many requests made for obscure works, difficult citations, and liaison with other libraries. Charles Haberlein, Edwin C. Finney, and Jack Green of the Curator Branch's Photographic Section provided advice and information concerning the many possibilities for illustrating the volume.

Many archival institutions and libraries provided us with information and copies of documents and illustrations from their repositories. Most notably included in this category is the Old Military and Civil Records Branch of the National Archives whose naval specialists, Rebecca Livingston and Richard Peuser, were most helpful in the search for obscure documents and in expediting their availability for proofreading. The staff of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress (Frederick Bauman, Ernest Emrich, Jeffrey Flannery, Ahmed Johnson, Patrick Kerwin, Bruce Kirby, and Mary Wolfskill) graciously accommodated our need to see original documents. Barbara DeWolfe, curator of manuscripts at the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, and Jim Cheevers of the Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, Maryland, assisted with documents and illustrations in the collections of their institutions. The National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; the Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax; the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; the National Maritime Museum of Greenwich, England; and the Public Record Office in London are repositories of large collections of naval documents that we frequently consult. As with all documents obtained from the Public Record Office, unpublished Crown Copyright materials are reproduced in this volume with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. The Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, was among other helpful institutions.

The members of the Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Subcommittee on Naval History have given us sympathetic support and advice over the years. Also of special assistance to us was John Arnold of Devon, England, whose knowledge of British naval and military records and painstaking research provided us documentation otherwise hard to obtain. We are also indebted to Park Rangers Scott Sumpter Sheads and Vincent Vaise of the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, Maryland, for their comments on the Battle of Baltimore. In addition, Mr. Sheads and Donald G. Shomette, of Dunkirk, Maryland, generously permitted reproduction of maps from their publications. T. Michael Miller, research historian in the Office of Historic Alexandria (Virginia), provided useful biographical information on that city's residents. Dr. Robert C. Suggs, of Boise, Idaho, a scholar who has written widely on the culture of the Marquesas Islands, reviewed the Pacific Theater documents for the accuracy of tribal and island place names. Paul Lear, the historic site manager at Fort Oswego, New York, provided insight on the British attack on that fort.

I am grateful for help provided the project by student interns: Jim Bartlinski, a graduate student at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; James Holton, a graduate student at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.; and Midshipman Steven A. Sablan, USNR, of the University of Norwich, Vermont.

As editor, I accept full responsibility for any mistakes or errors of fact or misinterpretations found in essays, head notes, or annotations. As in any selection of documents, others may differ with us about what was included or omitted. I believe that those we have selected fairly represent the concerns of the Navy Department during the last years of the War of 1812.

MICHAEL J. CRAWFORD
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Editorial Method

Selection

There are thousands of naval documents available in the National Archives, Library of Congress, and other repositories, from which we have selected a few hundred as being representative of the War of 1812. Our intention has been to choose documents evocative of topics and persons of that period. With citations and references provided, the interested reader can locate similar classes of documents of the particular period and theater of war in question. The majority of documents selected for publication are of an official nature, addressed to the secretary of the navy by officers in command of ships or naval stations. Added to these are orders from the secretary to his commanders, excerpts from logs and journals, and letters to the Navy Department from private citizens. We have specifically included more British documents in this current volume, compared to the number in previous volumes, in order to balance the perspective presented by American sources.

In most cases, the version printed is the original letter or recipient's copy; it frequently happened, however, that the original never reached its destination. Authors of letters customarily took the precaution of sending at least one and sometimes two copies to ensure arrival of their communication. Where one of these copies, in lieu of the original, is printed, it will be designated as a "copy" in the source note.

The secretary of the navy carried on a vast correspondence with all ranks of officers, for he was the operational chief of the navy as well as its principal administrator. The completest record of the secretary's outgoing correspondence is contained in letter books into which departmental clerks copied each letter, but not its enclosures. In many cases the only extant copy is the official letter book copy. Benjamin Homans, the chief clerk of the Navy Department in 1814 and 1815, signed departmental correspondence in the secretary's absence and during the period between William Jones's resignation and Benjamin W. Crowninshield's official appearance in the Cabinet.

Transcription

Transcriptions adhere as closely as possible to the originals in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviation. The following exceptions apply. The names of ships are italicized. Complimentary closes are printed immediately at the end of the last paragraph. The only superscripts retained are those used in signatures.

Textual Devices

The editors use brackets with roman type to supply letters that have been lost in the gutters of bound original documents. They clarify in a footnote or with bracketed italics any word whose spelling is so unclear as to be misleading. The editors use bracketed, italicized terms, [*blank*], [*torn*], and [?], for missing or il-

legible words. The virgule, /, indicates a line break in addresses, endorsements, and docketings when these are reproduced in source notes.

Placement of Documents

Volume 3 is divided into three theaters: Chesapeake, Northern Lakes, and Pacific. Documents are arranged by theme, usually in chronological order, and cover the period from 1814 through demobilization.

Chapter Essays and Head Notes

An introductory essay precedes each of the theaters, contextualizing the groupings of documents contained therein. The head notes orient the reader and provide the transitional framework for understanding the themes.

Document Layout

The title or rank, first name, middle initial, and last name of originators and recipients of documents precede the documents when known. The bracketed phrases [Extract] and [Enclosure] appear in roman type at the left margin, below the heading to designate an extract, or after the cover letter to designate an enclosure. A document's dateline appears as in the original; the editors supply corrections in bracketed italics. If an address forms part of the salutation, it is retained; however, those found at the end of a document, as well as addresses and endorsements found on the reverse side of a letter, are usually not reproduced. Any significant information contained therein is recorded in the source note.

Source Notes

The first note following the documentary text is unnumbered and gives a description and the source of the document. Lists of abbreviations used to describe the manuscripts, repositories, and collections follow this essay. The source note may also contain biographical information on the signer or the recipient if not previously identified. The editors also use this note for textual clarifications.

Annotations

Numbered footnotes provide essential clarification, explanation, or information about persons, places, or subjects mentioned in the text. The editors refer the reader to the relevant scholarship for further consultation on a particular subject. The prefatory material contains a short title list of references used. The editors furnish a full citation to letters cited by date in the text of a document, if the information is considered relevant to the subject under discussion. When enclosures are not printed, summaries are provided.

Abbreviations Used to Describe Manuscripts

AD	Autograph Document
ADfS	Autograph Draft Signed
AL	Autograph Letter
ALS	Autograph Letter Signed
D	Document
DS	Document Signed
LB	Letter Book
LS	Letter Signed

Repository Symbols and Other Abbreviations

Adm.	Admiralty
AF	Area File
AOR	Letters Sent Conveying Appointments and Orders and Accepting Resignations
BC	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Officers Below the Rank of Commander
CaOOA	National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
CL	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy: Captains' Letters
CLS	Confidential Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy
CM	Records of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department
CNA	Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to Commandants of Navy Yards and Navy Agents
CSmH	The Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.
DLC	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
DN-HC	United States, Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, Navy Department Library, Washington, D.C.
DNA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
InU	Indiana University, Lilly Library, Bloomington, Ind.
MC	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanders (Masters Commandant)
MdAN	U.S. Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, Md.
MdHi	Maryland Historical Society Library, Manuscripts Department, Baltimore, Md.
MHi	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.
MiU-C	University of Michigan, William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Mich.
MLR	Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy: Miscellaneous Letters
MLS	Miscellaneous Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy
NBuHi	Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, N.Y.
NcD	Duke University, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Durham, N.C.

NHi	The New-York Historical Society, New York, N.Y.
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
RG21	Records of District Courts of the United States
RG45	Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library
RG46	Records of the U.S. Senate
RG77	Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers
RG107	Records of the Office of the Secretary of War
RG125	Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Navy)
RG217	Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury
RG233	Records of the U.S. House of Representatives
RHi	Rhode Island Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, Providence, R.I.
R.N.	Royal Navy
SNL	Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to Officers
UkENL	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
UkLNMM	National Maritime Museum, London
UkLPR	Public Record Office, London
Vi	Library of Virginia, Archives Research Service, Richmond, Va.
WO	War Office

Short Titles

ASP: Military Affairs. American State Papers: Documents, Legislative and Executive, of the Congress of the United States. . . . Class V. *Military Affairs.* Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832.

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The Naval War of 1812

A Documentary History

Chapter One

The Chesapeake Bay Theater: January 1814–May 1815

News from the Elbe River Valley in the autumn of 1813 boded both good and ill for the United States in its war with the United Kingdom. The allied victory at Leipzig in October 1813 meant the end of Napoleon's Continental System and presaged the collapse of the French Empire. Napoleon retreated into France and, on 6 April 1814, abdicated unconditionally. The end of the Continental System removed the principal justification for British interference with the United States' commerce with Europe, and the coming of peace to Europe removed the Royal Navy's incentive for pressing seamen from American merchantmen. The way to a peace settlement between the United States and the United Kingdom seemed open. Yet, victory in Europe also seemed to provide the British the means to secure a victory in America that would exact retribution on the United States for its declaration of war.

Up until Napoleon's abdication, British policymakers considered America a minor theater of operations. As of August 1813, they maintained 75,000 soldiers in Europe, outside the British Isles and Ireland: 60,000 on the Iberian Peninsula, and 15,700 on Sicily and the Mediterranean and Ionian Islands. As of the same date, the British maintained fewer than 20,000 soldiers in North America: 732 in Bermuda, 12,935 in Canada, 708 in Newfoundland, and 4,189 in Nova Scotia. The increase over the 7,625 British soldiers in North America before the American declaration of war resulted from reinforcements sent from the Caribbean, not from Europe. The coming of peace to Europe freed British veterans of Wellington's Spanish campaigns for service in America. Between the end of 1813 and the end of 1814, the number of British soldiers in North America doubled to nearly 40,000. Reinforcements sent to the Chesapeake Bay changed the nature of British operations in that theater from one of swift raids to one of campaigns with more substantial objectives.[1]

Through the winter of 1813–1814, Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., remained in the Chesapeake with a small naval force to keep the capes blockaded. Rear Admiral George Cockburn returned to the bay on 23 February 1814 and resumed the pattern of shore raids he had pursued so assiduously during the previous year's operations, with the purpose of diverting American military resources from the Canadian theater southward. Cockburn would have to restrict offensive actions to small incursions until the looked-for arrival of significant reinforcements. Then, he anticipated grander actions under a new, more aggressive commander in chief.

Late in 1813, the Admiralty separated the North American Station from the Jamaica and Leeward Islands Stations and relieved Admiral Sir John B. Warren of his now reduced responsibilities. In his place, they appointed Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane (1752–1832). A veteran of the American Revolution, Cochrane made post captain in 1782. In the wars against France, he distinguished himself in expeditions in Quiberon Bay, against El Ferrol, and to Egypt. He was made commander in chief of the Leeward Islands Station in 1805 and was knighted for his share in the Battle of St. Domingue (6 February 1806). Attaining the rank of vice admiral in 1809, he served as governor of Guadeloupe from 1810 to 1814. Cochrane arrived at Bermuda in March 1814, and on 1 April Warren formally turned over to him command of the North American Station. During his first month in command, Cochrane implemented his instructions to pursue the war vigorously. He extended the blockade of the United States to all of New England and offered runaway slaves asylum and the opportunity to serve in the British army.

Tangier Island, selected as a Royal Navy supply depot and rendezvous point for British prizes, soon became a training ground for a corps of Colonial Marines composed of runaway slaves eager to fight against their former masters and a camp for their families. When word of the Treaty of Ghent reached the Chesapeake, British officers balked at considering such persons as property and returning them to their former owners as the treaty required. Some three hundred runaway slaves enlisted as Colonial Marines. Approximately two thousand left with the departing British to make new lives in British territory, primarily in the maritime provinces.[2]

The United States government did little to protect the people living along the Chesapeake from the Royal Navy's blockade and coastal raids. During its December 1813–April 1814 session, Congress increased the authorized strength of the army to 62,500, and recruitment brought the actual strength to 40,000 by early 1814, and to nearly 45,000 a year later. Yet, federal troops continued to march north to the Canadian frontier, leaving communities along the shores and tributaries of the bay to look to their own resources for defense.[3]

U.S. naval forces were inadequate to break the blockade or challenge the enemy's frigates and ships of the line operating in the bay. The sloop of war Adams, *Charles Morris, managed to slip into the Atlantic, but the frigate* Constellation, *Charles Gordon, was able to do no more than help the gunboats of the Gosport Navy Yard defend Norfolk. The Baltimore flotilla was severely reduced when the leased ships that constituted its greatest strength were returned to their owners. The most credible threat to British domination of Chesapeake waters was the flotilla service, a new independent command, answerable directly to the secretary of the navy, under Joshua Barney, who had proposed the unit in the summer of 1813.*[4]

Barney reasoned that a fleet of armed barges could defend the bayside communities by opposing the boats and small vessels that carried British landing parties between Royal Navy warships and land through shallow waters. After the U.S. Navy purchased the row galley Vigilant *in September 1813 for the fledgling flotilla, Barney, during the winter of 1813–1814, acquired or had constructed a number of barges. To these he added a few gunboats of the Potomac flotilla. He was never able to put his idea to the test. In late May he set out from Baltimore*

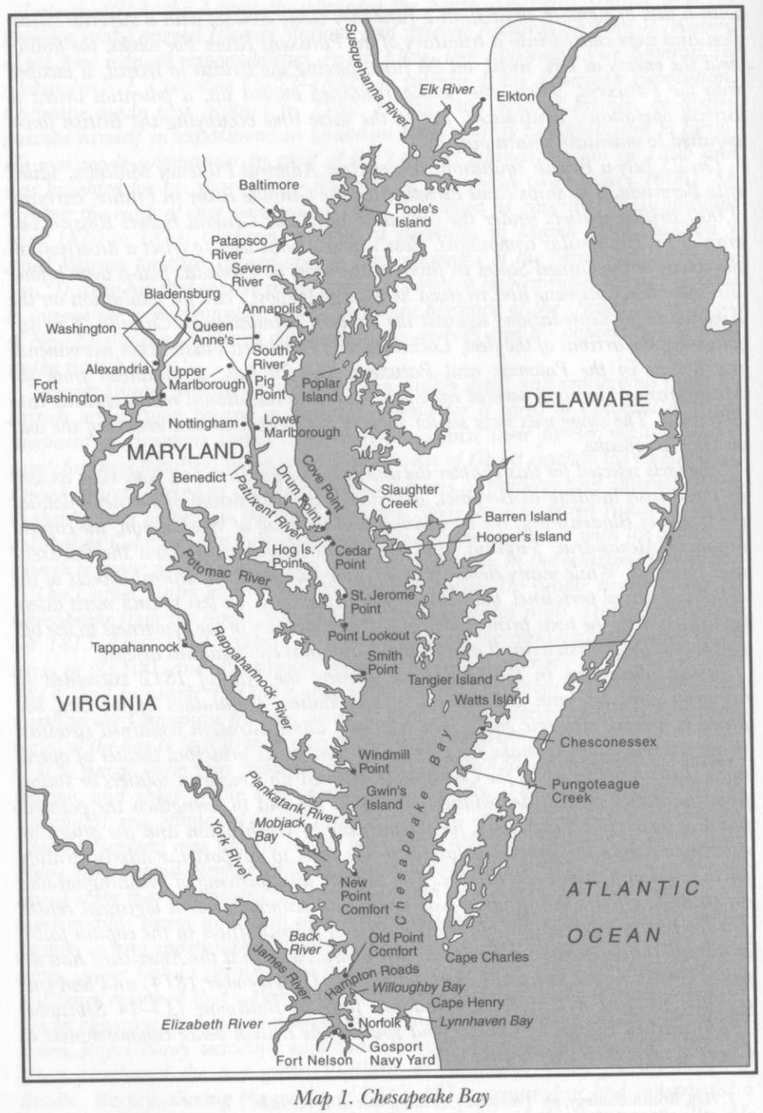
with a fleet of eighteen vessels; on 1 June they made contact with a superior enemy fleet and were chased into a tributary of the Patuxent River. For weeks, the flotilla held the enemy at bay, until, on 26 June, forcing the British to retreat, it escaped into the Patuxent. There, the flotilla remained bottled up, a potential threat to British operations, neutralized, but at the same time occupying the British forces required to maintain guard over it.

On 25 July a British squadron, under Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, sailed into Bermuda. The ships came directly from the Gironde River in France, carrying 3,000 British soldiers under the command of Major General Robert Ross, a veteran of the Peninsular campaigns. Ross's instructions were to effect a diversion on the coasts of the United States in favor of the army in Canada. Just a week before, Vice Admiral Cochrane had received Sir George Prevost's call for retaliation on the Americans for depredations against the civilian population of Canada. The day following the arrival of the fleet, Cochrane read Cockburn's dispatches recommending action in the Potomac and Patuxent. On 29 July, a squadron from the Mediterranean brought several transports carrying additional reinforcements into Bermuda. The stage was now set for some of the most dramatic events of the war in the Chesapeake.

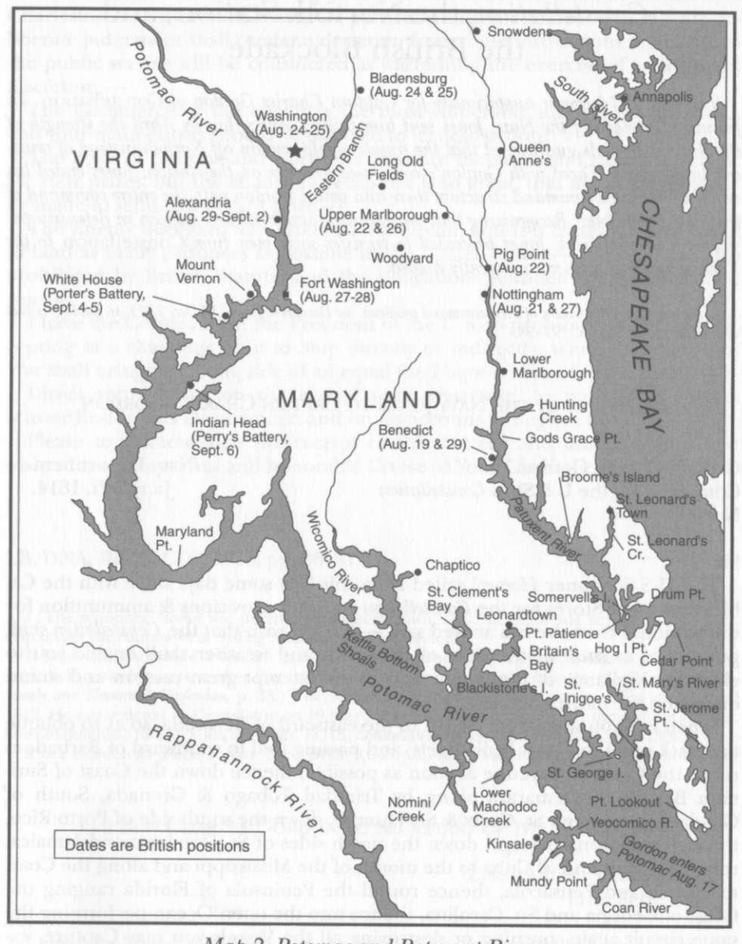
The texts selected for this chapter document the preparations on both sides as well as the British landing at Benedict, Maryland, the destruction of Barney's flotilla, the Battle of Bladensburg, the occupation and burning of Washington, the capitulation of Alexandria, Virginia, and the British withdrawal down the Patuxent and Potomac. While many elements of this story are familiar, several aspects of the actions of naval personnel, both British and American, are less so and merit attention. Similarly, the texts printed here give the immediacy of the eyewitness to the oft-told tale of the British assault on Baltimore and that city's gallant defense.

British operations in the Chesapeake during the War of 1812 succeeded in bringing hardship and deprivation to the civilian population of the bay, but failed to achieve strategic goals. The Madison administration remained steadfast in its determination to make the Canadian frontier its principal theater of operations. British activities in the Chesapeake diverted no American soldiers or sailors from the north. British depredations failed in the end to strengthen the political hand of bay region Federalists, for the burning of Washington and the attack on Baltimore awoke the general populace to the need to support the administration for the sake of patriotic self-defense. The capture and burning of Washington had no strategic effects. Washington was neither an economic nor a logistical center. The temporary interruption of the operations of federal offices in the capital failed to disrupt the decentralized American war effort. News that the Americans had defeated British naval forces at Lake Champlain (11 September 1814) and had successfully rebuffed a British expeditionary force at Baltimore (13–14 September 1814) reached Europe by October and spurred the British peace commissioners at Ghent to relax their negotiating terms.

1. *Hall,* British Strategy, *pp. 196–98, 213; Hickey,* War of 1812, *183.*
2. *Hickey,* War of 1812, *p. 204.*
3. *Ibid., pp. 165, 183.*
4. *Dudley,* Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 373–81.*



Map 1. Chesapeake Bay



Map 2. Potomac and Patuxent Rivers

Constellation, the Norfolk Station, and the British Blockade

The year 1814 began auspiciously for Captain Charles Gordon of Constellation. *In January Secretary of the Navy Jones sent him sailing orders, but by April the strength of the British blockade guaranteed that the frigate would remain off Norfolk instead of cruising to the south. Faced with Gordon's continued presence on the station, Jones ended his vacillation on the command structure there and vested Gordon with the entire command of the force at Norfolk.*[1] *Recognizing that maintaining underutilized seamen in defensive positions was inefficient, Jones proceeded to transfer some men from* Constellation *to the Lakes where they were more urgently needed.*

1. For an earlier discussion of these command problems, see Gordon to Jones, 13 Dec. 1813, in Dudley, Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 397–98.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Charles Gordon

Captain Charles Gordon
Commanding the U S Ship *Constellation*
Norfolk.

Navy Department
Jany. 5th. 1814.

Sir

The U S Schooner *Hornet*[1] sailed from this City some days since with the Cables and other Stores for the *Constellation* and with provisions & ammunition for the Station. I trust she has arrived safe.— It is my wish that the *Constellation* shall put to Sea as soon as the state of the winds and weather shall enable you to elude the vigilance of the enemy and in the attempt great caution and sound discretion are indispensable.

When out you will take a circuit to the eastward of Bermuda, so as to oblique the track of all the West India fleets, and passing well to windward of Barbadoes reach the Coast of Cayenne as soon as possible, thence down the Coast of Surinam Berbice & Demarara along by Trinidad Tobago & Grenada, South of Guadaloup, between St. Croix & St. Thomas, down the south side of Porto Rico, through the Mona passage, down the north sides of St. Domingo and Jamaica, round the west end of Cuba to the mouth of the Mississippi and along the Coast to Mobile and Pensacola, thence round the Peninsula of Florida ranging the Coast of Georgia and So. Carolina, thence into the open Ocean performing the same circuit again, burning or destroying all the Vessels you may Capture, except such as may be near our Coast with a moral certainty of getting them safe into Port; and continuing your Cruize as long as your Stores and casual supplies may enable you to keep the Sea. In this route you will regulate your time at any particular point according to the probability of success, and the danger to be apprehended from a superior force.—

You will be able to obtain some supplies and refreshments from New Orleans, and it will be proper to have a communication with Commodore Campbell at St. Mary's, in order to obtain information and receive such instructions from this Department as may await your arrival there.—

You can also obtain partial supplies of Water Rice &c. from Savannah and Charleston.— Unforeseen events or particular information such as in your deliberate judgement shall render a deviation from these instructions beneficial to the public service will be considered as warranting the exercise of your Sound discretion.—

The Commerce of the enemy is the most vulnerable interest we can assail, and your main efforts should be directed to its destruction.

The ports of Georgia and North Carolina are the safest and easiest of access, for your prizes, but the chance of recapture is so great, that no attempt should be made to send in a distant prize.—

The Enemy disregard all Cartels on the Ocean, and it is extremely important to land as many prisoners as possible in the United States.— Ransoms are also prohibited by British Statute, and the obligations founded thereon declared void.—

I have the Command of the President of the U S, to prohibit the giving or accepting of a challenge Ship to Ship directly or indirectly. When the chance of War shall bring you along side of an equal foe I have no fears for the result.—

Direct your Purser on the eve of your departure, to transmit a correct Muster Roll to this Department, and on no account to neglect this duty.[2]

Please to acknowledge the receipt of this Letter,[3] and accept of the best wishes for a prosperous and honorable Cruise of Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 86–87.

1. The schooner *Hornet* was purchased at Georgetown, D.C., in 1813. She served as a dispatch ship under the command of Sailing Master Joseph Middleton.

2. Isaac Garretson held a warrant as a purser dating from 1798. Before 30 March 1812, pursers held their ranks by warrant; after that date pursers were commissioned officers. (See McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession,* p. 33.) The Senate confirmed Garretson's commission on 25 April 1812. He was ordered to *Constellation* on 19 May 1812 and served as her purser throughout the war. For *Constellation*'s muster rolls, see DNA, RG45, *Constellation* muster and pay rolls, 1812–1838.

3. See Gordon to Jones, 11 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 25 (M125, Roll No. 34)

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constellation Crany Island
11th. Feby. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you of my having been compell'd (very reluctantly &. with extreme mortification) to return to my moorings after a most flattering prospect of getting to Sea— Yesterday with the wind at S.S.W. thick weather, & only one Frigate at the Capes, we at 1 P.M. slipp'd our moorings & stood down under easy sail to pass Sowels point flats at high water & Anchor'd in Hampton roads at 3 to waite the return of our reconnoitering Tender & to prepare for a final move so soon as the wind (which had then veer'd to South) should become settled & sufficiently fresh to give us an offing— At 5 P.M. The Tender return'd & the weather still very thick with squalls of rain & the wind unsettled

& veering from South to S.E. I was restrain'd from proceeding immediately (as the course down from Willoughby is S.E. by E. & the Southerly winds always inclining to draw in— The appearance of the weather however was so flattering, & the whole night before me that I felt most sanguine either of a settled S.W. Gale or, a sudden shift to the N.W. either of which (from the roads would be equally favorable to us) tho. the latter would have produced clear weather, & after the moon roase at 11. might enable the ships up the Bay to follow us; whereas the Southwester would prevent those up the Bay from moving & leave us the one Frigate to dispose of— So baffling was the wind & So extremely thick with squalls & Calms from the Southd. (that we were kept in this state of anxiety & uncertainty untill the morning, when it broak away with the wind at West, & exposed us to the full view of the Enemy) one Frigate in Lynhaven bay, And a ship of the Line, a Frigate & a large Brig off Back river— As I could not then proceede without being persued by the whole of their force, I remain'd in the roads to notice their movements & see what force would attempt to advance on me (as the one Ship shew no disposition to move when she might have fetch'd into the roads in a very few stretches— At 10. A.M. The Force off Back river & a Ship off the Capes apparently from Sea, made sail for the one Ship that still lay at Anchor in Lynhaven— At noon (it being high water & the Enemy collecting) I was reluctantly compell'd to weigh for the purpose of recrossing Sowels point shoals & return'd to my moorings at 3 P.M. to day, leaving leaving the Ship of the Line, Frigate & Brig beating up for Willoughby's or the roads; The other two Ships remain in Lynhaven bay— This has been the more mortifying to me as it has exposed my real intentions & anxiety to get to Sea, when I believe even our own Citizens did not apprehend an attempt of the kind untill we were discover'd standing down— I also apprehend a more rigid blockade— I have the honor to be with high respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chas. Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 106 (M125, Roll No. 34).

Captain Joseph Tarbell to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Gosport Feby: 15th. 1814

Sir

I beg I may not be considered attempting anything to the prejudice of a Brother Officer, but realy Capt. Gordons demands on the Flotilla has been so great, and so severe, that I have been compel'd to refuse him, and which I am sure you would sanction me in, I am persuaded every thing has been done to aid him in his departure, but as attempts has been made to injure me in your estimation respecting that ship hetherto; I have taken the liberty of stating a few facts in order to do away any impression that may be attempted against me by Capt. Gordon in this case, the two Tenders has been constantly employd. on the ship, with fifteen men each, and their crews so beat out that I have directed fresh crews from the Flotilla, also the *Centipede*, and two Masters have been on the bay shore as Telagraphs for these two weeks, and every kind of duty performed out of the Ship has been done by the crews of the Flotilla, and not assisted by one of his men, on the 9th. Capt. Gordon contemplated going to

sea, and directed the commanding Officer then on board of the Flotilla, Mr. Page,[1] to get under weigh, to man the *Centipede*, double man the Tenders and for what purpose I am at a loss. I was immediately informed, and asked Commd. Cassin, how I should act in such a case,[2] he replied not to stir with the Flotilla or to weaken my Command, but to be in readiness to act, and knowing Capt. Gordons intentions should he succeed, to send the Tenders to North Carolina, by his conversation to the officers, they being all sufficient to take off his Pilots, my haveing refused him in these demands, and he being compeled to return to his moorings at Craney Island, he might aim at some thing, as I was the cause of his not succeeding, the whole of the enemy having preceived his movements, got under weigh and proceeded from above and below towards Old Point, and on Saturday the 12th one Frigate, two Brigs, and one schooner came into the roads and stood out again. But I do assure you, nothing has been wanting on our part, to afford him that assistance and justification to myself, and nothing would afford me more satisfaction that to see that Ship go to sea, but I must confess not at the sacrifice of the Flotilla, your instructions in this case shall be punctualy attended to, yet I think the crew of the *Constellation* should be a part of the fatigue and not to let the burthen fall on the crew of the Flotilla, whose services may be called into action ere long, the commanding General[3] sent an officer to me yesterday requesting one of the Tenders to proceed as a flag to the enemy, I refered him to Capt. Gordon they being under his direction I have Honor to be Sir very respectfully your Obdt. & Huml. Servt.

Jos. Tarbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 116 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Originally warranted 9 March 1809, Sailing Master Lewis B. Page was dismissed on 8 March 1813 but was reinstated the following month on 6 April. Page was the flotilla's acting commander afloat in Tarbell's absence.

2. Both Captain Joseph Tarbell, who had commanded the Gosport flotilla since May 1813, and Captain John Cassin, who had superintended the Gosport Navy Yard since August 1812, resented Captain Charles Gordon, who had come to the Norfolk Station in the fall of 1813 to relieve Captain Charles Stewart of the command of *Constellation*.

3. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, Virginia militia, commanded the defenses at Norfolk until February 1814. He returned to active service in August 1814.

Captain Joseph Tarbell to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Gosport Febry. 24th. 1814

Sir

Enclosed I send you a correct copy of a communication from Captn. Gordon, to me, I feel every disposition on my part to act in conjunction, on the defencive in case of any attack, Captn. Gordon has signified to me previous to the enclosed communication, that it is his wish, I should follow him down to the enemy, and attak them, whilst he makes a running fire, in order that he may make his escape.

I can assure you Sir, nothing shall be wanting on my part to render every aid to Capt. Gordon consistant with prudence, I do not feel myself Justifiable to follow the Ship down to the Enemy in Lynhaven Bay without an order from the department, your orders Sir shall be strictly attended to.

Yesterday the enemys force in Lynhaven, was Two Frigates, one Seventy four & Several Tenders I have the Honor to be Sir your Obd. Sert.

Jos. Tarbell

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 137 (M125, Roll No. 34).

[Enclosure]

Constellation off Craney Island
22nd. February 1814

Sir

The time is now fast approaching, in which our respective force must necessarily expect active service, that will undoubtly require our co-operation— Therefore to prevent difficultys, it is highly important for the good of the service, that we should perfectly understand each other on the subject of our command, and comparative Rank— Being the senior Officer, my situation is peculiarly delicate, as it leaves me liable to be held responsible or not at pleasure for all the operations of both our forces on this station—

It may not be amiss therefore to inform you, that as respects your force, I assure you I never have contemplated interfering with it, neither shall I in any degree, except in case of our actual operations against the Enemy, when but one can command, and that command from the nature of our rank & service must devolve on me—

This Sir, I hope will convince you, that there is no disposition on my part, to presume on my rank, and deprive you of any privilege whatever in your command, consistant with the service which from the strange impressions, apparently throughout your Flotilla, and the Navy Yard, and I regret to say, from your distance to me since my leaving the yard, I have been induced to believe you apprehended, was my wish or intention. I have never given an order of any discreption to your Flotilla, and have not contemplated doing so, but in the event of such service, as I should conceive my duty as senior officer, would compel me to do, I view you as I should any other Captain Junior to myself commanding a Ship in company with me, you are responsible for your force in the performance of its duty or the execution of all general orders, I am responsible for my ship, and as the senior officer, also responsible for the disposition & general movements of both forces in action, or in all general hostile operations against the Enemy—

Without having any thing official from the Deptmt. on this subject (as it was not expected I should have been so long here) I may venture to say, I have received the sentiments of the Honbl. The Secretary of the Navy, on this subject— But should those ideas not exactly correspond with yours, I would recommend (for the good of the service) that you would communicate withe the Department, and enclose a copy of my communication on the subject without delay, as I repeat to you that there is not the most trifling disposition on my part, to interfere with your command, and shall never do it but from the purest motives of duty & my ideas of the Service—

If however this should meet your ideas of service, you will be pleased to signify it to me, in your answer to my communication—[1] Very Respectfully Sir Your Obdt. Servt.—

signed Charles Gordon

Captn. Joseph Tarbell Commdg.
Flotilla Navy Yard Gosport

N.B. In mentioning the Navy Yard (I wish my expression to be understood, as not intended in any degree for the Commander[2]—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 137, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. No response from Tarbell was found.
2. John Cassin, commandant of the Gosport Navy Yard. Gordon knew that Cassin outranked him because the latter's commission dated from 3 July 1812 and his from 2 March 1813.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constellation off Crany Island
26th. February 1814

Sir

I have this moment received a communication from the commander of the Flotilla on this Station, in answer to one from me of the 21st. Inst—[1] As he has agreeable to my request forwarded a copy of my communication, it may not be amiss, to acquaint you with the causes which induced me to address him— The day of my Departure from here for Hampton roads with a view & fair prospects of proceeding immediately to sea, I was desirous of making some certain arrangements for landing my Pilot on my way down to the Capes, as he is a married man, with a wife and six or seven Children dependant on him— And as this Ship has in use a very superior Barge of Admiral Warrens rowing twenty four oars, which was taken by the Officers & crew of this Ship in the attack on Crany Island,[2] I had determined to land the Pilot with her and sent to the Commanding officer of the Flotilla[3] to request he would man the Barge from his force, for that purpose, as I should of course be obliged to leave any men I might put in her— He first had to row up to the Navy Yard Gosport to ask his Commanders[4] permission, And before he returned I was under way standing down and did not get an answer untill I returned to my moorings the next day— The commanding Officer (pro tem)[5] then came on board to inform me, he was forbid furnishing any men from the Flotilla, And received writen instructions, not by any means to make any disposition or movement of the Flotilla under the then existing circumstances which existing circumstances was my ship standing down to pass a shoal which she had struck on, this time last year,[6] and which caused her to lighten very much, before she could make good her retreat— This however, I did not apprehend, as I had buoyed the Channel very effectually but I took this occasion to ask the commanding Officer (protem) what construction he had put upon the expression of existing circumstances in his writen orders or to be more explicite, "As I was at a distance, & of course could not have solicited your assistance (as a favour in person) in case of getting aground, or having superior force to contend with (in sight of you) had I made a Signal, could you have assisted me, under your Orders," He replied that he conceived his orders would not have justified his moving on any consideration even had he seen me aground, until he could receive further orders

from Capt. Tarbel—his commander, Still he had no hesitation in saying, that had I made any Signal for assistance, he most undoubtedly should have rendered it, immediately and "at all hazard," was his expression—stating that he should have expected to have lost his Warrant, had he assisted me without his commanders orders

Duty alone has urged me to trouble you again on this subject, as I concieve there are situations in which misunderstandings of this kind might tend to injure the service very materially, And I most undoubtedly should feel myself bound to enforce my orders, when I concieve it my duty to command a junior, while I view Capt. T- as an officer in the regular Navy were he of the Sea fencibles or any other corps, I should not concieve any responsibility attached to me, in whatever Situation he might place himself, & of course should be perfectly indifferent in every respect, but the interest I feel in the conduct of our forces in general, and the success of the Arms of my Country I am gratified at the course taken by the com[*mander*] of the Flotilla, as your reply will decide the only action in which I feel myself most interested (that is the extent of responsibility attached to me as Senior Officer—Particularly as my ambition does not extend to the immediate command of the Norfolk Flotilla, further than to comply with your wishes on the Subject and my duty as an Officer— I have the Honor to be Sir with great respect Your Obt. Servt.

Chas Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 139 (M125, Roll No. 34).

1. Gordon probably meant his letter of 22 February to Tarbell; see pp. 10–11.
2. Formerly H.M. barge *Centipede*; see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 359–61.
3. Sailing Master Lewis B. Page.
4. Captain Joseph Tarbell.
5. *Pro tempore* is Latin for *for the time being*; Gordon is referring to Sailing Master Page here.
6. For *Constellation*'s grounding in February 1813, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 311–13, 393, 394.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Charles Gordon

Captain Charles Gordon
Comg. U.S. Frigate *Constellation*
Norfolk.

Navy Department
March 4th. 1814—

Sir,

Captain Tarbell has forwarded a Copy of your letter to him of the 22d. ulto.—to which you will consider the following exposition as the decision of this Department, until otherwise ordered. The distinct command of the Flotilla is vested in Captain Tarbell, for which he is directly responsible to, and subject to, the direct orders of this Department.— That its immediate object is the defence of Norfolk and the adjacent Waters, from which it cannot be diverted or jeopardized for any other object.— Hence no order to the Commander of the Flotilla incompatible with these views can be valid; and although his Co-operation in order to facilitate the Escape of the *Constellation*, will be proper, and accord with the wishes of this Department, yet he must be

the judge of the extent and nature of that cooperation in order to insure the safety of the Flotilla and the defence of Norfolk, particularly in the event of the escape of the *Constellation*.— Whenever the forces shall act in conjunction either for defence or offence, the senior officer will of course command, and the Department cannot admit the idea of the least hesitation on the part of the junior officer, to act in conjunction, whenever an opportunity may offer to act with effect. When an officer is acting under the special and immediate command of this Department, it supersedes the general authority of a senior officer.

This is the case with Capt: Tarbell's command.— I am respectfully Your obdt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 230–31 (M149, Roll No. 11). Jones also sent a copy of this 4 March letter to Joseph Tarbell, to whom Jones reiterated the importance of promoting "harmony and concert with the commander of the *Constellation*." Jones to Tarbell, 4 Mar. 1814, ibid., p. 231.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Charles Gordon

Capt: Charles Gordon
U.S. Ship *Constellation* Norfolk.

Navy Department
April 15th: 1814

Sir,

In the present state and probable continuance of the Blockade, the prospect of your getting to sea is not only hopeless but it would be temerity to make the attempt, and therefore your attention will be exclusively directed to the efficient employment of the whole of the Naval force on the Norfolk station, for which purpose you are invested with the entire command of that force, and Captain Tarbell will report himself to you accordingly.—[1]

Your character, & zeal for the service, and the honor and interest of our Country, afford a satisfactory pledge for the judicious, active and energetic use of the force committed to your direction.— The object of that force is twofold.— 1st: the protection of Norfolk and the adjacent Waters & 2d: the persevering annoyance of the Enemys force in every situation on which circumstances may enable you to attack with a prospect of success.—

If by mounting a heavy Gun amidships with such other armament as you may deem proper, you can render the U. States Schooner *Hornet* serviceable, you may employ her on the station instead of dispatching her for this place as had been intended.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 278 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. For Jones's orders to Joseph Tarbell confirming the change in the command structure at Norfolk, see Jones to Tarbell, 15 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 278 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constellation 22nd April 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 15th. & 16th. Inst. And expect to get Lt. Kennedy off tomorrow agreeable to your instructions: But shall inform you more certainly of the probable time of his arrival at Potomac creek in my next. And shall also direct him to dispatch a letter to you, immediately, on his arrival at Richmond—[1]

The term of service of my crew, expiring in all of this year, except what few have entered since I joined the Ship, makes the selection of the sixty men you have order'd somewhat difficult And by the ensuing fall I shall expect to be quite destitute— I have therefore selected from those whose time will expire in one or two months as many as would reenter for the Lakes for twelve months and have made up the ballance with such as have the whole summer to serve. And I assure you Sir, my sending them away appears like separating man and wife for never were men more devoted to their Ship & Officers, than our present crew, we have laboured to organize & train them and we have been recompenced for our trouble, so far as their unequall'd good conduct could go— I would pledge myself, for the *Constellation*, with such a crew, against any Frigate, even the celebrated *Acasta* now in the Bay—

The inhabitants of Norfolk, honor us highly in looking to us for their defence, notwithstanding the large number of troops at this place— And I shall hope to prove to them their confidence is not misplaced—

The draught of sixty men, I am of Opinion will take considerable amount of property and some of the inhabitants from this place; for the Ship appears their constant theme, so little confidence have they in the Malitia, and I believe less in the present commanding officer of the Regulars— If Genl. Porter[2] is to command, his presence is now all important in my Opinion, as upwards of one thousand Malitia have just gone home, and others coming daily, who require organizing— Major Smith[3] commanding at the Island informs me, he has about five Hundred effective men, which I hope will stand a charge, otherwise the Island will fall and Fort Nelson must then be in danger, as its rear is not sufficiently protected And my Ship is within twice her length of all its front Batteries, on which many Columbiads are mounted, Still I cannot but flatter myself that even with the surrender of that Fort She would prove the greatest barrier to their entering the town of Norfolk, For if they have not an overwhelming force to weaken us too much below, in the first attack, and we are driven to the last extremity of defending ourselves afloat, with my own crew reduced as it may be at such a period, and the Gun Boats to support me, I am of Opinion I can take a position to annoy fort Nelson, as well as to defend the town from that side of the water—

I am daily occupied in organizing the Flotilla & fitting the *Hornet* with one long 18 on a pivot & four 18 pound Carronades. But the great number of discharges from that force, & some from this Ship every day, I fear will produce a deficiency of men, all of which immediately enter the Army in consequence of the high bounty—[4]

As their officers consider them unmanageable on Shore and as we have ever been ready to assist & serve the land forces in any situation—I think on the present occasion, an order from the war Department for a temporary draught of

the seamen from the land forces here to the Flotilla would be advisable— There are now seventeen Gun Boats, many of which, are only half manned, and Six others not fitted for want of men—[5] I am preparing the whole, so far as my crew will go to compleat them But I regret to say, that many of their commanders [are] such as I have not sufficient confidence it [*in*] to entrust any part of my reputation with, if I could so far obtain your indulgence as to be permitted to make two or three temporary acting appointments for the season only And let their confirmation or dismissal in the fall, rest with the Department & their own conduct[6] have the Honor to be Sir very Respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Chas. Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 163 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Jones ordered Gordon to send Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy, two experienced midshipmen, forty able seamen, and twenty ordinary seamen to assist Captain Arthur Sinclair on Lake Erie. Jones to Gordon, 16 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 281–82 (M149, Roll No. 11). Kennedy left Washington for Erie in mid-May. Jones to Sinclair, 19 May 1814, pp. 462–63.

2. Brevet Brigadier General Moses Porter, Light Artillery, U.S.A., did not return to command at Norfolk until the fall of 1814.

3. Probably Major Harry Smith, Seventy-second Regiment (Russell County), Virginia militia; this regiment served in Norfolk.

4. The bounty the army offered at this time was quite attractive. In return for a pledge to serve five years or during the course of the war, new recruits were paid $124 and 160 acres of land. Recruits received $50 on their enlistment and another $50 on mustering in. The remaining $24 plus the land grant were awarded on discharge from the army. *Statutes at Large,* Vol. 3, pp. 94–95, 96. Bounties in the navy were not set by statute but at the discretion of the secretary of the navy. Typically, the secretary authorized bounties of between ten and twenty dollars for skilled seamen.

5. Gordon's assessment of the strength of the flotilla differed from Tarbell's, its commanding officer. In March Tarbell wrote Jones: "I have seventeen Gun Boats, in the most efficient order, at any moment for operation, the remaining Six is in want of Officers and men, the recruiting Service is going on for the Flotilla." Tarbell to Jones, 10 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 29 (M125, Roll No. 35).

6. Jones had no objections to Gordon's making two or three acting appointments. Jones to Gordon, 27 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 303 (M149, Roll No. 11).

British Blockade Duty

From 6 September to 25 December 1813 Captain Robert Barrie's squadron had captured or destroyed seventy-two merchant vessels attempting to elude the British blockade.[1] *Despite this impressive figure, Admiral Warren was still concerned with the numbers that were escaping the Capes and so in January reinforced Barrie with the schooner* St. Lawrence[2] *and the frigate* Lacedaemonian. *The sixty-year-old Warren was showing his age in 1814; he had no bold initiatives. Meanwhile, Barrie's letters to relatives disclose the tedium of wintertime blockade duty and his pessimism that even Admiral Cockburn's arrival would not spur changes.*

1. For Barrie's list, see UkLPR, Adm. 1/505, fols. 139–43.

2. The British captured the American letter of marque schooner Atlas *in July 1813 at Ocracoke, North Carolina. Renamed* St. Lawrence, *she served prominently in the British Chesapeake squadron in 1814. For the 1813 capture, see Dudley,* Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 184–86.*

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N., TO CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N.

Private Bermuda Janry: 19th 1814

Dear Sir

I most earnestly hope that before this reaches you that Captain Jackson with his Two Victuallers will have arrived safe in the Chesapeake

your South Sea Ship came in here very well & the Officers & men will be conveyed to you by Leiut Croke who is ordered to continue the Blockade of Ocracocke; I learn that the *Narcissus* has left the Delaware to obtain provisions & water: & should the *Lacedemonian* be with you: pray send Capt Lumley back to his Station so soon as he has received his supplies

with respect to the *Bramble*s Dispatches I beleive they merely relate to the prisoner Department and the System of Retaliation threatened by King Madison: a Taste of which in consequence of Genl. Armstrongs order to burn Newark in Upper Canada & executed by Gen McClure: has been Repaid in Kind by our Troops under Genl Vincent at Niagara, Lewistown Manchester & probably Buffaloe:[1] I should hope that with the *St Lawrence* & *Lacedemonion* you will now be enabled to cut off or stop the Sortie of the Clippers; & also Capture some of the Vessels from France. all your Convoy of Flour Vessels arrived here: & I should expect that as you have kept our Friends within the Capes alive, now the weather may become more moderate that you will not forget the Virginians who are so hostile to us.

The Marylanders seem rather more moderate & have behaved in a much greater proportion than their Neighbours: you will no doubt hear that the *president* is out & also the *Constitution*: the latter pushed out in a strong Gale at N:W accompanied with Snow: Whilst *Majestic Tenedos* & *Junon* were at anchor under Cape Cod: the first of these ships has followed in search of the *Constitution*: as well as the *Goliath* after Rogers: but they are such small & Difficult Objects to hit—that our chances are few indeed & the good Fortune of these Rascally privateer Frigates makes me almost Despair of ever seeing them: I wish you may have it in your power to cut off the *J. Adams*[2] or one of their sloops: or a Schooner of the Baltimore Flotilla: but as to the *Constellation* I suppose She will not easily trust herself out of Hampton Road if she should Creep there; I think if you have something off Cape Charles with the *St. Lawrence* you must obstruct that passage: & so soon as you have cleared the Two Transports I wish them to be sent here under Convoy; as the *Lady Delaval* is employed in Conveying Bullocks to & fro to this Island; I suppose whatever supplies you now procure as the Embargo[3] is so severe must be by Force; the Sheep you mention from Smiths Island for the Board of Agriculture should be sent in a ship of war to go home from hence: I shall be very glad if they can see England in good Health & Condition: The news from home as late as the 9 or 10th of Novr. are glorious & gratifying to all who wish well to the Grand Cause: & I think Europe will now be Free & Independant & our old Friends & Allies the Spanyards are behaving Nobly & that Country will be saved: Lord Wellington is going to Catalonia with two Divisions of the Army to expell Suchet[4]: with respect to the prize war here there are about 6 South Seamen in the Harbour valuable ships, a National Schooner the *Vixen*[5] & about 45 other prizes. With every kind wish for your health & welfare as well as my best compts. to all the Squadron with you. I have the Honor to be with much esteem Dear Sir very sincerely yours

John Borlase Warren

p s. I have not heard from your Friend Pechell since he sailed or any prize R. Admiral Cockburne will visit you soon. I enclose a Late Halifax paper

ALS, NcD, Sir Robert Barrie Papers.

1. For more information on the destruction along the Niagara frontier in late 1813, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 622–28.
2. Warren has confused the sloop of war *Adams*, which sailed from Lynnhaven Bay on the night of 18 January 1814, with the frigate *John Adams*, which on 26 February departed New York on a diplomatic mission to Europe.
3. On 17 December 1813, Congress placed an embargo on American merchant shipping and exports.
4. Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult, French general in the Peninsular War.
5. For an account of the capture of U.S. schooner *Vixen* by H.M.S. *Belvidera* on 25 December 1813, see Sailing Master Thomas Hall to Jones, 20 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 30 (M148, Roll No. 13).

CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N., TO DOLLY GARDNER CLAYTON

[Extract]

Feby. 4th. 1814

HMS *Dragon* off Mockjack[1] Bay in the Chesapeak

. . . . My Letter by the *Bramble* would acquaint you that at the time of her sailing we were all well though nearly frozen to death, it still is so severely cold that I can scarce hold my pen— Three of my most valuable prizes are either lost or retaken by the Enemy— those that have arrived will not be profitable—however I have the satisfaction of knowing that if we have not enriched ourselves we have greatly destressd the Enemy, for since I was left in command of the Chesapeak Squadron we have destroyed & taken upwards of eighty nine of the Enemies Vessels, besides frequently annoying them on shore— I have now been seven months from Halifax or any friendly port, so you may suppose it is hard times with us—& we are likely to continue out for at least three or four months longer, having receivd six months provision by some transports— The Americans generally expect Peace will immediately result from the negotiations at Gottenburg[2]—I am not so sanguine—indeed I hope we shall never make any peace with Nathan that does not reduce him to his proper insignificance as a maritime power & I observe the American secretary of state in his reply to Lord Castlereaghs proposals dwells more on "reciprocity"—than "maritime rights"—& to arrange & agree to the extent of these will be very difficult—however Nathan has sufferd in his tender place cash & as my friend the great Napoleon seems going to leeward Brother Jonathan may find himself in a scrape that he will be glad to get out of on any terms— . . .

I have no news to send & am sorry our Naval affairs have not been to brillant on this coast as they might & should have been—but alas! we are all growing old—

Rear Ad. Cockburn is expected here in a short time but I do not expect he will do much I fear he is cramped in his orders— remember me affectionately to all at Lostock & its neighbourhood I am glad you have all been so gay &

hope you will long continue so— I am ever my dear Mother your truly affectionate and dutiful Son

Robt: Barrie

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers. Dolly Gardner Clayton was Barrie's mother. Her second husband was George Clayton. The unprinted portions of this letter relate to family matters.

1. Spelled *Mobjack* today.
2. Gôteborg or Gothenburg, in neutral Sweden, was the original site chosen for the Anglo-American peace negotiations, but the commissioners never met there, going to Ghent, Belgium, instead.

Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., to Eliza Clayton

[Extract]

Dragon—Hampton Roads March 14th

My Dear Pious

A signal has just been made from the *Marlbrough* to signify that there will be an opportunity to send Letters to Bermuda to be forwarded to England I therefore take up my Pen to acquaint the Lostockonians that I am alive & well and am quite pleased with my ship which out sails all the squadron—but the crew are a rum set—at least they are very fond of setting to at the Rum & give me a deal of trouble—we are here three sail of the line viz. *Marlbrough Victorious* & *Dragon*—literally doing nothing but blocking up a Yankee Frigate[1] and almost twenty gunboats— I do not think we can get at her & feel as if we were idling away our time below in Lynnhaven bay we have a squadron of Frigates & there is another squadron cruizing within the Capes so that the Chesapeak is completely blockaded— I hope soon to be ordered on a Cruize off New York unless some troops be sent out to enable us to attack Norfolk— I long to have a dash at Nathans towns for though I do not think we can hold any of them I am sure we can very soon make them not worth holding— News I have not a word of for we never get hold of a Paper and as yet we have done very little in the Prize way— *Dragon* has captured three very fast sailing schooners—but they are not of any value— she has also picked up at sea a fine Yankee brig the *Industry* of Savannah—without a person on board her—the Brig is loaded with Cotton about 75,000 Lbs—Burr stones & hardware— she had been captured by some of our Frigates but bad weather coming on she was abandoned & found by *Dragon* in a sinking state— I expect we shall have a little law—or at least Lawyers work about this Vessel as I will not allow either the admiral[2] or any of the ships to share for her—for as she was never condemned to the original captors I regard her as a god send to the *Dragon*— I know nothing of the fate of my Yankeys at Gibraltar but fear they are given up—which is a clear ten thousand out of my pocket—occasioned by the ignorance of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty—as they have now given orders for all Vessels under similar circumstance to be condemned— since we have anchored within the capes we have turned back at least fifty vessels so the trade within the Chessapeak is done up while we remain here—but without more force to enable us to land we can do nothing against Norfolk—& I am tired of blockading & long to be sent to the Eastward to cruize—. . . . here we are very cold & entres nous very dissatisfied at doing nothing I am sorry to say that the Frigate ordered to Bermuda has just struck on shore—& she will not be got off without loss— it is the *Acasta* one of the finest

frigates we have, fortunately the weather is not very bad— Farewell my dearest Pious ever believe me your faithful friend & affectionate

Robt: Barrie

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers. Eliza Clayton was Barrie's half sister. The unprinted portions of this letter relate to family matters.

1. *Constellation.*
2. Admiral Sir John B. Warren, R.N.

Recruiting and the Blockade Stymie *Ontario*

The construction of the six sloops of war authorized under the 3 March 1813 legislation continued apace in 1814. Washington Navy Yard naval constructor William Doughty prepared the design for three of these vessels, Argus, Ontario, *and* Erie. *Doughty oversaw the building of* Argus *at the capital, while Thomas Kemp built the latter two sloops at Baltimore.[1] Master Commandant Robert T. Spence superintended* Ontario*'s construction throughout the summer and fall of 1813 and constantly importuned Secretary Jones with requests to open a rendezvous.[2] Jones, constrained by a small budget, refused Spence's entreaties to authorize a rendezvous outside of Baltimore until construction of the sloop was near completion.* Ontario *was launched on 28 November 1813, but Spence's inability to recruit seamen throughout the winter of 1813–14 and the onset of a stronger British blockade by April dashed all chances of getting to sea that season.*

1. Chapelle, American Sailing Navy, *pp. 256, 258.*

2. Robert T. Spence belonged to a wealthy Portsmouth, New Hampshire, family. Secretary Jones, considering Spence a "Gentleman of affluence" who would not stay in the navy, did not include Spence in the 1813 promotion list until the latter complained. Jones to Spence, 26 July 1813, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 24–26 (M149, Roll No. 11). Spence was promoted to the rank of master commandant on 24 July 1813 and captain on 28 February 1815. As a prosperous property holder in Baltimore, Spence preferred duty at home if he could not have the glory of duty at sea.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore Jany. 9th 1815 [*1814*]

Sir,

In reporting to you the advancement of my ship I have the honor to state, that we got our topmasts on end to day—that our lower rigging is rattled down, and catharping'd[1] in.

The Hold is nearly stowed.— and I intend our yards shall be across next week. I then shall stand in need of my sails from Washington.—

Had I my compliment of men, I could be ready for sea in three weeks.—

My residing within a hundred yards of my ship since appointed to her, and giving personal attention to every little thing will account to you for my rapid progress.— The "*Erie*" has more men, but in other respects the "*Ontario*" is equally advanced. Indeed we have little the start!— With great respect your very Obt. Servant

R. T. Spence

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 7 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Catharpins are short ropes used to bind in the rigging in the wake of the topsail yards, so that the yard may be braced sharp up.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore January 18. 1814

Sir,

I beg leave to trespass on your time a moment, to request permission, to have the sails of the *Ontario*, made at this place; as I understand they have not yet commenced at Washington.

I have also to ask leave, to open a Rendezvous at New York, as Captain Ridgely[1] having nearly completed his compliment, is about to close at that place. Seamen are easily obtaind there tho' they are scarce, both here, and at Philadelphia.—[2] I have the honor to be, with great respect your Obt Servt.

R. T. Spence.

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 16 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Charles G. Ridgely was promoted to master commandant on 24 July 1813 and captain on 28 February 1815. He superintended the construction of sloop of war *Erie* at Baltimore during the same time that Spence oversaw the building of *Ontario*.

2. Spence reiterated this request in his letter of 24 January 1814 to Jones. DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 27½ (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

private Baltimore January 25th 1814

Sir.—

The kindness you have manifested; while it lays me under obligation to you, divests me of the reluctance I otherwise should feel, in asking any additional favour to those already conferred.—

I have understood that Captain Warrington with all his officers are ordered to the *J. Adams*.—[1] The *Peacock* can be made ready for sea in a few days—and, as my great desire is to obtain honor you can place me in the very field of glory, by appointing me, and my Officers immediately to her.— If I have any thing to urge in support of this request, it is the professional Zeal I feel—my disposition to give up every private consideration for opportunity to act well my part; together with the indefatigable industry I have evinced in getting ready the *Ontario*.

I can take my Officers, and a few of my best men, open rendezvous at N. York for the residue, and be at sea in a few days.— I ask for my Officers, because they are attached to me.— With great respect, & Esteem, your Obt. St.

R T Spence

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 30 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Spence was mistaken. The next day Jones ordered Samuel Angus to command *John Adams*. Jones to Angus, 26 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 1, p. 554 (M441, Roll No. 1). Lewis Warrington, who was promoted to captain on 22 November 1814, remained in command of *Peacock*.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Robert T. Spence

Robert T. Spence Esquire
U.S. Navy Baltimore.

Navy Department
Feby. 7th. 1814

Sir

I have received your letter of yesterday. The reiteration of your request to recruit in New York is superfluous, you were explicitly informed, that it was inadmissable. The recruiting for the Lake service at New York, will require all that can be obtained there.[1] a surgeon will be ordered to the *Ontario* in a few days.— I am respectfully your Obedt. Srvt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 212 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Less than two weeks before, Jones had ordered Spence not to open a rendezvous in New York. Jones to Spence, 28 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 203 (M149, Roll No. 11). But Spence resented Ridgely's recruiting success in New York. He warned Jones that if *Ontario* did not sail by the end of February her chances of getting out that year were slim. Spence to Jones, 6 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 47 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore February 9. 1814

Sir,

I have been honor'd with your letter of the 7th— The anxiety I felt to get out, must plead my excuse, for having so repeatedly troubled you with a reiteration of my request to open a Rendezvous at N York

My ship waits for nothing but men;— and the remainder of my equipments from Washington, to be ready for Sea.

I am inform'd,— there are about 20 Seamen at the Navy Yard, Washington: they will be a great acquisition to me; and can be replaced by others, before the ice breaks up;— will you be pleased in consideration of my readiness, to order, that they shall be turned over to my Ship.

I have been from day-break, 'till dark, watching and superintending her advancement, to get ready with the *Erie*:— and it will be peculiarly hard, to be detain'd for a few men: I hope to receive permission to send on for them.—

The Galley you refered to, in conversation with Mr. Smith will not answer;— I could therefore wish mine, at Washington; sent on by land immediately. With Sentiments of high esteem, I am respectfully yr. hmb. st.

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 49 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Robert T. Spence

Captain[1] R. T. Spence
Commanding U.S. Ship *Ontario* Baltimore

Navy Department
March 3d. 1814

Sir,

If you cannot get men in two of the principal Cities of the Union, how are we to replace those which you propose to draught from the Flotilla.—[2] Whatever importance you may attach to the manning of your own Ship, that of the flotilla is deemed equally so to the public safety, and may soon even deserve a preference should the enemy advance.—

Each commander confines his views to his distinct command, but those of this Department embrace the whole.— This question had been distinctly and I had thought sufficiently answered before.— Captain Bainbridge I apprehend, informed you that when the nominations of Pursers took place, the merits and claims of your Brother would be duely considered along with those of other candidates and that his recommendations were satisfactory, which has I presume been construed into a promise to appoint him.— I make no promises of the kind.—[3] I have no doubt of his merits and fitness for the station, but there are several Candidates who appear to have equal claims

An acting Purser can only be appointed in some extreme cases, when the public interest will not admit of delay.—

The law is very particular in regard to the appointment of Pursers. I am respectfully Your ob'dt. Serv't.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 229–30 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Spence did not become a captain until 28 February 1815.
2. Spence persisted in asking Jones for seamen from *Scorpion*, *Ontario*, and any in Washington. Spence to Jones, 21 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 61 (M147, Roll No. 5).
3. In anticipation of getting his brother, Groome K. Spence, a position as purser in *Ontario*, Spence had allowed him on board in January. Spence to Jones, 30 Jan. 1814, ibid., No. 34. On 1 March, Spence reiterated his request for a pursership for his brother. Spence to Jones, 1 Mar. 1814, ibid., No. 68. Groome K. Spence's commission dated from 8 April 1814.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore March 31, 1814

Sir,

I have yet hopes of getting to sea as soon as I shall obtain a crew:— but should it be found that I cannot, I beg that I may be permitted to make my ship a Battery of 24 pounders to anchor off the Harbour. I am induced to make this request not only from the wishes of the Citizens, who apprehend an attack this summer; but from a strong interest I feel in the safety of the City having a large property depending on its security.—

My Ship could be rendered a very formidble Battery, being sufficiently strong and ample for 24 pounders: thus she could be rendered serviceable untill

Septb.—, when I think I could easily get to Sea With high consideration I have the honor to remain, your Obt. St.

R. T. Spence.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 96 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Robert T. Spence

Navy Department April 4th. 1814

Sir

The clemency of the season and rigour of the blockade forbid the hope of your escape, and duly appreciating the value of your services in a fruitful field of enterprize and honor, you will forthwith proceed with all your commissioned and warrant officers to Sacketts Harbour on Lake Ontario and report yourself to the officer commanding on that station.[1] The *Ontario* shall be retained for your command until the Service on the Lake shall permit your return.

Your petty officers and crew indiscriminately and without exception you will transfer to the commandant of the flotilla at Baltimore[2] and on your return they shall be retransferred to the *Ontario*. You will lay the ship up in a secure and safe manner with her entire equipment and stores in the best state of preservation and suffer not a single article now attached to her to be removed, except the slops which you will deliver to the agent[3] and every article of cabbin and ward room furniture also,* which he will preserve and return to the ship. The dry provisions onboard will be held subject to his order for other branches of the service. Complete Inventories of all the stores of every Department in detail will be prepared for which the officer left in charge will receipt and be held accountable. You may designate a careful and trust worthy officer to remain in charge of the Ship. These orders in all respects you will see duly executed before your departure I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

*including cabbin and hospital Stores, and liquors of every kind

P S. The Inventories of the Stores and articles remaining will be compared with those charged to the Ship and it is expected that with the actual expenditure excepted they will be found to agree

ALS, DNA, RG217, Auditor for the Navy Department (Fourth Auditor), Accounts and Claims (Numerical Series), Settled Miscellaneous Accounts and Claims, 1817–1911, Box 33, No. 3302.

1. Commodore Isaac Chauncey.
2. Commodore Joshua Barney.
3. James Beatty.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore April 9, 1814

Sir,

Your letter of the 4th., I had the honour to receive to day. I cannot but express the pleasure I feel in being designated by you for so honorable a service:

this pleasure however, is mingled with pain and mortification, at the idea of not being able to avail myself of the opportunity it holds out, of rendering myself more active and useful. From having exposed myself a vast deal this Winter in fitting out my Ship, I have been attacked with a complaint in my breast;— and a severe spitting of blood:— a complaint which the climate of the Lakes would prevent my getting rid of. Desirous as I am of participating the honour which awaits those in that quarter, nothing but the advice of my Physician would induce me to ask to be continued here, untill the season will allow of the *Ontario*'s going to sea

The mortification I feel in being compelld to forego a service I otherwise should delight in, can be better conceived by one of your feelings, than expressed by me.

The Men shall be transfered as soon as possible, and your orders in other respects punctually executed. It will be necessary for the preservation and cleanliness of the Ship, that a few men should remain by her:— I shall accordingly continue a few, best calculated for this purpose.

I cannot conclude, without repeating how deeply chagrin'd I feel, in being coerced to this step: I derive some consolation however from the thought, that it is caused, by the zeal, which has led me to great exposure in fitting the Ship for sea.

Apprehensive of my not being much known to you it might impair my standing in your estimation, I have requested my friend Mr. Forrest, to whom I have written on the subject, to present you this; and to explain to you my feelings on the occasion. With high consideration I have honor to remain

AL, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 102 (M147, Roll No. 5).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE

Capt: R. T. Spence.
U.S. Navy. Baltimore

Navy Department
April 18th: 1814

Sir,

Your letter of the 9th: is received.— I regret that the state of your health should have prevented your participating in the enterprize on the Lakes, but it is evidently, too much impaired for that service.— You will, therefore, remain on the Baltimore station until your health is restored; and you will Keep an Eye to the *Erie* and *Ontario*, and Keep them in order with as few men as possible. Indeed, one very small gang will answer for both vessels. The Officers in charge must be Vigilant and must not sleep out of their ships.—

Every man that can possibly be spared must be transferred to the Flotilla.— That object in the present state of things is all important.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

P.S. Be pleased to return by some safe conveyance to this Department your private signals until they shall hereafter be required.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 284 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Blockade Stymies Ridgely and *Erie*

Sloop of war Erie *under the superintendence of Charles G. Ridgely, a native Baltimorean, was built in tandem with* Ontario. *The construction of* Erie *progressed faster than that of her sister sloop, and she was launched on 3 November 1813—more than three weeks earlier than* Ontario. *Ridgely took advantage of his lead over Spence to ship a crew for* Erie, *leaving few skilled seamen for* Ontario*'s recruiters to entice into naval service. At the beginning of 1814, Ridgely despaired he would get to sea and asked the secretary of the navy to consider him for duty on Lake Ontario. His optimism returned and by March he had received orders for a commerce-raiding cruise extending from the North Atlantic to South America and the Gulf of Mexico. Jones's admonitions to avoid sending prizes into port, to be constantly moving, and not to give or accept challenges reflected the secretary's views on naval strategy. The British blockade of the Chesapeake Bay, however, frustrated Ridgely's attempt to attain glory at sea.*

MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Baltimore Jany. 18th. 1814

Sir

I had yesterday some conversation with Commodore Chauncy respecting the force that would be on Lake ontario in the Spring, and the probability of active Service, he is extremely anxious I should join him, and requested I would write you on the Subject, as he also promised me he would do. I told him my great anxiety to get to Sea, and my determination to do so, if practicable sometime in March, but if should not Succeed and be blocked up here during the Summer, I certainly would join him, if it met with your approbation, I address you this letter to request that you will be so good as to hold a Situation on the Lakes in case I should be unsuccessful in the Chesapeake, I hope it is not asking too much and assure you that my anxiety for Service must plead my apology— I am happy to inform you that the Ship is progressing fast and am in hopes of having her in the Stream in two or three weeks if the weather continues good, I have nearly completed my compliment of Officers and Men, I have not yet received a Surgeon, Mate, or Purser, I now want them. My Carpenter, Sailmaker, and Boatswain have each asked me to procure for them warrants, shall I enclose you their names and receive warrants for them, I have the honor to be Sir your Ob St

Ch, G, Ridgely

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 19 (M147, Roll No. 5).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY

Charles G. Ridgley[1] Esquire
U.S. Navy Baltimore

Navy Department
Jany. 20th. 1814.

Sir/

I have received your letter of the 18th. and highly applaud the ardent desire you express for active service.

In my opinion there is none that will be more honorable than that you mention, and certainly none that will be more highly appreceated by the Nation. It will probably be the great theatre of Glory the ensuing Campaign, and I shall be willing to afford you an Opportunity of participating in the fame, which our brave Officers and Seamen are sure to acquire.

There will be some handsome Commands, and as the selections must be made early, you had better decide Soon.[2] I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 197 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Navy Department clerks often misspelled Ridgely's name.
2. Apparently Ridgely decided to remain with *Erie* because his correspondence with Jones for the next two months revolved around getting his ship ready for a cruise.

Master Commandant Charles G. Ridgely to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore March 11th. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you agreably to your order,[1] that the United States Sloop *Erie*'s draught of Water is aft—17 ft.—4 In.—forward, 12 ft.—8 In. making a difference of 4 ft. 6 In. not within two Inches of her original draft, I can with the greatest ease bring her more by the Stern if I should find it necessary, but from the information I received yesterday by letter from Captain Warrington,[2] am disposed to believe that the Ship will sail best by the head—he says that he draws 16 ft. 4½ In. aft and 14 ft. 2 In. forward, if he is correct his ship must certainly be by the head, I have exactly the same quantity of kentledge and Shingle Ballast that he has, and only a few more gallons of water, I have landed agreably to your order, 800, 32 lb. Shot, and have also landed one Months provisions of Pork and Beef and therefore have only 14 weeks provisions on board I think the Ship is now in good trim, her sails by a little alteration set very well I have every thing on board and shall drop her below the Fort[3] to Morrow Morning—I have also agreably to your order transferred every supernumerary officer and seamen to the *Ontario* Captain Spence, I shall immediately on receiving your instructions proceed down the Bay, I am happy to Say that I feel proud of my officers and Crew, and hope it is not necessary to assure you, that every exertion shall be made to add to the honor of our flag I have the honor, to be Your obt ser

Ch, G, Ridgely

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 80 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Jones had ordered Ridgely to sail whenever the weather permitted him to elude the British squadron. In the meantime, he expressed his concern that Ridgely had overloaded *Erie* with stores, thereby causing her to draw too much water. Jones to Ridgely, 7 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 233–34 (M149, Roll No. 11).
2. Ridgely is referring to Lewis Warrington's sloop of war *Peacock*.
3. Fort McHenry.



Charles G. Ridgely

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY

Capt. Charles G. Ridgley — Navy Department
Comm'dg. U.S. Ship *Erie* Baltimore — March 14th. 1814

Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 11th. current, I observe, that you will be greatly deceived, were you to regulate the trim of the *Erie*, by that of the *Peacock*.— The construction of the two vessels is entirely different.— The *Peacock* was moulded to trim at two feet difference, and the *Erie* at four feet 8 inches, which I am satisfied you will find to be her best trim.— The average draught of water of the *Peacock*, is now three inches more than the *Erie*.— In suggesting the possibility of your having a Surplus of Stores on board, I did not allude to provisions & water, of which it is desirable to carry as much as possible, & fourteen weeks Beef & Pork is a very small quantity, although the crew would readily agree to ⅔d allowance to lengthen the Cruise— I allude to Gunners Boatswains, Carpenters Stores &c. I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 241 (M149, Roll No. 11).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY

Charles G. Ridgely Esqr. — Navy Department
Commg. U.S. Ship *Erie* Baltimore. — March 16th. 1814.

Sir,

Having announced the complete preparation of the U.S. Ship *Erie*, under your command, for a cruise,[1] you will proceed, with due vigilance and caution, down the Bay, and, by every proper exertion, endeavour to elude the vigilance of the Blockading Squadron, and get to Sea. When clear of the land, you will run into the Gulph S[*t*]ream, and following its general course, pass about a degree to the Southward of the Grand Banks, then, under easy sail, shaping a course for a point about 30 or 40 leagues N.W. of Corvo and Flores, which having attained, cruise, in this position, ten or twelve days, according to the state of the winds and weather; thence for the parallel of, and about 60 leagues West of Ushant. Near this Meridian, and between the parallels of Ushant and Scilly, you will cruise thirty days more or less, according to the weather and prospects of success; thence for Cape Clear, between which and the English Coast, you will, according to circumstances, cruise a fortnight or three weeks; or until you have reason to apprehend being too closely pursued by the enemy; when it will be proper to take a circuit of 5 or 6 leagues to the Westward, and thence Southward, until you bring Cape Finisterre to bear S.E. about 50 leagues. Near this position cruise about 20 to 25 days, as success or information may dictate; thence to the Southward as far as Cape St. Vincent, ranging the coast from 20 to 30 leagues distant, and cruising eight or ten days; this may bring you to the 1st. or 10th. of August, when you will run to the Northward, and passing the West coast of Ireland, shape your course for the Shetland Isles, which you may reach

in time to intercept the British Archangel fleet, homeward bound. You will not remain longer on this ground than the 10th. of September, when, if you shall be in want of water and provisions, you will endeavour to reach the Coast of France, and get into L'Orient, which is a convenient port for refitting and of easier ingress and egress than perhaps any other. Should you refit in France, you will make all possible despatch; and, in leaving that coast for another cruise, as the autumnal season will be advanced, you will seek a milder Climate, steering for the Island of Madeira, and in its vicinity cruise three or four weeks. Thence for the Coast of Cayenne, Berbice, and Demarara, and through the Islands, down the Coast of South America, looking into the Bay of Honduras. Thence to the Mouth of the Mississippi, Pensacola, and through the Gulph, to St. Mary's Georgia, where you will touch for information and refreshments.

If from the Shetland Isles, you do not proceed to France, you will return home in such route as you may deem best adapted to the annoyance of the trade of the enemy, and endeavour to get into the Delaware, or New York.

If the qualities of the *Erie* are such, as I feel confident they will prove to be, you cannot fail to make a brilliant and productive cruise. Your own sound judgment and observation will sufficiently demonstrate to you, how extremely precarious and injurious is the attempt to send in a prize, unless taken very near a friendly Port, and under the most favorable circumstances.

A failure of success places our unfortunate Seamen in the hands of the enemy, diminishes your means of achieving honor to yourself and glory to your Country, curtails your cruise, and subjects you to the unequal attack of a foe, nominally your equal but fully manned. Hence, it is evident, that policy, interest, and duty, combine to dictate the destruction of all captures, with the above exceptions. It is a great object with the enemy to capture and detain, in prison, our Seamen; and this can only be counteracted by capturing and bringing into Port an equal number; this is an object of great National importance; the releasing at Sea, on Parole, though practised by all civilized Nations, is utterly disregarded by our enemy.

You will perceive, by the route I have designated and the time indicated at each cruising Station, that my object is, to avoid remaining too long at any one station; that, by a timely change of position, the vigilance of the enemy may be eluded.

The President of the United States, persuaded that the gallantry of our Naval Officers, resting upon a rock of adamant, cannot be shaken by the ostentatious vanity of a boasting but mortified enemy, and from motives of obvious policy, as well as solid objections to the practice, has given it to me in charge, to prohibit, in the strictest manner, the giving or accepting of a challenge, to fight Ship to Ship; which injunction you will strictly observe.

Before sailing you will direct your purser[2] to forward to this Department, a correct Muster Roll of the Officers and crew of the *Erie*. I am, very respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 109–11.

1. Ridgely to Jones, 15 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 85 (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. Matthias C. Attwood was appointed a midshipman on 17 December 1810 and became an acting purser before resigning about September 1813. He was appointed a purser on 26 March 1814 and ordered two days later to report to *Erie*, then at Annapolis and en route for a cruise.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY

Charles G. Ridgely Esq
Comm'dg. U.S. Ship *Erie*
off Annapolis

Navy Department
March 30th. 1814

Sir,

I have this instant received yours of the 27th.[1] and am much pleased with the very favorable account you give of the sailing and working of the *Erie*, but, Sir, the season is so far advanced, and the force of the enemy below so competent to effect a close Blockade, that I despair of your escape and must repeat my caution to be exceedingly on your guard against delusive appearances or partial prospects of escape.— I am satisfied that those vessels which were at Smiths point, only descended the Bay, in order to draw you down. You will therefore avoid excessive risk as it would be scarcely possible to justify the attempt in the event of disaster under existing circumstances.

Purser Atwood from the Eastern Shore is ordered to join you at Annapolis.

You will let me hear from you frequently. I am, respectfully &c

W Jones

P.S. Enclosed you have the report of Lieut. Smith[2] relative to the men whom you turned over to Capt Spence. You will immediately forward to me the name of the officer who recruited them, in order that he may be made answerable for the imposition.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 259 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. *Erie* left Baltimore and arrived off Annapolis on 20 March. Variable winds prevented her proceeding down the bay. Ridgely to Jones, 23 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 90 (M147, Roll No. 5). Writing on 27 March, Ridgely blamed southerly winds for dashing his hopes of getting to sea. Ridgely to Jones, 27 Mar. 1814, ibid., No. 91.

2. Frederick W. Smith was commissioned a lieutenant on 24 July 1813 and ordered to the Baltimore station the following month. In his report, Smith characterized the men transferred from *Erie* to *Ontario* as "quite useless" because of their age and infirmities. Frederick W. Smith to Robert T. Spence, 27 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 146 (M148, Roll No. 13).

MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S. Sloop *Erie* Cheseapeake Bay April 2nd. 1814

Sir

I had the honor to address you on the 27 Ulto: forwarding you by mail a Muster Roll of the Crew of the *Erie*. The next Morning the 28th. I weighed and stood down the Bay but owing to head winds, and Calms made but little progress on the 29th. I spoke a Schooner off Patuxent who reported he had been chased the Eveng. before by a Brig and Schooner of the Enemy & that they were lying inside the Potomac, I immediately despatched Lieutenant Bell[1] to ascertain if they were there, being determined to give them Battle, Lieutenant Bell returned in the Eveng. and reported he had not seen any thing, I ordered him to continue ahead in the Pilot Boat untill he should see the

Enemy, and I followed him in the *Erie* at Meridian of the 1st April then off the Wolf Trap, descried two Sail at anchor a little above New Point Comfort, at same time discovered our look out Boat standing for us with the Signal flying for an Enemy which proved to be a 74 and her tender who immediately made Sail in chase, tacked Ship and stood up the Bay,—

I much fear Sir the Season has too far advanced, for me to attempt to get to Sea, without imminent hazard, the Moon is very bright, the winds light and variable, I have much cause to regret it, having a fine Crew, and am much pleased with the Ship, if you should determine in laying her up for the Summer, I should be happy if it were done immediately, that I might the sooner go for the Lakes with my officers and Crew, in hope to obtain some of the anticipated laurels that may be won in that Quarter, at the Navy Yard Washington would be much preferable, to Baltimore to lay the Ship up, for in the latter place nothing of her equipment would be taken Care of,— I shall continue between the Potomac and Patuxent, unless a wind should favour my escape or, be driven further up by the Enemy, I have the honor to be Sir Yr &c &c &c

Ch, G, Ridgely

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 98 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. John H. Bell was appointed acting lieutenant and ordered to *Erie* on 13 September 1813. He was sent on 4 April 1814 with most of the disbanded crew of *Erie* to Sackets Harbor and on 9 December 1814 attained the rank of lieutenant.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO MASTER COMMANDANT CHARLES G. RIDGELY

Charles G. Ridgely Esqr.
Commg. U.S. Ship *Erie*
Chesapeake Bay.

Navy Department
April 4th. 1814.

Sir,

The instant I had closed my letter of this date, by Purser Atwood, I received yours of the 2nd. and accord with you in opinion, that there is not the least chance of your escape, without incurring a degree of risk, that would greatly hazard, both the Public interest and your reputation. This opinion I expressed to you, freely, in my last letter to you a few days since. You will, therefore, immediately proceed to Baltimore, and lay the Ship up, in a convenient and secure manner, so as to preserve, in the most perfect order, her entire equipment and stores, ready for a cruise, when it may be practicable to get to sea; for which purpose she shall be retained for yourself, Officers, and crew, when the service on the Lake shall permit your return.

You will have a complete inventory, in detail, made of the equipment and stores, in every department on board, and suffer not the least article to be removed.

A careful Officer, with a few men, will be appointed to keep the Ship in order. He will receipt for all the Stores and be held accountable.

When you shall have executed this order, you will, immediately, proceed, with your entire Officers and crew, (except such Officer as you may designate to

leave in charge of the *Erie*,) to Sackett's Harbour, and report yourself to Commodore Chauncey for service under his command. From the day you depart from Baltimore, the Seamen will be entitled to an encrease of pay, from 12 to 15 dollars per month; and Ordinary Seamen from their present pay to 7 to 12 dollars per Month, until their return from the Lake service.

Congress has now under consideration the expediency of encreasing the pay of the Officers also, while on that service.[1] I am, respectfully, Your Obedient Servt.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 263–64 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. For more on this subject, see Jones to Chauncey, 18 Apr. 1814, p. 402.

Master Commandant Charles G. Ridgely to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Sloop *Erie* April 7th April 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters by Purser Atwood, yesterday 2 P.M, at Annapolis, I immediately weighed and sailed for this place, I shall proceed with every expedition to put your orders in execution, and will make arrangements with the U,S, Navy Agent[1] for the transportation of my officers and crew, I will leave the Sailing Master[2] with one of his Mates in charge of the Ship, will take his seperate receipts for every article left on board in the different departments, I will leave with him such of my crew, that are now too much indisposed to travel with expedition, I will give written instructions what is to be done to the Ship for her preservation &C during the Summer— I presume bedding &c will be supplied the crew on their arrival at Sacketts Harbour, as it will be impossible to carry with them their Hammocks and bedding, there being numbered will easily be recognized by them on their return from the Lake,[3] will therefore have them placed in a Loft with the Sails, every assistance shall be given the Purser in order to expedite his accounts, and due attention shall be paid to the Slops agreably to your directions. I have the honor to be Sir Yr. Obt. Servt.

Ch, G, Ridgely

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 101 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. James Beatty.
2. George F. De La Roche's sailing master's warrant dated from 3 August 1813, at which time he was assigned to *Erie*.
3. Ridgely intended to return to *Erie*. He wrote Jones in June from Sackets Harbor recommending the substitution of 18 pounders for 32 pounders in her. Ridgely to Jones, 17 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 149 (M147, Roll No. 5). By October Ridgely wanted to leave Sackets Harbor for *Erie*. Ridgely to Jones, 24 Oct. 1814, ibid., Vol. 2, No. 104. Ridgely was still on Lake Ontario in January 1815 and asked the new secretary of the navy, Benjamin W. Crowninshield, if he could return to Baltimore. Ridgely to Crowninshield, 8 Jan. 1815, ibid., 1815, No. 8 (M147, Roll No. 6). By 28 February 1815, Ridgely had returned to command *Erie*. Ridgely to Crowninshield, 28 Feb. 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 177 (M125, Roll No. 42).

Barney's Flying Squadron Takes Shape

Joshua Barney spent the latter half of 1813 molding a fighting force of gunboats and barges. In early 1814 he continued to build or purchase vessels throughout the Chesapeake Bay and increased the recruiting tempo. Inundated with paperwork, Barney desperately needed a purser to keep accounts and issue supplies. The Navy Department anticipated a springtime invasion of the Chesapeake and it was the flotilla's mission to keep the British from Washington.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the U.S. Flotilla Baltimore,

Navy Department
Feby. 18th. 1814.

Sir,

I have received your Letter of the 15th. current,[1] the U States Cutter *Scorpion* is ordered to Baltimore subject to your command, and it was my intention to order the Schooner *Asp* also, but she sails so indifferently that I have ordered her to be employed in the transportation of Stores.—[2] It will be of importance to have a very fast sailing pilot Boat attached to the Flotilla as a Despatch or look out Boat, and a single carronade on a pivot. You will therefore ascertain whether a small Boat of first rate character for sailing, can be purchased upon reasonable terms and at what rate.—

I am of opinion that the Barges now building at St. Michaels[3] had better be armed with a long 12 pr. instead of a heavy 18. and a 32 pd. carronade instead of a 24—they will be equally formidable, the two Guns will balance each other and the Barges will row lighter.— We have beautiful long 12 prs. at the Navy Yard and abundance of Ammunition.—

What progress is making with the Barges at St Michaels.— are they to be brought over to be armed, or is their armament to be transported to them? It is time to be moving, we shall have warm work.— How comes on the recruiting?[4] We have 80 or 90 men belonging to the Gunboats and Barges here but the Potomac must not be left without protection. We shall expect you to keep the Enemy below the Potomac, and then the whole force can unite.— I am clearly of opinion your force will be fully competent to repel any force the enemy can put in Boats, & if we can confine them to their Ships, they can do us but little harm; I trust even there they will not be undisturbed.—

The Enemy has a strong desire to destroy this place, and will assuredly make an effort for that purpose, your force is our principal shield, and all eyes will be upon you.— The people on the Shores of the Chesapeake are calling out for a Barge here and there to protect local positions but this is idle, they would all be cut off in detail— To act with effect, the whole force must be concentrated.—

How are you off for light Boats, will you not want a couple of light fleet Barges. If you do, I will direct one of the best description to be built here 35 feet long.—



Joshua Barney

If you are not very busily engaged, you had better come down here and let us finally arrange all that may be necessary to your command. I am respectfully your obdt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 219–20 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Barney hired a pilot boat to execute Jones's order of 11 February 1814 calling for the removal of the schooner *Adolphus* from the bay. Barney leased the pilot boat for eight dollars a day because his barges and galley lacked coverings for winter protection and Gunboat *No. 138* was a poor sailer. Jones to Barney, 11 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 215 (M149, Roll No. 11), and Barney to Jones, 15 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 19 (M124, Roll No. 61).
2. Both *Scorpion* and *Asp* had served with the Potomac flotilla in 1813. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 366–68. *Scorpion* joined Barney in Baltimore on 18 February 1814 and became his flagship. This gunboat or block sloop had been built before the war and modified during the winter of 1813–14. *Asp*'s poor sailing qualities relegated her to transporting duties. Barney to Jones, 18 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 27 (M124, Roll No. 61).
3. Perry Spencer was the builder.
4. Barney wanted to employ the sea fencibles in his boats but had received no guidance from Jones. Barney to Jones, 14 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 55 (M124, Roll No. 60). Jones did agree to an advance of one month's pay in slops and three in money in order to stimulate interest. Jones to Barney, 22 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 222–23 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore March 1st. 1814

Sir,

I have seen several small pilot boats, two of which is in my offer, the price 500 and 600$ they will want some repairs and sails to put them in order, The One at 500$ I like the best as to her character for Sailing, and I believe will be the cheapest in her outfits, she will carry One 24 pound Cannonade on a pivot, very well, and would answer the purpose intended, I will thank you for orders respecting her, as I am to give an Imediate answer.[1] The *Scorpion* is heaving out at the Lazaretto[2] where we shall fit her, with our own hands, and will cost but a trifle, The Brass 42 lb. Howitzer has been taken out of her, for the Adams, she is almost distitute of every thing— I now inclose the names of the Masters with the dates, for to have the warrants filled up. I have not as yet seen either of the Captains of the Sea fencibles, as I wish them to receive letters from the War Department in the first Instance,[3] I am told that the men are very dissatisfied, and wish to join us, I could easily manage the matter if it was not, that the officers are mostly Landsmen.[4] I am Sir with respect your Obt. servt.

Joshua Barney

List of Names for Sailing Masters—

Claude Besse[5]	10th Sept. 1813
John Geoghegan	16th Sepr. do.
John Kiddall	16th Oct. do.
William Martin	12th Jany. 1814
Henry Thomas	25th Jany. do.

James Sellers 27th Jany. do.
James Wright 16th. feby. do.
Robert Hamilton
Josiah Rutter
John Davis
John A. Webster
Alexander Beard
William Peterkin & Beverly Degs[6]
} of the present date—

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 57 (M124, Roll No. 61).

1. Jones approved the purchase of the $500 pilot boat. Jones to Barney, 4 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 230 (M149, Roll No. 11).
2. Lazaretto Point is located east of Fort McHenry at the entrance of the Northwest Branch of the Patapsco River, Maryland. This area was originally called Gossuch Point, but in 1801 a hospital for the treatment of contagious diseases was built there, and the name was changed to reflect this. The Italian *lazzaro* means *leper.*
3. Barney is probably referring to Matthew Simmones Bunbury, who had been captain of one of the companies of sea fencibles at Baltimore since 1 October 1813, and William H. Addison, who was appointed a captain on 27 April 1814.
4. Apparently the War Department and Major General Samuel Smith were also vying for the sea fencibles. Barney to Jones, 17 Mar. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 112 (M124, Roll No. 61).
5. Claude or Claudius Besse had joined the flotilla at Baltimore on 10 September 1813. He was discharged when the flotilla was disbanded on 15 April 1815.
6. Also spelled *Diggs.*

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore March 25th. 1814

Sir,

I am very much at a loss for a Purser, (having been without nearly four weeks).[1] Particularly so, as I am bound to furnish one months pay to each recruit in Cloaths, which I cannot do with propriety myself, The provisions are furnished by the Navy Agent[2] on the requisition of the Purser, approved by me, I have been Obliged to draw provisions, without such requisition, which induces me to make the request that a Purser may be attached to the flotilla— One of the New Barges has arrived from the Eastern shore and I expect four more this week, the armament will go on with all the expedition Possible, nothing will be wanting but men. I wish to have the accounts of the men, that has been turned over to the flotilla, composing the Crews of the *Scorpion*, *Asp*, Barges, & Gunboat *137*, the men are in want of Cloaths, and I do not know what is due to them, so as to order supplies, and they are very clamarous, which Injures my recruiting, I will thank you to order the accounts forwarded to my purser or myself

A Schooner which has been lying in Piankatank ever since the Embargo arrived here yesterday, the Captain Informed me, he left that river on Wednesday morning,[3] that the frigate and Schooners which had been up the bay, went down on Tuesday evening, which induced him to run up; Yesterday morning he saw the *Erie* laying off Annapolis, so that I am now fully convinced any attempt of that ship to get out, would be imprudent, the season is past, and the enemy

concentrated near the entrance of the Bay, in such a manner, as to defeat all prospects of escaping—yet I fear that the great desire of Capt. Ridgeley to get to Sea, will induce him to make the trial.[4] I am Sir with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

I have just received a letter from sailing Master R[*utter*][5] now at Washington whom I had sent round in the *Asp* to bring the Barges to this place, he informs me that the *Asp* is not to return; in that case I shall be at a loss for quarters for my officers, and when I represented that circumstance to you when at Washingn. you granted my request, of the *Asp*'s remaining with the flotilla

JB

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 12 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Robert Ormsby had served as purser since July 1811; his commission was dated 25 April 1812. He was listed as a purser on the muster roll of the Chesapeake Bay flotilla until his official discharge on 6 April 1814, but he apparently was ordered to the sloop *Erie* in February and served there a short time before being furloughed in late April. Ormsby never returned to the flotilla.
2. James Beatty.
3. 23 March.
4. On 2 April Ridgely decided not to go to sea. Ridgely to Jones, pp. 30–31.
5. The document is torn here but Barney is probably referring to Josiah Rutter, who was attached to the flotilla on 1 March 1814.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney

Joshua Barney Esq. Navy Department
Commt. U.S. Flotilla Baltimore March 26th. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of yesterdays date. Nominations are now before the senate & you will have a Purser in a few days.[1]

I am extremely desirous that the Barges from the Eastern Shore should be with you without delay as danger and difficulty will every day increase.

I hope to be able to increase the number of your men ere long. The Fencibles I can say nothing about nor do I believe you can calculate upon them. The Accounts you require shall be sent on.

I trust Capt. Ridgeley will run no imprudent risk. A few days will determine whether it will be at all prudent to attempt to proceed down the Bay. He will remain a few days off Annapolis. The *Asp* will return to you but she will first take a load of ordnance stores to Frenchtown. respectfully &c

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 258 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Barney reported to Jones on 12 April that Purser John S. Skinner, who was also the American agent for prisoners at Annapolis, had joined his flotilla. Barney to Jones, 12 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 66 (M124, Roll No. 62).

Leadership Transition Portends Change in Tempo

Seeking to energize the North American Station, the British Admiralty in November 1813 recalled the lethargic, uninspired Admiral Sir John B. Warren from his command and appointed Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane to succeed him.[1] *The British government had twin designs for 1814: to divert American strength from Canada and to distress the American government and people financially. By ordering Cochrane to increase the attacks on coastal towns, the British hoped to prevent further deployment of American forces to the north. In addition, by capturing or destroying agricultural produce and enticing slaves to emigrate, the British were counting on both economic and psychological warfare to force the American government to terms.*

Vigorous campaigning had ended in the Chesapeake in September 1813. British activity during the winter of 1813–14 consisted of convoying merchant ships and blockading ports. During January and February 1814, Cockburn visited the Atlantic blockading squadrons to the north and returned to Lynnhaven Bay by 23 February. Cockburn did not know that the Admiralty in November 1813 had ordered Warren to relinquish his command or that Cochrane was on his way from England to replace him. Cockburn kept a low profile in March, deploying his vessels on reconnoitering missions. The squadron could attempt few offensive forays in the bay because of depleted provisions. The indeterminate state of the theater continued until April.

Even though Cochrane arrived in Bermuda on 6 March, he did not assume command of the station until 1 April because Warren refused to resign until he was ready to sail for England. Once in charge, Cochrane set an energetic tone by issuing proclamations that encouraged American slaves to leave their masters and extended the blockade further north.[2] *The first proclamation, besides having an economic motive, was considered a practical way to supplement the British ranks with a corps of Colonial Marines. After receiving orders to establish a base of operations in the bay, Cockburn eagerly reported on the attributes of Tangier Island.*[3]

1. For the Admiralty's orders, see Admiralty Commissioners to Cochrane, 25 Jan. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2342, fols. 95–96.

2. For the 2 April 1814 proclamation aimed at American slaves, see p. 60; for the 25 April 1814 proclamation that extended the blockade to include New England, see Niles' Weekly Register, *14 May 1814.*

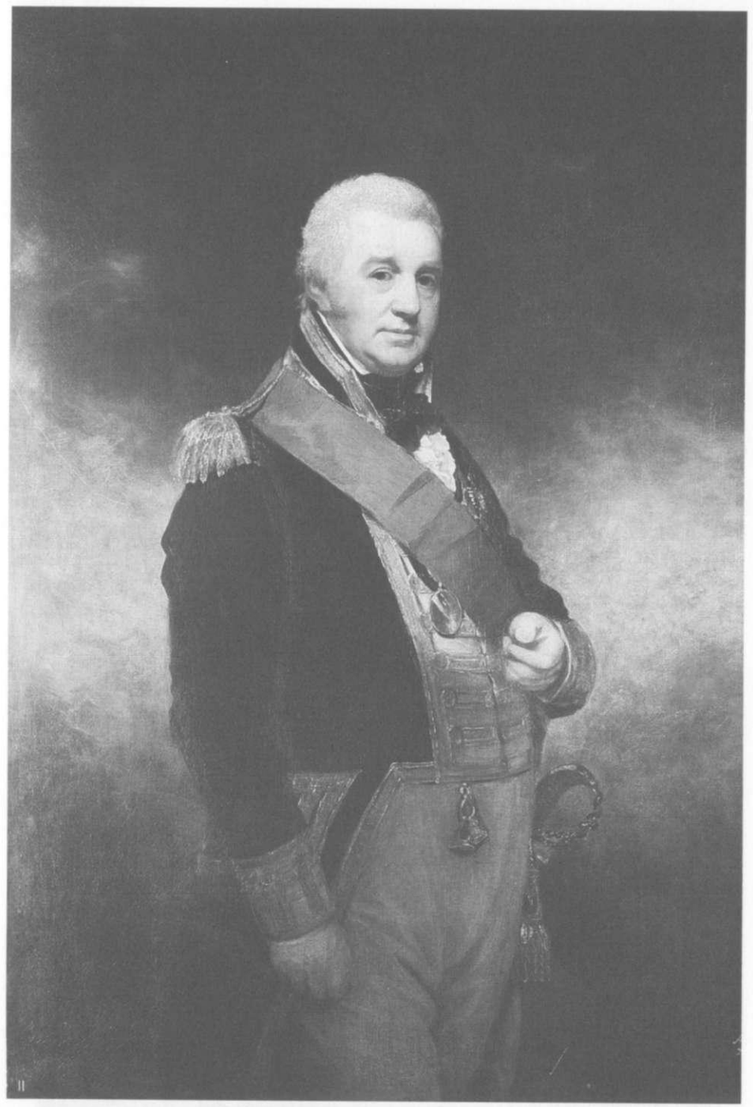
3. For more on British strategy in 1813–14, see Morriss, Cockburn, *chapter 3.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

HMS. *Asia,* Bermuda 11th. March 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint Your Excellency of my arrival at Bermuda, to Succeed Admiral Sir John Warren in the Command of His Majesty's Ships on the Coast of America, from the St: Lawrence to the Mississippi, and I take this early occasion of assuring Your Excellency of my most cordial concurrence in every measure that can be conducive to the good of His Majesty's Service; Rear Admiral Griffiths[1] will have my directions to Second your views to the utmost of his power,— And I hope to be able to make a very considerable diversion in



Alexander F. I. Cochrane

the Chesapeake Bay, to draw off in part the Enemy's Efforts against Canada— It is my intention to fortify one of the Islands in the Chesapeake, to facilitate the desertion of the Negroes, and their Families, who are to have their choice of either entering into His Majesty's Service, or to be Settled with their Families at Trinidad or in the British American Provinces— Recruiting Parties are to be Sent from all the West India Regiments to Bermuda, and those who may choose to enlist, are to have their Wives and Families Provided for in the same manner, as those permitted to attend the Regiments abroad, by which it is hoped in a certain time the Regiments will furnish their own Recruits— As two additional Battalion of Marines are on their way out, with the Recruits I expect to raise from the Negroes joined to the 102 Regt. all of which will be under the immediate Command of Major General Conran,[2] I hope to be able to Keep the Enemy in a constant alarm so as to prevent their sparing any part of their Military force from the State, South of the Delaware, which if I succeed in, I do not believe from the temper of the Eastern states that they will be able to recruit their Army from thence— I have the honor to remain &c

(Signed) A. Cochrane

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 1–2.

1. Rear Admiral Edward Griffith, R.N., commanded the British naval forces in the northern division of the North American Station, extending from Nantucket Island to the St. Lawrence River.
2. Cochrane was mistaken. Major General Robert Ross, not Major General Henry Conran, would lead the British expeditionary force in the Chesapeake in August and September 1814.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Admiral Sir John B. Warren, R.N.

No. 56 *Albion* in Lynhaven Bay the 26th. March 1814.

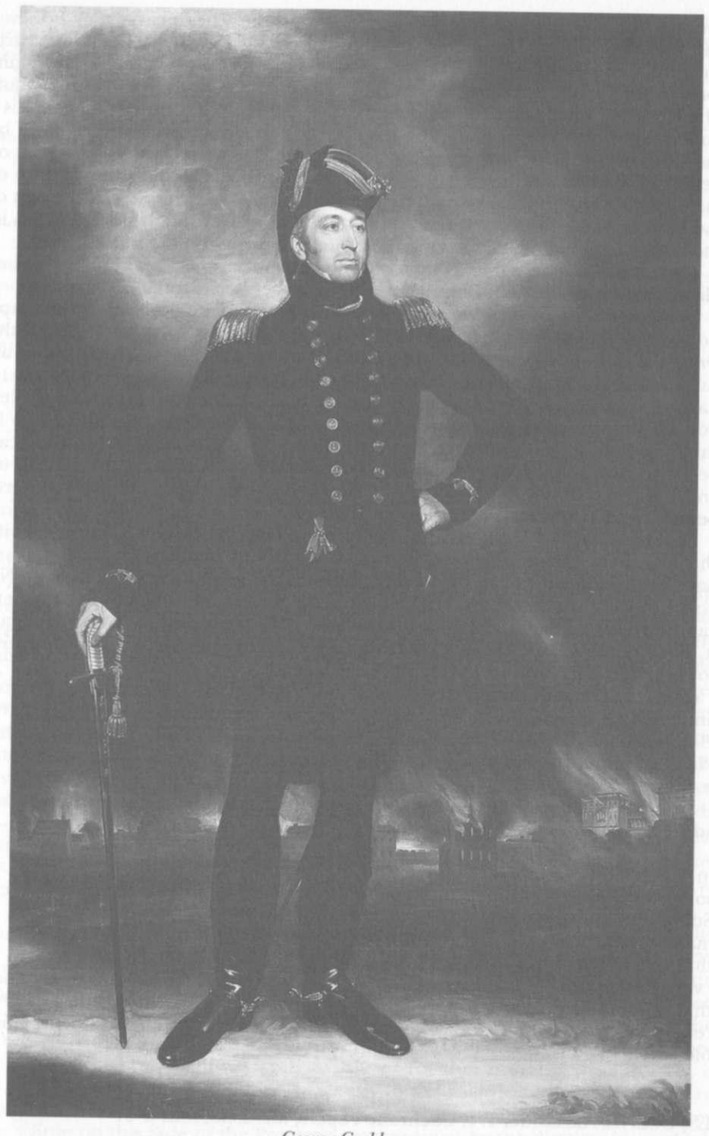
Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that the *Canso* arrived here on the 14th. Instant, the deficient State of her Sails, Spars Provisions &c. obliging her to quit her Station off Ocracoke and return to Port, and her Commander[1] very judiciously thinking it might prove convenient to the Service if he called here instead of proceeding direct for Bermuda, to give me an Opportunity of forwarding any Dispatches or Communications I might have for you.

As I was in hourly expectation of the Return of the *Acteon* or *Sophie* and had nothing at the Moment of material Importance to detail, I determined to keep the *Canso* a few days to ensure to me a ready Communication with you in the event of the Vessels so expected by me, bringing any Dispatches or Instructions from you requiring answers or Explanations—

An Easterly Wind having however now blown for some days, I am induced to give up the Hope of hearing from you so soon and have therefore directed the *Canso* to proceed to join you without further loss of Time taking under her Convoy a Spanish Brig detained by the Squadron here for Breach of Blockade.

Since my last Communication dated the 28th. Ultimo[2] nothing very material has occurred in this neighbourhood; After the Ships were completed with Water I sent



George Cockburn

the *Armide* with the *Jaseur* and two Schooners up the Chesapeake, they however had no opportunity of effecting any thing excepting Landing in different Parts and procuring Supplies of fresh Provisions for the People— The *Adams* I am sorry to say (as suspected by Captain Barrie) certainly went to Sea in January last, The Flotilla of small Craft for the defence of the upper part of the chesapeake is I understand no longer kept up, the large Armed Schooners which were hired by the Government being now again in the employ of the Merchants as Privateers or Letters of Marque, and there being only a few Gun Boats kept for the defence of the upper parts of the Rivers, nothing therefore is to be seen moving in any part of the Bay; there are however (I am told) two Sloops of War nearly ready for Sea in the Patapsco, though the large Frigate building there gets on but slowly.[3]

The *Constellation* is as usual under Orders to put to Sea, but remains in her old position with the Gun Boats above the Forts[4] near Norfolk.

I have sent the *St. Lawrence* to take a turn to the Southward as far as Cape Lookout in Consequence of the *Canso*'s being forced to quit that Ground, the *Dragon* and *Armide* are now cruizing outside, and the *Acasta* which Ship only arrived last Night from off the Delaware (having been relieved there by *Niemen*) I have sent with *Jaseur* to complete her water (of which she was very short) at New Point Comfort; when she returns I propose to call the *Dragon* in and to go in this Ship taking one of the Frigates with me, to the Southward, to see what can be done along the Coast, as the Equinoctial Gales are beginning to break up and I have no doubt the Weather will now soon settle, it has certainly hitherto been unusually severe and unsteady.

Different Flags of Truce have brought to me Letters of which I have herewith the Honor to transmit Copies, as well as Copies of my Answers to them,[5] I have been induced not to throw difficulties in the way of the Gottenburgh Negotiation, as I observe Lord Castlereagh's[6] Letter on the subject to the American Secretary of State[7] says that Instructions have been sent to you to facilitate it, but I confess I should feel more at ease in acting hereon if I could receive some Communication from you on the Subject.

The Letter from Colonel Gayle[8] informing me that the Legislature of Virginia and the Executive Government have established Regulations respecting Slaves eloping to His Majesty's Ships, has induced me to suspend ('till your further Pleasure is known) the indulgence hitherto granted them of Visiting our Ships in search of them

I enclose Letters which have been brought at different Times bearing your address, that from Colonel Barclay I answered as per Enclosure No. 2[9]

I have now only to beg your attention to the quantity of Provisions remaining in His Majesty's Ships here, as if you do not intend to relieve them, it is absolutely necessary no time should be lost in sending again Transports with Fresh Supplies; Since the 12th. I have put them to Two thirds Allowance of Bread, to make that Article hold out with the other Species, it is right I should also add that the *Dragon* has but one Bower Anchor left, and indeed is so reduced in every description of Stores (having been now about eight Months from Port) that it would I think prove more advantageous to the Service if in your power to relieve her. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. Humble Servt.

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 6–9.

1. Lieutenant Wentworth P. Croke, R.N.

2. Cockburn informed Warren that after watering his ships he would "take such steps for the General Annoyance of the Enemy." Cockburn to Warren, 28 Feb. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, p. 11 (Reel 6).

3. Sloops of war *Erie* and *Ontario* and frigate *Java*.

4. Forts Nelson and Norfolk.

5. A marginal note in the letter book copy states that Cockburn forwarded letters from James Monroe and Lieutenant Colonel Levin Gayle as well as Cockburn's replies. Enclosures not found.

6. Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, was British foreign secretary.

7. James Monroe.

8. Lieutenant Colonel Levin Gayle commanded the Sixty-first Regiment (Mathews County) of the Virginia militia.

9. Enclosures not found. Born in New York City in 1753, Thomas H. Barclay chose the loyalist cause in 1776, distinguishing himself in the Loyal American Regiment and Provincial Light Infantry during the American Revolution. After the war, he settled in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, where he pursued a political career and was named lieutenant colonel of the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment. In 1799 he returned to New York as British consul general, and, at the beginning of the War of 1812, he was appointed agent for prisoners in America.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Private *Albion* in the Chesapeak 2 April 1814

My dear Sir Alexander—

Allow me in the first Instance to offer you my Congratulations on your appointment to this Command, & particularly at your having it unburthened with West India Concerns,[1] and next I have to thank you for the Letters you were kind enough to write to me by the *Superb*, giving me a general outline of your Ideas & Plans[2] which (added to the wish you expressed respecting Troubridge) has induced me to order *Armide* at once to proceed to join you, as it is evident whilst making such extensive arrangements for operations in this neighborhood, you will require much local Information & I know nobody more equal to give it you than Troubridge, who has had so long a Spell here and has so often visited the different Points to which your first Operations will naturally be directed— I have also endeavored to make him completely Master of my Ideas on the several subjects to which your Letters referred, and his seeing you quickly is therefore, in my opinion, an Object as desirable on public grounds as private

The places you have pointed out to me, as fit for Posts for receiving the Refugee Negroes &c., will not I think any of them answer (as Sir Thos. Troubridge will explain to you—) those near the Main being not only within Shell Range but within Pistol Shot & indeed hardly to be said to be divided from it—and Sharp's Island being too far distant from those parts of the Country, from which alone we find the Slaves inclined to emigrate; The Spot therefore which seems most likely to answer for the several objects in view, is an Island, or rather Islands situated nearly in the middle of the Chesapeak, of which I enclose you herewith a Plan I caused to be taken of them last year,[3] they are a little on this Side of the Potowmac surrounded by the districts from which the negroes always come, and our Ships laying near them will be in as good a

Situation as possible for blockading every part of the Chesapeak except Norfolk and the James & York Rivers. My only fear is, as to their being able to supply as much water as may be necessary, the *Barrosa* & *Narcissus* however watered there last year & I am in great Hopes that we shall find enough by digging a number of Wells, and if they should at any time fail us unexpectedly, our Watering place at New Point Comfort is so near as to make this a matter of less moment than it otherwise would be & George's Island in the Potowmac is equally near & easy of access, which affords plenty of Wood & Water—

In the furtherance of your Plans I have therefore taken Lt. Fenwick,[4] with his Tools &c. into this Ship, & shall proceed tomorrow up the Bay to these Islands and if they prove on examination to be as eligible for the purpose as I hope to find them, we will immediately commence operations, should they however offer Difficulties of which I am not at present aware, We will visit every other part of the Chesapeak & fix on that which appears to be least objectionable, and in a few days I will let you know by the *Ratler* Sloop (which I keep with me for this purpose) the Result of our Observations

If you attach importance to forming a Corps of these Blacks to act against their former Masters, I think My dear Sir your Proclamation should not so distinctly hold out to them the option of being sent as free settlers to British Settlements,[5] which they will most certainly all prefer to the Danger & Fag of joining us in Arms; in the Temptations I now hold out to them I shall therefore only mention generally our willingness & readyness to receive & Protect them, and to put arms in their Hands if they chuse to use them in conjunction with us, The Black Regiments from the West Indies, may very probably have great effect amongst them, but Blacky hereabouts is naturally neither very valorous nor very active—

There are as Troubridge will explain to you a few Inhabitants on the Islands the occupation of which I now Contemplate, I shall of course assure them of Protection both for their Persons & Property, but you will oblige me by informing me by the first opportunity, how far I may venture to promise them or others in similar situations (who receive us kindly & assist us as far as may be in their Power) Indemnification for any Losses which they may unavoidably sustain from our occupying their grounds & Property

As to Provisions we cannot count upon commanding any, of any description whatever; since my arrival here the American Govr.[6] has refused to the People of Richmond to send a Barrel of Flour to their Friends at Norfolk, though we are laying in the outer part of Lynhaven Bay, and so strictly are the Embargo Laws enforced that I do not believe a single Vessel has escaped with cargo since the Bill was passed, this probably will not last much longer, but in all our operations we must make our arrangements for food quite independent of what we may hope to procure from the Enemy, which if any thing, must always be extremely precarious 'till we are in sufficient Force to occupy a considerable extent of Country, and with respect to Cattle, it is with great difficulty we manage now & then to get a fresh meal for the Crews of the few Ships now acting here, & the Americans are in the Habit of turning their Cattle loose into the Woods whenever they observe us approaching the Shore or hear of our landing—Captain Paget assured me a Victualler was on the way to this place under convoy of the *Loire*, if however she should not have left Bermuda before *Armide* arrives I must beg you my dear Sir to hurry her off, or we shall be all in great distress here. we have been for some time at ⅔d. Allowance of Bread & must soon reduce to the same of Spirits and the Negroes must for the moment encrease the Evil— the Ships are likewise in great Want of Candles & other necessaries which perhaps you will not be much surprized at when I add that *Armide* now going in has been here Nine Months, *Dragon* eight Months. This Ship has been from Halifax (her last port) since the 20th. October last and I believe most of the Ships on the Coast bear about an equal Proportion of Sea Service, which arises from what I am happy to observe you have already noticed to the Admiralty, namely, the inefficiency of Force employed on the Station, for its extent and the Service necessarily required on it, of which nobody in England & particularly at the Admiralty seem to have the most distant Idea—and now I am on this subject I must beg to draw your attention to a Point on which I wrote soon after my first arrival on this Station but I am sorry to say to no purpose, which is to state the very great advantage which would be derived from having Bomb Ships with us in these Waters there is not a Fort, from Norfolk to Baltimore that has a Bombproof Casement in it or a Splinter proof— there is not a Fort or Battery within the same extent which a Line of Battle Ship or even a frigate drawing upwards of three Fathoms, can approach within battering distance, nor is there one against which a Bomb Ship drawing twelve or thirteen feet Water might not be advantageously placed & under the immediate Cover of a Line of Battle Ship;! I am sure I need say no more to point out the propriety of sending Vessels of this Description here, instead of which, they will persist in sending us Rockets & Rocket Vessels which though of use in their way & tolerably good against a Column of Men are of no more to throw against a Fort than a toasted Biscuit would be.—

The force you mention to be under orders for this Country till the opening of the St. Lawrence is quite enough I really believe, to march to Washington if they like, but when the Soldiers go away and we are left with the Marines & Black Men, my only hope will be that General Conran may prove a very different Man to the General we had here last Year,[7] for from what I observed it will not answer to have regular officers with irregular Troops no more than perhaps unscientific officers would do with regular Troops,— Sir Thos. Troubridge will explain to you more fully my Meaning on this Point, the Experience of last year making me consider it as an imperious Duty to touch thus early on a subject, to which from what I have seen, I cannot but attach the highest Importance

The whole of these Shores are as usual in a wretched state of Defence and excepting at Norfolk, I do not think there are any Regulars doing Duty, but as to the exact Force at the different Points it is impossible to ascertain, During the present Embargo—which has greatly interrupted our former Sources of Information

The Stores of Tobacco, Flour the Founderies &c. if any such still exist on these Shores (which I much doubt) they are only close to or in the principal Towns and only to be got at by occupying the latter—which are generally so placed that Ships of large draft of Water cannot approach them— the Foundery I destroyed last year is I am told the only one in the Upper part of the Chesapeak,[8] there is a very grand one at Richmond but I fear it will be difficult to get at— I do not think any Yankee Senator or Member of Congress worth half the Money you seem inclined to give for them but I will try what is to be done in the way you mention

With respect to the Naval Force requisite for the Chesapeak it must of course depend on the Operations to be conducted in it, of which you must naturally

be better able to judge than myself, for the mere business of the Blockade a Line of Battle Ship, Two frigates & two small Craft are I think fully sufficient— especially during Summer whilst we have long days & short Nights.

I have now I believe adverted generally to every Point mentioned in your two Letters but must refer you to Sir Thos. Troubridge for any more minute Details you may wish; I cannot however close this Letter without assuring you how much I have been gratified by the flattering Expressions towards myself personally, with which you were good enough to commence your first Letter; and I beg you to believe the anxious solicitude with which I shall invariably endeavor to forward & maintain all your Views & Wishes, so long as I continue on this Station, but the Conduct of the Admiralty towards me, inclines me rather to think that they are not very anxious I should remain here, and induces me to take the Liberty of asking you direct whether they have not empowered you to make arrangements for my Return Home in the Event of my wishing it?

I have begged Troubridge to give you my opinion respecting the Fire eating Hero you have offered to send to my assistance, he is much too Great a Man for me— I am My dear Sir with great Regard Your very faithful & Obedt. Hum: Sert.

G: Cockburn

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 91–99.

1. When the Admiralty appointed Cochrane to replace Warren as commander of the North American Station, it removed the West India theater from his responsibility.
2. These letters were not found in Cochrane's or Cockburn's letter books. Apparently both Cochrane and Warren wrote to George Cockburn in March and *Superb* delivered their letters on 31 March. These Cochrane letters were not entered in the Cockburn letter book, possibly because of their private or secret nature.
3. This plan was not found.
4. Lieutenant J. H. Fenwick, Royal Engineers, assisted in fortifying Tangier Island until his departure in August 1814.
5. Cochrane issued his proclamation on 2 April 1814, the same date of this letter, and therefore did not have the benefit of Cockburn's advice. Cochrane offered the American slaves the opportunity to take up arms or settle in the West Indies or British North America. For this proclamation, see p. 60.
6. James Barbour was governor of Virginia during the War of 1812.
7. Cockburn is referring to Colonel Sir Thomas S. Beckwith, British army.
8. Cecil or Principio Foundry, Maryland. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 342–43.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Admiral Sir John B. Warren, R.N.

No. 60. *Albion* in Tangier Bay
Chesapeake—13th. April 1814.

Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that in consequence of the Communications I received by the *Superb*, I came up to this Neighbourhood on the 4th. Instant and having examined the channel to Tangier Bay and found it to be quite safe and practicable I caused the *Albion* to be moved to this Anchorage on the 6th., placing her in a perfectly secure Berth in 13 Fathoms Water about a Mile to the Eastward of the South end of Tangier Island, on which I have much satisfaction

in stating to you, excellent Water has been readily found in every part where we have dug for it, and is consequently to be obtained in any quantity; and this being the only Island (as I am informed) which produces such good Water as well as the only one hereabouts to which our large Ships can be placed conveniently close, and at which our Boats can Land with perfect facility at all Times and in all Weather, added to its situation offering in my opinion very great advantages over any other Island in the Chesapeak for favoring the Views and Operations contemplated; I have (in furtherance of the suggestions sent to me) taken possession of it, and commenced on it under Lieutenant Fenwick's superintendency the work of which I herewith enclose a Plan,[1] which we conceive will be deemed sufficiently strong when the advantage of its Position, the distance of the Island from the Main, and the probable constant vicinity of some of our Ships is considered.— We have likewise just completed an advanced Redoubt, and are building Guard Houses &c. the forwarding of which Works will be materially assisted by our having luckily Captured a Schooner in the Potowmack the other day, loaded with Lumber and Shingles, which I immediately purchased in your Name from the Captors for the Account of Government, as I shall continue to do any thing more which may be taken likely to prove beneficial to the new establishment instead of allowing it to be sent for Sale to Bermuda, which I trust will prove to be in conformity with your wishes and Intentions in this Respect.

From the *Albion*'s present Position Smiths' Point Light House bears W.N.W. about 5 or 6 Leagues and the Main Land of the Eastern Shore is about the same distance from us, we therefore perfectly command the View of both sides the Chesapeak and the Entrance of the Potowmack, one of our Ships being also constantly in the Main Channel West of Tangier Island, which places her about half way between us and the Light House it becomes almost impracticable for any thing whatever to slip by us, a Sloop from Norfolk attempted the other day in a fresh Southerly Wind to get past between Watts Island and the Eastern Shore, but the Boats cut her off at the upper part of that Channel and brought her out; indeed it appears to me that in addition to the other Views for which we have occupied this Situation there is no other within the Capes which we could take up with our present force, more likely to create essential Annoyance to the Enemy and to facilitate our endeavours to enforce the Blockade and to stop his usual Communications by Water.

Tangier Island however I am sorry to have to add does not produce more than is necessary for the immediate support of the few poor Inhabitants who live on it, although there is pasture on it and the adjacent Islands attached to it, sufficient to support several Hundred Head of Cattle if brought here; Watts Island which is on our Eastern side (about four Miles from us) of which I have also taken possession, furnishes plenty of Wood (though but bad Water) and is rather more fertile than this, but it is right I should add that as I before expected, none of the Islands can possibly afford a supply of Provisions of any Importance, or at all to be counted on as facilitating in any way the feeding of a large body of Men; fish is however (I am told) as well as quantities of Oysters constantly to be got amongst them, and I am assured by the Inhabitants of this Island that it is very healthy, which assertion their appearance justifies or I should otherwise have been inclined to doubt it, as it is chiefly Swampy low Land intersected with numerous Creeks and Marshes, but these being all Salt Water and kept in constant Motion by the Tides it seems prevents their produc-

ing any pernicious effects— For any more minute particulars which you may wish to have concerning the Place I beg to refer you to Captain Thompson of the *Rattler* who is charged with this Dispatch, and who has visited the different parts of this Island and has been in his Ship to the upper part of this deep Water Inlet, near to the next cluster of Islands which are called Smith's, and of which perhaps you may also think it right to take possession after you commence operations, but at present it is too much out of the way for me to make other use of than sending occasionally to it for small Supplies of Stock.

The Small Draft[2] I sent by *Armide* of this Bay and the Tangier and Watts Islands, is sufficiently correct to give you a tolerably good Idea of it, tho' the Shape and size of this Island is very incorrectly drawn in it.— As a guide to Strangers arriving I have placed Buoys on both sides the Channel and a Schooner in five Fathoms on the Southmost Points of each of the Shoals, which Schooners bear from each other NEbE and SWbW.—

The *Narcissus* arrived here on 11th. from off the Delaware Captain Pym having ordered her in, on account of her being without Fuel or Candles, the former I have directed Captain Lumley to get immediately from Watts Island and I have given him a small temporary supply of the latter from this Ship, intending to keep him with me a little while in the hope of an arrival from Bermuda enabling me to assist him more effectually; in which should I be disappointed I propose sending him to you with my next Communications.

The *Dragon* and *St. Lawrence* I have sent up the Chesapeake to see what force the Enemy has and what he seems to be about in the Neighbourhood of Annapolis and Kent Island, and to cause him any Check or annoyance which Captain Barrie may find to be in his power.

I sent the *Jaseur* soon after my arrival here to Land some Black men who volunteered for a small bribe to go to the Main for the purpose of spreading amongst their Brethren the intelligence of our having established ourselves here, and our readiness to receive protect and assist them and put Arms in their Hands, the *Jaseur* remained some days after landing them hovering about the Mouths of the Rivers and close to the Shore to cover and favor the escape of any that might chuse to come off to her, but none having made their appearance she has just returned to me, and as I think it possible that her want of Success in this point may have proceeded from her appearance so close to the Shore having occasioned an additional degree of Vigilance on the part of the Americans near the Coast; I shall employ her on other Service for a day or two; I however confess that I much doubt your procuring the Number of Black Recruits you seem to expect, 'till you actually establish yourself in some force on the Main Land— I have now altogether about Fifty of them and as soon as our Works are a little further advanced, I shall begin to form and drill them, they pretend to be very bold and very ready to join us in any expedition against their old Masters.

I must now again Sir beg to draw your Attention to the small quantity of Provisions and Necessaries remaining in the Ships here; I cannot at this Moment send you an Abstract of the Weekly Accounts owing to the Ships being so dispersed but I enclose a return of the Provisions remaining in this Ship[3] and you will observe by the last Abstract (sent the other day by the *Armide*) that the other Ships are but little better off, and when you consider that we have these Black People to feed in addition to our own Complements, you will perceive the Inconvenience which will be likely to arise if a supply does not arrive within a fortnight;

I have however put the whole to ⅔ds. Allowance and you may depend on my doing the best within my power to prevent any very serious Mischief arising to

our operations herefrom, with which View I shall begin before it is too late to send Ship after Ship to Bermuda always reducing the one I send to the least possible quantity necessary for carrying her safe in. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. Humble Servt.—

G Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 18–23. Cockburn was still writing to Warren because he had not yet received official notice that the command of the North American Station had devolved to Cochrane. The official transfer took place on 1 April, but Cockburn did not acknowledge receiving the notice until 28 April. Cockburn to Cochrane, 28 Apr. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, p.70 (Reel 6).

1. A British plan for Tangier Island showing Fort Albion is found in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fol. 288B.
2. This sketch was not found.
3. This enclosure was not found.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

HM Ship *Albion* Monday Morning 25 April 1814

Dear Sir

I have directed the *Albion*'s Men to be withdrawn from the *Erie* and desired Lt. Fitzmaurice to join you forthwith and to consider himself in future as entirely & exclusively attached to the *Dragon*, you will therefore put into her such Crew as you may deem advisable & then taking her with you I wish you to proceed in the *Dragon* into the Potowmac, to ascertain whether the Enemy has any force there within our reach, and to do him any Mischief, which you may find to be within your Power either at St. Marys or in any other part of the River below the Kettle Bottoms, after which you are to return again to your Anchorage off Tangier Island and I shall have your orders made out to proceed to Bermuda to refit & Victual, should not Vessels previously arrive from thence with Supplies—

I propose sending the *St. Lawrence* also into the Potowmac to assist you, after she has recalled the *Narcissus* for me & received some Provisions of which, she is I believe in immediate Want—

The *Jaseur* returned last Night having ascertained that there is not a passage into the Chesapeak to the Northwd. of us, but a deep channel runs up to the Head of this Bight, that is till Hoopers Straits bears West, into which however you cannot carry more than two fathoms Water, at high Water—& through Cages Straits[1] only one & half— they brought down with them three Schooners taken out of Hoopers Straits but I am sorry to say all light— I am my dear Sir very faithfully yours

G: Cockburn

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers.

1. Probably Kedges Straits.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

No. 64. *Albion* in Tangier Bay
Chesapeake—27th. April 1814

Sir,

Being still disappointed in the Hopes which I had been led to entertain of either soon seeing a Ship of War arrive from Port to relieve the *Dragon*, or a Transport with Provisions &c. to relieve the now pressing necessities of the whole Squadron in the Chesapeake; I feel that I must no longer detain the *Narcissus* and therefore having reduced her Provision to one fortnight's I have directed Captain Lumley to take charge of two Prizes and to proceed with them to Bermuda, there to Victual and refit the *Narcissus* and to receive further Orders from you.

I have no Communications of importance to make to you since my last by the *Rattler*—[1]

The *Belvidera* arrived here on the 14th. Instant having been detached by Captain Paget of the *Superb* from Sandy Hook to draw the *Narcissus* from the Delaware Station to that of Sandy Hook, but the *Narcissus* having previously come to this Anchorage for Supplies Captain Byron followed her here; Enclosed I transmit a Copy of my Letter to Captain Paget which will fully explain to you my Opinion on this Subject and the decision I was induced to make on it, and in consequence of which the *Belvidera* returned immediately with my Letter to Captain Paget.[2]

The *Dragon* returned a few days ago from the upper parts of the Chesapeake no opportunity having offered for effecting any thing of importance against the Enemy in that quarter; There is nothing in Annapolis, nor did there appear to be any force on Kent Island or in its Neighbourhood; The Sloops of War[3] which were ready at Baltimore and which indeed had come part of the way down the Chesapeake have returned again into the Patapsco and are I am informed dismantled and laid up for the Summer— The *Dragon* is now gone up the Potowmack to observe the state of the Enemy in that Neighbourhood and see if any thing offers for us to do thereabouts, immediately she returns I must (should supplies not arrive) send her in, and I am sorry to add that the *Albion* must follow her almost immediately, which will be the more distressing as in that case all we have done on this Island will most probably be destroyed though I shall endeavour by Means of the Frigates, Sloop and Schooner (which can hold out a little longer than us) to keep the Enemy from getting possession of the Island as long as possible, in the hope that each succeeding day may be at least the more likely to bring Supplies from Bermuda.

We have now above an Hundred Negroes, Men, Women and Children who are rather an Inconvenience than advantage to us in our present distressed state for Provisions and Necessaries, as they are all Victualled from this Ship, over and above the Complement for which latter we have now (as you will observe by the Returns) only 9 Days Bread, 7 Days Beef and 12 Days Spirits— I have therefore been induced to take out of the Prizes an Hundred Barrels of Flour literally to secure us from the danger of Starving and should it be used I think Sir you will see the Justice of allowing the Captors Agents the same Price for it as that now sent may actually fetch at Bermuda— I have likewise supplied the Engineer[4] with a Cargo of Lumber and have sent his Receipt to the Agents directing them to wait upon you to learn your Pleasure as to obtaining payment for it.

We still continue to be plentifully supplied with Water and have had occasional Supplies of fresh Beef & Fish, but on this and all other Points relative to holding these Islands, the observations I have been enabled to make since Anchoring here only tend to confirm the several Opinions I have already had the Honor of submitting to you thereon I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedient Humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

I enclose an Abstract of the State and Condition of His Majestys Ships remaining here, together with a particular Return of their Provisions.[5]

G: Cockburn

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 39–42.

1. See pp. 46–49.
2. Cockburn to Charles Paget, 15 Apr. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 25, fols. 5–7 (Reel 7).
3. *Erie* and *Ontario*.
4. Lieutenant J. H. Fenwick, Royal Engineers.
5. This enclosure was not found with the cover letter.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO
REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

No. 4 Bermuda 28th April 1814

Sir,

Your Dispatch by the *Rattler* addressed to Sir John Warren has been received & I am happy to find that you consider the Situation of Tangiers Island to possess so many advantages.[1] I presume that long before this Date the *Loire* will have arrived with the Transport laden with Provisions,[2] which Vessel will be of use to receive such of the Black Volunteers on board as may not be fit for Military Purposes— Those who enlist I think may be allowed a bounty of say Twenty Dollars to serve either on board or ashore, or in the Dock Yards, they will also receive the pay & Clothing of Marines. I will furnish you with Money to facilitate their enlistment before they come here as those now at Ireland[3] are beginning to be troublesome & all wanting to go to Halifax— The first object is to raise Volunteers to Garrison the Island[4] the Supernumeraries only to come here. You are at perfect liberty as soon as you can muster a Sufficient force, to act with the utmost Hostility against the shores of the United States— Their Government authorizes & directs a most destructive War to be carried on against our Commerce & we have no means of retaliating but on shore, where they must be made to feel in their Property, what our Merchants do in having their Ships destroyed at Sea; & taught to know that they are at the mercy of an invading foe. This is now the more necessary in order to draw off their attention from Canada, where I am told they are sending their whole military force—

Their Sea Port Towns laid in Ashes & the Country wasted will be some sort of a retaliation for their savage Conduct in Canada; where they have destroyed our Towns, in the most inclement Seasons of the Year; it is therefore but just, that Retaliation shall be made near to the Seat of their Government from whence those Orders emanated, you may depend upon my most cordial Support in whatever you may undertake against the Enemy— I have directed my Secretary Mr. Balhetchet to furnish you with 2000 Pounds Stg. (if so much is to be procured) to answer for the Contingent Expences of the Squadron, to pay for information & bringing off Persons of Political Interest attached to the Democratic party, to be held as Hostages for those they Keep in confinement to Suffer, should the British Traitors found in Arms against their Country suffer death— This Money will also be applicable to purchase fresh provisions from those willing to Supply the Squadron; for such as may be taken off the shore by force, no remuneration is to be paid to the Individuals, the fair Market price will be allowed for it by Government & the amount distributed as other Captured property— All the Lumber used in the Fortifications & buildings I will order to be paid for at the same rate, as if the Prizes had been Sent here & the Country Provisions you may find necessary to take for the Supply of the Negroes, for all of which you will keep a regular account.

I presume that you have had in view the building of a Magazine & a Store for your Provisions, also an Hospital, let me Know if the Materials can be had upon the Spot— A Magazine made of Logs, well fitted together Say four feet thick, with 8 or 10 feet of Earth above would I think be perfectly secure; but of this Lt. Fenwick will be the best judge— It is not my wish nor is it necessary to establish those works on a permanent plan but to answer for the local purposes of this War, expedition is the principal thing to be attended to

The *Saturn* takes about thirty thousand ball cartridges any farther supply you may require, will be sent, also more Arms when hands can be found to use them. I will also send you uniform cloathing, to answer for their temporary purposes. As Captain Nash is going to take the command of the blockading Squadron off New York, I wish him to be delayed as short a time as possible, the *Loire* I presume is gone to her station.[5] The Families of Artificers willing to engage in the Dock yards, will be victualled until they can provide themselves, and if the Women and Children are industrious, they will be paid for the work, such as picking Oakum &c. Those not willing to come under engagements, or to enter into the West India Regiments, may be sent direct to Halifax in the Transport. I wish none to come here but those willing to engage for a term of years, not under five, unless they prefer going to Trinidad instead of nova Scotia, in which case you may let them come here with the others: let the list be made out perfectly clear, and those who enter either for the Colonial marines, or to serve in the yards must sign regular enlistments. Whenever the Americans may d[*r*]ive down Cattle, or any other Stock with an intention of drawing our People into ambush to fire upon them, you will take the earliest opportunity of retaliating upon them by the destruction and laying waste of whatever property there may be near to the spot where the ambush was laid. In addition to the Ball Cartridges before mentioned, the *Saturn* will take 4. 18 pr. long Guns, compleat and 4. 12 pr. Carronades compleat, with 100 rounds of ammunition: and if they can be got from the yard in time four whip saws, and 4 cross cut saws, and 2 seines for the use of the establishment on shore, which may save a considerable

expence to Government in the victualling of negroes. I have the honor to be &c.

Sigd. A Cochrane

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 29–32. Another letter book copy is in DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 259–65 (Reel 9). A marginal note on the Cochrane version indicates it was sent via *Saturn* on 6 May 1814; a note on the Cockburn letter book copy states it was received on 14 May. Areas that were unreadable on the Cochrane film were supplied using the Cockburn letter book.

1. See Cockburn to Warren, 13 Apr. 1814, pp. 46–49.
2. The provisions finally arrived on 29 April. Cockburn to Cochrane, 29 Apr. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, p. 70 (Reel 6).
3. Ireland Island, one of the Bermuda Islands.
4. Tangier Island.
5. Cockburn had kept *Loire* in the Chesapeake.

Barney Confronts Manpower Shortages and Inferior Vessels

By April 1814 Joshua Barney was eager to test his fledgling flotilla on a shakedown cruise. Responding to the commodore's numerous entreaties for more men, Secretary of the Navy Jones transferred most of the crew of Ontario *to the Chesapeake squadron. On sailing from Baltimore on 17 April, Barney's vessels revealed significant deficiencies. The gunboats and the smaller class of barges, especially, were taking on too much water. After returning to Baltimore to remedy the defects and secure more men, Barney descended the bay again, but this time with fifteen craft—sloop* Scorpion, *Gunboats* No. 137 *and* No. 138, *and twelve barges. Lookouts reported the British squadron operating between Tangier Island and Smith Point. Meanwhile, Barney experimented with improving conditions on his "miserable tools."*[1]

By April 1814 the Navy Department recognized the need to regularize the flotilla service that it had established the previous summer to respond to the British coastal threat. In August 1813, Jones had appointed Barney an acting master commandant in the navy with the distinct and separate command of a flotilla in the upper Chesapeake. On 26 April 1814, the department sent Barney a commission, dated 25 April, as a captain in the flotilla service. Barney's two lieutenants, Solomon Rutter and Solomon Frazier, who had been appointed acting lieutenants in the navy, were formally commissioned as lieutenants in the flotilla service in April.[2]

1. The most comprehensive history of the Chesapeake Bay flotilla is Shomette, Flotilla.
2. DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 Nov. 1815, p. 165 (T829, Roll No. 382).

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore April 4th. 1814

Sir,

I had the honor of receiving your letter of the 29th Ulto.[1] and shall be extremely happy in having the number of my men increased. The two Barges

from Washington arrived this day, I had sent the Look-out boat to meet them with 30 additional hands for their assistance, four of the new barges from the Eastern-shore are here, and Col. Spencer the builder, will be here, (if the Weather permits,) with four more this week, the Armament for them is nearly ready, but I have been most cruelly disapointed in the delivery of the Guns (light 18 pounders) by Mr. Dorsey, he has trifled with us from the first, with promises from day to day, and it was but four days ago I was able to get from him the Guns, in fact, no dependance can be put, on his word. I beleive Mr. Beatty has much reason to complain. I have heard, that Capt. Spence has received orders to transfer some men to the flotilla, (say 18) but I have not seen him— I have just heard from Mr. Frazier,[2] he complains that men cannot be procured on the Eastern-shore for that both parties discourage inlistments, each wishing to keep the men, for the next Elections, as they are so equally divided, that the loss of a few Votes would throw the ballance into the hands of the other party, I have given Assurances that all the Demos.[3] shall be there on the 1st of Octr. next to Vote, which I hope will have some effect, It would appear we have about 30 men to come over, which I shall order here next week; We were doing very well in procuring men, untill the news of raising the Embargo arrived,[4] but I fear that will put a total stop to it, every thing that can sail fast, will now be fitted out, and the Cupidity of our Merchants is such, that they care not, how much the City is threatened so that they can get a vesel to sea— I am Sir with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 40 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. No letter from Jones bearing this date was found. Barney is probably referring to the order dispatching the U.S. galley *Shark* to join his flotilla. Thomas Tingey to John Kiddall, 29 Mar. 1814, Private Collection of Captain John P. Feerick, USMC, USNR.

2. In February 1814, Solomon Frazier was appointed an acting lieutenant in the navy for separate service in the Chesapeake Bay flotilla. His commission as a lieutenant in the flotilla service dated from 26 April 1814; he was discharged in February 1815.

3. Democrats.

4. On 1 April 1814 President Madison asked Congress to repeal the trade embargo, which it did on 14 April. Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War*, p. 384.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney

Joshua Barney Esq
Commandant U.S. Flotilla Baltimore.

Navy Department
April 14th: 1814

Sir,

Your letters of the 12th: and 13th: have been received.—[1] The Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the *Ontario*, have been ordered to Sackett's Harbour.—

The petty officers, Seamen, or ordinary Seamen and Boys belonging to that Ship are ordered to be transferred to your Command without discrimination or exception.— Capt: Spence whose state of health will not permit him to proceed will see this order punctually executed, with the exception of a petty officer & three or four men to take care of the Ship.—

Mr: Beatty will deliver to you the medecine chest of one of the Sloops, together with the instruments, the whole of which you will preserve in perfect order to be returned to the Ship when prepared for service.—

He will also deliver your purser such Slops from the *Erie* [which ship has a vast superabundance] as you may require and whatever stores of a perishable Nature may be onboard either Ship he will deliver on your requisition for the consumption of the Flotilla. The Schr: *Asp* has gone down the River with 13. 24 pdr. Cannon to be delivered at French Town and a set of mast pieces in tow for the Frigate[2] at Baltimore.—

I have in consequence of the information in your letter sent down to stop her.— I hope in a few days to transmit the Commissions for yourself and officers.— I am all anxiety to see you under way in order to Keep those fellows in check below.— Your present force I trust is sufficient to repel all the Boats the enemy can muster and I hope to hold his Ships uneasy under certain circumstances.—

If he enters the Potomac you must hang upon his rear.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 277 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Barney sought Jones's assistance in obtaining men and supplies for the flotilla and he reported news of the British sailing up the bay. Barney to Jones, 12 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 66 (M124, Roll No. 62), and Barney to Jones, 13 Apr. 1814, ibid., No. 69.

2. *Java.*

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore Apl. 15th. 1814

Sir

I had the honour to receive yours of yesterday, and shall communicate the contents to Captn. Spence in the morning, the Conduct of that officer in not transfering the men, put me under the necessity of telling him that I understood it was your intention it should be done, and if so, why not, when he saw that the enemy was at the mouth of the river, in consequence of which he told me they should be sent onboard, & which was done in a manner to require censure, forty came onbd. the evening of the 13th, All drunk, & caused the greatest confusion, yesterday twenty Eight more were sent in the same situation, so that I was under the necessity of putting the most of them in Irons, (all of which has a fatal tendancy) Seventeen are, returned, as in the Hospital, making in the whole Eighty five, I know not what has become of the remainder, but I shall be better informed in the morning—

Yesterday Mr. Frazier arrived from St. Michaels, he came over in an Open Barge, with 30 men for the flotilla, he passed a 74 and two Schooners, a few miles below Sandy point, and above Annapolis, they had been for two days off St. Michaels, I suppose, to hear of our Barges but finding them safe, they proceeded up the Bay, they have taken a number of Craft & set fire to them in the night, the weather has been bad all day & I have no news from below. I have

no certain news of my look out boat but rumour says, she is in some creek below, yet I fear for her safety—[1] I hope to move down in a few days if the weather will permit, with Seven heavy Barges, four smaller, the *Scorpion*, Galley, & one Gun boat— If I had the Sea fencibles, which are doing worse than nothing at the fort, I could mann five more Barges. I am with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 80 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Barney's lookout boat joined him soon after this; the enemy had driven it into the Patuxent. Barney to Jones, 20 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 98 (M124, Roll No. 62).

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Off Annapolis. Apl. 18th. 1814

Sir.

Yesterday I left Baltimore with ten Barges, *Scorpion*. Galley & Gunboat *138*. We had fresh Winds, I find the 2d class does not answer well, they shiped much water and are dangerous in any thing of a Sea— The Enemy (by information from a Craft this morning) was off Piankitank two days ago, having gone down the Bay, unless some of them were up Potomac, which he could not see, I shall return to Baltimore in the Morning, as three of the Barges, has Twisted off the head of their Rudders, they will require Rudders of more depth— I hope very shortly to be in a situation to resume my Station The remainder of my Barges are fitting at Baltimore under Mr. Rutter,[1] we still continue to pick up men, I hope to mann two more boats in a few days— I am respecfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 91 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. In September 1813, Solomon Rutter was appointed an acting lieutenant in the navy for separate service in the Chesapeake Bay flotilla. His commission as a lieutenant in the flotilla service dated from 25 April 1814, and he was discharged in February 1815.

Acting Master Commandant Joshua Barney to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore 22d Apl. 1814

Sir

I inclose you the Copy of a letter from Govr. Wright[1] to the Secretary at War, respecting the Sea fencibles, I do not know what effect it will have, but I wish to leave no stone unturned to obtain men; after this effort I am done, and the blame will lay on the right person.

I would wish with your approbation to have a good Bay craft, bought or hired for the use of the flotilla,[2] the Barges, particularly the second class will carry but a few days provision and water, and it will never answer to come, or, send them for fresh supplies, my situation at times might put it out of my power to do so, and perhaps find myself cut off from a Communication with Baltimore or Washington, but by having such a vessel we could always keep her a going, so as to put it in my power to remain on any station which may be necessary. I am Sir respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 101 (M124, Roll No. 62).

1. Robert Wright was governor of Maryland from 1806 to 1809, but at the time of this letter he was serving in the U.S. House of Representatives. He asked Secretary Armstrong to transfer willing sea fencibles to the flotilla where they could aid in protecting both shores of the bay. Wright to John Armstrong, 21 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 102 (M124, Roll No. 62).

2. Jones rejected Barney's request for a bay craft; the secretary considered *Scorpion*, *Asp*, the look-out boat, and the gunboats to be sufficient for his needs. Jones ordered Barney to convoy *Asp* from the mouth of the Potomac to Baltimore. Jones to Barney, 25 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 299 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

At Anchor. at Mouth of Patapsco 29th. Apl. 1814

Sir

Yesterday I left Baltimore, with the *Scorpion*, two gun boats, and twelve Barges, to proceed down the Bay, with a view of "Convoying" the *Asp* from Potomac, The wind from SSE has detained us: On Monday last[1] I sent down the Look-out boat with the Galley: The Galley has just returned and informs me, that there are two Ships and several Smaller vessels of the Enemy in the Potomac; I shall proceed down with a change of wind and be guided by circumstances: I cannot remain long as we are unable to carry more than twelve days of provisions, The *Asp* not being with me, nor the look out boat, and it is impossible to put provisions, other than Salt, onboard the gunboats, they have no hold or place to put Bread, which is very Bulky, nor dare I trust Liquors, or small stores among the Crews of Any, but I will do the best I can; The look out boat remains below to watch the movements of the Enemy— I have left Mr. Rutter to superintend the Service in Baltimore, and have Mr. Frazier with me. I am with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 129 (M124, Roll No. 62). On 27 April 1814 Barney acknowledged receiving his commission "as a Captain in the Flotilla Service of the United States." Barney to Jones, 27 Apr. 1814, ibid., No. 121. This commission, dated 25 April 1814, was not approved by the Senate until 18 October 1814. See pp. 354–55 for the letter transmitting Barney's second commission.

1. 25 April.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Patuxent May 1st 1814

Sir,

This morning I left the Patapsco with the Vessels mentioned to you in mine of the 29th: Ulto. and arrived here at 4 P M, I shall send over land in the morning to "point look-out," for information respecting the Enemy; I am informed here, that a ship and two or three Schooners lay in the Potomac two days ago; my look-out boat is still below me, and I expect to hear from her tomorrow; The information I shall receive from Point look out, will determine my movements; I shall be delayed here a day, to get a Mast for one of the Barges, which was carried away coming down, we had a fresh gale down, the Second rate Barges are unsafe, as they took in much water, and swim too deep, altho I have lightened them very much since I was at Annapolis, by changing the 18 pounder for a 12, and having but a few days provision & water onboard, I am Sir with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 138 (M124, Roll No. 62).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore May 11th. 1814

Sir,

Since mine of the 4th Inst.[1] from Patuxent, I have been with the flotilla to Potomac, where I remained part of Sunday & monday last;[2] I sent into St. Mary's, to obtain information of the *Asp* but without effect, I then concluded to send my "look-out-boat" up the Potomac to join her if possible, and to remain with her untill she got up the Bay. Previous to my leaving Patuxent I sent Gunboat *137* to Baltimore for Provisions with orders to follow me down to Patuxent; when at Potomac I found my provisions nearly expended I determined to run up the bay in hopes of meeting the Gunboat, knowing that so long as the wind was from the Southward she could not get down, nor could I get up with the flotilla with the wind from the Northward; on my arrival in Patuxent I found she was not there, which compelled me to proceed further up, and yesterday I met her just below Annapolis, the Weather being bad I continued up and arrived here at 5 PM, which was very luckey as we have had a terrible night. On examining the Bread put onboard the Gun-boat I found a great quantity has been wet by leaks in her deck, which Obliges me to take every thing out and to have her caulked, before she can serve again; indeed Sir, she and *No. 138* are both such miserable tools I do not know what to do with them, they cannot carry any thing more than their own Armament, as 3500 lb. Bread fil [*filled*] bags filled her, the salt provision on deck where their men were obliged to sleep, and they sail so bad, that I am afraid to trust them out of my sight ahead or astern. I had to take every thing out of the Barges of the 2d Class, even their shot (except 15 rounds) and put it into the large boats; In going down, and whilst laying off

point look out at anchor, I was very near loosing them, as they took in great quantities of Water; to remedy which, I have concluded to have Wash-boards put round them about 8 Inches high, which will keep out the water and of course make them more safe, I am Obliged to do this as the men are very unwilling to remain in them in their present state; Could I have a vessel to carry provisions, to receive the Sick, and to put the Doctor and his Medicines onboard, it would be a great releif, as I found great Inconvenience respecting the sick when down, as there is no place on board the Barges for them, and the exposed situation of the men, causes sickness, more or less daily, indeed we must expect 20 or 30 always on the list, out of Six hundred men, in such a service, of this you can judge as well as myself. The Enemy left the Potomac on the 30th. Ulto., the last vessel being a large schooner, and carried off upwards of 100 negroes, onboard the *Dragon* 74; they now lay at, and about Wats Island in the Tangier sound, and in the Bay below Smiths point. I suppose they got information of the flotilla from the Russian Secretary,[3] as we lay in the mouth of Patuxent when the flag went down and she was spoken by my look out boats, (Galley & pilot boat). Mr. Skinner informs me that the Admiral[4] and also the Captain[5] of the *Dragon* enquired where I was, & said, they had heard of me, they also took a schooner which went with me down as far as Patuxent; I got the same information from a gentleman who had been landed at Point look out, who also says, they have a fort of 17 Guns on Wats Island where they have their sick &c, and about 300 negroes, Men, Women & children, that the Admiral was much onshore fishing and amusing himself. I shall get ready again without loss of time to proceed down, or as you may direct. And am with respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 25 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. On 4 May Barney reported that a British ship of the line and three schooners had moved down the Potomac into the bay. They had sent raiding parties along the Virginia shore between the Coan River and Smith Point. Barney had remasted his barge and was ready to sail again. Barney to Jones, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 139 (M124, Roll No. 62).
2. 7–8 May.
3. Barney is referring either to Andrei Ia. Dashkov, the Russian minister at Washington, D.C., or to the counselor of the Russian legation, Aleksei Sverchkov.
4. Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.
5. Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

British Occupy Tangier Island and Recruit Blacks

As second in command on the Chesapeake Station, Rear Admiral Cockburn informed Cochrane in May 1814 that he had too few vessels to accomplish all his duties: establish a base of operations on Tangier Island, blockade the entrance to the bay, and raid coastal towns and ports. Cockburn's letters to his superior exude an independent spirit, evidenced by his defending his selection of Tangier as a staging area. Cochrane gave his subordinate some leeway, but he was not so flexible as his predecessor, Admiral Warren. The new commander in chief held specific views on diplomatic and refugee slave issues. Not receiving

the anticipated reinforcements by the end of May, Cochrane restricted his operations to economic harassment: raiding, and enticing slaves to emigrate.

PROCLAMATION OF VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

[*British royal coat of arms*]

By the Honorable Sir ALEXANDER COCHRANE, K.B.
Vice Admiral of the Red, and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels, upon the North American Station, &c. &c. &c.

A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS it has been represented to me, that many Persons now resident in the UNITED STATES, have expressed a desire to withdraw therefrom, with a view of entering into His Majesty's Service, or of being received as Free Settlers into some of His Majesty's Colonies.

This is therefore to Give Notice,

That all those who may be disposed to emigrate from the UNITED STATES will, with their Families, be received on board of His Majesty's Ships or Vessels of War, or at the Military Posts that may be established, upon or near the Coast of the UNITED STATES, when they will have their choice of either entering into His Majesty's Sea or Land Forces, or of being sent as FREE Settlers to the British Possessions in North America or the West Indies, where they will meet with all due encouragement.

GIVEN under my Hand at Bermuda, this 2nd day of April, 1814.
ALEXANDER COCHRANE.

By Command of the Vice Admiral,
WILLIAM BALHETCHET.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

D (printed), UkLPR, Adm. 1/508, fol. 579.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO
REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

No: 1. HMS *Asia*, Bermuda
8th April 1814

Sir,

I have directed Captn. Brown of HMS *Loire* to take under her Convoy the *Lord Collingwood* Transport laden with provisions which is sent to revictual the

Squadron employed in the Blockade of the Chesapeake & for the victualling of the Refugees that may come from the Shore of the United States, this Ship when discharged, reserving a sufficiency of Provisions to come here is to be sent with as many of the Refugees as she may be able to store conveniently under Convoy of one of HM Ships to this Port, and to land them upon Ireland, when she will be ordered to return with Provisions— The quantity of the Kings provisions to be issued I must leave to you conforming as much as possible to the custom of the Army for the Women & Children— Upon the arrival of the *Loire* you will take from the *Armide*, the provisions & Stores she can spare & send her here as I require her to fit for particular Service— Another Frigate will be sent from hence to relieve the *Loire*, which Ship may if the Transport is ready see her safe into Bermuda; & afterwards proceed to Boston Bay— The other Ships now in the Chesapeake will be relieved as fast as I can find Ships to Send but they are so scattered as to leave me but little hopes of being able to collect them for some weeks— It is not my intention to allow any Ships to call here for repairs during the Summer Months having directed Commodore Evans[1] to employ the Artificers of the Yard solely for the Works carrying on— The Ships of the Squadron are to call here for Provisions, Water, & Stores only & to go to Halifax to make good their defects— I send you one thousand copies of a Proclamation to be circulated which I hope will induce many of the Negroes to resort to the Squadron, or to the places that may be taken possession of in the Chesapeake— If you find the number of Refugees to encrease you will take care to send for Provisions in time unless you can procure a supply of such articles as may be substituted for Kings Provisions on the Spot. I have the honor to be &ca—

(Signed) A. Cochrane.

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 9–10. The docketing reads: "by *Loire* 15th April 1814." Another letter book copy is in DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 246–47 (Reel 9). Its docketing reads: "Received 28 April 1814 per *Loire*."

1. Captain Andrew F. Evans, R.N., was second in command at Bermuda.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

[Extract]
No. 3. *Albion* in Tangier Bay Chesapeake, 9th. May 1814.

Sir,

I am honored with your Letter No. 1 under date of the 13th. Ultimo by the *Loire* acknowledging the Receipt of mine addressed to Sir John Warren up to the 3rd. April, and intimating to me your Intentions of sending the *Plantagenet* immediately to relieve the *Dragon*,[1] . . .

Our Establishment on Tangier Island advances as fast as I can expect with the small force I am enabled to appropriate for that particular Duty from the various other Services necessary to be attended to within the Chesapeake Waters by

the few Ships here, two of which being required constantly in Lynhaven Bay to secure the entrance and watch the offing, leaves me only two others (considering the *Albion* as one) and a Brig & Schooner to attend to this Island and to carry on the requisite offensive attacks at different and distant Places within the Bay, by which in spite of every Effort of the Enemy who cannot possibly guard every point, we manage at times to surprize his Vessels where he deems them most secure, and keep him continually on the Fret, much harrass his Militia and oblige them to be always under Arms, which is a most serious Inconvenience and annoyance to the Country in general—and therefore induces me to keep a portion of my Force constantly moving about on such Services, in preference to putting our whole strength on the Works at this Island; And as it appears to me from an Observation in your last Letter that I have not explained myself sufficiently clearly in Answer to your question as to the Naval Force requisite for the Chesapeake Blockade, it may be necessary I should embrace this opportunity of explaining to you Sir, that although I stated I conceived Two Frigates, a Line of Battle Ship &c. enough to secure the Blockade, it was strictly supposing no other object to be in view and the whole of the Ships to be placed in Lynhaven Bay, stretching across it in a Line, but for Operations as above alluded to and now open to us, I could afford full and useful employment here to twice the Number; The enclosure marked 10 is a Return of Vessels taken and destroyed since the 1st. April.[2]

As I have had the Honor of stating to you in my former Letters I consider under all the Circumstances that Tangier Island (particularly the end of it which I have occupied) though perhaps not without its inconveniences, is far better adapted for the purposes you contemplated than any other in the Chesapeake, and though I have no doubt the Moschettos will be numerous in the Summer time, yet I do not think it probable they will be much worse here than at the other Islands, and as we clear the Ground from the underwood they will I think be likely to quit us for the other places where there is this necessary shelter for them from the Wind when blowing fresh, particularly the Sea Breeze to which the Southern end of this Island is fully exposed, and previous to the arrival of the *Loire* (by which ship I received your Letter expressing your Doubts as to its answering in consequence of what had been told to you respecting the Moschettos &c.) I had proceeded so far in establishing here one of the Posts contemplated by you, I consider it still most advisable to continue the completion of it, and if disapproved of hereafter or found more inconvenient than I expect, it need not be kept for the general or principal Rendezvous, but as an advanced Post and temporary place of Refuge for the Negroes, as whilst we have a considerable Naval force in the Bay it will always be safe from Attack, and when we have but a small one it must from its position be the best for us to occupy in as much as from its position it will always be the easiest for us to ensure the defence of.

I add marked 11 a Return of Black Refugees embarked for Bermuda in the *Lord Collingwood* and marked 12 a Return of those remaining under our Protection on the Tangier Island. I have the Honor to be Sir, Your very faithful and Most Obedt. Humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 54–59; docketing reads: "recd. by *Lacadmonian* 25 May." About five pages of text are not printed

here dealing with diplomatic issues, American naval strength in the Atlantic theater, and the economic state of the American government.

1. Cockburn meant Cochrane's letter numbered two, Cochrane to Cockburn, 13 Apr. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, fols. 12–13. *Plantagenet* was never sent to the Chesapeake.
2. Enclosure 10 was not found in the Cochrane or Cockburn papers.

[Enclosure No. 11]

Return of Black Refugees embarked for Bermuda in the *Lord Collingwood* Transport—9th May 1814.

Men	36
Women	48
Children	67
Total	151

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

DS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fol. 52A.

[Enclosure No. 12]

Return of Black Refugees remaining on Tangier Island in the Chesapeake 9th. May 1814

Men	38	Soldiers
"	13	Stout effective Men Sawyers &c. for Works
Women	13	Belonging to and
Children	14	attached to above
Total	78	All Volunteers to stay with us here and to assist us against their former Masters.

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

DS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fol. 53B.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Private *Albion* in Tangier Bay 10 May 1814

My dear Sir

The *Narcissus* which carried my last Letters to you, had scarcely got out of Sight when the *Loire* arrived with the victualling Transport and put an end to all my Anxieties respecting Provisions. I have also to thank you for your two private Letters by Captain Brown under date of the 11th & 13th Ultimo,[1] by the latter of which I was glad to learn that Sir Thos. Troubridge had had a good passage

in and arrived so immediately after Lady Troubridge to whom I beg my best Respects.—

By my public Letter No. 3,[2] which accompanies this, you will observe that I am rather inclined to hope the Moschettoes & other plagues you have been told of as infesting Tangier Island, will not prove to be quite so bad as has been represented, and at all Events that having advanced so far in establishing a Post here (which seemed to answer in every other Respect previous to receiving your Letter, I have not deemed this Report of sufficient Importance to induce me to give up all we have been doing and to relinquish a Place so admirably situated for forwarding all operations and Views against the Enemy in the surrounding rich & populous States—

In your Letter of the 13th you mention a Wish that I should send the *Loire* off New York "as I have two Frigates here," but as in your public Letter of the 8th Ultimo[3] you direct me to send the *Lord Collingwood* Transport with as Many Refugee Negroes as she can conveniently stow to Bermuda, under Convoy of One of His Majesty's Ships, and as I have certain Information of the Enemy's Squadron in New London being laid up & dismantled, which precludes any immediate necessity for encreasing our Force there,[4] And the Lives of the 150 poor Wretches embarked in this Transport depending on her getting safe in, I feel confident I am acting most in unison with your Ideas & Wishes by sending the third Frigate with Her to Bermuda, and suspending the sending of another Ship to New York till I again hear from you— Symptoms of Scurvy having lately shewn amongst the Crew of the *Lacedæmonian,* which Ship has been constantly kept at Anchor here ever since her arrival on the American Station, and the *Loire* having been as constantly cruizing, has inclined me to prefer the former for this little detached Service which I trust you will approve of, and if you agree with me in the Idea of the Mouth of the Delaware being now the part of the American Coast least guarded, you will perhaps permit me to send *Lacedæmonian* on to that Station after she has returned to me with any Letters or Instructions you may wish to send me, and as she is only in want of a small quantity of some Species of Provisions which the Transport could not supply, I have ordered Captain Jackson not to take his Ship into Bermuda until he has waited upon you and received your further Orders— The *Narcissus* which was on the Delaware Station would prefer I believe joining this, and as a Volunteer is always worth two prest Men, I hope you will indulge Lumley herein when he is ready.—

I send by Captain Jackson a file of American Papers for April by which you will see the wretched State of this Country and how anxious they are to have an End of this foolish Mad War which they rushed so headlong into; by a Paragraph in the National Intelligencer of the 22d, it appears that the Retaliatory System is about to be abandoned and a proper Line of Conduct towards Prisoners is likely to be adopted, but as I have heard nothing on this subject yet from Coll. Barclay and as the Americans are so much in debt to us for People landed from our Ships for Receipts, I still refuse to suffer any of the Prisoners taken by His Majesty's Ships to be landed without having equal Numbers of Englishmen delivered at the Moment in Lieu of them, and I still continue sending our Prisoners into Port by every Opportunity as being the only efficacious Mode of inducing the Americans to restore our People which the chances of War have placed within their Power; if you would wish me to relax

at all in this particular I will thank you to let me know it as soon as convenient, but my Ideas of managing Jonathan, is by never giving way to him, in spite of his bullying and abuse.[5]

Great pains are taken along the Shores of the Chesapeake to prevent the escape of the Negroes, by securing all the Boats & Canoes and placing strong guards over them and on the different Points along the Shore, in spite however of all this we are continually getting a few, but not the Quantities you would do were you once fairly landed on the Main, Those whom you will see by the Returns, I have enlisted as Soldiers are getting on astonishingly, and are really very fine Fellows, and I think whenever you arrive you will be pleased with them, they have induced me to alter the bad opinion I had of the whole of their Race & I now really believe these we are training, will neither shew want of Zeal or Courage when employed by us in attacking their old Masters; I am sorry to say some of those I landed to disseminate your Intentions respecting them have been taken, they managed however to tell so good a Tale & their Comrades kept so faithfully their Secret, that they escaped condemnation, & have only been sold for the back Settlements, and it is supposed by those who have since come off that they will not be carried far in land before they will contrive to elude the Vigilance of those who have charge of them, & that we shall probably see them again here ere very long— I have given to men I have sent on these errands forty Dollars in all which I suppose you will repay me, it is the only expence I have yet put Government to, on this Head, excepting the Slop Clothing I have ordered to be issued to those who volunteer as Soldiers, (as detailed in my public Letter on that subject) and the Cargo of Lumber I formerly mentioned to you I had delivered to the Engineer;[6] the Rice I took from Captain Lumley I am now forced to issue to this Ship's Company in lieu of Pease, owing to the Transport having brought us so very small a Supply of that Article in proportion to others— The Hundred Barrels of Flour which I kept back from One of the Prizes the *Narcissus* took in, I now send in the *Perseverence,* the Supply of that Article by the Transport being ample and precluding the necessity of my using the other, you have only therefore to pay the Captors for the Rice & Plank—

If you direct this Transport to be again loaded with Provisions for the Ships here as you say you intend it will be necessary for you to give Directions that she may have a very much larger quantity of Pease Spirits & Bread than of other Species, as she was this time deficient in these, particularly the two former, and she did not bring any Vinegar which is likewise wanted by these Ships, though we are not likely to be again in such absolute want as we were before *Loire*'s Arrival yet I have no doubt by the time this Transport can be again got ready with convenience & sent here, we shall be able to unload her, at least if our Black Mouths go on encreasing as I expect.— but I am not sanguine enough to think I shall want more Arms before I have the Pleasure of seeing you—

The American Papers tell me you have determined in the first Instance to attack Portsmouth & they add that they are quite prepared to receive you there, I doubt their being so any where, & I am sure they are not equal to defend them-

selves against a determined attack in any part of this Neighborhood, and the Government not being able to obtain Money to go on with is not likely to improve their Means of Resistance; the Numbers of their Militia their Rifles & the thickness of their Woods still I believe constitute their principal, if not their only, Strength—

It appears they already know of your Intentions respecting the Blacks and it has caused a most general & undisguised alarm, they expect Blacky will have no mercy on them and they know that he understands bush fighting and the locality of the Woods as well as themselves, and can perhaps play at hide & seek in them even better—

I will endeavor to procure Some Stock to send you by the next occasion which offers, I have not enough by me at this Moment worth sending you—and it is not without difficulty & some delay that we procure it—

I am very Anxious to have our next news from Europe my Letters & Papers are more behind hand than usual, I hope you will spare something to bring them to me when they arrive Adieu My dear Sir Believe, me most truly Yours

G: Cockburn

P.S I am rather surprised at learning by your Letter that my Ideas were erroneous respecting your having brought Permission from the Admiralty for My Return to England, and the Number of Junior Flags you mention as intended for this Station (particularly if Beresford[7] is to be so considered) renders it the more extraordinary,

Tho: if the War is to close with the year as expected it is perhaps as well to see it out and if it does not, you may perhaps be induced to Stretch a point for me by & bye in the fall of the Year when operations are over. but on this, when I have the pleasure of meeting you, will be time enough to enter more fully—

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 103–9.

1. No private letters of 11 and 13 April were found in either the Cochrane or Cockburn papers. A public letter of 13 April is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 12–13.

2. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 9 May 1814, pp. 61–63.

3. Cochrane to Cockburn, 8 Apr. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, pp. 9–10.

4. Cockburn is referring to Commodore Stephen Decatur's squadron, frigates *United States*, *Macedonian*, and sloop of war *Hornet*, which the British had forced into the Thames River, New London, in June 1813. In April 1814, the two frigates were removed up the Thames, dismantled, and laid up.

5. Prisoner exchanges were a continuing problem from the beginning of the war. Although exchanges were made, they were marred by retaliatory actions when one side took hostages in response to actions taken by the other. The article in the *Daily National Intelligencer* of 22 April 1814 reported several releases by both governments that augured well for a resolution of the prisoner of war problem. For a fuller discussion of prisoner exchange, see Dietz, "Prisoner of War."

6. Lieutenant J. H. Fenwick, Royal Engineers.

7. In May 1814, John P. Beresford was created a baronet and attained the rank of rear admiral.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

No. 9— Bermuda 26th. May 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatches by the *Lacedemonian* (which arrived here yesterday) numbered from 1 to 5 inclusively; replying to my Orders and Letters conveyed to you by the *Loire* and acquainting me of the various occurrences connected with the Squadron under your Orders up to the 9th. instant, which were accompanied by the several Papers therein referred to.[1]

I send you herewith a Scheme for Victualling the Refugee Negroes but I have no objection to your making whatever alterations you may think proper; and you will be pleased to substitute or differ in the mode of victualling these People as you may conceive best suited to existing circumstances. The object to be attended to is the feeding of them at as small an Expence to Government as possible at the same time giving them a sufficient quantity of what is wholesome, which can be better done by supplying them with their usual food than by giving them that which is established for the Service.

You will authorize the Captains of His Majestys Ships on whose Books Refugee Negroes are borne to supply such of them as are in absolute want of clothing with Slops to cover them, not exceeding the amount of thirty Shillings a Man: +[2] such as enter as Marines are to be fitted with Marine Clothing, and if there are a sufficiency of Red Jackets in the Squadron to supply them with one each, it may be advisable to Clothe them in Red as their gay appearance may act as an inducement to others to come off.

I do not see any necessity for the Russian Minister's[3] sending a Vessel to Europe purposely with information of the Embargo's having been taken off, as our Allies will have much earlier information of this through my Communication to the Lords of the Admiralty, which has been forwarded by Express and in Duplicate, than they can have through the means the Minister proposes.

With respect to the Ship *Emilie*!—as the whole of the Ports of the United States are now declared in a state of blockade you will be pleased to withdraw the permission you have given for her proceeding from Newport with a Cargo: she can only be allowed to sail in Ballast.

I request you will acquaint Captain Watts of His Majestys Sloop *Jaseur* that I have much pleasure in noticing the gallant and successful enterprize performed by the Boats of that Sloop under the Orders of Lieutenant West, whose conduct I shall not fail to point out to the Lords of the Admiralty for their consideration.[4]

I wish you could communicate with Colonel Barclay on the Subject of the Exchange of Prisoners; until you learn that America has arranged for the payment of the Balance in favor of Great Britain you will continue sending all Prisoners into Port; giving Halifax the preference whenever opportunities occur for that place.

His Majestys Ship *Narcissus* is to convey this Dispatch to you and then proceed Off the Delaware. She carries also the Duplicates of Letters sent to you by the *Endymion* which ship was to go off Charleston before she went to the Chesa-

peake; as the latter ship has on board the *Dragon*s Letters, you will detain the *Dragon* a few days for the *Endymion*'s arrival.

As I cannot with propriety send Captain Jackson back to the Chesapeake I have given him the Command off Charleston and you will retain the *Loire* until I have a Ship to relieve her.

I send you a statement of the distribution of Force upon the North American Coast.

If you can find a fine Pilot Boat of about 40 or 50 Tons have the goodness to retain her and I will order her to be purchased into the Service as an advice Boat for your Station, sending her papers in for condemnation, and surveying her. I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient humble Servant

(signed) Alexr. Cochrane

P.S. From the great loss of Anchors in the Chesapeake I recommend that upon Ships coming to an Anchor there, the Anchors are lowered down a cockbill and Afterwards checked on their way to the bottom by Stops upon the Cable.

(sd) A Cochrane

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 296–99 (Reel 9). Notation on top of first page reads: "Recd. pr. *Narcissus* 10 June 1814."

1. For Cockburn's letters to Cochrane numbered one, 28 April, numbered two, 29 April, numbered four, 9 May, and numbered five, 9 May, see DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 70–85 (Reel 6); for letter number three, see Cockburn to Cochrane, 9 May 1814, pp. 61–63, above.

2. The marginal note reads: "The Women to have a proportion of Duck to cover them."

3. Andrei Ia. Dashkov.

4. George E. Watts, R.N., commander of the brig-sloop *Jaseur*, was promoted to captain on 7 June 1814. In late April or early May 1814, the crew of *Jaseur*, under First Lieutenant Henry West, R.N., captured the letter of marque schooner *Grecian* in the East River. Also at this time, West's contingent captured a vessel carrying arms intended for the American army. Cockburn to Cochrane, 9 May 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 84–85 (Reel 6).

[Enclosure]

Black Marines—} whole allowance of all Species
Men not entered as Marines and Women
Bread or Flour, or a proportion of
Rice, Corn or Indian Meal. 1 lb pr. day
Children do do ½ pound
Men Meat per day 1 pound
Women do do ½ pound
Children do do ½ pound
All other species of Provisions in the above proportion. Women that work to be allowed a proportion of Rum extra.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 299–300 (Reel 9).

[Enclosure]
Disposition of His Majestys Ships upon the Coast of America—.

Stations	Force	Ships Names
Under Rear Adl. Griffith at Halifax & in Boston Bay	2 Line of Battle Ships 4 Frigates	*Bulwark Ramillies* *Junon Tenedos Nymph Curlew*
	11 Sloops 1 Schooner[1]	*Wasp Martin Arab Fantome* *Epervier Rifleman Thistle* *Indian, Ratler Borer & Bream*
Off Nantucket Shoals from 7 to 50 Leagues SE	2 Frigates	*Armide* & *Endymion*
Off New London and Rhode Isd.	2 Line Battle Ships 1 Frigates 2 Sloops	*Superb La Hogue* *Maidstone Nimrod Sylph*—
Off the Bar of New York	1 Razée and 1 Frigate	*Saturn* and *Belvidera*
Delaware	2 Frigates	*Nieman* and *Narcissus*
Chesapeak under the Orders of Rr. Adl. Cockburn	2 Line Battle Ships. 2 Frigates 1 Sloop and 1 Schooner	*Albion Dragon* *Acasta Loire* *Jaseur & St. Lawrence*
Between Cape Hatteras and St. Marys River	1 Razee, & 3 Sloops	*Majestic Morgiania* *Dotteral* and *Peacock*—
Gulf of Mexico to the Tropic Canser	1 Frigate 2 Sloops 2 Schooners	*Orpheus* *Sophie Childers,* *Shelburn & Cockchafer*

The same force or as near as possible will be kept on those Stations altho' the Ships will be occasionally changed.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, p. 300 (Reel 9). A fourth column, entitled "Remarks," appears to the right of the "Ships Names" column and is not reproduced here. Only two entries appear in this column: "*Majestic* going into Halifax to refit," and "*Orpheus* Do. [going into Halifax to refit]—."

1. Only nine sloops or brig-sloops are listed under the "Ships Names" column. A tenth vessel, *Borer*, was a gun-brig. The last vessel listed, *Bream*, was a schooner.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

Private and Confidential *Asia* 27 May 1814 Bermuda

My dear Sir,

As I daily look for the arrival of the Marines and it being probable from the lateness of the Season that nothing equal to what was intended can take place,

the Troops being required for the Defence of Canada, I must therefore confine myself to minor objects, attainable by a force not exceeding 1,500 Men. I have therefore to beg that you will endeavour to procure the most correct information possible of the Force and position of the Enemy within the Chesapeake—and to the Southward with the Situations where Landings can be made to do them the greatest injury and facilitate the Escape of their Negroes— such information can be only come at by paying for it—you have therefore authority to do so. It is of material consequence to know exactly their military force at the different Stations, as it may be necessary to make distant and partial attacks to draw off their force from the point of real attack. You will therefore see what consequence it is to obtain the best information on those heads which may be difficult unless you can find some enterprizing characters who run all risks for money, with which you may assure them of being well remunerated if their intelligence is found correct. Adieu my dear sir, ever most sincerely Yrs

A Cochrane—

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 2.

British Strategy

By early April, in anticipation of Napoleon's abdication, the British government ordered more troops sent to the North American Station. Limited manpower proscribed any grandiose strategy and necessitated instead restricted objectives. The Admiralty and the War Office established the parameters for their respective services and outlined the framework for joint operations in the Chesapeake. The British chose a less risky, conservative policy.

First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 40. Admiralty Office
4 April 1814

Sir/

In reference to my Letter to you of the 27. of January last[1] informing you of the directions which had been given for sending to you from Canada the staff officers of the Second Battalion of Royal Marines under the orders of Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm,[2] with such other officers as might not be wanted on the Lakes, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that in the Troop ships named in the margin,[3] now proceeding to join you under the protection of His Majesty's ship *Tonnant*, have been embarked one thousand Marines, formed into ten Companies of one hundred each, with one Company of marine Artillery, consisting of eighty men, with their guns &ca.

I am, accordingly, to signify their Lordships direction to you to form this Detachment into a regular Battalion, including the staff and other officers from Canada; and to employ the same in cooperating with the Naval Forces under

your orders, on such Services on the Coasts of the United States, as may be found most expedient for His Majesty's Service and the annoyance of the Enemy.

Their Lordships entrust to your judgment the choice of the objects on which you may employ this Force, the operations of which may be carried on against a maritime Country like America with comparative ease and security, as it will rarely if ever be necessary to advance so far into the Country as to risk its power of retreating to its embarkation. But it will naturally occur to you that on every account any attempts that should have the effect of crippling the Enemy's naval Force, should have a preference. I am Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

J W Croker

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2343, fols. 4–5. Notation at top of letter reads, "recd. by *Tonnant* 6 June /14."

1. Croker to Cochrane, 27 Jan. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2342, fols. 116–17.
2. Lieutenant Colonel James Malcolm, Royal Marines, was the brother of Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, R.N. They both served in the Chesapeake campaign in the summer of 1814.
3. *Regulus, Melpomene, Brune.*

First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Duplicate
Secret Admiralty Office
No. 61 19 May 1814

Sir

In response to my Letter to you of the 4. of last month conveying to you the directions of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the employment of a Battalion of Marines in such services on the Coasts of the United States as might be found expedient for His Majesty's service: I have their Lordships commands to acquaint you that orders have been given for the embarkation in the Gironde of a body of Troops, amounting to above three thousand men, on board the Line of Battle Ships prepared for the reception of Troops, and the Troopships named in the margin[1] and that Admiral Lord Keith has been directed to place those ships, as also four Frigates, two or three sloops, and the *Devastation* and *Meteor* Bomb vessels, under the orders of Rear Admiral Malcolm, and to direct that officer to proceed with them to Bermuda and put himself under your command: and it is their Lordships directions that you take that officer and the said Ships & Vessels under your orders accordingly.

It is the intention of His Majesty's Government that the abovementioned Division of Troops should be employed, together with the Battalion of marines in conjunction with the naval Force under your command, in such operations as may be found best calculated for the advantage of His Majestys Service, and the annoyance of the Enemy: on the subject of which I am to refer you to my Letter of the 4th ultimo, and also to the inclosed Extract of a Letter written by me to

Sir John Warren on the 20th. of March 1813[2] respecting the employment of a Force of a similar description under the directions of Colonel Sir Sydney Beckwith: and for your further information and guidance, I shall transmit to you, as soon as I can obtain them, a Copy of the Instructions given by the Secretary of State to the officer in command of the Troops ordered to proceed from the Gironde.[3]

In the event of your not proceeding yourself on such operations as may be undertaken with these Forces, I am to signify to you their Lordships direction that you employ Rear Admiral Malcolm on the same, with such naval Force as the nature of the service may require: and I am also to acquaint you that when the *Leopard* and *Diomede* Troopships shall have joined you from Quebec and you shall no longer find it necessary to employ the two Line of Battle ships sent out with the Rear Admiral, in the conveyance of Troops, it is their Lordships direction that you send these two ships to England.

Lord Keith is directed to send out to you in the ships under Rear Admiral Malcolm the three hundred Seamen mentioned in Mr. Barrow's Letter to you of the 6. Instant.[4] I am Sir Your most obedient humble servant

J W Croker

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2343, fols. 66, 71–72.

1. *Diadem, Dictator, Trave, Weser, Thames.*

2. The Admiralty left the actual targets in America to Cochrane's discretion, relying on his judgment to weigh advantages with risks. Croker to Warren, 20 Mar. 1813, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane, MS 2343, fols. 77–80.

3. See the following letter, pp. 72–74.

4. John Barrow to Cochrane, 6 Mar. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2343, fol. 58. Barrow was second secretary to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst to Major General Edward Barnes, British Army

Copy
Secret

Downing Street
20th. May 1814.

Sir

It having been judged expedient to effect a diversion on the Coast of the United States of America in favour of the Army employed in the defence of Upper & Lower Canada; Admiral Sir A. Cochrane has received Instructions to direct a Squadron to proceed with a detachment of Troops and a Battalion of Marines towards those places on the Coast where it may appear to him most advisable that a descent should be made; and H.R.H. the Prince Regent confiding in your valour, enterprize, and discretion, has been graciously pleased to commit to you the command of these Troops in such operations as you may judge it expedient when on shore to undertake—

In addition to the force which may have been placed under your orders previous to your departure from the Gironde, you will on your arrival at Bermuda, take under your command one other Regiment of Infantry & one Company of

Artillery which have been directed to proceed thither from the Mediterranean for that purpose—

The amount of the force which will be thus placed under your command (& which is specified in the margin[1]) will sufficiently point out to you that you are not to engage in any extended operations at a distance from the Coast—

In concerting the particular object of attack with the Officer in command of the naval part of the Expedition, you will express to him your opinion of its expediency in a military point of view, and will without reserve state the difficulties or facilities with which its execution may be attended. You will also consider yourself authorized to decline engaging in any operation which you have reason to apprehend will lead from the probability of its failure to the discredit of the Troops under your command, or will expose them to a loss disproportioned to the advantage which it may be the object of the attack to attain—

While afloat you will consider yourself as under the command of the Naval Officer commanding this Expedition— The disembarkation of the Troops and their reembarkation will be directed by him; but he will be instructed to concert with with you as to the best mode of effecting the same respectively— You will decide as to the time when you may consider it expedient to reembark the Troops, as that must in a great degree be regulated by the success of your undertaking, and by the approach of the Enemy's Force, but you will previously ascertain whether in the opinion of the Commander of the Naval Force there is any period positively unfavourable for reembarkation—

You will regularly transmit to me for the information of H. M. Government detailed Accounts of your proceedings & of any operations in which you may have been engaged—

When the object of the descent which you may make on the Coast is to take possesion of any Naval or Military Stores, you will not delay the destruction of them in preference to the taking them away, if there is reasonable ground of apprehension that the Enemy is advancing with superior force to effect their recovery.

If in any descent you shall be enabled to take such a position as to threaten the Inhabitants with the destruction of their property, you are hereby authorized to levy upon them contributions in return for your forbearance, but you will not by this understand that the Magazines belonging to the Government, or their Harbours, or their Shipping are to be included in such arrangements; These together with their contents are in all cases to be taken away or destroyed.

You will not encourage any disposition which may be manifested by the Negroes to rise upon their masters— The humanity which ever influences H.R.H. must make him anxious to protest against a system of warfare which must be attended by the atrocities inseparable from commotions of such a description. If however any individual Negroes shall in the course of your operations join you or give you assistance, & if you have reason to believe that they would in consequence be exposed to the vengeance of their masters after your retreat, you are at liberty on their earnest desire to take them away with you, and you are authorized, if they are willing to enlist, to enlist them in any of the Black Corps; but if they evince no such disposition, you will consign them to the care of the Admiral commanding who has received instructions as to their disposal—But you must distinctly understand that you are in no case to take slaves

away as slaves, but as free persons not subject to any restrictions incompatible with the state of free persons. I have &c

(Signed) Bathurst

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2343, fols. 67–70. This letter was enclosed in Croker to Cochrane, 21 May 1814, ibid., fol. 76. Bathurst addressed this letter to "Major General Barnes or the Officer in command of the Troops detached from the Gironde." Major General Edward Barnes (1776–1838) was serving on the staff of the British army in the Peninsula at this time. These orders actually went to Major General Robert Ross who was sent instead of Barnes to command the expeditionary force on the coast of the United States.

1. "3 Regts. of Infantry with a proportion of Artillery from the Gironde—1 do. [*Regiment*]— do. [*of Infantry*]— with one Company of do. [*Artillery*] from the Mediterranean—1 Battn. of Royal Marines with a proportion of Marine artillery—."

Java under Construction

Congressional legislation in January 1813 authorized construction of six 44-gun frigates, but only three were actually built. William Doughty completed the design for Java, Guerriere, *and* Columbia *by June, and while the naval constructor undertook the building of* Columbia *at the Washington Navy Yard, the other two were built under private contract. The Baltimorean schooner builders William Flannigan and William Parsons built light, swift, privately-armed vessels during the war and the Navy Department awarded them* Java*'s contract.[1] Secretary Jones mediated a construction dispute generated by a discrepancy between Doughty's draft and departmental instructions.*

1. Chapelle, American Sailing Navy, *p. 256, and Garitee,* Republic's Private Navy, *pp. 30, 107, 109.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent James Beatty

James Beatty Esqr.
Navy Agent Baltimore

Navy Department
April 29th. 1814

Sir,

I am this moment informed by Mr Doughty, that, contrary to the clear delineation of the Draught, and the particular instructions delivered to Messrs. Flanagan & Parsons for building the Frigate *Java*, they have fallen into a very gross error, in diminishing the height between the Gun and Spar Decks four inches fore and aft; and as the height, designated in the Draught, is the least that can possibly be admitted, in a Ship with a Battery of such magnitude, the error must be corrected without delay.—

I regret exceedingly, the inconvenience which Messrs. Flanagan & Parsons will incur by this untoward mistake; and were it not of such serious importance I would not insist upon the alteration, as I understand the Deck is entirely

framed and all the lodging and part of the dagger knees bolted; but whatever may be the consequences, the bolts must be backed out, and the Spar deck raised, to the proper height designated in the Draught and instructions. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 59 (M441, Roll No. 1).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent James Beatty

James Beatty Esqr.
Navy Agent Baltimore

Navy Department
May 2d. 1814.

Sir,

Referring to my letter to you of the 29th. ulto. relative to the error in the height between decks of the Frigate *Java*, I have now to say that Mr Flannagan has just been with me, with the copy of the Draught by which he worked and the Instructions from Mr Doughty.—

The latter very clearly designates the height to be seven feet exclusive of the thickness of the Gun deck plank, but it is not so clear in the former.

The Instructions however ought to have governed as they give the heights and thicknesses of the deck plank and beams in accurate detail. I find however from the representations of Mr F. that the spar deck frame is so far and so firmly secured that much injury and serious expense would be incurred in raising the deck frame, and altho' I regret extremely the error which has been committed yet under existing circumstances I have deemed it better to proceed with the deck as it now is and have instructed Mr. Flannagan accordingly. I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 60–61 (M441, Roll No. 1).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent James Beatty

James Beatty Esqr.
Navy Agent Baltimore

Navy Department
May 4th. 1814

Sir,

My letter to you of the 2d was induced by my desire to avoid subjecting the builders of the *Java* to the inconvenience and expense of correcting the error, into which they had fallen, by taking the heights from the shear plan of the inboard works, instead of the detailed heights and thickness in the instructions, and the working Draught, which exactly correspond and show the height to be 7 feet in the clear fore and aft, from the upper side of the Gun-deck, to the lower side of the Spar deck; and consequently six feet and an Inch from the lower side of the spar deck beams, to the Gun deck; and also by the representations of Mr Flannagan, by which I was led to believe that the error was not so

considerable, as I find it to be by the heights taken by Mr Doughty, who has just returned.—

Commodore Rodgers is of opinion that the error is of so much consequence, as not to admit of a moments hesitation in applying the remedy at once.[1] Indeed being now possessed of the facts, I have no hesitation in saying, that ten-thousand dollars would be no consideration, compared with the advantages to be derived from correcting the error. I am aware that the builders will make little or perhaps worse than nothing, by the Contract, and am on that account the more disposed to admit the most liberal construction of their Conduct in the present case, and to consider the representation made to me by the Naval Constructor of the faithful manner in which they have in other respects executed the Contract.— The error however must be corrected and the deck raised to its proper height fore and aft. You will keep an exact account of the expense attending that operation, which you will pay exclusive of the Contract, and I trust the builders will particularly feel the necessity of rendering that expense as moderate as possible. Mr Doughty is of opinion, that it may be completely done in four or five days, and will not cost more than from $500. to $1000. He is now directing the manner in which it may be accomplished, in the shortest time and at the least expense.—

The bolts which will be backed out, will be too small for the same holes through the knees, but will work up to advantage in the Gun Carriages & mast work.

I trust on this occasion the builders will exert themselves. Owing to the unfavorable result of the Contract on the part of the builders, you will exercise your discretion in respect to the last payment according to the solidity of their sureties.— I am respectfully &c

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 63–64 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. As Commodore John Rodgers was visiting Washington in the spring of 1814, he may have given an oral opinion. No letter was found in the captains' letters series.

Battle of Cedar Point, 1 June 1814

By the end of May events were drawing Joshua Barney's flotilla into its first armed clash with British naval forces on the bay. Reports that the British were establishing a staging area in Tangier Sound enticed Barney southward, while Captain Robert Barrie ordered reconnoitering parties between the Potomac and Patuxent rivers. The confrontation that ensued exposed deficiencies in both forces.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N.

30 May 1814

My dear Sir

Subsequent to our Conversation of last Night I have received Intelligence that Commodore Barney has again come down with his Flotilla to the Neighbourhood of the Potomac— The Man who brings the Information states that he saw him the Day before yesterday a few Miles to the Northward of the Cape Lookout— I therefore send You the Auxiliary Force I before intended, but I must beg of you to make use of it to the Northward instead of the Southward by sending it with your own Boats, Tender &ca. to examine St. Jeromes Creek &ca to the Patuxent, and covering them at such Distance as you may judge adviseable with the *Dragon*, taking also to your Assistance the *St. Lawrence* if on communicating with her Commander you find so employing her will not be likely to clash with Promises or Arrangements made with the Blacks landed from her the other Day.[1]

Should you neither gain Information nor see anything of the American Flotilla in or on this Side of the Patuxent, I would have you cause St. Marys & Yeucomoco to be looked into, & you may do any Mischief on either Side of the Potomac which you may find within your Power, if this Information which I have received turn out to be incorrect, I can only say in your Operations to the Northward of Point Look out or to the Westward of it, You will consider yourself at full Liberty to act as Circumstances may point out to You as being most adviseable for the Service

The high Confidence I have in your Zeal and Abilities asuring me that I cannot do better than Point out to You the Object, and leave the Rest to your Management, but should you not be able to annoy the Enemy in that Direction we will still hold in View our intended Attack on Cherrystone Creek and perhaps a further Attempt on the other Side opposite to it

The *Jaseur* has taken another Schooner loaded with Salt Fish, she is gone up to the upper Part of the Bay near Hoopers Straights— What Capt. Watts has in View I know not

Let me hear from You as occasion may offer. I am Dr. Sir With much Truth Yours most faithfully

G. C.

I send Lt. Urmston in Command of the Boats of this Ship & I trust you will be satisfied with his Attention & Conduct

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 25, fol. 12 (Reel 7). This letter book copy does not include an address line; internal evidence suggests that Cockburn was writing to Robert Barrie.

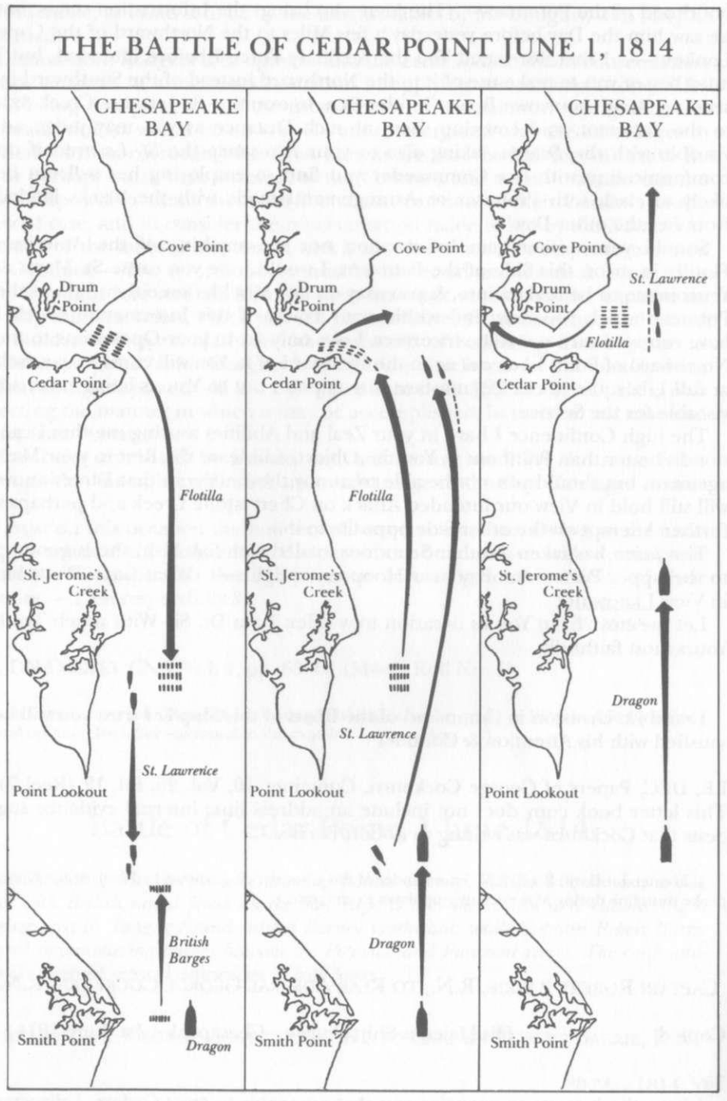
1. Lieutenant David Boyd, R.N., commander of the schooner *St. Lawrence*, had cruised the Chesapeake shoreline during May encouraging slaves to emigrate.

CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

Copied His Majestys Ship *Dragon* Chesapeak 1st. June 1814

Sir/

I have the honour to acquaint you that agreeably to your Orders, I directed the *St Lawrence* and *Catch up a Little* Tender to Rendezvous Off Point Look out, and at Eight Oclock last night I left the *Dragon* at Anchor Off Smiths Point, and



Map 3

proceeded with three Boats of the *Albion*, commanded by Lieutenant Urmston, and four of the *Dragon*'s commanded by Lieutenant Pedlar, towards St Jeromes Creek. I arrived in my Gig at the Rendezvous by day break, but the other Boats were along way astern: at 5 Am, while Employed in the *St. Lawrence* Reconnoitring St Jeromes, several strange Sail were discovered standing down the Chesapeak towards Hoopers Straights, We immediatly gave chace and soon discovered them to be the Baltimore Flotilla, consisting of twenty five Sail, Of these sixteen appeared to be large Lateen Rigged Vessels, Rowing from thirty to forty Oar's, the rest were Sloops and Schooners, one of the Sloops carried a Broad Pendant, and shewed six Ports Of a side. One Of the Lateen Vessels, carried a French Flag at the Fore.

On discovering the *St Lawrence* the Enemy altered his course and gave chace to us, as by this time I had bore up to the Southward to pick up the Boats, (yet a long way Off) and to call the attention of the *Dragon*. the Wind was variable but generally in favour of the Enemy, who closed us fast, but about one Oclock it shifted to the Southward, and Observing the *Dragon* to get under weigh We wore round to Close the Enemy, who in his turn made Off and was ultimately chased into the Patuxent, where he arrived about Sunset. the *Dragon* was oblidged to Anchor Eight Miles below, Not being able to stem the Tide as the *St Lawrence* & Boats rounded Cedar Point, the Flotilla opened its fire on us but at too great a distance to do execution, and as we were too feeble to attack the Flotilla with the *St Lawrence* and Boats, I endeavoured to tempt him to seperate his force, by directing Lieutenant Pedlar with the *Dragon*'s Barge and Cutter, to Cut Off a Schooner under Cove Point, this Service (as well as every other on which he has been employed) was ably performed by Lieutenant Pedlar, and Commodore Barney allowed the Schooner to be burnt in the face of the Flotilla, without attempting a Rescue.

It is my intention to take advantage of the first opportunity to move the *Dragon* into the Mouth Of the Patuxent, mean time I shall keep the *St Lawrence* and Boats on the look out, to blockade the Flotilla conceiving it my duty to do so, till I have the honour to receive your Instructions.

I fear it will be impossible to follow the Flotilla up the River in the *Dragon*, and as the Schooners and Boats are by no means equal to attack it, may I request you will have the goodness to Reinforce Me with *Jaseur* & one of the Frigates, when I think we may venture up the River, as our Boats would be able to tow the Frigate should it be necessary.

I have great satisfaction in assuring you Of the zealous Conduct of all the Officers & Men Employed in the Boats, and had we been any thing like a Match for the Enemy, I am certain We should have given a good account of him.

I was highly pleased with the conduct of the Colonial Marines, under Ensign Hammond, every Individual of which Evinced the greatest eagerness, to come to Action with their former Master's. I have the honor to be Sir Your Obedient & faithfull Humble Servant

Robt: Barrie Captain

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 98–99. A copy is in UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 74–75.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Patuxent June 3d. 1814

Sir,

On the 1st Inst. at 3 AM. we got under way from this place, at 9 the "Galley" & "Lookout boat" Signald the Enemy, "A Brig & schooner," below us, the wind light from the northward & inclined to calm, we gave chase Sails & Oars, and came up with them very fast, on approaching, I found that they were two schooners, One a full Rigged, shewing Nine ports on a side, they made signals & fired guns: when off St. Jeromes we discovered a large ship underway, and that she had dispatched a number of Barges to the Assistance of the schooners— unfortunately at this time the wind shifted to SW and squally, which brought the ship to windward of us and under a press of sail steering for point-look-out of course could cut us off from the Potomac, I then made the signal "for Patuxent," and was followed by a 74, three schooners & Seven Barges, with a fresh wind, Squally & Rain (bad for my boats) at 4 PM we doubled round Cedar point in the mouth of this river, The barges in all sail, as the wind had hauled to the westward, & rowed up under the weather shore, The *Scorpion* worked in very well, but the Gun boats hung in the Rear, particularly Gun boat *137*, (with provisions) The Enemies whole force very little astern, finding I must loose *No. 137* or risk an engagement I brought the *Scorpion*, & gunboat *138* to Anchor; sent men onboard *137* to Row & tow her in, the Tide & wind being against us, Signal'd my Barges to return and join me Imediately, at this moment No. *138* & myself opened a fire on the Large Schooner, who was leading in with a number of Barges, she Imediately bore up and got her boats ahead to tow her off; my Barges rowed down upon her and the other schooners and gave them a number of shot at long distance, We then gave up the chace, got under way with the *Scorpion* & gunboats and returned into port with all the flotilla, during the fireing, the enemy advanced a Barge which threw Rockets, but as they cannot be directed with any certainty they did no Execution, but I find they can be thrown further than we can our shot; and conclude from this Essay, this will be their mode of Warfare against the flotilla, The 74 is now anchored off the mouth of this River, the large schooner with her, the Barges play about all day—the other schooners have gone down the Bay, I presume for more force, in which case some attempt may probably be made to Attack us, we lay about 3 miles up the river (in Sight) I shall observe their motions and act accordingly, I now regret not having furnaces for hot shot, In a day or two I expect the enemy will make their arrangements and if the troops that are in this neighbourhood were ordered to this place I conceive a good use might be made of them— This affair has confirmed me in the bad opinion I had of the Gunboats for this service for to save *No. 137* I was near being exposed in Bad weather, to a general engagement with a heavy force, may I now be permitted to ask you for a vessel to carry provisions, such as will not be the means of disasters or disgrace, if you will allow me one she can be had of Mr. William ONeal in Washington, She is now here having been under my convoy, and her captain has gone on to Washington— she is a fine Vessel, sails well & will carry about 450 barrels, the Captain who is half owner will go in her, and says you may have her very cheap (hired) as he has nothing to employ her with. I have thought proper to send this by express, and have only waited to observe the movements of the Enemy to day; by the post on Monday I shall give you further details And am with great respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 86 (M124, Roll No. 63). The last page of this letter was bound out of order.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Capt. Joshua Barney
Com'dg. U.S. Flotilla Patuxent

Navy Department
June 6. 1814

Sir,

I have this instant received your letters of the 3d. & 4th.[1] detailing your rencontre with the Enemys force off the Patuxent.

It is very much to be regretted that the weather proved so boisterous and unfavourable for the Flotilla.—

The Gun Boats are really an encombrance to you as they cannot move with the rest of the Flotilla.—

You had better therefore when you have a convenient opportunity send them to Baltimore, there to remain.—

You are at liberty to hire the Schooner you mention as a Store Ship on the most reasonable terms you can agree upon with the Captain as one of the owners.—[2]

We have a surplus of excellent powder & provisions on this station which I could place at Annapolis, or any other convenient depot that you may point out for the use of your Flotilla.— I have caused an experiment to be tried on the Sheet Iron furnace, which I mentioned to you but it will not answer your purpose, for in heating the Shot the furnace itself becomes intolerably & dangerously hot,— when you return to Baltimore you may have a brick furnace constructed on board the *Asp* or either of the other vessels or in a good stout launch which might be kept for that special purpose.— Such a Boat would row as well as the Barges and might have a 12 pdr. Carronade in her Bow.—

The Enclosed documents are Copied from originals which are considered by the Govern'mt. to be entitled to entire credit.— Capt. Herbert is a very respectable man and would willingly accompany an expedition of the kind he suggests.—[3]

Should an opportunity occur when the calm season commences, and you deem the object practicable, its accomplishment would be very important & exceedingly popular.— I am respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 333 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. In a follow-up letter to his correspondence of 3 June, Barney reported that bad weather had prevented him from discovering the enemy's movements. Barney to Jones, 4 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 87 (M124, Roll No. 63).

2. After speaking to the owners of the storeship the next day, Jones left the hire of their vessel to Barney's discretion. Jones to Barney, 7 June 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 334 (M149, Roll No. 11).

3. This could be Edward Herbert, late master of the schooner *Traveller*, who was captured by the British sometime in April and released on condition that he exchange himself within one month. Cockburn to Lieutenant James Thorne, 1 May 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 16, Vol. 44, pp. 85–86 (Reel 10). Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason wrote to Secretary Jones in June and July about traitors conspiring with the British on Tangier Island. In this correspondence, Mason mentions that he has just recently exchanged a Captain Herbert of Norfolk, "a very respectable Man," who is "now free to act." Apparently Herbert had proposed an expedition against the enemy. Mason to Jones, 30 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 85 (M124, Roll No. 63), and Mason to Jones, 1 July 1814, ibid., Vol. 5, No. 25 (M124, Roll No. 64).

British Divert Strength to Crush the Flotilla

Having faced little naval opposition in the bay during 1813 and early 1814, the British recognized Joshua Barney's newly organized flotilla as a potential threat to their operations. Rear Admiral George Cockburn decided temporarily to divert some of his forces engaged in blockading the mouth of the Chesapeake and harassing coastal towns to destroying the fledgling American squadron. He ordered the frigate Loire, *Captain Thomas Brown, and the brig-sloop* Jaseur, *Commander George E. Watts, to join Captain Robert Barrie's force in the Patuxent. Barrie required the smaller vessels to pursue the Americans aggressively.*

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

[Extract]

Albion Tangier Bay 3d June 1814

My dear Sir

I am sorry the *Dragon* was not able to get up with the Baltimore Flotilla before they housed themselves in the Patuxent, it is however of all the rivers in the Chesapeake the best to have them in and I only hope you will be able to keep them there, till we are strong enough to follow them up it, with small Craft.— I have sent for *Jaseur* from Smith's Island and she shall join you immediately, I have likewise dispatched my Tender to Lynhaven Bay for *Loire* and have directed Captn. Kerr to hurry up whatever may arrive from Bermuda, nothing has appeared from that Quarter since you moved but I trust in God we must have something in a day or two—you may depend on my sending every thing to you as it arrives as the destruction of these Fellows would be a Point of great Importance; if a Line of battle Ship arrives (senior to you) I will come to you myself, and I know I need not press on you to endeavor by all means to get acquainted with the Channel in— Should these fellows get by you again in a Calm or in the dark pray hurry off to me some of the small Craft and my Boats—and with the *Dragon* & your Tender act as you may deem most advisable for Springing them again—

I send you fifteen Thousand Musket Ball Cartridges & some (14) blue Lights—but I am sorry to say we have only four spare oars in the ship (these I have however desired Ross to send) and as we have only two Boxes of Rockets &

I understand *Dragon* has many left, I must beg of you to supply what may be wanted by our Rocket Boat, and the Moment I receive the supply the Commander in Chief promised me some Months ago, I will send you a full Proportion—

I am glad this ship's Boats have conducted themselves to your satisfaction, and most pleased at your Report respecting the new raised Black Men[1]

Pray let me know as often as possible what passes in your neighborhood, as you may naturally suppose the anxiety with which I shall watch for accounts from you.— . . .

You will of course keep every thing with you that you now have so long as you [consider them necessary for your operations.

I will not detain your tender any longer. May success attend you. I am My dear Sir—]

AL, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers. One paragraph dealing with private affairs was not printed. The last page of the autograph letter is missing; material within brackets was supplied from the copy in DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 25, fols. 14–15 (Reel 7).

1. See Barrie to Cockburn, 1 June 1814, p. 79.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Alexander R. Kerr, R.N.

HMS *Albion*—3 June 1814.

Sir,

Information which I have this day received from Captain Barrie of the *Dragon*, who has chased the Baltimore Flotilla (consisting of Twenty three Vessels) into the Patuxent, occasions me to want whatever Force I can collect. You will therefore immediately you receive this hurry up to me the *Loire* and any other Man of War which may be in Lynhaven Bay excepting the *Acasta* & *Warrington*, and I must confide to you singly for a short time the care of the *Constellation*, in the doing of which I beg you to believe I feel no Anxiety except from the consideration of thereby placing it out of your Power to attend to Vessels passing in the offing, and which will induce me to send another Ship to you again the first moment I can do it, and I request if more Vessels than one in addition to *Loire* should arrive that you keep one with you 'till you hear further from me forwarding any Dispatches for me by your Tender.

Such Ships as come up you will please to direct to pass up to the Westward of Tangier Shoal in the Main Chesapeake Channel 'till they bring the South Point of Tangier Island to bear EbN of them, where they are to anchor and their Captains to wait on me for orders. I am &c.

(Signed) G: Cockburn Rr. Adl.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 99–100 (Reel 6).

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N.

Albion off Tangier Island the 5th. June 1814

Sir

In Consequence of the State of the weather to day, when the *Loire* passed, I made her Signal to proceed on to join you instead of anchoring, and I therefore now forward Captain Brown's Orders

As when *Jaseur* gets to you—you will have all our Force in the Chesapeake, excepting only the *Acasta* and *Albion*, which Vessels cannot be moved on Account of Services of higher Importance; I must desire if you find the Force I have now sent to you inadequate to attack the Enemy in the Situation he has occupied in the Patuxent, that you will be good enough to make such Arrangements as may appear to you necessary to insure his being kept within the River, and then direct such of our Force as can be spared to rejoin me without Loss of Time, particularly making a Point of sending to me the People and Boats of this Ship whenever you have resolved on giving up the Idea of acting for the moment offensively, as my other Views and operations within the Chesapeake most urgently require all the Contrivance and Means which I can possibly command with the present limited Force at my Disposal. I am Sir Your very faithful Humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers. Marginalia read: "received 7th June 8 PM."

Engagements at St. Leonard's Creek, 8–10 June 1814

As British reinforcements converged on the Patuxent, Barney recognized that the larger British vessels would hold the advantage in that river's open waters. In a move of questionable wisdom, Barney withdrew his small barges into St. Leonard's Creek where he hoped they would outmaneuver the British vessels. A collision was inevitable. A series of skirmishes, all ending in stalemate, preceded the first Battle of St. Leonard's Creek on 10 June.

CAPTAIN JOSHUA BARNEY, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Patuxent,—St. Leonards Creek. June 9th. 1814

Sir

Since mine of the 3d & 4th. Inst. the enemy has been re-inforced with a Razee[1] and a Sloop of War Brig,[2] I then moved up to the mouth of this creek, at 5 AM yesterday we perceived One ship, Brig, two schooners, & 15 Barges coming up the Patuxent the wind at East, I got the flotilla under way and moved up the Creek about 2 Miles, and moored in line abreast across the channel & prepared for action, at 8 AM the Enemies Barges came up the creek, the ship &c anchored at the mouth of the Creek, a Rocket barge was advanced upon us, we fired several shot to try the distance which fell short,

whilst their Rockets passed over us in every direction, finding myself exposed in such a situation I got my Barges (13 in number) under way leaving the *Scorpion* & gunboats at Anchor, and rowed down upon them when they precepitately fled from their position behind a point, sailed & Rowed off with all their means— we pursued them untill near the Shipping, fired several shot among them, when we returned to our moorings; In the afternoon they came up again, Again threw Rockets, and was again pursued out of the Creek, but this time they were more successfull, as One Rocket fell onboard of *No. 4* of the White,[3] killed one man, set fire to a barrel of musket carthridges, the explosion of which very much injured three men, this kind of warfare is much against us, as they can reach us, when we cannot reach them, and when we pursue them, their light boats fly before us, I expect we will have much of this kind of fighting, and if they continue the Blockade of the Creek, we shall be out of provisions in 12 days, and therefore beg you will order down our purser[4] with Instructions to provide what may be necessary, as my time is taken up night & day in the duties of my command— I send you by an express of Col Taney,[5] this letter & one of the Rockets which went into the ground and did not explode the staff was about 15 feet long, I think Sir if the troops under Major Stuart[6] was ordered up the Patuxent & to cross over at Benidict they would be of great use, as they could occupy the different points of the Creek and annoy their boats very much, I am well convinced that the Enemy are seriously inclined for our distruction, & no doubt will wait for more force, if they cannot succeed with what they have; The Militia under Col Taney are on the alert. I am Sir with great respect Your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

I am this moment informed the Ship &c have entered the mouth of the Creek

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 105 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. Frigate *Loire*.
2. Brig-sloop *Jaseur*.
3. Barney divided his squadron into three divisions. He commanded the red, Lieutenant Solomon Rutter the white, and Lieutenant Solomon Frazier the blue.
4. John S. Skinner.
5. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Taney, Thirty-first Regiment (Calvert County), Maryland militia.
6. Major Alexander Stuart, Thirty-sixth Infantry, U.S.A.

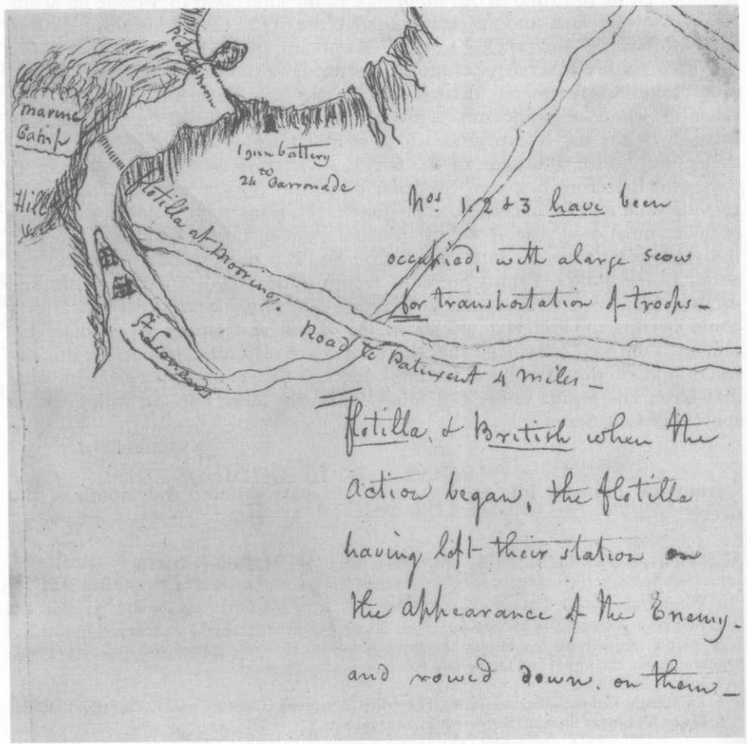
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO CAPTAIN JOSHUA BARNEY, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Captain Commanding the US flotilla
St. Leonards Creek

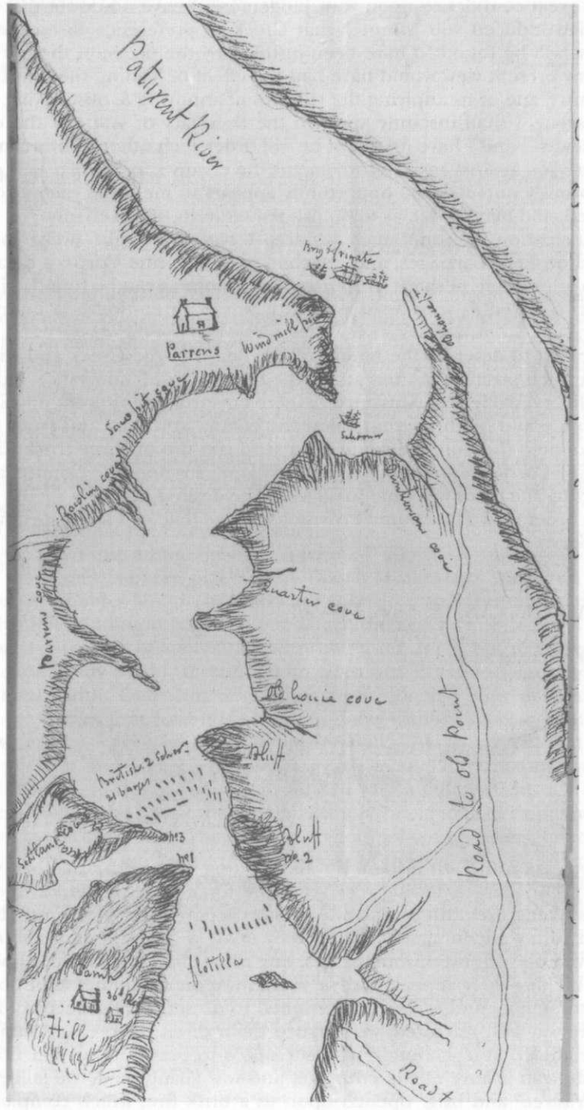
Navy Department
June 10th. 1814.

Sir

I have this moment received your letter of the 9th. and notice the detail of the attempt made by the enemy upon your force in St. Leonard's Creek. Rely-



Joshua Barney's Sketch of the Upper Part of St. Leonard's Creek, 10 June 1814



Joshua Barney's Sketch of St. Leonard's Creek, 10 June 1814

ing with great confidence upon your judgement, I have no doubt that the motives which induced you to enter that Creek in preference to ascending the Patuxent, will be found to have been justified by the occasion though the former in my present view would have had the effect of leading them farther into the Country, and of multiplying the chances of annoying & obstructing them in their descent. I shall instantly apply to the Secretary of War, for the order to Major Stewart,[1] and I have no doubt he will order such other reinforcements, as will secure you against any reinforcements the enemy may receive.— If properly and vigorously pursued, the opportunity appears to me to be such as ought to be desired, and may enable us to punish the temerity of the enemy.

In anticipation of some such service, I had four light twelve pounders mounted on field Carriages, and attached to the Marine Corps; a detachment of which amounting perhaps to 100, as good troops as can be found, will be immediately ordered to your assistance, with two or three twelve poundrs. and a howitzer.

Be pleased to describe the nature of the Banks of the Creek and River, and point out such positions as may afford the best points of annoyance, either with light or heavy Artillery or Musketry. Is there any prominent point upon which a Breastwork could be thrown up below the enemy, and the Guns from the Gun Boats mounted thereon. We could soon send you two or three truck Carriages, if travelling Carriages are not to be had. What means does the Country afford of transporting the Guns without Carriages to the desired point?—

I shall order your Purser[2] and Provisions in due time.— I am respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 149–50.

1. Major Alexander Stuart.
2. John S. Skinner.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonard's Creek, June 11th, 1814.

Sir,

My last was on the 9th instant. On the evening of the 9th, the enemy moved up with twenty barges, having received more force from the 74,[1] at the mouth of the Patuxent. I met them, and after a short action drove them until dark, and returned to my anchorage. Yesterday they made a bold attempt; about 2 P.M. they moved up with twenty-one barges, one rocket barge, and two schooners in tow. On making their appearance, we went down on them; they kept up a smart fire for sometime, and seemed determined to do something decisive. But they soon gave way and retreated; we pursued them down the creek. At the mouth lay the eighteen gun schooner;[2] she attempted to beat out, but our fire was so severe, she ran ashore at the entrance, and was abandoned. We still pursued, until the razee[3] and brig[4] opened upon us a brisk fire, which completely covered the schooner and the flying barges, &c. We must have done them considerable damage.

Printed, Brannan, *Official Letters,* p. 340.

1. *Dragon.*
2. *St. Lawrence.*
3. *Loire.*
4. *Jaseur.*

Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

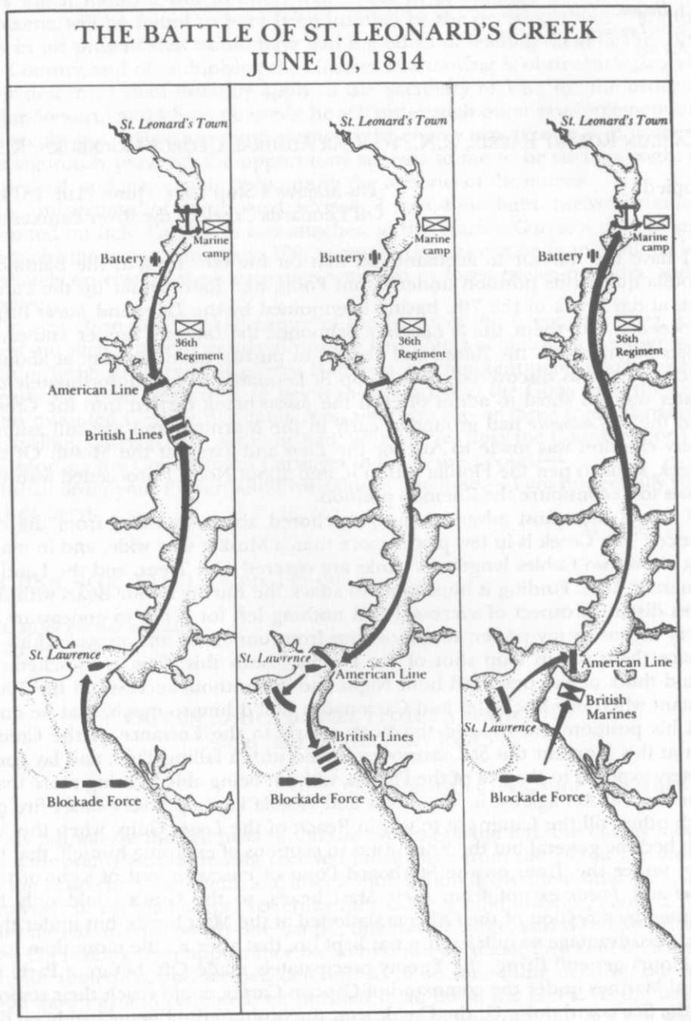
Copied

His Majesty's Ship *Loire* June 11th. 1814
Off Leonards Creek in the River Patuxent

Sir/

I have the honour to acquaint you that on the 6th. Instant, the Baltimore Flotilla quitted its position under Drum Point, and Ran further up the Patuxent. at day break of the 7th. having been joined by the *Loire*, and *Jaseur* Brig I proceeded with them, the *St Lawrence*, Schooner, the *Dragon*'s Tender, and seven Boats belonging to the *Albion* and *Dragon*, in pursuit of the Enemy. at about 9 O'clock[1] he was discovered working up St Leonards Creek, unfortunately the Water was too shoal to admit of even the *Jaseur* being carried into the Creek, and the *St Lawrence* had grounded early in the Morning, and was still ashore, every exertion was made to Anchor the *Loire* and *Jaseur* at the Mouth Of the Creek, so as to pen the Flotilla within it, and about Noon I proceeded with the Boats to Reconnoitre the Enemies position.

I found him most advantageously Anchored about six miles from the entrance.[2] The Creek is in few places more than a Musket shot wide, and in many not above two Cables length. its banks are covered with Trees, and the Land is generally high. Finding it impossible to attack the Enemy in our Boats with the most distant prospect of success, I had nothing left for it but to endeavour by every means in my power, to annoy him from our Boats and provoke him to Chace them within Gun shot of the Frigate, with this View every scheme I could think of was practiced both Night and day without success, till the 10th. Instant when our Rocket[s] and Carronades Gall'd him so much, that he quitted his position and Chaced the Boats nearly to the Entrance of the Creek, just at this Moment the *St Lawrence* grounded with a falling Tide, and lay completely exposed to the fire of the Flotilla, without being able to bring more than One Gun to Act against it. The Boats and Flotilla kept up a very smart fire on each other, till the Latter got to within Reach of the *Loire*s Guns, when the Action became general but the Enemy was so cautious of exposing himself, that he kept under the Trees on the Starboard Point of entrance, out of sight of the *Loire* and *Jaseur* except from their Mast heads, so the Gun's could only be pointed by direction of the Officers stationed at the Mast heads, but under this great disadvantage so quick a fire was kept up, that after a little more than half an Hours general firing, the Enemy precipatately made Off, before a Party of Royal Marines under the command of Captain Carter, could reach their station on the Starboard point Of the Creek, over the position the Enemy had been firing from, our Boats harass'd his retreat and chaced him to his former Anchor[age] where he lay secure defended by strong parties of Regulars and Militia, stationed on each side of the Creek behind the Trees. Notwithstanding the exposed situation of the *St Lawrence*, the Enemy's Gun's were so ill directed



Map 4

that only four Shot struck her, in this skirmish our loss consists of three killed, and two slightly wounded, Indeed this is all the loss we have hitherto sustained from the Flotilla in the different skirmishes we have had with it.

I have great pleasure in acquainting you that the Conduct of every Officer and Man Employed under my Orders, demands my highest approbation. I am much indebted to Captain Brown and Watts for their Zealous and Cordial Cooperation. I have the honour to be Sir Your Obedient & faithful Humble Servant

Robt: Barrie Captain

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 104–5.

1. 8 June.
2. Barney estimated the distance at two miles in his 9 June 1814 letter to Jones. See p. 84. In all likelihood Barney was correct. Shomette, *Flotilla*, p. 219, note 13.

Charles Gordon Adapts to Norfolk Station Duty

Captain Charles Gordon, resigned to coastal service because the British blockade consigned the U.S.S. Constellation *to the Elizabeth River, reluctantly took command of all the naval forces afloat at Norfolk. By May he had manned twenty-one of the twenty-three gunboats, using his ship's complement and men from the Gosport flotilla. While preparing defensively for a possible British attack, Gordon continued to aspire to sea duty. He asked the Navy Department's permission to replenish* Constellation*'s ranks in hopes of taking advantage of a lapse in the blockade.[1] Hearing of Barney's predicament in St. Leonard's Creek in early June, Gordon devised a plan to assist the blockaded flotilla and proceeded on his own initiative up the bay. Rebuffed by superior British forces, Gordon returned to Norfolk and its mundane personnel problems—discipline, retention, recruitment, and festering command issues.*

1. Gordon to Jones, 10 May 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 47 (M125, Roll No. 36).

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Hornet, Craney Island 12th. June 1814

Sir,

Finding that the Baltimore Flotilla is certainly blockaded in the Patuxent, I have determined on attempting a diversion with the *Hornet* & Tenders to raise his blockade if possible— As they have not more than 4 or 5 Ships now in the Bay, A very trifling movement on our part, will induce them to change their position; And I cannot but believe that they are weak upon Tangier Island, & of course apprehensive of being dislodg'd— I am not sufficiently strong to attempt a landing, And I find it impossible to obtain a single man from the Army notwithstanding they have so many Sailors at this Port; And absolutely we shall be overrun with molitia, for they are coming in by hundreds every day—

As I do not contemplate taking any of the Gun Boats with me, and intend keeping on the western shore I can (in the event of being cut off from Norfolk) run my Schooners up one of the rivers & rejoin the Flotilla (by land) at my pleasure; This however I do not apprehend as their force in the Bay is small,— But one Ship (the *Acasta*) is now kept at the Capes, which is mortifying to me while my Ship is laying unmann'd & unprepared— And should anything occur up the Bay or, off the Capes I should expect to see her depart also, while I should require some days to victual & prepare for sea—

I have mention'd this to prepare you for any reports which may circulate on the subject, as it is now very evident they do not intend keeping more than one warm Frigate for the summers Blockade; And as I am short of compliment even when all hands are on board, I feel desirous to be inform'd if it is your intention the ship should proceede to sea in the event of the lower part of the Bay & the Capes being entirely clear of Enemy Ships in order that I may immediately replace the provisions I am now using & have men in readiness to fill the vacancies in the Ship—

On my return from the present contemplated Cruise as we may then calculate on Calms, I shall take my force upon the Shore to annoy the Blockading Ship if practicable—

Could the Commander of the Baltimore Flotilla be acquainted with my determinations he might be prepared to profit by it; And I should feel conscious of effecting something could we possibly form a junction— This appear'd to me so desirable that I was about to despatch one of my fast rowing boats to look for & communicate with him when I heard of the Blockade— Could he get into Potomac & communicate with me, I will be in readiness & will immediately appoint [a] place of rendezvous—

[I] shall tomorrow send an extra officer [in] my lookout boat up the bay with orders to proceede up to St. Marys (should nothing important occur between this & Potomac) And by crossing over by land, try to get an interview with the Commander of the Baltimore Flotilla—[1] I have the honor to be with high respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chas Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 55 (M125, Roll No. 37); bracketed material is supplied in the places where the seal obscures letters.

1. Jones did not respond directly to Gordon about this daring plan but the secretary did inform Barney about it. Jones to Barney, 18 June 1814, p. 103.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Craney Island 29th. June 1814

Sir,

The force of the Enemy now in the Bay are so disposed as to render any movement (up the Bay) impracticable other ways than in Launches— While off Hampton, I had Launches & Cutters sufficient to operate with 150 men; But there Brigs & schooners being all up the Bay, no opportunity the most trifling was offer'd me—

After waiting untill Tuesday last[1] I was induced to return owing to the circumstance of Captn. Kerr (of the *Acasta*) sending in a flag with a frivolous excuse of enquiring for one of his Midshipmen & two men who were driven on shore (in a prize) upon the coast of North Carolina— He however, only saw my 3 Schooners & one Gun Boat, the Launches being conceal'd— Conceiving a change of position important on those occasions (I dropp'd up off Pig point) their old landing near Crany Island, in the night, And left my Launches & one Tender under Old point to prevent any reconnoitering they might attempt— But finding ultimately that the two Frigates[2] kept their position with their Tenders close under their Guns every night, And the men in my Launches requiring rest, having slept [*on*] the Boats & Mess'd upon the Beach for a week or 10 days, I return'd to the squadron, regreting very much that the inactivity of my Force together with its importance to the defence of this place deprives me the satisfaction of assisting Barney in any way at present— By the time my look-out boat reach'd here the point Lighthouse it appears two Ships had join'd Adml. Cockburn at Tangier; Previous to which, & when Capt. Barrie was defeated by Barney I am well satisfied the *Albion* had not half a compliment of men on board; And my officers who had been on board reported her as much lumbered with Mechanicks work Negroes, &c. &c. And disorderly & filthy in the extreme— That would have been my happy moment, with a sufficiency of Launches to have transported 500 of my men unobserved; But the distance was too great for one nights run with my Schooner which determined me on taking the western shore, so as to have concealed myself in the river before daylight had not their force been encreased and a large Ship Anchor'd off Back river on the very day that I arrived in the roads—

By tomorrows mail I will have the honor to enclose a Copy of the charges against Acting sailing master D. Hagan for which he is now in arrest! Also a statement of the distribution of all the sailing masters on this Station—[3] I have the honor to be with high respect Sir, Yr. Obt. servt.

Chas Gordon

P.S. My report from the Bay shore This moment mentions one Frigate from up the Bay & one of the two at the Capes, standing out to sea; so that its probable they are with drawing from the Patuxent

C—G—

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 111 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. 28 June 1814.
2. *Acasta* and *Armide*.
3. For Gordon's charges against Acting Sailing Master David Hagan and his assessment of the other flotilla officers, see Gordon to Jones, 30 June 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 112 (M125, Roll No. 37). To avoid the disruption of a court-martial, Secretary Jones dismissed Hagan, stating his services were "no longer required." Jones to David Hagan, 16 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 378 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

US. Schooner *Hornet*, Lamberts Point July 19th. 1814

Sir

I have the Honor to report, that we are now discharging men so fast from the Crew of the *Constellation*, as well as from the Flotilla that I shall be reduced to

the necessity of laying up several of the Gun Boats in a few days or at least to send them up to the yard so soon as the Enemy may make any threatning movement, as I am only keeping them at present for appearances, with the determination of full manning as many as I can & send the rest out of the way, as soon as an attack on the advance of the enemy is expected.

I have at present a nominal force of twenty Gun Boats & the *Hornet*, when I have not more than men sufficient to full man ten, including two thirds of the *Constellation*s Marines with her crew, which will soon be reduced to the few I have entered since I took the command of her— We this day discharged twenty and average from five to ten per day, In her present good condition for service, And dangerous as must be her present situation in the event of a serious attack here, I have much to regret she cannot be in a constant state of readiness for sea or, for any change of Situation that may offer for the better— Having repeatedly troubled you on this Subject, it is with much reluctance I am again induced to mention it, And confess, I scarcely know what remedy to suggest; But as I feel unbounded interest in this favourite ship; And as a Sailor seldom finds himself at a loss in any situation, I would solicit to be induldged with permission to open a rendezvowz in as many ports or such ports as you may deem proper, for instance all the Southrn. ports, as they may be conveyd here coast ways & through the Canal. And as an inducement to turn the attention of the Sailors from the Army & Letter of Marque Rendezvous's, to those of our service, I would suggest a bounty, to as great an extent, as you may concieve the importance of this ships getting to sea may require, Or even admitting they were only for the defence of this place. As it is allow'd by all who have given an Opinion that much depends upon the floating force— I would rather than be deprived of men, send my Officers to recruit Sailors for the Army, provided I could be permitted to command them in our own element, And if I could not be granted a Bounty Otherwise, It would also be gratifying if I could be permitted, by way of keeping what we have, before they are discharged, to have a general muster of the Men upon this Station, Produce my Shipping articles in person to them all. Offer such Bounty as you may sanction for a full crew of two years men from the present date, relinquishing the ballance of the time they have now to serve, and grant them liberty on shore in Small parties, to spend their Bounty and the pay now due them— Some such course appears to me desirable at this moment to enable me to profit by any change or opportunity which may offer, as I am sure, while but one Ship (now the *Dragon*) remains on the Blockade many circumstances might occur to give me an opening My Launches accompanied a Baltimore Schooner from this place night before last, and saw her safe out without the least difficulty—

With due differance I would remark that the recruiting & travelling expences, of the Crew of this ship as well as the *Adams*, Amounted I presume to at least 10 or 15 Dolls. per man from the time they sign'd untill musterd on board; And if my memory serves me we have had frequent instances in the Navy of a Bounty of 5. 10. 15. & 20 Dollars exclusive of other recruiting & travel expences— This however I do not presume to offer as a motive for my giving it, I allude to the urgency of the occasion, of which you must be the best judge, to prevent our being left destitute of men on the Station If a Bounty of 10 Dollars is considerd too much: And you will sanction my making the proposition to the men upon this station and to open a rendezvous in North Carolina, I am of Opinion if I can be allowd to go as far as 10 Dollars per man including every possible expence, I can man the Ship compleat with a Crew of two years men in a short time[1] I have the Honor to be Sir very respectfully yr. Obt. Servt.

Chas. Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 10 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Jones did not foresee any change in status for the bay-bound *Constellation*, but he recognized the need at this critical time to maintain the ship's complement. He therefore permitted Gordon to recruit seamen in North Carolina, Wilmington excepted, and authorized bounties of $10 for ordinary seamen and $20 for seamen. Jones to Gordon, 22 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 383–84 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain Joseph Tarbell to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U. States Gun Boat *No. 67*
Off Craney Island July 21st. 1814

Sir

Your letter of the 16th Inst.[1] I have had the honor to receive, in answer to which, I have to observe that on receipt of your letter of the 15th of April, wherein you directed me to report myself to Capt. Gordon, as senior officer, and to co-opperate with him for the defence of this station, I waited on him immediately, and produced your letter, which he observed he received one to the same effect.

Notwithstanding this Capt. Gordon assumed the command of every thing afloat, and in all his movements he has never suggested to me any thing whatever, in fact Sir, his Lieutennant has more command than he considers I have and in a late general order he even has gone so far as to deprive me of approving the requisitions for the Flotilla and Sir, I am even deprived of granting an officer, or sending a small boat from the Flotilla on duty without his special permission, now Sir, I would beg leave to ask what situation can I consider myself under. I did forbear troubling the Department but merely to appear before the Honle. the Secretary of the Navy, in order to explain these motives which actuate me. last year this place was well defended, all peace, harmony and unanimity, this year quite the reverse five Masters Mates were put in confinement on board the ship for stating their greivances to the Department, but since ordered to duty, by these proceedings and many other causes prevent the Petty officers & men from re-entering, we are now Discharging a number of them every day, by the last of August there will be but a very few men left, I now have rank as well as Capt. Gordon, & am always ready to defend my countrys wrights, it is Sir a painful task for me thus to complain; but I state nothing but facts I have the Honor to be Sir very respectfully your Obt. Sert.—

Jos. Tarbell

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 16 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Tarbell had written Jones on 13 July requesting permission to visit Washington to discuss his continuing command problems with Gordon. Tarbell to Jones, 13 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 161 (M125, Roll No. 37). Jones refused Tarbell's request and reiterated his 15 April order placing Gordon in overall command. Jones to Tarbell, 16 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 376 (M149, Roll No. 11), and Jones to Tarbell, 15 Apr. 1814, ibid., p. 278.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Norfolk 26 July 1814

Sir

I this day had the Honor to receive yours of the 22d. Inst.[1] and feel gratified for the opportunity you have given me to man my Ship, at this most urgent & important crisis—No exertions shall be wanting on our part—

Two rendezvous's shall be immediately opened in North Carolina (Wilmington excepted) and my personal exertions in this place—

Lieut. Drayton's[2] total incapacity for service has so much reduced that grade in my ship, that since the departure of Lt. Kennedy I have had Mr. Stallings[3] doing Actg. Lieuts. duty, without assuming the uniform or receiving the pay— He is worthy & deserving, has often written me on the subject of several juniors being made over him, but will not trouble you with a complaint, relying on his commander for his character & support Indeed (altho young as we all are) the *Constellation* cannot want for Lieuts with her present Officers— For Mr. Hamersley & Midsn. Davis[4] have also sufficiently my confidence to fill vacancies of Lieuts. when required, & yr. late appointmts. of Midsn. are a great acquisition to the service—

Capt. Tarbell I fear has troubled you on the subject of his command as he has addressed me on the subject in such a manner as to induce me to reply in a possitive and unreserved manner— I will not trouble you at this important period with our correspondence; But assure you that the Service shall not suffer— His authority was not curtail'd untill his arrangements and general system was disapprovd by me. And as I concieved prejudicial to a Force which my Character was responsible for; Indeed I left the whole details of the Squadron to him, such as signing requisitions for supplies granting indulgences &c. &c. untill I had complaints and found it a duty incumbent on me as a responsible Commander. I was not desirous of this trouble and have studiously avoided wounding his feelings; But be assured no difficulties will arise.—

My attention being now call'd more particularly to the Ship untill the enemy shall advance, I shall again vest him with his former authority in the Flotilla, under my general instructions & guidance during my absence or untill he again deviates from what I concieve correct service— I beg I may not be considerd vain, when I say that that force has progressed in its character of respectability, and would be more so with a few more dismissals, As they are, with the exception of four or five, a valuable set of Officers who will do honor to the service.—

Neither of the Warrants could be obtained from those who were dismissed— Fearful Mr. Hagan may intrude himself on you, I inform you he ran from this to avoid a warrant which was issued against him for violating the wife of a petty Officer of the Flotilla whose Husband is now in persuit of him— Mr. Hayman[5] is in my Opinion too worthless a character to find his way to Washington tho I believe he has left this place—

Since reporting the sloop *Earl*[6] of Nantucket, And on delivering up the baggage of the two men who were paroled by Capt. Barrie, we found a portable writing Desk among it which they disclaim'd the Capt. & Supercargo[7] of the Sloop also disclaimed it & observed that it came with Capt. Holmes's[8] baggage— I opened it and found it to belong to one of the Lts. of the *Dragon* It containd several papers, but were unimportant except a few signals— I have the Honor to be with high respect & consideration your Obt. Servt.

Chas Gordon

P.S. From the advice of a Lawyer I have concieved their deposition unimportant, consequently have not sent them on—

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 34 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. See the first note 1, p. 95, for a synopsis of Jones's 22 July letter.
2. Lieutenant Glen Drayton's service at Norfolk began in August 1813. He became ill in January 1814 and died at Norfolk on 4 September 1814. Gordon to Jones, 7 Sept. 1814, p. 305.
3. Charles T. Stallings's midshipman's warrant dated from 16 January 1809. Serving in *Constellation* since 20 May 1812, Stallings was not promoted to lieutenant until 9 December 1814.
4. Thomas S. Hamersley held the rank of sailing master from 14 January 1812. Pollard Davis's midshipman's warrant dated from 15 November 1809. He served in *Constellation* from 25 September 1812 until killed in a duel with Surgeon's Mate Richard C. Gregory on 12 November 1814. Gordon to Jones, 14 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 131 (M125, Roll No. 40).
5. Anthony W. Hayman was appointed a sailing master on 22 April 1813 and served on the Norfolk Station until his discharge on 7 July 1814. Hayman apparently was reinstated briefly because he again appears on the station's muster rolls from 10 May 1815 until his discharge on 15 June 1815. DNA, RG45, Norfolk Station muster and pay rolls, 1807–38 and 1809–26, entry numbers 261 and 269.
6. On 21 July 1814 Gordon reported detaining the sloop *Earl*, a vessel contracted by the citizens of Nantucket. The selectmen of Nantucket sought permission from Admiral Cochrane to obtain provisions and fuel for their destitute island. Gordon to Jones, 21 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 17 and enclosures (M125, Roll No. 38).
7. Jacob Barney was master and part owner of the sloop *Earl*. Peter F. Coffin was the agent for the selectmen of Nantucket.
8. A Captain Holmes carried coal up the Potomac to the Russian minister at Washington, Andrei Ia. Dashkov.

Jones Reassesses the Flotilla's Fate

After the first Battle of St. Leonard's Creek, a strategic dilemma confronted Secretary Jones. The initial euphoria of staving off a British attack on 10 June and maintaining a stalemate led to an optimistic assessment of the flotilla's situation. Jones sent more supplies and marines, and Barney strengthened his position with a small battery. In a series of letters to Barney over a ten-day span, however, Jones reevaluated American and British strategy in the Chesapeake. The bottling up of the American flotilla forced the secretary to question the value of protecting a fleet of barges and leaving Washington and Baltimore, possibly the real British targets, defenseless. Jones, ever the accountant, weighed the worth of bare hulls in deciding the fate of the little American fleet.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Captain Commanding the U S. flotilla
St. Leonard's Creek.

Navy Department
June 12 noon, 1814.

Sir,

I have this moment received yours of yesterday,[1] and mark with pleasure the result of the renewed attack made by the enemy on your flotilla on the 9th. and 10th.—

It is evident you must have done them great damage, particularly the Schooner.[2]

They will no doubt collect all the disposeble force within the Chesapeake, but as our force will doubtless collect at least as fast as that of the enemy, and as no force that he can bring against you in Boats can endanger the flotilla, so long as the Banks of the Creek are protected by our Military, the position appears to me as favorable as any in which we may expect to attack him. I shall be mistaken if ultimately he is not made to suffer extremely for his temerity.—

Lieutenant Miller[3] with a detachment of about 110 Marines, with three light 12 pounders in complete order, set out this morning at day dawn to join you.— They will go by the way of Queen Ann's, as there are no means of passing the Artillery over the river lower down.— He will send an Officer ahead, in order to consult you on the best position for his cooperation. All that may be expected from excellent Officers and Men, you will derive from their services.

I have not seen the Secretary at War since friday, but it is said that two 18 pounders were dispatched from this place yesterday morning, and some infantry to day.— Should you erect a Battery at any point on the Creek or River, shot may be heated with great facility and dispatch by making a simple excavation in the earth and a good large fire. I omitted to mention this to Lieutenant Miller but 12 Pound Ball may be thus heated in a few minutes, and in loading the peice insert a dry wad, and then a damp one, before the Shot; and no accident can possibly happen.—

I have a Letter from Mr. Skinner of the 10th. Inst.— He was to put 30 days provisions on board the *Asp* the following morning for South River, and I have no doubt has himself joined you by this time.—

You will give him instructions to draw either from Baltimore or this place, such supplies as you may require, and if from this place, he will expedite the object by attending to it in person.

I will direct the supply of powder and Cylinders you require, to be dispatched tomorrow for St. Leonards town.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 150–51.

1. Barney to Jones, 11 June 1814, pp. 88–89.
2. *St. Lawrence.*
3. Samuel Miller was promoted to first lieutenant in the Marine Corps on 7 March 1809 and captain on 18 June 1814. He was brevetted a major for his service at the Battle of Bladensburg on 24 August 1814.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonards Creek. June 13th. 1814

Sir,

I had the honor of addressing you on the 11th. Inst. giving you a short detail of our action with the enemy on the 10th, By information, they suffered much, the Large schooner[1] was nearly distroyed, having several shot through

her at the waters edge, her deck torn up, Gun dismounted, and main-mast nearly cut off about half way up, & rendered unserviceable; she was otherways much cut, they ran her onshore to Prevent her sinking, The Commodores[2] boat was cut in two, a shot went through the Rocket boat, One of the small schooners carrying two 32 pounders had a shot which raked her from aft, forward; the boats generally suffered, but I have not ascertained what loss they sustained in men. Since that time they have remained in-active this way, Finding that the masts of my barges was a mark for them over the trees and points of land, I have had them all taken out, the boats are lighter & will row faster, with less danger from the Fire of the Rockets. Major Stewarts men has arrived, he has placed them in different Positions along the creek to annoy, if they venture up,

I have also erected a small battery, (1. 24 lb. Carronade), at the mouth of the branch where the *Scorpion* & Gunboats lay, and have also drove piles across the Creek, with a Boom, so that, should the force increase we have little to fear from an Attack by boats, no matter how numerous.

Yesterday a Gentleman of this County by the name of Parren[3] (a Violent Fed) who lives at the mouth of the creek, came up, and said that himself & Brother had been taken and carried onbd.; That he had been landed from the Commodore, to inform the inhabitants that if they remained at home quietly, they should not be molested, but if on landing he found their houses deserted he would burn them all, as he had done the house of a Mr. Patterson,[4] and the Barn of Mr. Skinner, (our Purser), he also said he had, promised the Commodore after having given such information to return onboard in the evening, he had the Impudence to come where the flotilla lay, and then into the Camp of Major Stewart, where I found him, and on his declaring to me it was his intention to return onboard the Enemy in the Evening, I had him arrested and have him now under guard, where he must remain untill I receive your orders, or the enemy goes down,— several other persons are onboard the enemy, and some Voluntarily, (as I am informed). Saturday[5] and Yesterday, the enemy were employed on the Patuxent river in landing on the Banks to plunder stock &c— it was on saturday evening they burnt the property of Mr. Patterson & Skinner. This Mr. Parren informs me that Commodore Barrie of the *Dragan* alway commanded and is much disapointed at his defeats, for that he had wrote to Admiral Cockburn that if the Admiral would send him a frigate & Brig, he would most assuredly distroy the flotilla, The frigate is the *Acasta*, the Brig the *Jasseur*;[6] They left only 200 men, and one small boat onboard the *Dragon* at the mouth of the Patuxent, so that there must have been in the affair on friday[7] upwards of 800 men, they came with a Band of Music playing, My force, after the bursting of my Gun, & the sinking of the Galley, was twelve Barges and 450 men,

The Militia have all been discharged, except one company, the fact is, their officers (mostly Feds.) did not encourage their men to act, & such conduct only encouraged the enemy to commit depredations along the river— I have the honor to be respectfully, Your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 111 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. *St. Lawrence.*
2. Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

3. The Parran family, Anglicized French Huguenots, settled in Calvert County in 1706 on three hundred acres on the south side of St. Leonard's Creek. John Parran, owner of Spout Farm at the mouth of the creek, is probably the "Violent Fed" to whom Barney is referring.
4. A Mr. Pattison occupied a house just north of Skinner's home.
5. 11 June.
6. Barney is referring to Barrie to Cockburn, 1 June 1814, pp. 77–79, above. Barney meant the frigate *Narcissus* and the brig-sloop *Jaseur*.
7. 10 June.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Commo. Barney

Navy Department
June 14th. 1814—1 PM.

Sir,

Having this instant answered that part of your letter of yesterday, touching the case of Mr. Parren,[1] I have now to notice the remainder. I am gratified with the result of your contest with the enemy on the 10th.— He has doubtless suffered no less in men, than in his Vessels, and I trust before he leaves the Patuxent, we shall have cause to thank him for his visit.

The Marines sat [*set*] out on Sunday morning,[2] and from erroneous information, as to the means of passing the river at Nottingham, they went round by queen Anne's, which has protracted their journey 25 miles, they are I trust, with you by this time. There is a good Scow at Nottingham for passing Artillery.— The two 18 Pounders did not start as I had supposed, but will with a detachment from this place this afternoon.— Your powder and Cylinders are on the way.— Should they continue the blockade of the flotilla, without any any further attempt with their present force, it will be with a design to await the arrival of an additional force from the coast, with which they may attack some other point, while you are locked up.— In this view I have been reflecting what is best to be done, and now give you the result.— I am satisfied that the whole of the Barges may be transported from the head of St. Leonards Creek to the Bay with great facility.— I believe the distance is not more than four miles, and I am told the road is tolerably good and free from any serious impediment.— One of the large Barges stripped of every moveable article will not weigh more than Six tons—about the weight of a Cable for a 44.— Two pair of dray wheels with a stout Boltster and a chock to fit the bottom and raise it clear of the Wheels would carry a Barge. There are plenty of Oxen I am told, and in different places, you have manual force to assist.— Your information on the spot will enable you to test my information and judge of the practicability.—

If it is practicable it will be highly gratifying, and produce an excellent effect, for if you can transport them four miles you may twenty, and thus the enemy will see the futility of any attempt to Blockade you in any of the numerous inlets into which circumstances may force you.—*

Many of our heavy built decked Gun Boats were built in the district of Maine four or five miles from navigation and hauled down by Oxen.—

A recent instance has occurred of a Vessel of 100 Tons being hauled several miles.—

The wheels and whatever else may be necessary for the purpose may be ordered from Baltimore, under the pretext of being intended for Cannon, and it will be well to keep all snug until you are ready for a rapid movement.

The Artillery and infantry will be able to protect you on either side, until the Barges are ready for action on the Bay side. I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

*upon the effect of which, I believe they calculate with great Confidence.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 152–53.

1. After consulting Attorney General Richard Rush, Jones decided to free the suspected spy John Parran because he doubted that a civilian court would convict him. Jones to Barney, 14 June 1814, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 151–52.
2. 12 June 1814.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonards creek June 16th. 1814

Sir,

your dispatch of the 14th. 1:30 PM,[1] was deliverd to me this morning at 6 AM. I have released Mr. Paran, but he chuses to remain as if under restraint for his own purposes. The Marines arrived this evening, I have not seen Mr. Miller, he is encampted about half a Mile up the creek at the town. On the receipt of your letter I sent my Son, Major Barney[2] who has been constantly with me, to examine the grounds & roads from this creek to the Bay, he has returned and reports an excellent level road from the head of the Creek 2½ Miles to the Bay. I see but one thing to prevent carrying your plan into execution, the difficulty presents itself on the Bay shore, there is nothing to prevent the Enemy the enemies ships from laying near the shore, so that we should not be able to launch, Arm, and get away our barges after they are transported, for if we place Artillery to cover us from the shipping, we cannot defend the Blockade, & Rockets, as they throw them One mile further than our shot, & I am well convinced that in four hours after we begin to prepare for transportation, the Enemy will be informed of our intentions, by the people of this district, who are all disafected; however if you think proper we can make the attempt, and send to Baltimore for Wheels, Blocks, falls &c. Since mine of the 13th. the *Narcissus* frigate has come up, The Enemy has come up the creek once or twice after dark, threw a few Rockets & shot, and retired, but with no effect; I find they have four Barges from Admiral Cockburn, with 22 of his Marines all of which was in the Action of the 10th, as one of the Marines who deserted informed me; They have been up the Patuxent, Burning houses & plundering, on both sides yesterday & to day, I do not know whether they mean to attack me as yet, but expect if they do it will be in the night, I am pretty well prepared for them. Col. Carbery[3] is here, his conduct does not please me in more ways than one, he finds much fault publickly to the Inhabitants about my coming into this creek, he seems to have no disposition to give me real assistance, as you will see by the inclosed note, I have just received, The Position he occupied was a fine one, commanding

three points on the creek, the ground very high, and within 400 yards of the flotilla, on whom he could at any moment have fallen back upon, yet sir, last night he withdrew, without giving me any notice whatever, and this evening at 9 oClock sent me the inclosed note,[4] I can expect no support from him, Major Steuart or the men, the fact is, there is no order or dicipline in that Corps, The Col. disafected, the other officers without experience and in two parties, the men under no controle, ranging through the country, committing depredations, on the persons & property of the Inhabitants, leaving their Camp when they please, such sir is my situation at present, which loudly calls for relief. I am Sir with respect your Ob Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 119 (M124, Roll No. 63).

1. Barney is referring to Jones's one o'clock letter, pp. 100–101.
2. William B. Barney, Joshua Barney's son, held a commission as a major in the Maryland militia's Fifth (Baltimore City) Regimental Cavalry District. Serving as his father's aid while the flotilla sparred with the British, William commanded the cutter *Scorpion* during the first Battle of St. Leonard's Creek.
3. Colonel Henry Carbery, Thirty-sixth Infantry, U.S.A.
4. In a short note, Carbery cited fatigue among his men as the reason for withdrawing on 15 June. Carbery to Barney, 16 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, bound out of place with No. 125 (M124, Roll No. 63).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the U S Flotilla
St. Leonard's Creek.

Navy Department
June 18th. 1814. 2 PM.

Sir

I have this moment received your official letter of the 16th. Inst. together with copies of your notes to Colo. Carberry and his notes to you under the same envelope, and at the same time your private Letter of the same date.[1]

I regret to observe the want of cordial Cooperation and of harmony which you describe, for without the most perfect union and energy, we can hope to make but little impression on the enemy. Indeed the result of such a state of things must necessarily encourage the advances of the enemy, and may ultimately prove disastrous.—

It is difficult to account for the retrogade movement of Colonel Carberry, as the alleged motive of seeking quarters in a Barn for the repose of his men, appears to convey but an indifferent idea of the discipline and energy of that Corps. I shall lay the papers before the proper authority, and hope that a remedy may be applied.—

Colo. Wadsworth the Commissary General of Ordnance will be in your vicinity with two long 18 pounders, before this reaches you.— This morning a volunteer Company of Riflemen, and a very fine Company of volunteer Artillery I

understand have marched for the Scene of action, and I think it probable that a detachment of volunteers may march from Baltimore.—

The plan of transporting the Barges overland to the Bay, was not suggested without a view to the possible difficulties you have stated, but my local knowledge was not sufficiently distinct to determine the nature & degree of the obstacles.—

It is for you to determine the practicability of rearming and equipping the Barges on the Bay side in the face of the enemy.— If his heavy Ships can approach the beach within a point blank shot, I should deem it impracticable. The transportation can certainly be effected with great facility and reasonable expedition; and I think it will be well to order from Baltimore, two sets of wheels eight in each set, Vizt. four Wheels geered as close together as they will work, with a boltster and chock to receive the Barge at about one third from each, and thus the boat will be sustained by eight Wheels, say of the size and full strength of dray wheels, and would be drawn by fourteen yoke of oxen allowing the weight of the heaviest Barge and 500 lbs. for each Ox, but in the short portage of 2½ miles the force of your men would supersede the necessity of so many oxen.—

When you have the wheels purchases &c. prepared, you will be the better able to determine upon the expediency of using them upon the plan suggested, but whether or not, they may be converted to another very useful purpose, Vizt. to transport a few of your heavy Guns to any eligible point for a temporary battery, there to be mounted on truck Carriages which can be sent from this place or Baltimore, or by securing two rough Cheeks [*Chocks*] on the boltsters of those wheels, the Guns might be mounted on them for service.—

I wish to know how many Barges you have left in Baltimore of each kind, and in what state of preparation they are. We have one of the large and two of the smaller size Barges at this place ready for service.—

The enemy appear to attach great importance to the Blockade of the flotilla, and Mr. Barclay their Agent has been heard to say, that if you had double your force, the blockade would not be raised. Should the enemy increase his force in the Bay, it may be necessary ultimately to secure your flotilla if practicable, and transfer your men to the Barges at Baltimore and this place, and endeavour to raise the Blockade outside.—

Captain Gordon is now making a diversion in your favour, and has sent I believe an Officer to St. Mary's, to cross over and communicate with you upon the best plan of cooperation, as in collecting their force to blockade you, they raise the blockade of Norfolk, and Captain Gordon has now 23 Gunboats and two or three Schooners &c. with between 6 & 700 men.—[2] I am respectfully &c

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 154–55.

1. The correspondence relating to this interservice dispute can be found in DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 4, Numbers 119, 120, 125, 126 (M124, Roll No. 63) and ibid., Vol. 5, Numbers 1 and 2 (M124, Roll No. 64).
2. For Captain Charles Gordon's plan to divert the British blockade of Barney, see Gordon to Jones, 12 June 1814, pp. 91–92.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonards creek June 20th. 1814

Sir

I had the honor to receive your dispatch of the 18th. 2 PM, yesterday at 3 PM, Since mine of the 18th Inst.[1] by Major Stewart informing you that Col Carbery intended marching his troops, he did actually leave this Place that evening & encamped about 1 mile in the rear, and yesterday moved up the country a few miles from this, a number of his men left behind straggling about the farm, &c. The reports respecting the enemies movements up the Patuxent are various and no dependance to be put in them, it appears that the Brig[2] has moved up above Benedict, that several small schooner (prizes) returned onboard the frigates yesterday, laden with Goods Tobacco, Stock &c and imediately returned up the river again. Deserters, of whom I have had Six from the *Narcissus* say they will wait for troops from Bermuda, but little dependance can be placed in such information, at all events they have kept pretty well out of this creek for some days past, for on friday[3] I moved down the Barges and lay them under cover of a point, & about 10 AM. A Gig came in, and rowed up under the points untill she got within good gun shot, she then discovered us but our round shot was very near distroying her, I saw two Oars cut off and was told, two men fell over board, or jumped over, Several bodies of dead men have floated onshore in the creek and River since the 10th Inst. I observe what you say respecting Wheels &c. and now write to Mr. Beatty to furnish them, with Blocks, falls and other necessary Articles, as we have no means whatever of Assistance at this place.

If three or four truck carriages could be sent on from Washington for 24 pounders, we might make good use of them, there is a fine point below this, called Point Patience where the river is very narrow not more than 200 yards wide, this point will be shewn to Col Wadsworth when he arrives. There are neither ox, horse, or Person residing within several miles of this place, all have ran off from the Enemy, or removed with their effects to avoid the ill treatment & plunder of the 36th Regt. I have been obliged to take the Waggons of the Marine Corps to send for Provisions to South river where it seems Mr. Skinner has received some from Baltimore, I am under the necessity of furnishing the Marines with Rations &c; we are much at a loss for some person to purchase articles & procure supplies, the Waggons want money advanced to them, and horses to ride express, I am not provided with money for that purpose, nor is Mr. Skinner here to make the supplies— The waggon from Washington with powder &c arrived here on Saturday 18th Inst. I shall most cheerfully co-operate with Capt Gordon when I hear from him, or transport my men &c to Washington or Balte., but I am fearfull if I do transport the barges to the bay side, we shall sacrafice the *Scorpion*, 2 gunboats & look out boat, if left without troops to protect them—

I have now here

3. 75 feet barges carrying long 24 lb. & 42 lb. Carronades
4. do ..... long 18 & 32 lb. do.
2. 50 feet do ... long. light 18 & 24 lb. do.
4. 50 do do ..... long 12 & 24 lb. do.
Look out boat ..... 18 lb. Gunnade
Galley ..... 18 lb. Gunnade

Scorpion 1 long 24 lb., 1 18 lb. Gunnade & 2 12 lb. Carronades
2 Gunboats, Guns taken out for service here, & 1 long 24 lb. left at Baltimore. There is at Baltimore
8. 50 feet Barges with 1 long 12 lb. & 18 lb. Gunnade
3. Small barges bot. [*bought*] of City with Sixes & 12 lb. Carronades these barges are ready to receive Men.

A few Shells for my 42 lb. & 32 lb. Carronades could be used to advantage over the land & points where the ships lay, or a 68 lb. Carronade with Shells would be a formidable Instrument to move them.

We have several men disabled by Accidents & some sick, The Marine Corps have no surgeon, My Doctor[4] is much engaged, a Surgeons mate[5] if at Washington to assist him would be desirable, if none at Washington I will order down a Young Gentleman who attends, Gratis, my sick at the Lazaretto at Baltimore. I am Sir. Respectfully your Ob Servt.

Joshua Barney

N B. I had engaged a Waggon to go for provisions but Col. Carbery, pressed her into his Service I have inclosed my letter to Mr. Beatty, please to correct it if necessary.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 4 (M124, Roll No. 64). Several of the pages were bound out of order.

1. Barney to Jones, 18 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 1 (M124, Roll No. 64).
2. *Jaseur.*
3. 17 June 1814.
4. The muster roll for the Chesapeake Bay flotilla lists Thomas Hammilton as surgeon from 22 December 1813 to 1 April 1815. Barney refers to him in later letters as Hamilton.
5. Anthony Thompson is listed on the flotilla's muster roll as serving from 19 July to 7 September 1814 as a surgeon's mate.

[Enclosure]

James Beatty Esqr. St. Leonard creek June 20th. 1814

Sir

You will please to order without delay 16 Wheels the size & full strength of Dray wheels to be fitted as the fore Wheels of a Waggon with a Simple Tongue, Also—

4. 18 Inch threefold blocks. 4. 18 Inch double blocks.
4. 18 Inch Single blocks. 2 Carreening falls for Do.
4. towlings[1] 4½ Inch 120 fathom long
2 Coils of Lanyard Stuff
3 Coils of 15 thread rattling[2]
50 lb. of 10 Inch Spikes
50 lb. of 8 Inch do.
50 of 7 Inch do.
50 lb. of large nails—these articles to be sent down the bay as low as possible, to South river, West river, Herring bay or Plumb Point, according to circumstances, If a number (say 5) of heavy mill Waggons, could be procured at Baltimore to bring them down and afterwards to ply between this place, and where

my provisions may be landed, and for other Purposes it would be of Importance, Mr. Skinner is now above to send forward provisions, as my force has increased by the arrival of the Marine Corps & I expect other men of the flotilla from Balte. we shall continue to want provisions, which must be kept under forwardness to our relief— I am Sir your Ob Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 4, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Towlines.
2. Ratlines.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding US Flotilla
St. Leonard's Creek.—

Navy Department
June 20th. 1814.—

Sir

The force of the enemy present & accumulating in and near the Patuxent, either for the real or ostensible purpose of destroying or blockading the flotilla under your command, calls for a deliberate view of the motive and object of the enemy, in order to determine decisively and promptly upon the course which the public interest and sound policy may render it expedient to pursue on our part.—

There is little doubt that the enemy is concentrating in your vicinity, not only all the disposable force in the Chesapeake, but has ordered reinforcements from the Coast if not from Bermuda.— Such a force will either accomplish his object, if the destruction of the flotilla be in reality the object, or will require a corresponding increase of force on our part for its protection.— This force must be drawn chiefly from this place and Baltimore, and thus abstract an essential part of the defensive means of those Cities, including a large portion of Artillery.— To act with effect the greater part of this force must operate on the narrow peninsula formed by the Chesapeake, the Patuxent, and St. Leonard's Creek, the isthmus of which is not more than two miles wide, on the Bay side of which the enemy may land a body of men in the night and attack your rear, while another body in cooperation with his Barges and light Craft may assail you in front; thus jeopardizing all the force in the Peninsula, and exposing the flotilla to his musketry and artillery from the banks of the Creek

Suppose however he does not choose to hazard an attack, but shall be content to blockade the flotilla, and thus employ its whole force, together with the military, collected for its protection, in mere measures of defence; which the presence of two of his Ships will accomplish, while all his Barges and light Craft may, be employed depredating in every other quarter unmolested.—

But if his force should be very considerable, his apparent design upon the flotilla may serve to mask a rapid movement upon this City or Baltimore.—

He may ascend the Patuxent to Nottingham, and landing within twenty four miles of this City, reach it by a forced march in a few hours, and in the absence of a principal part of its defence, accomplish its destruction and return to his fleet before a sufficient force could be collected, either to repel his approach or cut off his retreat. A few hours would also carry him to the vicinity of Baltimore, where in the absence of the flotilla, he would command without molestation the whole of the Patapsco below the range of the Guns of Fort McHenry, and land on either side his forces, where his Rockets could be thrown into the Fort and Town, secure from the range of the Guns of the Fort.—

He certainly appears to attach much more importance to the blockade of a few Barges, than the distinct and intrinsic object can justify— Hence I believe he has other and greater designs.—

These are serious views of the subject, and demonstrate that our object in maintaining the defence of the flotilla, in order to justify our perseverence in that course, should be commensurate with the importance of the objects which are thus exposed to hazard.—

That some public sensation might be excited by the voluntary destruction of the flotilla, is very probably, but that could not sustain for a moment the force of just explanation. Let us examine the extent and nature of the object to be defended, and the consequences of its abandonment.— If all the armament & every moveable equipment of the flotilla was removed to a place of safety, the value would stand thus—

Hull of the cutter *Scorpion*	$3000"
Two Gun Boats, Hulls absolutely nothing being old and so sluggish as to endanger any force they may act with, and are better burnt than preserved.	
The bare Hulls of Six Barges, large Size, may be contracted for, to be built in a fortnight at $2000 each	12000"
Ditto of 7 Small Size Barges . . . . . do. at $1500 "	10500"
Extent of the loss by voluntary destruction	$25,500"

This is but the cost of a single Baltimore Schooner, which nobody would think of defending even at the expense already incurred, and if we continue to defend the flotilla in its present position, more than its whole value will be expended every fortnight, besides being deprived of the invaluable services, and perhaps of the lives of those employed in its defence.— The possible chance too of some of the Barges falling into the hands of the enemy ought not to be lost sight of.— Their loss would be nothing compared with the consequences of such formidable weapons of annoyance in the hands of the enemy; Our loss then will be merely the pecuniary amount of the bare Hulls of the Flotilla.—

The men can be immediately transferred to the other Barges which are ready to receive them.— These considerations have induced the determination to destroy effectually the whole of the flotilla under your command, after stripping them of every moveable article, which you will transport as soon and as conveniently as possible to Baltimore for the equipment of other Barges.—

The Agent at Baltimore[1] will have orders to contract immediately for the building of five large Barges with all possible dispatch.—

As soon as you have accomplished the destruction of the flotilla, and taken the necessary measures for the safety & transportation of the Stores; You will send to this place a sufficient number of officers and men to man one large and

two small Barges, and a new Schooner[2] of 100 tons just built and equipped at this Navy Yard.

The Schooner mounts one long 18 Pr. pivot Gun, and Six 12 Pd. Carronades.— The residue of your Officers and men you will order to Baltimore to man the Barges at that place, when the force from this, will join you as soon as possible.—

Should the enemy have changed his position so as to afford a clear indication of an opening for your escape, you will suspend the execution of this order for a short time, otherwise you will carry it into execution forthwith.— I am respectfully Sir your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

P S. The transportation of the Barges across the Isthmus to the Bay, as suggested in my former letter, could certainly be accomplished with ease, but if the enemy's Ships can lay within gun shot of the Bay shore, according to your information, the rearming and equipping of the Barges under his guns, would be impracticable.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 155–58.

1. James Beatty.
2. *Lynx.*

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonards creek. June 21st. 11 AM. 1814

Sir.

I have just received your dispatch of Yesterday, and shall instantly commence the preparation to carry it into execution, I acknowledge the justness of the reasoning, and the precaution in your orders, but I feel a depression of Spirits on the occasion, indescribable: I must be cautious in mentioning to my Officers & Men the final result, they are in high spirits and anxious to meet the enemy, who we look on as defeated & Beaten, I shall break the matter to them as we progress: We shall want waggons from above (none here) to transport the materials which will be great, The Cannon will be difficult to remove and if left here will be rendered useless by the disafected Inhabitants, as has been the case at Bendict. I had furnished Major Stuart with a 12 lb. Carronade when in St. Maries, he had it brought to Benidict on his way to join me, where some Villians spiked it, I conceive the best mode will be for me to forward our Articles towards Herring bay. West & South river, there to be embarked (if out of danger) for Baltimore, sending one party direct to Washington to mann the three barges at that place, nothing will detain me but the means of transportation, The enemies Brig[1] and several small schooners (prizes) laden with Plunder cheifly Tobacco went down the Patuxent yesterday, I suppose to deposit their cargoes & return This morning the other schooners & Barges have gone up towards Benidict, The two frigates[2] & Large schooner[3] lays at the mouth of the creek. I am respectfully your Ob Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 5 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. *Jaseur.*
2. *Narcissus* and *Loire.*
3. *St. Lawrence.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the US flotilla
St. Leonard's Creek.

Navy Department
June 21st. 1814.—

Sir

I herewith enclose a copy of the order of the Secretary of War to Colo. Wadsworth, by which you will observe that a battalion with some heavy peices has been ordered from Baltimore, and that Colo. W. is directed to examine point Patience, and if found a commanding position to erect a Rampart thereon, with which and the field Artillery on both sides the river, it is hoped to annoy effectually, if not prevent the return of the Ships, now above that point.

If this plan or any other which may promise a successful result, shall be adopted, you will suspend the execution of my order of yesterday until an experiment shall be made, or the project abandoned.—

Colo. Wadsworth will see and confer with you on the subject, and it certainly would be very satisfactory, if any decisive course could be adopted, to terminate the Blockade, and spare the destruction of the flotilla; but the continuance of the present state of things, is altogether inadmissible; and unless some alternative shall speedily occur, you will carry into execution my orders of yesterday. I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W. Jones.

P S. I have this moment, 3 PM, received yours of the 20th. the person who brought it, having been injured by a fall, cannot immediately return. If the enemy could be driven below the mouth of the Creek, so that the flotilla could pass up the river, the Vessels could be placed in safety, and the Crews transferred to other Barges.—

This however can only be done by a force on shore.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 159.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

St. Leonards creek June 22d. 1814

Sir.

At 11 AM. I received your letter of yesterday I was at that moment onshore carrying into Execution your order of the 20th. I had dismantled the *Scorpion,*

two gun boats, Galley, look-out boat, & the Six fifty feet barges, every article was onshore under tents ready for transportation when waggons should arrive, I instantly gave orders for all the guns to be again reshipped with the necessary Ammunition & prepared for Action, it is now 2.30 PM and every barge and the *Scorpion* is ready. I will not re-arm the gun boats. should an occasion present, by arrival of any force in troops, so that we can drive the enemy from the mouth of the creek, I will push up the Patuxent, according to your wish, which I now flatter myself will be done. Yesterday morning (I am informed) the *Dragon*, Brig,[1] schooner & Prizes went down the Bay, the large Schooner,[2] (again repaired) & a number of Barges went up the Patuxent, we are left with the two frigates[3] to blockade us.

As I have all the sails, Rigging, water casks and other articles onshore, and which I shall not want, even if I get up the river, I will have them transported up the Country, so that let the worst come, I shall have very little else, than our Guns & ammunition to send away, I have fixed on a place about 12 miles from here, Huntington Court house for a deposit, where I have sent Mr. Rutter with a guard to receive the Articles, also to take charge at that place of what provisions may arrive from Baltimore, it is situated about 3 miles from the head of Huntington Creek, and I believe more out of danger than if further up, and quite convenient to me in both respects; my only difficulty will be, if I am under the fatal necessity of distruction, to get off my heavy guns, the only mode I see is for Mr. Beatty to send down with Bread &c. several of the large Baltimore mill waggons, they & they only can effect the transportation of my long 24s. & 18 pounders. I am Sir, respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 6 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. *Jaseur.*
2. *St. Lawrence.*
3. *Narcissus* and *Loire.*

Recall of Blockading Force

By mid-June 1814, Admiral Cockburn, like Secretary Jones, was reevaluating his strategy in the Chesapeake Bay. After strengthening the force blockading Joshua Barney, to the detriment of the blockading squadron at the mouth of the bay and the establishment of the Tangier Island base, Cockburn decided to recall this concentrated force and leave a minimal one to bottle up the commodore. Meanwhile, Captain Barrie initiated raids against Benedict and Lower Marlborough, hoping a pillaging campaign would draw the American flotilla out. With Barney neutralized in St. Leonard's Creek, Cockburn decided it was an opportune time to order Dragon *to Halifax for refitting after its long duty in the bay. Captain Thomas Brown of* Loire *assumed command of the squadron blockading the flotilla.*

In the last week of June 1814, Cockburn resumed his correspondence with Cochrane after a five-week hiatus. The rear admiral attributed the lull to the expectation that Cochrane would be joining him in the Chesapeake at any time. In the meantime, as the commanding officer on the spot, having up-to-date knowledge of local exigencies, Cockburn took it on himself as occasion justified to overrule the absent vice admiral's orders and reinforce his own squadron.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N.

Albion in the Chesapeake 17th. June 1814

Sir

I have to request so soon as you receive this Letter that after making such Arrangements as may appear to you requisite for securing the Retention of the Baltimore Flotilla within the Patuxent you will without further delay rejoin me at this Anchorage in the *Dragon* bringing with you also such other of our Force as may not be absolutely required for the Duty above specified the charge of which you will be pleased to give over to Capt. Brown of the *Loire*— I am &c.

(signed) G Cockburn Rr. Adl.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 128–29 (Reel 6).

CAPTAIN ROBERT BARRIE, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

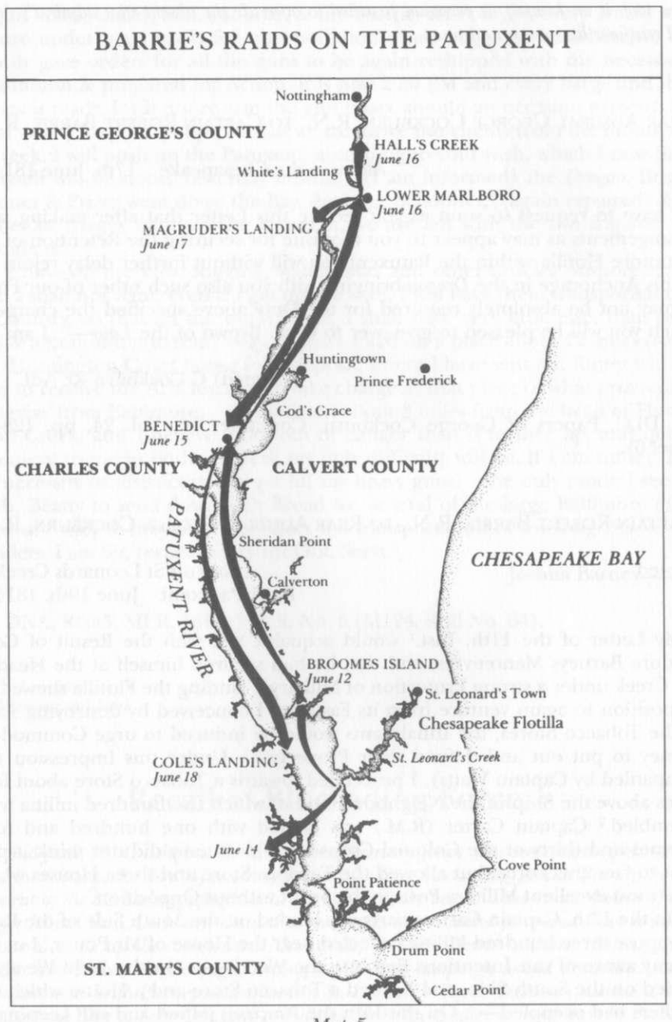
Copied

Loire off St Leonards Creek River Patuxent June 19th. 1814

Sir

My Letter of the 11th. Inst.[1] would acquaint You with the Result of Commodore Barneys Manœuvres, and that he had secured himself at the Head of the Creek under a strong Protection of Military, finding the Flotilla shewed no Disposition to again venture from its Fastness, I conceived by destroying some of the Tobacco Stores, the Inhabitants would be induced to urge Commodore Barney to put out and defend their Property— Under this Impression (accompanied by Captain Watts), I proceeded towards a Tobacco Store about four Miles above the Ship in the Neighbourhood of which five hundred militia were assembled.[2] Captain Carter (R.M.) was landed with one hundred and forty Marines and thirty of the Colonial Corps— The Enemy did not think it prudent to face this Force, but allowed the Tobacco Store and three Houses which were most excellent Military Posts, to be burnt without Opposition.

On the 13th. Captain Carters party was landed on the South Side of the River to oppose three hundred Militia collected near the House of Mr Prater,[3] but the Enemy aware of our Intentions fled into the Woods— On the 14th. We again landed on the South Side, and burned a Tobacco Store and a House which the Soldiers had occupied— On the 15th the *Narcissus* joined and still keeping in View the Probability that the Inhabitants would force the Flotilla out to protect them, I determined to proceed up the River with three Divisions of Boats, the first consisting of five, commanded by Captain Watts, the second of three by Lieutenant Alexander, the third of three by Lieutenant Urmston, in these I embarked about one hundred and Sixty Marines, and thirty of the Colonial Corps— I also took with me the *Dragons* Tender— We left the *Loire* at one



Map 5

o'Clock and in a few Hours arrived at Benedict, here a Party of Regulars were station'd who fled on our approach, leaving several Musquets—Knapsacks, and Part of their Camp Equipage behind them, they also left a Six Pounder which was spiked— The Inhabitants deserted the Town and removed their effects— We found a Store containing about three Hundred and Sixty Hogsheads of Tobacco, leaving Lieutt. Fitzmorris (an active zealous Officer) in the *Dragon*s Tender to protect this Store from the Enemy, I pushed on towards Marlborough where I understood there were several Stores of Tobacco and other Property, and as Marlbro: is near the Seat of Government, I thought an Attack on this Town would be a sad Annoyance to the Enemy and oblige the Regulars and Militia to try their Strength with us, but I was deceived; as both Militia and Inhabitants made off to the Woods, and we were allowed to take quiet Possession of a Town admirably situated for Defence, here we passed the Night without Molestation though only eighteen Miles from Washington— In the Morning I loaded a small Schooner with Tobacco, and having plentifully supplied ourselves with Stock, I burned Tobacco Stores containing two thousand five hundred Hogsheads of this valuable Article, and then embarked— From some Slaves who came down to us I received Intelligence that about three hundred and sixty of the 36th. Regt. and a Party of Militia were collected on some high Cliffs on the narrowest Part of the River to cut off our Retreat, as these Cliffs afforded a secure Ambush to annoy the Boats from, I landed Captain Carter with his Party to take the Enemy in Flank should he shew himself, but the Marines were allowed to traverse the Skirts of the Cliffs and embark without Molestation, tho' soon after they were embarked the Enemy shewed himself and fired a few Volleys out of Gun Shot; When we arrived off Benedict I found Lieutenant Fitzmorris had completely kept the Enemy at Bay, and leaving him with a few Boats to guard the Town and Ferry I returned on Board the *Loire* where I had the Honor to find your order of the 17th. Instant.

I am aware that the Nature of the Service I have been obliged to detail has renderd my Narrative extremely prolix, but I must yet trespass on your Patience to assure You of my fullest Approbation of the active obedient and zealous Conduct of every Officer and Man under my orders,

I received from Captains Brown, Lumley & Watts every Assistance I could expect from Gallantry, Zeal, and hearty Cooperation, the same Feeling animated all; Captain Carter of the Marines on this Occasion and on every other where his Services have been required, conducted himself like an active, able, and judicious Soldier; Lieutenant Urmston of the *Albion* commanded a Detachment of the Boats and I have great Pleasure in reitterating the Assurances I have given You of his meritorious Conduct— Lieutenant Alexander of the *Dragon* who commanded the third Division of the Boats continues to merit in the fullest Extent the high Encomiums you were pleased to express of his Conduct, when he had the Honor to be the Senior Lieutenant employed under you in the different Attacks up the Susquehanna— Lieutenants Dickinson, Marshall Fitzmorris, Hoare, Wright & Mr George Pearson who commanded in the heavy Boats acquitted themselves fully to my Satisfaction, and I am happy of again having this opportunity of bringing Mr Pearsons Services under your Notice— On every Occasion where the Marines were landed Lieutenant Hawkins commanded the Advance, his active, zealous, and intrepid Conduct justified my so employing him, at the same Time allow me to assure You that the Officers &

Marines belonging to the *Albion, Loire,* & *Narcissus* acquitted themselves with the utmost Credit.

You will be happy to hear that the Colonial Corps conducted themselves with the utmost Order, Forbearance and Regularity, and they were uniformly Volunteers for the Station where they might expect to meet their former Masters

It is with Pleasure I acquaint You that not an Instance has occurred of Drunkenness tho' every House we enterd was amply supplied with Spirits. I have the Honor to be Sir Your most obedient and Very humble Servant

Robt: Barrie Capt

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 106–10.

1. See pp. 89–91.
2. This incident occurred on 12 June 1814.
3. Barrie probably meant Plater, as that St. Mary's County family lived at "Sotterly," an estate overlooking the Patuxent River.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Sir Edward T. Troubridge, R.N.

23d June 1814

Dear Sir

I beg you to believe that it is not without the greatest Distress and Anxiety I feel myself called upon by the Exigencies of the Service to annul for a moment the pleasanter orders under which you were acting from the Commander in Chief,[1] and in Lieu thereof to employ *Armide* on a Duty so much less agreeable to you, but we all owe it to our Country to sacrifice our private Feelings, to the general Good—And I am sure if I were not here, and you were in Fact the Senior Officer, you would not leave the *Acasta* alone under the existing Circumstances and with such superior Force of the Enemy so near to her—much less would you give up all we have open to us in the upper Part of this Bay, to concentrate the whole in Lynhaven the only Alternative left me, in the Event of my complying strictly with orders, certainly written by the Commander in Chief, whilst ignorant of the rapid increase of the Enemys offensive means within the Capes— Captain Barries Report makes the Flotilla now blocked up in the Patuxent amount to 24 Vessels averaging about 60 men each, having a Regiment attached to them— there are four large Sloops of light Dft of water with 4 or 5 Guns of a Side, the others carry a long 24 Pr. each and are tolerably well handled & managed, this Force therefore he states cannot be secured in its present inoffensive Position with less than two Frigates and a Brig or Schooner[2] which Force he has therefore left there, I have there but one other Frigate to guard this Island (which I cannot now give up without Permission from the Comm in Chief for so doing) & to keep up the Communication between Lynhaven and myself as I must now [*proceed*] in this Ship[3] to the higher Parts of the Chesapeak in Consequence of the *Dragon* being orderd into Port and my Judgement dictating to me the Propriety of complying with the order relating to her in Preference of those regarding the Frigates[4] as she is short of Provisions Stores &ca of every Description in which you are of Course all of you complete, added

also to the Consideration that you have been lately refreshed in Port, and she has been out nearly a year— I owe it however to Capt. Barrie to add that seeing the Difficulties to which I am reduced for Force, and how much the Honor & Advantage of our Country require an Increase of it here at this moment, he has most handsomely offered and indeed pressed me to allow him to stay also, but the great Deviations I have been obliged to make in the Comm in Chiefs Arrangements imperiously calling on me to communicate with him thereon, I have for the Reasons I have before hinted & on other Considerations withstood his very disinterested & ready offer & directed him to proceed in Conformity with the Com. in Chiefs orders into Port, but carrying my Dispatches to him at Bermuda prior to his going to Halifax, all therefore which I find it in my Power to do to meet your wishes, is to send the order which I now do to Capt. Kerr to permit of your proceeding according to your former Orders on the Arrival of any Ship in Lynhaven Bay which will make him equal to cope with the Enemys Force threatening him from Norfolk

I have been led perhaps rather more into Detail on this Subject than was necessary, but I wish to impress upon you that nothing but the Paramount Call of what I conceive to be my Duty to my Country & to the Commr. in Chief himself, could have induced me to detain you one minute & you will perhaps understand better by & Bye, when you have had a few heavy & responsible Charges entrusted to you, that which I at present feel & by which I am governed in my Conduct towards you. I am Dr. Sir

G Cockburn

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 25, fols. 21–23 (Reel 7).

1. Admiral Cochrane had ordered Troubridge to cruize off Nantucket. Cochrane to Troubridge, 25 May 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 311–12 (Reel 9).
2. Frigates *Loire* and *Narcissus*; brig-sloop *Jaseur*; schooner *St. Lawrence.*
3. *Albion.*
4. Probably *Armide* and *Narcissus.*

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Albion in Tangier Bay 25 June 1814

My dear Sir

I have to thank you for your private Letters by the last four Ships which have touched here *Saturn Endymion Narcissus* & *Severn*,[1] but my want of means of communicating with you has occasioned my public Correspondence with you to accumulate to such an extent that I will not now trouble you at any length, the more especially as in your last of the 11 Inst. you give me to hope that I shall have the Satisfaction of seeing you so very soon, and I full well know how much more is to be explained in half an Hour's Conversation than in a Volume of Letter writing.

My public Letters[2] will inform you of all our late Operations and how sharply and unexpectedly Jonathan has exerted himself in putting forth his Marine Ar-

maments in this Bay and how much I have been puzzled to cut & contrive to meet him at all Points and cause all his Efforts to recoil on himself, I trust My dear Sir you will be satisfied with our Exertions, and can truly assure you that every man has done his best, had I had more force at my disposal more should have been done but as it is, this last Month has cost the Enemy around us more than a Million of Dollars, and I have his great Armament fast where it can do no harm but to its Friends and is exposed to certain Destruction whenever force enough arrives to attack it— Captn. Barrie will probably have to deliver to you my Dispatches indeed I hope it may so happen as he can give you every particular respecting the Situation of the Flotilla & of the Force requisite or best adapted for destroying it— the Bombs Ships are in my Opinion the first & principal requisite, the Marines the next; I like the description of Force you now have with you far better than that which was here last year, it is of a much handier & less ceremonious kind.

I hope you will be induced to push up towards the Patuxent or their Islands without stopping in Lynhaven, that the Armament may arrive before the Accounts of it— I am decidedly of Opinion that about the Seat of Government & in the upper parts of the Chesapeak is where your Operations may be commenced to most Effect—but the Country is in general in a horrible State it only requires a little firm & Steady Conduct to have it completely at our Mercy— I beg you to weigh in your Mind the reasoning in my last Letter to Coll. Barclay, and to make up your Mind how you chuse us to act on the subject of their Militia Men, much will turn on this[3]

I hope you will be gratified at learning by my public Letters how uncommonly and unexpectedly well the Blacks have behaved in the several Engagements in which they have now joined with us, & though one of them was shot & died instantly in the front of the others at Pungoteake it did not daunt or check the others in the least but on the contrary animated them to seek revenge Mr. Hammond however has them in excellent order & entirely prevents their committing any improper outrages, he really deserves much Credit for his Care & Management of these People, & I trust you will be inclined to do something for him

I do not think we want recruiting Parties from the West India Regiments, as I much prefer your Idea of forming a Corps of Colonial Marines the Name by which they are now known and I assure you I should be most happy to have a Proportion of them embarked in the *Albion* in lieu of our own Marines, they are stronger Men and more trust worthy for we are sure they will not desert whereas I am sorry to say we have Many Instances of our Marines walking over to the Enemy

The fatigues we have undergone here & the sudden changes of the weather from excessive Heat to Coolness has tried our Constitutions a little, I have been unwell but am now better again— Captn. Ross however of this Ship has suffered so much that I have been obliged to give him leave of absence to go into Port in the *Dragon*, in the hope that a few Weeks recreation & better Air may bring him about again, I trust you will approve of my having so done Any Commander who has a mind to act here during his Absence I shall gladly receive.

Dragon is loaded literally with Prize goods & I have still, more here than I know what to do with, I hope you will have some Transports with you fit to take it in, you see we have not been quite Idle even in this way—

Have you heard of the Change in the Admiralty? Mr. Canning is first Lord— Lord Melville is gone back to his board of Controul & Lord Buckingamshire is Lord President—[4] Our latest Paper is to the 17th. of June—Buonaparte had embarked at St Tropez for Elba & every thing was quiting on the Continent even faster than Could have been hoped or expected, [*Lor*]d Wellington & Lord Harrowby [*torn*] to be our Ministers at the general Congress, and the latter is to remain as our Ambassador in Paris—[5]

I enclose herewith some of our latest Papers and in anxious hope of sooning seeing you the Bomb Ships & Marines— I remain My dear Sir Most faithfully & truly your's

G: Cockburn

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 135–39.

1. Cockburn is referring to Cochrane's letters to him from April to June received via *Saturn* on 14 May, *Narcissus* on 10 June, *Endymion*, on 17 June, and *Severn* on 24 June.

2. Cockburn's public letter number nineteen of 25 June 1814 follows; the other public letter of this date is in UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fol. 87. This latter letter related Lieutenant George C. Urmston's destruction of an American post near Chesconessex Creek.

3. Cockburn is probably referring to his letter of 8 June to the agent for British prisoners in America, Thomas Barclay. Cockburn contended that off-duty American militiamen should not be considered noncombatants if captured. According to Cockburn, the American government considered all males between twelve and forty-five to be in the militia and capable of defending the coast, thus releasing the regular army for action in Canada. Cockburn to Barclay, 8 June 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 111–26 (Reel 6).

4. Cockburn was misinformed about the change at the Admiralty. George Canning did not replace Viscount Melville as First Lord. Robert Hobart, 4th Earl of Buckinghamshire, was president of the Board of Control from 1812 until his death in 1816.

5. This is a reference to the Congress of Vienna, which convened in the fall of 1814 to settle issues relating to the disposition of the French Empire. Although each nation that had participated in the war with France sent plenipotentiaries to Vienna, the four powers that had overthrown Napoleon—Austria, Britain, Prussia, and Russia—took the lead in negotiations. Lord Castlereagh headed the British delegation at Vienna. The Duke of Wellington later replaced him. The Congress of Vienna concluded its deliberations in June 1815. Dudley Ryder, 1st Earl of Harrowby, was a minister in Lord Liverpool's administration from 1812 to 1827.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 19 *Albion* in the Chesapeake
the 25th. June 1814

Sir,

I have the Honor to report to you that in pursuance of the System which I stated to you (in my last Communication of 9th May by *Lacedæmonian*)[1] I had thought most advisable to pursue here, for distracting and annoying the Enemy's Attention, Means, and resources; I caused (soon after the sailing of the *Lacedæmonian*) some Excursions to be made up the Severn, York, and Back Rivers, which however were not attended with any Consequences beyond that of harrassing the Enemy and therefore do not require being further detailed to you; On the 28th May having learnt that the Enemy had erected a Battery and established a Post at a Place called Pungoteake not far from this Anchorage. I

determined on attempting to Surprize the Guard and destroy the Work, On which Service therefore the Boats of the *Albion* and *Dragon*, proceeded in the Night of the 28th. under the immediate Command of Captain Ross of this Ship who very handsomely volunteered his Services on the occasion, and I have much Pleasure in adding that tho' they failed in the first part of the object (owing to the Wind and Sea getting up and preventing their reaching the place before daylight) yet they completely succeeded in the latter Point bringing off with them a very handsome 6 Pounder Field Piece after destroying the Battery Guard House &c. &c. in the Face of the whole Militia Force of the Neighbourhood; herewith I transmit for your more particular Information the official Report[2] of this Gallant little affair, and have much Pleasure in congratulating you on the Conduct of our new raised Corps, the Colonial Marines, who were for the first time, employed in Arms against their old Masters on this occasion, and behaved to the admiration of every Body.

On the 30th. May I was on the point of sending off an Expedition of similar Nature against a place called Cherrystone further to the Southward, under the immediate Direction of Captain Barrie, when I received Intelligence by one of these Islanders that a more extensive and formidable Flotilla than that of last Year had again been fitted out from Baltimore at great expence, and had actually sailed from thence under the Command of Commodore Barney towards the Potowmac, and was supposed in the first Instance to be intended to Capture or destroy any of our smaller detached Vessels which they might be able to cut off and surprize, and then to join in the Potowmac River, the Washington and Norfolk Flotillas both of which were on the move though they had not as yet quitted those places; Having often received Communications of this Nature without foundation, I did not give implicit faith to the Intelligence but I considered it sufficiently worthy of Attention to induce me to change the destination of my little Expedition and in lieu thereof, to direct Captain Barrie[3] to proceed with the Boats of this Ship and *Dragon* and the *St. Lawrence* (covering them with the *Dragon*) as high up the Chesapeake as the Patuxent, looking into every Creek and inlet in the way, to ascertain whether such a Flotilla was in the Neighbourhood, and if so, to use his utmost endeavors with the means at his disposal to Capture or destroy it; on the 3rd. I learnt by Letter from Captain Barrie[4] that he had scarcely reached St. Jerome's Creek in the furtherance of the Instructions I had given him, when he discovered the Flotilla in question consisting of Twenty four Vessels large and small, standing with a fair Wind towards Hoopers Straits, near to which the *Jaseur* had been placed to cover a Party of our People getting fascines from the Upper Islands for Fort Albion— on seeing the *St. Lawrence* and our Boats the Flotilla altered its Course and gave Chace to them but on discovering the *Dragon* under Sail it made the best of its way back up the Chesapeake again, and was closely pursued by the *St. Lawrence* the Boats and the *Dragon*, 'till it reached the Patuxent in which River it took shelter; Captain Barrie there closed with it, and reconnoitred it, and found the Strength of the Flotilla was far too great for him to attempt doing any thing against with the force then attached to him as there was not working room for a Line of Battle Ship within the River but he stated that he thought the Enemy might be followed up the Patuxent and perhaps something done with them if I would send to him Frigates and other small Craft, I therefore immediately dispatched an order to Lynhaven Bay for the *Loire* to proceed without Loss of Time to the Patuxent[5] and I recalled the *Jaseur* from the Service she was engaged in at the

upper part of this Inlet, and ordered her likewise to join him without delay, this was (unfortunately) all the force under my orders excepting only the *Acasta* in Lynhaven Bay and this Ship here between which I endeavoured to keep up a Communication though fifty miles apart, by means of a Prize Sloop I converted into a Tender—[6] On the 10th. I had the Satisfaction of discovering another Frigate coming up which proved to be the *Narcissus* but on her arrival (contrary to my Expectation) I found myself in much greater difficulty and dilemma than before, she having positive orders from you to go on to the Delaware and bringing Your Instructions for me to send *Dragon* into Port without being relieved immediately *Endymion* should arrive, which Ship was likewise not to remain here; seeing as I immediately did that it would be quite impossible for me to carry strictly into Execution these your orders, but by the Destruction of this new raised Flotilla, I did not hesitate in taking the momentary advantage offered me towards forwarding this object by the Arrival of the *Narcissus*, and I directed Captain Lumley (nothwithstanding his orders) to proceed on without loss of Time to Captain Barrie to aid in the Attempt, but on the 17th. the *Endymion* arrived and as I had learnt by Letter from Captain Barrie that notwithstanding every thing I had sent to the Patuxent, it was perfectly impracticable for him to do any thing successful against the Flotilla in the Situation it had occupied in Leonard's Creek, that all his Efforts by burning Stores &c. in the Neighbourhood had failed of inducing Commodore Barney to come from his strong hold, and that a very large land Force had been gathered from all parts for the Security of this Flotilla, I was obliged to give up the Idea of destroying it for the present, but I could not bring myself to permit of its escaping again from a Place where it is so easily to be got at, if any Strength of Marines or Land Force (as now expected) should arrive, and where by its being kept, the whole Country around Baltimore which was at the great expence of fitting it out, is left open to our incursions, I therefore considered it my duty, after reading your Dispatches by the *Endymion*,[7] to send to Captain Barrie the Letter of which the Inclosure No. 1 is a Copy[8]—and on the 18th. I received intimation that the *Armide* had arrived in Lynhaven Bay, but being at the same time informed that the Norfolk Flotilla ~~before alluded to,~~ and the *Constellation* & some armed Brigs and other Craft at Norfolk were on the Point of taking advantage of my being obliged to leave the *Acasta* single in Lynhaven Bay, and were on the move to attack her, I was obliged to direct *Armide* to remain for her support 'till the return of Captain Barrie would enable me to judge of the further arrangements these various Occurrences and the late rapid increase of the Enemys offensive Means (the whole of which I knew you to be unacquainted with) would render it necessary for me to adopt for the Moment;[9] the *Dragon* did not get here 'till the 22nd. Instt. when Captain Barrie informed me that he conceived the great Force and active Power of this Baltimore Flotilla to be such as to render it decidedly an overmatch for any of our smaller Ships and therefore that he had been obliged to leave the *Loire*, *Narcissus* and *St. Lawrence* at the mouth of the Creek to obey the part of my order which directed its retention within the River, no smaller force than that being in his opinion adequate to such service— I herewith transmit Captain Barrie's official Report[10] of the operations above alluded to and though the waryness of Commodore Barney has prevented the great object I had in view (the Destruction of this new raised Flotilla) yet my general Plan of annoying and distressing the Enemy to the utmost in all his different accessible Points, has been forwarded in a most eminent Degree by the indefatigable efforts of

Captain Barrie and the Force under him to oblige the Flotilla to come forth for the Protection of the Country, which, with this View was overrun by our Marines and Sailors in every Direction on both sides the River to within Eighteen Miles of Washington itself, vast stores of Tobacco which had been hoarded in the upper Part of the River (from the supposed security of the Situation) have been set fire to and destroyed to the Value of at least 7 or 800,000 Dollars; as well as all the Guard Houses and others where Military Posts had been established, and all the towns near the Banks have been abandoned, and Consternation spread far and near, and above Four hundred Hogsheads of Tobacco shipped off from the wharves and embarked in the Frigates— In short Sir I am sure I am within the Mark when I state to you that since my last Communication of the 9th May we have taken or destroyed within the Chesapeake above a Million of Dollars worth of the Enemy's Vessels and Property.

The above mentioned Movements and unexpected accumulation of Force of the Enemy, although I have managed in some degree to cause it to recoil on himself has nevertheless occasioned me much anxiety and difficulty, inasmuch as I found it decidedly impossible to guard at Norfolk the *Constellation* Thirty Gun Vessels Two Privateer Brigs and other Craft said to have been lately armed there, In the Potowmack the Washington Gun Boats, In the Patuxent the new Baltimore Flotilla and to take care of and forward the Works of this Island[11] (the distance between these Places being Eighty or Ninety Miles) with only this Ship Two Frigates a Brig and Schooner,[12] and I was therefore thereby obliged to take upon myself the always unpleasant Duty of deviating in some measure from the Letter of your Instructions, and take advantage for a few days of the assistance of some of the Ships under orders from you to proceed on other Service, which I did with the more reluctance when I considered that you had ordered the *Dragon* to be sent to Halifax without waiting to be relieved, immediately subsequent to receiving my last Letter pointing out to you the necessity of additional force being sent to this Station— The arrival however this day of the *Severn* has enabled me to despatch and arrange every Thing according to your last orders excepting only in what relates to the *Dragon* which Ship I am still obliged to desire to remain in Lynhaven until some fresh Arrival or other Circumstances may enable Captain Barrie to leave there a Force equal to Cope with the Proportion of the Enemy ready to push out from Norfolk, when the *Dragon* is to proceed without further Loss of Time to Halifax in the furtherance also of your Instructions respecting her.

I have now only to add that learning yesterday Evening the Enemy had established another Post and Battery at a place called Chissinessick[13] immediately abreast of Watts' Island I determined on destroying it, which was ably and gallantly accomplished by the Boats of this Ship the *Dragon*, and *Endymion* under the Command of Lieutenant Urmston 1st. Lieutenant of this Ship, who brought off with them another Six Pounder Field Piece after destroying the Work and burning the Guard Houses &c. &c. in its Vicinity, I have the Honor to transmit Lieutenant Urmston's detail[14] of this well executed Attack and beg permission to remark to you that this is the third Battery taken and Second Gun brought off from the Enemy by the Boats since my last report.

I also enclose herewith a List of Vessels captured and destroyed since my Last.[15] I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful And Most Obedient Humble Servant

G Cockburn Rear Admiral.

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 123–32.

1. Cockburn to Cochrane, 9 May 1814, pp. 61–63.
2. Captain Charles B. H. Ross to Cockburn, 29 May 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 314–17 (Reel 9).
3. Cockburn to Barrie, 30 May 1814, pp. 76–77.
4. Barrie to Cockburn, 1 June 1814, pp. 77–79.
5. Cockburn to Kerr, 3 June 1814, p. 83.
6. *Warrington.*
7. *Endymion* delivered these on 17 June 1814.
8. This enclosure was not found. Cockburn is probably referring to his 17 June 1814 letter to Barrie, p. 111.
9. Cockburn to Troubridge, 23 June 1814, pp. 114–15.
10. Cockburn may be referring to Barrie's letter of 19 June 1814, pp. 111–14.
11. Tangier Island.
12. *Albion, Acasta, Loire, Jaseur,* and *St. Lawrence.*
13. Spelled *Chessenessix* in 1814 and *Chesconessex* today.
14. A copy of Urmston's 25 June 1814 letter to Cockburn is in UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 88–89.
15. This list was not found.

Engagement at St. Leonard's Creek, 26 June 1814

While the British forces under Captain Robert Barrie and his successor, Captain Thomas Brown, attacked port towns along the Patuxent to draw Barney's flotilla out of St. Leonard's Creek, the American commodore plotted his escape. By 22 June the Daily National Intelligencer *reported that American land forces—militia, army, and marines—were marching to the mouth of the creek to support Barney. Colonel Decius Wadsworth, the army's Commissary General of Ordnance, commanded these forces and established a battery on a high bluff point that commanded the Patuxent River on its right and St. Leonard's Creek on its left. A combined attack from the battery and the flotilla commenced at daybreak on 26 June. Although there would be recriminations after the battle about the conduct of some of the battery forces, in the end Barney rowed his way out of the creek and up the Patuxent to the mortification of the British commander, Thomas Brown, lying becalmed at Point Patience.*[1]

1. For Col. Wadsworth's account and that of Captain Samuel Miller, commander of the marine detachment, see the Daily National Intelligencer, *29 June and 7 July 1814, respectively.*

CAPTAIN THOMAS BROWN, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

His M. Ship *Loire* off
St. Leonards Creek 23 June 1814

Sir,

I beg to acquaint you the day Captain Barrie quitted this Anchorage, I dispatched the *St. Lawrence* with the Launches and part of the Marines of the Frigate up to St. Benedict, to load with the remaining Tobacco, after getting on board seventeen Hogsheads, the Party were surprised and attacked by several hundred Infantry and Cavalry, with four field Pieces, a Serjeant, four Marines and one Seaman, retreating to the Boats were cut off, and made Pris-

oners, but I am happy to learn no lives have been lost, or any person wounded, Lieutt. Boyd speaks in the highest terms of praise and admiration of Lieutts. Scott of the *Narcissus* and Marshall of the *Loire* who commanded the Party on Shore, and also of the Soldier like conduct of Lieutt. Salmon Senr. Officer of the Marines on board the *Loire* and Lieutt. Bluck RM of the *Narcissus* who Commanded the Marines, the whole of the Officers express themselves in the highest terms of the conduct and exertions of the Men under their Command.—

Lieutenant Boyd being the bearer of this, will be enabled to give you every information relative to the transaction. I send also under convoy two Schooners laden with part of the Tobacco on board the Frigates, and there is now remaining on board them sixty eight Hogsheads, from information obtained by two Blacks, who come on board the *St. Lawrence* it appears that the Enemy are mustering a very strong force on both banks of the Patuxent, and a number of Tobacco Stores are already emptied. The Flotilla remains in the same situation as when Captain Barrie quitted, but I am given to understand from an American who came on board this Ship last night, that their Military force is daily increasing, which I fear will render all further attempts on Commodore Barney hopeless, without a considerable Land force, as well as Vessels calculated to carry long Guns, and not to draw more than eight feet water. Should the Enemy possess a decent proportion of Spirit and enterprise I imagine from the thick woods near the enterance of the creek, and on the opposite Bank of the River, they might get Guns that would oblige us to drop further out, and perhaps eventually out of the River, but should you have any hopes of an Army arriving, that could attack their capital it would be very necessary that Barneys Flotilla should be pent up the Creek, as so strong a Force up the River where Boats only could approach might be a considerable annoyance to any force going there. I learn also that a place about five Miles below, called point patience, they are beginning to errect Batteries and also on the opposite side of the River, as we have not been able to discover any thing of the Kind from the Ship, I shall desire Lieutt. Boyd in his way down the River to Telegraph me any alterations he may discover should the information given by the American prove correct you may depend upon my using every exertion, with the force under my Command to check their opperations.

I shall not think of quitting my present situation unless the safety of the Ships should absolutely require it, until I have the honor of receiving your Orders, I take the liberty to observe at the same time that it would be very desireous that I should have a small Vessel to cruize up & down the River to reconnoitre the different points of the Enemy.

The *Loire* having only three weeks Provisions on board I shall take a Months from the *Narcissus*, that was intended for the *Niemen*, which I trust will meet with your approbation. I have &c

(signed) Thos. Brown Captain

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 341–43 (Reel 9).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Honble. Wm. Jones Sunday 26 June 1814. 10 AM

Sir

This morning at 4 AM a combined Attack of the Artillery, Marine Corps, & flotilla, was made upon the Enemies two frigates[1] at the mouth of the Creek, after two hours engagement, they got under way & made sail down the river, they are now warping round Point Patience, and I am moving up the Patuxent with the flotilla, my loss is Acting Midshipman Asquith[2] Killed & ten others killed & wounded—

Mr. Blake[3] the bearer of this was a Volunteer in my barge, he will give you every other Information With respt. your Obt. Sert.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 12 (M124, Roll No. 64).

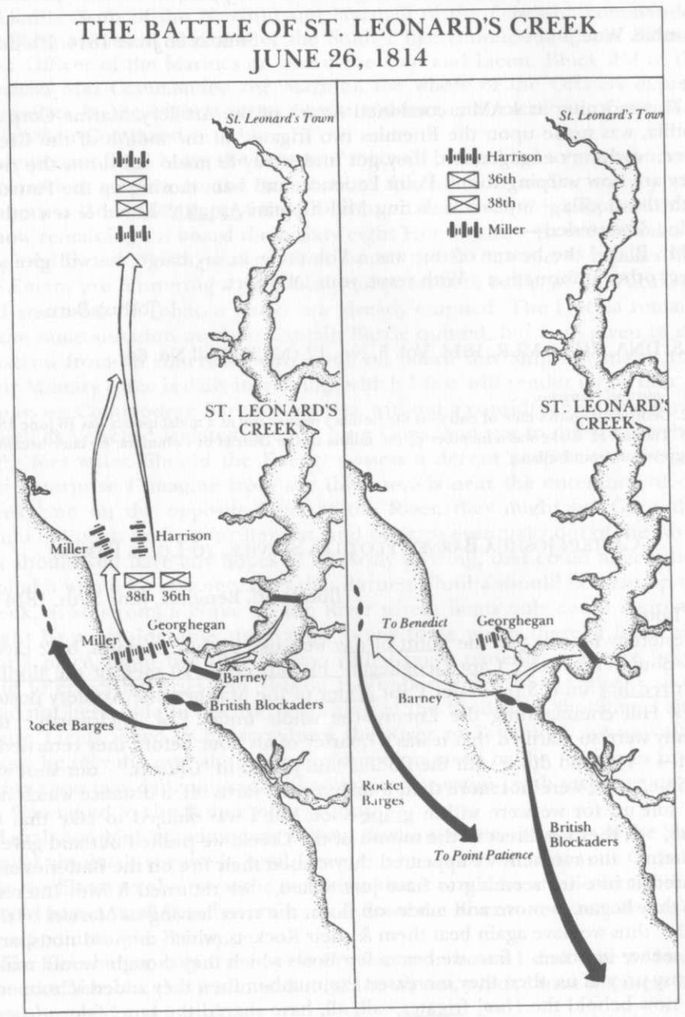
1. *Loire* and *Narcissus*.
2. George Aysquith's date of entry on the flotilla's muster roll as a midshipman was 16 June 1814.
3. Thomas H. Blake was a member of the militia of the District of Columbia; he later became a congressman from Indiana.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Louis Barney

flotilla off. Benidick, June 27th. 1814

Dr. Louis,

Yesterday morning at the point of day we woke up our enemies, by 2 pices. (18 pounders) under Capt Geoghegan[1] his officers & 20 men of the flotilla, with red hot shot, 3 pr. under Capt Miller of the Marines, the Artillery posted on a Hill commanding the Enemy, the whole under Col. Wadsworth, the enemy were so alarmed that it was a quarter of an hour before they returned a shot— I moved down with the flotilla, and joined in "Chorus," our shot was terrible, as we were not more than four hundred yards off, a distance which did not suit us, for we were within grape shot, but I was obliged to take that or none, as they lay direct in the mouth of the Creek, we pushed out and gave it to them, the moment we appeared they ceased their fire on the Batteries and poured it into us, seeming to have just waked, we returned it with Interest, at 6 they began to move and made sail down the river leaving us Masters of the field, thus we have again beat them & their Rockets, which they did not spare, you see we improve, first, we beat a few boats which they thought would make an easy prey of us, then they increased the number, then they added schooners, and now behold the [*two*] frigates,[2] all, all, have shared the same fate, I next expect, ships of the line; no matter we will do our duty— My loss was 6 Killed & four wounded, young Asquith who had just joined us was killed—Captn. Sellers, Kiddall, & Worthingtons[3] boats were the sufferers, I had three men wounded at the fort, for it was my men alone that fought there, altho there was



Map 6

600 men of Carbery & Littles[4] Regmt. in the rear— I am now waiting orders from head quarters.

Give my love to Ann & Kiss Misses—Your Afft.

J Barney

Wm.[5] was not with us, as I had sent him with Skinner, in a flag to the Admiral with dispatches from Government—

The moment the enemy ran off, we moved up the River, so that, thanks to Hot & cold shot the Blockade has been raised—

ALS, MdAN. Joshua Barney's brother, Louis, lived in Baltimore.

1. Sailing Master John Geoghegan's warrant dated from 16 September 1813. He served with the Chesapeake Bay flotilla from 11 March 1814 until his 15 April 1815 discharge.
2. Tape obliterates the end of the line. The British had two frigates, *Loire* and *Narcissus*, stationed at the mouth of St. Leonard's Creek.
3. Sailing Master James Sellers's warrant dated from 27 January 1814. He was attached to the Chesapeake Bay flotilla on 9 March 1814. Sailing Master John Kiddall's warrant and flotilla service dated from 6 October 1813. Henry Worthington's sailing master warrant dated from 15 September 1813. All three served in the flotilla until their discharge on 15 April 1815.
4. Probably Peter Little, colonel in the Thirty-eighth Infantry, U.S.A.
5. William Barney, Joshua Barney's son.

Sailing Master John Geoghegan to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Official Report of the Transactions at the Battery on the 25th & 26th June 1814.—

Sir

Agreable to your orders of the 25th. of June, I departed from the Gun-boat about 5 PM. with 21 persons, officers included, Mr. Blake in Compy. at 6 PM. we arrived at Mr. Taylor's, where I expected to fall in with Colonel Wadsworth, a short time after his servant came along and informed me that the Colonel was on his way down to the mouth of the Creek, I immediately moved on with my men, Mr. Blake took Colonel Tawney's horse and proceeded down to deliver orders which he had received from you. Nothing material occurred until about sun-set, when I fell in with Captn. Miller's encampment by whom and his officer's I was politely treated. Colonel Wadsworth came soon after, and held a few moments conversation with me, He told me to proceed on with my men; After marching a considerable distance, I again fell in with the Colonel who was planning his furnace, He then went on with us, and on the way we took down several fences by his orders, and continued on until about half a mile from the spot intended, we there made a halt, the Colonel & myself went to the spot where he wished the guns to be placed, And then returned to the men, The Colonel remained on the spot where the furnace was planning, At 11 PM. I left the men in charge of Mr. Carter[1] and went with Mr. Wall[2] towards the Furnace with the intention of falling in with Colonel Wadsworth, when we arrived there we found the Colonel with the guns, waggons, planks, spades &c. and a party of Infantry under Captn. Carberry, they marched down and halted a short distance from the place intended for the guns, June 26th. at ½ past 12 AM. I got 7 spades and the same number of

Pick axes, and commenced heaving up a Breast work, The Regulars & part of my men employed bringing plank for the Platform, Bricks, and wood for the furnace &c., My men continued digging without any assistance from the soldiers, altho frequent application was made for help and for more shovels, but without effect. At about ½ past 3 AM. the place was not so deep as Intended it should be for want of Assistance, The guns came soon after and the necessary preparations were made, The Col. disapproved of the position where I had thrown up the breast work it being too much exposed to the enemy's fire, he ordered the guns to be placed several feet in the rear of it in the soft Sand; by this time day was breaking, I divided my men equally to the big guns with some Soldiers, but not enough to work the guns as they should have been, at this time it was getting light, we loaded the guns & got every thing in readiness, We then commenced firing with the 18 poundr. which was followed by Captn. Miller's 12's. A short time after 2 officer's and one man, belonging to my crew were accidentally wounded by one of the gun's going off prematurely, this accident with one man whom I left in charge of our muskets, reduced our crew to 16 including officer's, Nothing material occurred till nearly At the close of the action, when Captn. Miller's shot being expended he deemed it most prudent to move back, at the same time a magazine chest blew up, but, from what cause I know not, This explosion injured one of my knees, it likewise injured Mr. Dunan;[3] At this moment Two Barges & one Rocket boat made their appearance on our right and commenced firing on us with round & Grape shot. they continued rowing in order, to gain our rear apparantly with a view of landing, At this time observing the infantry to be retreating, I informed the Colonel of it, he answered that he had ordered a detachment to march toward the barges to repell them should they attempt a landing, His orders were not obeyed & the troops continued their Retreat leaving the Col. myself, officer's & crew with three of the regulars on the Battery and exposed to the danger of being cut off by the enemy— The Driver and horses belonging to the 18's. having also retreated we were compelled to spike the gun's by Colonel Wadsworth Orders being fearful that the enemy might land and turn them upon us in our retreat, We then left the Battery and fell in with the Regular's who had halted on the road with the horses and limbers belonging to the big guns, they returned to the Battery and brought of the pieces, At that time the ships were getting Underway, I then left my wounded at Captn. Miller's Encampt. and returned with my Officer's and men to the Gun-boat,[4] and altho' my crew were much fatigued, I succeeded in getting every thing out of her by 5 O'-Clock PM. and hauled her up alongside of *No. 137.* and scuttled them both agreable to order's received from Lieutenant Rutter.

July 8th. 1814.
John Geoghegan SM

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 54, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 64). This report was enclosed in Barney to Jones, 14 July 1814.

1. Probably Master's Mate William Carter.
2. Boatswain Samuel Wall had joined the flotilla on 14 May 1814.
3. Midshipman Aymond Dunan entered the Chesapeake Bay flotilla on 7 April 1814 and was discharged on 24 August 1814.
4. Gunboat *No. 138.*

Captain Thomas Brown, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Loire* Off Point Patience.
in the Patuxent 27 June 1814

Sir/

I beg to acquaint you that yesterday at daylight the Enemy opened a Battery of Five Guns on the two Ships under my Command, from the high land, forming the Entrance of Leonards Creek, on the Larboard hand, at point blank Shot, it being covered with Wood, we were only enabled to fire at where the smoke issued from, shortly after the Flotilla came down rounded the point and opened a well directed fire on both Ships, but from the warm reception they met with, were soon obliged to retreat. I had previously to this sent the Launches of the Ships, with a boat fitted for Rockets to flank the battery, when I soon had the satisfaction to observe a slight explosion to take place, and the Battery to cease fireing. but judgeing we might be harrassed by the Battery again opening on us and the Ships having been frequently hulled, and part of the Riging Shot away, I thought it most prudent to weigh and drop down the River to a place called point patience, where I again Anchored about three Miles below in hopes the Flotilla might be induced to follow, but on its falling calm had the mortification to observe them rowing down the Creek, and up the River, the whole consisting of One Sloop[1] and Eighteen Row Boats, One of them we observed, to be obliged to return to the Creek, which I imagine had sustained so much injury as to prevent her accompanying the rest, during the fireing which continued nearly two hours; I am happy to say the only person wounded is the Boatswain of the *Narcissus* who has lost a leg.—

Captain Lumley who is the bearer of this will be able to give you any further information you may deem necessary, and whose cordial co'opperation during the time we have been together merits my warmest approbation I have the honor to remain Sir Your most Obedient Sert.

Thos. Brown Capt.

P S I Yesterday morning recd. your letter by the Flag of Truce and enclose you Mr. Reynolds receipt.—[2]

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 146–47.

1. *Scorpion.*
2. J. W. Reynolds was a civilian captured at Lower Marlborough when the British raided that town in June 1814. The "receipt" may have been for his exchange. Thomas Brown to George Cockburn, 23 June 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 339–41 (Reel 9).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

flotilla off Benidick June 27th. 1814

Sir,

I wrote you yesterday merely to inform you that we had raised the Blockade, and that I was moving up the Patuxent, I now wish your further orders re-

specting my future movements, I have sent down to St. Leonards for information respecting the enemy, which I expect has gone down (at least) to the mouth of Patuxent, from his great anxiety to get round point patience by Warping. I have left Mr. Rutter at St. Leonards with orders to get every thing which was left there away, either by water or land according to circumstances. The particulars respecting our Action with the Enemy, as regards the Artillery under Col. Wadsworth, and Capt Miller I cannot as yet give you, My Men worked & served the peices under the Col. but there certainly has been some unaccountable Conduct somwhere; but as I have not seen my officer,[1] I do not wish to give particulars such as has been related to me, one good result has been, I am clear of the Blockade, so far it is well, but I fear things have not been as they should be, for the honor of our Country. I am respectfully your Obt. Sert.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 15 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Sailing Master John Geoghegan did not submit his official report until 8 July; see pp. 125–26.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Navy Department
June 28th. 1814.—

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the US flotilla Benedict

Sir

Last Evening I received yours of the 26th & 27th. and congratulate you on the successful result of the vigorous effort by which the Blockade of St. Leonard's Creek was raised.—

The Patuxent affording a safe retreat for the flotilla in the event of the blockade of that river being continued with such a force as to forbid the hope of your release, it has become necessary to consider and determine what is best to be done, and as this can be decided with a more full and satisfactory discussion by an hours conversation than by partial correspondence; I think, after you have made such arrangements and given such instructions to the officer next in command,[1] as shall ensure the safety of the flotilla, and place you at ease during your absence for a day or two, you had better proceed immediately to this place, and with this view, I shall defer until your arrival whatever else I have at present to say.—[2] I am respectfully your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 160.

1. Lieutenant Solomon Rutter.

2. The *Daily National Intelligencer* of 2 July 1814 reported that Barney had arrived in Washington on 30 June. Secretary Jones and Barney, in discussing the flotilla's situation and British intentions, decided to prepare for attacks against either Washington or Baltimore by keeping Barney in command of his fleet in the Patuxent and sending Lieutenant Rutter to oversee the barges at Baltimore. Barney, *Biographical Memoir*, p. 262.

Cochrane Vacillates over Targets

As late as early July Cochrane was still under the misconception that 20,000 troops would join him on the North American Station and the British government had not yet informed him what his target would be.[1] He asked Cockburn's views on which city, Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Washington, to assault first. In anticipation of operations as soon as the forces from Europe arrived, Cochrane urged Cockburn to curtail his marauding expeditions and concentrate on the more mundane tasks of securing pilots, guides, horses, and black recruits. After giving descriptions of each city, Cockburn unequivocally recommended attacking Washington first.

Before receiving Cockburn's advice, however, Cochrane wrote three letters in mid-July to the War Office and the Admiralty which show his indecision. Before 15 July, Cochrane foresaw an attack on Baltimore and then Washington. But when Rear Admiral Edward Codrington[2] arrived in Bermuda and reported that the army coming from Europe would not be as substantial as Cochrane had expected, the commander in chief wavered. Even though the Admiralty had left invasion plans to Cochrane's discretion, the vice admiral outlined in a letter to Lord Melville possible attacks on every major coastal port. On 23 July, one month before the attack on Washington, Cochrane had even discounted the efficacy of a Chesapeake campaign during the "sickly season" of August and promoted an assault on Rhode Island or New Hampshire first. The British command lacked a plan in July 1814.

1. Cochrane did not receive until mid-July the Admiralty's letter of 19 May, which gave the vice admiral the power to choose his own targets. See pp. 71–72.

2. Captain Edward Codrington departed Portsmouth, England, on 28 May 1814. He was promoted to rear admiral on 4 June and, on arriving in Bermuda in mid-July, replaced Henry Hotham as captain of the fleet.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

Bermuda 1st. July 1814

Sir,

My departure from here has been delayed by the Account I have received from England that a considerable body of Troops are under Orders for this Country. Yesterday the Cannon arrived from Gibraltar by Captain Spencer I am informed that 2 Regts. the 26th. & 29th. were under Orders & Several other Regts. from Sicily; Lord Hill[1] & 15,000 men are Said to be coming out from Bourdeaux & Several Regts. from England & Ireland. In the Naval line I expect very considerable reinforcements— As it is a great object to Secure Guides & Persons calculated to Serve as pioneers, for this purpose & to enable you to cover the desertion of the black population I send you HMS *Asia* & *Ætna* Bomb with the 3 Troop Ships named in the margin (*Regulus, Melpomene* & *Brune*) having on board an Artillery Company & the 3rd Bat: of Marines which you will take under your Orders & employ in the manner you may consider best calculated to secure to the approaching Armies the necessary assistance they may Require, in this I include Guides who ought to be liberally paid for which you have my authority; Pilots of every description will be wanted not only for the Chesapeake but for the Delaware & New York & if they come in your way Secure

them & place them upon pay at 10 s. ℔ day each— Let the Landings you may make be more for the protection of the desertion of the Black Population than with a view to any other advantage, the force you have is too Small to accomplish an object of magnitude— the great point to be attained is the cordial Support of the Black population with them properly armed & backed with 20,000 British Troops, Mr. Maddison will be hurled from his Throne. As I understand that 2000 dismounted Dragoons compose part of the Armament procure all the good horses you can for them & the Artillery and give every Negroe a reward for bringing them Say 20 Dollars bounty for each horse fit for Service— These I think may be upon the Islands under your controul until the Troops arrive, collect all the Small Craft you can as I fear we will be deficient in Flat Boats or the means of transporting Troops into Shallow Water. I Send you 3 which is all I have. I trust the Ships from England, France and the Mediterranean will each have one on board— I have directed the Marine Clothing specified in the margin to be Sent you in the *Asia* for the purpose of equipping the Volunteers which make as gay as possible (500 Jackets, 1000 Shirts, 1000 Pr. Trousers, 500 Hats, 500 Stocks, 1000 Flannel Jackets) Each of the Troop Ships take 1000 Stand of Arms & 100,000 Ball Cartridges & the *Asia* 500 Stand with Accoutrements, They are mostly French, She also will take 1,000 Swords— I am uninformed of the plans of Government but shod. Suppose that they must be pointed against Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington, if to the first the landing should be made at or near New Castle & Chester upon the Delaware or at the head of Elk; at Brandwine the principal Mills for Powder & Flour are Situated which may be destroyed in passing— Line of Battle Ships can go up near to New Castle; Should Baltimore & Washington be the primary objects, it is to be decided where the landing can be made to most advantage, to me it appears that Baltimore should be the previous object & by landing to the Northward of it, you cut off the Resources & Support from the Country East of the Susquhannah On the other hand it is worthy of consideration if we would not derive an equal advantage by landing at Anapolis & march direct either upon Washington or Baltimore, by this we will Secure good Roads for your Artillery & make no doubt a number of Volunteers will join from the Surrounding Country— I will thank you for your opinion on these points which Send by the first conveyance— I beg that you will send Lieut. Fenwick of the Engineers back to Bermuda, detaching to me for this & what is before mentioned any one of the Ships under your Orders you can best spare & that may be most in want of provisions— The *Asia* will convey to you a Sum of Money which will be Spoken of particularly in an accompanying Letter—[2] I have the honor to be &ca

(Signed) A. Cochrane—

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 8–9. This letter was recorded in Cochrane's "Secret Orders and Letters 1814–15" letter book.

1. Rowland Hill, 1st Viscount Hill, served under Wellington on the continent in 1814. Major General Robert Ross was ordered to command the British expeditionary forces in the summer of 1814.

2. Cochrane sent $3,600 to Cockburn for victualling and contingent expenses. Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 July 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 365–66 (Reel 9).

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst

HMS. *Tonnant* Bermuda 14 July 1814

My Lord

Governor Cameron having requested of Me to forward a Small Turtle to your Lordship. I have requested Captn. Byron of the *Belvidera* to take charge of it; also another of a larger Size which I beg You will do me the Honor to Accept:— A Box of Indian Arrow root accompanies the Turtle which I hope will be Acceptable to Lady Bathurst—with my respectful Compliments,— upon the Top of the powder Her Ladyship will find one of the most Approved receipes for using it—, it will give me the Greatest pleasure if I can be made Useful in forwarding any of the productions of this Western World, and I beg that Your Lordship will upon every occasion lay Your Commands upon me

I am sorry to say that little public service has been performed since My Arrival unfortunately the fate of France was not determined in sufficient time for reinforcements to Arrive before the hot weather set in— the expectation of Arrivals has detained Me here, and I feel I must remain until I know the determination of Govt.— Lord Melville will shew Your Lordship what I have done with respect to the Indians Two Thousand Men would Give to Gt. Britain the Command of that Country—and New Orleans,— Major Nicolls of the Marines will I hope be able to bring all the Indian Tribes to act in Concert together,[1] I have sent about Nine Hundred Marines to the Chesapeake to act under Admiral Cockburn—who has been Annoying the Americans A good deal of late— with this force making partial Attacks and Shifting from place to place I trust to be Able to find the Enemy full employment for all his troops in Virginia, Maryland and Pensylvania,—without detaching to the Canada Frontier— If Troops Arrive soon and the point of Attack is directed towards Baltimore I have every prospect of Success and Washington Will be equally Accessible They may be either destroyd or laid under Contribution, as the Occasion may require, and I have not a doubt of raising any Number of Black troops for the prosecution of the War, but I am not equally Certain that they Will Volunteer their Services to the West India Regiments, Their bent is to Obtain Settlements in the British Colonies in N America—where they will be most Useful Subjects; from their Hatred to the citizens of the United States I have already a small Corps in Arms and now that the Marines are gone to Virginia they will rapidly encrease— Conceiving that it is in view to attack the enemy in that Quarter I have directed Horses to be Collected and placed upon Islands that are under our Controul— I beg to recommend that some Thousand sets of dragoon Acoutrements be sent out, and the Same Number of Riffles— the Blacks are all Good Horsemen and thousands will Join upon their Masters Horses—and they will only require to be Clothed and Accoutred, (with the Assistance of Officers, to bring them into a little regularity) to be as good Cossacks as any in the Russian Army—and I believe more terrific to the Americans than any troops that could be brought forward.— I have it much at heart to give them a complete drubbing before Peace is made—when I trust their Northern limits will be circumscribed and the Command of the Mississippi wrested from them. I have the Honor to be with the greatest respect Your Lordships Most Obedient and Humble Servant

Alexr Cochrane

P S 15th. Commodore Codrington has just Anchored and I have received a Copy of Your Lordships instructions to Genl. Barnes— they afford me much Satisfaction and coincide most fully with my wishes.[2] I entirely Agree with your Lordship that no steps should be taken to enduce the negro's to rise Against their Masters my views go no farther than to afford protection to those that chuse to Join the British Standard—who will be free to inlist as soldiers or to become Settlers in the British Colonies—

A C

I understand from Good Authority that when the peace was made with America the Boundary line Was Artfully removed from Penobscot to St. Crois River,[3] by the American Commissioners,— if this could be remedied in the New Treaty, our northern provinces would be made more Secure and a fine Mast Country would be Obtained thereby,— I trust Your Lordship will pardon me for this hand and attribute it to its true Cause

A C

ALS, UkLPR, WO 1/141, pp. 7–14.

1. Cochrane had ordered Brevet Major Edward Nicolls, Royal Marines, to West Florida to organize, arm, and train a force of Creek Indians as a prelude to British invasion of the Gulf. Cochrane predicted that a force of three thousand regulars, acting in concert with the Creeks and disaffected Spanish and French residents, "would drive the Americans entirely out of Louisiana and the Floridas." Cochrane to Croker, 20 June 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 390–93. For Cochrane's orders of 4 July to Nicolls, see ibid., fols. 480–85. Nicolls's operations among the Creeks are described in Owsley, *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands.*

2. See Bathurst to Barnes, 20 May 1814, pp. 72–74.

3. During the negotiations over the 1783 Treaty of Paris, the British, whose troops still occupied Maine, made a claim for territory as far south as the Penobscot River. The Americans made a counterclaim for a boundary at the St. Croix, a river named in Massachusetts' colonial charter. The British acquiesced and the treaty names the St. Croix in delineating the northeast boundary of the United States. After ratification, a disagreement arose as to whether the river St. Croix named in the Massachusetts charter commission was the Magaguadavic or the Schoodiac, nine miles further west. A boundary commission established by Jay's Treaty of 1794 determined that the Schoodiac would be the border. Morris, *Peacemakers,* pp. 363–64.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to First Lord of the Admiralty Viscount Robert Saunders Dundas Melville

His Maj Ship *Tonnant*
Bermuda 17 July 1814

My dear Lord

Commodore Codrington arrived here upon the 14th when I had the honor to receive Your Lordships letter of the 22d may,[1] I was well aware that the state of Europe did not admit of a military force being sooner sent out, I have most to regret that the one daily expected does not correspond with the numbers stated in the Public prints, but such as it is I trust some good service will be performed, and His Majestys ministers may depend upon their being Actively and I hope Carefully employed,—

The worst Enemy we have to contend with is the Climate and the Abundance of Green fruit every where to be met with, this brings on dysenteries which are

follow'd in the month of August by intermittent complaints— we must try to guard against those Evils as much as possible by keeping the troops in action and thier minds employed: I have always observed that while active Service was going on men seldom fell Sick, but immidiately after all was over they fell down in numbers

I think I explained to your Lordship as also to Lord Bathurst my opinion of the principal Towns in America all of which are Situated upon navigable Rivers—but none of Them Accessible to a direct attack from Shipping only,—although open to a combined one with a land Force

Boston and New York and I may add Philadelphia—ought not to be attacked by a Force under Twelve Thousand men— at the former place one of Their Line of Battle Ships is Launched the one at Portsmouth is only in the Frame and has a house built over it[2] I will endeavour to convey with this a Sketch of that Harbour with the Situation of thier Naval Yard

If N York ever becomes an object of Attack—and the destruction of the City is resolved upon—this may be carried into effect by Landing the Troops upon Long Island— by referring to the map Your Lordship will see that the East River which divides Brookline from N York is not half point Blank Shot over from thence Rockets Carcasses—&c &c may be thrown into the Town (or, put under Contribution.)

Philadelphia can be Approached within fifteen miles by a Ship of 64 Guns— to Attack it part of the Army may be Landed At N Castle upon the Delaware— Six miles from which thier Principal Powder and Corn Mills are situated upon the little River Called the Brandy wine—those of Course will be destroyd,— while one part of the Army is employd upon this service the rest may proceed up the Delaware in Transports to Chester from thence it is only 15 miles to Philadelphia by the time they will have landed and marched, the first division will be up, as the Roads are excellent. If the Enemy do not destroy the Bridge over the Skuylkill, the Troops may be in Philadelphia in four hours after they are landed and sooner if the Horses of the Country are Secured to guard Against the destruction of the Bridge a number of Copper Pontoons ought to be provided they are Portable and with the materials of a few of the Farmers Barns, or the wood of the Country—a Bridge will soon be Constructed

I was at the taking of Philadelphia under Lord and Genl. Howe and Assisted at the Reduction of the Forts at Mud Island,[3] as we can have no intentions of remaining there, there will be no occasion to go near them,— After this Service has been effected—the Army Can retreat by the Same Line to NCastle. from thence they may either proceed accross the Isthmus to the Head of Elk and from thence to the Attack of Baltimore or they may lay waste the lower Counties upon the Delaware and part of Maryland—being covered upon each flank by the Ships in the Delaware and Chesapeake Should they be followed by an overpowering Force there are many positions upon the Eastern Shore in the Chesapeake from whence they can embark. Kent Island Affords them a Secure retreat—the passage is fordable at low water— If this Route is not Judged Advisable the Army may cross the Susquehannah at Havre de Grace, or be conveyd down the Elk—and Landed either Above or below the Patapsco River as near to Baltimore as possible— This River is difficult of Access by Large Ships and has been fortified since the War— It is my Clear opinion that no time ought to be lost in taking of Forts—besides the great loss of Lives—the Object may in general be attained without taking the Bull by the Horns—

In an attack upon Baltimore I count upon being Joined by a Number of Negroes—those I would Arm, and Employ as Guides After leaving Baltimore the Army ought to march upon Washington, George Town and Alexandria—passing down the Right Bank of the Potomac to where the Fleet will be at Anchor near the Kettle Bottoms above which Large Ships Cannot go with safety

Anapolis is the Capital of Maryland—is the place of Residence of the Rich—lays perfectly open and liable to an attack

Rich-mond lays up the James River—too high up for the Ships to be of much service— it is said their principal Cannon foundries are there— I think it may be destroyd

Norfolk. must be attacked from the Portsmouth Side from whence it may be destroyd as also the Naval yard—which is close to Gosport on the same side with Portsmouth in this Case the Army must land and reimbark Above Hampton Roads upon James River

By this Means we will take all thier works in reverse and do them full as much Mischief as if they were in our possession

North Carolina can only be attacked by Vessels of a Light Dft. of Water—The Gun boats and Sloop Galleys now in the Medway are well Calculated for that and the Southern Coast, They are I am told fit to cross the Atlantic and 10 or 15 men Sufficient to Navigate Each if Loaded with provisions and stores they will pay all cost 40 or 50 of them will be of the Greatest use for Carrying Troops—for I am sorry to inform your Lordship that I have only Three Flat Bottomed Boats in the Country, I had about 70 in Egypt besides 200 Officers it is said two are at Halifax but this I am not certain of— Charles town and Savannah in Georgia are Accessible by the Inland navigation, by Galleys and Small craft—

Mobille—and NOrleans are equally so but the necessary Craft are wanting—

When I placed the whole Coast of America under a Strict Blockade I was in possession of private information that the Embargo was to be taken off from the same Channel I received a Copy of the report of the Secret Committee recommending the measure as the Only Means left by which a Revenue could be raised to enable them to prosecute the War that the Loans having failed and the Commerce annihilated they had no Other resource left— This Coming from such high Authority, I considerd that I owed it to my Country to defeat an Object that might endanger the Canadas—and in this I flatter myself I have fully Succeeded Their Revenue must have considerably decreased, as Neutrals can no longer Enter any of Their Ports. I therefore trust their plans are in a manner paralyzed for the present—

I sometime Ago informed Your Lordship that I had appointed a Cousin of Mine Mr. ORielly Lieutenant of the *Belvidera*—I then thought he had Served his time. finding I was mistaken I have cancelled his appointment and given the vacancy to Mr. Beckwith, upon your Lordships list—

I am vexed beyond measure to see the names of Lord Cochrane and my Brother Johnstone[4] coupled with a set of Sharpers who have so deservedly encurred the public censure. I hope and trust they will clear themselves with Honor if not our connection must cease. I did all I could to get Lord Cochrane

away—whose sentiments and Politic's as well as those of Mr. Johnstone have ever been at variance with mine

Your Lordship will See by my public Letter that I am called upon by Sr. Geo Prevost to retaliate upon the Maratime Coast of the United States for the Barbarities Committed by the Americans in upper Canada,[5] I ever remain with Great Truth my dear Lord your much obliged and most Obedient Humble Servant

Alex[r] Cochrane

ALS, InU, War of 1812 Manuscripts.

1. Melville sent this hasty note to inform Cochrane that Admiral Warren had just arrived at Spithead with Cochrane's letters of 10 and 25 March and 2 April. Melville had nothing substantial to add to his previous dispatches. Melville to Cochrane, 22 May 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 130–31.

2. Three 74-gun ships were under construction: *Independence* had just been launched at Charlestown; *Washington* was launched at Portsmouth in October 1814; and *Franklin* was launched at Philadelphia in August 1815.

3. Philadelphia fell to the British forces under Vice Admiral Richard, Lord Howe and General Sir William Howe on 26 September 1777. Two months later, with the capture of the Delaware River forts of Fort Mifflin, on Mud Island (November 16) and Fort Mercer (November 21), the British won control of the river below the city.

4. Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane's nephew, the dashing Royal Navy captain Thomas Cochrane, 10th Earl of Dundonald, was innocently embroiled in a stock exchange scandal during 1814. A French refugee, Charles Random de Bérenger, promoted a rumor that Napoleon had died, knowing that the news would inflate stock prices. Allegedly, Bérenger and Andrew James Cochrane-Johnstone, Lord Cochrane's uncle and Sir Alexander's brother, benefited by selling stocks during the spike in prices. Lord Cochrane had made many enemies and they eagerly used his association with these unsavory men to effect his conviction at a trial held on 8–9 June 1814. *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder, 1885–1901), Vol. 11, p. 170.

5. For more on this topic, see pp. 140–42.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 70 Bermuda 23rd. July 1814.

Sir,

Taking into consideration the advanced state of the Season and the sickness that prevailed in the Chesapeake last Year, in the month of August, where out of two thousand men, by the beginning of September five or six hundred were laid up with fever and ague, which in a manner rendered that Corps inefficient for the rest of the Season—

I am of opinion that until the month of October our efforts ought to be confined to the northern States, and if it should appear that the Line of Battle Ship building at Portsmouth[1] is not in so forward a state as to make her destruction an immediate object, Rhode Island presents itself as the next in consequence—either to destroy or to keep possession of, until the extreme heats are over to the southward, by which the Troops will be kept in health and fit to form attacks upon the Enemy from the Delaware southward as the Season advances.

I do not think that any attempt should be made in force south of the Delaware before the month of October: partial attacks may take place to keep the Enemy upon the alert, but in my opinion the great object will be to preserve

the Health of the Soldiers until they can act with effect. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alexr Cochrane
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/4360, fols. 133–34.

1. *Washington.*

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Albion Off Jerome's Point Patuxent 17 July 1814

My dear Sir

I have to thank you for Your private Letter of the 1st.[1] by the *Asia* containing so much pleasant Information as to the Mode in which my Friend Jonathan is likely soon to be handled, the sooner this sensible kind of Warfare begins, the better it will be for us, & the greater will be the advantages we shall derive from it, I can only say the whole of the Country around here (excepting a few of the Towns most exposed like Norfolk &c.) is in as defenceless or indeed in a more defenceless State than it was at the Commencement of the War, for then there was the Charm of Novelty to induce the Inhabitants to perform cheerfully & vigilantly the Military Duties required of them, but now that they begin to feel the Inconvenience of being kept to this kind of Work and the pressure & Privations occasioned by the War daily increasing, their patriotic Ardor has pretty generally vanished and given way to Murmurs and Squabbles as to the cause & necessity of their present Sufferings, In the Mean time the total Stop to their Trade & other resources, renders it extremely difficult for them to pay the War Taxes (inadequate as they are to prosecuting it with Vigor) and the Treasury is at this Moment without sufficient Funds to pay the various Demands on it, in short it is quite impossible for any Country to be in a More unfit State for War than this now is, and I much doubt if the American Government knew decidedly every particular of the intended Attack on them, whether it would be possible for them to adopt with sufficient Promptitude any effective Means to avert the Blow.— You will see by my Secret Letter of this Date the Points at which I consider them to be most Vulnerable but I have no hesitation in saying they have not a Place on the Sea board which can hold out any length of Time against the Force I understand you expect, and I take for granted if the regular Army they now have in Canada is called to the Southward in consequence of Your appearance here in such Force, Sir George Prevost will follow close on their Heels and render their Retreat difficult & Costly to them, & their arrival at length in this Neighborhood of little or no avail—

By the different Dispatches which the *St. Lawrence* will now convey to you you will learn how I have been employed since my last Communication by the *Lacedæmonian*, how much I have been harrassed & distressed for Ships to attend to the Numerous Irons I have been obliged to have in the Fire at the same Time; what we have managed to do and how much more might have been done had I had a greater Force at my Disposal as it is, however, the Americans I assure you feel most severely our late Operations and I have a Confident Hope that the General Exertions of the small Party in the Chesapeake will gain for them your Approbation—

My Brother Sir James is I understand arrived at Halifax and intends paying me a Visit here in his way to Bermuda— What you tell me of the conduct of Ferdinand in Spain surprizes me exceessively he will certainly love again his Kingdom if he persists in his endeavors to reestablish there the Old Order of Things—

Fleming will be delighted with his Command though I should not have expected the Admiralty would have selected him for it, or his Friends (particularly Lord Keith) have liked his returning there as they seemed to think he had already become too much of a Spaniard—Ben Hallowells remaining in the Mediterranean I always expected—pray what is Sidney Smith to have?

I am told by Captain Skene and Others that Geo Hope said *Spencer* is sent out for me, is there any truth in this? I don't know that I am very anxious about it so long as our Operations are likely to be confined within the Capes, but if I am to have any more sea work I confess I should prefer having a faster Ship than this, the more especially if the Americans succeed in getting any of their Seventy Sixers out and this Ship having been now Nine Months from Port, my having a fresh Horse at least whilst she goes in to bait, might be useful, but for myself I have neither a Want nor a Wish to carry me in, so long as I can be useful here or any where else.

I enclose herewith some of our latest Papers and a Piece of one giving an Account of the Capture of the *Essex* on which event I beg to congratulate you, though I cannot conceive what could induce Captain Hillyar to allow of that Vagabond Porter returning immediately to America on Parole—[2] at least if the Story be true of his encouraging his People to Tar & Feather an English Sailor, because he declared he was an Englishman & did not wish to fight against his Country[3]—and I have never heard this Report against Captain Porter contradicted—

Adieu My dear Sir Most anxious shall I be to see you with all Your Train till when, you may depend on my doing the best I can to meet your wishes as explained in your last Letters— Believe me Always with much Esteem Dear Sir Your's very faithfully & truly

G: Cockburn

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, pp. 142–45.

1. This private letter was not found.
2. For more on Hillyar's parole of Porter, see pp. 746–47.
3. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, pp. 170–76.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Secret
Copy *Albion* off Jerome Point Chesapeake the 17th July 1814

Sir

In Answer to that Part of your Secret Letter of the 1st. Instant[1] which regards the Landing and commencing of Operations of the English Army, which you inform me is to be so soon expected in this Country, and on which Points You desire me to communicate to You my opinion—I feel no Hesitation in stating to You that I consider the Town of Benedict in the Patuxent, to offer us advantages

for this Purpose beyond any other Spot within the United States.— It is I am informed only 44 or 45 Miles from Washington and there is a high Road between the two Places which tho' hilly is good, it passes through Piscataway and no nearer to Fort Washington than four Miles, which Fortification is sixteen Miles below the City of Washington, and is the only one the Army would have to pass, I therefore most firmly believe that within forty eight Hours after the Arrival in the Patuxent of such a Force as You expect, the City of Washington might be possessed without Difficulty or Opposition of any kind; As You will observe by my public Letter of this Day,[2] the Ships of the Fleet could cover a landing at Benedict, the Safety of the Ships and the Smoothness of the Water in the River would render us entirely independent of the Wind or Weather in all our projected Movements, (an Object of considerable Importance when we recollect how fast the Season is advancing to that Period when the Weather becomes so unsteady on all this Coast) The Army on its Arrival would be sure of good Quarters in the Town of Benedict, and a rich Country around it to afford the necessary immediate Supplies, and as many Horses as might be wanted to transport Cannon &ca; which Advantages might certainly now be obtained without meeting with the slightest Opposition or requiring any Sacrifice from us whatever, & as I have quitted the Patuxent and (on this Account) do not intend again to visit it until you arrive with the Army or I hear further from You;— I trust and believe every thing will remain till then, in the Neighbourhood of that River exactly as I have now left it— The Facility and Rapidity, after its being first discoverd, with which an Army landing at Benedict might possess itself of the Capitol—always so great a Blow to the Government of a Country as well on Account of the Resources, as of the Documents and Records the invading Army is almost sure to obtain thereby, must strongly I should think urge the Propriety of the Plan here proposed, and the more particularly as the other Places You have mentioned will be more likely to fall after the Occupation of Washington, than that City would be after their Capture— Annapolis is tolerably well fortified, and is the Spot from whence the American Government has always felt Washington would be threaten'd, if at all, it is natural therefore to suppose Precautions have been taken to frustrate and impede our Advance in that Direction; add to which Annapolis being fortified, a Station for Troops, and not to be approached by our larger Ships on Account of the Shallowness of the Water, it is possible and probable the Occupation of it might cost us some little Time, which would of Course be taken Advantage of by the Enemy to draw together all the Force at his Command for the Defence of Washington, and at all Events enable the Heads of Departments there, to remove whatever they may wish— Baltimore is likewise extremely difficult of Access to us from Sea, We cannot in Ships drawing above sixteen Feet, approach nearer even to the Mouth of the Patapsco than 7 or 8 Miles and Baltimore is situated Twelve Miles up it, having an extensive Population mostly armed, and a Fort for its Protection about a Mile advanced from it on a projecting Point where the River is so narrow as to admit of People conversing across it, and this Fort I am given to understand is a Work which has been completed by French Engineers with considerable Pains and at much Expence,[3] and is therefore of a Description only to be regularly approached, and consequently would require Time to reduce, which I conceive it will be judged important not to lose in striking our first Blow— But both Annapolis and Baltimore are to be taken without Difficulty from the Land Side, that is coming down upon them from the Washington Road, the former being I

think commanded by the Heighths behind it, and Baltimore having no Defence whatever in its Rear, and from the Moment of your Arrival in the Chesapeake, let the Plan adopted be what it may, a small Force detached to the Susquehanna will always prevent or materially impede the Arrival of any considerable Reinforcements or Assistance from the Eastern States.

If Philadelphia is supposed to be an Object of greater Importance than the Places I have just mention'd, I should deem the landing at Elkton the most advisable Mode of approaching it, as the intended Point of Attack would thereby be masked till the Army would be actually landed and on its March on the Road from Elkton to Wilmington (above Newcastle) which is short and good, and does not offer, as far as I know, Difficulties or Opposition of any Kind, and this Movement need not prevent such Ships as may be judged requisite, from proceeding up the Delaware to co-operate with the Army as Circumstances may require and point out the Propriety of, and I should here remark that if Washington (as I strongly recommend) be deemed worthy of our first Efforts, although our main Force should be landed in the Patuxent, yet a Tolerably good Division should at the same Time be sent up the Potowmac with Bomb Ships &ca which will tend to distract and divide the Enemy, amuse Fort Washington, if it does not reduce it, and will probably offer other Advantages of Importance without any counterbalancing Inconvenience, as the Communication between the grand Army and this Division will be easy and immediate in Consequence of the very small Space of Land between the Potowmac and Patuxent.

American Guides will not be difficult to obtain in this Country when we have Force to protect them and Money to pay them, I have already one who has been ill treated in his own Country, and seems extremely anxious to be revenged; I have employed him on all Occasions, and he has shewn himself staunch and clever, and I have therefore now put him on regular Pay according to the Tenor of your Directions, he being both a Pilot for the Rivers and a Guide for the Roads in this Neighbourhood

Norfolk seems to be the only Place where the Americans expect a serious Attack, that Place has been considerably strengthened of late and I am informed Eight or Ten Thousand Men are collected there, it is not however in my Opinion worthy of primary Notice, but You may deem it perhaps Sir worthy of attending to after others of greater Importance have been disposed of. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedient Humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 173–78. Docketing reads: "recd. by *St. Lawrence* 26 July 1814.—" Cochrane received this before leaving Bermuda for the Chesapeake.

1. See Cochrane to Cockburn, pp. 129–130.
2. See Cockburn's letter No. 29, pp. 154–57.
3. A succession of foreign-born engineers supervised the initial design and construction of the Baltimore fort. Majors John Jacob Ulrich Rivaldi (1794–97) and Louis Tousard (1798) oversaw the creation of the fort's detached water batteries, and Jean Foncin (1799–1802) directed the building of the main masonry work. Construction on the brick-faced, star-shaped fort was complete by 1805, and costs through 1802 amounted to some $110,000. Sheads, *Fort McHenry*, pp. 5–7.

British React to American Depredations

While pondering how he would employ the long-awaited invasion force, Cochrane received documentation from Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost outlining the uncivilized conduct of American troops against civilians in Upper Canada. Following Prevost's recommendation, Cochrane ordered his officers to retaliate against American coastal towns. However, in a secret memorandum, Cochrane tempered his order with pragmatism. A draconian policy that further alienated the American populace would be counterproductive to the British who needed supplies and other assistance from the local population. Cochrane adopted a practical approach—levying contributions but blaming their adoption on the predatory practices of the American government in Canada. The British would use the threat of force when appropriate.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Commanding Officers of the North American Station

By the Honorable Sir A. Cochrane

Whereas by Letters from His Excellency Lt. General Sir George Prevost of the 1st & 2d of June last,[1] it appears that the American Troops in upper Canada have committed the most wanton & unjustifiable outrages on the unoffending Inhabitants by burning their Mills & houses & by a general devastation of private property— And whereas His Excy has requested that in order to deter the Enemy from a repetition of similar outrages I would assist in inflicting measures of retalliation— You are hereby required and directed to destroy & lay waste such Towns and Districts upon the Coast as you may find assailable; you will hold Strictly in view the conduct of the American Army towards His Majesty's unoffending Canadian Subjects.

For only by carrying this retributary justice into the Country of our Enemy can we hope to make him sensible of the impolicy as well as inhumanity of the system he has adopted.

You will take every opportunity of explaining to the people how much I lament the necessity of following the rigorous example of the Commanders of the American forces And as these Commanders must obviously have acted under instructions from the Executive Govt. of the U S whose intimate & unnatural connexion with the late Govt. of France has led them to adopt the same system of Plunder & Devastation; it is therefore to their own Govt. the unfortunate Sufferers must look for indemnification for their loss of Property.

And this order is to remain in force until I receive information from Sir Geo. Prevost that the Executive Govt. of the U.S. have come under an obligation to make full remuneration to the injured & unoffending Inhabitants of the Canadas for all the outrages their Troops have committed.

Given under my hand at Bermuda 18th. July 1814
(Sigd.) A. Cochrane

To the respective Flag Officers, Captains, and Commanding Officers upon the North American Station.

By Command of the Vice Admiral (Sigd.) Wm. Balhetchet

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fols. 17–18.

1. After receiving Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond's letter of 27 May 1814 detailing the American raid on Dover (see pp. 489–90), Prevost sent Cochrane a copy of his response as well as his recommendation that Cochrane consider retaliatory measures in his theater of operations. Prevost to Drummond, 1 June 1814, and Prevost to Cochrane, 2 June 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, fols. 139–40 and 143–44, respectively.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Commanding Officers of the North American Station

Secret Memo. Bermuda 18th. July 1814

Notwithstanding my public order of this days date directing you to destroy & lay waste Such Towns & Districts of the Enemy as may be within your power, you are hereby authorized to except Such Islands & places as either from furnishing Supplies or from being likely to be hereafter occupied by us in furtherance of the object of the War in which we are engaged it may be more advantageous to ourselves to treat with a marked lenity & forbearance— And if in any descent you Shall be enabled to take Such a position as to threaten the Inhabitants with the destruction of their property, you are hereby authorized to levy upon them contributions in Return for your forbearance (& in proportion to the value of the private property thus Spared) But you will not by this, understand that the Magazines belonging to the Government or their harbors, or their Shipping are to be included in Such arrangements, These together with their Contents are in all cases to be taken away or destroyed—

(Signed) A. Cochrane—

To, Cockburn, Milne Griffith Hotham Jackson—Skene—Pym, Nash Sir T Cochrane, Percy

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2346, fol. 8.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

No. 14 Bermuda 21st. July 1814.

Sir/.

Having directed Captain Palmer of His Majestys Ship *Hebrus* to proceed in that Ship to the Chesapeake and follow your Orders, you will take him under your Command accordingly, sending the *Loire* forthwith, off New York with Directions to her Captain[1] to put himself under the Orders of Captain Nash of His Majestys Ship *Saturn*; previously Compleating her Provisions from the Transport named in the Margin[2] sent you under Convoy of the *Hebrus*.

The *Hebrus* will Convey to you two Field Pieces and their Stores with Tents for One thousand Men; she has on board also Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm and the Staff of the Second Battallion of Marines, who are to join the Battalion now under the Command of Major Lewis, to be henceforth the 2d. Battalion under the Command of the Lieutenant Colonel.

On board the Transport there are Lieutenant Colonel Brown, and Detachments from West India Regiments who by the direction of Government are sent to endeavour to recruit their respective regiments from the Blacks who may Emigrate, in which you will be pleased to assist them as they may require. If they succeed I purpose they shall form a Corps to Act under the Command of Lt. Coll. Brown during the Continuance with the War with America.

I am in daily expectation of the Arrival of Rear Admiral Malcolm with the first Division of the Army consisting of about five thousand Men;[3] when they arrive you may expect to hear from me again & to receive two hundred Congreves Rockets. The 1st. Battalion of Marines is also to join me.

You will receive herewith an Order to retaliate upon the inhabitants of the United States for the barbarities committed in Canada together with a secret Memorandum, as soon as you have Acted upon these with some effect you will use every means to Circulate Copies of the former, to shew that the Origin of the Evil which Visits them lies in their own Government—

As to the species of Warfare therein pointed out may accumulate much of the Enemy's property you may keep the Transport with you for its reception and cause temporary Stores to be put up upon Tangier Island for the reception of this Property as well as a Depot for Provisions

I send you herewith an order for Mr. Cummings, Surgeon of the Battalion under Major Lewis to Act as Surgeon of the Garrison upon Tangier Island

Your detention of Lieutent. Fenwick has occasioned me to receive the Enclosed Letter of Captain Cunninghams forwarded to me by General Horsford;[4] if he has not already been sent to Bermuda I must beg of you not on any account to fail sending him in.

As Captain Bruce proceeds in the *Hebrus* to take Command of the *Manly* you will employ Lieutenant Pearson in any manner he may be most useful—. I have the honor to be &c.

Vice Admiral of the Red & Commander in Chief

I send you a Letter for Mr. Barclay under Cover to General Mason which after perusal Seal & forward.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 378–81 (Reel 9). The marginal note reads: "recd. by *Hebrus* 7 Augt. 1814."

1. Captain Thomas Brown, R.N.
2. *Tucker.*
3. On 2 June 1814, Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm sailed from Verdon Roads, Bordeaux, France, with an expedition transporting almost 3,000 troops from the Fourth, Forty-fourth, and Eighty-fifth regiments of foot. Malcolm's flagship *Royal Oak* and the rest of his squadron stood into the harbor of Bermuda on 25 July. UkLPR, Adm. 50/87, fols. 81 and 107.
4. Cunningham to Horsford, 19 July 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 381–82.

Flotilla's Strategy in July

Commodore Barney and Secretary Jones were in a quandary after the second Battle of St. Leonard's Creek. The flotilla had escaped the creek, but what next? While Barney's squadron sailed up the Patuxent to the supposed safety of Nottingham, the British immediately attacked the village of St. Leonard's at the head of the creek, destroying gunboats and merchant vessels that might have eventually rejoined the flotilla. Cast into a defensive posture, all Barney could do was report British movements to the Navy Department and speculate where the enemy might strike next. Cockburn masked British intentions by dividing his force into two squadrons, Potomac and Patuxent, thus forcing Secretary Jones to adopt a reactive policy that changed daily from establishing a new flotilla for Barney in the Potomac, to moving his flotilla overland from Queen Anne's Town to South River.

ACTING LIEUTENANT SOLOMON RUTTER, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO CAPTAIN JOSHUA BARNEY, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Commodore Barney— Camp at Calvert Court house
July 3d. 1814—

Sir—

According to your orders a Schooner, lying at the head of St. Leonards Creeke was prepared for sailing, and loaded with the Spars and Iron Kentledge remaining there which had been landed from the Barges. This was compleated on the morning of the 30th. Ultmo.—with an intention of proceeding down the Creeke the ensuing night for the purpose of joining the Squadron as soon as possible— Capt: Geohagen, who had been left in charge at St. Leonards row'd some way down to gain inteligence of the Enemy and was soon informed that, two Ships, accompanied by several small Schooners had drop'd a little above the mouth of the Creeke; about 4 OClock that evening. This circumstance, precluding a possibility of the Schooner gaining the Patuxent, in the morning of the 1st. Inst., the Spars &c were al landed, & placed in thire former Situation. Capt. Geohagen then removed his party to this Camp, and on the morning of the 2d, again proceeded to St. Leonards town, with a guard of 8 men accompanied by the Waggons, for the purpose of removing the Spars & Kentledge left there, but had only time to load one Waggon when the near approach of the Enemy forced them to desist, & dispatch it back with orders for those not yet arived to return. Thirteen Masts of our Barges and the yards belonging to the Gally, were then launchd into the Creeke, & push'd up so as to conceal them from the Enemy. Care had also been taken to send off the Slide belonging to Gun Boat *No. 138*, lest by getting into thire posassion it might aid them in arming any other vessell.— Capt. Geohagen remained upon the point on which the warehouse is situated untill the Barges got within Musket Shot, when they were saluted with a well directed voly, which was returned by round & grape without any injury to our brave fellows, who were then ordered off, and directed to return to our post at this place.— An order with which they very reluctantly complied.— The officer remained to watch the motions of the Enemy, who has this morning returned, and reports from the best information he could obtain, that on the arival at the head of the Creeke, they commenced by burn-

ing the small vessells lying there, they then landed and a party remained upon the point who employ'd themselves in removing the few Hhds. of Tobacco which were left in the Warehouse, some of which they placed in a Launch, & the remainder, they either roled into the water, or left to be consumed in the house, to which they set fire— In the mean time another party had proceeded up the village, where they burned all the houses except that where the Doctor had his quarters with the store adjoining, and another immediately opposite. they did not even Spare the Negro's huts, or thire hen houses and pigstys.— The Officers eagerly enquired who fired upon them from the shore & upon being informed it was the Flotilla men said it was like them, but they regretted they had not stayd a little longer.— They embark'd in thire Barges about 6 OClock in the evening, occasionaly firing round & grape Shot as they proceeded down.— There appear to have been 11 Barges and one Schooner up the Creeke.— An Officer is going down to reconoitre, & inform himself of all the particulars relative to their proceedings while on shore. The Pins & Sheaves of the Spars left at the ware house, had been taken out and put in security, so that the few left near the Warehouse were all remaining in thire power.#— All our Waggons are now loaded here with Spars & rigging and are just moving off with them to hunting creek.— I am happy to inform you, that, from Doctor Hamiltons report, the Wounded are all likely to do well.— I have the honor to remain Sir with great respect your Obedt. Servt.

Sol[n] Rutter
Lieut. U S Flotilla

Spars belonging to Gunboats *No. 137* & *138*[1]

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 31a (M124, Roll No. 64). This is an enclosure in Barney to Jones, 4 July 1814, ibid., No. 31. Barney reported that he would soon be moving the flotilla up to Nottingham.

1. This note was probably written by Joshua Barney and was designated in the text with the # sign.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

US. flotilla, Nottingham July 8t 1814

Sir.

Major Briscoe of this place arrived here last evening from the mouth of Patuxent, which he left yesterday Morning, he informs, that on the 6th Inst. a large ship;[1] said to be Admiral Cockburns having a flag arrived, and joined the two frigates[2] at the mouth of the river, they have five schooners with them, two of which are the same as heretofore, and three others (smaller) on which they have placed two cannon each, that they are very busy in working upon their Launches & Barges to fit guns &c, from which he infers they mean an Attack either on the flotilla, or else where; An English officer had been onshore and said, that this flotilla was laid up, & that "Barney" was gone on to Baltimore to fit the flotilla there, and when ready, men were to be sent from Washington to mann this, & that they had information of Artillery having been sent down to

be placed on a point near them, where the two flotilla's were to opperate with them &c

I am informed that Col. Wadsworth is laying in the rear of Benidict, (some say to cover the property of Clemm Dorsey during his harvest) I am likewise told that a body of Militia are ordered out from this place & Vicinity, to proceed to St. Leonards creek, (under Col Taney, who has never done any thing, nor do I beleive, would, if in his Power;) this will be drawing the forces to an improper place, as they cross the Patuxent here, and no way of recrossing afterwards, for the defence of this side, from this downwards, so that in case the enemy comes up and lands on the Nottingham side we shall have no force to repel them. I shall take a stand about a mile below this town, being the best place for to operate with all my force, the river being widest there, and commands a narrow part of the river by which they must come, but, we have Cliffs on each side, which ought to be occupied by a few troops & one or two cannon, for if the enemy gets possession of them (Cliffs) they will have it in their power to injure us very much. I do not fear them without troops, but as they seem seriously employed at preparation, I think it very probable that they expect to have some. The troops under Col. Wadsworth can be of no real service at Benidict, or lower down, & even at lower Malborough, as every thing is distroyed below this & of course no object to the Enemy, so that the natural conclusion is, that this place & perhaps higher up must be the Object. I have got every thing from St. Leonards which was left there My officer[3] who was near there (at their landing) reports that they went onboard one of our gunboats that was sunk level with the water, & attempted to blow up part of her deck, but did not trouble the other, that he retired in the evening & next morning on going to the place met a number of the Inhabitants, who had been onbd. the Gunboats, & tore up & plunder'd every peice of Iron old Copper &c. they could get at, he took it from them, and Observed they were more Anxious to plunder the property of the US. than to defend their own, which is certainly the case, as there were more men collected for that purpose than has been seen together since we lay in the creek: And can it be possible that men are to cross the river from the defence of their own homes to defend such Traitors. I have the honor to be respectfully yours

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 43 (M124, Roll No. 64). The pages are bound out of order.

1. *Albion.*
2. *Narcissus* and *Severn.*
3. Sailing Master John Geoghegan.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

flotilla off Nottingham July 13th. 1814

Sir

On Monday evg.[1] 10 PM. I received Possitive information that a frigate, 2 small Schooners & 6 Barges were off Benidict, that the boats had been up a few

miles above, into the mouth of Hunting Creek, knowing that there was a Warehouse at the head of that creek with Tobacco, I concluded they intended to rob & distroy it. I then determined on moving down with the flotilla, at 2 AM we began our movements, at ½ past 5 we were off the mouth of the creek, where I was in hopes of catching the schooner & Boats, but saw nothing, We continued down to Benidict, when I was informed that the Ship &c. had gone down early in the morning and was then off St. Leonards, that they had landed about 100 men on the afternoon before at Benidict & burnt 8 hogsheads of Tobacco, and carried off three more in a Scow which they brought with them, this confirmed me that their Object was Huntington warehouse, as the schooners could not get up, & the Scow was for the purpose of taking Tobacco off— In going down the river, (some how or other) a Gun went off in one of my barges, the report of which was heard at Benidict, of course onboard the frigate, and the people informed me that in ten minutes afterwards the frigate got under way, I returned to my station this morning, and have just received your letter of yesterday.[2] The situation of the flotilla, in my opinion will not admit of my absence at this time, Mr. Frazier second in command (& the only officer) is now on shore in bad health, The enemy are below in force, One tide brings them up to us— Mr. Geoghegan can proceed to Washington but I feel a regret at letting him go, as he now commands one of my largest Barges in the place of Mr. Nicholson—[3] I wish if Possible for Captn. Miller to communicate to me for the Court of Enquiry what evidence he thinks I can give,[4] I hope such a mode may be adopted. I have also received inclosure respecting furnaces from Comr. Lewis,[5] and am of opinion with you, that a furnace in a launch, or rather in one of the fastest light barges, bought of the City of Baltre. will answer better than any other mode. I wish Sir to have a couple of light travelling gun carriages, to mount guns on in case of necessity, The Size for long twelves will answer. I am respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

An Officer of the 36th. just from Leonard town St. Maries informs that 1. 74 & two frigates with several small vessels have passed up by point look out[6]

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 53 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. 11 July 1814.

2. Jones ordered a court of inquiry into the conduct of Captain Samuel Miller, U.S.M.C., at the Battle of St. Leonard's Creek on 26 June, after receiving a letter from Colonel Decius Wadsworth, disparaging Miller's actions. Jones instructed Barney and Sailing Master Geoghegan to attend the court of inquiry at Miller's request. The court acquitted Miller of any blame. Wadsworth to Jones, 7 July 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 38 (M124, Roll No. 64); Jones to Barney, 12 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 372 (M149, Roll No. 11); Samuel Miller court of inquiry, 26 July–15 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 169 (M273, Roll No. 7).

3. Sailing Master James Nicholson, appointed to the command of one of the large barges at Baltimore, joined the Chesapeake Bay flotilla on 6 September 1813. Granted a furlough on 2 July 1814, Nicholson was temporarily replaced by Sailing Master Geoghegan. Nicholson was discharged on 15 April 1815.

4. Sailing Master Geoghegan and Commodore Barney, in lieu of attending Miller's court of inquiry held in Washington from 26 July to 15 August 1814, submitted either a general statement (Geoghegan) or written answers to several interrogatories (Barney). Both concluded that the marine captain was an able, cooperative officer whose men were well disciplined. Samuel Miller court of inquiry, 26 July–15 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 169 (M273, Roll No. 7).

5. The commander of the New York flotilla, Jacob Lewis, who was commissioned a captain in the flotilla service on 26 April 1814, suggested to Secretary Jones that if Barney had furnaces for hot shot the British could not blockade him. Jones asked Lewis for details on dimensions and Lewis sent the information to Barney. Lewis to Jones, 27 June 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 17 (M124, Roll No. 64); Jones to Lewis, 29 June 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 361 (M149, Roll No. 11); and Lewis to Jones, 6 July 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 37 (M124, Roll No. 64).

6. *Asia*, 74, *Regulus*, 44, *Brune*, 38, *Melpomene*, 38, *Manly*, 12, and *Aetna*, 8. They brought reinforcements of marines and Royal Marine Artillery.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Cutter *Scorpion*, July 21st. 1814

Sir,

On Sunday morning last,[1] the alarm was given, that the enemy were in force, with 3 Ships, 5 Schooners & 30 barges having troops onbd. and coming up the Patuxent,[2] the moment I heard of it from Genl. Winder[3] I got the flotilla under way and dropt down to a convenient place to receive the enemy and moored for the purpose, during the day I received fifty different accounts of the movements of the enemy but none agreeing, The Wind blew hard from the Southard with a flood tide, so that it was impossible for me to row down had an occasion of Acting, presented itself, in the afternoon I learnt they had landed just above Benidict on the Calvert side, and had marched to Huntington & burnt the Warehouse, which is what I expected from their movements the week before, This was done by not more than 120 men, who marched upwards of Seven miles into the country and returned without molestation; Rumours and alarms have been continuel every day since, the people are all frightened out of their senses running about the country like so many mad people, nor can I procure a single man & horse to go down the river for information as to the force of the enemy at the mouth of the River; And I cannot trust one of my officers for he would be betrayed by our internal foes such is my situation. Yesterday, news was brought by letters that the enemy had landed 700 men at Benidict and sent parties into the Country, that Leonard town in St. Maries was taken by a force that had gone up the Potomac;[4] and also that the enemy had again visited Huntington & burnt Calvert Court house, such Sir are the daily rumours & tales, so that in fact, I cannot write you any thing as certain; If I had a fast Gig, or whale boat, I could send down the river and obtain Information as to their force & position, but I have not, being confined to boats that will not row fast.

I have been under the necessity of suspending Sailing Master Claude Besse, his conduct has been such as to take away all confidence in him, for, from [*the*] day of our battle on the 10th. June, (the time his G[*unboat*] was sunk) he has appeared so much deranged, that I cannot continue his command any longer, he will be ordered to Baltimore.[5] I am Sir with Respect your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 67 (M124, Roll No. 64). The bracketed words are conjectures; the seal tore the paper.

1. 17 July 1814.
2. For British documentation on raids on the Patuxent River, see pp. 150–62 and the map of Nourse's raids on p. 158.
3. Brigadier General William H. Winder, U.S.A., was captured at the Battle of Stony Creek in June 1813 and imprisoned in Canada until early 1814. On 1 July 1814, Madison appointed him commander of the newly established Tenth Military District, comprising the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers.
4. For British documentation on their raiding parties along the Potomac, see pp. 162–73 and the map of Cockburn's activities on p. 164.
5. Sailing Master Besse, although temporarily suspended, was not discharged until the flotilla was disbanded on 15 April 1815.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

US Cutter *Scorpion* off Nottingham July 24th. 1814

Sir

By a deserter (A Dane by birth) which left the *Severn* frigate on the 19th. when they landed in St. Maries, I have obtained the following information; That the *Severn*, a troop ship, mounting 28 Guns, a Bomb ship having a Morter & 12 18 lb. Carronades, a Gun brig,[1] and 4 small schooners carrying 32 lb. Carronades & one with a long 9 lb., is the force in the river above point patience, and between that & Benidict; That he was of the parties at the burning of Huntington & Calvert court house, on Sunday & Tuesday last, and when landed on the St. Maries side on Wednesday,[2] he made his escape, that the Sole object of all the late expeditions, as he heard the officers say, was Tobacco & Negroes, with some fresh provisions. That two troop ships came from Bermuda with Admiral Cochrane, having onbd. about 8 or 900 Marines,[3] that about 300 was with the division above stated, he says the day they burnt a Tobacco house in St. Maries, he heard the officers say, that they had now got, and distroyed all, that was in their power, and must wait further orders from the Admiral. That when they went to burn Calvert court, Capt. Nourse of the *Severn*, got horses from Old Major Taney for himself & officers, that they were well received and treated by the Major, and that Capt Nourse had given the Major a Written protection; however I am informed from Genrl. Wilkinson that the day before yesterday, every Negro belonging to the Major went off Voluntarily, of course lost to him; My Informant says there is 4 ships of the line & 7 frigates in the Bay. I mean to drop down in a day or two, towards Benidict, but I have been so ill for three or four days, that I have hardly strength to keep up, however I am now better, and shall make a movement to watch the enemy, for I cannot obtain any positive information; There are so many individuals that make it their business to give false and alarming news, that we cannot believe any thing we hear, among others a Mr. Simmons late accountt. of the War office, he has been down into St. Maries, and came up with the Story of 1500 men marching up the Country, which set every person to moving from Portobacco &c, it is such, that do the mischief and prevents the Militia from doing their duty, by exagerating the force & power of the Enemy, such conduct is daily and hourly practiced by many others in these parts— I am respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 87 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Nourse was ordered to take *Severn*, *Brune*, *Aetna*, and *Manly* up the Patuxent.
2. Sunday, the 17th; Tuesday, the 19th; Wednesday, the 20th.
3. Admiral Cochrane's force did not arrive until mid-August. On 15 July 1814, five warships and two transports brought reinforcements to the Chesapeake.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the US flotilla
Patuxent River

Navy Department
July 26th. 1814.—

Sir

I have received your letter of the 24th. and am myself of opinion, that the principal object of the enemy at present is plunder. Admiral Cochrane I presume has arrived, and has brought reinforcements with him, but not to the extent that has been reported. He will in all probability endeavour to give more importance and activity to his command. They are now very busy upon the Potomac, have it is said bouyed out the Channel through the Kettlebottoms, and one frigate is reported to have passed those Shoals.— If the fact is so, they may probably go up to Maryland point.—

In this state of things, I wish you to reflect and determine, whether you can place your flotilla in a position, secure against the force of the enemy in the Patuxent, and leaving it in charge of your next in command, come yourself with two hundred of your Officers and Crews to this place, and with the new Schooner,[1] three new Barges and such other force as we have, proceed down to Maryland point and look at the enemy. I would also embrace the occasion to erect a Sailors Battery, of 6 or 8 heavy Guns on Maryland point, which with a furnace and a sufficient military force to protect the Battery, would effectually defend that point.

I have ordered two travelling Carriages, for long light 18 pounders to be made for the use of your flotilla.

If you come, come quickly.— I am respectfully Your Obed Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 172.

1. The schooner *Lynx* was being built at the Washington Navy Yard.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the US flotilla
Nottingham Md.

Navy Department
July 27th.—1814.

Sir

Accounts have been received here this morning, that the whole of the enemy's forces on the Potomac have gone down below Blackston's Island,[1] and probably up the Bay again. You will therefore consider my letter of yesterday by express as countermanded, and continue with your present command.—

As the temptation for plunder is nearly exhausted on the Patuxent, it is to be presumed that the enemy may be content, to blockade you in that River, and employ his disposable force elsewhere.— Should this be the case, it will be advisable to proceed with the flotilla to Queen Anns, from whence to South river, I believe is but 8 or 9 miles over a good level road.—

The *Scorpion* when divested of all her heavy Stores, can I believe ascend nearly to Queen Anns.— If arrangements can be made with due privacy, until the moment of operation, the Barges may be transported to South river,— but if this project shall fail, I still think that Queen Anns will be the place of greatest safety, from whence the Crews can be transferd to Baltimore, Annapolis, or to this place, as occasion may require, with more facility, and the position is, I believe the most salubrious, of any on the upper part of the Patuxent.—

I shall be glad of your opinion on this subject.— A waggon will start this afternoon with a very light fast Gig, oars &c. for Nottingham to your order.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 173.

1. Now St. Clement's Island.

Cockburn's Diversion along the Patuxent

Anxiously awaiting Vice Admiral Cochrane's arrival with the expected invasion army, Rear Admiral Cockburn, by mid-July 1814, was reinforced with only 900 marines and a company of Royal Marine Artillery. Under orders to limit his operations until the main force arrived from Bermuda, Cockburn employed his small contingent by forming two squadrons—one under his command to attack along the Potomac River and one under Captain Joseph Nourse to chart the Patuxent and make limited forays against the American populace. From mid-July to mid-August Nourse's squadron captured or destroyed tobacco stores along the Patuxent and the Eastern Shore, and stationed vessels at Drum Point to blockade Barney's flotilla in the Patuxent.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

Albion Off Drum Point Patuxent 11 July 1814

Dear Barrie

I was sorry to learn by your Letter of the 5th the untimely Fate of the *Warrington* & the more so as we have at this Moment Nothing of the kind equally good to replace her,[1] I hope however to get one ere long as in Consequence of finding Barney had got above Benedick and that it was useless to endeavor to follow him up this River affording him such facility of Retreat to so great a distance from our Shipping, I have directed the *Loire, St. Lawrence* & a Tender to take Advantage of his being hemmed in here, to proceed to the upper parts of the Chesapeake (as high as the Elk) to work Our friends about Baltimore & to endeavor to get hold of the Steam Boat and do them any other Mischief he may find to be within his Power,[2] if he be tolerably successful this will obtain for Your Friend Barney a few more Blessings

The Frigates[3] prior to my arrival had examined Leonards Creek, burnt the Vessels Barney left there[4] & brought off about forty Hhds of Tobacco and coming up here *Albion* took a Schr. loaded with Lumber, so you see we go on picking a little, which as the War is so nearly at an end may offer you some Consolation for Your Detention in Lynhaven being so unexpectedly prolonged, as the Operations of the Frigates took place on the Saturday,[5] which I find by your Letter was the day on which the *Acasta* & *Narcissus* sailed it will be necessary for you to be particular in Reporting the Hour of their passing the Capes[6]

I have had parties on Shore constantly on both Sides the River but the Militia pertinaciously keep to the Woods and leave the Shores & the Clear ground subject to our Depredations from which we have taken Stock Corn &c. but I have not allowed further Damage to be done in consequence of our Not meeting with Opposition— The other day two Heroes on Horseback fired at one of my Lieutts. when on Shore and then rode off as hard as they could— I ascertained who they were & where they lived, & that Night I sent to their House (between two & three Miles off) destroyed every thing belonging to it and brought them & their Horses on board, and I now send these two Heroes to you for a Passage to Halifax and I trust this example added to that of Jarboe[7] will induce Jonathan to be more guarded in his behaviour towards us & to treat us in future with due Respect

If the Commander in Chief does not appear before *Loire* returns I believe I must myself drop down to Lynhaven Bay to release you, it is really very Sad to be distressed as I am for adequate Force to do the Duties of this important Bay with so many Ships on the Station, but I hope when the Vice Admiral has once been here himself he will be induced to change his present System of Operations & Distribution of the Ships

I send you all the late Newspapers I have, but they contain little or Nothing more than you have already seen

Severn is gone up the River to ascertain how high it is possible for Ships to get, and *Albion* is completing her Water at Drum Point where I have established a most excellent Watering Place under the Guns of the Ship

I was very glad to learn Your Passengers are doing so well in spite of the natural anxiety attending their Detention, pray remember me most kindly to them all, Accept my best Thanks for your Offers of Service in England should I have any thing to send prior to your being Ordered home, I shall not hesitate in

availing Myself of your kindness— Adieu. Believe me with real Esteem & Friendship Ever most faithfully & truly yours,

G: Cockburn

As the Vessel Mr. Thorn is now in, is not fit for the Lynhaven Bay Anchorage—I will thank you to send her back to me with any Communications you may wish to make and I hope to have a better Vessel for him by the time he gets here in which case he shall lose no time in again returning to you—

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers.

1. This letter was not found. Cockburn used *Warrington*, *Albion*'s tender, to communicate among his squadron.

2. Cockburn ordered Captain Thomas Brown on 7 July to take *Loire* and *St. Lawrence* on a cruise to the upper Chesapeake to annoy American trade carried on via steamboat between Baltimore and Elkton. Cockburn to Brown, 7 July 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 16, Vol. 44, pp. 150–52 (Reel 10). This vessel may have been *Chesapeake*, which reportedly was the only steamboat in Baltimore between 1813 and 1815. Shannahan, *Steamboat'n' Days*, pp. 9–12.

3. *Severn* and *Loire*.

4. Among the vessels burned were Gunboats *No. 137* and *No. 138*.

5. 2 July 1814.

6. When *Acasta* and *Narcissus* sailed from the Chesapeake was important in determining whether they would qualify for prize money.

7. Cockburn is referring to the British capture of James Jaboe at his St. Mary's County home on 2 July 1814. George C. Urmston to Cockburn, 3 June 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 322–24 (Reel 9).

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

Albion Saturday Morning 16 July 1814 off Drum Point

Dear Barrie

The *Asia* got up to me yesterday, I immediately caused every Exertion to be used to get from her, the Company of Artillery & the numerous Articles she brought out for us and I now send her to release you, and with her, three Sloops & a Schooner loaded with Part of your Property to take with you to Halifax, the large Sloop is particularly valuable having besides 33 Hhds. of Tobacco, a Number of Cases & Casks of other Costly Commodities, they are all good Vessels and I do not think they will detain you much. We have now remaining at Tangier exactly 102 Hhds.

I am sorry to say the *Loire* missed the Steam Boat[1] by a few Hours (our Information respecting her Arrival at Baltimore was incorrect she gets in it seems in the Afternoon, instead of after Dark as we supposed) Captain Brown however managed to bring me Ten Prizes of Sorts, the best of the Vessels are those I now send to you & the most Valuable parts of the Cargoes of all, are in the Sloop, the produce of his Cruize is therefore not very great, but I intend having another treat for the Steam Boat when the Alarm occasioned by *Loire*'s going up has worn away a little

The Commander in Chief tells me he is coming in Mighty and overbearing Strength, but when seems a question he is not himself able to solve, I confess I do not expect him for some time and intend therefore sending the *St. Lawrence* to Bermuda with my Letters & Despatches for him—in the Mean Time I have

positive Orders only to make Play with the advanced Force now sent to me & on no account to attempt any Thing of Importance before the Army arrives, which is to be Thirty Thousand Strong (this however you are to consider as a Secret Communication) to be sure such an Army here will only have to chuse where it will go & what it will occupy & take Possession of I shall strongly advocate their seizing in the first Instance the Capital as that is always a hard Blow to begin with and is in this instance so easy to be effected within 48 Hours after Landing such a Force at Benedict—to facilitate which I am now going to move from this River leaving in it only two Frigates & a Brig,[2] that my Views respecting it may only appear to have reference to the Blockade of the Flotilla—and to further this Idea I have directed them to lay chiefly off Drum Point after having made one Haul up the River at a Place I have just received Information of as containing some extensive Stores—

I am myself with the rest of the Force going into the Potowmac & after making a Flourish or two there, sacking Leonards Town &c. I shall again move elsewhere, so as to distract Jonathan, do him all the Mischief I can and yet not allow him to suspect that a serious & permanent Landing is intended any Where this is the extent of what is at present permitted to me and indeed under the existing Circumstances it is perhaps the wisest Plan though I think we have more to expect from the Enemy's want of Means & Energy to frustrate our Plans than from his want of Information— Every thing is as quiet in this Neighborhood as when I last wrote, not a Militia Man or Soldier to be seen except we hunt for them in the Woods & then they only play at Hide & Seek with us, and in such good Order are the Inhabitants, that one of them on the left Bank of the River (about 40 Miles from Washington) sent to me to beg I would give him Permission to go from his Property for a few Days to Visit Relations ten Miles distant—and another sent to Ask leave to send a few of his young Geese to another of his Houses where part of his Family resided— in short it is quite ridiculous the perfect Dominion we have from the Entrance of this River to Benedict— Mr. Maddison must certainly be either in confident Expectation of immediate Peace, or preparing to abdicate the Chair.—

By the *Asia* & *Thistle* I yesterday received your Three Letters, two of the 12th. & one of the 14th[3] for which I thank you I read over all your Correspondence with General Porter who I think seems really to feel as he ought about the aggression of His officer and has done in it every thing within his Power.— agreeably to your Wish I return you the Generals Letters and I will thank you to leave for me with Captain Skene a particular Report of the State of the Wounded Man when you Sail— I was sorry to learn the Flux was becoming so alarming in the *Dragon*, All the Ships here have had a little of it but it seems generally to have yielded to Medicine without producing any fatal Consequences, and I trust your People will soon get better when you are once fairly out of Chesapeake Air, You did quite right in taking the onions from the Schooner with *Thistle* & the Stock from the Spaniard I only wish you had taken more from the latter, as we are here all in Clover— I am very glad you sent the *Thistle* up to me, as I shall keep her in lieu of *St. Lawrence*, I like the appearance of your Friend[4] who Commands her very much, he managed to get to me before the Troopers— My Brother[5] tells me he is coming here to pay me a Visit, he expected to come in *Niemen* & to be here before the Brig, and therefore kept back most of my Letters & other Things— there is however no News but what we have heard through the American Papers—Excepting Admiral Stirling trying at

Portsmouth for his conduct at Jamaica—[6] Fleming appointed Comr. in Chief from Cape Finisterre to Bay of Roses & Hallowell chief from thence up the Mediterranean all the Other Admirals returned or returning home, and 6 Frigates & five Sloops Ordered from Medn. here— Kerr of the *Acasta* has taken (off the Delaware) a Small Prize with Tar & Spirits of Turpentine, I hope you may pick up something good as you run along the Coast. Adieu let me once more repeat to you My Thanks for the Cheerful & ready Assistance I have so invariably received from you especially at the Moments when My Chief's Conduct put me So much to my Shifts May success attend you wherever you go and believe me Always with real Esteem Most faithfully & truly Yours

G: Cockburn

Remember me to all your Passengers I wish them Joy of their delivery from Chesapeak. when will they return me the Compliment

Pray make out as good a Case for me as you can in Answer to my public Letter about the American & leave it with Skene, if the Man does not remain behind—[7]

G C

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers.

1. *Chesapeake.*
2. *Severn, Brune,* and *Manly.*
3. Cockburn's letter book of received letters contains no Barrie letters from 19 June to 21 July 1814.
4. Commander James K. White, R.N. On 21 July Cockburn appointed White acting captain of his flagship *Albion* to replace Captain Charles B. H. Ross, who left for Halifax to restore his health.
5. Sir James Cockburn, British army.
6. Accused of corruption while in command at Jamaica, Vice Admiral Charles Stirling, R.N., was recalled in 1813. The charges against him were partly proved at a court-martial held in May 1814.
7. Cockburn is referring to the complicated case of James Guedron. The American government contended that the British impressed Guedron into service in 1809. British documentation found he joined the Royal Navy voluntarily. Cockburn to Barrie, 15 July 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 198–201 (Reel 6).

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 29 *Albion* off Jerome Point
Chesapeake 17 July 1814.

Sir,

One of the Bastions of Fort Albion being perfectly completed and the Guns mounted on it on the 30th. Ultimo, I considered the Establishment on Tangier Island to be sufficiently secure against any Force the Enemy in the actual state of affairs has it in his power to send against it, and therefore giving to Captain Watts of the *Jaseur* the order of which the Enclosure No. 1 is a Copy,[1] I moved up the Chesapeake to the Patuxent in the *Albion*, on Anchoring in the River I received Information that the light part of the Baltimore Flotilla which had escaped from Leonards Creek, had retired so high up and were of such shallow draft of Water, as to leave us no chance of again getting near them, I therefore immediately dispatched Captain Brown in the *Loire* with the *St. Lawrence* and a Tender to sweep (whilst the Flotilla were hemmed in here) the upper parts of the Chesapeake, from Baltimore to the Elk, and to endeavor to intercept the Steam Boat[2] (of Five hundred Tons Burthen) which runs continually between those Places— I also sent the *Severn* up the Patuxent to ascertain how high it is actually navigable for our Ships, and to endeavor to gain me further Intelligence respecting the movements and Intentions of Commodore Barney— From the Station I took in this Ship (immediately between Drum Point and Hog Point within Musquet Shot of both Shores,) I sent Detachments into the Country occasionally on both sides the River, but except procuring Supplies of Stock they have had no opportunity of effecting any thing against the Enemy, the few Militia Men they have met with having always taken to the Woods whenever approached, leaving the whole of the fine Country in this Neighbourhood completely at our disposal and Mercy— on the 12th. Instt. the *Severn* returned, Captain Nourse carried that Ship without difficulty nearly as high as Benedict (forty five Miles from Washington) and I enclose No. 2 the Plan he delivered to me of the River,[3] he sent his Boats four Miles above Benedict but could neither see nor learn any thing of Commodore Barney, excepting that the People told him the Commodore would for the future take care to keep where he would be secure from the possibility of our getting at him— Captain Nourse reports the whole Country bordering the River as high as he went, to be in the same defenceless and deserted State that it is hereabouts, and indeed the only People who venture now to inhabit the Houses around, are such as have applied for and obtained our Permission and Protection.

On the 14th. Instant the *Loire* returned and I am sorry to have to report that she missed the Steam Boat by a few hours only, she captured however Ten other Vessels and Captain Brown was with the Boats as high as French Town, and took Possession of every thing he could find afloat either on the Bay or in the upper Rivers— after giving the People of Baltimore and its vicinity a little time to recover again from the general alarm and state of active Vigilance which the sudden appearance of the Frigate in that neighbourhood occasioned them, I intend to repeat the manœvre, as I know the Americans cannot resist taking advantage of the easy and short Water Communication between Baltimore and Elkton whenever they believe Danger at all removed from it, and it was for the more particular protection of this (to them) valuable Communication, that the Flotilla I have now rendered useless was fitted out.

On the 15th. the *Asia* arrived here with the Troop Ships[4] and *Manly* Brig, and Captain Skene delivered to me your Letters, one dated 18th June (marked Confidential) and two dated 1st. July, one No. 13 and the other marked Secret[5]— after a full consideration of every thing set forth in the latter, and of your Instructions to me therein contained, I determined for the Reasons explained in the accompanying (Secret) Letter[6] immediately to move from the Patuxent with the greater part of the Ships, and to leave there only such a Force as would have the appearance of being merely intended to Blockade and attend to the Flotilla— I am therefore now on my way to the Potowmac, having left in the Patuxent Captain Nourse in the *Severn* with the *Brune* (and the Detachment of Marines in her) and the *Manly* Brig; and I have directed Captain Nourse (after capturing some valuable Stores which we had just received Information of and

which had previously escaped us) to remain principally at the lower part of the River only reconnoitring it occasionally, & by means of the Marines and Ships left under his orders, to prevent or destroy in its Infancy, any Work the Enemy may shew a disposition to construct on either of its Banks.

I have ordered the *Asia* to Lynhaven Bay to Blockade the Entrance of the Chesapeake and attend to the Enemy at Norfolk, and I intend to proceed myself with the rest of the Force in the first Instance as high up the Potowmac as a Place called Leonards Town, which by Information I have received has many valuable Stores deposited in it and principally belongs to People of the Democratic Faction. I also propose to take advantage of our being in that Neighbourhood to endeavour to ascertain the Passage past the Shoals in the Potowmac named the Kettle Bottoms, which the Ships ordered up that River last year were not able to accomplish, but which (with a view to our future operations) I think it essentially Important we should discover if possible— These objects, and knowing that the Black Population inclined to join us is more numerous on the Shores of the Potowmac than any where else within the Chesapeake, makes me consider that River as the place best adapted for the moment, to offer me advantages in meeting and advancing the Views and Spirit of your present Instructions to me,

I shall not however continue any longer than absolutely necessary so high up the Potowmac as Leonards Town, it being my Intention studiously to avoid occasioning the Americans to suspect I have been led into the River for any other object than that of Leonards Town and the other incursions which I shall probably make on the opposite side, and therefore I shall afterwards visit other Points endeavoring to distract as much as possible the attention of the Enemy and to induce him to believe that no serious or permanent Landing is really contemplated, which I think may be done whilst the best probable Means of advancing the Objects you have specified in your Instructions to me are adapted, and I will take care to keep a Vessel always so Stationed as to ensure her meeting with you in your way up the Bay, to inform you of my Movements and of my Position at that Moment.

I have several small Vessels already collected at Tangier, and I will take every opportunity encreasing the Number, but if you could send a light Transport to receive the great quantity of Prize Goods we have here, it would put so many more of these Vessels at our disposal, we have now 102 Hogsheads of Tobacco and many other Articles at Tangier Island, in addition to 320 Hogsheads and other things which I have sent to Halifax with the *Dragon*.

The Marine Clothing you sent by the *Asia* for the Colonial Marines has arrived most opportunely, we were in very great want of it; I think we have about 120 Men in the Corps and I have now no doubt of encreasing it rapidly, they are indeed excellent Men, and make the best skirmishers possible for the thick Woods of this Country.

The last Paragraph of your Letter repeating again so particularly your desire that Lieutenant Fenwick may be returned to Bermuda, I do not think it proper any longer to take upon myself to detain him here, but his loss will be very sensibly felt at Tangier, where his presence or that of some other Officer of Engineers is still very essentially necessary for the advancement of His Majesty's Service.

On the Evening of the 15th. Instt. the *Thistle* Gun Brig arrived here in search of you with Dispatches from Halifax, but as she sails excessively ill and is of a

draft of Water which may enable her to be of some use here, I have determined to send the *St. Lawrence* on to you instead of her, with the Dispatches from Halifax, with my present Letters in Answer to your Communications by the *Asia* and many other Dispatches from me (detailing to you the Proceedings in the Chesapeake since the sailing of the *Lacedamonian*) which have been accumulating on board the Ship of the Senior Officer in Lynhaven Bay waiting some opportunity of being forwarded or delivered to you. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. Humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2333, fols. 179–84. Docketing reads: "Received by *St. Lawrence* 26 July 14." This was Cockburn's public letter to Cochrane of this date.

1. Cockburn placed Captain George E. Watts in charge of Tangier Island during his absence. Cockburn to Watts, 30 June 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 16, Vol. 44, pp. 144–48 (Reel 10).
2. *Chesapeake.*
3. Nourse's sketch of part of the Patuxent River has been reproduced in George, *Terror*, p. 82.
4. *Regulus, Melpomene, Brune.*
5. Cochrane's confidential letter of 18 June 1814 was not found. In letter number 13 of 1 July 1814, Cochrane mentioned sending $3,600 to Cockburn for victualling and contingent expenses. Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 July 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 365–66 (Reel 9). For the secret letter of 1 July 1814 from Cochrane to Cockburn, see pp. 129–30.
6. For Cockburn's secret letter of 17 July 1814 to Cochrane, see pp. 137–39.

Captain Joseph Nourse, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

HM Ship *Severn* in the Patuxent July 23rd. 1814

Sir,

On Sunday the 17th. Instant I landed with the Marines you did me the honor to place under my command, at a point about 3 or 4 miles above Benedict called Gods graces on the County of Calvert side and marched to Hunting town a distance of seven miles and destroyd a Store containing 130 Hogsheads of Tobacco, we returned by the same road, taking off from the Estate of Gods graces 13 Hogheads of Tobacco, and got all the Marines reembarked and on board the same day.

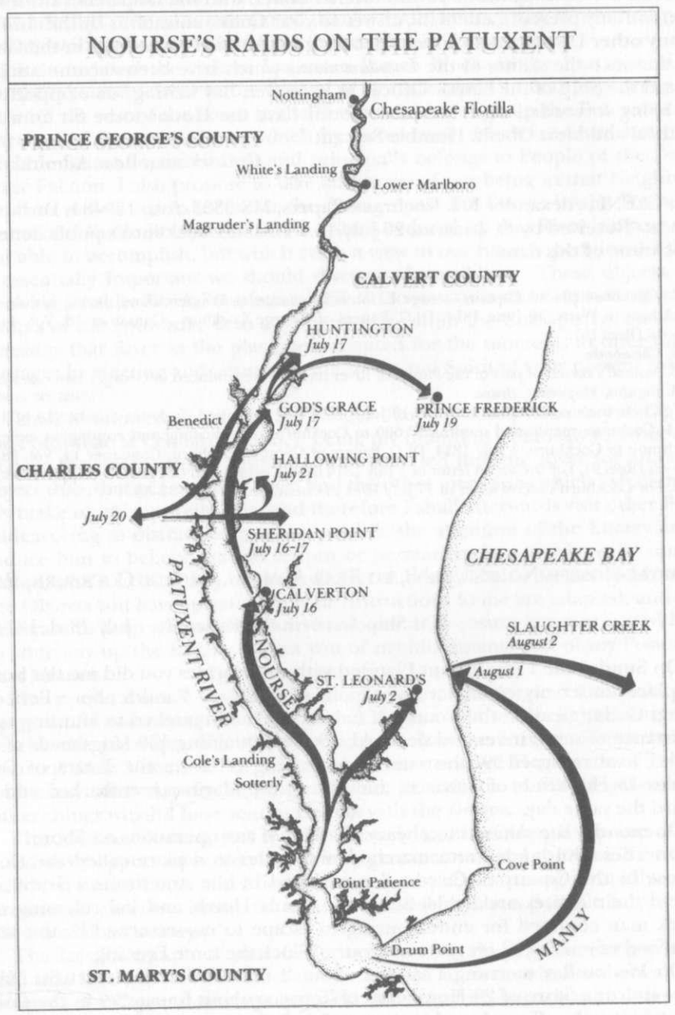
On monday the rain was too heavy to admit of any operations on Shore.

On Tuesday I landed and marched nine miles to a place called the Court House in the County of Calvert denominated by the Americans a Town and where their Assizes are held—Burnt the Court House and Jail releasing one Black man confined for endeavouring to escape to us—returned by the same road and re-embarked every one by four o'Clock the same Evening.

On Wednesday morning I landed about 2 miles below Benedict St. Marys side—burnt a Store of 29 Hogsheads of Tobacco about four miles in the Country and brought off ten found in the woods.

On Thursday I intended dropping down the River but the wind being foul I landed the Marines on both sides of the River.

On Friday Morning I moved the Ships down to Sandy Point having information of a Store of Tobacco in that neighbourhood—landed the Marines and



Map 7

marched 5 miles into the Country found a Store containing 12 but for want of means could bring away but five.

On Saturday morning in obedience to your Order I drop'd down to Drum point— In all these operations I have been attended by Captains Kenah and Badcock and my first Lieutenant Mr. Gammon and received every assistance from their Zeal and Activity I also find Captain Cole Commanding the detachment of Marines a most Zealous good Officer. I have the honor to be &c

signed Joseph Nourse

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 368–70 (Reel 9).

CAPTAIN JOSEPH NOURSE, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

H.M. Ship *Severn* in the Patuxent July 23rd. 1814

Sir,

I trust you will be satisfied that I have not been Idle since I left you, with respect to Commodore Barney I have not been able to procure any positive information as all the accounts vary so much as to his exact position though eve[r]y one agreeing and of which I have no doubt of his being as high up the River as he can get and that he has there made himself as strong as he can, repo[r]t says 3000 Troops are with him— the people on either side of the Patuxent are in the greatest alarm and consternation many are moving entirely away from both Calvert & St. Marys, and I think in a short time they will be nearly deserted, those that remained at home all their Slaves have left them and come to us, last night 39 Men Women and Children came from Colonel Plater's. I have never at any time when landed seen more than one or two armed people of the Militia and have reason to believe that all their Force is about Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis— When we landed on Wednesday[1] we heard that you had landed at St. Marys Town— The Militia commanded by a General Stewart that were laying in the woods opposite your Anchorage at Drum point I am informed moved up the River when we did—And are said to be at a place called Cool Springs about seven miles from Benedict— I could learn nothing of them when I landed in that Neighbourhood—their object I believe is to keep at a respectable distance— There is still a good deal of Tobacco, but in small parcels concealed in the Woods and Barns at some distance from the water side, but I did not think it of sufficient importance to delay me any longer from dropping down to Drum Point in obedience to your Orders where I mean to complete the Ships in water as fast as possible—

I do not think the Calvert side low down at all likely to be fortified from its being so narrow a slip of land, but I shall be upon the alert—

In one of our Expeditions an American told us he guessd we were the advanced Guard of a considerable force intended to land at Benedict and march to Washington— I wish with all my heart this Force was arrived for Jonathan I believe is so confounded that he does not know when or where to look for us and I do believe that he is at this moment so undecided and unprepared that it would require but little force to burn Washington, and I hope soon to put the first torch to it myself—

Horses may be procured in abundance and I should have taken a great many but I have not the means of taking care of them, the Slaves deserted to us I have sent by Captain Kenah he has been constantly on shore with me, and I have found him so useful that if I am not taking too great a liberty I should request your being kind enough to say how satisfied I have been with him. out of the number of Coloured people a great many are women and Children—but there would be no getting the men without receiving them, the misfortune is the one bears no proportion to the other— I have kept a few that are acquainted about here for guides— I have now 30 Hogsheads of Tobacco on board—but I did not think it proper to send any away by the Bomb—but should you Sir have a spare Vessel, we shall find her very useful, I allude to any capture you may chance to make in the Potowmac. I have &c

(signed) Joseph Nourse

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 370–72 (Reel 9).

1. 20 July 1814.

Captain Joseph Nourse, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Severn*
Drum Point Augt. 4—1814

Sir/

Since my last letter to you by Captain Kenah[1] I have completed the Ships Water and made several landings with the Marines my Boats have also been near Benedict— Commodore Barney from what I can learn has been moving about. I suspect with his best rowing boats only—but I do not hear of his having been seen lower than Benedict the information concerning him most to be depended on is that Orders had been sent to lay up the Boats but since countermanded—

The Militia are at last in Motion and on the Calvert Side have come as low down as the Court House— hearing they had a guard over some Tobacco on the Bay side opposite St. Leonards Creek and a force differently stated from one to three hundred Militia in that neighbourhood I dispatched Captain Pearson in the *Manly* with as many marines as I could conveniently send to Capture or drive away the Militia and bring off the Tobacco—which Service he has performed much to my Satisfaction and I enclose his Letter[2] for your perusal—by the Officers Account that destroyed the Schooners there are a number of Vessels of that description on the Eastern Shore about the Choptank River, and in a place below that river called in my Chart Hudsons river— The Vessels were burnt in this river in a Creek called Slaughters Creek— On Sunday last[3] I was over on the Eastern Shore and Crossed with my Gig a Flat between Hoopers and Barren Islands called Torbay,[4] I landed at a Mill in Fishing Creek In Dorchester County I found the people quietly desposed and was informed the Militia were not embodied

The Black Refugees increase so fast that I begin to be somewhat puzled about them. I have sent as many as the Gun Boat bearing this letter can take my other Gun Boats are so useful here that I cannot well spare them particularly as our boats are not sufficient to land all our Force— one of the Prize Schooners I have with me is loaded with Plank, and other Materials for house Building I enclose her Invoice and she has about 8000 feet of Plank upon her Deck in addition I have mentioned it as it struck me it might be wanted for Tangier Island— upon the return of my Tender, I could if you desire it send Her and the other Vessel I have with 22 Hogs. Tobacco to Tangier Island— I heard on St. Marys side yesterday that General Winder & 1,200 Militia were every day expected to occupy the same situation as did the Militia when you were here. I can get no papers as I hear you have Captured the Mail— I have &c.

sd. Joseph Nourse

I have 49 Hogs. Tobacco altogether here & expect a few more to Day—.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 372–74 (Reel 9).

1. Nourse is probably referring to the two preceding letters of 23 July 1814 in which he detailed raids along the Patuxent from 17 to 23 July.
2. Commander Hugh Pearson to Nourse, 3 Aug. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 375–76 (Reel 9).
3. 31 July 1814.
4. Tar Bay.

Captain Joseph Nourse, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

[Extract]

HMS *Severn* Drum Point Augt. 12th. 1814.

Sir/

. . . . I have sent by the *Manly* all our Blacks except such as I keep for guides and who are in training for Soldiers also two Vessels laden with Tobacco and the one with Wood, and an armed Tender with blacks also—

Commodore Barney is moving above he was seen with five of his Vessels at Anchor near Gods Graces by one of my boats, since that I have sent Captain Badcock with all the Boats up the river but he could see nothing of him there are various reports—one that he is ordered not to leave the river; and I have been told by a Person living on Sandy Point, that he came there and talked of bringing some Guns upon the Point, but that the proprietor of ye. land—"Groom objected to it. he also wanted to know where our Guard Boats came that he might surprize them. I have also been told of his meaning to get some people with Black faces & hands to personate negroes begging to be taken off and to Surprize our boat coming to fetch them. that he does not shew himself a little more alert I cannot conceive, and if he chose to fit out some small Craft as fire Vessels & follow close after himself he might if not get away throw us into some Confusion under this idea I have been laying down an Anchorage on the lower side & close to Point patience, it has this advantage, it is the narrow-

est part of the river the point Projects, across the River so as to protect us from fire Vessels, In case of attack also, if he dare it, the point would bring up his point blank Shot, and ours being so much higher would reach him over it— we can also see a long way up the River & saves a long pull for our boats and there is a well upon the Point sufficient to keep up our Water one report has been of his intention to take up his old Station in St. Leonards Creek but that cannot have ever been thought of Should you approve it I will move to Point Patience

We had a report Yesterday that Mr. Maddison had Ordered all the Militia to Washington but they refused to go—

I believe they are getting some Force In and about Hunting Town & should you leave the Potomac I suppose we Shall have them from that side of St. Marys to this—. I have &c.

sd. Joseph Nourse.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 405–8 (Reel 9). The forty-one lines left out concerned Nourse's rebuttal to charges made by William Bilgour that a British raiding party burned his house as well as his tobacco.

Cockburn's Diversion along the Potomac

In mid-July 1814, while awaiting Vice Admiral Cochrane's arrival in the Chesapeake, Rear Admiral Cockburn left Captain Joseph Nourse's squadron in the Patuxent and sailed with another squadron into the Potomac. Cockburn's incursions along the latter river below the Kettle Bottom Shoals were intended to distract American attention from his proposed plan of landing British forces at Benedict for an attack on Washington. He criss-crossed the river, attacked ports and towns along tributaries of both Virginia and Maryland, and encountered little significant resistance.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 31. *Albion* in the Potomac 19th. July 1814.

Sir,

In Conformity with the Plan of Operations which the arrival of the Battalion of Marines[1] sent by you to act under my Orders induced me to resolve on, and which I had the Honor of submitting to you in my Letter of the 17th Currt.,[2] I proceeded on the Morning of the 18th. with the Ships named in the Margin[3] up the Potowmac for the purpose of commencing by an attack on Leonard's Town, (the Capital of St. Mary's County) where I understood the 36th. american Regiment to be stationed and much Stores &ca. to be deposited, the Ships were therefore on the same Evening anchored as near to the Mouth of the Creek[4] which leads to the Town as they could be brought, and having reconnoitred the place I proceeded at Midnight up the Creek with the Boats having the Marines

embarked in them under the Command of Major Lewis— At the dawn of Day the Marines were put on Shore at some distance from the Town, and I directed Major Lewis to march round and attack it from the Land side whilst the Boats pulled up to it in Front. The Enemy however on discovering us, withdrew whatever armed Force he had in the place and permitted us to take quiet Possession of it.

I found here a quantity of Stores belonging to the 36th. Regiment and a Number of arms of different descriptions all of which were destroyed; A quantity of Tobacco, Flour, Provisions and other articles likewise found in the Town I caused to be shipped and brought away in the Boats and a Schooner which we took laying off it— This occupied us the most of the Day during the whole of Which not a musket was fired at us nor indeed a single armed american discovered, in consequence of which conduct on the part of the Enemy I deemed it prudent to spare the Town, which we quitted in the Evening and returned to the Squadron without having sustained accident of any kind.

I feel myself under much obligation for the Zeal manifested on this occasion and the assistance afforded me by Captain Brown of the *Loire,* who had the general Superintendence of the Naval Operations, and by Captains Ramsay of the *Regulus,* and Rowley of the *Melpomene* and Lieutenant Urmston 1st. of this Ship (acting as Captain of her) who each Commanded Divisions of the Boats, and the several officers and men employed under them behaved to my entire Satisfaction.

The Promptitude and ability shewn by Major Lewis with the Marines under his orders on this occasion, also require me to express to you my high sense thereof. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

I must also add that Captain White of the *Thistle* after much meritorious exertions succeeded in getting that Sloop into the Creek to assist our Operations and Secure our Retreat.

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 101–2.

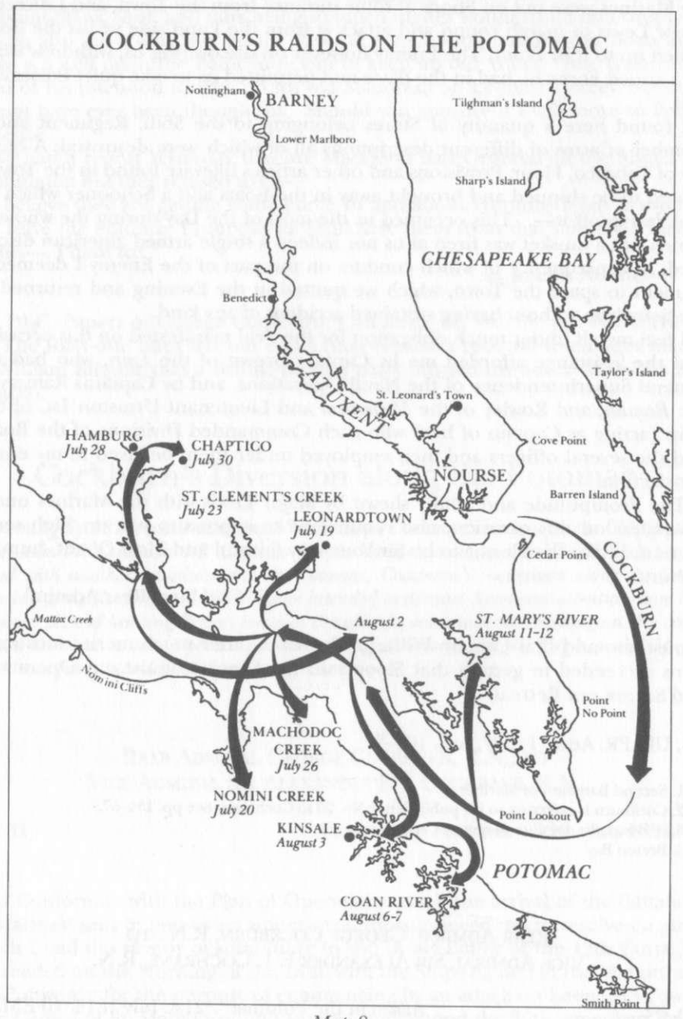
1. Second Battalion of Marines.
2. Cockburn is referring to his public letter No. 29 to Cochrane. See pp. 154–57.
3. *Albion, Loire, Regulus, Melpomene,* and *Thistle.*
4. Breton Bay.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 32. *Albion* in the Potomac 21st. July 1814. 10 P.M.

Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that understanding the Virginia Militia had assembled in some Force at a Place called Nominy Ferry in the State of Virginia situated a considerable way up Nominy River, and that some field artillery



Map 8

much Stores and several Vessels were also there, I determined on making an immediate Attack on the Place— The Ships were therefore moved yesterday Morning as close to the entrance of the River as practicable, and at Noon the three Divisions of Boats arranged and Commanded as on the 18th., having the Marines in them under the Command of Captain Robyns of that Corps (owing to the temporary indisposition of Major Lewis)—and the Marine artillery under Captain Harrison being embarked in Tenders fitted for that Service, the whole proceeded towards Nominy River supported by the *Thistle*, Captain White, and the Tenders tho' the Bar at the mouth of the River and the Intricacy of the Channel permitted the Boats only to succeed in getting up to the Enemy's Position at the Ferry, which I found to be on a very commanding Eminence projecting into the Water, a high Road going up the side of it from a Landing Wharf on one side, and the other side being steep and covered with Wood— I immediately directed a Sub Division to endeavor to land and get up on the Steep side to threaten the Enemy's Flank, whilst I landed the remainder of our Force at the Wharf and attacked him by the Road— This had the desired effect, for on discovering our People getting up the Craggy side of the Mountain he (after receiving a few Shot from them) fell back and enabled me thereby to gain without loss the Eminence, and to form upon it, after which no Time was lost in advancing to attack him, but his Knowledge of the Country and his advantage in Cavalry enabled him to baffle all my endeavors to bring him to Action, though I succeeded in overtaking a few of his Stragglers in the Woods and in making them Prisoners, after following him therefore into the Country between four and five Miles, and the Night fast approaching, I resolved on returning to the Position at the Ferry from which we had driven him, and there to pass the Night— This morning (neither seeing nor learning any Thing of the Enemy) after embarking all the Tobacco and other Stores discovered in the Place and a quantity of Cattle, and destroying all the Storehouses and Buildings, I again embarked the Marines and dropped down to another Point of this (Nominy) River where I observed some Movements on the Shore, scarcely had we landed here before a heavy Volley of musquettry was discharged at us by the Enemy, but the advance Guard of Marines dashing into the woods after them, soon dispersed them and I saw no more of them, Every thing in this neighbourhood was therefore all destroyed or brought off, and after Visiting the Country in several other Directions, covering the Escape of the Negroes who were anxious to join us, we quitted the River at dark and returned to the Ships carrying with us 135 Refugee Negroes—two Captured Schooners a large quantity of Tobacco, dry Goods and Cattle and four Prisoners.

It is perhaps right I should mention to you Sir that report was made to me, soon after landing at Nominy, of an officer of the *Regulus* having found a Bottle of poisoned Spirits set out with Glasses round it in the porch of a House on the Eminence we first gained, as however the officer unfortunately broke the Bottle, it has been out of my Power positively to ascertain the Fact.

It is with the greatest Pleasure I have again to report to you the Zeal and good Conduct of every officer and Man employed under me, and the particular obligations I feel to Captain Brown of the *Loire*, Captains White of the *Thistle*, Ramsay of the *Regulus* and Rowley of *Melpomene* and lst. Lieutenant Urmston of this Ship—as well as to Captain Robyns of Royal Marines who on this occasion

Commanded the marine Battalion and Captain Harrison who Commanded the Marine Artillery.

I have been informed since quitting the Ferry that the Enemy withdrew his Field artillery from it on learning our approach and hid it in the woods, fearing if he kept it to use against us, he should not be enabled to retreat quick enough with it to save it from Capture.

A List of Killed and Wounded during the operations above recited is herewith enclosed. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn. Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 103–6.

[Enclosure]

Return of Killed and Wounded in Nominy River in the Chesapeake on the 20th. July 1814.

Men's Names	Quality	To what Ship belonging	Remarks
Thomas Thomas	Carps. Mte	H.M. Sloop *Thistle*	Killed
T. Hardy	Seaman	——do.——	Wounded——not severely——
J. McKenzie	——do.——	——do.——	——do.—— ——do.——
T. Alexander	——do.——	——do.——	——do.—— ——do.——
Serjt. Jobb	————	Royal Marine Battalion	——do.—— Severely

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fol. 107.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 33 *Albion* in the Potowmac 24th. July 1814.

Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that yesterday Morning the Boats and Tenders went up St. Clements Creek in St. Mary's County, with the Marines and marine artillery to examine the Country on its Shores— The Militia shewed themselves occasionally but always retreated when pursued, and our Force returned to the Ships in the Evening without casualty of any sort having Captured four Schooners and destroyed another which had taken shelter in the upper part of the Creek.

The Inhabitants in this Neighbourhood having remained peaceably in their Houses I did not permit any Injury to be done to them, excepting only at one Farm from which two musket shots were fired at my Gig, where we therefore landed and destroyed the Property; Captain White acting in the *Albion* had the Superintendence and arrangement of the Naval department this day, and Major Lewis that of the Marines and as usual, with all employed, conducted every

thing to my entire Satisfaction. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 108–9.

Brigadier General Philip Stuart, Maryland Militia, to Secretary of War Armstrong

Sir,

A Frigate, two schooners and eight or ten Barges ascended the Potomack yesterday— They have since been busily engaged in sounding the River and marking the channel by a chain of Buoys. The Frigate to day passed over the most difficult part of the Kettle Bottoms, which is the only obstruction in the navigation of the river, which could create any serious delay to the Enemy's shipping.

From information, which I think entitled to credit, Admiral Cockburn landed with 1200 Marines on the 23rd. near St. Clement's Bay— His object plunder. He consoled the suffering Individual, whom he had stripped of his property, by an assurance that He should not visit him again, as the reinforcement so long expected, had arrived and He should proceed on against Washington.

To day the Enemy landed from 2 Schooners & 8 barges for the purpose of taking off the Tobacco from lower Cedar point Ware-House— I determined not to be an inactive Spectator, tho' the situation of the ground was highly advantageous to the Enemy and as unfavorable to us. I could not attack them with my Infantry as it would expose them to the rake of the Enemy's vessels and not assure to us the capture of the Enemy. So, I employed my Riflemen and artillery. With the latter I drove them from the shore and then opened a fire upon the Schooners & Barges. I had but two light sixes, whilst the Enemy employed agt. us as heavy metal as 32 pounders. after an hour's firing, the Enemy hauled off, not a little damaged. But not before they set fire to the Ware-House, which I presume was done by a rocket, as they employed them against us. This affair demonstrates the wisdom of employing this species of force on the Banks of our Rivers— We can thus annoy the Enemy without fruitlessly exposing the lives of the men— As I apprehend, the operations of the Enemy will now principally be carried on, in the Potomack, permit me to urge the propriety of detaching to my aid, Major Peter's artillery and Captn. Stull's riflemen— With their force, in addition to my own, we might keep the Enemy in check or at least annoy them in their progress up the River— at least I will pledge myself to suffer no opportunity of doing them mischief pass unimproved— I am with due respect, yr. obt. Servt.

Camp at Yates's
24 July 1814

Philip Stuart Br. Genl.

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, S-191 (8) (M221, Roll No. 66). Philip Stuart commanded the Fifth Brigade (St. Mary's and Calvert Counties) of the Maryland militia.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 34. *Albion* off Wicomoco in the Potomac—31st. July 1814—

Sir,

I have the Honor to inform you that having on the 26th. July proceeded to the Head of the Machodick River in Virginia where I burnt Six Schooners and the Marines having at the same time marched over the Country on the banks of that River without opposition and there not remaining any other Place either on the Virginia or St. Mary's side in the Neighbourhood of my last Anchorage which I had not visited, I caused on the 28th. the Ships to be moved above Blackston's Island[1] and anchored them at the Mouth of the Wicomoco River, and on the Evening of the 29th. I proceeded with the Marines under Major Lewis and the Boats under the Captains of the Squadron (the whole of whom invariably volunteer to accompany and assist me on every occasion) to reconnoitre this extensive Inlet and its adjacent Shores, on some part of which General Stuart was said to be stationed with Twelve hundred Men to oppose me— I landed at Hamburgh and examined in the course of the Evening the whole of the upper part of the River and passing the Night in the Boats I landed at daylight yesterday with the Marines about Three Miles below Chaptico, which Place we marched to and took Possession of without opposition, I remained all day quietly in Chaptico whilst the Boats shipped off the Tobacco which was found there in considerable quantity, and at Night I re-embarked without molestation, I visited many Houses in different parts of the Country we passed through, the owners of which living quietly with their Families and seeming to consider themselves and the whole Neighborhood as being entirely at my disposal, I caused no further Inconvenience to, than obliging them to furnish Supplies of Cattle and Stock for the use of the Forces under my orders.

This little excursion has furnished me with another occasion to mention to you the Names of Captains Brown White, Kenah, Ramsay & Rowley and Mr. Scott my 1st. Lieutenant and of Major Lewis of the Marines & Captain Harrison of the Marine Artillery all of whom as well as those employed under their orders are most indefatigable in their Exertions for the Service and their anxiety to meet my wishes on every occasion. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 110–11.

1. Now St. Clement's Island.

REAR ADMIRAL GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

No. 35 *Albion* in the Potomac 4th. August 1814

Sir,

I have the Honor to acquaint you that having (with the assistance of Captain Brown of the *Loire*) succeeded in my Endeavours to discover a passage

for large Ships through the Kettle Bottom Shoals, and there being no further object to induce me to remain longer in the higher part of this River—The Squadron was dropt down on the 2nd. Instant near to the entrance of Yocomoco River, (Virginia) and yesterday morning at day break Major Lewis and myself, assisted as usual by Captain Brown and the other Captains of the Squadron, landed with the Marines and some Seamen within the aforesaid River— We here found more resistance from the Enemy than usual he having collected in great Force to oppose us, but the ardor and determination of our gallant little Band carried all before them, and after forcing the Enemy to give way, followed him Ten Miles into the Country, capturing from him a Field Piece, and burnt in our Route several Houses which had been converted into Depôts for Militia Arms, Ordnance Stores &c. Learning afterwards that General Hungerford had rallied his Men and collected in some force at Kinsale we proceeded thither, and though the Position the Enemy had there taken was extremely strong he had only time to give us an ineffectual Volley or two of musquettry before our People gained the height, when he again retired with precipitation and we saw no more of him, we then shipped off without further molestation the Stores found at Kinsale, and having burnt the Store Houses and other Places and Two old Schooners, and destroyed two Batteries, we embarked again at Ten o'Clock at Night and returned to the Ships taking with us Five Prize Schooners, a large quantity of Tobacco, Flour &ca., a Field Piece, five Prisoners and the Horses of General Taylor and his Son, the former of whom being wounded was unhorsed and only escaped being taken by the Thickness of the Wood and Bushes into which he run.

I have the Honor to enclose a List of our killed and wounded on this day; the Enemy I have no doubt suffered much more.

The penetrating with 500 Men Ten Miles into the Enemy's Country at almost a Run, and the Skirmishing March back again surrounded by Woods in the Face of the whole collected Militia of Virginia under Generals Hungerford and Taylor, added to the gallant manner in which the Heights of Kinsale were carried after such a March, will I am sure prove to you Sir how much the officers and Men serving with me are entitled to my warmest Praises and Thanks— I must however beg Permission to add how particularly I felt indebted during this arduous Day to Captain Brown of the *Loire* whose Exertions are unceasing, Acting Captain White of this Ship, Captains Kenah, Ramsay, Rowley & Urmston (Acting in the *Thistle*) Major Lewis Commanding the Marines, Captain Harrison of the Marine Artillery and Lieutenant Scott (acting lst. Lieutenant of the *Albion*) my Aid-de-Camp when on Shore, and to 1st. Lieutenant Stephens of the Marine Battalion who Commanded the Company of that Corps charged with clearing the Woods and Skirmishing with the Enemy in his own way, which he conducted with such peculiar Activity and Ability as strongly to merit my begging to draw to him your favorable Notice. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedient humble Servt.

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 112–15.

[Enclosure]

A Return of Killed and Wounded in Yocomoco River the 3rd. August 1814

Albion—One Colonial Marine Killed
One—Do.—Dangerously Wounded
(Since Dead)
One—Do.—Slightly Wounded
Lieutt. Lewis (RN Supy.)—Do.—
Loire— One Seaman—Killed
Two—do.—badly Wounded

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fol. 116.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 36 *Albion* in the Potowmac the 8th. August 1814.

Sir,

Coan River situated a few Miles below Yocomoco being the only Inlet on the Virginia Side of the Potowmac which I had not visited, and the Enemy having lately been very busy in constructing a Battery at its Entrance, I moved the Ships down abreast of it on the Evening of the 6th. Instt., directing the *Loire Ætna* and *Thistle* to get as close in as the Water would admit of, and at daylight yesterday morning I advanced with the Boats of the Squadron, having the Battalion of Marines under Major Lewis in them, to attack the Enemy's Work; As we approached he opened a tolerably quick Fire upon us, but on our getting pretty near him (recollecting I suppose the Fate of his Field Piece at Yocomoco) he went off precipitately with his Guns, and by the Time we gained the Shore there was neither Gun nor Man to be seen, I immediately destroyed the Battery, and then directing Major Lewis to March up the Right Bank of the River, I caused the Boats to pull up to the Head of it, and in the upper part we found Three Schooners which were of course Captured, and some Tobacco which was shipped and brought off— Though the early disappearance of the Enemy on this occasion caused us to have less to do this day than at Yocomoco yet the gallant rapidity with which the Marines landed, formed, and proceeded in search of the Enemy's Troops was highly creditable to both Officers and Men, and I felt particularly indebted to Captain Kenah of the *Ætna,* and Acting Captain Urmston of the *Thistle* for getting their respective Vessels up through a most intricate and difficult Channel— Captain Brown of the *Loire* was good enough to accompany me again on this Service, as did likewise Acting Captain White, Captains Ramsay Rowley, and Lieutenant Scott (acting 1st. Lieutenant of the *Albion*) and with the Officers under them rendered me the same active able and cheerful assistance as on the former occasions— Two Seamen wounded was the only Casualty of this day—

Whilst occupied on the Duty above recited I was joined by Captains Sir Peter Parker of the *Menelaus*, and Palmer of the *Hebrus*, by the latter Ship also arrived Lieutt. Coll. Malcolm to take Command of the Battalion of Marines hitherto

Commanded by Major Lewis; I consider it therefore an Act of Duty and Justice incumbent on me to seize this opportunity of stating to you, that during the short but active period this latter Officer has been serving with me in Command of this Battalion, his Conduct has been most able, gallant, and zealous, & I consider myself very principally indebted to his Skill and Exertions for the successful Issue of our late various Expeditions. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 117–18.

William Lambert to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Lancaster County, Virga. August 12th. 1814.

Sir,

Absence from the place of my residence for the purpose of obtaining information, and the incessant rain which fell in this neighbourhood from morning 'till evening of Friday, the 5th. instant, prevented a communication that would otherwise have been prepared and sent to the post-office at Kilmarnock on that day. It had been ascertained, however, from personal observation, and reports of the commanding officers of the guards stationed near Windmill point and at the mouth of Indian creek, that during the preceding week, but few vessels of any description, and none supposed to belong to the enemy, were seen on their passage up or down the Chesapeake from either of those points: the facts relating to British operations in the counties bordering on the Potomac, would have been the principal object of notice; but the statements received from thence were too various and contradictory to select from among them such as were deemed sufficiently correct.

On Saturday, the 6th. Instant, at 4 o'clock P.M. two large ships, a brig and a schooner passed up the bay; and on Wednesday morning, the 10th. a ship and tender were seen from Windmill Point on their passage down. Information has been received from Northumberland courthouse, that part of the enemy's force in the Potomac moved down that river on or about the 3d. of this month, and proceeded up Yeocomico to Kinsale, which they totally destroyed, together with several other houses for seven or eight miles on both sides of the road leading from thence to Richmond courthouse; they were then checked in their progress by a detachment of artillery under the command of capt. Henderson, but that small party were forced in a short time to retreat with the loss of their piece of artillery, having two officers wounded, one of them since dead. It is represented, that the fortunate arrival of a considerable number of our militia from some of the upper counties prevented a farther incursion into Richmond, on the edge of which, the enemy burned the houses of capt. Henderson above mentioned, and marched back to their ships. We have not heard of British operations, if any, from Wednesday, the 3d. 'till Sunday, the 7th. instant, when ten of their large ships and some small vessels dropped down to the mouth of Cone,[1] a creek emptying into the Potomac between Yeocomico and Smith's point, from which they sent three barges up near the head of the creek, and within two miles of Northumberland courthouse, for the purpose of taking

three schooners anchored in their view: they were met by a company of Lancaster militia, who drove them back, and cut away their colours; but the appearance of ten other barges filled with men obliged our militia, who had not been reinforced, to retreat, which they did in good order, and without any personal injury: the British troops then took possession of the three schooners—landed on both sides of Cone, and burned all the houses they could find, some of which, the property of James Smith, postmaster at Northumberland courthouse, cost upwards of six thousand dollars.

It is reported, that there are nearly one thousand militia at the place last named, and about 150 at Wicomico church in Northumberland; and that the enemy's force at the mouth of Cone, including tenders and vessels captured, amounts to thirty sail.

The people of this part of Lancaster are in daily expectation of invasion, and it is their opinion that the war will be carried on against them with inveterate malignity. It is said, that the language of these marauding Britons to persons who are or have been in their power, accords with their actions; and that among other terms of scurrilous indignity, the opprobrious, insulting epithet of "rebels" has been applied to several native citizens of this state by some of the humane, well-bred disciples of Admiral Cockburn. I am, Sir, with great respect, Your most obedt. Servant,

William Lambert.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 20 (M124, Roll No. 65). William Lambert, a former clerk in the State and War Departments with a longstanding interest in determining the longitude of the Capitol in relation to Greenwich Observatory, England, turned down a clerkship in the Navy Department during the War of 1812 to continue serving as an informant to that department from Kilmarnock, Lancaster County, Virginia. Lambert chronicled British naval movements in the lower Potomac near the Chesapeake Bay. For information on Lambert's State and War Department positions see Madison, *Papers,* Vol. 2, p. 111; for more on his astronomical interests, see Lambert's letters to the secretary of the navy dated 26 March and 22 July 1812, 2 and 22 March 1813, and 7 and 10 May 1815, in DNA, RG45, Miscellaneous Letters Received series (M124). For Lambert's declining a clerkship in the Navy Department, see his letters of 28 January and 10 February 1814 in the same series.

1. Coan River.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 37. *Albion* in the Potowmac 13th. August 1814.

Sir,

I have the Honor to Inform you that having finished with the Virginia side of the Potowmac as detailed to you in my Letter of the 8th. I crossed over on the 11th. with the Squadron and Anchored them close to George's Island[1] at the

Entrance of St. Mary's Creek,[2] and the Marines under Colonel Malcolm being embarked in the Boats during the Night, Captain Sir Peter Parker Commanding one Division and Captain Palmer the other; assisted by Captains Ramsay and Rowley—I proceeded followed by the *Aetna* and Tenders into St. Mary's Creek— We landed in various parts of this extensive Inlet, and made some long Marches into the Country, particularly towards Sunset to a place they call the Factory of St. Mary's, where there is a building for Manufactoring Cotton, but (though Militia had certainly been formerly stationed at this Place for its defence) we did not meet with a Single Armed Person nor was one Musquet fired during the whole day, the Inhabitants of this State appearing to have learnt that it is wiser for them to submit entirely to our Mercy than to attempt to oppose us in Arms—They very readily complied with whatever Directions I gave for the line of Conduct they were to adopt, and the Supplies they were to furnish to our Forces, and therefore leaving the *Ætna* at Anchor in the Creek to facilitate these arrangements I returned at Night to the Ships with the whole of the Boats and Troops.

I felt much indebted to Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm for his cheerful Co-operation during this day, and to Captains Sir Peter Parker, Palmer, White, Ramsay, Kenah and Rowley & Mr. James Scott (Acting 1st. Lieutenant of the *Albion*) for the active and zealous assistance they afforded me. I have the Honor to be Sir your very faithful and Most Obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 119–20.

1. St. George Island.
2. St. Marys River.

Perry Outfits *Java*

After the Battle of Lake Erie, Captain Oliver H. Perry requested a transfer back to Newport, Rhode Island, to resume command of the naval station that he had commanded in 1812. He returned to his hometown in November 1813 after a triumphal month-long journey from New York—feted by jubilant citizens everywhere. The undemanding Newport station, blockaded by the enemy, became a sinecure for the naval hero until, as Secretary Jones noted, "a Ship, suitable to your rank, shall be at the disposal of the Department."[1] By the summer of 1814 when Jones offered him command of the frigate Java*, still building at Baltimore, Perry was eager to leave behind the tedium of his blockaded station of gunboats for the prospect of sea glory. But events in the Chesapeake during August and September relegated the outfitting of the blockaded* Java *to secondary importance. Anticipating that* Java *would never see action, by November 1814 Perry set his sights on commanding a flying squadron of commerce-raiding vessels.*

1. Dudley, Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, p. 577.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Oliver H. Perry

Captain O H Perry
Newport R I

Navy Department
July 6th. 1814.—

Sir

I offer to you the command of the United States Ship *Java*, if it shall meet your views, of which I shall expect to be apprised by return of mail; as she will be launched in all this month, and the direction of her Commander is much wanted at present.—

Should you accept, you may select an experienced Master and send him on immediately to superintend her equipment, and follow yourself as soon as possible.— Indeed I need not urge to you the necessity of your presence, for it is much easier to prevent than to correct errors in the fitting of a Ship, about which even judicious men differ in the minutia more than upon almost any other subject I am respectfully Your Obedt Servant

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 166.

Captain Oliver H. Perry to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Newport July 12th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to have your letter of the 6th Inst. offering me the command of the U.S. Ship *Java*, now before me— Permit me Sir, to express the high sense I feel, for the delicate manner this offer has been made.— I accept the command of this Ship, with pleasure, provided, Capt. Smith, who, I understand had previously the offer of her, (and, who, then chose to go to the Lakes) declines her, or Sir, if you should feel any disposition to repeat the offer to him, I beg I may not stand in the way—[1] I am sensible, that at a proper time I shall be called into service in a manner agreeable to my feelings and to my rank—

I shall be in Washington shortly after this letter—Sailg. Master Taylor,[2] will leave here, immediately to join the *Java*. I am Sir Very Respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 159 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. After spending a frustrating winter and spring of 1814 refitting *Congress* for another cruise, Captain John Smith was given the option in late May of the command of *Java* at Baltimore or the new frigate *Mohawk*, building at Sackets Harbor. Smith chose service on the lakes but informed Jones on 29 June that he was unable to assume his new duties because of poor health. Smith did not return to active command for the remainder of the war. Jones to Hull, 31 May 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 328 (M149, Roll No. 11); Smith to Jones, 9 June 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 42 (M125, Roll No. 37); Smith to Jones, 29 June 1814, ibid., Vol. 5, No. 46 (M125, Roll No. 38).

2. William V. Taylor's sailing master warrant dated from 28 April 1813. He was appointed an acting lieutenant on 16 November 1814 and lieutenant on 9 December 1814. Taylor served as the sailing master of *Lawrence* during the Battle of Lake Erie and followed Perry to the Rhode Island Station in 1814.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Oliver H. Perry

Capt. O. H. Perry
U.S. Navy Newport R.I.

Navy Department
July 17th. 1814

Sir

You will proceed to Baltimore and take command of the U.S. Ship *Java* now building and ready to launch.—[1]

The Navy Agent[2] at that place will inform you of the progress made in the equipments for that Ship, and of the existing contracts for the same purpose, which you will forward with due dispatch.—

You will be furnished with tables of Outfits &c. &c. as soon as they can be copied.—

You will order one suit of the heavy sails to be made out of the Hollands duck now at Baltimore in the hands of the Navy Agent, who will engage a competent sail maker to execute the work in the manner the sails of the Sloops of War at Baltimore,[3] which were made at the Washington Navy Yard, are completed.—

The mast maker has the dimensions of the Spars—the rope-maker of the rigging—and the blocks & pump work will be executed here.—

One hundred & forty or fifty tons of Kentledge will be sent from this place for her ballast as soon as the position of the Enemy will permit.—

If her lower battery is to be of the long 32's. of the new pattern (which will be the case if Mr. Dorsey can make them in time) and the spar deck battery of course of 32 pd. carronades, it will be necessary to attend to the Gun carriages in time.—

As you progress in fitting the Ship and can employ them to advantage, you will recruit one hundred petty officers, Seamen and ordinary Seamen for the *Java*.— I am respectfully &c.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 394 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Perry did not get to Baltimore in time for *Java*'s launching on 2 August. Master Commandant Robert T. Spence oversaw the event and reported "her entry into the element" was "without accident." Spence to Jones, 2 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 13 (M147, Roll No. 5).

2. James Beatty.

3. *Ontario* and *Erie*.

Captain Oliver H. Perry to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Java* Baltimore October 25th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you of my return to this place—[1] But little has been done toward the equipment of the *Java*, since the Enemy first made their appearance before this City—owing, to the Mechanic's being all employed in the Militia Service The Gun carriages for the 32 pdrs, are nearly completed, some of which have been loaned for a short time to the garrisons—

The mode in which the Enemy has prosecuted the war of late, must stimulate every officer, at least, to the desire of annoying them in their own way, and no

one has a more anxious desire to get to sea for that purpose than myself, but I fear Sir, the *Java* cannot be got out, while so large a force as it appears the determination of the Enemy to keep, remains in the Bay— Should the bill authorising the equipment of a number of small vessels, become a law, and the government decide upon dividing them into Squadrons—I beg Sir, I may be considered as an applicant for the command of one of them I understand Capt. Porter has applied for a similar command— I certainly do not mean to interfere with his application[2] I am Sir, Very Respectfully Your Obd. Servt—

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 61 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. Perry spent very little time overseeing *Java*. He arrived in Baltimore in early August but Jones soon sent him to New York to sit on a naval court of inquiry and in early September he organized a gunnery position on the Maryland shoreline to harass the British naval forces descending the Potomac after the latter's assault on Alexandria. Perry returned to Baltimore in late October after spending about a month at his home in Newport.

2. On 15 November 1814, Congress authorized the purchase or construction of no more than twenty vessels rating between eight and twenty guns. The following day, Jones ordered both Perry and Porter to purchase vessels for a "flying squadron" that would harass British commerce. Perry anticipated only a short cruise; he expected to return to the command of *Java*. The war's early conclusion, however, precluded Perry's command of either the squadron or the frigate. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, p. 144; Jones to Porter and Jones to Perry, 16 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 456–58 and p. 459, respectively (M149, Roll No. 11); and Perry to Midshipman Richard Lemmon, 18 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG217, Auditor for the Navy Department (Fourth Auditor), Accounts and Claims (Numerical Series), Settled Miscellaneous Accounts and Claims, 1817–1911, Box 33, No. 3302.

Labor Issues at the Washington Navy Yard

Just three weeks before the British invasion of Washington, the salaried master mechanics at the Washington Navy Yard protested the loss of their civilian pay while they engaged in militia training. The economy-minded William Jones rejected their entreaties for dual compensation. As commandant of the Washington Navy Yard, Thomas Tingey labored under the shadow of the secretary of the navy and therefore experienced more scrutiny than did other commandants. But this proximity could also be advantageous. In late October 1814, when faced with a disagreement over pay inequities, Tingey asked Jones's advice, thus temporarily deflecting the onus in the dispute.

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washtn. 5th: Augst: 1814

Sir

I have the honor to transmit you herewith, a letter from some of the Master Mechanics & others, relative to the stoppage of their pay, during their absence from the yard on Militia duty; which is submitted for your consideration.

I deem it proper to observe that, there are about one hundred, or more, of the Mechanics &c: to whom the case will equally apply. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 64 (M125, Roll No. 38).

[Enclosure]

Navy Yard Washington
August 3d: 1814

Sir

When we, the undersigned, are called out as volunteers to use our best exertions for the safety of this place, when menaced by the enemy, and when we know too, that the business of the yard suffers but a partial if any inconvenience by our absence for a short time, we think it extremely hard that our pay should stop during that period, more particularly as we are told that it is not the case with others employed in public service by the year: why we are restricted in this as daily* workmen we cannot conceive, and flatter ourselves that when the Secretary comes fairly to consider it he will direct it otherwise we are with respect your obt. servts—.

George Mᶜ Cauley
SHADᵏ Davis
Thoˢ. Murry
James Carbery
Thomas Howard

*These subscribers are all on yearly pay T:T:—[1]

Commodore Tingey Present

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 64, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. This annotation was written by Thomas Tingey.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Thomas Tingey

Thomas Tingey Esqr.
Com'dt: U.S. Navy Yard
Washington

Navy Department
August 5th. 1814

Sir,

Your note of this day is before me.— Whether the compensation of the persons employed in the Navy-Yard may be by the Year, or by the day, it is clearly understood to be, for service rendered, during the whole of the time for which compensation is claimed.—

Those Mechanics, who are employed by the day, expect only to be paid for the time which they render actual service in the Yard, during the hours estab-

lished for labour.— These men, who, have also families to support, and receive a comparatively small compensation for their labour, do not expect to be paid, as for service at the Yard, while they may be employed about their own personal concerns, or in the Militia service, for which they receive a distinct compensation

Why the master Mechanics, who are compensated by a stated sum Per Annum, should claim peculiar privileges and the continuance of Pay, while they render no service in their several vocations in the Yard, I cannot conceive.—

Is their case while employed in the militia, different from that of other mechanics, not in the Public service who leave their homes, their business, and private emolument, to discharge their duty as soldiers.— It certainly would be very convenient to the Individuals, to receive their pay as Master Mechanics of the Yard, while they are also receiving pay and rations as officers of militia; but it would be very unjust to the public.—

These claims serve to prove, that the whole system of Salaries in the Navy Yard is erroneous, and ought to be abolished; but while they exist they will only be paid for service actually rendered.—

During the time any Salary Officer of the Yard may be employed in his personal concerns, or in any other service, his pay will be proportionally reduced, in the Yard. I am very respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 159–60 (M441, Roll No. 1).

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washtn: 30th: Octr. 1813 [*1814*]

Sir

The riggers employ'd at this yard, having made a written application to me for a rise of their wages from 125 to 150 cents ℔ day, stating that their present wages is "smaller in proportion to their labour, than that of any other class of workmen in this yard." In [*I*] have therefore in submiting their request to you, deemed it proper (as there are other classes, not well satisfied with their pay, in proportion to that of some others) to transmit a statement of the daily pay, of the different denominations of tradesmen employ'd in the yard. My own opinion on this subject is, that the 1st: class of Shipwrights, are certainly entitled to higher wages, than any of the other trades—from their constant exposure to heat & cold—and from the time they must necessarily lose in severe, and rainy weather, and consequently that the wages of the Mastmakers, Boat-builders and Gun-carriage makers, (who all work under cover) are disproportionably high, compared with the Shipwrights— besides that, except in the case of one or two men, who are complete wheelrights—the work on the gun carriages, can be as well executed, by some of the Joiners, <u>all</u> of whom we have not now occasion for; and who I presume, will be glad of being retain'd in this yard, as gun carriage makers, without expecting any augmentation of pay—which has been 156 cents pr. day: and whether those three denominations of tradesmen, are entitled to a higher rate of wages, than that of the coopers, I think is worthy of consideration. One other point only, connected with this arrangement is, whether the apprentices in the last year of their time, shall continue to be allowed the

same wages as the 1st. class of their professions? It has occured that some apprentices, after being rated for one year with the 1st: class of their profession—on becoming free, & continuing to work in the yard, have had their wages lowered, on being reported by their former masters, as not being <u>compleat</u> workmen—which circumstance has more than once, created unpleasant feelings, in the minds of some of our best, and first rate mechanics.

All which is respectfully submitted. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your obedt: Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 79 (M125, Roll No. 40). There is no record of Jones's reply. A note written, possibly in Jones's hand, on the docket reads: "For early consideration." Jones resigned as secretary of the navy on 1 December 1814.

[Enclosure]
A Statement shewing the daily pay of Mechanics employed in the different departments in the Navy Yard Washington.

Description	wages pr. Day	Description	wages pr. Day
Carpenters Mast		Blacksmiths	
Makers, Gun Carriage		1st. Quarterman	237½
Makers; & Boat Builders		2d. Ditto	225
1st. Class	206	Journeymen 1st. Class	192
2d. Class	181	Ditto 2d. Ditto	180
3d. Ditto	150	Ditto 3d. Ditto	170
Apprentices 1st. Year	80	Ditto 4 Ditto	150
Do. 2d. Do.	120	Apprentices 1st. Year if over 17 years of age	80
Do. 3d. Do.	160		
Do. 4th. Do.	206	Ditto 2d. Ditto	100
		Ditto 3d. Ditto	140
		Ditto 4th. Ditto	180
Foreman Carpenter	320		
Quartermen	256	———	
———		Sawyers, Topmen	150
Mill Wrights	200	Ditto Pit men	120
Foreman of Ditto	300	———	
———		Block Makers & Painters	
Caulkers	175	Foreman of each	250
———		Journeymen	150
Coopers	175	Apprentices 1st. Year	65
Apprentices 1st. Year	65	Ditto 2d. Year	80
Do. 2d. Ditto.	100	Ditto 3d. Ditto	120
Ditto 3d. Ditto.	140	Ditto 4th. Ditto	150
Ditto 4th. Ditto.	175	———	
———		Riggers	125
Sail Makers	170	———	
Foreman	231	Engine Keeper	250
Apprentices 1st. Year	65	Apprentice	100
Ditto 2d. Ditto	100	Overseers of Labourers	
Ditto 3d. Ditto	140	Mr. Vidler	180
Ditto 4th. Ditto	170	Mr. Thornton	170
———		Labourers	75
Joiners	156	———	
Apprentices 1st. Year	65	Armouers	175
Ditto 2d. Ditto	100	Foreman	200
Do. 3d. Do.	125	Apprentices the same as Blacksmiths	
Do. 4 Ditto	156	Apprentices	

D, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 79, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40). The wages were calculated in cents per day.

Barney and Jones Plot Their Strategy

By the beginning of August 1814, Secretary Jones and Joshua Barney held opposing views on future British strategy in the Chesapeake. Jones thought the British had exhausted their plundering forays and would blockade Barney in the Patuxent and turn elsewhere.[1] Barney countered that the headwaters of the Patuxent were still abundant in tobacco and slaves and the capital was a strong lure. Barney meticulously outlined his objections to Jones's plan for transporting the flotilla overland to Queen Anne's Town. Ultimately, the British disembarkation at Benedict on 19 August decided the flotilla's fate.

1. See Jones to Barney, 27 July 1814, p. 150.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

US. Cutter *Scorpion*, Augt. 1st. 1814

Sir,

I have considered the situation of the flotilla, and passed in view the conduct of the Enemy since I came into this river,[1] and if I am to Judge from what has passed, I am led to believe we have little to apprehend at present; it would appear that they have not a considerable force, and I do think the force now here, has been drawn from Bermuda for the express purpose of capturing the flotilla in St. Leonards creek, for from the first attack on the 8th June they declared they must have Land, or Marine troops in order to take us where we were, and that vessels were dispatched to Bermuda for such a force; 8 or 900 Marines have come, & several smaller size Vessels, I do not understand that Admiral Cochrane has come, which goes to confirm me in my first opinion; The Enemy continued to attack me at times untill about the period they had a right to expect the arrival of the Troops; on the 26 Ulto.[2] we made the attack on the blockading Squadron and got out, a few days after brought up Admiral Cockburn with the force he expected, (too little for any serious enterprize on our large Towns) but as during my blockade they had tasted the sweets of Plunder of Tobacco & Negroes, they were then determined to continue that Species of Warfare, in the lieu of their disapointment in capturing the flotilla and their disgrace in their several defeats, at the same time to answer another purpose, for whilst plundering & burning, they, and their partizans here & in Washington threw the blame of such warfare on the Administration and the flotilla; The Admiral himself not wishing to risque an attack for fear of his reputation, has kept his light squadrons employed up and down the bay &c ever since, for as yet I do not learn that any other force has arrived, (yet Sir I may be mistaken) but it is from what has happened that I have drawn these conclusions.

The question now is, what is the best to be done with this part of the flotilla; Should an occasion present for us to get out, where are we to go, it will be difficult if not impossible to get up the Potomac, If up the Bay nothing short of Baltimore will put us in safety, or give us the means of acting as occasion may require against the enemy; on the other hand should the blockade continue so as to prevent my getting out, what would be the consequence of pro-

ceeding to Queen Anns and there attempting to cross by land to South river; Such a thing can be done, but can it be done with safety, & if done will we be better off in South river than in the Patuxent, for I fear very much we should be blockaded there, for let us act with what secrecy & precaution we will, such A Novel affair would be known all over the state in two days, and the enemy would know it in twelve hours, for all the lower part of Calvert County is in their quiet possession, where they act as they please, and where too many Traitors reside; These fiends travel up through the Country, they hear & see every thing, and the next day they are at home, where the British officers visit and learn every thing that passes, therefore by the time my barges had reached South River, the enemy who could run up in 6 hours would be there also; Another Idea presents itself would not the Enemy prefer my being any where else than here; Their object being plunder, where does such a harvest present itself, as on the head waters of the Patuxent; I do know, that at Nottingham, pig point, Upper Malborough, Queen Anns, and in the several private warehouses on these waters, there is nearly 6,000 Hogsheads of Tobacco, which the enemy know, & could they get it off, is worth to them three millons of dollars, exclusive of at least 1000 Negroes which would go off with them; This is a great temptation, more than can be presented to them throughout the U S; and I am well convinced had not the flotilla got out of St. Leonards the sweep would have been made before this day, (& if a sufficient force arrives may yet be attempted.) For what purpose does the enemy collect all their Craft prizes, they formerly burnt them, they now preserve them, unless to enter our shoal waters & carry off Plunder; The Admiral has been heard to say that he could take the City of Washington with more ease, than the flotilla where we now are; knowing that boats will never answer, and the troops now under his orders are not sufficient to asscend the river for that purpose; should these be their Ideas they will give me an opportunity of getting out, as they can then enter and with ease distroy, if not take away the whole of the property now left on this river; for Sir, they never have, and I beleive never will be resisted by the Inhabitants near this river, The Militia officers being mostly in their Interest, encouraging the enemy and discourage such as are disposed to act by exagerated accounts of the enemies forces &c, If you had seen the Panic that appears to strike all classes at hearing of the enemy, you would quickly coincide with me in saying that when they See them, (if they could be prevailed upon to stay & See them) they would make no defence whatever, for should 100 men land twenty miles below this, the numbers would increase (by report) to 1000 before they reached here, and when the 100 did arrive, they would be looked upon as the Advance guard of 2000 more; no resistance would be made for fear of the arrival of the supposed main army which were following, Thus sir, before the real number could be known the mischief would be done; I see it daily, I had sent an officer and 10 men to bring up a couple of yawls which belonged to the Gunboats and had been left at St. Leonards creek, on their way up the Militia which had been stationed on ther river, gave way in every direction at the appearance of these two boats— a small schooner which also escaped from St. Leonards came up, the people at lower Malborough ran out of town, called on a Militia officer and declared the enemy had come up and landed 500 Men from a schooner, this I had from the Officer himself a Mr. Contee, such Sir, is the situation here, the officers worse than the men & the moment I leave Nottingham the Inhabitants leave it also, they have no confi-

dence in any other defence for the place, there is 1000 hogheads of Tobacco here, it will soon go, this will encourage the enemy for further enterprize. On the other hand should the enemy come up in force by land I must retire, untill I meet, land forces of our own, to cooperate, we then might do much and perhaps by a dicisive effort put and end to the War in this Quarter, by compleatly beating them, for under all circumstances I am led to beleive that if they do any thing, or attempt any thing of consequence it will be in this Quarter, for reasons already given, first, for Rich plunder, secondly, if successfull, they can march to the Capitol with as much ease and in as short a distance as from any other place,

After receiving your letter of the 27th Ulmo.[3] requesting my "Opinion" respecting the flotilla's going to Queen-Anns &c. I sent my Son[4] up the River to sound and inform himself, he has returned last night and gives the following report—

—Annexed—

Should it be determined to cross the flotilla by land, I will cheerfully and expeditiously carry your orders into execution, my calculation is as follows

13 barges & 1 Galley at average of 5 tons eh.		70 tons
15 long guns. 24: 18 & 12 lb. average 1½ tons eh.		22½
15 Carronades 42: 32 & 24 lb. average ¾ say.		10 —
Shot of the 15 Vessels..... average 1½ . .		22½
Rigging, Masts, yards, anchors, cables, Water casks, small arms stores &c	2 eh.	30
		155 tons

Say 3 horses pr. ton will require 465 horses = 56 pr. of dray wheels & 64 Waggons, to transport all at once and be carried across in One day; In proportion of force the time of transportation will be longer—

I have the satisfaction to tell you that I have not more than ten men sick, except the wounded who are all getting well, nor have we had at any time since I came into the River a greater number of sick at a time. On Saturday[5] an officer I had below returned from the mouth of the river having left it in the morning— Two frigates, the *Severn* & *Brune*, a Gun brig,[6] & three schooners lay across the mouth of the River opposite Drum point— this position would infer a settled Blockade. first a Schooner near drum point, next a Brig, then a schooner, then 2 frigates & lastly a schooner near the south shore— It would be very convenient could the Mail be carried to this place twice a week in lieu of once. I am respecfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 103 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. Patuxent River.
2. Barney meant 26 June 1814.
3. See p. 150.
4. William B. Barney.
5. 30 July 1814.
6. Probably *Manly*.

[Enclosure]

Report of Mr. W B. Barney

The depth of water from this place (Nottingham) to Pig-point being already so well known, I did not sound it, from Pig point to Scotchmans hole about 4 miles higher up, is a sufficiency of Water for the *Scorpion*, above that place she could not be carried without lightening and then only about one mile— from this[1] upwards there is not more than 4½ to five feet at most— the river varies in its width— above pig point and to within one mile of Queen Anns it is narrow, not exceeding in some places 80 to 100 yards, its channel frequently crossing from side to side, for the last Mile it is quite narrow and very winding and no where wider than to admit more than One barge to row up at a time, as far as the Bridge at the town. The Road from Queen Anns across to South river is generally good, the distance rather less than Eight miles, there are 6 or 8 hills of gradual asscent to rise & as many to descend, all of which require more or less, and some of them considerable repairs; Twelve or fifteen gates also intervene having large Gate Posts. There are two or three Elbows in the Road to Obviate which, several trees would have to be cut down, there are only two marshy places, and them very small; the Shores at Queen Ann and South river are firm and rise gradually; The Road in places and for short distances, passes between two banks which may require a little cutting away on each side.

Sign'd. W. B. Barney

Copy, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 103, enclosure (M124, Roll No. 64). The enclosure is in Joshua Barney's hand.

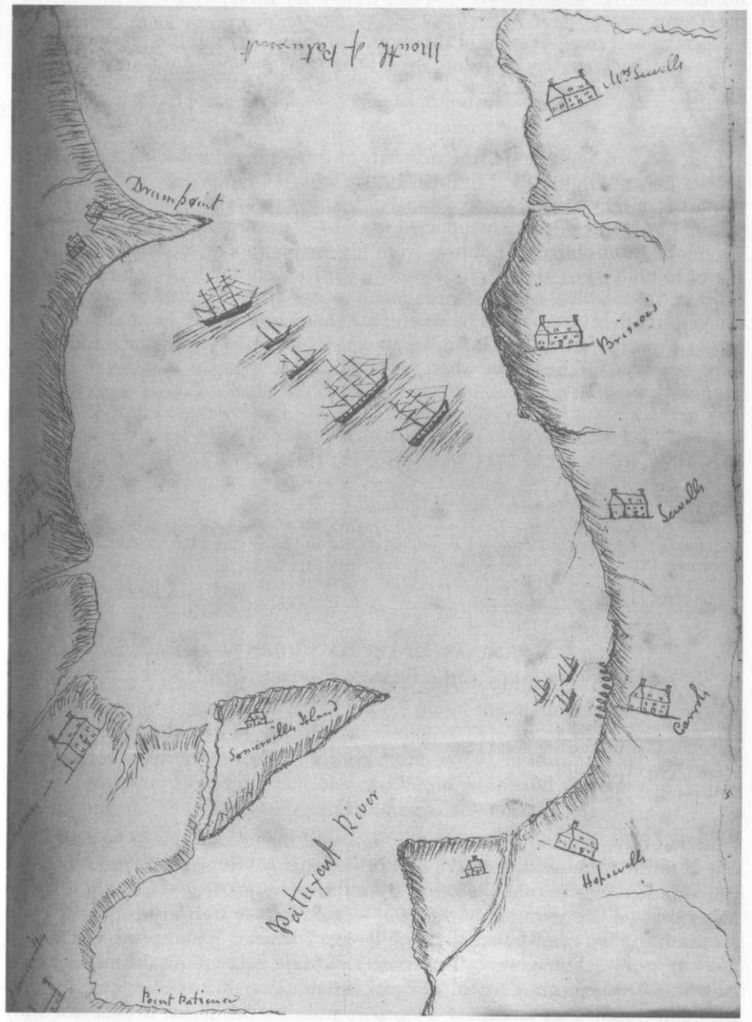
1. There is an interlineation at this point, "PP," which probably refers to Pig Point.

CAPTAIN JOSHUA BARNEY, FLOTILLA SERVICE, TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

US. Cutter *Scorpion*, Augt. 4th. 1814

Sir,

I had the honor of receiving yours of the 2d Inst.[1] by Mr. W. B. Barney. My Gig returned this morning from the mouth of the river, the officer informs me that the enemy are continually in motion with their small schooners & Barges, but seldom above point patience and then only for a few hours; when he left a hill in the rear of Hopewells house yesterday morning, the Enemy had made a landing, by means of three schooners & 8 Barges at Carrols, and from Information it was supposed they intended the distruction of a Cloth manufactory belonging to Mr. Peter Goughf about four miles from thence; the Enemy has been up a few miles on the Bay shore landed at a Mr. Makalls, carried off 14 Hoghd. of Tobacco & burnt the Warehouse & the remaining Tobacco, The Militia according to custom appeared after all was over— The Negroes, it would appear, flock to them from all quarters; I have advised a number of persons in Calvert to get their negroes off, and promised them to move down with the flotilla in order to Cover and protect them when doing of



Joshua Barney's Sketch of the British Position on the Patuxent River, 3 August 1814

it, and to be a check upon the Black Gentry— altho Calvert deserves nothing from us, yet I conceive it a duty we owe our Country and am sure it will meet your approbation—

I send you a small Sketch[2] of the mouth of the River, and the position where the enemy lay yesterday morning, the 3 Schooners & 8 boats at Carrols. &c and am respectfully your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

I am sorry in being under the necessity of requesting the discharge of Sailing Master James Wright,[3] for continual Intoxication and improper conduct, as reported to me by Lieutt. Rutter from Baltimore, Also the discharge of Sailing Master Claude Besse already reported to you— my situation is almost that of a Tyrant, as I am obliged to punish from my own authority, not having it in my power to hold court Martials for want of a sufficient number of Commission[*ed*] officers, from which circumstances many escape just punishment, whilst I am obliged in other instances to be severe; but thank god, I have been able thus far to get forward with a few examples; but to check effectually misconduct, We must begin at the head; for when petty officers & men see that, superiors are punished, we shall have but little trouble—

—JB—

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 111 (M124, Roll No. 64).

1. This letter was not found.
2. See p. 185.
3. James Wright received a warrant as a sailing master on 16 February 1814; he was discharged on 1 February 1815.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Captain Commanding the U S
Flotilla, Nottingham

Navy Department
August 19th. 1814.
2 P.M.

Sir,

Yours of this morning is now before me, and the account given by your Officer, as to the number and description of the enemy's force at the mouth of the Patuxent agrees with other accounts from the same quarter.—[1] Captain Gordon writes that on the morning of the 16th.—22 Sail came in from sea, and passed up the Bay, Vizt. two 74s. one 64. one Razee, 7 frigates 7 transports and two or three Brigs or Schooners.—[2] Appearances indicate a design on this place, but it may be a feint, to mask a real design on Baltimore; If however their force is strong in troops, they may make a vigorous push for this place. In that case they probably would not waste much time with the flotilla. If you can impede and retard his movements, time will be gained which is all important, but should he advance upon you, with an overwhelming force, you will effectually destroy the flotilla by fire, and with your small arms, retire as he advances, towards this place,

opposing by all the means in your power, his progress, and advising me of your movements, in order that the Park of Artillery 3., 12s. & 2 long light 18s. may be detached to meet you, together with the Marine Corps.— If the flotilla can be run up to Queen Anns with a very few men and a careful Officer, with orders to destroy the whole effectually, and in due time, in the event of the enemy advancing to that place in force, you may pursue that course, but you will run no hazard of capture, and will be careful to regulate your movements, so as to keep in advance of the enemy.

You will keep me advised of every important event, either by express, or by the numerous confidential persons who will be passing this way. I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 181.

1. Barney reported the following British force: an 80- or 90-gun ship, four 74s, six frigates, ten ships of about 32 guns, four small ships, two barges, one large 16-gun schooner, thirteen large bay craft, and a large number of small boats. Barney to Jones, 19 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 30 (M124, Roll No. 65).
2. Charles Gordon to Jones, 16 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 105 (M125, Roll No. 38).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Nottingham 20th Augt. 1814
—7 AM.

Sir

I recd. yours of yesterday 2 PM, at 9 PM. and would have dispatched an express Imediately to you, but it was out of my power to obtain a horse, such is our situation; The Enemy (14 sail of square rigged) got up to Benidict yesterday about Noon, and began to land troops, they contd. at it untill dark, when my officer returnd, No doubt their object is Washington, and perhaps the flotilla, The distance here is twenty miles and a fine road—and 25 to Washington,— it is 40 miles from Benidict to Washington the road not good, so that I think it probable they will come this way, unless they mean a push at the City, before you can be prepared to meet them— I shall be on the Alert, and do whatever is in my power, if you think it best, I can move up to Queen Ann leave the flotilla with a few men & march over to your Assistance;— not the least appearance in this Quarter of Resistance nor can I procure, horses, or any thing else to keep you informed of our situation if I had two or three Volunteers from the City it would be a desirable thing— With respect I am your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 31 (M124, Roll No. 65).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO
CAPTAIN JOSHUA BARNEY, FLOTILLA SERVICE

Navy Department
Augt. 20. 1814. 11½ AM

Sir

I have this instant received yours of 7 AM this day. I am informed by gentlemen who have freqently travelled from this to Benedict that there is a very good and direct road of 35 Miles. Should the enemy dash for this place he will probably take this road, unless he should follow the Bank of the river to Nottingham with his advance guard to drive back your flotilla and bring up his main body by water. This will have been decided before you receive this, and you will immediately send the flotilla up to queen anns with as few men as possible and a trusty officer to remain there and in the event of the enemy advancing upon the flotilla in force to destroy the whole effectually and proceed with his men to this place. Having given these directions you will retire before the enemy toward this place opposing his progress as well by your arms, as by falling trees accross the road removing Bridges, and presenting every other possible obstacle to his march. Tomorrow Morning the detachment of Marines with three 12s. and two long light 18' pounders with every thing complete will march to join you and will be placed under your command. When combined your men will man the Guns and the Marines under the command of Captain Miller will act as Infantry under your command.

I enclose for your government the joint "regulations of the War & [*Navy*] Departments for the government of their respective commanders when acting in concert"[1] and you will with the most perfect harmony and promptness afford all the cooperation in your power. With this view you will communicate freely with Brigdr. general Winder on the subject.

How are you off for muskets and pikes? Will you require an additional supply of the former after you have manned the Guns? You will draw your provisions from this place with more facility than any other. Make your requisitions on Com Tingey and they will be complied with immediately. Your force on this occasion is of immense importance and is relied upon with the utmost confidence.

I shall send to you two men from the Navy yard to ride express in quick succession during the continuance of the present emergency. I am respectfully your obdt. Servt.

W Jones
½ past 2. PM

P.S. Any modification of this order that yourself and General Winder shall agree upon I authorize. W J.

Joshua Barney Esqr.
Commanding the US flotilla Nottingham

ALS, PHi, Papers of Joshua Barney. The letter book copy is in DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 182, but it does not include the postscript and the closing time.

1. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 434–35.

Invasion Force Enters the Patuxent

Events took a decisive turn for the British in late July 1814. While Rear Admiral Cockburn's squadron in the Chesapeake was attacking American towns along the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers and on the Eastern Shore, a British invasion force was assembling slowly. Captain Alexander Skene arrived in the Chesapeake on 14 July with a reinforcement of warships and transports, consisting of a battalion of 350 marines and a company of Royal Marine Artillery. On 21 July, Cochrane ordered the frigate Hebrus *to the Chesapeake with two field pieces, stores, tents for 1,000 men, and the staff of the Second Battallion of Marines. Rear Admiral Codrington arrived in Bermuda from England on the 15th with dispatches and an oral report that dashed the wild speculations about a massive war machine rendezvousing at the island. Instead, after a seven-week voyage, Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm's flotilla of warships and transports, carrying only about 3,000 troops from the Fourth, Forty-fourth, and Eighty-fifth Regiments of Foot, stood into Bermuda's harbor on 23 July. On that late date Cochrane still vacillated over where to attack first—even considering going to New Hampshire or Rhode Island to avoid the "sickly season" in the Chesapeake.[1] Of crucial importance in formulating Cochrane's plans was the arrival in Bermuda on 25 July of H.M. Schooner* St. Lawrence *with Cockburn's letters dating from 22 May to 17 July. The latter's secret letter of the 17th,[2] emphatically recommending an attack on Washington, finally swayed the wavering Cochrane to come to the Chesapeake. By the 30th, another convoy brought about 1,000 men of the Twenty-first Regiment of Foot to Bermuda, thus completing Cochrane's assault force and permitting the vice admiral to depart for the bay on 1 August. Rear Admiral Malcolm and the troop convoy weighed anchor two days later. Cochrane joined Cockburn's squadron in the lower Potomac on 14 August, and, after Rear Admiral Malcolm joined on the 16th, the decision was made to disembark at Benedict. Barney's flotilla was the immediate British target; and, after its unopposed destruction, the British army commander, Major General Robert Ross, and Cockburn concurred on attacking the Capital.[3]*

1. See Cochrane to Croker, 23 July 1814, pp. 135–36.
2. See Cockburn to Cochrane, 17 July 1814, pp. 137–39.
3. For more on the roles of Ross and Cockburn in deciding what to do after the flotilla was destroyed, see Morriss, Cockburn, *pp. 105–6.*

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

Duplicate *Tonnant*
No. 77 Chesapeake Bay 11 Augt. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Rear Admiral Malcolm in the *Royal Oak* with the Ships Named in the Margin and Transports having on board Major General Ross and the Division of Troops under his command arrived at Bermuda on the 23d. Ultimo.[1]

On the 30th. following, the *Iphegenia, Furieuse, Bacchante* and *Euryalus* arrived there with the Transports having on board Major General Gossling and the Divi-

sion of Troops under his Command, one Regiment of which, the 21st. (by the Instructions which the Major General found at Bermuda) is placed under the Command of Major General Ross to be employed under my orders, the remainder of this Second Division proceeds to Halifax.— Leaving Rear Admiral Malcolm to bring on the Expedition as soon as it should have completed its water— I quitted Bermuda with the *Tonnant* and *Euryalus* on the 1st Instant, and arrived here this day, where I am advised that the Rear Admiral and the expedition left Bermuda on the 4th. Instant and I hourly expect their arrival.

I cannot at present acquaint their Lordships of what may be my future operations, they will depend much on the information I may receive in this quarter. I have the honor to be Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

Alex[r] Cochrane
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fol. 550. A notation indicates it was received 27 September 1814. A letter book copy is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2348, pp. 48–49. The latter was used to supply indecipherable words.

1. *Pomone, Menelaus, Despatch, Rover, Meteor, Devastation, Diadem, Dictator, Trave, Weser,* and *Thames.* Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm's squadron left Verdon Roads, France, on 2 June 1814.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 38 *Albion* in the Potowmac 15th. August 1814.

Sir,

According to the Permission you were pleased to give me last night[1] I landed again within St. Mary's Creek this Morning with the Marines under Colonel Malcolm, and accompanied by Captains Sir Peter Parker and Palmer and the other Captains of the Squadron; meeting however in the different Parts of the Country which we visited to day, the same quiet and submissive Conduct on the part of the Inhabitants as in the Places we visited on the 12th. Instant—We returned again to the Ships in the Evening without any material occurrence, and as the whole of this Country bordering the Potowmac has now been visited, I propose in Compliance with your Directions to join you Tomorrow with the Ships under my orders—[2] But I cannot close my detail of the various Services lately performed in the Potowmac with the assistance of this 2nd. Battalion of Marines, without begging again to express to you the high opinion I entertain of their gallantry and discipline, and how much on every occasion I have had reason particularly to admire the able and active Manner in which the Company under 1st. Lieutenant Stephens assisted by 2nd. Lieutenants Pascoe and Bloomfield, appropriated for the particular Service, scours the Country, examines the Woods and clears the way for the Column, and I have much real Satisfaction in also remarking to you that although our Marches have at times been excessively long and necessarily much extended in the thick Woods of the Country, and though our reembarkations have frequently taken place in the

Night, Yet during the whole of these operations, Neither a Marine nor a Sailor has been reported missing.

Lieutenant Coll. Brown, whom you sent here with the *Hebrus* to raise Men for the West India Regiments, has always accompanied me in the Expeditions undertaken since his arrival, and has favored me with ready advise and assistance on every occasion. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 121–22.

1. Cochrane and his invasion force joined Cockburn in the Potomac on the evening of 14–15 August 1814.

2. Cockburn may have initiated this raid to prove to Cochrane that American resistance was nonexistent and thus persuade his chief to disembark his troops in the Chesapeake.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Tonnant Chesapeake
Genl. Memo. 17th August 1814

Whenever the signal No. 8 is made accompanied by the Flag white pierced Red as directed in the Code of Signals appropriated to Combined operations of the Army and Navy, the Boats are to proceed to the ships, and prepare to receive the Troops according to the accompanying arrangement.—

When the Flag white pierced Red only is hoisted with a Signal relative to the Boats, it applies to the whole of the Boats.

When with a Red pendant under it applies to the first division only.

When with a White pendant under it applies to the second division only.

When with a Blue pendant under it applies to the third division only—

And if either two pendants are hoisted with the Flag it applies to the two divisions only designated by those pendants.

The Boats of the first division will be commanded by Captain Wainwright of HM Ship *Tonnant.*

The second division by Capn. Nourse of HMS *Severn*

The third division by Capn. King of HMS *Iphigenia*

(Signed) E. Codrington
Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

[Enclosure]

Ships Names	Description of Boats	1st. Division number of men to take on board	Regiment	From whence
Tonnant	1st. Barge	36	85th. Regiment	*Diadem*
"	2d. "	32	"	Do.
"	Pinnace	28	"	Do.
"	Yawl	24	"	Do.
"	Launch	60	"	Do.
Albion	1st. Barge	36	"	Do.
"	2d. "	32	"	Do.
"	3d. "	32	"	Do.
"	Launch	50	"	Do.
"	Flat	50	"	Do.
Diadem	Pinnace	28	"	Do.
"	Launch	40	"	Do.
Royal Oak	1st. Barge	35	"	*Golden Fleece* Tranp
"	Flat	50	"	Do.
"	1st. Cutter	18	"	Do.
		2nd. Division		
Severn	1st. Barge	32	Flank Compy. of 21st. Regiment	*Albion* Transpt. N 62:
"	Flat	50	"	Do.
"	Launch	50	"	Do.
Dictator	Pinnace	28	Flank Compy. of 44th. Regiment	*Dictator*
"	Launch	40	"	Do.
"	Cutter	18	"	Do.
Weser	Launch	35	Flank Compy. of 4th. Regiment	*Weser*
"	Cutter	20	"	Do.
Trave	Launch	35	"	Do.
Hebrus	Barge	30	Colonials	*Albion*
Regulus	Launch	32	Marine Skirmishers	*Regulus*
"	Pinnace	28	"	Do.
Melpomene	Launch	28	"	*Melpomene*
"	Cutter	12	"	Do.
Royal Oak	Launch and Barge	60 and two–3 Pounders	Artillery men	
Diadem	Cutter	Baggage	85 Regt.	
		3rd. Division		
Iphigenia	Barge	32	4th. Regiment	*Weser*
"	Pinnace	32	"	Do.
"	Launch	40	"	Do.
"	2 Yawls	40	"	Do.
Severn	Cutters	40	"	Do.
Weser	Cutter	20	"	Do.
Trave	2 Cutters	40	"	*Venerable*
Hebrus	2 Cutters	40	"	Do.
Regulus	Cutter	20	"	Do.
Melpomene	Cutter	20	"	Do.
One Boat belonging to *Venerable* Transpt. to take her remaining 30 men				
Transports Boats	4 of them to take three Horses each and the remaining 7 to take 30 Men each from the *Trave*			
Brune	Launch	25	4th. Regiment	Do.[1]
"	Cutter	12	"	Do.
"	Flat	40	"	Do.
"	Scow	30	"	Do.

Rear Admiral Cockbourns Tenders to take 300 of 44th. Regiment from *Dictator* and *Hornet* & *Melpomene*'s Tenders to take the remaining 144

(Signed) E. Codrington
Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4; enclosed in Codrington to the Respective Captains, 17 Aug. 1814.

1. The last four dittos in this column refer to *Trave*.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Pig Point. Augt. 21st. noon

Sir,

Yesterday about 11 AM I received information that the Enemy had left Bendedict, and was marching up, with Intention of taking the Nottingham road; knowing that they could reach Nottingham in the Evening, I determined to move up the river, which I did to this place,—leaving a boat to bring me information; in the night my boat returned and said that the enemy had not moved from Benedict, such was the information at Nottingham; I have just recd. your dispatch of yesterday,[1] and have concluded to land 400 men this afternoon and march to upper Malborough, a distance of two miles from us. I shall leave Mr. Frazier with about 120 men including, Sick & wounded, with orders to proceed up towards Queen Ann, and to destroy the flotilla in case of necessity, and join me with his men— I have also wrote to Captn. Miller informing him the road I shall take from upper Malborough, which I suppose will be by the Wood yard, for him to meet us in that direction, I shall do every thing in my Power to meet your Wishes and orders—

As we have but two or three days provisions it will be necessary to forward some from Washgn. also an Extra Waggon or two for our Baggage as I fear it will be impossible to obtain them on the road. Yours respectfully

Joshua Barney

N B. A boat I sent to Nottingham has returned & informs me that several British Barges are within three or four miles of Nottingham

J B.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 36 (M124, Roll No. 65).

1. See p. 188.

Secretary of State Monroe to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Augt. 21—1814 5 miles from Aquasco mills. ½ after 3. P.M.

Dear Sir

I have just receivd your letter of this date. I quarterd last night near Charlotte Hall, & took a view at 8. this morning from a commanding height below Benidict creek, of the enemy's shipping near the town, & below it 10 or 12 miles down the river. I counted 23. square Rigged vessels, & no others were to be seen, & very few barges. I inferrd from the latter circumstance that the enemy had mov'd up the river, either against Com: Barney's flotilla solely or against the city, taking the flotilla in the way, by a combind mov'ment with the force on the Potowk. I had, when I left Aquasco mills last night, intended, to have passd over to the Potowk., after giving you an account of their vessels from the height below Benedict—but on observing the tranquil scene which I have mentiond, I

hastend back to take a view of the enemy's movments in this quarter, which it might be most important to the govt, to [*be*] made acquainted with. I am now on the main road from Washington to Benedict 12 miles from the latter & find that no troops have passed in this direction. Reports make it probable that a force by land & water, has been sent against the flotilla. I shall proceed immediately to Nottingham with Captn. Thorntons troop, & write you thence whatever may be deserving of attention.

Of the real form of the enemy, I think it would be prudent, from every thing that I can collect to estimate it at about 6,000. Of that on the Potowk., your intelligence will be more correct than mine.

They have plunderd the country of all the stock &c to the distance of 3 or 4 miles from Benedict. with respectful regard

Jas Monroe

I have written to Genl. Winder.—

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 35 (M124, Roll No. 65). Monroe sent a similar letter, also dated 21 August, to James Madison; DLC, James Monroe Papers, Series I (Roll No. 5).

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 1 On board the *Resolution* Tender
off Mount Calvert Monday Night 22nd August 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that after parting from you at Benedict on the Evening of the 20th. Inst. I proceeded up the Patuxent with the Boats and Tenders the Marines of the Ships being embarked in them under the Command of Captain Robyns (the Senior Officer of that Corps in the Fleet) and the Marine Artillery under Captain Harrison in their Two Tenders— The *Severn* and *Hebrus* Frigates and the *Manly* Sloop being directed to follow us up the River as far as might prove practicable.

The Boats and Tenders I placed in three Divisions, the first under the immediate Command of Captains Sullivan (the Senior Commander employed on the occasion) and Badcock, the Second under Captains Money and Somerville, the third under Captain Ramsay—The whole under the Superintendency and immediate management of Captain Wainwright of the *Tonnant*, Lieutenant James Scott (1st. of the *Albion*) attending as my Aid-de-Camp.

I endeavored to Keep with the Boats and Tenders as nearly as possible abreast of the Army under Major General Ross that I might communicate with him as occasions offered, according to the plan previously arranged, and about midday yesterday I accordingly anchored at the Ferry House opposite Lower Marlborough where I met the General and where the Army halted for some hours After which he marched for Nottingham and I proceeded on for the same place with the Boats— On our approaching that Town a few Shot were exchanged

between the leading Boats and Some of the Enemy's Cavalry but the appearance of our Army advancing caused them to retire with precipitation— Captains Nourse and Palmer of the *Severn* and *Hebrus*, joined me this day with their Boats, having found it impracticable to get their Ships higher than Benedict.

The Major General remained with the Army at Nottingham and the Boats and Tenders continued anchored off it. during the Night, and soon after daylight this morning the whole moved again forward, but the Wind blowing during the morning down the River and the Channel being excessively narrow and the advance of our Tenders consequently Slow, I judged it adviseable to push on with the Boats only leaving the Tenders to follow as they could.

On approaching Pig Point (where the Enemys Flotilla was said to be) I landed the Marines under Captain Robyns on the left bank of the River, and directed him to march round and attack on the Land Side, the Town Situated on the Point to draw from us the attention of Such Troops as might be there for its defence and the defence of the Flotilla; I then proceeded on with the Boats and as we opened the Reach above Pig Point, I plainly discovered Commodore Barney's broad Pendant in the headmost Vessel (a large Sloop) and the remainder of the Flotilla extending in a long line astern of her. Our Boats now advanced towards them as rapidly as possible but on nearing them we observed the Sloop bearing Broad Pendant to be on fire, and she very soon afterwards blew up, I now Saw clearly that they were all abandoned and on Fire with Trains to their Magaz[ines], and out of the Seventeen Vessels which composed this formidable and So much Vaunted Flotilla, Sixteen were in quick Succession blown to atoms, and the Seventeenth (in which the Fire had not taken) we captured, the Commodore's Sloop[1] was a large armed Vessel the others were Gun Boats all having a long Gun in the Bow and a Carronade in the Stern, but the Calibre of the Guns and number of the Crew of each differed in proportion to the Size of the Boat, varying from 32 Prs. and 60 Men to 18 Prs. and 40 Men— I found here laying above the Flotilla under its protection Thirteen Merchant Schooners, Some of which not being worth bringing away I caused to be burnt, such as were in good Condition I directed to be moved to Pig Point— Whilst employed taking these Vessels a few shot were fired at us, by some of the Men of the Flotilla from the Bushes on the Shore near us, but Lieut. Scott whom I had landed for that purpose, Soon got hold of them and made them Prisoners— Some Horsemen likewise shewed themselves on the Neighbouring Heights but a Rocket or two dispersed them, and Captain Robyns who had got possession of Pig Point without Resistance now Spreading his Men through the Country the Enemy retreated to a distance and left us in quiet possession of the Town, the Neighbourhood and our Prizes

A large quantity of Tobacco having been found in the Town at Pig Point I have left Captain Robyns with the Marines, and Captain Nourse with two divisions of the Boats to hold the place and Ship the Tobacco into the Prizes and I have moved back with the 3rd. division to this Point to enable me to confer on our future operations with the Major General, who has been good enough to send his Aid-de-Camp[2] to inform me of his Safe arrival with the Army under his Command at Upper Marlborough.

In congratulating you Sir, which I do most Sincerely on the complete destruction of this Flotilla of the Enemy which has lately occupied So much of our attention; I must beg to be permitted to assure you that the cheerful and indefatigable exertions on this occasion of Captains Wainwright, Nourse and Palmer

and of Captains Sullivan, the other Commanders, Officers and Men in the Boats you have placed under my Orders most justly entitle them to my warmest acknowledgements, and my earnest recommendation to your favorable notice. I have the honor to be Sir Your very faithful and most obedient humble Servant

(Signed) G. Cockburn Rear Admiral

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 602–5. This copy, endorsed by Cochrane, is enclosure number one in Cochrane to Croker, 2 Sept. 1814, pp. 226–28, below. Bracketed words were supplied using Cockburn's letter book copy in DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, pp. 246–53 (Reel 6).

1. *Scorpion.*
2. Lieutenant George de Lacy Evans, deputy assistant quartermaster general, British army.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

Copy (H)

½ past 5.
22. August.

My dr. Adl.

I congratulate you most cordially on the Destruction of Barney's Fleet and think as this matter is ended, the sooner the Army get back the better; I will not longer detain the Boat that she may save Tide up[1]

Ever Your's
A. Cochrane

Best Wishes and Congratulations to the General[2] A: C:

Copy, UkLNMM, Papers of Admiral George Cockburn, COC/11, p. 135.

1. This short note indicates that Cochrane, who was waiting at Benedict, wanted to end the incursion after the destruction of the flotilla. Cochrane did not mention this dispatch in a letter to the Admiralty after the subsequent attack on Washington. Cochrane to Croker, 2 Sept. 1814, pp. 226–28, below.
2. Major General Robert Ross.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Head Quarters Upper Marlbro:
23 August 1814

My dear Sir

I wrote you a hasty Note from my Boat yesterday as I thought it would be a great Relief to you to know of the Flotilla being actually disposed of, I learnt in the Evening that the general had occupied this Place, I came here this Morning to consult with him & learn his future Plans, & I find he is determined

(in consequence of the Information he has received & what he has Observed of the Enemy), to push on towards Washington, which I have confident Hopes he will give a good account of. I shall accompany him & of course afford him every Assistance in my Power[1]

I yesterday took One of the Gun Boats unhurt, which ~~will make~~ is a good Vessel for these Waters— I likewise took several light Schooners which are loading Tobacco at Pig Point, We therefore shall not return empty handed

Every Body in the Naval Department has behaved admirably & we are all in high Spirits No Sickness amongst us & but little as yet in the Army Believe me My dear Sir Most truly Your's

G: Cockburn

If you could Spare the *Hornet* to come as high as Nottingham with Spirits & Bread it would assist us, as we are all getting Short of Provisions, she may return to you immediately after delivering it

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 3–4A.

1. Cockburn did not allude to Cochrane's short dispatch of 22 August (p. 197) recommending a recall of the forces, perhaps because the commander in chief did not phrase it as a direct order and because the rear admiral wanted to proceed against Washington. In his memoirs, Cockburn called the Cochrane note a "halter" that he disregarded. UkLNMM, Papers of Admiral George Cockburn, COC/11, p. 134.

Naval Preparations for the Defense of Washington

Washington was ill prepared for the invasion force that sailed up the Patuxent River on 19 August 1814. Seeing no strategic advantage the British could gain by attacking the capital, Secretary of War Armstrong denied any need to defend it. Brigadier General Winder, the newly appointed commander of the just-formed Tenth Military District, energetically undertook Washington's defense, but after six weeks had accomplished little due to his own lack of organizational skills and Armstrong's inertia. Secretary of the Navy Jones, as with most of Madison's cabinet, but not the president himself, did not consider Washington threatened. When faced with imminent peril, however, Jones acted quickly and decisively. He immediately enlisted the assistance of three of his illustrious naval captains, John Rodgers, David Porter, and Oliver H. Perry, and promised them glory in defending the capital. At the Washington Navy Yard, the secretary engaged Master Commandant John O. Creighton to reconnoiter the British squadron progressing up the Potomac. Meanwhile, the commandant of the yard, Thomas Tingey, responding to an oral order from Jones, employed the yard's clerk, Mordecai Booth, to secure wagons for transporting supplies to troops in the area. Booth's eyewitness account portrays the confused, panic-stricken state of the city in the days before the invasion.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Navy Department Augt. 19. 1814

Sir

The enemy has entered the Patuxent with a very large force indicating a design upon this place which may be real, or it may serve to mask his design upon Baltimore

In either case it is exceedingly desirable to collect in our vicinity all the disposable force within reach as soon as possible.

You will therefore with the least possible delay proceed to Baltimore with about three hundred men (including officers) of the force under your command and also order on the detachment of marines from Cecil furnace to meet you at Baltimore where the further orders of the Department will await you I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

Commodore John Rodgers
US. Ship *Guerriere* Philada.

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5532–33. Rodgers was at Philadelphia superintending the construction of *Guerriere*.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain David Porter

Capt: David Porter
U.S. Navy New-York

Navy Department
August 19th. 1814

Sir,

The Enemy has entered the Patuxent with a very strong force indicating a rapid movement upon this city.— The court of Enquiry[1] will therefore be suspended and you will proceed without delay to this place, with as many of your late officers & Crew as you can collect and any others you may be enabled to engage, as well for the defence of the U.S. new Ship *Essex*,[2] destined for your command as for that of the national Capital, and its important establishments.— I am respectfully &c

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 410 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. For more on the court of inquiry into the loss of *Essex*, see p. 760.
2. Jones was referring to the frigate *Columbia* that was building at the Washington Navy Yard.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant John O. Creighton

Capt: John O. Creighton
U.S. Navy, Present

Navy Department
August 22d: 1814

Sir,

The reports from the vicinity of Cedar point yesterday, state that six ships of the enemy either had passed, or were at that time passing the Kettle Bottoms

and ascending the Potomac.—[1] What the nature of his force is, or whether accompanied with transports or troops is quite uncertain.—

It is desirable to ascertain by the discriminating eye of a naval officer the real extent & nature of this force as well as its probable object; whether it be to ascend the river, to act in conjunction with the invading army, or to create a diversion of our force from that army.— You will therefore apply to Como: Tingey, who will furnish you with a fast gig & crew with which you will proceed down the river & carefully reconnoitre the enemy, watching his movements & penetrating if possible his designs, which you will report to me by a trusty express over land, or in any other safe & expeditious manner,— when you have completed your observations & satisfied yourself as far as may be practicable you will return to this city & report the result to this Department.—[2] I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 448 (M149, Roll No. 11). This letter was not entered in the letter book in its correct chronological sequence because there was no time to record it before it was sent. After returning on 9 March 1814 from a six-week cruise in the Caribbean with the brigs *Rattlesnake* and *Enterprise*, Master Commandant John O. Creighton was employed refitting those two ships at Wilmington, North Carolina, until he was transferred in early May to the Washington Navy Yard to superintend the construction of the new sloop of war *Argus*. Creighton would be Commandant Thomas Tingey's principal lieutenant at the navy yard during the summer of 1814.

1. As a diversion to deflect American attention from the main invasion body in the Patuxent, Cochrane ordered Captain James A. Gordon to lead a squadron of vessels up the Potomac River and attack Fort Washington on the Maryland shore. Besides his own frigate, *Seahorse*, Gordon commanded the frigate *Euryalus*, the bomb vessels *Devastation*, *Aetna*, and *Meteor*, and the rocket ship *Erebus*. For more on this expedition, see Gordon to Cochrane, 9 Sept. 1814, pp. 238–42.

2. No report was found. It may have been made orally.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

New Castle Aug 23d. 1814 (at Sun rise)

Sir

Last night at 11 P.m. between Chester & Phila. returning from Reedy Island where I had been to inspect the Flotilla,[1] I recd. your Letter of the 19th Inst.— I immediately got into my Boat and Arrived here this moment.—

The Signal has been made for the Flotilla & answered; and I shall leave here for Balto. in compliance with your Orders as soon as the Men can be debarked, and be assured, Sir, I shall loose no time in getting them.—

Owing to some shameful irregularity in the Post Office, your Letter, altho' it is dated the 19th. Inst., was not delivered until ten OClock yesterday morning.— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr Obt Servt.

Signed—Jno Rodgers

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 131½ (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. The Delaware flotilla.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Camp. Old Fields.[1]
9 Miles East of Washington City.
Augt. 23d. 1814. ½ past 8. AM

Sir

Presuming that if circumstances have been favorable to your progress you will reach Baltimore this evening in pursuance of my order of the 20th.—[2] I have now to direct that with the utmost possible celerity you will move on with the seamen and marines under your command to Bladensburg and endeavour to have as early a communication with General Winder who commands in this district and afford to him all the cooperation in your power advising the Department of your movements in order that the most efficient means may be employed to aid in the common effort to preserve the national capital and its invaluable establishments from the ruthless hands of our vengeful foe. The President calculates with confidence and pleasure on the influence of your zeal and patriotism in giving the best effect to the exertions of your brave seamen who on all occasions and on either element are ready to prove their devotion to the sacred cause of their country.

You will arm them with muskets, and on your arrival in this vicinity as many field pieces as you can conveniently fight will be added. Mr. Beatty will comply with your requisitions for Baggage and provision waggons with cooking utensils and whatever else may be necessary for the service

The effort will be but for a few days and I anticipate with pleasure the full share of glory our gallant naval officers and seamen will acquire on this occasion. The President of the U States and heads of Departments are now in this camp, The enemy were last night at upper Marlbro', from which it is probable they will advance to day toward Bladensburg. Our force is fast accumulating and we shall now retard and ultimately repel if not destroy the forces of the enemy whose numbers are various estimated but I believe does not exceed at most 5.000. I am respectfully your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

P S. Lieut. Solomon Rutter of the U S. Flotilla at Baltimore will report himself to you with about 250. men which you will combine with your own force

W J.

please send me a copy of this letter[3]

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5534–35. This letter was addressed to Rodgers at Baltimore where Jones presumed Rodgers must have arrived by the 23d. The preceding letter shows that Rodgers was still in Delaware on the 23d.

1. Long Old Fields, Maryland.
2. The letter book copy says 19th.
3. Jones wrote in such haste that he did not have time to have his clerk copy it.

Captain's Clerk Mordecai Booth to Commodore Thomas Tingey

[Extract]

Navy Yard Washtn. Monday 22nd: Augst: 1814.

In pursuance to your instructions to me of this day, to procure Waggons to remove the powder from the Naval Magazine—I proceeded fourthwith, to the execution of your order, After borrowing the Horse of Thomas Murray Master Cooper of the Yard, in consequence of your, regret, at my being obliged to ride one of the public Horses of the yard, then so much wanted. (Murrays Horse was borrowed of his Wife).—

I was aware of the demand for Waggons,—from the alarm then created by the removal of Public, as well as, private property—and my direction was, to the Turnpike road leading into the City from Baltimore.— I met with no waggons, but left directions at Longs Hotel[1] on Capitol hill, that from four to five Waggons should be directed to the Navy Yard to you, Should that number pass, that would be disposed to engage in public employment. I then proceeded with an intention of going to Alexandria, but seeing a Waggon on the Pensylvania Avenue, I soon overtook it, it was driven by a black Man who called himself William Barnett, say'd he was a free man, and the team of five horses (which was a very good one) was his own, that he was from Baltimore, and loaded in part with Tea for R. Monroe[2] of Geo: town, some Boxes for the City—Molasses for Alexa. and 25 boxes Candles.— The Tea for Monroe, I made him lodge at Mc,Keowins Tavern, deliver his boxes for the City— Gave him a Certificate of having employed him for the service of the Navy Department, & permitted him to proceed to Alexa. to deliver his Molasses &c: ordered his return to the Navy Yard—where he arrived in the evening, deposited the Candles for safe keeping, not having found the owner, reported himself, and regularly received into Service.—

Understanding several Waggons had passed on to Geo: town, and wishing to inform Mr. Monroe of the deposit of his Tea—I shaped my Course thither, On my Way, I overtook the Honbl. Wm: Jones, Secretary of the Navy— he enquired where I was going— I informed him of your Order, and was on my way to Geo: town in pursuit of waggons— he asked me if you had waggons to dispatch provisions to Comdr. Barney, I replyed I did not believe you had— he then ordered me to impress all I could get. I very soon met with the Waggons of George Vallandingham— he plead he was engaged to Mr. Nourse[3] to remove public papers— he had nothing to shew to that effect—and I impressed him,

and gave him a Certificate; at the moment I did it, Mrs. Nourse came to me, and claimed the waggon as being engaged by Mr. Nourse— The Secretary at the time drove up, when an appeal was maid to him and on Mrs. Nourse pledging her Word, it was for the public service—was instructed by the Secretary, to release it—(tho Vallandingham promised he would return to me, as soon as he delivered the load.) The Secretary then directed me to respect only, Waggons that was engaged for the public, and to impress all others I could.— I very Soon met with two Waggons in Geo: town from Baltimore, belonging to Virginia—them I impressed and put under charge of Nicholas Queen[4]— I then impressed John Anderson from Winchester Virginia, who was engaged to Daniel Renner, of the firm of Renner and Heath,[5] for the purpose of removing their Cordage— The younger Mr. Renner appeared in a violent passion on the occasion, but Renner the Partner of Heath, behaved most politely, he regreted the occurence—but Observed, private considerations must give way to the public good— I gave Anderson a Certificate of impressment— He soon unloaded, and went on to you— I have Since been informed by you and himself, that he took a load of Provisions in—and reached the Camp that Night— I could find no other Waggon in the town except one of three horses—that was engaged by the Bank of Columbia—and the Driver missing— Mr. Wm: Whan Cashier, Assured me,—that Waggon, would expressly take papers that the Government were particularly interested in; as that Bank, did a large proportion of the public Business—of course, I left it—and proceeding into the City—met with the Waggon of Richd. Love; it was taking in a load of furniture— A Black man was with it, who told me, he was loading for Doctr. Sims—[6] the waggon was a little distance from the Doctrs. House— I went to see the Doctr. to have the load put out— he was from home, his Lady was at the door— her distress was great indeed— I returned to the Waggon to do my duty, when on examining the Waggon, I found one of the tire broke, and the Wheel ready to break down— Mr. Renner was passing— he examined the Waggon, and with myself concluded, it was not fit for use—consequently left it— I soon met with another and taking it in charge, was proceeding by the Navy Department—where I found the two Waggons impressed in Geo: town, and put under Charge of Mr. Queen— they had been stop'd by Thos: Turner Esqr. Acctnt. of the Navy Deptnt. who advised me they would be wanted to remove papers of the Department—and spoke to the Secretary for his concurrance— before he gave his assent—he enquired of me, how many Waggons I had got, on observing—three others; Then Sir, (he Say'd) let the two remain, and the three can load in the provisions; and get as many more as you can— on returning to the opposite Side of the house—the waggon I had left, had run— I mounted my Horse to persue it— in passing around the Presidents Wall, I met with Seven Waggons loaded for Geo: town, from Baltimore, two only were impressed, they by Mr. Washington Booie[7]— the Other five I impressed— and finding I might run the risque of loosing them, to persue the one that had run thought it the better way to go to Geo: town, and hurry their unloading.— While they were discharging their loads, I rode through the Streets, and found three Waggons loading in private property—One of them for Rigs and Badon[8]— A White man was with the Waggon—who refused at the instance of Rigs, to tell his name, [*n*]or could I lern it, the waggon was drove by a Black man— I told the white man, I impressed the Waggon for and on account of the Navy Department—on which Rigs swore, I should not take it, at the risque of his life—

Wm. Ridgley was on the pavement, who also made use of language, Justifying & incourageing Rigs to opposition They went into the Store, I dismounted and followed them in— When they made use of such language, as was degrading to gentlemen—I had no one with me to inforce the detention of the Waggon— And it was hurried off, in opposition to my positive command to the contrary— and except I had used violence, could not have prevented it—in which, I did not think myself justified.— The second Waggon, was without a driver, he being absent—and while I was hunting him, the waggon was hurried off.— The third, I gave a regular Certificate of impressment to, but the Waggon being without a Cover—and the Waggoner assuring me, he was only to carry the load a few miles into the Country; and as he could get his tent, & feed, by going home, and would be at the Navy Yard the Next day, by ten O'Clock; I consented to his going— he you have since informed me, never reported himself.— His Name is Michael Conley, and lives in Mt,Gomery County, not far from George Town. The five Waggons, to wit Thomas Wade, three Negroes under his Charge, & Thomas Cowthon, I arrived with, a little before sun set—at the Yard.—

Tuesday 23rd. To day I was in the yard before sun-rise—and proceeded to have the Teams appraised &c: and as Soon as practicable, got off Thos: Cowthon and Wm. Barnett with provisions for Commdr. Barney.— The Other four—Wade and the three Negroes—I caused to go to the Magazine, where they were loaded with one hundred and twenty four Barrels, and two quarter Casks of Powder. Being without a Horse—and having to attend to the Securing the Powder, and understanding that Murry had objected to his Wife's lending his horse—and finding him in his Stable, I impressed him, with a Saddle and Bridle.— Before I left the City, I impressed the Waggon & team of four horses, of John Bair an old Dutchman—to whom I gave a Certificate of impressment, and got him into the Yard. I then followed the Waggons with the powder, and overtook them before they cross'd the Potomac Bridge. On the South side, and as I was about to ascend the ridge from the Causeway, I met Colo. Minors Redgment of Fairfax Militia[9]— The Colo. recommended six persons as a competent guard to take charge of the powder, and that night, I reached Wrens tavern at the falls Church, late at night, within one mile of the farm of Daniel Dulany Esqr. where the powder was to be deposited.— This Night a little before day, Captn. Smallwood[10] & family, with my Daughters and Son.—reached Wrens— The Acct: given me of the retreat of our troops, and the advance of the British, and the consternation of the Citizens—was to me truly distressing; but the Seeing my Children out of the reach of a ferocious and vandal enemy—was delight indeed.— And Now Sir! Permit me to pause—Untill I return you the warmest thanks of a grateful Heart, for the attention you paid to my unprotected Children in my absence—on public duty.— To your goodness, they owe their escape from a Sceen, the Most to be regreted of my life.— you can never be rewarded, beyond, the Sensations of a pure heart, and a sound mind—the Attribute of an all wise being, so bounteously bestowed on you.— . . . .

ALS, DNA, RG45, Naval Shore Establishments, 1814–1911; PC-30, Entry 350; Washington Navy Yard; Reports on Removal of Powder from the Yard at the Time of British Invasion of Washington, August–September 1814. This report covered the period 22 August to 10 September 1814 and was enclosed in a letter of 10 September 1814 from Booth to Thomas Tingey. For a printed version of this transmittal letter, with editorial notes, see Booth, *Capture of Washington.* For Booth's account of events on 24 August, see pp. 208–14.

1. Robert Long.
2. Possibly Robert Munro.
3. Joseph Nourse was register of the U.S. Treasury from 1789 to 1829.
4. Queen owned a hotel in Washington.
5. Daniel Renner and Nathaniel K. Heath manufactured rope.
6. Dr. Thomas Sim was a Washington physician.
7. Washington Bowie was a Georgetown merchant.
8. Riggs & Badon was a store in Washington.
9. Lieutenant Colonel George Minor commanded the Sixtieth Regiment (Fairfax County), Virginia militia.
10. Samuel N. Smallwood of Washington.

Battle of Bladensburg and the Attack on Washington, 24–25 August 1814

After receiving Secretary Jones's letter of 20 August,[1] ordering him to leave a skeleton crew with the flotilla's ill-fated vessels, Joshua Barney left Nottingham on 21 August with about 400 of the flotillamen. This force joined with the army and militia to resist the British threat. From Washington, Jones sent a contingent of marines under Captain Samuel Miller to serve under Barney. Experienced military men were now more important than vessels in opposing the British onslaught. No one knew where the British would strike next. While the American army marched around the Maryland countryside, first in pursuit and then in retreat of the enemy, the British army under Major General Ross left Nottingham on 22 August for Upper Marlborough, but their momentary detour down the Woodyard Road (which led to Washington) frightened the Americans. The latter retreated to the Long Old Fields. After arriving in Upper Marlborough on 23 August, Ross and Cockburn conferred about whether to attack Washington, sixteen miles away, or to return to the fleet.[2] Brigadier General Winder had proposed assembling his forces from a twenty-mile radius and assaulting the British at Upper Marlborough, but was stymied when Ross took the offensive first by breaking camp at Upper Marlborough, marching west a few miles, and then stopping to bivouac just three miles from the Long Old Fields where the Americans were camped.

Winder was in a quandary. After considering all the places that the British could attack (Annapolis, Fort Washington, Bladensburg, and Washington via the bridges on the Eastern Branch), Winder opted to retreat to the capital. On the evening of 23 August, as the American forces poured across the Eastern Branch bridges to a camp near the Washington Navy Yard, the initiative had devolved to the British.

After a peripatetic night conferring about strategic matters, and with little sleep, Winder arose at sunrise on 24 August still undecided where to assemble his troops. Meanwhile, the British broke camp about 5:00 A.M. and, after a feint toward Washington, marched to Bladensburg. Conflicting intelligence reports paralyzed American reaction until 10:00 A.M. when Winder finally accepted that the British were heading to Washington from the north. All American forces were ordered to Bladensburg to stand and repulse the British. However, Barney's flotillamen and marines, who had retreated with the army to Washington on the evening of 23 August, were delegated to blow up the bridge nearest the navy yard when the enemy approached. Recognizing that this was an inefficient use of his manpower, Barney persuaded the cabinet to detail a smaller force for this task, thus permitting his men to join the army and militia at Bladensburg. Although the Americans held numerical superiority, their last minute arrival at the battle site precluded a coordinated de-

fense against the disciplined and battle-tested British. The naval and marine contingent under Barney alone stood its ground.

In the days before the invasion, Secretary Jones was intimately involved with preparations for the capital's defense and joined President Madison and other cabinet members in conferences at the military encampments in Maryland and near the navy yard. After the British army broke through the American lines at Bladensburg on the afternoon of 24 August, Ross stopped to refresh his troops before proceeding on to the capital. Meanwhile, the Americans fled in all directions—to Baltimore, the Capitol, Georgetown, or their homes. Commandant of the Washington Navy Yard Thomas Tingey had no military force to guard the yard and by late afternoon he received an oral report from Secretary Armstrong that the army could not protect the yard. Under orders to destroy the yard's vessels and stores, rather than allow them to be captured by the British, Tingey delayed to the very last moment setting the yard on fire. Navy yard clerk Mordecai Booth and Master Commandant John O. Creighton diligently plied the streets of Washington to gather intelligence about the British for Tingey. On the evening of the 24th, they encountered some British regulars on Capitol Hill. They rushed to the navy yard with the news and Tingey set the fires just before escaping to Alexandria in his gig.[3]

1. Jones to Barney, 20 Aug. 1814, p. 188.
2. Cockburn to Cochrane, 23 Aug. 1814, pp. 197–98.
3. For more on this subject, see Lord, Dawn's Early Light, *chapters five, six, and seven. For the congressional investigation into the burning of Washington, see pp. 311–23, below.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant John O. Creighton

Capt: Jno: O. Creighton
U.S. Navy, Present,

Navy Department
August 24th: 1814

Sir,

Commodore Barney, who was charged with the defence or destruction of the Bridge over the Eastern Branch,[1] having by direction of the President, been ordered to join Genl: Winder at Bladensburg, you are specially charged with the eventual destruction of that Bridge, for which purpose a Serjeants guard of Marines, has been detailed & placed under your command.— You will see that sufficient combustibles are properly placed so as to explode & destroy the Bridge effectually on the instant the Enemy may approach its vicinity, which you will determine by a good look out or by such information as you may deem satisfactory.— This object is of vital importance, & I rely with confidence upon your vigilance.— Having performed this duty you will unite with Como: Tingey in preparing for the destruction of such vessels, magazines & Public Stores, as cannot be removed.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 448 (M149, Roll No. 11). There was no time to record this letter in the secretary's letter book and so it is not in the correct chronological sequence.

1. Two bridges spanned the Eastern Branch (Anacostia River) and led to Washington. The one referred to here was the lower bridge found at the end of Kentucky Avenue. The upper bridge spanned the river near East Capitol Street.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Farm at Elk ridge.[1] Augt. 29th. 1814

Sir,

This is the first moment I have had it in my power to make a report of the proceedings of the forces under my command since I had the honor of seeing you on Tuesday the 23d. inst. at the Camp at the "Old fields," on the afternoon of that day we were informed that the Enemy was advancing upon us, The Army was put into order of battle and our positions taken, my forces were on the right, flanked by the two Battaln. of the 36 & 38th. Regiments where we remained some hours, The enemy did not however make his appearance. A little before sun set, General Winder came to me and recommended that the heavy Artillery should be withdrawn with the exception of one 12 lb. to cover the retreat; We took up our line of march and in the night entered Washington by the Eastern branch Bridge, I marched my Men &c to the Marine Barracks and took up Quarters for the night, myself sleeping at Comr. Tingeys at the Navy yard, About 2 OClock. Genrl. Winder came to my Quarters and we made some arrangements. In the morning I recd. a note from Genrl. Winder and waited upon him, he requested me to take command, and place my Artillery to defend the passage of the Bridge on the Eastern Branch as the enemy was approaching the City in that direction, I immediately put my guns in Position, leaving the Marines & the rest of my men at the Barracks to wait further orders. I was in this situation when I had the honor to meet you, with the President, & heads of Departments, when it was determined I should draw off my Guns & men and proceed towards Bladensburgh, which was Immediately put into execution; on our way I was informed the enemy was within a mile of Bladensburgh we hurried on, The day was hot, and my men very much crippled from the severe marches we had experienced the preceding days ~~before, many of them being without shoes, which I had replaced that morning.~~ I preceded the men and when I arrived at the line which separates the District from Maryland the Battle began, I sent an officer back to hurry on my men, they came up in a trot, we took our position on the rising ground, put the pieces in Battery, posted the Marines under Capt. Miller and the flotilla men who were to act as Infantry under their own officers, on my right to support the pieces, and waited the approach of the Enemy, during this period the engagement continued the enemy advancing,— our own Army retreating before them apparently in much disorder, at length the enemy made his appearance on the main road, in force, and in front of my Battery, and on seeing us made a halt, I reserved our fire, in a few minutes the enemy again advanced, when I ordered an 18 lb. to be fired, which compleatly cleared the road, shortly after a second and a third attempt was made by the enemy to come forward but all were distroyed, The enemy then crossed over into an Open field and attempted to flank our right, he was there met by three twelve pounders, the Marines under Capt. Miller and my men acting as Infantry, and again was totally cut up, by this time not a Vestige of the American Army remained except a body of 5 or 600 posted on a height on my right from whom I expected much support, from their fine situation, The Enemy from this period never appeared in force in front of us, they pushed forward their sharp shooters, one of which shot my horse under me, who fell dead between two of my Guns; The enemy who had been kept in check by our fire for nearly half an hour now began to out flank us

on the right, our guns were turned that way, he pushed up the Hill, about 2 or 300 towards the Corps of Americans station'd as above described, who, to my great mortification made no resistance, giving a fire or two and retired, in this situation we had the whole army of the Enemy to contend with; Our Ammunition was expended, and unfortunately the drivers of my Ammunition Waggons had gone off in the General Panic, at this time I received a severe wound in my thigh, Capt. Miller, was Wounded, Sailing Master Warner Killed, actg. sailing Master Martin Killed, & sailing Master Martin wounded,[2] but to the honour of my officers & men, as fast as their Companions & mess mates fell at the guns they were instantly replaced from the Infantry, Finding the enemy now compleatly in our rear, and no means of defence I gave orders to my officers and men to retire— Three of my officers assisted me to get off a Short distance— but the great loss of blood occasioned such a weakness that I was compelled to lie down, I requested my officers to leave me, which they obstinately refused, but upon being Ordered they obeyed, one only remained. In a short time I observed a British soldier and had him called, and directed him to seek an officer, in a few minutes an officer came, on learning who I was, brought General Ross & Admiral Cockburn to me, Those officers behaved to me with the most marked Attention, respect, and Politeness, had a Surgeon brought and my wound dressed immediately, After a few minutes conversation the Generl. Informed me, (after paying me a handsome compliment) that I was paroled and at liberty to proceed to Washington or Bladensburgh, as also Mr. Huffington[3] who had remained with me, offering me every assistance in his power, giving orders for a litter to be brought in which I was carried to Bladensburgh; Capt Wainwright first Capt. to Admiral Cochrane remained with me and behaved to me as if I was a brother—

During the stay of the enemy at Bladensburgh I received the most polite attention from the officers of the Navy & Army.

My wound is deep, but I flatter myself not dangerous, the Ball is not yet extracted, I fondly hope a few weeks will restore me to health, and that an exchange will take place, that I may resume my Command or any other, that you and the President may think proper to honour me with, yours respectfully

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 57 (M124, Roll No. 65).

1. Barney lived in Elkridge, Maryland.
2. Sailing Master John Warner's warrant dated from 22 September 1813; he died at the Battle of Bladensburg on 24 August 1814. Acting Sailing Master James H. Martin entered the Chesapeake Bay flotilla on 5 July 1814 and was discharged on 15 April 1814. Sailing Master William Martin's warrant dated from 12 January 1814 and he was discharged on 15 April 1815.
3. Jesse Huffington entered the Chesapeake Bay flotilla as a sailing master on 21 September 1813 and was discharged on 15 April 1815.

Captain's Clerk Mordecai Booth to Commodore Thomas Tingey

[Extract]
Wednesday 24th.—Desireous of having the powder delivered and under a guard, I was on my horse at the dawn of day, and ordered the waggons to geer

up, and follow me; on geting to the Farm,[1] I found Seventy five barrels of Powder had been deposited—the Barn in which it was,—Open, and much out of order— I went to the House of Mr. Dosier Bennett a respectable Citizen, recommended by Colo. Minor, in whoom I might confide, for its care; he Agreed to have my orders attended to, and to have collected, a competent guard; on my stipulating to Allow him, two dollars Pr. day for his services, and one & a half dollars, for each person employed to aid him; untill I could relieve them, by sending a guard over; which Colo: Wharton[2] had promised me should be done— As soon as I had completed my orders, and directed the Waggons to hasten their return to the City—I set out to attend you.— On reaching the Navy Yard, I was told you had gone in the direction of the lower Eastern branch Bridge.— I found on reaching the Commons, the rear of the Army in motion, but was ignorant of its Movements— On geting in view of the door of the house lately Occupied by the Revd: A: Hunter;[3] I saw the Gig of the Secretary of the Navy, a number of horses, and several horsemen.— Thinking I might find you there, as from appearances the assemblage was, the heads of Departments and General Officers &c: I rode up— I saw the President of the U:S. through the Window. I inquired for you, an officer requested my name—and went in to see if you were there, he returned & informed me, you were not, & I went on to the bridge; on reaching it—saw you on it; I dismounted, and in approaching you, Met Commodore Barney and Captn. Creighton— receiving your orders to have the Waggons again loaded with powder, I returned to the Yard—prepaired some certificates for the Waggons—left the Office, and went to your house, to know your Commands, if you wished me to attend to any thing particularly— The Secretary of the Navy was then in his Gig at your door— You had no order for me, and I passed on, to get my dinner— While Dining, was told an action was pending—[4] the first intimation, that one was expected— I was scarcely up from the table, before the four Waggons arrived—And I was giving them orders to proceed direct to the Magazine, when the retreat of our Army was pronounced.—and in the direction to the Potomac Bridge; Waggons and Men; were seen flying in the utmost confusion— those receiving my orders, waited not a moment; but fled with all precipitation— I went to my house lock'd my doors, and ran to the Yard, where I found you, and tendered my Services— What was my astonishment! on being informed by you, that, in the event of a retreat, or defeat, and the Yard could not be defended—You had orders to fire it.— And as you was left without defence—I could remain & assist in the execution of the order— I had put my Horse in the Stable, and determining he should not be lost, I went to the Stable & Saddled him, on bringing him out, I saw Mr. A: Thornton (overseer of laborers) who appeared to be leaving the yard— to him I intended giving the charge of the Horse; but, reflecting that, my ho[*r*]se was a good one (before he had taken him) and thinking I might be useful in reconnoitreing; and not knowing you had received any communication from the Secretary of War, I proposed going in Serch of intelligence; At which you appeared well pleased.— Then Colo. Wharton and Captn. Crab[5] were in the Yard— The British Army were momently expected—and as I mounted my horse, was told that the whistling of the balls, had been distinctly heard at the Marine Barracks; Which you heard, as well as myself— I passed the commons, and to the turn-pike Gate; commanding a View of the Hills beyond the Gate, I saw not the Appearance of an Englishman— But Oh! my Country—And I blush Sir! to tell you—I saw the Commons Covered with the

fugitive Soldiery of our Army—runing, hobling, Creaping, & appearently pannick struck—One solitary company Only, (a) that was formed— I was told the Army had rallied at the Capitol— thither I intreated all I passed, that could point a Bayonet, to haste. Finding there was no persuing Army, I confess, I did believe, and that belief expressed to you, on my return to you—That there had not been a General defeat, but that, some gallent spirits had sustained the Action, and had checked our foe— With this impression—I received your order to go to the Capitol, for intelligence.— I went but found only men who had been dispersed, resting—Principally I concieved, Barneys Flotilla Men— The Citizen-Militia had Chiefly taken refuge at their houses—as I saw Officers, as well as men at their doors— It did not appear to me, that any Officer ranking a Captain, was at the Capitol; or more than from 250 to 300 Men. Captn. Bacon of Marines,[6] and Captn. Gohagan[7] of Barneys flotilla, were the only Officers I knew— they seemed to be setling which should command. I was told the Army had gone to the hights of Geo: town, this I could not credit; it had in appearance, Something too dastardly, to be believed by me—And I again went in view of the turn pike Gate, and Commanding a view of the hights in every direction— No enemy had yet Approached—and my belief being strengthened by that circumstance; that we were not entirely driven; and our Army, or that Part of it, that deserved the Name of Soldiers, was Still between the City and Bladensburg, I again returned to you to make my report.— When on my way, I saw a portion of the Eastern Branch Bridge Blown, into Splintery fragments, in the Air— At the Moment of my return to you, I heard a Communication Made by a Young Officer, that the British Army was in full force in the City.— And that, they had reached the Capitol, or were approaching it— this I knew to be incorrect, and indignant at the Communication—and my ardour and Zeal, alive to the public Good—And fearing you would fire the Yard, prematurely—Was induced to express myself in language, few Considerations but, my Countrys Honour and Welfair would have prompted me to.— And Now Sir! be assured, it was not from disrespect to You; But from my Knowledge of you— Which I now unhesitateingly declare in my Opinion to be, devotedly and truly attached to this, Your Country. Possessing undaunted bravery, and a Mind cooly deliberate—I can but believe that, had you been left entirely to the "Suggestions of your own Mind" and could have had the ordering the troops—or at least a part of them, the result of this Unfortunate 24th. Augst: would have been far different. Unfortunately "the Navy Yard could not be covered"— It had not been recollected that, in the event of a retreat—Barneys Flotilla Men, could be useful in the Yard— it was forgotten that the *Argus* &c: &c: had their guns expressly Mounted for the protection of this desireable depot of Public property & Wealth— Thither they had not been ordered to repair and rally— NO Sir! Fate had decreed that—with the Capitol it should be an Additional Monument of our Countrys disgrace and dishonour—And Alike, to exhibit one general Chaos of tumbling ruins.— Wheather it was for want of Military Means, or military Sience and knowledge in the Commanding General[8]—Or miscreant treachery in designing its fall, time may Never develope— This all will agree in—that the Stain can never be blotted from the recollection of Americans.—

But to return—On offering to reconnoitre the British Army—(after giving way to my feelings) that confidence which you appeared to repose in me, by the declaration that, you would depend on the intelligence I gave you; that you would pospone the execution of your Order to the last moment—and that your life and reputation should rest on the correctness of that intelligence, induced me to determine at the hazard of my life, to assertain, where the British Army was, to assertain to a Certainty if they had not been checked—or where the American Army was, and if likely to make a stand by which the City might be saved. I had left the Yard but a few minutes before I was in view of the Turnpike Road leading from Bladensburg—(I had passed Colo. Tatum[9])—and scarcely in view before I saw a Man on horseback coming over the hill beyond the gate—in full speed— A Waggon had been left about half way down the hill— the Man came as far as the Waggon—then turned, rode to the top of the hill, and turned to the left in the Woods, I saw no other person, and pushed on, passed the gate, and at Some distance saw John Davis[10] (brother of Shadrack) & Mr. Ivie, in the field to the right, but at the fence— They had Seen no British pass the hill—and enquired where I was going— as I reply'd, we saw a man pass the hill in full Speed, he was whiping his Horse at every jump— I galloped on & met him— he stoped and told me he had seen the British Army & where they were; that he was from Geo: town, was a Butcher, & had gone voluntarily to gain information for the People of his Town— he Offered to turn about, and Shew me where they were—and did.— On geting on the top of the hill, he took me along a blind road to the left, the way he had before gone into A field—(for he was the Man I had seen come over the hill to the Waggon) The ground was open for a great distance—and on a Hill to the left of the Road beyond the Farm House of Serjant-Major Forrest,[11] he Shewed me a Column of Men— They Appeared to me to be dressed in Blue or dark cloaths— I saw distinctly many red Coats—But took them for the drummers and fifers— Tho Miller (for that was the name of the man with me) insisted they were the Officers— I proposed to him to keep the ridge untill the sun, then near siting, might more distinctly favor our view, on proceeding some distance, I believed them to be American troops— Having seen a Company file off, that I took to be the Geo: town Rifle-Men—The Circumstance Alone of not having seen persons conveying intelligence of the Check—(if checked) of the British, made me doubt at all— However, I determined to gain a hight that I think was within 300 Yards of them, where I expected also, to have had a distinct view of the advancing Company— I had to pass a fence before I reached the hill, on geting to it, there was a gap, the rails scattered in every direction, Miller got down & opened it.— I bid him remain there— before I had reached the top of the hill, he called to me, I heard him, & looking round, he beckoned Several times; I still went on, he Mounted his Horse and Strained after me—and hallooing told me, he had seen several men run off into some bushes, that he expected, designed to pick me off— I had gained the summit of the hill, but a Corn field being between the Hill and Road, I could See nothing of the Company that had filed off— I saw the Men as they left the bushes, runing towards me, but Galloping off—before they Gained the hill, I was (I thought) pretty well out of their reach, I saw two assend it, and of them, one only, fired. Miller then asked me, if I did not think that proof? And thinking the Company that appeared to be advancing, might interupt our return, we kept the field, passed down the meadows, at the head of the Tiber, through Mrs. Casinaves plantation,[12] and out near the Capitol, and then went in View of the Turnpike gate— The British had not passed the hill, then Sundown—as I passed on, I again Saw Davis & Ivey, coming in— I found you at the Navy Yard Gate—and told you I would make my re-

port, if it met your approbation, before Colo. Wharton— my reason was, that, you and the Colo. hearing My Report, if you fired the Yard, you might be justified— The Colo. was not with you, and you having Sent Sergeant Stickney[13] to look for him.—He returned and reported the Colo. had left the Yard.— Captn. Haraden[14] being present, I reported as here Stated— You Observed that, every thing was ready—but as Captn. Creighton had gone out to assertain where the Army was, you would wait his Return— Miller had assured me, they had passed through Geo: town—

Desireous of knowing positively myself, I proposed to you, my going as far as the Presidents House, where I expected, were the Executive—by which I might assertain by some one to be relied on, what was the fact, and if any thing was to be done—or could meet Captn. Creighton— you assented—and when I reached the Jersey Avinue below Mr. Carrols;[15] I met Mr. Walter Cox—Cornet in Coldwells[16] troop of horse— He told me he had left the Army at Tenley town—And I informed him where the British were— he went with me as far as the Presidents House— A Horseman in Uniform, appearantly a field officer, was at the Steps— I ask'd him his Name— He Seem'd much Agitated, was About to draw a pistol from his holster—when on observing—I perceived he was an American as well as myself, and requesting him, not to be flurried—that my object was to gain correct information of our Army; he informed me his Name was Tatum (who I recognized, to have seen in the evening, near the Turn-pike gate) and he returned his Pistol, on my mentioning, my wanting information to convey to you.

On Mr. Cox's coming up, (who was behind, having stop'd on meeting some acquaintance) and asking if any person was within—The Colo. reply'd he expected not; for he had Called John,[17] and was not answered— Mr. Cox desired his Servant to dismount and ring the Bell— The Colo. made the Servt. hold his Horse, Dismounted—went up the steps, pulled the Bell several times with much violence—Knocked at the Door, and called John— But all was as silent as a Church.—

Colo. Tatum made some observations of having had it in his power, to have taken the British General,[18] got hold of Mr. Coxes hand, and wished to detain him in conversation, but on my observing we must not be detained; he left the Colo. and we wrode off.— Then, and not untill then, was my mind fully impressed that, the Matropelis of our Country was abandoned to it's horrid fate. We had not proceeded far on the Pensylvania Avinue, before we Overtook Captn. Creighton, when I lernt that, no further Opposition was to be expected. At the Tiber Bridge we met William Smith of Coldwells Troop; Mr. Cox turned him back, on telling him, they would return together to the Camp; after going to the Navy Yard. Mr. Cox proposed on our geting to Capitol hill, to pass to the North end of the Capitol, that we might see if any one was there; we saw not <u>One Soul</u>. We went on in the direction of Tomblinsons Hotel[19]—When about midway between that and Longs, Mr. Cox (we being in front) laid himself on his horses neck (it being sometime in the Night) as if observing something; I thought, he was looking at, what I took to be Cows; He observed he saw the Cows, but he also saw men advancing: they were riseing from the Hollow direct in front of Longs— we advanced untill within forty yards or less, when they began to display— I gave the reins to my Horse, and Captn. Creighton followed me— Cox & Smith & Cox's Servant, came to the right about— We were fired on by the party— I passed Carrols long row of Buildings[20]—turned

by the Revd. A: M'Cormicks—and with the Jersey Avenue, to the Virginia Avenue & to the Navy Yard—Captn. Creighton keeping with Me— We Made a report Accordingly You then determined to fire the Yard—And Asked Captn. Creighton and Myself, if we would keep our horses, or take a Seat with you in your Boat— Captn. Creighton determined on going with you— My Horse was too good a One to be lost, I obtained your permission to relye on him— When you told me to take care of Myself & horse, and bade me farewell; turned yourself to the Lanthorn, drew out your watch, & observed it was Twenty minutes after eight.— I left you only to return to my Children— I passed from the Yard by the 20 Buildings, and by Mrs. Younge to the Potomac Bridge— The South draw was up— I had it put down—and was scarcely over, before I saw the flames of the Yard—and had but reached the levil beyond the Causeway, before I saw a Considerable explosion, which I conceived was the Ordnance Store— But possibly, was the one at Greenleafs Point[21]—as I Saw very Soon after the flames at the Fort, at that Place—and by the time I reached the Hill—which did not exceed fifteen Minutes—I saw the Capitol in flames—(tho I had seen lights within, while on the Bridge.) This I had no doubt, was the work of the British.— A sight, <u>so repugnant to my feelings, so dishonourable;</u> so degrading to the American Character, and at the <u>Same time, so Awful</u>—Almost palsied my facultyes.—

Finding many of the Citizens at Owin's on the hill, of Which a large portion were Women and Children—I remained from—two and a half, to three hours—viewing the tumbling Ruins—and about Midnight reach'd Wrens[22]—where I found my Children— . . . .

ALS, DNA, RG45, Naval Shore Establishments, 1814–1911; PC-30, Entry 350; Washington Navy Yard; Reports on Removal of Powder from the Yard at the Time of British Invasion of Washington, August–September 1814. This report covered the period 22 August to 10 September 1814 and was enclosed in a letter of 10 September 1814 from Booth to Thomas Tingey. For a printed version of this transmittal letter, with editorial notes, see Booth, *Capture of Washington*. For Booth's account of events on 22–23 August, see pp. 202–5 above. About twelve manuscript pages detailing Booth's adventures from 25 August to 10 September are not printed here.

1. Daniel Dulany's farm near Falls Church, Virginia.
2. Franklin Wharton held the rank of lieutenant colonel commandant of the Marine Corps from 7 March 1804.
3. For more on Reverend Andrew Hunter, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 82–83.
4. For Joshua Barney's account of the Battle of Bladensburg, see pp. 207–8.
5. John Crabb's captaincy in the Marine Corps dated from 18 June 1814.
6. Samuel Bacon was promoted to captain dating from 18 June 1814.
7. Sailing Master John Geoghegan.
8. Brigadier General William H. Winder.
9. Possibly William Tatham, civil engineer and geographer, who served in the American Revolution.
10. John Davis owned the Indian Queen Hotel.
11. Sergeant Major Forrest, U.S.M.C.
12. The Casanove family was prominent in Washington.
13. Possibly Sergeant Levi Stickney, U.S.M.C.
14. Nathaniel Haraden had been stationed at the Washington Navy Yard since October 1806; his rank as a lieutenant dated from 31 March 1807.
15. Daniel Carroll.
16. Captain Elias B. Caldwell commanded a volunteer company in Washington.

17. Jean Pierre Sioussa (Sioussat), or French John, was the French doorkeeper at the President's House.
18. Major General Robert Ross.
19. B. H. Tomlinson was the proprietor of this hotel.
20. Daniel Carroll owned a row of buildings on Capitol Hill.
21. Greenleaf's Point, where an arsenal was situated, was at the confluence of the Potomac River and its eastern branch.
22. Wren's Tavern, Falls Church, Virginia.

Memorandum of Secretary of the Navy Jones

Memorandum

[*August 24, 1814*][1]

On Wednesday the 24th. Augt. 1814 the President and heads of Departments from 10 AM to 2 PM or after, were at and around Genl. Winders quarters when it was understood the enemy were advancing towards the Eastern Branch Bridge Commodore Barneys artillery being planted on the the hill in front of the Bridge and Materials placed under the Bridge ready to explode and destroy it should the enemy approach. Information being received that the enemy had pursued the road to Bladensburg to which place Genl. Winder with the military force had gone leaving Com Barneys force at the Branch Bridge for the purpose of destroying it and defending the passage over the river. It was determined after consultation among the members of the Cabinet that Commodore Barney should immediately proceed to join the army at Bladensburgh and Captain Creighton should be left to explode the Bridge[2]

I took occasion to State to the President and Secretary of War particularly and in the presence I think of Mr. Campbell and perhaps Mr. Rush[3] that besides the new frigate Sloop of War and several small vessels,[4] at the Navy yard there were large quantities of provisions and naval & military Stores of all kinds, at the Navy yard which ought to be destroyed in the event of the enemy getting possession of the City as those vessels provisions and Stores would be to him extremely important and valuable and there could be no doubt that after emptying the buildings of their contents and removing the vessels that were afloat he would destroy all the buildings and the frigate on the ways unless indeed he should launch her which as she was entirely caulked and her launching ways principally prepared he could with the force he would command from the approaching squadron accomplish in three or four days. It was agreed by the President and Secretary of War that every thing that could be useful or valuable to the enemy should be destroyed in the event of his repulsing our army and entering the City. The Secretary at War proceeded to join the army at Bladensburg and since that time after the President & Secretary of State followed. I then went to the marine Barracks to give some necessary directions there and to Captain Creighton relative to the exploding of the Bridge in the event of the enemy getting possession of the City in order to prevent his passage over the eastern branch for the purpose of attacking fort Warburton[5] in the rear. From the Marine barracks I went to the Navy yard accompanied by Mr. Edward Duval one of the clerks in the Navy Depmt. and in front of Commodore Tingeys house in the presence of Mr. Duval at about three oclock gave him the following verbal order

"you will make the necessary preparations for destroying the public shipping and all the Naval and Military Stores and provisions at the Navy yard including every thing that may be valuable and useful to the enemy, and after removing to a place of Safety all that may be found practicable of the most valuable articles, and having satisfactorily ascertained that the enemy has driven our army and entered the City you will Set fire to the trains and retire in your Gig."

I left the Navy yard at about half past three Oclock accompanied by Mr. Duval and not long after learned that our army was rapidly retreating and that of the enemy advancing rapidly. We proceeded to Georgetown where I met my family and that of the Presidents at the house of Charles Carrol Esqr. of Bellevue and received a message from the President requesting that I would join him at Foxalls Works.[6] at about 5 Oclock I set out in company with the family of the President, of Mr. Carrols and my own with Mr. Duval and proceeded through Georgetown to join the President but found he had crossed at masons ferry.

AD, PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers.

1. The archivists at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania dated this document 24 August 1814; the docketing in Jones's hand reads: "Mem. of the Occurrences on the 24th. August 1814 when the enemy entered and conflagrated the Capitol."
2. See Jones to Creighton, 24 Aug. 1814, p. 206.
3. In 1814, President Madison appointed George W. Campbell secretary of the treasury and Richard Rush attorney general.
4. Frigate *Columbia*, sloop of war *Argus*, schooner *Lynx*.
5. Fort Warburton, the precursor of Fort Washington, was built in 1808 in Prince George's County, Maryland, where Piscataway Creek joins the Potomac River. Located opposite Mount Vernon, Virginia, and about twelve miles from Washington, the fort was known under both names during this period.
6. Located just west of Georgetown was Henry Foxall's foundry.

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washn 27th. Augst 1814

Sir

After receiving your orders of 24th directing the public Shipping, Stores &c: at this Establishment, to be destroy'd, in case of the success of the enemy, over our Army—no time was lost, in making the necessary arrangements, for firing the whole, and preparing boats for departing from the yard, as you had suggested.

About 4 PM: I rece'd a message by an officer from the Secretary of War—with information that, he "could protect me no longer"— Soon after this, I was inform'd that the conflagration of the Eastern branch bridge had commenc'd—and, in a few minutes the explosion announc'd the blowing up of that part, near the "draw," as had been arranged in the morning.

It had been promulgated, as much as in my power, among the inhabitants of the vicinity; the intended fate of the yard, in order that, they might take every possible precaution for the safety of themselves, families and property.

Immediately, several individuals came in succession, endeavoring to prevail on me to deviate from my instructions—which they were invariably inform'd



Thomas Tingey

was unavailing unless they could bring me your instructions in writing, countermanding those previously given.

A deputation also of the most respectable women, came on the same errand—when I found myself painfully necessitated to inform them, that, any farther importunities would cause the matches to be instantly applied to the trains—with assurance however that, if left at peace; I would delay the execution of the orders, as long as I could feel the least shadow of justification. Captain Creighton's arrival at the yard, with the men who had been with him at the bridge (probably about 5 o'clock) would have justified me in instant operation—but he also, was strenuous in the desire to obviate the intended destruction—and volunteer'd to ride out, and gain me positive information, as to the position of the enemy—under the hope that, our Army might have rallied and repulsed them— I was myself indeed, desirous of delay, for the reason that, the wind was then blowing fresh from the SSW, which would most probably, have caused the destruction of all the private property, north and east of the yard, in it's neighbourhood, when, I was of opinion that, the close of the evening would bring with it a calm, in which happily, we were not disappointed— Other gentlemen well mounted, volunteer'd as Captn. Creighton had done, to go out and bring me positive intelligence of the enemy's situation, if possible to obtain it.

The evening came, and I waited with much anxiety the return of Captn. C—, having almost ~~perpetual~~ continual[1] information that, the enemy were in the neighbourhood of the Marine barracks—at the Capitol hill—and that their "advance" was near George town— I therefore determined to wait only until ½ past 8 oClock, to commence the execution of my orders—becoming apprehensive that Captn. C— had, from his long stay, fallen into the hands of the enemy.

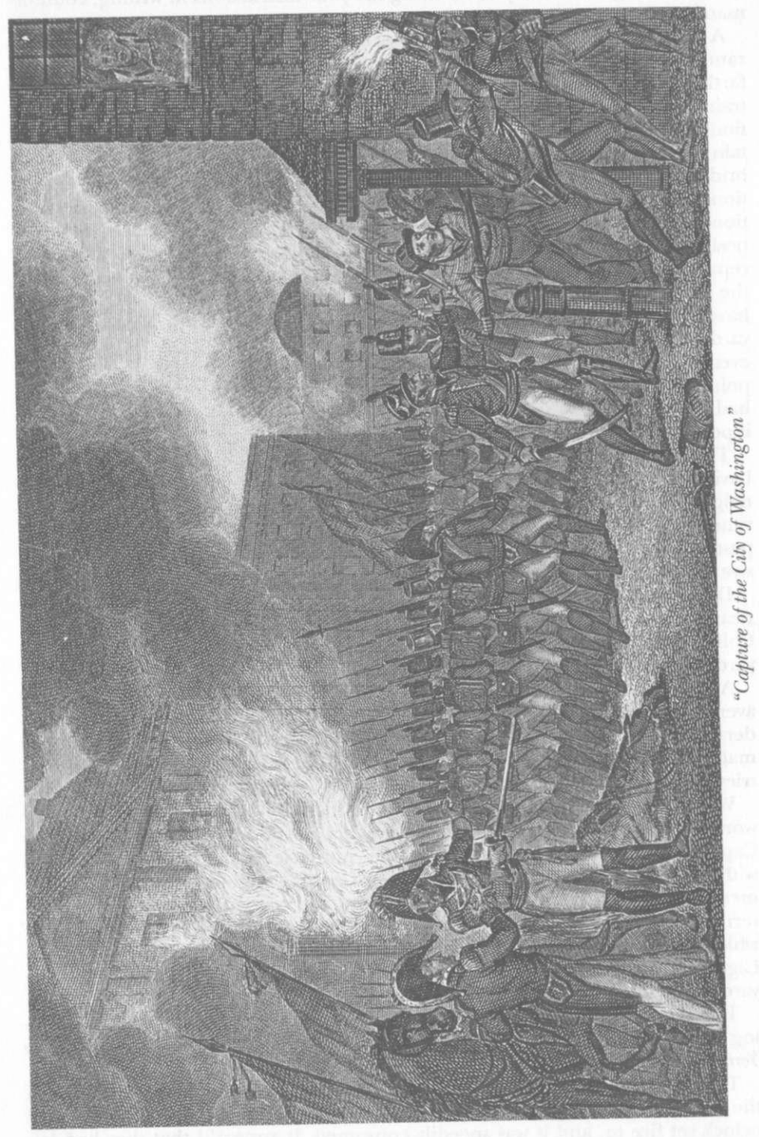
During this delay, I ordered a few Marines, and other persons who were then near me, to go off in one of the small gallies, which was done and she is saved. Colnl. Wharton had been furnish'd with a light boat, with which he left the yard, probably between 7 & 8 o'clock.

At 20 minutes past 8 Captn. Creighton return'd, he was still extremely averse to the destruction of the property, but having inform'd him that your orders to me were imperative; the proper disposition of the boats being made, the matches were applied, and in a few moments the whole was in a state of irretrievable conflagration.

When about leaving the wharf, I observed the fire had also commenc'd at the works at Greenleafs point, and in the way out of the branch, we observed the Capitol on fire. It had been my intention, not to leave the vicinity of the yard with my boat, during the night, but having Captn. Creighton, and other gentlemen with me, she was too much encumbered and overladen, to render that determination proper. We therefore proceeded to Alexandria, in the vicinity of which I rested till the morning of the 25th. when, having also refreshed the Gigs crew, we left Alexandria at ½ past 7 oClock, and proceeded again up to the yard, where I landed unmolested about a ¼ before nine

The Schooner *Lynx* had laid along-side the burning wharf, still unhurt—hoping therefore to save her, we hauled her to the quarter of the hulk of the *New York*, which had also escaped the ravages of the flames

The detail issuing store, of the Navy store keeper,[2] had remain'd safe from the fire during the night; which the Enemy (being in force in the yard) about 8 oclock set fire to, and it was speedily consumed. It appear'd that they had left



"Capture of the City of Washington"

the yard, about ½ a hour when we arrived. I found my dwelling house, and that of Lieutnt. Haraden untouch'd by fire—but some of the people of the neighbourhood had commenc'd plundering them— therefore, hastily collecting a few persons known to me, I got some of my most valuable materials moved to neighbours houses, out of the yard, who tender'd me their offers to receive them, the enemy's officers having declared private property sacred— Could I have stayed another hour, I had probably saved all my furniture and stores—but being advised by some friends that I was not safe, they believeng that, the Admiral[3] was by that time, or would very speedily, be inform'd of my being in the yard, he having expres'd an anxious desire to make me captive—but had said that the Officers dwellings in the yard, should not be destroy'd—I therefore again embark'd in the gig—taking along out of the Branch, one of the new launches, which lay safe, although along-side of a floating-stage envelop'd in flames— I had no sooner gone, than such a scene of devastation and plunder took place in the houses (by the people of the neighbourhood) as is disgraceful to relate—not a moveable article from the cellars to the garrets has been left us—and even some of the fixtures, and the locks off the doors, have been shamefully pillaged; some of the perpetrators however have been made known to me.

From the number and movements of the enemy, it would have appear'd rash temerity, to have attempted returning again that day—though my inclination strongly urged it, therefore reconnoitring their motions, as well as could be effected at a convenient distance in the Gig until evening, I again proceeded to Alexandria for the night. Yester'morn the 26th. it was impossible to form (from the various and contradictory reports at Alexandria) any sort of probable conjecture, either of the proceedings & situation of our Army—or that of the Enemy. Determining therefore to have a positive knowledge of some part thereof, from occular demonstration, I again embark'd in the gig, proceeding with due caution to the yard—where I learned with chagrin the devastation and pillage before mentioned—and found also to my surprize that the old Gunboat,[4] which had been loaded with provisions, and had grounded in endeavoring to get out of the Branch, on the evening of the 24th. was nearly discharged of her cargo, by a number of our people, without connexion with each other.

Having landed in the yard, I soon ascertain'd that the Enemy had left the city—excepting only a serjeants guard, for the security of the sick and wounded. Finding it impracticable to stop the scene of plunder that had commenc'd, I determin'd instantly on repossessing the yard, with all the force at my command—repairing therefore immediately to Alexandria; lieutnt. Haraden, the ordinary men and the few marines there, were ordered directly up, following myself, and got full possession again at evening.

I am now collecting the scattered purloined provisions ready for your orders, presuming they will now become very scarce indeed— the quantity saved you shall be inform'd when known to me

The *Lynx* is safe, except her foremast being carried away in the storm of the 25th. about 4 PM— We have also another of the Gunboats with about 100 barrels of powder; and one of the large yard-cutters, nearly full with the filled cylinders, for our different guns previously mounted—the powder of those however is probably much wetted by the storm. I would most willingly have an interview with you, but deem it improper to leave my station without some justifiable

cause, or in pursuance of your instructions—under which I am ready to proceed wherever my services may be thought useful. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Obdt. Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

P S: Sunday morn'g 28th. After terminating the foregoing last even'g I had scarcely laid down my pen, when a smart cannonading commenc'd at, or from fort Washington, which continued from heavy Cannon till after 7 o'clock, during which it appear'd as if two or three severe explosions had taken place. No doubt that it was between the enemy's frigates and the fort—but as to the result I am entirely without information[5]—nor have I at command the means of obtaining it, the wind blowing too fresh up the river, for a light boat to make any progress down.

I shall hire sufficient hands, as soon as practicable and collect all the materials, unhurt by the fire—which shall be suitably deposited and protected

T:T:

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 138 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. *Continual* is written, in probably a different hand, above the struck out word *perpetual.*
2. Buller Cocke.
3. Rear Admiral George Cockburn.
4. Gunboat *No. 140.*
5. For the British account of the bombardment, see Gordon to Cochrane, 9 Sept. 1814, pp. 238–42.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Copy

His Majesty's Sloop *Manly* off
Nottingham Patuxent 27 August 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that agreeably to the Intentions I notified to you in my Letter of the 22nd. Instant,[1] I proceeded by Land on the Morning of the 23rd. to Upper Marlborough, to meet and confer with Major General Ross as to our further operations against the Enemy, and we were not long in agreeing on the propriety of making an immediate attempt on the City of Washington.

In Conformity therefore with the wishes of the General, I instantly sent orders for our Marine and Naval Forces at Pig Point, to be forthwith moved over to Mount Calvert, and for the Marines, Marine Artillery, and a Proportion of the Seamen to be there landed and with the utmost possible expedition to join the Army, which I also most readily agreed to accompany.

The Major General then made his Dispositions, and arranged that Captain Robyns with the Marines of the Ships should retain possession of Upper Marlborough, and that the Marine Artillery and Seamen should follow the Army to the Ground it was to occupy for the Night, The Army then moved on, and bivouacked before dark about five Miles nearer Washington.

In the night Captain Palmer of the *Hebrus*, and Captain Money of the *Trave*, joined us with the Seamen, and with the Marine artillery under Captain Harri-

son— Captain Wainwright of the *Tonnant* had accompanied me the day before, as had also Lieutenant James Scott (acting 1st. Lieutenant) of the *Albion.*

At Daylight the morning of the 24th. the Major General again put the Army in Motion directing his March upon Bladensburg, on reaching which place, with the advanced Brigade, the Enemy was discovered drawn up in Force on a rising Ground beyond the Town, and by the Fire he soon opened on us as we entered the Place, gave us to understand he was well protected with Artillery; General Ross however did not hesitate in immediately advancing to attack him, although our Troops were almost exhausted with the Fatigue of the March they had just made, and but a small proportion of our little Army had yet got up; this dashing Measure was however, I am happy to add, crowned with the Success it merited, for in Spite of the galling Fire of the Enemy our Troops advanced steadily on both his Flanks and in his Front, and as soon as they arrived on even ground with him he fled in every direction, leaving behind him Ten Pieces of Cannon and a considerable Number of killed and wounded, amongst the latter Commodore Barney and Several other Officers, Some other Prisoners were also taken, tho' not many, owing to the Swiftness with which the Enemy went off, and the Fatigues our Army had previously undergone.

It would Sir be deemed presumption in me to attempt to give you particular details respecting the nature of this Battle, I shall therefore only remark generally that the Enemy, Eight thousand Strong,[2] on Ground he had chosen as best adapted for him to defend, where he had had time to erect his Batteries and concert all his measures, was dislodged as Soon as reached, and a Victory gained over him by a Division of the British Army not amounting to more than Fifteen hundred Men headed by our Gallant General whose brilliant atchievement of this day it is beyond my Power to do justice to, and indeed no possible Comment could enhance.

The Seamen with the Guns were to their great mortification with the Rear Division during this Short but decisive action, those however attached to the Rocket Brigade were in the Battle, and I remarked with much pleasure the precision with which the Rockets were thrown by them under the Direction of 1st. Lieutenant Lawrence of the Marine artillery— Mr. Jeremh. McDaniel Masters Mate of *Tonnant* a very fine young man who has passed and who was attached to this party being Severely wounded, I beg permission to recommend him to your favorable Consideration— The Company of Marines I have on so many occasions had cause to mention to you, Commanded by 1st. Lieutenant Stephens, was also in the action, as were the Colonial Marines under the Temporary Command of Captain Reed of the 6th. West India Regiment, (these Companies being attached to the Light Brigade), and they respectively behaved with their accoustomed Zeal and Bravery— None other of the Naval Department were fortunate enough to arrive up in Time to take their share in this Battle, excepting Captain Palmer of the *Hebrus*, with his Aid-de-Camp Mr. Arthur Wakefield Midshipman of that Ship, and Lieutenant James Scott 1st. of the *Albion*, who acted as my aid-de-Camp and remained with me during the whole Time.

The Contest being Completely ended and the Enemy having retired from the Field, the General gave the Army about two hours rest, when he again moved forward on Washington; It was however dark before we reached that City, and on the General, myself and some officers advancing a short way past the first Houses of the Town without being accompanied by the Troops, the Enemy opened upon us a heavy fire of Musquetry from the Capitol and two other

houses,[3] these were therefore almost immediately Stormed by our People, taken possession of, and set on fire, after which the Town submitted without further resistance.

The Enemy himself on our entering the Town set Fire to the Navy Yard, (filled with Naval Stores) a Frigate[4] of the largest class almost ready for Launching, and a Sloop of War[5] laying off it, as he also did to the Fort[6] which protected the Sea approach to Washington.

On taking Possession of the City we also set fire to the Presidents Palace, the Treasury, and the War Office, and in the morning Captain Wainwright went with a Party to see that the Destruction in the Navy Yard was Complete, when he destroyed whatever Stores and Buildings had escaped the Flames of the preceeding Night— A large quantity of Ammunition and ordnance Stores were likewise destroyed by us in the Arsenal,[7] as were about Two hundred pieces of Artillery of different Calibres, as well as a Vast quantity of small Arms. Two Rope Walks[8] of a very extensive Nature, full of Tar, Rope &c. Situated at a considerable distance from the Yard were likewise set Fire to and consumed, in short Sir I do not believe a Vestage of Public Property, or a Store of any kind which could be converted to the use of the Government, escaped Destruction; the Bridges across the Eastern Branch and the Potowmac were likewise destroyed.

This general Devastation being completed during the day of the 25th. we marched again at Nine that night on our Return by Bladensburg to upper Marlborough. We arrived yesterday Evening at the latter without molestation of any sort, indeed without a Single Musket having been fired, and this Morning we moved on to this place where I have found His Majesty's Sloop *Manly*, the Tenders, and the Boats, and I have hoisted my Flag pro tempore in the former— The Troops will probably march to morrow or the next day at farthest to Benedict for re-embarkation, and this Flotilla will of course join you at the same time.

In closing Sir my Statement to you of the Arduous and highly important operations of this last week, I have a most pleasing duty to perform in assuring You of the good conduct of the Officers and Men who have been Serving under me— I have been particularly indebted whilst on this Service to Captain Wainwright of the *Tonnant* for the assistance he has invariably afforded me, and to Captains Palmer and Money for their Exertions during the March to and from Washington—

To Captain Nourse who has Commanded the Flotilla during my absence, my acknowledgements are also most justly due, as well as to Captains Sullivan, Badcock, Somerville, Ramsay and Bruce who have acted in it under him.

Lieutenant James Scott now 1st. Lieutenant of the *Albion* has on this occasion Rendered me essential Services, and as I have had reason so often of late to mention to you the Gallant and Meritorious Conduct of this Officer, I trust you will permit me to seize this opportunity of recommending him particularly to your favorable Notice and Consideration.

Captain Robyns (the Senior Officer of Marines with the Fleet) who has had during these operations the Marines of the Ships united under his Orders, has executed ably and zealously the Several Services with which he has been entrusted, and is entitled to my best acknowledgements accordingly, as is also Captain Harrison of the Marine Artillery who with the Officers and Men attached to him accompanied the Army to and from Washington

Mr. Dobie Surgeon of the *Melpomene* volunteered his professional Services on this occasion and rendered much assistance to the wounded on the Field of Battle, as well as to many of the Men taken ill on the line of March.

One Colonial Marine killed, One Master's Mate, Two Serjeants and Three Colonial Marines wounded, are the Casualties sustained by the Naval Department— A general List of the Killed and wounded of the whole Army will of course accompany the Reports of the Major General.[9] I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most Obledt. humble Servant

(signed) G: Cockburn Rear Admiral.

Two long Six pounder Guns intended for a Battery at Nottingham were taken off and put on board the *Brune* and one taken at Upper Marlborough was destroyed.

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 606–13. This letter was enclosed in Cochrane to Croker, 2 Sept. 1814, pp. 226–28.

1. See pp. 195–97.
2. Brigadier General Winder, who commanded the American forces at Bladensburg, reported about 5,000 troops at his disposal. Winder to Armstrong, 27 Aug. 1814, *ASP: Military Affairs*, Vol. 1, p. 548.
3. One of the houses was owned by Robert Sewall.
4. *Columbia.*
5. *Argus.*
6. There was a battery protecting the arsenal at Greenleaf's Point.
7. Greenleaf's Point.
8. The British destroyed three ropewalks owned respectively by Tench Ringgold, John Chalmers, and (Daniel) Renner & (Nathaniel K.) Heath.
9. The casualty list enclosed in Ross to Bathurst, 30 August 1814 (see succeeding letter) is not reproduced here. The list can be found in UkLPR, WO 1/141, pp. 43–50. Ross reported sixty-four killed, one hundred eighty-five wounded, and none missing.

Major General Robert Ross, British Army, to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst

No. 1. *Tonnant* in the Patuxent 30th August 1814.

My Lord,

I have the honour to Communicate to your Lordship that on the night of the 24th Instant after Defeating the Army of the United States on that day the Troops under my Command entered and took possession of the City of Washington.—

In compliance with Your Lordships Instructions to attract the attention of the Government of the United States and to cause a Diversion in favour of the Army in Canada it was determined between Sir Alexr. Cochrane and myself to disembark the Army at the Village of Benedict on the Right Bank of the Patuxent with the intention of co-operating with Rear Admiral Cockburn in an Attack upon a Flotilla of the Enemy's Gun Boats under the Command of Commodore Barney. On the 20th. Instant the Army commenced its March having landed the

previous day without opposition, on the 21st it reached Nottingham and on the 22nd. moved on to Upper Marlborough a few Miles distant from Pig Point on the Patuxent where Admiral Cockburn fell in with and defeated the Flotilla taking and destroying the whole. Having advanced to within Sixteen Miles of Washington and ascertaining the Force of the Enemy to be such as might authorize an attempt at carrying his Capital I determined to make it and accordingly put the Troops in Movement on the Evening of the 23rd. A Corps of about Twelve hundred Men appeared to oppose us but retired after firing a few Shots.— On the 24th. the Troops resumed their March and reached Bladensberg a Village situated on the Left Bank of the Eastern Branch of the Potowmack about five Miles from Washington

On the opposite side of that River the Enemy was discovered strongly posted on very Commanding Heights formed in two Lines his Advance occupying a fortified House which with Artillery covered the Bridge over the Eastern Branch across which the British Troops had to pass. A Broad and streight Road leading from the Bridge to Washington ran through the Enemy's Position which was carefully defended by Artillery and Riflemen.—

The Disposition for the attack being made it was commenced with so much Impetuosity by the Light Brigade consisting of the 85th Light Infantry and the Light Infantry Companies of the Army under the Command of Colonel Thornton, that the Fortified House was shortly carried the Enemy retiring to the Higher Grounds.—

In support of the Light Brigade I ordered up a Brigade under the Command of Colonel Brooke who with the 44th. Regiment attacked the Enemy's Left, the 4th. Regiment pressing his Right with such effect as to cause him to abandon his Guns:— His First Line giving way was driven on the Second which yielding to the irresistable attack of the Bayonet and the well directed Discharge of Rockets got into confusion and fled leaving the British Masters of the Field. The rapid flight of the Enemy and his knowledge of the Country precluded the possibility of many Prisoners being taken more particularly as the Troops had during the Day undergone considerable fatigue.—

The Enemy's Army amounting to 8. or 9,000 Men with 3 or 400 Cavalry was under the Command of General Winder being formed of Troops drawn from Baltimore and Pensilvania.— His Artillery, ten pieces of which fell into our Hands was Commanded by Commodore Barney who was wounded and taken Prisoner. The Artillery I directed to be destroyed.—

Having Halted the Army for a short time I determined to March upon Washington and reached that City at 8. O'Clock that Night.— Judging it of consequence to complete the Destruction of the Public Buildings with the least possible delay so that the Army might retire without Loss of time the following Building were set Fire to and consumed—the Capital including the Senate House and House of Representation, the Arsenal the Dock Yard, Treasury, War Office, Presidents Palace, Rope Walk and the Great Bridge across the Potowmack, in the Dock Yard a Frigate[1] nearly ready to be Launched and a Sloop of War[2] were consumed.— The two B[r]idges leading to Washington over the Eastern Branch had been destroyed by the Enemy who apprehended an Attack from that Quarter. The Object of the Expedition being accomplished I determined before any greater Force of the Enemy could be assembled to withdraw the Troops and accordingly commenced retiring on the Night of the 25th; on

the evening of the 29th. we reached Benedict and re-embarked the following day.—

In the performance of the operations I have detailed it is with the utmost satisfaction I observe to Your Lordship that Cheerfulness in undergoing fatigue and anxiety for the Accomplishment of the Object were conspicuous in all Ranks.—

To Sir Alexander Cochrane my Thanks are due for his ready Compliance with every wish connected with the welfare of the Troops and the Success of the Expedition.—

To Rear Admiral Cockburn who suggested the attack upon Washington and who accompanied the Army I confess the greatest obligation for his Cordial cooperation and advice

Colonel Thornton who led the attack is entittled to every Praise for the noble Example he set which was so well followed by Lieut. Colonel Wood and the 85th. Light Infantry and by Major Jones of the 4th. Foot with the Light Companies attached to the Light Brigade.— I have to express my approbation of the spirited conduct of Colonel Brooke and of his Brigade, the 44th. Regiment which he led distinguished itself under the Command of Lieut. Colonel Mullens, the Gallantry of the 4th. Foot under the Command of Major Faunce being equally conspicuous.— The exertions of Captain Mitche[ll] of the Royal Artilley in bringing the guns into Action were unremitting to him and to the Detachment under his Command including Captain Deacons Rocket Brigade and the Marine Rocket Corps I feel every obligation.— Serious disadvantage being experienced from the want of Cavalry Capt. Lempriere of the Royal Artillery mounted a small Detachment of the Artillery Drivers which proved of great utility.—

The assistance afforded by Captain Blanchard of the Royal Engineers in the Duties of his Department was of great advantage. To the zealous exertions of Captains Wainwright, Palmer and Money of the Royal Navy and to those of the Officers and Seamen who landed with them the Service is highly indebted, the latter Captain Money had charge of the Seamen attached to the Marine Artillery.— To Captain McDougall of the 85th. Foot who acted as my Aid de Camp in consequence of the Indisposition of my Aide de Camp Captain Falls, and to the Officers of my Staff I feel much indebted.—

I must beg leave to call your Lordships attention to the zeal and indefatigable exertions of Lieut. Evans Acting Depy. Qr. Master General. The Intelligence displayed by that Officer in circumstances of considerable difficulty induces me to hope he will meet with some distinguished Mark of approbation.— I have reason to be satisfied with the Arrangements of Ast. Comy. Genl. Lawrence.—

An Attack upon an Enemy so strongly posted could not be effected without Loss. I have to lament that the wounds received by Colonel Thornton and the other Officers and Soldiers left at Bladensberg were such as prevented their removal.— As many of the wounded as could be brought off were removed the others being left with Medical care and attendants;— The arrangements made by Staff Surgeon Baxter for their Accomodation have been as satisfactory as circumstances would admit of.— The Agent for British Prisoners of War[3] very fortunately residing at Bladensberg I have recommended the wounded Officers and Men to his particular attention and trust to his being able to effect their Exchange when sufficiently recovered.—

Captain Smith Asst. Adjutant General to the Troops who will have the honour to deliver this Dispatch I beg leave to recommend to Your Lordships Protection as an Officer of much Merit and great Promise and capable of affording any farther information that may be required

Sanguine in hoping for the approbation of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent and of His Majesty's Government as to the conduct of the Troops under my Command.— I have the honor to be My Lord Your Lordships most Obedient humble Servant

Robt. Ross Major Genl

LS, UkLPR, WO 1/141, pp. 31–38. See pp. 43–50 for the British returns of killed, wounded, and missing at Bladensburg and a statement of the ordnance, ammunition, and stores captured from the Americans from 19 to 25 August 1814. For a summary of the casualties, see note 9, p. 223 above.

1. *Columbia.*
2. *Argus.*
3. Thomas Barclay.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 98 *Tonnant,* in the Patuxent, 2nd. September 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, of the proceedings of His Majestys combined Sea and Land forces since my arrival with the Fleet within the Capes of Virginia, and I beg leave to offer my congratulations to their Lordships upon the successful termination of an Expedition in which the whole of the Enemy's Flotilla under Commodore Barney has been captured or destroyed—his Army, tho' greatly superior in number and strongly posted with Cannon, defeated at Bladensburg—the City of Washington taken—the Capitol with all the public buildings, Military Arsenals, Dock Yard and the rest of their Naval Establishment, together with a vast quantity of Naval and Military Stores, a Frigate of the largest Class,[1] ready to launch, and a Sloop of War afloat,[2] either blown up or reduced to Ashes.

Such a series of Successes in the centre of an Enemy's Country, surrounded by a numerous population, could not be acquired without loss and we have to lament the fall of some valuable Officers and Men; but considering the difficulties the Forces had to contend with, the extreme heat of the Climate and their coming into Action at the end of a long march, our Casualties are astonishingly few.

My Letter No. 77 of the 11th. August[3] will have acquainted their Lordships of my waiting in the Chesapeake for the arrival of Rear Admiral Malcolm with the Expedition from Bermuda.

The Rear Admiral joined me on the 17th. and as I had gained information from Rear Admiral Cockburn, whom I found in the Potowmac, that Commodore Barney with the Baltimore Flotilla had taken shelter, at the head of the Patuxent, that afforded a pretext for ascending that River to attack him near its source, above Pig point, while the ultimate destination of the combined Force

was Washington, should it be found that the attempt might be made with any prospect of Success. To give their Lordships a more correct idea of the plan of attack I send a Sketch of the Country upon which the movements of the Army and Navy are portrayed.[4] By it their Lordships will observe that the best approach to Washington is by Port Tobacco upon the Potowmac and Benedict upon the Patuxent, from both of which are direct and good Roads to that City, and their distances nearly alike: the Roads from Benedict divide about five Miles inland—the one by Piscataway and Bladensburg, the other following the course of the River although at some distance from it, owing to the Creeks that run up the Country: this last passes through the Towns of Nottingham and Marlborough to Bladensburg, at which Town the River called the Eastern branch that bounds Washington to the eastward is fordable and the distance about five Miles. There are two Bridges over this River at the City, but it was not to be expected that the Enemy would leave them accessable to an invading Army.

Previously to my entering the Patuxent I detached Captain Gordon of His Majesty's Ship *Seahorse,* with that Ship and the Ships and Bombs named in the Margin,[5] up the Potowmac, to bombard Fort Washington (which is situated on the left bank of that River about ten or twelve miles below the City) with a view of destroying that Fort and opening a free communication above, as well as to cover the retreat of the Army should its return by the Bladensburg Road be found too hazardous from the accession of Strength the Enemy might obtain from Baltimore. It was also reasonable to expect that the Militia from the Country to the northward and westward would flock in, so soon as it should be known that their Capital was threatened.

Captain Sir Peter Parker in the *Menelaus* with some small Vessels was sent up the Chesapeake above Baltimore to divert the attention of the Enemy in that quarter[6] and I proceeded with the remainder of the Naval force and the Troops up this River and landed the Army upon the 19th. and 20th. at Benedict.

So soon as the necessary Provisions and Stores could be assembled and arranged Major General Ross with his Army moved on towards Nottingham while our Flotilla, consisting of the armed Launches, Pinnaces, Barges and other Boats of the Fleet, under the command of Rear Admiral Cockburn passed up the River: being instructed to keep upon the right flank of the Army, for the double purpose of supplying it with Provisions and, if necessary, to pass it over to the left bank of the River into Calvert County, which secured a safe retreat to the Ships should it be judged necessary.

The Army reached Nottingham upon the 21st. and on the following day arrived at Marlborough; the Flotilla continued advancing towards the Station of Commodore Barney, about three Miles above Pig point, who, altho' much superior in Force to that sent against him, did not wait an attack, but at the appearance of our Boats set fire to his Flotilla, and the whole of his Vessels, excepting one, were blown up.

For the particulars of this well executed Service I must refer their Lordships to Rear Admiral Cockburn's Report No. 1,[7] who, on the same Evening conveyed to me an account of his success and intimation from Major General Ross of his intention to proceed to the City of Washington, considering, from the information he had received, that it might be assailed if done with alacrity; and in consequence had determined to march that Evening upon Bladensburg. The remaining Boats of the Fleet were immediately employed in conveying up the River Supplies of Provisions for the Forces upon their return to Nottingham, agreeably to an arrangement made by the Rear Admiral, who proceeded on in company with the Army.

The Report No. 2 of Rear Admiral Cockburn[8] will inform their Lordships of the brilliant successes of the Forces after their departure from Marlborough, where they returned upon the 26th, and having reached Benedict upon the 29th., the Expedition was reimbarked in good order.

On combined Services, such as we have been engaged in, it gives me the greatest pleasure to find myself united with so able and experienced an Officer as Major General Ross, in whom are blended those qualities so essential to promote success where co-operation between the two Services becomes necessary; and I have much satisfaction in noticing the unanimity that prevailed between the Army and Navy as I have also in stating to their Lordships that Major General Ross has expressed his full approbation of the conduct of the Officers, Seamen and Marines acting with the Army.

I have before had occasion to speak of the unremitting zeal and exertions of Rear Admiral Cockburn during the time he commanded in the Chesapeake under my Orders—the interest and ability which he has manifested throughout this late arduous Service justly entitle him to my best thanks, and to the acknowledgements of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Rear Admiral Malcolm upon every occasion and particularly in his arrangement for the speedy re-embarkation of the Troops rendered me essential assistance, and to him as well as to Rear Admiral Codrington, Captain of the Fleet, I am indebted, for the alacrity and order with which the laborious duties in the conveying of Supplies to the Army were conducted.

For the conduct of the Captains and Officers of the Squadron employed in the Flotilla and with the Army I must beg leave to refer their Lordships to the Reports of Rear Admiral Cockburn, and to call their favorable consideration to those whom the Rear Admiral has had occasion to particularly notice. While employed immediately under my eye, I had every reason to be perfectly satisfied with their zealous emulation, as well as that of every Seaman and Marine, to promote the Service in which they were engaged.

Captain Wainwright of His Majesty's Ship *Tonnant* will have the honor to deliver this Dispatch to you and as he was actively employed both with the Flotilla and the Army, in the whole of their proceedings, I beg leave to refer their Lordships to him for any farther particulars.

I have not yet received any Returns from the Ships employed in the Potowmac, the winds having been unfavorable to their coming down; but by the information I gain from the Country people—they have comple[tely] succeeded in the capture and destruction of Fort Washington, which has been blown up. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex[r] Cochrane
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 598–601.

1. *Columbia.*
2. *Argus.*
3. See pp. 189–90.
4. This sketch is not filed with this letter. A sketch of Major General Ross's march on Washington is reproduced in Shomette, *Flotilla,* p. 182.
5. "*Euryalus Devastation Ætna Meteor Manly Erebus.*" Cochrane was misinformed about *Manly,* it stayed with the squadron in the Patuxent. For documents relating to Gordon's diversion in the Potomac, see pp. 237–58.
6. For more on Parker's feints in the upper Chesapeake, see pp. 231–37.
7. Cockburn to Cochrane, 22 Aug. 1814, pp. 195–97.
8. Cockburn to Cochrane, 27 Aug. 1814, pp. 220–23.

British Treatment of Noncombatants

Although cases of depredations against the American population by the invading British forces, from the time of their landing at Benedict on 19 August to their reembarkation on 30 August, appear in the record, the following documents outline the official British policy regarding their victualing practices. The British established a list of market prices for livestock and paid for the items that they took, while punishing looters. Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, as captain of the fleet, provisioned the vessels and maintained discipline.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Genl. Memo. *Iphigenia* 22nd August 1814

The Officers of the different Ships and Vessels in the Patuxent may purchase Stock of any of the Inhabitants who remain on their property but they are not to give more than the prices current at Baltimore and other Towns which Admiral Cockburn ascertained to be as underneath.

Oxen	10	or at most 12 Dollars
Sheep	2	"
Calf	4	"
Yearling	5	"
Ducks	1/10	"
Fowls	1	Shilling
Geese	1/2	"

When poultry or other Stock is taken from any uninhabited House an Account is to be rendered of it and the above Sums paid into the general prize Stock of the Fleet. Great caution is to be observed in communication with the shore for the above purpose and the people accompanying the Officer so employed must be Armed.

(Signed) E. Codrington Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Memo. *Iphigenia* Patuxent 24th Augt./14

It appears that the prices pointed out by the Genl. Memo. are in respect to the better sort of stock inferiour to the price usually given by the Natives of the River Patuxent to one another, the following prices are therefore to be substituted.

Sheep of 40 to 60 lbs	$ 3	under 40 lbs 2 Dollars
Calves	5	"
Common	2½ to 3	"

Bullocks of 400 lbs broke ——	22½ or 5 dollars pr Cwt
Unbroke ——	20 ——Dollars
Geese and Turkeys——	½ —— "
Ducks and Fowls ——	¼ —— "
Chickins ——	1½ pr dozen —— "

The above prices with a view to prevent imposition.— But it is the object of the Commander in Chief to do fair justice and to give due encouragement to such inhabitants as remain on their property & have shewn no disposition to act hostile towards us.— Officers purchasing stock are therefore to be guided by this principle, and where stock already received has not been paid for according to this proportion the proprietors are to receive a satisfactory remuneration.

(Signed) E. Codrington Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Genl. Memo. *Iphigenia* Patuxent 25th. Augt./14

Great outrages having been committed upon the Houses and property of Inhabitants in this Neighbourhood who have remained peaceably in their Houses by persons belonging to the Fleet, unaccompanied by any Officer to restrain and regulate their conduct.— It is the direction of the Commander in Chief that no Stewards or Servants be permitted to go onshore under the pretence of procuring Stock without being accompanied by a Midshipman or some other Officer.— And as a warning to others the following order[1] for the punishment of persons guilty of Robbery in a House near Benedict is to be read to the Crews of the respective Ships and Vessels in the River Patuxent/

(Signed) E. Codrington Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

1. See the following memorandum.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Respective Captains

Memo. *Iphigenia* Patuxent 25th. Augt. 1814

The Persons named in the Margin[1] having been found guilty of Robbery on shore, and as the Service will not admit of my immediately assembling a Court Martial for their Trial,— in order that the Inhabitants may be assured that their property will be protected from indiscriminate plunder.

You are to cause the Persons to be taken onshore to the Village of Benedict and there, in the presence of the Inhabitant whose House they robbed cause the Captains-Steward to receive in the usual manner four Dozen Lashes, and

the Gun Room Steward three dozen Lashes making the Boys who accompanied them and who acted under their directions witness this Punishment that they may be deterred from aiding such practices in future.— The Surgeon of the *Trave* is to attend to see that no more of this Punishment be inflicted at one period than the Parties can well bear.

(Signed) A. Cochrane Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

1. There are no names written in the margin of the letter book copy.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Genl. Memo./ *Tonnant* 3d September 1814

It has been represented to the Commander in Chief that plunder and Robbery has been committed on shore near Drum point upon even the poorest Inhabitants who have remained quietly at their houses under the faith of their property being respected; and that even women from some of the Transports have been guilty of enormities shocking to humanity.— It is therefore his positive order that no persons beneath the Rank of ~~Flag~~ Field Officers and Captains of the Navy be allowed to go on shore except upon duty or by permission of a Flag Officer or the General— That no watering parties be permitted to go on shore before daylight or to remain there after dark, and that the guard stationed on the Hill to prevent straggling do not permit any persons whatever to go beyond the limits of their station without a pass; which pass the Officer is to countersign that he may know the persons in possession of it.— none of the Women are to be permitted to leave their ships.— A Commander will superintend the watering place for the day to see that order and regularity be observed beginning with the Senior.—

Boats will row guard at Night for the purpose of inforcing obedience to this order—

(Signed) E. Codrington Rear Admiral and Captain of the Fleet

LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

Sir Peter Parker's Feints

Vice Admiral Cochrane decided on 17 August, at a meeting of the commanding officers of the invasion forces in the Chesapeake Bay, to land the main body of the military units at Benedict. Seeking to confuse the Americans, Cochrane dispersed two diversionary squadrons: One under Captain James Gordon sailed up the Potomac[1] and the other, under Captain Sir Peter Parker, scouted the upper Chesapeake and disrupted communications between Baltimore and Elkton. After probing the defenses at Annapolis and Baltimore, Parker raided coastal areas on the Eastern Shore. Overly confident after some unopposed incursions, the British were rebuffed by Maryland militiamen at Caulk's Field in

Kent County, Maryland. The subsequent reports by the opponents illustrate differing perspectives on force strength and who won.

1. For more on this expedition, see Gordon to Cochrane, 9 Sept. 1814, pp. 238–42.

CAPTAIN SIR PETER PARKER, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Menelaus*
off Pools Island in the Chesapeake
29th. August—1814.—

Sir.

Running down the Eastern shore of Maryland on the 27th: Inst. in His Majestys Ship under my command, I was surprizd to observe the Enemy's Regular Troops and Militia in Motion along the whole coast, and yesterday that he had taken up a strong Position close to a large Depôt of stores; this induced me instantly to push on Shore with the small arm men and Marines, and I have great satisfaction in acquainting you that the result has been the total Defeat of the Enemy's force who were dispersed in every direction, and driven into the Woods, and the capture of the Depôt of Corn, Hemp and Flax to an immense amount, which I immediately ordered to be burnt and the whole was consumed before Dark.—

My acknowledgements are due to Lieutenants Pearce and Warre; Lieutenants Beynon and Poe (of the Royal Marines) and to the Petty Officers, Seamen and Marines employed with me, for their Zeal, Gallantry and steadiness on this occasion.—

Lieutenant Warre being very severely wounded is the only casualty in this affair, and as he is an Officer of particular merit and ability I presume to recommend his Conduct and sufferings to your Consideration.— I have the Honor to be Sir Your most Obedient Humble Servant

Peter Parker. Captain.

List of Officers Wounded.—
Lieutenant William A. Warre shot through both thighs.

Peter Parker. Captn.
A S Merving. Surgeon.

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 15–16.

CAPTAIN SIR PETER PARKER, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Menelaus* off Pools
Island in the Chesapeake 30th August 1814

Sir

Since my last report by the Prize Schooner which I dispatched to you on the 18th inst.— I have been continually employed in reconnoitring the Harbours &

coves and Sounding the Bay and Acting for the annoyance of the enemy. From the observations I have been able to make I may with safety give it as my opinion that Annapolis would face a very easy conquest (Two of my Officers walked round Fort Madison[1] in the Night without being discovered.) The Enemy have several Gun Boats at Baltimore which have been twice driven in by His Majestys Ship, and on the 24th inst. Lieut. Warre with two Boats burnt a Schooner in Narrows creek close to Bodkin point in face of these Gun Vessels.— On the 24th we Experienced a Violent Squall in which I regret to add the *Mary* Tender upset and was totally lost We were however fortunate in saving Mr. Martin (Masters Mate) and the Crew (with the exception of two notwithstanding they had been upwards of an hour in the Water, on the 27th. in the morning I proceeded into the Petapsco river in the *Jane* tender close to the Forts of Baltimore and compleatly Sounded the Passage and reconnoitred the Port where there is a large frigate[2] with topmast rigged two Sloops of War[3] and Several Schooners and Gun Vessels also a Brig which has the appearance of an Armed Vessel I captured a Boat laden with Fruit close to the Forts and a boat which came out to us from the Harbour with an Officer in her mistaking us for a Friend only escaped by a momentary calm between the Lands For my further operations I beg to refer you to the accompanying Letters—[4] Not a vessel of any description is to be seen and not even a boat has escaped us having captured eight from the very beach one from under the Guns at Annapolis

I transmit herewith in Cypher intelligence I have received[5] I have the Honor to be Sir Your most obedt. humble Servant

Peter Parker—Captain

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fol. 17.

1. Fort Madison, located on the northern side of the Severn River, and Fort Severn, on the opposite shore, were built in 1808 to protect Annapolis. Both were poorly manned and ill-equipped to defend the Maryland capital.
2. *Java.*
3. *Erie* and *Ontario.*
4. See the following unsigned letter.
5. This letter was not found.

CAPTAIN SIR PETER PARKER, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Menelaus* off Pools Island Chesapeake
30th August—1814.—

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I this morning at day light dispatched Lieut. Crease with the small arm men and Marines of His Majestys Ship under my Command, to destroy some Granaries & adjoining houses which were observed near the beach; this Service he executed with the greatest promptitude, burning them in the face of three companies of the Enemys Militia.—

He expresses in the strongest terms his approbation of the conduct of Lieut. Pearce, and of Lieuts. Beynon and Poe of the R.M. and of the Petty officers Seamen and Marines engaged in this affair.— After their embarkation, the Enemys

cavalry shewed themselves in numbers, but were dispersed by the fire of the boat's carronades.— I have the Honor to be Sir Your most Obedt. Hble Servt.

Captain[1]

L, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fol. 19.

1. The following was written in the margin: "This letter intended to be sent but not sign'd—Lt. Hy. Crease." Captain Sir Peter Parker died in an engagement on the evening of 30–31 August 1814. See the following letter.

Lieutenant Henry Crease, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Menelaus* off Pools Island Chesapeake
1st. September 1814—

Sir

With Grief the deepest it becomes my duty to communicate the Death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart. late Commander of His Majestys Ship *Menelaus*, and the occurrences attending an attack on the Enemies Troops on the night of the 30th Inst. encamped at Bellair; the previous and accompanying letters of Sir Peter Parker, will I presume fully point out the respect the Enemy on all occasions evince at the approach of our Arms retreating at every attack, tho possessing a superiority of Numbers of five to one; An intelligent black man gave us information of two hundred Militia being encamped behind a Wood distant half a mile from the beach, and described their situation so as to give us the strongest hopes of cutting off and securing the largest part, as our Prisoners, destroying the Camp, Field pieces &c. and possessing also certain information, that one man out of every five had been levied as a requisition on the Eastern shore for the purpose of being sent over for the protection of Baltimore; and who are now only prevented crossing the Bay by the activity and vigilance of the Tender & ships boats; One hundred & four Bayonets with twenty Pikes were landed at 11 OClock at night, under the immediate direction of Captain Sir Peter Parker Bart. the first Division headed by myself—the second Division by Lieut. Pearce; On arriving at the Ground we discovered the Enemy had shifted his Position, as we were then informed to the distance of a mile farther; having taken the look out Picket immediately on our landing, we were in assurance our motions had not been discovered, and with the deepest silence followed on for the camp; after a march of between four and five miles in the Country we found the Enemy posted on a Plain surrounded by Woods, with the camp in their Rear; they were drawn up in line and perfectly ready to receive us; a single moment was not to be lost, by a smart fire and instant charge we commenced the attack, forced them from their position putting them before us in full retreat, to the rear of their Artillery where they again made a stand, shewing a disposition to out flank us of the right; a movement was instantly made by Lieut. Pearce's Division to force them from that Quarter, and it was at this time while animating his Men in the most heroic manner that Sir Peter Parker received his mortal wound which obliged him to quit the field and he expired in a few minutes.

Lieut. Pearce with his Division soon routed the Enemy, while that under my Command gained and passed the Camp; one of the Field pieces was momentarily in our possession, but obliged to quit it from superior numbers;

The Marines under Lieuts. Beynon and Poe formed our Centre and never was bravery more conspicuous. Finding it impossible to close on the Enemy from the rapidity of their Retreat, having pursued them upwards of a Mile I deemed it prudent to retire toward the Beach, which was effected in the best possible Order, taking with us from the field twenty five of our wounded, the whole we could find, the Enemy not even attempting to regain the ground they had lost; from three Prisoners (cavalry) taken by us, we learnt their force amounted to 500 Militia, a troop of Horse and five pieces of Artillery, and since by Flags of Truce I am led to believe their numbers much greater.—

Repelling a Force of such magnitude with so small a body as we opposed to them, will I trust speak for itself; and altho our loss has been severe I hope the lustre acquired to our arms will compensate for it.—

Permit me Sir to offer to your notice the conduct of Mr. James Stopford Hoare Masters Mate of this Ship, who on this so well as on other trying occasions, evinced the greatest zeal and gallantry.— In justice to Sub Lieut. Johnson, commandng the *Jane* Tender I must beg to notice, the handsome manner in which he has at all times volunteered his Services.—

Herewith I beg leave to enclose you a list of the Killed Wounded & Missing in this affair.—[1] I have the Honor to be Sir Your most Obedt. Humble Servt.

Hen[y] Crease Actg. Commr.

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 30–31. Cochrane sent a copy of Crease's letter to the Admiralty and enclosed a diagram of the attack. Cochrane to Croker, 3 Sept. 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 8–11.

1. The list of British casualties (fourteen killed, twenty-seven wounded) is located at fols. 20–21.

Lieutenant Colonel Philip Reed, Maryland Militia, to Brigadier General Benjamin Chambers, Maryland Militia

Camp at Belle Air, 3d Sept. 1814.

Sir—

I avail myself of the first moment I have been able to seize from incessant labor, to inform you that about half past 11 o'clock, on the night of the 30th ult. I received information that the barges of the enemy, then lying off Waltham's farm were moving in shore. I concluded their object was to land and burn the houses, &c. at Waltham's and made the necessary arrangements to prevent them, and to be prepared for an opportunity which I had sought for several days to strike the enemy. During our march to the point threatened, it was discovered that the blow was aimed at our camp. Orders were immediately given to the quarter master, to remove the camp and baggage, and to the troops to countermarch, pass the road by the right of our camp and form on the rising ground about three hundred paces in the rear—the right towards Caulk's house, and the left retiring on the road, the artillery in the centre, supported by

the infantry on the right and left. I directed capt. Wickes and his second lieutenant Beck, with a part of the rifle company to be formed, so as to cover the road by which the enemy marched, and with this section I determined to post myself, leaving the line to be formed under the direction of major Wickes and capt. Chambers.

The head of the enemy's column soon presented itself and received the fire of our advance party, at seventy paces distance, and, being pressed by numbers vastly superior, I repaired to my post in the line; having ordered the riflemen to return and form on the right of the line. The fire now became general along the whole line, and was sustained by our troops with the most determined valor. The enemy pressed our front; foiled in this he threw himself on our left flank, which was occupied by capt. Chambers's company. Here too his efforts were equally unavailing. His fire had nearly ceased, when I was informed that in some parts of our line the cartridges were entirely expended, nor did any of the boxes contain more than a very few rounds, although each man brought about twenty into the field.— The artillery cartridges were entirely expended. Under these circumstances I ordered the line to fall back to a convenient spot where a part of the line was fortified, when the few remaining cartridges were distributed amongst a part of the line, which was again brought into the field, where it remained for a considerable time, the night preventing a pursuit. The artillery and infantry for whom there were no cartridges were ordered to this place. The enemy having made every effort in his power, although apprized of our having fallen back, manifested no disposition to follow us up, but retreated about the time our ammunition was exhausted.

When it is recollected that very few of our officers or men had ever heard the whistling of a ball; that the force of the enemy, as the most accurate information enables us to estimate, was double ours; that it was commanded by *sir Peter Parker* of the *Menelaus*, one of the most distinguished officers in the British navy, and composed (as their officers admitted in a subsequent conversation,) of as fine men as could be selected from the British service, I feel fully justified in the assertion, that the gallantry of the officers and men engaged on this occasion, could not be excelled by any troops. The officers and men performed their duty. It is however but an act of justice to notice those officers who seemed to display more than a common degree of gallantry. Major Wickes and captain Chambers were conspicuous— captain Wickes and his lieutenant Beck of the rifle corps, lieutenant Eunick and ensign Shriven of captain Chambers' company exerted themselves, as did captain Hynson and his lieutenant Grant, capt. Ussleton of the brigade artillery and his lieutenants Reed and Brown— Lieut. Tilghman who commanded the guns of the volunteer artillery, in the absence of captain Hands who is in ill health and from home, was conspicuous for his gallantry, his ensign Thomas also manifested much firmness.

I am indebted to captain Wilson of the cavalry, who was with me, for his exertions, and also to adjutant Hynson, who displayed much zeal and firmness throughout— To Dr. Blake, Dr. Gordon and to Isaac Spencer, Esq. who were accidentally in camp, I am indebted for their assistance in reconnoitering the enemy on his advance.

You will be surprised, sir, when I inform you that in an engagement of so long continuance in an open field, when the moon shone brilliantly on the rising ground occupied by our troops, while the shade of the neighboring woods, under the protection of which the enemy fought, gave us but an indistinct view

of any thing but the flash of his guns; that under the disparity of numbers against us, and the advantage of regular discipline on the side of the enemy, we had not one man killed, and only one serjeant, one corporal, and one private wounded, and those slightly. The enemy left one midshipman and eight men dead on the field, and nine wounded; six of whom died in the coarse of a few hours. *Sir Peter Parker* was amongst the slain—he was mortally wounded with a buck-shot, and died before he reached the barges, to which he was conveyed by his men. The enemy's force, consisting of marines and musqueteers, was in part armed with boarding pikes, swords, and pistols, no doubt intended for our tents, as orders had been given by sir Peter not to fire—many of these arms, with rockets, muskets, &c. have fallen into our hands, found by the picket guard under ensign Shriven, which was posted on the battle ground for the remainder of the night—nothing but the want of ammunition saved the enemy from destruction.

Attached are the names of the wounded; and, as an act of justice to those concerned, I inclose you a list of the names of every officer and soldier engaged in the affair—[1] certain information from the enemy assures us, that his total loss in killed and wounded was forty-two or forty-three, including two wounded lieutenants. I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

PHIL. REED,
Lieut. Col. commandant

Benjamin Chambers, brigadier-general,
6th brigade Maryland militia.

Names of the wounded of capt. Chambers' company. John Magnor, sergeant, slightly, in the thigh.— Philip Crane, corporal, a ball between the tendons and the bone of the thigh near the knee.

Of captain Page's company.—John Glanville, a private, in the arm.

Printed, *Niles' Weekly Register*, Supplement to Vol. 7, pp. 151–52.

1. This list was not printed by *Niles'*. It was printed by Marine, *British Invasion of Maryland*, pp. 122–24.

James Gordon's Diversion in the Potomac

After arriving in the Chesapeake from Bermuda, Admiral Cochrane assembled a war council to outline his offensive strategy. Initially, the main invasion force would disembark at Benedict, Maryland, to destroy Barney's flotilla and depending on circumstances proceed to Washington. Cochrane ordered two diversions: Sir Peter Parker was sent to the upper Chesapeake and Captain James A. Gordon to the Potomac. The latter's squadron was to destroy fortifications along the river and act as a rear guard to assist the invading force if its return route were cut off. Gordon's three-week expedition was a success, measured in prize goods—twenty-one captured vessels laden with tobacco, sugar, and wine. Psychologically, the attack on Fort Washington (and its premature abandonment by the American forces) and the abject capitulation of Alexandria that followed were humiliating to a capital already reeling from the British incursion. But the lengthy duration of Gordon's expedition eventually delayed the commencement of operations against Baltimore

since the bombardment of Fort McHenry required the rocket and bomb vessels in his squadron.

From the Americans' perspective, Gordon's presence in the Potomac was almost as humiliating as the attack on the capital. After entering the river on 17 August, Gordon confronted shoals, squalls, and contrary winds. Grounding innumerable times, his ships did not reach Fort Washington until the 27th. After destroying the fort, Gordon proceeded to subjugate Alexandria, lingering there until receiving orders on 1 September from Cochrane to return to the fleet. By then the victors in the contest for Washington, had reembarked at Benedict having encountered no opposition while withdrawing. The captors of Alexandria were not so lucky. Eager for revenge, Secretary of the Navy Jones marshaled the expertise of three of his naval captains (John Rodgers, David Porter, and Oliver H. Perry), and with a joint naval and military force attacked the withdrawing British squadron with fire ships and from batteries hastily erected on the Virginia and Maryland shores. Ultimately unsuccessful in destroying the squadron, the Americans did retard its withdrawal, thereby purchasing more time for the Baltimoreans to prepare their defenses.[1]

1. For more on Gordon's expedition, see Perrett, Real Hornblower, *pp. 107–19.*

CAPTAIN JAMES A. GORDON, R.N., TO
VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N.

Seahorse Chesapeake 9th September 1814

Sir,

In obedience to your Orders I proceeded into the River Potomac with the ships Named in the Margin[1] on the 17th. of last Month.— But from being without Pilots to assist us through that difficult part of the River called the Kettle Bottoms, and from contrary winds we were unable to reach Fort Washington until the evening of the 27th.— Nor was this effected but by the severest labour.— I believe each of the Ships was not less than twenty different times aground and each time we were obliged to haul off by main Strength,—and we were employed warping for five whole successive days, with the exception of a few hours, a distance of more than fifty miles.

The Bomb Ships[2] were placed on the evening of the 27th. and immediately begun the bombardment of the Fort, it being my intention to attack it with the Frigates[3] at day light the following Morning.— On the bursting of the first shell the Garrison were observed to retreat.— But supposing some concealed design I directed the fire to be continued.— At 8 Oclock however my doubt was removed by the explosion of the powder Magazine which destroyed the inner buildings, and at day light on the 28th we took possession.—[4] Besides the principal Fort which contained

Two Fifty-two pounders
Two Thirty-two pounders &
Eight Twenty-four pounders
there was a Battery on the beach of
Five Eighteen pounders
a Martillo Tower with
Two Twelve pounders and loop-holes for Musquetry, & a Battery in the Rear
Two Twelve and
Six Six pound Field pieces.



James A. Gordon

The whole of these Guns were already spiked by the Enemy and their complete destruction with their Carriages also was effected by the Seamen and Marines sent on that Service in less than two hours.— The populous City of Alexandria thus lost its only defence.— And having buoyed the Channel I deemed it better to postpone giving any answer to a proposal made to me for its Capitulation until the following morning when I was enabled to place the shipping in such a position as would ensure assent to the terms I had decided to enforce.—

To this measure I attribute there ready acquiescence as it removed that doubt of my determination to proceed, which had been raised in the minds of the Inhabitants by our Army having retired from Washington. This part of our proceedings will be further explained by the accompanying documents.—[5]

The Honorable Lieutenant Gordon of this Ship was sent on the evening of the 28th. to prevent the escape of any of the Vessels comprized in the Capitulation and the whole of those which were sea worthy—amounting to twenty one in Number were fitted and loaded by the 31st.[6]

Captain Baker of the *Fairy* bringing your Orders of the 27th. having fought his way up the River past a Battery of five Guns and a large Military force confirmed the rumours which had already reached me of s[*t*]rong measures having been taken to oppose our return.—[7] And I therefore quitted Alexandria without waiting to destroy those remaining Stores which we had not the means of bringing away.—

Contrary winds again occasioned us the laborious task of warping the Ships down the River, in which a days delay [*n*]early took place owing to the *Devastation* grounding. The Enemy took advantage of this Circumstance to attempt her destruction by three fire vessels and attended by five row Boats.— But their object was defeated by the promptitude and gallantry of Captain Alexander who pushed off with his own Boats and being followed by those of the other Ships chased the boats of the Enemy up to the town of Alexandria— The cool and steady conduct of Mr. John Moore, Midshipman of the *Seahorse,* in towing the nearest fire Vessel on shore whilst the others were removed from the power of doing mischief by the smaller boats of the *Devastation,* entitles him to my highest commendation.—

The *Meteor* and the *Fairy* assisted by the *Anna Maria* despatch boat, a prize gun Boat, and a boat belonging to the *Euryalus* with a howitzer, had greatly impeded the progress of the Enemy in their works, notwithstanding which they were enabled to encrease their battery to eleven guns with a furnace for heating Shot.— on the 3d the wind coming to the North west the *Ætna* and the *Erebus* succeeded in getting down to their assistance and the whole of us with the prizes were assembled there on the 4th., except the *Devastation,* which in spite of our utmost exertion in warping her, still remained five miles higher up the River.— This was the moment when the Enemy made his greatest efforts to effect our destruction.— The *Erebus* being judiciously placed by Captain Bartholomew in an admirable position for harrassing the workmen employed in the trenches, was attacked by three field pieces which did her considerable damage before they were beaten off.— And another attempt being made to destroy the *Devastation* with fire Vessels I sent the Boats, under Captain Baker, to his assistance.— Nothing could exceed the alacrity with which Captain Baker went on this Service, to which I attribute the immediate retreat of the boats and fire Vessels.— The loss however was considerable owing to their having sought

refuge under some guns in a narrow Creek thickly wooded, from which it was impossible for him to dislodge them.—

On the 5th at Noon the wind coming fair and all my arrangements being made the *Seahorse* and *Euryalus* anchored within short Musquet Shot of the Batteries[8] whilst the whole of the prizes passed betwixt us and the shoal, the Bombs, the *Fairy,* and *Erebus* firing as they passed and afterwards anchoring in a favourable position for facilitating by means of their fire the further removal of the Frigates. At 3 PM having completely silenced the Enemy's fire, the *Seahorse* and *Euryalus* cut their Cables, and the whole of us proceeded to the next position taken up by the troops where they had two Batteries mounting from 14 to 18 Guns on a range of Cliffs of about a mile extent under which we were of Necessity obliged to pass very close.—[9] I did not intend to make the attack that evening, but the *Erebus* grounding within Range we were necessarily called into action.— On this occasion the fire of the *Fairy* had the most decisive effect as well as that of the *Erebus* whilst the Bombs threw their shells with excellent precision; and the Guns of the batteries were thereby completly silenced by about 8. Oclock.— At day light on the 6th I made the Signal to weigh and so satisfied were the whole of the parties opposed to us of their opposition being ineffectual, that they allowed us to pass without further molestation.— I cannot close this detail of operations comprizing a period of 23 days without begging leave to call your attention to the singular exertion of those whom I had the honor to Command by which our success was effected.— Our Hammocks were down only two Nights during the whole time and the many laborious duties which we had to perform were executed with a cheerfulness which I shall ever remember with pride, and which will ensure I hope to the whole of the detachment your favourable estimation of their extraordinary Zeal and abilities.—

To Captain Napier I owe more obligations than I have words to express.— The *Euryalus* lost her bowsprit, the head of her foremast, and the heads of all her topmasts, in a Tornado which we encountred on the 25th., just as our sails were clewed up, whilst we were passing the flats of Maryland point; and yet after twelve hours work on her refittal she was again under way, and advancing up the River.— (Captain Napier speaks highly of the conduct of Lieutenant Thomas Herbert on this as well as on every other of the many trying occasions which have called his abilities into action).— His exersions were also particularly conspicuous in the prizes; many of which already sunk by the Enemy were weighed, Masted, hove down, caulked, rigged and loaded by our little squadron during the three days which we remained at Alexandria.—

It is difficult to distinguish amongst Officers who had a greater share of duty than often falls to the lot of any, and which each performed with the greatest credit to his professional Character.— I cannot omit to recommend to your notice the meritorious conduct of Captains Alexander, Bartholomew, Baker, and Kenah, the latter of which led us through many of the difficulties of the Navigation: and particularly to Captain Roberts of the *Meteor* who besides undergoing the fatigues of the day employed the night in coming the distance of ten miles to communicate and to consult with me upon our further operations preparatory to our passing the Batteries.—

So universally good was the conduct of all the Officers, Seamen and Marines of the detachment that I cannot particularize with justice to the rest.— But I owe it to the long tried experience I have had of Mr. Henry King first Lieutenant of the *Seahorse* to point out to you that such was his eagerness to take the

part to which his abilities would have directed him on this occasion, that he even came out of his sick Bed to command at his quarters, whilst the ship was passing the Batteries The two first Guns pointed by Lieut. King each disabled a Gun of the Enemy; nor can I ever forget how materially the Service is indebted to Mr. Alexander Louthian the Master for both finding and buoying the Channel of a Navigation which no Ship of similar draft of water had ever before passed with their guns and Stores onboard; and which according to the report of a Seaman now in this Ship was not accomplished by the *President* American Frigate even after taken her guns out, under a period of forty two days.—

Enclosed is a list of the Killed and Wounded, and also of the Vessels captured with the cargoes they have onboard.—[10]

I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Sigd. James A. Gordon Captain

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 153–57.

1. *Seahorse, Euryalus, Devastation, Aetna, Meteor, Erebus,* and *Anna Maria.*
2. *Devastation, Aetna,* and *Meteor.*
3. *Seahorse* and *Euryalus.*
4. For more on the American abandonment of Fort Washington on the approach of the British squadron, see *ASP: Military Affairs,* Vol. 1, pp. 588–91, and Pitch, *Burning of Washington,* pp. 153–60.
5. For documents relating to Alexandria's capitulation, see UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 162–68.
6. For a list of the captured ships, public stores, and merchandise, see UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 163–64.
7. Commander Henry L. Baker, carrying dispatches from Admiral Cochrane, encountered resistance from the American battery commanded by Captain David Porter at the White House, just a few miles south of Mount Vernon. The White House was a large fishing house on the beach and was a landmark for vessels navigating the Potomac.
8. The British first encountered a battery on the Virginia shore commanded by Captain David Porter. For his account, see Porter to Jones, 7 Sept. 1814, pp. 251–55.
9. Captain Oliver H. Perry commanded the batteries at Indian Head, Maryland. Perry to Jones, 9 Sept. 1814, p. 256.
10. This foray up the Potomac cost the British forty-two casualties—seven killed and thirty-five wounded. UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fol. 160.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Navy Department
Augt. 28. 1814

Sir

Captain Creighton has undertaken to convey this in order to explain to you the nature and extent of the Naval force of the Enemy now near Alexandria which place capitulated this morning but upon what conditions I know not.

The enemy will acquire a large property in produce and shipping, and his cupidity will occupy his attention for some days.

I write this to invite your consideration of the means we may possess to annoy or destroy the enemy on his return down the river.

A few pieces of heavy cannon with a furnace on Maryland point protected by a competent military force in the rear would effect the object. The only difficulty is in the transportation which cannot be effected by land and the full moon forbids the hope of effecting it by water. Will you be pleased to hold a

conference with the Officers around you and if any practicable mode of accomplishing the object shall present itself you will either undertake its execution yourself or detach Captain Porter with a competent force for that purpose. These Suggestions are offered for your contemplation and decision according to your own views of the probability of Success. I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt

W Jones

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5536–37. A note on the address page described the British force at Alexandria thus: "3 Brigs—1 Schooner & a pilot Boat Dropping down/3 Ships & 4 or 5 Small craft loading in the stream/1 Brig loading at the Wharf/1 Ship Lieing above the Town unrigged." Jones addressed this letter to Rodgers at Baltimore.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Navy Department
Augt. 29. 1814

Sir

The terms of capitulation of the town of Alexandria are so degrading and humiliating as to excite the indignation of all classes of people. Those who have hitherto been the most vehement in their denunciations of the War and of the Administration are no less ardent in their zeal and determination to defend this City and George town to the last extremity than the warm advocates of both.

The arrogant foe had required the surrender of all articles of produce and merchandize even retrospectively to the 19th. Inst. including all that has been sent from the town subsequent to that date together with all the shipping whether afloat or sunk to be delivered to him in perfect order to carry off his immense booty which he is now busily engaged in lading and preparing for departure.

We are menaced with a renewed attack which however it is confidently believed must result in the defeat of the foe if attempted— I send you enclosed a list of his force which may be relied upon.—[1]

It is probable the large property at George town together with his recent success may induce him to make a bold attempt which can only be done in his barges and boats. If at such a moment you were present with 600. picked men his Ships might be carried beyond doubt, as boats sufficient for the purpose can be collected Viz the long light boats from the upper part of the Potomac At all events your presence with such a force would produce the best possible effect and plans might be laid to annoy or destroy his Squadron in its descent.

You will therefore without a moments delay repair to Bladensburg with 650 picked men (or more if you shall deem it expedient) where you will receive further orders either by letter from the Department or a personal interview which I shall be happy to avail myself of.

You will order on the necessary provisions and supplies for your expedition as every thing has been destroyed that was in Store here except some Beef Pork and Whiskey I am respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

P S. A party has been dispatched for the purpose of sinking Hulks and other obstructions in the River below.

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5540–41. Jones addressed this to Rodgers at Baltimore.

1. This list was not found in either the Rodgers Family Papers or the secretary of the navy's letter book. A list of British strength at Alexandria was added to the address page of Jones to Rodgers, 28 August 1814. See the source note for this letter, p. 243.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

10 OClock PM Balte Aug 29. 1814

Sir

I have recd. your Letters of yesterdays date,[1] and would to God it had been in my power to have reached Washington in time to have aided in its protection.

In the present state of this place, I thought it hazarding too much to attempt sending a detachment of my Corps to Maryland Point; particularly as I could not calculate with any certainty on finding support in that quarter.— I have however detach'd Capt. Porter with 100 Seamen and Marines under orders to march to Washington; but more with a view to Guard the Executive, than any thing else.— From his known patriotism, Zeal & Activity however he may be enabled to check in some instances that petty Warfare, which frequently takes place in the Environs after sacking a Town.—

It is believed here that, after a short pause, the Enemy will attack this place, which if they were to do with success, would be productive of consequencies, dreadful to ruminate on, as it is now the only Barrier between it and Phila.— consequently I could wish to remain, until the place is better Fortified and there is more certainty of my being able to render essential Service elsewhere.— at any rate, I shall be ready to march with all my strength at a moment, wherever you may think our Services can be of more benifit, for believe me, that I would cheerfully spill the last drop of my blood to revenge my injured country.—

The people now begin to shew something like a patriotic spirit: they are Fortifying the Town by all the means in their power, and those who direct their exertions, are pleged to me to defend the place to the last extremity, otherwise I should have been at Washington before this could reach you.—

I have only further to add Sir, that Capt. Porter will inform you of the confidence produced, by the stand our little Band took on reaching here, and of the effect likely to result, should it depart at the present moment, at any rate, I repeat again, that I am ready at a moments warning, to direct my course to any other point, where you may deem our Services of more importance.— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr Obt. Servt

Jn° Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 146 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. One of Jones's letters of 28 August 1814 to Rodgers is reproduced on pp. 242–43. The other deals with the destruction of the Washington Navy Yard and Fort Washington, and Jones's concerns for the fate of Alexandria. Jones to Rodgers, 28 Aug. 1814, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5538–39.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain David Porter

Navy Department
Augt. 31. 1814

Sir

You will proceed with the detachment of Seamen and Marines which arrived here under your command last evening, to the White House on the West Bank of the Potomac where you will find a train of five or Six 18 pounders ordered there by the War Department in concert with this Department, which you will take the Command of and place in Battery in the most favorable position or positions and endeavour to effect the destruction of the Enemys Squadron on its passage down the Potomac.

The ordnance Depmt. I presume will have furnished the necessary ammunition and a furnace for heating Shot. I am respectfully Your obdt. Servt.

W Jones

ALS, MiU-C, David Porter Papers. Porter was in Washington at this time.

Secretary of State Monroe to Commodore John Rodgers

washington Spr 2. 1814

Dear Sir

The battery erected at the white house under the command of Com: Porter, promises to embarrass, if not impede the progress of the enemy down the bay. If you could re'sstablish the post at Fort washington, to night,[1] & Com: Perry could place a few pieces, the more & heavier, the better, at a point opposite the white house, I think we might demolish them. I suggest this for yours & his consideration. Dispatch, is of the highest importance. with great respect I am yr very obt servt

Ja^{s} Monroe

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5549a–b. This was addressed to Rodgers at the Washington Navy Yard.

1. Rodgers was occupied with forming a squadron of fire vessels to attack the British as they sailed from Alexandria for the bay.

Captain Oliver H. Perry to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Greenway, opposite the White House 3d. Septr. Meridian

Sir

I proceeded from the navy yard, with our Artillery &c last night in the hope of being able to take a position, (before day light) to annoy the enemy and to cooperate with Comr. Porter after arriving with in musket shot of the enemy at 3. this morng.[1] I had the mortification to find, that there was no position I

could take that was tenable— this morning I have fallen in with Genl. Stewart with a body of men, and a few pieces of artillery— we have been hovering over the enemy all the morning,— and as we find we cannot be of any service here, Genl. Stuart and myself have determined, to proceed to the high grounds about 8. or 9 miles below and fortify, so as to annoy the ships as they pass down—[2] May I ask Sir, that some heavy guns may be immediately forwarded to me— Our men are entirely exhausted, but we will make an effort, to go to our destined post— Very Respy. I am Sir Your Obd. Sert

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 7½ (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. On 11 August, Secretary Jones had ordered Perry to make arrangements for equipping *Java* and to leave Baltimore for New York to serve on a court of inquiry charged with examining into the loss of the frigate *Essex*. By 19 August, Jones suspended the inquiry and ordered Porter and Perry to aid in the defense of the capital. Arriving in Maryland after the Battle of Bladensburg, the two captains stopped at Baltimore to join forces with John Rodgers who was assisting in that city's defense. By the end of August, Jones ordered these naval captains to Washington either to stop a possible second attack on the capital or to harass the enemy on his descent down the Potomac. Jones to Perry, 11 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 404 (M149, Roll No. 11); Jones to Porter, 19 Aug. 1814, p. 199; and Jones to Rodgers, 29 Aug. 1814, pp. 243–44.

2. Perry removed to the cliffs at Indian Head, Maryland, because this site was better suited to attacking the British squadron.

Charles Simms to Nancy Simms

Alexandria Septr. 3d. 1814

My Dear Nancy

The Brittish Squadron began to fall down the river yesterday morning and was not as low as the Fort[1] this morning, except one Vessel which the day before yesterday went down in the neighbourhood of the white House, and a pretty heavy firing has been kept up this morning in that neighbourhood. Mr. Cook has gone into the vicinity of the White House and on his return will be able to give you a full account of the state of things there Alexandria has so far had a most providential escape. It is impossible that men could behave better than the Brittish behaved while the Town was in their power, not a single Inhabitant was insulted or injured by them in their persons or houses your fear that something might occur to provoke them to ~~St.~~ fire the Town was not ill founded—

The Day before yesterday Capt. Porter, Lieutenant Creighton and Lieutenant Platt[2] naval officers rode into Town like Saracens and seized on a poor unarmd Midshipman[3] a mere strapling, and would have carried him off or killd him had not his 'neck handerchief broke this rash act excited the greatest alarm among the Inhabitants of the Town, Women and children runing and screaming through the Streets and hundreds of them layed out that night without Shelter I immediately prepared a message to the Commodore[4] explaining the manner and circumstances of the insult and sent it on board by Mr. Swann and Edmd. J Lee,[5] while I was preparing the message One of the Captains[6] rushd into the parlour with the strongest expressions of rage in his countenance bringing with him the midshipman who had been so valiantly assaulted by those Gallant Naval Officers, I explained to him by whom the outrage was committed, that the Town had no control over them; and ought not to be held responsible for their conduct, and I was at that time preparing a message of explanation to the Commodore he said it was necessary that it should be explained, after which his fury seemd to abate and he went off, before Mr. Swann and Mr. Lee got on Board the Signal of Battle was hoisted and all the Vessels were prepared for action when Mr. Swan and Mr. Lee made their explanation & the Commodore said he was satisfied and orderd the signal of Battle to be annulld thus the Town was providentially preserved from destruction, by the accidental circumstance of the midshipmans neck handkercief giving way for had he been killd or carried off, I do not believe the Town could have been saved from destruction.

I do not consider the Town perfectly safe yet If the Brittish Vessels should be prevented from passing the white House they or some of them may probably return here, and wait untill troops sufficent to drive off the militia &c at the white House shall come to their relief from Patuxin, and in that case this part of the country will become the seat of war. I can not therefore wish your return untill we are in a more quiet State— John[7] had better remain in the Country untill his health is restored as he will no doubt be compeld to go to Camp as soon as he returns, I have desired Mr. Cook to sell Bet if he can and you approve of it. Mr. Cook is in a hurry to return home I can only add that my blessing attends my children and that I am Your affectionate husband

Ch: Simms

ALS, DLC, Charles Simms Papers, Vol. 6, Peter Force Collection, Series 8D, fols. 35428–29 (Reel 66). Charles Simms, a prominent attorney and merchant, was mayor of Alexandria from March 1813 to March 1815; his wife was the former Nancy Douglas.

1. Fort Washington.
2. Charles T. Platt's midshipman's warrant dated from 18 June 1812.
3. Midshipman John Fraser, R.N.
4. Captain James A. Gordon, R.N.
5. Thomas Swann was an attorney in Alexandria and Edmund J. Lee was a former member of the Alexandria Common Council and succeeded Simms as mayor.
6. Probably Captain Charles Napier, R.N., commander of *Euryalus*.
7. John D. Simms, son of Thomas Simms.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Alexa. Sept. 3d. 3 P.M

Sir

I have to inform you that I this morning manned four Barges with about 50 Men (including Lieuts Newcomb & Forest Sailg Master Ramage & M Mate Stockton)[1] for the purpose of conducting three small fire vessels which I have no doubt we should have been able to attach to the Enemy's Ships had not the wind failed by the time we reached Alexandria

After reaching the Enemys uppermost ship within ½ a mile I ordered the vessels to be fired giving them a proper direction— At this time the Enemy had 19 or 20 boats in motion, a few of which he employed in towing the fire vessels

clear of his Ships of War & with the rest pursued our boats yet he shew no disposition to come within reach of our Musketry altho we laid up our oars, whilst he fired upwards of 20 shot one or two of the shot fell into Alexa. but did no damage— I have now two 12 lb Carronades mounted on wharfes & with the 50 N Officers & Seamen have with me & a detachment of about 200 mounted riflemen & Infantry under the command of Major Camper[2] I feel myself sufficiently strong to defend Alex against any force the Enemy may be disposed to land— I have just sent up for another fire vessel which I mean to try the effect of to night, should an opportunity offer.— I can see he feels very uneasy & he certainly acted with great prudence this morning I have the honor to be Sir yr Ob St.

Jn° Rodgers

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 9½ (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. The lieutenant's commission for Henry S. Newcomb was dated 24 July 1813. Dulany Forrest served as an acting lieutenant from 29 July 1813 to 9 December 1814 when he was commissioned a lieutenant. James Ramage's sailing master's warrant dated from 1 June 1813; he was appointed an acting lieutenant on 18 November 1814 and his commission was dated 9 December 1814. Robert F. Stockton's midshipman's warrant was dated 1 September 1811; his lieutenant's commission dated from 9 December 1814. Stockton attained the rank of captain before resigning from the navy in 1850. He served briefly as a U.S. senator from 1851 to 1853.

2. Major John Kemper served with the Eighty-fifth Regiment (Fauquier County), Virginia militia, at Alexandria from September to October 1814.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Navy Department
Septr. 3 1814. ½ past 5. PM

Sir

Your note of this day 3 PM. is before me. The enemy having taken possession of Kent Island are in a situation to make a rapid movement on Baltimore and I therefore wrote you this this morning directing the movement of the force under your command at Snowdens and with you, toward Baltimore without delay[1]—that Captain Perry would follow you as soon as possible and captain Porter as soon as the object in which he is engaged would admit

I have ordered Lieut. Gamble[2] to proceed to Baltimore and await your orders.

You will however try what effect can be produced by the fire vessel you have sent for and in the course of tomorrow will return to Washington unless in your opinion some decisive effect can be produced by your longer delay very respectfully your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5551–52. Jones addressed this letter to Rodgers at Alexandria.

1. In this earlier letter, Jones was fearful of an imminent attack on Baltimore and ordered Rodgers to that city "without a moment's delay." Jones to Rodgers, 3 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 412 (M149, Roll No. 11). By 5:30 P.M., however, Jones was calmer and he permitted Rodgers to use his discretion in deciding whether to attempt another foray with the fire ships against the British squadron in the Potomac. The Snowden family lived at Montpelier plantation, about eight miles north of Bladensburg. In late August, when Jones ordered Rodgers from Baltimore to Washington, the commodore left part of his force at Snowden's while he proceeded on to Washington and Alexandria.

2. Thomas Gamble's commission as a lieutenant dated from 27 April 1810. That summer he joined *President* as one of John Rodgers's lieutenants and continued to serve with the commodore until late 1814. Gamble commanded Rodgers's detachment of seamen left at Snowden's. For the order to proceed to Baltimore, see Jones to Gamble, 3 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, AOR, 15 May 1813–23 Nov. 1815, p. 211 (T829, Roll No. 382).

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Alexa. Sept 4th. 1814.

Sir

Yr. letter of yesterday ½ past 5 PM reached me at 11 last night— The fire vessel has not yet got down & it is now so calm & foggy that if she was even near at hand she could not be seen

Nothing material has occurred since I wrote you last further than that we fired on three of the enemy's Boats which came up at 2 this morning for the purpose of reconoitering I suppose— The weather to day is unfavorable for our opperations at least with the fire vessel—

All the Enemy's manoevres serve to convince me that he would willingly relinquish all his Booty to be once clear again of the Potomac & I can not but regret there should be a necessity for my leaving here just at the moment when I believe that with the small water force I have collected I should in conjunction with the artillery on each side, be able to do him serious injury if not effect his destruction— It is still so foggy that the position of his frigates,[1] which were last night about three miles above fort Washington can not be seen;— I am about to go down in my gig, however to reconnoitre— If it is yr. desire that I should proceed immediately to Baltre. I beg you will notify me of the same by the videt who hands you this

On taking possession of Alexandria yesterday at a moment when the Enemy menaced me with an attack with at least 5 times my force I can not in Justice avoid mentioning that Majors Kemper & Brokenburgh commandg. about 300 mounted Riflemen & Infantry of Genl. Hungerfords Brigade[2] march in[to] Town with all possible dispatch to my assistance (In haste) with great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr. Ob. St.

Jn° Rodgers

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 13 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. *Seahorse* and *Euryalus*.

2. Major Moore F. Brockenbrough, Forty-first Regiment (Richmond County), Virginia militia. A force under Brigadier General John H. Hungerford, commander of all the Northern Neck militia, had been ordered in late August by the Alexandria government not to assist that city against the British incursion.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore John Rodgers

Navy Department
Septr. 4. 1814

Sir

I have received your note of this morng. and am really embarrassed between the desire of affording you an opportunity of effecting either the destruction or injury of the enemy and the dread of an attack upon Baltimore before you shall have reached that place

There is good reason to believe that the enemy has been very considerably reenforced and we ought to believe that he will not remain long inactive and that his operations will be in the upper part of the Chesapeake

Could we destroy or seriously injure the enemy in the Potomac, or destroy or compel him to desgorge his plunder a most important object would be gained, as well in depriving him of so large and seasonable a supply of provisions as is the lesson it would teach him, and the security it would give to the shores of our rivers.

you will therefore use your discretion for two or three days and in the interim should the state of things at Baltimore become more alarming you shall be instantly informed. I have sent to the navy yard to hurry off the fire vessel Very respectfully your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5553–54. This was addressed to Rodgers in Alexandria.

Lieutenant Henry S. Newcomb to Commodore John Rodgers

Alexandria September 5th.

Sir

Yesterday At 1 PM got under way from Alexandria with four boats & the Navy Yard lighter—Two Ships in sight— at 4—one of them doubled the point— at 7.30 came to close under the land, abreast of Johnsons Springs— observing two men on the hill watching our motions, sent Mr. Ramage with a small party to take them, but he returnd unable to effect it— at 8 pm silently got under way & dropted up with the tide about half a mile— Then crossed to the Maryland side— Beached the small boats— formed their crews on the bluff with small arms to cover them & anchored the lighter close in shore with springs on her cable— at 10, pm heard the enemys barges in motion and making for the place where we first came to— at 10,30—bright moonlight & calm—perceived five large barges standing for us & several others keeping the other shore onboard waited till they came within half musket shot & then opend on them with round, grape & langrage— The seamen on the hill commencd at the same time— The enemy appeared to be in great confusion— gave them a second fire, when they returnd it with some vivacity from their great guns—small arms and Rocketts— at 11,45—silenced their fire— heard loud & distressing cries from their boats & on its being reported to me that they called for quarter ceasd firing— a short time afterwards the headmost boat appeared to be approaching & attempting to rally the others astern—those from the other side having joined them— when they recommencd firing—returnd it from the great guns & in five minutes heard several exclaim they were sinking—when they dis[*c*]ontinued firing & returnd to their ship— at midnight reembarked & came to below Alexandria— Their fire, tho well lined, was too high to do execution & I had only one man wounded— Respectfully

H. S. Newcomb

P.S. Midshipman Stockton came on board during the rencontre & was of much service to me—
Want of sleep for several nights past & incessant fatigue will apologize for the appearance of this letter

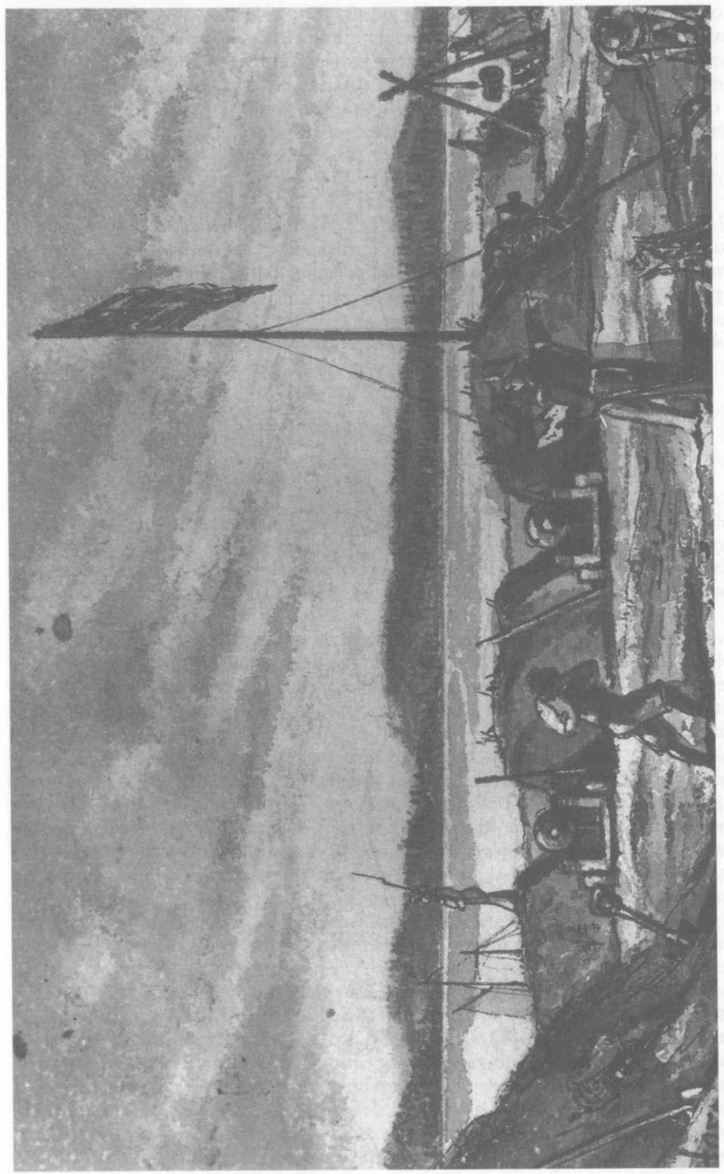
ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5557–58.

Captain David Porter to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Washington Septr. 7th 1814

Sir/

Agreeable to your Orders of the 31st Ulto.[1] I proceeded with the Detachment of Sailors and marines under my command, to the white house on the West bank of the Potowmac there to erect batteries and attempt the distruction of the Enemys Ships on their passage down the river. Captain Creighton Lt. Clack[2] and several other Navy officers as well as Mr. Augustus Monroe Mr. Ferdinand Fairfax and several other citizens and officers of the Militia and Volunteer Companies hearing of my destination voluntered their services on the occasion and ably supported me throughout the arduous and fateguing Enterprize. By preceding my men I arrived in company with the Honble. Secretary of State and Generals Hungerford and Young on the Evening of the lst. instant at the spot fixed on, where I found a few militia belonging to General Hungerfords army clearing away the trees to make room for mounting our Cannon which had not yet arrived, but which had been seen on their way down, consisting of three long eighteens and two twelves. Generals Hungerford and Young had received orders to cooperate with me to detach men on my requisition and make such disposition of their forces as would effectually protect me in the rear in the event of the Enemies landing. The positions they were to occupy were also alloted to them by mutual agreement when the Enemy should make his attempt to pass, as it was believed that concealed by the thick woods on the high bank they would be enabled to clear the Enemies decks with their Musquetry and in a great measure divert his fire from our battery— At the moment of my arrival one of the Enemies vessels of war, a Brig of Eighteen Guns[3] was seen coming up, General Hungerford and his men took their position in the woods, and two small four pounders that Instant arriving I caused them to be planted on the edge of the bank and on the Enemy arriving abreast of us we opened a brisk fire on him, having a fine breeze he was enabled to pass us but could fire only one broadside as he crossed the fire of our field peices and musquetry— The militia



Potomac River Showing Earthworks Erected by David Porter against the British Squadron in September 1814

continued following him up along the bank and greatly annoyed him by their well directed fire. In this affair we had only one man wounded and we beleived our elevated position rendered breast workes useless as it was remarked that none but the Enemies Grape passed over us, his round Shot went into the bank below. No men could have shown more zeal on the occasion than those composing the army and if they committed any errors which gave rise to confusion they proceeded from an over desire to injure the Enemy—of the conduct of the Sailors and marines I deem it unnecessary to say any thing. Their conduct on all such occasions has ever been uniform, The evening of our arrival two eighteen pounders reached our position and next morning one of the Enemies Bomb Ships[4] and two barges, one carrying a long two and thirty the other a mortar commenced their operations on us, the first throwing Shells in front beyond the reach of our Shot, the others flanking us on our right— several Shells fell near and burst over our battery and although the fireing lasted all day without intermission it had no other effect than to accustom the militia to the danger— In the afternoon I took an Eighteen pounder to a more advanced point about a mile distance and commenced a fire on the Bomb Ship which did so much execution as to draw on me the fire of all their vessels including a Schooner and an Eighteen Gun Brig which had droped down that day, on the 3d. the Enemy was reinforced from above by another bomb Ship[5] and a Sloop of War fitted up as a rocket Ship,[6] the latter anchoring within reach of our battery, we were enabled to play on her to great effect and compelled her to change her position. all this day and the succeeding night the Enemy kept up a brisk fire on us of Shot Shells and Rockets. In the course of the day their prizes from Alexandria anchored above them, and out of the reach of our cannon the work of our Battery went on, five light field pieces from four to Six pounders arrived and were planted and we had every hope of soon receiving some long thirty two pounders from Washington, We built a furnace for hot shot, and time only appeared necessary to make ourselves formidable— The whole of the 4th and 5th an incessant fire was kept up by the Enemy night and day, he had once attempted landing at night it is supposed with an intention of Spiking the Guns of our battery but was repulsed by the picket guard—my former plan of anoying him by advancing Guns was adopted to better effect than before, the Rocket Ship laying close in shore was much cut up by a twelve pounder and two Sixes carried to a point. Scarcely a shot missed his hull and for one hour we drew to this point the fire of all the Enemies force—the cool indifference of my Sailors to the danger to which they were exposed was very remarkable and the intrepidity of Captain Griffeth of the Alexandria Artillery his officers and men, merit the highest eulogiums they fought their Six pounders until their amunition was expended and cooly retired with their Guns when ordered to do so under a shower of the Enemies Shot—

We now as if by mutual consent ceased all hostilities, some thirty two pounders arrived. Carpenters were employed to make Carriages, two mortars, a large quantity of amunition and an abundance of Shot and Shells reached us, two Barges were equipping and every thing promised that we should spedily be put in a proper state for anoying the Enemy, in the evening two frigates anchored alone above us making his whole force

		Guns
Two Frigates	carrying	96
Three Bomb Ships	"	30
One Sloop of War fitted as a rocket Ship		26
One Brig	"	18
One Schooner	"	1
Two Barges	"	2
		Total 173

The Guns mounted in the Battery were three Eighteen pounders two twelve pounders Six Six pounders and two fours, my two mortars were without carraiges as were all my thirty twos for notwithstanding every effort was made by the Government at Washington to have them made there, as by myself on the spot they could not be compleated in time

On the morning of the 6th. the Enemy shewed a disposition to move, I advised General Hungerford of the same and prepared to meet them with hot Shot, about twelve oClock the two Frigates got underway with a fair wind and tide and stood down for us, the Rocket Sloop Bomb Vessels, Brig Schooner and prizes following in succession the Gun Boats endeavouring to flank us on our right, I immediately dispatched an officer to General Hungerford to request him to take the position agreed upon in the woods on the heights but from the distance of his camp and the quick approach of the Enemy he was unable to march before the firing commenced and after that period almost impossible as I have understood from the Vast quantities of Shot Shells and Rockets which were showered over the hills and fell among his troops—

As the Enemy approached a well directed fire was kept up from the Battery with hot and cold shot and my brave officers and men stood the broadsides of the Ships with unparalled firmness. I anxiously expected the militia would open their fire of musquetry, but was disappointed the cause was not explained until after the firing ceased— finding that the whole of the Enemies fire was directed at my force and that in a few minuets all his force would be brought to bear on me and (entertaining no hopes of preventing his passing) as some of my men had already been killed and wounded, I determined not to make a useless sacrifice. And when the Enemy was on the point of anchoring abreast the Battery, after sustaining his fire one hour and a quarter I directed the officers and men to retire behind a hill on our left and be in rediness to charge the Enemy if he should land to Spike our Guns. The two Frigates anchored abreast, the Bombs Sloops and smaller Vessels passed outside them, all pouring into the Battery and neighbouring woods a tremendious fire of every discription of missive In the woods on the left a company of Riflemen from Jefferson County Virginia under Captain George W Humphreys greatly distinguished themselves by a well directed fire on the Enemies decks, as did a company of militia under the command of Captain Gena[7] who was posted by me on the right—the first lost one man killed and one Seargent and four privates wounded, the latter two privates killed— The Company of artillery which so much distinguished itself on a former occasion behaved with no less gallantry to day and it affords me much pleasure to observe that the militia who came under my immediate notice and were attached to my command voluntarily or otherwise conducted themselves in a manner which reflects on them and their Country the highest honor many before the battle requested to be posted near me, and there was

no instance where one offered to retire until I gave the order to retreat and it was not necessary to repeat the order to rally.— Captain Grayson[8] of the marines is a brave and zealous officer he had volunteered to come with his detachment under me at Baltimore those veterans who so much distinguished themselves under their Gallant though unfortunate commander[9] at Bladenburg were all willing to try another battle they have been again unsuccessful but no less courageous two of them have fallen—

Captain Spencer of the U S Artilery late second in command at Fort Washington and now in command of the officers and men stationed there were attached to my command by the War Department— they have given the most unquestionable proof that it was not want of courage on their part which caused the destruction of that Fort— Captain Spencer his officers and men merit the attention of their Country and have encurred my esteem three of them were killed— The remnant of the Crew of the *Essex* behaved as usual. Lieutenant Barnwall received on this day his third wound, Doctor Hoffman was also wounded in the head. To particularize the good conduct of each individual placed under my orders would swell too much the bulk of this letter, several Lieutenants and midshipmen of the navy as well as many young Gentlemen of the neibourhood volunteered to serve under my orders and near my person, they all conducted themselves with great courage and made themselves of great utility before and during the battle, and I shall take an opportunity of making you more particularly acquainted with their names and merits— after the Bombs Gun vessels and prizes had all passed the Frigates[10] proceeded down and anchored abreast Indian Head where a constant firing was kept up until after Sun Set but I am fearful with but little success on our part—

The number we have had killed and wounded on this occasion I cannot ascertain exactly, I am induced to believe however it does not exceed thirty, and when we consider the constant fire which had been kept up by the enemy for the four days preceeding their passage by the fort we should esteem ourselves very fortunate, his damage can never be known by us, some of his Ships were much cripled and I should suppose his loss considerable.

I have understood that in order to bring their Guns to bear on our Battery they cut away the upper part of their ports and took the inner trucks from their Gun carriages When they had passed down I sent a torpedo after them, it was heard to explode about nine at night but I have not learnt the effect it produced— I have the Honor to be with much respect Your obt. & Humbl. Sevt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 27 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. See p. 245.
2. On 7 July 1814, Secretary Jones appointed John H. Clack an acting lieutenant and ordered him to report to *Argus*. His lieutenant's commission dated from 9 December 1814.
3. *Fairy*.
4. *Meteor*.
5. *Aetna*.
6. *Erebus*.
7. Probably Captain Joseph Janney, Sixth Regiment (Essex County), Virginia militia.
8. Alfred Grayson was brevetted a captain in the Marine Corps on 18 June 1814.
9. Captain Samuel Miller, U.S.M.C., was wounded at Bladensburg.
10. Bomb vessels *Aetna*, *Devastation*, and *Meteor*; frigates *Seahorse* and *Euryalus*.

Captain Oliver H. Perry to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Georgetown, September 9. 1814.

Sir,

The Battery under my direction at the Indian Head was of too small calibre to make much impression on the Enemy as they descended the Potomak on the 5th instant. A single 18 pounder, which arrived only 30 minutes before the firing began, ill supplied with ammunition, was the only Gun that could be of much service. The Field pieces (6 pounders) under the direction of that excellent Officer Major Peter, of the Georgetown and Captain Birch[1] of the Washington Volunteers and Captain Lewis of General Stewards Brigade kept up a very spirited fire— Those officers, together with Captains Stull and Davidson, and their brave men behaved in the handsomest manner, and rendered all the assistance their limited means afforded—

The ammunition of the 18 pounder, and of several of the sixes, being expended; and the fire of the Enemy from two Frigates, two sloops of war, two Bombs, one Rocket ship, and several smaller vessels being very heavy; it was thought adviseable by General Stewart, Major Peter and myself to retire a short distance in the rear. This was done in good order, after sustaining their fire for more than an hour. General Stuart and Colonel Beall were much exposed during the whole time of the cannonading. It would be presumption in me to speak in commendation of these veterans— I cannot, however, avoid expressing my admiration of their conduct. The few seamen (of the *Guerierre*) under the immediate command of Lieut Read,[2] of the *Java*, exhibited their usual bravery. Indeed, in the whole of this affair, every officer and man did his duty. Major Stewart of the 36th Regt. of Infantry was constantly with me and rendered all the assistance in his power.

The advantageous situation we occupied prevented the Enemy from doing us much injury. Only one man was wounded. I have the honour to be, very respectfully, your obedt. servant

O. H. Perry

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 34 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Captain Benjamin Burch commanded a company of artillerists from the Washington militia.
2. On 6 August 1814, while serving at Sackets Harbor, George C. Read was ordered by Secretary Jones to join Captain Perry at Baltimore as *Java*'s first lieutenant.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Balto Sept 9th. 1814

Sir

In pursuance of your instructions, I have to inform you, that on the 3rd. Inst. I proceeded down the Potomac with three small Fire Vessels under the protection of 4 Barges or Cutters, maned with about Sixty Seamen armed with muskets, destined against two of the Enemy's Frigates and a Bomb Ship,[1] which lay about 2½ miles below Alexandria—

At 9 A.M. in advance of the Fire Vessels in my Gig, finding no Colours displayed at Alexandria, but a Sweedish Ensign onboard a Schooner—being near the wharves, I hailed and ordered the American Flag to be hoisted, ~~otherwise, that I would set Fire to the Town.~~ After seeing the Flag hoisted, I directed the Fire Vessels (which were conducted by Lt. Newcomb, Lt. Forrest and Sailing Master Ramage) to proceed on to the objects of attack, and I have no doubt, would have succeeded in destroying two at least of the Enemy's Ships, had not the Wind failed them some time before & particularly after they had reached the uppermost Ship, within the range of musket Shot. At this time perceiving the whole of the Enemy's Barges in motion, I directed Lt. Newcomb who, commanded the van vessel, after giving her a proper direction, to set Fire to her— and after Mr. Ramage came up, gave him the same orders— the vessel under charge of Lt Forrest, was Fired by the Pilot without orders, some distance above the others.—

Of the Enemy's Boats, some were employed in towing off the Fire Vessels, and the rest in pursuit of our four Cutters, my own Gig, and a small Boat with three Oars without a rudder; they did not however, venture to come within musket Shot, altho, their Force and Numbers were more than threble ours but continued at a distance, firing their Great Guns for 30 or 35 Minutes, and then retired to their Ships again.—

On the 4th Inst. I had another Fire Vessel prepared, but it being calm, I ordered Lt. Newcomb[2] and the Four Cutters, to proceed with one of the remaining Lighters of the Yard, having an 18 pounder in her, to attack the Bomb Ship, which in the anxiety of the Enemy to get below the temporary Forts erecting by my Gallant associates Capts. Porter and Perry, had been left exposed to attack. At sun set just as I was about to give orders to attack the Bomb,[3] I discovered one of the Enemy's Frigates behond [*beyond*] the point forming the entrance of Washington's reach, which necessarily obliged me to relinquish this determination, and give orders to proceed across to the Virginia Shore, to haul up the Boats and place the Lighter in a situation to be defended against the Enemy's Barges.—

Having reconnoitr'd the Enemy, on returning to the Lighter at 9 P.M. I seized a man under suspicious circumstances, on the Beach near to a small Boat, about a mile above the Enemy's uppermost Ship, that again induced me to change my position to the opposite side of the River, where, after getting the Cutters hauled up, placing the Lighter in an advantageous position, and my musket men upon the top of a Cliff overlooking the River, I was at 11 P.M. attacked by all the Enemy's Barges, but which, by the cool intrepidity of Lt. Newcomb, having charge of the Lighter, assisted by Lt. Forrest, S Master Ramage, M Mate Stockton & Midshn. Whitlock[4] and 45 Seamen with muskets, the Enemy was not only repulsed, but in less than 20 Minutes, thrown into the utmost confusion and driven back to his Ships, and I have sufficient reason to believe, with great Loss, altho' the only injury sustained on our part, was one man wounded onboard the Lighter.—

The Enemy thus repulsed, and no prospect of doing him further injury in this way, as his rearmost Ship was not more than a mile distant, I had the Lighter shifted further up, and at 7 A.M. a Fire Vessel brought down for the purpose of assailing him in conjunction with the Battery at the White House under the command of Capt Porter—but in this I was again disappointed, as that excellent Officer, after using every possible exertion, was not able in so

short a time as had been afforded him, to erect a Work sufficiently strong, to check the Enemy any length of time; otherwise, I conceive I should have found no difficulty in effecting his destruction

At the time the Enemy silenced the Battery, the Fire Ship, under full Sail, was about a mile above his uppermost vessels, when I found myself under the necessity of ordering her to be set on Fire, and at the same time, our Boats to retire to prevent their being taken possession of by his numerous Barges.—

Altho' I did not succeed in the destruction of any of the Enemy's Vessels, I am never-the-less convinced, that the expedition was in many points of view, attended with good effect, consequently I feel it a duty to recommend to your notice, the Officers and Seamen engaged in the same, as in two of the Fire Vessels, Lt. Newcomb and S. Master Ramage, manifested so much zeal, as to continue onboard steering them, until they were enveloped in the flames, and obliged to jump overboard to avoid shareing the fate of the vessels themselves. I am also indebted to the exertions of Lt. Forrest, who volunteered his Services, and altho' very much indisposed at the time, afforded all the assistance in his power—

Permit me at the same time to recommend to your attention, Mr. Stockton, Masters Mate who, not only rendered me essential Service as an acting Aide-de-Camp, but in every other situation, manifested a zeal and intripidity not to be shaken: also, Midshn. Whitlock whose conduct in every part of the service I highly approve. Mr Thomas Herbert a young Gentleman of Alexandria & Mr. Parry, Pilot, who volunteered their services, also deserve well of their Country—

The conduct of the Seamen for energy and patriotism, was not even excelled by that of their Officers.—

At the time I took possession of Alexandria, there were 1500 pounds of fresh Beef lying on the Wharf ready to be delivered to the Boats of the Enemy's Ships, which were then only 2½ or 3 miles below the Town, & I mention this to shew the state, that place was in at the time.—

In justice to Major Kemper, commanding a Detachment of the militia of Genl. Hungerfords Brigade, it is but proper I mention, that on taking possession of Alexa. he immediately marched his detachment to my assistance and which at once secured the Town against any Force the Enemy could send back.—

The quantity of Flour the Enemy was enabled to take from Alexa., I found on enquiry to be not more than between 14 & 16,000 Barrels.—

As respects the manner of my reception by the citizens of Alexa. when I landed and took possession of that place, I shall inform you hereafter in a separate communication.—[5] With great Respect I have the Honor to be Sir, Yr Obt Servt

Jn° Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 33 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Frigates *Seahorse* and *Euryalus* and bomb vessel *Devastation*.
2. For Newcomb's account of this action, see Newcomb to Rodgers, 5 Sept. 1814, pp. 250–51.
3. *Devastation*.
4. Ephraim Whitlock's midshipman's warrant dated from 1 January 1812.
5. Rodgers did not mention this subject in subsequent correspondence.

Naval Preparations for the Defense of Baltimore

Commodore Rodgers received Secretary Jones's orders of 19 and 23 August[1] too late to conduct reinforcements from the Delaware station to the aid of the capital. Instead, his naval contingent arrived in Baltimore on 25 August, where, encountering a city in near panic, Rodgers quickly organized all the naval forces to assist the military in defending that place against an anticipated attack by the British. When Secretary Jones ordered Rodgers and his men deployed against the British squadron plundering Alexandria, anxious Baltimoreans demanded his return. With the crisis in the Potomac over by 5 September, Rodgers left Virginia to establish a strong naval presence at Baltimore. Besides manning vessels in the harbor, Rodgers established batteries on the shoreline to the east and west of Fort McHenry, as well as a bastion of batteries and entrenchments on Hampstead Hill that was designed to protect the city from an attack from the east.

1. See pp. 199 and 201–2.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Balto Aug 27. 1814

Sir

Enclosed is a copy of my Letter of the 23d Inst.[1] which, if you did not receive, will apprise you when I left New Castle; and I now have to inform you that, altho' by forced marches—night & Day, I was only able to reach this place at 9 OClock of the evening of the 25th Inst,— at a time, when the account had already reached here, that the Enemy was in possession of Bladensburg and the Capitol;— which disaster made it necessary to halt at least until I could gain information of Genl. Winder's position, to enable me to make the necessary arrangements to unite my Force with his in the least possible time—

Yesterday morning I gained the intelligence that, the Genl., with the remnant of his Forces, was at Montgomery Court House, and immediately sent an express to inform him where I was, to ascertain his dispositions, and to acquaint him that, I was in readiness to march to his assistance in whatever direction he might advise. In advance of the Army, Genl. Winder and suit, arrived here, early this morning, and already an understanding, relative to a coopperation of the Naval Forces under my command, with those of the Army, under his, has taken place.—

My uniting the Seamen & marines of my own Ship,[2] to those of the Flotilla and Capt Porter's, which are momently expected, constitute a Force of between 8 & 9 hundred effective men, and which, with the assistance of Capts. Porter and Perry and master Commdt. Spence who have volunteered their services to act under my orders I shall have organized on the principle of a Brigade to act either with the Army, or onboard the Flotilla at this place, as the pressure of the times may render necessary.—

Unfortunately a misunderstanding at present exists between Brigdr. Genl. Winder of the U States Army and Lieut Genl. Smith of the militia, relative to the command of the Land Forces—both claiming the right of priority;— this will not, I hope however, retard the service in any essential degree, as Genl. Winder has in a manner much to his honor I conceive, consented to waive his

pretentions to rank for the present and assist in the necessary preparations for the defence of this place, and annoyance of the Enemy, until the decision of the Government shall be made known.—[3]

We are yet ignorant of the dispositions of the Enemy further than, that he has bent his course either towards Annapolis, or his Ships on the Patuxent; from the information obtained however, the prevalent opinion is, that he intends to Embark.—[4]

I should have written earlier, had I known where to have addressed you.—[5]

I have only further to add that, I hope our little force on the principle already explained, will be able to render services of moment, and that you will approve of the arrangements I am at present about to make With great respect I have the honor to be Sir Yr Obt Servt

Jn° Rodgers

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 139 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. See pp. 200–201.
2. *Guerriere.*
3. Brigadier General Winder was the commander of the Tenth Military District, which encompassed Baltimore, and because of this federal service, he outranked Major General Samuel Smith of the Maryland militia. After the debacle at Bladensburg and Washington, however, the Baltimoreans supported Smith. Acting Secretary of War James Monroe eventually confirmed Smith's command. For more on this controversy, see Sheads, *Rockets' Red Glare,* pp. 61–62.
4. The British troops reembarked at Benedict on 30 August.
5. Secretary Jones returned to Washington on 28 August.

Commodore John Rodgers: General Orders

The pressure of the times calling for the Coopperation of the Naval Forces of our Country with thos of the Army; I have by authority of Instructions from the Hon. The Secty. of the Navy, assumed the command of the Naval Forces on this Station; and to render the same as useful as possible in the present eventful Crisis; do hereby direct, that a Brigade be formed of the whole, and divided into Two Regiments or Divisions the 1st. of which is to consist of the Officers, Seamen and Marines of the U States Frigate *Guerriere,* as well as those of the late U States Frigate *Essex.* And the 2nd. Division, of the Officers and Seamen of the Flotilla with the addition of such Volunteers as may tender their Services to either of said Divisions.—

The 1st. Regiment is to be commanded by Capt Porter and the 2nd. by Capt Perry.— Master Comdt. Spence to do the duties of Adjutant.— Purser Hamilton the duties of Commissary, and Purser's Halsey[1] and Skinner the duties of Assistant Commissaries.—

Signed John Rodgers Como. Comdg. Brigade

Baltimore Aug 28th. 1814

LB, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 64, Order Book.

1. Samuel Hambleton, whose rank as purser dated from 25 April 1812, was ordered to *Java* in August 1814. James M. Halsey's rank also dated from 25 April 1812. He had served as *Guerriere*'s purser since October 1813.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Commodore John Rodgers

Baltimore August 31. 1814

Sir,

The Oars were not to be procured in Baltimore, on the arrival of your order.— all the Carpenters which could be collected, have been at work; and the order has been executed as expeditiously, as under existing circumstances, was possible.

We deplore your absence, as you were looked upon the Bulwark of the City.

By a return made to me from the Lazaretto, I find there are but 25 men able to leave here for Washington: they will set out ~~tomorrow~~ immediately. I have the honor to remain yr vy obt st

R T Spence

LS, MdHi, War of 1812 Collection, MS 1846.

Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland Militia, to Commodore John Rodgers

Head Quarters 1 Sept: 1814

Sir

I have received your letter of yesterday[1]—your retrograde to Snowden's, is something, but unless you return to Baltimore immediately the injury done cannot be retrieved, inded I doubt whether it can be repaired— the preparations you had intended can (I presume) not be perfected, and this day all our 12s and 18s pounders depart for Washington as I informed you yesterday— I hope you will have had sufficient influence to cause them also to retrograde and have the honor to be— your obt.

S. Smith Major General

LS, MdHi, War of 1812 Collection, MS 1846. Addressed: "Commodore Rogers/at Snowdens/or Washington."

1. Rodgers apprised Smith that he had positioned his force closer to Washington but not far from Baltimore. He could thus protect both cities. Rodgers to Smith, 31 Aug. 1814, DLC, Samuel Smith Family Papers (Reel 2).

Commodore John Rodgers to Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland Militia

Washington Sept. 1st. 1814 11 PM

Sir

Your letter of this date reached me at 6 PM— Would to God! it was in my power to return to Baltimore immediately as I am well assured that our seamen would be of more service there than they are likely to be here;— There are now however 500 Encamped at Snowdens ready to march to Baltimore— the rest

are here & in the Vicinity of Alexandria so that you may calculate on having the whole detachment, Except about 80 who are on the Virginia side with Capt. Porter, in 12 hours from the time it is ascertained that the Enemy manifests any thing like a determinate disposition to attack Baltm.— for the men who are here I have the promise of stages to conduct them back so that they may be conveyed there as soon those who are at present at Snowdens— I am now preparing three fire vessels at the Navy Yard, & if a favorable opportunity offers shall assail the Enemy in that way tomorrow night— his force is two Frigates, two Sloops of War, a Gun Brig, & a Rocket Schooner—[1] I can assure you that I feel a deep interest in the welfare of Baltm. & am Satisfied that I shall be with you with ⅞ths of my force should the Enemy attack you; & this is an object on which I have set my heart, as I feel confident from what I have already seen that they will be made to curse the hour they undertook the expedition— From what I have witnessed here I cease to be surprised at any thing the Enemy was permitted to do:— altho he has receved an additional force it is presumed his Effective Strength is not greater than that with which he attacked this place, oweing more particularly to desertion than any other cause— by all accounts he must have lost from 6 to 700 men by desertion (In haste) With great respect I am Sir Yr Ot. Sevt

Jn° Rodgers

The Secty of the Navy has informed me, this moment, that the Artillery you mention is ordered Back to Baltm.

ALS, DLC, Samuel Smith Family Papers (Reel 2).

1. Captain Gordon's squadron consisted of the frigates *Seahorse* and *Euryalus*, bomb vessels *Devastation*, *Aetna*, and *Meteor*, rocket ship *Erebus*, and dispatch boat *Anna Maria*.

Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland Militia, to Commodore John Rodgers

Head Quarters, Baltimore 2nd. Septr. 1814

Sir,

I have recd. yours & regret that the Idea of setting fire to two frigates[1] Should induce the Government to detain so large & so efficient a force as yours from our Aid, because Altho you come at the time the British are before us, your Station is not Assigned & in the Meantime the Sloops of War[2] intended to defend the Western Branch[3] are not prepared— if we are Attacked on that side we are not defended, it is our Weak Point, I am persuaded you can do no good where you are— you may cause the Burning of Alexandria— What has become of the Ammunition secured in the Chapel— in haste, yours

S. Smith Major General

LS, MdHi, War of 1812 Collection, MS 1846. Smith addressed this to Rodgers in Washington.

1. *Seahorse* and *Euryalus*.
2. *Erie* and *Ontario*.
3. Patapsco River.

Commodore John Rodgers to Master Commandant Robert T. Spence

Balto. Sept 8th. 1814

Sir

You are requested to have one of the two Sloops of War (whichever can be most readily prepared for the objects intended) Moored on the southern side of the channel of the Patapsco as a Block Ship,[1] and in a line Southerd between her and the Shore, the Barges, so that the whole may act in conjunction with the several Forts (namely Forts McHenry and those above)[2] to the annoyance of the Enemy, without the risk of annoying each other, that is, the Flotilla the Forts.—

The Flotilla is supplied with the necessary requisites for Service, and you are requested to have the Block Ship supplied in like manner.— Respectfully &c

Signed Jno. Rodgers

LB, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 64, Order Book.

1. *Erie*.
2. Forts Babcock and Covington were situated on the Ferry Branch of the Patapsco River, to the west of Fort McHenry.

Commodore John Rodgers to Commodore Alexander Murray

Baltimore Sept 9. 1814

Dear Sir

I reached here the evening before last direct from Washington.—

There are now upwards of 15,000 Regulars and Militia exclusive of about 1,000 Seamen and Marines which I have formed into a Brigade consisting of Two Regiments, & now encamped in the environs of this Town. Forts, Redoubts and Entrenchments are thrown up all round the Town and the place now has nothing to fear, even should the Enemy make his appearance tomorrow.— It is understood however that he has descended the Bay and whatever might have been his intentions that he will not now attempt an Attack on this place with any such Force as he can Command at present.[1] I hope to leave here in two or three days for Phila., as I begin to feel tired of playing Soldier, and more particularly as there will not be any occasion for our Services.—

I recd. your Letter[2] just at the moment of commencing the Line of March from this place for Washington where, after my Arrival, I was constantly employed in that kind of way, as to deprive me the greater part of time, of Pen and Paper—

Please to present my respectful regards to Mrs. Murray and family, and believe me with great respect and regard Dr. Sir &C

Signed J Rodgers

LB, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 64, Letter Book. Rodgers addressed this to Murray in Philadelphia.

1. Concerned because Captain Gordon's squadron had not rejoined the main fleet in the Chesapeake, the British diverted their force to the Potomac to ascertain his circumstances. This activity around 9–10 September led many Americans to believe that Baltimore would be spared.
2. This letter was not found.

Lieutenant Solomon Rutter, Flotilla Service, to Commodore John Rodgers

Sir

I hereby report to you that the Battery with t[*h*]ree long eighteen pounders at the Lazaretto is fit for Service with one Hundred rounds and man'd agreeable to your orders Eight Barges up with long eight and four with long Twelves and all with gunades Eighteens man'd and ready for Service. Three small Barges the t[*h*]ree Large Barges are at the Point yet under the Directions of the navy agent[1]

Men Distributed as follows

8 Barges	Each 34 Men	272
3 Small Barges	each 22, do	66
Men on Board *Erie*—		24
In the Battery—		45
Remaining at Lazaretto		114
	Total	521
Deserted unfit for Service & Sick—		50
		471

Lazaretto Sept. 11th 1814
Sol[n.] Rutter Lieut. U S Flotilla

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5562–63.

1. James Beatty.

Commodore John Rodgers to Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland Militia

Fort McHenry 10 Oclock Sunday morg [*11 September 1814*]

Sir

I have Just ordered an officer[1] & 80 sailors to occupy fort Wadsworth[2] the Sea fencibles now there being all sick— The Six Gun Battery called fort Covington[3] I shall have manned if possible by a dectmt. [*detachment*] from the flotilla I am now making my distributions & shall inform you of the same as they are made

I shall sink obstructions if possible

J Rodgers

ALS, DLC, Samuel Smith Family Papers (Reel 2).

1. Lieutenant Henry S. Newcomb.
2. Fort Covington.
3. Fort Babcock.

Who Commands the Chesapeake Bay Flotilla?

Stymied by the rigorous British blockade of the Chesapeake, Master Commandant Robert T. Spence remained in Baltimore throughout 1814, a caretaker for the sloops of war Ontario *and* Erie *and commander of the naval station there. Since its creation in 1813, Joshua Barney's flotilla, whose home base was Baltimore, enjoyed a special status within the Navy. Barney's chain of command led directly to the secretary of the navy. After the British invasion of Washington, Secretary Jones placed Commodore Rodgers in command of the naval contingent at Baltimore. In early September 1814, while Barney was recovering from a bullet wound suffered during the Battle of Bladensburg and Commodore Rodgers was in Washington preparing a rearguard attack on the British squadron, a dispute arose between Spence and Solomon Frazier, Barney's second in command.*

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Commodore John Rodgers

Baltimore September 1 1814

Sir,

Your Order requiring all officers of the Navy & Flotilla to report themselves to me, having been read to Lieutenant Frazure he has refused to obey it,[1]

This example of insubordination will have the most pernicious effect unless its author be in Some manner called to an account

I have not thought it expedient to arrest him, until I consulted you on the Subject—indeed the good of the Service requires; nay demands his punishment Respy. Sir your obt. Sevt.

R T Spence

P.S. I understand that he intends to know no officer but Commodore Barney,— I have been endeavouring to collect the men belon[*g*]ing to the flotilla but in consequence of Mr. Frazure's conduct, it is difficult to make the officers understand that they are bound to obey naval officers, I request to be honoured with your order on the Subject.—

LS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series II, Container 26.

1. Spence sent Jones a copy of Rodgers's order. Spence to Jones, 3 Sept. 1814, p. 266.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Naval Camp Baltimore Sept 2 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, that, to the small part of the Military Brigade, left here by Commod. Rodgers, others, who have arrived here since his departure, have been added; and that I have at present encamped, about One Hundred men, together with eight travelling 12 pounders, completely equip'd for movement.

The Camp is in a salubrious, and commanding situation calculated, from its elevated site, to hold a large range of country in check.

As fast as the Flotilla men arrive, I shall dispose of them to the best possible advantage:—keeping in view the security of our Ships and Barges, in every arrangement.

Hoping my exertions will be rewarded with your approbation, I have the honor to remain with great respect, your most obt st,

R. T. Spence

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 34½ (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Naval Camp Baltimore Sept 3d 1814

Sir

I did myself the honor of addressing you yesterday, stating the arrangements made by me under the orders of Comd. Rodgers. After much difficulty in getting the men picked up, and sent to the Lazaretto, with the view of taking them immediately to Camp, where I have every thing prepared to carry into full execution, the Comd's. orders;— Lieut Frazier of the Flotilla arrives at the Lazaretto, countermands my orders; and prevents the men leaving there with an officer sent to receive them: declaring, that he neither knew "Capt Spence, or Comd. Rodgers."

At a time like the present, when subordination is so essential, such conduct if not punished, will lead to the most baleful consequences. I have foreborn to arrest him, untill I receive your order, or the order of Comd. Rodgers;— in the meantime, nearly 200 Seaman must remain idle at the Lazto.;— and the Batteries under my command destitute of men. I have the honor to remain, with great respect yr obt st

R. T. Spence

Copy of a general order signd

All Officers of the Flotilla and Navy, are directed in my absence, to report themselves immediately to Capt Spence.

(Signd) John Rodgers

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 36 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Robert T. Spence

R. T. Spence Esqr.
M.C. U.S. Navy Commanding
at Baltimore

Navy Department
Sept. 3d. 1814
½ past 11 P.M.

Sir,

The enclosed order to Lieut. Frazier will sufficiently explain the principles upon which the respective Services of the Navy proper and of the flotilla rest, when distinct, and when combined.—

Lieut. F. is a brave and meritorious officer, and as there may be some feeling on the occasion among the gallant officers of the flotilla under the idea of the distinct nature of the service, it will be well by a conciliatory conduct to remove any scruples which may exist.—

The times call for harmony and mutual exertion and I am well assured you will do what is proper upon the occasion.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 412 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Lieutenant Solomon Frazier, Flotilla Service

Lieut. Frazier
Com'dg. Officer of the
U.S. Flotilla, Baltimore

Navy Department
Sept. 3d. 1814.
½ past 11. P.M.

Sir,

Commodore Rodgers having been ordered on to Baltimore for the defence of that place, and being the Senior Naval officer, will of course command all the naval forces there whether of the Flotilla, or of the Navy proper, whenever it shall be necessary to combine those forces for a common object, Commodore R on his departure from Baltimore with a part of his force for the temporary aid of this district, left Captain Spence of the Navy in command with orders for all officers of the Flotilla and Navy to report themselves to him.—

Captain Spence has informed me that you have declined to recognise the authority of Com: R. This I am persuaded has arisen from a mistaken sense of duty on your part, and not from a spirit of insubordination.—

In ordinary cases the Commodore would not have interfered with the command of the flotilla, which being a Special Service was under the command of a flotilla Officer Specially appointed and under the distinct order of the Navy Department.—

It is however self evident that whenever it shall be necessary to combine these forces, the Senior Officer, whether of the Navy proper or of the flotilla, will command.—

Having done justice to your motive and explained the principles upon which your duty rests, you will report yourself and the force under you to capt. Spence, agreeably to the order of Commodore Rodgers.—

When the occasion which has called for the concentration of the forces of the Navy proper and of the flotilla shall cease the latter will again be placed under the distinct command of its own officers.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 411–12 (M149, Roll No. 11).

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Naval Camp Baltimore Sept 4, 1814

Sir,

Your letter to me inclosing one to Lieut Frazier, I have been honoured with. Lieut Frazier is at present absent from town, but will return tomorrow, when I shall send for him, deliver it, and pursue that conciliatory deportment, you have recommended;—which I [*have*] not fail'd to display on the occasion.

Harmony at this period, is so important to a union of effort, that a triffling sacrifice of feeling will be readily made to patriotism; and the desire all must feel in so troublous a time, to combine every exertion for the general good: with these sentiments, I hope you will rest assured, of my wish to pacify, unite, and exert myself for honor, and my Country. With great respect yr, vy, obt, st—

R. T. Spence

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 37 (M147, Roll No. 5).

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Naval Camp Baltimore Sept 19, 1814

Sir,

Annex'd, is a copy of a letter from Comd. Rodgers. My appointment to Fort McHenry, is with the concurrence of Genl. Smith.[1]

Commod. Barney I understand, is to be exchang'd in a few days; and it being unpleasant to the Flotilla Officers, to act under the orders of Naval Commanders; (there being no necessity at present for their doing so) I shall resign the direction of that Force to its commanding Officer.

Fort Covington having become evacuated by the departure of Comd. Rodgers, I shall endeavour to beat up volunteers to reoccupy it. The Commodore's departure with so efficient a force, creates a deep gloom— indeed Sir: we have much to dread—our force is diminishing, and the hour of trial, I fear, is not yet past.— I have the honor to remain with high respect yr Obt st

R T Spence

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 45 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Major General Samuel Smith commanded the Third Division of the Maryland militia during the War of 1812 and after the debacle at Bladensburg was chosen to superintend the defense of Baltimore. After the British bombardment of Fort McHenry, Smith appointed Rodgers to the temporary command there when its commander, Lieutenant Colonel George Armistead, fell ill. On 19 September 1814, Jones ordered Rodgers to return to Philadelphia where he had been overseeing the construction of *Guerriere*, and so the command of the naval forces at Baltimore devolved to Spence. Jones to Rodgers, 19 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 418–19 (M149, Roll No. 11). On his departure, Rodgers placed Spence in temporary command at the fort until Armistead's recovery. Rodgers to Spence, 20 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 45, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5). The copyist made an error in the date as the enclosure is dated after the cover letter.

British Strategy after Washington

After the British landing force had reembarked at Benedict, Admiral Cochrane decided to leave the Chesapeake and proceed north to Rhode Island for further military operations. He reversed his plans after Major General Robert Ross and Rear Admiral George Cockburn persuaded him to attack Baltimore before leaving the bay. The British had long held that city, the home of many American privateers, in opprobrium. Suspecting that Captain Gordon's squadron may have encountered resistance in the Potomac, Cochrane delayed the assault on Baltimore and ordered the fleet to his assistance. After sighting the squadron on 9 September, the entire fleet sailed northward up the bay.

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER F. I. COCHRANE, R.N., TO FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY VISCOUNT ROBERT SAUNDERS DUNDAS MELVILLE

Tonnant, Patuxent River 3rd. Septr. 1814

My dear Lord,

The brilliant success that has attended our efforts upon the Continent has roused me a little from the most severe depression of Spirits I ever suffered. the recent occurances at home of the shameful conduct of some of my near relations has hurt me beyond what I can possibly describe[1] having brought up Lord Cochrane I had hopes of his rising to distinction & I yet see a chance of his innocence being established. but as for others I must remain mute— To bear with such evils is no easy task, the loss of Property is nothing but the odium attending such proceedings leaves a Sting behind felt by the whole of their connections. Through life I have Steered by my own Compass & I have too high an opinion of H.M's. Ministers for a moment to suppose that I shall suffer in their opinion by what has happened to others with neither of whom I Either agreed in Politics or opinions. Let me now congratulate your Lordship upon the destruction of all the Public property at Washington. The previous defeat of their Army at Bladensburgh & the conflagration of their flotilla fleet at the head of this River it will take some millions Sterling to replace the injury they have sustained the short space of 8 days has accomplished all those objects & so much has been done with such a limited force I trust H. Maj's Ministers will place a further reliance on my recommendation & at least double our force so as we may be able to act with vigour the moment the sickly season is over, say the 5th. of Novr. the reinforcements should come out direct to the Chesapeake if Soldiers are not to be had pray send Marines but let them be selected as many of the Battalion here are slight lads unfit for the fatigues of the Field. I beg leave to recommend that a few troops of dismounted Cavalry be sent out with spare accoutrements also a Rifle Corps with spare Rifles. We must be upon a par to meet the Enemy with their own weapons. hitherto what I promised has been effected & if Peace makers will only stay their procedings until Jonathan is brought to the feet of Gt. Britain, future Wars will be prevented. As Septr. is a fatal month even for the Inhabitants of Virginia & more so for Strangers As soon as the Army is all reembarked I mean to proceed to the Northward & if possible try to surprize Rhode Island where we will quarter upon the Enemy & the Troops as well as the Ships meet with every refreshment About the close of

October we will move to the Southward & act agreeably to the information we may receive, if the reinforcements arrive I propose an attack upon Baltimore the most democratic town & I believe the richest in the Country. As this Town ought to be laid in Ashes, if the same opinion holds with H. Maj's. Ministers some hint ought to be given to Genl. Ross as he does not seem inclined to visit the Sins committed upon H. Maj's. Canadian Subjects upon the Inhabitants of this state. I do not mean this as any complaint for a better man nor a more zealous Officer does not exist. He is just what he ought to be & when he is better acquainted with the American Character he will possibly see as I do that like Spaniels they must be treated with great severity before you ever make them tractable. I believe his fear is that the discipline of his Army may suffer by a System to which they have not been accustomed but an arrangement may be made to obviate this evil. I am not of so savage a disposition as to conceive that measures of this sort ought to be resorted to except upon the most urgent occasions, but if you suffer their Troops to ruin your subjects in the Canadas & do not bring home your vengeance upon those the nearest to the seat of Govt. the Enemy will continue their conduct until Your North American Settlements are no longer worth holding. As the Season advances I propose going to the Carolinas Georgia &ca. & ending at N Orleans which I have not a doubt of being able to Subdue & thereby hold the Key of the Mississippi. Your Lordship will See by my public despatches that the Indians are coming forward in force[2] I have supplied them with 4,000 stand of arms, & 2000 more are going with the Vessel having Presents on bd. Capt. Gordon of the *Seahorse* is to have the comd. in the Glf of Mexico I hope for much from his activity & zeal. Let me close this Letter by soliciting Your Lships influence that this floating Army may be supplied with a liberal & not a sparing hand Send me flat bottomed Vessels that will act as Gun Vessels to cover landings & carry at least 100 Soldiers for a short distance this Coast requires them. abt. 25 or 30 such vessels wd. enable me to move with celerity & go up to the sources of the Enemies Rivers which cannot be done in the Ships of War or Transports. each Vessel shod. bring out a boat built flat but not what is called a Flat Boat Rather similar to a Ships launch. She is wanted to land Troops & Horses in shallow Water, the Gun Brigs & Gun Vessels will answer any purpose if a sufficient number are sent out & each Ship coming out ought to bring Supernumeraries. the Fleet is at least 1200 short I want 2000 to make up for occasional losses, this Service is different from all others & therefore requires a different treatment I ought to have at least 300 men disposeable as occasion may require. We often Acquire the Boats of the Country if they are manned by the cruizing ships I can't send them on such Services as may be at the moment required I therefore beg that the No. of men I have mentioned may be sent out without a moment's delay. there are many other demands of mine which I pray your Lordship to cast an eye over— I am much at a loss for want of a Printing Press & a devil to work it with all his imps. I will now conclude & trust &ca—

(signed A. Cochrane—

LB, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2345, fols. 11–12.

1. For more on the scandal surrounding Admiral Cochrane's nephew, Captain Sir Thomas Cochrane, see p. 135, note 4.

2. In an earlier letter to the Admiralty, Cochrane found that supplying the southern Indians with arms emboldened them against the Americans. Cochrane to Croker, 27 July 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 505–6.

[Extract]

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Jane Codrington

No. 5)— 5th. Septr. 1814. . . . We are going down this oven of a river[1] with a fine breeze, & after visiting the islands of Tangier where under the direction of Adl. Cockburn we have gone to a great expence, we shall quit it entirely for the present at least, & I hope with the troops in good health & ready for another dash. The sickly season here is about at its height, and from the uncommonly cadaverous appearance of the natives who are in health, the country with all its beauty of scenery is not fit for the habitation of social man. . . . 10th. Septr. We could not get a communication with them in time to send it by the *Iphigenia*, but we now have to detail the proceedings of our ships in the Potomac, which will make a glorious addition to the business of Washington. They were commanded by Capt. Gordon of the *Seahorse* who lost a leg in Hoste's battle in the Adriatic: and his conduct on this occasion best describes his character.[2] Napier of the *Euryalus* (although not a son of Lady Sarah)[3] was wounded by a musket ball in the back of the neck; but he will do very well. They overcame difficulties which would have dismayed many men in either of the two professions, and they have brought out 21. prizes many of which they weighed caulked & masted as well as loaded; and then forced their way through the most difficult shoal navigation in spite of batteries erected to stop them & a vast number of troops firing down on their decks in the narrow parts. The frigates[4] were even obliged to take their guns out on account of getting aground & put them in again. In short it is nothing less brilliant than the capture of Washington, and those employed deserve laurel crowns.— We were bent on other plans; but hearing reports of vessels being sunk & batteries formed to prevent their return, we decided on making the safety of these ships our first consideration. We are relieved from a great load by their rejoining us with so little injury, because we had pushed twenty miles up the Potomac with our whole force in order to effect their recovery if necessary. Jonathan must I think be somewhat surprized to find a ship like the *Tonnant* accompanied by so large a fleet going up and down these rivers by night as well as by day without pilots, each taking care of the other as the colliers do going up the Sevin.—[5] We were going out of the Chesapeake directly: but the Chief[6] has assented to another operation here at the wish of the General[7] & Cockburn, which I think would have been much better deferred until our return from the Northward, according to the Admiral's own plan. I hope & think it will equally succeed, because we are determined it shall; but it would have been better insured by postponement I think, & without danger of illness: and I am decidedly of opinion that our operations elsewhere would have been more favorable to the army in Canada. . . .

E.C.—

ALS, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/7/1, No. 5, letters from 5–10 Sept. 1814. Codrington wrote a series of letters to his wife marked No. 5 and dated from 5–21 September 1814. The fourteen sentences from the 5 September letter that are not printed here contain personal matters and derogatory references about the American character. Codrington did not write on 6 and 7 September. The 8 September entry is not printed here; it contains personal comments. There is no 9 September letter.

1. The invasion force descended the Patuxent River and sailed southward down the Chesapeake Bay.

2. Codrington has confused two battles against the French in the Adriatic in 1811. In March 1811 Captain Gordon served in a squadron under Captain William Hoste, R.N., at the Battle of Lissa. Gordon lost his leg in November 1811 at another Anglo-French engagement in the Adriatic but this time his squadron commander was Captain Murray Maxwell. For more on Gordon's earlier exploits, see Perrett, *Real Hornblower*, pp. 68–84.

3. Captain Charles Napier, R.N., (1786–1860) was a cousin of Lieutenant Colonel Charles James Napier, British Army, (1782–1853). The latter's mother was Lady Sarah Lennox.

4. *Seahorse* and *Euryalus*.

5. Phonetic for Severn River in western England.

6. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane.

7. Major General Robert Ross.

British Accounts of the Attack on Baltimore

For almost two weeks after the invasion of Washington, Cochrane was undecided where to strike next. He preferred to venture northward along the Atlantic coast, but, instead, allowed the urgings of Major General Ross and Rear Admiral Cockburn, and the approaching period of dangerous tidal currents in the Chesapeake Bay determine his next course of action. Baltimore had almost three weeks to prepare for the British. The latter's overconfidence, however, stemming from their rout of the American forces at Bladensburg, blinded them to their deficiencies.

In a joint operation that began in the predawn hours of 12 September 1814, Major General Ross led a contingent of forces that had disembarked at North Point, Maryland, and Admiral Cochrane commanded a bombardment flotilla off Fort McHenry. While proceeding along the road to Baltimore, Ross encountered American skirmishers and was mortally wounded, leaving his second, Colonel Arthur Brooke, Forty-fourth Regiment of Foot, in charge. Meanwhile, Cochrane left his larger ships off North Point and sailed up the Patapsco River with his shallower draft vessels, anchoring about four miles from the fort. While Brooke advanced toward Baltimore on the morning of 13 September, British ships bombarded the fort. Scuttled vessels at the entrance of Baltimore harbor near Fort McHenry, however, denied the British easy access to the city. Discouraged by this and the ineffectiveness of the bombardment, Cochrane decided that the Royal Navy could not assist Brooke.

The following letters depict the cooperation between the British services but also the problems. War Office instructions in the spring of 1814 detailed the command structure in joint operations. While the naval commander chose the targets and oversaw the landings, the army commander ruled on land and could reject an operation.[1] Brooke was prepared to assault Baltimore and asked Cochrane for a naval diversion. Cochrane expressed his misgivings about pressing on to Cockburn who relayed them to Brooke. Deprived of naval support, Brooke decided to forego the assault on Baltimore.

1. See Bathurst to Barnes, 20 May 1814, pp. 72–74. The Admiralty had passed this letter on to Cochrane.

Rear Admiral Edward Codrington, R.N., to Respective Captains

Memo. *Tonnant* 11th Septr. 1814

The Royal Marines belonging to the Fleet are to be disposed of as follows.

Surprize	38	*Diadem*	12	*Dictator*	14
Diomede	17	*Regulus*	14	*Trave*	10
Weser	9	*Melpomene*	14	*Brune*	17
Thames	11	*Volcano*	8	*Wolverine*	18
Madagascar	35	*Rover*	20	*Severn*	46

To be under the command of Lt. Col. Malcolm

Seahorse 59
Havannah 48
} To be under the command of Major Lewis.

Tonnant 110
Royal Oak 45
Albion 80
Ramillies 100
} To be under the command of Capt Robyns.

E.C.
Rear Adml. & Capt. of the Fleet.

The Marine Officers of the respective Ships will land with their Men; The Marines are not to take their Knapsacks but to land with only a Blanket each.— To be ready to land at the shortest notice.—

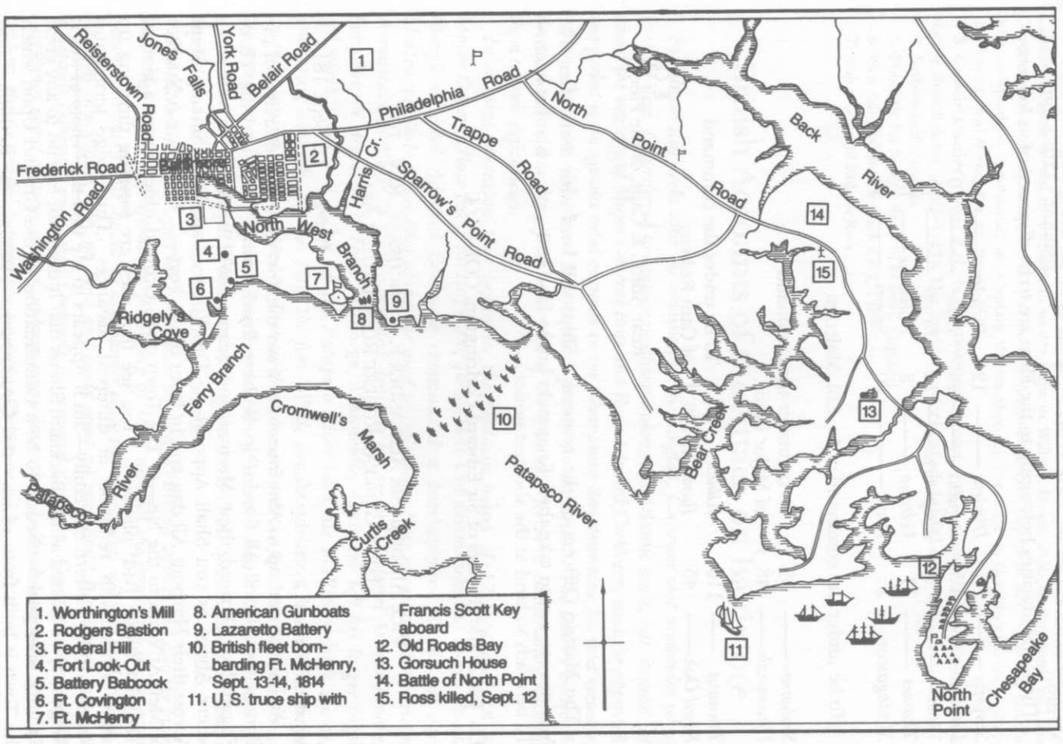
LB, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/4.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Major General Robert Ross, British Army

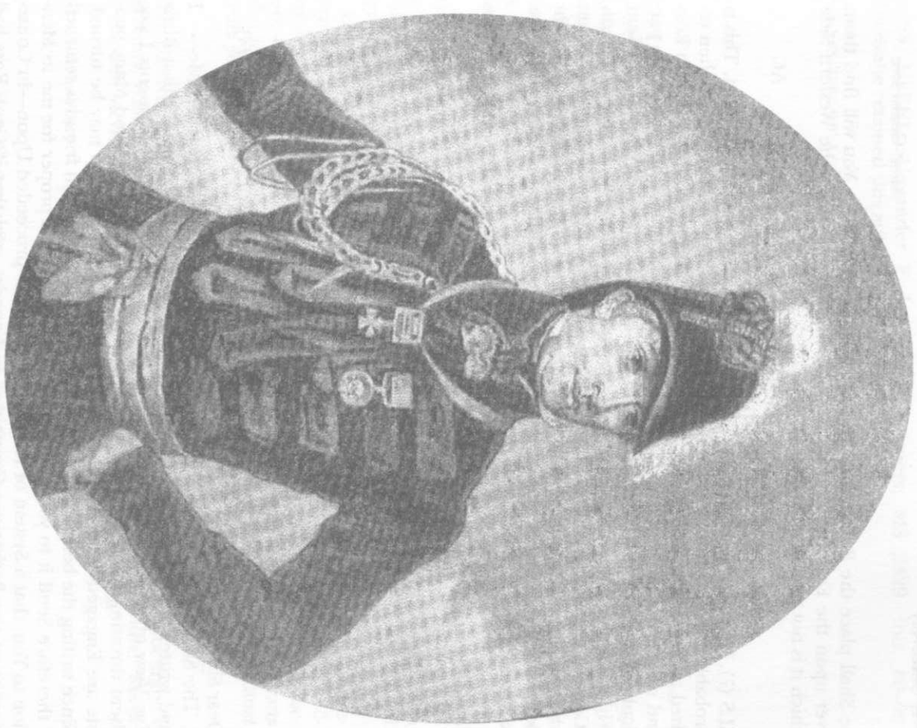
Surprise 12. Sept. 1814

My dear General

We have moved up to Abt. four miles from the Fort[1] to wait the Arrival of the Bombs—which will All five in No. be here this Evening[2] *Asia* and the Three Frigates[3] are Arrived their Marines and Seamen Will be Made to Join some where Above as you Shall Appoint— The Enemy have been Sinking Ships Across their Harbour All day, and in front of the Fort— They have A Number of Men At Work to the NE—of The Town upon Ground which forms a kind of Irregular Ridge (vid[4] plan)— I can see that they are ~~forming~~ throwing up breast Works with redoubts at different distances This Ridge terminates North—at the Eastern extremity—but it Appears to Me ~~that the Whole of this~~ it ~~Ridge~~ may be turned as the Backland Shews that it does not extend to any great distance ~~back and~~ it Seems to be a Continuation of the Ground Upon which the Town is built from ~~which~~ this Circumstance ~~I~~ inclines me to think it may be completely Turned—without the necessity taking it in front. The Numbers of persons employd I cannot ~~Speak~~ Ascertain of, of Course they have all at Work



Map 9. Battle of North Point and Baltimore, 12–14 September 1814



Robert Ross

they Can lay hold of—but I have seen Several divisions of Armed Men— I hope you will be Able to Understand what I now Send

Their ~~frigate~~ is not ~~burned~~ On Way— ~~I trust you will get her~~ —at daylight we begin ~~God Bless You and Success to Bombard the fort Attend You— Yours Ever Sincerely~~

~~Alex^r Cochrane~~

we Shall place the Bombs and begin to Bombard the Fort. You will find them over upon the Eastern Shore as the Enemy have forts upon the Western Side which it is not necessary to encounter

AC

ALS (?), UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 43–44. This is probably the autograph letter signed that was returned, unopened, and then revised and retained. The creases, folds, and seal indicate that it was sent to Ross and returned after his death. The address written by Cochrane reads, "On particular Service Majr. General Ross/&c/A Cochrane." The phrase "To be Sent With Expedition" is also possibly in Cochrane's hand. The docketing reads, "Copy of Letter to MG. Ross." Other notations: "Originals Copies &ca written while operations were carrying on against Baltimore" and "to be copied in Book." A copy was then sent to Brooke along with the following letter addressed to Brooke.

1. Fort McHenry.
2. *Aetna, Devastation, Meteor, Terror, Volcano.*
3. *Seahorse, Severn,* and *Surprise.*
4. Abbreviation for *vide,* Latin for *see*; no plan is now filed with the letter.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Colonel Arthur Brooke, British Army

½ past Seven Monday Evening [*12 September 1814*]

Dear Sir

The Sad Accounts of the death of General Ross has Just reached Me— I had written him a few Minutes before by the boats in Bear Creek with a Birds Eye View of the fortifications of Baltimore and the New entrenchments I saw them throwing up to the NNE.—of the Town, upon Which a Good Many people are Engaged— It Struck Me that this entrenched Camp may be turned. Since writing the before going My letter to My poor departed friend is returned I therefore Send it to you in its Original form—[1] It is proper for me to Mention to You, that a System of Retaliation was to be proceeded Upon—in Consequence of the Barbarities Committed in Canada—and that if Genl. Ross had Seen the Second letter from Sir George Prevost—he would have destroyd—Washington and George Town— Their Nature are perfectly known to Rear Adl. Cockburn and I believe Mr. Evans— In them a kind of Latitude is given for raising Contribution instead of destruction but in this public property Cannot be Compromised

You will best be able to Judge what can be attempted—but let me know your determination as Soon as possible that I may Act Accordingly Ever my dear Sir Yours Sincerely

Alex^r Cochrane

ADfS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 89–90. Cochrane retained this autograph copy for his files.

1. Cochrane sent a copy, not the original letter.

Colonel Arthur Brooke, British Army, to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Meeting House near Batimore Septmber 13th—12—in the Mrng—

Dear Sir

half past 12 this Moment have the Honr of yours and Much obligd for the Information ther in contained. from what little information we could obtain it had appeard to Admiral Cockburn Mr. Evans &c that there Works might be turnd.

In the Morng. we hope to proceed and at about thelve or one to work our destruction and have comunication with you about ten or Eleven when we shall have looked about three miles of the entrenchments. as your fire I should think on the Town would of infinite Service to us.

As to enter upon the loss of our Departd Frnd I shall leave to future oportunity but am happy to say that from the very heavy oposition givn by the Enemy in forceing this Position of the Meeting House our Loss has not been that which might be Expected but at present imposible to exactly assertain. the Enemys I pray fully equal to ours.

Lasseto Point[1] is most likely the place we shall be able to hold communication with you. from the fortunate success of this day have any hope in succeeding in our last and final attack to Morrow I shall be in hopes of meeting before Evening Admiral Cockburn. I have shown your latter note to Mr. Evans who joins me My Dear Sir in my hope for our mutual Success Belev. most Truly yours

Arthur Brooke Colonel &c &c—

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 41–42. Cochrane's secretary, William Balhetchet, wrote the following after the signature line: "Recd. by Captain McDougall and Mr. Nin—abt. ½ past 3 PM 13 Septr W. B."

1. Lazaretto Point.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

My dear Admiral

It is impossible for the Ships to render you any assistance—the Town is so far retired within the Forts. It is for Colonel Brook to consider under such circum-

stances whether he has Force sufficient to defeat so large a number as it [*is*] said the Enemy has collected; say 20,000 strong or even a less number & to take the Town: without this can be done it will be only throwing the Mens lives away and prevent us from going upon other services— At any rate a very considerable loss must ensue and as the Enemy is daily gaining strength his loss let it be ever so great cannot be equally felt—

The Enemy has a Battery on the opposite point to the Fort from which he last night fired upon the Guard Boats and is now firing at the Bombs our Shells seem to go into the Fort— The Battery on the Eastern point does not appear to be a regular Fort but it is commanded by the other— Ever yours sincerely

Alexr. Cochrane

off Baltimore
½ past 9 AM
13 Sepr. 1814

W. Balhatchet Esqr.
H.M.S. *Tonnant.*

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fols. 39–40. Notation at the foot: "*Nymphe.*"

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to Captain Charles Napier, R.N.

You are to proced with the Boats placed under Your command and execute the following Services[1]

The Boats to proceed up the patapsco [*River*] (to be Supplied with An additional Quantity of Blank Cartridges) to fire ~~more~~ for the intention of drawing the Notice of the Enemy—. When the Boats leave this Ship Their Oars must be Muffled— They will in the first place proceed dired [*directed*] for the Shore Abreast *Meteor* Bomb—then row up Close to the Shore until they round the point of the patapscco, and proceed up that river About One or One and a half Miles—then let Them drop Their Grapnels and remain perfectly Quiet Until One Oclock.—[2] at which Hour the Bombs will open upon the Fort and Sky Rockets will be Thrown up when You will begin a Regular fire directed upon the Opposite Side of the River Occasionally using blank Cartridges only— ~~This is Intended to take off the Attention of the Enemy Opposite to Where our Army, as~~ an Attack is to be Made Upon their Lines directly at Two OClock— ~~The Boats will leave the patapscco before Three OClock and Rendezvous Along Side of the Ship~~ After you find that the Army is seriously engaged you will return to this Ship for further Order

Surprize 13th Sepr.
Sgd—A Cochrane

ADfS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fol. 91. This was addressed to Captain Napier who commanded H.M.S. *Euryalus.* A notation regarding an unrelated matter appears below the close.

1. Not knowing if Colonel Brooke would continue with the attack on Baltimore, Admiral Cochrane sent Captain Napier on a previously planned diversionary feint up the Ferry Branch of the Patapsco River that was scheduled for the night of 13–14 September.
2. 14 September.

Colonel Arthur Brooke, British Army, to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Dear Sir—

from your letter to Admiral Cockburn this Evening, I calld a Councill of War, though I had made all my arrangements for attacking the Enemy at three in the Morng the result of which was that from the situation I was placd in they advisd I should Retire, I have therefore orderd the Retreat to take place to Morrow morning, and hope to be at my destination the day after to Morrow that is the place we disembarkd from. I have the Honor to be Dear Sir your most obdent Sert.

Arthur Brooke Colonl.
Commdg. his Mastys Troops before Baltimore

Tuesday Night 12 OClock.[1]

ALS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2329, fol. 45. Cochrane's secretary, William Balhetchet probably wrote the following after the dateline: "13 Septr WB recd by ℞ gc Capt. Gordon at/ 7 Bells A.M. 14th Septr." Beginning at 12:30 A.M., one bell is struck for each half-hour until 4:00 A.M. (eight bells) and then the sequence is repeated. Thus, this letter could have been received at 3:30, 7:30, or 11:30 A.M. Judging from the arrival times of earlier letters, a 7:30 or 11:30 A.M. delivery was more likely.

1. Brooke meant Wednesday morning, 12 A.M., 14 September 1814.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 45. His Majesty's Ship *Severn* in the Patapsco 15 Septr. 1814.
Sir/

In furtherance of the Instructions I had the Honor to receive from you on the 11th. Instt.[1] I landed at Daylight of the 12th. with Major General Ross and the Forces under his Command at a Place the General and myself had previously fixed upon near to North Point at the Entrance of the Patapsco, and in conformity with his Wishes I determined on remaining ashore and accompanying the Army, to render him every assistance within my Power during the contemplated movements and operations, therefore, so soon as our landing was completed, I directed Captain Nourse of this Ship to advance up the Patapsco with the Frigates Sloops and Bomb Ships to bombard the Fort and threaten the Water approach to Baltimore, and I moved on with the Army and Seamen (under Captain Edward Crofton) attached to it, on the direct Road leading to the abovementioned Town.

We had advanced about Five Miles (without other occurrence than taking Prisoners a few Light Horse Men) when the General and myself being with the advanced Guard observed a Division of the Enemy Posted at a turning of the Road, extending into a Wood on our Left, A sharp Fire was almost immediately opened upon us from it, and as quickly returned with considerable Effect

by our advanced Guard which pressing steadily forward soon obliged the Enemy to run off with the utmost precipitation leaving behind him several Men Killed and Wounded; but it is with the most heartfelt sorrow I have to add that in this Short and desultory Skirmish my gallant and highly valued Friend the Major General received a Musquet Ball through his arm into his Breast, which proved fatal to him on his way to the Water Side for reembarkation— Our Country Sir has lost in him one of its best and bravest Soldiers and those who knew him as I did, a Friend most honored and beloved; and I trust Sir I may be forgiven for considering it a Sacred Duty I owe to him to mention here, that whilst his Wounds were binding up and we were placing him on the Bearer which was to carry him off the Field, he assured me the Wounds he had received in the performance of his Duty to his Country caused him not a Pang, but he felt a lone anxiety for a Wife[2] and Family dearer to him than his Life, whom in the event of the Fatal termination he foresaw, he recommended to the Protection and Notice of his Majesty's Government and the Country. Colonel Brook on whom the Command of the Army now devolved having come up and the body of our Troops having closed with the Advance, the whole proceeded Forward about Two Miles further, when we observed the Enemy in Force drawn up before us (apparently about Six or Seven thousand Strong) on perceiving our Army he filed off into a large and extensive Wood on his Right, from which he commenced a Cannonade on us from his Field Pieces and drew up his Men behind a thick Paling where he appeared determined to make his stand— Our Field Guns answered his, with evident advantage, and so soon as Colonel Brook had made the necessary Dispositions, the Attack was ordered, and executed in the highest style possible; The Enemy opened his Musquetry on us from his whole Line immediately we approached within Reach of it, and kept up his Fire 'till we reached and entered the Wood, when he gave way in every Direction, and was chased by us a considerable distance with great Slaughter, abandoning his Post of the Meeting House situated in this Wood, and leaving all his Wounded and Two of his Field Guns in our Possession— An Advance of this description against Superior Numbers of an Enemy so posted, could not be effected without loss— I have the Honor enclose a return of what has been suffered by those of the Naval Department acting with the army on this occasion, and it is Sir with the greatest Pride and Pleasure I report to you, that the Brigade of Seamen with Small Arms Commanded by Captain Edward Crofton, assisted by Captains Sullivan, Money, and Ramsay, (the three Senior Commanders with the Fleet) who Commanded Divisions under him, behaved with a Gallantry and Steadiness which would have done honor to the oldest Troops, and which attracted the admiration of the Army— The Seamen under Mr. Jackson Master's Mate of the *Tonnant* attached to the Rocket Brigade, Commanded by 1st. Lieutenant Lawrence of the Marines, behaved also with equal Skill and Bravery; The Marines landed from the Ships under the Command of Captain Robyns, the Senior Officer of that Corps belonging to the Fleet, behaved with their usual Gallantry.

Although Sir in making to you my Report of this Action I know it is right I should confine myself to mentioning only the Conduct of those belonging to the Naval Department, yet I may be excused for venturing further to state to you generally the high admiration with which I viewed the Conduct of the whole Army, and the ability and Gallantry with which it was managed and headed by its brave Colonel which insured to it, the Success it met with.

The Night being fast approaching, and the Troops much fatigued, Colonel Brook determined on remaining for the Night on the Field of Battle, and on the morning of the 13th. leaving a small guard at the Meeting House to collect and protect the Wounded—We again moved forward towards Baltimore, on approaching which, it was found to be defended by extremely Strong Works on every Side, and immediately in front of us by an extensive Hill on which was an entrenched Camp and great quantities of artillery, and the Information we collected added to what we observed, gave us to believe there were at least within their Works from 15 to 20,000 Men— Colonel Brook lost no time in reconnoitring these Defences, after which he made his Arrangements for Storming during the ensuing Night, with his gallant little Army, the entrenched Camp in our Front, notwithstanding all the Difficulties which it presented; The Subsequent Communications which we opened with you, however induced him to relinquish again this Idea, and therefore yesterday Morning the Army retired leisurely to the Meeting House, where it halted for some Hours to make the necessary Arrangements respecting the Wounded and the Prisoners taken on the 12th., which being completed, it made a further short movement in the Evening towards the Place where it had disembarked, and where it arrived this Morning for reembarkation without suffering the slightest molestation from the Enemy, who in spite of his Superiority of Numbers did not even venture to look at us during this slow and deliberate Retreat.

As you Sir were in Person with the Advanced Frigates, Sloops, and Bomb Ships, and as from the Road the Army took I did not see them after quitting the Beach, it would be superfluous for me to make any Report to you respecting them— I have therefore now only to assure you of my entire Satisfaction and approbation of the Conduct of Every Officer and Man employed under me during the operations above detailed, and to express to you how particularly I consider myself indebted to Captain Edward Crofton (Acting Captain of the *Royal Oak*) for the Gallantry Ability and Zeal with which he led on the Brigade of Seamen in the Action of the 12th., and executed all the other Services with which he has been entrusted since our Landing— To Captain White (Acting Captain of the *Albion*) who attended me as my Aid-de-Camp the whole Time and rendered me every possible assistance.— To Captains Sullivan, Money and Ramsay who Commanded Divisions of the Brigade of Seamen—to Lieutenant James Scott of the *Albion* whom I have had such frequent Cause to mention to you on former occasions and who in the Battle of the 12th. Commanded a Division of Seamen and behaved most Gallantly, occasionally also acting as an extra Aid-de-Camp to myself—Captain Robyns who Commanded the Marines of the Fleet, and who was severely Wounded during the Engagement I also beg to recommend to your favorable Notice and Consideration, as well as Lieutenant George C. Urmston of the *Albion*, whom I placed in Command of the smaller Boats to endeavor to Keep up a Communication between the Army and Navy, which he effected by great perseverance and thereby rendered us most essential Service— In short Sir every Individual seemed animated with equal anxiety to distinguish himself by good Conduct on this occasion, and I trust therefore the whole will be deemed worthy of your Approbation.

Captain Nourse of the *Severn* was good enough to receive my Flag for this Service, he rendered me the greatest assistance in getting the Ships to the different Stations within the River, and when the Storming of the fortified Hill was contemplated he hastened to my assistance with a Reinforcement of Seamen

and Marines, and I should consider myself wanting in Candor and Justice, did I not particularly point out Sir to you the high Opinion I entertain of the enterprize and ability of this Valuable Officer, not only for his Conduct on this occasion, but on the very many others on which I have employed him since with me in the Chesapeake. I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedt. humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 20–27. The naval casualties suffered during the land operation discussed in this letter were 7 killed and 44 wounded. Ibid., fol. 28.

1. This letter was not found.
2. Elizabeth Ross.

Colonel Arthur Brooke, British Army, to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst

On board H.M.S. *Tonnant*
Chesapeake Septr. 17 1814

My Lord

I have the honor to inform your Lordship, that the division of troops under the command of Major General Ross effected a disembarkation on the morning of the 12th. September near North point on the left bank of the Paptapsco river, distant from Baltimore about 13 miles, with the view, as I have been subsequently informed, of pushing a reconnoissance in cooperation with the naval forces to that town, and acting thereon as the enemy's strength and positions might be found to dictate—

The approach on this side to Baltimore lays through a small peninsula, formed by the Patapsco and Back river, and generally from two to three miles broad, which it narrows in some places to less than half a mile.

Three miles from North point the enemy had entrenched himself quite across this neck of land.— towards which (the disembarkation having been completed at an early hour) the troops advanced.

The enemy was actively employed in the completion of this work, deepening the ditch and strengthening it in front by a low Abbatis,— both which, however, he precipitately abandoned on the approach of our skirmishers, leaving in our hands some few dragoons, being part of his rear guard.

About two miles beyond this Post our advance became engaged.— The country was here closely wooded and the enemy's riflemen were enabled to conceal themselves.— At this moment the gallant General Ross received a wound in his breast which proved mortal.— He only survived to recommend a young and unprovided family to the protection of his King and Country.

Thus fell at an early age, one of the brightest ornaments of his profession,— one, who whether at the head of a regiment, a brigade, or a corps, had alike displayed the talents of command,— who was not less beloved in his private than enthusiastically admired in his public character, and whose only fault, if it may be deemed so, was an excess of gallantry, enterprize & devotion to the service.

If ever it were permitted to a soldier to lament those who fall in battle, we may indeed in this instance claim that melancholy privilege.

Thus it is, Sir, that the honor of addressing your Lordship, and the command of this army have devolved upon me, duties which under any other circumstances might have been embraced as the most enviable gifts of fortune; and here I venture to solicit through your Lordship, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent's consideration to the circumstances of my succeeding during operations of so much moment, to an officer of such high and established merit.

Our advance continuing to press forward, the enemy's light troops were pushed to within five miles of Baltimore, where a corps of about six thousand men,[1] six pieces of artillery & some hundred cavalry were discovered posted under cover of a wood, drawn up in a very dense order and lining a strong paling which crossed the main road nearly at right angles.— The creeks and inlets of the Patapsco and Back rivers, which approach each other at this point, will in some measure account for the contracted nature of the enemy's position.

I immediately ordered the necessary dispositions for a general attack.— The Light Brigade under the command of Major Jones of the 4th. consisting of the 85th. Lt. Infantry under Major Gubbins and the Light companies of the army under Major Pringle of the 21st., covered the whole of the front—driving in the enemy's Skirmishers with great loss on his main body.— The 4th. Regt. under Major Faunce, by a detour through some hollow ways, gained unperceived, a lodgement close upon the enemy's left. The remainder of the right brigade under the command of the Honl. Lt. Colonel Mullins consisting of the 44th. Regt. under Major Johnson, the Marines of the fleet under Capt. Robbins, and a detachment of seamen under Captain Money of the *Trave*, formed line along the enemy's front.— While the left Brigade under Colonel Paterson, consisting of the 21st. Regt. commanded by Major Whitaker, the 2d. Battalion Marines by Lt. Colonel Malcolm, & detachment of Marines by Major Lewis, remained in column on the road, with orders to deploy to his left & press the enemy's right, the moment the ground became sufficiently open to admit of that movement.

In this order, the signal being given, the whole of the troops advanced rapidly to the charge.— In less than fifteen minutes the enemy's force being utterly broken & dispersed, fled in every direction over the country, leaving on the field, 2 pieces of cannon with a considerable number of Killed wounded & prisoners.

The enemy lost in this short but brilliant affair, from five to six hundred in Killed & wounded, while at the most moderate computation he is at least one thousand Hors de combat.—[2] The 5th. Regt. of Militia, in particular, has been represented as nearly annihilated.— Had we but 300 hundred cavalry, scarcely a man should have escaped.

The day being now far advanced, and the troops (as is always the case on the first march after disembarkation) much fatigued we halted for the night on the ground of which the enemy had been dispossessed.— Then I received a communication[3] from Vice Admiral The Honbl. Sir Alexr. Cochrane informing me that the frigates, Bomb ships & flotilla of the fleet would on the ensuing morning take their stations as previously proposed.— At day break on the 13th. the army again advanced, and at ten o'clock I occupied a favorable position, eastward of Baltimore, distant about a mile and a half, & from whence I could reconnoitre at my leisure the defences of that town. Baltimore is completely surrounded by strong but detached hills, on which the enemy had constructed a

chain of Pallisaded redoubts connected by a small breast work.— I have however reason to think that the defences to the northward and westward of the place, were in a very unfinished state.—Chinkopin hill,[4] which lay in front of our position, completely commands the town;— this was the strongest part of the line, and here the enemy seemed most apprehensive of attack.— These works were defended, according to the best information which we could obtain, by about Fifteen thousand men, with a large train of artillery.

Judging it perfectly feasible, with the description of forces under my command, I made arrangements for a night attack, during which the superiority of the enemy's artillery would not have been so much felt, & Captain McDougall, the bearer of these despatches, will have the honor to point out to your Lordship, those particular parts of the line which I had proposed to act on.

During the evening, however, I received a communication[5] from the Commander in Chief of the Naval Forces, by which I was informed, that in consequence of the entrance to the harbour being closed up by vessels sunk for that purpose by the enemy, a naval co-operation against the town and camp was found impracticable.

Under these circumstances, and Keeping in view your Lordships instructions, it was agreed between the Vice Admiral & myself that the capture of the town would not have been a sufficient equivalent to the loss which might probably be sustained in storming the heights.

Having formed this resolution, after compelling the enemy to sink upwards of 20 vessels in different parts of the harbour, causing the citizens to remove almost the whole of their property to places of more security inland, obliging the government to concentrate all the military force of the surrounding States, harassing the militia and forcing them to collect from very remote districts, causing the enemy to burn a valuable rope walk with other public buildings, in order to clear the Glacis in front of their Redoubts, besides having beaten & routed them in a general action,— I retired on the 14th. three miles from the position which I had occupied, when I halted during some hours.

This tardy movement was partly caused by an expectation that the enemy might possibly be induced to move out of his entrenchments & follow us, but he profited by the lesson which he had received on the 12th. and towards the evening I retired the troops about 3 miles & a half farther, where I took up my ground for the night.

Having ascertained at a late hour on the morning of the 15th. that the enemy had no disposition to quit his entrenchments, I moved down and reimbarked the army at North point, not leaving a wounded man behind, and carrying with me about Two Hundred prisoners, being persons of the best families in the city, and which number might have been very considerably encreased, was not the fatigue of the troops an object principally to be avoided.

I have now to remark to your Lordship that nothing could surpass the zeal, unanimity and ardor displayed by every description of force, whether Naval Military or Marine during the whole of these operations.

I am highly indebted to Vice Admiral Sir Alexr. Cochrane Commander in Chief of the Naval forces, for the active assistance and zealous co-operation which he was ready upon every occasion to afford me.— A disposition conspicuous in every branch of the Naval service, and which cannot fail to ensure success to every combined operation of this armament.

Captain Edward Crofton Commanding the brigade of Seamen, appointed to the small arms, for the animated and enthusiastic example which he held forth to his men, deserves every approbation. As do also Captains Nourse, Money, Sullivan & Ramsay R.N. for the steadiness and good order which they maintained in their several divisions.

I feel every obligation to Rear Admiral Cockburn for the council & assistance which he afforded me, and from which I derived the most signal benefit

To Colonel Paterson for the steady manner which he brought his column into action, I owe my best thanks.

The Honbl. Lt. Colonel Mullins deserved every approbation for the excellent order in which he led that part of the Right brigade under his immediate command while charging the enemy in line.

Major Jones commanding the Light brigade, merits my best acknowledgements for the active & skilful dispositions by which he covered all the movements of the army.

The distinguished gallantry of Capt. De Bathe 85th. Lt. Infantry has been particularly reported to me, & I beg to record my own Knowledge of similar conduct on former occasions.

To Major Faunce 4th. Regt. for the manner in which he gained & turned the enemy's left, as well as for the excellent discipline maintained in that Regiment, every praise is due.

The exertions of Major Gubbins commanding the 85th. Lt. infantry, & of Major Renney commanding the Light companies, were highly commendable.

Capt. Mitchel Comdg. Royal Artillery, Captn. Carmichel a meritorious officer of that corps, and Lt. Lawrence of the Marine Artillery, are entitled to my best thanks.— as is Capt. Blanchard Commanding Royal Engineers for the abilities he displayed in his particular branch of the service.

To Lieutenant Evans, 3d. Dragoons Ag. Dy. Q M Genl. to this army, for the unremitting zeal activity and perfect intelligence which he evinced in the discharge of the various and difficult duties of his department, I feel warmly indebted;— and I beg to solicit through your Lordship, a promotion suitable to the high professional merits of this officer.

Captain Mc.Dougall A.D.C. to the late General Ross (& who acted as Asst. Adjutant General, in the absence of Major Debbieg through indisposition) is the bearer of these despatches, and having been in the confidence of General Ross as well as in mine, will be found perfectly capable of giving your Lordship any farther information, relative to the operations of this army, which you may require.— He is an officer of great merit & promise, and I beg to recommend him to your Lordships protection. I have the honor to be My Lord Your Lordships Most Obedient And Most Humble Servant

Arthur Brooke
Colonel Commanding

LS, UkLPR, WO 1/141, pp. 75–89. See pp. 91–96 for the casualty returns. Brooke reported 39 killed and 251 wounded.

1. For a detailed study of the attack on Baltimore, see Whitehorne, *Battle for Baltimore,* chapter twelve. According to Whitehorne, the Americans had about 3,000 men on the field.

2. The Americans reported 24 killed, 139 wounded, and 50 captured. See Whitehorne, *Battle for Baltimore,* p. 183.

3. This is probably a reference to the letter Cochrane originally sent to Ross on 12 September but was forwarded to Brooke upon the death of Ross. See pp. 273–76 above.

4. Hampstead Hill.

5. See Cochrane to Cockburn, 13 September 1814, pp. 277–78 above.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 116 His Majs. Ship *Tonnant* Chesapeake, 17th Sept. 1814

Sir,

I request that you will be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the approaching Equinoxial new Moon rendering it unsafe to proceed immediately out of the Chesapeake with the combined Expedition,[1] to act upon the plans which had been concerted previous to the departure of the *Iphigenia*,[2] Major General Ross and myself resolved to occupy the intermediate time to advantage, by making a demonstration upon the City of Baltimore; which might be converted into a real attack should circumstances appear to justify it; and as our arrangements were Soon made I proceeded up this River and anchored off the mouth of the Patapsco on the 11th. ins[tant] when the Frigates and Smaller Vessels entered to a convenient distance for landing the Troops.

At an early hour the next morning the disembarkation of the Army was effected, without opposit[ion] having attached to it a Brigade of Six hundred Seamen, under Captain Edward Crofton (late of the *Leopard*) the Second Battalion of Marines, the Marines of the Squadron and the Colonial Black Marines: Rear Admiral Cockburn accompanied the General to advise and arrange as might be deemed necessary for our combined efforts. So Soon as the Army moved forward I hoisted my Flag in the *Surprize* and with the remainder of the Friga[tes,] Bombs, Sloops, and the Rocket Ship passed further up the River to render what co-operation could be fou[nd] practicable. While the Bomb Vessels were working up in order that we might open our Fire upon the Enemy['s] Fort[3] at day break the next morning, an account was brought to me that Major General Ross when reconnoitering the Enemy had received a mortal Wound by a Musket Ball which closed his glorious career before he could be brought off to the Ship—

It is a tribute due to the memory of this gallant and respected Officer to pause in my relation while I lament the loss that His Majesty's Service and the Army, of which he was one of the brightest Ornaments, have Sustained by his death; the unanimity, the zeal which he manifested on every occasion while I had the honor of Serving with him gave life and ease to the most arduous undertakings: too heedless of his personal Security when in the Field, his devotion to the care and honor of his Army has caused the termination of his valuable life. The Major General has left a Wife[4] and Family for whom I am confident his grateful Country will provide.

The Skirmish which had deprived the Army of its brave General was a prelude to a most decisive Victory over the flower of the Enemy's Troops. Colonel Brook on whom the Command devolved having pushed forward our Force to within five Miles of Baltimore, where the Enemy, about Six or Seven thousand, had taken up an advanced position Strengthened by Field Pieces, and where he had disposed himself apparently with the intention of making a determined resistance, fell upon the Enemy with Such impetuosity that he was obliged Soon to give way and fly in every direction, leaving on the field of Battle a considerable number of Killed and wounded and two pieces of Cannon. For the particulars of this brilliant affair I beg leave to refer their Lordships to Rear Admiral Cockburn's dispatch transmitted herewith.—[5]

At day break the next morning the Bombs having taken their Stations within Shell range Supported by the *Surprize* with the other Frigates and Sloops, opened their Fire upon the Fort that protected the entrance of the Harbor;[6] and I had now an opportunity of observing the strength and the preparations of the Enemy—

The approach to the Town on the Land Side was defended by commanding heights upon which was constructed a chain of Redoubts connected by a Breast Work, with a Ditch in front, an extensive train of Artillery and a Show of Force that was reported to be from fifteen to twenty thousand Men. The entrance by Sea, within which the Town is retired nearly three Miles, was entirely obstructed by a barrier of Vessels Sunk at the mouth of the Harbor, defended inside by Gun Boats, flanked on the right by a strong and regular fortification and on the left by a Battery of Several heavy Guns—

These preparations rendering it impracticable to afford any essential co-operation by Sea I considered that an attack on the Enemy's strong position by the Army only, with such disparity of Force, tho confident of success, might risk a greater loss than the possession of the Town would compensate for, while holding in view the ulterior operations of this force in the contemplation of His Majesty's Government.[7] And therefore, as the primary object of our movement had been already fully accomplished I communicated my observations to Colonel Brook,[8] who coinciding with me in opinion, it was mutually agreed that we Should withdraw.

The following morning the Army began leisurely to Retire; and so Salutary was the affect produced on the Enemy by the defeat he had experienced, that notwithstanding every opportunity was offered for his repeating the Conflict with an infinite Superiority, our Troops reimbarked without mol[es]tation, the Ships of War having dropped down as the Army reti[red—]

The result of this demonstration had been the defeat of the Army of the Enemy: the destruction by themselves of a quantity of Shipping, the burning of an extensive Rope Walk and other public Erections, the causing of them to remove their Property from the City, and above all—the collecting and harrassing of his armed Inhabitants from the Surrounding country, producing a total Stagnation of their Commerce and heaping upon them considerable expenses, at the same time effectually drawing off their attention and Support from other important quarters—

It has been a Source of the greatest gratification to me the continuance of that unanimity existing between the two Services, which I have before noticed to their Lordships, and I have reason to assure them that the command of the Army has fallen upon a most zealous and able Officer in Colonel Brook, who had followed up the system of cordiality that had been so beneficially adopted by his much lamented Chief

Rear Admiral Cockburn, to whom I had confided that part of the Naval Service which was connected with the Army, evinced his usual zeal and ability and executed his important trust to my entire Satisfaction. Rear Admiral Malcolm who regulat[ed] the collection, debarkation and reembarkation of the Troops, and the Supplies they required has merited my best thanks for his indefatigable exertion and I have to express my acknowledgements for the counsel

and assistance which in all our operatio[ns] I have received from Rear Admiral Codrington the Captain of the Fleet.—

The Captains of the Squadron who were employed in the various duties afloat were all emoulous to promote the Service in which they were engaged and with the Officers acting under them are entitled to my fullest approbation—

I beg leave to call the attention of their Lordships to the Report Rear Admiral Cockburn has made of the meritorious and gallant Conduct of the Naval Brigade[9] as well as to the accompanying Letter from Colonel Brook[10] expressing his obligations to Captain Edward Crofton who commanded, and Captains T. B. Sulivan, Rowland and Money & Robert Ramsay who had charge of Divisions, and I have to recommend these officers, together with those who are particularly noticed by the Rear Admiral, to their Lordship's favorable consideration.

Captain Robyns of the Royal Marines who commanded the Marines of the Squadron on this occasion and in the operations against Washington being Severely wounded, I beg leave to bring him to their Lordship's recollection as having been frequently noticed for his gallant Conduct during the services in the Chesapeake, and to recommend him, with Lieutenant Sampson Marshall of the *Diadem* who is dangerously wounded, to their Lordship's favor and protection.

First Lieutenant John Lawrence of the Royal Marine Artillery who commanded the Rocket Brigade has again rendered essential Service and is highly Spoken of by Colonel Brook.

Captain Edward Crofton who will have the honor of delivering this Dispatch is compe[tent] to explain any further particulars and I beg leave to recommend him to their Lordship's protection as a most zealous and intelligent officer— I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

Alex[r] Cochrane
Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fols. 171–75; Cochrane's letter book copy is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2348, pp. 74–79. Letters obscured in the gutter in the signed version were supplied in brackets using the letter book copy.

1. The concurrence of a new moon and the equinox creates the highest tides of the year; those high tides produce the strongest tidal currents; and the confining shores of the Chesapeake Bay multiply the strength of those currents. As a result, a new moon during the equinox is the most difficult and dangerous time to navigate the Chesapeake Bay.
2. Cochrane is referring to his plans to go to Rhode Island after the attack on Washington. Cochrane to Melville, 3 Sept. 1814, pp. 269–71.
3. Fort McHenry.
4. Elizabeth Ross.
5. Cockburn to Cochrane, 15 Sept. 1814, pp. 279–82.
6. The bombardment squadron consisted of: bomb ships *Aetna, Devastation, Meteor, Terror, Volcano*; rocket ship *Erebus*; schooner *Cockchafer*; brig-sloops *Fairy, Rover*, and *Wolverine*; and frigates *Euryalus, Havannah, Hebrus, Madagasgar, Seahorse, Severn*, and *Surprise*.
7. Cochrane is referring to the proposed operations against New Orleans.
8. This is probably a reference to Cochrane's 13 September 1814 letter to Cockburn. See pp. 277–78 above.
9. Cockburn to Cochrane, 15 Sept. 1814, pp. 279–82.
10. Brooke to Cochrane, 15 Sept. 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/507, fol. 176.

Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N., to First Lord of the Admiralty Viscount Robert Saunders Dundas Melville

private *Tonnant* off Baltimore
17 Sept 1814

My dear Lord

Your Lordship will see by My public letter[1] that we have made an Essay at Baltimore, an attempt Contrary to My Opinion, but extremely urged by the General[2] to which I reluctantly consented, but to preserve Unanimity between the two services; I have not stated My Objections to the measure in My letter to the Admiralty I now exceedingly regret My deviation from My Original plan, Although the events that took place have been highly creditable to his Majestys Arms which in My Opinion could have been employ'd with greater Advantage Against Rhode Island, by Attracting the Attention of the Northern States from the Canadas The Valuable life of the General would have been preserved; and his services continued to his Country, there never fell a More Gallant Man nor a better Officer The only Fault was that of exposing his own Person more than was necessary for a General to do, it was in reconnoitering the Enemys Army that he received his Mortal Wound, by a Rifle Ball, Just before he expired he Lamented the distressed state his Family would be left in, I trust his Country will consider this as placing Them under its protection and I pray Your Lordship to let this Circumstance be known to His Majestys Ministers

Colonel Brook his Successor is a Steady Good officer—but from his Rank I conclude that a general officer will be sent out— in a proper Selection will depend the Success or failure of our future Enterprises against the Enemy, If I was allowed to Speak My Wishes Sir Thomas Picton would be the Man, whoever he may be he must not expect to repose upon a bed of Roses, I therefore trust that the Choice may fall upon one who has seen Much Active Service under Lord Wellington

I need not recapitulate what Your Lordship will find in My public letter I have no doubt that we might have had the Command of the City of Baltimore but not without a loss beyond what our little Army could bear and be in a state to preserve its Superiority over the Enemy.— With Two Thousand Additional Troops the Enemys Works might have been Turned but with the force we had this measure could not have been attempted without risking the retreat of the Army being Cut off which from the Numerous Militia the Enemy had Assembled they could have done, and still keep Their Lines in a state of defence, The two Regiments that went to Halifax, when we left Bermuda would have fully Answered this purpose and Baltimore either laid in Ashes or Under a heavy Contribution

From the Side the Town was attacked the Fort[3] Could not be assailed nor could we without that Secure the Command of the Harbour.— If Attacked Again, I have seen sufficient of the harbour and Adjoining Country to make me prefer the Opposite or Western Side by it You have immediate Access to the City and to a hill that Commands the fort at a distance Not in my Opinion beyond point Blank range and I am told that the side of the Fort towards the Land is only defended by a Brick Wall fourteen feet high.

We labour and[4] the Want of Many essentials, to place us upon a par with the Enemy in the stile of Warfare they pursue

We have neither Cavalry nor rifle Men while they have Abundance of both

The Enemy we have seen will never stand a charge, when Closed in upon they Fly and take up New Ground. then would be the time for Cavalry to Act, the Other day with 300 Horse, hardly A Man would have returned to Baltimore, and the Same at Bladensburg, Rifles we have none and for want of Troops I am obliged to bring My Seamen into the Line, The Enemy Use Three Buck Shot in Addition to the Ball in each Cartridge, we ought to do the Same but I am for adding a fourth placed on the top of the Three—and these Never to be Used until Close to the Enemy Each Soldier having about Twenty in his pouch to load with when at the proper distance I send your Lordship two (by Capt. Crofton.) that used by the Americans is Marked N 1—that I prepare N 2.— and I beg that A Quantity May be sent out without delay; Also the Necessaries demanded for the Troops by frigates so as they may be here early in December— There is no carrying on any war without the Necessary Means and Government must not expect more from Us than they enable Us to Accomplish, from what I can see the Ball is at Our feet,— and give me but Six thousand Men—Including a Rifle and Cavalry Regt., and I will engage to master every Town South of Philadelphia and keep the Whole Coast in such a State of Alarm, as soon to bring the Most Obstinate, upon their Marrow bones

In Addition to a Quantity of Cartridges with four Buck Shot in each I require a number of Casks of the Buck Shot to be sent out which We can use As Occasion may require— it is necessary to remember that the American Balls are smaller than Ours, Consequently the Buck Shot Must be encreased in Size so as three May take up the Same Space with the diametre of the Ball.— Our Loss at Washington and the Other day, inclusive may be rated at 600 Men. this of Course is A Considerable reduction from our Original Numbers

Nothing Could be more Brilliant than the Manner in which Our Troops Routed the American Army drawn up under Cover of A Wood having a strong force in their front and supported by a numerous Artillery— The Attack was obliged to be made Accross Clear Ground and Contrary to the European System of Warfare, the Troops are freed to fire as they Advance Without Which the Enemy could Suffer but little as they make a Rule to turn tail the Moment they are likely to be charged, when within Fifty Yards Their whole Line Gave way and Fled in all directions—then was the time for Cavalry to Act. as it was they Suffered Severely Their fifth Regt. Composed of the Gentlemen of the Town are said to be totally destroyed. Another has Nearly shared the same fate

The Force the Enemy had At Baltimore Consisted of 2000 Seamen and from 15 to 20,000 of Militia but few Regulars Our little Army consisted of Only of 2500 Troops when they landed, to which was Added about 1350—Marines, and 600—Seamen making all say 4000. Bayonets, The Brigade of Seamen I placed under the Command of Capt Crofton late of the *Leopard*.—who Gallantly led them into Action in a Line, and with such Steadiness as drew forth the Aplause of all who saw Them— I strongly recommend him to Your Lordships Notice and beg to have him Sent back in a Ship that I may benefit by his Services upon other occasions— I care not how Small the ship may be as I can always give him another when here

Lt. Marshal of the *Diadem* has been severely wounded I fear Mortally Also Capt Robyns of the Marines of this Ship who Commanded a Battalion of Marines Composed of part of the Marines of the Fleet, I beg leave to recommend them both to your Lordships Notice— I have appointed Several Midshipmen of different Ships to vacancies from their Conduct While acting with

the Army, and as we are likely to have Much of the late sort of business to perform I consider it proper to Hold out a reward for unusal exertions— Captains Sulivan Money and Ramsay, Commanded each a division of Seamen and distinguished themselves greatly— I believe they are Amongst the Oldest Commanders here

The Midshipmen upon Your Lordships list have all been disposed Of except one or two that We cannot discover Where they Are,— I shall therefore in my Appointments, look to Merit let it be found Where it May— Mr. Keefe one of Those Now Appointed, took a Dragoon at Washington and Afterwards although Unarmed himself, disarmed An American Soldier and Made him prisoner—

One of the American Field Officers in the late affair Was Shot upon a Tree rather a Strange place for a Commander of a Regt. but I understand he went there to direct his men how to fire with Most effect, but staying there rather too long he was brought down by a Soldier—

I am sorry to say that the Gallant Conduct of the Seamen here has not been unique— two wretches Attempted to desert to the Enemy who have been Condemned and Will Suffer tomorrow, except them I know of no species of Impropriety having been Committed except such as always follows Military Movements

I have requested Capt Crofton to take Charge of a Turtle for Your Lordship and One for Lord Bathurst. I hope those I sent by the *Ephegenia* Arrived Safe I ever am My dear Lord Most faithfully and Sincerely Yours

Alex[r] Cochrane

I enclose for your Lordship a Sketch[5] of our proceedings at Baltimore—in care of Capt. Crofton.

AC

ALS, InU, War of 1812 Manuscripts. A letter book copy is in UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2345, fols. 15–16.

1. The preceding letter.
2. Major General Robert Ross.
3. Fort McHenry.
4. The letter book copy reads "under," not "and."
5. No sketch was found.

American Accounts of the Attack on Baltimore

The strong American naval presence at the Battle of Baltimore energized the military force there and contributed to the British decision to withdraw. The American navy and army cooperated closely. Under orders from Major General Smith, Commodore Rodgers deployed his naval contingent to defend both the land and sea approaches to the city. On Hampstead Hill, north and east of Baltimore, Rodgers formed a bastion extending from Belair Road to Harris Creek and outfitted the batteries with naval and field artillery, seamen, marines, and militia units. He established batteries on the eastern and western shores near Fort McHenry; sank vessels as obstructions; and positioned and armed Ameri-

can naval ships in the harbor. Smith praised Rodgers and his seamen because, in Baltimore's darkest hour, they "gave confidence to every one."

The British army planned to assault the city from the east, while the navy would secure the harbor. When Admiral Cochrane saw that Fort McHenry did not capitulate quickly to the bombardment, he realized that his squadron would suffer too many casualties in forcing its way through the solid American defenses. Thus, Cochrane decided that the Royal Navy could not support the army in a two-pronged attack on Baltimore. Caution ended the expedition.

Lieutenant Henry S. Newcomb to Commodore John Rodgers

Saturday Sep. 10th. 10 P.M. received information that the enemy were coming up the Bay, in force,
Sunday 11th. About Thirty sail hove in sight, Receiving orders to take command of Fort Covington with a detachment of seamen— the soldiers are sick with the fever & ague— At noon light airs from the Sd.—the headmost ships of war at anchor above Sparrow Point—the transports & smaller vessels several miles below—
Monday 12th. Light airs from the Sd. & pleasant— No visible alteration during the night— The barges & small vessels very busy thru the day— 2.P.M. The ships of war got under way & came to about 6 miles below Fort M'Henry—
Tuesday 13th. At 6. A.M—5 Bomb Ship and __[1] Ships of war got under way & took their station in a line abreast Fort M'Henry, distant 2¾ miles & 3 miles from F. Covington— 8 A.M—moderat breezes from the Sd. & Ed.—& hazy— The enemy commenced the Bombardment of F. MHenry, which was returned with shells & shot, but as they all fell short, the fort discontinued firing, while the enemy continued to throw their shells with great precision & effect— 2.P.M—Wind at the Nd. & Ed.—with heavy showers of rain— 3 P.M—Fort MHenry recommenced firing and by taking out the beds & coins [*quoins*] Threw the shot so well among the Bomb Ships that three of them got under way & run out of gunshot & bombarded the fort more furiously than before— 10 P.M. The enemies barges all in motion— Weather thick & hazy with frequent showers of rain—
Wednesday 14th.— The enemies small vessels & barges[2] were discovered by their lights moving up the S.W. Branch—the headmost abreast of F. Covington— Commenced firing—which was immediately returned with shot—shells & rocketts—Fort Babcock, (or the Six gun battery) now opened— The darkness prevented our accurately distinguishing their force— One Bomb Vessel was this side the Point—a schooner about half way between her & F. Covington—& the barges, (number unknown, Throwing 12. 18 & 24 lb Shot—) abreast of us— Our fire was directed at the headmost— A few broadsides checked their advance, when they concentrated nearly abreast of us, & continued their attack on the batteries— The decided superiority of our fire compelled them to retreat, when They were met by a fire from F. MHenry—which, however, from the darkness of the night was soon discontinued— Col. Taylor's regiment of Malitia was posted in our rear— How judicious his arrangements were I shall leave to those to say who are more competent to judge & whose duty it is to decide— The Shells & rockets were thrown with little intermission

till daylight—but with very little effect— The officers with me were attentive & active— Mr Mull is as when with you— Midn. Jameson Hunter & Bowman[3] discharged the duties assignned them with zeal & ability— Mr Bowman was detached to post the militia in a proper situation on our right & he discharged this duty with much judgment & returned to his guns— The seamen were extremely indignant that the enemy fought no longer— Respectfully

H. S. Newcomb

Fort Covington
Sept. 18th. 1814—

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series III-B, Container 51, fols. 5569–70.

1. No number was supplied. Besides the five bomb vessels, the British had twelve ships off Fort McHenry.
2. See Cochrane to Napier, 13 Sept. 1814, p. 278.
3. Sailing Master Jacob Mull's warrant dated from 13 February 1809. He had been attached to *Java* at Baltimore since 23 April 1813. Skeffington S. Jamesson, a midshipman since 18 June 1812, had served under Commodore Rodgers since 27 October 1813. George W. Hunter's midshipman's warrant was dated 1 February 1814. On 30 May 1814, the Navy Department ordered him to join Rodgers at Philadelphia. Charles Boarman's midshipman's warrant dated from 9 June 1811. He had served in *Erie* at Baltimore since 25 September 1813.

Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltre. Weds 14th 1814

Sir
The enemy has been severely drubbed as well his Army as his Navy & is now retiring down the river after expending many rons [*rounds*] of shot from 1800 to 2000 shells & at least 7 or 8 hundred rockets with great respect I have the honor to be Sir yr obt. St

Jn° Rodgers

I shall give you a more particular acct. as soon as I get a little rest[1]
Genl Ross of the B Army is said to be mortally wounded—

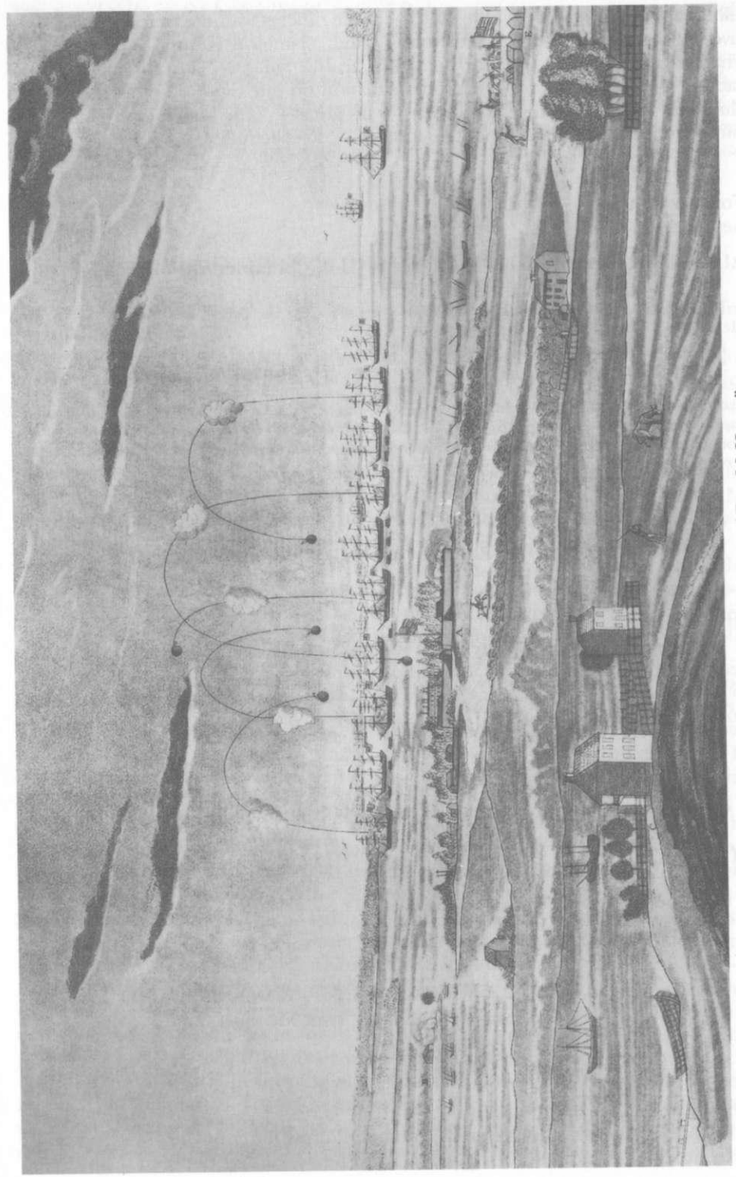
ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 54 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. See Rodgers's official report of 23 September 1814, pp. 298–302.

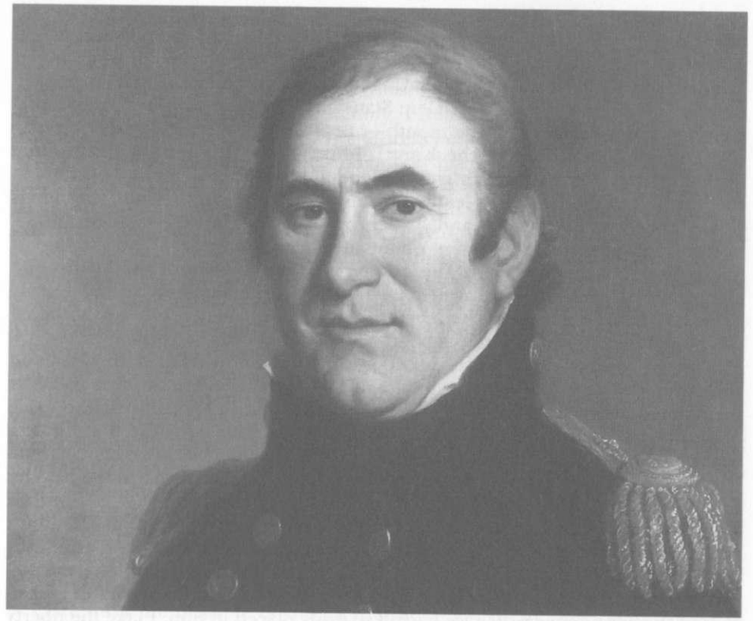
Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland Militia, to Acting Secretary of War Monroe

Head Quarters Baltimore
19. September, 1814—

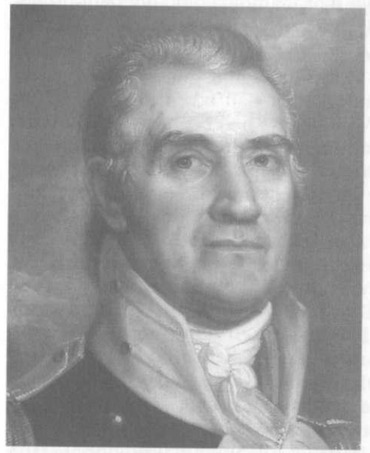
Sir
In compliance with the promise contained in my letter of the 15th.[1] Instant, I have now the honor of stating—that the Enemy landed between 7 and 8000



"A View of the Bombardment of Fort McHenry"



John Rodgers



Samuel Smith



George Armistead

men[2] on monday the 12th. Inst. at North Point, fourteen miles distant from this town. Anticipating this debarkation General Stricker had been detached on sunday evening, with a portion of his Brigade on the North Point road. Major Randal of the Balt. County Militia having under his command a light corps of riflemen & musquetry taken from Gen: Stansbury's Brigade and the Pennsylvania volunteers, was detached to the mouth of Bear Creek, with orders to cooperate with General Stricker and to check any landing which the Enemy might attempt in that quarter. On monday Brigadier General Stricker took a good position at the junction of the two roads leading from this place to North Point, having his right flanked by Bear Creek and his left by a marsh. He here awaited the approach of the Enemy, having sent on an advance corps under the command of Major Heath of the 5th. Regt. This advance was met by that of the Enemy and after some skirmishing it returned to the line, the main body of the Enemy being at a short distance in the rear of their advance. Between two & three o'clock the Enemy's whole force came up and commenced the battle by some discharges of rockets which were succeded by the cannon from both sides and soon after the action became general along the line. General Stricker gallantly maintained his ground against a great superiority of numbers, during the space of an hour & twenty minutes, when the regiment on his left, (the 51st.) giving way, he was under the necessity of retiring to the ground in his rear where he had stationed one Regiment as a reserve. He here formed his Brigade—but the Enemy not thinking it adviseable to pursue, he in compliance with previous arrangements fell back and took post on the left of my entrenchments and a half mile in advance of them. In this affair the citizen soldiers of Baltimore with the exception of the 51. Regt., have maintained the reputation they so deservedly acquired at Bladensburg, and their brave & skilful leader has confirmed the confidence which we had all so justly placed in him. I take the liberty of referring you to his letter[3] for the more particular mention of the individuals who, new to warfare, have shown the coolness & valour of veterans, and who by their conduct on this occasion have given their country & their City an assurance of what may be expected from them when their services are again required. I cannot dismiss this subject without expressing the heartfelt satisfaction & experience in thus bearing testimony to the courage & good conduct of my fellow townsmen. About the time General Stricker had taken the ground just mentioned, he was joined by Brig: Gen: Winder who had been stationed on the west side of the City, but was now ordered to march with Gen: Douglass Brigade of Virginia militia and the U.S. Dragoons under Capt. Bird,[4] and take post on the left of Gen: Stricker, during these movements the Brigades of Generals Stansbury & Foreman the seamen & marines under Commodore Rodgers—the Pennsylvania volunteers under Cols: Cobean & Findley, the Baltimore Artillery under Col. Harris and the marine Artillery under Capt. Stiles manned the trenches and the batteries— all prepared to receive the Enemy. We remained in this situation during the night.

On Tuesday the Enemy appeared in front of my entrenchments at the distance of two miles, on the Philadelphia road—from whence he had a full view of our position. He manoeuvered during the morning towards our left, as if with the intention of making a circuitous march and coming down on the Harford or York roads. Generals Winder & Stricker were ordered to adapt their movements to those of the Enemy so as to baffle this supposed intention. They executed this order with great skill & judgement by taking an advantageous position, stretching from my left across the country where the Enemy was likely to approach this quarter he seemed to threaten. This movement induced the Enemy to concentrate his forces (between one & two o'clock) in my front, pushing his advance to within a mile of us, driving in our videttes and showing an intention of attacking us that evening. I immediately drew Generals Winder & Stricker nearer to the left of my entrenchements and to the right of the Enemy, with the intention of their falling on his right or rear should he attack me, or if he declined it, of attacking him in the morning. To this movement and to the strength of my defences which the Enemy had the fairest opportunity of observing, I am induced to attribute his retreat, which was commenced at half past one o'clock on wednesday morning. In this, he was so favored by the extreme darkness and a continued rain, that we did not discover it until day light I consented to General Winder's pursuing with the Virginia Brigade and the U.S. Dragoons—at the same time Major Randal was despatched with his light corps in pursuit on the Enemy's right, whilst the whole of the militia cavalry was put in motion for the same object. All the troops were however so worn out with a continued watching and with being under arms during three days & nights exposed the greater part of the time to very inclement weather, that it was found impracticable to do any thing more than pick up a few stragglers. The Enemy commenced his embarkation that evening & completed it the next day at 1. o'clock. It would have been impossible, even had our troops been in a condition to act offensively, to have cut off any part of the Enemy's rear guard during the embarkation, as the Point where it was effected, was defended from our approach by a line of defences extending from Back river to Humphry's Creek on the Patapsco, thrown up by ourselves previously to their arrival.

I have now the pleasure of calling your attention to the brave commander of Fort McHenry Major Armistead—and to the operations in that quarter. The Enemy made his approach by water at the same time that his army was advancing on the land, and commenced a discharge of bombs and rockets at the Fort as soon as he got within range of it. The situation of Major Amistead was peculiarly trying, the enemy having taken his position at such a distance as to render offensive operations on the part of the Fort entirely fruitless—whilst their bombs & rockets were every moment falling in and about it—the officers and men being at the same time entirely exposed. Two vessels however had the temerity to approach somewhat nearer—they were as soon compelled to withdraw. During the night whilst the enemy on land was retreating and whilst the bombardment was the most severe—two or three rocket vessels & barges suceeded in getting up the Ferry Branch—but they were soon compelled to retire, by the forts in that quarter commanded by Lieut. Newcomb of the Navy and Lieut. Webster of the Flotilla—[5] the forts also destroyed, one of the barges, with all on board. The Barges and Battery at the Lazzaretto under the command of Lieut. Rutter of the Flotilla kept up a brisk and it is believed, a successful fire during the hottest period of the bombardment. Major Amistead being severely ill in consequence of his continud exposure to the weather, has rendered it impossible for him to send in his report— it is not therefore in my power to do justice to those gallant individuals who partook with him the danger of a tremendous bombardment, without the ability of retorting and without that security, which in more regular fortifications is provided for such occasions. The loss in the Fort is I understand, about 27 Killed and Wounded—amongst

the former I have to lament the fall of Lieutenants Claggett & Clemm—who were both estimable citizens and useful officers.

From General Stricker's Brigade, the return of the killed and wounded has not yet come in, it is supposed however to amount to about 150 among the former, this city has to regret the loss of its Representive in the State Legislature, James Lowry Donaldson Esqr. adjutant of the 27th Regt. This Gentleman will ever be remembered by his constituents for his zeal & talents & by his corps, for his bravery & military knowledge.

I cannot conclude this report without informing you of the great aid I have derived from Comr. Rodgers. He was ever present & ever ready to afford his useful counsel and to render his important services. His presence with that of his gallant officers & seamen gave confidence to every one

The Enemy's loss in his attempt on Baltimore amounts as near as we can ascertain it to between 6 & 700 killed wounded & missing.[6] General Ross was certainly killed. I have the honor to be with great respect Sir Your Obt Servt.

S. Smith
Major General Commanding

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, S-141 (8) (M221, Roll No. 66). Animosity toward Secretary of War Armstrong, on whom many blamed the fall of Washington, forced his resignation in early September 1814. James Monroe served as acting secretary until his confirmation by the Senate in late September.

1. Smith to Monroe, 15 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, S-141 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 66). Smith reported that most of the British ships had sailed from the Patapsco River; their destination was unknown.
2. For Cochrane's much lower estimate, see Cochrane to Melville, 17 Sept. 1814, p. 290.
3. Stricker to Smith, 13 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, S-141 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 66).
4. Captain John A. Burd, U.S. Light Dragoons (U.S.A.).
5. Lieutenant Newcomb commanded at Fort Covington; Sailing Master Webster at the six-gun battery called Fort Babcock. Webster joined the Chesapeake Bay flotilla as a sailing master; his warrant was dated from 1 March 1814. He was discharged on 15 April 1815.
6. Colonel Brooke reported 39 killed and 251 wounded. See source note, p. 285 above.

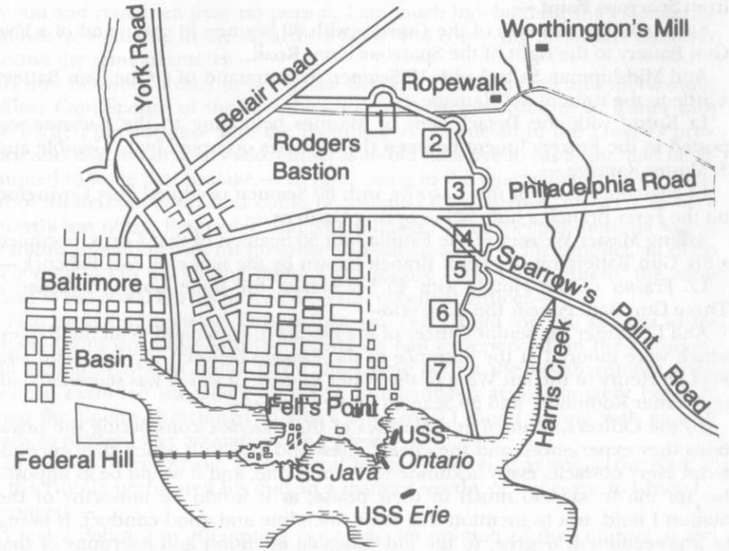
Commodore John Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy Jones

New Castle Sept. 23d—1814

Sir

From the time of my Arrival at Baltimore until my departure, the various duties I had to perform and the different situations in which I was placed, must plead my apology for not furnishing a Report of the Services of the Naval Force employ'd there under my command at an earlier period; and more particularly as my situation a large portion of the time was such as to deny me the use of Pen Ink or Paper.—

The advance and retreat of the Enemy, you have been made acquainted with from other sources and it now only remains for me to make known to you the dispositions made of, and the services rendered by the Force under my com-



Map 10. Rodgers's Bastion, 12–14 September 1814

This depicts the distribution of naval shore batteries and field artillery on the heights of Hampstead Hill. The entrenchments between the batteries were occupied by the U.S. Marines and companies of the Maryland and Pennsylvania militia.

Key: 1–2. First Regiment of Artillery, Maryland militia; 3. Captain George Stiles's Marine Artillery, Maryland militia; 4. Lieutenant Thomas Gamble; 5. Sailing Master George F. De La Roche and Midshipman Robert Field; 6. Sailing Master James Ramage; 7. Midshipman William D. Salter.

mand, and which I feel a pleasure in doing, as the conduct of all was such as to merit my entire approbation.—

In the general distribution of the Forces employ'd in the defence of Baltimore, with the concurrence of the Comdg. General,[1] I stationed Lt Gamble first of the *Guerriere*, with about 100 Seamen in command of a Seven Gun Battery on the Line between the Roads leading from Phila. and Sparrows Point.—

Sailing Master De La Roach of the *Erie* and Midshn. Field of the *Guerriere*[2] with 20 Seamen in command of a Two Gun Battery fronting the Road leading from Sparrows Point.—

Sailing Master Ramage of the *Guerriere* with 80 Seamen in command of a Five Gun Battery to the right of the Sparrows Point Road.

And Midshipman Salter[3] with 12 Seamen in command of a One Gun Battery a little to the right of Mr. Ramage.—

Lt Kuhn[4] with the Detachment of Marines belonging to the *Guerriere* was posted in the Entrenchment between the Batteries occupied by Lt Gamble and S. Master Ramage.—

Lt Newcomb third of the *Guerriere*, with 80 Seamen occupied Fort Covington on the Ferry Branch a little below Spring Gardens.—

Sailing Master Webster of the Flotilla with 50 Seamen of that Corps, occupied a Six Gun Battery on the Ferry Branch known by the name of Fort Babcock.—

Lt. Frazier of the Flotilla with 45 Seamen of the same Corps, occupied a Three Gun Battery near the Lazaretto—

And Lt. Rutter the senior Officer of the Flotilla in command of all the Barges, which were moored at the entrance of the Passage between the Lazaretto and Fort McHenry in the left Wing of the Water Battery, of which was stationed Sailing Master Rodmond[5] and 50 Seamen of the Flotilla.—

To the Officers, Seamen and Marines of the *Guerriere*, considering the privations they experienced and the cheerfulness and zeal with which they encountered every obstacle, every acknowledgement is due, and it would be as impossible for me to say too much in their praise, as it would be unworthy of the Station I hold, not to mention that their discipline and good conduct, is owing in a preeeminent degree, to the indefatigable attention and exertions of that highly estimable Officer Lt Gamble.—

The Enemy's repulsion from the Ferry Branch on the Night of the 13th: Inst after he had passed Fort McHenry with his Barges and some light Vessels was owing to the warm reception he met from Forts Covington and Babcock commanded by Lt Newcomb and S. Master Webster, whom with all under their command performed the duty assigned them, to admiration.—

To Lt. Frazier commanding the Three Gun Battery at the Lazaretto, great praise is due for the constant and animated Fire with which he at times assailed the Enemy during the whole Bombardment, altho' placed in a very exposed situation to Rockets and Shells.—

Great praise is justly due Lt Rutter for his prompt execution of my orders, as well as the zeal and coolness with which he performed all the duties of his Station, altho' continually exposed for near 24 Hours to the Enemy's Rockets and Shells.—

Similar praise is due to the Officers and Men in the several Barges of the Flotilla which were immediately under his command, who without regard to the Enemye's Rockets and Shells maintained their position with firmness in the Passage between Fort McHenry and the Lazaretto.—

Sailing Master Rodmond Stationed in the Water Battery of Fort McHenry with 60 Seamen of the Flotilla, did his duty in a manner worthy of the Service to which he belongs.—

To Masters Mate Stockton my Aid, I am greatly indebted for the zeal and promptitude with which he conveyed my orders from Post to Post and wherever I had occasion to communicate, altho' in some instances he had to pass through showers of Shells and Rockets.—

To Mr. Allen (brother of the late gallant Capt Allen of the Navy) who acted as my Aid and remained near my person, I am much indebted for the essential assistance he rendered in the capacity of Secty. and conveying my orders wherever I found the same necessary.—[6]

It now becomes a duty to notice the Services of that gallant and meritorious Officer Capt Spence of the Navy by whose exertions, assisted by Lt Rutter with the Barges, the entrance into the Basin was so obstructed in the Enemy's presence and that too in a very short time, as to bid defiance to his Ships, had he attempted to force that passage.— In fine, owing to the emergency of the Service, altho' no definite command could be assigned Capt Spence, his services were nevertheless of the first order, and where danger was expected there he was to be found animating with his presence and encouraging by his conduct, all to do their duty.— On my leaving Balto. Commodore Perry being absent, the command of the Naval Forces devolved on this excellent Officer.—

That justly distinguished Officer Commo. Perry, I am sorry to say, was so Indisposed and worn out with the fatigue he had experienced on the Potomac, and having arrived at Balto. but a short time before the Bombardment commenced excluded his taking an active command— at the moment however when the Enemy threatened to attack our Lines, I found he was with us, and ready to render every assistance in his power.—

In a word, every Officer, Seaman and Marine belonging as well to the Navy as to the Flotilla performed his duty in a manner worthy of the corps to which he belonged.—

I feel a delicacy in attempting to express an opinion of the conduct of any other corps than those particularly placed under my command by the Navy Department, and the more so, as my object is to avoid every cause of being thought presuming.— I must in justice however be permitted to say that the conduct of Col Stephen Stoner commdg. the lst. Regiment of Maryland Militia which was formed in colum in my rear for the defence of the Lines, and whom I considered attached to my Command by order of the Comdg. General, conducted in a manner not only to give me satisfaction, but the most incontestible proff that, that corps would have done its duty had the Enemy attempted to force the Entrenchment in its vicinity.—

Much praise is also due to Maj Randall commdg. a Battalion of Pensylvania Rifflemen who was also placed under my command, and whom I dispatched with my Aid mr. Stockton to dislodge a party of men in the Enemy's Boats, which it was supposed intended landing near the Lazaretto to take possession of our little Three Gun Battery.— Mr Stockton on his return reported to me in very high terms, the zeal and gallantry displayed by the Major and his Corps on the occasion.— Indeed it is but justice to say that I have the best reason to believe, that all the Corps' Stationed in the Entrenchments, so far as came under my immediate observation would have performed their respective duties in a

manner honorable to themselves and to their country.— With great respect I have the honor to be Sir, Yr Obt Servt

Jn° Rodgers

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 89 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Major General Samuel Smith, Maryland militia.
2. Sailing Master George F. De La Roche. The midshipman's warrant for Robert Field dated from 1 September 1811.
3. William D. Salter's midshipman's warrant was dated 15 November 1809; his lieutenant's commission dated from 9 December 1814.
4. Joseph L. Kuhne's commission as a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps was dated 18 June 1814.
5. Solomon Rodmon joined the Chesapeake Bay flotilla as a sailing master on 22 June 1814. He was discharged 15 April 1815.
6. For more on the final cruise of *Argus* and the death of William Henry Allen, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 217–24. Thomas Allen, William Henry's younger brother, had moved to Baltimore in 1813.

Lieutenant Colonel George Armistead, U.S.A., to Acting Secretary of War Monroe

Fort McHenry 24th. September 1814

Sir

A severe indisposition, the effect of great fatigue and exposure, has prevented me heretofore from presenting You with an account of the Attack on this Post— On the night of Saturday the 10th. inst. the British Fleet consisting of Ships of the line, heavy Frigates, and Bomb vessels, amounting in the whole to 30 Sail, appear'd at the mouth of the River Patapsco, with every indication of an attempt on the City of Baltimore, My own Force consisted of one Company of U.S. Artillery under Capt. Evans, and two Companies of Sea Fencibles under Captains Bunbury and Addison, of these three Companies 35 men were unfortunately on the Sick list and unfit for duty— I had been furnished with two Companies of Volunteer Artillery from the City of Baltimore under Capt. Berry and Lieut Commandt. Pennington,— to these I must add another very fine Company of Volunteer Artillerists under Judge Nicholson, who had profferd their Services to aid in the defence of this Post whenever an attack might be apprehended, and also a Detachment from Commodore Barneys flotilla under Lt. Rodman: Brigadier Genl. Winder had also furnished me with about Six hundred Infantry under the Command of Lt. Col. Steuart & Major Lane, consisting of detachments from the 12th. 14th. 36th. & 38th. Regts. of U.S. troops, the total amounting to about one thousand Effective men— On Monday Morning very early, it was perceived that the Enemy was landing troops on the East side of the Patapsco, distant about ten Miles— During that day and the ensuing night He had brought Sixteen Ships (including five Bomb Ships) within about two Miles and an half of this Fort— I had arranged my force as follows—The Regular Artillerists under Capt. Evans and the Volunteers under Capt. Nicholson, manned the Bastions in the Star fort, Captains Bunburys, Addisons, Rodmans, Berrys and Lt. Comdt. Penningtons Commands were stationed on the lower works, and the Infantry under Lt. Col. Steuart & Major

Lane were in the outer Ditch, to meet the Enemy at his landing if He should attempt one— On Tuesday Morning about Sun rise, the Enemy commenced the Attack from his five Bomb Vessels,[1] at the distance of about two Miles, when finding that his Shells reached Us. He anchored and Kept up an incessant and well directed Bombardment— We immediately opened Our Batteries and Kept up a brisk fire from Our Guns and Mortars, but unfortunately our Shot and Shells all fell considerably Short of him; this was to me a most distressing circumstance as it left Us exposed to a constant and tremendous Shower of Shells without the most remote possibility of our doing him the slightest injury. It affords me the highest gratification to State, that although We were left thus exposed, and thus inactive, not a Man Shrunk from the conflict— About 2 OClock P.M. one of the 24 pounders on the South West Bastion under the immediate command of Capt. Nicholson, was dismounted by a Shell, the explosion from which Killed his 2d Lieut and wounded several of his Men; the bustle necessarily produced in removing the Wounded and remounting the Gun, probably induced the Enemy to suspect that We were in a state of confusion, as He brought in three of his Bomb Ships to what I believed to be good striking distance; I immediately orderd a fire to be opened, which was obeyed with alacrity through the whole Garrison, and in half an hour those intruders again sheltered themselves by withdrawing beyond our reach, We gave three Cheers and again ceased firing— The Enemy continued throwing Shells with one or two Slight intermissions, till one OClock in the Morning of Wednesday, when it was discoverd that He had availed himself of the darkness of the Night, and had thrown a considerable force above to our right; they had approached very near to Fort Covington, when they began to throw Rocketts, intended I presume to give them an opportunity of examining the Shores, as I have since understood they had detached 1250 picked Men with Scaling ladders for the purpose of Storming this Fort— We once more had an opportunity of opening our Batteries and Kept up a continued blaze for nearly two Hours, which had the effect again to drive them off— In justice to Lieut. Newcomb of the U.S. Navy, who commanded at Fort Covington with a Detachment of Sailors and Lieut Webster of the Flotilla who commanded the 6 Gun Battery near that Fort, I ought to State that during this time they Kept up an animated and I believe a very destructive fire, to which I am persuaded We are much indebted in repulsing the Enemy— One of their sunken Barges has since been found with two dead men in it, others have been seen floating in the River. The only means We had of directing Our Guns was by the blaze of their Rocketts and the flashes of their Guns, had they ventured to the same situation in the day time, not a Man would have escaped— The Bombardment continued on the part of the Enemy until Seven OClock on Wednesday Morning, when it ceased and about Nine they [*their*] Ships got under weigh and Stood down the River— During the Bombardment which continued 25 Hours, (with two slight intermissions) from the best calculation I can make, from fifteen to Eighteen hundred Shells were [*thrown*] by the Enemy, a few of these fell Short, a large proportion burst over Us, throwing their fragments among us and threatning destruction, many passed over, and about four hundred fell within the Works—two of the Public Buildings are materially injured, the others but slightly— I am happy to inform You (wonderful as it may appear) that our loss amounts only to four Men Killed and twenty four Wounded, the latter will all recover— Among the Killed I have to lament the loss of Lieut. Clagett and Sergeant Clemm, both of

Capt. Nicholsons Volunteers, two Men whose fate is to be deplored, not only for their personal bravery, but for their high Standing, amiable Demeanour, and spotless integrity in private life— Lieut Russel of the Company under Lt. Pennington received early in the attack a severe contusion in the Heel, notwithstanding which He remained at his post during the whole Bombardment— Was I to name any individuals who signalized themselves, it would be doing injustice to others, suffice it to say, that every Officer and Soldier under my Command did their duty to my entire satisfaction— I have the honor to remain respectfully Your Ob Servt

G Armistead Lieut. Col[1] U.S.A.

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, A-48 (8) (M221, Roll No. 59).

1. *Aetna, Devastation, Meteor, Terror,* and *Volcano.*

Gosport Navy Yard Mobilizes for Attack

Captain Charles Gordon languished in Norfolk for almost a year, awaiting the chance for a blue water cruise and the sea glory it would bring. The British blockade of the Chesapeake Bay dashed his hopes of escape. Instead, as that station's commanding officer, he occupied himself with strengthening its flotilla. Not knowing where the British fleet would appear after the incursion at Washington, Gordon, along with Captain John Cassin, commandant of the Gosport Navy Yard, established works to protect the yard from a British assault. As the American army was preoccupied with defending Norfolk, these naval officers organized their own batteries.

Meanwhile, Gordon saw an opportunity to free Constellation *from her prison in the bay. The massive British concentration of ship strength in the upper bay in early September left the entrance to the capes patrolled by only one ship of the line. Secretary Jones, however, rejected Gordon's plea and consigned his ship to mundane harbor duty. After the British retreat from Baltimore, Jones accorded the station little attention. By November, with the bulk of the British fleet having left the bay and Jones's tenure as secretary coming to a close, it is little wonder that Jones stopped responding to Gordon's entreaties for more men.*

Captain Charles Gordon to Captain John Cassin

Constellation Saturday evening Sept. 3rd. 1814

Sir,

Many occurrences of late has thrown information in my way to justify the belief, that the Navy yard at Gosport, will be the principal object of the Enemy, and will be their first point of approach, leaving all the Forts[1] unmolested Untill the destruction of the yard is effected. And the Powder and the provisions (which they contemplate finding their) is in their possession— They certainly expect to possess themselves of every barrel and more than probable may be induced to proceed up the Canal in persuit of it.

As the Genl.[2] has not force to spare sufficient to throw up his contemplated breast work for the protection of the yard; I will undertake to do it in due time if you and Capt. Swift[3] will assist me with such force as you may have— And in the event of the advance of the enemy on that point alone, part of my force would of course be unoccupied, which would enable me to man any Guns planted their— The express of yesterday from Mr Munroe, officially announced the Departure of the British Army from Maryland, supposing, Baltimore Richmond, or Norfolk to be their next object, consequently we have no time to loose; If therefore you approve my proposition, I will commence tomorrow with all the force I can conveniently spare— Very respectfully Sir yr. obdt. Servt.

Cha[s] Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 11 (M125, Roll No. 39). Cassin enclosed this letter in his 16 September l814 letter to Jones. See p. 307.

1. Forts Nelson and Norfolk were constructed in 1794 opposite each other on the Elizabeth River to defend Norfolk, Portsmouth, and the Gosport Navy Yard.
2. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, Virginia militia.
3. Thomas R. Swift was commissioned a captain in the Marine Corps on 18 June 1814.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constelln. Norfolk 7th. Septr. 1814

Sir,

I am sorry to have to report to you the death of Lieutt. Drayton— He has linger'd since last Jany. & died on Sunday last—[1] He was buried in the Church yard at Norfolk with the honors due his rank; The purser[2] is settling his accts. & collecting his effects, a statement of which will be forward'd to his friends in South Carolina—

While the numerous fleet of the Enemy are engaged in there war of destruction up the Bay, but one (ship of the line)[3] is kept on the blockade at the Capes, It would therefore be gratifying to know if it is yr. intention I should embrace the first opportunity to proceede to sea— My Ship is again Victual'd for 5 months with a Crew of near 300 new recruits or, reenlistments, & the remainder of old hands who have 6, 8 & 12 months to serve— I have but 3 Commission'd Lieutts. with 3 other officers (of the next grade) in whom I can have confidence— All the others being very young & totally inexperienced, tho very promising officers—

In consequence of the long indisposition of Capt- Tarbell, & the probability of a formidable attack upon this place before his recovery, I have been under the necessity of placing Lieutt. Neale (my 1st. in the Command of the *Hornet*) with one half of the Gun Boats under him and station'd off Crany Island— This leaves me with Lieutts. Saunders & Cassin (both young in Commission, & Mr. Stallings actg.) Midn. Davis my next eldest has charge of one division of Guns, And Mr. Hammersly has the Command of the *Franklin* (Tender) & is to join the Ship or the *Hornet* in the event of an Attack—[4]

My Muster rolls & report of the state & condition of the Force upon this station has been duly prepared agreeable to Yr. orders on that subject;[5] But I have

thought proper to detain them untill I can be inform'd or, officially notified of the reestablishment or situation of the office of the Department— The Commdg. Genl.[6] having express'd much concern on the defenceless state of our Navy yard here, stating that he was too much occupied to give it his attention (And Captn. Cassin conceiving his force in the yard inadequate to the task) I have this day detail'd 50 or 60 men from this Ship & commenced throwing up a redoubt which I shall hope to compleat in 10 or 12 days; And which the principal Engineer[7] conceives adequate to the defence of the yard. I have the honor to be with much respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chas. Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 28 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. 4 September 1814.
2. Isaac Garretson.
3. *Asia.*
4. Benjamin I. Neale's lieutenant's commission dated from 4 June 1810. James Sanders's and Joseph Cassin, Jr.'s, lieutenant's commissions dated from 24 July 1813.
5. Circular letter, Jones to Gordon, 16 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 406–7 (M149, Roll No. 11).
6. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, Virginia militia.
7. Captain Sylvanus Thayer, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Charles Gordon

Capt. Charles Gordon
U.S. Navy. Norfolk Va.

Navy Department Sept. 10th. 1814

Sir,

I have received yours of the 7th. instant.— The orders from this Department, now in your possession, answer your Enquiry.— The *Constellation* cannot proceed to sea, until special orders for that purpose shall be issued from this Department.— The powerful force of the enemy being now exclusively directed against our territory and particularly against the Harbors and cities on the waters of the chesapeake, there is no comparison between any service the *constellation* could possibly render at Sea, and the importance of her force for the defence of Norfolk.—

The loss of Lieutenant Drayton to the service is much to be regretted.—

Two or three Lieutenants will be ordered to report themselves to you.— I approve of the steps you have taken for the defence of the Navy Yard.—

What object the Enemy has next in view, is yet uncertain but he will not be inactive long, and it is only by the utmost vigilance, and the highest state of preparation that you can hope to repel him, should he attempt Norfolk in force.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 415 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain John Cassin to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Gosport September 16th. 1814

Sir,

I have taken the liberty of giving you a sketch of the situation of this place, and presuming the enemys first object in attack would be the Navy Yard; sometime back I induced the Commanding General,[1] to visit the head of the western branch, called or known by the name of Hall's Mill, which is the only rout the enemy could make without much difficulty, from where its generally believed they would land to attack, which is old town point, Nansimond Creek; in order to get some intrenchments thrown up at the Mill, which in my opinion would annoy the enemy much, there being many ravines very difficult from the road to the river, from Hodges ferry up to the Mill.—

But not having any assurance from the General, of any works thrown up, or any aid from his forces for the protection of this Yard, and every man who arrives to join the Army is marched to the rear of Norfolk, even the portsmouth Militia, I was resolved to erect a battery inside of the yard, which is finished with Six eighteen pounders, pointing from West to SW and two thirty two pounders from SW to South, long Guns, the battery is made of timber sufficient for Sailors to work on, without any injury to the timber, also four twelve pounders at the gate way, ready to secure the Cossway, from portsmouth to Gosport, and contemplated to have taken the Marines, with what little force I have in the Yard, to have defended it, after moving all the Stores on board the Gun boats, laid up for want of men, and moved them up the river to some point where they could be Sunk provided the enemy persued them, being Satisfied Captain Gordon, could not render me much assistance from his weak force, afloat, which does not amount to more than five hundred & thirty, for Frigate Gun Boats &ca.—

Since fixing my battery, Captain Gordon, wrote me the enclosed,[2] which I have assented to, and procured more volunteers from Portsmouth to assist; the breast work is commenced about two hundred yards in the rear of the yard, and in front of my works, under the direction of Captain Thayer Engineer, with about one hundred and twenty or thirty men, Marines, bla[cks] and Captain Tabb's Company, the work being extensive in my opinion will not be finished in four weeks, every thing requisite for this breast work, is required from the yard, such as timber for platforms, Guns and every thing appertaining to them, by requisition of Captain Gordon, and the Engineer, the timber I shall procure of the inferior kind, when finish'd I know not how it's to be man'd.—

I do not know what the War department would do without the assistance of the Navy, enclosed you will receive a statement of Articles[3] furnished them, I have been compel'd to refuse them any more of the prime timber, without your authority.— but a few pieces of plank, for Gun Carriages, which I delivered to day. I have the honor to be Sir, Your obt. Servt.

John Cassin

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 57 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, Virginia militia.
2. Cassin is probably referring to Gordon's 3 September 1814 letter that was filed among the captains' letters to the secretary of the navy. See pp. 304–5.
3. This list was not found. Apparently it contained an extensive amount of material and munitions because Secretary Jones strongly reproved Cassin for distributing so many supplies to the army without the Navy Department's express approval. Jones to Cassin, 20 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 186 (M441, Roll No. 1).

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constellation 20th. Sept. 1814

Sir

In compliance with your orders of the 16th. ulto.[1] I have the Honor to forward herewith a report of the State and condition of the whole of the force on this Station, And a muster-roll of the Officers, Petty Officers, Seamen, marines and Boys under my Command designating those of the *Constellation* from those of the Flotilla, By which you will perceive the *Constellation* has a crew of 380 all told; and the Flotilla 283 A large proportion of the latter are officers and Boys and two thirds of the rest, blacks,— I have determined notwithstanding to keep seventeen Gun Boats in Commission, Six of which I have moored permanently to protect the rear of Fort Nelson, and the Town of Portsmouth, allowing them as many men as will work their Long Guns, to serve as a fix'd Battery, and under cover of the Guns of the *Constellation*, which also commands the plain in the rear of Fort Nelson and Portsmouth; The rest of the Gun Boats, (eleven in number,) I have detaild men from this Ship, to make a Crew of twenty five each. And Shall keep them in the advance at Crany Island, where I have a range of heavy Booms, well chaind & Anchord in the Narrows, And where I also contemplate experimenting with eight Torpedoes—

I have also three Launches and the *Centipede* barge with a small carriage Gun in each, And two Scows one mounting two Long 18s. and the Other two Long 12s. to operate with, should they be thrown in confusion or run upon the Flatts by the Booms in attempting to advance upon the Gun Boats, which I strongly apprehend, and will be prepared for—

The Six Boats out of Commission for want of men, I have put in charge of Capt. Cassin, by his request, to remove the powder, provisions &c, up towards the Canal in the event of an attack—

Every Seaman of the place, and those discharged from my Force who did not reenter, have joind the army either as Regulars or substitutes—

The Battery for the defence of the Navy Yard will evidently be formidable, as it will Command the only pass to the Yard, about 300 yards spaced between the heads of two Creeks or Branches which lead up on either side of Gosport and effectually enclose both, But Capt. Swift of the marines not having more than 30 Effective men, and Capt. Cassin none we must depend upon the Army throwing in Artillerests when wanting, unless I should be unoccupied afloat, my Officers and men being prepared to meet them at any point, And I have full Confidence in all— I have the Honor to be very respectfully Sir yr ob Sevt.

Chas. Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 77 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Circular letter, Jones to Gordon, 16 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 406–7 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constellation 21st. Octr. 1814

Sir,

Since my communication on the subject, I have been constantly engaged at the Fort intended for the defence of the Navy Yard, And do now contemplate

making it adequate to its compleat defence, provided the Commander of the land forces[1] does not take from me, the Malitia labourers he has been so good as to assist me with since its commencement— Had he furnish'd me with the Mechanics & tools promised, it would have been compleat long ere this, And with such as I could muster from my Ship, I have only been able to mount four long Eighteens as yet, But shall hope to mount five more this week.

The Battery is constructed to mount 15 long Eighteens or twenty four's and 2 forty two pound Carronades to rake the Ditches— I shall soon compleat it for 11 Long Eighteens and one thirty two pound Carronade, which is all that we have upon the Station; But with those, I will promise with two hundred of my crew to defend it against thousands of the Enemy As I intend it shall be impenetrable on all sides—

I have had a survey taken of all the Creeks and Country in the vicinity of the Navy Yard, Portsmouth & Fort Nelson, from which it is very evident that the Navy Yard & Gosport may with a little more labour and trifling expence be made perfectly secure from any Force, Our Fort commands a plane of one miles extent in every direction, and the heads of the two Creeks, within close musket shot, which compleatly embrace the Yard & Gosport— A redoubt of two or three Guns upon each of those Creeks, with the Ditches already contemplated is all I concieve necessary for its defence, provided the officer of the Yard will take care always to be prepared to line his Wharves well with Guns to oppose any force in front of the Yard on the opposite side of the river, which is narrow and would enable them to take a possition to throw Rockets across. A Survey of the whole with the possition of the fort shall be forwarded for your Satisfaction—

As the Flotilla is now nearly destitute of men & no Marines to man the Fort, except a small Guard of 25 men detail'd from the *Constellation* I have Offered to enlist any number of the Carolina Malitia who will enter as Flotilla men for two Years, And drill them as marines for the Fort, or, to act in Gun Boats as circumstances may require— Should I Succeed in procuring two hundred able bodied men on those terms, I contemplate dressing them in Marines fatigue uniform, it being the cheapest, in lieu of the sailors dress, which they will pay for as the Seamen do, And drill them to the heavy Guns in our own way, With such a force, and my present command upon this Station, well mann'd, I think while I remain in port, I may venture to pledge myself to you, to protect and defend this Yard with the whole of its contents against any force the Enemy may send against us—

I presume you are aware of the total stop to the recruiting service for some time p[*ast*] owing to our want of funds— Those men [*whom*] we have been obliged to discharge we have given due bills to, And all those of my crew 200 & odd, who reentered under my pledge, that they should recieve the amount of their last two years services, & liberty to Spend it, I am happy to say have not evan mentioned the subject, knowing my inability to comply at this moment I have the Honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. obt. Servt.

Chas. Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 81 (M125, Roll No. 39). The seal obscures several words.

1. Brigadier General Robert B. Taylor, Virginia militia.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Norfolk 11th. Novr. 1814

Sir

I have much satisfaction in informing you that my Fort[1] may now be considered as sufficiently defencable to meet the Enemy, And it certainly is the most compact and most formidable looking work in the place It would with 150 or 200 men, command respect and attention from the most formidable force the Enemy could oppose to it, so much so that I feel anxious to know if it is your wish or intention it should be retained by us as a Marine Battery or if it be expected of me to relinquish it to the Land forces; Some of the Malitia no doubt will enlist with me, when I can give them an advance, But for the present I have placed my Marine Officer[2] (who I am not in want of on board) and a detachment of my Marines to guard it untill I can know your wishes—

With due respect I would suggest that fifty Marines under a lieutenant, or Lt. Stern be detach'd to guard the Fort, and Capt. Swift & Lt. Breckenridge[3] with their Navy Yard marines to guard the Navy Yard, and man the Yard Guns This arrangement would enable me at any moment while in port, to throw all my marines as well as Sailors into the Fort when Necessary provided the *Constellation* could be indulged with another Marine Officer Senior to my present one and more suited to a man of War—

I avail myself of this communication to inform you how harrassing it will be to my Officers and crew to keep the numerous Boats of the Enemy in check this fall, while we lay so distant from the Roads, and they have it in their power to select their times of Operations And while we are compell'd to be always on the watch in Open Boats night & Day, too distant from the Ship to return to their meals or even for daily relief, and too cold to live upon the beach as we did in the summer—

The Gun Boats not having more than five or Six men on an average, I dare not trust them from under the Guns of the *Constellation* and Forts.[4] And to be constantly transfering from the Ship to the G. Boats, tends to make my whole force still weaker—

As Capt. Tarbell's services are at present unimportant on this Station I would respectfully Suggest that (when recruiting funds are allowd.) I might be permitted to order him with two or three of the Officers of the Flotilla Southerly or where you may deem most fit to procure men of some description for those Gun Boats If in the mean time the *Constellation* should get to sea (as indeed I should not consider the *Madagascar* & *Havanna* any obstruction in a tolerable SW. Blow) I could leave the Flotilla in charge of capt. Cassin untill Capt. Tarbells returning—

Lt. Neale having visited the above Ships thro'out and seen them exercise, he can [*best*] judge their force. The *Madagascar* is equal to us in rate and the *Havanna* a Short two and thirty, tho' she mounts 18s. on her main Deck— I have the Honor to be Sir—very respectfully yr. obt. Servt.

Chas. Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 120 (M125, Roll No. 40). The word supplied in brackets is a conjecture. The seal obscures it.

1. Gordon erected a breastwork defense outside of the Gosport Navy Yard.
2. Captain Thomas R. Swift, U.S.M.C.
3. Francis W. Sterne was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps on 24 July 1813; he was promoted to captain on 10 December 1814. Henry B. Breckenridge's rank as a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps dated from 9 July 1812 and his captaincy from 10 December 1814.
4. Forts Nelson and Norfolk.

Investigation into the Burning of Washington

Congress reconvened on 19 September 1814, almost a month after the British burned the Capitol. The House of Representatives quickly established a committee to inquire into the "causes of the success of the enemy in his recent enterprises against this metropolis, and the neighboring town of Alexandria." Committee Chairman Richard M. Johnson requested that the department heads provide detailed reports of the enemy's incursion and in particular an accounting of the public buildings destroyed. Secretary Jones dutifully communicated the Navy Department's role in the events and Thomas Tingey enumerated the destruction incurred at the Washington Navy Yard. On 29 November Congress ordered that all the findings be printed, but chose not to issue any opinion regarding them.[1]

1. For a printed version of the full report, see ASP: Military Affairs, *Vol. 1, pp. 524–99.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Congressman Richard M. Johnson

Navy Department
Octr. 3d. 1814.

Sir,

In compliance with your letter of the 26th. instant,[1] as Chairman of the Committee appointed by the Honorable House of Representatives, "to enquire into the causes of the success of the enemy in his enterprises against this Metropolis, and the neighbouring town of Alexandria, and into the manner in which the Public buildings and property were destroyed, and the amount thereof"; and with your request "for such information on the subject, as may be in my power, and more particularly in relation to the destruction of the Navy Yard; and the amount of Public property destroyed," I have the honour to present the following Report of the measures adopted by this Department, and of the facts, within my knowledge, in relation to the objects of the enquiry.

In obedience to the general instructions and early solicitude of the President, in anticipation of the probable designs of the enemy to harass the country in this vicinity, and to attempt the invasion of this Metropolis, I directed, in the month of May last, three 12 pounders to be mounted on field Carriages, by the Mechanics of the Navy Yard, and completely equipped and furnished for field Service. To these the marines at Head Quarters were trained, under the command of Captain Miller, and prepared to act, either as Artillerists or Infantry, as the Service might require. A short time previous to the reinforcement of the enemy in the Patuxent, I caused two long 18 pounders to be mounted on field Carriages, and prepared, in like manner, for field Service; ready to be attached to the command of Commodore Barney, should the enemy, at any time, compel

him to abandon the Flotilla, under his command, on the Patuxent, and the emergency call for the aid of his force, in defence of the Capital or of Baltimore.

For this eventual Service that Officer was instructed to prepare; and by his zeal and activity, his men acquired the expert use of their Muskets; and a capacity, as well as an ardent disposition, to be useful to their country on either element.

On the 26th. July, in consequence of the menacing movements of the enemy, near the Kettle Bottoms in the Potomac, which it was said they were sounding and buoying off, the letter A[2] was written; but, on account of information received on the same day, the letter B,[3] countermanding the former was written.

The enemy, in the Patuxent, was occupied in depredating upon its shores, until large reinforcements arrived at the Mouth of that River on the 18th. of August, the account of which was communicated on the 19th. to the Department by Commodore Barney, in the letter C,[4] with a list of the Naval Force of the Enemy annexed.

On the morning of the 19th. information was received at the Department from Captain Gordon, Commanding the U. S. Naval Force at Norfolk, that, on the morning of the 16th. came in from Sea, and proceeded up the Bay, 22 sail of enemy's vessels; viz. two 74's, one 64, one Razee, 7 Frigates, 7 Transports, and two or three Brigs or Schooners;[5] which, it appears by the letter C, joined the Force at the Mouth of the Patuxent on the 18th; the whole of which ascended the Patuxent, near to Benedict, on the 18th. and 19th. and commenced debarking the Troops. The letter marked D[6] was immediately written to Commodore Barney; the letter E[7] to Commodore Rodgers, and the letter F[8] to Captain Porter, urging the two latter to repair with their forces, towards this City, with the utmost expedition.

Commodore Rodgers had previously made the most judicious arrangements, to transport, with celerity, the Marines, and the principal part of the Seamen, under his command on the Delaware Station, to the Head waters of the Chesapeake, or to Baltimore, upon any sudden emergency, and had organized and disciplined his men with a view to such service. It appears, however, by his letters G[9] and H,[10] that, with every possible exertion, he did not reach Baltimore until the 25th. consequently too late to participate in the defence of the Metropolis, against a force, the greater part of which came in from Sea on the 16th. was first known to the Department to have arrived on the 19th. marched from Benedict on the 20th. and entered the Capital on the 24th.

Having sent to General Winder on the 19th. a copy of letter C, on the 20th, I called on him, at his Quarters at McKeowins,[11] to show him the letter I,[12] just received from Commodore Barney, and my order to that officer to join and cooperate with the force under his command, (see letter K,)[13] also to point out those Volunteer Corps, in his Army, that comprised the mechanicks of the Navy Yard, who, being excellent Axemen, would act with great effect as Pioneers. As it was understood that a strong Squadron of the Enemy's Ships, in cooperation with his land force had passed the principal obstacle in the Potomac, and was only retarded in its ascent by contrary winds, against which it was warping with great exertion;[14] I expressed to him my solicitude for the defence of Fort Washington, and proposed to throw the Marines, who had been trained to Artillery exercise, and a part of the Seamen into that Fort for its defence.

The General did not conceive the state of his force such as to warrant the abstraction of so efficient a part, as that of the Marines and Seamen, from the main body, which was to oppose the direct advance of the enemy's Army, on the City, and indeed his objection appeared to have weight.— He did not, however, consider Fort Washington as tenable.

On the 21st. the letter L[15] was received from Commodore Barney, and a Detachment of about 110 Marines, with three 12's, and two 18 pounders, under the command of Captain Miller, marched from Head Quarters to join Commodore Barney, and reached the Wood Yard that evening.

In the course of this day and the following, I visited the Navy Yard, and enquired of the Commandant,[16] what were the means of transportation, and what assistance he had in the Yard? He stated that all the Mechanics of the Yard were, and had been with the Army from the first alarm; that no persons remained but the Officers of the Yard, three besides himself, and a very few of the Ordinary, chiefly Blacks; that two of the old Gun Boats were the only craft for transportation; that all the Waggons in the District had been hired or impressed for the Army; and that those Blacks, who were usually to be had for hire, were employed on the Works at Bladensburg.

I directed him to employ all the means he had or could procure; to load the Gun Boats with provisions and powder, and send them up to the Little Falls; employ as many Waggons as could be either hired or impressed, and convey as much of the Navy powder, as possible, from the Magazine on the Eastern Branch, to Mr. Dulany's Barn, on the Virginia side of the Potomac, about nine miles above the City; to direct Messrs. Grayson, Stull and Williams, to transport the Public powder from their Works to the same place; and to continue transporting the most valuable and portable articles, from the Yard to any place of safety, with all the means he could command.

The Public Vessels, afloat at the Navy Yard, were the New Sloop of War *Argus*, with her Guns mounted, her Topmasts launched, and her sails, and detached equipments, complete, on shore in store; the New Schooner *Lynx*, and three New Barges, one of the First, and two of the Second class, completely equipped; with the two Gun Boats before mentioned.

On the Slip was the New Frigate *Columbia*, of the largest Class; caulked, ready for coppering, and nearly so for Launching. Her masts, Spars, Tops, &c. almost finished in the Mast House;— Gun Carriages nearly completed;— her Sails, made and in the Loft; her rigging fitted;— Blocks all made; and her Equipments, generally, in great forwardness.

Besides the Buildings, Engines, Fixtures, and Shop Furniture of the several Mechanical branches in the Navy Yard, there were about 100 Tons of Cordage, some Canvas, a considerable quantity of Saltpetre, Copper, Iron, Lead, Block Tin, Blocks, Ship Chandlery, Naval and Ordnance Stores, implements and fixed ammunition, with a variety of manufactured articles in all the Branches; 1743 barrels of Beef and Pork, 279 barrels of Whiskey, and a moderate Stock of Plank and Timber.

Had there been a prospect of transporting the Sloop of War *Argus*, to a place of safety, the representations of the Commandant will show, that he had not the means of transporting her, and there appeared to be no situation in which she could be placed, in which she would not fall into the hands of the enemy, in the event of his getting possession of the City. It therefore only remained to endeavour to save all the Stores, that could be transported, and the smaller Vessels, particularly the Barges, if practicable, by running them up to the Little Falls.— This was directed to be done.

On the 22nd. the letter M[17] was received from Commodore Barney. In the evening of that day I accompanied the President to General Winder's Camp, at the Old Fields, and passed the night in Commodore Barney's tent;— the Army of the enemy at Upper Marlborough eight miles distant; On the morning of the 23d. reviewed the Seamen and Marines, whose appearance and preparation for battle, promised all that could be expected from cool intrepidity, and a high state of discipline.

In the hope that Commodore Rodgers might arrive, that evening, at Baltimore, and not doubting that the enemy would be retarded on his march, by obstacles and annoyance, until the Seamen from Baltimore could reach Bladensburg, I wrote to Commodore Rodgers the letter marked N,[18] and sent it by a Vidette.

About 2 OClock P.M. I accompanied the President, on his return to the City, and, in the course of the evening, was informed of the sudden retreat of our Army, from the Old Fields to the City, over the Eastern Branch Bridge.

On the morning of the 24th. I proceeded to General Winder's Quarters, at Doctor Hunter's house, near the Eastern Branch Bridge, where the President, and Secretaries of War, State, and Treasury[19] soon after arrived.

I found Commodore Barney employed, by order of the General, in planting his Battery on the Hill, near the head of the Bridge. He was charged to defend that pass and to destroy the Bridge, on the appearance of the Enemy; for which purpose scows and Boats, with combustible materials, were placed under the Bridge ready to explode. At this time the enemy was apparently advancing on the road to the Bridge; but shortly after advice was received that he had turned off on the road towards Bladensburg, about six miles from that place;— General Winder set off for Bladensburg, leaving Commodore Barney, with his Seamen and Marines in charge of the Bridge.

It was soon observed that a very efficient part of the force had been left to destroy the Eastern Branch Bridge, which could as well be done by half a dozen men, as by five hundred. The subject was discussed by the President, Heads of Departments, and Com. Barney, which resulted in the order for his immediate and rapid march, to join the Army near Bladensburg, which he reached, just in time to form his men for Battle.— Captain Creighton was left in charge of the Bridge, to destroy it on the near approach of the enemy.

I here presented, for consideration, the subject of the Navy Yard, to the view of the President and Secretary of War, in the presence of the Secretaries of State and of the Treasury. I described the situation of the Public vessels, and the nature of the public property at that Establishment; the vast importance of the Supplies, and of the Shipping to the Enemy, particularly as there appeared to be no doubt of his Squadron forming a junction with his Army, should it succeed in the conquest of the Capital; (General Winder, having distinctly stated, on the same morning, that Fort Washington could not be defended;) and as, in this event, nothing could be more clear than that he would first plunder, and then destroy the Buildings and Improvements; or if unable to carry off the plunder, and the Shipping, he would destroy the whole. And if the junction should be formed, it would be a strong inducement to the enemy to remain, in order to launch the New Frigate, which the force at his command would accomplish in four or five days. He would then carry off the whole of the Public Stores and Shipping, and destroy the Establishment; and, in the mean time, greatly extend the field of his plunder and devastation.— Thus, in either case, whether

the junction was formed, or whether the Army alone entered the City, the loss or destruction of the whole of the public property at the Navy Yard was certain.

It was, therefore, distinctly agreed and determined, as the result of this consultation, that the Public Shipping and Naval and Military Stores and Provisions, at the navy yard should be destroyed, in the event of the Enemy's obtaining Possession of the City.— I went to the Navy Yard about 2 OClock, and ordered the Commandant to prepare the necessary trains, for the destruction of the Public Shipping, and of the Naval and Military Stores and provisions in the Navy Yard; and to destroy the same, so soon as he should ascertain that the enemy had taken possession of the City; first removing such articles of most value, as might be found practicable, particularly the New Barges, if possible, and then to retire in his Gig.

Subsequent events prove the justness of these conclusions, if indeed further evidence had been at all wanting.

The only legitimate objects of the enterprise of the enemy, to this place, were the Public Shipping and the Naval and Military Establishments and none can believe, that these would have escaped the torch of the Destroyer of our Civil Edifices, of Private Rope Walks and of every thing, in the most remote degree, connected with Navigation; but above all with the American Navy.

The order for the destruction of the Public Shipping and property, at the Navy Yard, was not issued without serious deliberation, and great pain, by him, under whose auspices and direction those noble Ships had been constructed, and a degree of activity, usefulness, and reputation, imparted to the Establishment, which it had never known before. It was given under the strongest obligations of duty. It is conceived that no Military maxim is better established, nor duty better understood, than that which enjoins the destruction of Public Ships, Arsenals, Naval, and Military Stores, and provisions, when they can be no longer defended, or prevented from falling into the hands of the enemy; and that this duty becomes the more imperative, as the ratio of the value of the objects is enhanced to the enemy.— To defend the Shipping or Navy Yard was out of the question;— All the mechanics and labourers of the Yard, as well as all the Seamen and Marines in the District, were with the Army.

The Commandant of the Navy Yard is a Captain in the Navy; the vessels and property were under his charge and command; and if no special order from the Department had been issued, and he had suffered the Public Shipping and property to have fallen into the hands of the enemy, he would have committed a high Military crime, for which he would have been amenable before a Court Martial. The objects which it was proper to destroy, in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, could not be separated from those which might have been left for his destruction. They were in Store, or in the midst of other combustible materials, and the fire from one would necessarily communicate to the other. Indeed the whole surface of the Yard was covered with Chips, Timber, Pitch, Tar, and other combustible matter, that to set fire to any one object, must produce the successive conflagration of the whole.

On returning from the Navy Yard, towards the Western part of the City I learned that our Army had retreated by the road to Tinley town, and that of the enemy was rapidly advancing towards the City. I soon after received a Message from the President, by Mr. Tench Ringgold, at Mr. Charles Carroll's, informing me that he had proceeded to cross the River, and requested that I would follow and meet him on the other side.

I returned to the City, on the morning of the 28th. immediately on hearing of the retreat of the enemy, and wrote the letter O,[20] to Commodore Rodgers.

The paper P,[21] is a copy of the detailed Report of the Commandant of the Navy Yard, of the manner in which he carried into execution the order I had given.

The Barge, he states to have been saved, was sent to Alexandria, and it appears remained there until the enemy took possession of her.

One Gun Boat was sunk near Foxall's, laden with Salted provisions, and has since been recovered. The other was laden with provisions and Gun powder, but ran aground in the Eastern Branch, in attempting to transport her to the Little Falls, and was plundered by the Inhabitants near the Navy Yard;—[22] the powder, and part of the provisions, have since been recovered.

The New Schooner *Lynx* escaped the flames, in an extraordinary manner, and remains entire.

The Metallic articles have nearly all been saved, including a vast quantity of Iron work, which, with little labour, will answer the original purpose. The Timber that was in Dock is saved; and a great deal of that which was partially consumed, will still be useful. Almost the whole of the Machinery of the Steam Engine, is reported to be in good condition;— the Boiler is perfect.

The Buildings, with the exception of the Houses of the Commandant and Lieutenant of the Yard,[23] the Guard Houses, and Gateway, and one other Building, have been destroyed. The Walls of some appear to be entire, and but little injured; of others they are destroyed. The Monument[24] was but slightly injured.

Paper Q[25] is a list of the Cannon remaining perfect in the yard, and of those which were injured by the Enemy.

The Issuing Store of the Yard, and its contents, which had escaped the original conflagration, were totally destroyed by the Enemy.

Orders have been issued to the Officers of the Yard to prepare their Statements and Estimates of the value of the public property destroyed, which shall be furnished as soon as possible.[26]

With the circumstances attending the abandonment and destruction of Fort Washington, and the fate of Alexandria, I am no otherwise acquainted, than by the accounts which have been published.[27]

After the Capitulation of Alexandria to the enemy's Squadron, a considerable force, in Seamen was ordered from Baltimore, (see letter R,)[28] under the command of Commodore Rodgers, with Captains Porter, Perry, and Creighton. The former attacked and annoyed the enemy in his rear, in Boats and with Fire Vessels, whilst the other Commanders planted their Batteries on White House Point, and Indian Head.

Those measures precipitated the departure of the enemy, and greatly annoyed him, in descending the River; but there was not time sufficient to prepare the means to render that annoyance effectual.— All that the limited means employed, could possibly effect, was accomplished, by the Gallantry, Skill, and Patriotism of those distinguished Officers, and the brave Seamen, Marines, and Volunteers, under their command.

The measures, pursued by this Department, in order to cooperate in the defence of the Metropolis, were not, in their nature, strictly sanctioned by the Regulations and usages of the naval service; but were adopted with an ardent desire that they might prove effectual; with a certain knowledge that the zeal and patriotism of the Naval Corps, would induce them to seek the enemy with

equal vigour and cheerfulness, in the field, as on the Main; and a conviction, that the emergency fully justified any step, which could contribute to the defence of the National Capital.

Whether more or less has been done, than duty required, is cheerfully and respectfully submitted. I have the honour to be very respectfully Sir your Obdt. Servt

W Jones

LS, DNA, RG233, Report of the Navy Department in Records of the Select Committee, HR13A-D15.3. All the enclosures A through R are found with this cover letter. All the enclosures except C, M, and Q are reproduced in this volume. Richard M. Johnson, a Democratic Republican from Kentucky, served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1807 to 1819 and in the U.S. Senate from 1819 to 1829, and, was vice president from 1837 to 1841. While a congressman, Johnson served as a colonel of a regiment of mounted Kentucky riflemen and was wounded at the Battle of the Thames (5 October 1813), during which he reputedly killed Tecumseh.

1. Jones meant ultimo. Johnson to Jones, 26 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 112 (M124, Roll No. 65). On 23 September 1814, the House of Representatives appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of the British attack on Washington and Alexandria.

2. Letter A, Jones to Barney, 26 July 1814, p. 149.

3. Letter B, Jones to Barney, 27 July 1814, p. 150.

4. Letter C, Barney to Jones, 19 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 30 (M124, Roll No. 65). This letter enclosed the following list of the British force that arrived at the mouth of the Patuxent on the 18th:

"1— 80 or 90 Gun Ship, Flag at the main.
4—74 Gun Ships one flag at the Mizen
6 Frigates—
10 Ships about 32 Guns
5 Small Ships
2 Brigs
1 Large Schooner 16 Guns—
2 Smaller schooners about 10 Guns.—
13 Large Bay craft
A Large number of small boats now under way standing up the Patuxent, with a Number of men.— with a determination to go to the City of Washington as they said Yesterday.—
18 August 5 o'clock P.M.
They have taken all the horses in this part of the world, and one of the officers said yesterday they had about Seven hundred on board.—"

5. Joseph Middleton to Gordon, 16 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 104, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 38).

6. Letter D, Jones to Barney, 19 Aug. 1814, pp. 186–87.

7. Letter E, Jones to Rodgers, 19 Aug. 1814, p. 199.

8. Letter F, Jones to Porter, 19 Aug. 1814, p. 199.

9. Letter G, Rodgers to Jones, 23 Aug. 1814, pp. 200–201.

10. Letter H, Rodgers to Jones, 27 Aug. 1814, pp. 259–60.

11. McKeowin's Hotel, Washington, D.C.

12. Letter I, Barney to Jones, 20 Aug. 1814, p. 187.

13. Letter K, Jones to Barney, 20 Aug. 1814, p. 188.

14. For the British account of their diversionary expedition up the Potomac, see Gordon to Cochrane, 9 Sept. 1814, pp. 238–42.

15. Letter L, Barney to Jones, 21 Aug. 1814, p. 194.

16. Commodore Thomas Tingey.

17. Letter M, Barney to Jones, 22 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 39 (M124, Roll No. 65). Barney reported that on 21 August he landed 400 men and marched to Upper Marlborough. On the 22d he proceeded to join the marines who were reportedly at the Wood Yard.

18. Letter N, Jones to Rodgers, 23 Aug. 1814, pp. 201–2.
19. Secretary of War John Armstrong, Secretary of State James Monroe, and Secretary of the Treasury George W. Campbell.
20. Letter O, Jones to Rodgers, 28 Aug. 1814, pp. 242–43.
21. Letter P, Tingey to Jones, 27 Aug. 1814, pp. 215–20.
22. Gunboats *No. 70* and *71* were lost. Gunboat *No. 140* grounded but was later recovered. Tucker, *Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy*, p. 136.
23. Lieutenant Nathaniel Haraden.
24. The Tripoli Monument, a thirty-foot high marble column, on a pedestal, topped by the American eagle, erected in the Washington Navy Yard in 1808, in memory of U.S. naval officers who lost their lives in the war with Tripoli. The monument would be moved to the Capitol grounds in 1831, and in 1860 to the Naval Academy in Annapolis, where it remains today. Smith, "*Tripoli Monument,*" pp. 72–73.
25. Letter Q, undated list of state of the ordnance at the Washington Navy Yard, Fort Washington, and the White House, DNA, RG233, Report of the Navy Department in Records of the Select Committee, HR13A-D15.3.
26. For Commodore Tingey's tables outlining the public property losses at the Washington Navy Yard, see pp. 321 and 323.
27. For more on the abandonment of Fort Washington and the capitulation of Alexandria, see *ASP: Military Affairs*, Vol. 1, pp. 587–96.
28. Letter R, Jones to Rodgers, 29 Aug. 1814, pp. 243–44.

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washtn: 18th Octr: 1814

Sir

On a review of the consequences which emanated from the retreat of our Army, and the entrance of that of the enemy into this city, on the 24th: of August last; so far as relates to this Establishment—I respectfully submit the following general statement.

After receiving repeated contradictory reports relative to the strength and position of the enemy, during the afternoon and evening of that day—at 20 minutes past 8 PM I received incontestible proof (by Captn. Creighton and Mr. M: Booth, my clerk, both of whom had been voluntarily active to obtain me positive information) that, the enemy was in complete possession of the city; having themselves been within the range of, and exposed to the fire of his musketry.[1]

The boats for our conveyance from the yard, being stationed according to order, we immediately repaired down the yard; applying fire to the trains leading to the storehouses—the principal of which were almost instantly in irresistable flame.

Advancing toward the boats, those to the new frigate *Essex*,[2] and to the Sloop of War *Argus* were touched, and they also immediately enveloped in a sheet of inextinguishable fire.

From a momentary impulse, and faint hope, of recovering the new schooner *Lynx*, I directed her not to be fired, and have the satisfaction to say that, by an almost miraculous escape she is still "ours."

The frigate *Essex*'s hull, in the shipwright's department was very near complete, her bottom ready for coppering, and she could have been launched in ten days; her masts and spars were nearly finished—with timber sufficient on the wharf to complete them—all her blocks, dead-eyes, and the major part of her gun carriages ready— Two suits of her heavy sails, and nearly the same quantity of her others were finished in the sail-loft ready for bending her standing rigging &c; fitted in the rigging-loft, and sufficient running rigging in store,

for her complete equipment, her largest boats nearly ready for launching all her water casks and every material of cooper-work ready to go on board.

The Sloop of War *Argus*, lay at the wharf, with all her armament and equipment on board—except her sails which were in the sail-loft, and her provisions in the stores, and therein consumed—and except her powder which had not been shipped.

A large quantity of timber, plank, knees &c, were in different parts of the yard, and the seventy-four gun-ship timber, stored in the appropriate sheds, all fell a prey to the devouring element. Also, one large and one smaller row galley—both arm'd, rigged and prepared for service; and three heavy armed scows, with their guns &c, on board also ready.

The buildings destroyed, by the fire from the frigate &c were, the Mast-shed, and timber-shed, the joiners & boat-builders shops, and mould loft—all the Offices—the medical store—the plumbers and smiths shops, and block-makers shop—the saw-mill & block mill, with their whole apparatus, tools and machinery—the building for the steam engine, and all the combustible parts of it's machinery and materials; the rigging loft—the apartments for the master, and the boatswain of the yard, with all their furniture—the gun carriage makers and painters shops, with all the materials and tools therein at the time: also the hulls of the old frigates *Boston*, *New York* and *General Greene*.

The store-houses first fired were the Provision stores Gunners' & Ordnance store—Cordage store and sail [loft] which with all their perishable contents were cons[ume]d.

The Navy Storekeeper's[3] detail issuing store, containing in its different apartments, a large quantity of new canvas, twine, lines, bunting and colours—together with all our stocks of mathematical instruments, and nautical apparatus appertaining to navigation—ship chandlery tools, nails, oils, paints &c: had escaped through the night the effect of the fire but was fired by the Enemy on the succeeding morning the 25th: and entirely consumed with all it's contents—as were also the coopers shop, two small frame timber sheds—and that in which our tar, pitch, rozin &c, were deposited.

The general loss of our papers, prevents the possibility of forming a just estimate of the loss in the mechanical departments, heretofore enumerated. Of that, relative to the stores on hand, in the Navy store keepers peculiar charge, it is presumed a tolerably accurate estimate may be form'd; and will be the subject of a future communication, which shall be transmitted, as soon as it is possible to effect.

In my return to the yard on the 26th: I had the mortification to observe that, the provisions which had been laded on board the old gun-boat *No: 140* (and with which she had grounded, in endeavoring to get out of the branch on the 24th) had become a prey to numerous unauthorized persons, some of whom however instantly offered to deliver up all in their possession, which was subsequently done—but several barrels are yet to be accounted for.

A subject of still greater regret is, the loss of upward of 200 barrels of powder, which were wantonly & unauthorizedly taken out of the Magazine, and chiefly thrown into the water—the cause of which however, being under investigation, by a Court Martial on the Corporal of the Marine-guard[4] then there; I forbear to enlarge on the subject as my feelings would dictate. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 50 (M125, Roll No. 40). Tape and tears obscure parts of the document. Bracketed words were supplied from the printed version in *ASP: Military Affairs*, Vol. 1, pp. 577–78.

1. For Mordecai Booth's statement of his reconnaissance efforts with Master Commandant Creighton on 24 August, see Booth to Tingey, 24 Aug. 1814, pp. 208–14.
2. *Columbia.*
3. Buller Cocke.
4. The index to the Records of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department (DNA, RG125, CM, Index 1799–1861 (M273, Roll No. 1) does not list such an inquiry.

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washtn: 9th: Novr: 1814.

Sir

I have the honor to transmit you herewith, a general statement of the moveable articles at this Establishment on the 24th: of August last, previous to the entrance of the enemy into this city; together with the cost or estimated value of those materials at that time—the value of those recovered since the fire of the yard—and a statement of the real loss resulting therefrom.

This business has been much delayed, from the want of data, to ascertain all the particulars lost, and from the daily difference by accumulation, in collecting the incombustible articles from the ruins of the warehouses &c: from whence more is expected to be obtained yet, which will be instantly reported when ascertain'd, together with any omissions, which it is probable have been made; though it is believed, if any, only to an inconsiderable amount.

I am not yet in possession of the calculations of the Artist, who was referred to, for the value of the wood and interior work of the several buildings destroyed, and therefore defer any report on the damage of the brick or stone work, and of all other immoveable matter, until I have that most material information, as it respects the buildings. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Obedt. Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 118 (M125, Roll No. 40).

[Enclosure]

Recapitulation	Cost or Estimated value: Loss		Cost or Estimated value: Recovery		Real loss	
No. 1. Frigate *Columbia*	$116,123.	05	$ 10,432.	—	$105,691.	05
" 2. Sloop of War *Argus*	75,000.	—	10,186.	55	64,813.	45
" 3. One large Row Galley	4,500.	—	1,477.	47	3,022.	53
" 4. Two smaller Ditto	6,000.	—	722.	80	5,277.	20
" 5. One armed Scow	1,610.	54	955.	87	654.	67
" 6. One ditto do.	1,096.	27	586.	67	509.	60
" 7. Gun Boats, row boats &c	6,553.	34	5,773.	34	780.	—
" 8. Boat-builders shop	2,962.	98	" "	"	2,962.	98
" 9. Blacksmiths & Plumbers do.	4,532.	80	1,969.	50	2,563.	30
" 10. Coopers shop &c	7,689.	75	2,854.	04	4,835.	71
" 11. Gun carriage makers do.	525.	—	" "	"	525.	—
" 12. Painters shop	869.	97	15.	—	854.	97
" 13. Blockmakers shop	1,610.	—	" "	"	1,610.	—
" 14. Medical store	2,679.	84	" "	"	2,679.	84
" 15. Ordnance stores &c	18,769.	90	" "	"	18,769.	90
" 16. Naval stores, cordage &c	78,262.	25	" "	"	78,262.	25
" 17. Copper, Iron, Lead &c	49,965.	27	42,522.	40	7,442.	87
" 18. Navy Storekeepers stores	20,431.	77	2,921.	89	17,509.	88
" 19. Ordnance, small arms &c	173,284.	97	162,926.	22	10,358.	75
" 20. Provisions & Contingencies	46,962.	04	4,071.	44	42,890.	60
" 21. Timber, Plank, Knees &c	45,000.	—	" "	"	45,000.	—
" 22. Anchors	12,400.	94	12,400.	94	" "	"
" 23. Miscellaneous articles	1,380.	03	648.	85	731.	18
	$678,210.	71	$260,464.	98	$417,745.	73

Navy Yard Washington 9th. Novr. 1814
Thoˢ: Tingey

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 118, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40). Of the fifteen pages detailing the loss and damage of the moveable articles at the Washington Navy Yard that Tingey enclosed with his letter to Jones, only the recapitulation page is reprinted here. Ditto marks indicate no entry.

Commodore Thomas Tingey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Navy Yard Washtn: 12th Novr: 1814

Sir

I have the honor to transmit you herewith, an estimate of the damage sustain'd in the buildings of this yard, by the fire of the 24th & 25th of August last with that of the materials and value of the parts saved— so an estimate of the cost of rebuilding such particulars, as in my judgement may be necessary for future operations; offering such observations thereon, as have appeared to me forcibly applicable—leaving to your better judgement, whether the whole may be necessary at this time, or which shall be first commenc'd on, in the event of the repairs being ordered: the whole is most respectfully submitted. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

Thoˢ: Tingey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 40).

[Enclosure]

Recapitulation.	Estimated value: Loss		Estimated value: Recovery		Real loss	
No. 1. Detail issuing store	$ 6,972.	80	$ 252.	—	$ 6,720.	80
" 2. Cordage store & sail loft	12,780.	81	312.	—	12,468.	81
" 3. Ordnance Store &c.	16,664.	10	820.	—	15,844.	10
" 4. Timber shed, Mould loft &c.	23,776.	94	2000.	—	21,776.	94
" 5. Rigging loft, guncarriage shop &c	15,279.	35	6480.	—	8,799.	35
" 6. Blacksmiths shop &c &c.	16,210.	81	5102.	—	11,108.	81
" 7. Sawmill, Enginehouse &c.	17,850.	52	5010.	—	12,840.	52
" 8. Blockmakers shop	2,091.	40	482.	—	1,609.	40
" 9. Coopers shop, and old buildings.	3,756.	80	" "	"	3,756.	80
	$115,383.	53	$20,458.	—	$94,925.	53
Thus the aggregate amount of damage to the buildings, by the fire, would appear to be					$94,925.	53
From which, the amount of the following enumerated incombustible particulars <u>being</u> saved, may justly be deducted vizt.						
Iron straps, and bolts to the <u>Girders</u>, and roofs, of the several buildings—not less than	$2000.	—				
Hinges &c: and sheet iron for roofing Ditto	1500.	—			3,500.	—
Making the real loss, sustain'd in the buildings					$91,425.	53

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 127, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40). Of the six pages detailing the damage to buildings at the yard, only the recapitulation page is printed here. In the other pages Tingey observed that some buildings were no longer required and that $62,370.14 was all that he needed to rebuild in a "plain and substantial manner."

Spence Prepares for Sea and Vies for the Steam Frigate

The correspondence of Robert T. Spence with the Navy Department and John Rodgers during the last six months of the war exhibited the frustrations of a blockaded commander and the insecurity of a junior officer. Manpower shortages plagued every station and Baltimore was no exception. Another season would pass with the new sloop of war Ontario *confined to the harbor. Spence rationalized that if sea glory were impossible, he would prefer to remain at Baltimore. In spite of his suspicions that Joshua Barney also wanted the command of the steam frigate building there, Spence actively pursued obtaining its command.[1] In addition, Spence was concerned that many routine, administrative matters were not being addressed, as the Navy Department lacked strong leadership at this time. William Jones was a lame duck secretary from September when he announced his retirement until he left the department on 30 November. Benjamin W. Crowninshield, a Massachusetts sea captain, merchant, and politician, vacillated about accepting the proffered post, and then delayed assuming it until mid-January 1815. During the six-week interim, the department's chief clerk, Benjamin Homans, acted as secretary. Spence never achieved a sea command during the war but, soon after, Congress rewarded him for his shore duty with a captaincy.*

1. For more on the steam battery being built at Baltimore at the end of the war, see Chapelle, Steam Battery, *p. 144.*

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Baltimore Septr. 21st. 1814

Sir,

General Smith yesterday shew me a letter from the Secretary at War,[1] by which I find that you suppose Captain Perry to be in Baltimore— I design this to inform you, both Captains Perry & Creighton left this place for the Eastwd. the day after the fleet went down.—

As I have but few men remaining in the Flotilla, of those turned over from my ship[2] it is time I should be endeavouring to make up a Crew more especially as I wish to overhaul my rigging before cold weather, I solicit permission to open rendezvous for that purpose—[3] The want of men prevented my getting to Sea last winter I wish in time to avoid a Similar occurrence.— I have the honour to remain with great respect Yr. Obt. Sevt.

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 46 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Acting Secretary of War James Monroe.
2. *Ontario.*
3. In his reply, Jones authorized Spence to open a rendezvous in Baltimore. He mentioned that Perry was away overseeing private matters and would return soon to superintend the outfitting of *Java.* Jones to Spence, 22 Sept. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 421 (M149, Roll No. 11).

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Baltimore Octo 12 1814

Sir

When you ordered the crew of the *Ontario* to be turned over to the Flotilla, you were pleased to say, they should rejoin the Ship in the Fall; the few which remain of them, say about 50, are now doing nothing at the Lazaretto; as I stand in need of them to prepare my Ship for sea by the Winter, I hope that you will see fit to order them to be retransfered.[1] I remain with high respect Yr. Obt St

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 66 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. In November, Jones ordered the *Ontario* crewmen who had transferred temporarily to the Chesapeake Bay flotilla to return to Spence's command. Jones to the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Flotilla, Baltimore, 26 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 406 (M149, Roll No. 11).

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Baltimore Nov 27, 1814

Sir

My Ship being nearly ready for sea, it becomes my duty to state the impracticability of my obtaining a crew at this place; also to inform you, that unless I attempt going down before the Winter is well set in, the chance of getting to sea will be but small: such being the case, I am induced to suggest a completion of my crew, from the Flotilla, in the following manner, viz—by taking back the remaining few turned over by me in April, making up the residue, with such as are willing to volunteer.

There are about 530 men in the Flotilla, out of which, number, I could procure a very excellent crew,— who, should I get to sea, would be more actively employed than at present. With high respect I remain yr obt st

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 89 (M147, Roll No. 5). Jones's last day as secretary of the navy was 30 November 1814. He did not respond to this letter, nor did the Navy Department's chief clerk, Benjamin Homans, who was the acting secretary.

MASTER COMMANDANT ROBERT T. SPENCE TO ACTING SECRETARY OF THE NAVY HOMANS

Baltimore Dec 12, 1814

Sir

The *Ontario* being in a state to require a Guard, I take the liberty to request, that you will please to order the detachment of Marines, designed as her compliment, forthwith to repair on board.—

I have also to ask for a Gunner.— as it is improbable the Frigate will get to sea during the War, I should have no objection to the one at present attached to her, should you see fit to order him.—[1]

I deem it proper to mention for your information, that out of the 110 men turned over by me to the Flotilla, I have but about 40 returned: the residue having run— these 40 are such as I was compelled to take, for the sake of a compliment: Thus sir I shall again be disappointed in getting to sea, although I know of nothing that can prevent, but a want of men.— I present for your consideration, a letter intended for the late Secty.

I understand there are in Washington, some men entered for the *Argus*:— they would be an acquisition.[2]

I beg leave to tender my high respect; and to express a wish, that you may permanently fill the office, which you at present occupy. With great consideration I remain y obt st—

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 95 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. There is no indication from *Ontario*'s muster roll that she received a gunner from the frigate *Java* at this time.

2. Homans promised to supply Spence with all the equipment he needed to get to sea in January and regretted that his complement was deficient. Homans to Spence, 28 Dec. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 494 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Confidential Baltimore January 16. 1815

Dear Sir,

Having had no opportunity to show you the Letter I mentiond, written by Commo. Rodgers to Judge Tait, I now inclose it for your perusal; also one to me, in which, he expresses a hope, that you will be induced to make up my compliment of men from the Flotilla. I request these letters may not go beyound your own eye; and that you will return them as soon as read.[1]

It is hinted, that an Officer, senior to myself, is applying to be ordered to this Station: I avail myself of this opportunity to observe, that there is no duty at this place, which will require my being superceded, in a command, to which I have some claim, from the active agency I have had in its recent defence: the marine opperations of which, were wholly entrusted to me:—except for the few days Commd. Rodgers was here with his men: this, you will perceive from the inclosed orders.[2] Fort McHenry was placed under my direction, with the approbation of Genl. Smith, Coln. Armistead being sick: under these circumstances, unless it is your intention that I should go to Sea in the *Ontario*,[3] I ernestly entreat that I may remain in command of a post, my knowledge of which, would enable me to be more useful in its defence, than any other Officer— indeed, Sir, as a resident of Baltim., with an extensive family connection within its bosom, and a large Estate depending on its preservation, I should have stronger claims than any other Officer; but to be superceded, after having so long the command, during such times of peril, would imply a want of confidence, which, I humbly hope is not felt.

Commod. Rodgers wishes I should have the command of the Steam Frigate; I refer you to his official Letter, respecting the defence of this place, for my claim: the building of it has been greatly advocated by me, with those who have afforded means; and I think I could make her very instrumental in defence of this place.[4] With great respect and regard, I remain truly yours

R T Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 14 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. The correspondence to which Spence refers is not in the series of master commandant letters. Crowninshield probably returned it. Spence is probably referring to Charles Tait, who was chairman of the Senate committee on naval affairs in 1815.

2. These orders were not enclosed with this letter.

3. Apparently Crowninshield had not given up hope of getting *Ontario* to sea. On 19 January he ordered Lieutenant Frederick W. Smith to open a rendezvous in Alexandria for the sloop of war. Crowninshield to Smith, 19 Jan. 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 14 (M149, Roll No. 12).

4. Edward Johnson, the chairman of Baltimore's Committee of Vigilance and Safety, sent Acting Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Homans certificates for $150,000 deposited to the credit of the U.S. Treasury. This was the city's contribution toward building a steam frigate that would defend Baltimore from British attack. Only the frames of a battery were erected before the ratification of the peace treaty ended further construction. Johnson to Homans, 22 Dec. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 105 (M124, Roll No. 67).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Commodore John Rodgers

confidential.— Baltimore Jany. 17th 1815

My dear Commodore

Your several kind letters have been received, & read with pleasure: the last did not come to hand until after the Secretary[1] left this: I however had the satisfaction of seeing him; being good enough on his arrival to send for me— I prevailed on him to remain with us for two days, during which time he visited my Ship,[2] and every other place calculated to excite interest. His interrogatories respecting the Fortifications &c. gave me frequent occasion to speak of you, He was delighted with my account of your masterly management of the means afforded you for the defence of the City; appearing deeply impressed with the conviction of your having saved Baltimore.— Barney stuck close to him, taking every opportunity to discant on the important services of the Flotilla, associating it constantly with the Navy & &— He is endeavouring to acquire the same influence he had in so unbounded a degree over Mr. Jones.— His sending in his resignation is thought merely a sham, with a view to obtain the Steam Frigate: Indeed he sais, Jones offered the Command to him!— The appointment would not be pleasing to the City.—

The Secretary spent most of his time with me, he is certainly a very different man from Mr. Jones; there is a friendly affability, and a conciliatory manner about him, extremely pleasing; Yet, for all this, I could not for the Soul of me, ask him for the Steam Frigate— He did not hint that you had spoken to him

respecting my appointment to her, I therefore was silent on the Subject.— His opinion of you, is very exalted, which I did not fail to increase by a few Biographical Sketches, narrated under the influence of that Affection, I cannot otherwise than feel for you,— He was anxious to learn from me, who was considered the Candidate to head the list of Admirals:—Murray he had not seen when in Philadelphia; he said he had conversed with Officers who advocated Murrays appointment. I suppose he alluded to Evans; I spoke to him very freely on the subject.—

I do not believe he is of opinion that I can get to sea—to Mrs. Spence he expressed a belief that I could not; I therefore cannot calculate on any extraordinary aid— This being the case the command of the Steam Frigate would be highly gratifying, more especeally as I am told that my appointment would be generally approved in Baltimore— I wish my dear Sir, you would take an oppertunity of calling the subject again to the Secretarys mind before Barney goes on to Washington, which will be in a few days; if possible I shall visit the City about the same time.— The administration will readily do you a favour being deeply in your debt.—

Your brother in law, Mr. Pinkney, went on in the Stage with the Secretary; would it not be well for you to write him, to use his influence in expediting this law for the creation of admirals; I am afraid of Peace, lest it should come unexpectedly, & knock it all in the head!—[3]

I congratulate you upon the berth of another child,[4] Mrs. S joins me in good wishes for Mrs. Rodgers, be pleased to present my most respectful compliments, and to believe me most Sincerely yours,

R T Spence.

PS. excuse the haste in which I write—

ALS, DLC, Rodgers Family Papers, Series II, Container 26.

1. Benjamin W. Crowninshield.
2. *Ontario.*
3. William Pinkney, a Maryland lawyer, statesman, and diplomat, had married John Rodgers's sister, Ann Maria, in 1789. He was President Madison's attorney general from 1811 to 1814. At the time of the present letter, he was recuperating from a severe wound received in the Battle of Bladensburg, and was awaiting the commencement of the Fourteenth Congress on 4 March 1815, to which he had been elected. Within a month, news of the peace effectively killed interest in a law establishing the rank of admiral.
4. Elizabeth Rodgers was the fifth child of John and Minerva Rodgers.

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Baltimore Jany. 26. 1815

Sir,

The Steam Frigate intended for the protection of this City, which heretofore has had my tributary exertions for it's defence, together with the solicitations of my friends, awakens with me a wish to devote myself again to a service, which probably will be very important the ensuing summer.

I should be highly gratifyed to be appointed to this command: being persuaded, it would be a formidable barrier to the enemy's approach.

We have above an hundred men to work upon her; perhaps my immediate superintendance would accelerate her advancement. I have the honor to be respecty. yr obt. St.

R. T. Spence

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 19 (M147, Roll No. 6). Crowninshield's next correspondence with Spence on 15 February did not mention the steam frigate, but ordered him to prepare *Ontario* for sea service. Crowninshield to Spence, 15 Feb. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 35 (M149, Roll No. 12).

Master Commandant Robert T. Spence to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Baltimore Feby. 2d. 1815

Sir,

The Cannon mentioned in your order at the Cecil Foundery, will not be ready for proving these ten days: when they are, Mr. Hughes[1] has promised to advise me.—

I think it my duty to inform you, that those sanguine expectations entertained, when you honored the *Ontario* with a visit, of her getting to sea, I am compelld now to relinquish: not only from the want of Eighty men, but from the situation the unexampled cold weather has left the River and Bay, which are frozen up nearly as far as Annapolis:— 'tis said, such a spell of weather has not been known since the year 1780.— It has been so intensely cold, as to render it impossible to work on the Steam Frigate for these last two days:— we however, have got at it again to day.[2] I have the honor to remain Your vy obt. St.

R. T. Spence.

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 25 (M147, Roll No. 6).

1. The most important of Samuel Hughes's several iron operations in Cecil County was his Cecil Furnace, formerly the Principio Ironworks. Since 1796, Hughes had produced cannon for the navy's frigates. After the British destroyed his foundry in 1813, Hughes rebuilt the works, selling it in 1820 because of financial reverses.
2. The city of Baltimore suspended work on its steam battery when peace was declared.

British Blockading Squadron—Fall and Winter

On 17 September 1814, just moments after writing public and private letters to the Admiralty regarding the Baltimore expedition,[1] Vice Admiral Cochrane received Lord Melville's secret letter of 29 July, detailing the operations intended against New Orleans.[2] Cochrane immediately reversed his plans to attack the northern Atlantic coast and sailed for Halifax to prepare for the southern campaign.[3] He left Rear Admiral Malcolm in the Chesapeake to replenish his ships until Captain Barrie, who was refitting in Halifax, could resume blockading duty in the bay. Rear Admiral Cockburn sailed for Bermuda and outfitted his squadron before returning to the Chesapeake briefly in early December to rescue Captain Barrie from an-

other winter in the bay. While Cochrane focused most of the British naval force against New Orleans, he left Cockburn in command of the Atlantic squadrons and, in particular, ordered his second in command to divert American attention in the southeast with an assault on Cumberland Island, Georgia. The Chesapeake blockading squadron, first under Malcolm and then Barrie, raided towns along the Potomac and the bay while the weather permitted in the fall of 1814. Winter curtailed the marauding expeditions and Captain John Clavell, the last commander of the squadron, resolutely maintained the blockade during the last two months of the war as the main theater of operations shifted southward to the Gulf of Mexico.

1. See pp. 286–91.
2. Melville to Cochrane, 29 July 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2574, fols. 146–48.
3. Cochrane to Melville, 17 Sept. 1814, InU, War of 1812 Manuscripts.

Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

By Pulteney Malcolm Esq.
Rear Admiral of the Blue &c.—&c.—&c.

Pursuant to an order from the Commander in Chief:

You are hereby required and directed to take under your Command the Ships and Vessels named on the Margin[1] and the 2nd. and 3rd. Battalions of Royal Marines; you will receive herewith the Commander in Chiefs Instructions to Captain Sir Thomas Hardy with various other documents for the Blockade of the Chesapeake and the several Services attached to that Station, to which you are to pay particular attention[2]

Rear Admiral Cockburn who is at present at Bermuda and may be expected in the end of the Month, has the direction of the Squadron in the Chesapeake and the neighbouring Coast; you will therefore communicate with him whenever opportunity offers— His last instructions to me is, that, should any Ship arrive in the Chesapeake more than necessary for the Services now conducting on the Coast those that have been longest out are to be releived by them and ordered to Bermuda to refit and receive farther Orders from the Rear Admiral, but Should the *Carron* arrive she is to be ordered to join the Squadron off Charlestown—

If any Vessel arrives with Dispatches for the Commander in Chief you are to send her to Bermuda to receive from Rear Admiral Cockburn the Secret Rendezvous;[3] first opening the Dispatches and making extracts of such parts as you may think necessary.

Should any Vessel arrive with orders to join me you are to direct her Captain to put to Sea immediately, furnishing him with one of the Accompanying Sealed Rendezvous which are to be left on board the Ship stationed in Lynhaven Bay to prevent delay.—

In the event of a Frigate arriving by accident whose Captain is Senior to You, you are to inform him that it is my direction he cruize off Cape Henry 'till the arrival of Rear Admiral Cockburn.— Given on board the *Royal Oak* in the Potowmak the 6th. of October 1814

Pulty Malcolm Rear Admiral

By Command of the Rear Admiral Wm. Little Sec.

LS, NcD, Sir Robert Barrie Papers.

1. *Menelaus, Madagascar, Havannah, Melpomene, Brune, Devastation, Terror,* and *Regulus.*
2. These documents were not found.
3. Negril Bay, Jamaica, was the rendezvous place for the New Orleans expedition.

Rear Admiral Pulteney Malcolm, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 9 *Royal Oak* in the Potowmak 7 October 1814

Sir

Having completed the refitment of the Squadron and Transports under my orders and assembled them at Georges Island in the Potowmack Colonel Brooke and myself were of opinion that a body of the Virginia Militia stationed near to the Northumberland Court House might be surprised for which purpose a detachment under Colonel Brooks immediate Command was landed half an hour before daylight on the morning of the 4th Instant at Black point Six Miles up the Coan River and one Mile from the Court House.—

They immediately advanced on the Enemy who after firing a few Rounds from the Woods, retreated, his Guns having been removed a short time before on the Sentinels discovering our Boats.

Colonel Brooke after pursuing them five Miles and finding very little probability of coming up with their Guns as they had left their Ammunition and every other encumbrance on the Road and dispersed by various intricate passages that lead through the thick woods of the Country returned to Black point where he was joined by Major Faunce with the First Regiment which had been landed at Mundy point three Miles up the Yocomico.

Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm with the 2nd. Battalion of Royal Marines was landed at Ragged point both his detachment and that of Major Faunce were near to parties of the Enemy who always escaped into the woods.

Captain Skene of His Majestys Ship *Asia* had charge of the Boats that were employed in the Coan River Captain Hamilton of the *Havannah* of those in the Yocomico and Captain Rowley of the *Melpomene* of the landing of the Marine Battalion at Ragged Point, as usual, every one exerted himself to the utmost.

I accompanied Colonel Brooke to be on the spot to give the necessary directions in the event of its being found adviseable to change the point of Re-embarkation which was the case with the detachment under Major Faunce.—

There was only two Soldiers wounded but I am very sorry to inform you that Captain Kenah of the *Ætna* Bomb was unfortunately killed by a chance shot from the wood, he is sincerely regretted by every one. You were well acquainted with his merits as an Officer. I found him on every occasion zealous and enterprising; He piloted the Boats up the Coan and having some knowledge of the Country went with the advance of the Army.

We found two Schooners in the River which had been Scuttled some days but as there was not time to weigh them I ordered them to be destroyed. I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant.

Pulty Malcolm Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2336, fols. 25–26.

William Lambert to Secretary of the Navy Jones

City of Washington, October 13th. 1814.

Sir,

By a letter just received from Mr. John Hall, postmaster at Kilmarnock, Virga. dated the 7th. of this month, I am enabled to communicate the following particulars relative to British movements and operations in that quarter: —

On Wednesday, the 5th. instant, at eight o'clock, A.M. one ship was seen from the mouth of Indian creek, passing up the bay: On Thursday, the 6th. at two o'clock, P.M. nine ships were seen from the same point, on their passage down: On Friday, the 7th. about two o'clock, P.M. fifteen ships and nine schooners anchored off the mouth of Dividing Creek, in Northumberland,—sent five barges filled with men, who were plundering the inhabitants of negroes, stock, &c. and had burned a valuable house, the property of a capt. Hughlett, about five o'clock, P.M. on the last mentioned day. Having no force to rely on but the militia, much injury to the people of Lancaster and Northumberland was apprehended at the time Mr. Hall's letter was written. He also states, that ten negroes had lately gone off to the enemy from the lower part of Northumberland, and fourteen from Richmond county, out of which last five number have been taken, and committed to gaol. That on or about the fourth of this month, from 900 to 1000 of the enemy landed at Black point,— marched from thence, and took possession of Northumberland courthouse,— stayed about two days, and pillaged the inhabitants of that place and its vicinity, of negroes, provisions, &c. It is farther stated, that the enemy had two men killed, and four were taken prisoners, and that only one man of our militia was wounded. I am, Sir, with great respect, Your most obedt. Servant,

William Lambert.

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 34 (M124, Roll No. 66).

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

No. 50 *Albion* Bermuda the 24th. October 1814

Sir

As the Information given to me by Captain Codd of the *Caliope* leaves me Reason to fear that the *Telegraph* Schooner (which I fell in with the 3d. Instant on my Way here) and the *Ratler* Sloop of War (which sailed from this Place with Convoy for Halifax on the 11th. Instant, and by which I wrote to You) have both missed you, I herewith have the Honor to enclose marked 1 and 2, the Heads of the more important Parts of the Dispatches brought from England by the former, and marked 3 a Duplicate of my Letter to you by the latter.[1]

Since the sailing of the *Ratler,* the *Whiting* has brought to me your three Letters dated Halifax 1st. October—One Marked Secret informing me of your intended Movements, and intimating your further Wishes regarding the Force to be employed in the Chesapeake, on the Coasts of Carolinas and Georgia.[2]

One with an Inclosure from Sir George Prevost and directing in Consequence strict Attention to your retaliatory Order of the 18th. July last.[3]

And one containing a List of the Ships you have been pleased to place under my immediate Orders, for the Purpose of carrying into Effect the Operations alluded to in Your above specified Secret Letter, in your Order to me of the 18th. Septr., and in the several Letters I have received from You thereon,—[4] But on comparing these Documents it appears to me necessary that I should point out to You the Difficulties which seem to present themselves, against my being able fully to meet and act up to your Wishes and Instructions as therein contained,— I observe by the List of the Squadron you have destined to act under my Orders, that the only Ships I am to count upon for the present, in addition to that which carries my Flag,[5] are, the *Dragon,* three Frigates, and one Sloop of War, besides the Frigate and two Sloops of War now off Charleston, and in this Number the *Euryalus* is included, which Ship only arrived here the 21st. Instant, and besides her Foremast and Bowsprit requiring to be changed, is otherwise in Want of very considerable Repairs.

By your Letter of the 23d. September,[6] you desire me to dispose of Two Frigates, and eight Sloops for the Blockade of the Carolinas and Georgia, and by your last Letter by *Caliope,*[7] you recommend my placing four Frigates and two more Sloops in the Chesapeake, and taking with me the *Dragon* to assist in the Offensive Operations which you intimate your Wish that I should commence on the Georgian Coast early in the next Month.

The Impossibility therefore of my doing all this with the Ships mentioned in the List you transmitted, leads me to believe you have expected that several Sloops or Frigates would have arrived and joined me from England, but I am sorry to say none whatever have as yet made their Appearance, nor have I seen or learnt any thing of the *Carron;* Admiral Malcolm has however fortunately left me the *Menelaus,* which he said he did not want, and I trust it is unnecessary for me to add, that with such Force as I collect, I shall attend to the Instructions on the several Points specified by You as nearly as may prove to be practicable when I get on the Coast, making the Stations and Services which are of the minor Importance, give Way to the two greater ones of the Chesapeake, and the Georgian Operations, 'till the Reinforcements I receive may enable me to attend to the whole.

I shall not remain here a Minute after *Albion* is ready to proceed again to Sea, but her late Cruize of Twelve Months has render'd necessary for her a much more complete refit than you appear to have contemplated— The whole of her Rigging, excepting the standing Shrouds and Stays has been condemned, and they have had to make for her in the Dock Yard two Topsail Yards and a Jib Boom, besides minor Articles, and she is reported to be in such great Want of a general caulking, that I have felt it right to order its being done previous to her undertaking a Winter Cruize, and the Smallness of our Means here, (having but eight Shipwrights who are also the Caulkers) added to the constant Interruptions of bad Weather, occasion our getting on but slowly, in Consequence however of your last Communication, I shall now order the Officers of the Yard until *Albion* is ready, to authorize extra Work, and to work on Sundays, and 'tho: I may not succeed in getting to the Coast quite so soon as you seem to anticipate, yet I trust I shall not be very far behind it.

I am sorry to have also to inform You, that from the Severity of the Weather in this Neighbourhood, the *Cossack* and *Canso* have both come in from Sea in Distress, the former with her Bowsprit sprung, and otherwise much damaged in her Hull and Rigging, the latter with the Head of her Foremast gone, and as this is the third Foremast the *Canso* has carried away within a very short Space of

Time, I have been induced to authorize her being now fitted with a Brigs Masts forward, which are so much lighter and easier to be handled and reduced in bad Weather— The *Canso* was on her Way to join Captain Jackson when the Accident happend to her, and I have sent the *Whiting* to him in her Stead— The *Hebrus* which had a complete Refit here, sailed for the Chesapeake the Day after the Prizes arrived with her Men, but I cannot count upon this as an Increase to the present Chesapeake Squadron, (which now consists of *Dragon* and two Frigates without any Sloop whatever) for Admiral Malcolm in his last Letter to me from thence, states the *Madagascar* to be in so bad a State as to make it necessary that she should return to Port as soon as possible,[8] and I therefore think it likely that Captain Barrie will order her in when joined by the *Hebrus*— I hope however to have the *Menelaus* ready to return there in a few Days, which will make up three complete Frigates for the Chesapeake, And as you inform me that you have orderd two large Class Frigates to cruize off this Island during the Winter, and the *Cossack* and *Pandora* are already stationed here for similar Service, I feel that I may very well take with me the latter to assist in filling up some of the Stations on the Coast— The *Diadem* is arrived to take Home the Convoy, and is only waiting to be joined by the Convoy from New Providence to be brought up by the *Wolverine*, the non Arrival of which, when the Date of the *Wolverine*s leaving the Chesapeake is considerd, gives Reason to fear that some accident may have happend to her, I trust however it will prove that she has only been delayed by some Requisition from Governor Cameron, which has induced Captain Burton to wait for Vessels which may not have been quite prepared to accompany him immediately.

Captain Napier, who as you will perceive, by the Date of the *Euryalus*'s Arrival above specified, had a very Tedious Passage, succeeded nevertheless in bringing safe to this Place all the Prizes from the Chesapeake, though he experienced much bad Weather— The *Fairy* which accompanied him is taking in her Water and Provisions, and will, in Pursuance of your Directions to me respecting her, proceed to Barbadoes with Convoy on Thursday Morning next.[9]

Your Order to me of the 18th. September, left it optional with me to go from hence to Halifax, for the Purpose of shifting my Flag to the *Bulwark*, the subsequent Communications however which I have received from You, of Course place my so doing now quite out of the Question, but as I am anxious to move into a Ship so very far preferable for me on every Consideration to the *Albion*, (should you not have already done it, as I understood You to have intended) I beg you will permit me to order her joining me immediately for the Purpose.

Admiral Malcolm will of Course explain to you personally the Arrangements he agreed to, prior to his quitting the Chesapeake, for an Exchange of all Prisoners made on either Side during the Operations against Washington and the Reconnoissance of Baltimore, it is therefore only necessary for me to report to you, that in Compliance therewith, the American Prisoners included in that Agreement were sent from hence by the *Hebrus*, that no Delay might take Place on our Part in securing the Return of our People from America.

Enclosed I transmit an Abstract of the State and Condition of His Majestys Ships here.[10] I have the Honor to be Sir Your very faithful and Most obedient humble Servant

G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 35–41.

1. In his 10 October 1814 letter to Cochrane, Cockburn mentioned that he arrived at Bermuda on 6 October after departing the Chesapeake on 26 September. Cockburn to Cochrane, 10 Oct. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 30–34.
2. While the expeditionary forces were massing in Jamaica for the attack on New Orleans, Cochrane ordered Cockburn's squadron to divert attention by capturing Cumberland Island, Georgia, and conducting offensive operations off America's southern coast. Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 Oct. 1814, ibid., MS 2346, fols. 13–14.
3. Cochrane sent Cockburn an extract of Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost's 3 August 1814 letter in which the latter expounded on the continued American outrages in the north. Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 Oct. 1814, ibid., MS 2349, pp. 183–84. For Cochrane's retaliatory order, see Cochrane to the Commanding Officers of the North American Station, 18 July 1814, pp. 140–41, above.
4. For Cochrane's list of ships that were assigned to Cockburn, see Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 Oct. 1814, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, p. 149. The order of 18 September was not found.
5. *Albion.*
6. In this secret letter, Cochrane informed Cockburn that New Orleans was the next target, that he expected to leave Halifax by 8 or 10 October, and that he would rendezvous with the military forces at Guadeloupe before 1 November. Cochrane to Cockburn, 23 Sept. 1814, Ibid., MS 2346, fols. 12–13.
7. This letter was not found.
8. This letter was not found.
9. 27 October 1814.
10. The following list was enclosed.

[Enclosure]
Copy of a List transmitted by Commander in Chief of His Majestys Ships and Vessels to be employed under the Orders of Rear Admiral Cockburn.

		Notes respecting them
	Albion—	
	Dragon—	in the Chesapeake
Frigates	1 *Madagascar*	in Want of returning into Port to refit—
Frigates	2 *Hebrus*—	To Chesapeake 22d. Octr. 14
Frigates	3 *Euryalus*—	At Bermuda in Want of considerable Repairs
Sloop	1 *Dotterel*	proceeds from Halifax for Castine with Convoy and from thence off Carolina (will probably be changed (by Rr. Adl. Cockburn) to Chesapeake)
Sloops Frigate	1 *Lacedemonian*	Charleston
Sloops		——Do.——
Sloops	1 *Peacock*	——Do.——
Sloops	2 *Primrose*	
	Nymphe—	must previously go to Halifax to refit
	Clinker—	To the Gulf of St. Lawrence with Convoy and afterwards to Halifax
	Sharpshooter	first proceed to Quebec
	Jaseur—	To Commander in Chiefs secret Rendezvous
	Devastation	Bombs
	Ætna—	Bombs
	Saracen—	With Convoy to Commander in Chiefs secret Rendezvous
	Morgiana—	repairing at Halifax
	Carron—	not joined, nor anything known respecting her
	St. Lawrence	To Commander in Chiefs secret Rendezvous
	Florida	goes first to West Indies with Convoy— if there is no Return Convoy to proceed from thence to the Coast of South Carolina

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fol. 43. On 1 October, Cochrane sent Cockburn a list of the ships that were assigned to him. Cochrane to Cockburn, 1 Oct. 1814, Ibid., MS 2349, p. 184. Cockburn annotated this list and returned a copy of it with his 24 October letter to Cochrane.

Captain Thomas Alexander, R.N., to Captain Robert Barrie, R.N.

His Majesty's Bomb Vessel *Devastation*,
off Poplar Island in the Chesapeake.
October 31st. 1814.

Sir,

In obedience to your Order of yesterday, I this Morning proceeded to Parkers Point, with the Boats, and detachment of Royal Marines you did me the honor to place under my Command; on finding the Houses deserted, I made dispositions for driving in Cattle. Lieut. Frazer of the R.M. and Lieut Alexander of the R.N. in advance with the Skirmishers.

On reconnoitreing, I perceiv'd the Enemy to be in considerable Force in Cavalry, therefore directed Captain Cole (Royal Marines) to bring up the Main Body, to support the advance, and the favorable position we had taken up, induced me to throw the Skirmishers forward, to entice the Enemy to make a Charge, which I am happy to say had the effect, but the steady and gallant reception, which I felt confident they would meet with from the Royal Marines, who threw in a destructive volley, put them to flight, leaving two Killed, two Prisoners, and twenty Horses with their accoutrements &ca. &ca. in our possession, I only regret a body of Infantry (chiefly Militia) from eight Hundred, to one Thousand with field Pieces, supported this Squadron, in their attack, or I have not a doubt, from the gallant Intrepidity of the detachment, the whole destruction of this Squadron, consisting of one hundred & fourteen would have been effected.

Perceiving the Enemys intention to cut us from the Beach, his very superior Force, the difficulty I experienced in Landing, the Shoal water not admitting the Boats to approach sufficiently near to cover us from their field Pieces, I judged it prudent to embark, which I am happy to say was effected without the loss of a Man, under the judicious arrangement of Lieut. Fitzmorris of the *Dragon*.

To Captain Cole R.M. commanding the detachment, I feel particularly indebted for his support, and I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of the gallant example shewn by Lieut. Frazer, R.M. and Lieut. Alexander R.N. in Advancing with the Skirmishers, and a party of Seamen in drawing the Enemy within our reach: I am convinced Sir, you will feel equal pleasure [with] myself, when I inform you, the Conduct of [every] Officer, Seaman, & Marine, was such as to [entitle] them to all praise I can possibly bestow

Considering the Force we were opposed to, I feel great satisfaction [in] stating our loss to be trifleing, three Seamen two Marines missing, and I only hope the Service performed by the detachment under [my] orders, will meet your approbation. I have the honor to be Sir, your Obedient humble Servt.

Thos. Alexander Commander

P S From the Prisoners I learn, their Cavalry consisted of the [First] Regt. United States Dragoons, the Infantry, of Regulars, and Militia, with several Field Pieces: the whole under the Command of General Maddison.[1] The Commanding Officer of the Ca[valry] was severely wounded.

ALS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/509, fol. 195. Words or letters obscured in the gutter have been added in brackets.

1. Brigadier General William Madison, First Virginia Regiment, Virginia militia.

Thomas Swann to Secretary of War Monroe

Point Lookout Monday noon 7 Nov. 1814

Sir.

In my letter of 3d Inst.[1] I omitted a sloop of war mounting twenty guns, which came up the Bay, with the squadron reported, and proceeded so far above St. Georges Island, during the preceding night, as to obscure her completely from my view at this place

On Friday[2] a Tender left the Island & stood down the Bay, and in the evening of yesterday two Tenders came up the Bay, and joined the fleet off the Island, which is now comprised of the following vessels vizt.

one Seventy four (the *Dragon*—Commr. Barry)
One frigate
One Bomb ship
Two sloops of war
One Brig
One Double Decker
Three ships . . . } Transports
Four Tenders—

The most wanton, and unprovoked destruction of private property, that has recently occured in the lower end of this County, was committed at Priest Ransaw's in the neighborhood of St. Inigoes, on Tuesday last.[3] A marauding party of fifteen men belonging to a Brig off St. Georges Island, (supposed the *Jasseur* Capt. Watts) robbed him of all his household furniture, as well as his wearing apparel including his watch &c. &c. Such articles as they could not conveniently carry off, and by which they could not be benefitted, was destroyed in the most shamefull manner: amongst which was an Alter, that after they completely pillaged of its ornaments, they also destroyed—

The enemy have been in the vicinity of St. Georges for the last four day's; the particulars of his movements, and the injury sustained by the inhabitants, I have not ascertained.

Colo. Minor left the Factory[4] Yesterday for St. Georges, with about 250 men, whom I hope will be enabled to give a good account of these Pirates

I understand by information from St. George's that Commr. Barry is the officer commanding the fleet at that place. A repetition of his conduct which has

lately been experienced by the inhabitants of Hampden, may consequently be expected.[5] I have the honor Sir, to be very Respectfully yrs.

Th[s]. Swann

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, S-1814, (M222, Roll No. 14). Thomas Swann was a prominent Washington attorney, who volunteered as an observer for the U.S. Army at Point Lookout, Maryland.

1. This letter was not found.
2. 4 November 1814.
3. 1 November 1814.
4. This is possibly a reference to a small textile firm that had been established in St. Mary's County before the war.
5. Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., had left the Chesapeake for Halifax in July. Before returning to the bay in late September, the crew of his ship, *Dragon*, participated in a joint expedition up the Penobscot River. Captain Charles Morris had sailed the sloop of war *Adams* up that river to Hampden, Maine, (the district of Maine was attached politically to Massachusetts at this time) to repair her. When the British troops, transported by Barrie's vessels, routed the local militia on 3 September 1814, Morris was forced to set *Adams* ablaze to prevent her capture.

Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., to Dolly Gardner Clayton

Dragon off Tangier Isle
Chesapeak Bay Novr. 11th. 1814

My Dear Mother will perceive by the date of this that I am once more fixed in the Chesapeak where I fear I shall have to commodore it for the rest of the winter— I have two Battalions of the Royal Marines under my orders but they are such poor things naturally and are so very sick that I shall be able to do very little with them— I have now out of eight hundred soldiers three hundred and fifty sick, most of them I fear fitting foreign— You will perhaps see by the Papers that I contrive to annoy and tease the Yankée a good deal but to do any serious mischief is out of my power— We have no news indeed the Commander in Chief[1] seems to have forgotten us altogether ten days since my whole squad was reduced to half a pound of Bread & no Grog to borrow a Yankée phrase—"right hard usage this I know"— When Rear Admiral Malcolm left me in command of the Chesapeak he gave me to understand Adl. Cockburn would soon relieve me but six weeks are passd & no Cockburn— so I give him up & have layed my account to another winter within the Capes—and then I think they must send me home— I am now one hundred and eighteen short of my complement of seamen— I have lately landed and taken off a few Hgs. of Tobacco & when I can collect a good Cargo of this precious Herb I shall send a Vessel to Bermuda and by her I will write you all long letters that is if I have any thing to write about— tell Mr. & Mrs. Lion that I put off my Letters of congratulation till I can kill two Birds with one stone—

In a little affair with Nathan the other day against at 1[*east*] six times our numbers—we killed [*torn*] two of his Men, took two pounder [*torn*] several & killed twenty of his [*torn*] horses— we had not a man hurt but three deserted from the *Brune*—& two of the Skirmishers were taken prisoners General Madison commanded— the Cavalry one hundred and fourteen—was commanded by a rascal who deserted from the *Victorious* last year— he was Sergt. of marines—

but had long before been trained in an English Dragoon regt. his Yankey name is Bond—his first name Grey this Rascal was wounded in the neck & very near being taken—

I have heard no more of the Penobscot affair but expect government will at least make my first lieut a Commander— The Prise money will not be much I would compromise for one hundred Pounds—but in good hands it would be worth as many thousands— There is no trade going on in the Chesapeak therefore all I pick up now is taken from the shore but this way I hope to pay my mess— my kindest love is ever with you all— I wish you a happy new year and merry Xmass— I am ever my dear mother your truly affectionate & dutiful son

Robt: Barrie—

Swainson & Hamer are still with me the first I hope soon to get made a lieut—he is very ill Hamer is not worth his salt—nor do I think he ever will be as a seaman or officer— you have no reason to tell his brother so.—

I some time since procured Mr. Ansell a Liuts acting commission—

ALS, MiU-C, Robert Barrie Papers. Addressed: "To/Mrs. Geo: Clayton/Lestock Hall/near Preston/Lancashire."

1. Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

Brigadier General John H. Cocke, Virginia Militia, to Governor James Barbour

Tappahannock Decr. 4. 6 O'Clock PM

Sir,

In two hours after my communication this morning the Enemy as suddenly & capriciously as the shift of wind which took place at that time turned about & made all Sail down the River.— His fleet consisting of fourteen craft including one large schooner & a Sloop heavily armed with all their Barges variously estimated from ten to twenty five all of which had ascended the River about 12 miles above this place, returned this morning about 10 'Clock and were out of sight standing down the River before 12 O'Clock.— We have intelligence of his passing Bowlers at an early hour this Evening and with the present wind unless he has anchored must have reached, nearly, the mouth of the River.— This rapid & unlooked for movement has baffled all my schemes— I had anticipated from his bold & rapid ascent that he wou'd have penetrated as high as the narrows of the River & there I had strong hopes of being able to make him feel us.—

I learn from an intelligent man of this place that the Expedition was commanded by Comdre. Barre & Coll. Malcomb— The number of troops landed here did not much, if any exceed 500 but it was evident they had other troops in Vessels from which they were not landed— Of the number landed here there were three companies, of about 50 each, of negroes in uniform and apparently well trained, commanded by white officers.— They were said to be Virginia & Maryland negroes, trained at Tangier Islands— The above accots. are

obtained from the only inhabitant of this place who remained while the Enemy had possession of the Town. He is an intelegent & observant man— He got his information from three several Sentinels who were posted to protect his property from pillage, they differed in the number of troops employed in the expedition from 1800 to 2400—but they all agreed that the whole force in our waters was here, and that there aggregate loss from desertion since their arrival in the Chesapeake was about three hundred— They further agreed in stating that the troops had been healthy & that but little loss had been sustained from sickness.—

Colo. Muse who has under his command below this about 600 men will give me the earliest information of the Enemies leaving the River or of their attempting to plunder below in which event I shall move down to his assistance—but if as I expect, they are really leaving the Rappahannock, as soon as I am informed of it, I shall take up the line of march for Camp Carters with my detachment and discharge Colo. Richie's Regt. and all the other local militia which has & are about to take the field— The Artillery & Ammunition Asked for by my communication this morning you will of course countermand I shall immediately do the same in regard to the additional force called from my Brigade—for even if the Enemy shou'd ascend the River again, as suddenly as he has descended it, we have every reason to believe, that we cou'd defeat any attempt on Fredericksburg if he dared to make it, by recalling to our aid the adjacent militia.

The plundering of the Enemy has been confined [to the] bay Shores ~~and on~~ of inconsiderable amount, & on a few plantations Indeed his whole course has been marked with the most circumspect caution & evident alarm. He has never trusted himself on land a single night.— An officer remarked here that their object was to harrass the Militia—that they shou'd beat about the Rivers for a week or two longer & then go into Winter Quarters— There has been much wanton destruction of private property here—in breaking windows & furniture—and one deed of damnation has been performed which out does all their former atrocities— The family Vault of the Ritchies was broken open and the Coffins searched— I have seen the shocking spectacle— I have the honor to be &c.

J. H. Cocke B.G. Comdg:

ALS, Vi, State Records, Governor's Office (RG3), Executive Papers, Governor James Barbour, 1812–1814.

Captain Robert Barrie, R.N., to Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.

The Sloop *Messenger* Rappahanock 7th. Decr. 1814

Sir,

Understanding by Signal from the *Dotterel* that you are arrived in the Chesapeake, I lose no time in acquainting you that in consequence of information I had received from authority on which I could rely "that the Regiments of Virginia Militia, lately stationed on the Banks of the Rappahanock, had been for

several days passed disbanded for the Winter and that most of the Troops belonging to the distant parts of the State were already returned to their homes"

I determined to proceed with the Forces named in the Margin[1] up the Rappahanock, intending first to attack the Town of Tappahanock where I understood there was an Inspectors Tobacco Store, but my chief object in the Expedition, was, to annoy the Enemy by obliging him to reassemble his Militia, and by landing in different parts of the River, keep his Troops constantly on the alert, which in this Country at this advanced season of the year is most harrassing Service.

On the 29th. Ultimo I entered the river with the Schooners and Boats, the *Devastation*, *Terror*, and *Bream* having previously grounded; light Winds and our ignorance of the Navigation (some of the Schooners being constantly aground prevented our getting sight of Tappahanock before eight O'Clock on the 2nd. Instant, when we observed a considerable body of Troops drawn out with their Field Pieces; as the Schooners could not make any progress against the Tide, I anchored them and proceeded with the Boats abreast of the Town, and when within Grape Shot commenced our Fire, which the Enemy did not return and observing them abandoning the Town, I directed Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm to land with the *Dragon*'s *Menelaus*, and *Havannah*'s Marines; before this was effected, the Inhabitants with the exception of two had entirely deserted the Town, and removed all their effects, except about forty Hogsheads of Tobacco and some Flour.

The Enemy in his haste to abandon the Town left behind him a Stand of Colours, several Musquets, Bayonets, and a quantity of Ammunition and Camp Equipage.

When the Schooners got up, about one hundred and fifty of the Royal Marines were landed in consequence of the Enemy, being in sight drawn up on a Hill, about a Mile and a half above the Town, his Force appeared to consist of nine Companies of Foot, a few horse, and three Field Pieces. Lieutenant Moore of the Royal Marine Artillery was advanced with the Rockets and two of them being thrown with great judgment, fell among the Enemy who soon retreated into the Wood behind the Hill, wishing to entice him to attack us in the Town, I caused to be set on fire the Custom House and a Jail, but as he evinced no disposition to quit his fastness, I embarked the Troops at Sunset, and at daylight on the 3rd. I again landed and completed Shipping the Flour and Tobacco; in the course of the day, a second Jail and the Court House was consumed without molestation from the Enemy though he frequently shewed himself with increased Force.

On the 4th. Instant I dispatched Captain Hamilton (who had Volunteered his Services to command the Row Boats of the Expedition) in advance to reconnoitre the River in Seven Mile Reach, finding from his report that it would require more time to arrive at Frederickburg than I could spare, and having sufficiently alarmed this part of the State, I bore up for an Inspectors Store on the left entrance of the River near which it was reported the Militia were assembled in considerable force, we Anchored off this Place at 5 P.M. on the 5th. being joined by the *Devastation*, *Terror* and *Dotterel* at daybreak on the 6th. I landed with the *Dragon*'s, *Manelaus*, and *Havannah*'s Marines part of the 2nd. and 3rd. Battallions of Royal Marines and about 50 Soldiers belonging to the Fourth, Twenty-first, Forty-fourth, and Eighty-fifth Regiments of the Line (lately received in exchange from the American Commissary for Prisoners of War[2]) who volunteered their Services, with a Rocket Brigade, and some trained Seamen

the whole consisting of about three hundred and Sixty Bayonets.— On approaching the Shore, a party of the Enemy's Horsemen were observed reconnoitring our motions, from some Slaves who joined us, I was informed that the Enemy had a Force of Six hundred Militia with two Field Pieces assembled at Farnham Church distant near seven Miles from the place of landing, and that a few hours before daybreak a Party also consisting of about Six hundred had marched on our right, expecting we should land in Lancaster County: the Slaves volunteering to be our Guides I determined to attack the Party at Farnham before those Marched to Lancaster County could be apprized of our intentions.— I therefore directed Lieutt. Coll. Malcolm to leave a strong party within Grape Shot of the Boats to cover our retreat should such an evolution be necessary, and we immediately pushed forward with the Main Body towards the Church, on our March we had frequent views of the Enemy's reconnoitring parties, and when within a Mile and a half of Farnham the Skirmishers discovered part of his Force drawn up across the Road, which is narrow, and on each side closely Wooded; on a little Hill in the rear of his Troops he had stationed his Field Pieces, and from them he fired several ineffectual Shot.

The Enemy conceived himself so secure in his position, that he frequently hailed us to advance, saying, they were more than a match for our Numbers.

Captain Hamilton of the *Havannah* and Coll. Malcolm agreeing with me on the method of attack, the Light Division was directed to amuse the Enemy in front and on his right, while the Main Body penetrated the Wood on his left, with intent to gain the Rear so thick was the Wood that we were frequently obliged to crawl through it at length after much difficulty, we gained an open Field on the Enemy's left under a Hill, which partly obscured us till we were formed, when we advanced to Charge the Enemy, who on discovering this movement of the Main Body, called in his advance and altering his line formed on the cross road near the Church protected by some Houses; his Artillery was ill served, but his Troops appeared determined to defend their Post, as they allowed us to approach within Musquet range, without firing a Shot, in this situation we were stopped for a few Minutes by a deep Ditch and staked Hedge; meantime the Light Troops gallantly advanced on the Enemy's right, who finding himself outflanked on our charging over the hedge, gave us a volley and fled; the pursuit was continued with great zeal, but the Enemy's superior speed and knowledge of the Country enabled him to escape into the Wood, and the Light Troops could only secure one Field Piece, the Horses of which with five others had been Shot.

In this affair we fortunately had not a Man hurt; I can form no estimate of the Enemy's positive loss, one Captain of Artillery was Wounded and made Prisoner, and from some Negroes on the spot, I heard that thirteen of them were missing who, I suppose, lay killed or wounded in the Woods

While the Main Body of the Troops were halted at the Church, I dispatched Lieutenant Hawkins with part of the *Dragon*'s Marines and Lieut. Moses with part of the new raised Colonial Corps to release a number of Slaves I understood were confined about two Miles from the Church. Lieutenant Hawkins fell in with several parties of the Enemy, but succeeding in releasing about Twenty Negroes, several of whom he found in the Woods handcuffed round the Trees.

A Store containing Spirits I directed to be burnt, the Inhabitants had previously abandoned the Town and removed most of their effects

Enclosed I have the Honor of forwarding you a letter I have received from Lieutt. Coll. Malcolm calling my attention to the meritorious conduct of the Troops under his Orders,[3] particularly recommending the Services of Captain [Ca?] first Lieutt. Pilcher, first Lieutt. Frazer of the Royal Marines and Lieutt. and Quartermaster Puddicombe who acted as Adjutant in the Field. I am happy in being able to add my testimony to the favorable report of the good conduct of the Officers on all occasions, and nothing could exceed the gallantry of the Troops when marching to attack the Enemy, but I am sorry to observe several of the Marines and Soldiers so far forgot themselves (as in spite of every exertion of the officers) to get beastly Drunk, twelve of them were in consequence lost in Wood and left behind.

I feel much obliged for the Able assistance I received from Captain Hamilton who accompanied me in this affair, and great praise is also due to Lieutenant Fitzmaurice of the *Dragon*, Lieutt Reece of the *Havannah*, Lieutt Moore of the Royal Marine Artillery, and the Seamen under their Orders for the indefatigable exertions used in dragging the Field Pieces from the Church to the Boats

I am happy in this opportunity of expressing my obligation to Lieutt. Coll Malcolm and the Officers of Royal Marines under my Orders, their gallantry and zeal have been uniformly conspicuous, but I am sensible no encomium of mine can add to the renommée already established for my gallant friend Coll. Malcolm

While I landed with the Troops on the left bank of the River, I directed Captain Sheridan of the *Terror* to attack a party of the Enemy which were assembled on the opposite side of the River

The Enclosed letter from Captain Sheridan will explain how well and effectually he performed this Service, and I cannot too strongly express my sense of the gallant and uniformly good conduct of this zealous Officer[4] I have the honor to be Sir Your faithful and obedient Servant

(signed) Robt. Barrie Captain

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/509, fols. 188–92. This copy, endorsed by Cockburn, was enclosed in Cockburn to Cochrane, 12 Dec. 1814, ibid, fol. 187.

1. Bomb vessels *Devastation* and *Terror*; schooner *Bream*; advice boats *Gabriel, Messenger, Little John, Bachelor* and *Bachelor's Friend*; boats from *Dragon, Menelaus, Havannah, Brune.*
2. John Mason.
3. A marginal note says that this enclosure was sent with the original letter but not with this copy.
4. A marginal note says that this enclosure was sent with the original letter but not with this copy.

Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain John Clavell, R.N.

By George Cockburn Esqr. Rear Admiral of the White Second Officer in the Command of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed on the North American Station, and Commanding a Detachment thereof &c &c &c

You are hereby required and directed to take under your Orders His Majesty's Ships and Vessels named in the margin,[1] and therewith to use every Effort and Exertion to maintain in the most strict and rigid manner possible the Blockade of the Chesapeake, and of all the Havens, Bays, Rivers, Creeks and Inlets therein situated; also to interrupt and to prevent (as far as may be possible,)

the Communications by Water which the Enemy by means of small Vessels occasionally endeavors to renew and keep up between different Towns and Places in the Upper Parts of the said Bay

You are to give your attention to our recent Establishment on Tangier Island, the Garrison of which is to be considered as under your immediate Orders and to which you are to afford whatever protection and Assistance Circumstances may render advisable, taking Care with this view, particularly whilst Prizes or other Vessels of ours are there, that that Anchorage is never left (except on any very urgent Occasion,) without one of His Majesty's Ships

You are likewise equally to make a point of having always at least <u>two</u> Frigates in Lynnhaven Bay, as well the more effectually to secure the Blockade of that General Entrance, as to prevent as far as may be possible the practicability of the Enemy's Frigate[2] now at Norfolk getting out to Sea unobserved, on which Account our Frigates on this duty should be directed to take up their Anchorages at considerable distance from each other, the one laying well in towards the Sandy Hills under the Light House, and the other laying as near as may be safe to the Shoal called the Middle Ground— And whenever a third Vessel can be spared for Lynnhaven Bay, she should be placed immediately between the other two— These Vessels should lay with Slip Buoys on their Cables, and every thing prepared for making Sail by night at a moments warning, they should likewise make a point of never continuing long in precisely the same positions, for though they should always be spread according to the principle before stated, it will tend to distract and possibly deceive the Enemy if advantage is taken in thick Weather, or sometimes in the Dark, to vary the situation of one or each of them.— Whilst three can be appropriated to this duty it may be also advantageous to place it at the discretion of the Senior Officer to send occasionally one of them to cruize off the Capes in the fair Way of the Entrance varying the distance from the Land, but making a point of coming within sight of Signals once in every forty eight Hours; and a Ship is invariably to be so stationed whenever (from the Upper parts of the Chesapeak being frozen in, or from the arrival of Reinforcements or other Circumstances,) <u>four</u> Vessels can be spared for the duty at the lower part of the Bay

It will be essential that a constant means of Communication be kept up between the Ships stationed in Lynnhaven Bay, and those taking the duties of Tangier, and the upper parts of the Chesapeake, for which purpose one of the Sloops under your Orders should be kept cruizing between them, with directions to be constantly moving from being within Sight of Signals from the one, to similar distance from the other, being particularly vigilant whilst on this Service to intercept any of the Enemys Vessels attempting to run by night between our Squadrons, and this Sloop will of Course be prepared to make Signals to the Ships in Lynnhaven Bay, should she discover without being able to stop any of the Enemy's Vessels pushing for Sea.— This Sloop is likewise as well as the Ships stationed in Lynnhaven Bay to be directed to keep an Eye towards the Gun Boats and Flotilla at Norfolk, that should any of them attempt to get up the Chesapeake for the purpose of making an Attack on Tangier, or shew disposition to move in other directions, you may have notice thereof and be enabled to deal with them accordingly.—

In pursuance of the directions given on that Head by the Commander in Chief under date of the 27th. July last[3] to which you will refer, you are to understand that you are not to consider yourself at liberty to negotiate or carry into

effect any Exchange for Prisoners of War, but that all you may make are to be sent into Port by each opportunity as they offer, for the purpose of being forwarded from thence to Europe

On the arrival of the *Euryalus* with the *Rolla* Transport, you are to cause all the Vessels under your Orders to take as much of the different Species of Provisions from the *Rolla* (necessary to leave them with as near as practicable equal quantities of all) as they can respectively stow, and taking the *Euryalus* under your Command, you will send the *Rolla* on to me under Charge and Convoy of the *Pandora*, directing Captain White to take especial care not to part Company from her

On the arrival of any other Ship to join me, which may be preferable to any of those now placed under your Command, you will consider yourself at liberty to keep her forwarding to me by the Vessel you deem least adapted for the Services of the Bay such Dispatches bearing my address as the one you detain may have been charged with

You will likewise lose no opportunity of forwarding to me particular accounts of the various Occurrences within the Command hereby entrusted to you, and to enable you so to do I shall take care from time to time to keep you informed of my movements, and until you receive further Communications you will send to me according to the accompanying Rendezvous

Whenever the Transports which came here from Halifax are cleared and ready to return to Port, you will direct the *Saracen* to take charge of them, and all such Prizes as may by that time be collected here, and to see the whole in safety to Bermuda, where her Commander is to deliver to Commodore Evans the accompanying Letter[4] and to follow the Commodore's Orders for his further proceedings

Whenever the *Madagascar* returns to this Place agreeably to the Orders she is under from Captain Barrie, you will take her also under your Command, and after her arrival (should not the Enemys Offensive means increase so as to render it absolutely necessary for you to act otherwise,) you are to keep a Frigate invariably cruizing off Cape Henry for the purpose of securing more effectually the Blockade by preventing the approach of Enemy's Vessels to the Coast before Dark, and taking such positions during the night as most likely to intercept any which may succeed in slipping out to Sea past the Ships in Lynnhaven Bay

As it is not my Intention that more than five Frigates should at any time be employed on the Chesapeake Service, should others in addition to the *Madagascar* arrive, you are to understand that it is my positive directions more than the above specified number are never detained here on any pretence, although as before stated you will consider yourself at liberty to make any changes in the five retained which fresh arrivals may place within your power, and which you may deem likely from Cicumstances to prove advantageous to His Majestys Service

You are to cause the Ships which remain here under your Command during the Winter to have painted Canvas Covers made for the Sails which are kept bent and exposed to the Weather, to prevent as far possible their being frozen to the Yards by the sudden Changes so common here from heavy rain to Severe Frost.— These Covers should entirely encircle the Yard and Sail Jib boom and Sail &c

You will herewith receive numbered from 1 to 9 inclusive former Orders &c relative to this Blockade and the Duties here, which you will refer to and attend

to as far as they may apply to the Services you have now to conduct and the Force left at your disposal— Transmitted likewise herewith marked A—is a Copy of some of the General Orders which have been issued at different times to His Majesty's Ships and Vessels serving within the Chesapeake of which you are to take care that every Ship under your Orders has a Copy, and that they continue to be strictly enforced and acted up to

You are to open any Official Letters which may be sent from the Enemys Shore directed for me, and you will send such immediate Answer to those which are not of consequence as they may seem to require, but should they contain requests or proposals of any Importance, or on Points which appear doubtful and on which you have not been Instructed, the Receipt of them is only to be acknowledged by you, with an Assurance of referring them to me with the least possible delay, which you will of Course do, when and in such manner as least inconvenient to the Service and the Importance of the Circumstance may require Given on board the *Albion* in the Chesapeak the 13th December 1814

(Sigd.) G Cockburn Rear Adml.

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 16, Vol. 44, pp. 327–33, 338–40 (Reel 10).

1. *Menelaus, Havannah, Dauntless, Pandora, Saracen,* and *Dotterel.*
2. U.S.S. *Constellation.*
3. The British resented having exchanged more prisoners than the Americans had. Cochrane to respective flag officers, 27 July 1814, UkLNMM, Papers of Sir Edward Codrington, COD/6/3.
4. Cockburn ordered Commander Alexander Dixie, R.N., captain of *Saracen,* to return to Bermuda to assist in its defense. Cockburn to Andrew F. Evans, 12 Dec. 1814, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 10, Vol. 24, p. 370 (Reel 6).

Thomas Swann to Secretary of War Monroe

Point Lookout Monday noon 19 Decr. 1814.

Sir

I have to acquaint you with the daring & insolent conduct of the enemy. It is no less astonishing, than true, that two small Schooners came up the Bay & ascended Potomac, on the night of the 17th Inst. and left that River yesterday & returned down the Bay, having in tow two captured Craft. I am informed these Picaroons have been as high up the River as Britains Bay,[1] & captured and destroyed several other vessels, exclusive of those they carried off.

The Frigate and Brig to which I alluded in my communication dated at 12 oClk on 12th Inst. and which ascended the Bay, were followed in the evening of the same day, by a Schooner from below, in the capacity of a Flag of Truce— I have the honor Sir, to be with Respt. yr. Obt. St.

Th^{s}. Swann

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, S-1814 (M222, Roll No. 14).

1. Breton Bay.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLAVELL, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

His Majestys Ship *Orlando* at Georges Island
in the Potowmac Jany: 16th: 1815

Sir

In obedience to your directions I send *Pandora* and Transport, and beg to assure you that no time has been lost in dispatching her— She parted from the *Telegraph* Schooner (whose convoy she came under from Bermuda) in a Gale of Wind and arrived in Lynhaven Bay on the 10th

The *Euryalus* joined me on the 8th: Instant having experienced a very severe Gale in which she suffered materially— The day she left Bermuda she drifted in light winds among the Rocks but got off unhurt with the loss of two Bower Anchors.— One has been supplied her from this Ship

We have had some very severe Weather here, Gales of Wind, Snow Storms and heavy Rains— It is now more settled and fine

Havannah and this Ship are getting very sickly having thirty each in the List— We are badly off for Fresh Beef, and there is no getting it without money, as they will not exchange it for Salt—

Enclosed, is a return of vessels taken and destroyed since you left the Chesapeake[1]

As it would require some time to collect Weekly Accounts and as I know you must be anxiously waiting for the arrival of *Pandora* and Transport, I shall delay sending them until another opportunity, but Sir, I beg leave to state that we shall be all complete to five months

On the arrival of the *Euryalus*, the *Menelaus* was ordered down to relieve *Havannah*, who with His Majesty's Ship under my command came up here to wood and water, after which I shall proceed to Tangier and deliver the Beds and Clothing brought in the *Euryalus* for the Marine Battalion

I have a Tender up this River *Havannah* has one up the Rapahannock and *Dauntless* (who is stationed from Point Lookout to Annapolis) has one up the Patuxent, and you may rely Sir that every exertion shall be used by myself and the Ships under my Orders for the Annoyance and Destruction of the Enemy's Trade in the Rivers within the Capes of the Chesapeake, or [*nor*] do I believe more than two has escaped Capture, both of which was discovered in the night and given chace to by *Pandora* and *Saracen*, The former chaced one nearly two hundred miles and could not come up with her

Saracen will sail in three or four days with the Transports and Prizes for Bermuda when I shall be quite at a loss for small vessels

Captain White, who is really a most active zealous Officer, will be a serious loss indeed, but he is too well known to you Sir, to require any encomiums from me

Every thing goes on well at Tangier— *Madagascar* has not yet joined

I have had no communication with the Enemy except a Flag of Truce from Captain Gordon of the *Constellation* requesting that four School Boys taken in the Norfolk Packet may be liberated to which I acceded

The Enemys Frigate at Norfolk is in the same state, quite ready for Sea, as is the *Ontario* at Baltimore, the other Frigate and Sloop at Baltimore[2] are in a state of Ordinary as before

Captain White who will have the honor of delivering this letter, will explain any further particulars relative to what is and has been doing in the Chesapeake during your absence I have &c

(Sigd.) John Clavell

LB, DLC, Papers of George Cockburn, Container 14, Vol. 38, pp. 502–4, (Reel 9).

1. No enclosure was found in this letter book collection.
2. *Java* and *Erie*.

CAPTAIN JOHN CLAVELL, R.N., TO REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN, R.N.

His Majesty's Ship *Orlando*
in the Patuxent Feby. 23d. 1815

Sir

I Have the honor of forwarding you Dispatches which I received late last Night from Mr. Baker British Minister at Washington together with a Copy of a letter from him, and another from the Secretary of the Admiralty,[1] and to State, that I have in consequence Dispatched the *Dauntless* to the Brazils, and Cape of Good Hope—*Euryalus* to Gibraltar—*Havannah* to Admiral Hotham and Bermuda, and *Menelaus* to you—which I hope and trust will meet your approbation—

I Have requested Admiral Hotham will forward those for Halifax in order that *Havannah* may not be delayed—

My intention is to remain in the Chesapeake untill I receive instructions from you Sir

There is a Quantity of Provisions at Tangier, and a Number of Black Women and Children, independent of the Garison—

Two Commissioners have come to me with proper Authority, to demand the private property and Slaves, agreeable to the first Article of the Treaty—[2] Private property I have none, or [*nor*], are there any Slaves on Tangier, except the Wives and Children belonging to the Black Batallion, which I have refused giving up, as well as those that have Entered on Board the different Ships— but I intend writing immediately to Mr. Baker for his opinion on the subject— mine is decidedly against it, or [*nor*] shall I consider myself at all Justifiable in giving them up, untill I receive directions from you—

That part of the first Article of the Treaty relative to Slaves, is a most Melancholy thing, as I am well Convinced, that the American Government, considers that the whole of the Black Batallion, comes within it, and will be given up

I hope you will be pleased to approve of what I have done—

I should write you more at large but am anxious that not a moment shall be lost in forwarding the different Dispatches. I Have the honor to be Sir Your most Obedient Humble Servant

John Clavell

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 123–24. Cockburn was knighted on 2 January 1815.

1. For the notification of the ratification of the peace treaty, see Anthony St. John Baker to the commanding officer in the Chesapeake, 17 Feb. 1815, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fol. 127. For the Admiralty's orders to notify stations of the peace, see Croker to the senior officer in the Chesapeake, 27 Dec. 1814, ibid., fol. 125.

2. Article I of the Treaty of Ghent: "... All territory, places and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, or which may be taken after the signing of this treaty, excepting only the islands hereinafter mentioned [*the Passamaquoddy Islands in Maine*], shall be restored without delay, and without causing any destruction or carrying away any of the artillery or other public property originally captured in the said forts or places, and which shall remain therein upon the exchange of the ratifications of this treaty, or any slaves or other private property...." *Treaties*, p. 400.

Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn, R.N., to Captain John Clavell, R.N.

(Copy) Head Quarters Cumberland Island[1] the 10th. March 1815.

Sir,

Should this letter find you still in the Chesapeake, you are on the receipt hereof (notwithstanding the former Instructions conveyed to you by the *Madagascar*) to leave that Bay with all the Vessels remaining with you of those lately acting under your Orders, (excepting only the *Menelaus* which Ship conveys this, and whose Captain has Separate Instructions from me) you are however to understand that you are to bring with you all the Ordnance and Stores of every description from Tangier Island, as by the Treaty such things only as were captured thereon are to be left, and the Commander in Chief desires in particular that on no account a Single Negro be left, except by his own request, if he joined you prior to the Ratification of the Treaty which took place at 11 PM of the 17th. February, the Commander in Chief also wishes you to take down the Barracks &ca. erected by us on Tangier, and to bring the Materials with you if you can manage it, and whenever you have so evacuated this Place and brought every thing from it, you are to repair with the Ships under your Orders to Bermuda, where you will receive Instructions for your further Guidance; It may however be right I should add that in the event of your having formally given up our possessions within the Chesapeake prior to receiving this Letter, you cannot with propriety repossess them, for the purpose of making alterations. I am Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

(Signed) G: Cockburn Rear Admiral

Copy, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2334, fols. 81–82.

1. By mid-January 1815, Cockburn had arrived off the Georgia coast. British forces seized and fortified Cumberland Island, using it as a base to disrupt American communications in the Southeast.

Denouement of Chesapeake Bay Flotilla

Joshua Barney recuperated at his home in Elkridge, Maryland, during September 1814. The bullet wound received during the Battle of Bladensburg would bother him the rest of his life but would never dampen his spirit to serve. On 5 October Barney sailed from the Washington Navy Yard in search of the British fleet to exchange prisoners. He encountered Rear Admiral Malcolm's fleet off the Piankatank River as it departed the bay and he effected the transfer on 7 October.[1] Returning to Baltimore by the 10th, Barney found his flotilla in disarray. The government's dire financial condition in the fall of 1814 resulted in no pay for the Chesapeake Bay flotillamen. Furthermore, Congress refused to compensate them for clothing and equipment lost during the British incursion. When the acting secretary of the navy ordered the flotillamen—unpaid and lacking winter clothing—to recover the merchants' vessels sunk in Baltimore's harbor, Barney resigned in disgust. Shortly thereafter, however, the new secretary, Benjamin W. Crowinshield, persuaded him to return. After the peace treaty was ratified on 17 February, Barney presided over the disestablishment of the flotilla that he had created and so valiantly led.

1. Barney to Jones, 10 Oct. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 83 (M124, Roll No. 65).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore Oct. 26th. 1814

Sir,

Since my return to Baltimore I find that the loss of men at Bladensburgh & since, amounts to upwards of 180, mostly by being shipped off, by the owners of privateers, in consequence of which, I wrote the inclosed letter to the Committee of Vigilance,[1] they appointed a Committee to confer with me, and have determined to discourage the sending men away, by waiting upon the Owners of the privateers, and forbidding Landlords to open any more Randezvous; I have to complain of another means used, to take away my men, the Recruiting officers for the land service, enlist them for five years, under the Idea that any man who is engaged for One year, may enlist with them for five, I cannot suppose that this provision extends farther than the Soldiers engaged for one year; however, if you think it more for the Interest of the U S that the men so enlisted should remain, I will submit, otherwise I must beg that you will be pleased to have an order from the War department to release such as are enlisted and to prevent it in future. one great cause why the men leave us, is, their not being settled with, and paid off according to Articles, the time of One hundred have expired, they have no money, and the landlords are in fact selling them to the highest bidder. Mr. Skinner has not made out the accounts, nor has he time to do it, he is just returned from the fleet, goes to Washington in the morning, and from thence to Annapolis, and again to the fleet with prisoners, and so on; his being employed by the department of State, and Commissary General of prisoners,[2] prevents his doing justice to the flotilla, by a continual absence; these delays have already injured the service very much, and if continued will be of serious consequences; Mr. Skinner will give you the information from the fleet, I sent the *Asp* down with him— My own health is not good I feel serious inconvenience from my wound, the Ball affects my hip-joint, so as to injure my Walking. I am Sir with respect, your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 75 (M124, Roll No. 66). There is no reply from Jones in the secretary's departmental letter book. Perhaps Barney met with Jones in Washington before the latter's departure on 1 December to discuss the commodore's complaints.

1. A copy of Barney's letter to the Baltimore Committee of Vigilance and Safety is bound in the middle of this letter. Barney chastised the owners of privateers who enticed Baltimore's seamen away from flotilla service with lucrative bounties. Barney to Committee of Vigilance and Safety, 21 Oct. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 76 (M124, Roll No. 66).
2. John Mason.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Baltimore Novr. 17. 1814

Sir,

I had the honour to address you on the 29th ulto.,[1] since then Mr. Beatty has furnished 4000$ to pay off the men whose times have expired, but that sum went but a little way, and we are now left in a worse situation than before, those who remain to be paid and whose time has expired some weeks, are very clamarous, most of them having families are in the greatest distress, this, with the loss of cloathing &c at this season, has placed them in a most distressing situation, the delay in settling their accounts has caused much mischief, not a man will enter again, and those whose times are not expired, Desert, and say they are not to be paid when their time is up, so that I see no prospect of keeping them together unless funds are forwarded, not only to pay off punctually, but to make advances to those who may be disposed to re-ship. I have had an officer and twenty five men at Queen Anns on the patuxent for several weeks, they have been very successfull in getting up the guns of the late flotilla, with a very considerable quantity of other valuable articles; we have also been employed assisting the Committee of Vigilance of this place, in securing the harbour by placing and sinking vessels in the channels, and transporting timber &c to the fort; Also in Assisting the Navy Agent & a Mr. Anderson naval store keeper in loading Vessels & Waggons with guns distined for New York; we are also rigging & fitting the *Ontario* at the request of Capt. Spence.— I am respectfully your Ob Servt.

Joshua Barney

N B. since writing the above, a flag has arrived from Capt. Barrie announcing the arrival in the Bay of the Americans which were exchanged by me.[2] Mr. Skinner goes on with the letters.

JB

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 1 (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. In this letter Barney asked Navy Agent James Beatty to obtain advance money in order to entice the men of the flotilla to ship for another year. He also criticized John Skinner, the flotilla's purser, for poor performance of his duties. Barney to Jones, 29 Oct. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 76 (M125, Roll No. 40).
2. On 7 October Barney met the British fleet in the lower bay off the Piankatank River and exchanged British prisoners taken at Washington and North Point. The return of the American prisoners completed the exchange and freed Barney from his parole obligation. Barney to Jones, 10 Oct. 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 83 (M124, Roll No. 65).

Edward Johnson to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

Baltimore 9th. Decr. 1814

Sir,

On the approach to this place, by the British Fleet, and upon the requisition of the Major General[1] to this Committe, a number of Ships & other Vessels, were procured & delivered to Commodore Rogers, under whose Superintendance they were sunk, to prevent the passage, by the Enemy, of our Fort; The Vessels which have been thus used are of very considerable value; & as they will be destroyed, if they remain during the winter in their present situation, the Committe have deemed it their duty to apply to the Major General, who assents to the propriety of raising the Vessels; but who cannot command the services of the Flotilla men for that purpose. The Committe then made application to the Commanding officer of the Flotilla, & have recd. a reply from Lieutenant Rutter, in the absence of Commodore Barney, declining to comply with the request of the Committe; It may be intimated that the Value of the Vessels which have been sunk will amount to some hundred thousand dollars; and as the Committe believe it to be their duty to diminish, as much as possible, the expence of our City defence; I am directed, respectfully to make known to you the present situation of those Vessels; & to sollicit that the Navy Department will give such directions as will raise the Ships & return them to their owners, whereby there will be a very considerable saving to the United States.[2] I have the honour to be Sir, with high consideration & respect, Your Very humble Servt.

Edwd Johnson chairman of committee of Vigilance & Safety

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 69 (M124, Roll No. 67).

1. Samuel Smith.
2. No reply to Johnson is extant. But on the same day as Johnson's letter, Homans ordered Master Commandant Spence to obtain the flotilla's aid in raising the hulks sunk at the entrance of Baltimore Harbor the previous summer. When the flotilla did not acquiesce, Homans ordered Barney to assist the War Department in raising the ships. Homans to the Commanding Naval Officer Baltimore, 9 Dec. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 475 (M149, Roll No. 11) and Homans to Barney, 27 Dec. 1814, ibid., p. 493.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

Baltimore Jany. 3d. 1815

Dear Sir

I received your note of the 27th. ulto.[1] and assure you that my feelings on the occasion cannot be described— It is true I did seriously intend to resign, but was advised to suspend it for a few weeks, by our mutual friend Mr. Jones but the orders of the 27th. from the Department has induced me to delay it no longer; could I have seen or supposed my situation would have been bettered, or a wider field given to me on the opening of the campaign in the Spring, and not embarrassed by contending for rank &c, I would not have quitted the service of my Country untill her Battles had all been fought, but finding my Non-

discript functions subject to continual misunderstandings, I concluded to put an end to it at once, by Resignation— The flotilla service in the spring will be no object, but few men will serve in it, if they can get other imployment; the conduct of Congress to those under my command has been infamous, and I see no honour and (certainly no profit) to be gained by commanding a few Boats badly mann'd; much will [*be*] expected from us, and we must disapoint public expectation to our discredit—which is a situation I would not wish to be in. Congress I fear will do nothing good for the Navy or themselves, all seems to be going the wrong way— I inclose you a letter which I would fain wish to have treated with attention.[2] Wishing you every happiness and success, is sincerely my desire, and am yours

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 7 (M124, Roll No. 68).

1. See note 2, p. 353.

2. In this twelve-page letter, also dated 3 January 1815, Barney expressed his deep-seated disenchantment with the navy's treatment of the flotilla. He believed his men had suffered great privations defending the Chesapeake Bay, while an ungrateful Congress refused to compensate them for the loss of clothing and equipment. Barney considered the order to raise the vessels during the winter, merely for the pecuniary benefit of a few Baltimore merchants, to be demeaning, and he resigned his commission in disgust. Barney to Homans, 3 Jan. 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, unnumbered; follows No. 29 (M125, Roll No. 42). Additionally, Barney resented taking orders from the Baltimore merchants, the War Department, and Master Commandant Spence. He had accepted the command of the flotilla in 1813 with the understanding that he was to report directly to the secretary of the navy. The Navy Department never resolved the issue of this independent command. Barney to Homans, 9 Jan. 1815, ibid., No. 29.

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service

Capt. Joshua Barney
Comm'g U.S. Flotilla Baltimore

Navy Department
Feb'y 14th. 1815.

Sir

I have the pleasure to transmit to you by the hands of Lieutenant Rutter, Your Commission as a Captain in the Flotilla service of the United States approved by the Senate,[1] in doing which I participate in the wishes of the President, that your talents and bravery as an Officer may be exerted in the service of our Country, and continue to merit, as they have done, the applause of the friends of our Government.—

In offering you my best wishes for your honor and fame, I assure you that nothing shall be wanting on my part to render your Command acceptable, pleasant, and respectable.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowinshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 35 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. There is no indication how the secretary of the navy reacted to Barney's resignation of 3 January. The Navy Department was in transition in January 1815. Although appointed secretary of the navy on 19 December 1814, Crowninshield apparently was not in charge until 16 January 1815. In his first communication recorded in his letter book, dated 18 January 1815, Crowninshield wrote Robert Spence about the "difficulty to settle respecting the Flotilla" and his inability to order flotillamen to *Ontario* at that time. Crowninshield to Spence, 18 Jan. 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 11 (M149, Roll No. 12). Secretary Jones had sent Barney the first commission in April 1814. See pp. 53, 55, and 57*n*. The Senate had delayed approving it until October. Perhaps this second commission was meant to placate Barney.

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Farm, Elk-ridge. Feby. 18th. 1815

Sir,

Your letter of the 14th Inst. accompanying my Commission "Approved by the Senate," I have the honor to Acknowledge, and to Express to you my gratefull sense of your good wishes for my "honor & fame," as also that of the President of the US. The news of Peace bursting upon us at a period sooner than was expected, will supercede all warlike operations, unless the treaty should not be honorable to our Country, in which case, I am convinced it will be rejected by the President; should that be the case I do most Solemnly pledge myself not to quit the service, or lay down my sword, untill death, or a peace such as our Country ought to Obtain; External Enemies and Internal Traitors, notwithstanding; Having been confined to the house for the last ten days will prevent my going to Baltimore for three or four days, where I shall be happy to receive your orders, And am respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 72 (M124, Roll No. 69).

Captain Joshua Barney, Flotilla Service, to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Elk ridge near MCoys. April 17th. 1815

Sir,

I had the honour to receive your letter of the 11th Inst. yesterday, ordering the *Asp* to washington with Gun powder;[1] I should have made my report to you before this period respecting the flotilla lately under my Command, had I not been prevented by ill health—[2] On the 1st Apl. according to your verbal instructions, I began to pay off, and on the 8th. finished with the petty officers & men; during that period, I had sent the *Asp*, look-out-boat, & the Gun boat to Patuxent, to bring away the Materials of the late flotilla, the look-out-boat, returned on the 4th. with Iron ballast, & I again sent her for a second load; on the 5th. the *Asp* & Gunboat returned, having brought every thing except the Guns & a few shot, On the return of the *Asp*. Captain Spence put her into requisition, & the Gun-boat was sent down the Bay, with British prisoners; I was obliged then to leave town on account of my health; I had previously got the

Barges hauled up and an Inventory taken of every Article belonging to them, which were delivered to Mr. Beatty the Navy Agent, his receipt will be sent to the Department, or delivered by me, the moment I can venture out— The Sailing Masters yet remain to be settled with, there appears a difficulty among them, they are desirous of retaining their warrants, & yet expect to receive the four months gratification, one or the other, I conceive they are entitled to, but not both, you will please to instruct me on that head.[3] As the *Asp* was left under the directions of Captn. Spence, and I having no officers or men under my Command, I found it impossible to comply with your orders respecting her, but have inclosed your letter to Mr. Beatty, and advised him to apply to Captain Spence for the vessel, officers & men, to take the Gunpowder to washington; I am informed that the object in taking the *Asp*, was to make a receiving vessel of her, for the men belonging to the *Java*. if that is the case, could not these men, be employed with her, in bringing up the Guns &c left at Patuxent, after they return from washington, I merely submit the Idea for your Information, previous to my leaving Baltimore, I engaged men to build the Sheds, or Covering for the Barges, which is progressing, and I hope will be finished by the time I get to Baltimore, I shall then do myself the honour to see you, and deliver up all that remains of my duty, to my late Command. I am respectfully Sir your Obt. Servt.

Joshua Barney

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 43 (M124, Roll No. 71).

1. Crowninshield cautioned Barney to choose responsible officers for this delicate mission. Crowninshield to Barney, 11 Apr. 1815, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 98 (M149, Roll No. 12).
2. Crowninshield on 9 March had ordered Barney to dismantle and cover his barges, deliver all armament and stores to the navy agent, and furnish a descriptive list of all the flotilla's small vessels. Crowninshield to Barney, 9 Mar. 1815, ibid., p. 55.
3. A congressional act of 27 February 1815 stated that all commissioned and warrant officers and privates of the flotilla service who were discharged as a result of the disestablishment of that service were to receive four months' pay in addition to what was owed to them at the time of their discharge. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, pp. 217–18.

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Joshua Barney

Joshua Barney Esqr.,
late commander of the
U.S. Flotilla in the Chesapeake, Present.

Navy Department
May 2d. 1815.

Sir.

I have received your Official communication of the 29th. Ultimo, with a return of the U.S. Flotilla late under your command, and the disposition made thereof,[1] conformably to the Act of Congress passed the 27th. Feby. last,[2] and the subsequent orders of this Department, all which are satisfactory, and approved.—

In the discharge of your duty as an officer, commanding the U.S. Flotilla on the Chesapeake, and Waters adjacent, I recognize with pleasure the character you had previously sustained, as a vigilant, active and brave commander, to whom your Country, and your Government, have unequivocally bestowed the

Meed of praise, and the well earned tribute of thanks; to these I cordially add my testimony and approbation.—

In compliance with the Act before mentioned, the term of your services has expired, and having honorably discharged your duty, settled up your accounts, and given evidence of your integrity, and fidelity in your prompt compliance with the Law; and orders of this Department, you will receive the pay and emoluments of a Commander of the Flotilla, to the 30th. of April last past.— and accept my best wishes for your good health and happiness.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 116 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. The 29 April 1815 letter was not found. The muster roll is found in the Joshua Barney Papers at the Pennsylvania Historical Society.
2. This act disestablished the flotilla service. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, pp. 217–18.

Blockaders Capture *Franklin*

On 6 November 1814 off Hampton, Virginia, a flotilla of thirteen barges from the British blockading squadron overwhelmed U.S. schooner Franklin, *Sailing Master Thomas S. Hamersley commanding. The civil treatment of the American prisoners, the quickness of their exchange, and the interchange of materials exemplified a less intense mode of warfare in the Chesapeake than that experienced just a few months earlier.*

Sailing Master Thomas S. Hamersley to Captain Charles Gordon

On board his B M Ship *Havanna:* 8th. Novr. 1814

Sir

It is with extreme regret that I have to report to you the Capture of the US. Schooner *Franklin* late under my command, on the 6th Inst by the Enemys Boats thirteen in number together with a tender mounting an 18 pounder, and many of the Barges with much heavier metal than the *Franklin*, the particulars are as follows; At day light when about 8 or 10 miles N. E. of old Point discovered some small craft and Boats off Back river point, made Sail and steared for that place with light breeces from the East'd, about 8 O clock discovered a small Schooner off Willoughbys on the star board tack heading for Old point, I then bore away, Soon after discovered two Boats with Sails & oars coming from under the Western land heading for me, and a Schooner close in with the Land, apparently with a view to cut me off, continued my course, the two Barges, coming up very fast, and about 9 oclock engaged me to windward, their first fire I returned immediately, they bearing down upon me keeping up a brisk fire with their Musketry and one of them with a brass eighteen in her bow, but finding their situation rather warm, took in their sails and row'd round my Stern where I had a Carronade for their reception, and after a desperate attempt to board me, one on my Stern the Other on my Quarter were compell'd

to Sheer off, and observing they pull'd along side of each other which I judged was in consequence of the injury they had sustaind, I tack'd and Stood for them to avail myself of this advantage, they however made Sail and retreated under a warm fire untill out of grape distance, during which time there were several guns fired in Hampton roads, wore Ship, the Tender firing as She came up, the two first Boats finding they had reinforcements from every direction renew'd the attack finding my retreat cut off, I accordingly hauled my wind for them but could not bring them to close action, by this manoevre I was in hopes of drawing their Boats from the mouth of the Roads trusting as there was every appearance of a Breeze that I would be enabled to weather them on the next tack, I then made a feint to go on Shore, tacked and stood on a wind off the land; The breeze at this time favouring me a little squeased away to force my way through them, the wind dying away enabled them to wear me in every direction and three large Boats athawt my hauze, finding myself compleatly surrounded, opposed to a force nearly nine times my own and no possibility of escape, I thought further resistance would be a wanton sacrifice of the lives of the men under my Command— I gave the painful order for the Ensign to be hauld down— I am happy however to say, that notwithstanding we were in Musket Shot of nearly two hundred men, we had not a man hurt There were upwards of two hundred men & Officers on the Expedition against me—

(Signed) Ths. S. Hamersley

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 117, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40). Hamersley addressed this to Gordon on *Constellation* in Norfolk harbor.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Norfolk 3d, Decr. 1814

Sir

I have the Honor to report the arrival of the last of the Officers and Crew of the late Tender *Franklin* in a flag granted by Capt. Barrie for the express purpose—

Fourteen had been previously exchanged by a Captn. Wise of the Eastern Shore Malitia and sent up by Capt. Barrie's Tender, and the remaining fifteen arrived last night Very respectfully Sir Your Obt. Servt.

Cha[s] Gordon

Postscript

Sir,

From the report of Mr. Hamersley I am happy to learn that an interchange of a little ceremonious civility (which I have thought it advisable to adopt since the Capture of the *Franklin*) has the desired effect—

Mr. Hamersley & all his crew have been treated with the utmost respect & civility— They were transfered to a Ship destined for Bermuda, & afterward recall'd to enable them to favor us with the first exchange;[1] And the communication (a copy of which is herewith enclosed) from Captn. Barrie, who invariably

acknowledges himself our most inveterate opponent, is a further testamony of their respect—[2]

A Steels list[3] of the 1st. of Augt. & a few old English papers have been sent me in exchange for one of our Alman[acs] of 1814 & a few late papers, selected from several National Intelligencers & Baltimore Patriots for the purpose—

Much conversation pass'd between Captn. Palmer of the *Hebrus* & Mr. Hamersley, on the subject of the *Constelln.* observing that he expected me down after the late blow; But that as he expected to be kept in his present station with only the *Dauntless* sloop of war, we might per chance have an interview— I have the honor to be respectfly. Sir, Yr. Obt. servt.

Cha[s] Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 77 (M125, Roll No. 41). Gordon signed but did not write the main letter. The postcript is in his hand. Gordon had not yet learned of Jones's resignation on 1 December 1814.

1. Acting Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Homans informed Gordon on 6 December that all of the officers and crew of the *Franklin* had been exchanged and that they were "free to act as if they had not been made Prisoners." DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 473 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Captain Barrie spared the American prisoners a long, overland journey from Baltimore by returning them directly to *Constellation.* Barrie to Gordon, 29 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 77, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 41).

3. *Steel's Original and Correct List of the Royal Navy of Great Britain.*

Constellation Prepares for Sea

Idleness characterized the Norfolk station in December 1814. Many of the gunboats were unmanned. Recruiting was negligible. Meanwhile, the British blockade of the Chesapeake Bay was minimal, as Admiral Cochrane diverted much of his fleet southward to support the New Orleans expedition. Captain Gordon recognized this opportunity and repeatedly requested experienced officers for Constellation *so he could get to sea. The transition in leadership at the Navy Department left the station adrift. No strategic planning for the spring occurred, but Acting Secretary Homans did grant Gordon permission to cruise.*

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Constelln. Norfolk 8th. Decr. 1814

Sir,

I have for the last two months kept the *Constelln.* constantly Victual'd & stored for a Cruise in expectation of receiving yr. instructions to authorise my availing myself of the first opportunity to proceed. Feeling also anxious that, agreeable to your promise some time since, you would order on an additional number of officers to fill my present vacancies— The return of the whole of the *Franklins* crew has again reinstated my compliment of men sufficiently for sea service; But, as I stated to you in a former communication, I am several thousand dollars in arrears to my Crew, they having re-enter'd with me for 2 years (a short time previous to the expiration of there old enlistment) under a pledge from

me that they should be paid up the ballance due on there old enlistment—[1] But if it is not contemplated placing the *Constelln.* under immediate sailing orders it would be extremely gratifying to me to be permitted to visit head quarters (while thus inactive)[2] as it would enable me to explain to you more fully the state and situation of the whole of the force upon this station (under my command) as well as the nature of the service to be perform'd— But should there be the least prospect of my receiving instructions before I could go & return, I wish it to be understood that I have not the most distant wish to quit my post; As it is alone the good of the service (I have in view) in wishing to visit washington at this moment— The Gun Boats 20 or odd in number being nearly totally unmann'd could not now be made use of, consequently my presence on the station is not entirely indispensible except, in case of the *Constelln.* proceeding to Sea— There is a Post Captn.[3] & a sufficiency of Lieutts. on the station to take care of my Ship, And to keep the Gun Boats out of the reach of the Enemy during my absence— I have the honor to be with high respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chaˢ. Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 88 (M125, Roll No. 41). Gordon was still addressing his letters to Jones. He had not yet received notice that Benjamin Homans was the acting secretary of the navy.

1. See Gordon to Jones, 21 Oct. 1814, pp. 308–9.
2. Gordon reiterated the same themes in his 18 December 1814 letter to the new acting secretary, Benjamin Homans. *Constellation* had stores for a five and one-half month cruise and lacked only a few officers and twenty men. Additionally, Gordon continued to complain of his "peculiar state of inactivity." Gordon to Homans, 18 Dec. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 122 (M125, Roll No. 41). It is not known if Gordon went to Washington.
3. Joseph Tarbell.

Captain Charles Gordon to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

Constelln. Norfolk 28th. Decr. 1814

Sir,

yr. two communications of the 24th. Inst.[1] is this moment received, And I am much gratified with the idea (once more) of getting to Sea— My requisitions upon the Agent[2] for the money necessary to settle with my Crew, as well as for all other purposes have been long since sent in— The Agent the other day effected some temporary accommodation with one of the Banks for $30,000 in Treasury notes, And I think it probable I could obtain a similar accommodation—[3]

As I am inform'd by the Agent that the whole of his requisitions to cover those made by me have just gone on, I would suggest that Ten or Fifteen thousand dollars of that requisition be forwarded by the earliest opportunity in treasury note, And the Agent directed to apply it exclusively to the *Constelln.*

Permit me now Sir, to solicite yr. attention to my former communications on the subject of my deficiency of officers— Some time since, our late Secretary promised to order 2 or 3 Lieutts. to join me, And since then, one of my Surgeons mates have been kill'd in a duel & the other, furlough'd & promoted by

the Departmt.—[4] I have now only a temporary Surgeons mate of my own appointment,[5] when the Ship requires at least two— Midsn. Chas. T. Stallings has been doing the duty of a Lieutt. since Lt. Kennedy left me in April last, & is a very deserving officer, who I had hoped would have had his Commission before the late Secretary left the office, as younger & certainly less deserving officers have been confirm'd by him—

If Mr. Stallings can be confirm'd And one, tolerably experienced Lieutt. with one or two good Surgeons mates can be immediately ordered on, my Ship will be compleat— In the event of an immediate opening or, opportunity for me (which I do not at this moment apprehend) I could make Mr. T. S. Hamersley an Actg. Lieutt. also; And could very easy obtain Volunteer Surgeons mates, so that the Ship cannot possibly be delay'd, tho I would suggest the hurrying of any officers that may be order'd on— As my Midshipmen are all new appointments, 2 or 3 experienced young men who have been to sea (if there are any such idle) would be very acceptable tho not materially necessary— I have the honor to be with much respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chaˢ. Gordon

Private

P.S. Mr. Stallings is certainly deserving of a Commission since April last—[6]

Chaˢ Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 143 (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. Homans ordered Gordon to prepare *Constellation* for a cruise as outlined to him in the department's January 1814 cruising orders. In the second communication, Homans gave Gordon permission to obtain a requisition from Navy Agent John H. Fawn for the amount to pay his men. Both letters are in DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 490 (M149, Roll No. 11). The 5 January 1814 cruising instructions from Jones are found on pp. 6–7.
2. John H. Fawn.
3. After taking charge of the Navy Department in mid-January 1815, Crowninshield remitted $93,500 in Treasury notes to Navy Agent John H. Fawn. Crowninshield to Fawn, 19 Jan. 1815, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 271 (M441, Roll No. 1).
4. Surgeon's Mate Richard C. Gregory died on 13 November from a wound received in a duel. Surgeon's Mate John Young, Jr., who had served in *Constellation* since 29 July 1812, was granted a furlough on 22 October 1814 and on 23 November was ordered to join Captain David Porter in New York.
5. On 31 January 1814, the Navy Department confirmed the appointment of James R. Boyce as an acting surgeon's mate.
6. Charles T. Stallings was commissioned a lieutenant on 9 December 1814.

Captain Charles Gordon to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

Private Norfolk 5th. Jany. 1815

Dear Sir,

My letter of yesterdays date was written in great haste, As yrs. of the 31st. (to which it was an answer) was not received by me untill just as the Northn. mail was about to close,[1] And I was anxious that no time should be lost, as I am now

determined to avail myself of the first fare wind & dark night so long as only a Frigate & a Sloop of war keep up the Blockade— I had occasion to send down a Flag yesterday by the request of the Citizens of this place to get released 4 or 5 boys who had been taken in the Hampton Packet— It will enable my officer to give me a full description of the two Ships with there names rate & force— Permit me now to explain more fully the subject of my letter of yesterday—

As respects the one Lieutt. requested, I could make Mr. Hamersley Acting, as he is highly deserving & very capable; But my object is to procure a Lieutt. calculated to fill the situation of a 1st. Lt. in case of accident; As you must be aware that after leaving this I have no other resorce than my own Ship, And Lieutt. Saunders, who is my second at present tho. a fine smart young man was only promoted a few months previous to my joining the Ship & was only an acting Lt. while under the Command of Capt. Stewart; I am also apprehensive that if I do not get to sea immediately I may loose my present 1st. Lieutt.[2] by promotion as he is high on the lists—

The Surgeons mates I am much in need of, & hope they will be young men of some experience

My motive for requesting two Midshipmen of some experience who had been to sea, is in consequence of having none but young men just appointed (except Mr. Forrest[3]) all of whom you must well know can be of little or no use to me or the Ship for the greater part of my cruise untill they can learn something, & my having lost 2 or 3 lately leaves room for 2 more provided I could get such as I have solicited otherways I would prefer having no more—

The small quantity of Cloathing required for my Marines I presume could come down by land in a small bale nearly as quick as the mail; But nothing of this kind (I assure you) will delay me, when the moment shall arrive which my judgement may dictate to me to proceede to Sea—

There being never more than two Ships on the Blockade here, what a great opportunity it would be & no doubt will be for some time to come (for the *President, Peacock* & *Hornet* to run into the Capes where I could join them almost instantaneously) deside the business with the two Ships in Lynhaven & then proceede up the Bay where (I feel assured) there is not more than two Ships or, at any rate by the time they could meet me at the capes I could have correct information as to the force up the Bay, for I mean to send up immediately on that business.[4]

Should you deem this sufficiently important to communicate it to Commodore Decature (provided he has not gone to sea already) you can also inform him that the moment any change of the force at the Capes does occur I will loose no time in communicating it—

My lookouts are down upon the shores & would be able to see him in the offing so that should he approve my plan he would only have to hoist a Signal say the try colour'd French flag (Blue white red) that can be seen a great distance, And I could get the information in time to meet him in Lynhaven bay—

My Fort, which I mention'd yesterday you may assure our new Secretary or (indeed the President) will effectually protect & defend the Navy yard against any force in its rear— And the Fort may only require of the Dock yard officer to have a plenty of heavy Guns planted upon his wharves together with the Flotilla for an effectual defence— The Fort alluded to I am getting a drawing of, to forward to the Department with its position— It Mounts 13 long 18 pounders such as the *Constellation*s main Battery (And Two, Fifty pounders)

Columbiad's— They are mounted 9 or 10 feet above the earth, And the Fort parapit or breast work has a rise of 12 or 15 feet beside a 2 or 3 feet ditch—

It is also enclosed in its rear & flank'd with a parapit or bank for infantry 6 feet high & reaching to the head of a Creek on each side of the Fort; Which Creeks effectually enclose the Navy yard & the little Town of Gosport—

This Fort, Captn. Swift (of the Marines in the Navy yard) has not men sufficient even to Guard; And I should be very sorry to relinquish it to the Army).

I have built a Hut to contain 50 men which would be a very good Guard for if it were possible for the Coll.[5] to interest himself sufficiently for the fate of this Navy yard to apply 50 of his Marines with a smart officer to take charge of the Fort—

In the event of my moving I shall, diliver the Fort in charge of the Navy yard, so that Captn. Swift can keep at least one of his Sentinels on the works which is only 2 or 3 hundred yards from the Navy yard— with much respect Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chas. Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 14 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Gordon's letter of 5 January expanded on the points he outlined in that of the 4th. Gordon to Homans, 4 Jan. 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 12 (M125, Roll No. 42). Homans attempted to accommodate Gordon's manpower requests. Homans to Gordon, 31 Dec. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 496 (M149, Roll No. 11).

2. Benjamin I. Neale.

3. French Forrest, warranted a midshipman on 9 June 1811, was ordered from Washington to Norfolk on 12 September 1814.

4. In early January 1815, a British squadron off New York was blockading *President*, Commodore Stephen Decatur, *Hornet*, Captain James Biddle, and *Peacock*, Captain Lewis Warrington. Gordon's scheme to join Decatur's squadron fizzled, for *Constellation* never breached the blockade in the Chesapeake Bay and the British squadron off New York captured *President* as she attempted an escape on 14 January.

5. Colonel Franklin Wharton, commandant of marines.

Captain Charles Gordon to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

Constelln. Norfolk 15th. Jany. 1815

Sir,

My Sailg. Master, Squire Fisk, has repeatedly solicited of me permission to go on to washington, for the purpose of getting ordered to some other station— His having suffer'd from indisposition for the last 3 or 4 months, And one half of the Gun Boats on this station being now laid up for want of men, induces me to refer his present application to you— He requests permission to report himself at Headquarters; And if it is not contemplated to send Seamen here in the Spring to mann the Gun Boats (as it is very certain but few can be had here) the services of Mr. Fisk & many others who are now totally idle might be dispenced with upon this station—[1]

We originally had 20 odd Gun Boats in Commission & a Master in each— Now, we have only 8 Boats in Commission, with a Guard Ship & a Transport Vessel; The other Masters (except what few has resign'd) of course remain idle—

From the appearance of the weather, a few days since I was induced to make my arrangements to depart; But had not so far progress'd in my arrangements as to shew my intention of going down, before the weather broak away; So that my intention of going to Sea is as yet unknown to the Town or to my officers; tho. all suspect I am waiting orders— Mr. B. Cocke, who perhaps may have received it from some of the Clerks in the office, wrote down some time since either that I had my orders or, was about to receive them— I regreted extremely that he should have mention'd it, as it required some time for me to do away the report

In consequence of my preparation for a move as above stated, & Lieutt. Smith not having arrived, I was induced to make Mr. Hamersly a temporary Actg. Lieutt. And have ordered Dr. E. Jones an Actg. Surgeons mate from the Flotilla to compleat my Medical Departmt.— Dr. Jones appears to have given great satisfaction & has obtain'd a letter from Dr. Hermon the Surgeon which I have enclosed herewith, by his request— I have full confidence in the superior skill & judgement of Dr. Hermon[2] I have the honor to be Sir, yr. obt. Servt.

Chaˢ. Gordon

P.S. The Enemys force in the Bay is still weak & admirably situated for the purpose suggested by me—

viz—The *Orlando* 36, Captn. Clavell
And *Havanna* 36, Captn. Hamilton } In Potomack

The *Euryalus* 36, Captn. Napier
And, *Menelaus* 36, Captn. Dix } In Lynhaven

The Brigs *Dotterell* 18 And *Saracen* 18 are generally moving about the lower part of the Bay; And the Tender *Franklin* is kept up the bay with the two Ships in the Potomac—

Chaˢ. Gordon

15th. Jany. 1815

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 4, No. 28 (M125, Roll No. 45). This document was misfiled with the June 1815 correspondence.

1. Sailing Master Squire Fisk, whose warrant dated from 7 May 1812, had served at Norfolk since September 1813. There is no indication in the departmental correspondence that he left the station until the end of the war.

2. Joseph Smith's lieutenant's commission dated from 24 July 1813. On 4 January 1815 the Navy Department ordered Smith, who had served on Lake Champlain in 1813–14, to join *Constellation*. Enoch Jones's appointment as a surgeon's mate dated from 10 December 1814; his resignation from the navy was effective 2 March 1815. Lewis Heermann, a surgeon since 27 November 1804, had served on the New Orleans station since August 1810. His letter of reference was not found.

Demobilization on the Norfolk Station

Constellation's stay at the Norfolk station in 1813 was intended to be temporary. The Navy Department anticipated a commerce-raiding cruise for the ship, but the British blockaders successfully penned her in for the duration of the war. Captains Cassin (Gosport Navy Yard) and Tarbell (gunboat flotilla) resented Captain Gordon's overall command at Norfolk. Confined to shore duty for more than a year, Gordon eagerly left the station a month after the declaration of peace still seeking sea glory in the next war in the Mediterranean. Captain Cassin took charge of reducing the naval presence there, placing some vessels in ordinary and redistributing some to other stations. The transition to a peacetime navy began immediately.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Constelln. Norfolk 15th. Feby. 1815

Sir,

By a short arrival from New york (coast ways) we last evening received the news of a Treaty of Peace between England & the United States— Under the presumtion that it will be officially anounced in a few days, I am induced to solicite of you permission to run the *Constelln.* up to Annapolis roads, where I can be in a more convenient situation to receive yr. immediate instructions either for the Mediterranean or, any other service required—

During this war it has been my misfortune to be deprived all opportunity of performing my part in common with my Brother officers; And when the Field for Fame is to be again open, must depend upon the next British war, as I cannot conceive any other Victory so Brilliant as those obtain'd over a proud Britton—

However trifling the prospects which an Algerine war may present, still, do I feel extremely desireous (after being so long under a rigid Blockade) to be among the first to partake in it, particularly as I have been much upon that station & well acquainted with the Mediterranean generally—[1]

By running up to Annapolis I could cross over to Washington & receive yr. instructions in person— with great respect I have the honor to be Sir, yr. obt. servt.

Chaˢ. Gordon

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Gordon and *Constellation* joined Stephen Decatur's squadron that sailed from New York on 20 May 1814 to engage the Algerines.

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Captain Charles Gordon

Capt. Charles Gordon. Navy Department
U.S.S. *Constellation* Norfolk. Feb'y 28th. 1815.

Sir

You will proceed with the U.S. Frigate *Constellation* to New York, and there await the further orders of this Department.—

You will take on board 50 or 60 of the Seamen on the Norfolk Station, whose times will not expire soon, and transfer them to the Commanding officer at New York,[1] to be sent to the Frigate *U States* at New London—provided the

terms upon which those men were Shipped, will admit of such a transfer.— I am, respectfully &c.

B. W Crowninshield.

P.S. You will please to be governed in your departure from Norfolk, by the stipulations in the Treaty of Peace.—

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 43 (M149, Roll No. 12).

1. Captain Samuel Evans.

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Captain John Cassin

John Cassin Esqr: Navy Department
Comm'dt. U.S. Navy Yard Gosport, Va. March 9th: 1815

Sir,

You will immediately proceed to dismantle all the Gun Boats and Barges on the Norfolk Station, except two of the best Gun Boats, that you will retain for occasional service, with crews sufficient to navigate them. The armament, equipments, and Stores of every kind, will be carefully deposited in the naval Stores, and an exact inventory of all transmitted to this Department. The Gun Boats will be laid up in ordinary, at the Navy Yard, in the most convenient and suitable place for their preservation; and the Barges be placed under cover to preserve them from the effects of the Sun & weather.— You will also furnish a List of all the other small Vessels, such as Schooners, Sloops, Ketches, Lighters &c., on the Station, accompanied by a particular description of their Rig, Qualities, Dimensions, and Tonnage, and the State of their Hulls, Rigging, Sails and Equipments, in order that those may be kept in Service, which are best calculated for Despatch Vessels, Transportation &c:— Please to make a Report of the whole, to this Department, as soon as practicable.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B W Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, p. 307 (M441, Roll No. 1).

Captain John Cassin to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Navy Yard Gosport March 16th. 1815.

Sir,

In conformity with your instructions of the 9th. & 10th. Current,[1] I have directed the dismantling of the Gun Boats, and shall proceed to laying them up in some convenient place, but not being able to procure laborers at this time, their being such demand for that class of Men, along shore, we progress slowly. As soon as practicable the returns shall be forwarded, in the mean time, I take the liberty of stating to you the Gun boats on this Station, in general will want

very considerable repairs. *No. 67*, the best boat on the station Captain Gordon, directed to Baltimore, before he sail'd, with a part of the *Argus*'s crew,[2] the Schooner *Despatch*, he has taken with himself. Seven Sloop boats built at Baltimore, and five sloop boats built at Norfolk, will all want considerable repairs (and new Sails for the whole of them) the seven Felucca rigged boats, built at Washington, are all sound and in good order, and fit for service, with the exception of sails; the four schooner boats built at Norfolk, will with very little repairs answer for New Orleans but will require new sails, taking off their heavy thirty two pounder, and placing a long eighteen & two eighteen pound Carronades. *No. 69*, was condemned in Washington, and I was allowed to take her to help remove my family to this place in 1812, patched her up and fitted her out afterwards, I fear several of them are not much better which I have the honor to submit for your consideration.— Since writing the above, hearing of the *despatch* being in Hampton roads for the purpose of taking their Stream anchor, and a hawser, which the Frigate[3] left off Sewels point, I have directed her up to the yard, having 12 or 15 Men, belonging to the Flotilla, which is very much wanting at this place, the Anchor and hawser I have directed to be taken up & brought to the yard, and shall forward them by the first opportunity, several of the Masters have been permitted to withdraw from the public service by Captain Gordon. I have the honor to be Your obt. Servt.

John Cassin

LS, DNA, RG45, AF 7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

1. In his letter of 10 March, Crowninshield asked Cassin to identify four or five serviceable gunboats that the secretary could send to the New Orleans Station. Crowninshield to Cassin, 10 Mar. 1815, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 310–11 (M441, Roll No. 1).
2. After H.M.S. *Pelican* captured U.S.S. *Argus* on 14 August 1813, the British imprisoned the American crew in England. Having endured over a year of confinement, the last of the prisoners sailed for home on 8 November 1814 in the cartel ship *St. Philip*, arriving in Hampton Roads on 25 February 1815. Shortly thereafter, Gordon sent some of *Argus*'s crew on to Baltimore to join *Ontario*. For more about the capture, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 217–24 and 274–76. For the subsequent exchange, see Dye, *Argus*, pp. 294–96.
3. *Constellation*.

Captain Charles Gordon to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Constellation [*22 March 1815*][1]

Sir

After much trouble with the different crews, in distributing, paying off, & transfering together with the voluminous accounts to be closed upon this Station, I am happy to inform you I am now standing out to sea with a light breese from the S.W. And the Pilot about to leave us—

Agreeable to your orders Mr. Dennison[2] the Purser of the late *Argus*, is now settling with such of the late prisoners, as have served their time out, And Gun Boat *No. 67* sails this day for Baltimore, with forty of those of the late *Argus*'s crew, whose term of service has not expired; The rest twenty or thirty in number with the Officers (late Prisoners) will also proceed to Baltimore in the Schr. *Hornet*, so soon as she can be provision'd, and the men collected on board,—[3] The Officers commanding the *Hornet* & Gun Boat *No. 67* are directed to report

themselves to you for further orders— The rest of the Gun Boats on this station, being so entirely destitute of men the few that remaind in Commission, with the exception of one as Guard Ship, I have ordered to be delivered up to Capt. Cassin of the Dock Yard and made smug [*snug*] by the *Argus*'s men before they leave the Station—

The Masters being all idle, & pressing applications for the Merchants, I was induced to recommend to them not to reject a good offer, as it was more than probable, an order for their discharge, or furlough, would soon arrive—

So many of my men have deserted since we have been under sailing orders, that I have deem'd it proper to leave two Officers to apprehend them when we disappear, and I have ordered the Tender *Despatch* to be kept in readiness to recieve them and bring them on to me at New York,— should you have any particular service for the Tender in that quarter I will detain her, otherwise I contemplate sending her back immediately— I have the Honor to be Sir Very respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

Cha[s] Gordon

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 99 (M125, Roll No. 43).

1. No date appears on this letter but it was postmarked 22 March. The phrase "24 Mch" was added in another hand in the dateline area and the letter was bound in the letter book between letters dated 23 and 24 March.

2. Purser Henry Denison's commission was dated 25 April 1812.

3. *Hornet* sailed for Washington on 24 March. Cassin to Crowninshield, 24 Mar. 1815, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 100 (M125, Roll No. 43).

Chapter Two

The Northern Lakes Theater: January 1814–June 1815

The successes and failures of United States forces along the border with Canada in 1813 set the context of American operations in the northern lakes theater for 1814. The year 1814 opened with Tecumseh's Indian confederacy crushed and the United States in control of Lake Erie. The U.S. Army's plan to choke off the British lifeline to the lakes at the Saint Lawrence River, however, had failed during the 1813 campaigning season and could not be successfully prosecuted in 1814 without the infusion of many additional soldiers and the winning of naval mastery of Lake Ontario.

Napoleon's defeat in the spring of 1814 opened up wider possibilities for British operations in the northern lakes theater. The availability of thousands of British veterans of the wars in Europe for service in Canada emboldened Lord Bathurst, British secretary of state for war and the colonies, to order Sir George Prevost, governor-general of British North America, to go on the offensive and to invade the United States.

British objectives for the lakes theater in 1814 included retaining control of the forts along the trade routes to the west of Lake Michigan and thus the support of the western Indians, recapturing Detroit, destroying the American base at Sackets Harbor, and occupying a piece of United States territory. If successful, the British believed they could gain territorial concessions along the United States-Canadian border and establish an Indian state in the northwest that would serve as a permanent barrier to American northern expansion.[1]

The Americans planned in 1814 to use mastery of Lake Erie to control Lake Huron, recapture Mackinac, and cut off British contact with the western tribes. In the meantime, the army projected conquering the Niagara frontier and then systematically taking the British settlements along Lake Ontario, from west to east, in preparation for moving against Kingston and Montreal.[2]

The American offensive on Lake Huron failed owing to a mixture of reasons, including bad weather, poor geographical knowledge, and carelessness, as well as pluck and enterprise on the part of the British. Further to the west, Prairie du Chien, a British trading post on the Mississippi River in Indiana Territory (now in Wisconsin), fell to an American expedition dispatched from St. Louis, but was soon retaken by the British.

During 1814, Commodore Isaac Chauncey, at Sackets Harbor, New York, the U.S. Navy's base on Lake Ontario, and Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, at the Royal Navy base, Kingston, Ontario, continued their shipbuilding race. Control of the lake's navigation alternated between the two fleets as each launched new warships.

Over the winter of 1813–14, the British started earlier than did the Americans on new warship construction, laying down a 58-gun and a 43-gun ship, and in the spring a large ship of the line. The Admiralty, which took over full responsibility for the naval forces on the lakes, shipped the frames of two frigates and two sloops to Quebec in the spring. In February 1814 the Americans began work on a 60-gun ship and a brace of 22-gun brigs; in May they laid down a 42-gun frigate.[3]

Having gained early ascendancy on Lake Ontario in May 1814, the British attacked Fort Ontario, a major transfer point for American supplies, and established a blockade of Oswego and Sackets Harbor. The Americans sent shipments of essential naval stores by boat along the Lake Ontario shore into Sandy Creek, south of Sackets Harbor, and captured a British force dispatched to intercept them. Having failed to cut off the supplies needed for the completion of new American warships, Commodore Yeo withdrew the blockade. Completion of the new American ships in mid-summer gave the American fleet a slight superiority in force, and, after recovering from a debilitating fever, Commodore Isaac Chauncey took his fleet into the lake in August, too late to be of essential aid to U.S. Army operations on the Niagara peninsula. In October, with the fitting out of the 102-gun ship of the line St. Lawrence, *the British regained naval superiority on the lake. It was then too late in the season for an attempt against Sackets Harbor.*

U.S. Army Brigadier General Jacob Brown's offensive along the Niagara River had some successes but ultimately bogged down because of changing objectives and the U.S. Navy's inability to cooperate at a sufficiently early date. Brown's forces captured Fort Erie and defeated the British in the Battle of Chippewa, but were unable to attack Fort George without naval support. The American troops held their own at the Battle of Lundy's Lane and defended Fort Erie against British assault. On 5 November, however, as winter closed in, Major General George Izard ordered the fort evacuated and blown up.

Prevost waited until late in the summer–and the arrival of reinforcements from Europe–to take the offensive. By then, he found it more practical logistically to invade the United States along the western shore of Lake Champlain than to move against Detroit, the Niagara forts, or Sackets Harbor. In order to protect the flank and supply lines of such an incursion, Prevost requested the Royal Navy to win control of Lake Champlain. Captain George Downie, in command of the British fleet on that lake, launched the frigate Confiance, *of thirty-six guns, at Isle aux Noix, on 26 August. That same day, however, the commander of the U.S. Lake Champlain fleet, Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough, launched the twenty-gun brig* Eagle. *Macdonough had also added to his numbers the seventeen-gun schooner* Ticonderoga. *By early September, the opposing Lake Champlain fleets could throw about equal weights in broadsides, but Downie enjoyed the advantage that his new frigate was significantly heavier than the largest American ship,* Saratoga, *of twenty-six guns.*

As Prevost was preparing his invasion force, the Americans were weakening their defenses in the Champlain Valley. On 29 August, Major General George Izard set out with 4,000 troops for Sackets Harbor, where Secretary of War John Armstrong ordered them to be ready to attack Kingston or to be in position to come to the defense of the Niagara frontier. Izard left Brigadier General Alexander Macomb with some 3,000 soldiers at Plattsburg. On 1 September, Prevost led 10,000 troops across the border. By 6 September, the British troops were on the outskirts of Plattsburg, where they paused while Prevost awaited the outcome of the naval battle. On 11 September, having been delayed by Confiance's *outfitting and by contrary winds, Downie led his fleet into Plattsburg Bay, where Macdonough had decided to fight at anchor. At the end of the day, all the British warships, with the exception of the gunboats, had been captured. Fearing for his supply lines, Prevost beat a hasty retreat to Canada.*

Along the United States-Canadian border, the 1814 fighting season ended in a standoff. The British retained control of a significant portion of the United States' upper Old Northwest, while the Americans still held Lake Erie. Neither side had been able to make permanent inroads across the Niagara River. On Lake Ontario the rival navies were in the process of building massive ships of the line that both were going to have difficulty manning. In the Lake Champlain Valley, the roles of defense and offense had reversed between the British and Americans. News of the American repulse of the British invasion at Plattsburg nullified any claim the British had to territorial demands at the negotiating table.

The shipbuilding contest on the northern lakes proceeded through the winter of 1814–15 until the proclamation of peace in February 1815. The U.S. ship of the line New Orleans *remained on the stocks at Sackets Harbor until it was sold in 1883, a reminder of the monumental naval struggle for control of North America's destiny.*

1. Horsman, War of 1812, *pp. 169–70; for a printed copy of Lord Bathurst's 3 June 1814 dispatch to Sir George Prevost, outlining British defensive and offensive policy in Canada for the second half of 1814, see* Hitsman, War of 1812, *pp. 249–51.*
2. Hickey, War of 1812, *p. 183.*
3. Horsman, War of 1812, *pp. 139–40.*

Security of the Fleet on Lake Erie

The British capture of Fort Niagara on 18 November 1813, followed by the destruction of the towns of Lewistown, Buffalo, and Black Rock in December, left British forces in a position to attempt to reestablish themselves on Lake Erie the following year. The British made plans in 1814 to recapture or destroy the ships they lost in the Battle of Lake Erie the previous September, and to establish a shipyard to build new vessels on Lake Erie or Lake Huron.

The weakness of the American land forces on the Niagara Peninsula caused apprehension at the American naval base at Erie, Pennsylvania, during the winter of 1813–14. Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott and Governor Daniel D. Tompkins of New York feared that the British might attempt an attack on Erie, or try to recapture the prize vessels

anchored at Put-in-Bay by crossing the frozen lake. The British, indeed, had such a plan in the works, but the mildness of the weather that winter made any attempt to cross on the ice impossible.

GOVERNOR DANIEL D. TOMPKINS TO SECRETARY OF WAR ARMSTRONG

Albany January 2nd 1814

Sir

I have this moment received an express announcing the distressing intelligence that the flourishing Village of Buffalo is destroyed. The British crossed at Black Rock, two miles below Buffalo, on Thursday morning at day break 1000 strong. They were attacked with spirit by the Volunteers under the command of General Hall and several lives were lost; but the Volunteers & Militia were overpowered & dispersed. The British proceeded to and burnt the Village, and I presume, the Brig *Caledonia* and the smaller Vessels of the Erie Fleet, which were ashore near Buffalo. Genl Hall's account is not very circumstantial.

The Capture of Fort Niagara is confirmed, the whole frontier from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie is depopulated, and the buildings and Improvements with a few exceptions destroyed. The bodies of diverse Inhabitants of Lewiston have been found in a mangled State. They were massacred and Scalped. Amongst them are Doctor Alvord, Mr St John a nephew of Judge Spencer, Mr Gardner, Mr Low &c.

In my former Letter I took the liberty of suggesting the danger of the destruction of the Lake Erie Fleet. The Frontier which lies between the British, and the harbor of Erie now lies open for their march from Buffalo to that harbor; &, if left unmolested by our Army, they will inevitably go to Erie to destroy the Vessels there, and will besides retake Detroit and destroy the Vessels in the upper part of the Lake if possible. Were they to accomplish these objects, and I have no doubt they will attempt them, it will with presents of Clothing and resources taken in Fort Niagara, enable them to regain the confidence and services of the western Indians

To counteract these winter expeditions it is indispensible that the Army should be in motion whether the whole force of Wilkinson & Hampton ought not to be assembled between Ogdensburgh & Sackett Harbor and acting in concert with the force at the latter place attack Kingston or Prescot, and thus divert the British from operations in the upper Country? or whether it will be better to convey about 2500 of the Regulars to the Niagara Frontier & let them with such Militia & Volunteers as I can assemble, (and I will pledge myself there shall not be less than 5000 Volunteers provided you will unite with them 2500 Regulars) make a diversion from Kingston, by assailing Burlington & York, while the residue of the Army with Commodore Chauncey's force attack Kingston, is thrown out for your consideration. The whole movement will cost little more than three or four large Vessels, which must otherwise be built. It is as healthy and as safe, and is less expensive, to move troops, warmly clad, in January & February as in the wet months of October & November. They can sleep in their sleighs with their arms in their hands & encamp as they would form; and the same sleighs which transport them will carry provisions & forage for ten days. The enemy's country will furnish some supplies. Be assured, Dear Sir that

something must be done, & that speedily and effectually, or the confidence of the Citizens of this quarter of the United States, in the government, will be lost.

You will excuse these suggestions. They are made with the best intentions. Any other propositions or arrangements which may be devised will equally receive my earnest cooperation & support. If any thing be undertaken it will be indispensible that all the enterprising & valuable officers of the Army, who are absent, should return to their posts instantly; & that all the recruits in Pennsylvania; New York & Vermont be ordered & forwarded to their respective Regiments without delay.

A disposition which might be made of Cass's Corps and the indians of the West, was mentioned in my letter of the 25th., namely, whether, if any winter campaign be undertaken, their transportation from the upper Country down to Lake Ontario, to cooperate in an expedition against Burlington & York, would not be adviseable?

In consequence of the recent information I shall exert myself to prevent further intrusions of the enemy within our territory. But the capture of Fort Niagara will prevent the possibility of doing any thing more. To attempt or hope to retake that formidable work by Militia alone, & that without Ordnance, would be the height of folly.

Permit me to hear from you as soon as possible upon these topics. I have the honor to be, Sir with high regard, Your Obt. St.

Daniel D. Tompkins

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, T-193 (7) (M221, Roll No. 57).

MASTER COMMANDANT JESSE D. ELLIOTT TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Erie Jany. 5th. 1813 [*1814*]—

Sir

By Express on the night of the 31st. ult. I had the honour to address you on the subject of the approach of the Enemy.[1] I have now to inform you that on Thursday morning 29th. inst. the Enemy, from the best information I can obtain, 2000 strong, crossed the Niagara River at the mouth of Scigocerdus Creek[2] (one mile below Black Rock) and with little opposition marched to the Village of Buffalow, succeeded in taking it from the Militia, and at 8 in the morning commited it to flames, together with two of the prize vessels, the *Little Belt* and *Chipaway*, and the Sloop *Tripe*, that had driven on shore some time previous in a gale of Wind. Lt. Packet with 12 Men, whom I had left in charge of these vessels for the purpose of securing the Rigging and other apparatus, have succeeded in effecting their escape, and I expect will be here in the morning. On his arrival I will inform you more particularly of all the transaction. I have had a communication through the Commanding Militia Officer at this place, and from the Commanding Officer on the Retreat, that the night previous to the crossing of the Enemy, one of our Prisoners had made his escape, and informed the Comg. General such was the intention of the Enemy—and that if not at that moment, when the Ice would make, all the force would be bent to Erie and the Shipping. Majr. Genl. Mead has ordered out one Brigade of Militia to perform a tour of

duty of 30 days. And for the security of this place and the Shiping, I would suggest to you the propriety of having a force of 2000 Militia at this place, until the middle of March. On the approach of the Enemy we shall have but a few hours previous notice. They are yet in possession of Buffalow, and what will be their immediate conduct, it is impossible to conjecture. I have the honour to be Yours &c. &c.

Jesse D Elliott

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1813, Vol. 1, No. 2 (M147, Roll No. 5). This document was misdated as 1813 and bound in with the 1813 master commandant letters.

1. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 626.
2. Scogeoquady Creek.

Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

"Copy"

U.S.S. *Niagara*
Erie 16th January 1814,

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 20th. Ulto. requiring the Dimensions age and armament of the Enemys fleet captured on the 10th. September 1813. The *Detroit* a Ship of about four hundred Tons, 126 feet on deck 28 feet beam, 12 feet hold, a new Ship well built and found, 4 long 24 lb Guns, 4 long 18 lb. Guns, 7 long 12 lb guns 2 long 9 lbs. and 2, 24 lb carronades. *Queen Charlotte*, a Ship about 5 years old, 116 feet on deck, 26 feet beam, 11 feet hold, well and substantially built, 14, 24 lb carronades and 3. long 9 lb Guns, and well supplied with every thing necessary for a Vessel of War, Schooner *Lady Prevost*, about 3 years old, 80 feet on deck 21 feet beam, 9 feet hold, 10. 18 lb carronades, and 3 long 9 lb guns, well found. Brig *Hunter*, about 9 years old 70 feet on deck, 18 feet beam, and 10 feet hold, 10. 4 lb Guns and, well found, Sloop, *Little Belt* about 3 years old, 59 feet on deck 16 feet beam and 7 feet hold, 2 long 12 lb guns and 1. 18 pdr, well found. Schooner *Chippewa*, about 8 years old 59 feet on deck 16 feet beam, 7 feet hold, 1 long 18 lb gun and well found, I regret that at this moment, I cannot get hold of the Inventory of what now remains on board, and what our Squadron has been absolutely in want of, and what has been used—

The affairs of the station are, as represented in my last communication, only the approach of the Enemy is near at hand, from late information from Detroit it appears that the Enemy are building a Naval force on Machidas Bay,[1] a bay laying on the grand River, receiving its water from Lake Huron, I shall not be able to have this fleet ready for service early in the Spring, unless I am furnished with sail Makers, many sails will be wanted, and I have not a person on the station at all acquainted with those Duties— Very Respectfully I have the honor to be Sir your obd. Servt,

signed Jesse D. Elliott—

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 13 (M147, Roll No. 5). Another copy of this letter gives the following valuations for the prize vessels: ship *Detroit*, $95,000; ship *Queen Charlotte*, $72,000; schooner *Lady Prevost*, $34,400; brig *Hunter*, $20,600; sloop *Little Belt*, $19,000; schooner *Chippewa*, $14,000. DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 105, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Matchedash Bay on Lake Huron.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. January 21st. 1814—

Sir,

Your Excellency's letter of the 17th. Ultimo directing me to give my opinion, on the practicability of an attempt being made, for the destruction of the Enemy's Vessels and Craft, on Lake Erie, I have the honor to acquaint you, that I have had, since my return to Kingston, frequent communications, with Commodore Sir James Yeo, and with Colonel Nichol,[1] Quarter Master General of Militia, whose local knowledge renders him competent to afford the most correct information, on this important subject.—

The security of the Right Flank of the Army, and the preservation of our intercourse with, and influence over, the Western Indians, being objects of the very first importance, it is proposed to undertake an expedition against Detroit, and the Enemy's Vessels in that Quarter, as the only means by which these ends can be obtained.—

In making arrangements for this service, due regard must be had to, the immediate security of the Niagara Frontier, the force which the Enemy has at Detroit, and to the means necessary to transport and to provision the Force, which it may be thought necessary to employ.—

From the destruction of the Enemy's Boats and Craft on the Niagara, no apprehension of an attack need be entertained, on any part of that line below Fort Erie. And a very small force will suffice to prevent their crossing on the ice.— By blocking up the roads, leading from Sugar Loaf, and from Hawn's, all the routes, excepting that immediately on the bank of the River, will be closed. And, therefore, our line of defence will be shortened, and greatly strengthened.— Under these circumstances I should consider twelve hundred men, as amply sufficient for the defence of this line, which will leave a sufficient number for performing the other service.—

I am not correctly informed on the strength of the Enemy at Detroit: but, from the information I have received, it cannot be very great, and I understand it is not in their power to subsist a very large force in that country; it having been greatly exhausted during the last campaign; and the Enemy having no other resource, but to bring their provisions from the State of Ohio, on packhorses, and in waggons, which is a most tedious, expensive, and difficult mode of supply.— I should not, under the circumstances just mentioned, estimate the force of the Enemy at more than Six hundred effective men. Of those I suppose Four hundred to be in Garrison at Detroit; the remainder at Amherstburg, Sandwich, and other out Posts.—

The force I should propose for this service would be

100th Regiment	500	
Light Company Royal Scots	100	
Do. 41st. Regt. completed to	100	
Do. 89th. Regt	50	
		750
Marines, if to be had	100	
		850
Marine Artillery, with two Six Pounders, & one 5½ Inch Howitzer,	40	
Militia	250	
Western Indians	400	
Captn. Coleman's Provincial Troop	20	
Seamen	200	
		1760

The Detachment of Seamen would be of the greatest service, in the attack on the Vessels, in Put-in-Bay.—

The next consideration is the moving and provisioning this force; which, from the state of the Country, must be marched in separate Columns, and probably by the following routes;

Light Infantry, and part of the Militia, by the Talbot road;—

100th. Regiment. &c, and Guns, through Oxford;

Indians, from Point aux Pins, to Point Peleé, followed by Light Infantry, and part of the Militia, through the Woods.

A road, at this season of the year, the ground being frozen, may be made with facility, through the woods, from the Thames to Amherstburg, without going round. And by moving by this last mentioned route, to the new settlements on the Lake, with the aid of the Militia of that Country, all communication with the Islands, will be prevented; and Amherstburg will immediately be secured; with such resources as the surrounding country can supply. While the rapid advance of the Troops by the Thames, will prevent the Enemy from detaching, either to support Amherstburg, or to reinforce their Post at the Islands.—

In some instances it will be necessary for the Troops to sleep out; but, being sheltered by the woods, and with large fires, it is hoped they will not suffer much.—

The Troops should be provided with Bill-hooks, or light hatchets; and the Militia with, each, a good axe, exclusive of his musquet or rifle; and the whole to be supplied with creepers.—[2]

The Provisions, necessary to subsist this force, may be calculated at 2500 rations per diem; weighing, including contingencies, two and half pounds each, or 6250 lbs.— A Sleigh may be calculated to carry one thousand pounds weight, so that, for 21 days provisions, 132 Sleighs would be requisite.— It is, however, proposed to take 300 Sleighs; as in moving the Troops forward, they might (as it is called,) ride and tie; that is, suppose a Column of 500 men on the march; 250 might march 12 or 15 miles without halting, while the other 250 went in

Sleighs. At the end of this march, the party in Sleighs having refreshed themselves, would proceed on foot, leaving the Sleighs for the party in the rear; who would get into them; and overtake the party in advance, in the evening: by which means they might proceed thirty miles a day.—

To procure the necessary number of Sleighs, active young Officers from the Militia should be selected, viz. one in each Township, who would procure even twice the number, if wanted.—

On arriving at Amherstburg the movements of the Troops would altogether depend on the information received. But, I should think, that the capture of Detroit would be indispensable, previous to any attack upon the Vessels, unless they should be in the Detroit River; as were Detroit left in the Enemy's possession, the Vessels at the Islands could not be maintained, without running a very great risque.—

The River Detroit, during the winter, may be crossed in several places; though seldom immediately opposite the town. And in Lake St. Clair, and at the Bar-Point below Amherstburg, it may be crossed in most seasons, as late as the middle of March.—

The distance, from Amherstburg, to Put in Bay, where two of the Enemy's Vessels are said to be, is about forty miles; all the way on the ice.—

Should this Expedition be determined upon, the sooner it is undertaken the better; as the Enemy will, doubtless, make great exertion to reinforce, and provision, Detroit; which delay, on our part, will perfectly enable them to effect.—

As much Biscuit as possible should immediately be baked; on which subject I have called the attention of the Commissariat at Niagara, and York.—

I need scarcely observe to Your Excellency the necessity of the Commissariat being furnished with a supply of at least four, or five, thousand pounds, in Specie, and small Bills, for this occasion.—

Should this proposed outline of operations meet Your Excellency's views, I shall lose no time in putting matters in train for carrying them into execution; although the state of the roads, through the want of snow, from the Bay of Quinte, upwards, renders any movement of such a nature, at present, totally impracticable.—

I am aware, there are several minor arrangements to be made, but which easily can be; provided the general plan be approved of.—

I propose moving with this Expedition myself. And Commodore, Sir James Yeo has expressed his intention to accompany me.— I shall be most happy to avail myself of his services, if it meets Your Excellency's approbation.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 682, pp. 32–40.

1. Lieutenant Colonel Robert Nichol, Upper Canada Militia.
2. Billhooks are implements with a curved blade used for clearing brush; creepers are metal frames with iron spikes worn on the shoes to prevent slipping on ice.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY, TO
GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Kingston. February 3rd. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's letter, of the 29th. Ultimo, communicating your approval of my proposed plan of attack upon the Enemy's Vessels on Lake Erie.—

The obstacles, which Your Excellency pointed out, to that highly desireable, and important object, are, no doubt, numerous; but they had not escaped my observation.—

And I am so sanguine as to think, they could all have been, by suitable energy and exertion, surmounted, were it not for the peculiarly uncommon mildness of the season; which has been so unusually free from cold and frost, that I could not form any hope, that, at this late period, the Ice would attain a sufficient degree of strength and soundness for our purpose, during the remainder of the winter.—

In a letter from Colonel Talbot I learn, that even the bordage upon Lake Erie, from Port Talbot, to Point Pelé is at present unsafe. And from every other information I can collect, there appears but little probability of it's being much better.—

As it would be highly imprudent to enter upon arrangements, under the probability that the season might still prove favorable; I conceive it much better altogether to give up the Expedition, at once; than to make a show of assembling Troops; without a very fair prospect of being able to continue my original intentions.—

From all these circumstances, having given the subject my most serious consideration, and placed every circumstance in the most favorable point of view, I feel myself under the necessity of relinquishing, with great reluctance, an object, from the success of which such beneficial consequences must have ensued.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 682, pp. 90–92.

Plans for a British Base on Lake Huron

Fort Michilimackinac, on the island of Mackinac, which had been in British control since its surrender on 17 July 1812, became the focus of strategy on the upper lakes in 1814. The Americans believed themselves masters of the upper lakes since all British supplies would have to be moved across Lake Erie, which was now controlled by the Americans. The post at Mackinac was desperately low on provisions by 1814, and the British had to find a way to resupply and strengthen it against an American attempt to recapture the fort.

Unknown to the Americans, however, the British had already established an alternative route for provisioning Michilimackinac—from York by way of Lake Simcoe to Nottawasaga Bay on Lake Huron. The British planned to move provisions and supplies along that route in order to build a fleet on Lake Huron and reestablish their military presence on Lake Erie through the "back door," through Lake St. Clair and Detroit.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST TO
LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY

[Extract]

Lt. Genl. Drummond

Head Qrs. Quebec
8th Jany. 1814

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 26th of last month[1] I have to acquaint you that I propose meeting Commodore Sir James Yeo at Montreal about the latter end of the month for the purpose of making with him the necessary arrangements for the approaching campaign—

Alive to the importance of Michilimackinac I have given orders for the necessary preparations being made to transport them in ten birtch canoes as soon as the Ottawa is navigable Arms & ammunition, indian presents & provisions together with a proportion of Troops—[2] It is necessary you should make arrangements for conveying to that post by Lake Huron twelve months provisions for three hundred men the number of Gun Boats & Batteaux necessary for the carriage of the whole is a matter of calculation & should be commenced upon immediately provided you have found a man of activity & enterprize to undertake the building of them in Penetanguishene Bay, who will be responsible that they are finished by the time required—

In addition to the force I propose sending to Mackinac by the Ottawa I shall require from you two Companies of the 2d. Battn. of Marines & a proportion of Seamen under a Lieutt. to man the *Nancy* & Gun Boats— No useless consumer of Provisions is to be allowed to acompany this Detachment, but as it should be composed of none but men who would prove a benefit & not an encumbrance to the Service— The arrangements regarding this movement will be completed immediately after I have met the Commodore

The North West Company being interested their opinions must be left out of the question whilst we are considering the advantages which may result from the preservation of Mackinac.—

I consider it as of vital importance as respects our Indian alliance, it being the rallying point, the last link by which their Warriors still faithfully cling to our interest, severed from that, they will find themselves an abandoned people, deserted by us in their utmost need & reduced by despair to seek mercy from their bitterest foe— Then the charm of British influence would be dissolved & hopeless becomes the prospect of ever regaining their confidence—

But the preservation of our Indian alliance is not the only solitary good which will result from being able to retain possession of Mackinac,—the spirits of our auxilliaries would be so received [*revived*] by it that in the event of operations being undertaken for the recovery of Amherstburg & Detroit, a most essential



Map 11. Upper Lakes

cooperation might be looked for from Lake Huron for the accomplishment of so great an object.—

In respect to the conveyance of this reinforcement, the preference must be given to the most expeditious & from all the information I have collected, I understand the navigation of Lake Huron from Peneteanguishine Bay is practicable early in April affording us a considerable start of the Enemy, provided you succeed in having the Gun Boats & Batteaux finished by that period— The Gun Boats may be armed with the 24 Pr. Carronades which are at York & were intended for the *Detroit*—

The reports of this day shew sixty 24 Prs. long guns for the new Ships moving towards Kingston & arrangements are made for forty 32 Prs. Carronades to follow— In addition to this immense transport several long guns are ordered from Montreal to Upper Canada for Garrison service—Two Brass 24 Prs. on Travelling Carriages from the Coteau dulac to Queenston are in the number. . . . I have &c

(Signed) George Prevost
Comr. of the Forces

LB, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 1222, pp. 20–30. Three paragraphs on the parole of two noncombatant prisoners of war and on prize matters have been omitted from this transcript.

1. See Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 2, pp. 505–7.
2. Notation in the margin: "10 Rl. Artly. 60 R. & File Canadian Embodied Militia."

Lieutenant Colonel Ralph H. Bruyeres, Royal Engineers, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

York 23rd. January 1814

Sir

I have to report to your Excellency my arrival here yesterday I was detained some days at Kingston waiting the arrival of Genl. Drummond as I was apprehensive of passing him on the Road. I have made every enquiry since I have been here respecting the practicability of building some Gun Boats in Penetengushene Harbor on Lake Huron for the purpose of communicating from thence to the Island of Michilimakinac as early as the opening of the Navigation can permit. the total want of resources in this part of the country renders any public undertaking extremely difficult, and uncertain. I have seen the only person here that could be competent for this Service (Mr. Dennis[1] late Master Builder at Kingston) he is at present unemployed but from the conversation I have had with him he is unwilling to engage in this business owing to the impossibility of procuring Workmen here for the purpose.

Captain Barclay whom I have seen on this subject very strongly recommends a Mr. Bell[2] who was Master Builder at Amherstburg he is now at Kingston, and I have written to Genl. Drummond to endeavor to engage him for this Service, and to procure 12 Ship Wrights to accompany him I have stated fully all that will be necessary. and I still hope that this business may be accomplished.—

The total want of Artificers, and Labourers of every description has retarded the progress of all the public Works here, and unless some efficient means are

taken to procure Men nothing effectual can be done towards the defence of the place. Lieut Kitson[3] has exerted himself to the utmost but personal exertion is of no use without assistance only 13 Carpenters are now employed whereas four times the number are required. the want of Snow has also retarded the supply of Materials being brought but the Roads are now more practicable, and I have directed Requisitions to be immediately made for all that is necessary.

Mr. Crookshanks[4] the Commissary is at present at Lake Simcoe where I understand he is gone to make arrangements for the building of two Batteaux to convey Provisions that were left on the communication to be sent to Michillimacki[nac]

I proceed this day towards Niagara, and shall make every arrangement in my power on my arrival there for the security of that Frontier but I am informed the want of Workmen is fully as severely felt as in this place, and in some instances worse. but I shall do the best that can be devised for the public Service.— I have the Honor to be with the greatest Respect your Excellency's Most Humble Servant

R H Bruyeres.

ALS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 732, pp. 10–12.

1. John Dennis, master shipwright.
2. William Bell, master shipwright.
3. Lieutenant John S. Kitson, Royal Engineers.
4. George Crookshank, Deputy Assistant Commissary General, British army.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. January 28th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint Your Excellency, that I received a communication from Deputy Assistant Commissary General Crookshank; at York, on his return from Lake Simcoe; where he had been, to make arrangements for forwarding the supplies to Michilimackinac.—

He informs me, that, from the authority of several credible persons, and likewise from Mr. Wilmot,[1] the Surveyor, who had been employed in running the line, from Lake Simcoe, to Penitanguishan Bay, that it is impracticable to transport anything by that route, previous to a road being cut upwards of thirty miles in length; and that it was calculated to take 200 men for at least 3 weeks, before it could be made passable; and, in case of deep snow, it could not be done at all.—

In consequence of the delay, and difficulty, attending such a measure, Mr. Crookshank has made arrangements for forwarding the supplies, to Nottawasaga Bay, on Lake Huron, a distance only of 20 miles from Penitanguishan.

The opening of the road to the river, leading to Nottawasaga Bay, will take but 12 men about 10 days; and, in the course of a few days, as soon as a shed can be erected, on the other side of Lake Simcoe, he will commence sending the Stores across it, should a thaw not prevent.—

As Mr. Crookshank found it almost impossible to procure hands to build boats, and altogether so a person to contract for the whole, or even a part; I have had a communication with the Commissioner of the Navy here; who says he could furnish 30 workmen, with an able foreman; that would, to ensure the measure being completed in the given time, contract, at once, for the building of as many as should be required.— And they could set out, from hence, at a day's notice, well furnished with Tools, Nails, Oakum, and every other requisite for the occasion.

This mode of proceeding would undoubtedly prove somewhat expensive; but I see no alternative.—

And, as there would be some check to the work upon the new Ships here, unless it was thought proper to send up an additional number of workmen, to supply the place of those thus otherwise to be employed, I have to request Your Excellency's instructions on this head, as soon as convenient.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble Servant

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

P:S: Since writing the foregoing, I have received a letter, from Lieutenant Colonel Bruyeres, from York, corroborating that part of Mr. Crookshank's letter, relative to the impossibility of procuring persons there, to build the boats at Penetanguishan Bay; and asserting, that the only way this object can be accomplished is, by sending up builders, with the necessary materials of Pitch, Iron Work, &c, from Kingston.—

G. D.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 682, pp. 90–92.

1. Major Samuel S. Wilmot, surveyor-general.

Captain Richard Bullock, British Army, to Captain Robert Loring, British Army

Copy

Fort Michilimackinac
26th. February 1814

Sir/

I have the honor to Acknowledge Your Letter of the 12th Ulto: (Received on the Evening of the 23rd. Instant) Acquainting Me by directions of Lieutenant General Drummond that a Quantity of Provisions had been sent to Notawasaque Bay and a further Quantity was about to be sent to Pentagusihan Bay destined for this Post, which Provision we are much in Want of:

In Reply to the information required by the General, I am sorry to say that, our Resources here are very few, and in that, of the Article of Provisions almost Consumed;— At the time I Received the Account of the Retreat of the Right Division from Amherstburgh, the Government Provision was nearly exhausted, there being but Sixty eight pounds of Salt Meat in Store, and Flour only Sufficient to Serve the Small Garrison for One Month:— Amherstburgh being the

Depot from whence this Post had been always supplied, and the late Season of the Year Rendering any Supply from York very Precarious— I immediately turned my Mind to find out what resources there were on the Island, and in it's Vicinity, and I directed Mr. Bailey[1] of the Commissariat Department to proceed without loss of time to the Small Settlements in the Neighbourhood for that purpose, and to purchase every Species of Provisions he could procure, both on the Island and places adjacent, which he did at most exorbitant prices, and on which we have been existing since October;— the proportion of Animal Food purchased was so small that, I found it necessary on the 1st November, to Reduce the Ration of Beef to half a pound per day, and since, on the 25th. December, to limit the issue of Meat to four days in the Week, at the above rate—so that the Troops &c. might have a small proportion of that Food as long as possible—And which they will have until about the Middle of the ensuing Month— We must then have recourse to Indian Corn and Fish—of the latter We have been fortunately successful in obtaining a good supply, and on which We must exist until Provisions can be sent us:— The Number of Boats &c. I can send to Notawasaque and Penitanguishan Bay in the ensuing Spring to Assist in bringing the Supplies &c. will be, 2 Batteaux, 2 large Birch Canoes, and a Keel Boat;— There is no Clothing of any description in Store, and I send herewith Returns of what is Wanted—also a State of the Garrison and a Nominal List of Officers— The Men have been paid to the 24th. January, except those on Command at the Island of St. Josephs and Green Bay.— The Number of Indians immediately about us are but few, not exceeding Forty—this being their Hunting Season, they are employed in that Avocation far back in the Woods;— I expect Numbers here early in the Spring—they appear to be well disposed towards us—Nor have I heard of any that have Attached themselves to the American Government,—except a few of the Saguinas, Residing at Saguina Bay on the South Side Lake Huron—about 150 Miles from hence.— I have not been able to obtain any information respecting the Enemy's Vessels, None of them appeared on Lake Huron last fall, Nor have I been able to collect any intelligence from Detroit, Notwithstanding I have offered a Considerable sum for that purpose:— I shall pay close Attention to the Works, Picketting &c. of the Fort, and my exertions will not be wanted in Keeping this Post in the best state of defence;— Please to inform General Drummond, that Robert Dickson Esqr. Agent and Superintendant to the Western Indians, writes me from Green Bay (on the West Side of Lake Michigan) that he intends being here as early as possible in the Spring with about Six hundred Warriors, and one hundred White People of every description— the Consumption of Provisions will of course be very Great, and should the People arrive previous to the intended Supply I dread the Consequence.— I have the Honor to be &c.— &c.— &c.—

Signed Richd. Bullock
Captain 41st Regt.

a True Copy
Noah Freer
Military Secretary

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 682, pp. 227–30.

1. William Bailey, deputy assistant commissary general.

Winter Preparations on Lake Ontario

The indecisive close of the naval campaign on Lake Ontario in 1813 set the tone for the campaign of 1814, which became a contest to see which side could build more and larger warships faster in order to gain naval ascendancy of Lake Ontario earlier in the season. Without a decisive superiority in guns and ships, neither Commodore Isaac Chauncey nor Sir James L. Yeo would commit his squadron to the uncertain outcome of battle.

For both sides, supplies were best moved during the winter, when snow-covered roads made the transportation of heavy stores faster and cheaper by sleigh. The pace of work at Sackets Harbor and Kingston quickened during the winter months before snowy roads turned to mud, making transportation of heavy guns and naval stores almost impossible. Both sides also strengthened their defenses to guard against attack. Master Commandant William M. Crane directed American preparations and defenses while Commodore Isaac Chauncey was in New York and Washington making preparations for the ensuing campaign.

British naval forces in Canada were brought directly under the Board of Admiralty, eliminating the bureaucratic step of administrating them through the Quartermaster General Department under Governor-General Sir George Prevost. The British ships were renamed and added to the official Royal Navy list in 1814.

Master Commandant William M. Crane to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

(Copy) USS. *Madison* Sacketts Harbour
Jany: 11th. 1814

Sir,

I have this morning learnt from Col: Smith[1] (the commanding military officer) that he has received information from a man, in the employ of government, that the enemy at kingston are making great preparations to attack this place, all the sleighs in the province have been impressed, and coming up with six soldiers in each, their force I am persuaded is daily augmenting— I have great pleasure in assuring you that, the squadron is kept at all times in readiness for battle, our greatest apprehensions arises from the probability of the buildings on the wharf and in the Navy yard being fired—in which case the heat would become so great, that the *Madison Oneida, Govr. Tompkins, Conquest, Pert, Ontario, Fair American,* and *Julia* must necessarily be abandoned—unless sufficient time should be given us to demolish them— I beg leave to add that, although sickness still prevails, the crews are in fine spirits, and I am satisfied will do their duty, I feel confident, that all will be done, by officers and men, that can be in case of an attack—the army consisting of near 1700 men muster less than 500 for duty and Genl. Wilkinson has made a requisition for the latter number to be sent to French Mills, it was however discretionary, and Col: Smith has declined sending them; and forwarded an express to the Genl. with the information I have already given you, the want of mounted Dragoons is also urged by the Col: it is stated here, but I cannot vouch for the truth of it, that 800 soldiers are in quarters at Green Bush— You may rest assured Sir that we will not yield up the Ships whilst men are left to mann the guns— I am cutting

and hauling timber for the purpose of erecting a work at the cross roads Very respectfully I am Sir yr. obt. Servt.

W. M. Crane

Mr. Eckford[2] arrived this morning

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 9 (M147, Roll No. 5). Crane forwarded this copy of his letter to Secretary of the Navy Jones.

1. Colonel Thomas A. Smith, U.S.A., was promoted to brigadier general on 24 January 1814.
2. Henry Eckford, shipwright.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Present.

Navy Department
Jany. 15th. 1814.—

Sir

The indecisive close of the Campaigne and the vigorous efforts making by the Enemy to gain the ascendancy on Lake Ontario, the probable theatre of decisive action the ensuing Campaigne, leaves but one direct and energetic Course to be pursued, which has been anticipated by the preparatory steps taken in pursuance of my order to the Navy Agent at New York on the 30th. Novr. last and my letter to yourself on the 1st. December last.[1]

Every possible resource and effort must be directed to the creation of such a force at Sacketts Harbour as will enable you to meet the enemy on the Lake the moment he may appear, and with means competent to ensure success.— For this purpose you are by direction of the President of the United States invested with authority to make such requisitions, take such order and employ such means as shall appear to you best adapted to carry into effect the important objects confided to your direction, and in such manner as shall best promote the public interest, and attain the end with the least expenditure of blood and treasure.

In my letter of the 1st. December last, I have described the force which it then appeared to me proper to create, but as the force preparing by the enemy is now better known, that of our own must be regulated accordingly.—

The Ship of the first Class I have suggested still appears to be well adapted to the occasion.— the *Genl. Pike* is suggested as the model for the second,— and perhaps the third had better be of the same Class, and the fourth that of the *Sylph*; but with a steady eye upon the enemy you will vary your plan to meet the exigency of the case.—

The transportation of the Stores from Albany in due time, and of those from New York which may yet be wanting, is of primary importance. The progress making in this branch of service by Mr. Anderson[2] is very satisfactory, and on your return such arrangements may be made as will leave nothing to doubt or casualty.

The talents enterprize and zeal of Mr. Eckford the builder, is a source of great satisfaction and confidence, which assures me that though the enemy has made great progress in the building of his two largest Vessels, he will be overtaken

and surpassed in this branch of service, by the superior energy and judgement of Mr. Eckford.—

Mr. Bullus will inform you of the quantity of Beef & Pork deliverable at Albany by contract for the service of the Lakes, a considerable part of which has already been delivered.— With a view to the ordnance already transported to Albany and five 24 Prs. reported by Mr. Anderson to be at the Harbour, you will determine what may required and order the residue on from New York, where if there should be any deficiency it can be made up from Philadelphia, where also there is an ample supply of Powder.

Your immediate attention will be required to the recruiting service, which unfortunately progresses but slowly, though it is believed the operation of the Embargo will facilitate that object, and you are authorized to give such reasonable bounty to Seamen as may be found necessary, particularly to those whose times may expire while in service on the Lakes.— Should your success in this branch fall short of your expectations when the period for active service shall be at hand, volunteer drafts from the flotilla service where it is practicable, and from such of our Ships as may be blockaded will be made in due time.—

The character and talents of the Officers employed on the Lake by the enemy shews the importance attached to that service, and must be met by corresponding qualifications on our part. This object will be provided for in due time by a reciprocal understanding between yourself and the Department. Lieut. Yarnall now at Philadelphia, was yesterday ordered to report himself to you, and Lieut. Stewart now attached to the flotilla on the Delaware, has this day been ordered in the same manner. These Officers you may immediately order on the recruiting service at New York and you will if expedient open Rendezvous further eastward.— Midn. G Lynch[3] whose health does not permit him to perform other duty will report himself to you in New York for the recruiting service.—

I take this opportunity to reiterate the perfect confidence of the President, in your skill, talents, and patriotism, to accomplish all that is possible with the force, and the means at your Command, and his entire approbation of your past services.— In these sentiments I most cordially unite.— I am very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 89–91.

1. In his letter to Navy Agent John Bullus of 30 November 1813, and that to Commodore Isaac Chauncey of 1 December 1813, Secretary of the Navy Jones ordered that the guns from *John Adams* and *Alert*, and quantities of ordnance stores, cables, anchors, canvas, and iron to fit out new ships, be sent to Sackets Harbor. He also requested the services of Henry Eckford for the construction of a 32-gun frigate of 175 feet and two 22-gun sloops of war of the size of *Peacock* at Sackets Harbor. Jones to Bullus, 30 Nov. 1813, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 78–79; and Jones to Chauncey, 1 Dec. 1813, ibid., pp. 79–80.
2. Samuel T. Anderson, Navy Storekeeper at New York.
3. Midshipman Green Lynch, appointed 16 January 1809, died September 1817.

FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER TO COMMODORE SIR JAMES L. YEO, R.N.

No. 4 Admiralty Office
29 Jany. 1814

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that it has been determined by His Majesty's Government that the whole of the naval Force on the Lakes of Canada, together with the Civil Establishments consequent thereon, are to be transferred to the direction of this Department, the ships composing the same to be registered on the List of the Royal Navy: and the Civil Officers and Artificers to be placed as nearly as possible, on the same footing with the naval establishments to which they may be most assimilated in His Majesty's other Colonies.

With the imperfect information of which their Lordships are possessed, they are unable to give you any detailed instructions for your guidance under this change of circumstances. The List transmitted with your Letter of the 29th. of September contains all the information by which they have been guided in classing and establishing the Vessels on Lake Ontario and I herewith transmit to you a List containing the names by which they are now ordered to be registered, with the establishments of men and Guns they are respectively to bear: which list includes also the Vessels employed on Lake Champlain; and I am at the same time commanded to direct that you give orders for placing, as soon as may be practicable, the said vessels on the Establishments severally allotted to them accordingly; and that you transmit to me with the least possible delay the most ample information of the arrangements you may make for officering and manning them: of the reinforcements that may be required for completing their Complements as established, and for manning any other Vessels that may be likely to be brought forward for service on any of the Lakes: of the supplies of Stores of all descriptions that may be required: and generally, to submit to their Lordships such observations as your experience may suggest for their guidance in the uninformed State in which they find themselves, with regard to all matters connected with this Establishment.

Directions are sent out to Sir George Prevost and Lieutenant Colonel Williams for breaking up the Second Battalion of Marines commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm, and placing the same, excepting the artillery company, at your disposal as far as may be necessary for furnishing the marine complements of the vessels under your orders, agreeably to the enclosed schemes, as well as of those to be brought forward here after, leaving the surplus if any to be incorporated with the first Battalion; and you are accordingly to take the necessary measures, in concert with the officers above mentioned, for so appropriating the said Marines.

With respect to the Ordnance proposed by the Navy Board for arming the vessels now employed on the Lakes, it appears to require the following number and nature of Guns, vizt.

Guns.	
8, 24 Pdrs.	on Col. Congreve's principle
4, 24 "	light
10, 18 "	Col. Congreve's
6, 12 "	
4, 9 "	
2, 6 "	

Carronades		
10–32 Pdrs.		
42–24 "		
36–18 "		

but it will be impossible to send you the Guns of a new description in time to enable you to arm these vessels according to their Establishments; but the quantity and nature of ordnance of which you must find yourself in possession (and of which an account is given here after) will enable you to arm the Squadron in a most ample and effective manner, until the arrival of the new ordnance may enable you to place them on their regular establishment.

The following is an account of the ordnance supposed to now at your disposal, vizt.

Long 24 Pdr. Guns.		
Already on the Lakes—	7	
Sent out by the ordnance last year	18	25
Long 18 Pdr. Guns		
Already on the Lakes—	12	
Sent out by ordnance	18	
Sent in *Æolus*	26	56
Long 12 Pdrs. Guns		
Already on the Lakes—	2	
Sent out by ordnance—	14	16
Long 9 Pdr. Guns		
Already on the Lakes—	9	
Sent by ordnance—	3	
Sent in *Æolus*—	6	18
Long 6 Pdrs. Guns		
Already on the Lakes—	15.	15
Carronades.		
68 Pdrs.		
Already on the Lakes	6	6
42 Pdrs.		
Sent out by ordnance	6	6
32 Pdrs.		
Already on the Lakes.	46	
Sent out by ordnance	90	136
24 Pdrs.		
Already on the Lakes—	12	
Sent out by ordnance—	42	
Sent in *Æolus*	8	62
18 Pdrs.		
Already on the Lakes	20	
Sent by ordnance	6	26
12 Pdrs.		
Sent by ordnance—	12	12

and you will accordingly send me for their Lordships information by the first opportunity a full report of the measures you have taken in this respect, to enable them to determine what supplies of ordnance, if any, it may be necessary to send out.

I further transmit for your information a Copy of a Letter from the Navy Board, pointing out a mode of strengthening the larger Vessels, if it should be judged necessary to enable them to bear the ordnance proposed for them; and I am commanded to add that their Lordships have been pleased to sign a Commission appointing you Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's ships & Vessels on the Lakes, intending that you shall have a Captain under you. I am Sir, Your most obedient humble servant

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/4360, fols. 24–28. A draft of this letter, with enclosures, precedes this copy at fols. 15–17.

[Enclosure]

An account shewing the number & nature of guns now carried by the vessels on the Lakes of Canada, and the New Establishments of the same (the latter in Red Ink

Ships	24 Pr. Guns	24 Pr. G. on Col. Congreve's principles	24 Pr. Guns on lightest pattern	18 Pr. Guns	18 Pr. Guns Col. Congreves	12 Pr. Guns	9 Pr. Guns	6 Pr. Guns	68 Pr. Carrs.	32 Pr. Carr.	24 Pr. Carr.	18 Pr. Carr.
Montreal. (*Wolfe*)	1			8					4	8		
new Estt.		8				2					10	
Niagara. (*Rl. George*)	1			2					2	16		
New Est.					6	2					12	
Star. (*Melville*)				2						12		
New Est.					4		2				8	
Charwell (*Moira*)							2				12	
New Est.							2				12	
Magnet (*Sir S. Smith*)						2				10		
New Est.						2				10		
Netley (*Beresford*)	1											8
New Est.								2				8
Linnet (*Growler*)												12
New Est.												12
Chub (*Eagle*)								11				
New Est.												12
Finch (——)								4				
New Est.												4
4 Gun Boats (1 each)	4											
New Est.			4									
now at the Lakes.	7			12		2	2	15	6	46	12	20
Required by New Estt.		8	4		10	6	4	2		10	42	36

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/4360, fol. 18.

[Enclosure]
List of Ships & Vessels at present employed on the Lakes of Canada, or building for that service

Tons	Guns	Ships		Compt.	Seamen	Marines
		Lake Ontario				
655	20	*Montreal*	(late *Wolfe*)	195	164	31
477	20	*Niagara*	(" *Rl. George*)	175	155	20
288	14	*Star* sloop	(" *Melville*)	95	80	15
192	14	*Charwell* sloop	(" *Moira*)	86	71	15
234	12	*Magnet* g.v.	(" *Sir Sidney Smith*)	75	60	15
121	10	*Netley* g.v.	(" *Beresford*)	70	55	15
		Lake Champlain				
——	12	*Linnet* slp. (late *Growler*)		80	65	15
		Chub schr. *Finch* do. Four Gun Bts.	} No Marines			
		Building				
	43	A Gun Frigate			200	42
	43	Do.			200	42
	25	A Gun Frigate			120	42
	25	Do.			120	42
	18	Sloop		140	115	25
	18	Do.		140	115	25
					1520	344

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/4360, fol. 19.

MASTER COMMANDANT WILLIAM M. CRANE TO COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY

Copy) US.S *Madison* Sacketts Harbour
Feby: 1st. 1814

Sir

Nothing of moment has occurred since I last wrote you. the bastions, platforms, guard and mess rooms of for [*Fort*] Tompkins are completed also the magazine and nearly all the pickets are up, it is a work of considerable strength, having seven heavy guns and one mortar in readiness, it has been entirely constructed by the seamen of the squadron, and without any expence, the block house has been altered and encreased in its armament— fort Chauncey, at the cross roads will prove highly important in case of an attack, it is already seven feet in height, I contemplate raising it seven more with solid massis of

logs, it is calculated to mount four 42 pdrs. carronades and two long 18 pdrs. on cavaliers,[1] it will command the main street and plain on both sides; fort Tompkins and the block house is garrisoned by about sixty seamen (exclusive of the Marines) under the command of Lt. Dudley of the Navy, this officer is also the superintending Engineer of fort Chauncey, this latter work may cost something as Lawyer Camp threatens to prosecute me for cutting timber off his land to defend his house and the Town—

a few days since I put in close confinement a fellow who calls himself Kenelm White, he was found loitering about the ship yard, and vessels, he affects to be desirous of entering the Navy as masters mate, states he made his escape from Niagara when it was taken, but gives a very imperfect and contradictory account of what carried him there. he pretends to have been acting Sailing Master of the *Argus* under Capt. Lawrence, and says Mr. Ludlow was the first Lieut. and that four or five years since (he does not recollect which) he cruised in her in the Bay of Biscay he recollects no other officers names than those mentioned pretends he wants either a masters mates birth or work as a rigger says he served with Commodore Truxtun when he engaged the *Vengeance* and that Comdr. Rodgers was the first Lieut. this story you will at once perceive is a lame fabrication, my opinion is that his object was to discover the number of vessls building length of Keel, defences of the place &c. &c. he has a dark villainous countenance, says he was born in Baltimore, I shall keep him confined until I hear from you— A respectable American in appearance was taken near Niagara falls (where he was keeping school) arrived last evening from Kingston, he made his escape on thursday last a few miles after they had left the Town on their way to Montreal where 100 prisoners were marching he saw two large vessels planked up but was so far off from the Ship Yard that he could not tell whether any more were building, he however was informed by several British officers and many of the inhabitants that two fifty Gun ships would be ready early in the spring beside a vessel equal to the *Pike*, all spoke confidently of their being able to obtain the command of the Lake, he arrived at York under guard in the night and saw outside the picketts nearest the town a large quantity of dressed timber but could not learn whether it was intended for a vessel, the country people said all their sleighs and sleds were numbered and they were ordered to hold them in readiness for an expedition, it was believed, Sacketts Harbour was the object this young mans name is Simeon Fuller a native of this state— Counsellor Bennet called on me to day and said he had learnt through a respectable and influential American in Canada, that the Enemy contemplate an attack on this place so soon as the ice will bear and that they are cutting a road across Long Island for the purpose I have no fears for the result if all do their duty—

Cannon daily arrives at Kingston. I have completed a new Code of signals. very respectfully I am yr. obt. St.

W. M. Crane

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 39 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Cavaliers are raised platforms within a fort.

Ships or Galleys for Lake Champlain

During the winter of 1813–14, Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough anchored his vessels at the southern end of Lake Champlain on Otter Creek, below the town of Vergennes, Vermont. During the winter months, he faced the task of rebuilding his squadron after many setbacks in 1813, including the loss of two sloops, Growler *and* Eagle.

Workers at the shipyard at Vergennes undertook to carry out the secretary of the navy's instruction of December 1813: to build a sufficent force to gain naval superiority on Lake Champlain when the navigation opened. But what type of vessels would best serve that purpose? The British had a superiority in gunboats. Those vessels were quick to build, were highly maneuverable, and had proved their effectiveness in several raids on the shores of the lake in 1813. But ships alone carried sufficient firepower to face larger British vessels in combat. Even a steam warship, which would be the first in the nation, offered as a possibility.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO
MASTER COMMANDANT THOMAS MACDONOUGH

Thomas Macdonough Esqr.
Commanding the U S Naval force
on Lake Champlain.

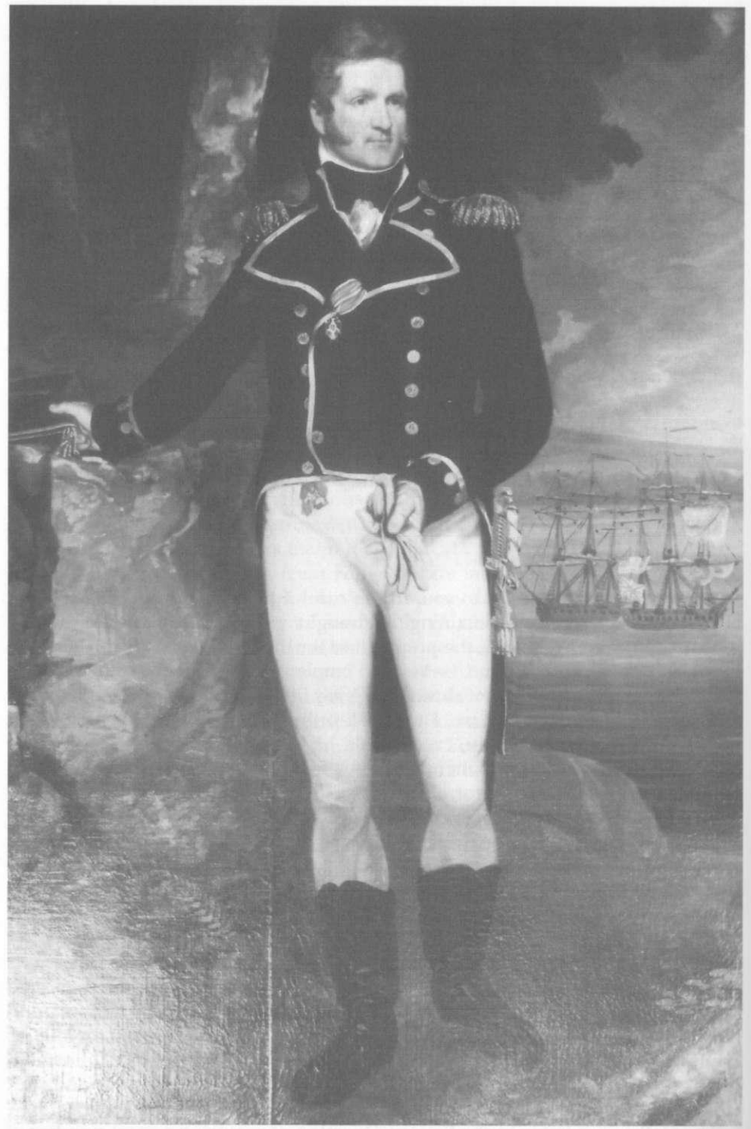
Navy Department
January 28th. 1814.—

Sir

I have this day forwarded to you, to the care of John Bullus Esqr. Navy Agent New York, a rolled packet containing the draught and sectional plans showing the inboard works of the Galleys, the preparation for the building of which I ordered in my letter of the 7th. ultimo.[1]— You will employ all possible means to expedite the building and equipping of those Vessels say fifteen in number which together with the force you already have, I trust will prove decisively superior to any that the enemy can oppose to you, even should he build the 24 Gun Ship you have mentioned and which is also mentioned as a fact in a letter received yesterday at the Treasury from the collector of the district of Champlain. My impressions are that the Galleys are better adapted to the waters and local circumstances of your Command than a heavy square rigged Vessel. As however your experience and knowledge of both will best enable you to determine that point, You are authorized to build either a vessel of such force as shall certainly exceed that of the enemy or the Galleys as you shall judge best adapted to the service. Or you may build a Ship and three or four of the Galleys. The object is to leave no doubt of your commanding the Lake and the waters connected, and that in due time.

You are therefore authorized to employ such means and workmen as shall render its accomplishment certain and you will make such requisitions upon the several Navy Agents for supplies of every kind, and for money for the recruiting service as in your judgement the public service may require, informing me of the places on which you may probably make your requisitions and they (the Agents) shall be instructed Accordingly.

The Galleys are liable to the Serious objection of requiring a great number of men, in proportion to their efficient force, but then they have the advantage of



Thomas Macdonough

attacking the enemy in calms and light winds, and in narrow waters to great advantage and of retreating into creeks, rivers and shoal waters from a superior foe.

If under all circumstances you shall deem the Ship, the most eligible, economy is decisively in favour of the Ship.

In the Battery of a Ship of 24 Guns is concentrated a very great force requiring but 180 to 200 men to serve at and manoeuvre the Vessel; whereas an equal Battery in Galleys will require three times that number of men.

The Ship will also cost but little more than the Galleys and has the advantage of good quarters in action, comfortable, accommodations, and shelter from the inclemency of the weather peculiar to the Lakes.

If you determine upon building a Ship Messr. Browns of New York will build her in less time than any other builders.

In that case you had better proceed immediately to New York and make arrangements with them for that purpose.

Guns, small anchors & cables and sundry other stores, have long since been forwarded to Albany for your command, but no discrimination has been made between them, and the Stores forwarded for Sackett's Harbour at the same time Commodore Chauncey and yourself can readily settle this point, and you can order from New York whatever may be deficient.

You some time since expressed some uneasiness at the circumstance of the force under your command not being particularly noticed in the Presidents Message, which contained that notice of the services of the Squadrons on Lakes Ontario & Erie.[2] These Lakes were the great theatres of action, and by the magnitude and importance of the events which had taken place, had attracted and greatly excited the public attention and feeling.

In a brief communication to the Legislature the executive could not notice all whose services entitled them to public favor but I can assure you that the President entertains the highest confidence in your capacity zeal & patriotism and is perfectly satisfied with your Services.

You are authorized to open a rendezvous wherever you may think proper and to give a bounty of twenty dollars to Seamen and in proportion to others. You will probably succeed better to the eastward than in New York as the competition will be less. No time should be lost in the recruiting service, and Officers of address & judgement should be employed on that service. I am respectfully Your Obt. Servt.

W. Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 94–96.

1. For William Jones's letter of 7 December 1813, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 605.
2. For Macdonough's letter of 18 December 1813, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 605–6.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes Feby. 7th. 1814—

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your orders of the 28th. January—they are received this day— I cannot but give a preference to Gallies for

these waters, the number of men required for them is a serious objection to them in preference to a ship, still, upon the whole their advantages are greater particularly in the north end of the lake where there are many reefs, shoal water, & calms and in this water tis most likely they will be called into action— The draughts and plans for those Gallies have not yet come on from New York. I am in daily expectation of them, and you may rest assured Sir, of my using every exertion to have them compleated by the opening of the lake—

I have sent three officers on the recruiting service, one at Boston one at Salem, Massa., the other at New York, should the officer at Salem not meet with early success he will open rendezvous at some more favourable place in that vicinity of which I shall immediately inform you— This increase of men and vessels will require an increase of officers, and I am very desirous to have the commanding officers those of experience, as it will require great care and attention to our men in those open vessels; I hope Sir, you will not deprive me of the services of Lt. Cassin—[1]

I beg leave to observe that your orders heretofore have reached me by the way of Plattsburgh and have not been directed to this place which causes a longer delay— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, your most obt. Servt.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 48 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Lieutenant Stephen Cassin.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough

Thomas Mc.Donough Esqr.
Commanding U.S. Naval Forces
on Lake Champlain.

Navy Department
Feby. 22nd. 1814.

Sir,

Mr. Brown,[1] Ship Builder of New York, will have joined you, some days since, from whom you will learn my anxious desire to complete the contemplated force on Lake Champlain.

He engaged, on the 14th. Inst., to launch a Ship of 24 Guns,[2] on Lake Champlain, in 60 days; presuming that the alleged fact of the enemy having a Ship of that Class in great forwardness, to be substantiated, I urged the propriety of building a Ship, without delay.

Yesterday Lieutenant Cassin arrived here, and informed me, that the enemy is not building a Ship, but some large Galleys. You will, therefore, consult with Mr. Brown, and vary your plan to meet the force and preparations of the enemy with decisive effect, and with such description of vessels as you may deem most efficient, and whose construction will admit of the greatest despatch.

Lt. Cassin says there is a New Boat, 120 feet long, near Vergennes, intended for a Steam Boat;[3] if she will answer, you are authorized to purchase her for the use of the Navy. Can she not be armed with heavy Guns under deck? The Guns, on either side, to be opposite the space between the opposite ports, so that, as the Vessel is probably narrow, the Guns would not come in contact when roused in.

Two long 18 Pounders, and four 42 pd. Carronades, were landed from the *John Adams*; I have directed those, with their Carriages and implements complete, to be sent to you, without delay. I am, respectfully, Your Obt. Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 223 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Noah Brown.
2. The 26-gun sloop of war *Saratoga* was launched 11 April, only forty days after her keel was laid.
3. This ship would be purchased and completed as the U.S. schooner *Ticonderoga*.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes March 7th 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your Letter of 22d Feby.— Mr. Brown having laid the keel of a Ship to carry 26 Guns, and nearly all her timber being on the ground, we have concluded to go on with building the Ship.— This, Sir, will still be agreeably to your wishes, as the enemy is certainly building a vessel to carry 20 Guns, or upwards.—[1] Persons from Canada say, the Enemy are building also four or five Gallies.—

A Man is now on his way to ascertain what their force is, together with what they are building, so, in a few days, I expect to be in possession of a correct statement thereof.—

I have commenced building Five Gallies, which Gallies, with the Ship, and the Force we already have, I calculate will be sufficient; but should it not be, the Steam Boat can then be purchased, finished & fitted, with eight or ten, long 24 pr. on circles amidships.—

I regret to inform you that the recruiting service is dull, ten men only have been shipped in Boston, and about thirty in New York.— The Officer ordered to Salem, & Marblehead, to recruit, was taken sick on the road; this caused some delay, and from the Officer afterwards ordered on that service, I have not heard, but presume, from what I learn that but few men are to be gotten there.— The inducements held out for men to enter the Army, is said to be the cause of the recruiting service of the Navy, being so dull, and I much fear when I get my vessels in other respects ready for service, there will be a great want of men.— Can an arrangement be made for the Comm'g. General to supply me with men for the Oars of the Gallies (this is the case with the Enemy's Gallies) leaving the Guns to be worked by Sailors?—

Commo: Chauncey informed me a few days ago in Albany, that he expected Officers & men from the vessels on the Atlantic for his command.— Should you make a transfer of Officers & men from the Atlantic to the Lakes, I beg you will direct some to this.—

The crew of the *Hornet* would well suit this ship

I perfectly well know that the Enemy have good Seamen & Officers on board their vessels.— I hold it correct to acquaint you that the men, with a few excep-

tions, sent to me last Summer are very indifferent, such as the command of this Lake, now of importance in our operations against Canada, should not be trusted to— I speak of good men for this Ship; as for the men for the Gallies, Soldiers, in my opinion, would answer in every respect as well as Sailors, and probably better in [*torn*]ing their small arms for close action.—

My requisition for Cannon, Powder &c has gone on to the Navy Agent in New York, and at present every thing appears in a fair way to operate on the opening of the Lake, with the exception of Officers & men.— I have the honor to be, very respectfully Sir Your most obt. st.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 77 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. The British were building a 16-gun brig at Isle aux Noix. This vessel was launched in April and named *Linnet*.

Governor Daniel D. Tompkins to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Albany March 10th. 1814.

Sir,

The Steam boat Company of Lake Champlain, who have an exclusive privelege of navigating that Lake with boats propelled by steam, are building a boat at Vergennes of 125 feet keel & 24 feet beam of the strength of a vessel of 400 Tons at least. They have an Engine & machinery ready for her equipment at Vergennes. They are now about laying her deck timbers. The Company would, I believe, have no objection to dispose of her to Government in her present state with all the machinery at an expense of from 15,000 to 17,500 dollars. At [*torn*] She is capable of being equipped as a war vessel, with [*torn*] alterations, & to be so bulwarked, without impeding her [*naviga*]tion as to protect, vessel, machinery & men from the assaults of row gallies or other vessels. She may be made to carry 4 long 32 pounders & ten twelves or eighteens at an expense at the utmost of 37,500 Dollars, including the price abovementioned.

The importance of such a vessel on Lake Champlain is obvious: She can move when no other vessel can—is at all times capable of firing hot-shot—can tow gallies or other boats in a calm will require but one hundred men, at most, for the 14 guns above mentioned & to navigate her; whilst the same number of guns in row gallies, althoug they will cost less, will require 250 men at least. She will transport men & warlike stores & tow batteaux &c. with more certainty & less time than they can be otherwise conveyed down Lake Champlain.

At the conclusion of the war Gun brigs, row gallies & all other usual naval equipments will be worth little or nothing; whilst the Steam boat with her machinery will sell to great advantage for carrying passengers through the Lake, which has, in time of peace, been a lucrative business. This Company with this boat, will, I understand convey a right of running her under their exclusive privelege as well during the war as after the conclusion of peace.

I have reflected upon this subject maturely & the result is that in my opinion the Government ought not to omit having the use of that boat for public purposes & I therefore beg leave recommend that you authorize Commodore Mc.Donough, or some other agent, to enquire into the propriety & usefulness

of the purchase and to equip the boat without delay if upon examination the ideas I have suggested are well founded. The old Steam boat on that Lake was by my advice employed under the War department for the transportation of troops &c. from Whitehall to Burlington & Plattsburgh in 1812 & 1813; & I refer you to that department for evidence of its great saving to the public in expenses of transportation. From the Steam boat now building the same advantages may be derived at the same time that She may be made a most formidable & efficient Vessel of war on that Lake. May I have the honor to hear from you on this Subject? With great regard I have the honor to be Sir, Your Obdt. Servt.

Daniel D. Tompkins

P.S. I forgot to mention that every thing is ready on the [*torn*] the new Steam Boat & that she can probably be completed at an earlier period than any other vessel, or naval force.

LS, NcD, U.S. Department of the Navy Papers.

Hardships of Lake Service

Service on the navy's distant stations, including the northern lakes, was hazardous, expensive, and unpopular. Small towns on these stations became boom towns as sailors, soldiers, officers, mechanics, shipwrights, and contractors moved in to stage the work of building and equipping a navy and fighting a war. Sanitation often lagged behind, resulting in disease and high rates of mortality. Living expenses were high, as both the necessities and the small luxuries of life had to be transported great distances, at great expense.

As the war dragged on into a third year, recruiting for these remote stations slowed, particulary when the prospect of prize money made service on a seagoing vessel more appealing than service on a remote station.

Early in 1814, President James Madison signed into law a bill authorizing a twenty-five percent increase in wages for service in these areas of hardship.

Petition of Master Commandant William M. Crane and Others to Congress

Sacketts Harbour 8th. Feby. 1814—

The undersigned Officers of the United States Navy serving on the Lakes, beg leave respectfully to represent to the Honl. the Senate and House of Representatives of the U.S. the peculiar hardships to which themselves the Seamen and Marines are subjected.—

First, all the necessaries of life have advanced near one hundred per Cent since the commencement of the present War, and on the Borders from a complication of causes which will readily present themselves to your consideration an additional heavy advance has taken place

Secondly Our inability to meet these additional expences is fully exposed— when we remind your Honl. body that on the formation of the Naval Establishment the pay &c was fixed as adequate only at that time to our support. Since that period the Wages of the Seamen have been curtailed and the value of the Ration reduced from 28 to 20 Cents.

Thirdly Altho' the established pay and notice of Government may be considered the recompence of the Officer, we nevertheless knowing the effect on the Seamen must call your attention to the limited opportunity they possess to obtain prize Money— A Contrast is unavoidably drawn between serving here and in an Atlantic cruizer and hence the difficulty in a great measure to obtain able Seamen for this Service again as we act immediately in Concert with the Army the difference of inducement held out to the Soldiers and the Seamen must be sensibly felt.

Fourthly

With the severities and unhealthiness of the climate many of your Honble. Body are personally acquainted— The favour which we hope to receive at your hands will on due consideration appear but a poor equivalent for the privations we suffer and the ill effects our Constitutions sustain—

Fifthly

We disclaim all intention of reflecting on or questioning the liberality of our Government and therefore beg leave to suggest to your Honble. Body that our Enemy receive their pay as Officers &c of the Royal Navy and an additional allowance from the Local Government— It would appear to us that our Establishment admits of the same distinction.

All which is respectfully submitted—

W. M. Crane Master Comdt.
Thos Brown Lt. Comdg.
Wm. Finch— Lieut.
J. Wragg— Do.
Gᵒ: Pearce— Do.
Chs. Campbell— Surgeon.[1]
Thomas B. Salter— Surgeon's Mt.[2]
William Lowe S M[3]
Henry Wells Lieutt.[4]
Francis H. Gregory do[5]
Charles W Skinner Lieut.[6]
Francis Mallaby S. Master[7]
Jaˢ. A Dudley Lieut.
Wᵐ. Mervine— Lieut.[8]
Joseph Stephens S. M.[9]
Samˡ. W. Adams— Lieut.
John Pettigrew Lt. Commanding
P. A. J. P. Jones, Lieut.[10]
Gwinn Harris— purser[11]
Alexʳ. P. Darragh Purser[12]
Rᵈ. Smith Capt. Marines Comdg.
Lyman Kellogg Ltt. Marine Corps—[13]
Leonᵈ. J. Boone Lieut. Marines[14]
W. W. Buchanan, M.D. Surgeon.
John D. McReynolds— Surgeon[15]

DS, DNA, RG46, Senate 13A-G8.

1. Charles Campbell, appointed surgeon 24 July 1813; resigned from the service on 14 July 1814 on account of poor health.
2. Thomas B. Salter, appointed surgeon's mate 24 July 1813; promoted to surgeon 22 May 1815.
3. William Lowe, appointed sailing master 19 November 1812; promoted to lieutenant 9 December 1814.
4. Henry Wells, appointed midshipman 20 June 1806; promoted to lieutenant 6 January 1813.
5. Francis H. Gregory, appointed midshipman 16 January 1809; commissioned a lieutenant 28 June 1814.
6. Charles W. Skinner, appointed midshipman16 January 1809; appointed acting master 7 December 1811; promoted to lieutenant 24 July 1813.

7. Francis Mallaby, appointed sailing master 3 July 1813.
8. William Mervine, appointed midshipman 16 January 1809.
9. Joseph Stephens, appointed sailing master 3 May 1812.
10. P. A. J. P. Jones, appointed midshipman 16 January 1809; promoted to lieutenant 24 July 1813.
11. Gwinn Harris, appointed purser 25 April 1812.
12. Alexander P. Darragh, appointed purser 25 April 1812.
13. Lyman Kellogg, U.S.M.C., commissioned 2d lieutenant 3 July 1812; 1st lieutenant 18 June 1814.
14. Leonard J. Boone, U.S.M.C., commissioned 2d lieutenant 7 July 1812; 1st lieutenant 18 June 1814.
15. John D. McReynolds, appointed surgeon 30 October 1811.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 14

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 7 March. 1814

Sir

I have this moment been honored with Your Letter of the 25th. Ulto. together with a Copy of yours to Commodore Bainbridge.— I had already wrote to that Officer that I would hold myself individually responsible for any Money that he might authorize as bounty untill he could hear from the Department.

The increased Pay and bounty I think will insure Men for this Service and in fact they deserve it for they Suffer much beyond what any one can form an idea of unless they witness it—we seldom have less than 20 per Cent of our whole Number Sick and sometimes 30 per Cent.— within three days we have buried Seven Marines out of a Corps of 180 and have this day on the Sick report of the Same Corps 40—and our Seamen in nearly the Same proportion.—

You do not Say Sir whether the pay of the Men already in Service on these Lakes—is to be increased to the same as that to be allowed to Men who enter for the Lakes— if this Should not be the case it will create great dissatisfaction in the fleet here and cause many desertions— the term of Service of more than half of the Men on this Lake expires before the first of July— the Crew of the *General Pike* has nearly all volunteered to Stay as long as I remain on the Lake and I hope that the greater part of the others will re-enter particularly when they find their pay increased—

I will in a few days make you a Return of the number of Officers and Men on this Station, together with the number that will be required in addition I have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 20 (M125, Roll No. 35).

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commg. U.S. Naval Forces
on Lake Ontario S. Harbour.

Navy Department
April 18th. 1814.

Sir,

By an Act of Congress, passed this day, the "President is authorized to make an addition, not exceeding twenty five per cent, to the pay of the Officers, Petty Officers, Midshipmen, Seamen, and Marines, engaged in any service, the hardships or disadvantages of which, shall, in his judgement, render such an addition necessary."[1]

The President, considering the Lake Service, as one of peculiar hardship and privation, directed an additional allowance of pay, to the Seamen and Ordinary Seamen, while employed on that service; which was communicated to you, in my letters of the 25th. February and 18th. March last.[2] He has, now, in conformity with the above mentioned Act, directed, that, from and after the date thereof, all the Commissioned, Warrant, and Petty Officers, while actually employed on the Lakes, be allowed twenty five per cent, in addition to the pay hitherto allowed; of which you will please to notify the Officers under your command. I am very respectfully Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 132–33.

1. The full text of "An Act Concerning the Pay of Officers, Seamen, and Marines, in the Navy of the United States" can be found in *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 3, pp. 136–37. This law was repealed 22 February 1817.

2. For Jones's letter of 18 March 1814, see pp. 409–10.

Gathering Intelligence on Shipbuilding

Building ships—larger, heavier, faster—became the key goal of the opposing navies on Lake Ontario in 1814. The rival commodores, Isaac Chauncey and Sir James L. Yeo, each knew that the side with the largest ships and the most guns, and the earliest to get out of port, would have the decided strategic advantage. The effort to sustain this shipbuiding race would increasingly cost both sides in men, money, and effort.

American shipwrights launched two large ships, Jefferson *(18 guns) and* Jones *(18) in April; they completed two frigates,* Superior *(44) and* Mohawk *(32) in June. The British, too, had used the winter and spring months to strengthen their naval force. Two frigates,* Princess Charlotte *(42) and* Prince Regent *(56), and three large gunboats were constructed at Kingston. The British considered a proposal to send precut frames of ships from Royal Navy dockyards to Canada for assembly and completion. The idea proved immensely unpopular among the naval officers in Canada. They feared it would delay their own efforts to construct even larger warships locally. The Board of Admiralty, nonetheless, carried out the plan.*

Because the shipment of naval stores and supplies was expensive and time-consuming for both sides, each sought accurate intelligence of what the opposing side was building and intended to build, as a measure of and guide to its own effort. In order to gain the crucial knowledge of the enemy's shipbuilding plans and progress, the American and British navies employed spies and gathered information from local citizens, deserters, and prisoners of war.

COMMODORE SIR JAMES L. YEO, R.N., TO
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN B. WARREN, R.N.

Copy

His Majesty's Ship *Wolfe*
Kingston, Upper Canada
5 March 1814

Sir

A Deserter from the *Lady of the Lake*, American Schooner, came in Yesterday and has given us a Statement of the Enemy's Naval preparations for the ensuing Campaign, which, as it is Corroborated by the testimony of many other people who have been lately at Sacketts— I firmly believe to be correct.

I have the Honor to enclose for your information, a copy of the Deserter's deposition, and a Comparative Statement of the two Squadrons, as they are likely to meet in Battle.

You will regret with me, that the Enemy's preparations are so great, and Yet, so short a time back as the 20th. January, not a keel was laid at Sackett's, now they have 400 Shipwrights, and two of their new Ships nearly ready for launching; the Third will be ready by the 1st. of May, and a Forth, by the end of that Month.— The Roads from Albany, Boston, and New York, are covered with Ordnance, and Stores for these Vessels, and which, when added to their old Squadron, will be far Superior to any thing I can bring against them.

It therefore becomes my duty to acquaint You, that unless I receive immediate reinforcements of Guns (long 24, and 32 Pounders) Men, and Stores of every Description. Upper Canada, will, in my Opinion be lost to His Majesty. In the mean time I shall use every exertion to collect the Shipwrights in this Country and build (if possible) to be on something like equal terms with the Enemy, altho' their resources are so much nearer to them, than ours are to us, that, if they exert themselves, it will be impossible for us to get an Equal Force.—

You however may rely, that this Squadron will do all in it's power to Save the Upper Province, and to uphold the Honor of the British Flag, nor shall it be surrendered to the Enemy under any Circumstances whatever.

I have sent a Copy of the information herewith transmitted, to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and have solicited from their Lordships, immediate re-inforcements; and I have acquainted them, that without which, I cannot expect Success against the Enemy. I have the Honor to be with the highest respect Sir, Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

(signed) James Lucas Yeo.
Commodore.

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fols. 292–93.

[Enclosure]

Copy of the Naval Part of a deposition, made by a Seaman, Deserter from the United State's Schooner the *Lady of the Lake*, in Sackett's Harbour.

4th March 1814.

"There are four Vessels building at Sackett's Harbour;— The First a Ship of 162 feet Keel, to carry 30 long 32 Pounders on the Main-Deck, and thirty two 42 Pounder Carronades on the Spar-Deck.— The Second the size of the *Pike*, to carry thirty long 24 Pdrs.; and two of 124 feet Keel; to carry twenty four long 24 Pounders each— The *Madison* is to have long 18 Pdrs.; and the *Oneida* Brig, to have 32 Pr. Carronades instead of 24's— The *Sylph* Schooner they have made a Brig, and she is to mount twenty two, long 12 Pounders.— They are also building another Schooner, the Size of the *Lady of the Lake*.—

Signed. James Lucas Yeo
Commodore

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/506, fol. 296.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 15. U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor 7th. March. 1814

Sir

A Deserter from the Enemy came in last Evening—he belonged to the 2d Battalion of Marines stationed at Prescott—a few Evenings since a Sailor came in direct from Kingston—these two Deserters together with many others give nearly the same account—these accounts are also corroborated by our own Spies—the substance of which is that the Enemy has about 2,000 regular Troops at Kingston and 1000 Seamen—they have two Ships caulked and decks laid—the materials for a third prepared, but not room to build her untill one of those the most forward is launched—the largest Ship on the Stocks is to be called the *Prince Regent* and is 154. feet Keel and 43 feet beam—to carry 30 long 24 pounders on Gun deck and 30–32 pounders Carronades on Spar Deck—the other Ship is to be called the *Princess Charlotte* and is 123 feet Keel—about 36 feet beam and is to carry 26 Long 18 pounders on Gun Deck—and 16 or 18 Carronades on Quarter Deck and Forecastle—these vessels are to be launched as soon as the Ice is gone—their Sails Rigging and Armament is all ready—the third vessel for which they are preparing Materials is to be 156. feet Keel 47. feet beam and is to carry long 32 pounders on Gun deck—the Guns are going up at this time and were taken from the lower gun deck of a 74 or 80 Gun Ship at Halifax—a Lieutenant and thirty Seamen have been sent to Lake Erie or Huron, supposed to fit some vessel— A number of Officers and Seamen expected from England or Halifax— In consequence of the information of the increased size of the Ships building at Kingston I have so altered the large Ship now building here that she will mount Sixty Guns, that is, with a tier of ports on the Spar Deck (the same as the Frigate *United States* had when first built) this alteration will increase the expense of building a mere triffle—the Sails and Rigging the same—her force double as I propose to mount 32-long 32 pdrs on Gun Deck and 30–32 pdrs Carronades on Spar Deck.— this alteration will I trust meet with your approbation—this vessel is more than half planked and will be so far forward as to commence caulking next week—the other two are completely caulked and could be launched in a few days if the Ice was gone—

I am preparing Materials for two other vessels but neither of them can be commenced untill we launch these we have on the Stocks, as we have no other place to launch from— I hope that we shall not require more than one of them—

Will you have the goodness to direct what Names these vessels shall bear—if you had no objections I shall be gratified to name one of them— I have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 21 (M125, Roll No. 35).

Governor-General Sir George Prevost to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

Quebec 14th March 1814

My Dear Sir

I have received your letter without a date containing the information you had just obtained from an American Seaman a Deserter from Sacketts Harbour of the extent of the Naval preparations at that Post

The unabated attention of every Department to meet & anticipate the Wants of the Dock Yard the enormous expence which has been incurred in complying with various requisitions made for articles essentially necessary to the equipment of the New Vessels and the prodigious difficulties which have been overcome in the Transport of proper and sufficient means for their Armament are sufficient evidence if any would be wanting of the extreme sensibility I entertain for every thing connected with the important service committed to you.

Sir Sidney Beckwith is instructed to meet your wishes respecting the removal of a proportion of Gun boats from the Coteau Du Lac to Kingston—

There is in circulation a comparative Statement of the American and British force in Lake Ontario which as regards the first is an exaggerated and the latter an unfair Diminution I should not mention this Circumstance to you but that the report comes from Kingston where as well as here it appears to me calculated to do much more mischief than good—giving publicity to such a document may depress us & must elevate the Enemy measures shall be taken to obtain from a Competent person correct information of what is going on at Sacketts harbour for your satisfaction as well as my own— I am assured that but a very small proportion of the heavy guns required by Commodore Chauncey can get beyond Oswego before the Navigation of the Lake is practicable— I have &c.

(Signed) George Prevost
Commr. of the Forces

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 1225, pp. 7–8.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

(No. 19) U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbour. 15th Mar. 1814

Sir

I have the honor of incloseing herewith three papers marked A. B & C.— the first marked A. is a view of the American Squadron as it is now fitting under the new arrangement— paper marked B. is a view of the British Squadron from the best sources of information that could be obtained and it is believed to be substantially correct— paper marked C. is an Exhibit of the number of Officers and Men on this Station at this time and also the number required to complete the Crews of the Vessels building.—

Altho' the allowance for Sick may appear large at first view Yet experience has taught us that it is not too great, for altho' our Sick List is sometimes reduced to 10. per cent, it more frequently increases to 25 Per Cent— the *Madison* for instance has never had since November last less than one third of her Crew Sick and in five Months she has lost by deaths, 41 Men— all new Men that arrive on the Station become sickly and in the Seasoning that they are obliged to undergo many of them die.

I will not presume to name any Commanders, that I wish sent to this Station, I will only observe that in the expected Contest, next Summer the Naval reputation of the Nation, as well as my own will be at stake—as it will be the first instance of an American Fleet being brought in contact with that of an Enemy's— We know moreover that the Enemy has some of his best Officers and Seamen to man his Fleet and has made great calculations upon the issue of the contest— we ought then certainly to meet him on equal terms by having our Vessels commanded by Officers of talents and experience and manned by Men who have already been disciplined— believing that You will do every thing for this Station which is right and proper, I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 48 (M125, Roll No. 35).

[Enclosure]

(A.)

A View of the American Squadron on Lake Ontario as they are contemplated to be fitted under the new arrangement for the next Summer.—

Description of Vessels	Names	actual force	description of force	Remarks.
			Pdrs	
Ship	*General Pike*	28	24.— Long—	These Vessels will be ready as soon as the Ice is gone—
Ship	*Madison.*	22	18— do.—	
Brig.	*Sylph..*	18	24. . Carronades	These two Brigs are nearly ready to launch, which they will be as soon as the Ice moves and fitted immediately after.
Brig	*Oneida*	16.	12. Long. . .	
Brig,	————	22.	42. . Carronades	This Ship is planked and it is expected that she will be ready to launch on or before the 10th. May, and can be fitted as soon after as her Guns arrive.—
Brig	————	22	42. . do.—	
Ship	————	60.	32. . 30. . Long	This Ship is not commenced but the materials are preparing and her keel will be layed as soon as one of the Brigs is launched, and it is expected she can be completed in forty days.—
			30. Carronades	
Ship.	————	26.	24— Long. . .	This small Schooner is kept as a dispatch Boat & as a repeater in time of action
Pilot-Boat Built-Schooner	*Lady of the Lake*	1.	18— Long. . .	
		215.		

Isaac Chauncey

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 15 Mar 1814

DS, DNA, RG45, Subject File, Box 354 [OD], Folder 18, Lists of British and American Forces on Lake Ontario, 1814.

[Enclosure]

(B)

A View of the British Naval Force on Lake Ontario, including Two Ships, that are building as derived from various sources, and beleived to be substantially correct.—

Description of Vessels	Names	Force in Guns	Description of Guns	Remarks.
			Pdrs.	
Ship	*Wolfe*	27	68-32-24-18	These Vessels are all fitted and ready for Service as soon as the Lake opens— they have all a proportion of Long Guns.—
Ship	*Royal George*	24	68-32-18-	
Brig	*Melville*	18	32-24-18-	
Brig	*Earl Moira*	18	32-& 18.-	
Schooner	*Sir Sidney Smith*	14	18 & 12.-	
Schooner	*Beresford*	14	12 & 9.-	
Ship	*Prince Regent*	60	Long Carrons. 24 & 32	These two Ships will be ready to launch in all April— the Rigging Sails and Armament is beleived to be ready for them.—
Ship	*Princess Charlotte*	44	Long Carrons. 18 & 32	This Ship is barely commenced and is supposed to be intended for two tier of Guns—her keel is 156 feet & breath of beam 47 feet.
		219		
Ship	———	———	———	———

Besides the above the Enemy are building Four small Schooners, which are beleived to be intended for Gun Boats to mount from one to two Long Guns— they have about 1000 Seamen at Kingston and more on the way.—

D, DNA, RG45, Subject File, Box 354 [OD], Folder 18, Lists of British and American Forces on Lake Ontario, 1814.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding U.S. Naval Forces
on the Lakes.

Navy Department
March 18th. 1814

Sir

Your Nos. 12, 14, & 15 have been received. The rate of pay, authorized to be allowed to the Men, who may be recruited for the Special Service of the Lakes, according to the tenor of my letter to Commodore Bainbridge, (copy of which you have received,) you will understand to apply, as well to the men now in service on the Lakes, as to those who may be thereafter recruited; and that the increase of pay will commence from the day on which you received that order.

The pay of the Non-commissioned Officers, Musicians, and Privates of the Marine Corps, as well those now in service, as those who may be recruited, is augmented to that which is allowed to the Infantry of the Army, to take place on the 14th. current.— This information it will be well to communicate to those now under your Command.

There is now, before Congress, a Bill for the augmentation of the Marine Corps, about 800 Officers and Men; and as a Bounty of 50 Dollars is authorized, I have no doubt of the prompt success of the Recruiting Service; which will enable me to order to your command a handsome Detachment.

You will, also, observe, that the price of the Navy ration, for the current year, is estimated at 25 cents, which will be allowed from the 1st. day of January.

The Naval Committee of the House of Representatives, has, also, under consideration, an Estimate, which was submitted by this Department, for the encrease of the Pay of the Commissioned, Warrant, and petty Officers, while actually serving on the Lakes; and the best disposition appears to prevail on that subject.

The actual force, and encreased preparations of the enemy at Kingston, as detailed in your No. 15,[1] demonstrate the necessity and propriety of the early measures, and subsequent modifications, which have been adopted to meet and frustrate his designs. The alteration you have made in the large Ship is approved. I shall send on as many heavy Carronades as can be commanded for that service; the two smaller vessels are abundantly competent to carry 42 pd. Carronades.

I regret that the furnaces are incompetent to provide, in due time, all that is required.

The Agent at New York, has employed all the Furnaces, within a reasonable distance, to cast the Kentledge and Shot you have required. Can the quantity of the former be diminished, and stone, in any degree, be substituted; as the space for provisions and Stores is small, and none required for Water? Can Shot, Kentledge, or other Stores, from the prizes at Erie, or Put in Bay, be got down, by any reasonable means, in due time? I hope you will prevail upon the Military Commander, to let you have a part of the Shot at Onandago, or at Rome Furnaces. Has the Military Department no heavy Ordnance, in that vicinity, which could possibly be spared on an emergency so great?

The transportation is really a most serious obstacle; and in the existing state of the roads, absolutely impracticable for heavy cannon.

There are no Foundries North of the Chesapeake;— the stock of Ordnance we had in New York is exhausted; and to send heavy Ordnance from Philadelphia, Baltimore, and this place, is an Herculean task. There are 370 pieces of heavy cannon mounted on the several Batteries at and near New York, a part of which can surely be spared without hazard; and I shall apply to the Secretary of War for that purpose, as the state of the roads, through Delaware and Jersey, is horrible. I have directed Mr. Anderson to superintend and direct the transportation, and have given to him the necessary authority to facilitate and insure the accomplishment of that object.

You will name the Ships as you please; I should prefer Geographical names, or those of distinguished events, Statesmen, or Heros, whose character has the seal of immortality; reserving, however, the name of WASHINGTON for the first Ship of the Line, which shall be launched in the United States. I am, very respectfully, Your Obedient Servt.

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 112–14.

1. See pp. 404–5 for Chauncey's letter of 7 March 1814.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

(No. 22) U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor 26th Mar. 1814

Sir

A Deserter from the Enemy came in the day before yesterday— he is a Seaman who left Kingston on Sunday last (20th) and belonged to the *"Prince Regent"* and came up with the last draft of Seamen under Captain Popham[1] and says that they were all picked Men but are very much dissatisfied with the Lake Service owing to the Short allowance of Provisions, that article being very Scarce in Canada— that the Men will disert whenever opportunities offer— that two left Kingston in Company with him but got alarmed and returned.—

This man corroborated what I have learnt from other Sources—to wit—that the Enemy are exerting every power they possess to get their vessels ready to launch the moment the ice breaks up— that the armament, Rigging and Sails are all ready to go on board, as soon as the Vessels are in the Water— that Sir James' avowed object is to attempt the destruction of the large Vessel building here— to take Oswego and Genessee and Supply themselves with Provisions from our Side of the Lake— that they have the most accurate information of our force and movements and even know the Caliber of the Guns coming from New York.— The force of the two Ships, that are in the greatest forwardness at Kingston are much the same as that I have already informed you—with this exception that both Ships are to mount, long 24 pounders on Gun Deck and the largest Ship 12–68 pounders it is expected that they will be on the Lake by the 25th. April the Enemy is also building 4 Gun Boats at Kingston, two of them with furnaces to heat Shot—and a Schooner at Presque [Isle] A detachment of Thirty Seamen under a Lieutenant left Kingston for Lake Huron Some time Since and another detachment of 70. or 80, were to follow about the last of this

month— it was understood that these Men were Sent up to man a Brig and Schooner building on Lake Huron— a number of Marines have arrived at Kingston lately and one or two Companies of Rocket Men—

The Enemy are building a third Ship which I mentioned when I wrote last upon this Subject— that he was not able to lay her Keel untill one of his others was launched— I find by the last Deserter that She has not only got her Keel laid but her floors acrossed and is contemplated to be finished about the first of August— She is to be a two Decker, and a very heavy Ship.—

I have got all our fleet that are in the Water rigged and fitted for Service— the two Brigs are ready to launch and the Rigging is fitting— the large Ship will be ready in the early part of May— and the materials for the fourth Vessel are preparing, which I hope to build and launch by the time the large Ship is ready— I shall also be obliged to fit and man some of our Schooners to oppose the Enemy's Gun-Boats— these kind of Craft always require more Men in proportion to the Service they render, than any other force.—

My last accounts from the recruiting Officers are not encouraging and from present appearances, I see but little prospect of manning one of the Brigs in time from the Rendezvouses. If you should determine to draft from any of the vessels on the Atlantic—the Officers and Men cannot get here too soon for the Roads will soon be almost impassable and the two Brigs will be ready for their Crews the moment they are launched which may take place in Ten days if the Ice breaks.— We also shall soon require the Crew for the large Ship, as they could even now be very usefully employed.— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, Yr. mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 76 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. Commander Stephen Popham, R.N.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

(No. 25) U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor 30 Mar. 1814

Sir/

This Morning my Agent from Kingston called on me— he left Kingston on the 21st. inst. and met the next day about 400 Seamen and nearly 500 Marines on their way to Kingston and supposes they all arrived on or before the 24th. the 103 Regmt. arrived at Kingston on the 20th. and relieved the Glengary and 104 Regmt. which has marched for York and Fort George and he understood that General Rial[1] had gone with a detachment to Malden— By a late Law of the Upper Province every 14th man of the Militia has been drafted and are to do duty one Year and to be officered with Officers from the line (or regular Army)— Every third man of the remainder of the Militia is also drafted to serve three Months, and to be officered in the usual way— he supposes that the force at and above York, about 3000 including the incorporated Militia— the enemy are building two Vessels on Lake Huron and makeing great exertions to supply Machelimackenac— that he saw a Letter from a Lady, residing

at that post to her relation in Kingston, saying that they were in a starveing condition—Salt one dollar a pint that if supplies did not arrive before the first of May the Post would be abandoned.— The two Ships at Kingston are ready to launch and it is the intention of the Enemy to fit them and show himself upon the Lake immediately and if opportunities offer to depredate upon our side of the Lake it is also his intention to make a desperate effort at this place— the Officers have been heard to express themselves that if they could destroy the large Ship which we are building and the Stores deposited here that they should have no more trouble during the War— The third Ship building at Kingston has been increased from her first dimentions—her keel is now 174 feet and 50 feet beam and to have two Gun Decks, below the Spar Deck— She is to be built of Pine Elm and Cedar and in the most expeditious manner— The Carpenter has assured the Commodore that she shall be in the Water, before the first of July— between 130 & 150 Cannon have arrived at Kingston in the course of the Winter and principally large Calibers— large Quantities of Rocketts, Shells, Carcases &c. &c. have also arrived together with every Species of Naval and Military Stores.—

You perceive, Sir, by this statement (which I believe to be correct) that the Enemy is bringing every resource he possesses into opperation to obtain and if possible keep the command of this Lake, and it really appears to me that it is going to be more a trial of Skill in building than in fair and honorable fighting—and unless we can get our Guns and Men by the first of May we shall be mortified with the Enemy's parading up and down the Lake uninteruptedly, and boasting of his having taken some defenceless Village of three or four houses.—

Could not the whole Armament of the *Hornet* be transported across the Country to Albany with less difficulty and expence than Guns could be procured else where—and as there is but little prospect of the Vessels at New London being able to get to Sea could not a part of the Officers and Men from that Squadron be sent here? and also from one of the Sloops of War in Baltimore or the *Constellation* at Norfolk? viewing the early command of this Lake as all important, I am persuaded that you will afford to me all the means within your power and consistent with the other great objects of the Nation and the Department over which you preside— I shall therefore rest easy as to men and Guns and use every effort to have the vessels ready to receive them— I shall prepare materials to build a Ship to meet the one building at Kingston—but I sincerely hope that some effort may be made to take Kingston and destroy that deposit of Stores and supercede the necessity of increaseing our Naval force on the Lakes.— It really appears strange that the whole Military force of the Nation aided with the Naval force here cannot take that small place— if nothing else could be done it appears to me that our Army might take up a position at or above Prescot and establish themselves there by which they would cut the Enemy's line of Communication and of course cut off all his supplies from below and distress him much for provisions, if not military supplies— it would also oblige the Enemy to come and fight our Army in their own position, instead of our being obliged to seek him in his strong holds— I have no pretensions to military Science—I merely suggest these ideas, thinking that in abler hands they may be improved upon or perhaps elicit some other idea, which might be serviceable to our Country I have the honor to be with great respect and consideration Sir, Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers.

1. Major General Phineas Riall, British army.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

private Sackets Harbor 30th. March 1814

Sir/

The Agent allude'd to in my letter No. 25 is a Doctor Carlisle who lives at Kingston has considerable property and an extensive practice is an american and well disposed towards this country he collects information and meets an agent employed on this side at particular places fixed upon—but seldom twice at the same place the reason of his coming over now was that he went to the place appointed but the agent on this side being sick and not meeting him there—he thought the information which he had to communicate of sufficient importance to come over himself and communicate it to me in person the reason that I did not mention his name in my official letter was that he is extremely anxious to have his name concealed lest it might be mentioned and the Enemy by some means become suspicious of him—

The above reasons I trust will be a sufficient apology for my troubling you with this private letter of explanation I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Sir your Most Obt. H. St.

Isaac Chauncey

ALS, PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers.

Commissary General William H. Robinson and Others to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Montreal 6th April 1814

We the Undersigned Officers having this day met agreeably to the desire of the Commander of the Forces, and having Attentively perused the Several Despatches with their Enclosures, which His Excellency has done us the honor to refer for our Consideration and Opinion, as relates to the intention of His Majesty's Government to send to this Country as early as possible in the present Year the Frames for the Construction of 2–32 Gun Frigates and 2 Brigs, to Carry each 20 Guns, for the Service of the Lakes in the Canadas;— Beg leave most respectfully to Report upon the Several Points which, upon a reference to the Plans or drafts of the Vessels proposed, have suggested themselves to us as to the practicability of carrying into effect the objects of Government in this respect;—

Having in view the several Arrangements on Lake Ontario and it being Understood that the two Vessels laid down in the last Autumn at Kingston, are in that state of forwardness that they will be launched in a few days
———— the Guns and Stores Complete for the Equipment of these Vessels have already been conveyed to the Spot where they are to be launched;—
———— a Third Vessel of a large class has been recently laid down at Kingston and is supposed to be now in that state of forwardness that, she may be launched in the Month of July next— Arrangements having been made for providing the Guns and Stores for this Vessel and it is expected that the Equipment will be complete to render her useful to the Service on Lake Ontario during the ensuing Summer;— the Conveyance required for the Guns and Stores of this last Vessel with the Various other supplies absolutely necessary to be forwarded from this Province for the existence of the Army and Navy in Upper Canada will engage and Occupy the whole of the Means of Transport by Batteaux or otherwise from Montreal to Kingston, which it will be possible to provide for the summer of 1814;
———— We are therefore of opinion that any impediments whatever which may be thrown in the way of the above Service, would be attended generally with Serious injurious Consequences to the Public, and in particular would retard the completion of the third Ship which is intended and Understood to be constructing of that Force; as equivalent and better adapted to the great object of obtaining the decided superiority over the Enemy on Lake Ontario, than the two Frigates if their Materials were this Moment at Kingston;
———— There being no Timber Merchants in Canada who keep any supply of that Article on hand, the Timber and Scantling required to be provided in Canada for the Completion of the two Frigates and two Brigs being of considerable Magnitude and not to be procured but from the Trees now Standing in the Woods would tend fatally to delay the present exertions in the Dock Yard at Kingston, And We are of Opinion that no Persons Could be found to Contract for the supply of that Timber at this unfavorable Season
———— Nor could the usual mode of obtaining Supplies be resorted to by raising a Competition, as it would give publicity to that which it is desirable to Conceal:

The Timber and Scantling for the Vessels building at Kingston was procured during the Winter, at which Season only it is possible to draw it from the Woods, or to procure hands for this Service—the Inhabitants who Attend to this business being in Summer engaged at their Agricultural Pursuits:—
———— It is recommended that no Attempt may be made for the Conveyance of the Frames of either the Frigates or Brigs to Kingston during the Approaching Season;—

We are now led to the Serious Consideration of the practicability of Conveying at any time during the Summer, the immense Timbers which Compose the Frames of the Frigates, as described in the Papers now before us, even if the whole Transport Accommodation could be allotted for that object, which never can be the Case;— The Batteaux at present in use are not calculated for the Service.
———— Flat Boats of a new description and larger in size must be provided and it is a matter of doubt whether, from the Weight they must carry, they could pass the Rapids of the River which impede the Water Communication with Kingston— It is also to be observed that in the Water Communication

with Upper Canada the Batteaux pass from Cornwall to Prescott within Musket Shot of the Enemy's Shore, whose Attention would naturally be excited by the Unusual Accumulation of Boats and Men for this extraordinary exertion, and the Americans not only possess the Means of obtaining the best information as to the object, but the ability of creating such interruptions as would prevent the possibility of Conducting this Service:—

We are however of Opinion that it may be possible to transport by Land to Kingston during a Winter Season, the Timbers, Guns and Stores for one Frigate should the Weather from the favorable State of the Snow and Frost be equal to the last, but the inconvenience and enormous expense that would Attend the conveyance of the Timber, by Land Carriage, and the time it must necessar[ily] employ, would exceed beyond all Comparison, what would be necessary to procure it from the Forests near the Naval Depôt at Kingston, and of equal good quality for the Lake Service;— Altho' from the Circumstances Stated it is our firm belief that neither of the Frigates or Brigs expected from England, can be rendered available to the Service of Lake Ontario during the Approaching Campaign, We recommend that a Communication made to Commodore Sir James Yeo, on [*the*] subject, and also to Captain Pring,[1] the Senior Officer of the Naval Establishment on the Richelieu who may probably be of Opinion that the Brigs might be made useful on Lake Champlain, if their draft of Water will admit of it, one of which with her Guns and Stores We are disposed to think may be conveyed to Isle Aux Noix during the next Summer by the Richelieu, partly by Batteaux, and about 12 Miles Land Carriage:—

In Submitting to His Excellency's Consideration these Suggestions, We beg leave to state that We have had reference to the best information on professional points that could be obtained, and that coupled with our own experience of the difficulty of Conveyance to Upper Canada We have been guided in forming our opinion upon the Several objects under Consideration:—

The Whole of which is respectfully submitted

W H Robinson
Comy Genl.
J. W. Clarke
acting Depty. Commy. Genl.
Noah Freer
Military Secretary

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 732, pp. 97–103.

1. Commander Daniel Pring, R.N.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

(No. 34) U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 7th. April 1814

Sir

The two Brigs have been ready to launch for the last Ten days, but the ice is still fast in the Bay altho' beginning to break in the Harbor— we have cut it away Yes-

terday and to day so as to enable us to launch one of the Brigs which I have called the "*Jefferson*" the other we shall launch as soon as the Ice is sufficiently clear— the large Ship will be ready to launch early in May— we shall lay the keel for a Ship as large as the *General Pike* on the blocks of the "*Jefferson*" immediately and which I hope to launch in forty five days.— from present appearances all our Vessels will be ready long before the Guns for them can arrive— my last accounts from Schinectady, mention that most of the heavy Guns which left New York early in February are still on the Road below Albany— it is much to be regretted that we did not leave them in New York to have come up in the first Sloops when the River broke up— they would now have been in Schenectady ready to have started in the first boats— we must now however make the best of it and redouble our exertions to get them here as soon as possible— I have directed Mr. Anderson to double man the boats and work night and day and you may be assured Sir, that every exertion in my power shall be used to be ready with the fleet as soon as possible I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. mo. ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 128 (M125, Roll No. 35).

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

His Majesty's Ship *Prince Regent,*
Kingston, 22nd. April 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 6th. instant, together with the Copies and extracts of letters from the Secretary of State, making known the intentions of His Majesty's Government to convey immediately to this Country the frames of two Fir 32 Gun Frigates, and two Brigs, each to carry 20 Guns, for the Service of the Lakes. The plans of the Vessels proposed, with the schemes of scantling for building them, and the lists of timber to be provided in this Country, have also come to hand.

I perfectly agree with Your Excellency that the impediments to the Scheme are numerous, and very difficult to be overcome, if not (under existing circumstances) wholly impracticable. The timber to be provided here for their completion can be procured but the time that would elapse ere the frames could be transported, considering the immense Supplies Your Excellency must also Send for the Subsistence of the Troops and Seamen, would be so long; that the third Ship, equal in force to three or four of Such frigates, would be built, equipt and on the Lake, ere the frames of the Fir Ships could be set up. That the Enemy would Suffer such immense convoys to pass unmolested, cannot be supposed and the large escorts which must consequently accompany them would weaken Your Excellency's force in those points where they might be more essentially useful. But what in my opinion, should chiefly influence Your Excellency's decision respecting them is, that the strength of the third Ship now building is Such as to give us a reasonable hope that their being Sent up is even unnecessary.

I wish much one of the Brigs could be made Serviceable on Lake Champlain; though I fear, that from their drawing 15 feet water, there is little hope of it. I have directed Captain Pring to ascertain with precision if a Vessel of that draft can navigate there in Safety, and his report shall be communicated to Your Excellency.

With respect to transporting the frames in the Winter Season, I see equal objections arise: for, should the War continue, the additional Ordnance and Iron Work, which we cannot do without, would employ all the Sleighs, horses and Oxen during the Season.— And on the whole, I am fully of opinion that building here is more beneficial to the public Service, not to say a word of the enormous expense that will be saved thereby. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's Most Obedient humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo
Commodore

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 732, pp. 139–41.

American Plans for an Expedition to Lake Huron

The American victory in the Battle of Lake Erie in September 1813 gave the Americans a chance to recapture Michilimackinac, to establish control in the old northwest territories of Michigan and Indiana, and to gain the loyalty and support of the native tribes in those territories.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey's order to Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott offers a concise view of American goals at the opening of the campaign in 1814. At about the same time, however, Secretary of the Navy Jones determined to make Lake Erie a separate command under Captain Arthur Sinclair so that Chauncey could focus his attention on the campaign on Lake Ontario. Commander Elliott would be transferred to Lake Ontario as soon as Captain Sinclair arrived to take over the command in April.

Secretary Jones's detailed instructions to Captain Sinclair encapsulate the government's intentions for the upper Great Lakes.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott

Captain Jesse D. Elliott
Commg. Nav. Off.
at Erie, Pennsylva.

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor 1 Apl. 1814

Sir

It is the command of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy that such parts of the Squadron on Lake Erie as may be deemed necessary shall proceed into Lake Huron as soon as the Ice will permit for the purpose of reducing the Posts of the Enemy on that Lake— you will therefore prepare the *Niagara* and *Lawrence* with such of the other Vessels as you may deem necessary to accomplish this object (taking care to select those drawing the least Water) you will

proceed with this force to "Put in Bay" and take the two Ships from that place to Detroit and moor them under the protection of that Garrison; leaving a Petty Officer and one Man on board as Ship-keepers—exclusive of a guard of Soldiers which I presume the Commanding Officer at that Post will furnish.—

I have applied to the Secretary at War for a detachment of 6 or 700 Men under the command of a judicious Officer to accompany you into Lake Huron. I presume that the Secretary will instruct the Commanding General at Detroit to furnish the Men which you will receive on board and proceed with all possible expedition to Michelimachinac make your arrangements land and take the Fort if it can be done without too great a Sacrifice— if you succeed leave a Garrison and proceed with the Fleet and remainder of the Troops and reduce St. Josephs and any other posts or place that you hear of— If Machidoch (the place where the Enemy is building two vessels) could be destroyed it would be of very great importance but it ought to be approached with great caution as I understand that it is some distance up a River and no doubt well guarded— you will therefore inform yourself well upon every point before you put too much at hazard— after accomplishing these objects upon Lake Huron you will cooperate with the Army upon any enterprize where the Enemy can be annoyed.

There is a depot of Stores at Long Point if that could be destroyed it would distress the Enemy and be honorable to those who atchieved the enterprize. I should recommend you to open a correspondence immediately with General Harrison or the Officer commanding the North Western Army in order to ascertain his views of the approaching Campaign in that Quarter so that you may make your arrangements to act together— You ought to take Six weeks provisions from Detroit and enter Lake Huron the moment that the Ice will allow you to pass Lake St. Clair, by which you will probably appear before Michilimachinac before the Enemy can throw any supplies or reinforcements into that Garrison which will make it an easy conquest. you will keep me regularly informed of all your movements and transactions and send copies of all your communications to the Navy Department.

If the repairs of the *Lawrence* should not be completed, I should recommend you not to be detained a moment for her as your force will be amply sufficient without her and some of your small vessels you had better make mere transports of and concentrate your best Men on board of the *Niagara*— I should also recommend you to take about 10 or 12 of the heaviest of the Long Guns from the *Detroit* and mount them on board of the *Niagara* as battering Guns— if in your judgement any enterprize into Lake Michigan would be attended with beneficial consequences you are at liberty to send one or more vessels under a discreet Officer upon that Service.

Having the most perfect reliance upon your zeal intrepidity and talents I calculate much upon the honorable and brilliant issue to your enterprize into Lake Huron I have the honor to be very Respectfully, Sir Yr. Mo. Ob St

I. C—

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 30 U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 1st. April 1814

Sir

I have been this day honored with your Letter of the 20th. and two of the 21st. Ulto.

I have already instructed Captain Elliott to be in a perfect state of preparation to push onto Lake Huron the moment that he can get through the Strait— I have this day wrote him more detailed instructions (a Copy of which is inclosed)— if the instructions to Captain Elliott do not meet the views of the Department, will you be pleased to make such additions or alterations as you may deem proper— An enterprize to Long-Point, would be desirable if it would not occupy too much time, but I am apprehensive that would be the case and possibly loose us the main object of our visit into Lake Huron which I think ought to be entered as early as the Ice will permit— I have wrote this day to the Honorable the Secretary at War asking for a detachment of Troops to accompany Captain Elliott, for the reduction of Michilimackinac, as well to assist in the reduction as to garrison it, if taken— your influence with the Secretary would ensure the Men— Captain Elliott complains much of the want of Officers, and as he has a number under arrest would it not be adviseable for the Department to reprimand the Delinquents and order them to duty? for it will be inconvenient to bring them to trial at this time.—

The valuation of the prizes taken on Lake Erie has been forwarded to the Department— The probable expence of repairs was not deducted as the gentlemen who made the appraisement had no documents or facts in their possession on which they could form an opinion of the extent of injury the vessels received in action consequently, could form no idea of the repairs which they would require— I have the honor to be with great respect Sir Yr. mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 107 (M125, Roll No. 35).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Arthur Sinclair Esqr. Navy Department
Captain U.S. Navy April 7th. 1814.

Sir,

The magnitude and importance of the force preparing on Lake Ontario, absorbing the whole attention of the Commander of the U.S. Naval Forces on the Lakes; and the intercourse between Lake Ontario and the Upper Lakes, being cut off by the enemy at Niagara, it is intended to render the command of the Upper Lakes distinct from that of Lake Ontario.

The enemy, it is understood, is making efforts to create a force on Lake Huron; and the moment is at hand, when our Squadron on Lake Erie, must be

actively employed, not only in keeping secure possession of that Lake, but a part of the Squadron must immediately proceed into Lake Huron, in order to rout the enemy, retake Michillimackinac, take St. Josephs, and thus secure the entire command of the Upper Lakes.

It is for these important objects that your services are in requisition; and, in order that not a moment may be lost, this goes by an Express.

With the least possible delay, after the receipt of this Order, you will repair to this Department, where your instructions for the command of the United States' Squadron on the Upper Lakes, will be prepared, so that you may proceed, directly, on to Erie by the Stage to Pittsburg. I am, very respectfully Your Obedient Servant

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 120–21.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Arthur Sinclair Esqr.
Captain U.S. Navy
Present.

Navy Department
April 15th. 1814.

Sir,

You are invested with the command of the U. States' Squadron on Lake Erie, to which you will repair with the least possible delay; and, after a full investigation of the state and condition of that force, the result of which you will minutely report to this Department, you will take immediate measures to complete whatever you may find deficient, and prepare for the prompt and efficient execution of these, and such further instructions, as time and circumstances may render expedient.

The Squadron consists of the following vessels; viz.

	1	The *Lawrence*	Brig	20 Guns 32 pd. Carronades.	Original American Squadron, now at Erie.
	2	*Niagara*	Do.	20 " "	
	3	*Caledonia*	Do.	3 "	
	4	*Scorpion*	Schooner	2 "	
	5	*Ohio*	"	1 "	
	6	*Porcupine*	"	1 "	
	7	*Amelia*	"	1 "	
	8	*Somers*	"	2 "	
	9	*Tigress*	"	1 "	
	10	*Ariel*	"	4 "	
☞	11	*Trippe*	Sloop	1 "	The *Ariel* & *Trippe* are supposed to have been destroyed by the Enemy near Buffalo.
Prize Vessels	12	*Detroit*	Ship. .	20 Guns and 2 Howitzers	At Put in Bay, dismasted.
	13	*Queen Charlotte*	Do.	18 "	
	14	*Lady Prevost*	Schooner	14 "	At Erie.
	15	*Hunter*	Brig	10 "	
	16	*Little Belt*	Sloop	3 "	On shore near Buffalo; supposed to have been burnt by the enemy; but no Official Account. Materials were stored near Buffalo.
	17	*Chippewey*	Schooner	1 " and 2 Swivels	

Under existing circumstances, and with the information now possessed, the 9 vessels first mentioned, together with Nos. 14 & 15 will be more than sufficient for the accomplishment of the objects contemplated by the Government; viz. the effectual command of Lake Erie against any attempt the enemy may make to gain the ascendancy; the attainment of the complete command of all the waters between Erie and Lake Superior; the reduction of the posts of Michillimackinac and of St. Joseph's, at the Mouth of French River.

The *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, being entirely dismasted and otherwise much wrecked, the expense, difficulty, and delay in repairing and refitting them, would not only be very great, but their draught of water excluding them from the Harbour of Erie, and the passage over the Flats of the River St. Clair, they are applicable only to Lake Erie, where an additional force is not at present, and probably will not in future be required.

It is, nevertheless, absolutely necessary, that even the wrecked Hulls of these vessels, should be placed in a situation perfectly secure against any attempt of the enemy to recover them. It is, therefore, very desirable that they should be placed in the Harbour of Erie, if it is practicable to get their empty Hulls over the Bar, which, I presume, may be accomplished by giving them a careen and raising them between two of the small vessels, first filled with water, then swifted to the Hull and pumped out. In this situation they could be securely repaired, at leisure, and fitted for future service if necessary.

The recent large requisitions, made by Captain Elliott on the Navy Agent at Philadelphia, for Mechanics and Stores; and by the Agent at Pittsburg, for funds, induce me to believe that he contemplates repairing and refitting those two vessels; as I have no doubt, from the early measures taken, and expenditures actually incurred, that the other vessels are in complete order, or nearly so, at least, it is certain, they ought to be so. If my conjecture is correct, you will immediately put a stop to that business, and employ the Mechanics and others, in securing the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* as above directed. From the Prizes taken, as well as from our own stock, the supply of Ordnance and Military Stores, and I should suppose of every article of equipment, must be superabundant for the force proposed to be employed.

The maintenance of a Squadron, and particularly repairs and equipments on those remote Waters, are extremely expensive; and I rely upon your judgment, and zeal for the service, to check and curtail every superfluous expenditure; recollecting that the service on the Lakes is but temporary, and, therefore, every economical expedient ought to be adopted, to substitute plain, rough, but solid equipments, for those which, on the Atlantic service, may be of a superior and costly nature.— Every thing that is ornamental, or tending to luxury, or personal gratification, ought to be rigidly suppressed.

What part of the Squadron it may be expedient to detach into Lake Huron, and what to retain in Lake Erie, will depend upon the information and circumstances, at the moment when you may be ready to act, which ought to be the instant the Navigation will admit of a passage into Lake Huron.

Either the *Lawrence*, or *Niagara*, will be the leading Ship of the Huron Squadron, with perhaps the *Lady Prevost*, and some of the light armed vessels, of easy draught, and best adapted to carry Troops and provisions, particularly of the Bread kind, of which you will require an ample stock.

You will, immediately, on your arrival at Erie, open a correspondence with the Military Commander at Detroit; asking of him all the information he may possess, relative to the passage into, and navigation of Lake Huron; and all the circumstances connected with your expedition, the nature and extent of which you will explain to him. You will, also, request him to have in readiness to join your force, a body of 300 hardy, intrepid Volunteers, one half of which should be Rifle men; for which purpose, I have no doubt, the Secretary of War will direct the necessary measures to be taken. You will, immediately, examine your stock of provisions, and take measures to make good any deficiency, in time, to avoid delay. Mr. Ormsby, the Deputy Agent at Pittsburg, will inform you, as you pass through that place, what requisitions and preparations have been made.

According to the last Muster Roll received, the number of Officers and men, attached to the Squadron at Erie, was 282, exclusive of 21, who are at Put in Bay, in charge of the Prize Ships, *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*.

An additional number of Officers, and 50 or 60 men, shall be sent on, as soon as possible, from the Seaboard; and I have no doubt you may engage some good Volunteers at Erie. The pay of Seamen and Ordinary Seamen, on the Lake Service, specially, has been raised; the former to 15 dollars, and the latter, from 8 to 12 dollars per Month, from the 25th. day of February last; and Congress has now under consideration, an encrease of pay to the Officers on the Lake Service. There is, moreover, every stimulus, which the prospect of prize money can add to the Service on the Upper Lakes; as there are known to be large depots of Furs, and of Indian Supplies, at Michillimackinac and St. Joseph's. The encreased pay, and the prospect of prize money, I have no doubt, will enable you to procure a select body of Lake Watermen or Volunteers.

The information we possess, in relation to the designs and movements of the enemy, rests upon report, rather probable than certain. There is, however, reason to believe, that the enemy has sent two small detachments of Seamen, and perhaps Mechanics, to Lake Huron, where they are constructing some sort of Naval Force. Rumour says two Brigs; but if the fact is so, they must be of small force. They are also said to be building a number of Boats on Lake Simcoe, and have recently transported considerable quantities of Naval and Ordnance Stores to York; the distance from which to Lake Simcoe is not above 40 miles, over a good road. The Boats are doubtless intended to convey these Stores, through the waters emptying from Lake Simcoe into Lake Huron at Gloucester Bay, on the E.S.E. extremity of Lake Huron. It is on the shore of this Bay they are constructing their Naval Force. For this place you will make a prompt and vigorous push; destroy, or capture, whatever they may have prepared; and, before the alarm can be extended to St. Joseph's, at the Mouth of French River, which place, it is expected you may readily reduce, and get possession of all the property and stores deposited there, and leaving a force to protect that port, if tenable, or not liable to be attacked by a superior force, thence proceed to Michillimackinac, which, with the communication of the enemy being entirely cut off, and the place destitute of provisions, will doubtless prove an easy conquest.

Having accomplished these objects, you will be governed by the season, the state of your provisions, and the information you may receive, whether to leave a small Garrison at that place, and a part of the Squadron on that Lake, during the ensuing Winter, or return with the whole to Erie.

Should you succeed in the two first objects of your enterprize, it may be well to load the small vessels with the Furs and Stores you may capture, and despatch

them to Erie, to return immediately with a supply of provisions, and reinforcements if necessary.

An Officer, of approved capacity and conduct, will be selected as your second in Command; upon whom the command of that part of the Squadron remaining at Erie will devolve in your absence; during which time, he will communicate with, and receive instructions from the Department, as Senior Officer, commanding in your absence.

I think, that, in justice, the whole Squadron should participate of whatever may be captured on either Lake; otherwise discontent and desertion may ensue, among those who are not favored with the service on Lake Huron. This, however, you can readily accomplish, by mutual agreement among the whole, before the Squadron is divided.

Captain Elliott, who now commands at Erie, having some time since solicited to be transferred to Lake Ontario, will be indulged.

I regret to say, that symptoms of personal quarrels, and insubordination, have appeared among the Officers of the Squadron, which have called for a Court Martial on several Officers and one or two Men. The cause, I have no doubt, you will soon trace to its source and remove. In doing which, if you find it expedient, to promote accommodation and good understanding, by revoking the arrests which may have taken place, you have authority so to do, stating that you have derived it directly from this Department: If, as is often the case, the cause should be found to exist, in one or two irritable individuals, give the information, and they shall be ordered to some other service.

It is stated, that one of the Officers, in a gust of passion, threw a Volunteer overboard, who was unfortunately drowned. If this shall prove to be the fact, he is a fit subject for the Civil Authority, to whom you will deliver him over, if there shall be testimony sufficient to sustain a prosecution.[1] I am very respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

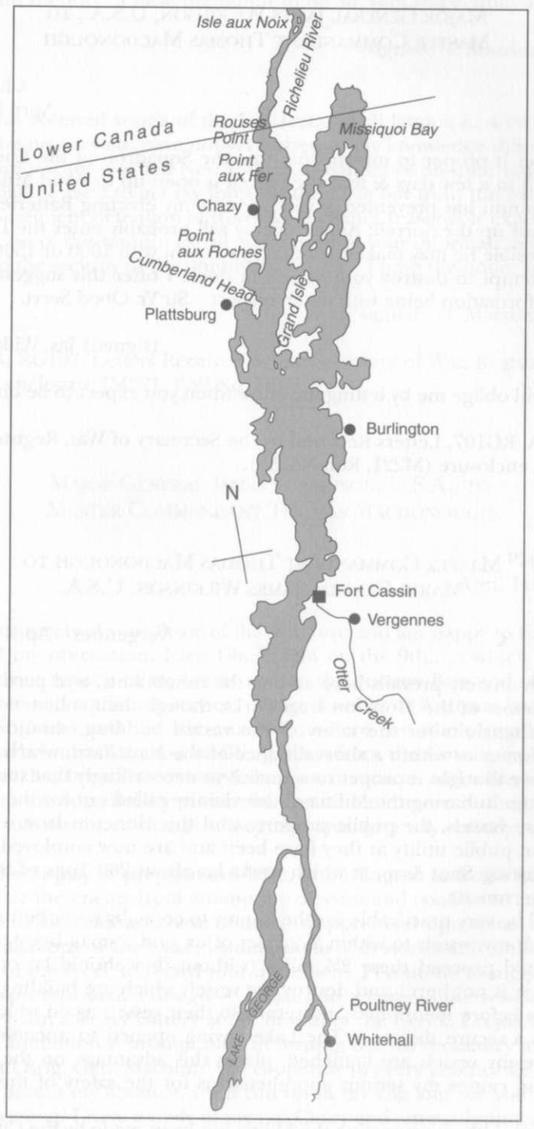
LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 123–28.

1. See p. 504 for more on this incident.

American Preparations on Lake Champlain

The shipyard at Vergennes, Vermont, hummed with activity during the winter months of 1813–14. The new vessels of Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough's squadron, the 26-gun ship Saratoga *and six gunboats, were still under construction when the ice cleared on the lake in April 1814. The American military commanders feared the British might attempt to destroy the new American ships before they were fitted out and ready for service.*

Navy officials also discussed the interesting possibility of a steam warship for Lake Champlain. Commander Macdonough determined, however, that the steamboat available for purchase might be too unreliable and too far from completion to warrant finishing her works. Macdonough, nevertheless, purchased the hull and later named her the U.S. schooner Ticonderoga. *If she had been completed as a steamship, she would have been the first steam warship in the United States.*



Map 12. Lake Champlain

Major General James Wilkinson, U.S.A., to Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough

Champlain
April 5th 1814

Sir

I consider it proper to inform you, that the Squadron of the Enemy will be ready to sail in a few days & that the Sorrell is open up to Wind Mill point: the want of Cannon has prevented & still prevents my erecting Batteries at Rouses point to shut up the Sorrell; As the enemy will probably enter the Lake before you it is possible he may make a sudden movement with 1000 or 1500 Men & by landing attempt to destroy your vessels in dock. I offer this suggestion merely for your information being with much respect Sir Yr. Obed Servt.

(signed) Jas. Wilkinson

N B. You will oblige me by letting me know when you expect to be on the lake

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, W-344 (7), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 58).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Major General James Wilkinson, U.S.A.

Vergennes April 9th 1814

Sir

As much anxiety prevails here among the inhabitants, and particularly with the proprietors of the Moncton Iron works, though their solicitations, and my own apprehensions for the safety of the vessels building, should the Enemy visit us by water to within a short distance of the Navy Yard, which adjoins the Town, I have thought it proper to acquaint you accordingly that such measures may be taken in having the Militia of this vicinity called out for the better security of these vessels, the public property, and the Moncton Iron works, which are of great public utility as they have been and are now employed by Government in casting Shot &ca., at which works lay about 200 Tons of Shot belonging to Government.

It would be very practicable for the Enemy to come by water before I can possibly launch my vessels to within 2½ miles of us, and a small body of men from thence could proceed these 2½ miles (without they should be opposed by a Force which is not here) and destroy the vessels which are building, as also the Iron works before mentioned and return to their vessels again which would insure them a secure shelter.— The Lake having opened so uncommonly soon, and before my vessels are launched, places this advantage on the side of the Enemy, and causes my serious apprehensions for the safety of the unfinished vessels.

A communication respecting the Militia has been made by the Citizens to the Governor of Vermont representing their situation and requesting his immediate attention thereto I have the honor to be Sir Very respectfully Yr mt. Obed Servt.

(signed) T. Macdonough

Sir

I have just received your's of the 5th. Inst. I shall launch in 4 or 6 days. The Guns for the new vessels, have not yet arrived to my knowledge this side Albany, & some have not yet reached New York from Baltimore on their way here Every exertion shall be used to get my force on the Lake but from the badness of the roads & consequent detention of stores &c, I cannot reasonably expect to be out before the last of this month; I shall avail myself of your information to direct my attention to the security of the unfinished vessels I have the honor to be &ca.

/signed T. Macdonough

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, W-344 (7), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 58).

Major General James Wilkinson, U.S.A., to Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough

Plattsburgh
April 11th. 1814.

Sir,

I have just received your favor of the 9th. inst: and am happy to find you had anticipated my precaution. I left Champlain on the 9th., at which time, from the concurrent reports of my secret agents, the enemys Brig and other vessels were manned and equipt for service. A large number of Batteaux have been collected at St: Johns and the Isle aux Noix, where the whole regular force of Lower Canada and a Battalion of Glengarians from the Coteau de Lac, up the St: Lawrence, has been concentrated since my incursion, and a Navy officer in a Gig came up the Sorrell daily to examine the state of the ice in the Lake, which, without an extraordinary change of weather, must give way entirely tomorrow or next day.

I hope the display of preparations here, at Burlington and also in your quarter, may deter the enemy from attempting descent and confine to aquatic operations only. In such case you have nothing to apprehend I presume, but his seizing on the shallops of the Lake, loading them with stones and sinking them at the mouth of the creek to retard your movement. Permit me to suggest two precautions to prevent such a design— Seize and secure all the vessels along our shores and plant a heavy battery at the mouth of the Creek. I rejoice to hear of Governor Chittendon's[1] promptitude in turning out his yeomanry to your assistance,— and Brig. Gen. Macomb[2] will cooperate in every practicable mode.— If things will permit my absence, I will run up in my Gig and see you and return the same evening. I have a body of men at Chazy and am equipping a battery of flying artillery to wait on the enemys vessels wherever the roads may permit.

With much consideration and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient Servant

(Signed) Ja: Wilkinson

Signed Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, W-344 (7), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 58).

1. Martin Chittenden, governor of Vermont.
2. Brigadier General Alexander Macomb, U.S.A.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes April 11th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Ship, "*Jones*"[1] to carry 26 Guns (20–32 lb. Carronades & 6–24 lb. Long Guns), was launched this day, being the thirty fifth day after her Keel was laid, and all her Timber taken from the Stump.—

The six Gallies will be launched by the 17th this month.— I regret to inform you that none of the Guns have yet come on, owing to the Roads being almost impassable— The Recruiting service is dull—we want about Two hundred & fifty more men to man all the Vessels

I beg leave to remind you of my want of Officers also—five or six Lieutenants or a less number of Lieutts. with four or five sailing masters.— I did myself the honor to mention the want of these officers in my Letter of the 23d. March— We want the Surgeon's mate, there mentioned, likewise as the Surgeon reports Forty men on this day's Sick List.— I have the honor to be, very Respy. Sir, Yr. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 103 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. This vessel was renamed *Saratoga.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough

Thomas Macdonough Esqr.
Commanding the U. S. Naval force
on Lake Champlain.

Navy Department
April 20th. 1814.

Sir

Since the receipt of yours of the 23d of last month, I am without further information from you, either as to the progress of the Vessels & recruiting service, or the movements of the enemy.—

It is extremely important at this Crises, that the Department should be accurately and constantly informed of the actual state of things under your Command, otherwise it is impossible to make the necessary arrangements in due time.

I presume from the number of Officers and men under your Command at the date of your last Letter, and the success of the recruiting service since the pay and bounty have been raised, that your full complement is complete before this time, and trust that the Ship will be completed in due time to keep the enemy from the Lake.— As the Army and Navy are to cooperate and combine together whenever they can act with effect, the Commanding General will doubtless furnish you with as many Soldiers as you may require, particularly if your own numbers should be deficient.— Indeed our recruiting service has been embarrassed and retarded by the Army bounty seducing so many Seamen.— I have no doubt you may find many in the ranks of the late recruits whom the Commanding Officer would doubtless transfer to you, at least for the Campaign.— Some officers have been ordered, and more will be immediately ordered to report to you.

You will keep me constantly advised of the progress made and of the actual state of your force. and on receipt of this transmit a list of the Vessels with the particulars of their Armament, and of the number and grade of Officers and number of men, together with the advice you may receive from your recruiting Officers and such general information as may be interesting.—

You will call the Ship you are now building the "*Saratoga.*"—

Will the Steam Boat be a necessary addition to your force, or will you be sufficiently Strong without her?— I think she would be an excellent substitute for a part of your small force, provided her Engine and Machinery are ready, which you could protect by a Bulwark. It would be a great saving of men and she would be well calculated to penetrate the River and return independent of the winds & without labour. Her Cannon and Musketry might be fought under Deck.— If her Engine and Machinery can be prepared in time (and I have been informed by Governor Tompkins, it could) you will purchase and equip her without delay.— I am respectfully Your Obet. Servt.

W Jones.—

P S In the arrangement of your plans and equipment of your force, you will be careful to avoid all unnecessary expenditure. It will be at best enormously great, and I calculate with confidence upon your prudence & judgement, not to extend your force and expenditure beyond what necessity prudence and economy shall require.—

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 134–35.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes, April 30th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the Rect. of your Letter of the 20th. Ulto., and herewith, to give you a statement of our force, the number and grade of

the Officers, and the number of men; as also a statement of the Enemy's vessels from the best authorities.—

The *Saratoga* is rigged, her sails are made, and will be bent immediately; she is ready below to receive her Officers & men, and has her Provisions stowed, her Gun carriages at the Ports, ready for the Guns, part of which have arrived, which we are mounting;— the others expected daily.— The new Gallies are also finished, & some of their Guns have arrived, which we are also mounting;— the other Guns for these Gallies, are daily expected, and will be mounted immediately on their arrival.— All the Powder is expected to be here in two or three days, and all my other supplies of every kind are on, with few exceptions.—

I have advised with Mr. Brown, (the Master Carpenter) and with the Carpenter who is building the Steam Boat, on the practicability of having this Boat prepared in due time in the manner you have suggested, and they assure me, it cannot be done within two months; owing to the Machinery not being complete, and none of it being here;— this delay, and the extream liability of the Machinery (composed of so many parts) getting out of order, and no spare parts to replace, have induced me, to abandon the idea of fitting this vessel to be propelled by steam, but to have her directly fitted for Twenty Guns in the rig of a Schooner.— This, I hope, will meet with your approbation, when I make known to you my reasons for so doing.— You will observe by the statement of the enemy's vessels, their force, which force, I am informed by a person who is to be relied on, they are increasing with five new Gallies building on the Sorrell:— this person left Canada three days since, saw the vessels, and says the Enemy speak of their force as being sufficient to command this Lake.— The Enemy are not aware that the Steam Boat will be fitted, which Mr. Brown engages to have done in two weeks from this day; her Armament will be composed of two of the Sloops Guns, (these Sloops being miserable Sailers) and some spare Guns which we have here, and the Guns of the four old Gallies; two of which are very rotten, as they were built in 1808; thus making a saving of men, and creating a much more efficient force. The disarmed Sloops will, with much advantage, be employed in the Transport service, and in carrying Provision &c for the Army.— I have made this arrangement from a conviction of benefit resulting to us thereby, considering the activity of our Enemy, and his views to be the stopping of all communication between the opposite sides of this Lake, & having his Eye on the Public Depots, & private property along its Shores.—

My last advises from my recruiting Officers are, that the recruiting service is dull, but Forty Men are yet to come from the different rendezvous; those, with what we now have, will not be a sufficient number for all the vessels.— You will please notice that most of my officers are below Lieutenants, and that three Master's mates, were, by the absence of the recruiting officers, ordered to act as Sailing masters on this station.—

The enemy's largest vessel, from the best information, is not yet ready,— my informant says she was rigged, but had not her Guns on board three days since, and that they were not full manned.— We are using every exertion to enter the Lake before him.— I have not yet selected my Crew for the Ship, leaving this untill more men should arrive, & have therefore enclosed a List of officers & men without designating to which vessels they are, and will be, attached.— Should you have ordered on three or four Lieutenants to command such vessels as I have no commanders for, there will then be a sufficient number of Officers; but a deficiency of men, allowing 200 for the *Saratoga*, 150 for the Schooner, 40 for each Galley (six in number), and 40 for the Sloop *Montgomery*, making in total, 630 men, which will leave a deficiency to man all the vessels, of 245.—

I beg you will rest assured of my prudence, and attention to economy in the expenditures of this station.—

That no time may be lost in waiting for your orders, I, in some cases, consider it proper to act without your orders, specially; but I am confident that you will, when made acquainted with the motives which call for such arrangements, approve of them, as they shall not be made without absolute necessity, and for the benefit of the service.

In the instance of the Steam Boat—two months would elapse before she could be got ready; then the great probability of some of the small parts of the machinery getting out of order, which is often the case on the North river, and is attended with long detention even there, where those parts are made.— This would subject us to the loss of her services probably in action; an accident happening to the Engineer would be of as bad consequences— I have scarcely known the Steam Boat, now running here, to pass thro' the Lake without something happening with her, and they have had to send to Albany to replace what was damaged.— The calculation by the Carpenter was that the Boat here would be propelled, at most, not more than five Knots, whereas, one of the Enemy's Gallies will move in a calm at the rate of six.—

In disarming two of my Sloops, I have got rid of two heavy dull Sailers, vessels that would have retarded (if sailing in squadron) the whole force;— also, the four old Gallies, vessels far inferior in size, and comfortable accommodations for the men, to the enemy's, and with their crews and equipments have formed those of the Schooner,— and should no unforseen circumstance occur, the whole, (provided we should get the residue of Men) can enter the Lake by the 15th or 20th of May, and it is to be hoped that no additional force will become necessary.— I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, Yr mot. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 115 (M147, Roll No. 5). A list of the twenty-two officers and petty officers then stationed on Lake Champlain was enclosed with this letter.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes, 6th May 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that we continue to progress rapidly with the equipment of our vessels here; some supplies have yet to come on, which are

said to be this side of Albany; that the Enemy have not appeared on the Lake this season, and that by my last advices he is not ready to enter the Lake.— 'Tis said he is in want of men as well as ourselves, and that their large vessel has not her Guns completely mounted.—

I have written to Major Genl. Izard[1] at Plattsburgh, inserting that part of your Letter to me of the 20th April which relates to my being supplied with Soldiers from the Ranks should I require them.— His answer, I much expect, will be, that he cannot spare these men, Two hundred & fifty in number, without injury or disadvantage to himself, as officers of the Army inform me that their men's times are daily expiring, and that they have not many men on this Frontier.— I expect from my different Rendezvous 50 men, and do not expect to get many more, as the recruiting service is very dull, particularly for this Lake, the Sailors having an objection to the Gun Boats or Gallies, and entering any service in preference to this.—

Sailing master Lindsey,[2] and three midshipmen, have lately joined me— No Lieutts. have yet come on.— You will please notice my want of Three or four Lieutenants—besides those on my Recruiting Service whom I cannot now order to join me without stopping the recruiting service, and even were those Officers here, viz Lt. Joseph Smith, & Lt. Stansbury,[3] three or four others would be required.— I have the honor to be, with high respect, Sir, yr. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 121 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Major General George Izard, U.S.A.
2. Sailing Master Joseph Lindsey, appointed 17 March 1814.
3. Lieutenant John Stansbury, commissioned 24 July 1813.

Men and Guns for Lake Ontario

The rapid pace of shipbuilding on Lake Ontario required increasing the numbers of seamen sent to the lake to man the new vessels. Recruiting during the nation's third year of war, however, was slowing, partly because of the increase in bounty money offered by the army.

It became necessary in 1814 to find other ways to fill vacant berths in Commodore Isaac Chauncey's new ships. Entire crews of ships that were unable to get to sea during the British blockade of the United States coast were transferred for service on the northern lakes. Over a period of several months, the Department of the Navy ordered the crews of the frigates Congress *and* Macedonian, *and of two new sloops of war,* Erie *and* Ontario, *to the lakes.*

Likewise, it became expedient to transfer the guns from some ships in New York to Sackets Harbor rather than wait for new guns to be cast and transported overland.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding US Naval Forces
on the Lakes

Navy Department
April 7th. 1814.

Sir

I have this moment received your No. 25. under cover with your private letter.

You will perceive that I had anticipated your wishes in ordering the Officers and Crews of the *Macedonian* and *Erie,* and the commissioned and warrant Officers of the *Ontario.*—

The remainder of the long Guns required by you are on their way from New York, including the light 18 pounders from the Battery at New York.— The Carronades and indeed the entire armament of your requisition, according to the last letter from Mr. Bullus, had gone on, but I have this moment, in order to render things certain, and to avoid the delay incident to the mounting and equipments for the Carronades, enclosed an order to Mr. Bullus, to receive the entire Spar Deck Armament of the Frigate *United States,* (42 pound Carronades I believe 18 in number) carriages implements fixed ammunition &c. to be transported without delay across the Country to Albany and onward to Sackett's Harbour with the utmost despatch. Mr. Anderson is specially charged by the Departt. with the entire transportation, with ample powers to effect the object.— I am respectfully Your Obedient Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 119.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent John Bullus

John Bullus Esq
Navy Agent
New-York

Navy Department
April 10. 1814

Sir,

I have received yours of the 8th. current, and consider the hesitation to deliver the Cannon from the Battery as a little extraordinary when the urgency of the occasion is considered, and that superior cannon for a Battery were known to be actually on the Way from Philada. to replace them.— He must be a nice casuist who in times like these can draw a distinction between the various branches of the public service or withhold even for a day at this season, the delivery of Cannon for the Lake Service under the idea of endangering New York for a few days by the absence of 16 pieces of cannon out of 370. mounted in that Harbour.—

'Tis well however they are gone.

Mr Anderson writes to Capt. Evans[1] for seamen to help on with the Cannon and expresses great anxiety.

Stewart whom you had employed for that purpose had grossly failed in his engagement.—

Mr Anderson understood on the 4th. currt. that some of the cannon were still on the way between Poukeepsie and Albany.—

I sent you an order on Com Decatur to deliver to you the whole of the 42 pdr. Carronades on the spar deck of the *U States* to be forwarded across the Country to Albany.

I now enclose to you an order on the Commanding officer of the U.S. Ship *President* to deliver to you 100. tons of her kentledge, and the whole of her 42 pdr Carronades together with Carriages Fixtures and every implement belonging to them and such fixed ammunition as you shall require. These can be replaced from the *U. States* before the *President* is ready and therefore it will make more dispatch and save expense to send them from New York to Albany by water than from New London to Albany by land.—

The officers and crew of the *Macedonian* and of the *Erie*, and the Commissioned & Warrant officers of the *Ontario* are ordered to Sackett's Harbour. Those that pass through N York you will facilitate in getting on.—

Capt. Ridgely[2] is ordered to dispatch 50 or 60 of his best men and officers to join Mr Anderson in order to hasten on the Cannon.— These you push on as fast as possible.—

The carronades are going on rapidly in Waggons from Baltimore to New York some of them must have arrived with you ere this. Send on immediately such as are required for the Lakes, taking into view however those which you may send from the *President*. I am respectfully &c.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 40–41 (M441, Roll No. 1).

1. Captain Samuel Evans, commander of the New York Navy Yard.
2. Master Commandant Charles G. Ridgely, commander of the sloop of war *Erie* at Baltimore, was ordered to Sackets Harbor 4 April 1814. See pp. 31–32.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding U. S. Naval Forces
On Lake Ontario
Sackett's Harbour

Navy Department
April 18th. 1814.

Sir,

Your Nos. 32, 33, 34, & 35, have this instant come to hand. I participate in the solicitude you express for the safety of the Ships and Stores at Sackett's Harbour; and my anxiety, in respect to the transportation of the heavy Cannon and Stores is extreme. The enemy has enjoyed, during the whole Winter, an uninterrupted, easy, and rapid transportation of Ordnance and Naval Stores, which, from the magnitude of his force, he could spare with convenience, by dismantling two or three of his Ships; whilst we have had to transport, from Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, our heavy Ordnance and Stores, over roads almost impassable during the whole Winter; and although we commenced so early, and have employed the most extraordinary means and exertions, regardless of the encreased expense, it is vexatious to find that the heavy Cannon are still so far short of their destination, and have to incur the hazard of the enemy, at and

from Oswego, after the Lake shall be open. Mr. Anderson describes the impediments and difficulties he has to encounter, from the state of the roads, as almost insurmountable. The Officers and Seamen on their way, I trust, will have greatly aided him.

Lest the heavy Cannon should not get on in time, I have ordered, as a substitute, the entire Spar Deck Battery of the *President*, consisting of 42 Pounder Carronades, with Beds, Carriages, Tackling, and fixed Ammunition, and also a part of the Kentledge of that Ship. These left New York five or six days since. The order for those of the *United States*, of which I informed you, has been countermanded.

Your No. 32 has been submitted to the Secretary of War, with my earnest solicitations on the subject.[1]

I cannot permit myself to doubt, however, that you will be competent to repel any attempt the enemy may make upon the Harbour; and that, by the united exertions of all, the Guns and Stores will get on in time, to enable you to meet him on the Lake in successful combat. I am, respectfully, Your Obedient Servant,

W. Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 131–32.

1. In his letter No. 32 of 4 April 1814, Chauncey expressed concern over the military defenses of Sackets Harbor and Oswego, and asked Secretary of the Navy Jones to urge the Secretary of War to increase the military forces in those villages. Chauncey to Jones, 4 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 114 (M125, Roll No. 35).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent John Bullus

John Bullus Esqr.
Navy Agent
New York

Navy Department
April 25th. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 21st. current, quoting a passage in Commodore Chauncey's letter to you of the 14th. in which he observes, that "the *Jefferson* will have all her Guns mounted to morrow, but not a pound of powder for her defence." This, Sir, is a very serious inculpation of the Agent whose duty it was to procure and forward, in due time, the quantity of powder required.

After the early and earnest injunctions from this Department, relative to the procuring and forwarding, with the utmost possible celerity, the supplies for the Lake service, I should exceedingly regret to find any delay in the execution of the requisitions of Commodore Chauncey, not absolutely unavoidable. I know those requisitions were made in due time; and if difficulty had existed in procuring at New York the quantity of powder required, in due time, it was your duty to have stated the fact to the Department; and had it been necessary, I could, from the stock on hand, have placed in New York, in ten days, three times the quantity required. If your present situation and the confidence of this

Department, are of any importance to you, you will perceive the necessity of a satisfactory explanation of this transaction, from which the most fatal consequences may ensue.

You state, that Mr. Anderson sent from the Magazine, on the 21st. and 24th. of March, 400 Barrels of powder and on referring to your Vouchers, in the hands of the Accountant, I find two Bills, of precisely those dates for a like quantity of powder, received on those days from Bullus, Decatur & Rucker, by Mr. Anderson, the Navy store keeper. To these Bills are annexed, receipts for the payment made by you, to yourself, as one of the firm of Bullus, Decatur & Rucker, and at the rate of seventy two cents per pound.— If the contract with that firm, shall be found to have been made upon terms as favorable to the U States as may have been offered by other Manufacturers, upon public notice having been given, then the contract will be valid, if not, the price must be regulated by that which other Manufacturers would have delivered a like quantity at New-York, at the time; and upon this principle, alone will your accounts be admitted, as well in this case as in others, in which charges apparently beyond the usual rates and prices are made.—

In particular I have noticed the contract of Bullus, Decatur & Rucker, of the 9th. February 1813, to manufacture and deliver to the Agent, the whole quantity of the Public materials received by them in to powder, at 13½ cents per pound; and to be allowed for whatever loss may arise in "repurifying the Saltpetre"; no other allowance or charge whatever is admitted in the contract.—

By the Bill rendered, it appears that a quantity of powder, exactly equal to the Nitre & Sulphur delivered, has been returned and no more; and a long string of heavy charges not authorized by the contract.— This therefore, will not be admitted.— The contract must not only be complied with, but it must appear, that that contract is, at least, as favorable as could have been obtained, at the time, from other respectable Manufacturers.—

I have, moreover, observed in your general transactions, that the most prominent articles are purchased or procured at rates apparently above the market price, and certainly considerably higher than at the other neighbouring agencies; and that your principal transactions are generally confined to two or three particular firms.—

I recollect, in my enquiry of you, some time since, about the price of Sheathing copper, your quotations were 60 & 62½ cents and the article appeared to be scarce; whereas, in a short time after, the Department purchased, at New York, all that was required at 50 cents.— These things must be explained and corrected.— I am, respectfully &c.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CNA, Vol. 2, pp. 53–55 (M441, Roll No. 1). No reply to this letter has been located.

The Opening of the Season

The "season for naval operations," that period when the ice cleared in the freshwater lakes, finally came in April. The opposing sides fitted out new vessels and readied their squadrons for action.

At the opening of the 1814 season, however, strategic goals for the year were still uncertain. The new British commander in Upper Canada, Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, called on the British squadron under Commodore Yeo to support the movements of his army in its campaign on the Niagara peninsula. Likewise, the American Major General Jacob Brown requested the assistance of the American navy to support his troops on the peninsula and to move men and military supplies.

The freshwater commodores would assess each other's strengths and wait as their new ships were readied for service. As in 1813, however, neither would commit his squadron to the uncertain outcome of a naval battle unless he clearly had the upper hand.

Sir George Prevost was receptive to Secretary of State Monroe's suggestion of an armistice, made early in 1814, believing such an accord would secure Canada from invasion. Armistice negotiations failed before summer arrived because of inability to settle two critical issues. First, the Americans wanted either side to be able to end the armistice by giving twenty days' notice, whereas Prevost wanted any armistice to continue indefinitely unless peace negotiations in Europe were discontinued. Second, Prevost had no authority to accede to the American insistence that the armistice extend beyond the Canadian border to include the entire Atlantic coast. While military and naval commanders on both sides knew of the possibility of an armistice, that knowledge does not appear to have changed military preparations for the 1814 campaign.[1]

1. On the armistice proposal, see Stagg, Mr. Madison's War, *pp. 385–86, and* Quimby, U.S. Army in the War of 1812, *pp. 497–99.*

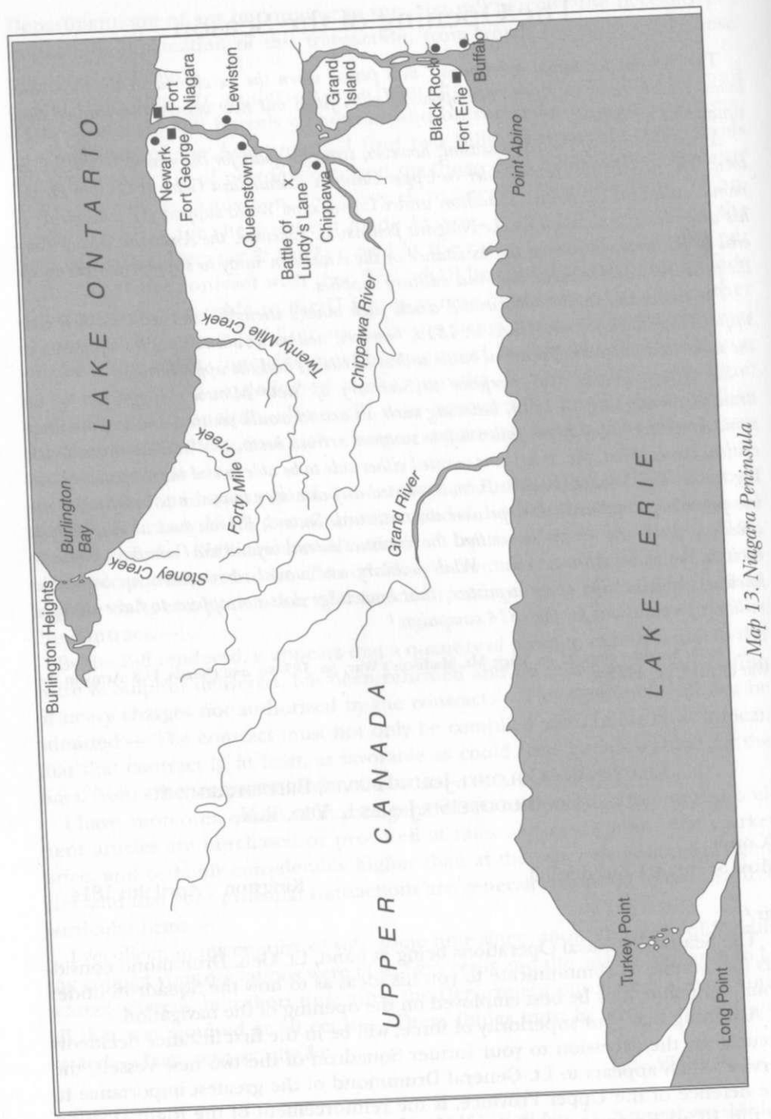
Lieutenant Colonel John Harvey, British Army, to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

(Copy)
Most Secret & Confidential Kingston April 9th 1814

Sir/

The Season for Naval Operations being at hand, Lt. Gen. Drummond considers it advisable to communicate to you his ideas as to how the Squadron under your command, may be best employed on the opening of the navigation.

Assuming that your superiority of force, will be in the first instance decidedly secured by the accession to your former Squadron of the two new Vessels, the service which appears to Lt. General Drummond of the greatest importance to the defence of the Upper Province, is the reinforcement of the Right Division by the 103rd Regiment, and the conveyance at the same time, of a supply of stores and provisions to Fort Niagara and Fort George—



Map 13. Niagara Peninsula

The Lieut. General would therefore wish, that you would be pleased to make arrangements for executing this service, at the earliest practicable period— The Troops to be landed at the Head of the Lake— The Stores and provisions at Fort Niagara and Fort George— On your way up the Lake, it would be desirable for one of the Vessels to look into York, to communicate with the Officer commanding that Post (Colonel Stewart[1]) with a view to receiving on board, and conveying to Fort Niagara, five heavy Guns (3–18s. & 2–24s.) destined for that Fort if they have not already been forwarded—

After landing the Stores &c at Fort Niagara, and communicating with M General Riall, it might be desirable, if you find the M General has no material assistance or co-operation to require from the Squadron, that you should proceed down the American Shore looking into the different Creeks &c, particularly reconnoitring Oswego, when if you find it an object, and consider the Marines of the Squadron sufficient for the Service, you might land and bring off or destroy whatever Stores Craft or public Buildings, the Enemy might have there—

After which the Lt. General would recommend your proceeding off Sacketts Harbour, endeavour accurately to reconnoitre that place, and if you should consider an attack upon the Enemy at that place, as offering any rational hope of success, you might in that case dispatch a Boat, or fast sailing Vessel to Kingston with the result of your reconnaissance, and follow with the Squadron, to be ready to receive on board the Troops, in the event of the Lt. General's determining on the enterprize—

To the forgoing outline Lieut. General Drummond has nothing at present to add— New circumstances or fresh intelligence, may confirm, or render it necessary wholly or partially to change, the plan of operations, both with regard to the Troops, and the Squadron, in such case the Lt. General will hasten to apprize you of the nature of such change of circumstance, as he will be anxious to communicate and consult with you, on the change which it may become adviseable to make in the plan of the Naval campaign— Considering it essential that you should be apprized of the Orders which have been sent to M General Riall, in order that you may be better prepared to appreciate the movements of the Troops under his Command, and more promptly and effectually to co-operate with, and assist them, I am directed to transmit inclosed, such extracts from M General Riall's instructions as relate to this subject— The Instructions to the officer commanding at York, are simply to defend that Post, which it is considered he has ample means of doing, against any force which the Enemy could convey to that Point, on board their Squadron—

If forced or over powered he is to retire upon Burlington, not Kingston. I have the honor to be &c.

(Signed) J Harvey
Lt. Col. DAG

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 732, pp. 147–51. Enclosures not found with copy.

1. Colonel Archibald Stewart, British army.

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston U. Canada 13th. April 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's letter of the 7th. Inst. requesting my opinion respecting an overture for an Armistice offered by the American Government—together with the information obtained from a Person recently from Sacketts Harbour—which Your Excellency is disposed to consider as correct—which You wish me to compare with my former statement to You (I perceive it corroborates that statement) And which You wish should assist my judgement in the Answer I am about to give.

After the most deliberate consideration I am of opinion, that, as far as relates to Naval operations—It is by no means certain the Enemy will have the advantage at the commencement of the campaign—And the reinforcement of Seamen & supply of Stores—which His Majesty's Government mean so promptly to assist us with, will, I have no doubt, enable us to regain the ascendancy on this Lake.

The Third Ship, now building is, I believe, of far greater force than any the Enemy can launch at Sacketts Harbour—And doubts have arisen as to the practicability of launching the large Ship now ready,—as will appear by the accompanying deposition of the Carpenter of the *Madison*.— But, even admitting the Enemy are able to launch their large Ship & have received the whole of their Guns & stores (of which I entertain a doubt) we never have been so competent to engage them with a reasonable prospect of success as at present;— For, altho' the Enemy have a greater number of Guns of heavy calibre—Yet, my having two Ships of such effective strength as the *Prince Regent* & *Princess Charlotte* closely to support each other may give me an advantage in the early part of an Action,— which I feel confident, the talents of the Officers & spirit of the Men under my command would immediately avail themselves of.— I perceive two of the Enemy's new Vessels are Brigs—and, however formidable they may be as to weight of Metal, should any accident befall their Gaff or Main Boom—they become for the time unmanageable.— Brigs have never been esteemed so effective as Ships in Battle.— In short, Sir, I am fully persuaded, that, with the means I now possess—together with those the Government mean to place at my disposal—I shall be able either to bring Chauncey to a decisive action—or—should I find him too superior (for I cannot rely on his strength until I see His Squadron) manouvre with Him until the third Ship is ready—And which Vessel I look upon to be of a description to look down all opposition. In the interim of this Ship being ready—the reinforcement of Seamen can be placed in heavy Gun Boats that may effectually assist me during the Calms at the commencement of the season.

These considerations induce me to be decidedly of opinion that were Your Excellency to accept of the proposed armistice—it would neither conduce to the credit of His Majesty's Government or the Honor of His Arms;— While it would enable the Enemy to gain time for launching & equipping more Ships—augmenting & concentrating his Forces & bringing them to bear (should a rupture of the Armistice ensue—a measure, I fear, from the known enmity & insincerity of the American Government, too likely to occur) with redoubled force against us. I have the honor to be with the highest respect Sir Your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo
Commodore

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 19–23.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No.—[1]

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 14 April 1814

Sir

The agent that I sent a few days since to the other Side has this moment returned with information that the Enemy has all his fleet ready (with the exception of the New Vessels) in the Stream he has 12 to 14 Gun Boats and a number of Small craft and 3000 Troops ready to embark for this place and it is said they are only waiting for a favorable time to make the attack— my own impression is that they have understood that we are going to York and that they have prepared this force for the purpose of attacking the Harbor the moment our Fleet leaves it— the Enemy however may be determined to make the attack at all hazards, as the object to them is of immense importance, and I am sorry to say that our force is but little adapted to the defence of this place— there are not a thousand effective Men here besides the Sailors and Marines— General Gains[2] arrived here Yesterday and assumed the command and we shall endeavour to defend the place as long as we can with the means we possess.—

We launched the other Brig yesterday which I have called the "*Jones*" but I am sorry to say that I have neither Men or Guns for her and from the present state of the Roads but little prospect of getting them soon— I received 21 Men a few days since from New York—they were eight days getting from Utica to this place a distance of about 80 or 90 miles I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 144 (M125, Roll No. 35).

1. This was Chauncey's letter No. 36 to Secretary of the Navy Jones.
2. Brigadier General Edmund P. Gaines, U.S.A.

Brigadier General Edmund P. Gaines, U.S.A., to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

Sacketts Harbour N Y.
April 14th 1814.

Dear General

I arrived at this place late in the night of the 12th., the Commodore has this moment informed me, that our confidential Agent has just now returned from

Kingston, and states, that the enemy have thier old Fleet all out in the stream, & ready to sail the first fair wind, with 3000 men for this place The wind is now fair, & that we shall this Evening, or to-morrow morning have some hard knocks, is very certain, unless the weather prevents, or the Enemy should conclude to pass on to Oswego, where we have, 'tis said, a great quantity of provisions. We shall exert our strength to the utmost. you know what our strength is—our works have been improved by the zeal & industry of the late Commdts. & the troops

I need not tell you that a Regt of Infantry a company of Artillerists and some mounted dragoons, would render this place more secure, and I pray you will send them, as it may be possible the Enemy may not move, untill this reinforcement could be got here. Your Friend

signed, E P Gaines.
Brigr. Gen'l commdg.

LB, DLC, Jacob J. Brown Papers, MMC-3212, Letterbook 1, pp. 3–4.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Secretary of War Armstrong

[Extract]
(Copy) Williamsville April 17. 1814

Sir

. . . I can see but two ways of approaching the Enemy in Upper Canada, with a prospect of striking a blow, that will effect any national object. The first is to carry Kingston by a direct attack, or to break the British Line below— this being effectually accomplished, all the Country above, is ours. I take it for granted, that this, the first, & the greatest object, will not be attempted untill we have the command on the lower Lake; Such appearing to be the will of the Government from the Vessels authorized to be built at Sacketts Harbour. The second, is to rapidly concentrate sufficient force, pass Lake Erie & by means of our flotilla on that Lake, and carry Burlington Heights, this being done, and our Force unbroken, the works along the Niagara river could be approached with better prospects of success. Should Chauncey have the ascendancy of Lake Ontario at the same time, the 2070 men that I have put down, might possibly be rendered useless to the Enemy, I do not know what our means are, but I am disposed to hope, that four thousand Regulars could be assembled for such an object, & this force, with the Militia volunteers & Indians that might be induced to join, would give us a fair prospect of success, All our supplies, not carried into the field, could be placed on board our Fleet. We need leave no deposits behind, to distract our attention or divide our Force, & with good luck, good management, and the smiles of Providence, this second plan will completely succeed by the 1st of June, One great difficulty may be in getting the necessary Force

With me, I have, say one half the number of Regulars deemed necessary—Men that I shall be willing to trust myself with, in any situation	2000

The Rifle Regt at Sacketts Harbour, that are much better fitted for the field than for the defence of a post their place may be supplied by some of the nearest Recruits—	say 300
Colo Ervin,[1] 42d. Regt, Sunberry, Pennsylvania—to be ordered to join by the Sec'y of War—	400
The troops that can be spared from Detroit	say 1000
Defficiency to be supplied by the Sec'y at War	800
One ninth allowed for the Sick	4500

A less force, would perhaps be competent to effect all the objects of this second plan, & I shall be willing to attempt its execution, with any force that you may order. But as our Country and its Army require success, I have deemed it most wise, to name to you a force that in all human probability, will be competent to meet whatever the Enemy may be able to bring against it, within the peninsula.

Genl Gaines commands at Sacketts Harbour, I ordered him there, the moment I perceived you were disposed to make me responsible for the safety of that post. I shall consider it safe in his hands with one thousand effectives, during the pendency of the contest for the power of the Lake.

Beleiving that Genl Gaines can be best employed at Sacketts Harbour, untill Chauncey beats Yeo, and renders his force disposable, I have to ask of you, as a particular favour to give me Genl Swift,[2] to command the 2d. Brigade of my Division. Swift, I learn, is a General by brevet. Under me he would (as I understand the subject) be second to Scott.[3] If I should fall, or be removed, Swift would command; If I have no additional force I desire no other Brigr. but Scott, If I have a Division, I ask for Swift,

I have neither Adjt. or asst. Adjt. General, Surgeon or Surgs. mate of the Army, with me, I should be pleased to have an efficient Adjt. Genl. Walbach,[4] would suit me very well, but he is better off where he is. If there is a Surgeon of the Army, fit for the active duties of the Field I should be highly gratified to see him with my command. Ross I do not want. Dr. James C. Bronaugh,[5] was he a Surg of the Army would be the man I should choose.

From the Neighbourhood of long Point to Burlington heights, the roads are passably good, & the Country open, the natural obstacles are much less on that route than any other within the Peninsula. Very Respectfully and truly Yours

Jac: Brown

Signed Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Unregistered Series, B-1814 (M222, Roll No. 10). Four paragraphs, discussing troop strength of the army, have been omitted from this transcription.

1. Colonel William N. Irvine, 42d Infantry, U.S.A.
2. Brigadier General Joseph G. Swift, U.S.A., breveted 19 February 1814 for meritorious service.
3. Winfield Scott, promoted to brigadier general 9 March 1814.
4. Colonel John De B. Walbach, Adjutant General, U.S.A.
5. Hospital Surgeon James C. Bronaugh, appointed 15 March 1814.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Near Lewiston
April 18th 1814—

My dear Sir

It is very unkind in you to remain so long silent, I did expect, that you would have written me very fully before this time. Last Evening I rec'd a letter at Williamsville, my Head Quarters, from Gen'l Gaines dated the 14th Inst, in which, he states, that from information received from you, he is induced to believe, that the Enemy are three thousand strong at Kingston; that their old Fleet was drawn out, and that an attack on Sacketts Harbour, was expected in the course of a day or two, from that time. You never intimated to me, a doubt of your ability to face the Enemy, at any moment after the Ice was out, and I must confess, that I was so confident of your strength by water, that I did not expect there would be any alarm for that post, during your continuance in its neighbourhood, of which I had no doubt untill the new ship was completed, I should have been very much gratified by receiving a Letter from you, shewing how the great change, in the relative strength of Sacketts Harbour & Kingston, is to be accounted for since I last had the pleasure of seeing you. You then mentioned, that by the last advices from Kingston, there was no reason to believe, that the Enemy had at that post, to exceed from 14 to 1500 men of the Army, and had you expressed a doubt, for the security of the position, so interesting to you particularly, and to all of us; I believe, you will not doubt, but that I should[1] have been disposed to stay with you, notwithstanding your unhesitating opinion that the order I rec'd, could mean nothing else, but the intention of the Sec'y, that I should march to this Frontier.

The Letter of General Gaines has rendered me very anxious, and unhappy, and I pray God, that what he appears to apprehend, may not take place. All I could do, with any prospect of being useful, has been done— The mounted Dragoons have been ordered to return, with all possible expedition, & the Recruits in the neighbourhood of Utica, have been ordered to your assistance.

Gen'l Gaines will have called in every soldier he can reach, and will accept of such Militia Volunteers, as may have the patriotism to offer themselves, or that he can induce to arm, in defence of thier country— The troops from this frontier could not, by any possibility, be expected to reach you in time. Should the Enemy presume to land, in defiance of your means, I can but hope and believe, that you will immortalize yourself, and should they get on shore, it does appear to me, that Gaines will be able to place the Army on higher ground, than it yet has stood. Let me again intreat you to write me fully, on this, and every other subject, connected with our common cause— Yours truly

Jac. Brown
Maj Gen'l—

LB, DLC, Jacob J. Brown Papers, MMC-3212, Letterbook 1, pp. 7–9.

1. The words "made it my duty" were written in another hand above the line at this point. These words were probably added at a later date, since other contemporary copies of this letter do not include that wording.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Brigadier General Edmund P. Gaines, U.S.A.

Near Lewiston April 18th 1814

Dear General

Your letter has made me very anxious and unhappy, and was it possible, I should rejoice to change situations with you for a few days.—

I have never doubted the ability of Commodore Chauncy, to beat off the Enemy should they attempt to land a force near Sackett's Harbour, during his continuance in that part of the Lake.—

He has never expressed to me a doubt on the subject; and it was only in case of his absence, that apprehensions were to be entertained for the safety of the place, judge then of my surprize, to see by your letter, that the Enemy would presume to cross, and cover their troops with their old fleet.—

It would be impossible to march troops from this frontier, in time to be of any use to you: all that I could do with any prospect of being useful has been done, Capt. Harris[1] with the mounted Dragoons, is I trust, on his way back, I have ordered him to move rapidly: the recruits for the 23rd. Regt., say 300 are also under orders to join you.—

You will not hesitate to make use of all the means within your reach, for the preservation of the important trust, committed to your charge.—

Call every soldier to your assistance, by accepting the service of every Militia Volunteer, disposed to arm in defence of his Country.—

If you are deficient in arms, take them, or any thing which the cause requires, which you can procure, from the State Arsenal at Watertown.—

Victory in such a contest will cover you with immortal honours, and I feel that your chances are enviable, should the Enemy presume to attack your post.— I cannot believe that he has the power to bring against you 3000 men, but this number is not alarming considering the strength of your position.—

Lieut McChain[2] is the bearer of this, he is ordered to forward to the Regts. here (by land) whatever cloathing may have gone to your post for them, have the goodness to facilitate him in this business by all the aid you can give, so as to prevent delays.— With great Regard Your's

Jac. Brown
Majr. General.

LB, NBuHi, Jacob Brown Manuscripts.

1. Captain Samuel D. Harris, Regiment Light Dragoons, U.S.A.
2. Lieutenant George McChain, U.S.A.

Sackets Harbor Defended

Commodore Chauncey's largest ship on the stocks, the frigate Superior *which was just days from launching, made a tempting target for Commodore Yeo. Yeo sent a British party of three small boats on the night of 25 April 1814 in an apparent attempt to blow up the new American warship. The plan was foiled when American guard boats discovered and*

chased the boats away. The failed plan, which is never mentioned in any official British documents, served as a British test of the strength of American defenses. Commodore Yeo and Lieutenant General Drummond were at that time discussing the prospects of an attack on either Sackets Harbor or nearby Oswego, which served as a supply depot and transshipment point for military and naval stores.

COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

No. 51

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 27th April 1814

Sir

The Night of the 25th inst. two of our guard Boats fell in with three of the Enemys boats in this Bay— Lieut. Dudley (the officer of the Guard) hailed and was answered "guard boats" this however not being satisfactory he repeated the hail but was not answered—finding that the strange boats were attempting to cut him off from the Shore he fired upon them the enemy laying upon their oars a short time pulled in towards "Bull Rock Point" without returning the fire— Lieut. Dudley returned to the Fleet and got a reinforcement of boats but nothing more was seen of the Enemy that night— Yesterday Morning I directed both Shores of Shermont [*Chaumont*] Bay to be examined to see whether the Enemy had not secreted himself in some of the small creeks— nothing however was discovered but Six barrels of Powder found in the Water near the Shore where our guard boats fired on the Enemy—these barrels were all slung in such a manner that one man could take two across his Shoulders and carry them—each barrel had a hole bored in the head of it above an inch diameter with a wooden plug in it—these barrels of Powder were evidently fitted for the purpose of blowing our large ship up, if the Enemy could have got in undiscovered by placeing them under the Ships bottom and putting a piece of slow match or port-fire in the hole in the head, which would burn a sufficient time to allow the parties to escape before the fire would communicate to the powder this also accounts for the Enemy not returning the fire of our boats, for having so much powder in he was apprehensive of accidents which no doubt induced him to heave it overboard to be prepared to return the fire if he was pursued.—

It would have been impossible for the Enemy to have succeeded even if he had eluded our guard boats (which there are two Lines of) for independent of all the approaches by Water being secured by booms, the *Madison* is moored across the large Ship's Stern within Twenty Yards and her Guns loaded with Canister and bags of Muskett Balls to rake under the bottom if necessary— A Lieutenant Two Midshipmen and ten Men are on watch under the Ship's bottom every night, besides a Marine Guard outside of her—with all these precautions, I think that it would be impossible for an enemy to land near the Ship-Yard unobserved—however after this discovery of the Enemy's intentions we shall redouble our vigilance and exertions to preserve our fleet to meet the Enemy fairly upon the Lake— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 186 (M125, Roll No. 35).

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY, TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Kingston 27th. April 1814

Sir/

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellencys Letter of the 23rd. Inst. enclosing a plan of a combined attack proposed to be made on the Enemys Fleet at Sacketts Harbour, to which I have given that serious attention which the great importance of the subject demands.

By my Letter to Your Excellency of yesterdays date, written prior to the arrival of your dispatches, you will perceive that I had already in a great measure anticipated Your Excellencys views with regard to the imperious necessity which exists for an immediate attempt to distroy the Enemys fleet, at the same time that I stated what I now beg leave to repeat, that in my opinion a force of not less than 4000 effective troops would be essentially necessary to ensure a reasonable hope of success, as from the latest information I have been enabled to collect, not only the Defences have been much strengthened and multiplied by the erection of Block Houses, but the Garrison does not consist of less than 1500 Regular Troops, with constant reinforcements of Recruits, besides there are between 1500 and 2000 Seamen.

Previously to the receipt of Your Excellencys commands, I had had a communication with Sir James Yeo relative to the expediency of a combined attack on the Enemys fleet. I also in compliance with your wishes, had this morning a conference with him on the same subject, when I submitted to him Your Excellencys Letter, and its accompanying Document.

Sir James entirely coincides in opinion with me, that the force to be brought against the place ought to be at least what I have before stated.—

Enclosed I have the honor to lay before Your Excellency a Statement of the Force & Means that I presume can be collected within my command, by which you will observe, that it is necessary a reinforcement should be sent from other quarters of the Province to make up the number specified.

In addition to the operation in agitation against Sacketts Harbour I conceive that a successful attack on their great Naval Depot at Oswego would nearly if not altogether circumscribe the proceedings of the Enemy, because should we be so fortunate as to distroy the Stores &c that are now collected there for the use of the Fleet, it is very improbable they could shew themselves on the Lake for some time at least.

I propose giving Sir James Yeo an adequate number of Troops to cooperate with him for the accomplishment of this desirable object, as soon after the Squadron can put to sea, as possible. I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellencys Most Obedient Humble Servant

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

ALS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 57–60.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY, TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Kingston 28th. April 1814

Sir/

In addition to the Statement I had the honor to address to Your Excellency in my Letter of yesterdays date, I now beg leave to transmit some further observations on the subject of the proposed attack on Sacketts Harbour. It is sufficiently obvious that considerable time will be required to collect the troops necessary for the undertaking, that a vessel must be sent to Niagara to carry up the Iron 24 Pr: and to bring down the Brass ones, as these Guns are indispensable, it is evident also, taking for granted that 4000 Men is the smallest number with which the Enterprize ought to be attempted, that at least 800 of them must come from the Lower Province.

Under all these circumstances, and with a view to derive every advantage which may be possible, from the interval which a referrence to your Excellency for your decision and aid, has unavoidably occasioned, I propose that immediately after the Squadron is ready to sail (which it is hoped will be in two days, provided the ring bolts arrive) Sir James Yeo shall proceed off Sacketts Harbour, to reconnoiter the state of forwardness of the Enemys new Ship, and from thence along the coast, to Oswego, where it is reported there are large Depots of provisions and Naval Stores, and what are of infinitely greater importance, some of the Guns and other essential parts of the Equipment of the New Ship, should Sir James Yeo in cooperation with the force which I intend embarking on board the fleet be so fortunate as to seize or destroy the Guns and Stores, and thereby retard the progress of this Vessel, the advantages to be derived from such a measure would be incalculable.

From Oswego Sir James can detach one of the Brigs to Fort George, and the Head of the Lake, to take up the Iron and return with the Brass Guns, and with the assistance of the *Beresford* and *Vincent* schooners, which are already there, and such Craft as can be collected the Detachments of Regular and Militia troops from York, and the Indians from Burlington can be conveyed to Kingston, or to the Point of Rendezvous.

Without entering into any of the numerous reasons in favour of an immediate attack on Sacketts Harbour, it may be sufficient to observe that the exhausted state of this Province with respect to provisions will not admit of protracted operations. I will not say exactly how long our resources may hold out, but I am very apprehensive that at no very remote period, difficulties the most serious and alarming in this respect will be felt by the Right Division.

Should the Enemy therefore be suffered unmolested to complete his new Vessel, it is to be feared that he will then be enabled occasionally at least, to interrupt the communication with Niagara and the Head of the Lake, by which alone that Division can be supported and fed. I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellencys Most Obedient Humble Servant

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 61–64. This letter covered two enclosures. In the first, "Statement of the Force and means which it is assumed may be collected in Upper Canada for the attack on Sackett's Harbour," Lieutenant General Drummond proposed raising 300 troops and 200 Indian warriors from several British army and militia regiments. In the second, he detailed moving ordnance from Kingston and Fort George for the proposed attack on Sackets Harbor.

The State of the Lake Erie Station

Commodore Oliver H. Perry departed the Lake Erie station in late October, 1813, leaving Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott in command. There was a great deal of work to be done that winter, for the American ships as well as the prize vessels captured the previous September in the Battle of Lake Erie were in need of extensive repairs. A rancorous debate over Commander Elliott's role in the battle divided the officer corps into bitter factions.[1] Squabbles and duels among the officers and men sapped the station's energy.

Captain Arthur Sinclair discovered just how bad things were on the station when he arrived at the end of April 1814, but he lost no time in restoring the station to better order.

1. On the Perry-Elliott controversy, see Dudley, Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, p. 607, note 1. In addition to sources cited in that note, see Skaggs, "Aiming at the Truth," and Skaggs, "Creating Small Unit Cohension."*

CAPTAIN ARTHUR SINCLAIR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

Erie 29th. April 1814—

Sir

I merely drop you a line to notify my arrival, as the short time I have been here precludes the possibility of giving you any thing like correct information as regards the state of affairs on the Station. I can only say the Squadron are in no state of forwardness for service. The materials and mechanics are beginning to arrive, Every nerve shall be exerted, as the very life of the expedition depends on the time we may be able to commence it. I have written the commanding officer at Detroit, apprizing him of the intended expedition, and dispatched a vessel with it yesterday morning—from present appearances, he will receive it tomorrow morning.— I have endeavoured to impress upon him, the absolute necessity of securing the strong holds, which may command our passage to and from the Upper Lakes, as from every information I can gain, there are situations when a very small force, could effectually cut off all communication between the two Lakes, (Erie & Huron), a narrow channel, bordering close upon the Enemy's shore (within Pistol Shot) and a current of 4½ knots, setting down, would it not be well to make arrangements with the war office to this effect, while it is in our power to secure those important points? It is stated here that Genl. Harrison has ordered all other points to be abandoned except Detroit— Should those passes be secured by the Enemy when the Squadron are divided on the two Lakes, it might be attended with most serious consequences to the Country, and the probability is he will not attempt doing so, until we are so divided—

There is no bread Stuff as yet on the Station—I have, however made arrangements for an ample supply— There are very few officers here, not one of the least experience, from whom I can receive assistance— Commanders for the



Arthur Sinclair

vessels are immediately and much wanting— Since your last returns from this place there has been many deaths & discharges— Capt. Elliott thinks there are not more than 170 all told, many of whom are unfit for service— I have sent up ordering the Prize ships immediately down to this place, and shall use all possible exertion to get them in safety over the Bar. There is only 5 feet on the Bar, Capt. Elliott thinks it impossible to get them over, as they draw 9½ with swept holds— I shall however, have some lighters constructed, which I hope will succeed in getting them in,

As soon as returns can be made you shall receive them— I have the honor to remain with great Respect, Sir, Your Obd. Sert.

A Sinclair

N.B. Your letter of the 18th. Inst. respecting the increase of pay of officers, was received yesterday—

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 200 (M125, Roll No. 35).

Lieutenant Colonel George Croghan, U.S.A., to Captain Arthur Sinclair

"Copy" Detroit 1st. May 1814

Sir

I have this moment received your confidential communication of the 28th. Ult, and am happy in assuring you that every assistance which my diminutive force can afford, will be freely offered you— Knowing that an expedition would be fitted out against the posts on the upper Lakes, I was enabled to anticipate your enquiries relative to the situation, Strength &c, of those several places, and have taken such steps as are most likely to secure me correct information on the subject, I have not been able to ascertain directly the strength of the several Garrisons of Michilimackinack, St Marys, & St. Josephs but from the latest indian accounts, they are stated to be weak, that of Mackinac, cannot exceed 40 regulars & Canadians, The Indians from the neighbourhood of the River Sable generally agree in saying that the Enemy have built at Matchitash, (Gloucester Bay) 25 boats each carryinq two guns, but as for the correctness of this tale I cannot vouch, I am rather disposed to disbelieve it— I think it highly probable that boats are building on Lake Simcoe, but as there is a portage of some miles between Lake Simcoe, and the waters of Gloucester Bay, over which those boats must be hauled I am induced to believe that they are not larger than ordinary bateaux, and that they are intended more for the purpose of keeping up the communication with, and of provisioning those posts above mentioned, than for acting offensively, I am well aware of the annoyance that your Fleet would meet with in passing up the Strait, should the Enemy by batteries, Gunboats or otherwise, command or block up the entrance into Lake Huron and shall therefore make immediate preparations for establishing a strong Post at the point on which, Fort St. Clair formerly stood— I fear Sir that in the present reduced state of my force, I shall not be able to afford you

any valuable assistance, indeed I cannot (unless previously reinforced) pledge myself to cooperate with you in any way, which would be likely to draw my troops from the immediate defence of this place and its dependencies— With regard to Provisions I cannot speak confidently, our supply at present is but scanty, nor am I aware of the arrangements made by Genl. Harrison for increasing the stocks, I find on enquiry that a sufficient number of boats can be furnished you at this place, the Qr. Masters return, reports 40, each capable of landing from 50 to 80 men— I have the honor to be Sir Your Obt. Sert

Signed, G, Croghan, Lt. Colo.
Comdt. Mic. Tery.

P,S, about 10 days since, I sent up some active Spies in the direction of Lake Simcoe & Gloucester Bay, for the purpose of ascertaining the exact situation of the Enemy in that quarter, within 10 or 15 days their return is expected.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 24 (M125, Roll No. 36). Croghan's letter was enclosed in Sinclair to Jones, 6 May 1814, pp. 453–57.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie 2nd. May 1814

Sir

Yours of the 27th. Ulto. has this moment come to hand, I had anticipated that part of its contents which required the curtailing the indents made on the Navy Agent at Pittsburg— I have however, difficulties to contend with, in order to inform myself of the State of the Station, which you can form no idea of— It appears that since Mr. Hambleton left this, there has been no responsible person, whos' duty it is to keep copies of requisitions, receipts, returns of expenditures &c, I am using every possible exertion, in my power to enable me to give you a correct and circumstantial account of what has been done, what requires doing, what is on hand, and what required to complete the outfits of the intended expedition—you will readily see the difficulties existing, when I tell you that there is no account of the articles on hand of any discription, and that they are scattered over a space of several miles— Shot are to be raked from below high water mark, covered in sand, materials of every kind unstored—private Store houses, which have been rented, and used for Storing, have been so repeatedly broken into, that they are now nearly useless, therefore inventories of every article must be taken before I can inform you with any degree of accuracy. From the view I have taken of things, I am very confident that, system once established, there will be a saving of 25 ℔ ct. to the Public,

I shall endeavour in the course of this week to give you a general view of the Station, and suggest such alterations as may appear necessary for the public good, The mechanics are arriving here daily—no provision had been made for their reception, and such are the difficulties for provision in this country, that I have been compelled, tho' against my inclination, to advance some from our Stock, in order to get them boarded at all— There are no boats on the Station, not a boat a piece for each vessel, of any discription—

The small vessels are in some state of readiness, the *Niagara* is over the Bar, but wants considerable repairs, Caulking entirely— The *Lawrence* shall pass the Bar the first good weather, in the mean time her repairs are going on, The *Lady Prevost*, a vessel only 72 feet on deck and 18 feet beam was altering into a Brig, the lower masts only are prepared, I have stopt the alteration, not only on account of expense, but utility also— She will not answer for the Upper Lake, her draft is 2 feet more than our Brigs, The *Hunter* is sunk with a quantity of Powder and Stores in her, much of which is damaged— The *Amelia* is in the same situation, I am now getting them on float, and saving what can be saved from them— The report is that they are rotten, and unfit for service—a survey shall be held and a report made accordingly—

The Prize Ships arrived last night, I have not yet visited them—their safety &c, shall be immediately attended to, they have considerable quantity of powder and ordnance Stores on board, full sufficient, I fancy, with what we have on hand, to answer all our purposes—

I am much pleased at the prospect of some Officers of experience being on their way here—none however have arrived yet; I would suggest that an old and experienced Purser be ordered to the station— One of that discription would answer all purposes, Mr. Harris, Mr. Hambleton, or One of their standing— A master commandant also of considerable experience, and who has system about him, will be absolutely necessary during my absence— I trust, Sir, that in my duty I shall not make unfavourable impressions as regards Capt. Elliott— He is very young as a Commander, has had but little experience, surely none to justify the difficulties he has had to contend with here—they have been many and of magnitude—

I have not yet heard from Detroit; but as the same vessel which carried my orders for bringing the Ships down took my dispatches, for that place, I shall expect her the first wind,

The vessels which were on shore (except the *Ariel*) were burnt, She, I am told, is a fine vessel, and lays four miles this side of Buffalo, uninjured— There is a considerable quantity of Ice yet between this and her, I shall however send down immediately and request Genl. Scott, who is in her neighborhood, to have her protected until I can make the necessary arrangements for getting her on float, which shall be in the shortest possible time— I have the honor to remain Sir, with high Respect Your Obt. Sert.

A. Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 3 (M125, Roll No. 36).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie 6th. may 1814

Sir

I herewith inclose you a return of officers and men on the Station and an inventory of such articles as I have been able to come at, and I shall endeavour to give you a view of the Station generally,—

There has not been a responsible officer at the head of any one department, whose duty it was to keep an account of the expenditure of Stores— There is

a Colo. Forster of this place (who appears to be a respectable man), and who Capt. Perry or Elliott appointed as receiver of provision and other Stores, (with the pay of a master) and to superintend the transportation from Waterford to this place, he is the only person who could give me any insight or information of what had been received, but as most articles, except provision, was either taken over to the Peninsula, or on board the Fleet with out order or requisition it, was out of his power, to say more than that they had been received. Timber which has been contracted for, not only for the use of the fleet, but for a Public Store House which Capt. Elliott has framed, and is finishing, by contract, on the Peninsula, has been exposed to pilfer and at the mercy of the waves—and I am told there are great quantities of 32 pd. Shot which have been brought from the Ships, and where the boats grounded, thrown overboard and are covered with sand— I am in hopes however, to recover them, and from that source have a sufficient quantity for the use of the Station—great quantities of timber and plank are contracted for, at very large prices, and the transportation to this place, from the mills, which are only two miles distant, amounts to more than half the cost of the articles: but as the work has been done under written contract, I shall be bound to pass the bills: but I absolutely feel mortified to place my Signature to them, as a sanction of their correctness— The Store house, building for the public, is much wanting for the security of Provisions and Stores, and also that part of it which is intended for a Hospital: but its situation is illy chosen, so much so, that I am yet doubtful whither I ought to have it finished, notwithstanding it is all ready for covering in, the materials nearly all delivered, and the finishing it contracted for,— I will inclose you a rough sketch of it with my opinion of the advantages, and disadvantages attending its situation, and shall be glad to receive your instructions on the subject as early as possible, that the necessary arrangements may be made with the contractors previous to my leaving the place—

The temporary manner in which the Brigs have been repaired has added nothing to their strength—they have merely had graving pieces put in without regarding the injury done their timbers, and they have not been caulked in the upper works, as appears, from their state, to be absolutely necessary, both for their preservation, safety, and the comfort of those on board, I have yet to get their Spars from the Forest— the *Hunter*, is from 12 to 16 years old and much decayed— They have put Powder and other articles in her, then suffered her to ground with her decks full of Shot and other heavy articles, where she has fell over, filled to water mark, and damaged half her contents, I have had her pumped out, and have secured what remained unspoiled— The *Amelia* is also sunk and reported to be rotten in her bottom—she shall be attended to as soon as possible, The *Ohio*, the *Porcupine*—the *Somers*—the *Scorpion*—and *Tigress* are all over the Bar— I keep two of them cruising between this and Long Point—two others anchored for the protection of those vessels over the Bar which have not yet got their guns on board, for such is the scarcity of Boats, and so heavy has the wind been since the *Niagara* passed the Bar, that I have not been able to get off all her Ballast & guns—nor has the *Lawrence* been able to move towards the Bar, in consequence of the sea on it,— I was anxious to stop the purchase of articles, which might not be wanted, and which had been ordered by Capt. Elliott when he contemplated fitting out the two Ships, but was at a great loss how to proceed, as he had only a copy of a part of his requisitions— I was therefore obliged to make a rough and hurried estimate of what they would have required, and send it on, as articles not wanting, but I very much fear most of the heavy articles have been contracted for by the agent at Pittsburg,— I would have curtailed the indents when passing through that place, but it was impossible for me to know what Capt. Elliott's views were, or what the Station absolutely required,— I am of opinion that the article of Shot, the transportation of which is so very heavy, might have been dispensed with, as there is on the Station, a very ample supply for any service we have in view— The arrangement as regards provision is bad, the Flour is brought here to be baked, and with the utmost exertion which can be made here, no more than 10 barrels can be baked ℔ day— I have urged the agent at Pittsburg to forward on bread with the least possible delay, and by paying extra to the Bakers here, I get soft bread baked sufficient of a night to serve the crews the following day, by which means we do not incroach upon our Stock intended for the supply of the Expedition— The Beef & Pork, contracted for, to be delivered at this place, Capt. Elliott has directed the contractor to deposit at different points on the Lake, from 70 to 150 miles distant from here—which not only subjects us to the inconvenience of sending for it, but it is entirely unprotected from any expedition which might be formed against it by the Enemy, and altho not at our risque, the want of it might prove of serious inconvenience, I have therefore as there are no private craft on the Lake, imployed one or two of the public vessels to transport it here immediately— they have arrived with a part of it and have gone for a second load,

The small part of the Ration, such as Beans, Peas, Rice, Molasses, Butter, Suit, and even vinegar, the men have been very long destitute of, and it is, as may be expected, a source of great discontent— I have written in the most pressing manner to the agent at Pittsburg to endeavour to supply them immediately—they had been some days without Spirits when I came, and but a very few barrels has yet arrived, I am doing every thing in my power to reconcile them to the Service here, as their times are daily expiring: but with all the inducements held out, I fear I shall lose a large portion of them—and as for getting volunteers among the people of this country, it is out of the question, where the common labourer gets his dollar ℔ day— you will perceive that there are only 31 marines fit for Service— That discription of men might be procured, as there are a number of substitutes among the militia here, who have evinced a disposition to enlist, were it not for their Officers preventing it, they have gone so far as to confine their men to camp and prohibit our recruiting parties from passing their lines, you will perceive, by the enclosed list of men, how little was known of the State of the Station, when I informed you, by authority from Capt. Elliott, that all told, there was not more than 170 attached to it, A muster had not been had for a very considerable time—

The mechanics have nearly all arrived, but their tools are yet behind— I have mustered for their use, all I can procure on the Station, have got the Spars underway, and am preparing to build a couple of Launches, fit for anchor boats &c, which are indespensably necessary, as we are going into strange, narrow, & shallow waters. I shall not be detained for any other class of boats, but endeavour to substitute such as Colo. Croghan mentions in his letter (in answer to mine on the subject of our expedition), can be furnished at Detroit, a copy of which letter I herewith inclose you—

So great is the scarcity of provision in this quarter, that in order to get board, upon any terms, for the mechanics, I have been compelled to advance provisions to each house keeper who would take 10 men at $4 ℔ week— Better

arrangements might, perhaps, have been made, had it been thought of before they arrived, but it appears their arrival had not been anticipated in any respect,

The gun carriages disabled in the action are yet to be made, I have been thus particular in giving you a correct state of things, that you may know the means with which I am furnished, and calculate accordingly—& whatever industry and the exertion of all the means in my power can perform, shall be done to hasten my departure and the equipment of that part of the Force intended for this Lake: but you will readily perceive that too much depends upon contingencies, for me to speak with any thing like certainty of the time I shall have it in my power to leave this, my situation is peculiarly mortifying, as I feel that the very soul of the enterprise depends upon the time, I shall be able to commence it—

I do not think that Mr. Magrath, (the only Purser we have on the Station) is entirely himself at all times, he is certainly occasionally deranged—[1] I suggested to you in my last letter the necessity of ordering an old and experienced Purser on the Station— I think the good of the Service requires it, and if he, instead of the commanding officer, could be made the agent and responsible person, through whom all money expended here should pass, it would take great trouble and responsibility from the commander—

Mr. Magrath, has been advancing some of the men three months pay, said to be voted by congress on account of their Services here, Is it correct and shall it be allowed to all? my having no instructions to that effect, I have stopt it until I hear from you,

What shall I do with the invalids, who have been disabled on the station? shall a certain allowance be made them to carry them home, and what shall that allowance be,—

Is there any allowance to seamen who have served their times out and discharged here, and if there is what shall it be?

Am I to continue the acting appointments made by Captains Perry and Elliott, where I find them deserving?

Shall I draw on the agent at Pittsburg or on the Navy Department for the requisite funds to meet the expences of the station— I have been able to trace most of the difficulties existing among the Officers to their proper source, and am in hopes to adjust them without court martial,— none of the officers mentioned in your letter of the 27th. have yet arrived—there services are very much wanting, as you know they are all very young here— a gang of Block makers, which I knew nothing of being ordered, have just arrived— A very industrious young man has been imployed here all the Season, and has an ample supply for all our purposes already on hand—they were therefore by no means wanting— I shall however, as they are here, and already incured the greatest expense of getting themselves, tools and materials on the Spot, let them make a stock sufficient to meet contingencies, and then discharge them— I have written the agent at Philadelphia to send no more mechanics, as it seems they are not all yet underway that were required— I have sent an officer on to Pittsburg to forward the articles wanting, provision especially, I have the honor to remain with highest respect, Sir, Your Obt. Sert.

A Sinclair

N.B.

The next mail will bring on a regular muster Roll to the Accountant. of the Navy.

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 23 (M125, Roll No. 36). Two enclosures, "Account of Naval Stores on the Erie Station 1st. May 1814" and "Account of the Stores captured from the Enemy, now on board the Prize Vessels, 1st. May 1814" follow this letter. A sketch showing the location of the new blockhouse, store house, and hospital, and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of a new anchorage for the fleet, follows letter No. 24.

1. Humphrey Magrath, purser. He committed suicide at Erie on 11 July 1814. For more on his mental state, see McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, pp. 407–8.

The Accidental Death of a Shipwright

There were two causes for celebration at Sackets Harbor on 1 May 1814. First, the frigate Superior, *which was constructed in only three months, was safely launched that day. As was customary in preindustrial America, the craftsmen were rewarded for their hard work with a celebratory feast and a "frolic," a day of freedom from work to go fishing, picnicking, and very likely drinking and reveling.*[1]

Superior*'s launching coincided with the day Commodore Isaac Chauncey announced the news that the officers, seamen, and marines on the northern lakes would receive a twenty-five percent increase in their pay, and an increase in the value of their rations, which would be an additional sum.*[2] *This, too, was probably celebrated by the officers, seamen, and marines with toasts and cheers.*

The day of celebration however ended that night in the tragic death of a shipwright, Milo Lacy, who was accidently killed by a sentinel. His fellow craftsmen threatened to strike and the commodore feared the progress of shipbuilding during this critical time would be halted.

1. See Trinidad Corporation, Ceremonies and Festivities, *for more on ship launching ceremonies and celebrations.*

2. For more on the pay increase, see p. 402, and McKee, Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession, *p. 332.*

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 56 U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Hon Wm. Jones Sacketts Harbor 1st. May. 1814
Secy. of the Navy
Washington

Sir

I am happy to have it in my power to inform you that the U.S. Ship "*Superior*" was launched this Morning without accident

The *Superior* is an uncommon beautiful well built Ship something larger than the *President* and could mount 64 Guns if it was thought adviseable to put as many upon her— This Ship has been built in the short space of eighty days and when it is taken into view that two Brigs of 500 Tons each have also been

built rigged and completely fitted for Service since the first of february—it will be acknowledged that the Mechanics employed on this Station have done their duty I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, Yr. Mo. Ob. St

I. C.

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac).

COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

No. 57. U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor, 2d. May. 1814

Sir.

A very unfortunate accident took place yesterday afternoon— The Carpenters as is usual after so important a launch were permitted to have a frolick—many of them got inebriated and in this situation one of them in passing a Sentinel at the Contractor's Store was stopped and an altercation ensued—the Sentinel fired and unfortunately killed one of the most respectable Carpenters on the Station who had not interfered in the altercation—this accident has created a great sensation, amongst the Carpenters and Mechanics generally in fact, so much so, that they immediately formed the resolution of doing no more work for the Public at this place but to proceed to New York immediately— The General and myself have done every thing in our power to soothe these Men and by giving the Sentinel up to the civil authority and a little management, I hope that I shall be able to induce them to relinquish their determination of proceeding to New York which if carried into execution would be ruinous to our prospects here and retard the operations of the Campaign so much that the Enemy would reap great advantages from it. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 5 (M125, Roll No. 36).

A Change in Strategy on the Upper Lakes

The American campaign to recapture Michilimackinac by combined military and naval operations, which had been in contemplation since the fall of 1813, was about to get under way when Secretary of War Armstrong had a sudden change of heart about the strategy for the northern campaign.

Armstrong assumed that, because no British supplies had been shipped on Lake Erie that winter, the enemy must be concentrating his efforts on the Niagara Peninsula and making it the western extremity of his campaign. Armstrong argued that the American naval forces that would have supported joint operations on Lake Huron could instead be diverted to the support of General Jacob Brown's army, which had just moved from Sackets Harbor to the Niagara frontier.

As a result, the operations on Lake Huron were delayed and scaled back while Captain Sinclair remained on Lake Erie with the squadron.

SECRETARY OF WAR ARMSTRONG TO PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON

War Dept.
1st May 1814.

Sir,

So long as we had reason to believe that the enemy intended and was in condition to re-establish himself on the Thames & open a-new his intercourse with the Indian tribes of the West, it was no doubt proper to give to our naval means a direction which would best obstruct or defeat such movements and designs.

An order has been accordingly given by the Navy Dept. to employ the flotilla on Lake Erie in scouring the shores of the more western lakes—in destroying a trading establishment at St. Josephs and in recapturing Michilemakinaw.

As however our last advices shew, that the enemy has no efficient force Westward of Burlington bay & that he has suffered the season of easy & rapid transportation to escape him, it is now evident that he means to strengthen himself on the Peninsula & make Fort Erie, which he is now repairing, the western extremity of his line of operations.

Under this new state of things it is respectfully suggested, whether another and better use cannot be made of the Flotilla?

In explaining myself it will be necessary to premise, that (the garrisons of Detroit and Malden included) it will be practicable to assemble on the shores & navigable waters of Lake Erie 5000 regular troops & three thousand volunteers & militia & that means have been taken to produce this effect on or before the 10th. day of June next. But without the aid of naval means this force will be comparatively inoperative & necessarily dispersed & with their aid ~~of these means it will be~~ competent to great objects.

Lake Erie, on which our dominion is undisputed, furnishes a way scarcely less convenient for approaching the heart of upper Canada than Lake Ontario. 8 or even 6000 men landed in the bay ~~within~~ between Fort Erie and point Abino and operating either on the line of the Niagara or more directly (if a more direct route is to be found) against the British post at Burlington bay, cannot be resisted with effect without compelling the enemy so to weaken his more eastern posts, as may bring them within the reach of our means at Sacket's harbor & platsburg.

In choosing between this object and that to which the flotilla is now destined there cannot be much if any hesitation. Our attack carried to Burlington & York interposes a barrier which completely protects Malden & Detroit—makes doubtful & hazardous his intercourse with the western Indians—reduces Makinaw to a useless possession—renders probable the abandonment of Fort Niagara & takes from the enemy half his motive for continuing the naval conflict on Lake Ontario. On the other hand—take Makinaw and what is gained, but Makinaw itself?

If this plan is ~~to be~~ adopted, no time should be lost in countermanding the execution of the other. I am Sir, with the highest respect Your Most Ob. Servt.

John Armstrong

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1 (Roll No. 16). Another copy of this letter, under date of 30 April 1814, can be found in DNA, RG107, Letters Sent to the President by the Secretary of War, Vol. 1, pp. 266–67 (M127, Roll No. 1).

President James Madison to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Montpelier May 4. 1814.

Dear Sir

The Secretary of War in a letter of the 1st. instant states that the last advices make it evident that the Enemy, instead of now undertaking a re-establishment of himself on the Thames, and a renewal of his intercourse with the Indians, means to strengthen himself on the Peninsula, making Fort Erie the Western Extremity of his line of operations; that including the Garrisons of Detroit & Malden, it will be practicable, by the means already taken to assemble on L. Erie & its waters, by the 10th. of June next, 5000 regular troops, and 3000 Volunteers & Militia; but that this force will be dispersed & comparatively inoperative, without the aid of the flotilla on that Lake, whilst with that aid, such a force, or even less, landed at a favorable point, and directed agst. the Enemy's post at Burlington Bay & York, could not be resisted without weakening & exposing himself to our forces at Sacket's Harbour & Plattsburg: the interposition of such a force being, in the mean time, a barrier to Detroit & Malden; obstructing their intercourse with the Indians, rendering probable the evacuation of Niagara, and, less important to him, a continuance of the Naval Contest on L. Ontario. With these prospects he suggests that the expedition into the Western Lakes be relinquished, and the naval means allotted to it, be turned in aid of that above proposed.

The probable effect, above as well as below, of so large a force if it can be assembled at the Eastern extremity of L. Erie, entitles the suggestion to a fair consideration; and if you find it not too late, & are satisfied that the project of creating a naval force on L. Huron is abandoned by the Enemy, or can not be effectually pursued so as to threaten a reanimation of Savage hostilities, it will be best, under all circumstances, to change your orders to Capt: Sinclair: I give the Secy. of War, so to understand.

Perhaps it may be practicable to find a sufficient naval aid for the War Dept without interfering with the expedition into the Western Lakes. The land force withdrawn for it, must I presume be too inconsiderable to interfere with the other object; besides that its appearance may prevent some of the Savages from descending to the main theatre of operations.

In a case depending on intelligence which must be daily unproving, and on circumstances liable to continual change, it would be unsafe to be more positive than I have been. I cannot do better than to leave it in the hands of yourself & the Secy. of War, whose interchange of information & sentiments, promises the soundest result. Accept my esteem & best respects

James Madison

ALS, PHi, Uslema Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to President James Madison

Navy Department
May 6th. 1814

Dear Sir

Your favor of the 4th. came to hand this morning. If the information received by the Secretary of War be correct as I presume it is from the confidence reposed in it by the Secretary, then the plan of operations which he suggests appears to me well adapted to the occasion. I have no information of recent date either affirming or contradicting the rumored preparations of the enemy at Mackadash on Lake Huron.

All that I can infer from what has hitherto been the supposed object of the enemy is that boats have been constructed on Lake Simcoe for the transportation of provisions and Indian supplies to Mackinac and it has also been suggested that they would probably arm and equip a trading vessel which it is said remained on Lake Huron after the surrender of the garrison at Mackinac

Whether that vessel yet remains or whether she formed part of the captured Squadron is uncertain

I have just conversed with the Secretary of War on the subject of the contemplated operations and shall instruct Captain Sinclair to remain with the Squadron on Lake Erie for the purpose of cooperation and to detach two of the light vessels into Lake Huron for the purpose of observation and to intercept the supplies destined for the relief of Mackinac thro' I apprehend that object will have been attained before their arrival.

It will be of importance however to explore the several points of communication with the enemys posts on the waters of Huron and ascertain the real state of things in that quarter which can be accomplished in a short time. A small detachment of troops will accompany the expedition.

All apprehension for the safety of Sacketts Harbour has subsided and we are evidently ahead of the enemy in the equipment of our new vessels and the remaining heavy Guns I trust and believe will get on in due time. Our large new ship was to Launch about the first of this month.

The two new Brigs of 600 tons & 22. 32 pd. Carronades each, were ready with the exception of the Guns for one, which however were near at hand.

I think the enemys force and preparations have been much exaggerated but the apprehension which it has excited may have accellerated ours.

I am not apprized of the actual state of forwardness of the enemys large ship which was expected to Launch about this time. His largest ship cannot I think possibly launch until August if then. I hope and trust we shall be able to take and keep the Lake at least until that time, when if he is determined to overpower us the contest will be very unequal

On the upper Lakes I do not anticipate anything to disturb our complete controul. On Lake Champlain our superiority will soon be placed beyond doubt indeed there is good reason to believe the enemy will not venture on the Lake. Our new Brig the *Saratoga* was Launched at Vergennes in thirty five day from the day her Keel was laid

She will mount 16. 32 pd. Carronades and Six long 24 pounders. I know of nothing to equal the exertions and dispatch in this case.

Commodore Barney is in the Bay with fourteen of his vessels and about 600 men. Could we procure about 400 more for him I think he would keep the enemy at bay, but we cannot get men.

The army bounty has deprived us of many seamen and the demand for the Lakes has thined our flotilla service. The *Congress* Frigate at Portsmouth has been waiting a long time only for 100 men and cannot get them.

The *Constitution* will sail again in a short time and from the vessels that are out we have only news paper accounts. We have got the Loan but I feel the absolute necessity of drawing upon it as sparingly as possible. Having conferred

freely with the Secretary of the Treasury and attended to the closing of the Loan, although I am gratified in the highest degree that we have succeeded at this important moment. The issue however is not very flattering and I hope it may not lull us into confidence. I perceive that the stream is nearly dry unless new sources can be opened.

I am humbled when I reflect that this great nation has to depend for one half that Loan upon a speculative individual who may or may not fulfill his contract, for in him I view it as the bold effort of a gambler.[1]

I will still hope for a better state of things, the election in New York is cheering, and I think there is daily evidence that the enemy has at least as little relish for the continuance of the war as we have. I am most sincerely yours.

W Jones

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1 (Roll No. 16).

1. On 2 April 1814, recently-confirmed Secretary of the Treasury George W. Campbell opened a short term loan of ten million dollars. In early May, New York banker Jacob Barker, as agent of a number of state and local banks, subscribed to half of the loan, and individuals and banks in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia loaned the government the remaining five million dollars. Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War*, pp. 375–79.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Captain Arthur Sinclair
Commanding Naval Officer
Lake Erie

Navy Department
May 19th. 1814.

Sir

The formidable exertions making by the Enemy to strengthen his positions and increase his force on the Peninsula and Niagara frontier, together with information which induces the belief, that he does not contemplate any movement with a view to recover the upper part of the province, but to exert all his vigor at these points, will necessarily induce a corresponding concentration of our forces along the Niagara & the adjacent shores of Lake Erie.—

These circumstances, it is expected, will call for combined Military and Naval operations on Lake Erie, where the Enemy may attempt by Boats, which he can soon construct, to accomplish by numbers what he is deficient in specific naval force; but it is particularly important that the Army should be afforded every facility of transportation, to such points as circumstances may require, and the cover of the Fleet while debarking.—

It is therefore, deemed expedient that you should remain with the Squadron on Lake Erie, to direct those important movements, secure the undisturbed command of that Lake, and by vigilantly exploring the hostile shore, defeat any attempt that may be made to create a floating force of any description.— This being determined, you will despatch either Lieutenant Dexter, Woodhouse, or Kennedy,[1] with three of the small Vessels, best calculated for the service, well equipped, upon the expedition to Lake Huron, pointed out to you in my instructions of the 15th. Ultimo.—

For all the purposes of this expedition, sixty Officers, Seamen and ordinary Seamen, in total, I should deem sufficient, and the commanding Military Officer at Detroit will furnish from 100 to 150 regulars to accompany the expedition.— Lieutenant Kennedy with the detachment from the *Constellation* left this place some days since.— Sailing Master Rutter[2] with his Detachment from Philadelphia writes from Pittsburg, and must be with you e're this. Some of his men deserted on the road.—

You will forward a description of all deserters to the Commanding Officer of the station, where they were recruited, to be advertized, and to Pittsburg, for publication, with a suitable reward.—

Examples must be made of Deserters, as the evil is greatly increasing.—

I have received your several Letters and reports, relative to the state of the force under your command, and of the measures you had adopted.— I regret the imperfect and negligent state in which you found that force, after the extravagant requisitions which had been made, and reiterate my earnest solicitude for the retrenchment of all unnecessary expenditures, and a judicious, systematical and economical arrangement.—

Enclosed you will have a list of the Officers which have been ordered to Erie, the date of each order and station to which directed.— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 141–42.

1. Lieutenant Daniel S. Dexter was ordered to Erie, Pennsylvania, in April 1814; Lieutenant Samuel Woodhouse was transferred from Philadelphia to Erie in April 1814; Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy, the senior lieutenant on Lake Erie, transferred from the frigate *Constellation* at Norfolk in April 1814.

2. Thomas Rutter entered the navy as a midshipman on 9 November 1813. He accepted a warrant as a sailing master 25 March 1814, a position offered to him after he submitted his resignation from the navy.

British Assault on Oswego

The town of Oswego, New York, is located at the terminus of a nearly unbroken water communication going north from New York along the Hudson River, west along the Mohawk River to Rome, and then across a portage to Lake Oneida and the Oswego River to Lake Ontario. This water communication made Oswego an ideal transshipment point for military and naval stores and supplies being sent from New York City and the foundry at West Point, N.Y. Heavy guns for the new American ships, cables, and other supplies were shipped along this route during the winter to be ready for the spring campaign.

The British contemplated an attack on Sackets Harbor with the goal of destroying Commodore Chauncey's new frigate Superior. *Several probes by small boat expeditions, however, indicated that Sackets Harbor was strongly guarded. Oswego was guarded by the poorly defended Fort Ontario.[1]*

If the British could carry off or destroy the military and naval stores and provisions that had been collecting at Oswego during the winter months, then they could essentially cripple American war efforts on the lake for many months.

A combined British operation, commanded in person by Commodore Sir James L. Yeo and Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, got under way on 4 May 1814, but did not reach Oswego until after noon the next day. They made an attempt to land but were repulsed by American gunfire. Poor weather further delayed the assault, and another landing was not attempted until the next day, 6 May. The British carried off a quantity of valuable stores, but larger quantities remained safe below the falls of the Oswego River.

1. Oswego was the site of three forts in the eighteenth century: Forts George, Oswego, and Ontario. The French destroyed all three in 1756. In 1759, the British rebuilt Fort Ontario on the site of the original defensive works but Continental forces destroyed it in 1779. The British rebuilt it again in 1782. This fort, located on a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Oswego River and Lake Ontario, is often misidentified as Fort Oswego.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. May 3rd. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint Your Excellency, that I propose embarking on board the Squadron, as soon as the wind is fair, the following Troops, viz.

Royal Artillery	24
Rocketeers	6
Sappers	20
Regt. de Watteville	450
Glengary Light Inft	50
which, with the Royal Marines	350

will make a disposeable force of 900 Men; for the purpose of destroying, if possible, the Enemy's Magazines, and Stores, at Oswego, and along the Southern Coast of Lake Ontario; bringing off, however, such quantities as it may be practicable so to do, particularly of provisions for the relief of our Right Division.—

To satisfy myself, that as much is done, on this occasion, as can be, I propose embarking myself, with Commodore, Sir James Yeo; but the immediate command of the Troops I have entrusted to Lieutenant Colonel Fischer, of De Watteville's Regt.[1]

By the enclosed Copy of Intelligence dated from Sackett's Harbour the 28th. Ulto. Your Excellency will perceive, that a new Ship is to be laid down there immediately, and finished in six weeks. If such be the case, as it is impossible for us to keep pace with such exertions, I must again beg leave to repeat my opinion, that the only way completely to secure the tranquillity of the Upper Province is a vigorous combined attack of Army and Navy against the Enemy's chief means of annoyance, their Fleet, & Stores, at Sackett's Harbour.— But on this occasion, the most ample measures must be taken to ensure success; and the small force, which the Upper Province can afford, must be assisted by a regular force from Your Excellency of certainly not less that 800 effective men from the Lower Province— In all these opinions I am fully joined by the Naval Commander, Sir James Yeo.—

Major General Riall has reported to me, that the Enemy are encamped at Buffaloe, with about 800 men, and three Field Pieces.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 93–96.

1. Lieutenant Colonel Victor Fischer, De Watteville's Regiment, British army.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 64.

U.S. Ship *General Pike*
Sacketts Harbor. 7. May. 1814

Sir

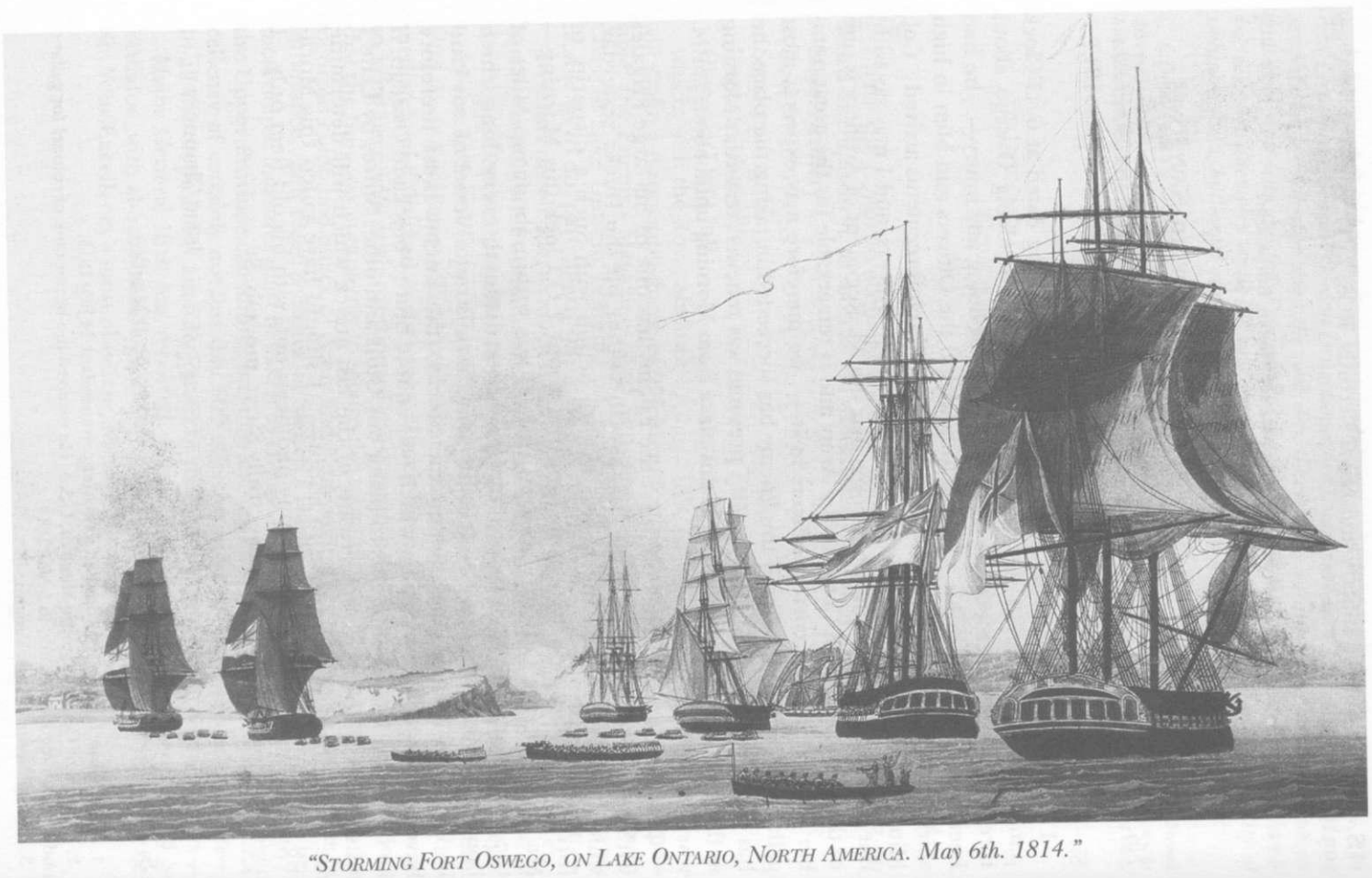
I received a Letter from Captain Woolsey[1] last Evening dated at 6. O'Clock p.m. on the 5th. inst.— the Enemy had been cannonadeing Oswego about three hours when the express came away without doing any injury— he had been twice repulsed in his attempts to land and the Officers and Men in high spirits, and expected to be able to hold out untill reinforcements arrived Col. Mitchell[2] and Captain Woolsey are both excellent Officers, and I may say without disparagement to any other corps that the 3d. Regiment of Artillery is one of the best disciplined Corps in the Army and is remarkable for the great number of scientific and correct officers in it— we therefore may expect a most gallant defence of Oswego if the Enemy has succeeded in taking the place, he has paid dearly for it— the attack I presume was renewed yesterday Morning as the guns were heard distinctly at this place from Morning untill about 2. P.M. when the fireing ceased

Captain Woolsey writes me, that the Enemy has one of his large Frigates with him, and the *Lady of the Lake* saw the other off the Ducks yesterday, which has determined me not to risk an action with Such a disparity of force.— my Gig returned from Kingston about 2 O'Clock this Morning— Mr. Vaughn[3] (the Officer who went in her) was within about two Miles of the Town last night at Sun-down and could see distinctly every thing which floated in the Harbor— he tells me that there is not a Vessel of any kind in Kingston (except the one on the Stocks) the Enemy must therefore have his whole fleet with him which will enable him to blockade Oswego, if he can't take it and oblige us to bring our Guns and other Stores by Land I must hear by tomorrow the result of the last attack which will determine me immediately what course to adopt— I should have sailed this Morning, if I had found that the Enemy had been out, with his old fleet only I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir yr. mo. Ob. St

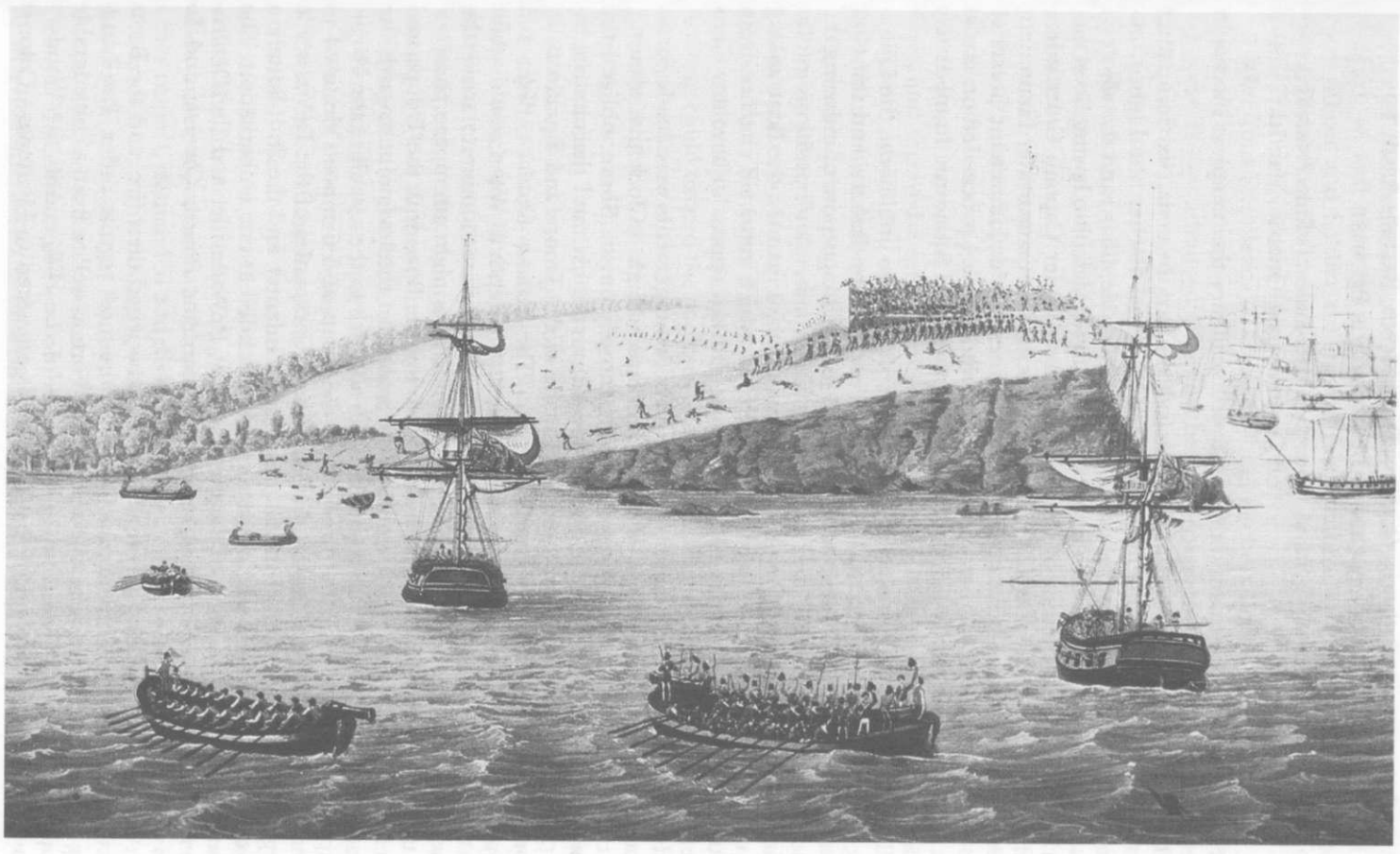
Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 28 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Melancthon T. Woolsey, promoted to master commandant 24 July 1813.
2. Lieutenant Colonel George Mitchell, U.S.A. He received the brevet rank of colonel for gallant conduct at Oswego, antedated to 5 May 1814.
3. Sailing Master William Vaughn.



"Storming Fort Oswego, on Lake Ontario, North America. May 6th. 1814."



"STORMING FORT OSWEGO, by 2nd. Battalion ROYAL MARINES and a party of SEAMEN; 15m. past Twelve at Noon."

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

His Majesty's Ship *Prince Regent*
off Oswego, Lake Ontario, May 7th: 1814

Sir,

I am happy to have to announce to Your Excellency the compleat success of the Expedition against Oswego.

The Troops mentioned in my Despatch of the 3rd. Inst. viz. Six Companies of the De Watteville Regiment, under Lieut. Colonel Fischer, the Light Company of the Glengary Light Infantry under Captain McMillan, and the whole of the 2nd. Battn. Royal Marines under Lieut. Colonel Malcolm, having been embarked with a Detachment of the Royal Artillery under Captain Cruttenden, with two Field Pieces; a Detachment of the Rocket Company under Lieutenant Stevens, and a Detachment of Sappers and Miners under Lieutenant Gosset of the Royal Engineers, on the evening of the 3rd. Instant, I proceeded on board the *Prince Regent* at Daylight on the 4th. and the Squadron immediately sailed—[1]

The Wind being variable, we did not arrive off Oswego until noon, the following day. The Ships lay to, within long Gun shot of the Battery, and the Gun boats under Captain Collier,[2] were sent close in, for the purpose of inducing the Enemy to shew his fire, and particularly the number and positions of his Guns.— This service was performed in a most gallant manner, the Boats taking a position within point blank shot of the Fort, which returned the fire from Four Guns, one them heavy—[3] The Enemy did not appear to have any Guns mounted on the Town side of the River—

Having sufficiently reconnoitered the place, arrangements were made for its attack, which, it was decided, should take place at Eight oClock that evening, but at Sunset a very heavy Squall blowing directly on the Shore, obliged the squadron to get under weigh, and prevented our return until the next morning; when the following disposition was made of the Troops and Squadron, by Commodore, Sir James Yeo and myself— The *Princess Charlotte, Wolfe,* and *Royal George* to engage the Batteries, as close as the depth of Water would admit of their approaching the Shore; The *Sir Sidney Smith* Schooner to scour the town, and keep in check a large body of Militia, who might attempt to pass over to the Fort.— The *Moira* and *Melville* Brigs to tow the Boats with the Troops, and then cover their landing, by scouring the woods on the low point towards the foot of the hill, by which it was intended to advance to the assault of the Fort— Captain OConner[4] had the direction of the Boats and Gunboats destined to land the troops, which consisted of the Flank Companies of the DeWatteville Regiment, the Company of the Glengary Light Infantry, and the 2nd. Battalion of the Royal Marines, being all that could be landed at one embarkation. The four Battalion Companies of the Regiment of DeWatteville, and the Detachment of Artillery remaining in reserve on board the *Princess Charlotte,* and *Sir Sidney Smith* Schooner—

As soon as every thing was ready, the Ships opened their fire, and the Boats pushed for the point of Disembarkation, in the most regular order. The Landing was effected under a heavy fire from the Fort, as well as from a considerable Body of the Enemy drawn up on the Brow of the Hill, and in the Woods— The immediate command of the Troops was entrusted to Lieutenant Colonel

Fischer of the Regiment of deWatteville, of whose gallant cool, and judicious conduct, as well as of the distinguished bravery, steadiness and discipline of every officer and Soldier composing this small force, I was a witness, having, with Commodore Sir James Yeo, The Deputy Adjut. General, and the officers of my Staff, landed with the Troops—

I refer Your Excellency to Lieut. Colonel Fischers Letter enclosed, for an Account of the operations.— The place was gained in ten minutes, from the moment the Troops advanced. The Fort being every where almost open, the whole of the Garrison, consisting of the 3rd. Battalion of Artillery, about 400. strong, and some hundred Militia effected their escape, with the exception of about Sixty Men, half of them severely wounded, who fell into our hands.— The loss of the Enemy could not have been less than one hundred in killed and wounded—

I enclose a return of our loss; amongst which I have to regret that of Captain Holtaway[5] of the Royal Marines. Your Excellency will lament to observe in this list, the name of that gallant, judicious and excellent officer, Captain Mulcaster[6] of the Royal Navy, who landed at the head of 200 Volunteer Seamen from the Fleet, and received a severe and dangerous wound, when within a few yards of the Guns, which he was advancing to storm, which I fear will deprive the squadron of his valuable assistance for some time, at least.

In noticing the cooperation of the Naval Branch of the Service, I have the highest gratification in assuring Your Excellency that I have throughout this, as well as on every other occasion, experienced the most zealous, cordial, and able Support from Sir James Yeo— it will be for him to do justice to the merits of those under his command; but I may, nevertheless be permitted to observe that nothing could exceed the coolness and gallantry in action, or the unwearied exertions on Shore of the Captains, Officers and Crews of the whole squadron—

To the high honor of both branches of the service; I have to draw Your Excellency's notice to the gratifying fact, that not a single Soldier or Sailor is reported missing, nor did I observe one of either Service in a state of intoxication, altho surrounded by temptation.

I enclose a Memorandum of the captured articles that have been brought away, in which Your Excellency will perceive with satisfaction Seven heavy Guns, that were intended for the Enemy's new Ship— Three 32 Pounders were sunk by the Enemy in the river, as well as a large quantity of Cordage, and other naval Stores; the loss to them, therefore, has been very great, and I am sanguine in believing that by this blow, they have been deprived of the means of compleating the armament, and particularly the equipment of their large Man of War— an object of the greatest importance—

Every object of the Expedition having been effected, and the captured stores embarked, the Troops returned in the most perfect order on board their respective Ships, at 4 oClock this morning, when the Squadron immediately sailed; the Barracks in the Town, as well as those in the Fort having been previously burnt, together with the platforms, Bridge, &c, and the works, in every other respect, dismantled and distroyed, as far as was practicable.

I cannot close this despatch, without offering to Your Excellency's notice, the admirable and judicious manner in which Lieut. Colonel Fischer formed the troops, and led them to the attack— The Cool and gallant conduct of Lieut. Colonel Malcolm at the head of the 2nd. Battalion Royal Marines, the intrepidity of Captain De Bersy of the Regiment De Watteville, who commanded the ad-

vance, the zeal and energy of Lieut. Colonel Pierson, Inspecting Field Officer, who, with Major Smelt of the 103rd. Regiment had obtained a passage on board the squadron to Niagara, and volunteered their Services on this occasion, the gallantry of Captain McMillan of the Glengary Light Infantry, who covered the left flank of the Troops in the advance, and the activity and judgment of Captain Cruttenden, Royal Artillery, Brevet Major De Courten of the Regiment De Watteville, Lieutenant Stevens of the Rocket Company Lieut. Gosset, Royal Engineers, each in their respective situations— Lieut. Colonel Malcolm has reported in high terms the conduct of Lieutenant Lawrie of the Royal Marines, who was at the head of the first men who entered the Fort; and I had an opportunity of witnessing the Bravery of Lieutenant Hewitt of that Corps, who climbed the Flag Staff, and pulled down the American Ensign, which was nailed to it—[7]

To Lieut. Colonel Harvey, Deputy Adjutant General my warmest approbation is most justly due, for his unremitting zeal and useful assistance— the services of this intelligent and experienced officer have been so frequently brought under Your Excellency's observation before, that it would be superfluous my making any comment on the high estimation in which I hold his valuable exertions—

Captain Jervois my Aide de Camp, and Lieut. Colonel Hagerman[8] my provincial aide de camp, the only Officer of my personal Staff who accompanied me, rendered me every assistance—

Captain Jervois, who will deliver to Your Excellency, with this Despatch, the American Flag taken at Oswego, is fully enabled to afford every further information you may require—and I avail myself of the present opportunity strongly to recommend this Officer to the favourable consideration of His Royal Highness, the Commander in Chief— I have the honor to be Sir Your Excellency's most obedient Humble Servant

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 105–12. Document has two enclosures, "Return of Killed and Wounded of the Troops, in Action with the Enemy at Oswego, on the 6th May 1814," and "List of Officers and Seamen of His Majesty's Squadron Killed and Wounded at Oswego on the 6th May 1814—."

1. Officers mentioned in this paragraph are: Lieutenant Colonel Victor Fischer, De Watteville's Regiment; Captain Alexander McMillan, Glengarry Light Infantry; Lieutenant Colonel James Malcolm, Royal Marines; Captain Edwin Cruttenden, Royal Artillery; Lieutenant John Harvey Stevens, Rocket Company; and Lieutenant William M. Gossett, Royal Engineers.
2. Commander Edward Collier, R.N.
3. The American fort at Oswego was armed with three 4-pounders, one 6 and one 12-pounder; the shot were heated in a shot oven.
4. Commander Richard O'Conor, R.N.
5. Captain William Holtaway, Royal Marines.
6. Captain William H. Mulcaster, R.N.
7. Officers mentioned in this paragraph are: Captain Rodolphe de Bersy, De Watteville's Regiment; Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Pearson; Lieutenant Colonel William Smelt, 103d Regiment; Brevet Major Armand de Courten, De Watteville's Regiment; Lieutenant James Laurie, Royal Marines; Lieutenant John Hewitt, Royal Marines.
8. Captain William Jervois, 57th Regiment; Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Hagerman.



Melancthon T. Woolsey

Master Commandant Melancthon T. Woolsey to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Copy. Oswego Falls.
May. 7. 1814.—

Dear Sir,

I wrote you last night per express but he went without my Letter.— Col. Mitchell I believe detailed our truly disaster— The Enemy got the *Penelope* and her Cargo— 3–32's and 2–24's— two Batteax 2 (I believe) 32's and 1–24 all sunk— one 24. they have not found.— I have sent Mr. Hart[1] to Selina for all boats, to send back all Schenectady boats which have not passed Three River Point and two or three large boats are coming down from Baldwins Mills to carry any thing back to Rome— where I calculated to be in a day or two—but we have just heard that the Enemy have evacuated Oswego and I do not know what to do— I will however send the lighter articles back to go by Land send the Guns on in light boats by water untill I shall receive your orders on the subject which I beg may be as soon as possible.— Two of our Seamen (Brookins and Harris) were killed Two (my boy Elixis Maville and Scott) were missing the latter has just come in— I send you the report of a deserter, who does not consider himself either a deserter or Prisoner of War

I wish the honor of your orders respecting him— at present I want him to shew me the train to a plot I have the honor to be &c. &c. &c.

M. T. Woolsey—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 41, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Midshipman Ezekiel B. Hart, appointed 30 April 1814.

[Enclosure]
Copy.

John Miller a Native of Liverpoole and a Quarter Master on board H.B.M. Ship *Prince Regent* left the *Royal Sovereign* at Plymouth some time last summer for the Lake Service and embarked in the *Oelus* for Quebec where he arrived some time in July last— from Quebec (we 550 Sailors) were sent to Montreal— 65 Seamen we sent to Lake Champlain— the remainder of us have been at Kingston about four Months.—

The *Prince Regent* and *Princess Charlotte* were launched about three weeks since— about a Week after they were launched or just before the *Superior* was launched an expedition consisting of only one boat seven Men proceeded to the Harbor and landed under the bottom of the *Superior*.— Last Monday a week the Second expedition one boat as before but with Rocketts but did not fire them having been pursued by the guard Boats.—[1] Last Monday the third expedition, the same boat as before went into the Harbor saw the *Superior* afloat one of the Brigs with the foretopsail not bent— all day Tuesday hid in the bush— Wednesday all day in the bush— Thursday chased by the *Lady of the Lake* obliged to haul our boat on Shore and conceal her Friday Morning joined the Fleet, at 1 A.M. off Oswego— There were four thousand Troops in the fleet.—

250 Seamen landed in front of the Battery— all the Marines landed and some of Dewattervilles, some Glengarians, but how many he does not know.—

They took eight guns, all the other Naval Stores and all the military Stores burned the barracks, Hospital and Blacksmiths Shop— Sir James Yeo landed General Drummond commanded the expedition and landed Captn. Mulcaster headed the Seamen and was wounded in the groin, supposed mortally— The Seamen lost most.—

The *Prince Regent*— Sir J. Yeo—
On the Gun Deck. 28 long. 24s.— on the spar deck 8–68s. Carronades,— 20–32s. Cds. and 2. long 24s. shifting Guns— 450 Men exclusive of Marines— One Officer and four men Rocket Party

———

Princess Charlotte—
Capt. Mulcaster— 42. long. 24s.— draws more water than the *Prince Reg[ent]* number of Men does not know

———

Wolf
Captain Popham— Metal or Men not known.

———

Royal George
Captain Spellsburgh— M.C.[2]

———

Milvill
Captain Colier— Post— with volunteers from Halifax

———

Earle of Moira
Captain Dobbs— M.C[3]

———

Brig *Baresford* (old *Prince Regent*) Lieut. Owens

———

On the Stocks a ship five feet longer on the keel than the *Caledonia*

———

A Carpenter deserted from Sacketts Harbor and launched in style the *Princess Charlotte*

———

The spies who stole the boat from this place were a Mr. Kere a Merchant in Kingston and a Masters Mate, Mr. Brown wounded yesterday.—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 41, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. See p. 446.
2. Commander Francis B. Spilsbury, R.N.
3. Commander Alexander Dobbs, R.N.

Lieutenant Colonel George Mitchell, U.S.A., to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

Oswego Falls
May 8. 1814

Sir

I informed you of my arrival at Oswego Fort on the 30th. April, and reported to you the truly defenceless situation of that large and antient Fortification; of what repair was necessary and what Guns and ordnance Stores were wanted to successfully defend it against a Naval and Land attack. Circumstances made it utterly impossible for you to comply with my requisition. I found five old Guns one 12, one 6 and three Four's in the Fort & Batteries on the Lake, three of which had no Trunnions. These Guns had been reported unfit for service, yet for want of better I thought it my duty to prepare them for action; and by unremitted industry and labor their carriages were repaired and new platforms made in the Batteries in Twenty four hours after our arrival. At the same time, a number of men were employed in preparing Timber for and making Gun Carriages for large Guns coming down the River for Commodore Chauncey, which Lt. Pearce of the Navy had offerred to furnish us. The want of time prevented their being finished. The corroding hand of time had destroyed every Picket around the Fort and at several points it was as accessable as through an open Gateway. Every exertion was however made, that time and circumstances would admit to place it in the best possible state of defence.

On the 5th. Inst. the British Naval Force of the Lake consisting of four large Ships, three Brigs, and a number of Gun boats, was descried at Reveillie about seven miles from the Fort. I immediately gave information to Capt. Woolsey of the Navy who was at the Village of Oswego he promptly made great exertions to assemble the Militia and made precautionary arrangements, required by apprehensions of the result of a contest very evidently about to take place with a force vastly our superior.

It being doubtful which side of the River the enemy would land, and dangerous to detach from my command, consisting only of 290 effective men, I thought proper to endeavour to deceive him and ordered the Tents in Store to be pitched on the Village side of the River, and concealed all my force within the Fort on this side, except Capt. Boyle's company, who had command of the Guns without the Fort. I think it probable this artifice had the effect of making the Enemy believe our force was with the Tents, when we had not a man or Gun on that side of the River, and perhaps determined them to land on this side where they no doubt expected the least opposition. Aware of the Superior Force of a brave and enterprising Enemy and the importance of securing an honorable retreat to protect this place and the Country, I called for the opinion of my intelligent and brave officers, Capts. Boyle, Melven, Romayne McIntire & Pierce, and we unanimously determined, as we could not man & defend the Fort, to meet the Enemy on the Shore, and contend with him every foot of ground as long as we had a probability of making good our retreat.[1]

The Fleet about one oClock approached within a mile of the shore and a mile and a half below the Batteries. The Boats fifteen in number, very large and crowded with Troops rendezvoused at the Commodores Ship, and at a Signal given moved slowly for the Shore rapidly preceded by the Gun boats to rake the woods and cover their landing. The Gun boats and several of the vessels of War

commenced & kept up an incessant cannonading on the Batteries, the Fort and the Militia I had marched into the Woods, having thought proper not to shew my Regular Force at that time. As soon as and not until the Gunboats approached within the range of our Guns Capt. Boyle and Lt. Legate[2] commenced from their Batteries a well directed and successful fire and caused them twice to retire, during which the Six pounder in Lt. Legate's Battery bursted without doing any injury. The Enemy returned to the vessels and I think not without loss. A wind unfavorable to their anchorage compelled them to weigh and run off from the Shore. Late in the evening we took up one of the Boats, Sixty feet in length, thirty six oars, three sails, and sufficiently large to carry one hundred & fifty men. It was nearly full of water having received a Ball through it's bow. Several other Boats were taken up by the Militia but not reported to me.

During the night picquet Guards were stationed at different points on the shore— We laid on our Arms. One sail of the Fleet was seen for several hours during the night below the Fort and off the Harbor, I supposed engaged in sounding. An intelligent Deserter from De Watteville's Regt. informed me that the comm'g. officers Lt. Genl. Drummond and Sir Jas. Yeo had received a letter from the Village of Oswego during the night giving much information.

At day break (6th. Inst.) the Fleet was bearing up under easy Sail. The Militia that had collected, I ordered over on the Village side, and ordered Capt. Romayne to assist the commanding officer of the Militia in displaying them to the best advantage, and as soon as the Fleet should approach near enough to fire Grape to protect them in the Ravines, old redoubts and woods. This order was well executed.

I supposed from the movement of the Fleet that the Village side of the River had been selected for the place of landing and under this impression I marched secretly from the Fort with the Troops to the Wharf, when I soon found it necessary to return, the new position of their smaller Vessels and Gun boats, having pointed out the place of landing.

The *Wolfe* run up and anchored opposite the Batteries and kept up a constant firing for three hours, frequently pouring in Broadsides of Grape.— other vessels having taken the most advantageous positions, kept up an incessant firing of Ball & Grape on the plain, Fort & Batteries; and often the whole Fleet was engaged in cannonading our Antient Fortification and small Batteries. Capt. Boyle & Lt. Legate were unremitting in their duty The *Wolfe* must have received many shots, and if the information received be correct, her crew must have suffered considerable injury.

Knowing that I could not approach the intended place of landing without exposing the Troops to a severe and galling fire from the Fleet and Gun Boats, I concealed them in the ditch in rear of the Fort until the enemy had landed and were between my place of concealment and the covering vessels; I then advanced with Capts. Romayne & Melven's companies and commenced a brisk fire on their advancing columns, then retired with a retreating fire and joined the other companies which had advanced and were warmly engaged with the Flank companies of the enemy. Lt. Pearce of the Navy joined us with his Sailors, they fought with their characteristic bravery. We stood our ground about thirty minutes. Having with safety to my Troops done them all the injury in my power, I ordered a Retreat and when we had gained the road in the woods 400 Yards only from the Fort, I ordered Capt. Romayne to halt his company and act as a

rear Guard. I remained with it and marched in good order to this place. The Bridges were cut down in our rear.

Capt. Boyle & Lt. Legate merit your greatest approbation for their unparralled gallantry and good conduct. I have not language to express my admiration of the conduct of those Gentlemen whose names I have already mentioned, and of the valuable Subalterns, Lt. Blainey, Adjutant Macomb Lieuts. Ansart, King, Robb, Earle, McClintock & Newkirk who acted well their parts in this little affair.[3]

I lament that it is my melancholy duty to report to you the death of Lt. Blany, a brave and enterprizing young officer from Delaware— he was shot through the heart with a musket ball. But Sir, while we shed the sympathetic tear, we ought to reflect he fell fighting for his Country.— He rests in the Grave of honor. Our loss in killed, wounded and taken, the Adjut's report will inform you. From my own observation within Sixty Yards of the Enemy and from information from Deserters, the Enemy landed in the first Boats 600 of De Watterville's Regiment, 600 Marines and Two companies of the Glengary Regt. 350 Sailors landed at the same time under the Batteries.

His Excellency Lt. Genl. Drummond and Commodore Sir James L. Yeo were on shore. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded must have been much greater than ours; Eighteen were found buried near the Fort. Those killed in the Boats and on the shore by the pieces of Arty. and near the shore by the Artillery acting as Infantry were taken to the Ships.

The Deserters, and citizens who taking Prisoners and afterwards released report that there were 64 killed and a great number wounded and that several officers of merit of the army & navy were killed and wounded.

It would be injustice not to acknowledge and report to you the patriotism evinced by the Militia officers and soldiers who arrived at a very short notice and were anxious to be useful. Mr. Forrest actg. D. Qr. Mr. Genl. had orders to destroy all the public property belonging to the Army at Oswego Village, should it be necessary. He executed the order. The amount was inconsiderable; It could not be removed. Capt. Woolsey no doubt has reported to the Commodore what loss the Navy may have sustained.

There was at the Village a great number of Barrels of Salt belonging to different Citizens. On my arrival there I requested them to have them removed into the woods; this request was not attended to. The Enemy took off the greater part of it, as well as some of the Citizens with them.

Dr. Senter[4] remains with the sick and wounded— this excellent officer was assisted much by the humanity of Dr. Baldwin an eminent Physician of this neighbourhood. The Dead have been buried with the honors of War and the wounded provided for.

It was my duty to be particular in correctly detailing occurrences to you. It is your duty to decide whether we have acted honorably to ourselves and our Country. I have the honor to be Very respectfully

G. Mitchell.
Lt. Col. 3d. Arty.

P.S. The enemy having burnt the old Barracks evacuated the Fort about 3 oClock in the morning— Little respect was paid to private property.

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, B-510 (7), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 51). An enclosure, "Consolidated Report of the Killed, Wounded and Prisoners, engaged in the action of 6th. May 1814 at Fort Oswego," listed a total of six killed, thirty-eight wounded, and twenty-five taken prisoner among U.S. Army regulars.

1. The officers mentioned here were Captain James H. Boyle, breveted major 5 May 1814 for gallant conduct in defense of Fort Ontario; Captain George W. Melvin; Captain James T. B. Romayne; Captain Rufus McIntire; and Captain Benjamin K. Pierce, all of the 3d Artillery, U.S.A.
2. Lieutenant Thomas Legate, Corps of Artillery, U.S.A.
3. Lieutenant Daniel Blaney; Lieutenant Charles M. Macomb, Adjutant; Lieutenant Felix Ansart; Lieutenant William King; Lieutenant B. F. Robb; Lieutenant Thomas V. Earle; Lieutenant William McClintock; and Lieutenant Charles Newkirk, all of the Corps of Artillery, U.S.A.
4. German Senter, surgeon's mate, 3d Artillery Regiment, U.S.A.

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

His Majesty's Ship *Prince Regent*
9th May 1814

Sir

My Letter of the 15th of April last, will have informed their Lordships, that His Majesty's ships *Prince Regent* and *Princess Charlotte* were launched on the preceding day, I have now the satisfaction to acquaint you for their Lordships' information, that the Squadron, by the unremitting exertion of the Officers and Men under my Command, were ready on the 3rd. Inst. when it was determined by Lieut. Gen. Drummond and myself that an immediate attack should be made on the Forts and Town of Oswego, which in point of position is the most formidable I have seen in Upper Canada, and where the Enemy had, by river navigation, collected from the interior several heavy guns, and Naval Stores for the Ships, and large depots of Provisions for their Army.

At noon on the 5th. we got off the Port and were on the point of landing when a heavy gale from the N. West obliged me to gain an offing. On the morning of the sixth, every thing being ready, one hundred and forty troops, two hundred seamen armed with pikes, under Captain Mulcaster, and four hundred Marines were put into the boats. The *Montreal* and *Niagara* took their stations abreast and within a quarter of a mile of the Fort, the *Magnet* opposite the Town, and the *Star* and *Charwell* to cover the landing, which was effected under a most heavy fire of round grape and musquetry kept up with great spirit. Our men having to ascend a very steep and long hill were consequently exposed to a destructive fire, their Gallantry overcoming every difficulty, they soon gained the summit of the hill, and throwing themselves into the fosse, mounted the ramparts on all sides vyeing with each other who should be foremost. Lieut Laurie my secretary was the first who gained the ramparts, and Lieut Hewitt of the same Corps climbed the flag-staff under a heavy fire and in the most gallant style struck the American colours which had been nailed to the mast.

My gallant and much esteemed friend Captain Mulcaster led the Seamen to the assault with his accustomed bravery, but I lament to say he received a dangerous wound in the act of entering the Fort, which I apprehend will for a con-

siderable time deprive me of his valuable services, (the benefit of which I have many years experienced) and the country of a brave and experienced Officer. Mr. Scott[1] my First Lieutenant who was next in command nobly led them on, and soon gained the ramparts.

Captain OConor of the *Prince Regent*, to whom I entrusted the landing of the troops displayed great ability and cool judgement, the boats being under a heavy fire from all points.

Captain Popham in the *Montreal*, anchored his Ship in a most gallant style sustaining the whole fire untill we gained the shore. She was set on fire three times by red hot shot and much cut up in her Hull, masts, and rigging. Captn. Popham received a severe wound in his right hand, and speaks in high terms of Mr. Richardson the Master,[2] who from a severe wound in the left arm was obliged to undergo amputation at the Shoulder joint.

Captain Spilsbury of the *Niagara*, Captain Dobbs of the *Charwell*, Captain Anthony[3] of the *Star*, and Captain Collier in the *Magnet*, behaved much to my satisfaction.

The 2nd. Battalion of Royal Marines excited the admiration of all. They were led by the gallant Colonel Malcolm and suffered severely. Captain Holtaway doing duty in the *Princess Charlotte* gallantly fell at the head of his Company.

Having landed with the Seamen and Marines I had great pleasure in witnessing not only the zeal and prompt attention of the Officers to my orders but also the intrepid bravery of the Men whose good and temperate conduct under circumstances of great temptation (being a whole night in the town employed loading the Captured Vessels with Ordnance, naval stores and Provisions) most justly claim my high approbation and acknowledgement and I here beg leave to recommend to their Lordships notice the services of all, of my First Lieutenants Mr. Scott and aide de camp Actg. Lieut. Yeo,[4] to whom I beg leave to refer their Lordships for information, nor should the meritorious exertions of Acting Lieut. Griffin,[5] severely wounded in the Arm, or Mr. Brown both of whom were attached to the storming party be omitted.

It is a great source of satisfaction to me, to acquaint their Lordships that I have on this and all other occasions received from Lieut. General Drummond that support and attention, which never fail in securing perfect cordiality between the two services.

I herewith transmit a List of the killed and wounded, and of the Ordnance, Naval Stores and Provisions captured and destroyed by the combined attack on the 6th. Inst. I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient Humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo
Commodore and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 43–46.

1. Lieutenant John Scott, R.N.
2. Master James Richardson, R.N., previously of the Provincial Marine.
3. Commander Charles Anthony, R.N.
4. Acting Lieutenant George C. Yeo, R.N., brother of the commodore.
5. Acting Lieutenant Charles W. G. Griffin, R.N.

[Enclosure]
A Statement of Ordnance and Naval Stores and Provisions brought off and destroyed in a combined attack of the Sea and Land Forces on the Town and Fort of Oswego on the 6th of May 1814

Brought off
Ordnance Stores
Guns— 3 long 32 Pdrs.— 4 long 24 Pdrs.
A quantity of various kinds of ordnance Stores.
Naval Stores & Provisions
3 Schooners
800 Barrels of Flour
500 Do. of Pork
600 Do. of Salt
500 Do. of Bread
A quantity of large Roap

Destroyed
Guns, Sunk— 3 long 24 Pdrs. 1 long 12 Pr. 2 long 6 Pdrs.
1 Schooner, and all Barracks and other public Buildings.

James Lucas Yeo
Commodore & Commander in chief

DS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fol. 49. A second enclosure to this letter is not printed here. "A List of Officers Seamen and Marines of His Majesty's Fleet on Lake Ontario Killed and wounded at Oswego on the 6th of May 1814" listed the names of nine men killed and thirty-seven wounded in the attack (UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fol. 47).

Attack on Otter Creek

The British made the first move on Lake Champlain in 1814. Their new brig, Linnet, *under Commander Daniel Pring, led the Britsh flotilla on an expedition to capture or destroy Master Commandant Macdonough's vessels at Vergennes, Vermont, before they were fitted out for service.*

The expedition arrived at the mouth of Otter Creek on 14 May. The British ships and the American shore batteries that had been hastily erected exchanged fire for an hour and a half. The British concluded that a landing would be impossible and withdrew.

Casualties were light on both sides, and the action had little effect on the American post. The British attack on Otter Creek signaled the start of operations in what would be a decisive year on Lake Champlain.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes, 13th May 1814

Sir,

The Enemy entered the Lake yesterday with his Brig, 14 Gallies & Three Sloops; he evinces an intention of coming to the mouth of Otter Creek probably with an intention of blocking us in.—

Ten of our Gallies will be placed at the mouth of the Creek to day, & with the aid of a Battery there, will keep the passage open for our entrance into the Lake as soon as the Ship shall be compleated.— The Ship has her Guns mounted and one hundred men on board,— I not having more men to put on board of her, and there are none to join me from the different Rendezvous.—

The Schooner is launched & rigged, and had I men she could enter the Lake with all the force in ten days at farthest.—

None of the Lieutts. whom you have directed to join me have arrived.— Lt. Cassin & actg. Lt. Budd, are the only Lieuts. with me; Lt. Cassin has charge of the Schooner, & Lt. Budd, one of the Sloops; leaving the Ship without any Lieutenants.— It is much wished that those Lts. you may have ordered will join me soon;— I shall employ my whole force in keeping the entrance into the Lake clear, for my passage out, when the vessels are officer'd & manned; and when this is the case I shall be sufficiently strong to keep the Enemy out of our waters.— No answer has been given, as yet, to my application to Major Genl. Izard for men, and as our Depots may be attempted by the Enemy, I think he will not supply me with any.—

I have called the Schooner *Ticonderoga*.— Should it meet with your approbation I shall continue it so.— I have the honor to be, with great respect Sir, Yr. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 126 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Vergennes, 14th May 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that an Engagement, between our Battery at the mouth of Otter Creek, & Eight of the Enemy's Gallies, with a Bomb Vessel, has just terminated, by the retreat of the Enemy, who, it is supposed, came with an intention of Blockading us.—

The Battery, commanded by Capt Thornton[1] of the Artilery, who was gallantly assisted by Lt. Cassin of the Navy, received but little injury, although a number of Shells were thrown and many Shot lodged in the Parapet.—

Colo. Davis[2] was advantageously posted to receive the Enemy, in the event of his landing, which we had reason to expect, as his new Brig, with several other Gallies, & four Sloops, were within 2½ miles of the Point, on which the Battery

stands, during the Action, which lasted one hour & an half; when they all stood off, and were seen passing Burlington for the Northward.— Every exertion was made to get the Vessels down to the mouth of the Creek, which, however, we could not effect, untill the Enemy had withdrawn.— Our whole force is now at the Creek's mouth with the exception of the Schooner, and she will be down also, in four or five days.—

I expect to be supplied with some men from the Ranks, & I hear that Lt. Perry[3] is at Whitehall, with 50 men for me.— Should this be true, I shall enter the Lake immediately on getting the different crews quarter'd, and the men feeling themselves at home at the Guns.— The Enemy have as yet done but little or no injury on the Lake I am induced to believe the sole object of his visit was to take a position at the Creek's mouth and probably to fortify the point in order to keep us from entering the Lake.—

Their Brig is one of the first class and is a remarkably fine looking vessel.— Sail'g Master Jairus Loomis, who command[ed] & was taken in, the Sloop *Eagle*, has joined me & is on duty, also Midsn. Walter N Monteath who was taken at the same time.— I have the honor to be, with high respect, Sir, Yr. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 128 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Captain Arthur W. Thornton, Regiment of Light Artillery, U.S.A.
2. Probably Colonel Parley Davis, Vermont militia.
3. Lieutenant Raymond A. Perry, brother of Oliver H. Perry; he was ordered from Newport, R.I., to Lake Champlain on 22 April 1814.

Commander Daniel Pring, R.N., to Lieutenant Colonel William Williams, British Army

HM Sloop *Linnet* cruizing off
Little Otter creek, May 14th. 14

My dear Colonel,

You will be sorry to hear that continued Southerly winds kept me from reaching Otter Creek until this morning, as it gave the Enemy so much time to prepare for receiving me, that I found it impracticable to effect what I proposed to you before leaving the Island—

A Battery of three long twelve pounder Guns and one Field-piece was placed on the point north of the Entrance which the Gun boats cannonaded at Daybreak this morning, I think with great effect; and, I have not the least doubt but that we should have succeeded in taking it by storm, but as the ground immediately in the rear and on the opposite side of the River perfectly commanded the Point the Enemy having a number of men laying in Ambush at both places I deemed it imprudent to prosecute my intended plans; being most fully convinced from the situation of the place that it could not be tenable; or that we should have a chance of succeeding in blocking up the Channel without a sufficient Land-force to keep the Enemy from Skirting the woods at the entrance—

One Seaman was killed & two Marines slightly wounded in the Gun boats— The Battery appeared to be strongly manned by Artillery men, and the enemys Gun boats were there with many Seamen Landed— I think I had a view of my adversary Commodore McDonough Every Tree on the Lake Shore seems to have a Jonathan stationed behind it and all the Military Posts and towns are in a dreadful consternation hourly expecting an Attack—

By two Prisoners taken in a small vessel from Vergennes I learn that the Enemys large ship has got mounted eight long 18 Pr. Guns and twenty 32 Pr. Carronades; her sails bent, and wanting only her Breechings and tackles to complete her for taking the Lake— Commodore McDonough had a month since received authority to purchase the Steam-boat building at Vergennes to be fitted as a Vessel of War; She has been strengthened and fitted for that purpose has got 11 Ports of a side and was to be launched Thursday last, they state her to be a very fine looking Vessel, and is to be rigged as a Brig carrying Six long 12 Pr. Guns and Sixteen 32 Prs. Carronades. A Captain has arrived from Boston to command her, and brought with him a strong party of seamen, making their number at present above 500— The complement in the Ship is 160— the Brig, 120 exclusive of Soldiers to serve as marines, All the Sloops excepting the *Commodore Prebble* and *Montgomery* are to be sold out of the government service, the former one is to carry 10–18 Pr. Carronades and 1, 18 Pr. Columbian gun, with a compt. of 60 Seamen & the latter two Carronades less with 50 Seamen besides marines— Their Six new Gun Boats which are nearly ready as well as the four old ones which we saw this morning are to have 100 Seamen attached to them, to be completed with Soldiers and placed under the command of Lieut. Kettleton[1] of the Navy—

The ship is called the *Jones*,[2] length of Keel 135 feet; breadth abeam 35— the Brig, name unknown,[3] length of keel 112 feet, breadth 32 feet 6 inches, they are expected to be ready and to come out in a week or ten days, I think this information may be relied on excepting that as they have had so much difficulty in procuring heavy guns for the Ship it is more probable that the Brig will have those mounted, which have been taken from the three dismantled Sloops and indeed one of the Prisoners tells me that it is intended as a temporary arrangement—

After looking into Burlington and Plattsburgh I intend returning within the Province Line, to be able immediately to give every assistance in my power for building the new Ship, and I hope if it is in your power you will have the goodness to allow any artificers there may be in the Regiments stationed at the Post under your command to be employed for that purpose—

The Builder feels assured that she can be completed by the latter end of July—

The Marines with the Sloops (Merchant) under convoy of the *Canada* will return to the Island without loss of time— the Officers and men deserve the greatest praise for their steady and cool conduct whilst cannonading the Battery within grape distance, and for their spirit in volunteering the storm of it; indeed they have evinced the greatest cheerfulness in executing every service that has been required of them, whilst undergoing much fatigue, and suffering from being exposed to the continued rainy weather which they have experienced since leaving Isle aux noix—

Believe me my dear Colonel I feel very sensibly the extent of the obligation I owe you for the very flattering compliment paid to the force under my command on quitting the Island, which will always be remembered by Yours very sincerely—

Dan Pring

ALS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 164–70.

1. He probably means Sailing Master Samuel Kettletas.
2. Later renamed *Saratoga.*
3. *Ticonderoga.*

The Raid on Port Dover

Petty warfare, raids, and retribution characterized fighting on the Niagara peninsula and the northern shore of lakes Ontario and Erie in 1813 and 1814. This unofficial policy culminated in a raid on Port Dover, Upper Canada, that brought recriminations from both sides.

The goal of the expedition was to capture or destroy valuable stores of flour and provisions on the Long Point peninsula on the north shore of Lake Erie. Colonel John Campbell of the 11th U.S. Infantry led the expedition. The navy provided transportation for the troops, landing support, and a shore party. A group of Canadian volunteers fighting for the American cause joined the raiding parties.

The attack quickly got out of hand and the American troops and Canadian volunteers burned or ransacked private homes and property as well as public stores and buildings. Colonel Campbell took it on himself to exact retribution for the burning of Buffalo, New York, four months earlier. His actions were disavowed by the American government and he was tried by a military court-martial but acquitted.

The raid provoked outrage in Canada, and Governor Prevost called for retaliatory measures to be taken on the east coast of the United States. The memory of the burning of Dover would be used to justify the raids on the shores of Chesapeake Bay, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore in 1814.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie 13th. May 1814—

Sir

The *Lawrence* past the Bar yesterday, after almost insurmountable difficulties— She had been Hoged when getting on shore last Fall, and from this circumstance drew upwards of a foot more water than her marks, and the water having fallen to four feet, eight inches on the Bar, it was attended with excessive labour to get her out, I have now outside the Bar three Brigs, including the *Caledonia*, and five Gun boats, and have every department employed to the best advantage to facilitate their outfits—materials, however, begin to be much wanting, none of importance having yet arrived from Pittsburg—oweing, it is said, to the waters having fallen very much since their being shipt from that place, The

greatest difficulty now, upon the spot, is the great deficiency of Boats, there not being more than one for each two vessels, and our having to transport Ballast, Guns, and all materials at least 3 miles to the Fleet, and three fourths of the time, as yet, it has been blowing and raining— The very bad arrangement made in sending the carpenters before their tools is attended with serious inconvenience— The latter have not yet arrived, and if they do not by the time we get though the caulking, I shall discharge one half of them, as it will be very useless to keep them here at high wages & board, without the means to employ them, I shall have gotten through with making most of the spars by that time, and half of them will be amply sufficient for all other purposes, I shall not wait for more boats than can be completed by the time I am ready in other respects— I shall have at least one good anchor boat built, and shall depend upon what I can get at Detroit, to answer other purposes— The Troops from this place both Regulars and militia are ordered to Buffalo— I do not, however, apprehend any danger from their departure, as I have acquired the best information, within a few days past, from the oposite Shore, by which I learn they are building nothing, on any part of this Lake, which can give transportation to Troops, I learn that near Long Point, they have a considerable quantity of Flour deposited in five or six large manufacturing mills, standing within a compass of as many miles, and guarded by only a company, and distant forty or fifty miles from any military post. Those mills supply all the Upper part of the province with bread Stuff. I have proposed to the commander of the military (Colo. Campbell of the 11th. Regiment an inteligent and apparently enterprising officer,) that I will transport as many of the Troops, from this to Buffalo, as can be embarked on board the small vessels, say 750, which will not interfere, very materially, with my outfits, and that we shall wait a favourable opportunity, touch on the oposite Shore, land before daylight, and by a rapid move, distroy those mills, embark the same day and proceed down— He seems full of the Enterprise, and if the weather favours, I am in hopes, it may be accomplished, I know it is your wish to give every possible aid to the movements of the armies, and as those small vessels are equipped for service, I will imploy them to the best advantage— Your letter of the 27th. mentions that some of the officers ordered here will have arrived by the time I received it; but I regret to say that they have not yet done so— How they [recon]cile it to themselves to trifle with their orders, in the way they must have done, is very astonishing to me— I have the honor to remain with great Respect, Sir, Your Obd. Sert.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 63 (M125, Roll No. 36).

Colonel Thomas Talbot, Middlesex Militia, to Major General Phineas Riall, British Army

Turkey Point 16th: May 1814. P:M:

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that the Enemy have reembar[*k*]ed, and their Vessels have Steered towards the extremity of Long-Point where they appear to have come to an Anchor— It is painful to relate the excess's the Americans have committed in this Settlement, unfortunately from the dispersed state of the Militia, it was impossible to assemble the Militia in sufficient time to oppose the landing of Enemy, which took place on the 14th. Int. at 4 oClock in the afternoon at the mouth of Pattersons Creek near Dover. The Weather was so extremely foggy that the approach of the American Vessels was not perceived more than an hour before they landed, I found it therefore necessary to retire as far as Sovereigns Mills, as did also Lieut. Burton with the Detachment of the 19th. Light Dragoons,[1] for the purpose of affording time to the Militia to collect. About one hundred joined me at that Place during the course of yesterday, with whom I returned in the afternoon to Dover, which Village, I am extremely sorry to say was burnt during the Morning, Ryerse's Mills and buildings were also destroyed, after which the Enemy returned to the mouth of Patterson's Creek and returned on board their Vessels— from thence they moved up during the Night opposite to Finches Mills between Ryerse's Mills and Turkey-point where they sent a Strong force and burnt those Mills at an Early hour this Morning, I proceeded with the Militia and the 19th. Light Dragoons to Turkey point, knowing it to be their next object of destruction, The enemy shewed a disposition to land at this place, but after getting as near to the landing place as the Water would admit of, they steered outward. The Dragoons and Militia will remain at this place for the present, that is to Night, as it is not impossible but that the Enemy may return during the Night and attempt to complete their work of destruction in burning the Court House and other buildings— I have every confidence in the determined Spirit of the Militia to oppose the Enemy, at the same time, that I must add that their ardour is greatly encreased by the support of the 19th. Light Dragoons, whose anxiety to face the Enemy cannot be described.

The force of the Americans, that have landed, is estimated at about 800 men commanded by a Lieut. Col. Campbell, Markle and young Grace that deserted last winter with Malleray were with them.[2] I conceived it proper to send for the Detachment of the Royals & Kent Volunteers from Burford, they have arrived at Culvers about an hour back— with this additional force I think I can prevent any further attempts of the present force of the Enemy from succeeding.

I trust that Lieut. General Drummond will be enabled to send some Regulars to Long Point, as it is to be apprehended that the Enemy will ere long return with a strong force, at least, they have declared such to be their intention, and also that you will be so good as to order a supply of ammunition to be forwarded without delay—such as will answer French & American Muskets— I have the honor to be Sir, Yr. very obt. Humble servt.

Thomas Talbot

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 171–74.

1. Lieutenant Benjamin Burton, 19th Light Dragoons, British army.
2. Major Abraham Markle, 1st Lieutenant Oliver Grace, and Major Benajah Mallory served in Joseph Willcock's regiment of Canadian Volunteers.

Colonel John B. Campbell, U.S.A., to Secretary of War Armstrong

Erie pensylvania 18th May 1814

Sir,

I informed you a short time since that I had come on here from put in bay in the prize ships with the regular troops I had with me at that place for their protection. Unwilling to be idle, I obtained the consent of Commodore Sinclair to an enterprize against Long point; and prepared a force of seven hundred men for the purpose, consisting of Capt Chunn's company of the 19th Lieut Macdonald's of the 26th, Lieut Ellisons of the 24th & 27, being two small detachments consolidated, Major Marlins detachment of the 22d. consisting of Capts Kings and Carmacks companies, and a part of Col Fentons regiment of pensylvania militia commanded by the Colonel in person and Majors Gallaway and Wood; amounting to about two hundred and fifty regulars and four hundred militia, to which the Commodore added thirty sailors under the command of Lieut John packet of the navy and twenty marines under Lieut Hyde, to work three pieces of Artillery.[1]

With this force I sailed from this place on the night of the 12th, and hoped to effect a landing on the enemy's shore on the night succeeding. But the winds being adverse, we were disappointed, and it was not until the evening of the 14th, I reached the shore with the first boats about a mile and a half below the town of Dover. A party of Dragoons hovered about, more with a view to ascertain our force, than to resist the debarkation of the troops. I immediately took possession of an elevated piece of ground, which upon examination I found to be well chosen, and bivouaced for the night. On the 15th I marched into the town of Dover without resistance, except a little skirmishing in the morning before I left the camp, between a party I had sent to burn a warehouse, and some of the enemy's militia. No injury was sustained on either side except by one of the enemy, who I was informed was wounded in the shoulder.

The town of Dover being inhabited mostly by revolutionary tories and half pay officers, noted for their oppression of those who were suspected of being friendly to the success of our arms; some of them also having taken a part in the burning and plundering of Buffaloe: I determined to make them feel the effects of that conduct, they had pursued towards others. I therefore had burnt under my orders the whole village and Col Nicol's Mill, sawmill and distillery, Col Rierson's mill, carding machine and distillery in the neighbourhood, and Mr Finch's mill, sawmill and distillery the whole perhaps amounting in value to about $100,000. I then reembarked the troops, and arrived at this place this morning.

Whilst at Dover, several country people came in, and from a very intelligent man on whose information, I was told by Capt Markle of the Canada volunteers who accompanied me, I might implicitly rely, I received the following account of the enemy force in that part of the province above York.

Fifteen hundred men on the Niagara river, six hundred of those garrison, Fort Niagara, and four hundred Fort George: Thirty at Burlington heights: twenty regulars and twenty militia at Burford near the Grand river, fourteen militia near Oxford, and fifty Dragoons at Long point.

I could Sir, with the force under my command have marched to Burlington heights, but for the want of supplies and cooperation with the other parts of the Army, I could not have remained there. With great deference, I would however beg leave to remark, that by this route from Long point to Burlington, which is said to be a good one, the enemy's retreat from Niagara river could be completely cut off. If a force of fifteen hundred or two thousand men were to pass over from this place, whilst the Army below occupied the attention of the enemy, they could reach the head of the Lake, seize the post at the heights, which is not now strong, but can be made so, and make a stand in the heart of the country. It is not, Sir, by impressions made on the margin of the enemy's territory that we are to conquer it; we must penetrate to the interior, give confidence to the people, and establish a rallying point for the disaffected, of which description there are great numbers in the upper province. The oppressions of the government are becoming insupportable a slight suspicion will send the most respectable to the jails of York and Kingston.

This expedition was undertaken by me without orders and upon my own responsibility. I have done the enemy some injury and returned without the loss of a man. I did communicate with Brig Genl Scott on the subject, who did not disapprove of it. I am ordered by Brig Genl Scott to join him with all the regular troops at this place. Having no opposing orders and not wishing to return to the 8th Military District,[2] in which I have served long enough, I will proceed to Buffaloe as soon as the troops get a little repose. I enclose you a copy of my order prescribing the order of battle and of march. I am with great respect Your obdt Hble Servt

John B Campbell
Col U S Army by brevet.

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, C-297 (7) (M221, Roll No. 51).

1. Captain John T. Chunn, 19th U.S. Infantry; 1st Lieutenant William McDonald, 26th U.S. Infantry; 1st Lieutenant Uriah Allison, 24th U.S. Infantry; Major Ralph Marlin, 22d U.S. Infantry; Captains Sampson S. King and Jacob Carmack, 22d U.S. Infantry; Colonel James B. Fenton, Major Samuel Gallaway, and Major James Wood, Pennsylvania Militia; Lieutenant John Packett, U.S.N.; 1st. Lieutenant Benjamin Hyde, U.S.M.C.

2. The 8th Military District encompassed Kentucky, Ohio, and the territories of Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop *Niagara*
Erie 19th. May 1814—

Sir

In my last letter of the 13th. Inst. I stated to you that I was about giving transport to the Troops stationed here, in such of the small vessels as were ready for service and not otherwise employed, from this to Buffalo, and that if the weather would admit they would call at Long Point, and endeavour to distroy such Stores as the Enemy might have there, and several large manufacturing mills, on which most of the Upper part of the Province was dependent for Bread Stuff.—

To forward those views I placed under the command of Colo. Campbell—3 pieces of light Artillery maned from the Gun Boats and commanded by Lieut

Packett—this party was covered by Lieut Hide with 25 marines— They were two days on shore, succeeded in distroying several valuable mills, and some Public property, with very little oposition: but I am sorry to learn that several private Houses were also distroyed, which was so contrary to my wish, and to the idea I have of our true policy to those people, that I used every argument against it before his departure, and was under the impression that he accorded with me most fully. He has explained to me that he was urged to do so by people favourable to our cause, on that side, who pointed out those persons as old revolutionary Tories who had been very active, not only in oppressing our friends in Canada, but in aiding all in their powers the burning and plundering Buffalo— However much, such characters may deserve our vengeance, I do not think it correct that our judgements should be past upon them from their merely being designated by a partisan Officer or Citizen who may, and no doubt are, in many instances, biast by individual motives— He, however, will explain the whole affair to the Government, in the Official report he makes, The impossibility of getting the militia to volunteer for an expedition without its being made known to its fullest extent was, no doubt cause of the Enemy being informed of the contemplated attack, and their having moved several thousand barrels of Flour to the niagara Frontier just before the arrival of our party— We learn of no Troops being to the westward of York, of any consequence. There are 400 at that place— 30 at Burlington heights— 500 at Fort George, and 700 in Fort Niagara,

A Capt. Marcle, one of the Canadians of Willcox's party, was over on the expedition— He has sent several of his friends into their military Posts to gain all the information in their powers, which will be sent over to us on sunday next by a person we shall take off from there— Lieuts. Woodhouse and Delainey[1] arrived the evening before the last. But five ordinary seamen have yet arrived, nor have the Carpenters tools from Philadelphia yet come to hand This bad arrangement has put me to much inconvenience— I have, notwithstanding, nearly completed the sparing, and shall, I hope, have the necessary Boats built by the time the Bread and other articles, equally necessary, come to hand— I have a letter by the last mail from Mr. Ormsby,[2] stating that most of the articles, required by my requisition, were shipped, and I hope most ardently that they, with a reinforcement of Seamen, will soon arrive, as I am anxious in the extreme to be on my way above— Seamen are very much wanting: a number of those so rated here are but indifferent ordinary Seamen, and their terms are daily expiring, and they insisting on their discharge— The best men I am in hopes I shall prevail on to stay at least until the Fall, but they will not enter for a longer time or will they receive the Bounty— A detachment of marines is very much wanting here— When leaving a Corporals Guard for the Public Store house, which is indispensably necessary, there will not be a sufficiency for one Brig— A letter from Mr. Ormsby, this moment received states that he had selected and shipt on the 17th. Inst., all the articles immediately wanting to complete the Fleet for service, and that the persons are bound to perform their water carriage in 15 days; and I shall make the necessary arrangements for their being immediately brought from Waterford here— Should men and officers arrive, nothing can interfere to detain me longer— I shall not wait for extra Stores, but let

them follow in the provision vessel— I have the honor to remain with high Respect, Sir, Your Obd, Sert,

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 81 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Acting Lieutenant Bladen Dulaney was ordered to escort seamen from the sloop of war *Argus* to Erie.
2. Oliver Ormsby, acting navy agent at Pittsburgh.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston, May 27th. 1814

Sir,

In my letter, which I had the honor to address to Your Excellency, on the 21st. Inst. I stated, that a force of the Enemy, at that time supposed to be about 300, had landed near Dover, on Lake Erie.— I have now the honor to transmit a letter from Major General Riall, covering a Report of Colonel Talbot, commanding the Militia of the London District, on the subject.— Your Excellency will, however, perceive, that the force of the Enemy has been since computed to consist of about 800 Men, whose conduct has been disgraced, during their short stay ashore, by every act of wanton barbarity, and of illiberal and unjustifiable outrage.— Not only a large store, fitted up as a Barrack for Militia, but every private house, and other building belonging to the peaceable inhabitants of the Village, and neighbourhood of Dover, has been reduced to ashes; together with Ryarse's, and Finch's Mills, between that place, & Turkey Point.— The Court House, and Buildings, at Turkey Point were only saved, by the appearance of the Militia, and a Detachment of the 19th. Light Dragoons; both of which Corps, I have very great satisfaction in acquainting Your Excellency, evinced the strongest anxiety to come in contact with the Enemy.—

I have likewise received the most satisfactory accounts, from Lieutenant Colonel Parry,[1] of the 103rd Regt. relative to the conduct of the Grenadier Company of that Corps, and the Light Company of the 89th. placed under his immediate orders.— The Latter he says are wild; but with attention and management perfectly tractable and orderly.— And Lieutenant Colonel Parry bestows much just commendation on the zeal and alacrity, with which the Militia assembled, considering the distance from whence they were to be collected.— The Lieutenant Colonel from all these circumstances feels convinced, that, had not the Enemy retired to their Shipping, before his arrival, his little band, encreased by a few of the Rangers and of the Kent Volunteers, as well as of some persons, and some Wyandot Indians, who joined him from Amherstburg, would have made the Enemy pay dear for their outrages.— He states, that but one house, in which a sick woman resided, was left standing, between Paterson's Creek, and Turkey Point.— And the Enemy, on retiring, avowed their intention to destroy Port Talbot in a similar manner.— And as their Officers appear determined to pursue the same system, throughout the whole of the Western Frontier, I feel convinced, that nothing but the most vigorous opposition to such disgraceful proceedings will prevent a recurrence of them.— The accompanying

Declaration made by Captain Holmes,[2] Commanding at Amherstburg, to the Inhabitants of the New Settlement is a proof of the Enemy's nefarious intentions.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant.

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 196–99.

1. Lieutenant Colonel Parry J. Parry, 103d Regiment of Foot, British army.
2. Captain Andrew H. Holmes, U.S.A., was promoted to major 9 April 1814.

The Royal Navy on the Lakes

British ships, officers, and seamen on the northern lakes came under direct control of the Board of Admiralty under new orders issued to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo in January 1814.[1] The Admiralty's original orders, issued 19 March 1813, placed Commodore Yeo in command of the squadron but also required him to operate with the concurrence of Governor-General Sir George Prevost and to cooperate with the military department under the governor.[2]

The Admiralty's new orders placed Yeo on an equal footing with other Royal Navy squadrons and dockyards and allowed him more responsibility and more autonomy in command decisions. Commodore Yeo received these new orders in May and began reorganizing the squadron. The Admiralty renamed the British vessels on the lakes in order to avoid duplicating names of vessels already on the Royal Navy list. Under the new instructions, Commodore Yeo could reward his promising young officers with acting post captaincies.

1. See pp. 388–91.
2. See Dudley, Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 435–37 for the Admiralty's instructions to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo.*

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 11

H.M.S. *Prince Regent*
at anchor off Sackett's Harbour
21st. May 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you for their Lordships' information that I have placed the former Squadron (as near as I possess the means and the nature of the service will admit) on the Establishment they have directed. For this purpose I have appointed Captain OConor (late civil Commissioner) to act in this Ship bearing my Pendant, Captain Popham to act as Post Captain in the *Montreal* and Captain Spilsbury to act as Post Captain in the *Niagara.*

As to Pursers, Gunners, Boatswains and Carpenters I have not Men qualified to hold such situations. I have only seven Midshipmen who have passed, two of whom I think alone deserve promotion, and the Captains of the Squadron cannot find above half the number of Men worthy of being rated Petty Officers agreable to their Lordships' new Establishment.

We are particularly deficient in Artificers of every description.

I have the honor to transmit a copy of a Scheme I have issued to the Squadron for the payment of the Seamen and Marines, conforming as closely as possible to their Lordships instructions on that head, and which I hope may be approved of.

With respect to the difference of the Seamen's pay on the Lakes and the general service, I feel it my duty to assure their Lordships, I do not consider it more than a just equivalent, for the following reasons— In the first place all the labour of the Dock yard in building the Ships, Stores &c has been performed by the Seamen, who remaining six Months of the Year on Shore &c. are obliged to take up double or treble the quantity of Slop Clothing they would have occasion for on any other Station. Secondly—The great scarcity of and exorbitant charges for every article of life— Thirdly—the very great privations in fresh meat, vegetables, or any thing that is nourishing, in a country subject to the Lake fever and Dysentery. His Majesty's Squadron has not had a fresh beef day since the 24th of February last, nor can they hope for any until the month of July. A general Officer is frequently on the Same fare with his Men.

The Ships of the Squadron are very short of Complement agreable to the Admiralty Establishment, and the third ship building at Kingston, (which will be ready in August), will require a Complement equal to fight one hundred and two Guns.

The Enemy's large ship which is launched will carry thirty-two long 32 Pounders on the main and thirty-four long 24 Pounders on the Spar Deck. Their two new Brigs mount twenty-two 42 Pounder carronades, one long 24 and two long 18 Pounders each— Another ship of 140 feet Keel will be launched in three weeks, I therefore leave their Lordships to judge what I have to contend against.

Though the Artificers of this Country have been receiving very extravagant wages, it is found impossible to retain them in consequence of the great privations they undergo, no provisions being to be procured more than what Government allows. They soon become tired and anxious to rejoin their families at Quebec, which being four hundred miles distant little prospect is afforded of their again returning. Under those circumstances I have to submit the great advantage the public service would derive from there being sent to this country a gang of Shipwrights regularly entered and bound by agreement to serve a stated period; these may be encouraged, if necessary, by the promise of grants of land proportioned to the merits of their claims.

There is likewise much wanted, to assist me, a Civil Officer well versed in Accounts, acquainted with the Rules and forms practised at Somerset House,[1] and on Foreign Stations, (that the same may be observed at the different Posts on the Lakes in Canada or as near thereto as the peculiar nature of the service will admit) and one in whom their Lordships may feel disposed to place much confidence, it being necessary to lodge in his hands, during my absence, large sums to make the necessary disbursements on account of purchasing materials for, and constructing vessels of such force as were launched this spring and are now

in progress. It would be endless to detail to their Lordships the substitutes used, and difficulties to be overcome in constructing vessels of force, in a country so new and deficient of materials. Much has been, and will be performed by perseverance and unceasing exertion.

The necessity there exists that the Officer presiding in my absence should merit the greatest confidence, will be seen, when their Lordships are informed, he must as regarding the public expenditure be governed by local circumstances, and early information of what Force the Enemy are constructing, that timely provision may be made for keeping pace with their exertions.

I beg leave to call their Lordships' attention to a very worthy Man and excellent Officer Mr. James Mackenzie Master of this Ship. He has performed the duty of Master Attendant in Kingston Yard ever since I have been in the Country, and tho' Commissioner Wodehouse[2] in a letter to me declared, that with the whole strength of Halifax Yard he could not make the sails for the two new frigates, but would transmit my demand to England; yet Mr. Mackenzie without the aid of any regular Sailmaker cut out all the sails, and had them ready by the opening of the Navigation, tho' I could not procure the canvass before the middle of February. He has also by a judicious arrangement and conversion of stores saved much to the Public, and without which this Squadron could not have been equipped until the arrival of the supplies from England which will not reach Kingston before July—

I therefore beg leave (if their Lordships have not already appointed an Officer to that situation) to recommend the above Gentleman. I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient humble servant.

James Lucas Yeo.
Commodore and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 96–97, 102–3.

1. Somerset House was the London address of the Navy Office.
2. Captain the Honorable Philip Wodehouse, Commissioner of the Royal Navy dockyard at Halifax.

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander F. I. Cochrane, R.N.

H M.S *Prince Regent*
Off Sackett's Harbour. 26th May 1814

Sir

Having received several communications from their Lordships, announcing an intention of sending out Frigates and Brigs in frame, Stores &c. but being perfectly silent with respect to a reinforcement of Seamen, which of all things is the most important.— From the strong representations made to Government by Sir John Warren, Bt. Sir George Prevost, and myself I did not entertain a doubt on the subject, particularly as Sir John desires me to send back the Crews of the Sloops, immediately my reinforcements arrive in the Spring

The Enemy's large ship which is launched will carry 32 long 32 Prs. on the Main and 34 long 24 Prs. on the Spar Deck: their two new Brigs mount 22–42

Pr. Carronades 1 long 24 and 2 long 18 Prs. each. another Ship of 140 feet Keel will be launched in Three weeks, I therefore leave you to judge what I have to contend against—

His Majesty's Squadron on this Lake are all very short of complement, and I have not a man for the Ship on the Stocks which is to carry 102 Guns—

I therefore feel it my Duty, (as I am directed by Their Lordships to apply to You for Seamen &c. when necessary) to represent to You Sir that unless I receive a sufficient number of Seamen to man the above Ship, This Province will be lost to His Majesty in the course of the Summer, and all our Efforts rendered useless I have the Honor to be Sir Your most Obedient Humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo
Commmodore and Commander in Chief

LS, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2326, pp. 125–125a.

Reassessing the 1814 Campaign

Disagreements and doubts about the goals of the military and naval campaign began to surface in Madison's administration in May and June 1814. Secretary of War Armstrong questioned the use of naval force on Lake Huron in his memorandum of 1 May.[1] News of the British attack on Oswego, which reached Washington in early June, exposed the lack of military and naval coordination on Lake Ontario. It became apparent that larger ships would have to be constructed on Lake Ontario to match the British shipbuilding program. There were rumors, too, that Napoleon's army had been defeated in France, and the British would be able to send seasoned veterans to fight in North America.

In his letter of 25 May, William Jones expressed his dismay at the lack of a coordinated, combined campaign against Canada. President Madison called an urgent cabinet meeting for 7 June to discuss military goals for the year.

The President and his cabinet agreed on an ambitious four-prong attack against Canada in 1814. A joint expedition would be sent into Lake Huron from Lake Erie to recapture Mackinac and destroy British shipbuilding activities on Lake Huron, and a second expedition would be launched from the north shore of Lake Erie across the Niagara Peninsula toward York. The army would also secure the Saint Lawrence River above Kingston, and a movement would be made toward Montreal in an attempt to cut off British communications between Quebec and Kingston. A direct attack on Kingston was apparently not considered.[2]

These plans hinged on the naval contest on Lake Ontario and the ability of Commodore Chauncey to secure naval control of that waterway as early in the season as possible. An additional goal was thrown open in a comment by Secretary of War Armstrong's instructions to Brigadier General Brown on 10 June: "To give however immediate occupation to your troops & to prevent their blood from stagnating—Why not take Fort Erie and its garrison?" This comment would initiate some of the fiercest fighting of the war in the military campaign for the Niagara peninsula.

1. See p. 459.
2. See also Stagg, Mr. Madison's War, *pp. 387–91, and Skeen,* John Armstrong, *chapter 10.*

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 80
Honble. Wm. Jones
Secy. of the Navy
Washington

U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 23d May. 1814

Sir

As I have already had the honor of stating to the Navy Department in my communication of the 15th. of March the number of Men we should require to man the Squadron on this Lake (exclusive of the Schooners— I hope that I may not be considered importunate in again calling your attention to a Subject of such vital importance to the Nation and my own reputation

Notwithstanding my present difficulties I calculate to get all my Guns and Stores here on or before the 10th of June about which time we shall launch another ship 10 feet longer than the *General Pike* and if we have Men the whole Squadron will Sail before the end of June

This I conceive to be important as the Enemy is driving on with great force with his large Ship at Kingston which is intended to be an 80 Gun Ship upon two decks but will mount 100 Guns or upwards.— there are large reinforcements of Officers and Seamen expected at Kingston in all June besides a number of Carpenters— The Enemys Ships which are now off this place are uncommonly well manned— the *Prince Regent* having 500 Men on board including Marines and the others in proportion this information is from a source which cannot be doubted first from a deserter from their Fleet— second from one of the Seamen taken Prisoner at Oswego— third from an American Citizen who has been a Prisoner on board of the *Prince Regent* for the last 10 days and was landed yesterday— this gentleman took some pains to ascertain the force of the Enemy while he was on board.—

Our recruiting prospects are not encourageing Commodore Bainbridge informed me some time since that he should not be able to send me any More Men from Boston and the recruiting Officers at New York and Philadelphia also inform me that their prospects are not flattering

The Discharges of Men whose term of Service has expired averages from 5 to 7 per day some of them reenter but the greater part (and generally the best) push for the Atlantic States— some of these get rid of their Money at Utica and Albany and enlist in the Army with the idea of being transferred to the Navy when they arrive here, but it appears that power only rests with the Secretary at War—

Could not an arrangement be made with the War department to transfer the Seamen which are in the different Regiments at this place to the Navy upon our returning the bounty which has been given by the recruiting Officer of the Army and charge the Men so transferred with the difference between the bounty given as Soldiers and that allowed as Seamen we should then save the expense of transporting the Men from the Atlantic and I am confident that we should get from 100 to 150 good Seamen who are now here as Soldiers— many of them were some of our best petty Officers and are extremely anxious to be transferred to the Navy— it is certain that they will never make good Soldiers.—

Knowing the lively interest which you take in every thing relating to the Service and that you will do all that can be done for this Station consistent with the good of the whole service I shall rest satisfied that if Men can be spared from other Stations that they will be ordered in time to mann the Squadron. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, Yr. Mo Ob St

I. C.

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to President James Madison

Navy Department
May 25. 1814

Dear Sir

The enclosed are copies of the last received from Com. Chauncey. I regret to find that the enemy raised the schooner which had been sunk with the guns and stores onboard and that we have lost seven guns instead of two as I had supposed.

Except the heavy guns the loss is unimportant as the entire upper deck battery of the *President* Frigate consisting of 42 pd. Carronades were sometime since forwarded from New York by my order to provide against any casualty and ensure a surplus. These will form an excellent substitute for those that were lost.

Every precaution has been employed and every possible exertion used by this Department and those under its direction to get the heavy stores on with dispatch and safety, the difficulties have been almost insurmountable and it is painful to reflect that a point so important and which of necessity our heavy stores must pass, or be greatly delayed; should have been left to the defense of a handful of brave men in an old mouldering fortification.

It is consoling however to reflect upon the judicious and gallant conduct of this little band and the severe chastisement they inflicted upon the enemy

Last year our plans were marr'd by the defenceless state in which Sacketts Harbour was left in the absence of the fleet and consequent destruction of our stores and now we are again delayed by the defenceless state of Oswego and the disaster consequent thereon.

I have thought that military and naval cooperation should be reciprocal and that if the command of the Lake is paramount to every other consideration that protection to the stores during their transit without which that command cannot be attained, would have been considered as the first military object. The defenceless state of Oswego has long since been a subject of remark and of apprehension. We shall probably learn to day the object if not the result of the subsequent expedition of the enemys squadron, which Com Chauncey says was steering toward Oswego or Genessee river.

I have some apprehension that his object may be to push forward to Oswego falls in order to meet and destroy our stores in which should he succeed the consequence would be disastrous indeed.

The squadron of the enemy is very formidable—is said to be exceedingly well officered and manned, and his means of increasing his force infinitely trancend ours. His ordnance and naval stores, and equipments, are all prepared to any required extent, and the transportation by water easy expeditious and uninter-

rupted along the whole line of the St. Laurence to Kingston, and as to seamen he has only to transfer the crews of any given number of his superfluous ships.

Our means are comparatively narrow, and our transportation difficult, distant, tedious, and expensive, in the highest degree. In weight it has exceeded 1500, tons this Season along a line from Baltimore Philada. and New York to Sacketts Harbour.

The transportation alone will amount to $200,000 we have stripped our Atlantic ships of their crews and in so doing I fear have exposed them to destruction by the enemy particular near New London unless our military defence shall protect them. All the men that could be recruited with the encreased pay and bounty for the Lake service have been and unless we strip the few remaining ships of their crews or the flotillas and leave our harbours exposed our physical means are nearly exhausted. Should the hostile squadrons meet, the contest will be bloody and probably decisive of the fate of one or the other. Whether vanquished or victor we are sure to gain honor.

Have we an adequate object in that quarter for all this hazard and expenditure of blood & treasure?

I do not understand that we are prepared for or have any view to offensive military operations. The enemy is perfectly secure at Kingston and I suspect equally so on the Niagara frontier.

Then is it exclusively a naval contest and even if we fight at all it will be on unequal terms for the enemy secure in Kingston will chuse his time circumstances and force. Not so in the ocean where twenty of his ships cannot check the depredations of one of our ships or prevent the capture of his single Ships. Is it for the defense of that frontier? Than is one fourth of our naval force employed for the defence of a wilderness, while our Atlantic frontier—our flourishing Cities, towns & villages, cultivated farms, rising manufactories, public works & edifices; are deprived of the services and protection of this valuable body of men, the loss of whom by any casualty would be to the nation a deep calamity

Judging of the reported encreased preparations of the enemy, by the great exertions he has recently made and the importance attached to the possession of Ontario he is now pursueing his true policy, which appears to me to be, to tempt us to follow his example and thus free him from trouble on the ocean and expose our Atlantic frontier to his depredations.

Feeling the force of these reflections (whether they are really entitled to weight or not) duty induced me to exhibit them to your view, and you will receive them for what they are worth. Do not imagine Sir that these observations are excited by undue apprehension or any indisposition to pursue the original plan of operations, so long as the circumstances and views which gave rise to it, shall continue the same but they appear to me to have entirely changed with the aspect of our military affairs and that the war in that quarter is and must from necessity be purely defensive. Not the slightest relaxation has taken or shall take place in this Department [everything that] could or can be done has and shall be done.

The upper Lakes we have and can maintain at a moderate expense of men and treasure so long as we keep the military command of the passage between Erie and Huron, but if that should be lost we shall lose the command of Huron and Michigan unless a military and naval post is created at the head of Lake Michigan (which appears to me extremely important) with which we could

keep the command of both lakes although [— —?] communication should be cut off. With sincere regard I am your Obdt. Servt.

W. Jones

I had written this before I saw the National Intelligencer of this day which states from the Albany Digest that the British were again at Oswego.

Draft, PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers. Two words in the last paragraph are illegible.

President James Madison to Cabinet

June 3. 1814

J. Madison requests a consultation with the Heads of Dept. on Tuesday next at 11 O C.

The object is to decide on the plan of campaign which our means naval & military render most eligible.

Meantime the Secretary of the Navy will cause to be made out, & send over

1. a Statement of the naval force on the Lakes Erie, Ontario, & Champlain, respectively, now ready for service; & the portion of that on L. Erie, destined for L. Huron

2. State & prospects of additional naval force, in preparation for Lakes Ontario & Champlain, respectively.

3. State & Stations of vessels of war (including the Steam vessel), Gun boats & barges, for the defence of the Atlantic frontier.

4. Naval force of the Enemy (including marines) according to best information in the Navy Dept., near & in the Atlantic waters of the U.S.

5. do. understood to be destined for our Coast

J. M

LS, PHi, Uselma Clark Smith Collection, William Jones Papers. See Appendix for Secretary of the Navy Jones's report on the state of the navy.

Notes on Cabinet Meeting

In Cabinet June 7. 1814— present J. Monroe, G.W.C Genl. A., W. Jones, R. Rush.[1]

The subject, the opening of the Campaign,—

1. determined nem: con:[2] on an expedition into L. Huron, of 4 or 5 vessels, and 800, or 1000 troops—the first object to occupy Machedash & St. Josephs—leaving abt. 500 to hold at least the former.

2. do nem: con. (except Mr. Monroe who did not positively oppose but thought the measure hazardous) on an expedition, with the forces under Genl. Brown, from L— Erie, near long Point, to Burlington Heights, preparatory to

further operations for reducing the Peninsula, & proceeding towards York, &c; the expedition to depend on Commodore Chauncey's getting the command of the L: without wch.— supplies could not be secured, and with which they might be conveyed safely by water from Depots on the S. side of L. Ontario.

3. do. Nem. con. 14 or 15. Armed Boats to be built at Sacket's Harbour to command the St. L[3] under protection of posts to be supplied by detachments from Izard's command; so as to intercept the Water communication between Montreal & Kingston—

4. do. nem: con: the main force under Izard, to make demonstrations towards Montreal, as a diversion of the Eny. from operations westward & affording a chance of compelling Prevost to fight disadvantageously, or break up his connection with L. Champlain

D, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1 (Roll No. 16). Docketed: "Cabinet plan for commencing the Campaign for 1814."

1. The names Campbell and Armstrong were spelled out in another hand. Cabinet members present were Secretary of State James Monroe, Secretary of the Treasury George W. Campbell, Secretary of War John Armstrong, Secretary of the Navy William Jones, and Attorney General Richard Rush.
2. Nem. con, an abbreviation for *nemine contradicente,* no one contradicting.
3. The word "Laurence" is inserted here in another hand.

Secretary of War Armstrong to Major General George Izard, U.S.A.

Major Genl. Izard — War Dept. June 10th. 1814.

Sir,

I avail myself of the return of Colonel Snelling[1] to communicate to you the general objects & outline of the present Campaign.—

1st. Capt. Sinclair will repair to Detroit with a part of the fleet under his Command. He will there embark Lt. Colonel Croghan and as large a number of troops, with the necessary supplies of ammunition and provisions as his Vessels will accommodate. He will then enter Lake Huron and proceed to Gloucester bay, where the troops will debark, attack & carry the enemy's new establishment at Matschedash—fortify and garrison that place, and open with General Brown a communication, if another part of the plan to be next detailed, shall succeed. This effected the fleet will go on to the mouth of St. Joseph's and to Mackinaw &ca.

2nd. What remains of the fleet at Buffaloe, will be put under orders to transport General Brown's Division to the Canada shore. The place of landing will be selected in the discretion of the General, and under the best information of which he may be possessed. Burlington-Heights will be his first object. These he will fortify, and so soon as Commodore Chauncey shall be in condition to co-operate with him (say the 15th. of July) proceed to attack the Enemy's posts on the peninsula in succession &ca.

3rd. A number of armed Gallies (such as those employed on Lake Champlain) will be immediately constructed at Sackett's Harbor and, while we have the ascendancy on Lake Ontario, pushed into the St. Laurence, with orders to occupy the rapids of that River & thus intercept the water communication between Montreal and Kingston. The better to effect this object, a post will be established on the South Bank of the St. Laurence, strongly fortified, garrisoned by a competent force (say 1500 men) and in case of attack, sustained by the 1st. or division of the right. The moment for beginning this establishment will be that which assures to us the command of Lake Ontario. An Engineer will be employed by the War Department to select the scite: and

4th. Another post of Lake Champlain adapted to the purpose of cooperating with & covering our fleet on that Lake & of excluding the enemy's flotilla therefrom, will be immediately selected, established & garrisoned. This post you will be pleased to select.—

LB, DNA, RG107, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, Vol. 7, pp. 269–70 (M6, Roll No. 7).

1. Colonel Josiah Snelling, U.S.A.

Secretary of War Armstrong to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

Major Genl. Brown. — War Department June 10th. 1814

Sir,

This dispatch will be handed to you by Lt. Frazier of the 15th. Regt. of Infantry.[1] It contains the necessary construction both as regards the objects to be attained & the means of attaining them.—

1st. Cap. Sinclair will go up to Detroit with a part of the fleet. He will there embark Colo. Croghan and as large a number of troops as his Vessels will accommodate, with the necessary supplies of ammunition & provisions. He will then enter lake Huron and proceed to Gloucester bay, where the troops will debark, attack & carry the Enemy's new establishment at Matchedash, fortify & garrison that place & open with you a communication, if another part of the plan, to be next detailed, shall succeed. This effected, the fleet will go on to the mouth of St. Josephs & Makinaw.—

2nd. What remains of the fleet in lake Erie will be put under orders to transport your Division to the Canada Shore. The place of landing will be selected under the best information you possess. From Colo. Campbell's report & other advices it is believed, that the point marked A. in the inclosed sketch, is best adapted to the purpose & that your approach to Burlington bay, should be made by the route, marked C, as laid down in Faden's map.[2] On reaching the heights of that place, your first study will be to fortify the position in such way as to cover your whole force, taking care to establish a small interior work of increased strength, which will render the position tenable by a reduced force & which, in particular, will be so constructed as to command the only road, as we understand, that leads from York to Fort George. Thus situated, you will find yourself in the heart of the Enemy's Country—in the center of his military Stations & prepared to fall upon & carry these in succession.—

A question arises here, whether this expediton should be hazarded immediately & as an isolated movement, or whether it should be suspended until we

obtain an ascendancy on lake Ontario, & as part of a greater plan? This question turns on circumstances which I shall briefly examine. In all military operations, we must, as you know, begin with the belly. Our attention must therefore be first directed to the quantity of provisions on hand, to the means of transporting them, and to the expedients for supply, should either be deficient.— You ought to be assured of at least one months provision. This you possess—but how is it to be transported? In boats to the Canada shore & thence by land, in waggons or on pack horses. But 5000 men require for one month's subsistence 300,000 lb. weight of bread & meat. Calculate then the lading of a 2 horse waggon at 1500 lbs. & that of a pack horse at 250 lbs. & your train will be enormous, difficult to sustain, perhaps impossible to procure. But besides provisions, you must also carry Artillery, Ammunition, medicines, Hospital Stores, camp Equipage, tents, Spare musquets &ca. &ca. Where is such number of Waggons or pack horses to be found? In Canada? No.— They also must be carried with you, which necessarily leads me to state another difficulty. I have said you must cross the lake in that part of the fleet which shall be left in Lake Erie. But the Secretary of the Navy does not calculate on more being left than will transport 800 men at one trip. Whence it follows, that 5000 men will require more than six trips—besides what may be wanted for your tents, Artillery, provisions, Waggons & horses. Is it to be supposed that the Enemy will remain ignorant of these repeated movements, or that knowing them, they will either mistake their object, or be inattentive to the means of defeating it? We have no right to think so. They are well informed, vigilant and skilful. Taking for granted, however, that we had conquered all difficulties arising from land & water transportation, and that we had actually got hold of Burlington heights—are we in condition to avail ourselves of that position, so long as the Enemy has command of Lake Ontario? Could we advance to the reduction of York or fort George—with any hope of success, without the aid of a fleet? Could we even maintain ourselves at Burlington for any length of time without this aid, and if not, ought we to hazard the reproach of a retreat, or the disgrace of a surrender? The conclusion from all this is—that though the expedition be approved—it's execution must be suspended, 'till Chauncey shall have gained the command of the lake. That accomplished, there will be no hazard of interruption to our march from the enemy—nor any necessity for loading ourselves & retarding our movements, by a long provision train.— Burlington will be easily supplied from 18 mile Creek or the Gennessee River, where depôts have been long established. Other considerations lead to the same conclusion. This course will give time to Genl. Porter to assemble his Corps—to Genl McArthur to forward the recruits of the 17th. 19th & 28th. Regiments—to those of the 9th. 11th. 21st. & 25th. to join their Regiments—to the 1st 22d. & 23d. Regts. to reach their destination & for the Boats now at Detroit to be brought down to Buffaloe.— Commodore Chauncey says "the fleet will be ready in all the month of June"—to which the Secretary of the Navy adds two weeks, for accidents—making it the 15th. of July before they will be actually on the Lake & fit for action with the Enemy— On the whole therefore it will be seen, that the expedition is contingent—& that if our fleet on lake Ontario be beaten or destroyed, it will not be undertaken.—

To give however immediate occupation to your troops & to prevent their blood from stagnating—Why not take Fort Erie & it's garrison, stated at 3 or 400 men? Land between point Abino & Erie in the night—assail the fort by land & Water—push forward a Corps to seize the Bridge of Chippeway, & be governed by circumstances in either stopping there, or going further. Boats may

follow & feed you. If the Enemy concentrates his whole force on this line, as I think he will, it will not exceed 2000 men. But garrisons must be left to occupy forts George & Niagara— Whence arises the probability that he will not shew in the field more than 1600 regular troops. With these you should not decline a Contest.— A successful one, on our part, will enable you to invest Fort George & to avail yourself, in the most direct way, of Commodore Chauncey's aid (should he beat Yeo) in reducing that place & Fort Niagara.—

LB, DNA, RG107, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, Vol. 7, pp. 257–59 (M6, Roll No. 7). The maps mentioned in the text are not found with this letter book copy.

1. Lieutenant Donald Fraser, 15th Infantry, U.S.A.
2. British map publisher William Faden (1750?–1836) was geographer to the king during the American Revolution.

Reinforcing Michilimackinac

The outpost of Fort Michilimackinac was badly in need of reinforcements and supplies in 1814. Captain Richard Bullock, commander of the fort since September 1813, knew additional officers, soldiers, and sailors were also needed if the British were to resist the American assault that was likely to occur in 1814.

In February, Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDouall was ordered to the Nottawasaga River to construct batteaux and transport troops and supplies to Mackinac. McDouall was an experienced veteran who participated in several campaigns on Lake Ontario, including the attack on Sackets Harbor in May 1813, and was stationed on the Niagara peninsula in 1814. When the ice finally broke up on Lake Huron, his party of twenty-one seamen, eleven artillerymen, and two companies of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment set out in twenty-four batteaux to cross 360 miles of open lake to Mackinac Island. They departed 25 April and arrived 18 May after a stormy and icy passage, carrying with them the much-needed military stores and provisions.

Lieutenant Colonel McDouall's authority on Lake Huron, however, was challenged by young Lieutenant Newdigate Poyntz, who apparently perceived himself commodore of everything afloat on the lake, including the batteaux that McDouall had constructed at Nottawasaga that winter. The young lieutenant was speedily replaced by Lieutenant Miller Worsley, who would prove more willing to participate in joint British operations on Lake Huron.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT MCDOUALL, BRITISH ARMY, TO
LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY

Copy/ Michilimackinac 26th. May 1814

My dear General,

The *Nancy* being just under way, I refer you to my Letter to Col. Harvey for the particulars of our Voyage. I avail myself of the few minutes left me before

she sails, to urge in the strongest terms, the necessity of Mr. Crookshank being immediately directed to deposit for us at the mouth of the Nottawasaga River, another supply of provisions consisting of from three to four hundred Barrels of Flour and Pork; otherwise this place will soon be in danger from the want of that article, owing to the great issues to the Indians, which I have curtailed as much as possible, even at the risque of offending them. I also daily expect Mr. Dickson, with from three to four hundred more, which will encrease our issues to about 1600 ₱ day. Mr. Crookshank should also be directed to send us

20 Stand of Arms, left at Lake Simcoe.

The Stocks and Clasps I ordered.

200 pairs more Shoes, & 400 more American Socks.

A Good supply of Leather to repair the others, there not being any here.

As much of the Flour and Pork should be in Bags as possible, to stow in Canoes, as I may have no other means of getting them.

Ten Casks of Rum, of about 16 Gallons each.

No step has yet been taken to fit out the *Nancy*; her former Commr. Capt. Mc.Intosh gave his opinion that she was not fit to cut down, or worth it, and I silently acquiesced in Lieut. Poyntz's opinion, that even if fitted out, she could not shew herself before the force which the enemy could bring against her, because I derive more advantage from her guns on shore than I have any hope of doing from her being equipped with them. I most heartily wish that Sir James again had the pertinacious Lieut. that he unfortunately sent me, who, full of his own consequence, as Commanding on Lake Huron (Commg. what? not a vessel) and a great stickler for naval etiquette, is constantly disposed to cavil, and on the watch for opportunities in his naval capacity, to oppose what I wish. I have had on that account, much difficulty in getting the *Nancy* sent this trip. Indeed I should have sent the Gentn. back in her, only I could not well spare in our circumstances, the twenty Seamen, and they would not be willing to serve under a military officer. It is necessary that he should return, and that a deserving Midshipman, or some one explicitly under my orders, be sent out in his place, or that part of the service cannot go on. Lieut. Poyntz told me on the passage, that he conceived he commanded all afloat, and of course the whole expedition, when we were in Batteaux. I shall state these matters by the Express Canoe to His Excellency— I have sent two Canoes to ascertain what they are doing at Detroit and the River St. Clair. Should they be establishing themselves at the latter place, uncountenanced by a Naval Force, it may be in our power to interrupt them, on Mr. Dicksons arrival, but, if well protected in that way, it would be a hazardous attempt, as our Batteaux may be destroyed, and our retreat cut off— Believe me to be &c

(Signed) Rt. Mc.Douall

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 264–66.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U States Sloop of War *Niagara*
Off Erie— May the 27th. 1814

Sir

I think it proper to inform you that Genl. Scott sent, with a letter of introduction to me about two weeks since, a Captain Marcle, who it appears is a Canadian of respectable standing and one who has taken a decided and active part in our cause during the present war— He brought with him a confidential and enterprising man, selected by the Genl., as a Spy— Through this man, who I have landed several times in the Enemies Country, Capt. Marcle has been enabled to correspond with his friends, who are favourable to our cause, and has gained considerable information as to the numbers, situation and movements of the Enemy in the upper province— One of his friends visited york in order to assertain what had gone Westward, and their views in that quarter— It is now certain that a large body of men, more than a thousand, 500 of whom were Mechanicks, & Sailors, with a number of pieces of Cannon have been sent Westward, by the way of Lake Simcoe, during the last winter; and since that time quantities of stores have gone the same rout; but so closely cased up that no citizen could say of what kind they were: indeed, no undertaking of theirs during the War has been kept so profound a secret as has this; so say his friends, and they are clearly of opinion that the object is the building a strong naval force— They go on to say to him, "from frequent hints we have from officers, in the different garrisons, there is no doubt but they are constructing a force above, with which they calculate to gain the superiority of all the upper waters, and from what our wives have gained from the wives of officers high in Rank, we are confirmed in the belief that they calculate on the superiority on this Lake before the month of August"— Marcle appears to be a man who can be relied on, and places implicit confidence in those friends who give the information— I therefore feel it my duty to transmit it to you, that you may use your judgment as to its correctness and if believed, order the necessary coercive steps to be taken— I will not venture to hazard an opinion on the subject, but shall endeavour to be in perfect readiness; with all the means in my power, to meet any emergency, and I trust that whatever force he may bring, to oppose me, the well earned glory of our Flag on this Lake will receive no tarnish— Our informant states that a Ship to rate 80 and mount upwards of 90 Guns is now building at Kingston, by a company of Merchants, and other citizens, who have bound themselves to their government to have her completed by the middle of July— Comdr. Chauncey is no doubt informed on the subject; but I will, notwithstanding, give him the information as I have recd. it

Our information as to their number of Troops on the Niagara frontier (including York) and their distribution, corresponds with what I last stated to you—

Your letter by this days mail, countermanding my proceeding with a strong force above, has proved a sourse of considerable disappointment to me, more especially after having received the above information, and by great exertion, having got that part of the force intended originally for Lake Huron nearly ready to proceed on service— Your order shall, however, be promptly obeyed— I have the means in my power to dispatch the force you last mention, and it shall be done in a few days, under Command of Lieut. Woodhouse,

neither of the others mentioned by you having yet arrived— I had intended taking with me the *Niagara, Lawrence* & 3 gunboats—Leaving on this Lake the *Hunter,* & *Caledonia* Brigs, and *Lady Prevost, Ohio* and *Somers,* s[*c*]hooners—the British built vessels being of much too heavy draft to pass through the straits— The *Lady Prevost* (a vessel of 102 Tons) draws 2 feet more than either of our Brigs— I shall send the *Caledonia* as one of Lieut. Woodhouss. squadron, as she will carry a quantity of provision and draws but little water—.

Your letter of the 11th. Inst., ordering the release of Purser McGrath from arrest, has been received by the last mail. Its contents had been anticipated, by the release of that officer soon after my arrival; the cause of his arrest having been a trivial one— Most of the others have been also released from their arrests, there not being sufficient evidence to substantiate the charges

The sailor who threw the volunteer overboard, and whom you had understood to be an officer and ordered to be delivered to the civil authority in case of their being evidence to convict him, I have also released; the misfortune having originated entirely in accidents; and I am happy to state to you that the most perfect harmony exists throughout the station The only officer now under arrest is Lieut. Conkling,[1] the charges against whom are serious, but the evidence against him being principally of the Army, and absent or removed from this place, it is doubtful whither they can be substantiated— As soon as time will allow my doing so, I will have a fair investigation, and if in my judgment there is sufficient evidence, I will require a court martial and try him, otherwise I will release him under the power given by you to that effect

Your letter of the 17th Inst. relating to a vessel being sent to Cleveland for his Excellency Genl. Cass, also came to hand by the last mail and shall be complied with if not, as you say, inconsistent with the publick service

He had written to Capt. Elliott to the same effect, which letter came into my hands, and was answered, before you reached me, and a conveyance promised him I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, your Obt. Servt.—

A Sinclair

N B— In case the above information should alter your determination as relates to the force to be sent into Lake Huron, I shall order a place of rendezvous in that Lake, where I may be certain of seeing or hearing of the Force under Lt. Woodhouse— Tho, if I hear from you immediately I may perhaps overtake him before he passes the River St. Clair, as I understand there is considerable difficulty in passing those flats in almost any vessel

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 106 (M125, Roll No. 36).

1. Lieutenant Augustus H. M. Conckling, U.S.N.

Macdonough on the Lake

Twelve days after the failed British attempt to destroy the American vessels near Vergennes in Otter Creek, the American squadron entered Lake Champlain. They sailed to Plattsburg and anchored 29 May, ready to cooperate with the army under Major General George Izard.

Before long, however, Master Commandant Macdonough learned the British were constructing a new ship at Isle aux Noix and that eleven galleys had arrived from Quebec. Two of the ships in frame that had been sent from the Royal Navy dockyards in England were to be assembled on Lake Champlain as well. More ships would have to be built if Commander Macdonough was to keep pace with British construction on Lake Champlain.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Ship *Saratoga*
at anchor off Plattsburg.
May 29 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that I arrived off here to day, & having been informed that the enemy had retired to the Isle aux noir the Squadron was brought to an anchor.— there is now a free communication between all parts of this Lake—and at present there are no doubts of this communication being interrupted by the enemy.

I find the *Saratoga* a fine Ship, she sails & works well, she is a ship between the *Pike* & the *Madison* on Lake Ontario, the Schooner is also a fine Vessel & bears her metal full as well as was expected. The Gallies are also remarkably fine Vessels— I have not yet my complement of men, but as fast as they come on I shall relieve the Soldiers whom I have on board by them.

I have made it known to Major Gen Izard that the squadron is ready for service. I have the honor to be, very respectfully Your Ob. Servant

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 134 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Ship *Saratoga,* 11th. June 1814.

Sir,

Four Sailors (Deserters) from the Enemy's Squadron came in to day, who give information that the keel of a ship to carry 32 Guns was laid at the Isle Aux Noix, and that the Enemy are getting up Gallies from Quebec:— this intelligence is confirmed by the person whom I sent in a few days since, who has returned with information that the enemy had the keel of a ship laid which was to equal, at least, the *Saratoga;* that three Gallies had arrived at the Isle Aux Noix

from Quebec, and that eight more Gallies were on their way to that place from Quebec.—

They certainly consider the command of this Lake of much importance by the determination they evince to have an ascendancy on it, and as they can easily obtain a correct statement of our force, they can prepare their's accordingly.—

Four frames of Vessels have arrived at Montreal, two of which, it is said, are intended for this Lake, the others for Lake Ontario.— I shall, however, ascertain what is to be done with those frames without delay.—

Our force is now very considerable on the Lake, an augmentation of which, on this probably might be unnecessary, if the narrow parts, in the vicinity of the line, were so fortified as to keep the enemy from entering our Waters, with the assistance of our Vessels, untill there should be an expedition against Isle Aux Noix.— Should it be ordered to increase our Naval force, it should be commenced without loss of time, & Messrs. Brown of New York would be the persons to build such force as might be deemed necessary.— Gallies are unquestionably the best description of Vessels for the northern parts of this Lake, but the number of men they require is a very serious objection to them.— The next best Vessels for this service in my opinion are Schooners or Brigs carrying 16 or 18 long 18 prs— these Guns would reach their Gallies in their sculking places— the number of men requisite for these latter Vessels, in comparison with the Gallies I think would make them the vessels to be preferred the whole expence of the Gallies would exceed the expences of larger Vessels without being so healthy or comfortable.— All the Carpenters have long since gone to New York.—

Cannon, Rigging &c would have to be sent on, which I should like to be about getting on immediately—Should you order me to build.— I hoped a short time since that no increase of our Naval force would become necessary, and that the Enemy would meet us with what force he had compleated, which three years ago, he would have considered equal to ours; but now, Sir, I am sure he intends risquing nothing, but will endeavour to out build us, and there is no knowing where this building may stop, for, as I before said, his acquaintance with our force will enable him to know exactly what force to bring against us, so there is a probability of his not meeting us unless he is pretty confident of being successful.—

He is now under the protection of Isle Aux Noix, and will no doubt continue there untill he feels himself strong enough to risque a Battle.—

I have been changing some of my Crews for other men from the Ranks, and shall now go down towards Isle Aux Noix, & if I can, without very imprudently exposing my vessels I shall endeavour to bring him to action.— I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect, Yr. Mot. Obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 145 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Ship *Saratoga*,
At the lines 19th June 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Squadron was brought to an anchor here on the 12th Inst.—

The Enemy's squadron which lies in the Sorrell has been reconnoiter'd and found to be moored across a narrow channel under the protection of Batteries.— They have one Brig, four Sloops, and twelve Gallies,—some of the Gallies carrying two Guns, others one Gun.

Their position is so strong as to make an attack on him, where he now lies, a very imprudent measure— There is no getting round him, or between him, and Isle Aux Noix: the Channel will not admit of it, and there are so many Reefs, & such bad water, on the South side of him, as to make it hazardous to move the Ship farther down the Lake than where she now is.—

The position my Vessels are now in, at the Lines has the effect of keeping the Enemy entirely out of the Lake, consequently, a free communication on all its parts.— My intention is to continue here untill a combined movement, between the Army & Navy, shall be deemed expedient by Major Genl. Izard, who is aware of my present superiority to the Enemys.—

This superiority, I am apprehensive however will not continue untill the Army can make a movement, for the Enemy are preparing a large increase to their force.— My information from the Enemy is as late as yesterday—they were then raising the frame of a Vessel, intended to equal, if not surpass, the *Saratoga* they are also getting up Gallies from Quebec, three of which took their Guns on board the 12th. Inst. at Isle Aux Noix, and eight more were on the way to the Island which will be ready in the course of a few days.—

By my last information the four Frames, which came from England, were at Montreal, and my informant did not understand what was to be done with them.

We may, however, calculate that they will set them up on some of the Lakes without delay.— Two Gallies are nearly ready to launch at the Isle Aux Noix which are all the Gallies building at that place.— When all are compleated, their force will be Twenty two Gallies (nine of which we see every day, as they come up the Sorrell to look at us) the Brig, four Sloops, & the Vessel now building.— This force will be much larger than our's— I should, therefore, propose building (if our force is to be increased in preference to Batteries) a Brig, or Schooner, to carry Eighteen long 18 prs., which Vessel would require so few men to what half her number of Guns would require if in Gallies; that, upon the whole, she would be preferr'd to Gallies—her long Guns could reach the Gallies of the Enemy, and in a breeze she would have decidedly great advantage over them.— The Enemy are very industrious, & seem to have a strong desire for the ascendancy on this Lake.— Should such large reinforcements of Troops be coming from Europe, as the Papers speak of, they would do much mischief, had they this ascendancy.—

I have just sent a Flag to Capt. Pring the British naval commander for him to receive about Two hundred Prisoners of War, who are here from the Westward.— These Prisoners, it is believed, will immediately on their arrival in

Canada, be put on Duty, whereas, those of our's who came out & were said to be exchanged on the 15th. May, are here, but not on duty, in consequence of Genl. Winder advising me not to put them on Duty untill something farther should be done relating to the exchange.—

Will you inform me, Sir, whether these Prisoners who came from Canada on the 15th May are to bear Arms, or is it as Genl. Winder said, inexpedient that they should bear Arms untill something more should be done about their Exchange?— I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect, Yr. mot. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 146 (M147, Roll No. 5).

The Capture of British Gunboats in Sandy Creek

Following the British attack on Oswego, the Americans continued to move naval supplies and ordnance from that place to Sackets Harbor, but were careful to transport stores by night in small boats which could be concealed in the creeks during the daytime. Lieutenant Melancthon T. Woolsey coordinated these movements, aided by the First U.S. Rifle Regiment and a band of Oneida warriors who were friendly to the American cause.

The British maintained a blockade of Sackets Harbor and watched for a chance to capture these small boats and the valuable naval stores. After capturing one boat that had been separated from its convoy, a British party under Captain Stephen Popham set out to capture the remainder of the convoy, which was tranporting a valuable shipment of guns and cables to Sackets Harbor. The British gunboats were surprized by a strong shore party in Sandy Creek, suffered heavy casualties, and were captured. Six Royal Navy officers and nearly two hundred sailors, soldiers, and marines were made prisoners.

MAJOR DANIEL APPLING, U.S.A., TO
BRIGADIER GENERAL EDMUND P. GAINES, U.S.A.

Sandy Creek, May 30th 1814.

Sir

This morning the Enemy attacked the detachment under my command at this place. We met, beat, & took them, after an action of 10 mints. The killed wounded and prisoners, on the part of the Enemy are as follows:

Prisoners	27.	marines
"	106.	soldiers
wounded	28.	sailors & marines
killed	13.	do. " do.
"	1.	midshipman
	175.	

With two post Captains, four Lieuts of the Navy, Prisoners, and two Lieuts of the Marines dangerously wounded, & Prisoners. The dead and wounded will receive all the honors & attentions due unfortunate Soldiers.

The prisoners have been marched into the Country, and to-morrow they will proceed to the Harbour. The Enemys boats also fell into my hands, consisting of two gun boats, & five barges, some of which carried Howitzers. Of 120 men, and a few Indians, my loss does not exceed one man killed & two wounded. I cannot sufficiently extol the conduct of the Officers who served under me, who were Lieuts. McIntosh, Colhoun, McFarland, Armstrong and Smith, & Ensign Austin.[1] The Indian Warriors conducted themselves with humanity & gallantry. I have the honor to be Respectfully Your obt Sert.

Signed} D Appling
Maj: commdg.

Copy, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, B-14 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 59).

1. 1st Lieutenant James McIntosh, 1st Lieutenant Joseph Calhoun, Jr., 2d Lieutenant Robert M. McFarland, 2d Lieutenant William Armstrong, 3d Lieutenant T. F. Smith, and Ensign H. B. Austin, all of the First Rifle Regiment, U.S.A.

COMMANDER STEPHEN POPHAM, R.N., TO
COMMODORE SIR JAMES L. YEO, R.N.

(copy) Sacketts Harbour June 1st. 1814

Sir

Having obtained certain information that the Enemys Boats with their Guns and stores, had taken shelter in Sandy Creek, I proceeded to that place (having ordered Captain Spilsbury to accompany me) and reached the entrance of it shortly after day light, yesterday morning. I landed accompanied by Captain Spilsbury and some of the Officers, and having reconnoitred their Position, determined on an immediate attack.

The masts of their Boats (consisting of eighteen) were plainly seen over the marsh, and from their situation did not appear to be very near the woods, and their not attempting to interrupt our entry into the Creek, led me to hope they were only protected by Militia. This circumstance, added to the very great importance of the lading of their Boats, to the equipment of their Squadron, was a strong motive for me to risk the attack, not aware that they had brought their Riflemen in their Boats, and that a body of Indians had accompanied them along the Beach—

The Boats advanced cautiously to within about a quarter of a mile of the Enemy's, when Lieut. Cox of the Royal Marines, was landed with the principal part of his men, on the left Bank: and Captain Spilsbury and Lieut. Brown, with the Cohorn and Small arm Party accompanied by Lieut.

McVeagh, with a few Marines, were landed on the Right Bank:[1] these respective Parties, advanced on the flanks of the Gun Boats (which had from their fire dispersed a Body of Indians) to a turning which opened the Enemys Boats to our view, when unfortunately the Sixty eight Pounder Carronade, on which much depended, was disabled, seeing us pulling the Boat round to bring the 24 pounder to bear, the Enemy thought we were commencing a retreat, when they advanced with their whole force, consisting of one hundred and fifty Riflemen, near two Hundred Indians, and a numerous Body of Militia and Cavalry: which soon overpowered the few men I had, their resistance was such as I could have expected from a brave and well disciplined Body, but opposed to such numbers unavailing, their officers set them an example honorable to themselves, and worthy of a better fate. Captain Spilsbury for a time checked the advance of the Enemy by the fire he kept up with the Cohorn, and his Party; and I feel much indebted to him for his conduct throughout—

Lieutenants Cox and McVeagh, who nobly supported the honor of their Corps, are I am sorry to say dangerously wounded. Mr. Hoare[2] Master's mate of the *Montreal*, whose conduct was conspicuous throughout, is the only Officer killed; our loss in killed and wounded (mostly dangerous) is great, I send as correct a return as I can possibly get of them as well as of the Survivors—

The winding of the Creek which gave the Enemy great advantage in advancing to intercept our retreat, rendered any further perseverance unavailing, and would have subjected the men to certain death.

Lieutenants Majoribanks and Rowe, in the rear, with the small boats, did every thing in their power, and Lieut. Loveday's exertions in the *Lais* Gun Boat was such as I was much pleased with—[3]

The exertions of the American Officers of the Rifle Corps commanded by Major Appling, in saving the lives of many of the Officers and men, whom their own men, and the Indians were devoting to Death, was conspicuous, and claim our warmest gratitude I have the honor to be Sir &c.

(Signed) Stephen Popham
Captain

A true Copy
(signed) J L Yeo

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 220–24.

1. Lieutenant Thomas S. Cox, Royal Marines; Commander Francis B. Spilsbury, R.N.; Lieutenant Patrick M'Veagh, R.N. Probably Acting Lieutenant John H. Brown.
2. Master's Mate Charles Hoare, R.N.
3. Acting Lieutenant John Majoribanks, R.N.; Acting Lieutenant James Rowe, R.N.; Acting Lieutenant Edward Loveday, R.N.

Master Commandant Melancthon T. Woolsey to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Copy Sacketts Harbor 1st. June. 1814

Sir

"I have already had the honor to inform you of the affair at Sandy Creek on the 30th. Ulto. but for want of time at that juncture I had it not in my power to give you the particulars and as the most of my communications since measures were adopted for a push from Oswego Falls to Sandy Creek with the Naval Stores, have been made in great haste— I avail myself of a leisure moment to make a report in detail of my proceedings Since that period.— On the 17th. I dispatched Mr. Huginan to Mexico[1] to hire a number of Ox Teams and to engage a quantity of forage &c.— I also sent orders to Oswego Falls to have an additional number of large wheels made for transporting the Guns and Cables back, across the Portage and caused reports to be circulated in every direction that I had received your orders to Send all the Naval Stores to Oneida Lake, with all possible expedition.— On the Morning of the 28th. when these reports were well in circulation and when (as I have since heard from good authority) they had been faithfully detailed to Sir James, I had the honor to receive per express your communication of the 27th. vesting in me discretionary powers.— I immediately dispatched Mr. Dixon[2] in the long Gig to reconnoitre the Coast— I went with my Officers to the Falls, to run the boats down over the Rapids— at Sunset we arrived at Oswego with the boats (nineteen in number) loaded in all with Twenty one Long thirty two Pounders, Ten–Twenty four pounders— three Forty two do. (Carronades) & ten Cables besides some light articles and distributed in the batteause a guard of about One hundred and fifty Riflemen—under command of Major Appling— Mr. Dixon having returned with a report of the coast being clear, we Set off at dark and arrived at Big Salmon River about Sun rise on the 29th. with the loss of one Boat having on board Two Twenty four Pounders and one cable— I cannot account for his having sep[ar]ated from us but by the design of her Commander as every possible exertion was made to keep the brigade as compact as possible

At Big Salmon we met the Oneida's whom I had dispatched the day previous under the command of Lieut. Hill[3] of the Riffle Regt.— as soon as they had taken up their line of [*march?*] along the Shore to Big Sandy Creek, I started with all the boats and arrived at Noon at our place of destination about two Miles up the Creek— In this laborious and hazardous duty I feel much indebted to Major Appling, his Officers and Men for their exertions, having assisted my Officers and Seamen in rowing the boats without a moments rest— twelve hours and about half the time enveloped in darkness and deluged with rain—also to Some of the principal inhabitants of the village of Oswego, who volunteered their Services as Pilots— At 2 A.M.—on the 30th. I received your Letter of the 29th. 6 P.M. per express and agreeably to the order contained therein sent Lieut. Pierce [*Pearce*] to look out as far as Stoney Point about 5 O'Clock he returned having been pursued by a Gun Boat and three Barges— The best possible disposition was immediately made of the Riffle men and Indians about half a mile below our boats— about 8. AM a canonadeing of long shot was commenced by the Enemy and beleiving (as I did) that no attempt would be made to land with their small force I ordered Lieut. Pierce to proceed

in erecting Shears and making preparations to unload the boats, and as all the Teams had retrograded in consequence of the canonading— I sent in pursuit of them to return— about 9 OClock Captain Harris with a Squadron of Dragoons and Captain Melvin with a company of light Artillery and two Six pounders arrived— Captain Harris the commanding Officer agreed with me that this reinforcement should halt as the Troops best calculated for a bush fight were already on the ground where they could act to the greatest advantage, and that the Enemy seeing a large reinforcement arrive would most probably retreat about Ten the Enemy having landed and pushed up the Creek with three Gun boats, three Cutters and one Gig,— The Rifflemen under that excellent Officer Major Appling rose from their concealment and after a smart fire of about Ten Minutes Succeeded in capturing all the boats and their Crews without one having escaped— at about 5 P.M. after having buried with the honors of War Mr. Hoare (a British Midshipman) killed in the action I was relieved by Captain Ridgely[4] who you did me the honor to Send to Sandy Creek for that purpose— all the Prisoners except the wounded having been removed and expecting another attack at Night, I remained to assist Captain Ridgely in that event—but yesterday Morning Seeing nothing in the offing I availed myself of my relief, I returned to this place— In performing to the best of my abilities the duty for which I was ordered to Oswego Falls, I have great Satisfaction in acknowledging the unremitted exertions of Lieut. Pierce Sailing Master Vaughan and Midn. Mackey Hart and Caton[5] also to Major Appling his Officers and Men for their kind assistance in the same duty."

"The Report of killed and wounded and prisoners and also the number and description of the capt[ured] boats has been already remitted by Captain Ridgely and myself—" I have the honor to be &c. &c. &c.

(Sign'd) "Meln. T. Woolsey"

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 3, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Mexico, a village on the Little Salmon River in Oswego County, N.Y.
2. Acting Sailing Master Samuel Dixon.
3. 2d Lieutenant Josiah Hill, First Rifle Regiment, U.S.A.
4. Master Commandant Charles G. Ridgely.
5. Midshipmen Daniel H. Mackey, Ezekiel B. Hart, and Richard Caton, Jr.

Commencement of the American Expedition into Lake Huron

The joint expedition into Lake Huron, originally ordered by Secretary of the Navy Jones on 15 April but postponed,[1] finally got under way in June. The goals were to destroy any British shipyards at Matchedash, to capture St. Joseph Island, an important military and fur trading post, and to recapture Fort Michilimackinac.

The expedition departed Erie on 19 June and arrived at Detroit two days later. It consisted of five American vessels, Lawrence, Niagara, Caledonia, Scorpion, *and* Tigress *under Captain Arthur Sinclair, and some 700 infantry and artillerymen under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Croghan. Delayed by a week of adverse winds and low water, the ships entered Lake Huron on 12 July.*

1. See pp. 420–24.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Captain Arthur Sinclair
Commanding the U S Naval force
on Lake Erie.— Erie Penna.

Navy Department
June 1st. 1814

Sir

I have this moment received your Letter of the 27th. ultimo and upon the information it contains, have determined that the expedition to Lake Huron agreeably to the original design, communicated in my order to you of the 15th. April shall proceed without delay, and therefore revoke my subsequent order of the 19th. May, substituting a smaller force under the command of a Lieutenant. Whether your information be correct or otherwise, it will be prudent to explore the several Ports on Lake Huron, in order to ascertain the real force and designs of the enemy in that quarter, and if found to correspond with the intelligence you have received, the force under your command will be amply sufficient to frustrate his projects, and I trust to capture his force.— Should your information prove erroneous, still the recovery of Michilimacinac and the capture of St. Joseph's will have an important effect, particularly upon the Indian tribes whom the enemy will endeavour to seduce into a belief of his competency and determination to recover the command of upper Canada; If the enemy is in reality creating any naval force, it is undoubtedly at Matschedash, which is on a point of land at the head of Gloucester Bay, marked on Smyth's Map Townplot.—

The Secretary of War will this day write to Major Croghan, to accompany you with as many troops as you can accommodate on board your Squadron, and not a moment should be lost in carrying into effect the objects of the expedition.

In the discharge of the duty assigned you, it is the express command of the President, that private property be respected, unless under circumstances so connected with, or favoring the designs of the enemy, as to render its destruction inevitable.—

This injunction accords no less with your sense of duty than of justice, as exemplified in your remarks upon the destruction of private property at long point, which has excited much regret, for notwithstanding the innumerable instances of violation on the part of the enemy to sanction retaliation on our part; the morality as well as the policy of the United States forbid the uncivilized practice.—

It will be of importance to return to Lake Erie, as soon as may be, in order to guard against any casualty or unfavorable change of circumstances, which may possibly take place during your absence. You will leave the Squadron on Lake Erie as strong as possible, for in the event of disaster, it will not be practicable to send reinforcements of Seamen from the Atlantic Ports in due time.—

I therefore trust, that in detaching your force for the upper Lake, you will bear this in mind, and take no more Seamen than are absolutely necessary to work the Guns, with a few to the rigging. This will enable you to carry more troops, a part of whom may act as Marines, and assist in working the Vessels.—

I submit it to your discretion, to take one or both the Sloops of War *Lawrence* and *Niagara*, though I feel some reluctance in permitting them both to leave Lake Erie. The principal object of the Squadron on Lake Erie during your absence, will be to facilitate the transportation of the Army from point to point, as occasion may require, and this service will in all probability be pretty active. You will therefore instruct the Commanding Officer, particularly on this point, and direct him to keep as many Vessels as are fit for this service in constant readiness.—

On the Eve of your departure you will forward to this Department, a Report of the force, state and condition of the Squadron under your immediate command, as well as that which you shall leave on Lake Erie, with a Muster Roll of the Officers and men attached to each Vessel.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 146–48.

Secretary of War Armstrong to Lieutenant Colonel George Croghan, U.S.A.

Lt Colo. Croghan
Detroit

War Department
June 2d. 1814.

Sir,

Information has been received that the Enemy is about making a new Establishment at Matchedash on Lake Huron, and that five hundred or 1000 seamen, mechanicks & others, are now employed there in the construction of armed vessels &ca— This Establishment must be broken up— The safety of Detroit—the command of the lakes—the general security of the frontier depend upon it. Captain Sinclair will accordingly receive orders to pass into Lake Huron with part of the flotilla, & to carry such troops as may be destined to cooperate with the fleet in the reduction of this & other places. His means of transportation will probably accommodate more than eight hundred—but the safest rule will be to embark as many as can be accommodated—taking yourself the Command and leaving behind you a competent force to guard against Indian attacks, which at present are alone to be feared.

If on reaching & reducing the place, it be found to be important (as I believe it will) it ought to be fortified and garrisoned, & become the left of a new line of operations extending by the way of lake Simcoe, from Gloucester bay on Lake Huron, to York on lake Ontario. In this last view of the subject, surplus cannon, ammunition & provisions ought to be carried with you.—

LB, DNA, RG107, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, Vol. 7, pp. 215–16 (M6, Roll No. 7).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U States Sloop *Niagara*, Erie, June the 10th. 1814

Sir

your letter of the 1st Inst, from the circumstance of its having been put in the common instead of the Express mail to pittsburg, has just come to hand— I am pleased with the prospect it holds out, of a more active and interesting service than your order of the 19th May confined me to on this Lake— That order has in a considerable degree frustrated the arrangements I had made for the Service above; in as much, as it induced me to put an immediate stop to the transportation of Bread from pittsburg to this place, as I found the expense more than double that of Flour and the loss and damage, by exposure in Waggons, excessively great; and as I was not to leave this Lake I had got my Baking sufficiently ahead to keep up a regular supply of fresh good Bread— There was 100 bbls., however, contracted for previous to my order to the agent being recd.,— This is on its way, and will with what I have, and by feeding the men in the mean time, on loaf Bread which I get Baked of a night, enable me to sail in a short time— should it not arrive by the middle of the ensuing week I shall sail without it, leaving a vessel to follow with it and all that may in the mean time be baked, presuming she will overtake me while lightening over the Flats of the River St. Clair— I have dispatched a vessel to try and stop the expedition under Lieut. Woodhouse, as from the constant N.E. wind we have had ever since the time he must have arrived at Detroit, I am under the impression he has not yet been able to get further than that place— I have also forwarded the Secretary at Wars letter which was inclosed to me for Colnl. Croghan, in order that he may be apprised of our movements— The wind is fine as far as the mouth of the River, from which I have ordered the officer, should it still remain to the NE—to hire a horse and proced by land to Detroit— The few seamen I have under my command is a sourse of serious inconvenience and uneasiness— I had confident[ly] hoped from the nature of your order to Capt. Gordon, that I should have been considerably strengthened by that draft; but there are scarsely any Seamen among them, and those we had here are the most indifferent men of their rates I have ever seen.— They have been reentered, it seems, and rated as seamen by way of encouragement to do so— They are really not good ordinary Seamen, and are exhausted in constitution from their winter dissipation onshore— I am told they were many weeks drunk at a time and never onbd. of their ships until forced there by disease and debility— The men from the *Constellation*, or rather which were intended by you to have come from that Ship, are Ordinary Seamen and landsmen, given a bounty from onbd., the gunboats, to enter for seamen for the Lakes, and told they were quite able to do their duty as such here— The ordinary Seamen sent, were every one rated Boys onboard the *Constellation*. I shall notwithstanding all those inconveniences, arrising out of that want of liberality which I regret to see exists but too common in our service, use every effort in my power to carry into effect the views of the government intrusted to my conduct— You shall see by the next mail a proper Muster Roll arranged as you have directed, as one of the Pursers ordered (Mr. Soloman[1]) has arrived, and appears to be

capable of filling the situation he holds— I have the honor to remain, Sir, very respectfully Your Obt. Sert.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 47 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Purser Ezekiel Solomon.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Sloop of War *Niagara*
Detroit June 23d. 1814

Sir

Immediately after the Sailing of the *Caledonia* & *Ohio* for Erie with my letter of yesterdays date, Colo. Croghan returned from above.

He informs me that he has ascertained beyond a doubt that the Enemy are in force, from 800 to 1000, strong, and are building a considerable Naval force on Matschedash Bay— He is using every effort to make his force equal to cope with them, in which event the four Vessels I had intended taking will be by no means equal to their transportation, and would fall still further short of carrying an ample supply of provisions to guard against contingencies— In consequence of this information I dispatched an Express and succeeded in stopping the Vessels above mentioned, between this and Malden,

I ought to take them both with me; but I feel so extremely tenacious of complying implicitly with my instructions, and you have been so impressive, in your wish that Lake Erie should be left as strong as possible, that I act against my own judgement, when I determine to retain the *Caledonia* only— There can be nothing to fear but from above, and now, that it is clearly ascertained, that he is building a Naval force, is it not rational to believe, that that force will be at least equal to all ours? for surely his dear bought experience, must have taught him the futility of bringing into action an inferior one.— On the ascendancy on those Lakes, depends entirely the possession of all we hold in this quarter; every exertion, therefore, will necessarily be made to protect that force while building, and I cannot but ardently wish, that the gallant Officer who is to cooperate with me, had ample means in his power to insure that success. I am confident his exertions will merit, and that I had it equally in mine to give him the necessary transportation for such a force; but situated as we are, bravery and enterprise, must supply our deficiency in physical force— It appears that a force of Regulars have marched from the Niagara frontier lately— Coln'l Croghan thinks that an effort will be made to cut off our return to the Lower Lake, by regaining one or both, this place and Malden,— He knows the Indians are concentrating, and that an attack is contemplated at some point.

Should it not be made certain that any effort of this kind should prove abortive? It is so much easier to garrison and hold a conquered Country than to reconquer it, should the Enemy again possess himself of it, that I have taken the Liberty of suggesting to you, what is believed will be attempted here during our absence, that the Government may take such Steps as they think adviseable to counteract his movements— I find the Army quite unprepared in Salt Provisions

They have not more than thirty days, The Expedition must consequently be given up or considerably delayed, unless I loan them— I have therefore thought correct to do so, at the same time taking the Contractors obligation that it shall be returned before I can want— I have a supply of my own Crews for between 4 & 5 months, and can, with what the Army have themselves, make up a supply for the whole for near two Months— This will insure time, at least, for the accomplishment of our first object, which is of infinite importance to be performed in the shortest possible time— The Contractor then binds himself to follow on with an immediate supply, One hundred Barrells of which I have loaned him from a deposit we have on the River Huron

I trust, Sir, that the discretionary powers I have used to facilitate the enterprize on foot will meet your approbation, as you must be assured that the good of the service is and has been my only Study,

The *Scorpion* has returned from staking out the flats through the River St. Clair, and has found not much short of 2 fathoms, Had this circumstance, as well as the Enemies force above been known in time, The prize ships might have been fitted for that service—

From the large requisitions of Capt. Elliott not being entirely put a stop to, owing to the state of forwardness many Articles were in, it is my Opinion, if you wish it, or the service of the Lower Lake should require it, that at least one of those Ships might be fitted out without scarcely any additional expense, from what is now actually on hand, provided recruits can be got to man her— I am now waiting entirely for the Army—they talk of being detained Six or eight Days; but this must not be the case— Colo. Croghan is an active Officer, and I shall give him every facility in my power to get him embarked. I have the honor to remain with great Respect, Sir, Yr. Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 94 (M125, Roll No. 37).

Diary of Surgeon Usher Parsons

[Extract]

[*U.S. brig* Lawrence, *Sandwich, Upper Canada*]

Sunday [*July*] 3d— On shore— The troops from Sandusky arrived.—Sailed from Detroit at 9 P.M. for Michilimackinack 240 Soldiers on board—with Maj. Holmes.—[1] Col. Chroghran commands the expedition. The intention of the expedition is to retake Mackinack.—by storm and also destroy any shipping there may be on the upper lakes.— The Fleet will probably return to this place in 4 weeks.— Mr Croaks came on board.—[2]

Monday 4th. Arrived in Lake St. Clair early in the morning. Distance about 10 or 12 miles.— Rained in the morning Remarks— The banks of the lake are low,—not a hill to be seen.— There is a small current in the lake perhaps ¼ knot— The water is about 4 & 5 fathoms at the lower & middle part The wind blew various directions, and we several times came to anchor. About two thirds of the distance from the lower to the upper end of the Lake we came to 2 fathoms water and about 5 or 6 oclock having moved a short distance further we run aground, and the *Niagara* also,— Had a squall & shower. Remained here

all night in sight of the Huron River settlement at the mouth of the river perhaps a dozen or 20 families were once settled here and some now remain buildings are good. Orchards &c. There are a few buildings more scattered along the Western shore.—But the opposite or Canada shore is marshy & uninhabited
The water on the bar is about 8 feet this however is not the worst place.—

Tuesday 5th— The Soldiers were sent from the vessels to the mouth of the river St Clair that the vessels might be lighter.— The schooners *Scorpion* & *Tigress* came along side in the after noon and lightened us some, soon we drifted on shore again, where we remained all night. Wind West.— A schooner from Detroit with lt. Col. Crogran arrived in the evening— Capt More[3] & another slept on board. Signal guns were fired. The *Niagara* succeeded today in getting to the other bar about 6 miles distance.

Wedy. 6th— Got over the bar 8½ feet water about 10 oclock Passed the *Niagara* at 1 oclock.—on the bar on which we were detained about 2 hours.— Proceeded about 6 miles further to the mouth of the river St Clair where we anchored at 3 P.M. and took in our ballast.— The men begin to be sick Took on the list 4 patients. On both sides the mouth of the river is an extensive Marshes particularly on the Starboard or Canada side. . . .

Sunday July 10th.— Sailed by 2 oclock about 10 miles to where the troops were encamped and took them on board. . . .

Monday 11th.— Pleasant Wind continues ahead. Attended to writing cases in the Medical Ledger.— Officers plunged.— Got under way in the evening and sailed about ½ a mile to the head of the Island. The soldiers debark'd in the morning and march'd to Fort Graciot at the head of the river which is about 9 miles distant.—

Tuesday 12— Made but little head way Pleasant.

AD, RHi, Usher Parsons Diary. For a printed version, see Parsons, *Surgeon of the Lakes*.

1. Major Andrew H. Holmes, 32d Infantry, U.S.A.
2. Ramsay Crooks, agent for John Jacob Astor's fur company, was trying to arrange for removing a shipment of furs from Mackinac Island to the United States.
3. Captain Nimrod H. Moore, 28th Infantry, U.S.A.

The Blockade of Sackets Harbor Lifted

The British blockade of Sackets Harbor, which was clearly ineffective in preventing cannon and stores from reaching the American port, was lifted after the capture of the British boats at Sandy Creek on 30 May.

Commodore Chauncey's new ship Superior *was nearly ready to take the lake except for a critical shortage of seamen. The commodore suggested "borrowing" some from the American ships that were unable to put to sea because of the tight British blockade of the American coast. It appeared that the American naval squadron would soon be master of Lake Ontario until Commodore Yeo could complete his new warship.*

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army

Copy/ *Prince Regent,* at Anchor
Off Sacketts Harbour, June 3rd: 1814

Sir,

The Enemy's Squadron being now nearly ready for Sea, and it being too late for any joint attack on the Enemy's force at Sacketts Harbour, I conceive it necessary to determine in what way His Majestys naval Force can best be employed to defeat the Enemy's views, and protect this province; I transmit you herewith a statement of their force, on which it is unnecessary for me to make any Comment.[1]

There are two things to be considered,

1st. What the Enemy's Squadron can effect before our large Ship is ready.

2nly. What object we have for risking an action with our present force, when we will so soon have the superiority.

From the large reinforcements Government are sending to this country, it appears to me to be their wish, that a respectable naval Force should be established to meet the Enemy, and that any rash, ill-timed, or unnecessary risk, would defeat their views— The Enemy are not in sufficient force to undertake any expedition in the face of our present Squadron, but any disaster on our Side, might give them a serious ascendancy.

In making this communication, I trust you will give me credit, when I assure you I do not write from the feeling of a Captain of a Ship, but consider myself placed here in a highly responsible situation, as commanding the naval Force in this Country, on which most materially depends the safety or loss of this province—

I therefore require of you, Sir, as the General officer with whom I am acting, your opinion on the several points in my letter, I shall at all times be ready to take the Squadron into action, whenever the General Officer with whom I am acting represents to me that he thinks it necessary for the good of the service, and safety of the Colony, but such sanction or authority under existing circumstances, I will require, as I never can take the whole responsibility on myself— I have the honor to be &c &c

(Signed) James L. Yeo
Commodore & Commr. in Chief

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 239–40.

1. In the enclosure, "A Statement of the American Naval Force, in Addition to their old Squadron—3rd. June 1814," Yeo listed four American vessels, *Superior* (64 guns), *Jefferson* (24), *Jones* (22), and "name unknown" (52). The latter vessel would be called *Mohawk*.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

Copy/ Head Quarters, Upper Canada
Kingston 6th. June 1814

Sir,

Your letter of the 3rd. Inst. has received my most serious attention—

So long as your position off Sacketts Harbour was found to distress the Enemy, and to retard the armament and equipment of his new ships, so long it appeared to me that the Blockade ought to be maintained, and so long, in fact, no risk whatever could attend it—

It appearing, however from your letter, that the Enemy's Squadron, including his new Ship (*Superior*) and Brigs, is now ready for sea, it is evident the Blockade has not had all the Effect to which we looked, and moreover, that it can no longer be maintained, without risquing an action with a Squadron quite equal, if not superior to that under your command, and under circumstances on our part of decided disadvantage. With regard to the probable objects of the Enemy, and to what their Squadron may be able to effect, before our large Ship is ready, I am of opinion that whatever may be their ultimate views, they will not undertake any offensive operation, until their second large Ship is ready, and even then, I am very much disposed to concur with you in thinking that they will scarce venture, in the face of your present squadron and with the knowledge of the powerful addition to it, which is in rapid progress, to encumber theirs with Troops, and other means necessary for the invasion of any part of this province—

It follows, therefore, as my opinion, and I have no hesitation in giving it as such, that there exists at present no motive or object connected with the security of this Province, which can make it necessary for you to act otherwise than cautiously on the defensive (but at the same time closely watching all their movements) until the moment arrives, when by the addition of the large Ship now on the stocks, you may bring the naval contest on this Lake fairly to issue, or by a powerful combined Expedition (if the Enemy, as is probable, should decline meeting you on the Lake) we may attack and destroy him in his strong hold—

In thus frankly giving you my Ideas, as to the line of conduct which it would be prudent and proper for you, as Commodore of His Majesty's Naval Force in this Province, to pursue, it is scarce necessary for me to observe that circumstances may arise which may render it expedient and necessary to adopt a widely different system (such for instance as the relief of the necessities of the advanced Division, an Expedition against Sacketts Harbour &c &c

But these circumstances as they may arise, will be discussed by us, with those feelings of perfect good understanding and cordiality, which have, I think I may affirm, ever subsisted betwixt us, and which to me have been a source of great satisfaction and confidence— I have the Honor to be &c &c &c

(Signed) Gordon Drummond
Lt. General.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 242–44. Enclosed in Drummond to Prevost, 7 June 1814.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 92. U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 8th. June 1814

Sir

I was yesterday honored with your two Letters of the 27th and 28th Ulto and will reply to them tomorrow

I have much gratification in being able to inform you that all my Guns (with the exception of the nine captured by the Enemy) have arrived and the *Superior* will have her whole armament on board tomorrow, and we have Sufficient Guns for all the other Vessels— the whole of our Rigging Shot, Powder and other Stores from North Bay Utica Rome and Sandy-Creek will be in before tomorrow night— all the prize boats, together with the Schenectady boats which brought the Guns to Sandy Creek arrived here this Morning and the Troops Marines and Seamen which have been detached for the protection of the Property at that place have all returned— I therefore begin to feel as if we should soon be in a Situation to take the Lake—in fact there will be nothing to prevent my Sailing on the first of July if Seamen arrive to man the vessels, but we are still Five hundred short— I understand that there are a number of Men recruited in Philadelphia for Lake Erie—could they not be transferred to this Lake? I should presume that the vessels on Lake Erie would not require to be full manned as the Enemy has no fleet to contend with— If any of the Frigates will lend me a few Men I will return them in the Autumn, I hope with interest. The *Congress Hornet* and New Frigate at Philadelphia[1] are in situation which makes it very doubtful whether they will be able to get to Sea before next Winter and if we could be supplied with our compliment from those Ships, I should hope to place the Mastery of the Lakes beyond a question— I hope Sir that you will not consider me impertinent in so frequently calling your attention to this Lake, but it is a subject in which I have much at stake and feel a great interest— you will I trust make all due allowance for my anxiety—

The reinforcements of Seamen Marines Soldiers and Carpenters which left England about the first of April have arrived at Quebec.— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 31 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. The U.S. frigate *Guerriere* was then under construction at the Philadelphia Navy Yard; she was launched 20 June 1814.

Governor-General Sir George Prevost to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

11th. June 1814

Dear Sir

Your letter of the 3d Inst made me acquainted with the unfortunate result of the expedition under Captn. Popham—

On receiving this unwelcome intelligence I desired every possible exertion to be used to hasten to Kingston the whole of the Officers, Seamen & Artificers who have just arrived from England, I also applied to the Senior Officer of His Majestys ships at Quebec to send by the Steam boat as many sailors volunteers for the Lakes as could be obtained from the vessels in the St. Lawrence—

The most incessant exertions of every Departt. concerned with the Transport Service are making to forward the Articles which you have required for the Equipment & Armament of the New Ship & I most sincerely hope our endeavours to ensure to your Squadron a decided superiority will prove successful—

Captain Downie[1] having had an opportunity of entering into the detail of the measures in operation is well qualified to afford you such information as you may require respecting them—

In reply to your letter of the 5th from the Upper Gap I have to hope the timely arrival of officers & seamen removed one of the causes for raising the blockade of Sacketts Harbour during the short period you will be compelled to adopt defensive measures I cannot too strongly recommend that every possible precaution be taken to preserve the Water Communication from Fort Wellington to Kingston from interruption or molestation—

In order to facilitate this service I have directed the Gun boats which have been built at the Coteau du Lac to be delivered over to the Division of seamen as they passed that Post

The immediate arrangements you propose for the Naval establishment at Isle Aux Noix & on Lake Champlain cannot fail in being satisfactory to Dear Sir Your faithful Humble Servt.

George Prevost
Comr. of the Forces

LB, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 1225, pp. 15–16.

1. Captain George Downie, R.N.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 102 U.S. Ship Superior
Sacketts Harbor 15th. June. 1814

Sir

The Enemy's Fleet has not been in sight since the 5th and I have some reason to believe that he is preparing for some expedition— he is now at Kingston collecting boats and transports— a large reinforcement of Seamen and Marines has arrived— the Marines is said to amount to about 2000 Men— boats are constantly passing up the St. Lawrence with Troops Naval Stores and munitions of War— last week more than Two hundred boats passed Ogdensburgh for Kingston and contrary to the usual practice all the boats are detained at Kingston for some purpose or other.—

I have good reason to believe that the Enemy contemplated an attack on this place about the time that he lost his boats and Men at Sandy Creek— that loss together with the severe indisposition of General Drummond (who still lays very low) induced the Enemy to defer the attack but I am persuaded that he has not abandoned it and only waits for his reinforcements and a favorable opportunity and why he has deferred it so long is most astonishing, for we are now pretty well prepared to take care of ourselves but if Sir James had landed 3000 Men when he first appeared off this Harbor and made a simultaneous attack with the Fleet he must have carried the place, for our New Vessels (with the exception of the *Jefferson*) at that time were without their armament and the Military force had been considerably weakened by Five hundred of the best Troops being ordered from this place to Buffaloe and a few days ago about Seven Hundred more marched in the same direction.— I really do not understand the Policy of

leaving the most important post upon the Frontier the weakest in point of force—for altho' the Fleet will be in a situation in a few days not only to take care of itself but to act offensively, yet if we should be obliged to visit the upper part of the Lake the Enemy would avail himself of the absence of our fleet make a push at this place and I have no doubt would carry it and destroy the place and all the Naval and Military Stores and provisions here which would put us back at least a Campaign besides the mortification of the Country at the loss of so important a Post.

I hope sir that you will not consider that I am travelling out of the line of my duty in detailing my impressions as to the situation of this place—my only motive is to make you acquainted with its true state in order that if in your judgement a reinforcement should be thought necessary for the protection of the public property here that you would be pleased to speak to the Honorable the Secretary at War upon the subject.

I have no information by which I can form a correct opinion of the strength of the Military at this place but believe that it is less than 2000 effective Men— this force would do all that so small a force could do for Officers and Men are excellent but the probability is that whenever the Enemy make the attack it will be with a force three times as large as the one we have which in the absense of the Fleet would ensure him success.— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. st

Isaac Chauncey

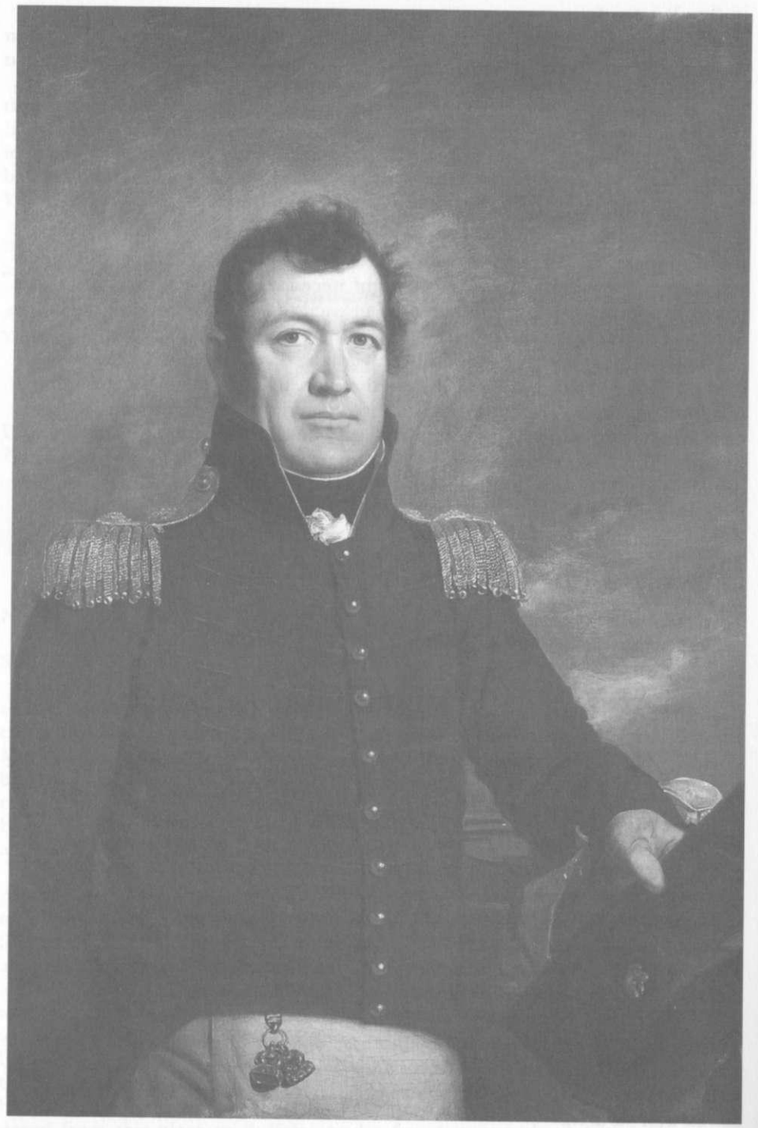
LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 65 (M125, Roll No. 37).

Army-Navy Relations on Lake Ontario

In their public statements, army and navy commanders pledged to work in close cooperation with each other to further the interests of the United States. Privately, however, jealousies, bitter feelings, and latent rivalries between the services began to emerge in the northern lakes theater. Accolades for the American success at Sandy Creek, for example, became a sore point when the navy appeared to be given credit for the action.

The campaign of 1814 demanded close coordination and good communication between army and navy commanders on Lake Ontario if it was to succeed. Secretary of War Armstrong's instructions to Major General Jacob Brown, dated 10 June, led the general to believe that Commodore Chauncey would be on the lake no later than 15 July to cooperate with him in operations on the Niagara Peninsula.[1] Commodore Chauncey, however, only received orders to have shipwrights at Sackets Harbor construct barges for the army's use. The barges were modeled after those used by the Chesapeake Bay flotilla under Commodore Joshua Barney. These instructions did not detail specific plans to cooperate with the army.

1. See pp. 499–501.



Jacob Jennings Brown

MAJOR GENERAL JACOB BROWN, U.S.A., TO SECRETARY OF WAR ARMSTRONG

(Confidential) Head Quarters
Buffaloe. June 7th. 1814

Dear Sir

Detachments from my division, having been long engaged in the defence of the Stores destined for the flotilla at Sacketts Harbour, & on this service, having conducted with honour to themselves & the Country, I cannot patiently stand by, & see a reputation so fairly earned, by the gallant Corps employed, wrested from them.* I feel the more tender upon this subject, as I do know, that the Navy of Lake Ontario is under great obligations to the Army; for its preservation & support, the last & the present Campaign, & I have not seen in this navy, a magnanimous expression of the obligation, unless this expression is to be found in the surrender of a dryed Scalp.

Do not suppose, that I feel unfriendly to Commodore Chauncey, or the Navy. The Commodore has my friendship, & the Navy will ever have my support, but do not expect me under any circumstances, or for any considerations, to offer up the honors of the Army, on the Altar of the Idol that all sects & parties in this country, have agreed to worship. Believe me Very Respectfully & truly yours

Jac: Brown

*Besides Mitchells Artillery, & Applings Rifle Corps, Major Lyman[1] with three hundred & fifty Infantry, was ordered upon this service, & was at Oswego, when the Guns & Stores passed,— Lyman is now near this place.

At Buffaloe, I have found all well—.

LB, DLC, Jacob J. Brown Papers, MMC-3212, Letterbook 1, p. 55.

1. Major Chester Lyman, 9th Infantry, U.S.A.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding U S Naval force
Sacketts Harbour

Navy Department
June 7th. 1814.

Sir

The meditated operations of the Army and Navy in the course of the Campaign, render it expedient to construct and equip, fifteen large Barges at Sacketts Harbour, as soon as possible, and for that purpose I send by the Mail which conveys this, a roll containing a draught of a Barge 75 feet long, 15 feet wide and 4½ feet deep, to carry a long 24 or 18 in one end, and a 42 or 32 pdr. Carronade in the other, and to row forty Oars.[1]

A considerable number of them have been built for the flotilla service on the Chesapeake and elsewhere, and perfectly answer all the purposes for which they were intended;— they row fast, and with Crew and every thing on board draw

but 22 Inches water.— You will therefore have fifteen of these constructed armed and equipped, as soon as may be practicable.

We have some of a smaller Class but they were all constructed in the same form and manner. The plan of the inboard works, of one of the small Class is also enclosed, and may serve for those you are to build.

The Awning is made of light stanchions and Cedar top covered with painted Canvas like the top of a stage Coach, with Canvas Curtains at the sides. They are decked on each side and open amidships, under the Awning where the men sit at the Oars.— You will adopt the awning or not as you think proper, but in all respects you will fit them in the most plain and economical manner

You have also a copy of the Naval Constructor's directions to the Builder.

I presume you will have a few spare Guns or Carronades toward their armament, and the Secretary of War will furnish the residue from the ordnance Stores, until required for separate service; You will find those Barges a valuable auxiliary to your Squadron in any enterprize where that species of force may be necessary; both ends are alike and they row equally well either way.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 148–49.

1. A sketch of a larger version of this barge, drawn by Commodore Joshua Barney, can be found in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 375.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Head Quarters Buffaloe
June 21st. 1814

Dear Sir

When I parted from you at the Harbour, you assured me, that you would communicate freely, with me, and give me all the information in your power. I have not received a line from you, and am yet to learn, when, your fleet will be upon the Lake.—

I shall consider the Lake as yours, the moment you have your new vessels in condition to appear upon it.— Sir James will not honestly and manfully meet you, and if his Fleet is captured this Campaign, it will be captured in port.—

Capt. Sinclair is ordered to Lake Huron, and I am yet to learn, that the Fleet of either Lake, will co-operate with the Army, under my command.—

The Fleet of Lake Erie having failed me, I have taken measures to procure the necessary water craft, to enable me to cross this end of Lake Erie, and intend to cross, with the means the Government have given me, about the first of July, with the hope of not being disgraced.—

Upon the receipt of this, will you have the goodness to let me know by Express, when you will be out; and if I may expect you in the Neighbourhood of Fort George, by the 10th. of July? or what day?—

If you conclude to meet me at the head of Lake Ontario, I desire you to bring up in the fleet, two 18 pounders that will be delivered to you by Genl. Gaines,

and if the General believes that he can spare the Rifle corps, will you have the goodness to convey them to me, in your Fleet?—

I am not advised of any reinforcements having reached Kingston, but I know, that the best Regt. the Enemy had, at that post, (the 103rd.) has been moved to the peninsula.—

Three of the Enemy's Ships, and three of their smaller vessels, were near the mouth of the Niagara River on the 19th. inst.—

They no doubt conveyed the stores and troops that Johnston gave an Account of, from Earnesttown, to Fort George, and Fort Niagara.— Very respectfully, and truly Yours,

(signed) Jac. Brown

LB, NBuHi, Jacob Brown Manuscripts.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 25th. June 1814

Dear General

Your favor of the 21st. I received yesterday—the extreme anxiety under which I have labored for the fate of my Guns and other Stores must plead my apology for not writing you before— I have now received the whole of my Guns and Stores—the *Superior* is ready to sail the *Mohawk* is rigged and will be ready to sail the first Week in July—when I shall proceed in quest of Sir James and offer him battle, if he accepts the invitation I shall either go to Kingston or be at leisure to cooperate with you upon any enterprize against the Enemy— but if Sir James should pursue the policy that he did last year of avoiding a general action I should be obliged to watch his movements to prevent his doing mischief—I shall therefore be governed by circumstances—if he visits the head of the Lake with his Fleet, you may expect to see me there also, if he returns to Kingston, I shall remain in this vicinity to watch his movements—our force is about equal without reckoning his Gun Boats and small Schooners—my fleet will mount five Guns more than his but he has had greatly the advantage of me by two Months exercise on the Lake—he has received a reinforcement of about 700 Seamen, 2000 Marines and 300 Carpenters.— It is said that a large reinforcement of troops have arrived at Quebec and I have no doubt but that it is the Enemy's intention (if he can lead me up the Lake and induce us to weaken this Post by detaching from it) to make a bold push across in boats and attempt the destruction of this place and Stores and if he should succeed he gains a great object— It is my firm opinion that this place has been too much weakened already and I think that it would be unwise at this time to detach either Guns or men—as soon as I am ready to Sail and fix on the day I will write to you and I will also keep you informed from time to time of my movements upon the Lake.—

I am much indebted to Major Appling and the brave Men under his command for the protection and preservation of my Guns at Sandy Creek and beg to express to you and through you to them the high estimation in which I hold

their gallantry and services— General Gaines has also on all occasions promptly rendered me every assistance in his power.—

In your contemplated enterprize may your most sanguine wishes be realized and may the God of battles preserve you and give you victory I have the honor to be with great respect and esteem Dear General Yr. mo. ob st

Isaac Chauncey

LS, MHi, Jacob Brown Papers.

The Exploits of Lieutenant Francis Gregory

While he was fitting out his squadron at Sackets Harbor, Commodore Chauncey kept his officers and small boats busy moving supplies from Oswego, scouting the Canadian shore for signs of naval activity, and conducting an occasional operation against British gunboats moving troops and supplies to Kingston.

Acting Lieutenant Francis H. Gregory commanded a party of three gunboats sent out on the night of 15 June to the Thousand Islands to try to intercept British boats that were carrying supplies and troops from Montreal. They surprised and captured the British gunboat Black Snake *on 19 June, but were in turn discovered by a larger British boat and gave up their prize in order to escape.*

Sailing Master William Vaughan and privateersman Samuel Dixon piloted the other boats in the expedition. Both were experienced lake mariners, and Mr. Dixon had participated in a similar exploit the year before in the capture of the British gunboat Spitfire *in July 1813.*[1]

The three men would undertake another successful raid a few days later. Commodore Chauncey sent them across the lake to Presque Isle on 26 June either to intercept British transports or to burn a schooner under construction there. After a close encounter with a British gunboat, Lieutenant Gregory landed and burned the ship on the stocks, then wisely beat a hasty retreat back to the American shore.

1. See Dudley, Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 523–25.*

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 110 U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 20 June 1814

Sir,

Knowing that the Enemy was constantly receiving Naval and Military Stores at Kingston by the St. Laurence I thought it might be practicable to surprize and capture a Brigade of Boats with Stores on board and either destroy or bring them off—for this purpose I directed Lieutenant Gregory to take three Gigs with only their Crew and one settee in each boat and proceed down the St. Laurence—secret himself on some of the Islands and watch a favorable opportunity to surprize a brigade of loaded boats and either bring them off or destroy them as circumstances would point out.—

Lieut. Gregory left here with his party on the Evening of the 15th. inst. and proceeded to the "Thousand Islands" where he hauled his boats on Shore and concealed them—saw two Brigades of boats pass one up the River with Troops of course too strong for our little party—the other down the River empty and not worth taking.—

Lieut. Gregory found that the Enemy had Gun boats stationed between Kingston & Prescot within about Six Miles of each other and that they had a Telegraph and Lookouts on almost every high Island so that they convey intelligence with great expedition.—

Yesterday Morning between 9 and 10 OClock Lieut. Gregory finding himself discovered and a Gun boat close to him he instantly formed the bold design to board her which he did and carried her without loosing a Man—one of the Enemy was badly wounded—she proved to be the fine Gun-boat *Black Snake* or *No. 9*—and mounted one 18 pounder and manned with 18 Men chiefly Royal Marines (a List of which is inclosed) Lieut. Gregory manned his prize and proceeded up the St. Laurence but was soon discovered and pursued by a very large Gun-boat mounting two heavy Guns and rowed with upwards of forty oars, which overhauled him fast—he kept possession of his prize untill the Enemy threw their shot over him he then very reluctantly (but I think properly) took all his prisoners out and scuttled the Gun boat which sunk instantly and escaped the Enemy altho so heavily loaded— Lieut. Gregory arrived safe this Morning with all his Prisoners

Permit me to recommend this gallant young Officer to your notice and patronage he is not surpassed by any of his grade in zeal intelligence and intrepidity Sailing Master Vaughan and Mr. Dixon each commanding a Gig under Lieutt. Gregory are entitled to my warm acknowledgements for their zeal and activity on all occasions to render service to their Country more particularly on the last expedition where from their knowledge of the River they rendered the most important Service by pointing out the proper channels to elude the pursuit of the Enemy

Will you be pleased to direct in what manner the Prisoners are to be disposed of I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 82 (M125, Roll No. 37).

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. June 21st. 1814

Sir,

I am concerned to acquaint Your Excellency of the capture, by the Enemy, of one of our Gunboats, under the command of Captain Landon,[1] of the Militia, with about 20 Marines, on the 19th. Instant at Tar Island.—

I understand, that Captain Landon, conceiving the first boat of the Enemy which made it's appearance, to be one of our own Flotilla, went on board her in

a small skiff; which, having been seen by his own people, induced them to consider her in the same friendly point; and they pulled towards her; when the whole force of the Enemy, (two Gunboats, and a gig, or cutter,) appearing, rendered resistance too hopeless a case, to be attempted.—

Captain Landon is so well known on the opposite Shore as an active, zealous, and loyal subject, that I am apprehensive he will not experience the kindest treatment during his confinement. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

P:S: The enclosed are the only official notification I have had of this affair; immediately on receipt of which Captain Owen,[2] with two Gunboats, and 150 Seamen, to complete the complement of those at present manned with the Military, proceeded in pursuit of the Enemy.—

G D.

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 300–302. Two enclosures, one from Thomas Blakeny and the other from Lieutenant John Newson, 89th Regiment, to Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Morrison, were filed with this letter.

1. Captain Charles Landon, 1st Grenville Militia.
2. Lieutenant Charles Cunliffe Owen, R.N.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. June 23rd. 1814

Sir,

I have much satisfaction in acquainting Your Excellency, that the Enemy has not been able to reach any Port of their own, with the Gunboat, *Black Snake*, which they so lately captured.—

Lieutenant Campbell, of the 104th. Regt.[1] who had gone in pursuit,— was so fortunate as to fall in with them, and, in a most gallant manner, in a single boat, armed with a Carronade, and eighteen Soldiers, chased a Gunboat, and Four other Boats, filled with men, and obliged them, after firing a few shot, to scuttle, and abandon their Prize.— The Enemys boats escaped round Gravelly Point by superior pulling.—

Captain Owen has weighed the *Black Snake*, and recovered the Gun, and greater part of her Stores; and sent her to Kingston for repair.—

Commodore, Sir James Yeo, anchored, this morning, with the Squadron, off the Ducks. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant.

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 683, pp. 303–5. A draft of a general order by Governor-General Sir George Prevost, commending Lieutenant Campbell and the soldiers of the 104th Regiment, is appended to this letter.

1. Lieutenant Alexander Campbell, 104th Regiment, British army.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 121 U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 7th. July 1814

Sir

I am happy that I have it in my power to detail to you another brilliant atchievement of Lieutenant Gregory with his brave companions.—

I received information some time since that the Enemy was building a large Schooner at "Presque Isle" I determined upon her destruction but deferred the execution untill she should be nearly ready for launching— finding the alarm extensive down the St. Lawrence in consequence of taking the Gun Boat *Black-Snake*, I thought it a favorable opportunity to attempt something at "Presque Isle"— on the 26th. Ulto. I directed Lieutenant Gregory to take with him Messrs. Vaughan and Dixon—proceed with the two largest Gigs to Nicholas Island (within about Seven Miles of "Presque Isle" harbor) and there conceal his boats and wait for some transports which I had information were expected there to take up Provisions and munitions of War, which had been sent up the Bay of Quinte for the Troops at York and Fort George, but if these Transports did not make their appearance in three or four days then to proceed to "Presque Isle" and burn the Vessel on the Stocks but with positive orders not to injure a private building or any private property— the day after Lieutenant Gregory arrived on the coast he discovered a vessel beating up, but just as he shoved off to board her a large Gun-boat hove in sight a little below him—this boat made a signal to the vessel in the Offing, upon which she tacked and stood for the Gun-boat— Lieutenant Gregory secreted his boats as well as he could but was apprehensive that he had been discovered— the Gun-boat and her convoy (which was full of Troops) stood into "Presque Isle"— Lieutenant Gregory was determined to ascertain whether he had been discovered—accordingly he sent one of his boats in the next Night and took off one of the inhabitants who informed him that it was known that he was on the coast and that two expresses had been sent to Kingston in consequence, he therefore determined upon executing the latter part of his instructions and made his arrangements accordingly, landed, placed Sentinels at the Houses to prevent alarm and set fire to the vessel which was nearly ready to launch—she was a stout well built vessel to mount 14 guns and would probably have been launched in about Ten days— a Small Store House which contained Stores for the New Vessel was unavoidably burnt as it was so near the Vessel that it took fire from her— Lieutenant Gregory learnt from the inhabitants that much property had been sent up a few days previous—that a Company of the Glengary Regt. had been stationed there but had been sent to York a few days before another company was on its way from Kingston to replace them— the few Militia which had been

left to guard the vessel and property retreated upon the approach of our Boats— as soon as the vessel was intirely consumed Lieutenant Gregory reembarked his Men without having permitted one of them to enter a House.— On finding the alarm so general he thought it prudent to cross the Lake immediately— he stopped one day at Oswego for refreshment and arrived here last evening having performed a most difficult service with his usual gallantry and good conduct

Lieutenant Gregory speaks in the highest terms of commendation of Sailing Master Vaughan and Mr. Dixon, as well as the Men under his command for their patient endurance of hunger and fatigue and the zeal with which they performed every part of their duty

I think in justice to these brave Men that they ought to be allowed something for the destruction of this vessel—they have however every confidence in the justice and liberality of the Navy Department and submit their case most cheerfully to your decision I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Ob. Hl. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 138 (M125, Roll No. 37).

Assessing Enemy Strength

Both Commodore Chauncey and Commodore Yeo needed accurate information on the numbers of ships and guns his opponent could bring to bear in the naval contest on Lake Ontario. They used various means, including spies, observations from small boats, and information from deserters, to assess their opponent's strength. The numbers of guns and ships were carefully totaled in an effort to match the opposing force.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

(No. 115.) U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 24 June 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inclose a view of the American and British Squadrons on Lake Ontario.—

I shall sail the first week in July to offer the Enemy battle if he accepts the invitation—the superiority on this Lake will soon be decided and the victors remain Masters of these Waters during the War If however the Enemy pursues the policy that he did last year and avoids a general action it will force us to a blockade of his Fleet untill he can add to it a force much superior to ours which will be as soon as he can launch and fit the 84. now in great forwardness at Kingston—this Ship is progressing rapidly and the Enemy calculate to launch her by the first of August and fit out immediately—my own impression is however that she cannot be got ready for service before October—if however I should be mistaken and the Enemy add this Ship to his present force before next Fall I should again be obliged to submit to the mortification of a blockade

as we have nothing to oppose so overwhelming a force and as this class of vessel is so much beyond any thing which the Government contemplated when I had the honor of your instructions in January last, I should not feel myself authorized even to prepare to build any thing to oppose Such a vessel without Special authority.—

After I have been a sufficient length of time on the Lake to ascertain whether the Enemy will fight me without his 84 Gun Ship and there should be no probability of a Peace with England it will become absolutely necessary to prepare Materials for building next Winter, provided we mean to contest the Supremacy of the Lakes and the sooner these materials are collected the better both for the Government and builder, as much of the Timber must be brought a considerable distance and the water conveyance lessens the price considerably. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Ob. Hle. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 98 (M125, Roll No. 37).

[Enclosure]

A View of the American Squadron on Lake Ontario

Description of Vessels	Names	Rate	actual force	Captains	
Ship	*Superior*	44	58	I. Chauncey	
Do.	*Mohawk*	32	42	John Smith	
Do.	*General Pike*	24	28	Jacob Jones	
Do.	*Madison*	20	22	Wm. M. Crane	
Brig	*Jefferson*	18	21	Charles G. Ridgeley	
Do.	*Jones*	18	21	M. T. Woolsey	
Do	*Sylph*	16	18	Jesse D. Elliott	
Do	*Oneida*	14	14	Thomas Brown	
Schooner	*Lady of the Lake*	1	1	Marvin P. Mix[1]	This vessel is a small Pilot-boat built schooner for a tender & Repeater
			225		

I Chauncey

Sacketts Harbor
24th. June. 1814.

DS, DNA, RG45, AF7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

1. Acting Lieutenant Mervine P. Mix.

[Enclosure]

A View of the British Squadron on Lake Ontario

Description of Vessels	Names	Force	Captains	
Ship	*Prince Regent*	58	Sir James L. Yeo Comm. O'Conner Captain	
Ship	*Princess Charlotte*	44		
Ship	*Montreal*	25		late *Wolfe*
Ship	*Niagara*	24		" *Royal George*
Brig	*Star*	18		" *Melville*
Brig		18		" *Earl Moira*
Brig		16		" *Sir Sydney Smith*
Schooner		16		
		219		

N.B. The Enemy has changed the Names of his vessels since last Winter

Besides the above the enemy has about Twenty heavy Gun Boats and two or three small Schooners mounting heavy Guns.—

I Chauncey

Sacketts Harbor
24th. June 1814

DS, DNA, RG45, AF7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

COMMANDER CHARLES CUNLIFFE OWEN, R.N., TO
COMMODORE SIR JAMES L. YEO, R.N.

Copy Fort Wellington 17th. July 1814
Extract of a Letter fm. Captain Owen R.N.
to Commodore Sir J. L. Yeo

Sir/

Since my arrival here, I have directed my attention towards the means of gaining Information as to the Enemy's movements & I have now the Honor of Communicating some Intelligence which may be relied on—

Informant is a man; well known to our Friends on the other Side & left Sacketts on the 14th. Inst.

The fleet was not expected to sail in less than fourteen days fm. that period waiting it is reported for the Equipment of the Flotilla—but it is generally thought delayed through the want of Seamen—

Sixteen large Gun Boats are building & will be complet'd in the course of a fortnight— Informant has seen them & supposes them to be twice as large as those taken at Sandy Creek & capable of each holding 200 Men—

Four Gun Boats have been built of 60 feet keel—A great number of smaller ones are constructing—Two thousand Troops at the Harbour

I have obtained some Idea of the fire arms on the Repetition Principle—[1]

The Swivels (which are placed in the Tops) have seven Barrels—& throw 250 Balls at each fire— They have one Lock & the fire is communicated fm. Barrel to Barrel—& they discharge successively at the Interval of one Second—

They load very quick—The Balls are all perforated & are made up in Cartridges for the Charge— Their Boarders Pistols have one Lock & throw Six Balls—

The Musquets have Two Locks & throw twelve Balls—Eleven at one Discharge & a reserve Ball for the Second Lock—

The shock fm. these arms is not greater than that from ones on the common Construction—& which must be attributed to the Channel of the fire passing through the aperture of each Ball—

On the 14th Commodore Chauncey had 12 Swivels—50 Musquets & 200 Pistols of this description—more were daily expect'd—

Two Men of the names of Vaughn & Dickson have fitted out each a Privateer for the River—

It is the common opinion at Sacketts, that a general attack will be made on Kingston—

I have ascertained that the Boat taken fm. the Marine Officers has been scuttled in Jibaway[2] by people fm. our Side & the things sent by land to Sacketts—Judge Ford[3] has written to the Commanding officer there to endeavour to recover them—

Nothing will prevent Similar occurrences but Severe measures & removing Suspicious Persons on our own Side from the Banks of the river—

I have the names of Several Persons on the american Shore who ought to be carried off—& either sent to Quebec or on board the Squadron till the War is over—otherwise this System of plundering will never cease—

I propose remaining here two days longer & then proceed to the neighbourhood of Grenadier Island— I would have wished to have stopp'd a sufficient time in order to arrange a regular communication with Sacketts—but as the Enemy is momentarily expect'd in the River—I consider it my Duty not to be absent from the probable point of attack—

Vaughn & Dickson are both determined Men & I understand have collect'd good Crews &c—

Have the goodness Sir; to let me know—to what extent I may go in paying people for Information— The Sum you did me the honor to mention—in employing confidential People (at least for a continuance) will not go far—

Signed
C. Cunliffe Owen

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 684, pp. 160–63.

1. Joseph G. Chambers of Philadelphia was developing an experimental repeating gun for the navy. Some of these guns were sent to Lake Ontario in April 1814. Chambers guns were used in battle at Oswego, the Battle of Lake Champlain, and at New Orleans.
2. Perhaps Chippewa Bay on the Saint Lawrence River near Hammond, New York.
3. Judge Nathan Ford, St. Lawrence County, N.Y. See Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 1, p. 293, note 2.

Smuggling Naval Stores

The brazenness of some of the local residents in smuggling naval supplies, stores, cattle, and foodstuffs to Canada outraged Commander Macdonough. Trade across the border flourished during peacetime and remained lucrative despite embargo and war. The officers of the American navy remained vigilant and intercepted quantities of supplies, including the spars that were intended to fit out the new British ship building at Isle aux Noix.

MASTER COMMANDANT THOMAS MACDONOUGH TO
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S Ship *Saratoga*
at the lines 29th. June 1814

Sir.

I had information yesterday that two spars intended for the masts of a ship building at Isle Aux Noix were on their way to canada in charge & under the management of four citizens of the United States, I sent Sailing Master Vallette[1] to destroy them which he did near the lines, the persons who came towing them made their escape on shore— One of the spars was 85 feet in length the other 80. feet, it is supposed from the size of these spars that one was for the Fore the other the mizen mast & that the main mast may also be on its way which we shall keep a good look out for— I have the honor to be, Sir, very Respty. your Mot. ot. Sert.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 153 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Sailing Master Elie A. F. Vallette, changed later in life to Lavallette.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*
near the lines Lake Champlain
9th. July 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, on the night of the 7th. inst. Midn. Abbot[1] distroyed four Spars supposed to be for the enemy's ships Main-Mast and her three Top-Masts four Miles within the enemy's country—

The enemy are progressing rapidly with their Ship which they say will be ready by the first of August, they are also preparing Gallies it is said to the number of fifteen or Twenty; fourteen of these Gallies are to my knowledge in the Sorrell River between the line & the Isle aux Noix— The Ship it is said is to have a Frigates Guns on her, brought from Quebec and, all accounts agree that he will make a bold attempt to sweep the Lake, I am daily expecting orders to build for the enemy will when he gets his force compleated have one superior to ours, I have written to Doctr. Bullus requesting his immediate attention to forwarding carpenters &c (should he receive instructions from the Dep'mt. to do so) to White hall, to build there I fear the enemy would prevent any additional force built at Vergennes from joining me— As Gallies take so many men, I think the most servicable Vessel would be a Brig of 20. 18 prs. long Guns, she could be built in time to prevent, with the force I now have, the enemy continuing long on the Lake— I beg you to rest assured that what force we have shall be employed to the best advantage against the enemy but he will not I am convinced meet me unless he should come with a force that would not make a contest doubtful Our crews are healthy the arrangements of the Squadron similar and regular as Vessels on the Atlantic— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your most obt. sert.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 4 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Midshipman Joel Abbot.

Completing the American Squadron on Lake Champlain

Master Commandant Macdonough urgently requested permission to build an additional ship for his Lake Champlain squadron to match the British force under construction at Isle aux Noix. William Jones approved a new 20-gun brig to be constructed by Adam Brown, the shipwright who helped to build Captain Oliver H. Perry's squadron on Lake Erie the previous year. The new brig Eagle *was launched only nineteen days after the date her keel was laid, a remarkable feat. Secretary Jones, however, made it clear that he was not about to fund another naval shipbuilding contest like that on Lake Ontario.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough

Thomas Macdonough Esqr.
Commanding the U S Naval Force

Navy Department
July 5th. 1814.
on Lake Champlain.

Sir

In consequence of the representations made in your letters of the 19th & 26th. Ulto., I have directed Mr. Brown to repair immediately to Vergennes and commence with an adequate force, the building of a Brig of 18 Guns, agreably to your suggestions.—

Your present force however, is greatly superior to the enemy, as from accounts I have received, the Schooner *Ticonderoga* is a full match for his Brig, and I had hoped that the irksome contest of Ship building would have been superseded, by the possession and fortification, of the point which the Secretary of War had designated, for the purpose of repelling any attempt of the enemy, to pass into the Lake.—

I am strongly impressed with the belief, that such a position in co operation with your Squadron, would have more effectually secured our command of the Lake, than any reasonable increase of our naval force, because the enemy's means and facility of increasing his naval Armament, greatly exceed those which we possess, either in equipment, transportation or manning.— If we have not the military means of commanding the pass into the Lake, how are we to command the Shores of the Lake, and if we are incapable of the latter, of what avail will the command of the Lake be to us.— If the enemy shall have sufficient military force to command the Shores of the Lake, our Squadron must ultimately fall into his power.— It is therefore in vain to rest exclusively upon our Naval superiority, and I see no end to this war of Broad Axes.—

You will however immediately confer with Mr. Brown, and take the necessary measures, for building and equipping the Brig of 18 Guns, with all possible despatch.

Mr. Bullus will provide and forward the necessary stores and materials, agreably to the Indents of yourself and Mr. Brown, and the armament shall be forwarded in due time.— There are nine long 18 pounders in New York, and abundance of 32 pd. Carronades, you had better order her Battery of these.—

It will be superior, and more convenient, than an entire Battery of long 18s. as in case of necessity, you can fight more or less of the long 18s. on a side, and in close action the Carronades are more efficient.—I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 164–65.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S. Ship *Saratoga*
near the line, Lake Champlain
August 12. 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that Mr. Brown wrote me a few days since that he should without fail launch the Brig on the 11th. Inst., hence I conclude she went into the water yesterday,—by my advises from the transporting agents in Albany all her stores had left that place for Vergennes.

Can Master Commandant Creighton[1] be spared from the sea board to command this Brig?— all my officers are young and many of them inexperienced.

The recruiting service is dull and I am advised of but fifteen men being entered for the Brig although three rendezvous are opened for her—one at New York, one at New Port and its vicinity and Commodore Bainbridge has ordered one to be opened in Boston. The Brig will be ready to enter the lake before she gets her crew unless a transfer of men could be made from some vessel or station on the sea board. The enemies ship is caulking and from my last information will be ready for service by the first of next month, by which time our Brig could be easily got ready had she her officers and men. The enemy has collected in considerable numbers at the line near the lake and threaten an attack both by land and water.— We keep in readiness to receive him, as we cannot without unpardonable imprudence go to him, because he lies under strong batteries and the water is extremely unfavourable.— These circumstances have long since given him confidence of security in his situation. It was with great reluctance that Genl. Izard furnished me with men from the ranks, but I presume he will spare me about forty more for marines for the Brig. I have the honor to be, very respectfully Sir Yr. mo obd Servt.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 91 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Master Commandant John Orde Creighton.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*
near the line lake Champlain
August 16th. 1814—

Sir.

I have the honor to send you herewith a letter from Majr. Genl. Izard by which it appears not even the forty men to act as Marines on board the Brig are to be supplied, in my letter to you of the 12th. inst. I mentioned that I expected those men,— The Brig will be in Plattsburgh by the 20th. inst. where she will be moored until men arrive to man her, in the mean time should the enemy come

out with his additional force, any movement of the Army on the Lake and the transportation for the Army also, would become unsafe, because the enemy's force would unquestionably be far superior to ours, without our new Brig— I have in the Squadron about 200 Men from the ranks of the Army this I think should not be considered a great proportion particularly as they are so immediately employed for the benefit of the Army in covering all its transportation &c. on water— By my last advises from the Rendezvous not more than thirty men can be entered for the Brig, had she her officers & men in a short time she would be ready for service The enemy's Ship will be launched in a few days I do not however think she will be ready before the next month— I have the honor to be Sir very respectfully your mo. ob. servt.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 18 (M147, Roll No. 5).

[Enclosure]
Captain Thomas Macdonough, Camp near Chazy.
U.S. Navy. August 17, 1814.

Sir,

Your note of yesterday was received last Evening— After the Conversations which took place with you several weeks ago respecting the Inconvenience & Impropriety of manning the Vessels under your Command from the Ranks of the Army I cannot but be surprised that supplies of sailors have not been provided, and that instead of restoring the men lent to the navy there should be an application for more at this late Hour. You are acquainted with my readiness to assist in every respect the Squadron on Lake Champlain—you will consequently attribute to its true cause my Declaration that it is inconsistent with the general situation of the Troops to detach any more of them for the service of the navy.— I have the honor to be, Sir, very respectfully your obedt. servt.

Geo. Izard

Copy, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 18, enclosure (M147, Roll No. 5).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*, near the Line,
Lake Champlain Augt. 27th. 1814

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you of the arrival, at the Squadron, of the U S Brigt. lately built at Vergennes, under the Command of Capt. Robert Henley.—[1]

From late advices from my different Rendezvous, I may expect men on in the course of a fortnight to man this Vessel; none of her Officers have yet arrived— I suppose they are, however, on the way.— The Enemy's Ship was, I believe, launched on the 22nd. Inst.—they talk of entering the Lake,—but, as the active

part of the Campaign is to the westward, and the different forces moving thither, this may be considered doubtful at this time.—

Subjoined is a statement of our force, and that of the Enemy's, as correctly as I have been able to ascertain it, & which may be relied upon as very Correct.—

Our Force		Enemy's Force	
			Guns
Ship *Saratoga*—	26 Guns	Ship	30 or upwards
Brig	20 "	Brig *Linnet*—	18—
Sch'r. *Ticonderoga*	17 "	Sloop *Shannon*	11—
Sloops—*Preble*—	7 "	*Broke*	11—
" *Montgomery*	6 "		
Six Gallies—each 2 Guns	12 "	Seven Gallies each 2 Guns	14.—
Four Gun Boats each 1 Gun	4 "	Ten Gallies each 1 Gun	10
Total	92 Guns	Total	94 Guns
		also A Rocket Boat, and 3 Boats with pieces on them	

I have the honor to be with great respect Sir, yr. mot. ob. St.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 25 (M147, Roll No. 5).

1. Robert Henley was promoted to master commandant on 12 August 1814 and ordered from Norfolk to Lake Champlain; the new brig on Lake Champlain was later called *Eagle*.

Major General Brown Seeks Support from the Erie Squadron

Captain Arthur Sinclair's flotilla was in the Detroit River when Major General Jacob Brown called on the Lake Erie fleet to support the army at Fort Erie. Brown's forces had recaptured Fort Erie on 3 July and were ready to advance. Major General Brown hoped the navy could anchor in his rear at the fort while his army pressed into Canada. Secretary of the Navy Jones, however, urged Lieutenant Kennedy, in command during Sinclair's absence on Lake Huron, to decline cooperating with the general. The remaining vessels on Lake Erie were already expected to transport British prisoners who had been captured in the Battle of Lake Erie the previous September from Sandusky, Ohio, to Canada for exchange.

By the time Lieutenant Kennedy received Secretary Jones's instructions, it was too late for the navy to render any assistance to the army. At the Battle of Chippawa on 5 July, Brown's victorious army had forced the British to pull back to Fort George and Burlington. The Americans began a siege of Fort George on 20 July but lifted the siege after two days because of heavy casualties and the lack of naval support from either Lake Erie, or Lake Ontario.[1]

1. *For more on army operations on the Niagara peninsula, see Whitehorne,* While Washington Burned, *and Quimby,* U.S. Army in the War of 1812, *chapter 16.*

Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie July 8th: 1814

Sir,

I have the Honr. of enclosing a Copy of a Letter received from Majr. Genl. Brown at Fort Erie, he desires to have all the naval force on this Lake, to co-operate with him at the place he names—

The Three Gun Boats, *Ohio, Porcupine* & *Somers* are all the force on this Lake in readiness the *Lady Provost,* will be ready in a few days—

I have given charge of the Schooners to Lieutt. Conklin,[1] they are at Erie now, & will wait my arrival—. I have given sixteen of the *Lady Provost*'s men to the Schooner's *Somers* & *Porcupine,* & I think it necessary (when I sail from this Port) to leave half that I now have to Man the Block House on the Peninsula, as the armament of the Ships, & a number of naval Stores are deposited there— It will be necessary also to leave a proportion of Men to take care of the *Q. Charlotte* & *DeTroit,* The *Hunter* & *Amelia* are under the Guns of the Block House on the peninsula— The Ships are under the other Block House—but in a wild anchorage— I have supplied Majr. Marlin with every necessary article for the Equitmt. of the Block House but he has but a small guard, a Bare sufficiency for guarding the public stores on this side—

I have a guard of Officers station'd on the beach, opposite the peninsula B. House, for the purpose of giving alarm, should the Enemy attempt to land in Boats, as a very small force might destroy that property in the night

Mr. Timberlake[2] has reported himself, Mr. Salomon was left here by Comd. Sinclair, he is a man of business, & quite able to discharge the whole duty of purser & agent for both Lakes Doctr. Richardson[3] has not arrived— I should be glad to have your Orders Sir, respecting the finishg. of the Block House & Hospital, the Hospital if finish'd would make a good roomy Store House & it lays but a few rods from the B. House— Very respectfully I have the Honr. to be Yr. Obt. Svt.

Edmd. P. Kennedy

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 9 (M148, Roll No. 13). A copy of Major General Jacob Brown's letter to Kennedy, dated 4 July 1814, was enclosed. In that letter, Brown stated that he was in possession of Fort Erie and "would wish your whole force to move down & take a position near the Fort, where the vessels can continue with perfect safety & form a very desirable support to our rear—."

1. Lieutenant Augustus H. M. Conckling.
2. Purser Richard T. Timberlake.
3. Surgeon's Mate John C. Richardson was commissioned 17 May 1814 and ordered from his home in Kentucky to Lake Erie.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy

Lieutt. Edmund P Kennedy
Commanding Naval Officer
Erie Pennsylvania

Navy Department
July 13th. 1814.

Sir

I have received your Letters of the 4th & 8th inst.— the latter covering a letter of the 4th Inst. from Genl. Brown to yourself, in which he requests the co operation of your whole force, and points out a position near Fort Erie, where it is proposed you should remain inactive at Anchor to cover his rear.—

This would leave Erie together with all our valuable Stores and the two prize Ships (which of necessity lay outside the Bar) exposed to destruction by a night attack, even of 200 men in Batteaux, which could cross from long point unperceived until the attack was made. All the arrangements made by this Department and the several important objects to be accomplished at Erie during the absence of Commodore Sinclair, together with the transportation of the Prisoners from Sandusky where they are now waiting your promised arrival, must be suspended if the plan of General Brown is adopted.—

This cannot be.— the force now remaining on Lake Erie is so exceedingly reduced by the expedition to Lake Huron, that your presence at Erie will be indispensable, in order to increase and render that force more efficient.—

You will therefore inform General Brown, that you are directed by the Secretary of the Navy, to state to him, that under existing circumstances, with the very reduced force left under your command by Com: Sinclair, and the objects you are directed to carry into effect at Erie, and other parts of the Lake, the only effectual co operation will be, that of transportation, which upon due notice you will promptly afford.—

You will then return to Erie, and equip for service with the least possible delay, the best of the two prize Ships—that is, the one which may be prepared for service at the least expense, and in the shortest time.— You will fit her as a Brig according to the directions which Com: Sinclair has given you.—

In a Letter of the 23d Ulto. from Detroit he says,— "From the large requisition of Captain Elliott not being entirely put a stop to, owing to the state of forwardness many articles were in, it is my opinion, if you wish it, or the service of the lower Lake should require it, that at least one of those Ships, might be fitted out without scarcely any additional expense, from what is now actually on hand."— I trust therefore, that by your prudence and exertions, this object will be accomplished without any further requisitions or expense.—

In the equipment of the Brig, much may be saved by a judicious and economical conversion of the materials; and it will readily occur to you, how much more necessary this is, on a remote Lake, where the transportation in many cases exceeds the first cost of the articles, than in our Atlantic ports, where every article may be had with so much convenience, and at prime cost.

Having selected a sufficient number of men for the equipment of the Brig, you will immediately employ the Squadron in the transportation of the Prisoners from Sandusky as before directed, and then hold it in readiness for co operating with the Army under General Brown, wherever it may be practicable to employ its force with activity and effect.—

In respect to the place of landing the prisoners, that is arranged by the Commissary General of Prisoners, which you will adhere to. The Commissary General has been made acquainted with the loose and irregular manner, in which prisoners are allowed to travel, and I trust it will be corrected.—

You certainly have a right to apprehend for examination, any person whom you may have reason to suspect is a Spy, and if an Alien, the Department will upon being informed of the facts, order a Court Martial for the trial of the suspected person, provided the circumstances, shall appear to warrant that course.— If the suspected person shall be a Citizen of the United States, the civil authority alone can take cognizance of his offence.—

The enclosed Copy of my letter to Mr. Eyre,[1] will explain to you, the station he is to occupy, and the duties he is to perform, which you will take for your government.— He is a Shipwright of the first order, and a very worthy and highly ingenious man.—

If the repairs and other Carpenters work will admit, he will be well employed in building a light fast Sailing Schooner Boat, 30 feet keel, 8 feet rake forward, and 6 feet rake abaft, 12 feet Beam, and five feet hold, to trim at double the draught of water aft, to that of forward, with a Cockpit 6 feet long upon a level with the main deck, and a quarter deck 12½ feet long before the Cockpit, with a break of 18 inches at each bulkhead.— Such a Boat with the form he would give to her, would sail very fast, and would be usefully employed, as a Dispatch or look out Boat, from Detroit to Buffalo, as the *Lady of the Lake* is employed on Lake Ontario.— In this way we could receive dispatches at this place, from Malden through Buffalo, in six or seven days by the express mail.—

In respect to the finishing of the Block house and Hospital, and other details, I have no orders to give, but refer you to those from your Commanding Officer. I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 167–69. A notation followed this letter: "Duplicate of this and of Letter to Mr. Eyre sent by Express mail to Buffaloe, under cover to military Commanding Officer on 15th July.—"

1. Jones offered Thomas B. Eyre a position as master carpenter at Erie to superintend repairs to the vessels. Jones to Eyre, 30 May 1814, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, pp. 175–76 (M209, Roll No. 4).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy

Lieutt. Edmund P Kennedy.
Commanding Naval Officer
Erie Pennsylvania.

Navy Department
July 19th. 1814.

Sir

On the 13th Instant I answered your letter of the 4th. and sent duplicate thereof by the express mail under cover to an Officer at Buffaloe, to meet you off Fort Erie, should you have taken that position, in consequence of the request of General Brown.

The subsequent movements and designs of that Officer which were not within the knowledge or anticipation of this Department, at the time my letter of the 13th. was written, indicate a possibility that he may require the transportation and aid of the Vessels under your command, so promptly as not to admit of the delay incident to giving notice to you at Erie.—

You will therefore immediately on receipt of this, suspend the transportation of the Prisoners, and send the four Vessels under your command, to Fort Erie, to co operate with Genl. Brown, reserving at Erie a sufficient number of Officers and men, to equip the Prize Vessel, as directed, and you will either proceed with the Squadron to Fort Erie, or remain to equip the Brig according to the confidence to be reposed in your next in Command, for the able discharge of either duty.—

Should the transportation of the Prisoners have taken place before you receive this, you will consult with General Brown, as to the proper point at which to land them.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 169. A notation followed this letter: "Duplicate under cover to Commanding Military Officer at Fort Erie near Buffaloe.— Triplicate on the 20th. by Express mail to Erie via Pittsburg. The original to Erie via Buffaloe.—"

Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie, 22d. July 1814.

Sir,

Your Letter of the 13th. Inst. I have before me every thing therein directed shall be strictly attended to— I yesterday dispatch'd the *Ohio, Porcupine,* & *Somers* with several hundred Men under Command of Ltt. Colo. Nicholas & Majr. Marline,[1] for Buffaloe—they had a fresh whole sail breeze, & in all probability will return here tomorrow, when they will be immediately Order'd to Cleveland, & the Mouth of Portage River, for the purpose of Transporting Troops to Buffaloe agreeable to arrangments made with Genl. McArthur— Genl. Brown has requested me by express, not to take on board the prisoners alluded to in your instructions, untill he has recd. reinforcements, or untill I hear further from him on the subject— I have sent Mr. Eyres to get the *Ariel* off, he thinks her a fine Vessel & a fast sailer, & may be got off with triflg. expence; I discover him to be such a man as you discribe— Capt. Sinclair is mistaken Sir, as respects the situation of the Prize Ships, they have not a single spar belongg. to them, the old rigg. remains in the same cut up state as when dismantl'd, & every usefull article belongg. to them originally, have been plunder'd, such distruction of Public Property I never have witness'd before, notwithstandg. the many exertions of Capt. Sinclair to discover where the many articles belongg. to those vessels were stow'd, there is yet many thousands of Dollars worth of property that never will be recover'd— On bd. the *Detroit* I found in cleang. out her hold a number of fine muskets, swords, pistolls, & Fill'd Cartridges lying in the bilge water, & on board the *Hunter,* as many; on shore, abt. the Houses in the Town 75 stand of arms, Kentledge in the most of the Houses & distributed

about the Lake 2270 round shott of different sizes & a few Grape & Cannister, some of them in one & one half fathoms water, Crow Bars, passing Boxes, powder horns &c., all gone, & the powder prickg. about the lower Decks of the Vessels—

I will have the *Queen Charlotte* put in fighting Order as soon as possible her sparrs can be soon rough'd out—

There are but three Men & an ensign left here by Majr. Marlin for the purpose of guardg. the Block House which is stow'd full of powder belongg. to the army— The public stores of the Navy are unprotected— I mean to set a watch of Midshipmen to guard them untill the arrival of some Troops—

I herewith inclose you Sir, Copy of a Letter rec'd from Capt. Sinclair the 20th. Inst,[2] an extract of which I have forwarded to his Excellency, the Governor of Pennsylvania— The *Lady Provost* will Cruise between this place & Long Point, untill I can ascertain the force & the spot where they are collected— Respectfully I have the Honr. to be yr. Obt. Svt.

Edmd. P. Kennedy

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 36 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Nicholas, 1st Infantry, U.S.A.; and Major Ralph Marlin, 22d Infantry, U.S.A. These troops reinforced Major General Jacob Brown's army at Niagara.

2. See pp. 557–58 for the enclosure, a copy of a letter from Captain Arthur Sinclair to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy dated 12 July 1814.

Sailing Master James E. McDonold to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy

Erie, July 27th 1814

Sir.

Agreeable to your instructions I repaired on board the sc[*h*]ooner *Diligence* at 3. P.M. on the 23 inst. with sixteen volunteers, which with the six seamen from the *Lady Prevost* made a party of Twenty Two men, and immediately sailed for the Enemies shores— at 11 P.M. the weather being thick discovered land which proved to be the east end of Long Point; stood up the bay in hopes of reaching Pattersons Creek before day light, but the wind becoming light & variable at day break, we were more than fourteen miles from that place, believing that if we should be discovered by the inhabitants the object of the expedition would be defeated; I hauled upon the wind and made a small bay of Long Point, where we came to anchor during that day of the 24th.— At 9. P.M. got under weigh with a head wind; at 3. A.M. seeing no hopes of making the creek before day light; got the men into the boat at the same time directing (Mr. Perry) the owner of the schooner, to beat as near in shore as practible she being then distant from Land about six miles; we pulled direct for the shore & landed at day break, left the boat in charge of Midshipn. Wendell[1] with orders to await our return, at the same time to keep pulling off & on, to prevent his being surprised, After ascending a very high and steep bank, we found ourselves in a thick piece of woods, through which we marched about half a mile, when we discovered some houses, which proved to be a court-house, Jail & Tavern near which the building of an immense large Block House had commenced & the

land recently cleared, after satisfying myself that there were no centinals placed, I concluded the force, if any must be trifling, and therefore determined on ascertaining the exact situation of the Place, surrounded the buildings, broke the doors of the Jail and Inn, seised the Jail Keeper, from whom I was in hopes I should be able to collect the information wanted at this moment— an alarm gun was fired by the enemy, which was answered by several others, we then retired to the boat, bringing the Jailor with us, when distant from the shore about half a mile, we perceived the enemy had collected on the bank forming a body of about three hundred men which number seem'd constantly encreasing while we continued in sight, an evidence that there is a force collecting at that place, at 7 A.M. stood for Erie where in consequence of baffling winds and calms we did not arrive untill 2 P.M. on the 26th— Mr. Windal, Midn. & Mr. Burling, Citizen, who acted as my assistants on landing as well as the citizens volunteers and seamen conducted themselves with much coolness and determination, and I am happy to say exhibited no disposition to depart from an honourable mode of Warfare Very Respectfully

(signed) J. E. McDonold[2]

Copy, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 44 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Midshipman John W. Wendell, appointed 18 June 1812; resigned 16 December 1814.
2. James E. McDonold was appointed a sailing master on 21 July 1814. He was warranted a midshipman the following November and promoted to acting lieutenant on 12 January 1815.

Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie, July 29th. 1814—

Sir,

I have the Honr. of acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 19th. Inst., & Triplicate of your Orders of the 13th.— Lieutt. Concklin with the three Schooners, sail'd on the 21st. Inst. for Buffaloe, with three hundred Troops from this place, with Orders to return here, to be join'd by the *Lady Provost* for Cleveland; but his not having yet arrived induces me to believe he has been detain'd by Genl. Brown,— I wait his arrival to put in execution your last Orders— Mr. Dulany Forrest, Acting Lieutt., has been extremely ill ever since he arrived on this station, he has a Certificate of his illness from the surgeon of the Station with my permission to leave here, for the recovery of his health, the surgeon earnestly requesting it

The schooners *Porcupine* & *Somers*, are commanded by Ship'd masters mates, they are active, genteel young Men, have been long on this station & have conducted themselves with propriety; the warrant Officers, Masters & Midshipmen are disatisfied on account of it, "how am I to act Sir, in this case"— I am sorry to say Sir, that there are only three others on the station, (of my experience), that confidence can be placed in, Those are Mr. Concklin, Sailg. masters Coldwell[1] & McDonald; The latter has recd. his warrant as master, & beg'd me to mention that he would much rather, if it meet your approbation to have a midshipmans warrant, believing that masters cannot be advanced in the line of promotion; I hope he is mistaken!— I herewith inclose you a report from him—[2] I gave him Orders on the 23d. Inst. to proceed to Long Point, or its vicinity with a few Volunteers & land under cover of the night for the purpose of reconnoiterg. the Enemy & obtaing. information respecting the force there, & in what place, if any, the Boats were building, he has executed his Orders promptly, & brt. off a prissoner, who gives information, that there are from 6, to 700 militia & Regulars, at, & near long point & at Grand River, 1200 Including Indians, he gives no information of Boats, he calls himself an American, has been 15 years in Canada, born in New York, his name is Montrose, an American, Rifle & musket was taken with him, I think by treating him well, & permitting him to return, he may be of use, he is very communicative, he is known by several here, to be friendly to us. all his property, consisting of a mill & distillery were distroyed at the attack of long point by Colo. Campbell—[3] I have the Guns, of the *Queen Charlotte* mounting, & am going on with her out fitts as fast as Circumstances will admit of— Respectfly. I have the Honr. to be yr. obt. Svt.

Edm[d]. P. Kennedy

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Sailing Master Thomas Caldwell, warranted 23 April 1814.
2. See pp. 547–48 for Sailing Master James E. McDonold's report on the expedition to Long Point.
3. See Campbell to Armstrong, 18 May 1814, pp. 486–87.

Waiting for Commodore Chauncey

The American victory at Chippawa on 5 July gave Major General Brown confidence that a quick campaign on the Niagara peninsula was possible. The next movement against York and eventually Kingston could commence if the Americans could secure a victory at Fort George and Burlington Heights. Major General Brown expected that Commodore Chauncey's fleet would be on the lake by 15 July, and anxiously waited for news that the squadron was at the head of the lake ready to cooperate with his forces.

Commodore Chauncey, however, had fallen ill about the middle of July, and no letters or reports were sent from Sackets Harbor until the end of the month. As the days stretched on with no word from the commodore, Secretary of the Navy Jones grew increasingly anxious. The period when the Americans were expected to command Lake Ontario was slipping by, and President Madison and Secretary of War Armstrong both pressed for news from the commodore. Secretary Jones had relied on Commodore Chauncey's loyalty and diligence during the past two years of the war, but the secretary had to make plans to replace him if no news was received. He issued secret instructions to Commodore Stephen Decatur to proceed to Sackets Harbor and take over command of the Lake Ontario station if he should find that Commodore Chauncey was still unwell.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

Sacketts Harbor
8th. July. 1814—

Dear General

Permit me to congratulate you upon your success in the commencement of the Campaign—it is I am persuaded a precursor of much more brilliant events.—

Johnson[1] returned a few days since and states that all the Glengarys and 103. have gone to York or Fort George and that 260 of the 10th. Regt. of Royal Artillery went up about Ten days Since— large Quantities of Provisions munitions of War &c. &c. have been sent up recently— the force at Kingston about Two Thousand including Militia but Troops constantly arriving from below.— The New Ship commenced planking and Two hundred additional carpenters at Work expected to have her ready by the first of September— the fleet in Kingston and not expected to Sail again untill their New Ship was ready.—

I am nearly ready— the *Mohawk* is detained on account of a little Iron Work &c. but hope to sail in a few days— shall take my Station off the Ducks—unless the Enemy will go up the Lake in which case I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you at Fort George or Niagara

Two of my Gigs paid a visit to "Presque Isle" and burnt a vessel building there— let me hear from you soon. I have the honor to be very Respectfully Dear General Yr. mo. ob. st

Isaac Chauncey

LS, MHi, Jacob Brown Papers.

1. William Johnson, intelligence agent for the U.S. Army.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Head Quarters Queenstown
July 13th. 1814

My dear Sir,

I arrived at this place on the 10th., as I assured you, that by the blessing of God I would.—

All accounts agree, that the force of the Enemy in Kingston is very light.— Meet me on the Lake Shore, north of Fort George, with your Fleet, and we will be able I have no doubt, to settle a plan of operations, that will break the power of the Enemy in Upper Canada, and that, in the course of a short time, at all events, let me hear from you.—

I have looked for your fleet with great anxiety since the tenth; I do not doubt my ability to meet the Enemy in the field, and to march in every direction over his country, (your fleet conveying for me the necessary supplies): we can threaten Forts George and Niagara, and carry Burlington Heights and York, and proceed direct to Kingston, and carry that place.—

For Gods sake let me see you.— Sir James will not fight; two of his vessels are now in Niagara River.—

If you conclude to meet me at the head of the Lake, and that immediately, have the goodness to bring the guns and troops that I have ordered from the Harbour: at all events have the politeness to let me know, what aid I am to expect from the Fleet of Lake Ontario.—

There is not a doubt resting in my mind, but, that we have between us, the command of sufficient means, to conquer Upper Canada within two months, if there is a prompt and zealous Co-operation, and a vigourous application of these means: Now is our time before the Enemy can be greatly reinforced: Very respectfully and truly Yours

Jac. Brown

LB, NBuHi, Jacob Brown Manuscripts.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding the U S Naval force
on Lake Ontario

Navy Department
July 20th. 1814—

Sir

General Brown in his Official letter of the 6th Instant to the Secretary of War, which you will have seen published,[1] appears to anticipate meeting you, to co operate with him near Fort George, which I presume must have been founded upon an understanding between yourself and him, as he had written to you by an Express for that purpose.—

Your instructions and powers from this Department in relation to co operation with the Military Commander on the Shores of Lake Ontario, are so ample, that nothing need be added on that subject, and your own zealous desire to give effect to every movement which may tend to promote the public cause, is sure to command the most efficient co operation in your power.—

I fear however that the unavoidable delay in the final equipment of the Squadron, will have protracted your departure to a period rather late for the movement and junction which General Brown anticipated.—

I am not fully apprised of the nature and effect of the aid you could contribute with your Squadron, in a joint Military and Naval attack upon forts George or Niagara, as I do not exactly know what position you could take for that purpose, nor am I aware, of what other co operation General Brown may desire.— I cannot undertake to define the manner in which the most effectual co operation may be afforded, but it appears to me, that the primary object, is, the attack and capture, or destruction of the enemy's fleet if tangible, or its close blockade & the effectual command of the Lake, so as to stop all transportation of troops & Stores by the enemy.— Of the nature and extent of the co operation which you may from time to time afford, you will determine in concert and harmony with the Military Commander, and with a special view to the security of your fleet, and the objects to be hazarded in your absence from the Rendezvous, upon which the existence of the fleet under your command so materialy depends. I regret the delay of a few days, which you say in your Letter of the 8th inst., would take place in the sailing of the fleet, in consequence of the changes necessarily produced by Captain Smith's[2] incapacity, (from sickness) to reach Sackett's Harbour and take the command of the *Mohawk*. I have however no expectation that this will find you in Port, unless victory or casualty shall have caused your return. With earnest invocations for the glorious result of your enterprize, and your individual fame and happiness— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 170.

1. This letter appeared in the 15 July edition of the *Daily National Intelligencer.*
2. For more on Captain John Smith, see Perry to Jones, 12 July 1814, p. 174, note 1.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding the U S Naval
Force on Lake Ontario.—

Navy Department
July 24th. 1814.—

Sir

Since yours of the 8th instant, stating the inevitable delay of the Squadron in port, for a few days, in order to make some necessary changes in the Commanders and Crews, in consequence of Captain Smith's ill health preventing his taking the command of the *Mohawk*, I have not received a line intimating the day of your departure; nor for a considerable time past, any information respecting the force, position, and probable designs of the enemy, and progress of his new Ship; nor of your contemplated movements and operations, which can alone be regulated by a constant, vigilant, and correct view of all these on the spot.—

Your letters down to the 16th. are entirely silent on these subjects; and I can only infer, from the high state of preparation, and formidable aspect of your force, as exhibited in your Statement of the 15th. instant, and the Muster Rolls to the 30th. June, and subsequent arrival of men, in succession, from the several Rendezvous, that you were ready, and I hourly expect to hear of your departure.—

The public anxiety is beginning to be extreme; and it is the lot of those in command and authority, to sustain the irritable impatience of those, who judge only from the impulse of the moment, and their own partial views, without knowledge or correct information.—

Your expected co operation with General Brown, has excited much ardent solicitude, and uneasiness for the ultimate safety of the Army, should the enemy, by any means, convey reinforcements to Fort George.—

It appears that he wrote to you, on the 21st Ulto. and calculated confidently on your receiving his despatch on the 23d.—but on the 17th instant, it seems, however, that he had not heard from you; and I hence infer, and fear, that his letter miscarried.—

I conclude, without doubt, that if any obstacle to the immediate sailing of the Squadron had existed, you would have mentioned it in due time; but your silence, as to your intention, so late as the 16th instant, has excited some uneasiness in my mind.—

The Squadron is, as it always has been, under your entire command and control, to sail when and where your judgement may dictate with a full knowledge of all the circumstances before you, in pursuit of such plan as may, in your view, be best calculated to bring the enemy to action, and capture or destroy his fleet; or to blockade his force, and cut off his entire communication by water, with the head of the Lake; to annoy him, by all the means in your power, and to cooperate with the Army, in the most effectual manner, by a liberal and harmonious concert with the Military Chief, and in such way as you may deem most efficient and practicable, with the force under your command.—

I have expressed the solicitude, which has produced this letter; but my confidence in your patriotism, Judgement, Skill, and Energy, is entire.—I am very respectfully Sir your Obedient Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 171–72.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Secretary of War Armstrong

Head Quarters
Chippewa, July 25th. 1814.

Dear Sir,

On the 23rd. instant I received a letter by Express from General Gaines, advising me that on the 20th. the heavy guns that I had ordered from the Harbour, to enable me to operate against Forts George & Niagara, were blockaded in that port, together with the Rifle Regiment that I had ordered up with them. I had ordered these Guns & troops, in Boats; provided the Commodore should not deem it prudent or proper to convey them in his fleet, not doubting but that he would have been upon the Lake for their protection, & that the Enemy would have been driven into port or captured— As Genl Gaines informed me that the Commodore was confined to his Bed with a fever, and as he did not know when the fleet would sail, or when the guns & forces that I had been expecting would even leave Sacketts Harbor; I have thought it proper to change my position, with a view to other objects. You know how greatly I am dissapointed, and therefore I will not dwell upon that painful subject.— And you can best perceive, how much has been lost by the delay—and the command of Lake Ontario being with the Enemy—reliances being placed upon a different state of things. The Indians all left me some time since, It is said that they will return, but this you will perceive depends upon Circumstances, The reinforcements ordered on from the West have not yet arrived. Yours Respectfully & truly

Jac: Brown

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, B-174 (8) (M221, Roll No. 59).

Captain Jacob Jones to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S.F. *Mohawk* 25th July 1814

Sir

I write you by the direction of Commodore Chauncey, who is too unwell himself to do so, that the Squadron has been prevented being earlier fitted for sea, in consequence of the delay in obtaining blocks and iron work— We shall however be in A state of readiness in two days hence, at which time the Commodore's present condition, authorises the belief he will have sufficiently recovered to proceed upon A cruise

There was brought in here the day before yesterday by one of our citizens A portmanteau, containing several letters from the Mechanics working upon the ship building for the enemy at Kingston— They all agree that she cannot be launched before some time in September, and some of them express an apprehension that it may not be possible to launch, from the difficulty of securing the ways, as there is no rise or fall of the tide

There appeared A guarded silence upon the subject of the strength and state of the garrison and defenses of the place I am respectfully Yrs.

Ja. Jones

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 31 (M125, Roll No. 38).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Stephen Decatur

Commodore Stephen Decatur
Commanding the US Ship *President*
New York.

Navy Department
July 28th. 1814.—

Sir

The silence of Comr. Chauncey ever since the 8th Inst., relative to the sailing of the Squadron under his command,— the previous and positive assurance of his departure, after the final arrangements, which would be completed in a few days—his reported sickness, and the apprehension that it may be so serious, as fatally to retard the operations of the Squadron, and produce the most disastrous consequences; imperiously demand an immediate though eventual provision, for that highly important command.—

You will therefore Sir, on receipt of this, without a moment's delay, proceed with the utmost celerity to Sacketts Harbour, and if the Squadron shall be still in Port, and Com Chauncey disqualified by the state of his health, for the immediate and active Command of that force; take upon yourself the Command, and forthwith proceed to carry into effect the designs of the Campaign in that quarter.—

These objects I shall explain to you in general terms, leaving your own judgement and discretion free, to adopt such means, as shall appear to you best adapted, to the attainment of the end.

There is no alternative, between the absolute command of the Lake, by the capture or destruction of the enemy's Squadron, before he shall have added the heavy line of battle Ship, which he is now building—and taking shelter in port, and acting upon the defensive after that event.— This alternative in its ultimate consequences approaches so near to defeat, that I can scarcely draw the distinction.—

If he will give you battle in the present state of the two Squadrons, I feel an assurance of Victory.

If he shall avoid battle, and take shelter in Kingston, it will then be desirable to blockade him with the utmost rigour, and effectually shut all the avenues to his communication with the upper end of the Lake, by Boats as well as Ships, until he shall have attained the superiority by the accession of his line of battle Ship; which Com Chauncey thinks will not be before the month of October, though by the efforts he is making, and the importance of the object, I think it highly probable, he will accomplish it sooner.

In either case, you will thus afford the most effectual co operation with the Army of the United States, that the nature of your force will admit.—

The character of the War on the Lakes, requires in a peculiar degree, the joint operations, of the Naval & Military forces; and you will on all occasions, with the most perfect harmony and reciprocal concert, combine with the movements of the Army, all the aid and effect which the nature of your force and the important naval objects, which have been explained to you will admit, but you will yourself judge and determine, upon the propriety and expediency of any particular mode of co operation, which may be required of you, and with a special view to the safety of the fleet—the nature of the navigation, and to the elements whose violence and caprice on that Lake have scarcely a parallel any where.— Of the effect of all these upon any proposed operation, nautical science skill and experience can alone correctly determine.—

In the present state of things, it is peculiarly desirable to afford to Genl. Brown all the co operation in your power. His situation is critical and becomes more so by every days delay.— His object and wishes you will ascertain from Comr. Chauncey and General Gaines

The Squadron is represented to be in the highest state of order & efficiency, Officered and manned with disciplined Crews, not excelled by any equal number of men in any fleet; if however on your arrival at Sacketts Harbour, and taking the command, you should deem it expedient to provide against contingencies, by ordering One hundred and fifty Volunteers of the *President*, you may do so, and if the Ships shall be full, they may act in the Gun Boats.—

The President entertains the highest respect for, and confidence, in the patriotism, valour, skill, and experience of Com Chauncey and desires to proceed in this business with the utmost delicacy.—

If the state of his health will justify his retaining the command, no change is desired, and if before you start, or on your way, you should learn with certainty that the Squadron has sailed, you will consider this order as null and void.—

As this order may or may not go into effect, and as the Squadron will certainly have sailed if Commodore Chaunceys health, shall have enabled him to command, I shall not write to him on the subject; but should the final execution of the order become necessary, you will exhibit to him this letter, and request of him a free communication of the result of his observation, judgement and experience in that service.

You will see the propriety of withholding the knowledge of this order from the public, until its final execution.

You will please to acknowledge the receipt of this letter, and state the time of your intended departure from New York.—[1] I am very respectfully Sir your Obedt. Servant

W Jones

LB, DNA, CLS, 1814, pp. 173–75.

1. Having received news of Chauncey's apparent recovery, and reluctant to relieve a fellow captain and friend without unconditional orders from the department, Decatur delayed his departure for Sackets Harbor. The sailing of Chauncey's fleet on 1 August ended the crisis.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 131

Sacketts Harbor
31st. July. 1814

Sir

I am so far convalescent that my Physicians are preparing to take me on board today. I shall sail immediately and look after the Enemy— when I have

sufficiently recovered as to be able to write I will account to you for the detention of the Fleet in Port so much beyond the time contemplated. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Ob. Hle. St.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 45 (M125, Roll No. 38).

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding the U S Naval force
on Lake Ontario, Sacketts Harbour

Navy Department
August 3d. 1814.

Sir

It appears by your letter of the 8th Ulto. that the necessary changes in the Officers and Crews of the Squadron under your command, incidental to the absence of Captain Smith, would detain you in port a few days longer to make final arrangements.—

No other cause of detention was then apprehended or intimated, and your entire silence from that day until the 25th. following, when Captain Jones wrote by your desire, (as you were too unwell to do so) to say, "that the Squadron has been prevented being earlier fitted for Sea, in consequence of the delay in obtaining blocks, and iron-work," is so extraordinary and inexplicable, that though reluctant to communicate, I cannot withhold from you the knowledge of the extreme anxiety and astonishment, which the protracted and fatal delay of the Squadron in port, has excited in the mind of the President.—

Though entirely without information (other than indirect) of the serious indisposition, with which it appears you have been afflicted, I am compelled to attribute to that cause, the detention of the Squadron in port, during a period more critical and, important, than any that has occurred, and of which it appears you had been apprised by General Brown.—

The uninterrupted command of the Lake by the enemy during that period, has enabled him to transport formidable reinforcements to Niagara, and nothing but the unexampled prowess, and fortitude, of the gallant Army under General Brown, have saved it from utter destruction. These things cannot but be felt, and the questions naturally arise— Why has our fleet been detained in port, so late as the 25th., after the positive assurances, that it would be out the first Week in July?—

If the gallant and able Commander of our Squadron, was rendered incapable by disease, why did not the second in command, in whom the national confidence also resides, lead it into action, or scour the Lake so as to prevent, or intercept the transportation of the enemy, or force his fleet to battle, while we have the known and decided superiority?— Why was the executive kept in ignorance, of the ill state of health of the Commander, and of any real cause of detention, from the 8th. to the 25th. of July, when by timely notice, its orders might have provided for the contingency, and spared the flow of gallant blood in an unequal, though glorious contest.

I shall not be able to answer to these interrogatories—the Squadron has been prevented being earlier fitted for sea, in consequence of the delay in obtaining blocks and Iron work!— I am very respectfully Sir Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 176–77.

Joint Operations on the Upper Lakes

The American flotilla under Captain Arthur Sinclair entered Lake Huron after a difficult and slow passage through Lake St. Clair. The British lacked sufficient force to oppose the flotilla's entry into Lake Huron, but instead used their resources to strengthen their position on Mackinac Island by constructing a new blockhouse above the fort and erecting batteries.

Captain Sinclair's first objective was to destroy the British shipbuilding establishment at Nottawasaga. The islands, fogs, and shallow rocky coast prevented the Americans from locating that post, however, and the squadron sailed for St. Joseph Island, which they found abandoned. They discovered and captured the North West Company schooner Mink, *and captured but later abandoned a second schooner,* Perseverance.

The combined forces under Captain Sinclair and Lieutenant Colonel George Croghan attempted the recapture of Fort Michilimackinac on 4 August. Although the British troops at the post were few in number, they were well positioned and the British regulars were joined by armed Indian allies and militiamen. Lieutenant Colonel Croghan's troops suffered heavy casualties, including two senior officers, several junior officers, and many rank and file. The Americans gave up the attempt to recapture Michilimackinac and turned back to make a second effort to locate and destroy Nottawasaga. There, they found the schooner Nancy, *which the British had set on fire to prevent her capture. On his departure for Lake Erie, Captain Sinclair left two schooners,* Scorpion *and* Tigress *to blockade the passage between Nottawasaga and Michilimackinac.*

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy

U.S. Sloop *Niagara*
At the Rapids of the River St. Clair
July 12th. 1814—

After waiting two weeks at Detroit for the army I left that place eight days ago, and have by immense labour got thus far— I was a week heaving over the flats of Lake St. Clair there being only 8 feet & 4 Inches water for several miles,

I had to take almost every thing out to enable me to get over at all— I am now, however, over all the difficult parts I have to pass except the Rapids, and only wait a wind to pass them,

I take the opportunity of a boat passing to Detroit to send you these few hasty lines, the principal intention of which are to inform you that we are informed by prisoners captured by Col: Croghan's patrol that there is a force opposite to you at Long Point, and that boats are constructing in that place, or in some of

the creeks or inlets between that and Detroit, for the purpose of some enterprise—you must find out where they are and destroy them at once—no force of the kind must be allowed to be created—an [*and*] in the mean time be always on the look out against surprise—

Write me fully, & let me know what prospect you have for men, and how many vessels you have or will be able to put into comission and send me all the letters, and dispatches, newspapers &c. by the vessel which you send to join me with provision &c.— Let the commander of that vessel call at the Fort at the head of this River and get the signal I shall establish with that garrison

Let him also be particular in not going on shore between Detroit & the Fort above, as we find there is great danger of the Indians, & to be constantly on the alert while on his passage, in not venturing near any vessel which does not first answer his signal number, as I know of a 12 gun Brig the Enemy have already on float in the upper lakes Yours in great haste & respectfully

(signed) A. Sinclair

Copy, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 36, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13).

Diary of Surgeon Usher Parsons

[Extract]

[*U.S. brig* Lawrence]

Wednesday July 13th.— Arrived in Lake Huron about 4 Oclock. P.M. The rapids are about ¾th of a mile in length, and run from 4 to 5 knots.— Fortunately we have a six knot breeze which enables us to enter the Lake. There are no settlements around the fort but below the Fort on both sides are small tracts of cleared land and several small houses all deserted since the surrender of Detroit— River St. Clair has many small windings—but from the commencement of arrable soil and timber growth to Lake Huron the course is due north— The fort is about as large as Detroit but not so well stockaded—

Thursy. 14th.— Troops all onboard early in the morning amounting in all to about 750 Rank & file. On board the *Lawrence* more than 300 Made during the day & night about 100 miles.— The distance to Mashitash bay is about 230 miles. Thither we are bound before we go to Mackinack

From thence we shall go to Mackinack 220 miles further Course N by E The Starboard shore runs about N.N.E. The larboard about north....

Friday 15th.— Rained some last evening and the weather is hazy today. Unable to discern the vessels half a mile distant Hazy weather in the forenoon. high wind.— Made land ahead which led Commre. to think the land was the islands about the head of Mashitach bay and that we might tack to the Starboard and enter the large bay Accordingly we run down in a S.E. direction keeping the land on our lar bord side and near us. This tack was commenced in the afternoon—but no entrance into the bay could be discovered this night It was the opinion of many we were runing back to the rapids again by keeping along this shore; that it is the cape of land which divides the large bay from the lake, and

that we did not ascend the Lake sufficiently high to find the entrance in to the large bay at the head of this cape—

Saturday July 16.— Lake Huron— Pleasant & calm morning. While coasting along in the direction we did last night an encampment was discovered on our larboard bow by the *Niagara*. Commanders all called on board the Commodore.— A sail was now discovered (9 Oclock) astern of us N. by E. apparently about 15 or 20 miles distance— Signal was made but the Commodore not crediting the report nor discerning the sail gave no order for chasing for an hour or two. The sail was distinctly seen by the officers on board the *Lawrence*. The Com. finally ordered to give chase but presently countermanded the order. The vessel was probably the *Nancy*. Resumed our former course and continued it for some time and towards evening the Commodore concluding he had been mistaken about Mashitash bay, Order'd the fleet to sail in a direction for Michilimackinack— The wind was probably now nearly on the Larboard bow if our course had been directed toward Mackinac— Beat during the evening & night. Wind was west a little north— Was sea sick. . . .

Tuesday July 19th— Lake Huron.— Today ~~made sight of~~ Passed Thunder Islands bearing on our larboard beam Our course being N.W.— Sailed within a mile of the islands.— At about noon made sight of land on our star board quarter and ahead—represented to be the Mainland on the Starboard side of the river St. Joseph. In the afternoon we entered the mouth of sd. River with an 8 knot breeze.— The land in every direction as we came in sight of it had fires set the smoke of which is no doubt intended to serve as telegraphs for the enemy in Mackinac— The smoke arose on the land in the streights on our Larboard side from a high bluff when we were within about 3 miles from it and making toward it. We pass'd within musket shot of it. The Com. a short distance a head fired into it and discovered a man— The streight is about ¾ths of mile wide. Soon after we entered it we discovered Fort St. Joseph; a few miles a head bearing a little on a larboard bow tho' on the enemy's side, and commanding the river. It is on an island. Several houses perhaps a dozen are a little to the right of the Fort. Anchored in sight of the Fort & Village about 3 or 4 miles distant.— A flag was sent in the evening demanding a surrender of the fort, but no person was to be seen. Some spies were sent in the night in order if possible to take some person in order to gain intelligence respecting Mackinack. Some plunder was brot. off but no person could be seen.— The houses are good and one discovered marks of having been very recently occupied—even within six hours— Bedding was found and brot. off.

Wedy. July 20th.— Streights of St. Joseph The two launches were sent on shore today containing about 200 men. The Fort publick buildings &c destroyed— Found some beeves & sheep 3 of the former & about 6 of the latter were brot. on board. About 40 barrels of rosin was also found.— A trunk of officers clothing of inferior quality brot. on board, a chair, &c.— Men very sickly—about 12 on the list—4 with pleurisy.— Brought on board from the fort 40 barrels Rosin.—Some nails—copper, a fire engine, chairs—Old muskets. &c. also 2 or 3 birch canoes.—

Thursday July 21st. Early this morning a strange sail was discovered at the mouth of the river within 2 miles of us.— Gave immediate chace with all the vessels except the *Lawrence* The vessel came around the point and was thus near before she discovered us, she made tack & put from us, but immediately turn'd and met our fleet & surrendered She is the schooner *Mink* of about 6 tons. laden with flour 230 barrels for St. Mary's about 40 miles distant. Brot her along side about 10 oclock— In a few minutes was discovered another sail coming around the point— Two launches and commanded by Lieut Turner— with sailors & soldiers on board were dispatched the sail immediately disappeared the *Scorpion* was likewise sent which fell to the leward and could not gain sight of the strange sail.— It proved afterwards to be indian canoes with sails— The indians fled & left them—and they were brought to the fleet with a number of tools belonging to the Indians.— People very sick. Learned by the prisoners of the *Mink* that there are 2000 Indians & 500 Regulars & 100 Volunteers

Friday July 22nd.— Near Fort St. Joseph very cold.— Two launches with Sailors & Soldiers were sent to Fort St. Mary's to take off any furs that may be deposited at the place.— Commanded by Lt. Turner & the land force by Maj. Holmes.— Signal was made to prepare to get under way the wind changed which rendered impossible to proceed.— Duel fought between Capt. Desha[1] of the Infty. & Lt. B~~ullus~~ of the Navy, the latter wounded in the breast....

Sunday July 24th.— Near Fort St. Joseph Today the fleet got underway except the *Scorpion* Lt Packet left to take onboard Lt. Turner & the crews of the two launches.— Sailed South for perhaps 15 miles then nearly N.W. till we made sight of Mackinack about 10 or 15 miles ahead at sun set. In the night made to within 6 or 7 miles.— Was taken ill....

Tuesday 26th. . . . Set sail in the evening for to go around the island of Mackinac on the North Side a distance of about 8 or 10 miles and anchored off the west side of Round island In pursuing around the Island were fired on by the enemy and returned.

Off Mackinack about 2 & a half miles....

Saturday 30th The *Scorpion* arrived to the fleet laden, having been absent several days longer than was calculated. The boats that went to St Mary's within 15 miles of Lake Superior found there a small vessel above the falls containing perhaps 200 lbs sugar and perhaps 50 ceggs of liquors With about 40 skins and a few bales of cloaths &c &c Burnt the houses belonging to the N West fur company, and all the property they could not take away— In attempting to bring the vessel over the falls she had several holes beat through her and was finally burnt A few boats were also taken which with the launches brought off all the property to St Joseph's where the *Scorpion* lay.— An Indian carried the news from St Joseph's to St Marys that it was burnt and the news was noted in the logbook of the prize vessel. Mr Champlin today took some fish and nets from Point St Ignace— The Col. talks of not landing [— —?]

Sunday July 31st.— Rainy Col. Crognan came on board the *Lawrence.* Other officers arrived on board who went on the expedition— Two prisoners were

taken at Point St. Ignace frenchmen from whom the strength of the enemy was ascertained. It is stated by them that about 300 regulars 100 militia & 400 indians are on the Island Col. Crogran return'd to the fleet with the determination to fight— Recd half of a hog from Champlin

Wedy. 3d— Wind changed which soon brought us near the Commod. It was now determined by the army to land immediately but the artilery pieces being on board the *Mink* and she out of sight this was found inexpedient. In the course of the day she was found. She in following the Com. yesterday lost sight of him in the fog and her compass being wrong she sailed in a wrong direction. It is now determined to land tomorrow morning.— On board Champlin & Woodhouse Lt. B— went on shore after wood and was fired on by the Indians. One sailor & three soldiers were wounded Boats immediately returned.—

Off Mackinack August 4th— Pleasant at about 9 Oclock signal was made for army vessels to get under way At about half past 11 came to anchor in line of battle abreast the N.W. side of Mackinac island where there is a spot partly cleared, on which the British landed when they took the fort from us. The land is low. At ~~half past~~ one the troops began to disembark. At two a fireing commenced from the vessels which cleared the shore. At three oclock the troops were formed at a short distance from the shore and marching at quarter past three firing commenced with field pieces and shortly after musketry— a cessation then ensued 'til 35 minutes after 3 A constant irregular fire then commenced which continued ten minutes when there was a constant rattling of musketry—for about ½ a minute then the firing abated a little till 10 minutes after 4 when the firing recommenced with considerable rapidity accompanied with yelling and at ¼ past four was very warm from which till ¼ before five the ~~firing was very~~ report of musketry was very frequent and irregular. At half after four however the direction of the firing indicated that Our army was on the retreat. At 5 Oclock firing ceased and most of the troops were on the shore from which they had marched.— Boats were on shore ready to receive them. Maj. Holmes was killed early in the action and Capt Desha wounded. Capt Vanhorn was mortally wounded and likewise Jackson.—[2] The report of killed & wounded of the regulars stands thus

		Killed	Wounded	Missing
Regulars	Infantry	12	39	3
	Artillery	———	———	———
	Militia	———	———	———
	Marines	———	1	———

Lieut Jackson was wounded through the bowels a little below & to the left of the navel the ball passed out a little above the os innominatum[3] on the left of the spine a small portion of omentum[4] passed through the front wound. Capt Vanhorn was also wounded in the same manner. A seargent was wounded through the stomach and died in the night. A private through the left lung bids fair to recover. The other wounds were slight that occurred to the men on board the *Lawrence* Weigh'd anchor & stood off about one mile

The retreat was well conducted

Off Mackinac August 5th.— Lieut Jackson died early and Capt Vanhorn shortly after. A flag sent to the fort to ask the body of Maj. Holmes It was politely rec'd and the request granted. The commander Col. McDowel offered the fleet provisions fruit &c. In the evening the body of Maj Holmes was found unmolested and brought on board. But the other bodies had been scalped and buried the Maj was not found by the indians. two balls had entered his breast.— A vessel arrived to the fleet from Detroit 17 days passage informs Genl. Brown had gained a signal victory over the enemy at Queenstown.

AD, RHi, Usher Parsons Diary.

1. Captain Benjamin Desha, 2d Rifle Regiment, U.S.A.
2. Captain Isaac Van Horne, 19th Infantry, U.S.A.; 3d Lieutenant Hezekiah Jackson, 24th Infantry, U.S.A.
3. The pelvis.
4. The membrane covering the intestines.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDouall, British Army, to Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army

Michilimackinac 17th. July 1814

Sir

I beg leave to call your attention to the expediency of taking immediate & effectual steps towards the supplying of this Garrison with Provisions to the end of June next.

By the last Canoes to Montreal I have strongly urged the necessity of this being attempted with the least possible delay but unfortunately so much time is necessarily lost by the distance the delay in giving orders, & in acting upon them that I am not a little apprehensive that the opportunity which now exists may be lost, before preparations are matured & steps taken to provide us with the supply before mentioned which will require four hundred Barrels of Flour & two hundred of Pork, without including the Indian Corn necessary for the Indians, & which I am grieved to say threatens this year to fail us in our neighbourhood altogether, every thing in the shape of grain being nearly destroyed for want of rain, should the dry weather continue a few days more, the Corn will be burnt up, & a greater misfortune could scarcely befall us—for this Island cannot be defended without Indians, nor they fed without a large supply of Indian Corn—the little which remains at this Post selling for twelve Dollars pr. Bushel.— I was greatly disappointed at the *Nancy*s bringing us last trip, only eleven Barrels for Governt.— I at least expected three hundred— I also received but little comfort on Mr. Crookshanks telling me, that by the 20th. Inst. he was in hopes to have 200 barrells at the mouth of the Nottawasaga River— however as it is of great consequence even the securing that quantity, I am now dispatching the *Nancy* for it. I however beg leave to represent the great necessity which exists that the supplies should be more liberal for this place;— It is now the last point of connection with the Indians, & I believe the great importance of their alliance, & the policy of conciliating them as much as possible is generally admitted particularly as the enemy is making such efforts to seduce them from us, & yet what means are placed in my hands to counteract the influence

of the Americans a continual interchange of Indians is going on at this place, & some have come a great distance for its defence, & yet I have been compelled to refuse rations to their Wives & Children, & to many others in a half famished state, even my own garrison I am obliged to reduce the ration of, & as Soldiers have but little foresight, & think only of the present, it adds to the general discontent on the subject of Provisions. In what a predicament does this leave me & in what a situation shall I be left, if great efforts are not made for my relief, every day adds to my perplexity on this subject; I now only issue 250 rations daily to Indians, which makes the whole about 550, & is absolutely essential & cannot with prudence be otherwise, that in calculating the supplies for this Garrison at least three hundred Indians should be included, & I am fully convinced that they never could be expended to a better purpose.—

I have paid much attention to Coll. Forsters[1] suggestion of offering some annoyance to the Enemy during their operations in the River St. Clair.— If it is meant with a view to dislodge them, & drive them from the River, we have now since the departure of the expedition to the Prairie du Cheins, no force at all adequate to the purpose all we could muster being two Companies of the Newfoundland Regt. about 100 effective, & not a hundred Indians on whom I could rely—& as to these repeated experience has proved that they are scarcely of any use in attacking a fort— From the time the enemy have occupied the River St. Clair, we could never have dislodged them without a cooperation by the River Thames, & they must now be so well established having also a large Garrison, that it would require more than double my force to afford the least chance of success; But the principal objection even if a force equal to the attempt, could be mustered would be the danger arising from the Vicinity of the Smaller Vessels of the enemys fleet. An expedition of unprotected Batteaux (for the *Nancy* could not even protect herself) if fallen in with by them which in going or returning there would be every probability it would end in the Capture of the whole, & the consequent loss of this Island.—

Our latest Indian Accounts state that the enemy have ten Vessels at Detroit, & that great preparations were making to attack us which was to take place in August: I am doing my utmost to prepare for their reception, Our new works on the Hill overlooking the old fort are nearly completed & the Block houses in the center will be finished this week which will make this position one of the strongest in Canada; its principal defect is the difficulty of finding Water near it, but that obviated & a sufficient supply of Provisions laid in, no force that the enemy can bring will be able to reduce it.—

I am strongly inclined to believe that the threatened attack is likely to take place in the Course of next month hitherto they have been apprehensive of risking it, perhaps apprehensive of the Niagara Indians advancing upon Sandwich & Detroit in their absence; still their fleet is strong enough to afford a powerful protection to the latter place, & also admit of a sufficient number to come against Michilimackinac, to which it is probable they will be strongly induced, on hearing of the expedition against the prairie du Cheins, thinking that our force here is greatly weakened in consequence, I have about sixty of the Follsovine[2] Indians, who are of the best description I have yet seen & most thoroughly to be depended on; I depend much upon them in the event of an attack.—

As to what has been suggested of endeavouring to feed the Indians upon the Enemy, I am convinced that such a project is altogether delusive. It could not be affected at Amherstburg, where the Indians were backed by a large regular

force—a Superior fleet & the enemys supplies at hand— We have none of these advantages & no place within our reach where these can be obtained— I have besides invariably found that the Indians in such exertions, as I have sent them upon, instead of effecting a saving, devour three times the usual quantity of Provisions.—

(Signed) Rt. McDouall

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 66–69.

1. Probably Lieutenant Colonel Colley L. L. Foster, adjutant general of the Upper Canada Militia and Drummond's military secretary.

2. Folles Avoines, or Folsavoins, was the French name for the Menominee nation.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop of War *Niagara*
Off St. Josephs 22nd. July 1814

Sir,

The wind became favourable on the evening of the 3d. Inst. the Troops were immediately embarked, and I sailed from Detroit that night—but such were the difficulties I had to encounter on the Flats of Lake St. Clair (where instead of 10 feet, as I had been led to believe there was, I only found 8,) and the Rapid current of that River, that I did not reach Lake Huron, until the 12th., From thence I shaped my course, as directed for Matchadash Bay, and used every possible effort to gain it, but not being able to procure a Pilot for that unfrequented part of the Lake, and finding it filled with Islands, and sunken Rocks, which must inevitably prove the distruction of the Fleet, as it was impossible to avoid them, on account of the impenetrable Fog, with which this Lake is almost continually covered, And finding the Army were growing short of Provisions, from the time already elapsed—it was agreed between Colo. Croghan and myself, to push for this place, where we should procure such information, as would govern our future operations. We were favoured in winds, and arrived here on the 20th., The Enemy had abandoned his works, consisting of a Fort, and large Block House &ctr. Those we distroyed, but left untouched, the Town, and S W company's Store Houses.—[1] Very Respectfully I have the honor to remain, Sir, Your Obt. Sert.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 24 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. The South West Company was established in 1811 by a merger of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company and the Montreal firm known as the Michilimackinac Company. It rivaled the North West Company in scope. For more on the fur trade during the War of 1812, see Haeger, *John Jacob Astor*, chapter 6.

Lieutenant Daniel Turner to Captain Arthur Sinclair

"Copy"

U S Schooner *Scorpion*
Off Michilimackinac 28th. July 1814

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that agreeable to your orders of the 22nd. Inst. I proceeded on the expedition to Lake Superior with the Launches. I rowed night and day, but having a distance of 60 miles against a strong current information had reached the enemy at St. Maries of our approach, about two hours before I arrived at that place, carried by Indians in their light canoes, several of which I chased and by firing on them and killing some, prevented their purpose, some I captured and kept prisoners untill my arrival, others escaped. The force under Major Holmes prevented any thing like resistance at the Fort, the enemy with their Indians carrying with them all the light valuable articles, Peltry, clothes, &c. I proceeded across the Strait of L. Superior, without a moments delay, and on my appearance the enemy finding they could not get off with the vessel I was in quest of, set fire to her in several places, scuttled and left her. I succeeded in boarding her and by considerable exertion extinguished the flames, and secured her from sinking. I then stript her and prepared for getting her down the Falls, having secured the Man you directed, offering the reward in case he succeeded, and death in case of treachery. Adverse winds prevented my attempting the falls, until the 26th, when every possible effort was used, but I am sorry to say without success to get her over in safety. The falls in ¾ of a mile, is 45 feet, and the channel very rocky, the current runs from 20 to 30 Knots, and in one place there is a perpendicular leap of 10 feet, between 3 rocks, here she bilged, but was brought down so rapidly that we succeeded in running her on shore, below the Rapids before she filled, and burnt her. She was a fine new schooner, upwards of 100 tons, called the *Perseverance*, and will be a severe loss to the N. W. Co., had I succeeded in getting her safe, I could have loaded her to advantage from the Enemys store houses—I have however brought down four captured boats loaded with Indian goods to a considerable amount, the balance contained in four large, and two small store houses, were distroyed, together with a very superb mill amounting in value to, from 50 to 100 thousand Dollars, all private property was according to your orders respected. The Officers and men under my command, behaved with great activity, and Zeal, particularly Midshipman Swartwout.[1] I have the honor to be Sir with great Respect Your Obd. Sert.

Signed Daniel Turner

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 49, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Midshipman Augustus P. Swartwout.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop of War *Niagara*
off Michilimackinac July 29th. 1814

Sir

Whilst wind bound at St. Josephs, I captured the N W Companies Schooner *Mink*, from Michilimackinac to St. Maries with a Cargo of Flour— Receiving

intelligence through this source that the Schooner *Perseverance* was laying above the Falls, at the lower end of Lake Superior, in waiting to transport the *Mink*s Cargo to Fort William, I dispatched the Ships launches under Lieut. Turner of the *Scorpion*, an active enterprizing officer, to capture her, and if possible, to get her down the Falls— Col. Croghan attached Major Holmes with a party of Regulars to cooperate in the expedition, in which the capture of St Maries was included— The official report of the result, made by Lieut. Turner, I herewith enclose you.[1] The capture of the *Perseverance*, gave us the complete command of Lake Superior, and had it not been for the strong force at Michilimackinac, forbidding a seperation of our means of attacking that place, and feeling myself bound by my instructions to do so, before I was at liberty to enter into any extensive Enterprize of my own planning, I should have availed myself of this unlooked for advantage, and have broken up all their important establishments on Lake Superior— The capture of Fort William alone, would have nearly distroyed the Enemy's fur trade, as that is his grand Depot and general rendezvous, from which his extensive trade branches in all directions, and at which place there is never less than a Million in value, of property, and at this season of the year, it is said, there is twice that amount— I fear such another opportunity may never occur. The capture of those two vessels, and the provisions, will, however, prove of very serious inconvenience to the Enemy in that remote quarter, where the loss cannot possibly be retrieved— Flour was before this loss, worth $60 (℔ barrel [with?] them, and Salt Provisions 50 cts (℔ lb. &ctr. I have the honor to remain Sir, with great respect Your Obedt. Sert.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 49 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. See p. 565.

Lieutenant Colonel George Croghan, U.S.A., to Secretary of War Armstrong

U: S: Sloop of War *Niagara*, off Thunder Bay,
9th. of August, 1814.

Sir.—

We left Fort Gratiot (head of Strait St. Clare) on the 12th. ultimo, and imagined that we should arrive in a few days at Matchadash Bay. At the end of a week, however, the Commodore, from the want of Pilots acquainted with that unfrequented part of the Lake, despair'd of being able to find out a passage through the Islands into that Bay; and made for St. Joseph's, where he anchor'd on the 20th. day of July. After setting fire to the Fort of St. Joseph, which seemed not to have been recently occupied, a detachment of Infantry and artillery, under Major Holmes was order'd up to Sault St. Mary's, for the purpose of breaking up the Enemy's establishment at that place. For particulars, relative to the execution of this order, I beg leave to refer you to Major Holmes' report herewith enclosed.[1] Finding on my arrival at Michilimackinac, on the 26th. ultimo, that the enemy had strongly foretified the height overlooking the old Fort of Mackinac, I at once despair'd of being able, with my Small force, to carry the place by storm, and determind, (as the only Course remaining) on landing and

establishing myself on some favorable position, whence I could be enabled to annoy the enemy by gradual and slow approaches, under cover of my artillery, in which I should have the superiority in point of metal. I was urged to adopt this step by another reason, not a little cogent; could a position be taken and fortified on the Island, I was well aware that it would either induce the enemy to attack me in my strong hold, or force his Indians and Canadians (his most efficient, and only disposable force) off the Island, as they would be very unwilling to remain in my neighbourhood after a permanent footing had been taken. On enquiry, I learned from individuals who had lived many years on the Island, that a position as desirable as I might wish, could be found on the West end, and, therefore immediately made arrangements for disembarking. A landing was effected on the 4th. Instant, under cover of the guns of the shipping, and the line being quickly form'd, had advanced to the edge of the field spoken of for a camp, when intelligence was convey'd to me, that the enemy was a head, and a few seconds more, brought us a fire from his Battery of four pieces, firing shot and shells. After reconoitering his position, which was well selected; his line reaching along the edge of the woods, at the further extremity of the field and cover'd by a temporary breast work; I determin'd on changing my position, (which was now two lines, the militia forming the front) by advancing Major Holmes' Battalion of Regulars on the right of the militia, thus to outflank him, and by a vigorous effort to gain his rear. This movement was immediately order'd, but before it could be executed a fire was open'd by some Indians posted in a thick wood near our right, which proved fatal to Major Holmes and severely wounded Captain Desha, (the officer next in rank.) This unlucky fire, by depriving us of the services of our most valuable officers, threw that part of the line into Confusion, from which the best exertions of the officers were not able to recover it. Finding it impossible to gain the enemys left, owing to the impenetrable thickness of the woods; a charge was orderd to be made by the regulars immediately against the front. This charge altho' made in some confusion, served to drive the enemy back into the woods, from whence an annoying fire was kept up by the Indians

Lieut Morgan was orderd up with a light piece to assist the left now particularly galed; the excellent practice of this piece brought the enemy to fire at a longer distance. Discovering that this disposition, from whence the enemy had just been driven, (and which had been represented to me as so high and Commanding) was by no means tenable, from being interspersed with thickets, and intersected in every way by ravines; I determind not longer to expose my force to the fire of an enemy deriving every advantage which Could be obtaind from numbers, and a knoledge of the position, and therefore orderd an immediate retreat towards the shipping. This affair which has cost us many valuable lives leaves us to lament the fall of that gallant officer Major Holmes whose character is so well known to the War Department. Captain Vanhorn of the 19th Infantry and Lieutenant Jackson of the 24 Infantry, both brave, intrepid young men, fell mortally wounded at the head of their respective commands. The Conduct of all my officers on this occasion, merits my approbation.

Capt Desha of the 24th. Infty altho' severely wounded, continued with his command untill forced to retire, from faintness through loss of blood. Capts. Saunders, Hawkins, and Sturgus with every Subalturn of that Battallion acted in the most exemplary manner. Ensign Bryan (2nd Rifle Regt.), acting adjutant to the Battallion) actively forwarded the wishes of the Commanding officer. Lieuts.

Hickman 28th. Infty & Hyde of the U:S: Marines, who commanded the reserve claim my particular thanks for their activity in keeping that command in readiness to meet any exigency. I have before mentioned Lieut Morgans activity, his two assistants Lieut Pickett and Mr. Peters Conductor of Artillery, also merit the name of good officers[2]

The Militia were wanting in no part of their duty. Colonel Cotgreave,[3] his officers, and soldiers, deserve the warmest approbation. My acting assistant adjutant Genl. Captain N. H. Moore 28th. Infty; with volunteer adjutant McComb were prompt in delivering my orders. Captain Gratiot of the Engineers,[4] who volunteerd his services as adjutant on this occasion, gave me valuable assistance

On the morning of the 5th. I sent a flag to the enemy to enquire into the state of the wounded (two in number) who were left on the field, and to request permission to bring away the body of Major Holmes, which was also left, owing to the unpardonable neglect of the soldiers in whose hands it was placed

I am happy in assuring you, that the body of Major Holmes is secured, and will be buried at Detroit with becoming honors.

I shall discharge the Militia tomorrow and will send them down together with two regular Companies, to Detroit. With the remaining three Companies I shall attempt to destroy the enemy's establishment on the head of Naw-taw-wa-sa-ga River, and if it be thought proper, erect a post at the mouth of that River— Very respectfully I have the honour to remain, Sir, your obt. Sevt

G Croghan Lt. Col.
2nd. Riflemen

ALS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, C-110 (8) (M221, Roll No. 60).

1. Major Holmes's report discusses the legality of the capture of goods claimed by John Johnston, Indian agent and former governor of the Michigan Territory. Holmes to Croghan, 27 July 1814, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, C-110 (8), enclosure (M221, Roll No. 60).

2. Captain Minor Sturgis, 24th Infantry, U.S.A.; W. N. Bryan, 2d Rifle Regiment, U.S.A., promoted to 3d lieutenant, 1 August 1814; 1st Lieutenant James Hickman, 28th Infantry, U.S.A.; 1st Lieutenant Benjamin Hyde, U.S.M.C.; 2d Lieutenant Lewis Morgan, Corps of Artillery, U.S.A.; Lieutenant James C. Pickett, Corps of Artillery, U.S.A.; and John H. Peters, Conductor of Artillery, Ordnance Department, U.S.A. Captains Hawkins and Saunders have not been identified with certainty.

3. Colonel William Cotgreave, Ohio Militia.

4. Captain Charles Gratiot, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop of War *Niagara*
Off Thunder Bay— August the 9th. 1814

Sir

I arrived off Michilimackinac on the 26th. July, but owing to a tedious spell of bad weather which prevented our reconnoitering or being able to procure a prisoner who could give us information of the Enemys Indian force, which from several little skirmishes we had on an adjacent Island appeared to be very great, we did not attempt a landing until the 4th. Inst. and it was then made more

with the view to ascertaining positively the Enemy's strength, than with any possible hope of success, knowing at the same time that I could effectually cover their landing and retreat to the ships, from the position I had taken, within 300 yards of the beach— Colo. Croghan would never have landed, even with this protection, being positive as he was that the Indian force alone on the Island, with the advantages they had, were superior to him, could he have justified himself to his government, without having stronger proof than appearances that he could not effect the object in view—

Mackinack is by nature a perfect Gibraltar, being a high inaccessible Rock on every side except the west, from which to the heights, you have near 2 miles to pass through a wood so thick, that our men were shot in every direction and within a few yards of them, without being able to see the Indian who did it, and a height was scarcely gained, before there was another in 50 or 100 yards commanding it, where breast works were erected, and cannon opened on them— Several of those were charged, and the Enemy driven from them, but it was soon found the further our Troops advanced, the stronger the Enemy became, and the weaker and more bewildered our force were,— several of the commanding officers were picked out and killed, or wounded by the Savages, without seeing any of them. The men were getting lost, and falling into a confusion, natural under such circumstances, which demanded an immediate retreat, or a total defeat, and general massacre must have ensued— This was conducted in a masterly manner by Colo. Croghan, who had lost the aid of that valuable, and ever to be lamented officer, Major Holmes, who with Capt. Vanhorn, was killed by the Indians— The Enemy were driven from many of his strong holds: but such was the impenetrable thickness of the woods, that no advantage gained could be profited by— Our attack would have been made immediately under the lower Fort, that the Enemy might not have been able to use his Indian force to such advantage as in the woods, having discovered by drawing a fire from him in several instances that I had greatly the superiority of metal of him; but its site being about 120 feet above the water, I could not when near enough to do him an injury elevate sufficiently to batter it. Above this, nearly as high again, he has another Strong Fort commanding every point of the Island, and almost perpendicular on all sides— Colo. Croghan not deeming it prudent to make a second attempt upon this place, and having ascertained to a certainty that the only naval force the Enemy have upon the Lakes consists of one Schooner of 4 Guns, I have determined to dispatch the *Lawrence* and *Caledonia* to Lake Erie immediately, believing their services in transporting our Armies there will be wanting, and it being important that the sick and wounded, amounting to about 100, and that part of the Detachment, not necessary to further our future operations here, should reach Detroit without delay— By an intelligent prisoner captured in the *Mink*, I ascertained this, and that the mechanics and others, sent across from York, during the winter, were for the purpose of building a Flotilla to transport reinforcements, and supplies into Mackinac— An attempt was made to pass them by the way of Matchadash; but it was found impracticable from all the portages being a morass—that they had then resorted to a small River called Nautauwasaga, situated to the south of Matchadash, from which there is a portage of 3 leagues over a good road to Lake Simcoe— this place was never known until pointed out to them last summer by an Indian— This River is very narrow and has 6 or 8 feet water in it, about 3 miles up, and is then a muddy Rapid shallow for 45 miles up to the portage, where their armada were

built and their Store Houses are now situated— The navigation is dangerous and difficult, and so obscured by rocks and bushes, that no stranger could ever find it—I have however availed myself of the means of discovering it. I have agreed on a reward with this man under a promise of secrecy, and the penalty of death in case of failure, who is one of a very few, who have ever been there, and who is to conduct me to the River and Portage—for this place I am now on my way, and if it is found tenable, its importance to the supply of Mackinac, will induce Colo. Croghan to fortify and garrison it. I shall also blockade the mouth of French River, until the fall, and those being the only two channels of communication, by which Mackinac, can possibly be supplied, and their provisions at this time being extremely short, I think they will be starved into a surrender by the Spring, when a strict Blockade must again commence. This will also cut off all supplies to the N W Company, who are now nearly starving, and their Furs on hand can only find transportation by the way of Hudson Bay. At this place I calculate on falling in with their Schooner, who it is said has gone there for a load of Provision, and a message sent to her, not to venture up while we are on the Lake.— Very Respectfully I have the honor to remain, Sir, Your Obd Sert.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 78 (M125, Roll No. 38).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Lieutenant Daniel Turner

U.S. Sloop of War *Niagara*
Nautawasauga River Aug 15th 1814

Sir

Having accomplished the Object for which the Squadron came into this quarter, in the destruction of the Enemies whole Naval Force on this Lake, I am on the eve of returning to Lake Erie: but as it is all important to cut the Enemies line of communication from Michilimackinack to York, which is through the Nautawasauga River, Lake Simcoe &c, and on which his very existence depends, You will remain here and keep up a rigid Blockade until you shall be driven from the Lake by the inclemency of the Season, suffering not a boat or canoe to pass in or out of this River— I shall leave the *Tigress* with you in case accident should happen to either one of the Vessels the other may afford her necessary assistance— Should you deem it proper to send the *Tigress* up to cruize a week or two about St. Josephs, in order to intercept the Enemies Furr Canoes between St Maries and French River, you can do so, as one Vessel is sufficient to Blockade this River

I should recommend your immediately finding out anchorage to cover you from N W Gales, as that is the only Wind which can effect you in this Bay— I see from the *Nancy*'s Log Book that the small Island on the S. W. of this Bay is such a place as you could wish, directions for which I herewith give you— The Islands North of us may also give you good anchorage; but always be sure of good bottom before anchoring, as the loss of an Anchor might prove of serious consequence to you— Should you find Anchorage on both sides I would recommend your changing frequently, and in a way not to be observed by the

Enemy, who might not only avail himself of your position to move out his boats in the night on the opposite side, but he might attempt surprizing you in the night by throwing a number of Men on board— Against attacks of this kind, which he might be driven to by his desperate situation, as this Blockade must starve him into a surrender by the Spring, I must particularly caution you— When the *Tigress* is here it would be well to be on the opposite Shores—and sometimes run out of sight, taking care to scour both Shores as you return— I shall endeavour to annoy the Navigation of the River by felling trees across its mouth in order that a portage must be performed there; which must be seen by you

I wish you to take an accurate survey of this Bay, and its Islands, and if possible the one on the north of it, called Matschadash, observing all its Islands, Creeks, Bays, Shoals, Anchorages, Courses, Distances & Soundings, particularly attending to the kind of Bottom

Should any thing occur to make it necessary you can send the *Tigress* express to me— If we can keep their Boats from passing until October, I think the weather will effectually cut off all communication by any thing they have on float, and in the Spring an early Blockade will possess us of Mackinac—

You will be particularly careful in having communication with the Shore, and when you send a party for Wood, let it be on an Island, under the protection of your Guns, and a Guard from both Vessels— Wishing you a pleasant Cruize I remain very Respectfully Your Obt. Servt

Signed A Sinclair

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 102b (M125, Roll No. 38). Marked "True Copy, George L. Lawton, Clerk."

Deputy Assistant Commissary General George Crookshank, British Army, to Deputy Commissary General Peter Turquand, British Army

Copy

York 21st. August 1814.

Sir

I have the honor to report that I have just returned from Nottawasaga, on my arrival there I learned from Lieut. Worsley Royal Navy that the Enemies fleet had appeared off the mouth of Nottawasaga River on the 13th. Inst. and on the 14th. that they landed a large party of men, in consequence of which I regret to say that he had to destroy the *Nancy* with all her cargo to prevent the same from falling into the Enemies hands, a copy of the Invoice and receipts for the same I herewith enclose, there was also 50 bags of flour private property on board which I had directed Mr. Livingston[1] to load a canoe with and proceed and that I would replace the same, but the Enemy had appeared there before Mr. Livingston had reached that place, one of the largest size gun boats which had been brought down from Mackinac for the purpose of loading the Vessel fell into the hands of the Enemy. I have also enclosed a return of the Quantity of provisions remaining at the store house at Nottawasaga part of which Lieut. Worsley takes on with him in two Boats and a large canoe with Mr. Livingston,

as Mr. Worsley had hands for manning another boat, I directed one to be sent across from Lake Simcoe to him, and I think it probable that they have left Nottawasaga to day in case the boat sent across the carrying place should not have got injured in the Transport in that case Lieut. Worsley would proceed with the two boats and Canoe as it is doubtful whether Mr. LaMotte[2] who has charge of the government canoes will return for provisions, I shall immediately send out three batteaux's and endeavour to get hands for manning the same, that they may make two trips with flour to the place pointed out by Colonel MacDouall, and shall send out sufficient to make up the 600 barrels required for that Post.—

All the public letters that were forwarded in charge of Lieut Worsley for Lieut Col. McDouall I learn were burnt in that Vessel, which I have to request you will please inform Col. Foster, as some of the Packets that were delivered to Lieut Worsley were from General Drummond I have the honor &c

(Signed) Geo: Crookshank
D. A. C. G.

P.S. The Enemies fleet left Nottawasaga river on the 16th. Inst. and stood up the Lake—

G. C.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 145–46.

1. Lieutenant Robert Livingstone, Indian Department, British army.

2. Fur trader Joseph-Maurice Lamothe (1781-1827), resident agent of the Indian Department at Montreal, captain "to the Indian Warriors," and a captain in Montreal's 3d Militia Battalion, departed from Lachine on 9 July 1814, in command of a brigade of canoes bound for Michilimacinac. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966–), Vol. 6, pp. 387–88.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop *Niagara* Erie— Septr. the 3d 1814

Sir

Immediately after the attack on Michilimackinac, I dispatched the *Lawrence* and *Caledonia* with orders to Lt. Comdt. Dexter to make all possible dispatch to Lake Erie, and there cooperate with our Army &ct, while I shaped my course in pursuit of the Enemies force supposed to be about Nautauwasauga, and I cannot but express my surprise at having past those vessels and arrived at Erie before them— By that opportunity I apprised you of my movements up to the 9th Ulto.—since which time I have been fortunate enough to find his B Ms. Schooner *Nancy* loaded with provision, Clothing &Ct for the Troops at Mackinac

She was two miles up the Nautauwasauga River moored under a Block House strongly situated on the S E side of the River, which running nearly parrallel with the Bay shore for that distance forms a narrow peninsula—this and the wind being off shore afforded me an opportunity of Anchoring oposite to him and within good battering distance; but finding the sand hills and Trees frequently interrupting my Shot—I borrowed an 8½ inch Howitzer from Colnl. Croghan, mounted it on one of my carriages and sent it on the Peninsula under command of Lieut. Holdup— a situation was chosen, by Capt. Gratiot of the Engineers, from which it did great execution— The Enemy defended himself very handsomely, until one of those shells burst in his Block House, and in a few minutes blew up his Magazine— This set fire to a train which had been laid for the distruction of the vessel, and in an instant she was in flames— I had made the necessary preparation with boats for geting onboard of her; but frequent and heavy explosions below deck made the risque of lives too great to attempt saving her—she was therefore, with her valuable Cargo, entirely consumed— I cannot say whether those who defended her were blown up in the Block House or whither they retreated in the rear of their work, which they might have done unseen by us, as it afforded a descent into a thick wood—I hope the latter— A number of articles were picked up at a considerable distance off—among them was the commanders Desk, containing copies of letters &Ct; several of which I herewith inclose you for your information— They serve to shew the vessel to have been commanded by Lieut. Worsley of the Royal Navy, of what infinite importance her cargo was to the garrison at Mackinac, and that they have nothing onfloat now on that Lake— The *Nancy* appeared to be a very fine vessel between the size of the *Queen Charlott* and *Lady Provost*— There were three guns on the Blockhouse—2–24 pdrs. & 1–6 pdr.— I cannot say what was on the vessel as all her ports were closed— I also got a New Boat, called by them a gunboat but unworthy the name, being calculated to mount only a 24 pound carronade

The Nautauwasauga is too narrow and over hung with bushes for a vessel to get up except by warping, which prevented my sending gunboats in, or Colnl. Croghan from attempting to turn his rear, as we saw a number of Indians sculking and occasionally firing across from the banks, it was in this way the only man we had touched was wounded

You will see by the inclosed letters the short state they are in for provision at Michilamackinac and I am assured from the best authority that this is the only line of communication by which they can be supplied, that of the Grand River being rendered impassable for any thing heavier than a man can carry on his back, by 60 portages; I have therefore left the *Scorpion* and *Tigress* to blockade it closely until the season becomes too boisterous for Boat transportation—

This precaution with an early blockade upon the same place in the spring, will insure the government of an easy conquest of Mackinac in May or June, and in my opinion the only means of conquering it without a sacrafise of lives such as the importance of the place cannot justify—

Colnl. Croghan thought it not advisable to Fortify and garison Nautauwasauga, as the Enemies communication from York is so short and convenient that any force he could leave there would be cut off in the Winter— It appears that the settlement at Green Bay, on Lake Mitchgan, can sell from 1 to 3000 bushels of grain which no doubt will be secured by the Enemy during the Winter— Their crops were yet growing when I left that country— should it now meet your approbation I will order a vessel or two up immediately to secure it, and in case of refusal to sell to the U States, as it seems they are favourable to the Enemy, a force of 100 men can distroy it— Any measure respecting it must be immediately taken, as the Navigation in that quarter is unsafe after this month

I was unfortunate in geting embayed in a gale of Wind on a rocky Ironbound shore which occasioned the loss of all the boats I had in tow, among which was the captured gunboat and my Launch— I felt fortunate, however, in saving my vessel, lumbered as she was with 450 souls onboard, and shipping such immense quantities of water as to give me very serious alarm for some hours— I was compeld to strike some of my guns below, and nothing saved her, at last, but a sudden shift of wind, as there is nothing like anchorag in Lake Huron, except in the mouths of Rivers—the whole coast being a steep perpendicular Rock— I have been several times in great danger of total loss, in this extremely dangerous navigation, entirely unknown to our Pilots except direct to Mackinac, by falling suddenly from no soundings into 3 fathoms & twice into ¼ less twain— all a craggy rock

Those dangers might be avoided from the transparency of the water; but for the continued thick Fogs which prevail almost as constantly as on the Grand Bank— By the arrival of the mail a few hours after I anchored at Detroit, I learned the critical state of our Army on the Peninsula, and that the *Somers* and *Ohio* had been captured— The Craft from the Flats, with part of my Guns and Shot had not yet arrived; but being certain my presence would be necessary at the earliest possible moment I availed myself of a fair wind and sailed for this place—where I am happy to learn that our Army feel themselves perfectly secure where they are— I have howe[ver] sent the *Lawrence Lady Provost* and *Porcupine* to Buffalo; there to render any assistance which may be required, and shall follow them myself in the course of 24 Hours— There is such an eminent risque of the loss of the Fleet at this season of the year laying to an anchor near Buffalo, where the Bottom is composed entirely of sharp Rock, a strong current setting down, and exposed to the open lake from whence the heaviest gales are experienced, that I shall not, unless ordered positively to do so from the Department, continue there a moment longer than I can ascertain the commanding Genls. views and in what way the Fleet can cooperate with him— Daily and dear bought experience teaches us we ought not to risque our Fleet in a situation, where they are so liable to be lost— Lieut. Kennedy has, no doubt, informed you of the Total loss of the *Ariel* after being onfloat and ready to move from there— a large number of my best mens times are out and no argument or policy I can use can prevail on them to remain, even to go down to Buffalo, and I cannot use force as they have served already several months over their time— I shall stop the Outfits of the *Queen Charlott* immediately on my return here, unless I find she may be absolutely necessary as a Transport for some movement the Army may have in contemplation, as I have not a sufficiency of men now to man well more than 12 of the guns, onboard either the *Lawrence* or this vessel— I have not had time to look round me sufficiently since my arrival, to give you the state of things here—Lieut Kennedy, however, informs me that the lighters were too much decayed to get the *Detroit* over the Bar, which will induce me to leave the *Caledonia* here to protect her from surprise until I can have Lighters built, which I have ordered to be immediately done— The *Caledonia* is unseaworthy, from natural decay— I would recommend her, the *Amelia* and perhaps the *Hunter* to be sold, being all nearly in the same state— I have the Honor to remain with great respect, Sir, your Obt Servt.

A Sinclair

N B— A company of Riflemen from Sandusky has just arrived here & have been forwarded on to Fort Erie without delay—

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 10 (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]

Michilimackinac 28th July 1814

Sir

The American Expedition destined for the attack of this Island, having at length made its appearance, under the Command of Commodore Elliott[1] and Lt. Colonel Croghan, consisting of the *Niagara* 20 Guns, *Laurence* 20 Guns, *Hunter* Brigg 8 Guns, a Large Schooner of — Guns, the *Mary* of — Guns, five Gunboats, and the *Mink* their prize, I hasten to apprise you of this Circumstance lest the *Nancy* and her valuable Cargo, fall into their hands, and that you may be enabled to take such steps for their preservation as will appear to you most expedient under the present Circumstances— I have taken such precautions as were in my power, to make you acquainted with this Event, in case you should be upon your passage— If so, I would recommend you to return to the Nottawasaga River, and to take the *Nancy* up as high as possible—place her in a judicious position, and hastily run up a strong Log House, (such as were made where the boats were built but larger) with Loop Holes and Embrasures for your two six pounders which will enable you to defend her should you be attacked which is not unlikely—

The mode of obtaining her Cargo of such value to us, will depend upon the result of the attack which we daily expect and on the duration of the Blockade, I see no other way of obtaining the Provisions but by bringing them in Batteaux, protected by the Carronades in the Bows of two of them I have the Honor to be Sir Your Most Obt. Sert.

(Signed) Rt McDowall Lt. Col.
Commanding at Michilimackinac

You will probably receive instructions from Kingston as to your Conduct—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 10, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Captain Arthur Sinclair was in command of the squadron, not Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott.

[Enclosure]

Extract from a letter to W D Thomas Esqr. M.D. Surgeon 104 Regt. York or Kingston—dated Nautawasauga River 6th. Aug. 1814.

"It is now nearly a month since I left York in company with Lieut. Worsley of the Navy, on my way to the Land of promise, but things have turned out rather unfortunately, for you still behold me a sojourner in this wilderness. We had waited about a week on the Banks of this River before the *Nancy* arrived, during which time we suffered every misery that you can imagine from bad weather, and meriads of musquettos &c., &c.— The land here is the most barren I have seen and seems to have been formed from time to time by the washing of Lake

Huron, it being for upwards of two miles composed entirely of banks of sand, on which nothing grows but small brush wood. We found a number of Indians encamped on the Lake Shore who were extremely troublesome before the Vessel arrived, and it was not possible to keep them out of our Wigwams. You may therefore judge what a pleasant sight the *Nancy* was for us, we found her a very fine Schooner with an admirable cabin, her cargo was not completed before Sunday last, and she got under way on Monday with every prospect of reaching Mackinac in a short time, which is only 220 miles from hence, we had been out but for a few hours, when we met an express from Colo. McDouall to say that the American Squadron from Lake Erie of large force was Blockading the Island, and that we could not possibly reach it, we therefore had the mortification to put back into this wretched place, where we are busily employed in erecting a Block House to contain and defend the Stores and Schooner in case of an attack which is an event I have no doubt of, but I hope from the strength of the ground Worsley has chosen, and the goodness of his crew, that we shall be able to beat off a very strong force— The River is too narrow to sail up, we shall therefore only have Gun boats to contend with— I hope Mackinac has Provisions for 3 months, and the Enemy it is said cannot keep out so long on account of the climate, so that the *Nancy* can make a run late in the season, with the Stores, if we succeed in defending them— I expect the man who brought the express the other day, who has gone to York, and intends going back to Mackinac in a canoe— I shall trust my person with him, as he thinks he can again give Jonathan the Slip."

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 10, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]

By Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo Kt., Commanding his Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed on the Lakes in Canada &c. &c. &c.

You are hereby required and directed to proceed to Lake Huron, and take upon yourself the Charge and Command of the Naval Establishment on that Lake—

In the execution of this Service you are strictly enjoined to cooperate most cordially with Lieutt. Colonel McDowell, the Military officer Commanding the Forces in that Quarter—

You are to be particular that a proper course of discipline and good order is observed in the party placed under your command—and to transmit to me by every opportunity the particulars of the Service you are employed on; also to keep a Journal of your proceedings, which is to be transmitted to me every Six Months—

Given under my hand on Board his Majesty's Ship *Wolfe*, at Kingston in upper Canada, this tenth day of February 1814—

(Signed) James Lucas Yeo

To Lieutt. Newdigate Poyntz
Appointed to Command the Naval Establishment on Lake Huron

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 10, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]
Dear Sir,

The Bearer Lt. Worsley is appointed to supercede Mr. Poyntz in the Command of your Flotilla, & I beg to introduce Him to you as an Excellent naval officer & fine honorable young man—

Col. Tucker[1] is come out to the 41st. & with that Regt. some Militia & Indians will proceed to Erie to watch the motions of the enemy's force there.—

Wishing you every success for there is no chance of Peace, I am yrs. very Truly

W Howe Mulcaster

I got a hit in the thigh at Oswego but am getting better—
Kingston U.C. June 25th. 1814

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 10, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39). Addressed to "Lt. Col. McDouall, &c &c &c, favored by Lt. Worsley."

1. Colonel John G. P. Tucker, 41st Regiment of Foot, British army.

Chauncey's Delay

Commodore Chauncey at last recovered sufficiently from his illness to go on board his new flagship, Superior, *on 31 July. The American squadron reached Niagara four days later, after Major General Brown's troops had retreated back to Chippewa. The army had fought the British to a standstill at Lundy's Lane on 25 July, and the general himself was wounded in the battle.*[1]

Recriminations and censures for the failure of the Niagara campaign flowed freely on Lake Ontario and in Washington, D.C., Major General Brown placed the blame on Commodore Chauncey's failure to cooperate with his army and to communicate his intentions adequately. Commodore Chauncey declared that he had made no commitment to support the army and that sailing conditions at the Niagara River would have prevented his aiding the army anyway. The dispute between the two commanders became public when their private and official correspondence appeared in the press.

During its brief time at the head of the lake, Commodore Chauncey's squadron surprised a Royal Navy detachment that had been at Niagara to transport Major General Drummond's army from York. U.S.S. Sylph, *commanded by Master Commandant Jesse D. Elliott, sighted H.M. brig* Magnet *and ran her on shore, but before the brig could be captured, the British crew set fire to her and she exploded.*

1. For an analysis of the battle, see Graves, Battle of Lundy's Lane.

MAJOR GENERAL JACOB BROWN, U.S.A., TO SECRETARY OF WAR ARMSTRONG

Head Quarters Judge Barkers
August 7th. 1814

Sir

Confined as I am, and have been, since the last engagement with the Enemy, I fear that the account I am about to give, may be less full and satisfactory, than

under other circumstances it might have been made.— I particularly fear, that the conduct of the gallant men it was my good fortune to lead, will not be noticed in a way due to their fame and the honor of our Country.—

You are already apprised that the Army had on the 25th. ult. taken a Position at Chippewa.— about noon of that day, Colonel Swift, who was posted at Lewistown, advised me by Express, that the enemy appeared in considerable force in Queenstown and on its Heights; that four of the enemy's fleet had arrived during the preceding night, and were then laying near Fort Niagara, and that a number of boats were in view moving up the streight.—

Within a few minutes after the receipt of this intelligence had been received, I was further informed by Capt Denmon,[1] of the Quartermaster's department, that the enemy was Landing at Lewistown, and that our baggage and stores at Schlosser, and on their way thither, were in danger of immediate capture.—

It is proper here to mention, that having received advices as late as the 20th. from General Gaines that our fleet was then in port and the Commodore sick, we ceased to look for co-operation from that quarter, and determined to disencumber ourselves of baggage, and march directly for Burlington heights.— To mask this intention, and from Schlosser a small supply of provisions, I fell back upon Chippewa. As this arrangement, under the increased force of the enemy, left much at hazard on our own side of the Niagara, and as it appeared by the before stated information, that the enemy was about to avail himself of it, I conceived that the most effectual method of recalling him from this object was to put my self in motion towards Queenstown. General Scott, with the first Brigade, Towson's artillery, and all the Dragoons and mounted men, were accordingly put in march on the road leading thither with orders to report if the enemy appeared, and to call for assistance if that was necessary. On the General's arrival at the falls, he learned that the enemy was in force directly in his front—a narrow piece of woods alone intercepting his view of them. Waiting only to give this information, he advanced upon them. By the time Assistant Adjutant General (Jones[2]) had delivered his message, the action began, and before the remaining part of the Division had crossed the Chippewa, it had become close and general between the advanced corps. Though General Ripley with the 2nd Brigade, Major Hindman with the Corps of Artillery, and General Porter at the head of his Command, had respectively pressed forward with ardour, it was not less than an hour before they were brought to sustain General Scott, during which time his command most skillfully and gallantly maintained the conflict.[3] Upon my arrival I found that the General had passed the wood and engaged the enemy at Queenstown road and on the ground to the left of it, with the 9th, 11th, and 22nd. regts. and Towsons Artillery. The 25th. had been thrown to the right to be governed by circumstances; Apprehending that these corps were much exhausted, and knowing that they had suffered severely, I determined to interpose a new line with the advancing troops, and thus disengage General Scott, and hold his Brigade in reserve. Orders were accordingly given to General Ripley. The enemy's artillery at this moment occupied a hill which gave them great advantages, and was the key of the whole position. It was supported by a Line of Infantry. To secure the victory, it was necessary to carry this artillery and seize the height. This duty w[*as*] assigned to Colonel Miller;[4] while, to favor its execution, the 1st Regt. under the command of Colonel Nicholas,[5] was directed to menace and amuse the infantry. To my great mortification this Regt., after a discharge or two, gave way and retreated some distance before it could

be rallied, though it is believed the officers of the Regt. exerted themselves to shorten this distance. In the meantime, Colonel Miller, without regard to this occurrence, advanced steadily and gallantly to his object and carried the height and the cannon. General Ripley brought up the 23rd. (which had also faultered) to his support and the enemy disappeared from before them. The 1st. regiment was now brought into line on the left of the 21st., and the detachments of the 17th and 19th, General Porter occupying, with his command, the extreme left. about the time Colonel Miller carryed the enemy's cannon, the 25th regiment under Majr. Jessup,[6] was engaged in a more obstinate conflict with all that remained to dispute with us the field of battle. The Major as has been already stated, had been ordered by General Scott, at the commencement of the action, to take ground to his right. He had succeeded in turning the enemy's left flank—had captured (by a detachment under Captain Ketchum[7]) General Riall and sundry other officers, and shewed himself again to his own army, in a blaze of fire, which defeated or destroyed a very superior force of the enemy.— He was ordered to form on the right of the 2nd. Brigade. The enemy rallying his forces, and as is believed, having received reinforcements, now attempted to drive us from our position, and regain his artillery. Our line was unshaken and the enemy repulsed. Two other attempts having the same object, had the same issue. General Scott was engaged in repelling the former of these; and the last I saw of him on the field of battle, he was near the head of his column, and giving to its march a direction that would have placed him on the enemy's right. It was with great pleasure I saw the good order and intrepidity of General Porter's volunteers from the moment of their arrival, but during the last charge of the enemy, those qualities were conspicuous. Stimulated by the examples set by their gallant leader, by Major Wood, of the Pennsylvania corps;[8] by Colonel Dobbin of New York,[9] and by their officers generally, they precipitated themselves upon the enemy's line, and made all the prisoners which were taken at this point of the action.

Having been for sometime wounded, and being a good deal exhausted by loss of blood, it became my wish to devolve the command on General Scott, and retire from the field; but on enquiry I had the misfortune to learn, that he was disabled by wounds; I therefore kept my post, and had the satisfaction to see the enemy's last effort repulsed. I now consign the command to General Ripley.

While retiring from the field, I saw and felt that the victory was complete on our part, if proper measures were promptly adopted to secure it. The exhaustion of the men, was however such as made some refreshment necessary. They particularly required water. I was myself extremely sensible of the want of this necessary article. I therefore believed it proper that General Ripley and the troops should return to camp, after bringing off the dead, the wounded, and the artillery; and in this I saw no difficulty as the enemy had entirely ceased to act. within an hour after my arrival in camp I was informed [*that General Ripley had returned*][10] without annoyance and in good order. I now sent for him and after giving him my reasons for the measure I was about to adopt, ordered him to put the troops into the best possible condition; to give to them the necessary refreshment; to take with him the picquets and camp guards, and every other description of force, to put himself on the field of battle as the day dawned, and there to meet and beat the enemy if he again appeared. To this order he made no objection, and I relied upon its execution. It was not executed. I feel most sensibly how inadequate are my powers in speaking of the troops, to do justice

either to their merits or to my own sense of them. Under abler direction they might have done more and better.— From the preceding detail, you have new evidence of the distinguished gallantry of Generals Scott and Porter, of Colonel Miller and Major Jessup.

Of the 1st. brigade, the chief, with aid de camp Worth, his Major of brigade Smith, and every commander of battalion, were wounded.[11]

The 2nd. brigade suffered less; but as a brigade, their conduct entitled them to the applause of their country. After the enemy's strong position had been carried by the 21st., and the detachments of the 17th. and 19th., the 1st. and 23rd. assumed a new character. They could not again be shaken or dismayed. Major McFarland[12] of the latter fell nobly at the head of his battalion.

Under the command of General Porter, the militia volunteers of Pennsylvania and New York stood undismayed amidst the hottest fire, and repulsed the veterans opposed to them. The Canadian volunteers commanded by Colonel Wilcox,[13] are reported by gen. Porter as having merited and received his approbation.—

The corps of artillery commanded by major Hindman behaved with its usual gallantry. Capt. Towson's company,[14] attached to the 1st. brigade, was the first and the last engaged, and during the whole conflict maintained that high character which they had previously won by their skill and their valour. Captains Biddle and Ritchie[15] were both wounded early in the action, but refused to quit the field. The latter declared that he never would leave his piece and, true to his engagement, fell by its side, covered with wounds.—

The staff of the army had its peculiar merit and distinction. Col. Gardner,[16] the Adjutant General, though ill, was on horseback and did all in his power; his assistant major Jones, was very active and useful. My gallant aids du camp, Austin and Spencer,[17] had many and critical duties to perform, in the discharge of which the latter fell; I shall ever think of this young man with pride and regret; regret, that his career has been so short; pride, that it has been so noble and distinguished. The engineers, majors McRee and Wood,[18] were greatly distinguished on this day, and their high military talents exerted with great effect—they were much under my eye and near my person, and to their assistance a great deal is fairly to be ascribed, I most earnestly recommend them, as worthy of the highest trust and confidence. The Staff of generals, Ripley and Porter discovered great zeal and attention to duty. Lieut. E. B. Randolph[19] of the 20th regt. is entitled to notice, his courage was conspicuous.

I enclose a return of our loss; those noted as missing, may generally be numbered with the dead. The enemy had but little opportunity of making prisoners.— I have the honor to be &c. &c.

Jacob Brown

LB, NBuHi, Jacob Brown Manuscripts.

1. Captain Denmon has not been identified.
2. Assistant Adjutant General Roger Jones, U.S.A., brevetted major 5 July 1814 for distinguished service at the Battle of Chippewa.
3. Mentioned are Major General Eleazer W. Ripley, U.S.A.; Major Jacob Hindman, 2d Artillery, U.S.A.; Brigadier General Peter B. Porter, New York State Militia; and Brigadier General Winfield Scott, U.S.A.
4. Colonel James Miller, 21st Infantry, U.S.A.; brevetted brigadier general 25 July 1814 for distinguished service at Battle of Niagara (Lundy's Lane).

5. Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Nicholas, 1st Infantry, U.S.A.
6. Major Thomas S. Jesup, 25th Infantry, U.S.A.; brevetted lieutenant colonel 5 July 1814 for distinguished and meritorious service at the Battle of Chippewa; brevetted colonel 25 July 1814 for gallant conduct at the Battle of Niagara.
7. Captain Daniel Ketchum, 25th Infantry, U.S.A.; brevetted major 25 July 1814 for distinguished service and gallant conduct at the Battle of Niagara.
8. Major James Wood, 5th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Militia.
9. Lieutenant Colonel Hugh W. Dobbin, New York State Militia.
10. The text supplied in brackets is from another copy of this document in DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, B-82 (8) (M221, Roll No. 59).
11. First Lieutenant William J. Worth, 23d Infantry, U.S.A., brevetted captain 5 July 1814 for gallant and distinguished conduct at the Battle of Chippewa; and Captain Gerard D. Smith, 6th Infantry, U.S.A., brevetted major 25 July 1814 for gallant conduct at the Battle of Niagara.
12. Major Daniel McFarland, 23d Infantry, U.S.A.
13. Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Willcocks, Canadian Volunteers.
14. Captain Nathan Towson, Artillery Corps, U.S.A.; brevetted lieutenant colonel 5 July 1814 for gallant and distinguished conduct at the Battle of Chippewa.
15. Captain Thomas Biddle, 2d Artillery, U.S.A.; and Captain John Ritchie, Artillery Corps, U.S.A.
16. Colonel Charles K. Gardner, Adjutant General, U.S.A.
17. Captain Loring Austin, 1st Light Dragoons, U.S.A.; brevetted major 5 July 1814 for gallant and distinguished conduct at the Battle of Chippewa; and Captain Ambrose Spencer, Jr., 29th Infantry, U.S.A.
18. Major William McRee, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A., brevetted lieutenant colonel 25 July 1814 for gallant conduct at the Battle of Niagara, and brevetted colonel 15 August 1814 for distinguished and meritorious service in defense of Fort Erie; and Major Eleazer D. Wood, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A., brevetted lieutenant colonel 25 July 1814 for gallant conduct in the Battle of Niagara, killed 17 September 1814 in sortie from Fort Erie.
19. Second Lieutenant Edward B. Randolph, 20th Infantry, U.S.A.; brevetted 1st lieutenant 25 July 1814 for gallant conduct at the Battle of Niagara.

COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY TO MAJOR GENERAL JACOB BROWN, U.S.A.

Major General Jacob Brown — U.S. Ship *Superior*
Comm'g the Troops — Off Niagara 7th. Aug. 1814
&c &c &c Niagara Frontier

Sir

I arrived off this place three days ago— I have run one of the Enemy's Brigs on Shore which he set fire to and blew up—two Brigs and one Schooner lay in the Niagara River I shall leave three Brigs under the orders of Captain Ridgeley to watch them and prevent reinforcements being landed at Niagara.

I shall leave here with the remainder of the Fleet for the vicinity of Kingston this Evening as I do not feel myself justified to remain longer absent from the lower end of the Lake particularly as Sacketts Harbor has been left so weak

My own health is mending slowly I have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir, Yr. Mo. Ob. St

I.C—

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac).

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Camp before Fort
Erie— Augt. 8. 1814.

Sir,—

Immediately after the Dispatch of the Deputy Adjutant General's Letter to Colonel Baynes[1] of the 6th. respecting the unfortunate accident which Majr. Genl. Conran met with[2] & the appearance of the Enemy's Fleet off Niagara a sharp affair of Out Posts took place, the Enemy having thrown the whole of his Rifle Men into the Woods in front of his Position for the purpose of driving away our Indians, the latter having retired precipitately on the advance of the Rifle Men some of our most advanced Picquets also fell back, on being supported however by the Glengary Light Infantry in the first instance & subsequently by the Reserve the Enemy was driven back, & our advanced Posts quickly reoccupied. I enclose a Return of Casualties on this occasion.

During this operation the Enemys Schooners cannonaded our Position & one of his 32 Pr. Shot having struck close to myself & the Deputy Adjt. General I am sorry to say Lt. Colonel Harvey received a severe wound from one of the splinters which will I fear deprive him of the use of one of his Eyes for a few days.

In consequence of the very exposed Situation in which we have been compelled from the nature of the Ground to place our Breaching Battery; and of which the accompanying Sketch will give Your Excellency some idea, I felt convinced that it would be risqueing the safety of the Guns to arm the Batterys until a Traverse had been thrown up in the front & an abattis on the flanks to protect it against a Sortie which the Enemy would otherwise have the opportunity of making against it with his whole Force— The Engr. & an officer of the Quar. Mastr. General's Department have accordingly been employed on it and I am in hopes by this Night the Battery will be put in a state of sufficient Security to warrant my placing the Guns in it. Your Excellency will perceive however by a glance at the Sketch that from the position of the Enemy's Schooners[3] on its flank and the Battery of Black Rock on its rear, a Traverse in both these directions is also necessary for altho' the Enemy has not as yet shewn any Gun at Black Rock we have no reason to believe he will refrain from availing himself of that Position.

I hope to be able to open this Battery tomorrow morning, & if a good Effect is produced & no unfavorable Circumstance occurs, I shall probably risque an assault upon the Place on the following Morning the 10th.— My present idea is to make the principal attack with the 2nd. Brigade consisting of the King's & De Wattevilles Regt. under Lt. Colonel Fisher upon the right of the Enemy's Position by the Lake Road, on which side I have hitherto carefully abstained from making any demonstration & have reason to believe the whole of the Enemy's attention has been drawn to his Left.— If Lt. Colonel Fisher succeeds in gaining possession of Snake Hill I cannot doubt of our Success, but Your Excellency may be assured that I shall well weigh the risque & consequences of failure against the Chance of Success before I commit this Division of the Troops by an Attempt which considering the strength of the Enemys Position and the number of Men & Guns by which it is defended, must certainly be considered as one of great hazard.

I Enclose Your Excellency the latest Report from Lt. Colonel Warburton,[4] which is dated at 4 oclock this Morning, at which time the Enemys fleet was standing down the Lake without having attempted any thing against the Forts or Vessels in the River. I regret to find that His Majesty's Schooner *Magnet* which had not been able to enter the River Niagara on the appearance of the Enemy's Squadron & which had in consequence been run on shore at the 10 Mile Creek has been burnt by her Commander, to me this appears to have been an Act of unpardonable precipitation, Lt. Col. Warburton having moved a Field Piece & Troops to her support, But I am not yet in possession of the whole of the circumstances, however I trust & believe that the whole of her Stores &c have been Landed & saved.

I omitted to mention, I believe, to Your Excellency, that on the first appearance of the Enemy's Fleet, I ordered Colonel Grant[5] to detach one wing of his Regt. to Burlington, remaining with the other himself at York, by which means the security of both places has been Effectually provided for.

With a view to the Attack contemplated above, I have ordered up the remainder of De Wattevilles Regt from the Forts, and the Battn. Companies of the 41st. to replace them.

The troops have hitherto supported the Privations & hardships of this severe service with great constancy & cheerfulness & I am happy to say very few desertions have taken place, those from the Enemy to us have been numerous & what is remarkable, three of our own Deserters serving in the Enemy's Rifle Corps have just come in.— I have pardoned these Men— They state a circumstance which I have strong reason for believing to be a fact, vizt. that in the night action of the 25th. ult. Their boasted 1st. Brigade laid down their Arms & called that they had Surrendered—this being believed by us to be a ruse de Guerre was not attended to, our fire resumed, & the Enemy compelled to save themselves by flight. I have the honor to be Your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant.

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

P.S. I have considered it necessary to order all the 6th. Regt. to this frontier.

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 47–50. The enclosures referred to in this letter have not been located.

1. Colonel Edward Baynes, Adjutant General, British army.
2. Appointed second-in-command of the Right Division in August 1814, Major General Henry Conran was injured by a fall from a horse. Graves, *Merry Hearts*, p. 181.
3. U.S. schooners *Porcupine, Ohio,* and *Somers.*
4. Lieutenant Colonel Augustus Warburton, British army.
5. Probably Colonel William Grant, 82d Regiment of Foot.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A.

Major General
Jacob Brown
Command'g the left Division
of the American Army &ca &ca &ca
Buffaloe

U.S. Ship *Superior*
Off Kingston 10th Aug. 1814

Sir

Your Letter of the 13th Ulto.[1] was received by me on a sick bed hardly able to hear it read and entirely unfitted to reply to it— I however requested General Gaines to acquaint you with my situation—the probable time of the Fleet's sailing and my views of the extent of its cooperation with the Army.

From the tenor of Your Letter it would appear that you had calculated much upon the cooperation of the Fleet— You cannot surely have forgotten the conversation We held on this subject at Sacketts Harbor previous to your departure for Niagara— I then professed to feel it my duty as well as inclination to afford every assistance in my power to the Army and to cooperate with it whenever it could be done without loosing sight of this Great object for the attainment of which this fleet had been created to wit—the capture or destruction of the Enemy's fleet, but I then distinctly stated to you, that this was a primary object and would be first attempted and that you must not expect the Fleet at the head of the Lake unless that of the Enemy should induce us to follow him there.—

I will not suffer myself to believe that this conversation was misunderstood or has since been forgotten—how then shall I account for the intimation thrown out to the Public in your despatch to the Secretary of War, that you expected the Fleet to co-operate with you?[2] was it friendly or just or honorable not only to furnish an opening for the public but thus to assist them to infer that I had pledged myself to meet you on a particular day at the head of the Lake for the purpose of co-operating and in case of disaster to your Army thus to turn their resentment from You (who are alone responsible) upon me who could not by any possibility have prevented or retarded even Your discomfiture— You well know Sir that the Fleet could not have rendered you the least Service during Your late incursion upon Upper Canada— You have not been able to approach Lake Ontario on any point nearer than Queenstown and the Enemy were then in possession of all the Country between that place and the Shores of Ontario so that I could not even communicate with You without making a circuit of 70 or 80 Miles.—

I would ask of what possible use the Fleet could have been to You either in threatning or investing Fort George when the Shallowness of the Water alone would prevent an approach with these Ships within two Miles of that Fort or Niagara.

To pretend that the Fleet could render the least assistance in Your projected capture of Burlington Heights on Your route to Kingston is Still more romantic for it is well known the Fleet could not approach within nine Miles of those Heights.

That you might find the fleet somewhat of a convenience in the transportation of Provisions and Stores for the use of the Army and an agreeable appendage to attend its marches and counter marches I am ready to believe but

Sir the Secretary of the Navy has honored us with a higher destiny—we are intended to Seek and fight the Enemy's fleet—this is the great purpose of the Government in creating this fleet and I shall not be diverted in my efforts to effectuate it by any Sinister attempt to render us subordinate to or an appendage of the Army.

We have one common object in the annoyance defeat and destruction of the Enemy and I Shall always cheerfully unite with any Military Commander in the promotion of that object. I am Sir with Great consideration and respect Yr Mo. Ob. St.

I. C.

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac). This letter was published in the *Daily National Intelligencer* on 8 September 1814.

1. See pp. 550–51.
2. A reference to Brown's letter of either 6 June or 25 June to Secretary Armstrong. Both letters were published in the *Daily National Intelligencer* on 15 July and 5 August respectively.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 132.

U.S.S. *Superior.* off Kingston
August 10th. 1814.

Sir.

Great anxiety of mind and severe bodily exertions have at length broken down the best constitution and subjected me to a violent fever that confined me for eighteen days— This misfortune was no more to be foreseen than prevented but was particularly severe at the moment it happened as it induced a delay of five or six days in the sailing of the fleet—

In the early part of July I expected the fleet would be made ready for sailing by the 10th. or 15th. but many of the mechanics were taken sick & amongst them the Block makers & Blacksmiths so that the *Mohawk* could not be furnished with Blocks and Iron-work for her Gun and Spare Decks before the 24th or 25th. ult. when she was reported ready by Captain Jones As considerable anxiety had been manifested by the Public to have the fleet on the Lake I should have asked Captain Jones to take charge of it and go out, but I was then recovering my health and was confident I should be able in three or four days to go on board myself— there was an additional reason for submitting to this delay in the difficulty I found in making the changes of commanders, neither of them being willing to be separated from his officers and men and a change of crews through the fleet being inadmissable—

In the afternoon of the 31st. July I was taken on board, but it was calm, and I did not sail before the next morning— To satisfy at once whatever expectations the public had been led to entertain of the sufficiency of this squadron to take and maintain the ascendancy on this Lake and at the same time to expose the futility of promises, the fulfilment of which had been rested on our appearance at the head of the Lake, I got under way at 4 oclock in the morning of the 1st. Instant and steered for the mouth of the Niagara—owing to light winds I did not arrive off there before the 5th. There we intercepted one of the Enemy's Brigs running over from York to Niagara with troops and ran her on shore about six miles to the Westward of Fort George— I ordered the *Sylph* in, to anchor as near to the Enemy as she could with safety and to destroy her—

Captain Elliot run in in a very gallant manner to within from 300 to 500 yards of her and was about anchoring when the Enemy set fire to her and she soon after blew up— This vessel was a Schooner the last year and called the *Beresford*— Since they altered her to a Brig they have changed her name and I have not been able to ascertain it.[1] She mounted 14 Guns—12 24-lb Carronades [and] two long 9 pounders—

Finding the Enemy had two other Brigs and a Schooner in the Niagara River I determined to leave a force to watch them and selected the *Jefferson*, *Sylph*, and *oneida* for that purpose and placed the whole under the orders of Captain Ridgley— Having looked into York without discovering any vessels of the Enemy I left Niagara with the remainder of the Squadron on the evening of the 7th. and arrived here the 9th.— We found one of the Enemys ships in the offing and chased her into Kingston—

My anxiety to return to this end of the Lake was increased by the knowledge I had of the weakness of Sacketts Harbour and the apprehension that the Enemy might receive large reinforcements at Kingston and embarking some of the troops on board his fleet, make a Dash at the Harbour and burn it with all my stores during our absence when I left the Harbour there were but about 700 regular troops fit for duty—it is true a few militia had been called in, but little could be expected of them should an attack be made— My apprehension it seems was groundless the Enemy having contented himself with annoying in some trifling degree the Coasters between oswego and the Harbour in his boats—

I cannot forbear expressing the regret I feel that so much sensation has been excited in the Public mind because the Squadron did not sail so soon as the wise-heads that conduct our newspapers have presumed to think I ought— I need not suggest to one of your experience that a man-of-war may appear to the eye of a landsman perfectly ready for sea, when she is deficient in many of the most essential points of her armament—nor how unworthy I should have proved myself of the high trust reposed in me had I ventured to sea in the face of an enemy of equal force without being ready to meet him in one hour after my anchor was weighed

It ought in justice to be recollected that the building and equipment of vessels on the Atlantic are unattended by any of the great difficulties which we have to encounter on this Lake—there every department abounds with facilities— A Commander makes a requisition and articles of every description are furnished in twelve hours—but this fleet has been built & fitted in the Wilderness, where there are no agents, and Chandlers shops and founderies &c &c to supply our wants but every thing is to be created—and yet I shall not decline a comparison of what has been done here, with any thing done on the Atlantic, in the building or equipment of vessels— The *Guerrier,* for instance, has been building and fitting upwards of twelve months, in the City of Philadelphia, and is not yet ready— The *President* Frigate went into the Navy Yard at New York for some partial repairs a few days after the Keel of the *Superior* was laid— Since then two Frigates of a large Class and two Sloops of war of the largest class, have been built and fitted here, and have sailed, before the *President* is ready for sea, altho every article of their armament & rigging has been transported from New York in despite of obstacles almost insurmountable— I will go farther Sir for it is due to the unremitted exertions & the unsurpassed exertions of those who have served the Public under my command and will challenge the world to produce a parallel instance—in which the same number of

vessels of such dimensions have been built and fitted in the same time by the same number of workmen—

I confess that I am mortified in not having succeeded in satisfying the expectations of the Public but it would be infinitely more painful could I find any want of zeal or exertions in my endeavours to serve them to which I could in any degree impute their disappointment I have the honour to be Sir with the utmost respect your most obedient and very humble Servant—

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 84 (M125, Roll No. 38). This letter was published in the *Daily National Intelligencer* on 8 September 1814. Another letter of 10 August from Chauncey to Jones criticizing Brown had appeared in the *Intelligencer* the preceding day.

1. H.M. brig *Magnet*, formerly *Sir Sidney Smith*, was actually the vessel involved in the action. The Provincial Marine schooner *General Beresford*, originally built as the *Prince Regent*, was renamed *Netley* on the Royal Navy list in 1814. See pp. 388–91 for additional information on the renaming of British vessels.

Major General Jacob Brown, U.S.A., to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Head Quarters Buffalo Septr. 4th. 1814

Sir

Your letter of the 10th. Ultimo, after going the rounds, was delivered to me a few days since, on my way to this place.

The exception you take at my letter to the Secretary, would be very reasonable and proper, provided the Fleet of Lake Ontario was your private property, over which the Government had no controul;—but as I have been induced to believe that it was the property of the Nation, subject to the orders of the Government; and as the Government led me to believe that the fleet you command would be upon Lake Ontario, to co-operate with my division of the army, the 1st. week in July; I have deemed it fit and proper to let the nation know, that the support I had a right to expect, was not afforded me.

I consider my conduct towards you and the Navy, as not only honorable, but Sir, as being very liberal and friendly, from the date of my report of the battle of Sacketts Harbour to the present hour.—

The troops under my command have always been disposed of so as to meet your views, to the extent of my power, and authority; and as far as was consistent with the rights, and the honor of the Army. Your information appears to be very incorrect as to the situation of the army previous to the arrival of reinforcements, with Lt. Genl. Drummond. From the 9th. of July to the 24th. the whole country was in our power, from Fort George to Burlington Heights, and could the army have been supplied with provisions from the Depots provided on the shores of Lake Ontario; we should not have doubted our ability (without reinforcements or additional guns,) to carry the Heights; when we could have returned upon Forts George and Niagara, or advanced upon Kingston, as might have been thought most advisable, with the co-operation of the fleet.

You speak of responsibility, I do not desire you, or any man, to be responsible for me.— I have endeavoured to execute the orders given me; success has not attended my endeavours; but, I humbly trust in Heaven that the honor of the

brave men entrusted to my command, has and will be, preserved, let what may happen.— It will be very difficult to retire from fort Erie, pressed as the remains of my gallant little Army is, by the superior force of the enemy, but no other alternative will be left us, unless reinforcements speedily arrive. The Militia are coming in, in very considerable numbers, but it is not yet ascertained, how many of them will cross.— The Secretary has given me to understand, that Genl. Izard would move to the St. Lawrence, with the view of attacking Kingston, (Should he and you deem that measure advisable) should you decide otherwise; that Genl. Izard would come with, or send to me a reinforcement of from two to three thousand men.— I have not heard from Genl. Izard, and begin to apprehend that some thing has occurred to retard or prevent his movement, I will thank you for any information you can give me on this subject.— I am Sir with great Consideration and respect your most obt. Sert.

Jac. Brown

LB, NBuHi, Jacob Brown Manuscripts. This letter appeared in the *Daily National Intelligencer* on 26 October. Its publication was prompted by Brown's request to Secretary Monroe to arrange for the letter's public release.

Capture of *Somers* and *Ohio* near Fort Erie

Three American schooners that were anchored on Lake Erie near Fort Erie made a tempting target for the British, despite the lack of a British naval presence on Lake Erie. A party of soldiers and sailors led by Commander Alexander Dobbs cut a path through the woods between lakes Ontario and Erie and hauled a gig and five batteaux eight miles across the peninsula. Staging a daring night attack, they boarded and captured two of the three schooners, Somers *and* Ohio. *During the action, the cables of the two captured schooners were cut, and as the two vessels drifted past* Porcupine, *the British raiders were unable to board and capture her in addition.*

Commander Alexander Dobbs, R.N., to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

(Copy) Niagara River near Fort Erie
Schooner *Somers* August 13th. 1814

Sir/

Having succeeded in getting my gig and five Batteaux across from the Niagara River to Lake Erie, a distance of Eight Miles by land—I last night attacked the Three Enemy's Schooners, that had anchored close to Fort Erie—for the purpose of flanking the approaches to that Fort.— Two of them were carried sword in hand in a few minutes, and the third would certainly have fallen—had the Cables not been cut, which made us drift to Leeward of her among the Rapids— The Schooners taken are the *Ohio*, & *Somers*, Commanded by Lieutenants, and mounting Three long twelve pounders, with a complement of 35 men each— My Gallant Friend Lieutenant Radcliffe[1] and One Seamen fell in the act of boarding, which, with four wounded is our loss.— The Enemy had

One man killed and Seven wounded among the latter is Lieutenant Conklin commanding the Squadron as well as two of his Officers;— The Steady and gallant conduct of the Officers, Seamen and Marines employed on this Service, was such as to have insured me success against a greater force—and has called forth a very handsome General order from His Honor Lieutenant General Drummond— I beg leave particularly to mention Mr. Grinded Mate of the *Star*—and Mr. Hyde Mate of the *Charwell*,[2] not only, for their gallant conduct in the Attack, but for their skill in bringing the Vessels, into this River, through Shoals, and Rapids, and under a Constant and heavy fire— I have the honor to remain with great Respect Your faithful Humble Servant

(signed) Alexr. Dobbs.

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 145–47. Attached was a list of the men killed and wounded in the attack. A notation on the first page reads "A True Copy J. L. Yeo."

1. Lieutenant Charles Radcliffe, R.N.
2. Master's Mate John Grinded, R.N.; and Master George Hyde, R.N.

Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Erie, Augt. 15th. 1814

Sir,

It is with extreme regret I have to inform you of the capture of The *Ohio*, Lieutt. Concklin, & the *Somers*, Mr. Darling,[1] they were carried, after a short conflict on the night of the 12th. Inst. at 11 PM. by boarding, within Pistol Shott of Fort Erie; The Enemy had eight large batteaux's & one Small Gun Boat built 10 miles from point Ebony, in the interior, & brot. down that night by waggons: the expidition was headed by the Comdr. of one of the Enemies Sloops of war lately chas'd on shore near Fort Niagara by our Squadron on Ontario he had 150 Seamen & 100 marines & soldiers:

This information was given by two deserters that came from the Enemy the following morning the particulars are not known— 'tis fear'd there are but few survivors on our side, the night was very dark which gave the Enemy an opportunity of getting close on board within [*without*] being discover'd no Cannon was fired, but muskets, pistoles & the clash of swords distinctly heard, preparations were making for attackg. the *Porcupine* the next night, she however lost one of her anchors in the early part of the night, & draged down the rapids within Pistole shott of the Enemies Battery, & was challenged by the Centinal, but gave no answer, a favourable breeze springg. up at that time he made Sail, & arrived at this place on the following day, (the 14th.) having expended 150 rounds of 32 lb. round Shott, & as many of Grape & Cannister, & by report of deserters have dismounted five of their Battering Cannon, & kill'd a number of men & officers her Guns being very heavy, was most dreaded; Genl. Drummond has offer'd one thousand Dollars to the 1st Engineer that will disable, or sink the *Porcupine* hot shot has been directed at the Squadron but without effect, the *Porcupine* has been cut up considerably in her Sails & rigging, She recd. one

Shott in her foremast & five in her Hull, one of them in her magazine but no lives lost—

Lieutt. Concklin recommends Mr. Thos. Brownell in the highest terms, as a brave enterprizg. & meritorious officer indeed Sir, he is deserving of a better Station—he will sail for Fort Erie this Evening with a supply of every thing—

The Commandg. Genl. at Ft. Erie, urges the necessity of having all my force at that place, as they will be of the utmost importance to the safety of the Garrison, I have none to send but the *Porcupine*; the *Lady Provost* having sail'd for DeTroit on the 12th. Inst. with Genl. McArthur & 300 Troops for that place, she will, I presume return in the course of two days, when she will have Orders to act with the *Porcupine*—

The Brig will be ready for Sea in eight days. I shall have to make a requisiton on the Army for soldiers to assist in workg., & defendg. her— Ltt. Webster[2] who has a rendezvous open for this Lake writes that he cannot get Seamen— Respectfy. I have the Honr. to be yr. most obt. Svt.—

Edm[d]. P. Kennedy

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 72 (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Sailing Master Gamliel Darling.
2. Midshipman Nelson Webster, promoted to lieutenant 9 December 1814.

Lieutenant Augustus H. M. Conckling to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy

Fort George U. C.
Augt. 16th. 1814—

Sir,

With extreme regret I have to make known to you, the circumstances attending the Capture of the *Ohio* & *Somers*, on the night of the 12th.; between the hours of 11. & 12. the boats were seen a short distance ahead of the *Somers*, & were hailed from that vessel. They answer'd, "Provision boats" which deceived the Officer of the Deck, as our Army boats had been in the habit of passing, & repassing throughout the night, and enabled them to drift athwart his hawser and cut his cables at the same time pouring in a heavy fire, before he discovered who they were—

Instantaneously they were along side of me and notwithstanding my exertions aided by Mr. McCally Actg. S. Master[1] (who was soon disabled) I was unable to repulse them but for a moment, I maintained the Quarter Deck untill my sword fell in consequence of a Shot in the shoulder and nearly all on deck either wounded or surrounded by bayonets, as their force was an overwhelming one, I thought farther resistance vain & gave up the vessel with the satisfaction of having performed my duty and defended my vessel to the last.—

List of Killed and Wounded

Ohio

Killed——— John Fifehill B.M. shot thro' the body
Wounded—— Reuben Wright, shot thro' the arm
" —— S.M. McCally shot thro' the thigh and bayoneted in the foot
Sergt. Eastman of the 11 regt. of the Army wounded in the neck by a musket ball
——— Granger 11 regt. wounded in the arm
——— Weath 11 " do " arm
——— Whillers 21 " do— cut in the arm

Somers

Wounded—— Samuel Taylor shot in the arm & cut in the head
— —— Charles Ordean cut in the shoulder

also one of the *Ohio*'s marines whose name the Sergt. cannot find, now in the Hospital, badly wounded

The enemy's loss in killed and wounded is much more, considerable; amongst the killed is the commanding Officer of the *Netley*, (lying here) Capt. Ratliff, he fell in attempting to come over my quarter—notwithstanding the number of muskets & Pistols which were fired, and the bustle inseperable from enterprises of this kind, neither the fort or the *Porcupine* attempted to fire as we drifted past them, nor did we receive a shot untill past Black Rock—tho' they might have destroyed us with ease— Respectfully Your Obt. St.

(signed) A. M. Conkling

P.S. We expect to be sent to Montreal & perhaps to Quebeck directly—

Copy, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 90, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13).

1. Master's Mate Alexander McCully.

Advice to Lieutenant Drury

In early April 1814, Acting Lieutenant John T. Drury, then engaged in the recruiting service at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, penned the secretary of the navy a long, rambling, distraught letter seeking a promotion. Instead of issuing Drury a lieutenant's commission, Jones ordered him to Lake Champlain. In August, Drury's unusual plan to discover whether the crews of his guard boats were neglecting their duties and stopping at a local tavern led to the death of a citizen in Vermont. Disguised as a British sailor, Drury entered the tavern, which was located on the Vermont shore of Lake Champlain. In the confusion that ensued, the tavern keeper was shot and killed. This incident caused Lieutenant Drury much remorse, and he fled Lake Champlain, became depressed, and started drinking.

Drury was apparently in the Washington area during the British incursion because on 5 September he was ordered to report himself to Commodore John Rodgers for temporary duty in Alexandria. By November the department had assigned him to Lake Erie. At this same time, Captain Macdonough learned of Drury's whereabouts and offered him a berth on Macdonough's next cruise. Macdonough's letter reveals the captain's religious and personal side.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Ship *Saratoga.*
Off Chazy August 20th. 1814

Sir

I regret having to inform you of an unfortunate accident which took place on the night of the 16 inst near this, in the State of Vermont; a man was shot by the crew of one of my boats, the circumstances attending and which led to this tragical scene are from my best information as follows.— I had been informed that my guard boats had been in the practice of landing in the night at the house of the deceased which is a kind of tavern; in order to know an officer who should thus neglect his duty.— I sent Lieut. Drury after the guard boats had gone out to endeavour to discover what boat was in the habit of landing;— he went to the house of the deceased and as appears, the better to effect his object wished to pass for an enemy's boat, and though at [*it*] appears the disguise did not fully succeed for one said they were Americans and another they were Englishmen; the deceased it appears was of the latter opinion and entering through a back door charged furiously on Mr. Drury ordering him to surrender,— Mr. Drury knocked the musket aside, at this instant seeing his men preparing to fire, it seems he endeavoured to prevent them, but the men seeing their Officer charged upon (and another man behind him who charged also, with a musket) fired which took fatal effect.

It is probable the men were doubtfull whether they were assailed by friends or foes, although within the United States, being near the line it might be supposed they were enemies and concealed in the house for the purpose of taking a guard Boat which might land there. Mr. Drury has imprudently gone away supposed to Washington.— his intention is said to be by his friends in the ward room not to avoid a just and impartial trial—it is said by some Citizens that he would not get such a trial in the place where the act was committed.

The men concerned in this affair are demanded by the civil authority,— they are charged with wilful murder and will be turned over to that authority.

I should have made this affair known to you before but it was in so confused a state that I defered it untill as clear a statement could be given as in my power. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. m. obd. Servt.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 23 (M147, Roll No. 5).

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Acting Lieutenant John T. Drury

U.S. Brig *Eagle*
Plattsburgh 12 Novr. 1814

Dear Sir

I understand that you are stationed at Baltimore, by Mr. Latimer who has recently arrived from thence— The subject of this letter is to offer you an opportunity to sail again with me should you wish it as I am thro' my own request directed to report myself to the Department in person and shall most probably

be attached to a station or vessel on the Atlantic— Will you give this your Consideration?— I have wondered you did not write to me or some other of your friends on the Lake to let us know what had become of you, as we have all felt anxious about you, not so much thro' fear of your being unable to obtain a suitable situation in the service of your Country, as, that you would suffer yourself to ponder too much on the unfortunate accident which occured in this quarter some time since— I call it accident, considering (as every thinking man would) that it was so—it is here, now almost universally acknowledged as such; this I hope will relieve your feelings, should they have been affected by it in a greater degree than those of a more firm or religious nature would have been— You my good sir can I am sure or at least I sincerely hope can lay your hand on your heart and acquit your Conscience and feelings to God of being intentionally, directly or indirectly instrumental in the unfortunate occurrence— I say I hope— I believe you can then let me advise you to do it in your room with your door and window shut asking with a penitent and unfeined heart forgiveness of him who has said that he is always ready to forgive and receive all humble and penitent supplications—let me advise you my dear sir to bring your mind to this state and the heaviest weight will be taken off, leaving you reconciled to yourself and to your God— I have indirectly learned from a source friendly to yourself that it was suspected by him that the reflections on the late mentioned subject had or would affect you in a manner very injurious to health and morality— Now let me advise you in the most earnest and strong manner to refrain from such a mode of quiting or alleviating your feelings, your own good sense will I trust and sincerely hope point out the fallacy of such a remedy—it will be momentary and returning to the same thing again be the sure and natural consequence which will ultimately terminate in destruction and misery to yourself, and be to your family an everlasting sting of bitter pain and regret— No my dear sir you would do extremely wrong even to indulge at all in this deceiving and destroying substitute to exterminate any affection of the mind; believe me it leads to ruin, certain ruin—

Where is there a man to whom one may have done an injury who will not forgive it from the goodness which is inspired into his heart on the offender going to him openly and candidly asking it, and become probably a true friend—how much more ready then would the Almighty whose attribute is all goodness be to forgive one of his children when asked in an humble manner with a heart penitent for the offence; this, all great and good men have done before you and many testimonies have been left behind them at their deaths of their petitions having been granted by going to their graves in peace—[1]

Will you favour me with a letter at Middletown Connecticut as I expect to be there in a few days—believe me your friend

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 54, enclosure (M148, Roll No. 13). Enclosed in Drury to Jones, 1 December 1814.

1. Drury was commissioned lieutenant 9 December 1814. He perished in U.S.S. *Epervier* when that ship, bearing copies of a treaty with the Dey of Algiers, disappeared with all hands after passing the Strait of Gibraltar on 14 July 1815.

The Capture of Lieutenant Gregory

Lieutenant Francis H. Gregory evaded British boats in several successful expeditions in the St. Lawrence River and the north shore of Lake Ontario. His luck ran out on 26 August during a scouting expedition near Kingston. Two British gunboats spotted his gig and captured the American party after a spirited engagement. Commodore Yeo was glad to see the infamous lieutenant made prisoner, and also glad for the return of his personal gig, which the Americans had captured at Sandy Creek in May.

D. Daverne to Captain Powell, British Army

[Extract]
(Copy) Kingston 28th. August 1814

Sir

. . . Brought in on the night of the 26 Inst. a Gig containing Lieut. McGregor[1] of the U.S. Navy, Ten Seamen, five of which were wounded & a dead midshipman—who was enterred yesterday: they were taken by Lieut. Scott near the upper Gap in the Bay of Quinté the party of the enemy had Landed & been on shore for some time, during which time our people were taking a proper position to intercept them on their return.— They however left the shore before our people were altogether prepared to meet them, as on leaving the Shore they laid a different course to what was expected & went in quest of a raft of timber boards that was on, it was on its way down— on boarding it they threw all they considered valuable overboard, piled some of the boards & set fire to the raft took the owner (a Mr. Fairfield) into their boat & pushed off— they had not proceeded far before they perceived our boats in chase of them, on which she pulled away smartly, our people commenced a fire with musquitry, on which she hove overboard the man taken from off the raft, with a view to lighten their boat, one of our boats (they were two) stopped to pick him up the other continued the chase keeping up a constant fire from both sides till the enemys boad [*boat*] had so many men killed & wounded on board that they found it unlikely to escape, when they lay to, and behold the Renegadoe McGregor who did his Country such an essential service in destroying that vessel that was burnt on the carrying place, he is a very meritorious fine looking fellow & I think justly entitled to some particular mark of favour for throwing the man overboard & when the poor fellow tryed to hold by the gunnel of the boat rapped his fingers heartily with the oars— They were taken in a Gig that was brought out by Capt. Mulcaster from England a very fine boat— Sir James expressed his pleasure on seeing him & the boat said they were what he just then wanted. . . . I have the honor to be Sir Your Most obt. Servant

(Signed) D. Daverne.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 15, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39). This letter was intercepted in a packet of mail by William Johnson, an intelligence agent for the army at Sackets Harbor. This copy was forwarded by Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones in a letter of 4 September 1814. The first and last paragraphs of the letter, concerning military pay, have been omitted from this transcription. Powell was deputy assistant quartermaster general for the 24th Regiment of Foot.

1. Lieutenant Francis H. Gregory.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 144 U.S. Ship *Superior* off the Ducks
29th. August 1814

Sir.

I have the mortification to inform you of the loss of Lieutenant Gregory, a midshipman and eight men in one of my Gigs.

On the 25th. Inst. we missed the enemys Ships from Kingston: at first I was apprehensive that they had taken advantage of the heavy north wind on the 20th. which had drove me from before Kingston, and gone up the Lake, to cut off our Brigs that were blockading Niagara; but I was determined to ascertain the fact, whether they had gone up the Lake or not before I left my present position, and as they sometimes lay in the passage between the Island of Fonta and the Main, the next day 26th. I dispatched Lt. Gregory in a Gig with a midshipman and eight men to look into the upper gap by which he could see through the passage and ascertain whether the enemy lay there or not. I cautioned him very particularly not to approach the shore or to run any unnecessary risque: but it appears from his letter that his zeal induced him to land and burn a raft of picket timber, and on his return by keeping too close in shore and not allowing himself room to see his danger, that two British Barges containing about 30 men (which had been secreted in the bushes) came upon him suddenly and by pouring in a very distructive fire compelled him to surrender after the loss of the midshipman killed and five out of the eight men wounded.

The loss of this boat and crew is truly mortifying: Lt. Gregory was an officer in whose judgment and discretion I had the most implicit confidence, but it appears that in this instance that he has suffered his zeal to get the better of his judgment.— he is an officer however, of great worth and bids fair to become an ornament to the service.

In midshipman Hart,[1] the service has lost a most excellent officer, he was a young man of great worth & of much promise; he was brave intelligent and full of zeal and enterprize and bid fair to become an ornament to his profession.

I enclose herewith copies of my letters to Sir James Lucas Yeo and his answer, also, Lt. Gregorys report of his capture. I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Sir Your Most obedt. Hble. Servt.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 144 (M125, Roll No. 38).

1. Ezekiel B. Hart was appointed a midshipman 30 April 1814.

[Enclosure]
Copy.

On Board H.M. Ship *P. Regent*
Kingston Roads Augut. 27th. 1814.

Sir,

It becomes a painful duty to inform you of my Captivity, and the loss of the Boat and Crew, (ten in all) under my charge, taken at the mouth of the Bay of Quanti, Yesterday by two English Barges, with thirty men, after an unavailing, and fatal attempt to escape.— In obedience to your orders I had pulled into the Bay, observing a cautious distance from the shore, just into the mouth of the Bay,— I fired a large raft of picket timber, and after having accomplished the duty, you had directed was returning to the Squadron, in pulling round a small point (which I had passed only a few minutes before) I discovered the Enemies Barges advancing and before I could wind the Boat was so completely under their fire, that it was impossible to escape. Three Seamen were shot down in a few minutes—two more shared the same fate.— Mr. Hart was killed while bravely animating the men.—leaving only three Seamen, and myself, there was no longer any hopes of escape.— The enemies Barges had been secreted in the Woods, seeing me pass had taken the position, which enabled them to cut us off.— I regret the unfortunate issue of this affair—but am proud of the heroic devotion of my gallant companions while overpower'd by superior numbers.—

The Wounded have every attention paid them from a generous foe.— Mr. Hart will be entered [*interred*] in a manner suitable to his rank.— A List of the Killed and Wounded will be sent you through Commo. Sir James L. Yeo. I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Your obdt. Servt.

(Signed) Fran. H. Gregory.
Lieut. U.S. Navy.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 144, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 38).

Macdonough at Plattsburg

In late August 1814, a British invasion of New York along Lake Champlain appeared imminent. The new American brig Eagle *took the lake on 26 August and sailed north to join Master Commandant Macdonough's squadron patrolling the northern end of Lake Champlain. British troops under Governor-General Sir George Prevost crossed the border 31 August as the new Royal Navy frigate* Confiance, *building at Isle aux Noix, was nearly ready for service.*

Commander Macdonough then moved his vessels back to Plattsburg Bay where they were sheltered from British artillery and could help support the movements of the American army, now under the command of Brigadier General Alexander Macomb. Brigadier General Izard and 4,000 of his troops had been ordered in mid-August to march westward to join General Brown's army at Niagara.

The British advance arrived near Plattsburg on 5 September. The American galleys took a position alongside the shore road to fire at the advancing troops, but withdrew when British artillery was placed to return their fire.

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*
Plattsburgh Septr. 3d. 1814—

Sir,

I have the honor to acquaint you with the arrival of the Squadron at this place— As an attack on this place is threatened by a land movement of the enemy and their fleet evincing no immediate signs of coming out, Brigr. Genl. Macomb and myself considered this movement of our vessels proper and necessary.

The enemy say, when their ship is finished (which will be in a few days) he will come out, and it is supposed Plattsburgh will be attacked by land and water at the same time, and that their Army at Champlain is waiting for their fleet— I have the honor to be Sir with great respect Your Mo. Ob. Servt.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 5 (M125, Roll No. 39).

Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S Ship *Saratoga*
off Plattsburgh, Sept. 7th. 1814.

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that on the 5th. Inst. the Gallies composing a part of the Squadron under my command, were directed to take a position in shore, for the purpose of impeding the Enemy's force on their advance towards Plattsburgh, as they were momently expected.—

At 10 Oclock the next morning they appeared advancing rapidly towards the village, but in passing a defile in the woods (through which the Roads lie) their progress was considerably checked by the fire of the Gallies, untill their Artillery could be brought up.—

Being enabled, by their situation in the woods, by which they were screen'd, to aim with precision at our vessels, while a heavy sea running at the same time prevented the Gallies from bringing their Guns to bear, it was thought prudent to withdraw them from action.—

In this affair, I am sorry to state that Actg. Lt. Silas Duncan was mortally wounded on board the Gun Boat *Allen* while communicating my orders to her commander.— One Seaman was also Killed and three Marines wounded.— I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect yr. mot. obt. st.

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 41 (M147, Roll No. 5).

GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST TO
CAPTAIN GEORGE DOWNIE, R.N.

Head Quarters Plattsburg 9th September 1814

Sir

In consequence of your Communication of yesterday's date, I have postponed moving on the Enemy's position on the South bank of the Saranac, until your Squadron is in a state of preparation to cooperate with this Division of the Army.

I need not dwell with You on the evils resulting to both Services from delay, as I am well convinced you have done every thing that was in your power, to accelerate the Armament and Equipment of your Squadron, and I am also satisfied, nothing will prevent its coming off Platsburg, the moment it is practicable—

I am happy to inform you, that I find from Deserters who have come over from the Enemy, that the American fleet is inefficiently manned,— and that a few days ago, after the arrival of the New Brig, they sent on shore for the Prisoners of all discriptions, in charge of the Provost to make up a Crew for that Vessel— I have the Honor to be Sir Your most Obdt. humble Servant

(signed) George Prevost

Captain Watson of the Provincial Cavalry[1] is directed to remain at little Chazy until you are preparing to get under weigh, when, He is instantly to return to this Place, with the intelligence.—

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 196–97. Copy enclosed in letter of 24 September 1814 from Commodore Sir James L. Yeo to Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker.

1. Captain William Watson, Dorchester Provincial Light Dragoons.

CAPTAIN GEORGE DOWNIE, R.N., TO
GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

9th Septr. off Little Chazy—
H.M.S. *Confiance*

Sir

I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency, that it's my intention to weigh and proceed from this Anchorage about Midnight in the expectation of rounding into the Bay of Platsburg about dawn of day and commence an immediate attack upon the Enemy if they shall be found Anchored in a position that will offer chance of success— I rely on any assistance you can afford the Squadron—

In manning the Flotilla and Ships—finding we are many short, I have made application to the officer commanding at Chazy, for a Company of the 39th. Regiment—

I have the honor of Your Excellency's letter of this morning to which the preceding is a full Answer I have the honor to be &c— &c— &c

(signed) G. Downie

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fol. 199. Copy enclosed in letter of 24 September 1814 from Commodore Sir James L. Yeo to Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker.

The American Squadron at Buffalo and Erie

Captain Arthur Sinclair departed Lake Huron and returned to Lake Erie in early September. The storms that are common on Lake Erie during the fall months worried him. The Navy Department called on the squadron to support the remnants of Major General Brown's army as it withdrew back to Fort Erie and then prepared to recross to the American side of the Niagara River.

At the same time, the fleet was to transport a group of British prisoners who had been captured in the Battle of Lake Erie the previous September and were being marched from Kentucky to Ohio to await transportation to Upper Canada. The unfortunate prisoners were sickly, undernourished, and without warm clothes or blankets.

The vessels on Lake Erie were in need of repairs after another season on the lake. One, the brig Caledonia, *was driven on shore in a gale and accidently set on fire, an act which the suspicious Captain Sinclair considered treasonous.*

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES TO LIEUTENANT EDMUND P. KENNEDY

Lieutt. Edmund P Kennedy
or the Officer Commanding the
U S Naval Force at Erie.

Navy Department
Septemr. 5th. 1814.

Sir

Your letters of the 25th. (two) & 29th. have been received, and will be further noticed so soon as the derangement consequent upon the late disaster in this Capital shall admit.

The object of this letter is to request your vigilant attention to the state of the Squadron under your command, in order that its cooperation with the Army, at Fort Erie, may be rendered the most effectual.

The state of that Army has become critical in the extreme by its persevering defence of that Post, while the force of the enemy has encreased to a degree which may render it impracticable for our Army to cross the Niagara without the hazard of destruction

You will therefore communicate with the Commanding Officer at Fort Erie, and render him every possible aid in your power, compatible with the safety of the force under your command, which must not be hazarded by taking an insecure position, from which you may not be able to extricate yourself in the event of the fall of Fort Erie, or of the enemy taking a commanding position, with heavy Guns on the Bank of the Niagara, which may prevent your return into Lake Erie.—

The two Vessels recently captured by the enemy, under the Guns of Fort Erie,[1] were lost in consequence of the injudicious position in which they had been placed, at the request of the Military Commander.—

You are alone responsible, and consequently are to be the judge of the cooperation required of you.— If it is reasonable and practicable, you will afford it with zeal and promptitude.—

If on the contrary it shall appear to you to be impracticable, or to expose the force under your command to extreme or unreasonable hazard, you will decline it, and proffer such other as your best judgement may dictate.—

The principal cooperation which you will be enabled to afford, will be in aiding and conducting the transportation of the Army across the Niagara should that measure be determined upon, and in this, you will exert all your powers to protect and conduct it in safety.— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 183.

1. For the capture of the schooners *Somers* and *Ohio*, see pp. 588–91.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Sloop *Niagara* Off Buffalo— Septr. the 7th. 1814

Sir

I arrived here on the morning of the 4th; but it has blown so heavy, on shore, as to prevent my having any communication with the Genl. until yesterday— He expresses great anxiety that I shall lay on the other shore, in order to secure the weak side of his Fort from a water attack— I am equally anxious to cooperate with him in every possible way, which does not place at too great hazard the safety of the Fleet—such a move would do this— I shall therefore not be urged to it, against my own judgment, by any argument he can use, unless the salvation of the Army depends on it—in which event I shall risque every thing, for on the safety of this Army depends the whole Niagara Frontier and the Winter security of the Fleet— I am now laying at the nearest possible point to be free from Rocks—and not without the range of their Rocketts, some of which have been thrown at the Ships— I have sent all the Commanding Officers, the Masters, and pilots, and sounded the whole Bay, and there is not a point at which the Ships could lay within serviceable distance of the army, that an Anchor would hold against the rapid current which is setting into the Niagara; and should it hang under one of those Rocks, the Cable would be cut from it in a few hours, when nothing could save the Ship from total loss— At the best Anchorage, we have sandy bottom, and are exposed to a scope of 250 miles, laying within ¾ of a mile of a Rocky lee shore— in a common breze this vessel rides with her bows under—you can therefore judge how very unpleasantly I am situated here— I would not remain here; but the Genl. intends crossing the militia in a day or two, and is anxious, in case of disaster, to have every assistance to get them back— This done or declined, I shall leave this unsafe place without delay, as the season for heavy gales is now at hand, and I am too well aware of the importance of those vessels, to the safety of this Frontier, to hazard their laying thus exposed a moment longer than can be avoided

Genl. Ripley has just sent his aid off, who informs me that the Enemy have hauled across 40 or 50 large boats to a point just above us, and that about 200 Seamen and Marines have come over from the vessels laying in the Niagara—

I think it probable they contemplate an attack upon me— I am prepared for it, and have no fears for the result— They may, knowing the weak state of Erie and the exposed state of the ships there, have views in that quarter

I shall therefore form a line in that direction within signal distance of each other and keep underway— I wish there was a possibility of geting Boats below the Falls I would take advantage of their absence and attempt the distruction of their vessels laying there— I have the honor to remain very respectfully Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 29 (M125, Roll No. 39).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Brig *Niagara* off Buffalo
Septr. the 12th. 1814

Sir

It is with infinite mortification I transmit you the inclosed letter for your information, as I cannot but strongly suspect, from the circumstance of the vessels being fired after her geting onshore, that some unfair means was the cause of her geting there— A number of men on this station claim their discharge as having served their term of enlistment; but they have been transfered from other stations without any data by which the Pursers' here can either know their term of service or state of their acct. with the Department—under such circumstances I have thought the president [*precedent*] would be a bad one to give them their discharge; but have done every thing to reconsile them, while I have taken the proper steps to assertain their date of entry &ctr. Those men are becoming troublesome—there are Foreigners among them, and as the officers here commanding the small vessels are extremely inexperienced in their profession, I should not be astonished at advantages being taken of them, in cases of difficulty, by such characters— The *Caledonia* has been very leaky during my whole cruize on the Uper Lake, and since the Troops left her, the labour of the pumps, has been greater on the crew— this induces me to suspect that unfair means has been used in geting her onshore; particularly as I had her made snug for a Gale before I left there; her cables were very good, and the small vessels here rode out the same Gale, exposed to the whole Lake, without accident, while she had a lee of the Peninsula—

The person who set her on fire will be a proper subject for the Gallows, and will, I have no doubt, make known the truth of the affair when brought to trial—

You shall be made acquainted with further particulars on my return to Erie—

Our pilots and all persons acquainted with this anchorage, Genl. Porter among others who has long resided here, recommend my not remaining in this exposed situation longer than the middle of this month; about which time the S

W gales commence with great violence, and continue until November, when they change to the N Western quarter— I shall, therefore, be at Erie by the 20th. Genl. Browne has crosst over 2 or 3000 Militia, and says he feels very secure against any attack from the Enemy— I shall leave him all the transportation I have to spare, which with the Boats belonging to the army will make his means of retreat very ample, in case he should find it advisable to abandon Fort Erie—indeed I do not see any advantage the Fleet can be to him here— He says he wishes me to receive his Artillery in case of crossing; but as the Rocky bottom and strong current prevents the possibility of my anchoring nearer than I now am the transportation to Buffalo is equally convenient, and much more certain; as he can land in the Creek when he cannot come alongside of a Ship—

My greatest fear is that they will weaken themselves on this side so much as to give the Enemy an opportunity of crossing & distroying their Boats, by which means he cuts off their retreat and supplies at the same stroke— This might be affected in one night; and as they have brought across the Peninsula a number of Boats and seamen for some marine expedition, I should not be surprised if this was one of the objects in view— I trust, however, that no casualty of this kind will be suffered to take place I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 46 (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]

Erie 6th. Septr. 1814

Sir!

I am sorry to inform you that in the gale of wind, this morning the *Caledonia* parted both her Cables, and drove ashore on the Beach—shortly after permission was granted to the Men to come ashore and cook as the Cabouse had been injured— A Black Boy by the name of Charles Stevenson, remained on board, and set her on fire—and it was with the greatest difficulty we could extinguish the flames,— The fire had got so far aft that we were compelled to heave the Powder overboard, together with the greater part of the sails, which were the first he set on fire,— The Vessel is much injured—all the after part of her beam is burnt to cinders— The trysail mast & Boom are likewise consumed & other damages which in my present weak state (having been compelled to swim to the Vessel) I am not able exactly to inform you I am Sir with great Esteem yr. Obt. Servt.

Thos. Holdup

Comdr. A. Sinclair
Comdg. U.S.N. Forces
on the U. Lakes Buffalo

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 46, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Brig *Niagara* Erie Roads— Octr. the 21st. 1814

Sir

I have the satisfaction of stating to you that I have succeeded in geting the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlott* within the Bar, and they are now safely moored, which circumstance has relieved me of much anxiety— I had to pass them over in 3½ feet less than they drew with sweept holds— The *Charlott* past over, on Friday last, without difficulty— Saturday and Sunday it blew a gale on shore, shifted the chanel and filled up nearly a foot, which gave me some trouble in geting the *Detroit* over on Monday

I have righted the *Caledonia*, freed her, within a foot, and taken every article out of her— she then began to motion in her bed and gained rapidly on the pumps—which induces me to believe her garboard streak, or some of her lower butts have started— Boistrous weather compeld me to leave her in her old bed—she lays in 5½ feet water, and should the present bad weather not separate her, I will put her on the Camels,[1] take her over the Bar and have her hauled up on the ways, where she can be repaired; as her deck being burned out of her, from her breasting beam aft, and her leaky bottom will prevent her being repaired in any other way— The loss sustained, by the fire, onboard of her was considerable—all her powder was thrown overboard and her sails burnt— Indeed, it must have required considerable enterprise and exertion to have extinguished the flames while they were at such a hight, and separated from her powder only by a thin Bulk head— Much praise is due to Lieut. Holdup who left a sick bed and swam off to her just in time to save her exploding

I have the masters mate and crew still in confinement, who I strongly suspect of the diabolical act of setting her onfire; but, as yet, I can get no clew to the truth of the act— No justifiable means shall be left untried to come at it—

I had sent the *Lawrence*, *Lady Provost*, and *Porcupine* to Sandusky, agreeably to your order of the 21st Ulto. to transport the British prisoners to Canada (with orders to be governed by the instructions the officer of the guard might have from the government as to the point of landing) previous to your further instructions of the 3d Inst.— On receit of that letter I dispatched an express to Genl. Izard, to be informed as to their place of landing, wishing if possible to save the risque of the vessels going into Buffaloe Bay at this season, and have received his instructions to land them at Long point—where there can now be no risque, since Detroit is garisoned— Since the Sailing of the above vessels I have received a letter, dated the 10th Inst., from one of the Captains of the guard over those prisoners, informing me of his having marched them down to Cleveland, which accounts to me for the long absence of the Squadron— My greatest fear is, that they will not find them, as there are no inhabitants near Sandusky to inform them of their change of situation— It is strange that prisoners of war should be moved about in this way without the knowledge of government— Had you been informed of this change of situation, much time would have been saved— The above mentioned officer states that 430 out of 550 of the prisoners are sick, and that they are without a Blanket or a second suit of cloths— The guard are equally sickly and without shelter

Knowing those men to be principally sailors, and the squadron very shortly maned—I made Flags' of the Transport vessels, by taking off their Guns &Ctr. at the same time, while securing them in this way, I ordered the commanders to

be equally on their guard, not placing too much faith in British honor, and to hold out the idea that their crews were shortened in order to give room for transportation— I have nearly 150 sick on the station— I am using every exertion to finish a Hospital for their comfort, with the hope that their numbers and sufferings will be much lessened when placed in good Quarters I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

N B— Since closing this letter the *Porcupine* has arrived, and informs me that they had learned of the Prisoners being at Cleveland and had returned there from Sandusky
They had taken onboard a part of them when a violent Snow Storm came on and caught them on a Leeshore— The *porcupine* parted from three Anchors, and before she could make sail she struck several times, but fortunately fetched off— The *Lawrence* had parted one Cable, and both her and the *Lady Provost* were in eminent danger when he left them— I have been riding here without lower yards and TG [*topgallant*] masts struck for two days, blowing tremendously with hail and snow— I trust however they will ride it out—as their ground tackle is very good—at least, it is new—good rope we never get from pittsburg— I have sent a parcel back at the cost of the makers— in haste

A S

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 54 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. For a description of camels, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 543.

Capture of *Scorpion* and *Tigress* on Lake Huron

On his departure from Lake Huron, Captain Sinclair left behind two schooners, Scorpion *and* Tigress, *with orders to Lieutenant Daniel Turner to blockade the passage between Nottawasaga and Mackinac to cut off the British supply line.*

Lieutenant Miller Worsley, the former commander of the burned British schooner Nancy, *gathered men and four boats for an expedition against the two ships. Lieutenant Worsley and three British army officers with their crews of soldiers, sailors, and Indians hid during the daylight hours near* Tigress*'s anchorage. That ship had become separated from the* Scorpion *amid the islands in Lake Huron. The British made their move on the night of 3 September. They surrounded the American vessel and boarded her from both sides. The Americans spotted the enemy too late and submitted after a resistance of only five minutes. The American prisoners were sent to Mackinac, and Lieutenant Worsley and his men now commanded* Tigress.

Two days later, Lieutenant Turner brought his vessel, Scorpion, *back within two miles of* Tigress *and anchored for the night. Unknown to him was that* Tigress, *still flying the American flag, was now in British hands. Lieutenant Worsley wisely bided his time all night, then slipped anchor at dawn and brought* Tigress *alongside, capturing* Scorpion *as well with little resistance.*

Lieutenant Andrew H. Bulger, Royal Newfoundland Fencible Infantry, to Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDouall, British Army

Copy Michilimackinac 7th Sept. 1814.

Sir/

I have the honor to report to you the particulars of the Capture of the United States Schooners *Scorpion* and *Tigress* by a detachment from this Garrison under the command of Lieut Worsley of the Royal Navy and myself— In obedience to your Orders we left Michilimackinac on the Even'g of the 1st. inst. in four boats, one of which was manned by seamen under Lieut Worsley, the others by a detachment of the Royal Newfoundland Regt under myself, Lieutenants Armstrong & Radenhurst—[1] We arrived near the Detour about sun set on the following day, but nothing was attempted that night, as the enemy positions had not been correctly ascertained— The Troops remained the whole of the 3rd Inst. concealed amongst the roads, and about 6 oclock that Eveng embarked & began to move towards the enemy— We had to row about 6 miles, during which the most perfect order and silence reigned. The indians which accompanied us from Mackina were left about 3 miles in our rear— About 9 oclock at night we discerned the enemy and had approached to within one Hundred Yards of them before they hailed us, On receiving no answer, they opened a smart fire upon us both of musketry & from the 24 Pr. all opposition however was in vain for in the Course of five Minutes the enemy's vessel was boarded and carried, by Lieut. Worsley & Lieut. Armstrong on the Starboard side & my boat & Lieut Radenhursts on the larboard. She proved to be the *Tigress* commanded by Sailing Master Champlin,[2] mounting one long 24 Pr. and with a compliment of 30 Men. The defence of this Vessel did credit to her officers, who were all severely wounded, she had 3 men wounded & 3 missing supposed to have been killed & thrown immediately over board—our loss is 2 seamen killed & several Soldiers & seamen slightly wounded— On the morning of the 4th. Inst. the Prisoners were sent in a boat to Mackina under a Guard and we prepared to attack the other schooner, which we understood was anchored 15 miles farther down, the position of the *Tigress* was not altered, and the better to carry on the deception the American Pendant was kept flying— On the 5th Inst. we discerned the Enemy's schooner beating up to us, the Soldiers I directed to keep below, or to lie down on the Deck to avoid being seen— Every thing succeeded to our wish, the enemy came to anchor about 2 miles from us in the night, and as the day dawned on the 6th Inst. we slipt our cable & ran down under our Jib & Foresail, every thing was so well managed by Lt. Worsley that we were within 10 yards of the enemy before they discovered us. it was then too late, for in the course of 5 minutes her Deck was covered with our men and the british flag hoisted over the American, She proved to be the *Scorpion*, commanded by Lieut Turner of the U S. Navy carrying one long 24 Pr. in her hold with a compliment of 32 men—she had two men killed & 2 wounded— I enclose a return of our killed & wounded, and am happy to say that the latter are but slight— To the admirable good conduct and management of Lt. Worsley of the Rl. Navy the Success is to be in a great measure attributed, but I must assure you that every Officer and Man did his Duty— I have the honor to be Sir, your most obedient humble servant

A. H. Bulger
Lieut. Royal Newfoundd. Reg.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 172–74. The enclosure listed one enlisted man of the Royal Artillery wounded, one officer (Lieutenant Bulger) and six enlisted from the Royal Newfoundland Fencible Infantry wounded.

1. Lieutenants Alfred A. Armstrong and John Radenhurst, Royal Newfoundland Fencible Infantry.
2. Sailing Master Stephen Champlin, U.S.N.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT MCDOUALL, BRITISH ARMY, TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY

Copy/ Michilimackinac 9th Septr. 1814.

Sir/

I have the honor to inform you that some Indians, on their way to the falls of St. Mary's, returned to me with the intelligence, that part of the enemy's Squadron had on the 25th ulto., again made their appearance in the neighbourhood of St Josephs, likewise occupying the passage of the Detour, their intention being evidently to cut off our supplies, & prevent all communication with this Garrison.

On the 31st,— I was joined by Lieut. Worsley of the Royal Navy with seventeen seamen, who had passed in a Canoe sufficiently near the enemy to ascertain them to be two schooner rigged Gun boats of the largest class, On stating to me his opinion that they might be attacked with every prospect of success, particularly as they were at Anchor nearly five leagues asunder, I immediately determined to furnish him with requisite Assistance.

In the course of the next day, four Boats were accordingly equipped, two of them with field pieces in their bows, One of them was manned by the seamen of the navy, the remaining three by a detachment of the Royal Newfoundland Reg't under Lieut Bulger, Armstrong & Radenhurst, consisting of fifty men. The whole sailed the same Evening under the Command of Lieut. Worsley—

I have now the satisfaction of reporting to you the complete success of the expedition. Lieut. Worsley having returned to this place on the 7th. inst. with his two prizes, consisting of the U.S. Schooners *Scorpion* and *Tigress*, the former carrying a long 24 and a long 12 pr. and the latter a long 24.— they were commanded by Lieut Turner of the American Navy and are very fine vessels— For the particulars of their Capture, I beg leave to refer you to the enclosed statement of Lieut Bulger, whose conduct in aiding the execution of this enterprise (in which he was slightly wounded) reflects upon him great credit, & I beg leave to recommend him as a meritorious Officer of long standing, who had been in many of the Actions of this War— Lieut Armstrong & Radenhurst possess similar claims, and with the detachment of the brave Newfoundland Reg't (who are familiar with this kind of service) merit my entire approbation—neither should I omit noticing the zeal displayed by Mr. Dickson and Lieut. Livingston of the Indian department, who volunteered their services on this occasion—

In calling your attention to the conspicuous merit of the Officer who so judiciously planed & carried into effect this well concerted enterprise—I am conscious that I only do Lieut Worsley strict justice in acknowledging the eminent services which he has rendered this Garrison— You are already acquainted with the unequal conflict which he sustained at the Mouth of the River Nottowasaga and the almost unprecedented defence which he made of the *Nancy* schooner with only twenty one Seamen and a few Indians, against the American Squadron & upwards of three hundred Troops— Since that period he with his gallant little band of Seamen, has traversed this extensive Lake in two boats laden with provisions for the Garrison, & having at this extremity of it, discovered two of his former opponents his active and indefatigable mind rested not.— till he had releev'd us from such troublesome neighbours, and conducted the blockading force in triumph into our Port—

Such, Sir, have been the services of Lt. Worsley during the short time that he has been stationed on Lake Huron— I have to beg that you will strongly recommend him to the protection of Commodore Sir Jas. Yeo & also to the patronage of His Excellency the Governor Genl. in order that my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may be enabled to appreciate them as they merit— I have the honor to be Sir your most obedt. Servant

Rt McDouall Lt. Col.
Comg. at Michilimackinac

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 685, pp. 176–78.

The Battle of Lake Champlain

On the morning of 11 September, the British squadron, which had been delayed in fitting out, finally sailed for Plattsburg Bay toward the waiting American squadron. Choosing to fight a stationary battle, Master Commandant Macdonough anchored his vessels within the bay and waited for the British ships to come into range. About 9:40 A.M., the battle ensued. After nearly two hours of hard fighting, the British vessels surrendered one by one. It was an action fought at close range with devastating casualties on both sides.

On land, the British army under Governor-General Prevost was supposed to undertake a simultaneous assault of the American batteries. The governor-general, however, ordered a retreat when he saw the outcome of the naval contest.

The British offensive into New York State had ended. The American victory gave a huge boost to American morale and dealt a tremendous blow to the British war effort. The victory would be a significant factor in the British decision to negotiate an end to the conflict.

CAPTAIN THOMAS MACDONOUGH TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*
off Plattsburgh September 11th. 1814

Sir:

The Almighty has been pleased to Grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain in the capture of one Frigate, one Brig and two sloops of war of the enemy— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, your obt. Servt.

T. Macdonough Comg:

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 38 (M125, Roll No. 39). Thomas Macdonough was promoted to the rank of captain effective 11 September 1814.

Lieutenant Colonel Edward B. Brenton, British Army, to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

Montreal
12 Septr. 1814

Dear Sir/

I this morning recd. from Capt. Freer the distressing intelligence of the loss of our Fleet in Lake Champlain which I lose no time in communicating to you.— The two Squadrons encountered each other yesterday at about ten in the forenoon, ours was led to the Attack in a most gallant Style by Capt. Downie & the Enemy very soon driven under their batteries but unfortunately at the moment the *Confiance* was rounding to in order to lay along side the American Ship she grounded & after sustaining a tremendous fire from their batteries & gun boats was compelled to strike & the Brig & the Sloops have shared a similar unfortunate fate—our gun boats have I believe escaped in consequence of the unsuccessful termination of the Naval Cooperation His Excelly. recalled the Troops which were advancing to storm the Enemys works not considering the possession of them of sufficient importance to compensate for the loss we might sustain in effecting that object— as no further offensive operations can be carried on whilst the Enemy have the Naval ascendancy on the Lake I think it probable our Troops will return from our Frontier— no communication had taken place with the Vessels when the express came away at two—yesterday afternoon while the loss of lives had not been ascertained— the Action took place in Cumberland Bay & close to the Batteries upon Platsburg— I am Dr. Sir yours truly

E B Brenton

13th. since writing the within I have recd. encl. letter from Capt. Freer—by which I learn that Capt. Downie was Killed early in the action—& that the loss of the *Confiance*s rudder which rendered her unmanageable principally occasioned her Capture—nearly 150 men were Killed & wounded on board of her. the Capt. of Marines Killed & almost every sr. officer wounded—only 40 men escaped unhurt on board the Enemys ship upwards of 100 were Killed & wounded— the *Confiance* was so much damaged that she is said to have sunk the night after the action.— Capt. Pring was unhurt we presume— the *Linnet* which he commanded grounded on a rock as she was going into action & continued fast until she was compelled to strike— the two Sloops which came up in time to support the action fell on board the Enemys Vessels under a tremendous fire & were taken possession of one of them also said to have sunk— all our gun boats escaped with the provision Vessel which attended the Fleet— All our Troops moved from Platsburg yesterday Mg. to Chazy & Champlain & His Excelys. Head Qtrs. moved in the course of the day & at Odell Town.— our hopes are now centered in the Ontario fleet & I am anxiously expecting the intelligence of the safe launching of the New Ship which is I trust destined under your auspices to retrieve the Misfortunes of the other Lakes Believe very try. Yr ob St.

E B Brenton

ALS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 174–77.

Major General Alexander Macomb, U.S.A., to Acting Secretary of War Monroe

Fort Moreau. Plattsburgh
Sept. 12th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the British Army consisting of four Brigades—a Corp of Artillery a Squadron of horses and a strong light Corps amounting in all to about fourteen thousand men after investing the place on the north of the Saranac River since the 5th. Instant broke up their Camp and raised the seige this morning at 2 o'Clock. They are now retreating precipitably leaving their Sick and wounded behind—

The Enemy opened his Batteries yesterday morning and continued the Cannonading Bombarding and Rocket firing untill sun set. by this time our batteries had Completely silenced those of our opponants.

The light Troops and militia are now in full pursuit of the Enemy making prisoners in all directions— Deserters are continually coming in, so that the loss of the British Army in this enterprise will be considerable.— A more detailed report will be made of the Seege and circumstances attending it as early as possible.— The officers and men have all done their duty. The Artillery and the Engineers have performed their functions with a zeal and precision highly creditable to themselves and honorable to their Country.

Our loss is trifling indeed having only one officer and fifteen men killed and one officer and thirty men wounded.

The Militia of New-York and the Volunteers of Vermont have been exceedingly Serviceable and have evinced a degree of Patriotism and bravery worthy of themselves and the States to which they respectively belong.

The Strength of the garrison is only fifteen hundred effective rank and file. I have the honor to be with perfect Respect Sir, Your most obt. Servt.

Alex: Macomb

LS, DNA, RG107, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, M-135 (8) (M221, Roll No. 64). Enclosed with this letter was a detailed hand-drawn map of Plattsburg showing the British and American military positions and batteries and the position of the ships during the naval battle. Macomb was brevetted major general, 11 September 1814, for distinguished and gallant conduct in defeating the enemy at Plattsburg.

Commander Daniel Pring, R.N., to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

Copy

United States Ship *Saratoga*
Plattsburg Bay, Lake Champlain
12th September 1814.

Sir,

The painful task of making you acquainted with the circumstances attending the capture of His Majesty's Squadron yesterday, by that of the American under

Commodore McDonough, it grives me to state, becomes my duty to perform, from the ever to be lamented loss of that worthy and gallant Officer Captain Downie who unfortunately fell early in the Action.

In consequence of the earnest Solicitation of His Excellency Sir George Prevost, for the Co-operation of the Naval Force on this Lake, to attack that of the Enemy, who were placed for the support of their Works at Plattsburg, which it was proposed should be Stormed by the Troops at the same moment the Naval Action should commence in the Bay, Every possible Exertion was used to accelerate the Armament of the New Ship, that the Military movements might not be postponed at such an advanced Season of the Year—longer than was absolutely necessary.

On the 3d Inst I was directed to proceed in Command of the Flotilla of Gun Boats to protect the left Flank of our Army advancing towards Plattsburg and on the following day, after taking possession and paroling the Militia of Isle la Motte, I caused a Battery of 3 Long 18 Pounder Guns to be constructed for the support of our position abreast of little Chazy where the supplies for the Army were ordered to be landed.

The Fleet came up on the 8th Instant but for want of Stores for the Equipment of the Guns could not move forward until the 11th— At daylight we weighed and at 7 were in full view of the Enemy's Fleet, consisting of a Ship, Brig, Schooner and one Sloop, moored in line, abreast of their encampment, with a Division of 5 Gun Boats on Each Flank;— at 7.40 after the Officers Commanding Vessels and the Flotilla had received their final instructions, as to the plan of attack; we made sail in order of Battle, Capt. Downie had determined on laying his Ship athwart hawse of the Enemy's, directing Lieut. McGhee[1] of the *Chub* to support me in the *Linnet*, in engaging the Brig to the right, and Lieut. Hicks[2] of the *Finch* with the Flotilla of Gun Boats, to attack the Schooner & Sloop on the left of the Enemy's line.

At 8 the Enemy's Gun Boats and smaller Vessels commenced a heavy and galling fire on our Line, at 8.10 the *Confiance* having two Anchors shot away from her Larboard Bow, And the wind baffling was obliged to anchor (though not in the situation proposed) within two Cables length of her Adversary. The *Linnet* and *Chub* soon afterwards took their allotted Stations, something short of that distance, when the Crews on both sides cheered and commenced a spirited and close Action, a Short time however deprived me of the valuable services of Lieutenant McGhee who, from having his Cables, Bowsprit and Main Boom shot away drifted within the Enemy's line and was obliged to surrender. From the light airs and the smoothness of the water, the Fire on each side proved very destructive from the commencement of the Engagement, and with the Exception of the Brig, that of the Enemy, appeared united against the *Confiance*.

After two hours severe Conflict with our opponent; she cut her cable, run down, and took Shelter between the Ship and Schooner which enabled us to direct our fire against the Division of the Enemy's Gun Boats, and Ship, which had so long annoyed us, during our close Engagement with the Brig, without any return on our part: At this time, the fire of the Enemy's Ship slackened considerably, having several of her Guns dismounted—when she cut her Cable, and winded her Larboard Broadside to bear on the *Confiance* who, in vain endeavoured to effect the same Operation, at 10.30 I was much distressed to observe the *Confiance* had struck her Colours— The whole attention of the Enemy's Force then became directed towards the *Linnet*, the shattered and disable state

of the Masts sails, rigging and Yards, precluded the most distant hope of being able to effect an Escape by cutting the Cable, the result of doing so, must in a few minutes have been her drifting alongside the Enemy's Vessels, Close under our Lee—but in the hope that the Flotilla of Gun Boats who had abandoned the object assigned them would perceive our wants and come to our assistance, which would afford a reasonable prospect of being towed clear, I determined to resist the then destructive Cannonading of the whole of the Enemy's Fleet, and at the same time dispatched Lieutenant W. Drew to ascertain the state of the *Confiance*.

At 10.45 I was apprized of the irreparable loss she had sustained by the Death of her brave Commander (whose merits it would be presumption in me to Extol) as well as the great Slaughter which had taken place on board, and observing from the Manoeuvres of the Flotilla, that I could enjoy no further expectation of relief; the situation of my gallant Comrades, who had so nobly fought, and even now fast falling by my side, demanded the surrender of His Majesty's Brig entrusted to my Command, to prevent a useless waste of valuable lives, and, at the request of the surviving Officers & Men, I gave the painful orders for the Colours to be Struck.

Lieutenant Hicks of the *Finch* had the Mortification to strike on a reef of Rocks, to the Eastward of Crab Island, about the Middle of the Engagement; which prevented his rendering that assistance to the Squadron that might from an Officer of such ability have been expected.

The misfortune which this day befell us by Capture, will, Sir I trust Apologize for the lengthy detail, which in Justice to the Sufferers, I have deemed it necessary to give of the particulars which led to it; And when it is taken into consideration that the *Confiance* was Sixteen days before, on the Stocks, with an unorganized Crew, comprized of several Drafts of Men; who had recently arrived from different ships at Quebec, many of whom only joined the day before, and were totally unknown either to the Officers or to each other, with the want of Gun Locks as well as other necessary appointments, not to be procured in this Country; I trust you will feel satisfied of the decided advantage the Enemy possessed, Exclusive of their great superiority in point of force, a comparative Statement of which I have the honor to annex.— It now becomes the most pleasing part of my present duty, to notice to you, the determined skill and bravery of the Officers and men in this unequal Contest, but it grieves me to State, that the loss sustained in Maintaining it, has been so great; that of the Enemy, I understand amounts to something more than the same number.—

The fine style in which Captain Downie conducted the Squadron into Action admidst a tremendous fire, without returning a Shot, until secured, reflects the greatest credit to his Memory, for his Judgment and coolness as also on Lieuts. McGhee & Hicks so strictly attending to his Example and instructions, their own accounts of the Capture of their respective Vessels, as well as that of Lieutenant Robertson,[3] who succeeded to the Command of the *Confiance*, will, I feel assured, do ample Justice to the Merits of the Officers and Men serving under their immediate Command, but I cannot omit noticing the individual Conduct of Lieutenants Robertson, Creswick and Hornby, and Mr. Bryden Master,[4] for their particular Exertion in Endeavouring to bring the *Confiance*'s Starboard side to bear on the Enemy, after most of their guns were dismounted on the other.

It is impossible for me to Express to you, my Admiration of the Officers and Crew serving under my personal Orders, their coolness and steadiness, the effect of which was proved by their irresistible fire, directed towards the Brig opposed to us, claims my warmest acknowledgements, but more particularly for preserving the same, so long after the whole strength of the Enemy had been directed against the *Linnet* alone, my 1st Lieutenant Mr. William Drew, whose merits I have before had the honor to report to you, behaved on this occasion in the most exemplary manner. By the death of Mr. Paul,[5] Acting 2nd Lieutenant the Service has been deprived of a most Valuable and brave Officer, he fell early in the Action, Great Credit is due to Mr. Giles,[6] Purser, for Volunteering his Services on deck, to Mr. Mitchell,[7] surgeon for the Skill he evinced in performing some amputations required at the moment as well as his great attention to the Wounded during the Action, at the close of which the Water was nearly a foot above the lower Deck, from the number of shot which struck her, between Wind and Water.— I have to regret the loss of the Boatswain Mr. Jackson, who was killed a few minutes before the Action terminated.

The assistance I received from Mr. Muckle the Gunner and also from Mr. Clarke, Master's Mate, Messrs. Fouke and Sinclair, Midshipmen,[8] the latter of whom was wounded on the head and Mr. Guy my Clerk, will, I hope, recommend them, as well as the whole of my gallant little Crew, to Your Notice.

I have much Satisfaction in making you acquainted with the humane treatment the wounded have received from Commodore McDonogh.

They were immediately removed to his own Hospital on Crab Island, and were furnished with every requisite. His generous and polite attention also to myself, the Officers and Men, will ever hereafter be gratefully remembered.

Enclosed I beg leave to transmit you the statement of the different Commanding Officers of Vessels relative to the circumstances attending their capture, also the Return of killed & Wounded, and I have honor to be [&c.]

(Signed) Dan. Pring
Captain
late of H.M. Sloop *Linnett*

Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 368–73.

1. Lieutenant James McGhie, R.N., commander of H.M. sloop *Chub*.
2. Acting Lieutenant William Hicks, R.N., commander of H.M. brig *Finch*.
3. Acting Lieutenant James Robertson, R.N., commander of H.M. gunboat *Beresford*.
4. Mentioned were Acting Lieutenant Charles Creswick, R.N.; Acting Lieutenant W. Hornby, R.N.; and Master Robert A. Brydon, R.N.
5. Acting Lieutenant William Paul, R.N., killed in action.
6. Purser James P. Giles, R.N.
7. Assistant Surgeon James Mitchell, R.N.
8. Midshipmen Richard Fowke, R.N., and John Sinclair, R.N.

[Enclosure]
Copy

United States Ship of War
Saratoga off Plattsburg
12th September 1814.

Sir,

In compliance with your Commands that I should relate the circumstances which led to the surrender of His Majesty's late Ship *Confiance*, I have the hon-

our to acquaint you that, in leading into the Action, the small bower Anchor was shot from the bows, and when the spare Anchor was let go, the Cable was shot away—the best bower was then let go, the spring on which suffered the same fate— About 15 minutes after we commenced the Action, our gallant Commander, Captain Downie, was mortally wounded, and only lived to be carried below. The Action was kept up with Great Spirit a considerable time afterwards, and until the Enemy's Ship was Silenced and he found it necessary by means of his Springs to bring his other broadside to bear on us. The Enemy's Brig at the same time finding her situation too warm, cut her cable, and anchored again in a position so as to enable her to do us much injury.

Our loss, at this time, amounted to a great number in Killed and Wounded, and on the side opposed to the Enemy we had nine long Guns two Carronades and the pivot Gun disabled; on the other side, three long Guns and two Carronades.

It then became absolutely necessary to shift our broadside, and a Spring was accordingly got on the Cable for the purpose, and our broadside was nearly got to bear on the Enemy again, when the Ship's Company declared they would stand no longer to their Quarters, nor could the Officers with their utmost exertions rally them.

The concentrated fire of the whole of the Enemy's Squadron and Flotilla of Gun Boats had been then, for some time directed against the *Confiance*, and the Ship's Company had until now kept up the Action with as much Spirit as could be expected from men unacquainted with each other and with their Officers, and in a Ship which had been sixteen days before, on the Stocks. I had previous to this ordered a Boat to inform you of the fate of Captain Downie, but I found that both our boats were shot from the Stern— Our Gun Boats were, at this time, at a distance from the Action, and when I ordered the Signal to be made for them to engage Closer, the Signal book, in consequence of the Captain's Death, had been mislaid.

The Ship was making Water very fast. The Rigging, Spars and hull completely Shattered; upwards of forty men killed, and the wind from that Quarter as not to admit of the smallest prospect of escaping, had the ship been in a condition. It was my own opinion and that of the Officers, that keeping up the Colours any longer would be a Wanton and useless waste of human blood, I was therefore under the most distressing circumstances that an Officer could be placed in compelled to order the colours to be struck.

It would be presumption in me to attempt saying anything of the merits of my late brave and meritorious Captain—they are too well known to require any Commendation of mine as well as those of Captain Anderson of the Marines who likewise fell performing the duty of a Gallant Officer; as did Mr. Gunn, Midshipman,[1] a very promising Young Officer.

It now becomes my duty to advert to the surviving Officers whose conduct on the occasion merits a better fate, and the warmest Approbation of their Country, for their unceasing exertions during so destructive a fire; it would be an injustice to them were they not mentioned individually. Lieutenant Charles Creswick and Acting Lieutenant Hornsby[2] set the best example; Mr. Bryden, the Master Carrid the ship into Action in the most gallant style: Lieutenant Childs of the Marines,[3] and Fitzpatrick of the 39th Regiment distinguished themselves in encouraging their men—Messrs. Simmonds and Lee, Midshipman,[4] were particularly zealous, the former had passed his examination for a Lieutenant,

and is in my opinion very deserving of promotion; the latter was wounded in two places. Messrs. Dowie, Whitesides and Kooystra, young Midshipmen, conducted themselves uncommonly well. It would be injustice to pass over the humanity and attention paid by Mr. William Martin, Acting Surgeon, and Mr C. C. Todd, Assistant, to the numerous Wounded and at a time when the water was above the Gun room deck. The Warrant Officers conducted themselves to my satisfaction in their different Departments, I have not been able to ascertain the exact number of Killed and wounded— Thirty eight bodies were sent on shore for interment, besides those thrown overboard during the Action I have the honor to be &ca. &ca.

(Signed) James Robertson
Late 1st Lieut. *Confiance*

Wood, *Select British Documents*, Vol. 3, pp. 373–77. Two other enclosures, "A Statement of the Enemy's Squadron engaged with His Majesty's late Squadron on Lake Champlain," and "Return of the Killed and Wounded on Board His Majesty's Late Squadron in Action with the Enemy's Squadron on Lake Champlain," are not printed here.

1. Midshipman William Gunn, R.N.
2. Acting Lieutenant William Hornby, R.N.
3. Lieutenant Joseph Childs, Royal Marines.
4. Midshipman Robert Lee, R.N.

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Ship *Saratoga*
Plattsburgh Bay Sept. 13th. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to give you the particulars of the action which took place on the llth. Inst. on this Lake.—

For several days the Enemy were on their way to Plattsburgh by Land and water, and it being well understood that an attack would be made at the same time by their land & naval forces, I determined to await at anchor the approach of the latter.—

At 8 A.M the look out boat announced the approach of the Enemy.— At 9 he anchor'd in a line ahead at about 300 yards distance from my line.— His Ship opposed to the *Saratoga*—his Brig to the *Eagle*, Capt Robt. Henly—his Gallies, thirteen in number, to the Schooner, Sloop, and a division of our Gallies.— One of his Sloops assisting their Ship & Brig—the other assisting their Gallies. Our remaining Gallies with the *Saratoga* and *Eagle*.—

In this situation the whole force, on both sides, became engaged—the *Saratoga* suffering much from the heavy fire of the *Confiance*.— I could perceive at the same time, however, that our fire was very destructive to her.— The *Ticonderoga*, Lt. Commt. Cassin, gallantly sustained her full share of the Action.— At ½ past 10 the *Eagle*, not able to bring her Guns to bear, cut her Cable and anchor'd in a more eligible position, between my ship and the *Ticonderoga*, where

she very much annoyed the Enemy, but unfortunately leaving me exposed to the galling fire from the Enemy's Brig.—

Our Guns on the starboard side, being nearly all dismounted, or not manageable, a Stern anchor was let go, the bower Cable cut, and the ship winded with a fresh broadside on the Enemys Ship, which soon after surrendered.— Our broadside was then sprung to bear on the Brig, which surrendered in about fifteen minutes after.—

The Sloop that was opposed to the *Eagle* had struck some time before and drifted down the line—the Sloop which was with their Gallies having struck also.— Three of their Gallies are said to be sunk, the others pulled off.— Our Gallies were about obeying with alacrity the signal to follow them, when all the Vessels were reported to me to be in a sinking state—it then became necessary to annul the signal to the Gallies, and order their men now to the Pumps.—

I could only look at the Enemy's gallies going off in a shatter'd condition, for there was not a Mast in either squadron that could stand to make sail on; the lower rigging, being nearly all shot away, hung down as though it had been just placed over the mast heads.—

The *Saratoga* had Fifty five round Shot in her Hull—the *Confiance* One hundred & five.— The Enemy's shot passed principally just over our heads, as their were not 20 whole hammocks in the nettings at the close of the action, which lasted without intermission Two hours & twenty minutes.—

The absence and sickness of Lt. Raymond Perry left me without the services of that excellent Officer—much ought fairly to be attributed to him for his great care and attention in disciplining the Ships crew, as her first Lieutenant.— His place was filled by a gallant young Officer Lt. Peter Gamble,[1] who I regret to inform you, was killed early in the action.—

Acting Lt. Vallette worked the 1st. & 2nd. divisions of Guns with able effect.— Sailing Master Brum's[2] attention to the Springs, and in the execution of the order to Wind the Ship, and occasionally at the Guns, meets with my entire approbation,— also Capt. Youngs[3] comm'g the acting marines, who took his men to the Guns.—

Mr. Beale, Purser, was of great service at the Guns, and in carrying my Orders throughout the Ship, with midshipman Montgomery.[4]—

Master's Mate, Joshua Justin, had command of the 3rd division—his conduct during the action was that of a brave and correct Officer.— Midshipmen Monteath, Graham, Williamson, Platt, Thwing, and Act'g Mids: Baldwin, all behaved well, and gave evidence of their making valuable Officers.[5]

The *Saratoga* was twice set on fire by hot Shot from the Enemy's Ship.—

I close, Sir, this communication with feelings of gratitude for the able support I received from every officer and man attached to the Squadron which I have the honor to command.— I have the honor to be with great respect, Sir, Yr Mot. obt. St.

T. Macdonough

P.S. accompanying this is a list of Killed & wounded, a list of Prisoners & a precise statement of both forces engaged—Also letters from Capt Henly & Lt. Commt. Cassin.—

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 51 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Lieutenant Peter Gamble entered naval service 16 January 1809; promoted lieutenant 17 March 1814.
2. Sailing Master Philip Brum, warranted 15 February 1813.
3. Captain White Youngs, 15th Infantry U.S.A.; brevetted major 11 September 1814 for gallant conduct in the defense of Plattsburg.
4. Purser George Beale, commissioned 24 July 1813; and Midshipman Lawrence Montgomery, appointed 17 December 1810. After 1815 the latter appears as "Nathaniel" and "N. L. Montgomery" in the navy registers.
5. Mentioned were Master's Mate Joshua Justin, Midshipmen Walter N. Monteath, John H. Graham, Charles L. Williamson, Charles T. Platt, and Samuel Thwing, and Acting Midshipman James M. Baldwin.

Governor-General Sir George Prevost to Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army

Secret

Hd. Qrs. Montreal
16th Septr. 1814

Sir

By referring you to the accompanying General Order I shall spare myself a painful narrative of the disastrous event which befell the Lake Champlain Flotilla on the 11th. Int. off Platsburg and which arrested the promising career of the Left Division into the State of New York. My views were to establish the Army at Platsburg and to detach from thence a Brigade for the destruction of Vergennes & its Naval establishment. The melancholy fate of our Vessels blasted these intentions and compelled me to bring back the Troops nearer to their supplies.—

The impracticability of carrying on any operations without a sufficient Naval cooperation has caused me to turn the whole of my attention to Upper Canada in hopes to be enabled to inflict on the Enemy in that quarter the chastisement they so richly deserve.—

Sir James Yeo's report of the *St. Lawrence* having been launched in safety on the 10th. restores the hopes I have long cherished that Sackets Harbour, almost the only object now to be cared for, may be attacked with certain success provided the means & force we possess can be conveyed there— The impending blow must be struck the moment the Right Division has been relieved by the supplies which the Fleet is in the first instance to convey to it— My only apprehension is that by the time that service has been performed, the Season of the year may prove too unfavorable for so serious an undertaking—a design pregnant with such result, if successful cannot fail to fill the Enemy with despair & dismay & should be indefatigably followed up until accomplished I am well aware that Presquile is next in consideration to Sacketts Harbour but it presents great difficulties yet without the destruction of the Lake Erie Fleet, every Military operation within our reach is cramped & paralised but more of that when Sacketts Harbor falls.—

When I contemplate the first mentioned Service I cannot but indulge a hope that the expulsion of the Enemy from Fort Erie will add to the means of undertaking it.— The high military character which Major General Kemp[1] has brought with him induced me to entrust to him conjointly with Commodore Sir James Yeo the previous arrangements of an Expedition of so important a nature and as he shews talents fitting him for the task you will readily afford him your support.—

One great embarrassment still exists & that arises from the insufficiency of the Depôt of Provisions at Kingston & my inability to encrease it whilst the Navy continue to require so considerable a proportion of our means of Transport for the armament & equipment of the large Ship to which objects, all others have hitherto given way.— I have &c.

(Signed) George Prevost

LB, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 1222, pp. 194–96.

1. Major General James Kempt, British army, was ordered to Canada to command a brigade sent there from Bordeaux, France.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Thomas Macdonough

Thomas Macdonough Esqr.
Commanding the US Naval Force
on Lake Champlain Plattsburg.

Navy Department
Septemr. 19th. 1814.

Sir

The glorious victory you have achieved, having secured the tranquil and permanent command of the Lake, by the annihilation of the force of your adversary; you will with the utmost possible dispatch, detach from 250 to 300 of your best men including a proportion of petty officers, to Sacketts Harbour, by the same route that General Izard pursued.— One Commissioned Officer will be sufficient to accompany the detachment. Their early arrival at the Harbour, will be of the utmost importance to the service, and I am sure you will omit no effort to accomplish it. very respectfully, your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 184.

Moving Major General Izard's Army

Major General George Izard took command of the Right Division of the U.S. Army at Plattsburg in April 1814. On 2 August he received orders from Secretary of War Armstrong to march his army westward toward Sackets Harbor, either to attack Kingston in conjunction with the navy, or to reinforce Major General Brown's army on the Niagara peninsula. These poorly-timed orders left the New York border short on troops.

Major General Izard's army of some 4,000 men began its march on 29 August, arriving at Sackets Harbor on 17 September. Commodore Chauncey's fleet took on board some 3,000 men and transported them to the Genessee River, arriving 21 September. Izard assumed command on the Niagara peninsula and the armies were combined.[1]

1. Quimby, U.S. Army in the War of 1812, *pp. 602–8; Whitehorne,* While Washington Burned, *pp. 84–89.*

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 155. U.S. Ship *Superior* off Stoney Island
17th. September 1814.

Sir.

On the 11th. Inst. having the wind from the Northward and a fine breeze and a clear day, I detached the *Lady of the Lake* for the Harbour and beat (with the four ships) close in with Kingston, hove too and hoisted our Colours, the enemy shewed his colours and sprung his ships in line to receive us, but evinced no disposition to come out altho Superior.

We had a fine view of his works which appeared extensive, particularly the one on Sugar loaf Hill. The Town and Navy Yard appeared well defended with redoubts and Block Houses and the whole picketed in.

Their new ship[1] was launched and appeared to have her mizen mast in, but as her Hull was screened by some buildings on navy point, we could not discover the state of preparations she was in— I think however that in all probability that she will be ready for service about the first of October.

The wind which had been moderate during the 11th., that night and the following day increased to a severe gale attended with thick weather and heavy rains. The fleet in consequence was drove from its Station before Kingston into the Lake where we remained (most of the time under reefed foresail, and close reefed main topsail) until the 15 when it moderated and I was joined by the *Lady of the Lake* from Sackets Harbour with Major Brown[2] onboard bearing a letter from Major General Izard informing me of his arrival at that post.

I pressed upon the ships all the sail they could bear in order to gain an anchorage to communicate with General Izard to know his views and wishes. Owing however to the winds continuance from the Eastward I did not arrive at this anchorage before yesterday morning, and last evening I received the letter from General Izard marked No. 3. which has determined me to run into Sackets Harbour this morning to offer the General all the assistance in my power. Immediately on the reciept of the Generals Letter last evening I dispatched the *Lady of the Lake* to "Presque Isle" ordering captain Elliott to join me as soon as possible at the Harbor with the *Sylph* and *Conquest*.

I enclose herewith copies of the letters that have passed between General Izard and myself since I had the honor of addressing you last.

The Ships behaved uncommonly well in the late gale, they are stiff and very fine Sea Boats, and bore their mettle as well as any ships I have ever been in. I have the honor to be Very Respectfully Sir Your Most obed Hble servt.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 64 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. H.M.S. *Saint Lawrence*.
2. Major Samuel Brown, U.S.A., deputy quartermaster general.

[Enclosure]
Copy
No. 3. Sackets Harbour
Commodore Chauncey &c. &c. &c. September 16th. 1814

Sir,

Major Brown has just now delivered me your note of this date; I regret that mine of which he was the bearer, did not reach you twenty four Hours sooner, as I should then have been able to accept your obliging invitation to visit you on board of the fleet,— but the troops have this morning arrived, and my presence here is at present indespensable.

Until the last communication which has been made me by M Genl. Brown under date the 11 Inst., I was impressed with the belief that an expedition might be undertaken with Success to the Head of the Lake, which might embrace among other objects the attack of Fort Niagara. But it seems that he is very closely pressed by the enemy in his position and considers the arrival of my division to his relief as of the utmost importance. In this view it has become my duty to hasten to his assistance and to proceed with the least possible delay to Buffalo. The only doubt remaining is, whether the transportation of my force by water to the mouth of Genessee River, or some other point in that Vicinity will expedite my movement more than a continuance of my march by Land. In either case the train of the army must be sent to Onondago, as so many Horses cannot be conveyed in the vessels provided here.

The uncertainty as to the time of arrival, should we go by water, is balanced by the great fatigue incident to the Length & badness of the route. Permit me then to rest my division upon the answer to this Question, which I beg leave to propose to you Whether the naval means at your command are sufficient and prepared to take onboard 4,000 men on the morning of the 18: Instant (the day after tomorrow) and convey them to the mouth of Genessee River? If your opinion be in the affirmative, the troops will be ready for embarcation at Sun rise on that day— if it should be otherwise, we shall march to morrow afternoon or the following morning. Accept, Sir, the assurances of Respect & esteem with which I am your most obed & humble servt.

(signed) Geo Izard

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 64, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

[Enclosure]
Copy U.S. Ship *Superior* off Stoney Island
No. 4 Friday evening 16th. Sepr. 1814
Sir

I was this evening honored with your favour of this days date. and in answer to the question therein propounded "Whether the naval means at my command are Sufficient and prepared to take onboard 4,000 men on the morning of the 18th. Inst. and carry them to the mouth of Genessee river." I answer that the naval force under my command (and on this station) is not Sufficient to receive 4,000 men: but all the means that I have, shall be ready to receive as many

of your troops on the morning of the 18th. as we can accommodate and transport them to Genessee river or any other point on Lake Ontario that you may wish to land them at—probably the vessels that are at present in this vicinity could accommodate from 1500 to 2000 men—you will judge whether it is advisable to separate your force or not. at any rate I have ordered the vessels cruising off "Presque Isle" to rejoin me immediately and I shall run into the Harbor with this fleet tomorrow morning, and be prepared to afford you every assistance within my power. I have the honor to be with great consideration and respect Sir your most obedient Humble servant

signed Isaac Chauncey

Major Genl. George Izard
commdg. the troops &c. &c &c S. Harbor.

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 64, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 39).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 161. U.S. Ship *Superior* off Stoney Island
24th. Septr. 1814.—

Sir:

Owing to the Severity of the Storm we did not leave Sackets Harbor before the morning of the 21st. Inst., at the request of General Izard, I steered for the mouth of Genesee River, arrived there the next morning landed the Troops (3000) and Sailed that Evening, on my return, and Anchored here this morning. As soon as I can send the Gun Boats and small Craft (that we took up to land the Troops) to the Harbor, I shall resume my station off Kingston.

I left Lieut. Deacon in charge of the Schooners with orders to return to Sackets Harbor as soon as the Wind would allow him to get out of the River.—

The *Ontario* (which had been missing since the 12th. Inst.) I fell in with on my passage up the Lake, this Vessel had been sent to the Ducks with provisions for the Fleet, was drove out on the Lake by the Gale which commenced on the Morning of the 12th. Split her Sails, and drifted more than a hundred Miles up the Lake, however by the exertions of Midn. Evans[1] (who had charge of her) he got into Oswego a few hours before the second gale, on the 18th. commenced, there he repaired his Sails, and was on his return when I fell in with him.—

Mr. Evans together with his companions (six in number) deserve much credit, for their exertions in saveing this Vessel, during so severe a gale; he had previously lost his Anchors and Boat at the Ducks. I have the honor to be Very respectfully Sir Your most obdt. Hmble. Servt.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 95 (M125, Roll No. 39).

1. Midshipman John Evans, appointed 17 December 1810.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 167. U.S. Ship *Superior* off the Ducks,
1st. Octobr. 1814.

Sir,

On the 28th. Ult. at daylight we discovered two of the Enemy's ships standing out of Kingston under a press of Sail, as soon as they discovered us, they hove too, the Wind being fresh from the Northward and Eastward, and fair to leave Kingston, I was impressed with a belief that Sir James had got his large Ship ready, and that he was comeing out with his whole fleet. I immediately made Sail in order to gain the Wind, but as soon as we tacked for them, the Enemys Ships filled, made Sail on a Wind, and soon after tacked from us, the Weather being hazy it soon become so thick a fog, that we could not discover objects more than a hundred yards, I however continued to beat to Windward, and late in the afternoon it cleared up for a short time, when we discovered the Enemys two Ships outside of Nine mile point, but as soon as he discovered that we had neared him considerably and in a situation to cut him off from Kingston if he ventur'd farther out, he immediately made all Sail and beat in to his Anchorage.—

As no other part of the enemy's Squadron made their appearance and these two Ships from their Manouvers evidently wished to escape us, it struck me that the enemy had learnt the movement of General Izard up the Lake, and apprehending an attack upon General Drummon's Army (which probably also was distressed for provisions,) had induced him to put on board of these two Ships, Troops and provisions and risque them for the relief of his Army upon the Niagara frontier, the Wind and thick foggy weather also favor'd such a movement.— I determined to frustrate his design's if possible, soon after Sundown I anchor'd the Fleet between the Galooes and Grenedear Island, for the purpose of keeping them together, and put Lieutenant Skinner with an additional number of men on board of the *Lady of the Lake* with orders to Anchor between Pigeon and Snake Islands, and if he discovered any movement of the Enemy, to make me a Signal with rockets or guns of his number &cr. It continued a thick fog during the Night, the enemy made no movement, and the next morning (29th.) the Weather cleared up with the Wind to the Westward, Weighed with the fleet and stood in for Kingston untill we open'd the Town, sent the *Lady of the Lake* close in to reconnoitre and assertain the state of forwardness of the new Ship, Lieut. Skinner found her haul'd off in the Stream, and completely rigged, but Sails not bent, four other Ships and a large Schooner laying also in the Stream and apparently ready to Sail.—

From present appearances I have no doubt but the enemy will be on the Lake, with his whole force in the course of a Week, and I think his first movement will be against Sackets Harbor, because he cannot be ignorant of its present weakness, besides at this time, he must have a large disposeable force, and no doubt, will attempt to retrieve at Sackets Harbor, what he lost at Platsburgh. I hope however that he will meet with the same gallant resistance upon this Lake that he experienced on Lake Champlain. I have the honor to be Very respectfully Sir, Your most obdt. Hmble. Servt.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 6, No. 114 (M125, Roll No. 39).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 174 U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 12th. Octor. 1814—

Sir

The defences of this place are not such as they ought to be considering its importance—they have been placed without plan or connexion.—

General Gaines while here and Colonel Mitchel since the command devolved on him have done every thing to connect the Works on the Land Side that could be done with the limited means they possessed

Upon examination I find that I cannot moor the fleet in any situation where more than four Guns from the different batteries can be brought to bear upon the Enemy after he anchors Ship to Ship, but on his approach he will be exposed to the fire of nearly all the batteries which will greet him with hot Shot and I hope with effect— Col. Mitchil has very much improved Fort Tompkins on the West side where we have 5–32 Pounders mounted I am now adding a redoubt on the east side where I shall mount four heavy Guns which will rake the Enemy's line after he anchors.—

Fort Tompkins will be manned with Seamen and Marines under the command of Major Smith of the Marine Corps and I have no doubt will be defended to the last.—

The effective Troops left for the defence of this place consist of 330 artillery 460. Infantry (the latter principally recruits left in place of veterans) and about 2000 Militia which desert by companies General Collins[1] appears to be a good Officer and disposed to do every thing in his power to provide for the defence of this Post but it is out of his power to make Soldiers of Militia in the short space of a few Weeks.—

Sacketts Harbor I believe is admitted to be a place of considerable importance to the Nation, at this time particularly, as its fall involves the destruction of this fleet—why it has been left with so few regular troops with the knowledge of the enemy's intentions of attacking it both by Sea and Land is best known to the Generals whose duty it was to provide for its defence.—

The Officers and Men whom I have the honor to command will do their duty and they feel a confidence that if the place could be maintained that the Enemy's fleet would be repulsed and possibly distroyed but if the works are carried and the Guns from the Shore turned upon us even after the Enemy's fleet should be worsted, our's would be in no situation to get under weigh to avoid the fire from the Batteries on Shore and must therefore inevitably fall.—

I do not wish to be thought an alarmist but conceive it to be my duty to acquaint you with the true situation of this place that you may make such application to the Secretary at War for reinforcements as in your judgement would be right and proper— it would be improper in me to make any pledge in advance but I think I should be safe in assuring you that the fleet of Ontario will be defended in such a manner as will satisfy the Department I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, Yr. mo. ob. st.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 28 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. Brigadier General Oliver Collins, 13th Brigade of Infantry, New York Militia.

Secretary of War Monroe to Major General George Izard, U.S.A.

War Department, October 24th. 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 16th. of this month.

It appears doubtful by it whether you will be able to force the Enemy from his present position, so as to make any farther impression on him before the Campaign closes,— and as Commodore Chauncy is not a match for the Enemy on the Lakes, and the successes heretofore gained on the strait and the pressure now made on General Drummond may draw there, Sir George Prevost, in great force, to his aid, it becomes an object to look to your own safety, and that of the Country Westward of you, more especially the post of Detroit. Equally important is it, to look to the safety of Sacketts Harbour which seems to be eminently exposed by the ascendency which the Enemy have gained on the Lake by its own weakness, the great force which the Enemy either have or may soon have at Kingston—and your distance from it, with the main Army of the United States.

Heretofore I thought it most advisable as I remarked to you in my letter to suffer the movement which had been given by my predecessor to go on, and to strengthen the posts which were most exposed in consequence of it.

The Governor of New York was called on for such aids in militia as would secure Plattsburg, Sacketts harbor and Fort Erie; not knowing as you depended on the Flotilla for your Conveyance up the Lake, when you might arrive at the point of your destination, General McArthur was instructed to send a detachment of One thousand regular troops from Detroit to its aid, and not wishing to press too much on the militia of New York, the Governor of Vermont was requested to send a strong detachment of the militia of that State to Plattsburg— I was happy to find that these views had been anticipated in a great measure by the Governors of those States, and to receive assurances from them of their continued exertions in support of our Operations in those quarters.

If it should be practicable to demolish the Army before you, it would certainly be a happy event—the good effects of it would be felt thro' the whole northern and Western frontier, along the Coast, and in Europe.—

It is impossible at this distance to give an Opinion of the propriety of such an attempt. The President entertains full Confidence in your Judgment that you will omit nothing justified by a well founded prospect of success nor attempt any thing attended with great risk—always recollecting that the preservation of the Troops we now have is important, not only for the protection of our frontier thro' the Winter but as a School of instruction and a model for the much greater Army which it is contemplated to raise.

As soon as the Enemy perceives that your Offensive operations are suspended on the strait; should that be the case and General Drummond secure, he will probably attempt Sacketts Harbour—if not previously— that post is deplorably weak— Its importance is well known to you— It constitutes in a manner the principal Head Quarters of our northern frontier— I have to request on the receipt of this letter in case the state of affairs on the strait will permit it that you either repair thither in person or detach General Brown to take the Command as you may deem most expedient. The great interest depending there, and the critical posture of affairs, admits of no delay in providing for the Safety of that post which it is thought will best be done by either you or General Brown taking immediate charge of it.

The next distant object to be attended to, is Detroit— It was expected that the regular troops brought thence lately to Erie would be sent back before the

winter set in— It is apprehended that, that post will be exposed to much danger in the course of the Winter, not from the Indians only but from more serious expectations, consisting of regular troops set on foot from below— How far this may be practicable regarding the position which we may hold on the Strait during the Winter and other circumstances on which movements from below must depend, you will best be able to judge— If the 1,000 men can be spared with Safety, to other objects—the President prefers that they be sent back to Detroit— he leaves this however to your Judgment.

You will apprize General McArthur of your decision as soon as taken, whether it be to detain or send them back.

LB, DNA, RG107, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, Vol. 7, pp. 388–90 (M6, Roll No. 7).

A Shipbuilder's War

The launching of H.M.S. Saint Lawrence *on 10 September 1814 changed the scope of operations on Lake Ontario. That vessel, a first-rate ship of the line, 194 feet on the gun deck, pierced for 102 guns in three tiers, escalated the shipbuilding contest on that inland sea.*

Commodore Chauncey would argue for building three 80-gun ships of the line during the winter of 1814–15 to match the strength of Saint Lawrence. *A continuation of the war on that scale, however, would bankrupt the public treasury and require enormous numbers of seamen that were no longer available through illness, deaths in service, or their recruitment by the army or privateers. Additional shipbuilding on Lake Ontario would mean taking men and supplies from the eastern seaboard and from ocean-going vessels, actions that would result in a political and public outcry.*

The low state of public finance in the United States, and the realization that the numbers of seamen who could actually be recruited were limited, forced Secretary of the Navy Jones to weigh other alternatives. One proposal that had to be considered was simply to abandon Lake Ontario and rely on cutting off the British supply line above Montreal. Another proposal was the construction of three floating steam batteries on the plan of Fulton the First, *which was nearing completion at New York. Despite the navy secretary's belief that a continuation of the shipbuilder's war on Lake Ontario was strategically and financially unsound, President Madison ordered the construction of the new ships of the line for that station to proceed.*[1]

1. Brant, James Madison, *Vol. 6, pp. 345–46.*

COMMODORE SIR JAMES L. YEO, R.N., TO
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY JOHN W. CROKER

No. 34 H.M.S. *Saint Lawrence*
Kingston 14th. October 1814

Sir

My letter to you No. 26, will have informed Their Lordships of the Safe Launch of this Ship—which, I have now the satisfaction of reporting, Completely Equipped—And will proceed up the Lake tomorrow— The Enemy's



Squadron of Ten sail are now off Sackett's, and whether They will engage, or not, is uncertain: If They do—I have reason to hope, a Complete Victory—as I think it impossible, any of Their Vessels can withstand the fire of this Ship—Should They seek shelter under Their Batteries, I have the satisfaction of having (by means of this Ship) gained the Superiority of the Lake

I am most anxious for Their Lordships' approval of my Conduct, in Building so large a Ship, without Their previous instructions, which, it was impossible to receive, in time,— I therefore have acted to the best of my Judgement, for the good of the Service;— and am convinced in my own mind, that nothing less, would have obtained the most important object, that, of the Naval Superiority on Lake Ontario—

It is impossible to describe the prodigious labour, and difficulty, we have had in Equipping this Ship;— from having to get all our supplies, from Quebec, and Montreal;— to give Their Lordships some idea of the Navigation of the River, between This, and Montreal I need only mention, the time which it took, to bring up the frame of the Frigate, B, which only arrived the end of September, having been, upwards of Three Months, from that Place—

I would strongly recommend all Stores and Supplies, which may be sent, for the Naval Service of the Lakes, being Shipped in Vessels of a light draught of water, (say 12 feet) which would enable them to come up to Montreal, and remove the Necessity of keeping any Stores, or Establishment, at Quebec,— In the Spring of the Year, when the first Convoys arrive, the Wind is always to the Eastward, and Vessels can run up to Montreal in a few hours,— without waiting at Quebec,— whereas, if They have to unload at the latter place, and ship the Stores in small craft, it causes such delay that the Wind sets in from the Westward—and They frequently are Two Months reaching Montreal—

I have also to inform Their Lordships, that I am making Arrangements for building a Ship of 24. or 26 Guns, on Lake Huron, which, with the Two Schooners lately captured by Lieutenant Worsley, and a few Gun Boats, will ensure the Naval Ascendancy in that Quarter.— As to Lake Erie, in the present state of the war, it would be impossible to establish a Naval Force on that Lake,— nor is it, in my opinion, near so important as Lake Huron—on account of the Indians.

I am sorry to say, we have suffered severely by Sickness, chiefly Dysentery, few have escaped an Attack—and the Mortality has been very great— I have, for this reason, been obliged to detain a greater Number of Marines, to enable me to man the Ships—

I particularly request, that any Seamen, Their Lordships may send to this Country in the Spring, may be Strong and hale Men, as none others can stand the extraordinary, and constant change of Climate, peculiar to this Country—

I am happy to say, Nothing can exceed the Zeal, and good Conduct, of the Seamen and Marines—it has been a source of great comfort to me, and I feel infinitely obliged to the Captains and Officers, for the Pains they have taken to keep Their Crews in such Excellent subordination.—

Captain Hall[1] has arrived, and I expect him here, hourly;

Their Lordships will have heard of the Capture of the *Stranger* Transport, with Ordnance and Naval Stores,[2]— but which, I am happy to say, I shall not feel the loss of, this Year—

To guard against Accidents, I have applied to Captain Upton[3] of the *Junon* for his Main Deck Guns—

I have the honor to Enclose a Statement of the Number of Seamen, which will be required to be sent from England, in the Spring, for the service of the Lakes—Also the Dimensions of His Majesty's Ship *Saint Lawrence*. I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo
Commodore and Commander in Chief

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/2737, fols. 221–23. In his first enclosure (fol. 225), Yeo requested a total of 868 seamen for service on the lakes in 1815, 310 for service on Lake Huron, 250 for "Frigate B" building at Kingston, and 300 to replace men from the *Junon* and transports who were temporarily serving on Lake Ontario. The second enclosure (fol. 226) gave dimensions for H.M.S. *St. Lawrence*, which was 194 feet on the gun deck, 171'6" keel, 52'5" breadth, and 11'6" depth. She weighed 2304 tons burthen with a draught of 12' afore and 15' abaft, and carried 102 guns on three decks.

1. Captain Sir Robert Hall, R.N.
2. H.M. transport *Stranger*, carrying ordnance for the northern lakes, was captured by the Portsmouth, N.H., privateer *Fox*, Samuel H. Handy, on 8 September.
3. Captain Clotworthy Upton, R.N.

Governor-General Sir George Prevost to Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst

No. 200 Kingston 18th. October 1814

My Lord

The American Government having availed itself of the Naval Ascendancy it possessed on Lake Ontario and on Lake Erie to bring from Sacketts Harbour and Detroit on board its vessels considerable reinforcements and extensive supplies to Major Genl. Browns Army occupying Buffaloe and Fort Erie Lieut. Genl. Drummond's situation with scanty resources for the support of a Force reduced by Sickness and contests was becoming daily more critical.— The State of the Roads from hence to York being represented as impracticable for that movement of any considerable number of men or any adequate quantity of Provisions— I had nothing to hope for the Lieut. Genl's. relief but from the exertions of Sir James Yeo.— On the 12th. Inst. a reconnoissance pushed into the neighbourhood of Sacketts Harbour returned with intelligence that Commodore Chauncey's Ships were anchored under the Batteries indicating a disposition on his part to await there the result of the Superiority we had just obtained and in the event of an attack cooperate in the defence of the place,— In consequence Sir Jas. Yeo with difficulty consented to receive on board his Vessels*[1] a Wing of the 90th. Regt. in addition to a small proportion of Ordnance stores and Provisions and Sailed from hence for Niagara on the 16th. Inst. leaving with me the assurance that he would return as soon as possible with as many of the Sick and disabled of the Right Division as were in a situation to be removed

and convey another and much more ample supply of Provisions Stores and Men previous to the closing of the Navigation

I have contemplated the Measures of the Aministration at Washington as originating in precaution against the effects to be produced by the Naval Ascendancy we were expected to acquire on Lake Ontario at an earlier period of the Year than has been the case— That the American Generals prompted by Confidence in their numerical Superiority and aware of my inability to reinforce the Right Division until our Squadron should take the Lake, may be induced to attack Lieut. Genl. Drummond at this moment, is in the opinion of that officer probable and he has made his dispositions accordingly with confidence that his Troops will in the event deserve the applause of their King and Country.—

An investigation of the state of the Stores at this post proved that the articles for the armament and equipment of a ship of the Class of the *St. Lawrence* carrying upwards of 100 Guns had absorbed almost the whole of the Summer Transport Service from Montreal leaving the Materials for an undertaking of the magnitude of the Destruction of Sacketts Harbour still at the extremity of the Line of Communication and more by giving precedence to that supply of provisions and Stores without which an Army is no longer to be maintained in Upper Canada its removal is inevitably postponed until the Winter Roads are Established.—

Your Lordship has been long aware how unavoidably Military operations in this Country are combined with Naval Cooperation and unconditionally dependent upon it this conviction has excited a Struggle for ascendancy on the Water that has drawn forth on both sides a formidable array of Vessels that could never have been anticipated on these inland Seas, and the Naval Commanders have I am afraid in consequence been led to consider themselves as directing Squadrons which by a trial of strength were to decide the fate of the War forgetting their necessary Identity with the Land Force for the general prosperity of the Common cause.—[2]

Thus instead of that zealous, prompt, & cheerful cooperation so essential to the movement and very existence of H M's Troops on this widely extended frontier, every demand for the Transport either of Men or Stores, is considered as hampering the powers of the Fleet and endangering its safety.

As a partial remedy to this evil I beg leave to Suggest to your Lordship the expediency of a Transport Establishment on a Moderate Scale calculated to meet the ordinary demand for Conveyance which the Army may require by the Construction of a Sufficient number of small Vessels in the Dock Yard at Kingston to be manned by Seamen from the Fleet and placed in charge of an officer of the Navy as Agent of Transport, and I entreat that the necessary instructions may be given to the Commodore and Commander in Chief on the Lakes to carry this object into effect.— I have &c

(Signed) Geo: Prevost

LB, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 1219, pp. 307–10.

1. Notation in the margin:

St. Lawrence—	110	Guns
Prince Regent—	58	—
Prince Charlotte	42	—
Montreal—	23	—
Niagara—	21	—
Charwell—	14	at York or Niagara
Star—	14	at York or Niagara
Magnet—	12	at York or Niagara
Netley—Burnt to avoid Capture	10	
	304	

2. Notation in the margin (note that the actual number of guns adds up to 231):

		Guns
Ships—	*Superior*—	60
	Mohawk	44
	Pike—	28
	Madison	24
Brigs—	*Jefferson*—	22
	Jones—	22
	Sylph—	16
	Oneida—	14
Schr	*Lady of the Lake*	1
		230

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding US Naval Force
on Lake Ontario, Sacketts Harbour

Navy Department
October 24, 1814.

Sir

The probable result of the Campaign on Lake Ontario demands the immediate decision of the Executive, upon the measures proper to be pursued in anticipation of the ensuing Campaign, and the prompt execution of the preparatory steps for constructing and completing for actual service by the time the Lake shall become navigable, a naval force decidedly superior to that of the enemy, including the accumulation of force which he may prepare during the interval.—

With the most perfect reliance upon your Skill, judgement, and patriotism, it is wished to derive information from your experience and observation upon the following points.—

1st. It is contemplated to build three Ships of the Line, of the following dimensions, Vizt.

190 feet between the perpendiculars—

52 feet moulded beam and of such depth as the harbour may admit, to have three flush gun decks, the lower battery 30 long 32 Pounders, the second bat-

tery 32, 24 Pounders and the spar deck battery 32 light 18s. or a mixed battery of long guns and heavy Carronades, as may be most conveniently procured.—

2d. Have you space, depth of Water, and foundation for the Slips proper to sustain and launch Ships of such magnitude, so that the whole may progress together?—

3d. Can all the materials of wood be procured with facility, and with the requisite despatch, and what other materials are there which may be procured in the vicinity so as to avoid the heavy and dilatory transportation from the Hudson? This question embraces every thing which may be applicable, to the building, equipping and arming, including heavy ordnance stores, kentledge &c.—

4th. What number of mechanics of the several branches, and what work shops, implements and machinery will be required for the purpose, at Sacketts Harbour?—

5th. Will it not be better to transport the yarns, and erect rope works on the spot, to lay the Cables and heavy rigging?—

6th. What part of the equipment will it be necessary to manufacture or construct in the Atlantic Ports?—

7th. An estimate is required of all the heavy materials which it may be necessary to transport from the Hudson, while the navigation of the Mohawk is open.—

8th. An estimate is required, of all the materials, implements and articles, which it may be necessary to procure in the Atlantic Ports for the complete equipment of those Ships for service.—

You will please add such other information, as your experience may suggest, and point out the obstacles which present themselves, and the means of obviating them. In short the result of your deliberate Judgement, upon the nature, extent, execution and probable ability or incompetency of the force proposed is desired.—

The Guns will be put in motion immediately, they are to be transported from this place, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, and probably from the Lake Champlain and New London.— For your information, I will enclose, by tomorrow's mail, a copy of my letter to Mr. Anderson, relative to the transportation, with which he is charged, and generally to the object in contemplation.

A few days will determine whether the plan shall be carried into execution upon the Scale proposed or suspended.—

In the mean while, no time will be lost, as the heavy transportation will commence.— If in the affirmative, the whole force, both of Mr. Eckford and Messrs. Browns the builders will be put in requisition.—

You will please to transmit as soon as possible, your general view of the subject, and of the measures necessary to be put instantly in operation. If you deem it impracticable to complete in due time, the full extent of the force proposed, you will please say to what extent, it may in your judgement be carried with certainty in due time, and also your opinion of the means and capacity of the enemy to augment his force during the same period, and what steps may be taken on our part to counteract his measures and impede his resources.— I am respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 188–90.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to President James Madison

Navy Department
Octor. 26. 1814

Dear Sir

In obedience to your instructions to take the preparatory steps for increasing our Naval force on Lake Ontario to an extent which shall command the superiority on that Lake at the opening of the spring campaign of 1815, I wrote to Commodore Chauncey and to Samuel T Anderson Esqr. agent for the transportation of stores, the letters of which the annexed are copies; the originals went by the mail of this morning.

Mr. Anderson will instantly set about the work of transportation with the greatest activity provided I shall be enabled to make good my promise to place the necessary funds at his disposal, of which however I see no immediate prospect.

Without funds not a gun can be moved and the magnitude of the undertaking does not admit of a days delay. The contemplated increase of force is three ships to rate 80 guns but to mount as follows, viz.

30 long 32 Pounders
32. do. 24. do
16. do. 18. do
16.... 42. Pd. Carronades.
94 Guns and 800 men each.

This augmentation is predicated upon the relative force of the adverse Squadrons at this time and the countervailing increase which the enemy may be expected to create during the same period of time; and it is believed that less would be doing worse than nothing.

The enemy has now one Ship of 104 Guns, the frames of two frigates which are probably now building, and he will doubtless lay the keel of another first rate and probably of two, the instant he discovers our preparations. Whatever may be my apprehensions and views upon this subject, your commands will always find a cheerful and ready obedience with every exertion on my part to ensure a prompt vigorous and efficient execution.

As the Naval contest on Lake Ontario has become a warfare of Dockyards and arsenals it may be well to examine with candour the relative capacity, resources, and facilities, of the combatants to attain their respective objects within the time limited. Nothing can be more obvious to reflecting practical professional men than the sanguine and extravagant ideas & expectations of the public in relation to our internal naval power and resources—and nothing can be more fallacious.

We seem to forget that we are at War with the most potent Naval power in the world, whose depots and workshops are full of all kinds of munitions and equipments which he may transport without interruption from the ocean to Lake Ontario, in less time and at one fourth of the expense that we can transport similar stores from Washington to New York.

He has nothing to construct at Kingston but the bare Hulls of his ships for which he has abundance of materials and workmen at his command and we have evidence that he can with facility procure both from our own territory.

He has paid off and discharged a great many seamen and has a superfluous number of ships of the line on the American Station, three or four of which he may at any time dismantle without inconvenience and send their stores and crews to Lake Ontario. If we have hitherto maintained a vacillating superiority on Lake Ontario by the greatest exertions and most vigorous application of narrow means that has ever been witnessed, we ought not to delude ourselves with the belief that these can be extended indefinitely, or we may perchance find their limitation in disaster and useless expenditure.

There is a point beyond which it will be admitted we cannot proceed, and we know that our enemy may create as many ships of the line on lake Ontario as his policy shall require, and so long as we shall maintain the competition he will have the strongest motive to persevere because by so doing he must ultimately and soon lock up all our disposable seamen, and thus free his commerce from depredation on the ocean, his flag from further humiliation, and expose our maritime frontier to incalculable vexation and pillage in consequence of the absence of our seamen on the Lakes

With the contemplated increase of force on Lake Ontario we shall require for the Naval service on all the Lakes for the year 1815 about seven thousand men. My experience and observation particularly within the current year, enable me to say without doubt, that the U. States cannot calculate upon more than 12000 men in the aggregate for the Naval service including the flotilla and the Lakes.

We have at no time been able to reach that number and no rational estimate can be founded on the recruiting service for any definite period, force, or object.

Out of eight ships of the Navy which were ready or nearly ready for service in the Atlantic ports during the current year, we were compelled to transfer to the Lakes the entire crews of four—to draught part of the crews of three, and to lay up six in ordinary after dismantling three of them and sending their armament to the Lakes.

Heavy draughts of men were also made from the flotilla for the Lake service and all this while Rendezvous were open in all quarters, and in the most promising situations, exclusively for the Lake service, with an increase of 25 per Cent to the pay and 33⅓ per Cent to the ordinary bounty

The Lake service is one of peculiar privation, destitute of pecuniary stimulus, and unpopular both with the officers and men. Indeed our recruiting prospects are very discouraging in all quarters from our inability to pay not only those who are in service but those whose time have expired and have two or three months pay due to them.

It ought not to be forgotten that the services of our seamen are entirely voluntary and for which there is no substitute upon any pressing emergency as of militia for regulars; moreover our stock of seamen is fast diminishing by the casualties of War and the diseases incident to the service, particularly on the Lakes and in the flotilla service in open boats, exposed to the exhalations of marshes and the intense heat of our southern climate—by capture and remote imprisonment probably during the War—by enlistments in the Army—by the encouragement given in our manufactories to those who have families and are averse to the privations and dangers of War—by the domestic habits of a considerable

portion of our eastern Seamen who cultivate their little fields and by an ingenuity and industry peculiar to themselves sustain in comfort their families until the storm shall subside, and lastly as it respects the public service, by the preference given to that of the private in which they manage to acquire prize money, the greatest of all temptations to a seaman.

To all these may be added the entire suspension of our commerce fisheries and coasting trade, and the seductions of foreign employment free from the perils of war and the horrors of a British prison.

I have said that the aggregate Naval force in officers and men will not exceed twelve thousand from which deduct Seven thousand for the service on all the Lakes, will leave only five thousand for the defence of our Waters and Harbours from Louisiana to Maine and for service at Sea including ineffectives and captives.

Our present force may be estimated as follows—

Maritime frontier Viz		
Louisiana	526	
Georgia	259	
South Carolina	398	
North Carolina	197	
Norfolk	696	
Baltimore	800	
Delaware River	702	
New York	1309	
New London	300	
Rhode Island	189	
Boston	636	
Portsmouth	500	
Officers and men. total	6512	
On the Lakes Viz		
Champlain	500	
Ontario	2300	
Erie	450	3250.
At Sea Viz		
Ship *Peacock*	160	
" *Wasp*	160	
Brig *Siren*	130	450
In Prison Viz		
Crew of the *Argus*	130	
do. .... *Frolic*	165	
do. .... *Rattlesnake*	110	405
Officers & men in Service total*[1]		10617

With this distribution of force out of an aggregate of 10617. Officers and men we have 450 on the Ocean! 3250—on the Lakes—and 6512. employed in harbour defence, which latter includes four frigates and one Sloop of War ready for sea Viz the *Constitution* at Boston, the *President* at New York—the *Constellation* at Norfolk—the *Guerriere* on the Delaware and the Sloop *Hornet* at New London—

Nevertheless complaints are made from all quarters and in some cases by men high in authority of neglect and want of Naval protection—yet an increase of force on the Ocean is strongly urged by public writers and by the Legislature also as far as can be collected from the Committees and from individual members.

The species of force called for is undoubtedly well calculated to annoy the enemy and in order to meet the wishes which have been expressed on this subject by the President and in accordance with my ardent desire to employ every possible mean of annoyance against the enemy I have recommended an appropriation to cover the expenditure for about twenty Schooners.

These no doubt will be expected to be at Sea in the course of Six weeks, but it must be recollected that they will require about 2000. men!

Are our resources in Seamen and the inducements to hard fighting and destroying all captures such as to warrant the expectation?

If we transfer the men from the Lakes or from harbour defence are we to rely upon the precarious contingency of their return in the Spring for internal defence? Or are we to find our harbours and rich cities without protection and then hear the thunder of denunciation from all quarters for stripping those places of their local defence and exposing them a prey to a ruthless enemy? These are embarrassing alternatives and yet there appears to be none other.

It will be remarked that out of our whole force we have but three small Vessels on the Ocean which to be sure are well employed and serve to enliven the spirit of the nation by the fame of their exploits. The difference between the Lake and the sea service is that in the former we are compelled to fight them at least man to man and gun to gun whilst on the Ocean five British frigates cannot counteract the depredations of one Sloop of War.

The details in the letter to Mr. Anderson and the queries put to Commodore Chauncey will show the magnitude of the undertaking and some of the difficulties attending its execution. Ships of 90 Guns are enormous engines. The dimensions and weight of all the materials and machinery of Ships of War increase nearly in the ratio of the squares of their capacities and it is scarcely to be believed that we can construct equip and fit in six months three such ships in a wilderness to which every thing but the rough timber must be transported from the seaboard, when at Charlestown, Massachusetts under the most favorable circumstances it required fourteen months to build and launch the *Independence* seventy four Gun Ship.

The same details will show that we have the necessary ordnance, but it will be by dismantling some of our ships, and appropriating to this use the Guns intended for the two Seventy fours at Portsmouth and Charlestown which are now ready to receive them.

All the materials and stores mentioned in the details to Mr. Anderson are to be purchased with money and transported immediately. For this purpose an immediate appropriation of twelve hundred thousand dollars will be indispensable.

To construct a smaller force would in my opinion be useless and having reflected deeply and anxiously upon the subject it is my deliberate judgement that the force proposed cannot be constructed and equipped for service in due time, and that it would not be possible to man the fleet on Lake Ontario without withdrawing from the Ocean entirely, and draughting from the harbour defence to such an extent as would be altogether inadmissible; and finally that the project ought to be abandoned and the seamen brought into active service in defending our harbours and flourishing cities, and in pursuing and destroying the commerce of the enemy upon the Ocean and upon his own shores. The fact is that unless we estimate some given number as the maximum of seamen which the United States can command for the naval service we shall always be liable to fall into error and disappointments.

The estimate will be better founded upon the data derived from the experience of two years and a half of prosperous and popular service than from statistical tables or speculative reasoning to show our capacity to sweep the enemy from the Lakes, drive him from our Waters, and harrass and destroy his commerce on the Ocean with a powerful flotilla requiring some thousands of men. It is remarkable that we invariably look to our capacity to build ships and vessels and lose sight of our resources in volunteer seamen and of our means of procuring them.

But it is proposed to abandon Lake Ontario! Let us examine the intrinsic importance of the Naval superiority on that Lake without reference to the interest and excitement which the ardour and display of the contest has produced. My own opinion always has been that it was greatly overrated and my settled belief now is that further sacrifices in the struggle would be incompatible with the public interest. It has often been said (and in the Cabinet too) always admitted, but never reduced to practice, that a position taken near St. Regis at the head of Lake St. Francis on the St. Laurence, well fortified and held with a strong force, would effectually cut off all transportation either of troops or stores from below. Of what consequence then would the Naval Command of Lake Ontario be to the enemy.

If this position were taken and maintained (and it is surely practicable, or it would prove that we are neither competent to invade Canada or to repel invasion) the enemy must of consequence abandon all the country above, together with this fleet and concentrate his forces for the defence of Montreal and the country below our northern frontier. If the Isle Aux Noix cannot be taken, is it not practicable to seize upon and maintain St. Johns or some point on the River Sorrel so as to cut off the communication with Isle Aux Noix?

I have never been able to discover any possible good to be derived from the contest on the Niagara. It has been emphatically styled "taking the Bull by the horns" and with great propriety.

The late Secretary of War in a letter to the President dated 22 July 1813 which formed the basis of the military operations under Gen Wilkinson says when urging the necessity of concentrating our forces with a view to some decisive object.

> "If at Fort George our utmost success can but give us the command of the Peninsula which if Gen Harrison succeed against Malden will be of diminished interest both to us and to the enemy:—to us because Malden will more completely cover our Western frontier and controul the Savages than forts George & Erie—to the enemy because Malden lost, our inroad upon the Peninsula will but have the effect of shortning not of dividing the ene-

mys line of operations. In a word Success at this point will not give to the Campaign a character of decisive advantage."

Again in his letter of the 8th Augt. 1813. to Gen Wilkinson speaking of the indirect attack upon Kingston which contemplated taking and fortifying a position on the St. Laurence opposite Hamilton for the purpose of "obstructing him of his communications and thus drying up the sources by which he is nourished and maintained." he endeavours to demonstrate the impolicy of carrying the War to the Westward of Kingston and if that place shall be invulnerable to show the policy of the indirect attack by seizing a point below and cutting off the communication by which he received his supplies. If his reasoning was just when we had possession of forts George and Niagara and of the whole Niagara frontier how much more forcable was it when these posts rendered more formidable, and that frontier, were in possession of the enemy with a force superior to that under General Brown, and Lake Erie Detroit and Malden in our quiet possession.

Desperate and successful courage however may sanctify any plan, for the exaltations of victory preclude the cold retrospect of wisdom.

I presume the Ohio Kentucky and Penna. Militia are competent to defend Detroit and Erie, and the New York volunteers and Militia with a small body of regulars would protect the Niagara frontier. The efforts of the enemy would thus be neutralized in that quarter while the Army under Generals Izard Brown and Macomb, with an adequate force of Militia from New York and Vermont would seize upon the designated points on the St. Laurence & Sorrel Rivers and connect these points by a strong chain of posts forming a complete frontier barrier.

It is but forty miles from Plattsburg to St. Johns and from either place to St. Regis it is but 65 or 70 miles thus enabling the two divisions speedily to concentrate and receive supplies and reinforcements from Plattsburg. The division on the St. Laurence from the rapidity and facility with which it could descend to Montreal would keep the Garrison of that place in constant check and prevent large detachments from that place going to the relief of the posts on the Sorrel. Part of the guns of the Squadron at Sacketts Harbour might be transported to form the Battery at or near St. Regis and it appears to me that our great effort should be during the Winter Campaign while the Snow is hard and the weather settled. We surely can command numbers and means sufficient to execute these designs with energy and effect. If we cannot it will be in vain to attack him in his strong holds or to attempt to regain the command on Lake Ontario. The anxiety I feel on this subject though my participation in the responsibility will soon cease will I trust plead my apology for troubling you with these imperfect speculations. With sincere regard and great respect I am Sir your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

ALS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1 (Roll No. 16).

1. Notation in the margin reads "Exclusive of the Stationary Marine Guards at Portsmouth NH Baltimore Washington and New Orleans."

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 193— U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor. 5th. Novemr. 1814

Sir

In answer to the several interrogatories propounded to me in your Letter of the 24th ulto I have the honor to reply.

1st. That the dimensions of the three Ships proposed to be built are such as must be approved—their capacity will be equal to Ships of the first class— I would therefore suggest the propriety of mounting Two more Guns on each Deck which they would bear with great ease— The *Superior* can mount 32 Long 32 Pdrs. on her Gun Deck— Carronades would be preferable to Long Guns on the Spare Deck if they can be procured.—

2d. We have depth of Water and foundation sufficient to launch Ships of any size and space to build three Ships at the same time of the largest Class.—

3d. We can procure in this vicinity all the Materials of Wood and in time I think to complete Two of the Ships at least if not three—and all the Charcoal requisite for the Smiths— About 400 Tons of Shot or Kentledge might probably be obtained from the Furnaces of Onondaga and Rome and 100 Tons more perhaps from all the other small Furnaces in the neighborhood of Utica— The other articles used in building equipping and arming cannot be had nearer than at Albany and very few even there— I understand that the War Department has a large quantity of Shot at Onondaga and Vergennes furnaces if such parts of it could be borrowed as would answer our purposes it would very much facilitate our operations because it could be sent from those deposits in the Winter

4th.— There will be required to build the Three Ships contemplated—600 Ship Carpenters—60 Ship Joiners—60 Pair or 120 Sawyers—75. Blacksmiths—25. Block and Pump Makers.—10 Boat-builders. 10. Spar Makers.—15 Carriage Makers.—10 Armorers and 5. Tinmen— It will also be necessary to build 2 Blacksmiths Shops with Six fires each.—1. Joiners Shop 1 Block Makers Shop 1 Boat-builders Shed, 1 Armorer and Tinmen Shop—1 Powder Magazine—2 Wharves to launch over—1 Rope-Walk with all the Machinery required to lay a Cable of 24. Inches.—

The Quantity of Tools and Machinery required in the various Departments would be better regulated by the Heads of the different branches that are to be employed here.

5th. I think it will be better to transport the Yarns and erect Rope-Walks here for the purpose of laying the Cables and Standing Rigging.—

6th.— It will be necessary to manufacture in the Atlantic Ports all the running Rigging Seizing Stuff—White Lines Marline Spun Yarn &c. &c. all Cogs and Pins for Blocks Anchors—Rudder Pintles and Braces, Iron Tillers Fids Hawse and Scupper Leads, Pump Chambers Galleys Bells, Cannon Locks, Powder Horns Match Rope, Magazine Signal and Battle Lanthorns, Rocketts Port-Fires Blue Lights &c. &c. Canvass Twine and Bolt Rope and whatever Shot and Kentledge cannot be furnished in this vicinity—bolt and bar Iron Spikes Nails and all the Tools which will be required in the various Departments

7th. & 8th.— Are both answered in estimates A & B which will be forwarded immediately

As soon as it is determined to build here Mr Eckford should be sent with about 100 Carpenters to cut and prepare the necessary Timber—he should be dispatched immediately to enable him especially to make his Contracts before it shall be known to what extent it is intended building—for all classes of People here take every possible advantage of the Government and its Agents.—

It is also very important that all heavy Articles weighing One Ton and upwards should reach Albany before the Hudson closes—that accomplished there will be no difficulty in sending the Ordnance and Stores to this place by Land before the Roads break up, which I am confident is the best mode, both for dispatch and oeconomy— The trouble and expence of loading and unloading the boats will more than counter-balance the difference in the price of such transportation from Schenectady. The Roads from the 15th. of December to the 15th. of February are generally good— The Farmers at that Season take their Produce to Albany and as they are anxious for a return Load—transportation may then be obtained with facility and at low Prices—not so between Albany and New York—there the Roads are generally bad and the means of transportation difficult to be obtained.—

The Force proposed to be built is, in my estimation, ample for all the purposes wished or intended by the Government.—

Two Ships of the Line of 90 or 100 Guns can certainly be built and prepared for Service by the 15th. of May and I should say three, but for the difficulty which I apprehend will be found in procuring Timber of sufficient dementions for Vessels of so large a class—but as there will be unavoidably in so great a collection of Timber a large quantity which cannot be worked into the Line of battle Ships, but will answer for a smaller one— I am confident that a Frigate might also be built and in readiness at the same time.—

If we can prepare three Ships of the Line by the middle of May it will give us decidedly the superiority on the Lake and I think that Two Ships of the Class proposed and a Frigate added to our present Force would be superior to any thing that the Enemy could produce in the same time.—

From the best information I can collect the Enemy has no timber prepared to build any Vessel of a larger Class, than a Frigate and he has neither Guns nor Stores at Kingston for fitting even such a Ship nor could he procure them but with extreme difficulty, if a proper position upon the St. Lawrence was taken up by our Troops in order to impede & prevent his transportation by that River or along its Banks.—

The Frames of one or both of the Frigates sent from England last Spring have arrived at Kingston and the Keel of one of them laid and Stem and Stern-Post raised but I understand that neither of them will be built unless we commence building here—the dimentions of these frames are said to be about the same as those of their 38 Gun Frigates

Timber is not so easily procured in Canada as on this side—particularly Oak, which I understand to be extremely scarce—and I am inclined to believe the Enemy could not procure Mechanics to perform any very extensive operations.—

If the Division of the Army which is now on the Niagara Frontier should take a position on the St. Lawrence at or near "Hamilton" it would command the passage of the River and oblige the Enemy to send his Stores and Munitions of War by Land and under strong convoy, and even then he would be subject to interruption and loss as the Road lays near the banks of the River.—

The advantages to our Country to result from the Military occupation of such a position will readily present themselves

Besides the injury the Enemy would sustain in the interruption and loss of Stores, he would feel it still more severely in the harrassing his Troops with constant watching and fatigue and the consequent sickness and desertion

It may be asked what is to become of the Niagara Frontier? I answer leave its defence to the brave General Porter and the Militia and Volunteers of the State of New York.—

It has always been my opinion that among the best means to conquer the Canada's, was, that of cutting off the Supplies from the Lower to the Upper Province—by taking and maintaining a Position on the St. Lawrence—this would be killing the tree by "girdling"—the branches deprived of their ordinary supplies from the root, die of necessity, but if it is attempted to kill the Tree by lopping its uppermost branches, the body becomes invigorated by reducing the demands upon its resources—

To attempt to take Kingston by crossing at Erie, in preference to being landed within a few Miles of the spot is a species of Military policy, much beyond my comprehension; particularly when it is recollected that in the first mode our Troops would be obliged to march through a well settled Enemy's Country upwards of 200 Miles—their strength and resources constantly diminishing while that of the Enemy would be as rapidly augmenting; when by landing in the vicinity of Kingston they might go fresh to the assault with their whole force unexhausted by fatigue and undiminished in their numbers—

I cannot forbear calling your attention to my Letter of the 30th. October 1813—[1] On recurring to it you will be satisfied by what subsequent events have shown, that if my advice had been adopted by the Commanding General Millions would have been saved to the Nation, and the Executive had it in its power to concentrate the whole of the Northern and Western Armies at Kingston or Montreal. I have the honor to be with great respect Sir Yr. mo. ob' Hb'e St

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 104 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. For Commodore Chauncey's letter of 30 October 1813, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 594–96.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Secretary of War Monroe

The Honble. James Monroe
Secretary of War

Navy Department
Novemr. 7th. 1814.

Dear Sir,

I have received your note covering the letter from General Scott relative to the Navy Cannon loaned to the military Department at Baltimore.

In obedience to the orders of the President, preliminary steps have been taken, to create a very large additional force at Sacketts Harbour, for which place those Guns are destined. The proposed increase of force on Lake Ontario

will require all the heavy Cannon at this place, Baltimore and Philadelphia, besides dismantling one or two (if not more) of our Ships of War.

You will recollect that this Department has recently loaned to the War Department 35, Thirty two pounders for Fort Washington, and about twenty for Fort Mifflin, besides those at Baltimore.— It will therefore be impossible to dispense with those Guns, unless the object contemplated by the President is abandoned, for there is not an hour to be lost in the transportation.— I cannot take upon me the responsibility of changing the destination of those Guns, without his approbation.— I believe it is proposed to have a Cabinet Meeting for the purpose of determining whether any and what increase of Naval force shall be prepared on Lake Ontario, will you have the goodness to see the President on this subject, it is of the utmost moment, that this question should be at once decided.— If it is to go into effect, every nerve must be strained, and instantaneously, to get the ordnance and heavy stores forward before the frost. very sincerely & respectfully Your Obed Servt.

W Jones.

P S. Will you be pleased to inform Genl. Scott of the intended destination of the Cannon, otherwise the impression will be made, that they are merely intended for Philadelphia.—

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 205.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Stephen Decatur

(confidential)
Commodore Stephen Decatur
New York

Navy Department
Novemr. 8th. 1814.

Sir

Preparatory to the augmentation of the Naval force at Sacketts Harbour, the transportation of Cannon has been ordered from this place, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, and is now in active operation.

In the mean time it is of great importance to decide upon the extent, and nature of the force, which may be most efficient, and adequate to the end, and the practicability of completing it in time to seek the enemy the moment the Lake opens. The magnitude of his principal Ship, the resources and facilities which he has in stores, equipments and transportation by water, to increase his force, will of course be taken into view, as well as the difficulties we have to encounter in these respects, in meeting him with a force of a similar nature and to so great an extent.—

The object of this letter is to ascertain the deliberate opinion of yourself, Governor Tompkins, Captain Porter (if in New York) and Mr. Fulton, whether three such Steam floating Batteries as the *Fulton*, could be constructed and completed at Sacketts Harbour in due time, and whether that force would or would not when combined with the Squadron now at Sacketts Harbour, be competent to subdue all the force the enemy may have prepared for service at that time.

I particularly wish to know whether Mr. Fulton could and would engage to construct the Machinery and Engines in due time, and whether any thing short of the force proposed would be adequate to the end. I must therefore request that you will without delay, ask the favor of a meeting with those Gentlemen, and report to me the result as soon as possible.— I am respectfully Your Obet. Servant

W Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, p. 207.

Commodore Stephen Decatur to Secretary of the Navy Jones

New York 16 Nov. 1814.

Sir.

Yours of the 8th. inst. marked "confidential" was duly received, and would have been answer'd before this, if Govr. Tompkins had not been out of Town when it came to hand. He did not return in time to allow me to lay the subject of your letter before him, until night before last, when I had the pleasure to confer thereupon both with the Governor and Mr. Fulton—

The opinions of these Gentlemen upon the questions propounded, were yesterday given to me in writing, and I have the honor herewith, to transmit their letters to you.

It is unnecessary to enlarge this communication, with my own opinions upon the same subject, further than to say, that after mature deliberation I agree entirely with Govr. Tompkins and Mr. Fulton. Very respectfully yr. Ob Servt.—

Stephen Decatur

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 135 (M125, Roll No. 40).

[Enclosure]

New York, Nov. 14th. 1814.

Sir,

I have reflected for a few hours upon the subject of the confidential letter of the Secretary of the Navy which you communicated to me this afternoon. The Steam frigate building in this harbour is, I presume, intended to act as a moveable water battery, for harbour defence; and is expected to operate most advantageously in a calm, when ships of the ordinary construction would be unmanageable and she of consequence would be enabled to choose her position. The Experiment of her utility is yet to be tried, though I think it probable she will answer the end proposed.— I do not believe however, that vessels of this description would be formidable on the ocean, or in broad waters; or that they would be the most adviseable armament for Lake Ontario. Ships of the Line and Frigates, form the Naval force upon which alone I should place reliance either for blockading the enemy's fleet on that lake, or for conquering it in open fight— I have the honour to be Sir, with high regard Your Obt. St.

Daniel D. Tompkins

Commodore Decatur.

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 135, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40).

[Enclosure]
To Commodore Decatur New York Novr. 15th 1814

Sir

In answer to your communication from the secretary of the Navy concerning the propriety of now constructing steam Ships on Lake Ontario, I am of opinion that although the experiment which is making presents the flattering prospect of succeeding for harbor defence & will have many advantages over an Enemy in a calm, I would not until I see her in motion with her own engine, and until I shall have some experience on her movements and powers recommend such Vessels for a lake as turbulent as the Ocean; I have in contemplation some improvements which I have reason to believe will render them valuable for coast as well as harbour defence, and for narrow seas; but they can only be made after a fair experiment on the one now constructing, till then I could not recommend to the government so much confidence in a new machine, as to substitute it for the Usual engines of war of a power equal to that of the Enemy.

I request some days to reflect on the kind of vessel which moved by steam may be useful on the Lake I am about finishing the model of one to carry not more than Three or Four guns of heavy metal, and to apply Torpedoes, She may be made shot proof and so as to risk little from a plunging fire or bombs her cost from 50 to 60 thousand dollars. I have the principal part of the steam engine of a power for such a Vessel which could be finished in March if commenced about the first of December, In a few days when I shall have satisfied my mind on this subject, I will communicate it to you, I am Sir very respectfully Your most Obedient

Robt. Fulton

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 135, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 40).

Winter Quarters on Lake Champlain

The threat of British invasion of New York State by land or water subsided following the American naval victory at Plattsburg Bay. With the coming of winter, Captain Thomas Macdonough could safely send his vessels into winter quarters at Whitehall, New York. On 10 November, the now-famous navy captain turned over command to Lieutenant Charles A. Budd, giving him detailed instructions to be vigilant and thrifty in the management of the squadron.

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Brig *Eagle*
Plattsburgh Bay October 15th. 1814

Sir.

I have the honor to inform you that I have sent the U.S. Vessels *Saratoga, Confiance, Linnet* and *Ticonderoga* to winter quarters at Whitehall; and have retained

and kept prepared for service the Brig *Eagle* and the ten Gallies with the sloops *Preble, Growler, Eagle,* and *Montgomery* for the men attached to the Gallies to live in and for provision Vessels; as the contemplated attack on New York appears to have ceased I should be much Gratified by receiving your permission to proceed to Washington for the purpose of settling my accounts of this station; as they extend to a considerable amount I should like a Settlement of them at an early period, and as Naval operations are considered at an end on this lake I beg you will be pleased to relieve me in this command; from Lt. Cassin's knowledge of the lake I think he could be a suitable person to succeed me— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir, your Mo. obt. servt.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 42 (M125, Roll No. 40).

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Lieutenant Charles A. Budd

U.S. Brig *Eagle*
Plattsburgh Bay Novr. 10th 1814

Sir

Agreeable to an order from the Honble. Secty. of the Navy to me directed dated 30th of October 1814 you will take command of the U.S. squadron on lake Champlain—

You will be particularly careful to guard against any enterprize of the Enemy at all times but more especially should there be a necesity for your going to the Northward of this place—Vigilant in watching the Movements of the enemy on the Lake that he does not capture or injure in any manner the public property, the citizens, or their property—To prevent which your force is amply sufficient— Do not be induced by any show of the enemy to get you beyond point Au Fair [*Point au Fer*], or any wish or request of the Commanding officer of our land forces, the Navigation of that water & your knowledge of it, will, I trust be sufficient to prevent your going there, unless with a land force of ours superior to the enemy acting in concert with you—

The time will arrive in the course of a few days to lay the squadron up for the winter, as the season is far advanced, the men suffering considerably from the severity of the weather, and the enemy at present evincing to My knowledge no intention to come out from his strong hold, with his gallies the only naval force he at present possesses—

You will however advise with the commanding general on the expediency of your going before you go— It is absolutely necessary however that you get to White Hall before the Ice makes. As you will there have all the vessels together & farthest from the Enemy's land forces during the winter—

When at White Hall the vessels must be moored so as to bring the guns to bear on any point, the greatest number on that point from whence an attack is most likely to be made— Corrospond frequently with the Comdging. General who will inform you of the movement of the Enemy & give information should his object be the destruction of the vessels, of which you will immediately inform the Hon Secty. of the Navy & take measures to repel or defeat such an at-

tempt— It will be well when you arrive to raise two or three gun batteries in advance of each other, & all in advance of the squadron on some elegible point bearing on the lake in case the Enemy came on the Ice & either intrench or strongly barricade a small Island called Crafts Island immediately where the vessels will lie, with a hundred or two of men to hold it & to have cannon on it. On the first correct inteligence of the Enemy to destroy the vessels you will require without loss of time the aid of the surrounding Militia & advise without fail the government of it; do not depend solely on the Comdg. general for information of the Enemys motions, but be vigilant in your own enquiries from every source from which you would be likely to obtain it—

It is the orders of the government that you enter into no contracts for the squadron but make your requisitions on the Navy Agent at New York directly or through the Purser as the service may require—and to draw no bills on the Navy Agent at New York— It will require your personal attention as well as the constant vigilance of all your officers in keeping the vessels in order as to the powder sails &c. having centinels & a regular watch kept to guard against any articles being taken away, And I cannot impress too strongly on your mind the great necessity of guarding against incendiaries— To Destroy these vessels is admitted to be the first & greatest wish of the Enemy on this frontier, to effect which, means will I do not doubt be taken to attempt to burn them by offering a large reward probably to some of our own citizens & most likely to those who may by their intimacy with the officers or men be the least suspicious, it will also require your vigilance personally in keeping the men regular in their habits, to prevent fatal effects by intoxication in this cold climate & to prevent abuse or maltreating of the Citizens in any manner; it will be well to adopt the Method which was adopted at Vergennes last winter by making the aggressor pay for any injury done to a citizen and averaging such injury by theft among the men of the vessel by whom the theft was committed if the persons who committed it cannot be found out or among the whole of the vessels crews if the particular vessel should not be known

The prevention of injury in any manner by the enemy on the Lake, a hearty Cooperation with the land forces & guarding against any attempts or enterprizes of the Enemy will be the objects of your first & immediate attention until you lay up for the winter then, the safety of the vessels in guarding against fire, as before said of Citizens & the regularity & good order of the vessels, officers, & men will be the objects of your immediate care & attention— ~~You will draw no bills on the Navy Agent at New York as directed by Govt.~~[1]— Respectfully I am Sir your Obt Servt

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG217, 4th Auditor's Accounts, Settled Miscellaneous Accounts and Claims, March 29, 1817–June 30, 1829, Numerical Series, Box 16, No. 1435.

1. This sentence was moved up to the sixth paragraph when the letter was signed.

News of the Loss of *Scorpion* and *Tigress*

News of the capture of Scorpion *and* Tigress *on Lake Huron on 3 and 6 September did not reach the American headquarters at Erie until late in October. Five American prisoners from the captured schooners, who had escaped while they were being transported to Kingston, returned to Erie with the first details of the capture. Sailing Master Stephen Champlin, who had been severely wounded in the action and was paroled and returned to Lake Erie in October, provided additional information.*

Lieutenant Daniel Turner's official report on the capture of the two brigs, written 1 November while Turner was a prisoner at Beauport, did not reach Washington until April 1815.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop *Niagara*
Erie Roads Oct 24th 1814

Sir

I think it proper to relieve you from the anxiety the Postscript to my letter of the 21st. Inst.[1] may have occasioned, the subject of which has never been a moment absent from my mind until dispeld by the arrival of the *Lawrence* this morning— She and the *Lady Prevost* had rode the Gale out without material injury. Her Boats were on shore for the Prisoners provision, and to assist in getting off the balance of them to the Schooner— After the Gale abated sufficiently for her to get her Anchors, finding the surf too high to get her Boats off, and no prospect of a change for the better, she was compelled for the want of Provision to leave the *Lady Prevost* to take off the balance— Necessity has driven her in here, contrary to my wishes; and such is the state of the weather blowing on shore, and still snowing, hailing &c—that they are compelled to remain until a change, when they shall immediately depart for Long Point—in the mean time they are kept from seeing the state or situation of the place— Their situations are lamentable, indeed, most all sick—no clothes or Blankets except the rags they have on, and the weather wet and freezing—several have died on their passage

The long absence of Lieut Turner beyond the time to which I limited the Blockade, which was to the 1st. of this month, and a report brought by Indians to Detroit, which I heard when last there but gave no credit to it, that he had been boarded and taken, begins to give me considerable uneasiness— Added to this, there is a report, this day from Buffalo, that some of their crew which had been captured, and made their escape from York, had arrived at Fort Erie, and confirmed the above report— I trust in God! it is not true, as it would at once undo what my unremitting exertions had effected in that quarter, and which promised to give us an easy conquest of Mackinac in the Spring—independent of the disgrace attending such surprizes— More particularly in this case, as my written instructions[2] fully embraced every point that ought to guard him against surprize, and my last words, on my Quarter Deck, when parting were, "never lay at Anchor the night through where you may have been seen at Anchor in the evening, for on your vigilance & safety depends the possession of Mackinac to your Country in the Spring— I also deprived myself of the most

experienced Officer in my Vessel (Sailing Master Rutter) who I left with him; believing that by adding Seamanship to his bravery & intrepidity I should secure him on all points—

The continued bad weather we have lately had, and which now seems to have set in for the Winter makes this Roadstead very unsafe, and the preparing and getting those Brigs over the Bar is becoming daily more perilous— It is very rare to have two succeeding good days— Our Camels cannot ride a Gale out here, and we cannot lighten and get over in one day— Everything must be struck from aloft; and all from below except just enough to insure their safety, taken out, and when the day offers the balance must be accomplished—a night must not be risked.— I shall much fear their safety, or the possibility of getting them in, if much of the next month passes before it is attempted— I therefore hope, Sir, you will give me your instructions as early as convenient— You must be well assured that I have no possible motive in urging this, but what arises out of the duty I owe the service I have the honor to remain very Respectfully, Sir, Your Obt Servt

A Sinclair

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 60 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. See pp. 603–4.
2. See Sinclair to Turner, 15 Aug. 1814, pp. 570–71.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S.S. *Niagara*, Roads off Erie— Octr. the 28th 1814

Sir

I am under the mortifying necessity of stating to you that the report, mentioned in my last letter, of the vessels left in the Upper Lake having been surprised and captured by Boats of the Enemy has turned out to be correct— The Boatswain and four men from the *Scorpion*, made their escape, on their way to Kingston, and crost Lake Ontario in skiffs from the Bay of Qunte to the Genessee River, from thence to this place— This Mans story is a most unfavourable one, and such as I am loth to believe true, from the well known character of Lieut. Turner— He says the Blockade of the Nautawasauga River was rased in a short time after my departure—that the Lieut. who commanded the *Nancy* (and who had escaped in the woods when she was distroyed) had past up to Mackinac in Boats, and it was by him and his crew they were captured— The *Tigress* had been separated from him five days, among the Islands, in which time she had been captured— They came in sight of her, laying at anchor, in the Evening—the wind being light they anchored some distance from her, without passing signals— In the morning there was only four or five men and no Officer on deck— The *Tigress* got underway, run down, fired into them and were onboard without any report ever being made to Mr. Turner, or was there an officer of any grade on deck when she was captured— The wind was light, the *Scorpion* had the advantage of a long 12 pr. over the other and could have recaptured her with much ease— The *Tigress* had made great resistance, but was overpowered by an Overwhelming force—her commander (Sailing master Champlin) and all his Officers were wounded, as were many of his men, and some killed— I had given Lieut. Turner a picked crew from this vessel, with my Sailing Master, and had added to both their crews 25 chosen men borrowed from Colnl. Croghan, to act as Marines— I had also left him a Boarding netting: indeed there was no precaution I did not take, in anticipation of every effort, I knew, the Enemy would make to regain their line of communication on which their very existence depended— I herewith inclose you my instructions to Lieut. Turner—[1] after which I cannot express to you, Sir, my chagrin at learning the little regard which appears to have been paid to them, and the evil consequences growing out of such neglect; consequences but too well known to you and to the government— you must first believe the infinite interest I had taken in the expedition, from the moment I had been intrusted with the conducting it, and the sanguine hope I had formed of its complete success, and the benefits resulting from it to my Country, to enable you to form an adequate idea of the mortification I now experience—

That part of the Squadron employed in transporting the Prisoners of War to long point have returned to this place The *Lady Provost*, with loss of her Foremast, in a gale of wind on the night of the 26th— It appears there are upwards of 100 that could not be taken off from Cleveland in consequence of the great surf on the shore, where the vessels were compeld to sail for want of Provisions, for the Prisoners— Six died on their passage— So soon as the weather will permit I will have the balance transported, if it is possible to get them off— There are a part of two Companies of Infantry, composing the guard over those men, now at Cleveland—permit me to make the request of you to make arrangements for their being ordered here to act as marines— I have not enough at this time, admitting they were all well, to do the Sentinel duty onboard the vessels—and all our valuable stores onshore are entirely unprotected for want of a guard, and have been several times depredated on within the last few weeks—

The two Block Houses are without garrison, and will afford them good Barracks— There is a Regiment at long Point, and it was understood, by our officers, they were building some king [*kind*] of Craft in Patersons creek— I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, your obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 71 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. For Captain Sinclair's instructions to Lieutenant Daniel Turner, see pp. 570–71.

Lieutenant Daniel Turner to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Beauport L Canada Novr. 1st 1814

Sir/

It is with feelings the most poignant I have to inform you of the capture of the United States Gun boats *Scorpion* and *Tygress*. The particulars relative to the latter I refer you to Sailing Master Champlins Letter.

After you left me in the Bay I made a faithful tho unsuccessfull search for anchorage but could find none to shelter me from a NW gale and after having ex-

perienced three severe blows from that quarter during which time it was with the utmost difficulty I kept off the lee shore (being obliged frequently to wear Ship) I deemed it most prudent with the advice of my officers and having in mind the good of the service, to leave the Bay and Cruize between St Josephs and French River knowing that the Enemys boats from the Natawwassaga to Michilimackinac, must pass thro that channel—which I did on the 28th August. I arrived off St Josephs two days after destroy'd a considerable quantity of wheat Potatoes &c—

I left the *Tygress* to Cruize off St. Joseph's when I got underway to Cruize between St Joseph's and French River to intercept the Enemys boats and canoes that might be passing to and from the Enemy—having made a diligent tho unsuccessfull cruize returned to St. Joseph's on the evening of the 5th Sept. I anchored ½ a mile to the Eastward of the *Tygress,* it being extreemlly dark and having no signals on board to order her to Join company, not having the most distant Idea of the *Tygress* being in possession of the enemy. I remain'd at my anchors all night,

At dawn of day the officer of the deck came to me and informed me the *Tygress* was bearing up for me under easy Sail, as I supposed for the purpose of joining company five minutes after this information she being close on my larboard bow the enemy fired his long 24, 12 and 3 Pds. and boarded me at the same time, with one hundred and ten Sailors and soldiers accompanied by a great number of Indians— I sprang from my birth but all attempts to regain the vessel were found fruitless, my loss was two killed, and three wounded, enclosed is a list—together with Mr. Champlin's letter—

It was with considerable difficulty the Indians were restrained from Murdering my Crew and self—

The enemy in approaching took the necessary precaution, to secret all his force, six or seven men excepted and some of them dressed in the apparel of the officers formerly commanding—

Thus Sir, we have been captured in a way, which nothing but a knowledge of the *Tygress* being in possession of the enemy could have enabled us to avoid—

After taking into view all those circumstances, I am convinced you will give to my conduct on this Occasion a construction more favourable than it might otherwise be with an assurance that during my stay on Huron—I have always had in view the public good I have the honor to be Sir Verry Respy. Your Most Obt. Sert.

Danl. Turner

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 3, No. 80, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 44). This letter was enclosed in Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield, 27 April 1815. Captain Sinclair notes in his cover letter that "The official letter of Mr. Champlin alluded to by Lieut. Turner as being enclosed, must have been supprest by the Enemy, as it was not contained in the envelop." For Champlin's version of the loss of *Tigress,* see DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 6, No. 207. Lieutenant Turner enclosed a list of two men killed and three wounded, and a list of the thirty-three officers, seamen, and soldiers on board the *Scorpion* at the time of the capture.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Sloop of War *Niagara*
Erie Roads 11th. November 1814,

Sir

Your letter of the 4th. Inst, has just been received, and I see with regret and mortification the misconstruction you have put upon my application respecting the time those Brigs should be taken over the Bar— This Squadron is differently situated from any other in the service—when taken within this Bar, there is an end to its operations for the season, and the views of Government, however important they might be, could receive no aid from it— I have been ever anxious to cooperate most cordially with the Army on this Frontier, and to meet with alacrity all orders received from the Government; and as I was neither apprised of the movements of the one, or the wishes of the other, I fealt it my duty to consult you, who were acquainted with both, before placing the force under my command beyond your control— I feel gratified at the confidence reposed in my judgement by the Department, and shall study to merit it in all my acts— I trust, Sir, after this explanation you will not believe I am disposed to add to the weight of your office any detail duty of the Squadron, you have done me the honor to place under my command—

Sailing Master Champlin, who commanded the *Tigress,* has arrived here in the Cartel from Mackinac, with some of the wounded— He has his thigh shattered by a Grape Shot, and has not yet been able to make out a detail report of his capture— He appears not to have been surprised; but defended his vessel very bravely, killing and wounding a number of the Enemy, who overpowered him with 150 Sailors and Soldiers and 250 Indians, the latter headed by Dickson— The *Scorpion* was surprised, as mentioned in my letter of the 27th. Ulto.

The conduct of the Enemy to our prisoners thus captured, and the inhuman butchery of those who fell into their hands at the attack of Mackinac, has been barbarous beyond a parallel— The former have been plundered of almost every article of clothing they possest—the latter had their hearts and livers taken out, which were actually cooked and feasted on (and that too in the quarters of the British officers sanctioned by Colo. McDouall) by the Savages—

This cannibal act, which has capt the climax of British atrocity, and must ever be viewed with indignant horror by the cristian world, will be sworn to by two respectable ladies, who came down in the cartel, and who were witnesses to it— I am further assured by Mr. Astor,[1] who was detained there with his cartel for near two months, that it was not disowned by the Garrison at Mackinac, and that when remonstrance was made by some, who had not lost all sense of feeling and honor, they were threatened with arrest by the Colonel, if they checked the Indians in any of their wishes— One of the Prisoners was inhumanly murdered by one of their Militia (to decide a dispute between him and an Indian of who had the best claim to the reward for his body or scalp) and no notice was taken of it by the Colonel— To relate to you, Sir, all the acts of horror which have been practised upon those unfortunate victims who fell into the Enemys hands on the 4th of August, would go far beyond the limits of a letter— I have the honor to remain with high Respect, Sir, Your Obd. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 7, No. 122 (M125, Roll No. 40).

1. George Astor, agent and nephew of John Jacob Astor.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Captain Arthur Sinclair
Commanding U S Naval Force
on Lake Erie

Navy Department
Novemr. 17th. 1814.

Sir

I have received your letter of the 11th.[1] and do not perceive the misconstruction which you attribute to the observations contained in my letter of the 4th. instant; but, be that as it may, the meaning I intended to convey was, that the Squadron under your command would remain on the Lake as long as the Season would admit, (of which you were to be the judge) in order to render whatever cooperation with the Army the General might require, and yourself deem practicable, and that when the safety of the Squadron, should render it expedient, to seek a harbour for shelter from the inclemency of the season, you would determine as your judgement should dictate. If you have not been apprised of the movements of the Army, and of the General's views of cooperation, I must presume, that he stood not in need of the aid of the Squadron, or he would have requested your cooperation; but when you add, that you have not been apprized of the wishes of the Government in respect to the services of the Squadron, I have only to refer you to my letter of the 28th of Septemr. last, as well as to those prior to that date, to yourself and Lieutenant Kennedy, in which, the only wish that Government entertained, or indeed, that your services could gratify, on Lake Erie, is distinctly expressed, Viz,— to offer to the Military Commander all the aid in your power.

I am perfectly satisfied that the confidence reposed in you has been well placed, and that you have done, and will continue to do, all that can be expected from a correct and zealous Officer.—

I am gratified to learn, that Sailing Master Champlin was prepared to meet the enemy and defended his Vessel gallantly.

The alternate sensations of horror and indignation suppress all comment upon the awful narrative you have given of the barbarity of the enemy at Mackinac.— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 209–10.

1. See p. 649.

The Lure of the Atlantic

Commodore Isaac Chauncey's squadron returned to Sackets Harbor on 7 October, relinquishing control of Lake Ontario to the British squadron, now led by the immense ship of the line Saint Lawrence, *pierced for 102 but actually carrying 112 guns.*

The squadron's return to port signaled the end of the active campaign season. As was usual at the end of each sailing season, officers requested transfers to other stations, citing illness, desire for professional training, patriotism, or the quest for prize money and glory to justify their requests.

News spread that Congress was considering a bill to purchase twenty schooners to be organized into three squadrons under the popular and successful captains Oliver H. Perry and David Porter. Lieutenants flooded the Navy Department with requests to command these fast schooners. Commodore Isaac Chauncey feared that his squadron, itself in need of more officers for the three new ships building at Sackets Harbor, would be left with only the youngest and least experienced officers.

Lieutenant William Carter, Jr., to Captain John Shaw

Mohawk Frigate, Sacketts harbour, 7 November 1814—

My dear Sir,

Your very acceptable favor of the 29 ultimo reached me yesterday; and in the evening I mentioned the purport of it to Captain Jones: After some compliments, expressive of his satisfaction with my efforts while I have been in his ship; and after stating his wish to have me remain with him, he finally remarked that the situation with you was certainly more promising than my present one here, and for that reason he could not object to my accepting of your polite offer— Indeed when we were about to leave the *Macedonian* for this station he had the goodness to let me know, tacitly, that when an opportunity for a more eligible situation should present itself he would cheerfully let me embrace it— The expected promotion this session of Mr. Rodgers[1] would, if it occurs, leave me first of this ship, but an Atlantic situation is much more congenial with my wishes— Considering that the application will come from you; that the birth is a desirable one to me; and that it has received the concurrence of Captain Jones I cannot doubt but the Secretary, when acquainted with these circumstances, will grant it without hesitation— Will you be pleased to make them known to him?—

It may not, perhaps, be amiss in me to remark that several reasons concur in making me anxious to receive orders at an early period— Besides the hope of being serviceable in promoting the great object of engaging a smart crew, and of having an opportunity of making myself acquainted with those who comprise it; it will, I apprehend, require some time, and considerable attention, to free the ships bottom from the shells that soon accumulate in the Thames.

Our present prospects here are neither brilliant nor animating, and they hold out but slender hopes for frequent enterprise: The superiority of the enemy is of too decided a nature to allow us a reasonable expectation of success in a general action; and it seems to be the opinion of many, whom I think well acquainted with the subject, that our government have determined to build no more ships here— An obvious consequence that must result from this determination, if it be founded in fact, is that those we have already built must become entirely useless— We have here, at this time, two thousand of the best men in the Navy and their fine health, and spirits, would appear to make them invincible—

I am really sorry to tell you that Lieut Gregory is not exchanged— We have learned that his wound was by no means dangerous, and it may of course be fairly presumed that he has long since recovered from it— I understand that he is yet in Kingston, and the circumstance of his having conducted, with success, several enterprises against the enemy may justify the conclusion that his

exchange will not be soon effected— The circumstance of your not having instructed me where to direct to you, whether at New York or New London, induces me to send a letter to each place, because if that addressed to New York should reach the city before your departure from it, it may hasten the object of the letter— Have the goodness to receive my best wishes, and to accept an assurance of the high esteem and regard with which I am, Dear Sir, yr ob sert

Will[m]. Carter

ALS, DLC, John Shaw Papers.

1. Lieutenant George W. Rodgers.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Jones

No. 198 U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor. 23d Novr. 1814

Sir

The Bill which is now pending before Congress authorizing the President to build or purchase Twenty Schooners has set all the Lieutenants on this Station Crazy—they are all determined to have commands and the Department will be inundated with applications.— I am daily importuned for Letters, and it really would be an injustice to with-hold them from Officers of such conspicuous merit as many of them are on this Station, yet I have given the Gentlemen fair warning, that altho' I will testify to their merits, yet I shall conceive it to be my duty to point out to the Department the inconvenience and injury the Service would sustain, by granting their requests

Many of the Officers appear to entertain erroneous opinions in regard to the Service on the Lakes— they think that when the Season for cruising has passed in consequence of the frost that all duty ceases also, when the contrary is the fact, for the Winter is the Season of fatigue and anxiety—besides if the Government should determine to build here we shall require the Services of all, Officers as well as Men— moreover by removing all the Senior Lieutenants, the Ships would be left with very young and inefficient Officers— I therefore pray that the Honorable the Secretary will not weaken this fleet by removing the most experienced and efficient Officers.— I have the honor to be with great Respect Sir Yr. Mo. Obt. St

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 31 (M125, Roll No. 41).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans

No. 1 New York 5th. January 1815

Sir

The great number of officers recently ordered from Sackets Harbor creates in my mind considerable alarm, scarcely a day passes without one or more ar-

riveing from that station either with a sick ticket or with orders from the Department to report themselves to Commodore's Porter or Perry, I presume that the Department is not aware of the extent of injury the public service is suffering by these removals, for independent of the extreme mortification to the commander of the station, to have his best officers selected and taken from him by his juniors, the weakening the station so much in officers may lead to consequences fatal to the squadron, It is hoped however that the Department will not hold me responsible for consequences arising from causes over which I have no controul.

I think Sir that you have not adverted to the last return of officers and men on Lake Ontario, because that return would show, that there was no surplus officers on that station, Yet within the last month most of the first Lieutenants and others have been ordered away, and all that remains are daily expecting orders to leave the station, the *Madison* has been so weakened by these means as to be left in charge of a Midshipman, every officer of higher grade having left the station, either by an order from the Department or by a sick ticket, the injury does not stop here, for a most serious riot bordering on mutiny took place on board of the *Superior* on the night of the 24th Ulto, I have not heard the particulars of the case but presume it arose in consequence of the bad management of young and inexperienced officers, who know but little of the art of governing men, Mr. Elton the first Lieutenant having been ordered to report himself to Captain Perry and Mr. Macpherson to the temporary command of the *Oneida*, the duties of first Lieutenant devolved on Mr. Macomber,[1] who is not qualified for so important a situation, this riot was hapily surpressed without blood shed, but might have led to serious consequences, to remove the first Lieutenant of any ship is attended with inconvenience and injury to the Public Service, this injury is much increased when such removal takes place in the absence of her commander, whose presence might remedy any defects in the discipline of the officer in his new situation,

The Flag ship of so important a station as Lake Ontario has become, requires a good first Lieutenant, I had one in Mr. Elton, but he has been ordered to Captain Perry, how I shall replace him I am at a loss to determine, I have no officer well calculated for that situation, I shall consequently be obliged to attend to much detail on board of my own ship which a good first Lieutenant would releive me from

Mr. Bourne[2] has presented me with an order from Commodore Decatur to report himself to Captain Warrington as Purser of the *Peacock*, these orders has been predicated upon a letter received by Captain Warrington from the Department informing him, that Mr. Bourne has been ordered to his ship agreeably to his request, You may remember Sir that Mr. Bourne was ordered to Lake Ontario as my Secretary, but in consequence of Purser Chews[3] being ordered from that Station, Mr. Bourne was directed to assume the duties of Purser of the *Madison* and *Oneida*, when I was ordered to New York I brought him with me, to assist in any writing that I might have to do, or take charge of stores or men for Sackets Harbor, but Mr. Bourne has now been ordered on other service, the Department will be pleased to direct to what Purser, he will transfer the accounts of the *Madison* and *Oneida*, as the term of service of the crews of these two vessels are about expireing, unless the transfer is made regularly, it may lead to a confusion in the accounts that will not be easily remedied after Mr. Bourne has left the country,

The Naval force that is now in commission and building on Lake Ontario will require about Thirty Lieutenants, and Five Pursers, in addition to what was there on the first of December, and a proportionable number of other officers of all grades, I therefore hope that the Department will not further weaken the station by ordering any more officers from Sackets Harbor I have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir your mo. Obt. Sert.

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 16 (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Lieutenant Samuel P. Macomber.
2. Purser Benjamin F. Bourne, commissioned 26 March 1814, transferred to *Peacock* 16 December 1814.
3. Purser Thomas J. Chew, commissioned 9 March 1809, was ordered from Sackets Harbor to Portsmouth, N.H., 16 August 1814.

Surgeon's Mate Leonard Osborne to Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason

U S Brig *Oneida,*
Sackets Harbor Jany. 6th. 1815.

Dear Sir,

From my very slight and short acquaintance with you, it will perhaps be deemed a liberty which I take not justified by your Knowledge of me in addressing an application to you, but feeling confident of your wish to advance the interests of any young man whom you may Know as is consistent with your Knowledge and good opinion of him I request sir the favor of your making use of your influence with the present Secy. of the Navy in seconding a request that I have made for an appointment as Acting Surgeon to one of the New Brigs or Schooners which are now fitting out under the direction of Com Perry & Capn. Porter.—

After leaving the *Analostan*[1] I had confident expectations of getting to Sea in the "*Congress*" and participating in the honor & profit which I had hoped would have resulted from her cruize; The crew and officers having been ordered to this Lake, frustrated those expectations— Since my arrival here I have acted as Surgeon of one of the Brigs on this station, while a gleam of hope remained that we should have any active Service here I was content, all idea of a battle or an attack having ceased, I must anxiously desire to get to Sea this winter, and conceive that, if you can make any representations, in my favor, they will go far to obtain the boon which I am seeking.

My appointment to the *Analostan* was far from being a profitable one to me, not receiving from the Dept. the pay of Surgeon and my expences being equal to any Ward Room— I assure you sir tho' I made use of all due economy that I was more than $100. in debt extra of my pay when I left that vessel, depending alone on the Service for Support I am very desirous of getting into a Situation where there is an expectation of drawing some profit from it: I wish very much to attend a course of Lectures at Philadelphia next winter, and it will be altogether impossible for me to accomplish it, unless I should be so fortunate as to make prize money, I pray you to excuse sir my troubling you with so long a letter, and so much of my private concerns—you will confer a particular obligation

on me sir, when time & leisure will permit, by writing me a few lines on the subject of this letter.—[2] With Sentiments of respect I am Sir, Yr. mo obt. Servt.

L. Osborne.

ALS, DN-HC, Early Naval Records Collection ("ZV" Files), Subject Files, Box 171.

1. Leonard Osborne was appointed a surgeon's mate and ordered to the cartel brig *Analostan* on 29 April 1813. One of two vessels purchased by the government during the war to transport prisoners, *Analostan* was manned by navy personnel but under the direction of Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason.
2. Osborne left Sackets Harbor but not until 19 April 1815 when he was ordered to report to Commodore Decatur for duty on board *Firefly.*

Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Como. Isaac Chauncey
Comm'g U.S Naval force
on Lake Ontario.— New York

Navy Department
Jany 11th. 1815

Sir,

I have the honor to reply to your letter of the 5th. current, and to assure you that I am fully sensible of the nature of the service on Lake Ontario, and have felt as much anxiety and delicacy for your command, and its peculiar importance and security, as you have expressed on the subject.—

If the Station has been weakened by the transfer of officers, I assure you that I have not, in any respect, aided by a compliance with their solicitations, for removal.—

In the selection of officers by the late Secretary to command the small vessels fitting under Captains Porter and Perry, I had no agency; nor do I know more of that arrangement, than that other officers of equal or superior claims, under your command, are as much dissatisfied as you can be.—

I am aware of the unpleasant situation in which you are placed, as Commanding Officer of that Station, and of the importance it is to you to have able, active, and experienced officers under your command.— I believe that such can yet be found, to replace those who have been removed; and I will endeavour that your wishes shall, in this respect, be gratified when the new Secretary shall take charge of the Department.—

I have offended a number of respectable connexions of Officers, by refusing their requests to leave the Station, and have complied in one instance only; and that under circumstances of pulmonary weakness, which appeared to justify it, in the case of Lieut. Frederick W. Smith, formerly of the Sloop of War *Erie* under Captain Ridgely.— One other young Lieutenant has been ordered here on special business by direction of the President, Lieut. Dugomier Taylor; and he will return as soon as his affairs are settled.—

The Department is now crowded with letters of application all of which lie over for consideration. I was sensible, at first, of the strong inducements for the officers to apply for stations on board the Cruising Vessels, and kept in view constantly your suggestion to the Department on that subject at the early part of the business.—

If officers have obtained leave of absence by Sick Tickets the Department is not informed of their number, and cannot be answerable for the consequences; although in some instances humanity may have been the imperious and justifiable plea.—

As respects Purser Bourne, he was ordered at the special request of Captain Warrington, presuming that his services as Purser were not essentially necessary on the Station; but I was not informed of the peculiar relation in which he stood with you as an assistant.— There are other Pursers of experience who can replace him.— I assure you, Sir, that every thing shall be done to meet your wishes, in strengthening the Station, in ordering such officers as you may designate.—

Purser Bourne will transfer his accounts to Purser Chew, who is now here and will return to the station as soon as his accounts are settled.— I am very respectfully &c.

B Homans A S N.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 9–10 (M149, Roll No. 12).

Establishing British Dockyards on the Upper Lakes

The capture of Scorpion *and* Tigress, *renamed* Confiance *and* Surprise, *gave the British an advantage on Lake Huron. They planned to reinforce that theater with the construction of additional gunboats at Penetanguishene Bay during the winter. On Lake Erie, the capture of* Somers *and* Ohio, *renamed* Sauk *and* Huron, *provided an opening for the reestablishment of a British naval presence on that lake in 1815. The British intended to build a naval depot at Turkey Point, located on the north shore of Lake Erie east of Long Point, during the winter months.*

These plans were interrupted when Brigadier General Duncan McArthur, leading a combined force of Kentucky and Ohio militiamen, swept across the northern shore of Lake Erie from Detroit eastward to the Grand River from 22 October until 7 November. His forces burned mills and destroyed stores of military provisions.[1] McArthur's raid deprived the British of valuable food supplies that would have sustained British troops and their native allies in the west. Lieutenant General Drummond called on Commodore Yeo to bring out his fleet to help transport foodstuffs to his army in the west, but Yeo declined, citing the uncertainty of navigation during the early winter months.

1. For more on Duncan McArthur's raid, see Quimby, U.S. Army in the War of 1812, *pp. 756–58.*

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GORDON DRUMMOND, BRITISH ARMY, TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

H M Ship *St. Lawrence*
Off the Ducks 9th. November 1814

Sir

Having proceeded to Niagara on the morning of the 6th I immediately embarked on board the *Montreal* and reached the *St Lawrence* at her anchorage at

York early the following morning. Commodore Sir James Yeo gave an immediate and decided negative to my proposition relative to cooperating in operations on the right Bank of the Niagara He grounded his objection on the lateness of the Season, the uncertainty of the weather and the danger which might arise to the Squadron from that cause as well as from the Enemy if left for any considerable Period at its anchorage at York— I did not because I saw it was in vain to urge the matter— It remained therefore to discuss the more important Point of the properest Situation for the proposed Naval Establishment for the Upper Lakes— For this purpose I proceeded on shore with the Commodore and the Naval Commissioner and Captain Payne whom I had brought over from Niagara for the purpose, and having heard the opinion of the Surveyor General Major Wilmot the Asst. Commy. General Mr. Crookshanks and other well informed Persons at York it was decidedly and unanimously agreed that the obstacles in the way of such an establishment on Lake Huron at Penetangashen Bay at this season of the year are not only insurmountable but even if it were possible to overcome them that a Naval Establishment on that Lake would by no means offer the same advantages with one on Lake Erie, the formation of which at Turkey Point is to be effected with far less difficulty and risque than at any point on Lake Huron— By gaining the Naval superiority on Lake Erie that of Lake Huron follows—but the Proposition cannot be reversed— Sir James required from me an assurance that the establishment should be protected by the Army a Promise which I have willingly given and have accordingly instructed M General Stovin to detach one Wing of the 37th. Regt. one Troop 19th Dragoons and two Six Pounders without delay to Long Point and in the event of the Enemy's attention being drawn to that Point and of its being threatened with a visit from him, not only to reinforce this Wing by the remaining Companies of the Regiment but to continue to strengthen that Post according as circumstances may render necessary.

Keeping in view the desire which your Excy. has manifested on the subject of some Naval establishment being formed on Lake Huron, I have directed Mr. Crookshank to cause a road to be opened from Kempenfelt Bay to Penetangashene (all that can at present be effected) with a view to open a better communication than we at present possess with the Shores of Lake Huron and particularly with our two newly acquired Schooners on that Water

Major Cockburn[1] with the Company of Canadian Fencibles & Captain Payne R Engr will proceed to Turkey Point without delay— I must take this occasion of observing however that Captain Payne has been sent up not only without any part of his Personal Baggage (or his Instruments) but without the Men of his Company whose Services on the duty on which he has been detached would have been invaluable and are in fact indispensable and I have therefore to beg they may be sent up by the quickest possible mode of conveyance

Sir James Yeo has consented to detach the *Niagara* filled with every thing which may be most useful for the new Establishment. Captain Collier a most active and zealous officer and who moreover is destined to command on Lake Erie is also to land and to proceed to Turkey Point with the whole of the Crew of that Ship (*Niagara*) after laying her up at York, to superintend and assist in the works.— Captain Payne is ordered to hue out a work (on a site to be determined by that which the Naval Commissioner will designate for the future Dock Yard) capable of containing 1000 Men, and to commence this work with such means as we can collect for him, without a moments delay. Your Excellency will

see the importance therefore of sending up to Captain Payne his Company of Sappers & Miners. The Naval Commissioner has come down in the Squadron for the purpose of making some necessary arrangements—but will return in the *Niagara*.

We had scarcely discussed this Point and taken the necessary consequent measures when a communication of which the enclosed is a Copy was brought to me by an Express from Kingston— It decided the Commodore instantly to return to this Place without waiting for the small Vessels which had been detached to Burlington to bring away the 103d Regiment.— The Embarkation of that Regt. has however I fear been delayed if not wholly prevented by a circumstance which I have not yet had an opportunity of reporting to your Excellency nor indeed am I at this moment in possession of any satisfactory information on the subject.— On the morning of the 6th. I received a Report, Copy of which is enclosed, from Lt Colonel Smelt 103d Regt. Comg. at Burlington.[2] I lost no time in detaching the 37th Regt. with two 6s and the remaining Troop of the 19th Regt. and directed M General De Watteville to proceed and assume the direction of the whole. As the M General probably would not reach Burlington, in the present state of the roads, sooner than the evening of the 7th. and as I sailed from York yesterday Evening (8th) I have had no further reports Lt Colo. Smelt having most unaccountably omitted to communicate with the Commanding officer of the Post of York relative to the advance of the Enemy. That the next reports will contain the account of the rapid retreat of the Plundering Party (for such I conclude it to be) I have no doubt— No time however shall be lost in forwarding any further information which I may receive.

Previous to quitting York I directed a communication to be made to the Indians in Council on the subject of the very gratifying information contained in your Excellency's Letter and its enclosure of the 31st Ultimo I have the honor to be Your Excellency's Most obedient Humble Servant

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 686, pp. 144–50.

1. Major Francis Cockburn, Canadian Fencible Infantry. He was the younger brother of Rear Admiral George Cockburn, R.N.
2. Lieutenant Colonel William Smelt, 103d Regiment of Foot, British army.

[Enclosure]

Kingston Thursday Morning
10th. November—

P S—

The Squadron Anchored off the nine Mile Point last night— I have just landed and find M General Robinson[1] in possession of no information subsequent to that contained in his Letter of the 4th. Inst.

I do not therefore Consider it necessary to detain the Troops here which the Squadron has brought down vizt. the 41st. Regt. the Light Company of the Kings and about 130 convolescents & sick of the 103rd. Regt.

Finding that the Express which conveyed my Letter to your Excy. of the 5th. Inst. has not yet passed through this Place I have great Satisfaction in acquainting Your Excy. that the principal object of that Letter was to report that the Enemy evacuated Fort Erie on the morning of that day (5th) & retreated precipitatly to his own shores after blowing up the works and destroying the Place.

Having just observed in a late Quebec Paper the arrival at that Place of a considerable Detachment of R. Artillery Drovers I lose no time in requesting Your Excy to spare no less a Proportion of this valuable description of Men as may be possible for the Right Division in order to relieve the Boys of the different Regts. who are wholly unequal to that laborious & important duty.

G: D:

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 686, p. 151.

1. Major General Sir Frederick Philipse Robinson, British army.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

Copy/

Head Quarters, Kingston
13 November 1814

Sir,

Having just received an Account of the destruction by the Enemy of all the Resources (and the Mills) of the Country to the Westward of the Grand River, from which we had calculated upon deriving the principal part of the Supplies destined to support the Regular Troops and Indians during the approaching Winter, it becomes absolutely necessary that the means of feeding them should be forwarded from hence before the close of the Navigation.— I can not exactly state the quantity of Transport which will be required, but I can without hesitation say that nothing less than the aid of the whole Squadron will be sufficient to relieve the Urgent wants of the Right Division of the Army. In the event of your agreeing to afford me the assistance which I feel it to be my Duty to require, I should be induced to avail myself of the opportunity of proceeding myself to Burlington in order to ascertain the extent of the mischief which the unfortunate want of Troops at that point has enabled the Enemy to do us and to make such arrangements as may appear to me to be called for.

It will be necessary in my Opinion that the smaller Vessels should land the Stores they may take on Board at Burlington Beach.

In anticipation of your assent to a proposal which is so immediately connected with the preservation of an important part of the Province and which must be absolutely evacuated by the Troops unless I am provided with the means of conveying relief to them, I have directed the Deputy Commissary General to be prepared to put on Board the Ships every Barrel of Provisions which can possibly be spared from the Stores of this Depôt.

Under the unfortunate circumstances which have occurred, it would perhaps be advisable to change the Plan relative to the Crew of the *Niagara*, which would only add to the difficulties which we shall, I fear, experience in feeding any

thing at Turkey Point— At all events, for the present I would advise only a few Artificers and Shipwrights being sent there—the Crew of the Ship can be sent up in the Winter. I have the honor to be, &c.

(signed) Gordon Drummond
Lt. General—

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 686, pp. 170–72.

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army

(Copy.) His Majesty's Ship, *St. Lawrence,*
at Kingston the 14th. Novr. 1814.

Sir,

I have had the honor of your letter of yesterday's date, acquainting me of the destruction by the Enemy of all the Mills, to the Westward of the Grand River, and requiring the aid of the whole Squadron to relieve the urgent want of the Right Division of the Army.—

I have at all times, (from motives of duty and inclination,) been ready and solicitous to cooperate, and assist the Army, to the utmost of my means and ability, and therefore on the present occasion feel the more distressed, that it is not in my power to comply with your request, without exposing His Majesty's Squadron to most imminent danger, such, as no Officer could be warranted in risking.—

I have consulted Messrs. Richardsons, the Pilots, and others best acquainted with the Lake, who give it as their opinion that it would be the height of imprudence and hazardous in the extreme, to take the large Ships on the Lake at this advanced season of the year—that it has ever been the custom to lay up the Vessels on the 15th. of this month, and though small Vessels have been on the Lake as late as the 1st. of December they have narrowly escaped being lost—that the Snow Storms generally last Twenty-four Hours, with great violence, and there is no anchorage or Shelter for large Ships between this and York. I do not hesitate in declaring, that if the Squadron were to be caught on the Lake in such a storm it is my opinion that their loss would be inevitable.—

It is also to be considered, that if the Squadron were at this moment ready to sail, the Service could not be accomplished under ten days at least, from it's being impossible to approach the Niagara River within Six Miles; Burlington is out of the question, and York, which is the only place the Squadron can communicate with, the Ships are obliged to lay at the distance of three miles, and it is only in moderate weather, that Boats could land the Provisions—it would therefore be December before the Squadron could return, and then could not get into Port, if the wind was Easterly.—

The *Montreal* is reported by the Builder Unfit for Service without undergoing repair, and I can assure you, Sir, I am not without my apprehensions for the safety of the two Brigs on the Lake.—

I shall attend to your suggestions respecting the Crew of the *Niagara*.—

Should you determine on going up, and think proper to accept of the *Niagara*, I will order Captain Collier to be prepared to receive you on board.— I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) James Lucas Yeo
Commodore and Commander in Chief.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 686, pp. 173–76.

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army, to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Kingston. November 22nd. 1814.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Letter of the 16th. Instant, covering an Extract of a Despatch from Your Excellency to Earl Bathurst, of the 5th. of the same month, expressive of your sentiments on the subject of Naval Establishments on Lake Erie and Lake Huron.—

Previous to my departure from York, although the idea of building upon the latter sheet of Water had been abandoned by the Commodore, the Commissioner, and myself, yet I issued directions to Mr. Crookshank, the Deputy Assistant Commissary General at that place, to commence opening the Road to Penetangushene, and to transport as much provisions as he possibly could across Lake Simcoe before the close of the navigation upon that Lake; and likewise to repair the Yonge Street Road; which has of late been totally impassable for Wheeled Carriages in many places: for both which purposes I have ordered him every assistance he could require from the Militia of the Country, &c; and from his unceasing zeal, and attention to the good of the Service, I feel little doubt but that he has already commenced the work required.— I will direct Captain Payne to proceed with the Sappers and Miners, to Penetangushene, according to the original instructions he received from Your Excellency detaching Lieutenant Wilson with a few of those men, to Turkey Point, for the purpose of erecting cover for the Wing of the 37th. Regt. at present there.— Captain Payne has recommended this cover to consist of Four Block Houses, connected by a strong Stockade; as being easiest erected, both as cover and defence, at this season of the year.— And I will also order Major Cockburne to proceed with the Canadian Axemen in like manner to Penetangushene.—

Sir James Yeo has decided upon taking out the Guns of the *Princess Charlotte*, and sending them, together with what Stores can possibly be spared from hence, and the Naval Artificers, to York, in the *Niagara*, (daily expected from the Head of the Lake,) for the proposed Vessel on Lake Huron.— And Captain Collyer, with this Ship's Company, will be ordered to remain at York, for the purpose of affording his assistance towards the completion of the desired object.—

A Boat has been dispatched, to Sackett's Harbour, by the Commodore; which is expected to return in about five days.— Should the Reports by her induce the opinion, that the Enemy's Fleet has no intention of again taking the Lake, or that even they still continue in their present position, (the two large ships an-

chored under Fort Tompkins, and the remainder across the Harbour's mouth,) I propose accompanying Sir James Yeo, by water, to Montreal, if it meets Your Excellency's approbation, for the purpose of having a personal interview with Your Excellency, on the subject of future operations; which, from the difficulty and risk attending epistolary communication, cannot be otherwise so satisfactorily arranged.— I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble servant,

Gordon Drummond
Lt. General

P: S: No accounts of importance, since my last communication, have been received from the westward.—

G: D:

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 733, pp. 123–28.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT COMMISSARY GENERAL GEORGE CROOKSHANK, BRITISH ARMY, TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL COLLEY L. L. FOSTER, UPPER CANADIAN MILITIA

Copy/ York 16th. Decemr. 1814

Sir

Your Letter of the 4th. I had the honor to receive on the 14th. instant on my return from Crossing Lake Simcoe where I had been with Captain Collier to render what assistance I could in forwarding the shipwrights for Penetangushene Bay by way of Nottawasaga River, but on our arrival at the latter place we found the river had froze up the day before and that it was not practicable for them to proceed any further than Nottawasaga where Captain Collier has left 18 ship wrights under Lt. Poyntz, for constructing the Boats that may be required on that River, and the other ship wrights have been left at Holland River for Building the Boats required on Lake Simcoe.—

I beg leave to state that on my crossing Lake Simcoe immediately after the Lt. General went down to Kingston I wrote a note to Lt. Worsley commanding the Vessels on Lake Huron, stating that the Building of Vessels at Penetangushene Bay had been given up for the Winter, and recommended that his Vessels should remain at Nottawasaga River for the Winter, as it would Facilitate the Transport of the Supplies required for Mackinac in the Spring, as from what I had learnt the Vessels might make a trip to Mackinac from Nottawasaga River before the Ice would permit them to get out of Penetangushene Bay and in that case the enemy might again be on the Lake under present circumstances this arrangement has turned out rather unfortunate for had the Vessels gone round with what Provisions and Stores Lt. Woresley had taken in the Carpenters might have marched thro' the Woods and taken such Tools as was immediately required and have been supplyed with provisions from the Vessels.—

I have also to state that thinking there would be sufficient time for cutting the new Road out, not being aware of the change until Captain Collier's arrival, that it had not gone on as expeditiously as would other ways have done from my

Having had a Store House put up and also a small House for the person who had charge of the same, and the person I sent out in charge of the Party being taken dangerously ill was obliged to be brought in which also caus'd some delay. I have to report when I left these on the 12th. instant nearly 4 Miles of the road was cut out, 20 feet Wide and causd way'd to the large Cedar Swamp which was also cut thro' and partly caused way'd, on that Swamp being completed the Road will go on rapidly as I have directed that it should be opened only a sufficient width for the Team to pass and for to take our time afterwards for opening of it the full width, from the number of Hands 35 left at work I have not a doubt of it's being practicable for loaded Sleighs to go thro' to Penetangushene Bay by the time the Ice will permit them to cross Lake Simcoe about the 20th. January, since my Return I also engaged some more hands but am fearful that it is not practicable for them to cross Lake Simcoe for some time.—

The Stores are going out a few Loads daily to Holland River and I am now receiving proposals for taking out the Guns, Anchors and other heavy articles for which contracts will be entered into next Week.— I have the honor to be Sir Your most obedient Humble Servant

(Signed) Geo. Crookshank
A. C. G.

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 733, pp. 166–69, enclosed in Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond to Governor-General Sir George Prevost, 28 Dec. 1814. Lieutenant Colonel Foster was adjutant-general of militia.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM R. PAYNE, ROYAL ENGINEERS, TO BRITISH MILITARY SECRETARY NOAH FREER

York 21st. Decr. 1814

Dear Sir

His Excellency the Commander of the Forces being aware of my having been sent to Turkey Point, in consequence of Lt. General Drummond's decision, when at York, relative to the abandonment of the Establishment at Pennetangushine; I am now glad in being able to communicate, that I shall leave this to morrow for Holland River, and shall cross Lake Simcoe on my arrival, provided sufficiently frozen: if otherwise, shall employ myself in making such arrangements as may be found necessary.

The chief obstacle to the present service appears to be the supplying with provisions those employed; the winter communication will however, much facilitate the means of the Commissariat and I hope to be able to employ 300 Men this season: and have written to Lt. Genl. Drummond to cause the Commandant at this Post, to furnish me with such number of Militia as I may require: The resources of this part of the country are such as to prevent that Body of Men working beyond the period of three or four months without causing a great scarcity of Provisions in the ensuing season. I have however suggested (in

order to remedy this evil) that the embodied Militia be ordered to relieve the local in the early part of the Spring.

The communication to Pennetangushine by the Nottway Sague, will of course be used as soon as possible; but I am in hopes, that the heavy stores will be able to reach Pennetangushine by the road about to be formed; and which however can only be expected to answer as a winter communication. it will necessarily take some time and trouble to make it a summer road.

The Schooner's are now in the Nottaway Sague; the Post at Mackinac will demand their attention as soon as possible, in transporting Provisions Pennetangushine will be their second object; and I shd. wish six months salt provisions to be kept up at this latter Post. The Enemy may stop the communication by the Nottaway Sague in which case, that by the Road will, I fear, not be found as practicable, the ensuing summer, for the purpose of transport—

My utmost exertions will be used in forming the Depot at Pennetangushine, and, I shall transmit to his Excellency, Plans &c. of such works as I may intend to erect. Cover as well as defence must in the first instance be considered; and I shall endeavour so to arrange my plans, that the first works may ultimately add to the strength of the Post. I hope by the Spring to be able to cover 500 Men.

I left 5 Sappers & Miners with Lt. Willem[1] at Turkey Point, by Lt. Genl. Drummonds desire. I had not been able to visit the Deep Hole on the Point, a boat which I had sent for not having arrived in time; I however tried it with Major Cockburn, on Horseback, but the swampy state of the ground obliged us to return.

The high ground at Turkey Point presents a fine feature for a work; and I had laid down on paper a Fort, with the intention of commencing it in the Spring; and for the present had commenced a Block House, lined with earth, having a Ditch palisaded, and a covered way; and which wd. contain about 400 Men. The distance from the High ground to the Point being about 3 Miles, a work of a small nature wd. have been required between the Fort on the height, and that at the Naval Depot otherwise the communication might easily be interrupted by Gun Boats.

The swampy nature of the Point wd. have caused great trouble & time in forming an Establishment there. a causeway of about a mile and a half must have been made as early as possible tho' water communication might occasionally have been resorted to—

Lt. Willem will remain at Turkey Point to complete the work which I had commenced— I have the honor to be Sir your most obedient humble servt.

W. R. Payne
Captn. Rl. Engrs.

ALS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 388, pp. 240–44.

1. Possibly Sub-Lieutenant Patrick Whelan, Corps of Royal Sappers and Miners, Royal Engineers.

Midshipman James McGowan's Mission

Midshipman James McGowan departed Sackets Harbor on the night of 12 November on a secret mission to blow up the formidable new British warship Saint Lawrence *with a torpedo. For five days, the intrepid crew lay in the Saint Lawrence River waiting for a chance to place the incendiary device under the hull of the ship. Their plan was thwarted when their boat was discovered by two British gunboats, which immediately surrendered to the Americans. With the number of British prisoners equaling the number of the Americans, Midshipman McGowan prudently decided to return to Sackets Harbor to bring in the prisoners.*

Midshipman James McGowan to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Copy.

U.S. Brig *Sylph*
Sacketts Harbor 19th Novr. 1814

Sir

"I have the honor to inform you of my arrival this day after an absence of eight days— according to the instructions I received from you, I left the Harbor on the Evening of the 12th. inst. at 6 o'clock, and proceded with the Whaleboat, with Mr. Johnson (Pilot of the *Mohawk*) and Nine Men, to the River St. Lawrence and at 11. PM encamped on the Main land abreast of Fox-Island, the wind at S.E.—with heavy Squalls and rain— Sunday Novr. 13. fresh Gales from the S.E.—boats Crew engaged in making necessary preparations for the Cruise, latter part heavy rain and fresh gales from the S.E.— Monday Novr. 16th. [*14th*] light breezes from the N.E. at 1 o'C P.M. got under weigh and proceeded to the Mouth of the St. Lawrence, where we remained 'till dark, when we proceeded down the River about 7 Miles—the weather at this time squally from the N.E—which compelled us to make a Harbour in Tibbets Bay, during the Night Tuesday Novem. 15. Moderate breezes from the No.E. during the day, we lie concealed and at 6. P.M. got under way and proceeded down the St. Lawrence at 11. made a harbor in Mill Creek, in consequence of the lightness of the Night, we considered it imprudent to proceed Wednesday 16th. fresh Gales from the S.W.—and very Squally and rainy during the Night thought it advisable to remain where we were— Thursday 17. Fresh winds from the S.W.—accompanied with Rain, at 3 P.M—discovered two boats at the foot of Long Island standing for us, which appeared to be armed and well manned.— made every necessary preparation for receiving them— at ½ past 4, they came within hail; we then rushed out upon them and demanded a Surrender—no opposition was made, all hands crying out for quarters— they proved to be two of the Enemys boats, sent out by Capt. Owings,[1] commanding the British flotilla, on a plundering expedition to our Shore— the Prisoners &c. were immediately secured and as there were at this time several Gun boats at a short distance from us, we fortified ourselves against so superior a force, by springing several Mines &c. over which they would have been compelled to pass,— in case of an attack— Friday Nov. 18th. fresh Gales from S.W. and rainy—at 5. P.M. got under way with our prizes and proceeded for Sacketts Harbor.— latter part light breeses from N.N.E.— Saturday 19th. at 8. am we arrived safe at this place.—

In consequence of the information we received from the Prisoners of the Enemy's Fleet having gone to the head of the Lake, we thought it advisable not to proceed any further for the present— we also learnt from them that the frame of a 32 Gun ship was nearly raised and that they were laying the keel of a 74—also that Two Brigs of 20 Guns each were building in Little York

I have now given you the particulars of our Cruise and it affords me great satisfaction to inform you that the Men conducted themselves with the greatest propriety." I have the honor to be &c. &c.

Signd—James McGowan
Mid. U.S. Navy

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 11, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 41).

1. Commander Charles Cunliffe Owen, R.N.

COMMODORE ISAAC CHAUNCEY TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

private U.S. Ship *Superior* Sackets Harbor
19th November 1814

Sir

Midshipman McGowan's real business down the St. Lawrence was to pass round the foot of Long Island and approach Kingston from below for the purpose of attempting to blow the Enemies large ship up with a "Torpedo" but being discovered by two of the Enemies boats he was obliged to take them and as the prisoners amounted to an equal number to his own men he had no alternative but to return.

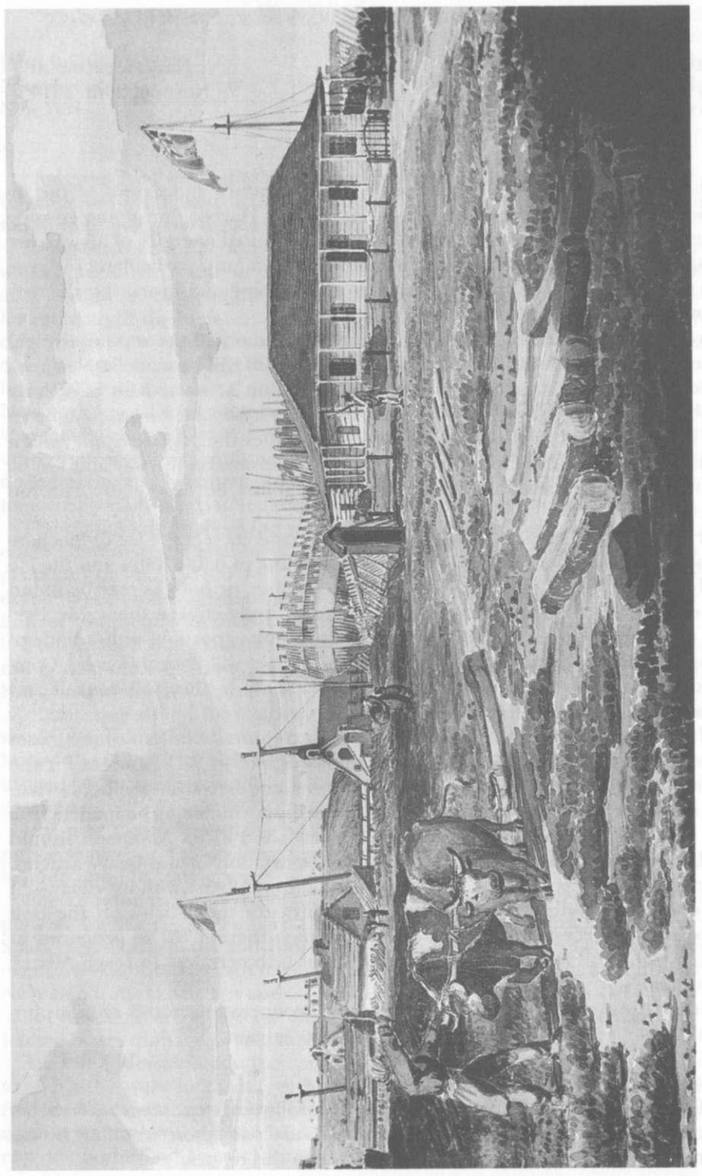
I shall make another attempt befor the frost sets in I have the honor to be with great respect Sir your Most Obt Humble Servant

Isaac Chauncey

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 11 (M125, Roll No. 41).

Building New Ships of War

The balance of naval power on Lake Ontario swung back and forth between the American and British sides during the course of the 1814 season. At year's end, the British, with their enormous 102-gun ship Saint Lawrence, *had an overwhelming advantage. If the Americans were to keep pace or surpass them, they would have to commit to an unprecedented level of ship construction. The Navy Department adopted Commodore Chauncey's plan to build two ships of the line and a frigate. Not a moment could be lost in moving guns, stores, and men to Sackets Harbor to gain the earliest advantage in the spring.*



Commodore's House in the Naval Yard, Kingston, Upper Canada, July 1815

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent John Bullus

John Bullus Esqr.
Navy Agent
New York

Navy Department
Novemr. 20th. 1814

Sir

The enclosed Indent will intimate to you the nature and extent of the intended augmentation of our Naval force at Sacketts Harbor during the ensuing winter, which from its magnitude will require the united energies of all who are engaged in the prosecution of this important object, and particularly of those who may be charged with the business of transporting and procuring the articles necessary for its construction and equipment.

As it is intended to erect a rope works at the Harbor, all the rope over eight inches will be made at that place. The Breeching stuff will be made at New York of Russia Hemp. you will therefore procure all the heavy articles and those which will be first required without delay on the best possible terms, payable either in Treasury Notes or in money 60 or 90 days after the purchase. Mr. Anderson is charged with the transportation; the guns are now on the way and will be at Albany in due time; as every heavy article must be before the Hudson closes—

Mr. Eckford and Messrs. Brown's will examine and correct the list of Mechanicks stores; the former will undertake one of the line of battle Ships and the latter the other. The 44 gun Ship will be built by either, or both as may be found convenient, and for this purpose you will immediately engage them. Mr. Eckford and one of the Mr. Browns will set out as soon as possible with a body of Carpenters to contract for and cut the timber. They will probably meet Commodore Chauncey on his way to New York with whom they will consult and whose directions they will follow.—

When he arrives at New York you will exhibit to him the Indent of the stores and materials, and follow his directions in all respects— The Indent for the cordage and cables of the 44 gun Ship is distinct and herewith enclosed. whatever may be at the navy Store or at the navy yard, or which may be made at the navy yard, you will require of the officers there; and if Mr. Anderson should not be on in time to take charge of the transportation of the heavy articles, you may have prepared, you will forward them to Albany without delay.— I rely upon your judgment and prudence to procure the articles on the best terms, and if necessary you will order any part thereof to be procured at Philadelphia, and forwarded without delay, but with certainty to reach Albany in due time.—

With my earnest requisition for your zealous cooperation in this arduous undertaking— I am very respectfully Your Obedt. Servant

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 212–13. The following text was centered between the address and the date lines: "Confidential with those who may be engaged in the prosecution of the business to which this relates."

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Navy Agent John Bullus

John Bullus Esqr.
Navy Agent
New York

Navy Department
Novemr. 28 1814

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 25th Inst and doubt not that every effort will be made on your part to accomplish in due time the important objects committed to your charge by my letter of the 20th. Inst.—

If you succeed in procuring the machinery and implements for the rope walks agreeably to your expectations it will save time, and probably expence also.— In order that you may have a more comprehensive view and form a better estimate of the measures necessary to be pursued in the first instance, I enclose an extract of a letter received from Commodore Chauncey in answer to certain detailed interrogatories contained in a letter from the Department embracing the whole subject; and as he was directed on the 16th inst to proceed to New York in order to arrange the plan of operations, he will probably be with you shortly after the receipt of this letter, when such of the details as do not require to be instantaneously acted upon, can be revised and executed with more deliberation and advantages particularly the procuring of the Workmen and materials, which may not be required in the first stage of the business.

The remittance I ordered to you on the 26th inst. will relieve Mr. Eckford and enable him to go on as soon as his presence may be required— I regret that the proposals of Mr. Eckford and Messrs. Browns are not more explicit and better defined.— The engagement on their part is altogether discretionary as to the time of completing their contracts, which is of all things the most important, for it is upon that, the whole efficacy of the measure depends; moreover they do not contemplate building the 44 until one of the line of battle Ships shall be launched, where as the whole may go on together—

I have understood from private sources that Messrs. Brown's have said they would engage to build two ships of the first class in two months, and I had hoped they would have fixed a short and definite period for their completion instead of "as early as possible in the spring," which is so loose as to afford no certainty.

It is true that relying upon what these gentlemen have already done in the public service, and upon their known zeal, talents and patriotism, I feel less solicitude upon this subject

The conditions also are too loosely expressed. They say—"to finish the Carpenters, Caulkers, Joiners, Blacksmiths, and Blockmakers work for the Hull and Spars: The Blacksmiths and Blockmakers work for the Rigging and armament excluded—all the materials except timber to be delivered on the ground by the Navy Department which is also to risk the vessels while on the Stocks.—

For which we are to receive and be paid at the rate of eighty dollars per ton United States tonnage or measurement"

Am I to understand that the contractors are to furnish the materials as well as to finish the work in the above branches, and that the Navy Department is to furnish all the transportation except for the timber, or that the Navy Department is to furnish the materials as well as the transportation to the ground, except the timber?—

Nothing is said of Oakum Naval Stores Iron or lumber though it may be inferred and I presume is intended that the contractors are to furnish all these and that the Navy Department is to furnish only the transportation to the ground, otherwise the price would be enormously high in the midst of a country abounding in timber, and for work merely substantial but rough.—

Again, what is meant by United States tonnage? Is it the tonnage by which the vessels of the Navy have always been built and measured; or is it Custom house tonnage? I presume it is the former, in which the length between the perpendiculars less ⅗ of the beam, and the rake of the post, is taken for the streight rabit; which multiplied by the moulded breadth of the beam and that product again multiplied by half that breadth; and this last product divided by 95 the quotient will be the Navy tonnage—

If Custom House tonnage is meant (which I cannot suppose, as it is wholly inapplicable and has never been applied to Ships of War) which of the decks is to be taken as the basis of the length? If it is the upper deck as in Merchantmen it would swell the tonnage to an enormous degree.—

The *Java* 44 lately built at Baltimore (and better never was built) cost Seventy three dollars per ton Navy tonnage, and the builder found all the materials of Wood, of Iron, of Copper (except the sheathing Copper which he put on) and lead for the Hull, together with Carvers Plumbers and Joiners work, (except the rooms) Oakum Naval Stores, and three coats of paint inside & out.—

In the present case contracts cannot be made in the usual public manner because policy forbids it, and men must be employed upon whose integrity capacity and zeal the Government may perfectly rely not only to execute the work well but above all things, in due time; and for this merited confidence the Government is disposed to be liberal, but have a right to expect a corresponding disposition on the part of the Contractors—

I mention these things in order that proper explanations may be had and that you may have a perfect understanding and a well defined contract upon the best possible terms you can procure, and which you are hereby authorized to make without further reference to the Department as not a moment is to be lost I am very respectfully Yr. Ob. St.

W. Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, CLS, 1814, pp. 213–15.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Commodore Isaac Chauncey
Commanding the U.S Naval
force on Lake Ontario
Sacketts Harbour

Navy Department
Novemr. 30 1814

Sir,

On your arrival in New York Mr. Bullus will exhibit for your information the letters, estimates and Indents for the contemplated augmentation of the Naval force on Lake Ontario, by which you will perceive that your suggestion of Two Ships of the first class, and one 44 Gun Ship, has been adopted after having consulted Commodore Decatur, Governor Tompkins and Mr. Fulton, on the expediency of substituting Steam floating Batteries; which upon mature deliberation, they reported against, and recommended the description of force now adopted. If however, upon your consulting with those gentlemen again upon the expediency of substituting one Steam Battery in lieu of the 44, and the decision should be in favour of the former, you are authorized to take the necessary measures for that purpose, and to arrange the business with Mr. Fulton so as to leave no doubt of the execution in due time

You will carefully examine and correct the estimates and Indents, by extending, curtailing, or dispensing as you may deem proper; confiding in your judgement, and desire to limit this inevitably heavy expenditure to the most economical scale.

The transportation of the Guns, is in great forwardness, and I trust all the heavy and necessary articles required in the early stage of the operations, will reach Albany in due Season. On this subject the President is very solicitous, and I pray you to look into the entire arrangements and correct such as may be found defective.—

Mr. Anderson is charged with the transportation, but subject to such orders in that respect as you may deem best adapted to the end in view—

In what manner this great additional force is to be manned, ought to be investigated and provided for, as early as possible.— I cannot but entertain great solicitude on this subject, knowing the difficulty of procuring men for the service, and particularly that of the Lakes, for which they entertain a great aversion.—

The defense of our Atlantic ports cannot be abandoned, and the preference given to the private armed service, from the hope of gain, I fear will much impede our recruiting service.

The result of your reflections on this subject will doubtless be acceptable to the Department, in which, tomorrow will terminate my official functions, for which I have been preparing since April last, from the indispensable attention required by my private concerns.

I cannot suffer this occasion to pass without bearing testimony to the talents, energy, judgment, and patriotism which you have displayed during your arduous command, and stating expressly my perfect conviction that it could not have been in better hands.

With my best wishes for the honorable and prosperous issue of that, for which you are now preparing. I am very respectfully Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, 1814, CLS, pp. 223–25.

Captain Richard O'Conor, R.N., to First Lord of the Admiralty Viscount Robert Saunders Dundas Melville

91 Wimpole St. London
Decembr. 19th. 14

My Lord

Having already informed your Lordship in person of the circumstances under which I was despatched to England by Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo,

I consider it my duty to furnish your Lordship with all the information on the present state of affairs in the different Districts of Upper Canada which my long Residence therein in an Official situation has necessarily enabled me to acquire,

It will not be necessary for me to impress upon your Lordship how much the safety of the Province of Upper Canada depends on the maintenance of our Naval Superiority on Lake Ontario; This superiority which by unprecedented exertions we at present possess (as will appear by the accompanying statement of the comparative force of the two Squadrons on that Lake) can only be maintained by creating means of transport from Montreal to Kingston for the Supplies of Stores and Provisions which any increase of that force will necessarily demand,

Timber for building is to be procured on the spot to any extent, all the other materials must come from Europe, and be conveyed from Montreal in part by Land Carriage and the remainder by the most difficult Navigation perhaps existing, to Kingston, (a distance of nearly two hundred miles) which is the grand Naval Depot of all Upper Canada, The Navigation of the St. Lawrence is practicable only from May to the end of October or beginning of November, and the means of transport by this navigation, the most important of all considerations with a view to the defence of Upper Canada, may be very materially improved, as I am prepared to prove if called upon by your Lordship or any of His Majesty's Ministers so to do,

The present means of Kingston Yard I consider to be fully equal to any Demand which can be made upon it for keeping in repair the Force at present on Lake Ontario, and for a gradual encrease thereof, and the means of transport from Montreal as furnished by the Province during the last Campaign, may also be considered equal to the supply of the Yard on its present Establishment, Although admitting of no reduction: If however the preparations of the Enemy render necessary a corresponding increase of the British Naval Force on the Lake it will become a question of the most vital importance how the additional means of transport which the construction and maintenance of such increased force will demand, are to be procured, as without such additional means of transport it will be impossible to meet on equal terms the superior advantages which the Enemy in this respect possesses: The foregoing observations will equally apply to any force which it may be in contemplation to construct on Lakes Erie or Huron, the Demands for both of which Stations, must necessarily be supplied, from Kingston Yard, although there is another communication to Lake Huron by means of the Ottawa River which cannot however be depended upon,

I have already observed that I consider the present Establishment of Kingston Yard equal to a gradual increase of the Force on the Lakes but the continuance of the Naval Superiority which we at present possess, must depend on the expedition with which the exertions of the Enemy may be met, I take the liberty of calling your Lordships attention to the expediency of timely re-inforcing the strength of that Yard according to the Intelligence which may be received by His Majesty's Government of the preparations of the Enemy at Sackets, and here it may not be impropper to observe that the general impression in Canada prior to my departure, was, that the exertions of the Enemy in this respect during the ensuing Winter would be very considerable; An early provision of Ordnance will also be necessary, and the serious injury which had nearly been occasioned by the recent capture of the Transport laden with Ordnance Stores for the Lakes,[1] may probably suggest the propriety of sending them in Ships of War hereafter in preference to Transports: There are also many details with regard to an improved mode of packing the Stores both with a view to their preservation and more convenient transport and other matters, with which I will not trouble your Lordship, but will communicate, if your Lordship should think proper so to direct, with the Navy Board and the other Departments to which these Details more particularly belong. I have the honor to be your Lordships Most obedt. Humb. Servt.

Rich oConor

ALS, CSmH, Melville Papers.

1. H.M. transport *Stranger,* carrying ordnance for the northern lakes, was captured by the Portsmouth, N.H., privateer *Fox,* Samuel Handy, on 8 September.

Close of the American Campaign on Lake Erie

Operations on Lake Erie in 1814 were at an end when Captain Sinclair requested permission to leave Lake Erie to settle his accounts and visit his family. He also longed for the command of a frigate so that he could win the glory and "brilliant success" that he saw other naval captains achieve.

Captain Sinclair was granted permission to depart for Washington and to visit his family, but did not receive the coveted command of a cruising frigate during the war. He was ordered back to Erie to close up the station in March 1815.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U S Brig *Niagara* Erie
November the 28th 1814

Sir

I have the satisfaction to inform you that all the heavy vessels are within the Basin—without accident— The *Lady Prevost* will be ready to come in the first good day which offers, and it will be but a short time before they are moored in as complete a state of defense as it is possible to place them— I shall throw temporary roofs over the four large vessels, in order to secure the use of their guns at all times, give comfort and health to their crews, preserve the Ships and make them safe from boarding— I shall have it done in a short time & with but very trifling expense—a mere nothing when compared with the utility— It will be necessary to let me know as early as possible the force you contemplate for the ensuing season, as our mens times are daily expiring, and all the 12 Months men's times will be out in March; and those constitute a large majority, and will include almost every Sailor on the Station— If I knew your views I would regulate the recruiting service accordingly— Mr. Ormsby has also stated that much may be saved by an early contract for our Salt Provision, and

that it can now be made without an advance— I have the honor to remain with great respect, Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 192 (M125, Roll No. 35). This letter was misfiled with letters from April 1814.

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Jones

U.S. Sloop *Niagara* Erie, Decr. the 5th. 1814

Sir

you were good enough to say to me, when giving me my instructions for the station, that so soon as the campaign on the frontier closed, I should be permitted to return to the Atlantick— That time is now at hand, and the Squadron placed in a situation which requires bravery alone to defend it, should defence become necessary— I can therefore with propriety renew my request to you, not only to come on to the seat of government with a view to settle my account for the disbursements of the station, which stands open to a large amount; but to give some personal attention to my domestick affairs, which, from circumstances beyond my control, have become much deranged—[1] My family have been driven from two different settlements by the incursions of the Enemy, and they are now in that unsettled state which imperiously call for my presence— I have ever considered it the duty of an officer to make his private concerns subservient to the publick good, and I only ask indulgence when I am under a belief my services can be spared without injury to the command I hold—

It will be unnecessary for me to say to you, Sir, how much of my time has been employed on Lake Service, and how infinitely more desirable would be the command of a cruizing Frigate (were it in your power at this time, without interfering with officers who have stronger claims, to give me such an appointment) as you have too just a sense of the feelings which belong to an officer not to be able to anticipate his wishes in Service; I have therefore remained contented, under a belief that where I was ordered my services were most necessary— If a devotion to an arduous and unpleasant service gives an officer a claim to indulgence I feel conscious that I have earned it, and altho my exertions have not been marked with any brilliant success, yet I am not without a hope that they have been of advantage to my Country, and that those who know me will do me the justice to believe, that had opportunity offered I would have used the means in my power to the greatest advantage—

In making this request, Sir, I do not wish you to understand that I am paving the way to leaving this Station— I assure you I have no such intention, for unpleasant and arduous as is this Service, and preferable as would be an appointment to a Frigate, where glory might be won, I shall cheerfully lay aside all selfish pretensions and apply myself where it is believed I can render most service to my Country I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, Your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 82 (M125, Roll No. 41). William Jones stepped down as secretary of the navy on 1 December 1814.

1. Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans ordered Sinclair to Washington to settle his accounts on 12 December. Lieutenant Daniel S. Dexter assumed command of the Lake Erie Station during Sinclair's absence. Dexter was promoted to master commandant on 10 December 1814.

The Trial of Surgeon Joseph G. Roberts

Surgeon Joseph G. Roberts entered naval service in 1811 and served on Lake Erie during the war. In 1813 he was in charge of a shore hospital established at Erie, and so missed the action, and the prize money, when the American squadron under Captain Oliver H. Perry captured the British squadron on 10 September 1813. He petitioned Congress to grant him a share of prize money for the action, but was turned down.[1]

In 1814, he faced charges of neglect of duty, neglect of his patients, and unofficerlike conduct. The testimony at his court-martial reveals shocking accusations about his callousness toward his patients, and hints that he may have had a drinking problem and was perhaps embezzling naval stores as well. The testimony against him was so damning that Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield overturned his sentence and ordered a new trial on the grounds that his sentence was inadequate to the charges.

Doctor Roberts was the only medical officer to be court-martialed during the War of 1812. His hearing reveals much about the state of medical practice on distant stations. It also describes a man who was clearly not suited to the caring profession of medicine. Doctor Roberts resigned from naval service on 30 May 1815 before he could be called before a second court to hear the charges against him.

1. ASP: Naval Affairs, *Vol. 1, p. 362.*

Court-Martial of Surgeon Joseph G. Roberts

Duplicate of the proceedings of a Court Martial held on bd. the U S Brig *Queen Charlotte* in the harbour of Presque Isle by Virtue of the following Order—

Sir

By Virtue of authority vested in me by the Honl. the Secretary of the Navy, for the convening a Court Martial for the trial of Doctr. Joseph G Roberts on the enclosed charges exibited by myself—You are hereby appointed President of said Court to be convened on bd. the U.S. Brig *Queen Charlotte* this day at 10 oclock A.M. And to be composed of the following Members and Judge Advocate who's summonses have been duly handed them and for which this shall be your warrant

Given under my hand & Seal on bd. the U.S.S of War *Niagara* Erie, 6th. Decr. 1815 [*1814*] Sd. A Sinclair

Lt. Comdt. Danl. S Dexter President

Lieut. Comdt. S Woodhouse
" E P Kennedy
Lieut. Thos. Holdup
" S. H. Bullus
} Members

John C Wallace Judge Advocate

Decr. 6th. 1814

The Court met pursuant to the above—Order—Present
Lieut. Comdt. Danl. S Dexter—Presidt.
Lieut. Comt. E Kennedy — Lieut. Comdt. Woodhouse
Lieut. Saml. H Bullus — Lieut. John [*Thomas*] Holdup
John C Wallace J Advocate

The Court being duly sworn in the presence of the Prisoner proceeded to the trial of Joseph G Roberts Surgeon in the U.S. Navy, who being previously asked if he had any objections to the members named in the General Order, and replying in the negative, was arraigned on the following Charges preferred against him by Arthur Sinclair Come. Commanding the U S Squadron on Lake Erie—

Charge 1st. General neglect of duty since first arriving on the station

Specification. That you were sent to Pittsburg for the purpose of selecting an assortment of medicine for the use of the Hospital Department, and that you there suffered the Apothecaries to select and put up several Hundred Dollars worth of Medicine entirely useless for a Naval Hospital, and others that were damaged and unfit for use, great quantities of which medicine is now laying on our hands— And that when you were asked, why you made such purchase, your reply was, that you gave the Apothecary a list of the Vessels and their supposed Crews, and suffered him to put up what he thought proper— not feeling disposed to give yourself much trouble about it

2nd. That you have most shamefully neglected the Sick in most instances when they came under your charge particularly on bd. the Hospital Ships *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* in not giving your personal attention to their diseases, and even after being urged by Doctr. Richardson who lived on board with them and knew all their wants, you did not let me know that they, such as Bedding & Clothing were wanting, and that it never came to my knowledge through you— That you were personal in your neglect to some of the Men to whom you had dislike telling them their lives were not worth saving or language to that effect— Should it be necessary before a Court Martial a number of instances of inhuman and flagrant neglect can be proved—

Charge 2nd. A want of proper Respect and decorum to the Comg. officer on this Station

Specification—That you threatened to punish the Officers who had reported your neglect to me (Doctrs. Barton & Richardson)[1] in my presence at which time I arrested you

Charge 3rd. For unofficerlike Conduct &c—

Specification—For suffering Midshipman Senat, to kick you in a most disgraceful way without resisting the affront in any way

Sd. A Sinclair—

Doctr. Joseph G Roberts
U S Navy

To the foregoing charges and Specifications the Prisoner pleaded not Guilty—

Doctr. Richardson Surgeons Mate in the U S Navy being duly sworn, says, that the prisoner was Surgeon of the Hospital Vessels *Detroit* & *Queen Charlotte*, and that he (the Witness) lived on bd. those Vessels, that frequently for two and three days at a time the Prisoner did not visit the Sick, and when on bd. that he did not pay that attention to the sick, that a Surgeon having the care of a Hospital ought to have Done— I frequently represented to him the necessity of procuring clothing Bedding &c for the sick, and at length (finding my complaint unattended to) told him I should make complaint to the Commodore if longer neglected—a partial supply was then obtained of Bedding, I then informed the Commanding Officer of the wants of the Sick who ordered a further supply— The first bedding procured for the Hospital was on a requisition signed by Capt Kennedy

At one time when going round the Hospital I observed to the prisoner there was a man by the name of Ray who required attention— The Prisoner said there was not much the matter with him, at any rate he was too much of a rascal to merit care

Q by the Court. Did the prisoner appear to have a personal dislike to Ray

Ansr. I think he had from his manner of speaking—

Q by the Prisoner— Was it not frequently the case that I could not visit the Hospital in consequence of high Winds and for want of a boat

Answer— Sometimes the wind would not admit of coming off; A Boat was every day sent on Shore, it frequently happened that you did not come on board when you might have done so

Q by the Court. Did he at all times when on board attend to his Duty

Answer No, he sometimes did not arrive until I had done prescribing, at which time he did not visit the sick

Q by the Court What was your hour of prescribing

Ansr. I had not any particular hour, I usually put it off as long as possible, Waiting for the prisoner

Q by the Prisoner— Did I not always enquire when I came on board if any and what alterations had taken place during my absence

Ansr. You did Generally

Q by the Court. Did the prisoner give his personal attention when changes had taken place

Ansr. I believe he did

Doctr. Barton Surgeon in the U S Navy being duly sworn—Says—that he was directed by the Commodore to occasionally Visit the Hospital Vessel which he did, but does not know any thing of the Prisoners Conduct relative to the charges exibited against him but as informed by Doctr. Richardson

The Court adjourned to meet tomorrow at 10 oclock

Decr. 7th 1815 [*1814*]

The Court met pursuant to adjournment

In consequence of the Arrest of Lieut. Bullus[2]—Lieut Packett was placed on the Court by order of the Commodore and duly sworn

Present
Lieut. Comt. D S Dexter—Presidt.
Lt. Com E P Kennedy, Lieut John Packett } Lieut. Comt. Woodhouse, Lieut. Thomas Holdup
John C. Wallace J A

Doctr. Parsons Surgeon the U S Navy being duly sworn, says, that during the time the prisoner had the charge of the Hospital he was absent, that he gener-

ally considered the prisoner as inattentive to his duty, that when the prisoner had charge of the Sick on bd. of the *Lady Prevost* in the Winter and Spring of 1814 he (the Witness) was called upon to visit the Sick on bd. of that Vessel, who were suffering for want of Medical Aid—
The Prisoner was sent to Pittsburg for the purchase of medicines &c for the Squadron at this place—among which medicines &c were a number of Articles unfit for practice on bd. a Man of War, useless instruments and two Boxes of Damaged Chocolate—
Q by the Court What medicines &c were unfit for practice on bd. a Man of War in the purchase made by the prisoner
Ansr. Four Female Catheters and a Quantity of Worm Medicine
Q by the Court, Would not those things you mention as unfit for practice in a fleet, be useful in the event of transporting Troops with Women & Children
Ans. they might be useful
Q by the Prisoner— Was I not sick on Shore at the time you visited the Sick on bd. the *Lady Prevost*
Ans You were not at that time—
Q by the Court— Was the chocolate you mentioned being damaged, so when purchased in Pittsburgh, or injured in the transportation to this place
Ans. I dont know
Comr. A Sinclair being duly sworn, says, that the Prisoner met him in the town of Erie and asked him if he had any fault to find with him (the Prisoner) I said yes—he enquired for what— I told him for neglect of Duty he asked my informers— I said they were numerous and mentioned Doctrs. Barton & Richardson— he replied he would call upon them for gentlemanly satisfaction— I then told him to consider himself arrested—
Q by the Court. Did he appear to be in a passion when he addressed you
Ans. he did
Lieut Thomas Holdup being duly sworn Says—I commanded the *Lady Prevost* part of the Winter & Spring of 1814. the Prisoner was then Acting Surgeon of my Vessel four or five men were very unwell and were not attended to in the manner which they ought to have been by the Prisoner— In two instances I was obliged to send men to the care of Doctrs. Barton & Parsons to prevent their suffering
Q by the Court— Could the Prisoner have visited your Vessel at the time you sent those men to the care of other Surgeons
Ans. I dont know of any cause to have prevented him
Q by the prisoner— Did the neglect you mention take place in the month of January, if so—what time in that month
Answer. I do not recollect that it was in the month of Jany.—
John C Wallace being duly sworn—says, that he had the Charge of the Navy Hospital about the time the Medicines &c were purchased by the prisoner arrived from Pittsburgh that he examined them when unpacked, that there was a quantity of Worm Medicine and some Female catheters in the said purchase, and that he firmly believes that there was five or Six Hundred Dollars worth of damaged or otherwise useless Medicines in said purchase
The Court adjourned to meet tomorrow Morning at 10 oclock

Decr. 8th 1814

The Court met pursuant to adjournment all the Members present

John C Wallace J Advocate

Lieut. Comdt E P Kennedy being duly sworn—Says, he gave the Prisoner an order for clothing, Bedding &c to the amount required by the Prisoner for the use of the Hospital— I know at that time all the necessary Articles for the Sick could not be had—
Purser E Salamon[3] being duly sworn—Says—The Order issued by capt Kennedy and handed by the Prisoner for the Articles for the use of the Hospital could not at that time be complied with in whole—part was—there was not clothing on hand—had application been made at the time Capt. Kennedys Order was issued, a sufficiency of bedding could have been had, when on bd. the Hospital Vessel he passed through the Birth Deck where the sick lay, and did not think their situation so peculiarly distressing as represented, his view was slight, nor does he feel himself competent to judge of the Situation in which a Hospital ought to be
Q by the Court. Why was not the order of capt Kennedy complied with as to bedding
Ans I know not unless in consequence of its raining at the time the order of Capt. Kennedy was presented
Lieut Comdt Woodhouse being duly sworn—Says—that during the time the prisoner was under his command, he was attentive to his duty and his deportment Officerlike
Q by the Court— How long was the prisoner under your Command
Ansr. About one Month—
In consequence of the death of Midn. Senat[4] previous to the meeting of the Court, no testimony was had on the third Charge & Specification against the Prisoner
The Prisoner being asked if he were ready to proceed made his defence
The Court being ordered to be cleared and the whole of the proceedings read over to the court by the Judge Advocate the following sentence was pronounced

Sentence

The Court after Mature deliberation Sentence the prisoner to be Six months Suspended, during which time he is not to receive pay or emoluments nor shall he wear the Uniform of the U S Navy during said time

The Court adjourned Sine Die

John C Wallace — Dan[l] S Dexter
Judge Advocate — President

DS, DNA, RG125, CM, Vol. 5, No. 193 (M273, Roll No. 7).

1. Surgeon Robert R. Barton, appointed 13 May 1813. John C. Richardson was appointed a surgeon's mate 17 May 1814.
2. On 7 December, the court's president, Daniel Dexter, ordered the arrest of Lieutenant Samuel H. Bullus on charges that included drunkenness and lying. Lacking sufficient officers to hold a court-martial, Dexter permitted Bullus to report himself to the department. Bullus resigned on 18 April 1815 while awaiting court-martial.
3. Ezekiel Solomon, pursur, appointed 28 March 1814; commission dated 26 March.
4. Midshipman George Senat was killed in a duel on 30 November 1814.

CAPTAIN ARTHUR SINCLAIR TO SECRETARY OF THE NAVY JONES

U.S.S. *Niagara* Erie, Decr. the 12th. 1814

Sir

Inclosed I send you the proceedings of the Court Martial on Doctor Roberts— I should make no remarks on his character after his having been brought before a court, which has past sentence on him, but for a circumstance which has come within my knowledge since the Court closed its proceedings—

From my frequent absence from this place I have been obliged to suffer the Hospital surgeon to procure the necessaries for the comforts of the sick, for which purpose I have directed a Merchant in this place to furnish him on his requisition; and upon calling the accounts in, a few days ago, for revision I found one, for the short space of three months, amounting to near $1300— principally for wine, Sugar, Tea &cta., with his signature to it, certifying its correctness— It is my opinion, and that of the surgeons here, that there must have been the most wanton and disgraceful waste that can be imagined; or something worse than waste— His rapacious plunder, when with Colnl. Campbell at Long point last May, as I have lately learned, was highly disgraceful— Indeed, Sir, from my personal knowledge of his character, since my return to this Lake, I must say he is unworthy the service; and he is certainly extremely ignorant in his profession, too much so to be trusted with the lives of a Ship's Company— I have the honor to remain with high respect Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 8, No. 105 (M125, Roll No. 41). Two letters are numbered 105 in this volume.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY CROWNINSHIELD TO CAPTAIN ARTHUR SINCLAIR

Capt. A. Sinclair
Comm'g Naval Officer
Erie Pa.

Navy Department
April 20th. 1815

Sir

The proceedings of the Court Martial upon Dr. Joseph G. Roberts a Surgeon of the Navy, are herewith returned, and are disapproved, upon the ground of inadequacy in the punishment.— You will as soon as may be, convene a new Court Martial for his trial upon the same charges, and such other additional charges, as may be exhibited against him.— and if there should not be a sufficient number of Officers upon the Station, you will immediately order Surgeon Roberts to New York under arrest, to take his trial there.— I am very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, p. 107 (M149, Roll No. 12).

Guarding the American Fleet at Whitehall

At the end of November, the American vessels and prize ships lay moored in the narrow southern end of Lake Champlain near Whitehall, New York. Captain Thomas Macdonough was given permission to visit Washington, D.C., to settle his accounts, then proceed to New York to take command of the U.S. Navy's first steam warship, Fulton the First.

Less than a month later, Captain Macdonough was ordered back to Lake Champlain. Rumors were circulating of a British expedition to destroy the American vessels as they lay moored for the winter. Such a plan had indeed been proposed, but was called off when it was discovered that the army at Plattsburg and the navy at Whitehall were prepared to counter the invasion. The British instead focused their efforts on building a new squadron at Isle aux Noix during the winter months.

MAJOR GENERAL SIR THOMAS M. BRISBANE, BRITISH ARMY, TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Montreal 22d. decr. 1814—

Sir

In consequence of the advantage that I have derived from local knowledge in the command of the left division of the Army, I deem it my duty to suggest to Your Excellency, the practicability of destroying the Enemy's fleet at White hall; and I should feel highly flattered if you are pleased to confide the execution of the under taking to me. I beg to assure you, I should not have engaged in a service of this nature without giving it that due reflection that the extent of the operation & the magnitude of the object required & which I should pledge myself to accomplish, at the hazard of any small Military reputation I may possess— I should require Your Excellency to place at my entire disposal not less than 7,000 men & 1000 sleighs—(or more if they could be conveniently collected as it might tend more effectually & more speedily to the completion of the undertaking) for the space of three weeks from the commencement of their march—

I shall not now enter into the detail of my arrangements as I am not yet aware that Your Excellency will be pleased to sanction such an enterprize at the present season, but should You coincide in opinion with me, as to its eligibility I shall lose no time in entering into the detail of the whole of my plan—

Draft, MiU-C, Thomas M. Brisbane Papers.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE PREVOST TO MAJOR GENERAL SIR THOMAS M. BRISBANE, BRITISH ARMY

Secret & Confidential Quebec— 24th. Decr. 1814

Dear Sir

Altho' it is out of my power to enter into the merits of the Enterprize suggested in your letter of the 22nd Inst. by this days post, still I cannot restrain the desire I feel of declaring to you that I consider it worthy of being chosen.

Having made known my predisposition to the measure, it remains with you to demonstrate its practicability with the means I can place at your disposal, which cannot exceed 6000 Men including Militia.— It is necessary I should ascertain that you are aware of the many difficulties you have to encounter, & that the roads you are to use have been examined on the ground & not upon Maps alone. Have you a thorough knowledge of the country in which the operation is to be executed? Do you propose moving by the East or West Shore of Lake Champlain?

Allow me to impress upon you the absolute necessity of the most profound secrecy upon the occasion. The Quarter Master General is the only person in whom I would recommend you to confide & from whom you may obtain valuable information, respecting the Enemy's arrangements, & useful assistance, in calculating the practicability of obtaining the extensive transport stated by you as requisite.—

In order to enable you to mature your scheme for the destruction of the Enemy's Naval Force on Lake Champlain I have taken this cursory view of it reserving to myself a more solicitous attention to so highly important a measure whenever the whole machinery is before me. I have the honor to be Dear Sir Your faithful humble Servant

George Prevost

ALS, MiU-C, Thomas M. Brisbane Papers.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Homans to Captain Thomas Macdonough

Capt. T. Macdonough
U.S. Navy. New York

Navy Department
Decr. 27th. 1814

Sir,

It is the Presidents express direction, that you proceed immediately to White Hall, and take such measures as may be in your power, with the aid which may be furnished from the army, to repell an expected attempt of the enemy to destroy the fleet— in this Sir, you will receive all the support and assistance in the power of the Department to afford, and you will be pleased to communicate all the information you may obtain relative to the designs of the Enemy in that quarter and satisfy yourself as to their measures and preparations previous to leaving the station— they have Sleighs &c. to go on the Ice, and to transport several thousand men, this information is received direct and authentic and excites much anxiety for the safety of the Champlain fleet.— I am respectfully &c.

Benjn. Homans. A.S.N.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 492 (M149, Roll No. 11).

Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N., to Governor-General Sir George Prevost

Saint Lawrence, Kingston,
6th January 1815.

Sir,

In consequence of Mr. Goudie[1] Ship Builder, having offered to Build four Frigates at Isle aux Noix, to be ready by the Month of May next; I am induced to recommend to your Excellency, the Building three Frigates and two heavy Brigs:— It will oblige the Enemy to keep up a large Naval Force on that Lake, and thereby deprive him of the power of applying all his force at Sackets Harbour.

I consider this Force, added to the Gun Boats sufficient to regain the Naval Ascendancy on that Lake; and therefore request, if your Excellency should coincide with me on this subject, you will immediately urge His Majesty's Government to send out Officers and Seamen for that service.

I shall send through Commissioner Sir Robert Hall, a demand for every thing necessary for the Equipment of these Vessels. I have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's most Obedient humble Servant

James Lucas Yeo

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 734, pp. 8–9.

1. John Goudie.

Secretary of War Monroe to Major General Alexander Macomb, U.S.A.

Department of War, January 12th. 1815.

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 28th. of December, which announces the removal by general Izard, of the company of light artillery from Plattsburg your great concern at that measure, and your apprehension of an attack from the enemy at that post, and likewise at Whitehall. I have always apprehended that the enemy would, as soon as the lake froze, make the attack which you now suggest, and had the utmost solicitude, that our preparations and means of defence should be adequate to their repulse. It was for this purpose that I ordered your return to Plattsburg, that looking to the danger which menaced, you might be prepared to meet it. You have power to call on the governors of New-York and Vermont, for any portion of militia you may think necessary. By making yourself strong at Plattsburg, you would not only secure that post; but add much to the security of the flotilla at White hall; for the enemy would not readily pass you to attack the latter place, having you in his rear, prepared to close on him. In addition to the strong force which it is indispensably necessary to land at both those points, I trust that you will not fail to make arrangements with the governors of New-York and Vermont, for reinforcements to co-operate with you, in case the enemy should make the advance in such manner as to afford the

most effectual aid. Should he make the attempt, I indulge a strong hope, that you will cover him with additional ignominy, and acquire to yourself new glory.

I have some time since, ordered all the troops capable of service at Greenbush, to move to Whitehall. I had before ordered 1000 of those under general Izard to Albany: I shall change their destination to Whitehall; but let not these precarious and distant resources relax your efforts to obtain those within your reach.

I shall request general Izard to send you all the artillery which he can spare. Should you be able to obtain any from nearer points, you will not fail to do it. In the mean time, you had better to continue to drill at the cannon, the necessary number of infantry, to be prepared for the earliest possible movement of the enemy.

You mention that you have in advance at Chazy, a detachment of 200 men. I presume those men are selected from the main body to act as light infantry. In drawing in the militia, it will be advisable to train many companies of them to that particular kind of service. I am, &c.

Jas. Monroe

LB, DNA, RG107, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Confidential and Unofficial Letters Sent, 1814–35, pp. 26–27 (M7, Roll No. 1).

Governor-General Sir George Prevost to Major General Sir Thomas M. Brisbane, British Army

Confidential

12 Jany. 1815
Quebec.

Dear General

The intelligence which you have obtained of the Enemy's preparations to frustrate your proposed enterprize against White Hall justifies sufficiently its suspension. I consider the destruction of the American Flotilla on Lake Champlain as so very desireable that I request your attention may continue, fixed on that important & difficult design, in order that any change in existing circumstances which may be deemed favorable to it should not slip past unseized.

Major Genl. de Rottenburg has reported that 300 of the American Regulars had made their appearance on the Manor, in consequence I have desired him to direct you not to allow of such visits without giving the intruders a suitable reception. I have the honor to be, Dear General, your faithful humble Servant

George Prevost

ALS, MiU-C, Thomas M. Brisbane Papers.

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

White hall January 18th. 1815

Sir

I have the honor to report my arrival at this place and to give you such information relative to the enemy as I have been able to collect; it does not appear

that an attack on the vessels is contemplated by the enemy, various reports induce this beleif and a man of respectability and intelligence who came from the line yesterday—informs me that no movements of the enemy excite among the people along the line any apprehension of an attack on the fleet and at present no apprehensions are entertained for its safety—, I shall in a day or two however go to the northward where I hope and expect to obtain a complete knowledge of the intentions of the enemy of which I shall give you immediate information—

It is reported that five hundred sleighs have gone from the lower to the upper province of Canada, some say with troops others with provision only, it appears however pretty certain that the Sleighs have gone—

Preparations have been made to repell an attack of the enemy and further preparations shall immediately be made with the same view and nothing shall be left undone that may tend to the security of the fleet—

The climate for this Lattitude is mild but little ice in the lake and none in what is called the broad lake at a distance of from forty to sixty miles and many of the old inhabitants here think the broad lake will not close this winter— The Militia of Vermont express their willingness to meet the enemy should he invade us & I beleive we are in a tolerable state of preparations have the honor to be very respectfully sir, your mo. obdt. Servt.

T. Macdonough

It is also said that the sleighs which have gone to upper Canada carried ordnance and ordnance stores, if so their destination may be Kingston— I have the honor & &—

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 51 (M125, Roll No. 42).

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

White Hall Febry.—6th 1815

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that since my letter of the 1st Inst., sent from Plattsburgh, nothing has occurred respecting the Enemy in this quarter, contrary to the information that letter contained, as all accounts agree, that timber is collecting on Isle aux Noix and carpenters likewise, and it is still the opinion of every one, that no attempt for the distruction of the Fleet, will be made this Winter; we are notwithstanding making every preparation to repell such an attempt— There are now attached to the vessels on Lake Champlain about 250 men, some Young Officers, no old ones (in rank) and the Vessels in the state in which they were imediately after the action. Should Government Contemplate having our present Naval force prepared for service early in the Spring, it becomes necessary that Carpenters, Sail Makers &c Should be ordered from the Seaboard to repair them and that rendezvous be opened: the sooner the better;

for the Shipping of their Crews. It will be also highly necessary, that two or three Master Commandants, and eight or ten experienced Lieutenants be attached to the vessels and about twenty Midshipman— I have had a Communication with a Man who is said to be perfectly well acquainted with the Lake, and in my own opinion is, on the praticability of blocking up the Channell from Isle aux noix, into the Lake, he says that at six miles north of the line, the Channell is about fifty feet wide, and not to exceed fifteen feet deep, hard sandy bottom, within sixty yards of the shore which is about twenty feet high hard ground and favourable for the erection of works by the Enemy. hence arose the idea in my letter of the 1st Inst., the necessity of our having a military force superior to that of the Enemy, to cooperate with our naval force in obstructing this passage—

I have not since my return to the Lake received any orders that may have been issued for me from the Depmt. and acting under those of the 9th and 27th December— I conceive it my duty to proceed to the Steam Frigate in New York, after remaining at this place a few days longer— It is my intention to stop a few days in Middletown Connt. to make some arrangements with my Family, at which place as in New York, your orders for my future Service will meet me, this I hope will meet your approbation and Could it be so directed by the Depmt. that I do not Return to the Lake to Command the ensuing summer it would be very Gratifying to me— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Your Mo. Obdt. Servant

T. Macdonough

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 109 (M125, Roll No. 42).

Financial Difficulties in Shipbuilding

The public finances of the United States reached a crisis point in late 1814 and early 1815.[1] Congress was opposed to raising additional taxes to pay for the war, and government notes, already offered at high interest rates, were further discounted. The previous requisitions of navy agents went unpaid at the same time the government authorized new naval construction on Lake Ontario.

The human dimension of the troubled economy comes to light in the pleas of shipwrights Adam and Noah Brown and Henry Eckford. Their carpenters, laborers, and suppliers refused the discounted treasury notes and demanded payment in specie. Eckford and the Browns themselves had not been paid by the government. Unless the Navy Department could make good on the treasury notes they had been issued as payment on their contracts, they stated they would have to stop construction on the vessels they were building at Sackets Harbor.

1. On public finances, see Stagg, Mr. Madison's War, *pp. 436–53.*

Adam and Noah Brown to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

New york Jan 15th. 1815

Sir

Please to pardon us fer taking the libirty of wrighing to your Hounour on this Subject the navy Agent offered us the first payment on our Contracts of building the Ships of war on Lake Ontario in tresuree notes witch is Seven per cent under par this being too mutch fer us to we was obliged to refuse them unless we was aloud the discount whitch the navy agent refused to Comply with I hope your will be So good as to order him to pay us money So to in able us to go on with out any obstickles if we are to be paid in money Seven per Cent under par we never will be able to fulfill our contract we have allready give Security in tresure notes one hundred and ten thousand Dollars fer one hundred thousand Dollars in cash, whitch being contrary from our understanding with the navy Department we have thought proper to Beg you to inform us what we are to do as it will ruin us if money is not Sent from the navy Department that will pass in this State to fulfill the contract that they have made with us one hundred thousand Dollars was Due the 22nd of Dec 1814 and the Like Sum on the first of febuary 1815 we therefore hope you will Send an answer to this in what manner we are to receive our money as our notes fer one Hundred thousand Dollars must be protested if we Dont receive it from the Navy Department—

We have received letters from Sacketts harbour stating all the timber is in the yard fer one of the large Ships and coming in fast fer the Ships and if money is Supplyd that the Ships will be done in ample time to Sail by the time the Lake is Clear of ise there is about one thousand Carpenters arivd at the harbour and at work— Your Most Obt. & Humble Servants

A & N Brown

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 59 (M124, Roll No. 68).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

No. 15 U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor. 1st. feb. 1815

Sir

The two Ships of the Line are progressing rapidly—part of their frames are already raised and the builders assure me that they shall both be launched in all April— The Frigate is not yet commenced but the materials will be prepared for her, so that she can be built in a short time— would it not be advisable to give her so much beam as to bear two tier of Guns in case the Enemy should encrease his force beyond what we at present expect? I hope to hear from Kingston in a few days when I shall learn what is building there.—

The Roads are now excellent and our Stores are coming in rapidly— I hope to have the principal articles here before the middle of March— the Rope Walk will be in operation in a few days and all the other branches of Mechanics at work, preparing for the Spring operations— the weather has been so extremely cold for the last week that Men could not work in the open air—it is to day more moderate and all the different branches are at work again. I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. Mo. Ob. St

Isaac Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 98 (M125, Roll No. 42).

Lieutenant Colonel George Richard John MacDonell, Glengarry Light Infantry, to Quartermaster General Sir Thomas Sidney Beckwith, British Army

Cornwall Feby 4th. 1815

~~My dear Sir,~~

~~I yesterday saw~~ "our friend" ~~Jones—He~~ "left Sacketts on the 26th Ultimo, but could not cross the River till yesterday, on account of the floating ice—"

~~General Brown left S.H. on the 25. Ultimo to attend, as an Evidence, at General Wilkinson's trial.—[1] It is understood that he will repair from thence to Washington, from whence~~ "Commodore Chauncey is supposed to be on his return from [-] to his fleet, which Captain Jones commands in the interim— Colonel Brady[2] commands the troops at the harbour, amounting to about four thousand regulars— The Marines and Sailors amount in number to about Two thousand— The troops are all quartered in the forts" ~~& except a Sentry in front of each, have no Outposts of any kind, nor even patroles— The Line of circumvallation & abbatis is entirely neglected & going to decay, the soldiers using some of it for fire wood & the people making roads thro' it— They do not appear to have any suspicion of the people who pass & repass—~~

"They have now two distinct Ship yards— the old one at the point, where they have laid down one keel, & have 400 Carpenters with 200 Choppers & teamsters—& the new yard at Stores's harbour, about two miles and a half higher up the bay, where they have 300 Carpenters & 200 Choppers & teamsters— at this yard they have no Guard nor fortification of any kind—

By pacing the length of these keels he thinks they are each 182 feet long each— Several of the ribs are up, to make room for the workmen in the yard—the shipwrights say that they do not know whether they are intended for two or three deckers—

They are hewing out more keels in the woods—it is supposed for a frigate at each dock yard—but no one appears to know exactly except the Master Builder, & it is said that the Commodore has laid the strictest injunctions of secrecy upon them, as he is reported to have said that the British have hitherto got information of all his plans— Ackfor[3] builds at the Point & Brown at Stores's harbour.

The general conjecture is that they are to be 3 deckers—to register 90 but to carry from 100 to 110 Guns— It is said that the Guns are still at New York, but that the Commodore will immediately on his return enter into contracts for bringing them on in sleighs— Report says that the Government have offered One thousand dollars per Gun— When our friend was at Albany (9th Jany.) he heard Colonel Jenkins, the Dy. Qr. Mr. General,[4] say, that 64 of the guns were then in store there— There were no Anchor nor any other stores then there— Report, some little time before he came away, said that the keels which are now preparing in the wood were intended for steam frigates—but it is now thought otherwise.

The Report of boats building on the point opposite to the harbour must have originated in the circumstance of a quantity of the ship timber being cut on that side, but the ice was not thought sufficiently strong to bring it over— The timber is supplied by the inhabitants who contract for it— The naval Officers

say, their Commodore does not wish to have a superior fleet to our's, but that he will keep pace with us in building—

The Ships are moored in a line from the point of the harbour towards Fort Pike—in the same position that they have been in ever since they came into Port.

The Anchor of the *Superior* lies on the Point— The Ships are all frozen in & are not to be cut out till the Gravelly Point Channel be frozen over— He could not ascertain whether they sent persons to examine that channel frequently— It is said that when it is frozen, they will, as last winter, cut them so loose every day as to swing round & will have patroles of seamen towards Horse Island & Point Peninsula— The Ships lie thus—*Superior—Mohawk—Pike—Madison—Jones—Jefferson*—the schooners lie intermixed with the large vessels—

The sailors live on board of their ships day & night— Most of the seamen have six months pay due to them— They were bringing provisions into the harbour—a few naval stores were arriving daily—a great many sleigh loads of lignum vitæ in bulk had arrived— The great mass of the seamen appear to be coloured people—"

Nothing is now spoken of respecting cutting off the communication, nor is there any report of General Izard's Army coming to the harbour— There is a report of General Izard having resigned— On the 10th. of January our friend met about 1500 men of Izard's army from Buffaloe, between Utica & Albany— They had been at Genesee & then at Utica, & when he met them, they did not know their destination, but expected they were intended for Castine, as the Governor of that state had offered to attack it with the Militia if supported by a sufficient number of regular troops— He has not since been able to learn what has become of this Column, but he thinks they kept the route towards Castine, tho some spoke of Plattsburg—

When at Utica, he dined two days successively with Generals Dearborne, Izard, Lewis & Porter & the other members of the Court martial— They all seemed to think that if the conscription failed that their Campaign would be defensive— Captain Eaton the biscuit contractor came to Utica from the harbour on his way to Buffaloe to procure 10,000 barrels of biscuit on that route, to be delivered at, or near, the harbour—but after conversing with General Dearborn he returned direct to Albany to receive further orders— It was supposed the failure of the prospect of the conscription was the cause of his sudden change of route— The Officers of Militia have not received any orders to prepare for the conscription—

The road to Gravelly Point is not opened, but probably the bordage is good every where round to the Harbour—

He met the officer of our Navy who deserted lately, at a Ball in Denmark—in his British uniform he said he was on his way to some friends he had at New York— He had been ordered away from the harbour[5]

It is thought that ere this the Congress has passed a general Non intercourse law, which will prevent all supplies of beef &c, as the Custom house officers are authorized by it to seize, with impunity, every thing approaching the frontier—

I have directed him to make minute enquiry into the marine preparations & to the probable movements of the army; & for this purpose to remain some days at the harbour—

He has been lately held to bail in the sum of 10,000 dollars,— he supposes some fictitious plea, to induce him to give up suits he has instituted with others against military officers for an illegal Arrest by General Pike when Commanding at Sacket's— He does not think it is on the score of giving information, as the process would have come thro' another Court— I have the honor to be my dear Sir yours faithfully

G MacDonell

Copy, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 687, pp. 96-99. The following appears above the address line in a different hand: "Extract for Secret Intelligence."

1. A court-martial investigating Major General James Wilkinson's management of the failed 1813 campaign in the northern theater convened in January 1815. The court acquitted Wilkinson of all charges.
2. Colonel Hugh Brady, U.S.A.
3. Henry Eckford.
4. Colonel Elisha Jenkins, U.S.A., deputy quartermaster general, 9th Military District, Albany.
5. Denmark may be a reference to the town of Copenhagen in Lewis County, New York. The officer referred to is probably Lieutenant George Hawksworth.

Henry Eckford and Adam and Noah Brown to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Sackets Harbour Feby. 10th. 1815

Sir

We have a sincere wish to perform the contract entered into with Doctor John Bullus in New York for building ships at Sackets Harbour—

But to enable us to do it we expected Doctor Bullus to perform his part also. The first and second payments are due and neither of them paid. Although we sent a person to New York for the express purpose of receiving the Money. One of us receipted for the first payment before we left New York. We are at a weekly expense of eight thousand Dollars each which must be paid in current money or we cannot go on

We were obliged to negotiate a loan of 100,000 Dolls. on treasury notes at a loss of 10 pr. cent exclusive of interest untill the same is redeem'd. This was done in full confidence of being reimburs'd of which we were assured by Doct. Bullus we had further assurance from a letter shown us from Mr. Dallas.[1] Our present situation prevents us negotiating other loans particularly at the probable terms we should have to give, We will therefore most certainly be oblig'd to stop the whole business in ten or twelve days if we are not Supply'd with money. We again send a Young Man to endeavour to obtain by some mode the necessary supplies. Presuming that Doctor Bullus has ere this recv'd further instructions from the Department. With due Respect We remain—Yours—

Henry Eckford
A & N Brown

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 117, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 42).

1. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander J. Dallas. He assumed direction of Treasury on 6 October 1814 in place of George W. Campbell.

The Naval School at Sackets Harbor

The professional education of midshipmen before the establishment of the U.S. Naval Academy in 1845 was limited and haphazard. Navy chaplains traditionally filled in as schoolmasters teaching mathematics and navigation as their time and inclinations allowed. Andrew Hunter, chaplain at the Washington Navy Yard, conducted a more ambitious educational program between 1811 and 1813.[1]

Secretary of the Navy Jones proposed a naval academy in his ambitious plan for the reorganization of the Navy Department that he submitted to Congress 15 November 1814.[2]

During the idle winter months, Commodore Chauncey asked his naval chaplain, Cheever Felch, to open a naval school at Sackets Harbor. The commodore may have implied that Reverend Felch would be allowed some extra compensation for his additional duties, something that the Navy Department did not usually allow.

1. *McKee,* Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession, *pp. 194–209.*
2. *William Jones to President of Senate, 15 Nov. 1814, DNA, RG45, Letters to Congress, p. 314; printed in* ASP: Naval Affairs, *Vol. 1, pp. 320–24.*

Chaplain Cheever Felch to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Sacket's Harbour
February 17, 1815.

Sir,

When the fleet came in last fall, Commodore Chauncey ordered me on shore to open a Naval School, for the officers and boys on this station.— There are attending, ninety five officers, studying Navigation, Mathematics, Astronomy, Philosophy, Geography, &c. and seventy one boys, in various studies.— For the officers, I have no assistant; and you will readily perceive, Sir, that my duties must be of the most arduous nature. So unremitting an attention is necessary, that my health is somewhat impaired by it. And, although I would not arrogate to myself any peculiar patriotism, nothing but the conviction that I should be useful to the service, would have induced me to undertake it.

And I refer with much confidence to our excellent Commander and his officers, as to my application and ability in the discharge of the duties. If the Commodore has not already, he probably will soon write you on the subject.

Perhaps some compensation may be due me, for this extra service; and I beg leave respectfully to ask your attention to the subject.

Dr. Hunter, at Washington, received an additional pay from the contingent fund, although his school was nothing in comparison with this. But if that should not meet your approbation in my favour, I would respectfully suggest, the propriety of ordering something from the pay of those who are reaping the benefits of the institution, you will be aware, Sir, that there are many incidental expenses attending it, and unless something should be done for me, I shall be a considerable loser.— And it would seem a hardship, that I should receive no more pay, than those who do no duty, either as Chaplains or School-Masters; who hold the station as a sinecure.

I should have resigned a year since, had it not been for the solicitations of my lamented and worthy friend, Vice-President Gerry, and Capt. Smith, my former

commander. But as I find I can make myself more useful, I feel more willing to continue. Should Congress adopt the recomendation of the late Secretary, and establish a Naval Academy, I should apply for a professorship of Mathematics and Experimental Philosophy. My practical knowledge of Navigation, and the application of Mathematics to it, and my present situation, might be some recommendations. I have the honor to be, With the greatest respect Your most obedient servant,

Cheever Felch
Acting Chaplain
U.S.S. *Superior.*

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 113 (M148, Roll No. 14).

Peace on the Northern Lakes

On 14 February 1815, Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield informed the commanding officers of the navy's ships and stations of the impending ratification of the treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain. Work on the northern lakes stations would continue into the summer while ships were laid up or secured for preservation.

The American vessels on Lake Erie were eventually sold with the exception of the brigs Lawrence *and* Niagara, *which were sunk for preservation. The timbers of* Niagara *were brought up for restoration and display in 1913 during the centennial of the Battle of Lake Erie.*[1]

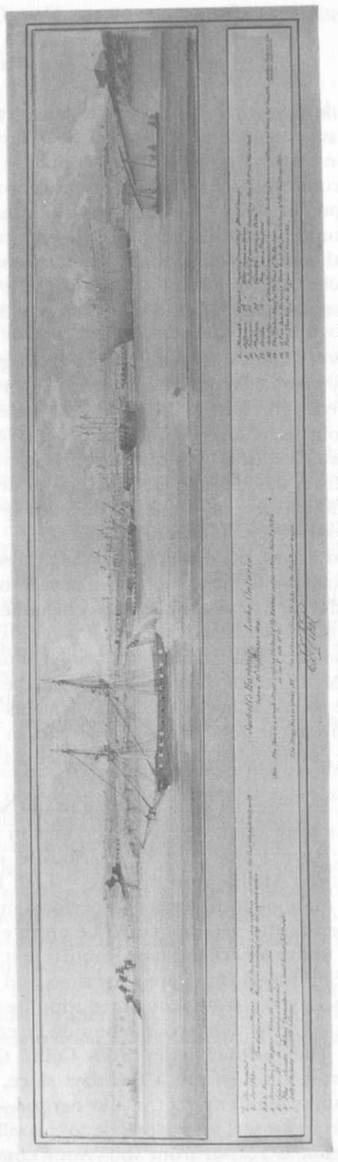
On Lake Ontario, the construction of the two ships of the line continued until carpenters were discharged and the ships housed over on the stocks. The former merchant vessels were sold off at auction. The other vessels were laid up in ordinary with roofs built over their upper decks; they eventually rotted and sank.[2]

Commodore Chauncey invited his former adversary, Commodore Yeo, to Sackets Harbor for a visit when the British officer was on his way south to take passage from New York back to England. The two commodores finally met in person and no doubt had much to discuss, having both constructed immense fleets in areas that were only sparsely settled and had little industry before the war.

The Lake Champlain squadron was moored in the narrow southern end of the lake. The sloops and galleys were sold at auction, and the other vessels decayed and sank, and were eventually sold for scrap. The schooner Ticonderoga *was raised in 1958 for display at Whitehall.*[3]

Canadian military and naval leaders remained wary of the peace settlement. The Canadian peace establishment reflected the desire of the British colony to defend against future American expansionism.

1. Disposition of the ships on Lake Erie can be found in Malcomson and Malcomson, HMS Detroit, *pp. 126–30.*
2. Crisman, The Jefferson, *pp. 164–77; Malcomson,* Lords of the Lake, *pp. 325–26.*
3. Crisman, The Eagle, *pp. 97–110; Crisman,* Ticonderoga.



"Sackett's Harbour, Lake Ontario taken 20th September, 1815"

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Warrenton, N C. February the 24th 1815

Sir

After the ice had made upon the Lake and the Squadron under my command made secure, I was indulged, by the former Secretary of the Navy, with leave of absence from the Station, to visit my family until the breaking up of the ice; still retaining my command— A Treaty of peace concluded with our Enemy has, I presume, put an end to the naval service in that quarter; but as I feel myself responsible for the Squadron and stores being placed in the greatest possible security I take the earliest opportunity of addressing you on the subject— It is a general belief, and I think well founded, that vessels built of unseasoned timber will become seasoned (and never decay while under water) by sinking them

I think it worth the experiment with the *Lawrence* & *Niagara*, as they will by being left in the ordinary way, become unfit for service in three or four years, as their materials were not only green from the Forest, but were composed of various kinds of timber without selection— The *Detroit* is also of green timber, but more select— The *Queen Charlott* is built of the best seasoned Oak & Cedar— and by being preserved from the weather, as she is now under a tight Roof, she will last many years— Much may be done for their safety and preservation, and much oeconomy preserved by a judicious arrangement

Until otherwise ordered I must, of course, still consider myself as commanding that station; but as I presume it will not be thought necessary to keep an Officer of my grade on that service during a time of peace it may be understood that I volunteer my services (unless more active and important service should offer in the mean time) to return and place the Station in a proper situation, to be left in charge of a trusty Sailing Master and a few men (should that be the wish of the Department,) so soon as the ice will admit of such arrangements being made— In offering this, my sole motive is the good of the Service and an interest in the well doing of a Station I have commanded, as the trip to that place is an excessively unpleasant one—

I am induced to hope, Sir, from my long standing in the Navy, since the year 98 and my having been actively employed in all the wars in which my country has been engaged since that, I shall not be overlooked in case there is a squadron sent to protect our Mediterranean trade, Which I have little doubt there will be— Should there be local service to perform my family residence is Norfolk Virginia, therefore the nearer I could be given employment to my family, with convenience to the service the more gratifying it would be to me— I have taken the liberty, Sir, thus far to express my views and wishes, as it is impossible, at this early period, you can be acquainted with the different Officers; confidently hoping you will give them your attention if consistent with the good of the Service— The inclosed letter from Colnl. Gratiott, the commanding Officer at Detroit, reached me a few days since, I have therefore taken the earliest opportunity of offering it for your perusal— My family have been driven, by the war from my seat near Norfolk, to this village, where I shall remain until my destination is known from you—your communications will, therefore, find me here— I have the honor to remain with high respect, Sir, your Obt. Servt.

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 166 (M125, Roll No. 42).

[Enclosure]

Fort Malden
28th. January 1815

Dear Sir,

Your favour of the 2d. instant from Pittsburgh came to hand by last mail & am happy to see that you were then on your way to visit your family & I hope that you will find in its bosom that happy relief which the soldier usually meets with, when returning to his home, after a dangerous & tedious Campaign.

It affords me particular pleasure to have it measurably in my power to give the information you requested, respecting the naval preparations, which are said to be making by the enemy on the waters of Lake Erie. Early after General McArthur's Return from Grand River & Long Point, reports circulated freely among the inhabitants of this province, that it was contemplated to build two large Frigates (44's) in the neighbourhood of Long Point during this winter. About the time that those reports were circulating, Agents to the Enemy, were busily Employed on the head of the River Thames in hiring Teams & offered $5 per day for each pair of oxen, which price has since, been considerably encreased as we are informed. Whilst those proposals were making a number of paroled inhabitants applied to some of our officers to know wether it would be considered a breach of Parole, were they to send their Cattle to Long Point where such high wages were profered. On being examined they Uniformly Answered that the services required of their Teams (as they had been informed) was to hawl Ship Timber, Subsequently two young fellows have been apprehended on the River Thames, who state that they are deserters & Lately from the head of the Lake & that a very Large Collection of slays was making at Oxford, Burford & other places—they state that the object of this Collection was not Known, tho' Supposed by many to be for Kingston.

The next day after the reception of your Letter I sent out a reconnoitring party of indians, who is to explore the Country lying between the Crossing of Grand River & Long Point. The reward offered the party is $500, for positive information on the questions stated in your Letter, $100 in addition for a mail & $50. for every prisoner brought off from either of those places. whatever information the party may bring in, I shall deem it a duty incumbent on me to give you the earliest intimation thereof.

Permit me, Sir, to reiterate my thanks for the many acts of hospitality bestowed on me whilst an inmate of your Cabin & you may rest assured, that I shall always appreciate them with gratitude. I am with respect Your Most Obt. Servt.

C Gratiot

Commodore A Sinclair

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 1, No. 166, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 42).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

No. 30 U.S Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor feby. 25th. 1815

Sir

I have suspended all contracts, and stoped the transportation of all stores, except those between this place, and Utica, which must come here for safe keeping— I have directed Messrs. Eckford and Browns to discontinue all building; these gentlemen however state to me that it is impossible for them to stop so suddenly, because they have upwards of Eight hundred men employed, which must be paid, work or play, untill they arive in New York, consequently it costs no more to keep them at work, than to suffer them to remain Idle; they reduce their gangs from thirty to forty men pr. day which is as many as they can find transport for—

I have directed a survey upon the two ships and the timber for the third one, to enable the Department to settle with these gentlemen on fair terms. As the two ships of the line are in that state of forwardness that they could be launched in four weeks, I should presume that it would have been for the interest of the government to have launched, and sunk them, between piers; in which state they would have lasted for ages; if left on the stocks they must be housed, or they will decay in a few Years.

As the Rope Walk is in full operation and the greater portion of the workmen belonging to the fleet, would it not be adviseable to spin all the Hemp into yarn and lay it up into small cordage; & in that state it would be more saleable (if to be sold) or it would be subject to less damage, in case it should be sent to the Atlantic— The Tar and every requisite is on the spot I have presumed, Sir, to volunteer these opinions presuming, that, information upon these subjects would be agreeable to the Department— I have the honor to be very Respectfully Sir Your obt. Humble Servt.

Isaac Chauncey

ALS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 104 (M124, Roll No. 69).

Report of Survey of Vessels Building on Lake Ontario

Copy
Triplicate

We the subscribers having been appointed by commodore Isaac Chauncey and Henry Eckford and Adam & Noah Brown, to examine and report what in our opinion would be the expence of completing the three vessels contracted to be built by the sd. Eckford and Browns for the U. States, in the state in which said vessels now are, submit the following report— That by the said contract dated the 15th. day of December 1814 and executed by the said Henry Eckford and Adam & Noah Brown of the one part, and John Bullus Navy Agent of the U. States of the other part, the said Eckford & Browns covenant to build or cause to be built Two ships of the line to carry from seventy four to one hundred guns each and one Frigate of the largest class, for the use of the U. States at or in the vicinity of Sacketts Harbor in the state of New York, in the manner particularly specified in the sd. covenant— That said Eckford & Browns have commenced building said ships of the line one at Sacketts Harbor under the direction of sd. Eckford and the other at Store's Harbor under the direction of sd. Browns

The ship at Sacketts Harbor is completely planked up to the upper deck, fitted in between the ports, squared off and rabbits of ports cut, lower gun Deck beams and on top beams in and bolted at the ends, Masts capsterns half done. Iron work for them also half done, Dead Eyes completed pumps partly boared, Iron work for dead eyes & chain Bolts ready—Bottom half calked and payed from keel to wales

The remaining beams clamps waterways and framing of Decks ready to go on board—Deck partly built and launching ways ready—Joiners work, vizt. Bulk heads steering wheel, Binacle &c. ready— The keel was laid on the 23rd. Jany. 1815— The ship at Store's Harbor is not in the same state of forwardness, owing to the situation of the place where she is building— When they commenced the said ship there was no house within a mile and the place a wilderness— They had to erect buildings for four hundred men to live in, a building to make the mould in 32 feet by 70 and a blacksmiths shop for Thirty Blacksmiths to work in also a Joiners shop and a guard house for the soldiers— The ship is all in frame has the greatest part of bottom planked and her wales on and her lower ports formed the greatest part of her ceiling, and all her deck beams dressed out and all the timber for the deck frame ready— The Masts spars and Iron work under considerable forwardness and one third of her bottom caulked— They have all the timber for finishing the two ships of the line and to build the Frigate, and it is believed a large surplus owing to the expectation that a fourth vessel would be built, and the difficulty of procuring timber after the sleighing is gone.— The number of hands now employed is about four hundred on each ship now building— The average of wages is one dollar and seventy five cents per day to each man, and four dollars a week for board— all the expence of building the three vessels except the wages and board of the hands appears to have been incurred— from the foregoing facts, and the manner the work has progressed in the winter season and all other evidence we can obtain upon the subject we are of opinion that four hundred hands would complete the ship at Sacketts Harbor in twenty three days, and that the same number of hands would complete the ship at Stores Harbor in thirty one days, The Frigate it is understood was to be built at Sacketts Harbor where the ship is now building, to have been 185 feet keel and forty six feet beam, That she would have been ready to raise as soon as the first ship was launched it is our opinion that with the preparation now made she would be built by four hundred hands in forty Days, It is to be understood that by finishing the aforesaid vessels, we mean all the work that was to be done by the said Eckford & Browns by their covenant aforesaid, from the carefull examination we have bestowed upon the subject, we verily believe the foregoing report to be substantially correct all which is respectfully sub-

mitted dated at Sacketts Harbor the third day of March Eighteen hundred and fifteen

signed Amos Benedict
Jacob Jones
Wm. M. Crane

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 34, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 43). Enclosed in Chauncey to Crowninshield, 10 March 1815.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Commodore Sir James L. Yeo, R.N.

(Private)
Commodore Sir
James L. Yeo Kn't
&c. &c. &c. Kingston—

U.S. Ship *Superior*
Sacketts Harbor 3 Mar. 1815

Dear Sir—

If your public avocations will allow you to visit Sacketts Harbor I should be most happy to offer my hand as a friend to one who I have contended with as an Enemy and for whose character I have the highest respect

If it should be your intention to return to England by the way of New York, it would afford me pleasure to offer to you all the facilities in my power with Letters to my friends in that City. I have the honor to be &c. &c. &c.

I— C—

LB, NHi, Isaac Chauncey Letter Books (BV Chauncey, Isaac).

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Commodore Isaac Chauncey

Como. Isaac Chauncey
Comm'g Naval Officer
Sackett's Harbour

Navy Department
March 7th. 1815,

Sir

In consequence of the final ratification of peace, it has been determined to suspend building, and to lay up all the Ships of War on the Lakes, except such as may be otherwise disposed of to advantage.— For this purpose, I request your attention to the proposition of Messrs. A & N. Brown to complete the two Ships of the line, provided it can be done for a sum not to exceed $50,000. each, of which you will decide and inform me soon as convenient, also as to the expediency of sinking those Ships for their better preservation, upon the certainty of which (you will decide), that they can be so preserved and raised again for public service when wanted.—

Enclosed you have a Copy of my letter of this date to Messrs. A. & N. Brown, in answer to theirs upon this subject. The Timber procured for the Frigate must

be placed in the best situation to be preserved or to be sold, if it should be more for the public interest.—

You will be pleased to have all the other materials and stores collected, and prepared for transportation to New York, in the most economical manner, and I trust entirely to your good judgement and prudence, to do every thing for the best of the public Service.—

You will also state to me your opinion of the best mode of laying up and preserving all the public Ships; and such as you may think not worth keeping, or not suitable for the Service, you will furnish a list of their state and condition, and your opinion of their value in order that they may be sold, under the late Law of Congress authorizing the President to dispose of such Public Vessels &c.—

Your early decision on these subjects will enable the Department to come to a settlement with Messrs. Browns & Mr. Eckford, upon the relinquishment and payment of their Contracts.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 51–52 (M149, Roll No. 12).

Captain Thomas Macdonough to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

White hall March 12th. 1815

Sir.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 28th. ultimo and the 1st. instant, and to inform you that the Squadron on Lake Champlain is compleatly dismantled with all the guns sails, ballast, powder shot, & stores on shore and stored— The officers and Men exclusive of a few to take care of the public property shall immediately proceed to Charleston Massts. and report themselves to the Commg. naval officer on that Station— I have not had Marines on this station but soldiers from the ranks of the army acting as such, it will therefore be necessary I suppose that the Guard which you have ordered in your letter of the 28th. ulto. to be kept by the vessels should be placed here by order of the War Department—

The best Manner in my opinion of laying up these Vessels will be to keep them afloat, to have them Whitewashed on the in side and out with the bulkheads taken down and every thing cleared away below so as to admit of a free circulation of air, to be roofed over with rough boards, all which can be done for about three hundred dollars, the vessels to be placed as much as can be out of the Sun—feeling assured of your assent to this secure and cheap mode of laying up the fleet and to save time in the transmission of orders I have commenced it, & expect that the men who remain will be able to get all the vessels thus laid up in a fortnight— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir your Mo. obdt. Servt.

T. Macdonough

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 38 (M125, Roll No. 43).

Captain Arthur Sinclair to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Washington March 24. 1815

Sir

Agreeably to your instructions I herewith have the honor to hand you a statement of the shipping and their appendages now on the Erie station, with my opinion as to the best mode of preserving them &ca.

The Brigs *Niagara* and *Lawrence* are new vessels built of Green indifferent Timber, badly put together and will no doubt decay in a few Years— They are about 430 Tons, mounting each 20 Guns principally 32 pound Carronades

The Prize Ship *Detroit* is a new vessel built of green Timber & of good quality— She is strong & roughly put together about 265 Tons—mounts 18 Guns of various calibre—Dismasted & without Sails or Rigging—

The *Queene Charlotte* a Prize Ship, (since made a Brig) is an old vessel, built of the best seasoned materials and will last many years 250 Tons and mounts 16–24 pound Carronades—Completely Rigged of new materials and has her principal Sails—

The Prize Schooner *Lady Prevost*, built of green Timber of good quality, well put together—model bad, new spars rigging & Sails about 100 Tons and mounts 12–12 pd. Carronades

The *Hunter* a prize Brig very old, rotten and unfit for service—Sails and rigging equally bad—about 75 Tons and pierced for 12 Guns—

The *Caledonia* a prize Brig taken at the commencement of the War— She is an old clunk Merchant vessel about 120 or 130 Tons—her frame good— she has been used as a Gun Boat carrying Two long 24 pounders— She was driven on shore last September, and sustained material injury Her upper deck, Ceiling, spars & Sails have been since burnt She was got off and ordered repairs before I left the station—when repair'd she will make a fine transport or provision vessel, being well calculated from her draft to pass into Lake Huron

The *Amelia* a Schooner purchased into Service has had new upper works, upon a rotten bottom was sunk when I arrived on the station, and condemned unfit for service—60 or 70 Tons, may perhaps sell for something; has no materials—

The *Porcupine* a new, Schooner rigged, Gun Boat about 45 or 50 Tons, mounts one long 32 pounder completely found and well suited for the navigation of the lakes—

The *Despatch* a fine pilot Boat Schooner built of the best materials, Oak & Cedar—55 Tons—Intended as a dispatch vessel— She is either launched or ready to be so, and will be a proper vessel to keep in Commission

A Block House newly built at the expence of the Navy—stands on that point of the Peninsula covering the Basin, where the ships are laid up, cost considerably and built of good materials mounts 8 heavy Guns and can fight from 150 to 200 Men within it—For its preservation, requires to be shingled and weather-boarded

A new Store House 160 feet by 24 Two Stories high—stands on the Lake shore—one end of this building constitutes a Hospital & Surgeons Room

It is too near the water, ought to be picketed in the rear; and a ridge of stone thrown in front to protect it from the wash of the Lake, which would form an inclosure for the safekeeping of the Cannon, Anchors &ca.

The Four large vessels are roofed in for winter protection, The plank, in case the method of sinking for preservation is adopted; will answer for Boat, Spar, and Gun carriage Sheds—

I would recommend that none of the material articles of the Ships, reserved for future service, be sold not untill we see that Peace is likely to be permanent.

The Stock of Salt Provisions to be transferred to the War Department for the Garrisons on the Lakes—Colo. Munroe having sanctioned the proposition you authorised me to make him on that subject

The proposed plan of sinking the vessels intended to be preserved for future service, will place them beyond the reach of incendiaries and save much expence in Anchors Cables Men &c.

If Two or Three small vessels are kept in Commission for the purpose of carrying Despatches throwing in troops & supplies into remote garrisons It will be expedient to keep an old steady Lieutenant or sailing Master and Two or Three Midshmen and Masters Mates, with a few Seamen, ordinary Seamen and Marines on the station, amounting in all to Twenty Men I have the honor to remain very respectfully Sir your obt Servt

A Sinclair

ALS, DNA, RG45, AF7 (M625, Roll No. 77).

Commodore Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

No. 48 U.S. Ship *Superior*

Sacketts Harbor 26th. Mar. 1815

Sir

In answer to your Letter of the 7th. inst. I have the honor to state, that it is clearly my opinion that the two Ships of the Line might have been completed and launched for a sum not exceeding Thirty five Thousand Dollars each, provided the Carpenters had been permitted to have proceeded with their work, but as they have now broke off and returned to New York, it would make the difference of transportation each way, say about $60,000 which would exceed the sum prescribed by the Department, yet I should imagine that in the course of the Summer Messrs. Eckford & Browns might be able to finish the two Ships of the Line for a sum not exceeding $50,000. provided they were permitted to do the work at their leisure and launch before the Winter.—

I have caused the Timber to be collected and piled in order to preserve it I should however recommend it to be sold, if it should be determined not to complete the Ships— All the Ordnance and Stores of every description have been landed, and such as were subject to injury, have been put in Store-houses, and in a state to be transported to New York or elsewhere.—

I would respectfully recommend that the public Vessels which are not to be sold, should be sunk for their preservation, and the best mode is, to sink them between Piers so that the Vessels will remain upright—"Hendersons Harbor" is preferable to Sacketts Harbor to sink the vessels in, because it is completely land locked and not subject to be disturbed by any wind— I think that it

would be adviseable to keep one of the Brigs in Commission, because the Officers and Men (who are left for the protection of the Public Vessels and property on this Lake) would be more comfortable and kept in better discipline than if permitted to live in Barracks.—

The Schooners *Governor Tompkins Conquest Fair American Ontario Pert, Asp* and *Raven* I should recommend to be immediately sold— these vessels were originally Merchant Vessels purchased into Service— they are from 40 to 80 Tons burthen and would sell very well now—but if kept another year, would be nearly a total loss— The *Oneida* is a small Brig built about Seven years ago and is quite rotten and in the course of two years, would be condemned I would therefore recommend, that she should be sold also— *The Lady of the Lake* would render great service as a dispatch boat and to keep in Check the Smugglers which will swarm in great numbers on this Lake.— I have the honor to be very respectfully Sir Yr. mo. ob. St.

I Chauncey

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 114 (M125, Roll No. 43).

Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield to Captain Arthur Sinclair

Arthur Sinclair Esqr.
Capt. U.S. Navy
Present.

Navy Department
April 5th 1815.

Sir.

You will proceed immediately to Erie (Penna.) and direct the arrangements for laying up the U.S. Squadron, on that Lake, in such manner, as in your best judgement, shall tend to the preservation, and safety of all the Vessels to be placed in ordinary; and you will select a prudent, skillful, and competent Officer, to leave in Command of the Station, and of the Vessels to be retained in Service, for the purpose of Despatch Vessels, and transportation to and from the upper Lakes, to Michilimacinac, Detroit, and else where, as may be ordered by this department.— I submit the manner of laying up the Vessels to your decision, when you shall have ascertained whether the sinking them in the Basin shall be best or mooring them afloat, the preservation of the Timber will probably induce you to sink them, and you will compare the probable advantages or disadvantages in both cases.— You will retain the new Schooner and the Schooner *Porcupine,* in command of a good Sailing Master with—

2 Masters Mates
2 Boatswains Mates
2 Stewards
2 Quarter Gunners
1 Carpenter
2 Cooks &
16 Seamen & Ordinary Seamen

to navigate them upon the Lakes, and to do such other duty, as shall be required of them upon the Station.— A Sergeants Guard of Marines will be ordered to guard the public property.—

You will have all the Guns, Shot, and materials of the Vessels of every kind, safely stored or covered from the Weather, and have complete Inventories thereof made, and transmitted to this Department.— Such of the Stores as can be disposed of to advantage, you will advertize and Sell at public Sale, and for which purpose Buller Cocke Esqr. is ordered to assist you.— The provisions not required for the Station you will transfer and deliver over to an agent of the War Department, taking proper receipts & Vouchers for the whole, which you will transmit to this Department.— You are authorized to sell the small vessels at public Sale, or any others which you may deem not suitable for public Service, provided they can be sold at a price near their Value.— You will also sell all the perishable articles, spare Boats, small Rigging, Sails, and useless materials, and such part of the powder, as may be Sold advantageously, and if you judge best, you may send all that will not be wanted on the Station to Detroit for safe keeping, in the public magazines at that place.—

You will give all necessary instructions to the Officer left in Command, and direct him to make regular quarter Muster Rolls of the whole station, in order that the remittances may be made for payment of the wages as they become due.—

You will have the U.S. Brig *Niagara* equipped and manned to proceed to Michilimacinac, with such officers and troops as may be ordered by the War Department, to Garrison that Post, and on this vessels return, you will have her laid up in ordinary in the same manner as the rest of the fleet.—

After performing this service you will report yourself to this Department for further orders.— I am, very respectfully &c.

B. W. Crowninshield.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 12, pp. 92–93 (M149, Roll No. 12).

Commodore Sir Edward W. C. R. Owen, R.N., to Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, British Army

St. Lawrence Kingston
16 June 1815.

Sir

I have lost no time on my return to this place, in proceeding with the arrangements for the Naval Peace Establishment upon the Lakes, as I informed you was my intention, and I have the honor to give your Excellency the following outline of the plan which after consultation with the Commissioner I have begun to carry into execution.

At Champlain the twelve Gun Boats building being completed, I have ordered one, of each of the three different models of which they consist, to be launched, armed, and trial made of them comparatively with each other. The rest will be hauled up, and housed, or otherwise secured as the Commissioner when he visits that place shall direct.

I have ordered the Complement of that place to be One hundred and thirty five Viz.

65 Seamen with the Establishment of Officers for a sloop of war with 121 Men
5 Boys— and
65 Royal Marines including 3 lieutenants 3 Sergeants 3 Corporals and 1 Drummer to which will be added Nine Artificers the whole under the command of Captain Baumgardt.

At Quebec and Montreal, the Civil establishment is already as much reduced as it ought to be, and at the latter place I have desired the Commissioner Sir Robert Hall will order the Frames of the two Brigs which were sent out from England to be immediately set up and got ready to go round to Halifax.— It is very doubtfull whether the frame of the Frigate will be worth setting up, but the Commissioner will decide on this after enquiry at Montreal— I have given these directions, after consulting with the Builder because there seems little doubt that the price of conveying them up to Prescott (where they might otherwise have been put together) would be double that of building them at Kingston.

At this place the duties which we have in hand prevent the immediate reduction of the Establishment, but about the End of September the Commissioner is of opinion that it may be effected, and consist of about a hundred every description of persons being included—

Your Excellency is aware that I had before given directions, that the new Ships should be put in as forward a state as possible, with a view to seasoning; and be left in that State; the Beams, Plank and every thing which would be requisite to finish them being prepared, and kept as much in readiness as possible.—

One of these has been carried to that state and the other is in considerable progress towards it: but it has been reported that the American Ships at Sacketts are to be completed, in consequence of the rise of Water on the Lake having softened the ground on which they have been built and endangered them. Whatever may be the cause they assign it will be incumbent upon us, if they complete their ships to do the same, and finish one at least of ours; for which, will take care to leave Conditional instructions

The *St. Lawrence, Psyche* and *Princess Charlotte* are reported to be in good condition and I shall lay them up immediately.

The *Regent* is said likewise to be in good Condition, but as she has been on shore and hung some time it will be necessary to examine her, and it is my intention to keep her in Commission with a few men only for the pendant of Sir Robert Hall who will retain the Command when I go home.

The *Niagara* is reported weak and, since the Scale of the vessels on this Lake has been so much encreased she has ceased to be of much consideration except, that, drawing little water, she can enter the Niagara when it is necessary

I propose to keep her in Commission with a smaller crew, and shall recommend her wintering at York to keep Communication with the distant Lakes—

The same reasoning which applies to the *Niagara* has already induced me to fit the *Montreal*, (as Your Excellency has been acquainted) with a spar Deck to enable her to carry Troops or Stores, and being now compleat, she is gone up

to Fort George.— I propose to keep her in commission, as well as the *Star* Brig principally with a View to the means of Transport which you may require; and I request Your Excellency will be pleased to acquaint me, if, in your opinion, or that of the officers with whose department it particularly rests, the service of these two Vessels will be sufficient for the purposes of the Colony, or whether any other assistance on this Lake and river will be necessary.

The *Charwell* is reported to be bad— She, (as well as the *Star*) is too inferior to the American Brigs to be considered in our effective Force.— I therefore purpose to condemn her as a vessel of war, and fit her expressly to be used hereafter as a Transport, which will be a reason for providing as we may have leisure the Frame of a better Vessel, in her stead.

Upon Lake Erie I cannot yet decide, but the two Schooners which were weighed up, in the Chippewa, have been fitted out and sailed for Sandwich: the two I ordered to be built it is reported will be ready early in the Month of August.—

The moment that I can obtain sufficient knowledge of those Lakes to form my opinion I will make your Excellency acquainted with it: in the mean time a depôt will certainly be requisite for Erie wherever formed; and, that, most probably on a little larger Scale than that upon Champlain, although similarly organized.—

A Small depôt will likewise be required for Huron, and most likely, one intermediate at York or Burlington.

It has appeared to me (as I have already stated to Your Excellency) and on reference to the Commissary General I find it is the case, that a considerable inconvenience must arise from the several Vessels on the Lakes sending separate demands at irregular periods to the Commissaries for their provisions:— I have therefore thought it right to confine the demands hereafter to one person, on each Lake; and, with this view, I am about to unite the duties of an Agent Victualler with those of Agent for the Hospital, and appoint an officer to fill the Situation; the arrangements for which, shall be transmitted to Your Excellency the moment that I have compleated them.

It is my intention that He shall always have in his store as much as may be necessary for three months probable consumption, and make demands upon the Commissary at stated periods to compleat—

I have ordered that the equipments and Furniture of the Ships and Vessels preparing to be laid up shall be in every thing completed, then stowed carefully away in places that will be assigned them: and as there is no Naval Establishment of Ordnance at this place, I have with a View of Keeping those Stores more complete and after consulting with the Commanding Officer of Artillery and Store keeper of Ordnance, requested the Commissioner to assign a storehouse for them, and have appointed a Steady Gunner to have them in his Custody, and to keep them constantly in readiness and good order.

I have likewise fixed with the Commissioner that stores sufficient for full three months expence shall be kept at Kingston, & the Isle aux Noix; and a larger proportion at the Depôts to be established on the Upper Lakes.

This will I hope in the event of any future war, give time for the Arrival of supplies from England; and will enable the Squadrons on the Lakes to enter on immediate action—

I have however in the Article of Ordnance requested from My Lords Commissrs. of the Admiralty that a considerable depôt may be immediately formed, not

only to compleat the Vessels now upon the Lakes but with a View to any emergency which may make it needful to encrease the number of our Ships.

This outline of my Intentions will meet I hope, your Excellency's wishes and be Satisfactory: Should it appear defective, in any point or should Your Excellency think any alteration necessary, I shall be most happy in receiving any suggestions with which you may have the goodness to favor me who have the honor to be Sir Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant

E W C R Owen
Commodore
Commr. in Chief

LS, CaOOA, British Military and Naval Records, RG8, I, "C" Ser., Vol. 735, pp. 8–17.

Chapter Three

The Pacific Theater: January 1814–August 1815

In December 1813 as David Porter prepared his frigate to leave the Marquesan island of Nuku Hiva, he could reflect on a year of memorable accomplishment and extreme good fortune. Ten months earlier he had made the bold decision to enter the Pacific and cruise singly against British merchant shipping off the coasts of Chile, Peru, and Mexico. In March he arrived at the Chilean port of Valparaiso where he was greeted enthusiastically by a people in the midst of their own revolutionary struggle for independence. The frigate commander was gratified on this occasion to win the friendship and support of the Carrera family who controlled Chile's military and ruling national junta. Fortified by these demonstrations of pro-American sentiment, Porter set sail for the Galápagos Islands where he cruised in search of British whaling ships from 17 April to 3 October. Essex *enjoyed good hunting in the waters surrounding that exotic archipelago, bagging twelve whalers and more than 300 prisoners. Porter next headed for the Marquesas Islands to refit his ship and give his men a well-deserved rest ashore. He arrived at Nuku Hiva on 25 October and immediately began the hard work of repairing* Essex *and fitting out her prizes for the voyage home. He was impressed enough with the strategic importance of the island to claim it on behalf of the United States, a gesture the overawed natives were temporarily unable to dispute. After seven weeks of labor* Essex *was again ready for sea.*[1]

Porter had hopes for even greater success in 1814. His reasons for such high expectations were not unfounded. His ship had suffered no material damage in the course of her cruise, his crew was healthy, and he had manned and fitted out the captured whaler Atlantic, *renamed* Essex Junior, *to act in concert with* Essex. *Yet the American captain aimed at something more grand and personally gratifying than adding to the tally of whalers captured in 1813. As Porter would later explain it, I sought "to signalize my cruize by something more splendid before leaving" the Pacific.*[2] *Having learned before sailing for the Marquesas that the British had sent three warships in quest of* Essex, *Porter now determined to seek combat with the enemy. Knowing that Captain James Hillyar, the British squadron commander, would seek* Essex *at Valparaiso, Porter set sail for that port on 13 December 1813.*

Essex *arrived off the coast of Chile on 12 January 1814, anchoring in Valparaiso harbor on 3 February. Porter returned to a country whose political landscape had altered dramatically since his visit the previous March. The Carreras, whom Porter styled "my particular friends," were no longer in power, having been stripped of their political and military offices and thrown in prison.*[3] *With the government torn by faction from within, and the nation threatened by royalist forces from without, the entire tone of Chilean sentiment toward the Americans had shifted to open suspicion and hostility.*

Porter did not have to wait long for Phoebe*'s arrival, for on 8 February the British frigate sailed into Valparaiso harbor. She was accompanied by the sloop of war* Cherub, *a contingency Porter seems not to have anticipated. The American commander now found himself outnumbered by a superior force in a foreign port whose officials were openly Anglophile. Within a week Hillyar had stationed his ships in a blockading position off Valparaiso, awaiting the arrival of reinforcements to bottle up, or perhaps destroy, the Yankee cruiser.*

Porter would later record in his Journal *that* Essex *was so superior in point of sailing compared to* Phoebe *and* Cherub *that he believed he could escape their blockade "at almost any time."*[4] *He remained at Valparaiso specifically to provoke Hillyar into a ship-to-ship combat. Despite several ploys, Porter was unable to tempt, taunt, or shame Hillyar into accepting his challenge. As an officer who had demonstrated bravery in battle on numerous occasions, Hillyar did not feel compelled to risk all in a sea fight simply to prove his courage. More important, the British commander knew he had time on his side and saw little reason to hazard battle when a more prudent course of action would accomplish the same ends.*

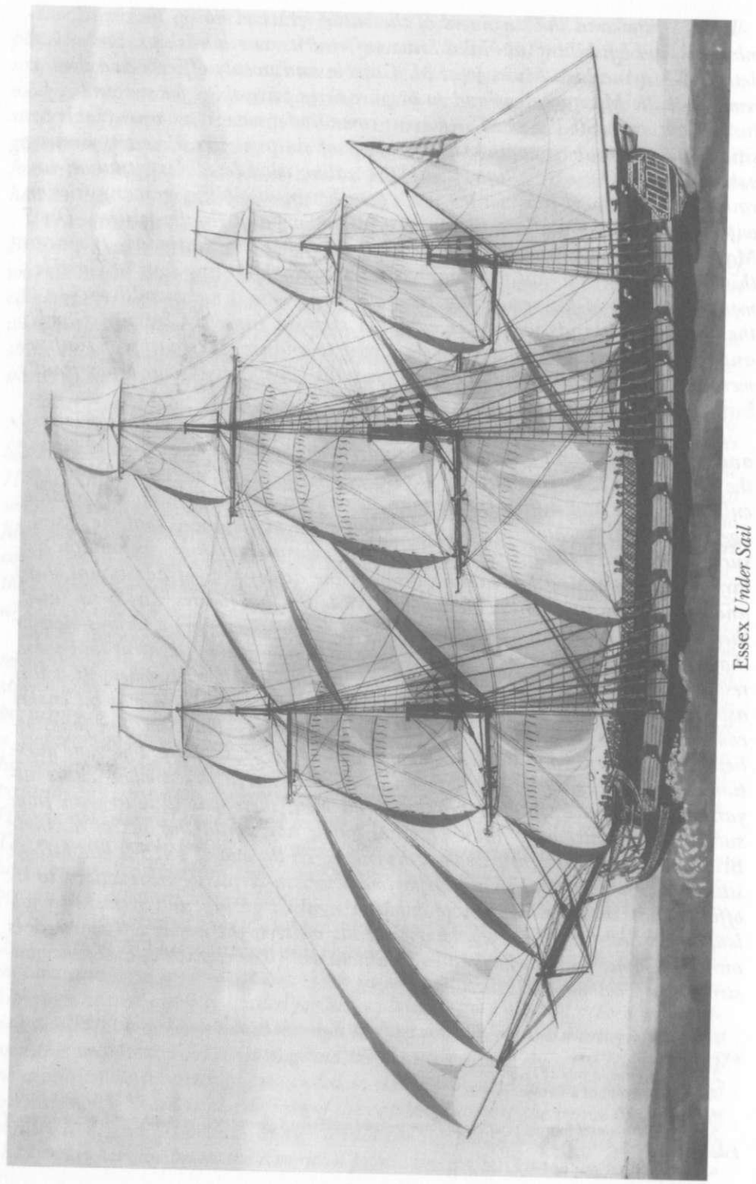
When the engagement Porter sought finally happened, it occurred not on the terms he wished, but under circumstances he could not control. On 28 March strong winds drove Essex *from her anchorage in Valparaiso. Porter seized the opportunity to sail past his blockaders outside the harbor and run for open sea. But a sudden squall snapped* Essex*'s main topmast, compelling Porter to abandon his bid for freedom. Instead he anchored close in to shore on the eastern side of Valparaiso Bay, in waters he considered neutral and thus safe from British attack. Hillyar now deemed the crippled frigate fair game and moved in to engage* Essex. *The ensuing battle lasted, with some periods of interruption, nearly two and a half hours. The American ship and its crew took a dreadful pounding, with sixty percent casualties among all hands.*

On 27 April David Porter and the majority of Essex*'s survivors set sail for the United States in* Essex Junior, *now serving as an unarmed cartel. The defeated captain and crew arrived in New York in early July and were acclaimed heroes. Although he was publicly lauded for his exploits in the Pacific, Porter sought official vindication of his conduct through a court of inquiry. But Porter was denied even this satisfaction for no sooner had his court convened than the Navy Department ordered its proceedings suspended so that Porter and his crew could proceed to Washington to aid in the defense of the capital. Lacking the venue of a court of inquiry to defend his actions, Porter would use the publication of his* Journal *in 1815 to lay his case before the American public.*[5]

While Porter and the survivors of the battle returned home, the small command he had left behind at Nuku Hiva suffered its own hardships. Porter had detached Marine Lieutenant John M. Gamble and twenty officers and men to remain at the Marquesan island to prepare three prize ships for sea and a future rendezvous with Essex. *The marine commander was in an unenviable position with an understrength crew, a charge of six prisoners, deserters lurking ashore, and an uneasy alliance with the native islanders. His situation unraveled over the next five months, with breaches in discipline, growing friction with the native population, incidents of desertion, and finally mutiny. On 7 May Gamble and his loyal seamen were overwhelmed by mutineers. It was at this critical juncture that the native islanders struck, killing four of Gamble's men. Gamble and his remaining crew of seven made a hairbreadth escape to the Sandwich Islands only to be captured there in June by* Cherub. *Gamble and his unfortunate shipmates were forced to endure six months of confinement in* Cherub *and an additional six months of captivity ashore before finally being permitted to return home.*

The return of Gamble's crew to the United States brought a close to the longest and most colorful and daring cruise undertaken by a U.S. Navy vessel during the War of 1812. In summing up the accomplishments of his cruise, Porter calculated that he had inflicted more than two and a half million dollars of damage on the British whale fishery in the Pacific. He also claimed that the Essex*'s success had forced the British government to expend more than six million dollars in accomplishing her capture through the deployment of additional ships and men in Asian and Pacific waters. While Porter's figures may be inflated, there is no question that he had dealt the enemy's whale fishery a serious blow or that he had caused the Admiralty to divert large resources to the hunt for* Essex, *resources that would have better served the British war effort elsewhere. It is this aspect of* Essex*'s cruise that showed the true potentialities of a war on enemy commerce. It was this type of war—a guerre de course—that Secretary Jones believed was best suited to the size and resources of the U.S. Navy. The more questionable dimension of Porter's cruise was his decision to seek combat with Hillyar. With a service strapped for ships and men, there was little to gain from such an encounter other than personal glory, nor would the loss of a single British frigate significantly weaken the enemy. By the end of 1813 it had become standard practice for the Navy Department to issue cruising instructions to its officers that included a strict prohibition against giving and receiving challenges. As Secretary Jones would remind his officers, the enemy's "Commerce is our true Game, for there he is indeed vulnerable."*[6] *The capture of* Essex *demonstrated the wisdom of this dictum.*

1. *For documentation on the events of 1813 in the Pacific theater, see Dudley,* Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, pp. 683–714.*
2. *Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, p. 733.*
3. *Porter,* Journal of a Cruise, *p. 490.*
4. *Ibid., p. 484.*
5. *In an 1822 reprint of* Journal of a Cruise, *Porter included additional documentation on British perfidy in the capture of Essex.*
6. *Dudley,* Naval War of 1812, *Vol. 2, p. 296.*



Essex *Under Sail*

Essex Blockaded

On 8 February Phoebe *and* Cherub *entered Valparaiso harbor to find the U.S. frigate* Essex *lying at anchor with three of her prizes. In short order the British warships took up their station outside the harbor effectively bottling up the American man-of-war within. These documents describe the dramatic first encounter between* Phoebe *and* Essex *and illustrate the strong nationalistic and competitive spirit each nation's sailors exhibited as they prepared to square off.*

Captain David Porter to Master Commandant John Downes

["Memorandum for Lt. Downes,—

Sh]ould I fall in [with the "*Phoebe,*" the "*Racoon*"[1]] the *Cherub* altogether I shall endeavour to make my retreat in the best manner I can and to effect this we must endeavour to keep together and act from circumstances—

If we fall in with the *Phoebe* & one Sloop of War you must endeavour to draw the Sloop off in chace of you and get her as far to leward of the Frigate as possible and as soon as you effect this I shall engage the Frigate—

If we meet the *Phoebe* alone, and to leward of us I shall run along side of her, You must remain out of Gun shot to windward of us until you see how matters are likely to go with us, if you find we can master her ourselves you will not bring your ship into action but keep her free from injury to assist us in case of need, if you find from the loss of our masts or other damage that we are worsted you will take a position that will most annoy the enemy to enable us to haul off or take such advantage as may offer—

If I make the *Phoebe* to windward I shall manoeuvre so as to endeavour to get the weather gage otherwise I shall avoid coming fairly along side of her unless I can disable her so with my stern chace Guns as to obtain an advantage—

Should we make the *Phoebe* & a sloop to windward draw the sloop off if you can and leave the *Phoebe* to me—

I wish you to avoid an engagement with a sloop if possible as your ship is too weak, if however you cannot avoid an action endeavour to cut her up so as to prevent her coming to the assistance of the *Phoebe*—

I shall in all probability run along side the *Phoebe* under the Spanish Ensign & pendant, should I do so you will show British colours until I hoist the American—

It will be advisable for you at all times to keep to windward of us—

D Porter.
U S Frigate *Essex* 10th Jany. 1814[2]

DS, MdAN. A typescript of this memorandum is attached to its top edge obscuring a portion of the text. The obscured text is supplied in brackets from the typescript.

1. Near the end of his cruise in the Galápagos Islands in 1813, Porter received intelligence that *Phoebe, Cherub, Racoon,* and a twenty-gun store ship (*Isaac Todd*) had sailed from Rio de Janeiro for the Pacific in search of *Essex.* This was only part of their mission. The British vessels had also been ordered to destroy American fur trading settlements on the Pacific Northwest coast. See Porter, *Jour-*

nal of a Cruise, pp. 271–72; Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, p. 732; and, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812,* Vol. 2, pp. 710–14.

2. This memorandum was drafted while *Essex* and her consort were at sea, two days before their arrival off the Chilean coast. Porter was cruising off Valparaiso harbor as early as 21 January. Porter to Secretary of the Navy, 21 Jan. 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 55 (M125, Roll No. 34).

Log Book of H.M. Frigate *Phoebe*

Remks. &c. *Phœbe* Tuesday 8th. Feby. 1814

AM, Do. Wr. [Moderate & Cloudy]— At 3.40 Set the Jib At 4 Moderate & Cloudy Wr. At 4..55 Saw the Land, Made Sail Trimmed Sails. At 7 Saw a Strange sail on the Starbd. Bow ranged Cables, Cleared Ship for Action At 8 Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company, Tackd. Occasionally Working into Valparaiso Bay, Spoke the United states Frigate *Essex* at Anchor, At 11..55 came too with the small Bower in 16 fms.— Noon moderate Wr. Furled Sails— *Cherub* at Anchor—

P.M, Do. Wr. Sent away Empty Casks for Water Bearings at Anchor, Point of Angels NW by N, A Fort[1] on the West side of the Bay NW by W Governors House in another Fort[2] West— a rocky point running off from the town SSE Best bower NNE in 24 fms. Small Ditto SSW in 16 fms., found lying at Anchor *Montezumer Hector*[3] & *Atlantic*[4] the latter Armd, (Prizes to the *Essex*) At 4 Do. Wr. Recd. 10 Tons of Water Pr. boats Recd. 2 Oxen Weighing 657 lbs, Suppd. the *Cherub* with 129 lbs. of Fresh Beef— At Sunset up Boats— Midnight Moderate & Cloudy Wr.—

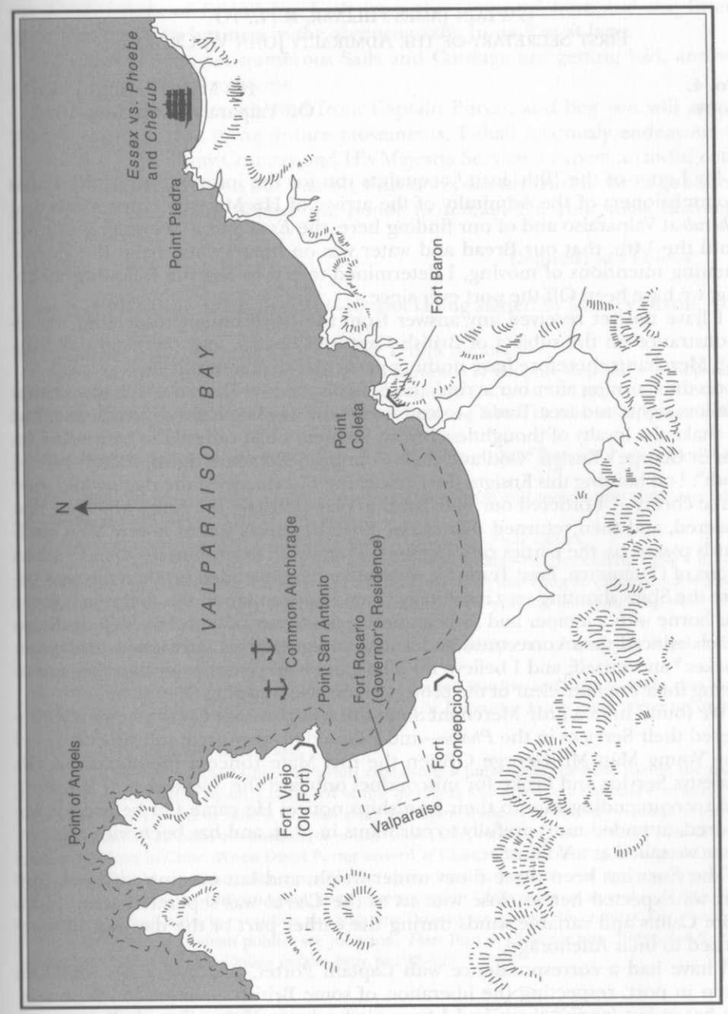
Remks. &c. *Phœbe,* Moored in Valparaiso Bay, Wednesday 9 Feby. 1814

AM, Moderate & fine Wr. Sent empty Casks for Water Mended sails, At 8 Do. Wr. Obsd. the *Essex* hoist a White flag at the Fore Top Gallt. mast head (Motto) Free Trade & Sailors rights *Phœbe* return'd it, Traitors offend both, God & Country, British sailors best rights, Obsd. the *Essex* mand. the rigging and gave three Cheers was Instantly return'd by H M Ship *Phœbe* playing God Save the King Accompd. with three Cheers— People empd. as Necessary, Saluted the Fort with 15 Guns Obsd. the Fort to return Ditto Noon Do. Wr. Saluted the Governer of Valparaiso[5] with 15 Guns

P.M. Moderate & fine Wr. Recd. 11 Tons of Water, Empd. Stowing away Ditto. Mustered at Quarters: At Sunset up Boats Midnight Do. Wr.

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/2675, Log Book of *Phoebe,* 1 Jan. 1813–28 Aug. 1815, fol. 151.

1. Fort Viejo (Old Fort), situated on St. Antonio Point.
2. Fort Rosario.
3. In July 1813 Porter directed John Downes to escort *Montezuma, Hector, Catherine,* and *Policy* to Valparaiso where he was to offer the captured whalers for sale. Unable to find buyers for the prize ships, Downes left the first three vessels moored at the Chilean port and dispatched *Policy* to the United States. *Policy* was captured en route to America by the privateer *Loire. Hector* and *Catherine* were destroyed following Porter's return to Valparaiso on 3 February 1814. *Montezuma* remained moored at Valparaiso at least through the spring of 1814 with the Chilean government rebuffing British efforts to claim the whaler as a lawful prize. On the destruction of *Hector,* see p. 717; and, *Montezuma,* see Hillyar to Croker, 26 June 1814, pp. 716–19, 739.
4. Renamed *Essex Junior.*
5. Francisco de la Lastra y de la Sotta, governor of Valparaiso. With the dissolution of Chile's ruling junta in early March 1814, Lastra was elected Supreme Director of Chile. He left for Santiago in mid-March to assume his new duties, appointing Captain Francisco de Formas to act as interim governor of Valparaiso. For a contemporary sketch of Lastra, see Johnston, *Three Years in Chile,* pp. 165–67.



Map 14. Valparaiso Harbor

Captain James Hillyar, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 4. His Majesty's Ship *Phœbe*
Copy Off Valparaiso 28th. feby. 1814

Sir

My Letter of the 10th. instt.[1] acquaints you for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of the arrival of His Majestys Ships *Phœbe* and *Cherub* at Valparaiso and of our finding here, the *Essex* and a Corvette; it was not until the 14th. that our Bread and water was on board when from the Enemy shewing intentions of moving, I determined to put to Sea the following morning; we have been Off the port ever since.

I have not yet received any answer from the Government respecting my remonstrance on the subject of British Captured Vessels, and the claims of English Merchants therefore have nothing particular to communicate[2]

on the morning after our arrival, the *Essex* displayed a Flag on which was written "Sailors rights and free Trade"; to counteract this (as I conceived) insidious effort to shake the loyalty of thoughtless British Seamen, I had ordered to be worked on our St George's Ensign "God and their Country, Sailors best rights, traitors offend both":[3] on hoisting this Ensign, the Crew of the *Essex* manned the rigging and gave three cheers— I ordered our little band to play God save the King, which we first cheered, and then returned that of our Enemies, Boats full of liberty Men afterwards passed us, the parties carrying small Flags with inscriptions on them; such as "Sons of Commerce, Free Trade" & who on landing, paraded on the Hills and before the Ships shouting very insultingly,[4] I am happy to say all this and much more was borne with a temper and forbearance by the Crews of both His Majestys Ships which evinced their correctness and loyalty and gave great satisfaction to Captain Tucker[5] and myself; and I believe no Men can be more desirous than they are of seeing their Enemies clear of the protection of a Neutral Flag.

We found here a little Merchant Ship, the *Emily*,[6] whose Crew to a man volunteered their Services in the *Phœbe*—and I should do very great injustice to a very fine Young Man Mr. George OBrien the first Mate (once a Lieutenant in His Majestys Service and broke for misconduct onboard the *Sparrowhawk*) If I omitted recommending him to their Lordships notice: He came Off before we Anchored, attended most usefully to our wants in port, and has been with me ever since we sailed as a Volunteer.

The *Essex* has been three times under weigh, and last evening with her consort we expected her to close with us as the *Cherub* was seperated some Miles from Calms and variable winds during the earlier part of the day, but they returned to their Anchorage.

I have had a correspondence with Captain Porter, and interviews with him when in port, respecting the liberation of some British Seamen, his Prisoners. He has at last landed them and I have pledged myself that they shall not serve onboard any Ship under my orders, and that the British Government will immediately on hearing from me, restore an equal number of Americans.[7] The *Essex* carries Forty Thirty two Pound Carronades, Six long Guns and about three hundred and twenty or thirty men, the Corvette twenty Guns.[8]

Her destination (The *Essex*) if she gets safe from hence, is said to be Off the River Plate on her way to America, but that I think is very uncertain. I have

warm assurances of Friendship both from the Govenor[9] here and the Intendant, who transacts business in the absence of the Junta,[10] at St Iago.

our wants are not yet numerous Sails and Cordage are getting bad, and we cannot procure Salt Provisions.

I enclose documents received from Captain Porter, and beg you will assure their Lordships, that in my future movements, I shall anxiously endeavour to Act for the good of my Country and His Majestys Service: I expect an awful combat if the two Ships meet, but humbly wish to repose my trust in Gods goodness for a favourable result. I have the honor to remain Sir. Your most obedient humble servant.

(Signed) Ja's Hillyar

Copy, UkLPR, Adm. 1/22, fols. 214–16. Docketing signed by Manley Dixon.

1. Hillyar to Croker, 10 Feb. 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1949, No. 194.

2. Hillyar wrote Governor Lastra to protest the destruction of the prize ship *Hector* in Valparaiso harbor on 26 February. Hillyar to Governor of Valparaiso, 26 Feb. 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1950, No. 300. For the complaints of British merchants on this head, see British Citizens at Valparaiso to Hillyar, 25 Feb. 1814, pp. 717–19.

3. For Porter's discussion with Hillyar regarding the flying of these flags, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, p. 477.

4. For more on these spirited displays between the Americans and their British rivals, see ibid., pp. 478–79, 485–87; and pp. 720–23, 750, below.

5. Captain Thomas T. Tucker, R.N., commanding H.M. sloop of war *Cherub*.

6. Porter believed that Hillyar's aggressive actions on 8 February—nearly running aboard *Essex*—were prompted by intelligence received from a British merchant ship lying at Valparaiso. *Emily* may have been this vessel. *Phoebe*'s log book records several contacts with the merchant ship while *Essex* was blockaded. See Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, p. 475.

7. Correspondence and discussion between Porter and Hillyar on this subject is printed in Porter's *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 479–84.

8. According to Porter *Essex* was manned by two hundred fifty-five and *Essex Junior* by sixty men. Together these numbers total close to the figure given by Hillyar for *Essex*'s crew. Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, p. 733.

9. Franciso de la Lastra y de la Sotta.

10. On 18 September 1810 Chilean patriots established a junta government to rule in the name of King Ferdinand VII of Spain. Composed of five members who acted as a national executive, the junta immediately voted to raise a Chilean army and open trade to all friendly nations. Over the next three and a half years a succession of juntas ruled Chile, reflecting the fractured state of revolutionary politics in Chile. When David Porter arrived at Chile in March 1813, José Miguel Carrera Verdugo was president of the junta, a position he surrendered in September of that year in order to assume command of the Chilean army. Junta government in Chile came to an end in March 1814 with the election of a single executive, the Supreme Director, to govern the country. For a contemporary description of Chilean politics see Johnston, *Three Years in Chile;* see also, Rippy, *Joel R. Poinsett*, pp. 35–60, and, Collier, *Chilean Independence*, pp. 92–125.

Captain David Porter to Secretary of the Navy Jones

N York July 13th. 1814

Sir/

There are some fact relating to our enemy and, although not connected with the action, serve to shew his perfidy and cowardice and should be known.

On Comre. Hillyars arival at Valparaiso he ran the *Phoebe* close along side the *Essex* and enquired politely after my health—, observing that his ship was cleared for action and his men prepared for boarding, I observed "sir if you by any accident get on board of me I assure you that great confusion will take place, I am prepared to receive you but shall only act on the defensive"— he observed coolly and indifferently "oh sir I have no such intentions"— at this instant his ship took aback on my starboard bow, her yards nearly locking with those of the *Essex*— I called all hands to board the Enemy, and in an instant my crew were ready to spring on her decks— Comre. Hillyar exclaimed with great agitation—"I had no intention of geting on board of you— I had no intention of coming so near you— I am sorry I came so near you"— his ship fell off with her jib boom over my decks her bows exposed to my broad side her stern to the fire of the *Essex Junior* her crew in the greatest confusion and in 15 minutes I could have taken or destroyed her— after he had brought his ship to anchor Comre. Hillyar and Captn. Tucker of the *Cherub* visited me on shore when I asked him if he intended to respect the neutrality of the port— "Sir, said he, you have paid such respect to the Neutrality of this port that I feel myself bound in honor to do the same"—[1] I have the Honor to be With great respect Your Obedt. Servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 162 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. This incident is also described in Farragut, "Reminiscences of Early Life," p. 749; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 474–77. Hillyar's correspondence and *Phoebe*'s log book are silent on this encounter.

Flames in Valparaiso Harbor

On 25 February the Americans burned the prize ship Hector *in Valparaiso Bay. The event was significant because in Hillyar's estimation it represented a hostile act violating the neutrality of the Chilean port. As Porter would later charge Hillyar with violating the Chilean neutrality in attacking and capturing* Essex *on 28 March, the British viewed the destruction of* Hector *as an act that vitiated American accusations of British perfidy.*

Log Book of H.M. Frigate *Phoebe*

Remks. &c. *Phœbe* Friday 25th Feby. 1814

AM. Fresh breezes & fine Wr. At 3 Tackd. Ship, up Driver At 4 Do. Wr. Wore Ship. *Cherub* in Compy. At 6 Carried away the Larbd. Main Sheet rove another, Made & Shortened sail Occasionally At 10 Wore Ship, Light airs Inclinable to Calm, Sounded in 53 fms. Came on board a boat with fresh beef 600 lbs Vegitables 1091 lbs At 11..30 Tackd. Noon Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company, Point Angels SSE on 4 or 5 miles, Enemy's Frigate[1] at Anchor

P..M, Fresh breezes & Cloudy Wr. At 1.30 Wore Ship At 2.50 Shortened Sail & hove to, At 3 h. 40 m. Sent a boat on board the *Cherub* with Fresh beef lbs Vegetables At 4 Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company. At 4..30 up Boat Filled & Made Sail At 5 Obsd. the Enemy's Boats towing an English prize[2] and burnt her, Point of Angels SS.E½E 3 Miles At 6.30 Wore up Main Sail, Obsd. the Prize Burning, At 8 Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company At 9 Wore Ship, Set Fore top Mast Staysail Enemys Prize Still Burning, At 9.30 *Cherub* North 3 Miles. Tackd. Ship Occasionally Midnight Moderate & fine [*weather*] *Cherub* in Compy.

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/2675, Log Book of *Phoebe,* 1 Jan. 1813–28 Aug. 1815, fol. 157.

1. *Essex.*
2. *Hector.*

British Citizens at Valparaiso to Captain James Hillyar, R.N.

Valparaiso February 25th. 1814.

Sir

We beg leave to inform you that this afternoon between the hours of 4 & 5 oClock the *Essex* Frigate set fire to the English prize ship *Hector,* as near as we can judge within Musket shot of the shipping, and considerably withinside the fort.— Mr. Whittaker and Mr. Munro have seen the Governor;[1] who strongly expressed his surprise and indignation at such an unwarranted act: and disavows all sanction or knowledge of it.— We have farther to represent to you, that it is the general opinion of every one in this town, that the Americans have most grossly and shamefully in this instance violated the neutrality of the port.

Leaving to your better judgment how far the American frigate is now entitled to avail herself of what Capt. Porter may call neutral rights, after so repeatedly having broken them, and after even in the event of this afternoon exposed the English property on the water (had the wind suddenly changed) to a total ruin: we conceive it needs no apology on our part to represent to you, that it is our decided opinion, that you are now authorised in taking those decisive steps in retaliation, which perhaps previous to this occurrence you might have doubted—

from several circumstances which have taken place this afternoon we strongly suspect that Captn. Porter will leave this the very first opportunity. we remain with the greatest respect Sir Your most obedient humble servants

George Cood
James Whittaker
Andrew Munro
Thos. N. Crompton
James Dent
And[w] Blest

P.S. Since writing the above, we have seen the Governor of this Place on the subject, who has informed us, that he sent this afternoon on board the *Essex* to let Captn. Porter Know; that he considers the burning of the English prize in the Port, a complete violation of all Law, and that he might depend upon it; the government here would not by any means be guarantee for anything the British



James Hillyar

Commander might be pleased to do regarding them here.— he also is writing strongly on this subject to the Government in St. Iago.—

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1950, No. 300. This letter was enclosed in Hillyar to Croker, 26 June 1814, pp. 719–20.

1. Francisco de la Lastra y de la Sotta.

Captain James Hillyar, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 13 H.M.S. *Phoebe* At Sea
June 26th. 1814—

Sir

Having understood that Capn. Porter, before he left Chile had declared the neutrality of the Port of Valiparaiso violated by the Capture of the *Essex* within its limits, although previous to her being taken, he had Burnt a British Ship in the bay; had come out with his Armed Boats in the Night for the avowed purpose of boarding one of our Ships,[1] while his own were enjoying the protection of the Neutral Flag; and besides these acts had actually fired Two Shot at the *Phoebe* when much nearer the Port than w[*h*]ere he was attacked

I have the Honor to transmit you for their Lordships information Copies of Letters sent and received on the Subject, by which I trust Captain Porter will be proved the only aggressor as well as the last I received from the Supreme Director[2] respecting the *Montezuma* with my reply to it

On my Arrival at Valparaiso there were two Prizes of his. The *Hector* and *Montezuma* laying in the Bay the former he Burnt on the 25th. about a mile & a half from the Anchorage. we were Standing towards the Bay, while he was in the Act of towing her out and fearing I believe, an attempt to cut her off was induced to take this unwarrantable Step: The four Letters dated from the 25th. Feby. to the 28th. are on the Subject. My Letter on the 11th. May to the Supreme Director and his Answer of the 16th. May follows: the latter refers to those of the 25 and 28 Feby. On the 19th. May I wrote to the Governor of Valparaiso; a Copy of my Letter is enclosed with his Answer: which not proving quite satisfactory to me I addressed another Note to him, the Copy of which I have mislaid or lost requesting he would have it Certified whether the *Essex*, when She fired two Shot at the *Phoebe* on the Eveng. of the 27th. Feby. was nearer the limits of the Port of Valpo. than when she was attacked by H B M. Ships *Phoebe* & *Cherub* on the 28th. March: he forwarded in reply the accompanying attestations, an oath, of several respectable Inhabitants of Valparaiso who were Eye Witnesses of the facts.[3]

I shall now state as well as my memory will enable me, the particulars of the circumstance: On the Evening of the 27th. of Feby.[4] being about three miles from the Anchorage & the *Cherub* some distance to leeward we perceived the Enemys Ships Slip their Cables and stand out towards us with a Commanding Breeze and Flags flying at all the mast heads: The *Phoebe*s head was off Shore on the larboard Tack: we immediately prepared to receive them, the Colours were hoisted, the main Topsail Backed and the driver brailed up. The *Essex* led, and as there appeared a determination to bring us to Action I prepared commencing it on the other Tack in order to prevent Captain Porter's choosing his Dis-

tance or Situation, and therefore directed the Ship to be wore and the Starboard Guns to be manned; while wearing the *Essex* was observ'd to make a Signal with a Gun and haul her Wind on the Larboard tack. We immediately did the same She fired two Shot towards us and soon afterwards Tackd we tacked also and Stood after her as far as the entrance of the Bay. She reached the Port before our Shot could be expected to produce any material effect and therefore I would not allow any to be fired She took in her Cables and we brought too a mile and a Half or two miles from her. I should not have thought this circumstance of sufficient consequence to detail to their Lordships had not Capn. Porters unkind assertion call'd it forth.

When the *Essex* fired at the *Phoebe* she was certainly not more than Two miles and a half from the point of angels which forms the western extremity of the bay; and when she was attacked by the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* she was then more than Five Miles from the said point, and at least Three and a quarter from Fort St. James[5] which forms the Eastern Extreme.

On my conversation with the Supreme Director on the impropriety of the *Montezuma* being allowed to remain any longer in the Port, he informed me that Captain Porter having declared her to be a recapture, She was entitled to Stay untill the contrary was proved, I enclose a letter from him on the Subject with my answer;[6] and have the Honor to remain, Sir, Your most Obt. servt.

Jaˢ Hillyar

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1950, No. 300.

1. Porter did not mention this incident either in his letters to Secretary Jones or in his *Journal of a Cruise.* Farragut describes it in his "Reminiscences of Early Life," see pp. 749–50. Hillyar received intelligence that ten armed boats from *Essex* had made an attempt to board *Phoebe* on the night of 12 March. Andrew Blest to Hillyar, 15 Mar. 1814, UkLNMM, AGC/23/7.
2. Francisco de la Lastra y de la Sotta.
3. Copies or originals of the letters mentioned in this paragraph follow Hillyar's letter to Croker. They cover the period 25 February to 30 May 1814. The copy of Hillyar's letter of 11 May 1814 to the Supreme Director of Chile was incorrectly dated 11 April.
4. For more on the events of 27 February and on Porter's determination to bring *Phoebe* to combat, see pp. 720–23, 733–34, 750; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 477–78, 484–89.
5. Probably Fort Baron.
6. See enclosures Lastra to Hillyar, 22 May 1814, and, Hillyar to Supreme Director of Chile, 30 May 1814.

Challenge Given—Challenge Declined

Because of Essex*'s superior sailing qualities, David Porter believed that he could elude the enemy's blockade any time he chose. He remained at Valparaiso in order to provoke Hillyar into single-ship combat. Porter thought his wish would be granted on 27 February when Hillyar seemed to signal his intention to battle alone the American frigate. But* Phoebe*'s captain had no intention of throwing away his advantage, so the battle Porter so eagerly sought failed to materialize. These documents illustrate some of the gamesmanship involved between rival navies and the frustration Porter's officers felt at what they perceived to be cowardly behavior on the part of the British.*

Log Book of H.M. Frigate *Phoebe*

Remks. &c. *Phœbe.* Sunday 27th. Feby. 1814
AM Moderate & Cloudy Wr. At 12.15 Wore Ship Wore Ship Occasionally. At 4 Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company, At 7 Light Airs inclinable to Calm At 8 Calm & cloudy Weather, At 8.15 up fore Sail, Trimmed Sails At 9 Wore Ship At 10 Mustered by Divisions & performed Divine Service Noon Calm & fine Wr. Enemy's Frigate at Anchor
Point of Angels SE by S 9 Miles
P.M. Calm & cloudy Weather At 2 a light breeze from the Westd. At 3 out 3d. reef of the Top Sails, At 4 Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Company, Point of Angels SE½E 6 or 7 Miles, Enemy Anchor. At 5.30 *Cherub* N by W 6 Miles, Made Signal to make more Sail & to close with a Gun, Set Top Gallt. Sails, At 6.15 Tackd. Enemy's Frigate ESE 4 Miles At 6.45 Saw the Enemys Frigate & Sloop of War Get under weigh & Stand out of the Bay, towards us, Backd. the Main Topsail Shew'd our Colours & Beat to quarters, a Gun Went off in Clearg. Read Prayers to the Ships Company Adapted to the occasion, Captain[1] admonished them to be Calm & steady, which was received with three cheers *Cherub* N by E 5 or 6 Miles. At 7.20 When in the Act of wearing to bring the Starbd. Guns to bear on the *Essex* Obsd. her haul to the wind on the Larbd. tack & fire one Gun to Windward & two, to Leward, hauld to the Wind. on the Starbd. tack. Made Sail in Chase. At 7.20 Obsd. her shorten sail & Anchor in the Bay At 7.40 Tackd. Ship & hove to, hoisted a light, *Essex* North 3½ miles, West Point of the Bay SSW 3 miles, Tackd. occasionally, Midnight Do. Wr. *Cherub* in Sight.—

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/2675, Log Book of *Phoebe,* 1 Jan. 1813–28 Aug. 1815, fol. 158.

1. James Hillyar.

The Crew of *Essex* to the Crew of *Phoebe*

Challenge of the crew of the Essex *to the crew of the* Phœbe.[1]

"On board the U.S. frigate *Essex,* March 9th, 1814.

"The sons of liberty and commerce, on board the saucy *Essex.* whose motto is "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights," present their compliments to their oppressed brother tars, on board the ship whose motto is too tedious to mention, and hope they will put an end to all this nonsense of singing,[2] sporting, hunting and writing, which we know less about than the use of our guns—Send the *Cherub* away, we will meet your frigate and fight you, then shake hands and be friends; and whether you take us or we take you, either will be to your advantage; as in the first case, you will not doubt, for the service you render in a cause every brave and free man detests, be turned over to Greenwich hospital[3] or to a new ship, on your arrival to England; and if we take you, we shall respect the rights of a sailor, hail you as brethren whom we have liberated from slavery, and place you in future beyond the reach of a press gang.

(Signed,) FROM THE SONS OF LIBERTY.

Printed, *Aurora,* reprinted in *Niles' Weekly Register,* 20 Aug. 1814.

1. According to Porter, the crew of *Cherub* penned several offensive letters to their American adversaries following the events of 27 February. The *Essex* crew's challenge was written in response to those letters. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 485.

2. From 8 to 14 February *Cherub* was anchored in Valparaiso harbor within hailing distance of *Essex* and *Essex Junior.* During this time the rival crews taunted each other with insulting songs. "The national tune of yankee doodle was the vehicle through which the crew of the *Essex,* in full chorus, conveyed their nautical sarcasms," recalled Porter, "while 'the sweet little cherub that sits aloft,' was generally selected by their rivals." Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 478.

3. Established in the 1690s by William and Mary, Greenwich Hospital provided care and pensions for Royal Navy seamen who were unable to support themselves.

A Midshipman of *Phoebe* to the Crew of *Essex*

ANSWER.

[*10? March 1814*]

To you, Americans, who seek redress,
For fancied wrongs from Britons you've sustained;
Hear what we Britons now to you address,
From malice free, from blasphemy unstain'd;
Think not, vain boasters, that your insidious lay,
Which calls for vengeance from the Almighty God—
Can from their duty Britons lead away,
Or path of honor which they have always trod.
No—Your vile infamy can never fail,
To excite disgust in each true Briton's heart;
Your proffered liberty cannot avail,
For virtue is the sons of Albion's crest.
Our God, our king, our country and our Laws,
We proudly reverence like Britons true;
Our captain who defends such glorious cause,
Meets due respect from all his grateful crew.
When to the battle we're by duty called,
Our cause, like Britons, bravely we'll maintain;
W'ell fight like men whom fear ne'er yet appall'd,
And hope, Americans! you'll do the same.
Your vile letter, which on board, was brought,
We scorn to answer, tho' with malice frought;
But if, by such foul means, you think to make
Dissentions rise our loyalty to shake,
Know then we are Britons all, both stout and true,
We love our king, our country, captain too;
When honor calls, we'll glory in his name,
Acquit like men and hope you'll do the same.

Lieut. Ingraham[1] acknowledged the above to have been written by a midshipman of the *Phœbe,* and with the approbation of com. Hillyar.[2]

Printed, *Aurora,* reprinted in *Niles' Weekly Register,* 20 Aug. 1814.

1. Lieutenant William Ingram, R.N., first lieutenant of *Phœbe,* mortally wounded 28 March 1814. For Ingram's role as an intermediary between Hillyar and Porter, see p. 723; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 487–89.

2. Porter suspected Hillyar of writing several of the "poetical effusions" sent to *Essex.* For more on this war of words and Porter's attempts to rouse Hillyar to action, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 485–87.

Statement of the Officers of *Essex*

On Sunday, the 27th February, 1811 [*1814*], at 5 P.M. the *Phœbe* run close in with the harbor, hoisted an English ensign bearing the motto—"*God and our country—British sailor's best rights—Traitors offend both*"—and fired a gun to windward; the sloop of war was about two and an half miles the leeward. The *Essex* immediately got under way, hoisted a flag bearing the motto—"*God, our country and liberty—Tyrant's offend them*" and fired a gun to windward. The *Phœbe* hove to until the *Essex* was within gunshot, when she bore up and run down for the sloop—Two shot were fired across her bows to bring her to, without effect—After chasing her as far as was prudent, captain Porter observed that their conduct was cowardly and dishonorable, and returned into port where we came to anchor.

John Downs,	*M. W. Bartnue,*[1]
Wm. Odenheimer,	*Alex. Montgomery,*
Edwd. Barnwell,	*Geo. W. Isaacs,*
Rich'd K. Hoffman,	*Saml. L. Dusenberry,*
John R. Shaw,	

Printed, *Aurora,* reprinted in *Niles' Weekly Register,* 20 Aug. 1814.

1. Melancton W. Bostwick.

Statement of Master Commandant John Downes

On the 16th March, 1814, lieutenant Ingraham,[1] first of the *Phœbe,* came on board the *Essex* under a flag of truce, having a letter from commodore Hillyar to captain Porter. Lieutenant Ingraham informed captain P. that commodore H. had heard that captain P. had called him a coward for running away from the *Essex,* and begged to know if it was the case; captain P. informed him, that, considering the circumstances of the challenge, and the conduct of the *Phœbe* in bearing up, he believed any thing he could have said on the occasion; justifiable. Lieutenant Ingraham assured captain Porter that no challenge was intended, and that the gun was fired by accident.[2] Captain P. said he supposed it at the time to be a challenge, and accepted it, and that he should accept another, if given by the *Phœbe,* observing—"it cannot be expected that I would take upon myself the responsibility of challenging a 36 gun frigate with a frigate of 32 guns, as my country would censure me should I prove unsuccessful, but the difference of force will not prevent my accepting a challenge given by captain Hillyar.

The *Phœbe* and *Cherub* soon after kept close together, and shewed a determination of not risking an action unless they could both engage the *Essex.*

(Signed) J. DOWNS.

Printed, *Aurora,* reprinted in *Niles' Weekly Register,* 20 Aug. 1814.

1. William Ingram.

2. For Hillyar's own description of the events of 27 February, see Hillyar to Croker, 26 June 1814, pp. 719–20.

The Battle

Unsuccessful in provoking Hillyar to engage Essex *in ship-to-ship combat, and concerned about the imminent arrival of additional enemy warships, Porter began making preparations in late March to leave Valparaiso. Fate took a hand in the timing of* Essex*'s escape when strong winds drove the frigate from her anchorage on 28 March. The American captain seized the opportunity to make a run for open sea. An accident to* Essex*'s rigging forced Porter to abandon his attempt and return to the safety of the harbor's neutral confines. He anchored* Essex *close in to shore on the eastern side of the harbor in what he believed were neutral waters. Undeterred by concerns about Chilean neutrality, Hillyar moved in to engage the American ship. After nearly two and a half hours of bloody combat* Essex *struck her colors. These documents detail the battle that brought the cruise of* Essex *to a sanguinary close.*

Log Book of H.M. Frigate *Phoebe*

Remks. &c. Monday 28th March 1814

AM. Fresh breezes, Obsd. a Blue Light NE by E Bore up for Ditto, At 12.20 Obsd. Several blue lights North, made all Sail in chase, At 1 Obsd. Several Blue Lights & Rockets a Head, Shew'd a Light— At 1.20 Light not being Ansd. Shortd. Sail & Hauled to the wind on Larbd. Tack, Suppd. the Above Sigl. made by Enemy's boats as a Decoy, Spoke the *Cherub*— At 1.40 Split the Main Topsail, Shifted Ditto, in 2 & 3 reefs of main Topsails, At 4 Fresh breezes *Cherub* in Co. At Daylight Obsd. the Enemy's Ships at Anchor, Wore Ship Occasionally At 8 Do. Wr. Point Angels E by S½S 3 miles Wore ship Occasionally, At 10.30 Down Royal Yards & in 2 reefs of Mizen Top Sail Noon Do. Wr. Close reef'd the Top Sails

Point of Angels SE by E 3 miles

P.M, Fresh Breezes & fine Wr. At 3.10 Obsd. the Enemys Frigate Standing out of the Bay of Valparaiso, Set Main Sail in Chase, Fresh Gales & heavy Squalls, Beat to Quarters, At 3.50 the *Phœbe* & *Cherub* hoisted each a St. Georges Ensign bearing the following Inscription, God & Country British Sailors best Rights, Traitors offend both Obsd. the Enemy to lose his Main Top Mast and soon afterwards he Bore up and run along shore, At 4 the Enemy Anchor'd about half a mile from the Land & bore long Ensigns, with two white Flags, flying, One at the Fore top Gallt. mast head, having, written on it Free Trade and Sailors Rights, the other at the Mizen top Gallt. mast Head having on it, God our Country and Liberty. Tyrants offend them At 4.10 made the Sigl. to prepare to Anchor with Springs, up Courses Came on board the *Emely*'s boat with Mr. OBryan first Mate and Mr. Porter & Boats Crew of the *Phœbe Essex* a Head one Mile, Standing towards her quarter, Empd. ranging Cables and prepairing Springs, As we drew into the Bay, Ship broke off in the Squalls, so as to prevent us from bringing the Enemy to so close Action as we intended, At 4.20 having fetched as near as the wind permitted, Commenced firing about half Gun Shot off— St Antonio SW½ by W 5 Miles. *Cherub* close to us on the Starbd. Quarter,— Enemy returned our fire with her Aftermost Guns & Stern Chacers, At 4.40 Very near the Shore, ceased firing; Wore round and came to the Wind on the Larbd. tack— Mainsail much cut, Jib boom badly wounded,

Fore Main & Mizen Stays Shot away and other rigging damaged— Empd. repairing damages,— At 4.50 Tackd. Ship, furled the Mainsail, At [*blank*] hailed the *Cherub,* informed him of our intending to Anchor and ordered him to keep under weigh At 5..35 commenced firing with the Bow Guns on the Enemy, which was returned,— Light airs Inclinable to Calm, At 5.50 the Enemy cut his Cable, Set his Jib Fore Topsail & Foresail; Wind becoming light & variable, endeavoured to keep our broadside to bear on the Enemy— At 6 the firing was hot and Incessant on both sides, At 20 Minuets past 6 the Enemy struck his Colours— Made Sigl. to take possession of the Prize,— Calm came to with the Small Bower, furled Sails, out Boats, & Sent Lt. Pearson and two Petty Officers with a Party of Men to take possession of her, Light airs & hazy Wr. Weighed the Small Bower and made Sail Boats Empd. as necessary, Came on board Captain Porter a few of his Officers & part of his Crew At 12 Calm, came to with the Stream Anchor in 34 Fms. furled Sails, The following Men were killed in action vizt. Thos. Griffiths Ab, Willm. Knowles Ab, Dennis Murphy Ab, Lieutenant Ingram mortally wounded, died about Midnight,—, Robert Bruce, Humphry Jameson, Thos. Warren Seamen & Geo. Fieldhouse Marine Severly Wounded==James Madden, Thos. Millery (Seamen) James Evans, Marine, Slightly, *Cherub*'s Return as follow's,— Willm. Derbyshire Marine killed, Captn. Tucker Severe Contusion, John Edwards Corpl. Marines & Christr. Rafferty Private Marine, Slightly Wounded,— Damages pr. Carpenters report,— seven 32 prs. between Wind & Water & one 12 pr. 3 feet under water, Thirteen 32 & 12 prs. into the Waist & Qr. Deck A number of Grape Shot & Musquet Balls in different parts of the Ship, Starbd. Bill-boards & Bolsters, three chain plates & three dead Eyes Shot away, Hammock Boars & Stantions, Boats, Cabins, Qr. Galleries & Sashes considerably damaged, Main Mast head Wounded badly, Wounded also below 1st. Qr. with Cannon Shot,— Main & Main Topsail Yards, Mizen Mast Jib Boom & Spritsail Yard Severaly Wounded,— Gunners report, Transon and Transon Bolt damaged of an 18 Pr.—, An Axeltree of a nine Pr. Carrage,— A 12 pr. Carronade Slide destroyed & 2 Cap Squares,— Boatswains Report, Cutter Swampt—all her Oars & Geer lost, One Fore Top Gallt. Studdg. Sail, 200 Yards of Main Topmast Staysail, Thirty Fms. of Spring hawser 4½ Fore Jib Guys, Martingale & Stay,— Messenger Cablet of 11 In 4 Fms. for yarns,— Bowsprit Gammons & three eight Inch & 4.6 Inch Single Blocks,

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/2675, Log Book of *Phoebe,* 1 Jan. 1813–28 Aug. 1815, fols. 173–74.

Log Book of U.S. Frigate *Essex*

United States Frigate Essex, *David Porter, Esq Commander, March* 28th 1814

Light Winds and cloudy, at day light got every thing ready to weigh, expecting the enemy's ships were to leeward, according to the report of Lieutenant Maury, who was last evening entrusted with an expedition to effect this end;[1] we were much surprised at about half past six to see both ships close to the weather point of the Bay—they stood within the point, tacked and stood out again—at noon the wind freshened at S.SW. and encreased to a strong gale—struck royal

yards and masts, at 45 minutes past 2, parted the larboard cable, which caused us to drag the starboard anchor—Capt Porter hailed the *Essex, Junr* to send her boat to take Mr. Poinsett[2] on shore—Immediately after he left us, Captain Porter gave orders to cut the cable, which was done, and sail made on the ship; the enemy's ships were at this time standing in for the port. On luffing round the point of Angels, a heavy squall struck us which carried away our main-topmast by the lower cap; 2 men, Samuel Miller and Thomas Browne, fell overboard and were drowned as we suppose; the ship was wore and hauled to the wind on the starboard tack, and orders given to clear the wreck; the main-sail and main-top sail were cut away from the yards, so as not to act against us in working into the Bay Captain P finding it impossible to gain our former anchorage, concluded to bear up for a small Bay situated on the westward side of the harbor.[3] At 45 minutes past 3 came too with the best bower in 9 1-2 fathoms water, and in half pistol shot of the shore.— The Western Fort (Castello Viego,) bore E. by N distant 3 miles;[4] the Eastern Fort, (or Castello jel Barren) bore S.W by W. distance about 1 1-2 miles. This fort was not in sight, as we were anchored under a high bluff that screened us from it. There was a long 24 pounder detached from it on a rising ground to the N.E. distant 1-2 a mile, and consequently so much nearer to where we anchored. In this situation we considered ourselves perfectly secure. Capt. Porter gave orders to clear the ship for action, although he did no[t], I believe, entertain an idea that the enemy would attack him At 55 minutes past 3, the *Phœbe* commenced firing on our larboard quarter, and at 4 the *Cherub* commenced firing on our starboard bow In about half an hour they wore round and stood out to repair damages. They appeared to be much cut in their rigging, their top sail-sheets a flying away. In this Interval we got the 3d spring on the cable, the two first being shot away as soon as put on—They soon returned and took their position out of reach of our short guns, and opened a most galling fire upon us, the wind shifting about this time Capt P. determined to lay the *Phœbe* aboard—the cable was accordingly cut, but the only hallyards standing were those of the flying jib, this sail was partly hoisted, but not sufficient to ware the ship off—we were now in a most dreadful situation as the enemy hull'd us every shot, and our brave fellows falling in every direction, but we were all so animated by the brave, cool and intrepid conduct of our heroic Commander, that every man appeared determined to sacrifice his life, in defence of our Ship and of *Free Trade and Sailor's Rights,* for which they were continually huzzaing fore and aft, but an unlucky accident took place which frustrated all our hopes, to wit, the explosion of some loose cartridges in the main hatchway, which caused a general consternation among the crew, the greatest part of which jumped overboard. Capt. Porter seeing now no hopes left gave orders to fire the ship, but humanely considering that many of his brave companions were lying wounded below, he countermanded this order and gave the painful one to lower our ensign which was executed precisely at half past six, the enemy did not cease firing for some minutes afterwards—During this interval some of our men were wounded and four shot dead—Thus fell the *Essex* into the hands of the English, after a resistance worthy the cause which animated us.

Since the action I have been informed by the 1st Lieut. of Marines of the *Phœbe* (Mr. Burrows) that they passed those two unfortunate men on our Life Buoy, which had been thrown over to them & inhumanly left them to perish in the waves, without endeavoring to afford them the least assistance.

Printed, New-York Evening Post, 8 July 1814.

1. Hillyar received intelligence that the Americans had been preparing to depart Valparaiso as early as 23 March. Thomas N. Crompton to Hillyar, [24 Mar. 1814?], UkLNMM, AGC/23/7. To mislead Hillyar as to his true intentions, Porter ordered Purser John Shaw ashore before *Essex* sailed in order to create the impression that the American frigate was not yet ready to leave Valparaiso. Memorial of Mrs. John R. Shaw to the Naval Affairs Committee, 5 Feb. 1839, DNA, RG46, SEN 25A-G13.
2. Joel R. Poinsett, Special Agent to Buenos Aires, Chile, and Peru.
3. *Essex* anchored on the eastern side of the harbor. This may be a transcription error on the part of the copyist or typesetter.
4. Fort Viejo (Old Fort), bore WSW of *Essex*'s position. This may be a transcription error on the part of the copyist or typesetter.

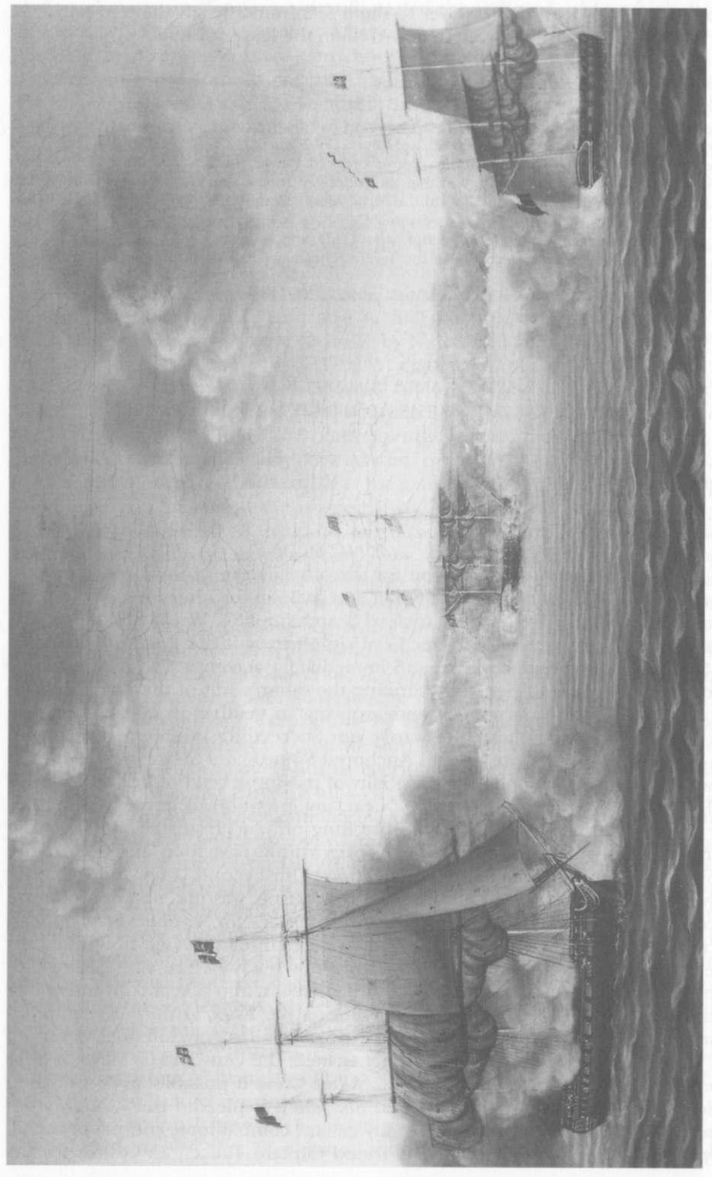
Captain James Hillyar, R.N., to First Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker

No. 5
Duplicate

His Majesty's Ship *Phoebe* in
Valparaiso Bay 30th. March 1814

Sir

I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that a little past 3 oClock on the afternoon of the 28th. Instant, after nearly five Months anxious Search, and Six Weeks Still more anxious look out for the *Essex* and her Companion to quit the Port of Valparaiso, we Saw the former under weigh, and immediately, accompanied by the *Cherub* made Sail to close with her: On rounding the outer point of the Bay and hauling her wind for the purpose of endeavouring to weather us and escape, She lost her Main Topmast; and afterwards, not Succeeding in an effort to regain the limits of the Port, bore up and Anchored So near the Shore, a few Miles to leeward of it, as to preclude the possibility of passing a head of her without risk to His Majesty's Ships.— As we drew near, my intention of going close under her Stern was frustrated by the Ship breaking off, and from the wind blowing extremely fresh, our first fire, commencing a little past four, and continuing about ten minutes produced no visible effect: Our Second, a few random Shot only, from having increased our distance by wearing, was not, apparently, more Successful; and having lost the use of our Mainsail, Jib, & Main Stay, appearances were a little inauspicious: On Standing again towards her, I Signified my intention of Anchoring, for which we were not ready before with Springs, to Captain Tucker, directing him to keep under weigh, and take a convenient Station for annoying our opponent.— On closing the *Essex,* at thirty five minutes past five, the firing recommenced, and before I gained my intended position, her Cable was cut, and a Serious conflict ensued; the Guns of His Majestys Ship gradually becoming more destructive and her Crew, if possible more animated which lasted until twenty minutes past Six, when it pleased the Almighty disposer of events to bless the efforts of my gallant companions, and my personal, very humble one, with Victory.— My friend Captain Tucker, an Officer worthy



Essex *Battles* Phoebe *and* Cherub

of their Lordships best attentions, was Severely wounded at the commencement of the Action, but remained on Deck until it terminated; using every exertion against the baffling winds and occasional Calms which followed the heavy firing to close near the Enemy: He informs me that his Officers and Crew, of whose loyalty, Zeal, and discipline I entertain the highest opinion, conducted themselves to his Satisfaction.—

I have to lament the death of four of my brave companions, and one of his: With real Sorrow, I add, that my first Lieutenant, Ingram, is among the number: he fell early, is a great loss to His Majesty's Service, and the many manly tears which I observed this morning, while performing the last mournful duty at his funeral on Shore more fully evinced the respect and affection of his afflicted companions, than any eulogium my pen is equal to. Our Lists of wounded[1] are Small, and there is only one for whom I am under anxiety.—

The conduct of my Officers & Crew without an individual exception that has come to my knowledge before during, and after the Battle, was Such as became good and loyal Subjects zealous for the honour of their much loved though distant King & Country: I believe I may add a still higher Species of praise, and Say Such a Christian Should observe— they joined me in asking the blessing of the Almighty previous to the battle, met the Enemy with cheerfulness generously felt for them when subdued, and humbly ascribed their preservation & Victory to the kindness of that gracious Being in whom they wish to repose their trust.—

The defence of the *Essex,* taking into consideration our Superiority of force; the very discouraging circumstance of her having lost her Main Topmast; and being twice on fire, did honor to her brave defenders, and most fully evinced the courage of Captain Porter and those under his command: Her Colours were not Struck until the loss in killed and wounded was So awfully great, and her Shattered condition So Seriously bad as to render further resistance unavailing

I was much hurt on hearing that her Men had been encouraged, when the result of the Action was evidently decided; Some to take to their Boats, and others to Swim on Shore: Many were drowned in the attempt, Sixteen were Saved by the exertions of my people and others, I believe between thirty and forty, effected their landing: I informed Captain Porter that I considered the latter, in point of honor, as my Prisoners: he Said the encouragement was given when the Ship was in danger from fire, and I have not pressed the point.— The *Essex* is completely Stored & Provisioned for at least Six Months, and although much injured in her upperworks, Masts, Rigging, is not in Such a State as to give the Slightest cause of alarm respecting her being able to perform a Voyage to Europe with perfect Safety.— Our Main & Mizen Masts, & Main Yard are rather Seriously wounded,— these with a few Shot holes between wind and water, which we can get at without lightening; and a loss of Canvas and Cordage, which we can partly replace from our well Stored Prize; are the extent of the injuries His Majesty's Ship has Sustained.—

I feel it a pleasant duty to recommend to their Lordships notice my new Senior Lieutenant Pearson and Messrs. Allen, Gardner, Porter, & Dew, Midshipmen; and to request that they will do me the honor to confirm my acting appointments, Since passing Cape Horn, of Messrs. Henry S. Gardner Kirby and Rickard as Lieutenants, Nickinson as Purser, and John Gillispie as Boatswain, all unhappily in consequence of death Vacancies— they have acquitted themselves well with me in battle, both Gardner's, and Kirby, on two occasions.— I Should

do very great injustice to Mr. George O'Brian, the Mate of the *Emily,* Merchantman who joined a Boat's Crew of mine in the Harbour, and pushed for the Ship the moment he Saw her likely to come to action, were I to omit, again recommending him to their Lordships: His conduct with that of Mr. N Murphy, Master of the English Brig *Good Friends,* was Such as to intitle them both to my lasting regard, and prove that they were ever ready to hazard their lives in their Country's honorable cause: They came on board when the attempt was attended with great risk, and both their Boats were Swamped.— I have before informed their Lordships, that Mr. OBrian was once a Lieutenant in His Majesty's Service, and may now add that youthful indiscretions appear to have given place to great correctness of conduct and as he has proved his laudable zeal for its honour, I think if restored, he will be found one of its greatest ornaments.— I enclose returns of killed & wounded, and, if conceived to have trespassed on their Lordships time by this very long letter, hope it will kindly be ascribed to the right cause.— An earnest wish that merit may meet its due reward.— I have the honor to remain Sir your obedt. huml. Servt.

Jas. Hillyar

P.S. There has not been found a Ships Book or paper of any description, (Charts excepted) on board the *Essex,* or any document relative to the number Serving in her previous to the Action.— Captain Porter informs me that he had upwards of two hundred & Sixty Victualled: Our Prisoners including fifty two wounded, amount to one hundred and Sixty one, twenty three were found dead on her Decks, three wounded were taken away by Captain Downes of the *Essex, Junr.* a few minutes before the Colours were Struck and I believe twenty or thirty reached the Shore—the remainder were killed or drowned—[2]

LS, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1950, No. 264.

1. Enclosure not printed. Hillyar reported eleven men killed and wounded in *Phoebe* and four in *Cherub.*
2. The list of *Essex*'s killed, wounded, and missing is published in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 463–66.

Captain David Porter to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Essex Junior July 3d. 1814 at sea

Sir,

I have done myself the honor to address you repeatedly since I left the Delaware but have scarcely a hope that one of my letters have reached you therefore consider it necessary to give you a brief history of my proceedings since that period—

I sailed from the Delaware on the 27th. October 1812 and repaired with all diligence (agreeable to instructions from Commre. Bainbridge)[1] to Port Praya, Fernando de Noronho, and Cape Frio, and arrived at each place on the day appointed to meet him— On my passage from Port Praya to Fernando de Noronho I captured his Majesties Packet *Nocton* and after taking out about £11.000 sterling in specie sent her under command of Lt. Finch for America.[2] I cruized off Rio de Janeiro and about Cape Frio until the 12th. January 1813, hearing frequently of the Commre. by vessels from Bahia; I here captured only one Schooner[3] with Hides and Tallow, I sent her into Rio— The *Montague* the Admirals[4] ship being in pursuit of me, my provisions now getting short and finding it necessary to look out for a supply to enable me to meet the Commre. by the lst. April off St. Helena, I proceeded to the Island of St. Catharines (the last place of rendezvous on the coast of Brazils) as the most likely to supply my wants, and at the same time afford me that secresy necessary to enable me to elude the British Ships of war on the coast and expected there— I here could procure only wood, water and rum, and a few bags of flour, and hearing of the Commre. action with the *Java,*[5] the capture of the *Hornet* by the *Montague,* and of a considerable augmentation of the British force on the coast and of several being in pursuit of me, I found it necessary to get to sea as soon as possible: I now agreeable to the Commres. plan stretched to the southward and scouring the coast as far as Rio de la Plata, I heard that Buenas Ayres was in a state of starvation, and could not supply our wants, and that the Government of Montivideo was very inimicable to us— The Commre. instructions now left it completely discretionary with me what course to pursue and I determined on following that which had not only met his approbation but the approbation of the then Secretary of the Navy.[6] I accordingly shaped my course for the Pacific and after suffering greatly from short allowance of provisions and heavy gales off Cape Horn (for which my ship and men were very illy provided) I arrived at Valparaiso on the 14th. March 1813.[7] I here took in as much Jerked Beef and other provisions as my ship could conveniently stow and ran down the coast of Chili and Peru; In this track I fell in with a Peruvian Corsaire[8] which had on board twenty four Americans as prisoners, the crews of two whale ships which she had taken on the Coast of Chile. The Captain informed me that as the allies of Great Britain they would capture all they should meet with in expectation of a war between Spain and the United States. I consequently threw all his Guns & ammunition into the sea, liberated the Americans, wrote a respectful letter to the Vice Roy[9] explaining the cause of my proceedings which I delivered to her Captain: I then proceeded for Lima and recaptured one of the vessels as she was entering the port— From thence I proceeded for the Gallapagos Islands where I cruized from the 17th. April until the 3d. October 1813, during which time I touched only once on the coast of America which was for the purpose of procuring a supply of fresh water as none is to be found among those Islands which are perhaps the most barren and desolate of any known—[10]

While among this Groupe I captured the following British ships employed chiefly in the Spermacity whale fishery—viz[11]

Montezuma	270 Tons,	21 men,	2 Guns,
Policy	275 --"--	26 --"--	10 --"--
Georgiana	280 --"--	25 --"--	6 --"--
Greenwich	338 --"--	25 --"--	10 --"--
Atlantic	351 --"--	24 --"--	8 --"--
Rose	220 --"--	21 --"--	8 --"--
Hector	270 --"--	25 --"--	11 --"--
Catharine	270 --"--	29 --"--	8 --"--
Seringapatam	357 --"--	31 --"--	14 --"--
Charlton	274 --"--	21 --"--	10 --"--
New Zealander	259 --"--	23 --"--	8 --"--
Sir, Andrew Hammond	301 --"--	31 --"--	12 --"--
	3465 tons,	302 men,	107 guns.

As some of those ships were captured by boats and others by prizes my officers and men had several opportunities of showing their gallantry

The *Rose* & *Charlton* were given up to the prisoners, the *Hector, Catharine* and *Montezuma* I sent to Valpariso where they were laid up, the *Policy, Georgiana* and *New Zealander* I sent for America, the *Greenwich* I kept as a Store Ship to contain the stores of my other prizes necessary for us, and the *Atlantic* now called the *Essex Junior* I equiped with 20 Guns and gave command of her to Lieut. Downes—

Lt. Downes had convoyed the prizes to Valparaiso and on his return brought me letters informing me that a squadron under the command of Commre. James Hillyar consisting of the Frigate *Phoebe* of 36 guns, the *Raccoon* and *Cherub* Sloops of war and a Store Ship of 20 guns had sailed on the 6th. July for this sea—[12] The *Racoon* & *Cherub* had been seeking me some time on the coast of Brazils and on their return from their cruize joined the squadron sent in search of me to the Pacific— My ship as may be supposed after being near a year at sea required some repairs to put her in a state to meet them, which I determined to do and bring them to action if I could meet them on nearly equal terms— I proceeded now in company with the remainder of my prizes, to the Island of Nooaheevah or Madisons Island laying in the washington groupe discovered by Captn. Ingraham of Boston: here I caulked and completely overhauled my ship, made for her a new set of water casks, her old ones being entirely decayed and took on board from my prizes provisions and stores for upwards of four months and sailed for the coast of Chili on the 12th. Decr. 1813—[13] Previous to sailing I secured the *Seringapatam, Greenwich* and *Sir Andrew Hammond* under the Guns of a Battery which I errected for their protecti[on] and (after taking possession of this fine Island for the United States[14] and establishing the most friendly intercourse with the natives) I left them under the charge of Lieut. Gamble of the Marines with 21 men with orders to repair to Valparaiso after a certain period—[15]

I arrived on the coast of Chili on the 12th. Jany. 1814, looked into Conception and Valparaiso, found at both places only three English Vessels, and learnt that the squadron which sailed from Rio de Janeiro for that sea had not been heard of since their departure and were supposed to be lost in endeavouring to double Cape Horn.

I had completely broken up the British navigation in the Pacific, the vessels which had not been captured by me were laid up and dare not venture out, I had afforded the most ample protection to our own vessels which were on my arrival very numerous and unprotected— The valuable British whale Fishery there is entirely destroyed, and the actual injury we have done them may be estimated at two and a half millions of dollars independant of the expences of the vessels in search of me— They have furnished me amply with sails, cordage, cables, anchors, provisions, medacines and stores of every description, and the slops on board them have furnished cloathing for the seamen, we had in fact lived on the enemy since I had been in that sea[16] I had not yet been under the necessity of drawing any Bills on the Department for any object and had been enabled to make considerable advances to my officers and crew on account of pay—

For the unexampled time we had kept the sea my crew had continued remarkably healthy, I had but one case of the scurvy, and had lost only the following men by death's, to wit—

John S Cowan, Lieutenant.
Robert Miller, Surgeon.
Levy Holmes, Ody. Seaman.
Edwd. Sweeny—do—
Samuel Groce, Seaman—
James Spafford, Gunners Mate—
Benjamin Geers, John Rodgers } Qt. Gunners
Andrew Mahan Corporal of Marines,
Lewis Price, Private Marine—

I had done all the injury that could be done the British commerce in the Pacific, and still hoped to signalize my cruize by something more splendid before leaving that sea, I thought it not improbable that Commodore Hillyar might have kept his arrival secret and believing that he would seek me at Valparaiso as the most likely place to find me, I therefore determined to cruize about that place and should I fail of meeting him hoped to be compensated by the capture of some merchant ships said to be expected from England—

The *Phoebe* agreeable to my expectations came to seek me at Valparaiso where I was anchored with the *Essex,* my armed prize the *Essex Junior* under the command of Lt. Downes on the look out off the harbor; but contrary to the course I thought he would pursue Commre. Hillyar brought with him the *Cherub* Sloop of War mounting 28 guns, 18 thirty two pound carronades, and 8 twenty fours and two long nines on the quarter deck and fore castle and a complement of 180 men: the force of the *Phoebe* is as follows, 30 long eighteen pounders, 16 thirty two pound Carronades, one Howitzer, and 6 three pounders in the tops, in all 53 guns, and a complement of 320 men; making a force of 81 guns & 500 men in addition to which they took on board the crew of an English letter of Marque laying in port; both ships had picked crews and were sent into the Pacific in company with the *Racoon* of 22 guns and a Store Ship of 20 guns for the express purpose of seeking the *Essex,* and were prepared with flags bearing the motto "God & Country, British sailors best rights, traitors offend both." this was intended as a reply to my motto "Free trade & Sailors rights." under the erroneous impression that my crew were chiefly englishmen or to counteract its Effect on their own crews— The force of the *Essex* was 46 Guns, 40 thirty two pound Carronades & six long twelves, and her crew which had been much reduced by prizes amounted only to 255 men— The *Essex Junior* which was intended chiefly as a Store Ship mounted 20 Guns, 10 Eighteen pound Carronades and 10 short sixes, with only 60 men on board— In reply to their motto I wore at my mizen "God our Country & liberty, Tyrants offend them." On getting their provisions on board they went off the port for the purpose of blockading me where they cruized for near six weeks, during which time I endeavoured to provoke a chalenge and frequently but ineffectually to bring the *Phoebe* alone to action, first with both my ships and afterwords with my single ship with both my crews on board[17] I was several times underway and ascertained that I had greatly the advantage in point of sailing, and once succeeded in closing within gun shot of the *Phoebe* and commenced a fire on her, when she ran down for the *Cherub* which was 22 miles to leeward; this excited some sur-

prize and expressions of indignation, as previous to my getting underway she hove to off the port, hoisted her motto flag, and fired a Gun to windward— Commre. Hillyar seemed determined to avoid a contest with me on nearly equal terms, and from his extreme prudence in keeping both his ships ever after constantly within hail of each other, there was no hopes of any advantages to my country from a longer stay in port, I therefore determined to put to sea the first opportunity which should offer, and I was the more strongly induced to do so as I had gained certain intelligence that the *Tagus* rated 38 and two other frigates had sailed for this sea in pursuit of me, and I had reason to expect the arrival of the *Raccoon* from the NW coast of america where she had been sent for the purpose of destroying our fur establishment on the Columbia— A rendezvous was appointed for the *Essex Junior,* and every arrangement made for sailing, and I intended to let them chace me off to give the *Essex Junior* an opportunity of escaping. On the 28th. March the day after this determination was formed the wind came on to blow fresh from the southward when I parted my larboard cable and draged my starboard Anchor directly out to sea, not a moment was to be lost in getting sail on the ship, the enemy were close in with the point forming the west side of the Bay but on opening them I saw a prospect of ~~bringing~~ passing to windward when I took in my top Gt. sails which were set over single reefed topsails and braced up for this purpose, but on rounding the point a heavy squall struck the ship and carried away her main Top mast precipitating the men who were aloft into the sea who were drowned; both ships now gave chace to me and I endeavoured in my disabled state to regain the port, but finding I could not recover the common anchorage I ran close into a small Bay about three quarters of a mile to leeward of the battery on the East side of the harbor and let go my anchor within pistol shot of the shore, where I intended to repair my damages as soon as possible; the enemy continued to approach and shewed an evident intention of attacking me regardless of the neutrality of the place where I was anchored, and the caution observed in their approach to the attack of the crippled *Essex* was truely ridiculous, as was their display of their motto flags and the number of Jacks at all their mast heads— I with as much expedition as circumstances would admit of got my ship ready for action and endeavoured to get a spring on my cable, but had not succeeded when the enemy at 54 minutes after 3 P.M. made his attack, the *Phoebe* placing herself under my stern & the *Cherub* on my starboard bow, but the *Cherub* soon finding her situation a hot one bore up and run under my stern also where both ships kept up a hot raking fire, I had got three long twelve pounders out of the stern ports, which were worked with so much bravery and skill, that in half an hour we so disabled both as to compel them to haul off to repair damages— In the course of this firing I had by the great exertions of Mr. Edwd. Barnewall the Acting Sailing Master, assisted by Mr. E. Linscott the Boatswain succeeded in getting springs on our cable three different times but the fire of the enemy was so excessive that before we could get our broad side to bear they were shot away and thus rendered useless to us— My ship had received many injuries and several had been killed and wounded, but my brave officers and men, notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances under which we were brought to action, and the powerful force opposed to us, were no ways discouraged, all appeared determined to defend their ship to the last extremity and to die in preference to a shameful surrender; our Gaff with the Ensign and the motto flag at the mizen had been shot away, but Free trade and sailors rights continued to fly at the Fore— our Ensign was replaced by another and to guard against a similar event an Ensign was made fast in the Mizen rigging and several Jacks were hoisted in different parts of the ship— The enemy soon repaired his damages for a fresh attack, he now placed himself with both his ships on my starboard quarter out of the reach of my carronades, and where my stern Guns could not be brought to bear, he there kept up a most galling fire which it was out of my power to return, when I saw no prospect of injurying him without getting underway and becoming the assailant; my top sail sheets and haliards were all shot away, as well as the Jib and Fore top mast stay sail haliards, the only running rope not cut away was the Flying Jib haliards, and that being the only sail I could set I caused it to be hoisted, my cable to be cut and ran down on both the ships with an intention of laying the *Phoebe* on board, the firing on both sides was now tremendous, I had let fall my fore top sail and fore sail, but the wants of tacks and sheets rendered them almost useless to us, yet we were enabled for a short time to close with the enemy, and although our decks were now strewed with dead and our Cock pit filled with wounded, although our ship had several times been on fire and was rendered a perfect wreck we were still encouraged to hope to save her from the circumstance of the *Cherub* from her crippled state being compelled to haul off, she did not return to close action again, although she apparently had it in her power to do so, but kept up a distant firing with her long guns: The *Phoebe* from our disabled state was enabled however by edging off to choose the distance which best suited her long guns, and kept up a tremendous fire on us which mowed down my brave companions by the dozen: Many of my guns had been rendered useless by the enemies shot and many of them had had their whole crews destroyed, we manned them again from those which were disabled, and one gun in particular was three times manned, fifteen men were slain at it in the course of the action! but strange as it may appear the Captn. of it escaped with only a slight wound— Finding that the enemy had it in his power to choose his distance, I now gave up all hopes of closing with him, and as the wind for the moment seemed to favor the design, I determined to endeavour to run her on shore, land my men, and destroy her; every thing seemed to favor my wishes, we had approached the shore within musket shot, and I had no doubts of succeeding when in an instant the wind shifted from the land (as is very common in this port in the latter part of the day) and payed our head down on the *Phoebe* where we were again exposed to a dreadful raking fire: my ship was now totally unmanageable, yet as her head was toward the enemy and he to leeward of me I still hoped to be able to board him. at this moment Lt. comdt. Downes came on board to receive my orders under the impression that I should soon be a prisoner, he could be of no service to me in the wretched state of the *Essex* and finding (from the enemy's putting his helm up) that my last attempt at boarding would not succeed, I directed him after he had been about 10 minutes on board to return to his own ship to be prepared for defending and destroying her in case of attack, he took with him several of my wounded leaving three of his boats crew on board to make room for them. The *Cherub* now had an opportunity of distinguishing herself by keeping up a hot fire on him during his return— The slaughter on board my ship had now become horrible, the enemy continuing to rake us and we unable to bring a gun to bear, I therefore directed a hawser to be bent to the sheet anchor and the anchor to be cut from the bows to bring her head round, this succeeded, we again got our broad side to bear, and as the enemy was much crippled and unable to

hold his own, I have no doubt he would soon have drifted out of gun shot before he discovered we had anchored had not the hawser unfortunately parted. My ship had taken fire several times during the action but alarmingly so forward and aft at this moment, the flames were bursting up each hatchway and no hopes were entertained of saving her, our distance from the shore did not exceed three quarters of a mile and I hoped many of my brave crew would be able to save themselves should the ship blow up, as I was informed the fire was near the magazine, and the explosion of a large quantity of powder below served to increase the horrors of our situation, our boats were destroyed by the enemies shot I therefore directed those who could swim to jump overboard and endeavour to gain the shore, some reached it, some were taken by the enemy, and some perished in the attempt—but most prefered sharing with me the fate of the ship— we who remained now turned our attention wholly to extinguishing the flames, and when we had succeeded went again to our guns where the firing was kept up for some minutes, but the crew had by this time become so weakened that they all declared to me the impossibility of making further resistance, and entreated me to surrender my ship to save the wounded, as all further attempts at opposition must prove ineffectual; almost every gun being disabled by the destruction of their crews— I now sent for the officers of Divisions to consult them, but what was my surprize to find only Acting Lt. S D McKnight remaining (who confirmed the report respecting the condition of the guns on the Gun deck, those on the spar deck were not in a better state) Lt. Wilmer after fighting most gallantly throughout the action had been knocked overboard by a splinter while getting the sheet anchor from the bows and was drowned, Actg. Lt. John G Cowell had lost a leg, Mr. Edwd. Barnewall Actg. Sailing Master had been carried below after receiving two severe wounds one in the breast and one in the face, and Actg. Lt. Wm. H Odenheimer had been knocked overboard from the quarter an instant before, and did not regain the ship until after her surrender— I was informed that the Cock pit, the steerage, the ward Room and Birth deck could contain no more wounded, that the wounded were killed while the Surgeons[18] were dressing them, and that unless something was speedily done to prevent it the ship would soon sink from the number of shot holes in her bottom, and on sending for the Carpenter[19] he informed me that all his crew had been killed or wounded, and that he had once been over the side to stop the leaks when his slings had been shot away and it was with difficulty he was saved from drowning— The enemy from the smoothness of the water and the impossibility of our reaching him with our Carronades, and the little apprehension that was excited by our fire which had now become much slackened, was enabled to take aim at us as at a target, his shot never missed our hull, and my ship was cut up in a manner which was perhaps never before witnessed, in fine I saw no hopes of saving her and at 20 minutes after 6 PM. gave the painful order to strike the colors, 75 men including officers were all that remained of my whole crew after the action capable of doing duty, and many of them severely wounded, some of whom have since died— The enemy still continued his fire and my brave though unfortunate companions were still falling about me, I directed an opposite gun to be fired to shew them we intended no further resistance, but they did not desist, four men were killed at my side and others in different parts of the ship; I now believed he intended to show us no quartors and that it would be as well to die with my flag flying as

struck, and was on the point of again hoisting it when about ten minutes after hauling the colors down he ceased firing—

I cannot speak in sufficient high terms of the conduct of those engaged for such an unparalleld length of time (under such circumstances) with me in this ardous and unequal contest, let it suffice to say that more bravery skill patriotism and zeal were never displayed on any occasion, every one seemed determined to die in defence of their much loved countries cause, and nothing but views to humanity could ever have reconciled them to the surrender of the ship, they remembered their wounded and helpless shipmates below— To Actg. Lieuts. McKnight and Odenheimer[20] I feel much indebted for their great exertions and bravery throughout the action in fighting and encourageing the men at their divisions, for the dexterous management of the long guns, and for their promptness in remanning their guns as their crews were slaughtered— The conduct of that brave and heroic officer Actg. Lt. John G Cowell who lost his leg in the latter part of the action excited the admiration of every man in the ship, and after being wounded would not consent to be taken below untill loss of blood rendered him insensible— Mr. Edwd. Barnewall[21] Actg. Sailing Master whose activity and courage was equally conspicuous, returned on deck after his first wound and remained after receiving his second until fainting with loss of blood— Mr. Saml. B Johnston[22] who had joined me the day before and acted as Marine officer conducted himself with great bravery, and exerted himself in assisting at the long guns, the musketry after the first half hour (from our distance) being useless— Mr. M W Bostwick[23] whom I had appointed Actg. Purser of the *Essex Junior,* and who was on board my ship, did the duties of Aid in a manner which reflects on him the highest honor—and Midsn. Isaacs, Farragut & Ogden, as well as Actg. Midsn. James Terry,[24] James R Lyman and Saml. Duzenbury,[25] and Masters Mate Wm. Pierce exerted themselves in the performance of their respective duties and gave an earnest of their value to the service, the three first are too young to recommend for promotion, the latter I beg leave to recommend for confirmation as well as the Acting Lieutenants and Messrs. Barnewall, Johnston & Bostwick—

We have been unfortunate but not disgraced the defence of the *Essex* has not been less honorable to her officers and crew than the capture of an equal force, and I now consider my situation less unpleasant than that of Commodore Hillyar who in violation of every principle of honor and generosity, and regardless of the rights of nations attacked the *Essex* in her crippled state within pistol shot of a neutral shore, when for six weeks I daily offered him fair and honorable combat on terms greatly to his advantage; the blood of the slain must be on his head, and he has yet to reconcile his conduct to heaven, to his conscience and to the world— The annexed extract of a letter from Commre. Hillyar which was written previous to his returning me my sword will shew his opinion of our conduct—[26]

My loss has been dreadfully severe 58 killed and have since died of their wounds and among them Lt. Cowell, 39 were severely wounded, 27 slightly, and 31—are missing making in all 154[27] killed wounded and missing, a list of whose names is annexed[28]

The professional knowledge of Doctr. Richd. K Hoffman[29] Acting Surgeon, and Doctr. Alxr. Montgomery[30] Acting Surgeons Mate, added to their assiduity, and the benevolent attentions and assistance of Mr. D P Adams the Chaplain, saved the lives of many of the wounded those gentlemen have been indefatiga-

ble in their attentions to them; the two first I beg leave to recommend for confirmation, and the latter to the notice of the Department—

I must in justification of myself observe that if the *Essex* has been lost for want of suitable arrmament I am not to blame; myself & officers applied to Paul Hamilton Esqr. for a greater proportion of long guns, which were refused us, and I now venture to declare, that if she had been armed in the manner I wished, she would not have been taken by the *Phoebe* and *Cherub*— with our six twelve pounders only we faught this action, our carronades were almost useless; what might we not have done had we been permitted to take on board a few long Eighteens?[31]

The loss in killed and wounded has been great with the enemy, among the former is the first Lieut. of the *Phoebe,*[32] and of the latter Captn. Tucker of the *Cherub* whose wounds are severe—Both the *Essex* & *Phoebe* were in a sinking state, and it was with difficulty they could be kept afloat until they anchored in Valparaiso next morning: The battered state of the *Essex* will I believe prevent her ever reaching England, and I also think it will be out of their power to repair the damages of the *Phoebe* so as to enable her to double Cape Horn, all the masts and yards of the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* are badly crippled, and their hulls much cut up, the former had eighteen twelve pound shot through her below her water line, some three feet under water; nothing but the smoothness of the water saved both the *Phoebe* and *Essex*—

I hope sir, that our conduct may prove satisfactory to our country and that it will testify it by obtaining our speedy exchange that we may again have it in our power to prove our zeal—

Commre. Hillyar (I am informed) has thought proper to state to his government that the action lasted only 45 minutes, should he have done so, the motive may be easily discovered, but the thousands of disinterested witnesses who covered the surrounding hills can testify that we faught his ships near two hours and a half; upwards of fifty broadsides were fired by the enemy agreeable to their own accounts, and upwards of seventy five by us; except the few minutes they were repairing damages the firing was incessant—

Soon after my capture I entered into an agreement with Commre. Hillyar to disarm my prize the *Essex Junior,* and proceed with the survivors of my officers and crew in her to the United States taking with me all her officers and crew, he consenting to grant her a passport to secure her from recapture—[33] The ship was small and we knew we had much to suffer yet we hoped soon to reach our country in safety that we might again have it in our power to serve it— This arrangement was attended with no additional expence as she was abundantly supplied with provisions & Stores for the voyage—

In justice to Commre. Hillyar I must observe that (although I can never be reconciled to the manner of his attack on the *Essex* or to his conduct before the action) he has since our capture shewn the greatest humanity to my wounded (whom he permitted me to land on condition that the United States should bear their expences) and has endeavoured as much as lays in his power to alleviate the distresses of war by the most generous and delicate deportment toward myself my officers and crew, he gave orders that the property of every person should be respected, his orders however were not so strictly attended to as might have been expected, besides being deprived of books charts &c &c both myself and Officers lost many articles of our cloathing some to a considerable amount— I should not have considered this last circumstance of sufficient importance to notice, did it not mark a striking difference between the Navy of Great Britain and that of the United States, highly creditable to the latter—

By the arrival of the *Tagus* a few days after my capture I was informed that besides the ships which had arrived in the Pacific in pursuit of me, and those still expected, others were sent to cruize for me in the China seas, off New Zealand, Timor and New Holland, and that another Frigate was sent to the River la Plate— To possess the *Essex* it has cost the British Government near six millions of dollars, and yet sir her capture was owing entirely to accident, and (if we consider the Expedition with which Naval contests are now decided) the action is a dishonor to them, had they brought their ships boldly into action, with a force so very superior, and having the choice of position, they should either have captured or destroyed us in one fourth the time they were about it—

During the action our Consul General Mr. Poinsett called on the Governor of Valparaiso[34] and requested that the Batteries might protect the *Essex,* this request was refused, but he promised that if she should succeed in fighting her way to the common anchorage, he would send an officer to the British Commander and request him to cease firing but declined using force under any circumstances, and there is no doubt a perfect understanding existed between them this conduct added to the assistance given to the British and their friendly reception after the action, and the strong bias of the faction which govern Chili in favor of the English, as well as their hostility to the Americans, induced Mr. Poinsett to leave that country under such circumstances I did not conceive it would be proper for me to claim the restoration of my ship confident that the claim would be made by my government to more effect—

Finding some difficulty in the sale of my prizes, I had taken the *Hector* and *Catharine* to sea and burnt them with their cargoes—[35]

I exchanged Lt. McKnight, Mr. Adams and Mr. Lyman,[36] and eleven seamen for part of the crew of the *Sir Andrew Hammond,* and sailed from Valparaiso on the 27th. April, where the enemy were still patching up their ships to put them in a state for proceeding to Rio de Janeiro previous to going to England—

Annexed is a list of the remains of my crew to be exchanged, as also a copy of the correspondence between Commre. Hillyar and myself on that subject[37] I also send you a list of the prisoners I have taken during my cruize amounting to 343—[38] I have the honor to be with the greatest respect Your Obt. Servt.—

D Porter

P.S. To give you a correct idea of the state of the *Essex* at the time of her surrender I send you the Boatswains & Carpenters report of damages; I also send you a report of the divisions—[39]

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 37). Portions of this letter were bound out of order. It was enclosed in Porter to Jones, 8 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 144.

1. Bainbridge to Porter, 13 Oct. 1812, in Dudley, *Naval War of 1812,* Vol. 1, pp. 525–26.
2. On the capture of *Nocton,* see ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 684–85; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 48–49.
3. The British merchant schooner *Elizabeth.* See Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 59–60; and, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812,* Vol. 2, pp. 689, 690*n.*
4. Rear Admiral Manley Dixon, R.N., commander in chief of the South American Station, 1812–15. Dixon was promoted to vice admiral 4 December 1813.
5. For documentation on the capture of *Java* by *Constitution,* see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812,* Vol. 1, pp. 639–49.

6. Paul Hamilton.

7. *Essex* arrived at Valparaiso on 15 March 1813. For *Essex*'s visit to the Chilean port, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 685–90; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 114–30.

8. *Nereyda*. On the capture of the Peruvian privateer, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 690–92; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 131–34.

9. José Fernando Abascal y Sousa. For Porter's letter of 26 March 1813 to the Viceroy, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, p. 692.

10. On *Essex*'s Galapágos operations, see ibid., pp. 692–702; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, chapters 5–10.

11. A fourth column, written in pencil, appears to the left of the "Guns" column entitled "No of Guns Pierced for." The numbers in this column are listed in the following order beginning with *Policy*: 18, 18, 20, 20, 20, 20, 18, 26, 18, 18, and 18. To the left of the ships' names, also in pencil, appears a brace and the words "Letters of Marque." These are written parallel to the left margin. These pencil notations appear in printed versions of this letter, illustrating how Porter's letter was edited for publication.

12. For background on Hillyar's mission in the Pacific, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 710–14. The store ship mentioned in the text is the North West Company store ship *Isaac Todd*.

13. On *Essex* in the Marquesas, see Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 702–10; and, Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, chapters 13–17.

14. See Porter's declaration of 19 November 1813 claiming Madison Island (Nuku Hiva) for the United States, Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, Vol. 2, pp. 707–10.

15. For documentation on John M. Gamble's command, see pp. 772–80.

16. The following appears in pencil here and appeared in printed versions of this letter: "Every prize having proved a well found Storeship for me."

17. On Porter's efforts to bring *Phoebe* to battle, see pp. 719–23, 733–34, 750.

18. Acting Surgeon Richard K. Hoffman and Acting Surgeon's Mate Alexander M. Montgomery.

19. John Langley.

20. William H. Odenheimer entered *Essex* as a midshipman and received promotions to acting sailing master on 23 June 1813, and acting lieutenant on 31 January 1814. He was commissioned a lieutenant 16 July 1814.

21. In 1813 Edward Barnewall commanded *Colt*, an American brig purchased into Chilean service. Following the seizure of his ship by mutineers, Barnewall was imprisoned at Callao, Peru, at the order of the Viceroy, in retaliation for Porter's seizure of *Nereyda*. Upon his release Barnewall went to Valparaiso, shortly after which he offered his services to David Porter. Porter appointed Barnewall acting sailing master in *Essex* on 31 January 1814. The Navy Department confirmed the appointment on 16 July 1814. Six days later Barnewall was commissioned a lieutenant. Johnston, *Three Years in Chile*, pp. 101–46; and Porter to Jones, 19 July 1814, NcD, U.S. Deptartment of the Navy Papers.

22. Samuel Burr Johnston served as a lieutenant in the Chilean brig *Colt* in 1813. Like Edward Barnewall, Johnston was imprisoned in Callao, Peru, after *Colt* was seized by mutineers. He was released along with his captain and sailed to Valparaiso in November 1813. With the assistance of Joel Poinsett, Johnston received an appointment as acting lieutenant of marines in *Essex* on 26 March 1814. Johnston was commissioned a 1st lieutenant of marines on 16 July 1814. Johnston, *Three Years in Chile*, pp. 101–46, 168.

23. Melancton W. Bostwick entered *Essex* as a captain's clerk. He was appointed an acting purser on 14 February 1814. He was commissioned a purser on 16 July 1814.

24. James Terry entered *Essex* as a master's mate. It is not known when Porter appointed him an acting midshipman. The Navy Department confirmed his appointment on 16 July 1814. He resigned from the naval service on 30 April 1815.

25. Samuel J. Dusenberry had served as a midshipman in the Chilean brig *Colt*. Like his fellow officers Samuel B. Johnston and Edward Barnewall, Dusenberry was imprisoned in Callao, Peru, after the *Colt*'s crew mutinied. After obtaining his release, Dusenberry made his way to Valparaiso and on 4 February 1814 received an appointment as acting midshipman in *Essex*. He was warranted a midshipman by the Navy Department on 16 July 1814. Johnston, *Three Years in Chile*, p. 123.

26. Enclosure not printed here. For a published copy, see Hillyar to Porter, 4 Apr. 1814, in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, p. 463.

27. The correct casualty total, 155, has been inserted here in brackets in another hand. The casualty total published in Porter's *Journal of a Cruise* alters the number of slightly wounded men from 27 to 26. All other numbers are identical to those given by Porter in this letter.

28. Enclosure not found, but a notation in the letter reads: "List of killed and wounded is filed with similar papers for pensioner Certificates." A printed list of the killed, wounded, and missing is published in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 463–66.

29. Richard K. Hoffman was commissioned a surgeon on 16 July 1814.

30. Alexander M. Montgomery was appointed an acting surgeon's mate on 2 July 1812. He was commissioned at that grade on 16 July 1814.

31. This paragraph was edited for publication with significant portions of text stricken out in pencil. As published, this paragraph read: "I must in justification of myself observe that with our six twelve pounders only we faught this action, our carronades were almost useless."

32. Lieutenant William Ingram, R.N.

33. Hillyar to Porter, 4 Apr. 1814, and, Passport for *Essex Junior*, 13 April 1814, pp. 746–47.

34. Captain Francisco de Formas, who was appointed interim governor of Valparaiso by Lastra sometime in mid-March.

35. For the destruction of *Hector*, see pp. 716–19. It is unknown when *Catherine* was destroyed. *Phoebe*'s log book makes no mention of her presence at Valparaiso, nor is she mentioned in any other related documents. It is possible Porter destroyed her before Hillyar's arrival.

36. Lieutenant Stephen Decatur McKnight and Acting Midshipman James R. Lyman were directed to proceed with Hillyar to Rio de Janeiro and thence to England to give affidavits in the condemnation of *Essex*. On 22 August 1814 the two officers departed for England from the Brazilian port in the Swedish brig *Adonis*. On 9 October the Swedish brig was overhauled by the U.S. sloop of war *Wasp*, Johnston Blakeley commanding. This was the last time McKnight, Lyman, and the company of *Wasp* were seen. The American sloop of war met with some form of accident at sea and never returned home. Porter had appointed Lyman an acting midshipman on 25 August 1813. The Navy Department confirmed this appointment on 16 July 1814, but Lyman never arrived home to receive his warrant. For documentation on the fate of McKnight and Lyman, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 555–67.

37. This correspondence between Porter and Hillyar and a list of paroled officers and crew is not printed here. Published copies may be found in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 467–72.

38. Enclosure not printed.

39. See pp. 741–44.

Boatswain's Report of Damage to *Essex*

Boatswains Report of rigging, sails &c &c damaged on board the late U S Frigate *Essex* in an action faught with the British Frigate *Phoebe* & Sloop of War *Cherub* on the 28th. March 1814

Rigging shot away—
Four Larbd. lower shrouds.
Five starbd. ——do——
Both Fore top sail sheets,
Jib, Flying Jib, & Fore top mast stay sail haulyards,
Fore Top Gt. Stay,
Five Fore top mast shrouds,
Starbd. Fore lift, & Fore stay,
One pair bob stays
One larbd. Fore top mast back stay,
All the larbd. main shrouds & five of the starbd.
The Miz: rigging much injured
The greater part of the larbd. dead eyes & chain plates
The greater part of the running rigging—
Most of the Hammocks on the larbd. side shot out of the nettings—
All the sails bent rendered entirely useless by shot holes.

Edw[d.] Linscott[1]
Boatswane

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. Linscott was severely wounded in the engagement with *Phoebe* and *Cherub*. See Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, p. 464.

Carpenter's Report of Damage to *Essex*

Carpenters report of damages sustained by the late U S Frigate *Essex,* in an action with the British Frigate *Phoebe* and Sloop of War *Cherub,* on the 28th. March 1814

The shot were planted so thick in the hull they could not be well counted, but supposed to be upwards of 200—18 pd.—through the larbd. side below the spar deck—
The starbd. side much injured,
The head shot away,
The bullworks of the larbd. side of the Fore Castle nearly demolished.
The larbd. quarter much shattered and Qr. Gallery destroyed,
A large breach in the larbd. counter,
The stern much shattered.
Two shot in the head of the rudder & the wheel injured—
Seven of the Spar deck knees cut in two.
Two spar deck beams cut from the clamps,
Two Gun deck beams cut through in the ward room—
Five shot between wind & water.
Pump well destroyed, and much injury done between decks from the shot which passed through—
The Bow sprit much damaged, several shot in it—
Spritsail yard cut in three pieces,
Jib boom shot half off
Five shot through the center of the Fore mast.
Three shot through the center of the Main Mast
The Mizen Mast much crippled.
The Miz. Top mast cut half off.
Larbd. Fore yard arm shot half off.
Main Yard very badly crippled
Cross Jack yard— ditto dito—
Gaff & Spanker boom shot away.
Both lower swinging booms shot away.
The larbd. Fore Top mast studding sail boom cut,
Nearly all the spare spars on the booms & in the chains entirely destroyed.
All the boats shattered to pieces—

John Langley[1]

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. John Langley shipped in *Essex* as a carpenter's mate on 25 September 1812. He was promoted to carpenter on 23 March 1813. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 394, p. 260, and no. 563, p. 264. Langley was slightly wounded in the engagement with *Phoebe* and *Cherub.* Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 465.

Gunner's Report of Damage to *Essex*

Report of the killed and wounded at the different Divisions on board the late U S Frigate *Essex,* mounting 46 guns and 255 men, D Porter Esqr. Comdr. in an action faught on 28th. March 1814, in the port of Valparaiso de Chili, with the British Frigate *Phoebe* & Sloop of War *Cherub* mounting together 81 guns and 500 men J Hillyar Esqr. Comdr..—

Together with the Gunners report of the guns damaged and rendered useless by the enemies shot—

Quarters	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Guns, how disabled.
Spar deck				
Quarter deck —				
~~Lieutenants~~ —	~~1~~	"	"	
Sailing Master —	"	1	"	
Midshipmen —	"	2	"	
Master at Arms —	"	1	"	
Armourer —	"	1	"	
Marines —	"	"	3	
Wheel —	1	1	"	
Qt. Gunners —	"	"	1	
Braces —	"	3	3	
1st. Gun & opposite	2	2	2	Larbd. gun, side bolts tackles & blocks shot away
2d. Ditto —	1	1	1	
3d. Ditto —	2	3	1	Larbd. gun, fighting bolt shot away —
4th. Ditto —	3	"	3	
Carried fowd.	10	15	14	
Brot fowd.	10	15	14	
5th. gun & opposite	1	2	1	Larbd. gun struck by a shot which split the muzzle
6th. Ditto —	2	2	2	Starbd. gun britchings shot away
7th. Ditto —	1	4	1	Larbd. gun, eye bolts & britching shot away and carriage shattered —
Fore Castle. —	4	1	1	
Lieutenants, —	1	"	"	
Boatswain —	"	1	"	
Qt. Gunners —	"	1	"	
1st. gun & opposite	1	3	"	Larbd. gun, ring bolts shot away and the carriage splintered
2d. —Ditto —	"	"	"	Larbd. Gun, Carriage shattered first part of the action —
3d. —Ditto —	1	2	2—	
Gun Deck.				
1st. Division —				
Qt. Gunners —	"	1	"	
1st. gun & opposite	"	"	1	
2d. —ditto —	3	2	1	

Quarters	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Guns, how disabled.
Gun Deck—*continued*				
3 —ditto —	1	1	"	Larbd. Gun, naval bolt shot away —
4th. —Ditto —	4	"	"	—Ditto—Fighting bolt shot away —
5th. —Ditto —	5	5	"	
Second Division				
Lieutenants —	1	"	"	
1 Gun & Opposite	2	4	1	Larbd. Gun, Carriage splintered & fighting bolt injured.
2d. —Ditto —	2	6	1	
	38	48	25	Carried fowd. —
Brot fowd.	38	48	25	
3d. Gun & opposite—	3	4	"	Larbd. Gun struck with a shot, muzzle carrie[*d*] away & the gun split —
4th. Ditto —	4	"	"	
Third Division				
1st. Gun & opposite	"	4	"	Larbd. gun struck with a shot & split, Starbd. gun muzzle shot away —
2d. —Ditto —	3	2	"	
3d. —Ditto —	4	1	1	Larbd. Gun, Eye bolts, britchings, tackles & blocks shot away —
4th. —Ditto —	3	1	1	Larbd. gun dismounted, one truck & the screw shot away, carriage splintered —
Tops, Pumps & birth deck.				
Fore Top —	2	2	"	
Main Top —	1	"	1	
Mizen Top —	"	"	2	
Magazine passage	"	2	1	
Pumps Carpenter	"	1	"	
Total —[1]	58	65	31	13 Larbd. & 2 starbd. guns completely disabled —

James Stedy[2]

DS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. The ditto marks in this table represent zeros. The first subtotal in the killed column was incorrectly added. The correct subtotal is nine killed. The final figure for the wounded column was incorrectly totaled. The correct total is sixty-seven wounded. The casualty figures Porter published in *Journal of a Cruise* match those in the three columns above. See Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 463–66.

2. James Stedy or Steady shipped in *Essex* as a quarter gunner on 25 September 1812. He was promoted to gunner's mate on 8 April 1813. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 142, p. 256, and entry no. 564, p. 264. It is unclear why Stedy signed this report rather than Laurence Miller, who was *Essex*'s gunner.

Parole Given

In the days following the battle there was much that commanded the attention and energies of the Americans and the British. There were wounded to be cared for and dead to be buried, prisoners to be confined and ships to be repaired. There was also the issue of the parole and exchange of Essex*'s crew. The arrangements for the parole of the American sailors were soon settled, but the preparations for the voyage home were not completed until the last week of April. On the afternoon of 27 April, Porter and his men set sail in* Essex Junior *for America.*

Log Book of H.M. Frigate *Phoebe*

Remks. &c. Tuesday 29th. March 1814
AM. Light Airs & fine Wr. At 6 Weighed & Made Sail Standing in for the Bay of Valparaiso Obsd. the Prize[1] at Anchor, At 8.50 Shortened Sail & came to with the Best Bower in [*blank*] fms. Furled Sails Came on Board [*blank*] Prisoners Recd. Fresh Beef [*blank*] lbs Vegitables [*blank*] lbs Moored Ship,— Bent the Sheet Cable Noon moderate & fine *Cherub* under weigh
P.M, Do. Wr. Empd. Getting the Sheet Cable and Anchor on board the Prize Sent the Prisoners on Board the Spanish Prison Ship, Sent an Officer & A Guard of Royal Marines with them, Employd unbending the Courses & Jibs Empd. as Necessary, At Sunset up Boats Midnight moderate & fine Wr.
Remks. &c. Wednesday, March 30th. 1814 Moor'd in Valparaiso Bay
P.M, [*A.M.*]— Light Airs & fine Weather. Recd. Fresh Beef [*blank*] lbs Vegitables, Hoisted out the Launch, At 10 sent the body of the Deceased, Lt. Ingram on shore, for Interment, attended by the Officers, & a party of Seamen & Marines Fired minute Guns while conveying the corpse on Shore, Noon moderate & fine Wr.
P.M Do. Wr. People empd. washing the Decks, Bent the Sheet Cable, At 8 Do. Wr. Midnight moderate & fine Wr. . . .
Remks. &c. Monday. 4th. March [*April*] 1814 Moored in Valparaiso Bay
A M, Calm & cloudy Wr. At 8 Do. Wr. sent away Empty casks for Water, Suppd. the *Cherub* with [*blank*] Wood Recd. Vegitables 220 lbs Recd. 10 Tons of Water & a boat load of Wood. Got the Fore Yard down People Empd. overhauling & fitting the rigging fore & Aft, Noon Light Airs & fine Wr. Arrived a Spanish Ship from Juan Fernandez
P M Do. Wr. Sent empty Casks on Shore for Water, Carpenters, Empd. Fishing the Mizen Mast & Head of the Main Mast, Recd. Fresh Beef 545 lbs being the weight of two Oxen, At 8 Light Airs & fine Wr. Came on board an Englishman having made his escape from the *Essex Junr.* Midnight Do. Wr. . . .
[Remks. &c.] Tuesday 26th. [April 1814 Moored in Valparais Bay]
A M, Fine Weather, At Daylight discharged 52 Prisoners to the *Essex Junr.* Cartel, recd. Vegitables 246 lbs, People Empd. as required, Came on board the Marines from the prison Ship. Noon Do. Wr.
P.M. Do. Weather Carpenters Empd. fishing the Jib boom & Main Mast At Sunset up Boats. Midnight. Do. Wr.
Remks. &c. Wednesday 27th April 1814 Moored in Valparaiso Bay
A M, fine Weather, At daylight sent the Caulkers & a party of Men on board the prize. Compleated the Water Carpenters Empd. fishing the Jib boom & Main

Mast, Sailmakers Empd. making a New Main Sail, Noon moderate Wr.
P.M. Do. Wr. Sailed the *Essex Junr.* (Cartel) with Captn. Porter & the remg. part of his Officers & Crew, People Empd. as before, at Sunset up Boat[s] Midnight Moderate & fine Wr.

D, UkLPR, Adm. 51/2675, Log Book of *Phoebe,* 1 Jan. 1813–28 Aug. 1815, fols. 174–75, 177.

1. *Essex.*

Captain James Hillyar, R.N., to Captain David Porter

Valparaiso April 4th. 1814

Sir,

Taking into consideration the immense distance we are from our respective countries; the uncertainty of the future movements of His Majesty's ships under my command, which precludes the possibility of my making a permanent arrangement for transporting the officers and crew late of the *Essex* to Europe; and the fast approaching season which renders a passage round Cape Horn in some degree dangerous: I have the honor to propose for your approbation the following articles, which I hope the Government of the United States, as well as that of Great Britain, will deem satisfactary; and to request, that should you conceive them so, you will favour me with the necessary Bond for their fulfilment—
1stly. The *Essex Junior* to be deprived of all her armament and perfectly neutralized; to be equipped for the voyage solely and wholly at the expence of the American government; and to proceed with a proper American Officer and crew (of which I wish to be furnished with a list, for the purpose of giving the necessary passport) to any port of the United States of America that you may deem most proper—
2ndly: Yourself, the Officers, Petty Officers, seamen, marines &c composing your crew to be exchanged immediately on their arrival in America; for an equal number of British prisoners of similar rank—Yourself and officers to be considered on their parole of honor until your and their exchange shall be effected—

In case of the foregoing articles being accepted the *Essex Junior* will be expected to prepare immediately for the voyage, and to proceed on it before the expiration of the present month—Should any of the wounded at that period be found incapable of removal from not being sufficiently advanced in their recovery, the most humane attention shall be paid them; and they shall be forwarded home by the first favorable conveyance that may offer—I have the honor to remain With great respect Your Obt. Servt.

Signed Jas. Hillyar—

Copy, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127, enclosure (M125, Roll No. 37). Addressed: "Capt. David Porter/late Commander of the/United States Frigate *Essex*/Valparaiso—."

Passport for *Essex Junior*

By James Hillyar Esq. captain of H.B.M. Ship Phœbe, *and senior officer of his majesty's ships in Valparaiso Bay.*

I hereby certify, that I have on the part of his Britannic Majesty, entered into an agreement with Captain David Porter, of the United States navy, and late commander of the frigate *Essex,* who, on the part of his government, engages as follows, to wit: That himself, his officers and crew will proceed to the United States, in the ship called the *Essex-Junior,* as a cartel, commanded by Lieutenant John Downes, of the United States navy, and having a crew, consisting of the officers and men, named in the annexed list.[1]

The said Capt. Porter, his officers and crew, a list of which is subjoined, will remain as prisoners of war on parole, not to take arms against Great Britain until regularly exchanged, and that he pledges his honour to fulfil the foregoing conditions. I therefore request, that said ship, the *Essex-Junior,* may be permitted to pass freely to the United States without any impediment, and that the officers commanding the ships of war of his Britannic Majesty, as well as those of private armed vessels, and all others in authority under the British government, as also those in alliance with his said majesty, will give the said David Porter, his officers and crew, and the crew of the aforesaid ship called the *Essex-Junior,* every aid and assistance to enable them to arrive at the place of their destination.

And as it may become necessary for the *Essex-Junior* to touch at one or more places for the purpose of obtaining refreshment and supplies, it is requested, that in such case all, to whom this passport may be presented, will give the persons on board said ship every facility in supplying their wants, and permit them to depart with her whithout hindrance.

Given under my hand, on board his majesty's ship *Phœbe,* at Valparaiso, [*13*] April, 1814.

Printed, Bowen, *Naval Monument,* pp. 119–20.

1. One hundred thirty-two names appear on this list, a copy of which is enclosed in Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 127 (M125, Roll No. 37). A printed version may be found in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 469–72.

Midshipman Farragut

David Glasgow Farragut, who would achieve fame for his naval service during the Civil War, entered the U.S. Navy as a midshipman at the age of nine. He was not yet twelve when he participated in his first sea fight, the capture of H.M. sloop of war Alert *by* Essex *on 13 August 1812. Even more memorable adventures awaited the young Farragut as a member of* Essex*'s crew on her cruise in the Pacific. Farragut later recorded these experiences in "Some Reminiscences of Early Life." Although penned nearly three decades after the fact, they offer a vivid description of the people, places, and events of that cruise. Particularly noteworthy is Farragut's own critique of Porter's decisions on the day of the action with* Phoebe *and* Cherub. *The following excerpt relates the departure of* Essex *from the Marquesas in December 1813 and follows the fortunes of the frigate's crew until they returned home in July 1814.*

David G. Farragut: "Some Reminiscences of Early Life"

[Extract]

[9 December 1813–July 1814]

. . . we were ready for sea, on the 9th Dec, when many of the *Essex* Crew went as was usual on Sunday on board the *Essex Junior*— on Monday morning. I saw all was not right— the Capt. was much agitated All Hands were called to muster— When the hands were announced up, the Capt. took his cutlass in his hand, went one side of the Deck & laid it on the Capstan— He then trembling with anger, but with forced composure, addressed the crew "All you who are for weighing this ships anchor when I give the order, go over on the Starboard Side, you who are of a different determination stay on the Larboard"— All to a man, walked over on the Starboard side— He then called a man, named Robert White an Englishman & said to him in the same smothered tone "How is this? did you not tell them on board the *Essex Junior* that the crew of this Ship would refuse to weigh the anchor?" He tremblingly replied "No Sir" "You lie you scoundrel" was the answer. "Where is the list of the libertymen" "Here Sir" said the Officer [*of*] the deck== Then calling out one or two, he said "Did you not hear it on board the *Essex Junior*" "Yes Sir" was the response. "Run you Scoundrel for your life"—and out he went through the Starbd. Gangway. It was evident that the Capt. would have Killed him if he had caught him, but it was equally evident that he did not wish to catch him. The Capt. then went aft and addresed the crew in an exciting manner, praising their good conduct, in always holding up such miserable villians to punishment and shame at the same time letting them Know that no set of villians should ever disgrace him, for he was always ready should they so far forget themselves, to attempt it, to blow them all to Hell, before they could attain their ends. He then wheeled round and ordered them to man the Cap[*s*]tan, and the Music to play, the "Girl I left behind me, the music struck up and the anchor literally flew to the bows, and we made sail and stood to sea— White jumped overboard, and was picked up by a passing canoe[1] Take it altogether it was one of the most exciting scenes I ever witnessed, and made such an impression on my young mind, that the Circumstance is as fresh as if it had happened yesterday We went to sea in the usual light fine weather leaving behind all the Prizes, but the *Essex Junior* when about 12 miles from Hoods Island, a fresh breeze blowing at the time, a splash was heard in the water along side— No attention was paid to it, in fact the person that heard it did not report it until,—at quarters next morning an Oteheitian by the name of Tameoy, was missing and upon inquiry it was found that some difficulty had occurred between a Boatswains Mate and himself, and the Boatswains Mate had struck him, this he could not brook, and so jumped overboard, as a matter of course we all thought he was drowned, and as he was a general favorite on board it gave us great regret— I learned some years after from an Officer of one of the Prizes, that Tameoy arrived at Nooahevah on the 3rd. day after we left, having swam more than 30 miles== The nearest land at the time he jumped overboard was distant 12 miles, and we thought it very doubtful if he could have landed on it==[2] I shall not attempt to give any description of Nooahevah, as it is glowingly described by Capt. Porter—[3] I shall only confine myself solely to my own walk thro life Our passage was as usual, uninteresting every day the Crew were exercised at Great Guns and small arms,

and amused themselves at single sticks—& by the way I will mention a fact—, that I have never been in a Ship, where there were any of the *Essex* Crew, that were not the best stick players on board— Boarding was our forte, and every man was prepared for it, with a dirk made by our armourer out of an old file, a Cutlass that you might shave with, and a pistol== We arrived on the coast of Chile in Jany. 1814—looked into Conception and then ran down to Valparaiso where we lay until the arrival of the British Frigate *Phebe,* and Sloop of War *Cherub* which was early in February—[4] The Frigate mounted 30 long 18s. 16 32pd. carronades, 1 Howitzer and 6 3pds. in the Tops, with a crew of 320 men— The *Cherub.* 18 32pd. Carronades 8. 24pd. 2 Long 9s. and had a crew of 180 Men— When they made their appearance off the Port one third of our crew, were on shore on liberty, which was one watch, our crew having been divided into 3 watches as before mentioned— The Mate of an English Merchant Ship that lay in Port,[5] went immediately on board the *Phebe,* and stated to Capt. Hyllar, that one half of our crew were on shore, and the Ship would fall an easy prey— The Ships hauled into the harbor on a wind— The *Phebe* made our larbd. quarter, but the *Cherub* fell to leeward, about ½ mile— when the *P* had gained our quarter, she put down her helm, and luffed up on our Starbd. Bow, within 10 or 15 feet of our Ship— The moment the enemy hove in sight, a gun was fired and a cornet hoisted for all boats and men—and in 15 minutes every man was at his quarters, and not one the least intoxicated except one, and he a boy— and here I may relate an incident in which this lad figures, which might have made a different result to record of the fight between the *Essex* & *Phebe*— While the *P.* was alongside within 20 yards, and all hands at quarters the Powder Boys, were stationed, with matches to discharge the Guns, as the men boarded in the smoke— This Boy saw some one from the Port, as he imagined grinning at him— "D—n you my fine fellow" said he, "I'll stop your laughing or making faces at me" when as he was in the act of firing his gun, Lt. McKnight saw him and with one blow sprawled him on the Deck— Had that gun been fired, I am convinced the *P*— would have been ours. But it was destined otherwise== As before stated we were all at quarters cleared for action, and all were awaiting with breathless anxiety for the order to board, Capt. Hyllyer appeared standing on the after Gun, dressed in a Pea Jacket, and said Capt. H's Compliments to Capt. P. And hopes Capt. P. is well— Capt. Porter replied, very well, I thank you, but I hope you will not come too near, for fear some accident might take place,—that would be disagreeable to you— Capt. Porter, then Called "All hands repel boarders, and with a wave of his Trumpet the Kedges went up to the Yard Arms== Capt. H hove his yards aback, and said to Capt. P. that if he fell on board of him, he assured him it would be entirely an accident— Capt. P replied, that he had no business where he was, and if he touched a rope yarn of his ship, he would board him that instant. he then hailed the *Essex Junior,* and told Capt. Downes to be prepared to repel the enemy— But the *P.* backed astern her yards passing over ours, and not touching a rope, and anchored ½ mile astern of us—[6] Thus we lost the opportunity of taking her— We remained together in port some days, when the British vessels having Completed their provision and watering, went to sea, and commenced a regular blockade of us— one night we manned all our boats, and went out for the purpose of boarding him outside— the Capt. went so near, that he heard the conversation on her forecastle of the *Phebe,* and thereby lear[*n*]ed that they were lying at their quarters, so that we did not make the at-

tempt, but returned on board—[7] One day it was understood throughout the Ship, that, Capt. Porter, had sent out word to Capt. H, that if he would send the *Cherub* to the leeward point of the harbor, he would Come out and fight him we all believed he would accept the terms, and were in readiness to get underway. The *Phebe* was soon after seen standing in with her Motto Flags flying "God and Our Country" "Traitors offend them" She fired a gun to windward and the *Cherub* was seen running to leeward In 5 minutes we were underway, under our topsails and Jib, cleared for action (in fact we were always ready for that. When within about 2 miles of the *P.* she bore up and out steering sails== This I consider the 2nd. breach of faith on the part of Capt. H. for by his maneuvers in both instances it was Evident, he either had not the Courage or wanted the good faith of a high toned chivalrous spirit, to act out the original attention, and as Capt. H. has shown himself a brave man, in more instances than one, I will not deny him that Common attribute of a naval officer, therefore I impute it to a want of good faith. He was dealing with a far inferior force, and it was ignoble in the extreme, not to meet his foe when he had the show of an excuse for so doing Ship to Ship[8] on the 28th. Mar[*ch*] 1814 the wind Came on to blow, from the Southward, when we parted our Larbd. Cable, and dragged our Starbd. anchor Leeward== We immediately weighed and made sail in the Ship== the Enemy's Ships were Close in with the weathermost point of the bay, but the Capt. thought, we could weather them, and hauled up for that purpose and took in our Top Gallant Sails, which were set over ~~Double~~ Single Reefed Topsails== The Top Gallant Sails were hardly clewed down when a squall struck the Ship, and Altho the Top sail Halyards were let go, the yards jammed and would not come down—, when the Ship was nearly gunwale too, the Main Topmast, went by the board, Carrying the men on the Main Top Gallant Yard—, into the sea, and they were drowned— We immediately wore Ship, and attempted to gain the Harbor but owing to our disa[*s*]ter were unable so to do but anchored in a small bay, about a ¼ of mile of the shore, and ¾ of a small battery on the East Side of the Bay,[9] here we commenced our repairs, but it was soon evident from the preparations of the Enemy that it was his intention to attack us, and we made the best preparations to receive him we were able— Sp[*r*]ings were got on our Cable and the Ship perfectly prepared for action== Well do I remember the awful feelings, produced on me at their approach, by perceiving in the face of every one as clearly as possible even to my young mind that all was hopeless, and yet a determination equally clear, to die at their guns, rather than surrender— And such I believe were the feelings of the Crew almost to a man— There had been so much bantering of each other, with letters and songs,[10] and whenever the boats Crews met they invariably fought, so that their feelings were entirely different to what they would have been under different Circumstances== our Flags were flying in every direction, at the first Gun down she came with Flags, Jacks and Ensigns flying in every direction— At 54' after 3 P.M—they Commenced the attack the *Phebe* under our stern, and the *Cherub* on our Starbd. Bow— The latter soon found that too many guns bore on her, so she bore up and ran under our stern also— we got 3 long guns out astern and kept up as well directed a fire as possible, under the fire of such unequal numbers, In ½ hour they were both Compelled to haul off and repair damages, during this period we had succeeded 3 times in getting springs on our cables, but the instant they were hauled taught they were shot away. Notwithstanding the Constant fire of both the enemy's Ships we had suffered

less than might have been expected under the Circumstances, having but 3 Guns opposed to 2 Broadsides== we had many men Killed in the first 5 or 10 minutes of their fire, before we could get our stern guns to bear on them— They soon repaired damages, and again renewed the attack by placing both Ships on our Larbd. Quarter out of reach of our carronades, and where the stern guns, could not be brought to bear, then they kept up a most galling fire, which it was out of our power to return, at this juncture the Capt. ordered the Cable to be cut, and after many attempts to get sail on the Ship at last succeeded, in finding the flying Jib Halyards in a condition to hoist the Sail, it being the only servicable rope on the occasion, not shot away, by these means, we were for a short time enabled to close with the enemy— The fire on both sides was tremenduous, the *Cherub* was again compelled to haul off, and did not come again to Close action, but laid off and used her long guns, as if firing at a target== The *Phebe* was enabled by her better condition to edge off, and choose her distance, suitable for her long guns, and kept up a most destructive fire upon us— Finding as the Capt. says "the impossibility of closing with the *Phebe*" he determined to run the ship on shore and to destroy her— we accordingly stood for the land, but when within ½ mile of the Shore the wind suddenly shifted, took us flat aback and payed our head off shore— We were now again exposed to a most galling fire from the *P*— at this moment Capt. Downes came on board to receive his final orders, the enemy continued to rake us, while we could not bring a gun to bear— Capt. Porter now ordered a hawser to be bent to the Sheet Anchor and the Sheet to be let go— This brought the Ships head round, and we were in hopes the *P* would drift out of gun shot, as it was now nearly calm—but the hawser parted and we were again at the mercy of the enemy— The Ship was now reported to be on fire, and the men came rushing up from below, with their clothes on fire which we pulled off from them as fast as possible, and when we could not do so fast enough, told them to jump overboard, and put out the torment of the flames many of the Crew, and some of the Officers hearing the order to jump overboard took it for granted it was to guard against blowing us [*up*], jumped into the sea, and attempted to reach the shore about ¾ of a mile distant== The Capt now sent for the commissioned Officers to consult with them upon the propriety of further resistance, but first went below to ascertain the quantity of powder in the Magazine and on his return to the deck met Lt. McKnight the only commissioned Officer left, all the others having been Killed or wounded and it was determined to surrender the Ship in order to save the wounded, as it was evident the Ship must soon sink— At 20 minutes after 6 P.M, the painful order was given to haul down the colors, and executed— They did not cease firing for some 10 minutes after the colors were hauled down, and many of our unfortunate crew were Killed during those 10 minutes— Thus terminated one of the most bloody fights that ever occurred== On our side there were but 75 left of our brave companions Most of the above account is taken from minutes of the action Kept by Mr. Bostwick the Actg. Purser of the *Essex Junior*, who happened to be on board our Ship when we put to sea—[11] The remainder is from memory and in some instances I differ from my most venerated friend and Commodore—

Remarks on the Action. In the first place I think the 1st. and greatest error was in our attempting to regain the anchorage. Being greatly superior to our enemies in Sailing, I think we should have borne up, and run before the wind, if we had come in contact with the *P*—we could I think have carried her by

boarding if she avoided the contact as she might have done by her greater ability to maneouver, then we would have taken her fire and passed on leaving them behind us, until we could have replaced our topmast, by which time they might have been considerably separated, as unless they did so, it would have been no chase, as the *Cherub* was a dull sailor==

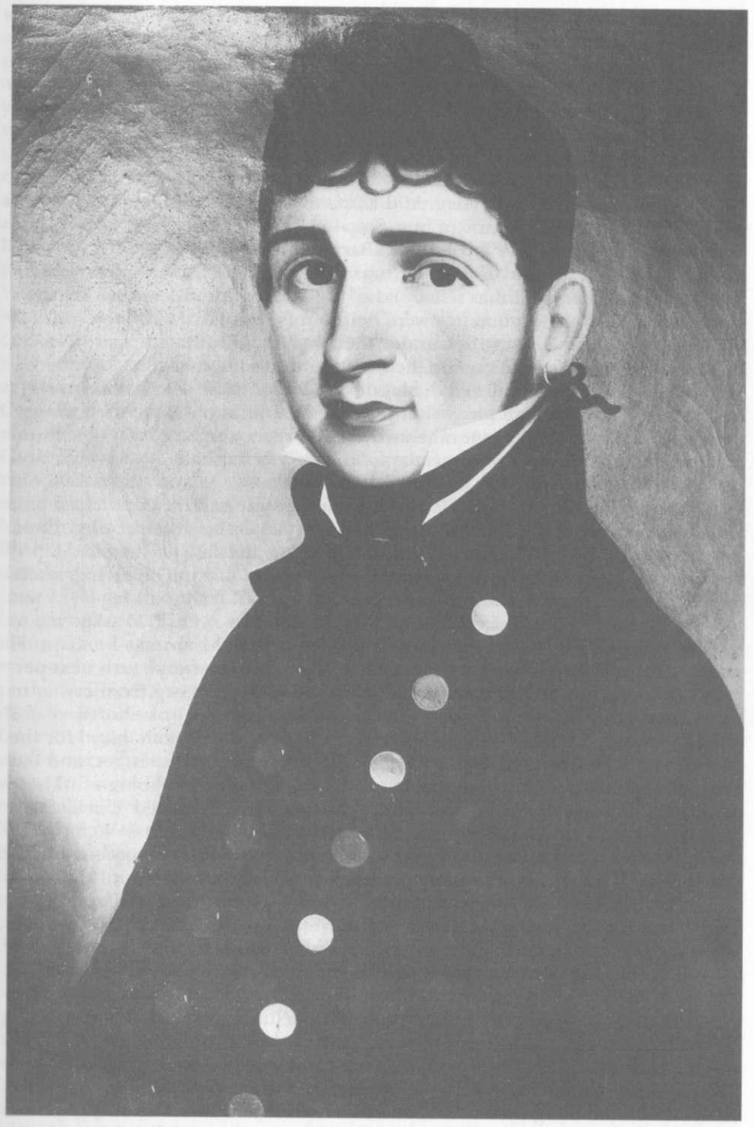
2ndly. It was apparent to every body that we had no chance of success, under these circumstances the Ship should have been run ashore, throwing her broadside to the Beach, to prevent raking fought him as long as consistant with humanity, and then set fire to her— But as we determined on anchoring we should have bent the anchor to the Ring of the Anchor instead of bending it to the Cable, where it was so exposed. that it was shot away as fast as it was put on— This mode of proceeding would have given us a better opportunity of injuring our opponents although I by no means intend to intimate that with our commodore we could hope for a different result to ourselves— If the above were not my reflections at the time, it was because I had always been in the habit of relying on the Judgement of others, for certainly they have always been my opinions whenever I can recollect to have thought on the subject— We are in the habit of blaming Capt Hillyar, but when we reflect upon the difference of the 2 commandrs we are not surprised at Capt. Porters complaint they were as different as day and night— Capt. P. was about 32 years of age and the Pink of Chivalry of an ardent and impetuous temperament While Capt H was a man of 50 [years] of age,[12] of as cool, calculating man had as he said to the Lt. gained his reputation by several single Ship combats and that he only expected to maintain it on the present occasion, by an implicit obedience "to his orders to captin [*capture*] the *Essex*, at the least possible risk to his vessel and crew," and as he had the superior force, he was determined not to risk any thing to chance, believing it would call down the disapprobation of his government Mr. Ingraham his 1st. Lt: was a young chivalrous and ardent man, and it is said begged Capt. P[13] to bear down and board us, and the above was the cool reply of the Capt. Ingraham said it was deliberate murder to lay off and fire at us like a target, when we were unable to return it— This young Officer visited us once with a Flag of Truce, and was shewn throughout the ship==[14] His manly, frank and chivalrous bearing quite won the hearts of all on board our Ship. Whilst admiring her he said it would be the happiest moment of his life, to take her to England, could we have taken her in equal fight— To which Capt. Porter replied, that if such an event had to occur, he knew of no British officer to whom he would more readily yield his honor—&, and in this sentiment all our Officers and crew sincerely coincided. Unfortunately he was not destined to survive the Action—, a shot struck the rail one of the Splinters scalped him, and he died before its close,— All the remnant of our Officers and Crew attended his funeral, which took place on shore, he was buried in the Governors Castle at Valparaiso[15]

Incidents of the Action.

During the action I was like Paddy in the catharpins "a man on occasions. I performed the duty of Capts. Aid, Quarter Gunner, Powder Boy, and in short every thing that was required of me. I will here remark the horrid impression made upon me, by the death of the 1st. man— It was a Boatswains Mate his abdomen was taken entirely out, and he expired in a few moments, but they soon fell so fast around me, that it all appeared like a dream and produced no effect on my nerves. I well remember while standing near the Capt. just abaft

the main mast, a shot came through the waterways, which glanced upwards, Killing 4 men who stood by the side of the Gun, taking the last man in the head, and his brains flew over us both, but it made no such impression on me as the death of the 1st. man I neither thought of, or noticed any thing but the working of the Guns== On one occasion Mid Isaacs came up and reported to the Capt., that a quarter Gunner by the name of Roach had deserted his quarter the sole reply of the Captain was, "do your duty Sir—" I seized one of the Capts. Pistols that lay on the Capstan, and went in pursuit of him, but did not find him, and as soon as the Ship was said to be on fire, he contrived to get into the only boat we could keep afloat, and with 6 others made his escape to the shore— The most remarkable part of this is that Roach had always been a leading man in the Ship—and on occasion before mentioned of the *Phebe* running into us, when the boarders were called away. I distinctly remember Roach being in the most exposed situation—on the Cat Head ready to board, with every expression in his countenance of eagerness for the fight== All of which only goes to prove that man is not always the same thing. Roach was a brave man with a prospect of success, but a coward in adversity Soon after this, tubes were wanted, and the Capt. sent me after them== In going below when on the Ward Room Ladder the Capt. of the Gun directly opposite the Hatch, was struck full in the face by an 18 pd Shot and fell back upon me— We both fell down the Hatch together, I struck on my head, and fortunately he fell on my hips, whereas, as he was a man weighing about 200 Pounds, had he fallen directly on my body he would have Killed me; I lay there stunned for a few minutes by the blow, when awaking as it were from a dream, I ran on deck— The Captain seeing me covered with blood, asked me if I was wounded, to which I replied I believe not Sir. Then my son said he where are the tubes? This first brought me again to my senses and I ran down again, and brought them on deck when I arrived on deck the second time, I saw the Capt fall, and in my return, ran up and asked him, if he was wounded, he answered me in almost the same words. "I believe not my son, but I felt a blow on the top of my head" he must have been crushed down by a passing Shot, as his hat was some what injured. When not wanted for other purposes, I generally assisted in the working of a gun, would run and fetch powder from the boys, and send them back for more, until wanted by the Capt to carry a message, so continued to employ myself during the action== When it was determined to surrender, the Capt sent me to ascertain if Mr Odenheimer, had the signal book and if so, to throw it overboard== I could neither find him or the book for some time, at length I found the book in the sill of a port, and threw it overboard, after the action Odenheimer said he was overboard himself trying to clear the book from some part of the wreck where it had lodged==very unfortunate story for him as I found it in the Port. Isaacs, and myself amused ourselves throwing overboard, Pistols &c to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy== At length the boarding Officer came on board, and running up to the Capt asked him, how he would account to some one, I do not recollect who, for allowing the men to jump over board, and demanded his sword That sir said the Capt is "reserved for your master." The Capt then went on board the *Phebe*, and I followed in about ½ hour== The effect of excitement is astonishing== I have already noticed how soon I became accustomed to blood and death during the action but so soon as the excitement ceased, and I went below, and saw the mangled bodies of my shipmates, dead, and dying, groaning cursing, and expiring with the most patriotic

sentiments on their lips== I became faint and sickened, my sympathies were all excited, I assisted to staunch the blood, and dress the wounded, as occasion required— Among the wounded was one of my best friends Lt J. G Cowell when I spoke to him, his reply was "Oh Gatty, I fear it is all up with me"— I looked at his wound as the Dr. with some assistance laid him on the table, and found he had lost his leg above the knee— But the Doctor said his life might have been saved if he would have consented to the amputation an hour ago but when it was proposed to drop another patient to attend to him, he replied "no, no Doctor—none of that— Fair Play is the jewell, one mans life is as dear as anothers, and I would not cheat any poor fellow out of his turn" he lived 21 days, when from loss of blood, mortification took place, and life went out, like a candle[16] Thus died one of the best of Officers as well as the bravest of men— He belonged to Marblehead, It was curious to hear dying men, who had hardly ever before been thought of, expiring with sentiments on their lips worthy of a Washington— you could hear in all directions "Dont give her up Logan" (a sobriquet applied to the Capt. "Hurrah for our Liberty—&c"— There was related by the crew of one of the Bow Guns, a singular act of heroism on the part of a young Scotchman by the name of Bissley, who had one leg shot off clean up to the groin, he secured it with his handkerchief for a tourniquet and turning to his Gunmates said "I left my own country, and adopted the U. States to fight for her, I hope I have this day shown myself worthy the Country of my adoption, I am no longer of any use to you or her. I will not be a burthen to her—, so goodbye" with these words he leaned the stump upon the sill of the Port and leaped overboard—[17] Many of our fine fellows bled to death for want of tourniquets— An old Quarter Master by the name of Bland, was standing at the Wheel, I saw a Shot coming over the Fore Yard in such a direction as I thought would hit him or me. so I told him to jump, and pulled him towards me, at the same instant, the shot took off his right leg— I helped the old fellow below, and after the action went to see how he fared, but I just got to him in time to hear his last words, he had bled to death, before it came his turn to be amputated I had escaped without any injury except the bruise from my fall in the Ward Room, a few scatches, and the loss of my coat tail, was all the damage done me— next day however my bruise pained me considerably, but it worked off in 4 or 5 days, cured by hard work— I went on board the *Phebe* about 8. P.M and was ushered into the steerage; I was so mortified at my capture, that I could not refrain from crying, and so I laid down and gave vent to my tears— I was aroused from my stupor, by hearing a young Reefer sing out "Prize Oh" Boys "a fine grunter by Jove"— I thought at once of a Pet Pig we had on board by the name of Murphy== I immediately claimed him as my Pig— "my Pet Pig" ah, but said he "you are a prisoner, and your Pig also," but said I "we always respect private property," and as I had laid hold of Murphy at the beginning I said I would not give him up unless compelled this was nuts for the Oldsters, who immediately sung out, "go it my little Yankee, and if you can thrash Shorty" (a sobriquet applied to the reefer) "you shall have your Pig." Agreed said I, for I knew there were few of any boys of my age that could master me. so a Ring was formed and in the Open space, at it we went. I soon found, his pugilistic education did not equal mine, and that he was no match for me, and as he made the discovery as soon as I did, he yeilded the Pig, and I took Master Murphy under my arm, feeling I had in some degree wiped off the disgrace of our capture== The



John G. Cowell

next morning I looked round to see what had become of all the Officers of our ship— Lt Wilmer poor fellow had been sent forward to let go the sheet anchor, and while in the performance of that duty, had been struck by a shot, Killed and fallen overboard; after the action a little negro boy that he had, by the name of Ruff, came up on the Quarter Deck, and asked me where his master was— I replied, I had heard he was killed, well said he, if he is gone, I will go to, and jumped out of the port and was drowned— Wilmer was a good fellow, but was not fit for a 1st. Lt and let his faults go with him— Lt McKnight still lived, and together with Actg. Mid Lyman was to go to England or Rio, to give evidence of the capture of the Ship—[18] Cowell was dead and Odenheimer was the only one Lt. left us. Barnwell the Actg. Master, had been wounded in the face and breast, but was doing well Isaacs, Ogden, Dusenberry and myself were all that remained of the Midn. without material injury== Drs. Hoffman and Montgome[*r*]y were neither of them hurt, although some of their patients were Killed whilst under their hands Too much praise cannot be given to those gentlemen for their skill and attention to the wounded== Many of those who were burned died, but very few of those who had been early amputated== It is astonishing what powers of endurance, some men possess there was one man who swam on shore with scarcely a square inch of skin on him, and altho he was for some days deranged he ultimately got well, and served with me afterwards on the W. I. Station== It was the same old Boatswains Mate Kingsbu[*r*]y who so distinguished himself off Cape Horn and for which he was made Boatswain of the *Essex Junior,* he accompanied Capt. Downes on board in his boat, as he said to share the fate of his old Ship— Another seaman swam on shore with 16 or 18 pieces of iron in his leg, scales from the muzzle of his gun, he also recovered without losing his leg== I was sent for by Capt. H into the cabin, Capt. P was present— Capt. H asked me to take some breakfast— my heart was too full— I could not eat— Capt. H said in a Kind manner, never mind my little fellow, it will be your turn next perhaps— I told him I hoped so,— and I left the cabin, to keep from crying in his presence== We were all soon put on parole, and I went on shore== our wounded were all removed from the ship to a comfortable Room, hired for the purpose— I volunteered my services to the Surgeon, as an assistant, and was given charge of all such patients as required plastering and rubbing— These consisted of those burnt and bruised— never have I earned Uncle Sams money so faithful and hardly as during my service in that Hospital== I rose at day light, and spead a bolt of linen into plasters by 8' o'clock—got my breakfast, and then went to work on my patients== This continued until the 27th. of April, when the Capt. succeeded in making arrangements, with Capt. H. for the transportation of the remainder of our crew to the U.S. in the *Essex Junior*—[19] She was accordingly dismantled, and we embarked== We were but a small band of officers when we were assembled, and yet we were better off than the crew their numbers, were wofully diminished, we went into action with 255 men, and now numbered only 132, including wounded— we were compelled to leave 2 of our poor fellows in the hospital, one died the day after we sailed, and the other recovered and returned to the U States. His name was Wm. Call, he lost his leg during the action, and while he was weltering in his blood, and it yet hung by the skin, he discovered Adam Roach skulking on the Berth Deck, and he dragged his shattered stump all around the Bay House with his pistol in his hand, trying to get a Shot at him— On the 27th. April

we embarked and made sail for the U. States having made all the arrangements necessary for the wounded== We had generally good weather, and passed the Cape with Top Gallant Steering Sails set— on the passage, I still attended to my patients, and made a singular discovery on one of them,— a young Scotchman by the name of John Glasser, who had been handed over to me to treat for a severe contusion of the right Shoulder— The Shoulder was much swolen and the Skin ruffled, but apparently not broken, but as he always complained of a particular spot, at length I informed the Doctor that there was a rising from the bone forming, and that there was some thing hard inside, on examination the Doctor agreed with me, and made an incision with his knife laid the shoulder bone bare, and found the half of a grape shot, that was so fast in the shoulder bone, that it required all his strength to remove it— When we arrived off Long Island at the distance of 10 leagues from the land we were boarded by the Razee, *Saturn,* Capt. Nash[20] the boarding officer took Capt. P's. report on board, to Capt. N. who said Capt. Hillyer had no right to make such an arrangement wheerupon Capt. P. told him, that by the agreemnt. if any of his Majesty's Ships should detain him over 12 hours, that by Capt. P.s delivering his sword to the Officer detaining him, he would be considered a prisoner of War to said Officer, and absolved from all obligations to Capt. H— Capt. P. reminded the officer of that fact, and Offered him his sword, to convey to Capt. Nash, which was refused, and we were ordered to remain under the lee of the Razee, all night== The last words of Capt. P to the boarding Officer were, "tell Capt. Nash, that if British Officers have no respect for the honor of each other, I shall have none for them" and I will consider (if detained all night) myself at liberty—to effect my escape if I can— On the return of the boat to the *S.* they hailed us, and ordered us to remain under their lee all night== The next morning after breakfast, the Capt. ordered his boat manned and armed== She was a whale boat, that pulled very fast, and it was evident he was determined to make a desperate fight if pursued== He then pushed off and they did not discover him for some time as our Ship was Kept directly between the Razee and the Boat— As soon as they discoved him from the mast head, they turned the hands up and wore Ship, and passed under our stern but in an instant there came up such a dense fog, that though we heard every order given on board the Razee, we could not see her— We made all sail to Sandy Hook, and in a few moments were going 9 Knots, we Kept a man at the Royal Mast Head, and about 11 A.M. he discovered the broad pendant of the *Saturn,* to windward and before the ma[*i*]n was out of the fog, on her Fore Top Gallant Yards we were all snug with the Main Topsail to the Mast. She fired a gun to leeward, and ran down to us. Their boat then came on board, with a different officer in her for the 1st. was a gentleman, and this one was an upstart; & as he came over the gangway he comm[*enced*] by saying. "You drift quite fast, we have been going 9 Knots for the last 3 hours, and yet we find you abeam of us, with your Maintopsail to the Mast." "Yes" was the quiet reply of Capt. Downes. "And that was Capt. Porter who left the Ship in a boat I suppose" "It was" said Capt. D. "By God you will a be leaving soon, if we dont take your boats from you" "You had better" replied Capt. D. coolly— "By God, I would if I had my way" Capt. D. now advanced saying, "You impertinent puppy, if you have any duty to do here sir—Do it, but if you dare again to insult me, I will throw you overboard" accompanying these words with a very significant gesture== The young man jumped into his boat, and left the Ship

soon after the regular boarding Officer came on board, and said Capt. Nash hoped the Capt. D would excuse the youth and ignorance of the Officer, who had insulted him, and receive his apology, as the Capt. had commanded him to ask pardon for the insults== He then told Capt. D. that Capt. N. had ordered the men to be mustered, to see if they tallied with the passport the crew were accordingly mustered, their names were called and each man critically examined as he passed forward, but no one was stopped As the last man passed, the officer said to the man beside him, (one of his own boats crew) "which is the man, of whom you spoke as being an Englishman" we all now trembled for some poor devil, we knew not who, but the fellow with the utmost composure replied "I never said he was an Englishman" but said the Officer "You said you had sailed with him" "Oh Yes" replied the man "but it was out of New York though" The Officer then with some confusion, made an apology, returned on board the Razee, our passport was countersigned by Capt. Nash and we were allowed to depart.—[21] We then made all sail for Sandy Hook, about sundown we fell in with the Frigate *Narcissus*, the boarding officer took our passport on board, it was countersigned by the Capt.[22] whose name I have now forgotten, and we proceeded, about 8' o'clock we made the Hook. The night was dark and squally, we could not procure a pilot so the Capt took her in by his chart. When we got opposite to the small Battery in the Horse Shoe, we hoisted our colors with a lantern, clewed up our sails, and sent a boat ashore, with a light in it— By accident the light was extinguished, and the fort immediately commenced firing on us— This continued until the boat returned and procured another light, our men were all ordered below, but the ship was not struck by a single shot, which convinced me it was not as awful a thing as was supposed to lie under a battery== We now furled sails and remained here all night for as they were now convinced that we were Americans, we were unwilling to risk another contact with the next battery— It was well we did, for next day while we were standing in to the harbor under full sail, at mid day, with our colors flying, they fired at us again, so that we found it as difficult to get clear of the shot of our friends as of our enemies We anchored in N. York in July,[23] and were much surprised to find the Capt. had not arrived, but he did so in a day or two afterwards and informed us he was much farther from the land when he left us than he supposed, and did not reach it until near sun set, that he was sufficiently below the fog, to notice all our movements, and saw both ships make sail for the Capes, he had great difficulty—in landing in consequence of the Surf— When he did succeed he was taken prisoner by the Militia, but as soon as he showed his commission, they gave him 3 cheers, and fired a salute of 21 Guns from a small swivel, gave him a horse to ride to N. York, and an ox cart to carry his boat— When he arrived in Brooklyn he reported to the Commanding Officer, took a hack and came over to N. York, where the mob, took the horses from the carriage, and dragged him all over the city==thereby showing that his countrymen, had esteemed his defeat not less than he had,[24] we were all put on leave==until regularly exchanged or peace concluded The *Essex Junior* was sold—[25] and thus terminated one of the most eventful cruises of my life—

D, MdAN, "Some Reminiscences; of Early Life. By, D. G. Farragut, A Captain of The U.S. Navy," pp. 20–27. Farragut dictated the majority of this autobiography to an amanuensis in 1845. The first two hundred twenty-one pages of text are numbered. The last seven pages are not and appear to be in Farragut's hand, carrying his life's story through 18 September 1854. Farragut's son, Loyall, incorporated lengthy, edited selections from "Some Reminiscences" in his biography of his father, *Life of David Glasgow Farragut*, published in 1879. Lewis, *David Glasgow Farragut*, Vol. 1, pp. 241, 306*n*.

1. Robert White entered *Essex* as a seaman. He would later participate in the mutiny at Nuku Hiva on 7 May 1814, leaving that island with his fellow mutineers in the prize ship *Seringapatam*. See Journal of Midshipman William W. Feltus, 7 May 1814, pp. 772–74; and, Gamble to Crowninshield, 28 Aug. 1815, pp. 774–80. Porter's confrontation with White is also described in *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 442–43.

2. This incident involving Tameoy is related in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 444–45, 497–98, 502.

3. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, chapters 14–17.

4. *Essex* arrived off the coast of Chile on 12 January and at Valparaiso on 3 February 1814. *Phoebe* and *Cherub* arrived at the Chilean port on 8 February.

5. Probably George O'Brian, first mate of the British merchant ship *Emily*. Hillyar to Croker, 28 Feb. 1814, p. 714.

6. This initial encounter between *Essex* and *Phoebe* is described in Porter to Jones, 9 July 1814, pp. 764–65.

7. For Hillyar's complaint on this head, see Hillyar to Croker, 26 June 1814, pp. 719–20.

8. The incident Farragut describes occurred on 27 February 1814. For additional documentation, see pp. 719–23, 733–34.

9. A one-gun battery detached from Fort Baron. Log Book of U.S. Frigate *Essex*, 28 Mar. 1814, p. 726.

10. For documentation on several of these exchanges, see Crew of *Essex* to Crew of *Phoebe*, 9 Mar. 1814; and, Midshipman of *Phoebe* to Crew of *Essex*, 10 Mar. 1814, pp. 721–23.

11. Shortly before the events of 28 March, Porter had ordered *Essex*'s purser, John R. Shaw, ashore to mislead the British into thinking the American frigate was not yet ready to put to sea. Bostwick must have been ordered to *Essex* to serve in Shaw's stead. See note 1, p. 770.

12. Hillyar was forty-four years old at the time of the battle. The British commander had entered the Royal Navy in 1779, rising to the rank of lieutenant by the age of fourteen. He saw his first service on the North American Station during the Revolutionary War and later earned distinction for his performance in the Mediterranean during Britain's wars with France. It was in the Mediterranean that Hillyar met and befriended David Porter. After the capture of *Essex*, Hillyar helped to negotiate the Treaty of Lircay in May 1814, ending armed hostilities between Peru and Chile. On Porter's earlier acquaintance with Hillyar, see *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 474–75. Documentation on Hillyar's role as an intermediary between Chile and Peru may be found among his 1814 correspondence with the Admiralty in UkLPR, 1/1950, and, Graham and Humphreys, *The Navy and South America*, pp. 141–97.

13. Farragut means Hillyar here, not Porter.

14. On Lieutenant William Ingram's visit to *Essex*, see Statement of Master Commandant John Downes, 20 Aug. 1814, p. 723.

15. Fort Rosario.

16. According to *Essex*'s muster roll, Cowell died on 25 April 1814. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 637, p. 266.

17. For additional examples of heroism in *Essex* that received public notice after the return of the frigate's survivors, see the editorial entitled "American Heroism," in *Niles' Weekly Register*, 20 Aug. 1814.

18. On the fate of McKnight and Lyman, see note 36, p. 741.

19. See Hillyar to Porter, 4 Apr. 1814, p. 746; and, Passport for *Essex Junior*, 13 Apr. 1814, p. 747.

20. Captain James Nash, R.N.

21. On the detention and consequences of *Essex Junior*'s detention by *Saturn*, see pp. 764–68.

22. Captain John R. Lumley, R.N.

23. *Essex Junior* arrived at New York on 8 July after a passage of seventy-one days from Valparaiso. Downes to Jones, 8 July 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 2, No. 3 (M147, Roll No. 5).

24. On the hero's welcome Porter received on his return to the United States, see pp. 760–64.

25. Secretary Jones authorized the purchase of *Essex Junior* for $25,000. Jones to Porter, 13 July 1814, p. 766.

A Hero's Welcome

If David Porter had any doubts as to how the loss of Essex *would be greeted by the public and the Navy Department, they were immediately dispelled when he stepped ashore at New York. The defeated captain and his crew were given a hero's welcome.[1] Parades, dinners, and public rallies celebrated the return of* Essex*'s brave sailors. As the documents below illustrate, Americans saw little to criticize in what was deemed an unequal contest between* Essex *and her captors.*

1. The Daily National Intelligencer *reported that on Porter's arrival at New York City "the citizens took the horses from his carriage, and drew it up to the City Hotel, and from thence to his lodgings in Greenwich street, with constant and loud huzzas."* Daily National Intelligencer, *11 July 1814.*

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain David Porter

Navy Department
July 10th. 1814

Sir

Accept my congratulations upon the safe arrival of the gallant commander and surviving Officers and crew of the U.S. late Ship *Essex,* in triumph though captives; having gloriously elevated the naval character of our country even beyond the towering eminence it had before attained.

The enquiry you solicit shall be speedily made—not the mere formal investigation which necessarily follows ordinary casualty, but the official record of facts, which shall place the fame of the vanquished on the same proud column with that of the most renowned Victors.[1]

The interesting narrative of your cruize[2] has been received and shall be laid before an anxious and admiring public without delay, and no effort will be wanting to effect the exchange of your brave companions. I am very respectfully Sir Your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

ALS, PHi, Simon Gratz Autograph Collection. Addressed: "Captain David Porter/U.S. Navy/New York."

1. Porter requested a court of inquiry into the loss of *Essex* in his letter to Jones of 8 July 1814. On 11 August Secretary Jones ordered Captain Stephen Decatur to convene a court of inquiry on board the frigate *President* in New York harbor. Eight days later Jones ordered the court suspended so that Porter and the remaining crew of *Essex* could proceed to Washington and aid in the defense of the capital. The court was never reconvened. Porter to Jones, 8 July 1814, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 144 (M125, Roll No. 37); Jones to Decatur, 11 Aug. 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 400 (M149, Roll No. 11); and Jones to Porter, 19 Aug. 1814, p. 199.

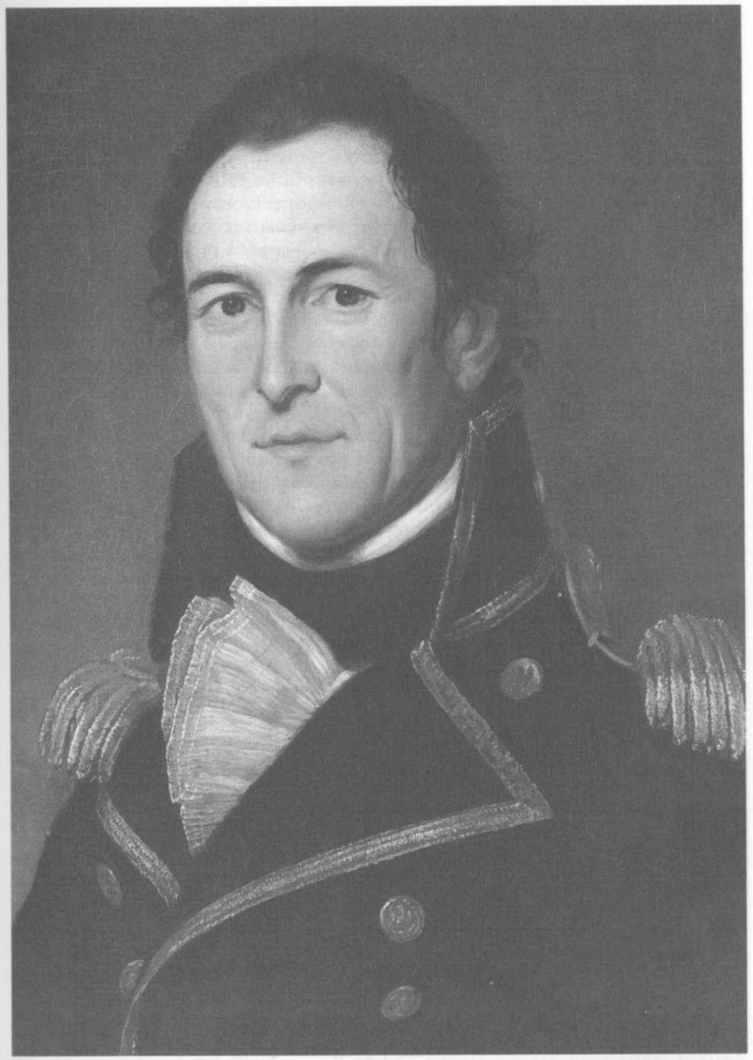
2. Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, pp. 730–41.

Editorial on the Loss of *Essex*

CAPTAIN PORTER

From the Columbian.

The return of this distinguished naval officer to his native country after a toilsome absence of nearly two years in her service, has created in the hearts of his



David Porter

fellow citizens a kind of melancholy joy scarcely ever equalled on any similar occasion. We are rejoiced once more to clasp the hand of a hero whose bravery stands pre-eminent in the naval records of our country; but, at the same time, are lost in a sort of indescribable sorrow that almost silences utterance, and we can only faintly articulate with tears of transport starting in our eyes—welcome home, our dearest brother. We can speak to him of his health—of his good fortune, in reaching after a variety of vicissitudes the grateful bosom of his paternal land, but we dare not ask him how fares his brave little *Essex* and her gallant crew. Alas! She is no more—His downcast looks speak but too plainly the nature of her fate, and, painful as the tidings are, we must receive them and bear up manfully under the stroke. And need we then indeed recoil at the recital of these tidings? Was she fairly won, in equal combat, by a more courageous and intrepid foe? No—Thanks to the brave spirits who sailed beneath her glorious flag, and ten thousand thanks to the yet braver spirit under whose auspices they fought; she stood her ground, with incomparable zeal, against a far superior force, for an almost incredible period, and only yielded the victory when the flower of her heroes were laid speechless on her encrimsoned decks. What! my fellow-citizens, shall we mourn the loss of the *Essex,* when we bear in mind the stupendous force by which that loss, after two and a half hours of desperate fighting, was effected: and yet even while we have the strongest reason to believe, that had not the unfortunate explosion of a few cartridges paralized the efforts of an unwearied crew, her most powerful antagonist in all likelihood would have been carried by boarding, and this day, wore the American flag? Surely, none but men of the most exalted courage could ever dare to hazard so unequal a conflict; and our regret at the ignoble capture of the vessel should be drowned in the loudest applauses of our tars The archives of the British navy, we venture to assert, throughout their voluminous extent do not contain a similar display of unexampled magnanmity, and the only plausible reason that can be assigned for it in this instance emanates from the peculiar principle universally adopted by the naval warriors of the United States, never to surrender the ship, even to a superior force, while power is left to fight her. Such was the brilliant exit of that truly valuable frigate, and such the characteristic energy of those hardy tars, by whom she was so long and so valiantly defended.

As to the enemy, a victory like this can indeed be of no other service to him than as affording another extraordinary example of the superior discipline and undaunted valor of American seamen, and all he can reap from the acquisition of so dear-bought a prize, will amount only to the plain simple fact, that another frigate has been taken. He dare not say *how* she has been taken—nor dare he without the most flagrant injustice add an unmerited laurel to the brows of the two inhuman wretches[1] who took her, should either of these wretches ever reach home. Inhuman wretches, did I say? Yes, fellow-citizens, *after* the colors of the *Essex* were lowered and the reluctant signal of submission thrown out, not content with having abandoned in cold blood two unfortunate men on a buoy, to perish in the storm; these inhuman Britons continued without relaxation their galling fire and barbarously murdered four American tars. Gracious God! grant that the hour may soon arrive when Porter shall chastise these monsters for their savage cruelty, and pour out vengeance on their devoted heads. But let us endeavor to lower this exulting tone a little, and state the case to the public as fully as the nature of it will admit, so that upon striking the balance it may be clearly seen upon what high grounds captain Porter and his matchless crew are

entitled to the grateful plaudits of their countrymen. It appears that on the 28th March last, while the *Essex* was lying at anchor, near the bay of Valparaiso, in a violent gale, having already suffered considerable damage, the British frigate *Phœbe* and sloop of war *Cherub* fell in with her, and after a most sanguine contest of two hours and a half, during which the *Essex* obliged them to haul off to repair, as might be expected, succeeded in capturing her. Now, before we proceed any further, we shall just stop to ask two simple questions. First, whether the scene of this action, being within "pistol shot of the shore" and within gun-shot of two Spanish forts, was not within the jurisdiction of a sovereign state, in amity with the United States and Great Britain? Second, whether the best writers on national polity do not universally acknowledge that the jurisdiction of a state extends *at least* within the waters of the sea, as far as its cannon can reach, if not farther, and that no foreign ships can commit any acts of hostility upon each other while within the jurisdiction of a third, with whom they are both in amity, upon any pretences whatever? This *Phœbe* from all accounts appears to be an old hand at the business, and is perhaps one of the strongest frigates, without exception, in the British navy. From "Steel's List" we learn that she was built in the year 1795, and that previous to 1798 she took the *L'Africaine,* of 44 guns, and afterwards the *La Neried,* of 36, and that in 1810, under the command of her present captain, in company with the *Astrea* and *Galatea,* she took the *La Nereide* and *La Renomine,* of 44 guns each. The *Cherub* was built in the year 1807,[2] and is well known to be one of the most powerful ships of her class. Now, when in the capture of the *Essex* this immense disparity of force is connected with the fact that the crew of the latter were greatly reduced in number, while the *Phœbe* and *Cherub* had each their full complement of men, we cannot wonder at the result of the battle. Let us then console ourselves with the proud reflection that she was ably defended to the last against a very superior force—that she was only delivered over into the hands of her antagonists to preserve the lives of many of her wounded heroes—that the conduct of Captain Porter and his courageous tars outshines the most gallant exploit recorded in the naval annals of the world—and that the defence of the *Essex* surpasses that of the late *Epervier,*[3] as infinitely as the Heavens surpass the earth. Before we conclude these hasty remarks, however, we cannot avoid congratulating our fellow citizens upon the important advantages resulting from the long cruise of the *Essex;* from which it will be seen that though her own carcase is lost perhaps forever to the U. States, she has bequeathed them a legacy that will ever remain a splendid monument of her inestimable services, and fully entitle her late intrepid captain to the immediate command of another frigate.

NAUTILUS.

Note. It is proper to add several interesting particulars which, though doubtless not far from the real truth of the case, may perhaps differ a little from the future statement of captain Porter; for which we look forward with the liveliest anxiety, reserving, in compliance with his request, a more correct account of the action until his official report appears. The *Phœbe* is 19 years old, and according to "Steel's List" is rated at 36 guns, but in the engagement with the *Essex* mounted 48,[4] and had a full crew of 320 men. The *Cherub* is 7 years old, and by the same author is rated at 20 guns, though she mounted at this time 28 and had a complement of 180 men. The *Essex* is 14 years old, rated at 32 guns and went into action with a crew of only 260 or 265 men.[5] All her guns are car-

ronades,[6] excepting 6, which alone could reach the enemy, who were more fortunate in being enabled to annoy her with 34 of their long cannon. The *Essex* had 52 men killed and 100 wounded and missing.[7] The loss of the enemy could not be ascertained.[8] It is stated in addition that the *Essex* had safely deposited, previous to the battle, two millions of specie in Valparaiso.

Printed, *Columbian,* reprinted in the *Daily National Intelligencer,* 22 July 1814.

1. James Hillyar and Thomas T. Tucker.
2. *Cherub* was launched on 12 December 1807. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy,* Vol. 1, p. 120.
3. H.M. brig-sloop *Epervier* was captured after a forty-five minute action by U.S. sloop of war *Peacock* on 28 April 1814. The British vessel was severely damaged in her hull and rigging with more than five feet of water in her hold at the time of her capture. Her casualties numbered more than twenty killed and wounded out of a crew of one hundred twenty-eight men. For the after action report of *Peacock*'s commander, Lewis Warrington, see Warrington to Jones, 29 Apr. 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1814, Vol. 1, No. 94 (M147, Roll No. 5).
4. According to Porter, *Phoebe* mounted fifty-three guns of all calibers. Porter to Jones, 3 July 1814, p. 733.
5. Porter states that *Essex* had a crew of two hundred fifty-five men and mounted forty thirty-two pound carronades and six long twelve pound guns. Ibid.
6. For Porter's complaint to Jones about the disadvantages of his armament, see ibid.
7. Porter reported one hundred fifty-four total casualties. Ibid., p. 737.
8. Hillyar reported eleven men killed and wounded in *Phoebe* and four in *Cherub.* Hillyar to Croker, 30 Mar. 1814, UkLPR, Adm. 1/1950, No. 264, enclosure.

Parole Broken

The passage of Essex Junior *from Valparaiso to New York was uneventful until the cartel ship arrived off Sandy Hook. There she was overhauled by the British razee* Saturn *and detained while* Saturn*'s captain determined on the validity of the passport she was sailing under. An enraged Porter considered the terms of the American parole violated and therefore no longer in force. Rather than remain subject to* Saturn*'s captain, Porter made an early morning escape from* Essex Junior *by boat, landing at Babylon, New York. In his report to Secretary Jones, Porter requested a ruling on the status of his men.*

Captain David Porter to Secretary of the Navy Jones

N York July 9th. 1814

Sir/

You have already been made acquainted with the arangement made with Comodore Hillyar respecting the *Essex Junior*—

On the 5th. inst. fell in with the British Razée *Saturn* Captain Nash who examined our passport[1] endorsed it and permited us to proceed, About two hours afterwards we were again brought too by the same ship and were informed we must remain under her lee next morning as Comre. Hillyar had no authority to make such arangement with me; I informed them that if the ship met with any further detention I should consider it a violation of the contract and no longer hold myself bound to comply with it but wished them to consider me their prisoner and offered my sword, they refused to receive it and took my passport on board the *Saturn*— at 7 Oclock next morning perceiving no disposition on the part of the enemy to liberate us I determined to attempt my escape; the

Ships being distant from each other near musquet shot and about 40 miles from the east end of long Island I maned and Armed a boat and pulled off, before I had got out of gun shot they discovered my intentions and gave chase to me under a press of canvass but fortunately it suddenly grew very foggy and by changing my course I was enabled to elude them— on its clearing off I discovered the *Essex Junior* under a press of Sail and the *Saturn* in chase of her and on her firing a gun she hove too— at 5 oclock that evening I reached long Island landed at the Town of Babylon About 40 miles from N York where I put my boat on wheeles and at 5 PM next day launched her at Brooklin— The *Essex Junior,* (Captain Downs informs me), was detained 24 hours had her hold broke out casks scutled the Warrants and commissions of all the Officers strictly examined the crew mustered and every insult and indignity offered that their motive and ingenuity could invent— it remains only for you to say whether the British government is now entitled to an exchange for the prisoner[*s*] brought home in the *Essex Junior.*[2] I have the Honor to be With great respect your Obedt. servt.

D Porter

ALS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 4, No. 147 (M125, Roll No. 37).

1. See p. 747.
2. Porter also describes *Essex Junior*'s encounter with *Saturn* in *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 491–93.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Captain David Porter

Capt. David Porter
U.S. Navy
New-York

Navy Department
July 13th. 1814

Sir,

I have before me your letter of the 9th. which has been exhibited to the President and received his attention.—

The conduct of the commander of the *Saturn,* has excited in his breast, as it must in every liberal and correct mind, the most indignant feelings.—

The history and the presence of the brave remnant of the crew of the *Essex,* was alone calculated to inspire a generous sympathy and courteous demeanour, though the highest safeguard known to civilized warfare had not guaranteed their exemption from molestation, and it is difficult to reconcile the absence of those feelings with the character which captain Nash doubtless aspires to.—

The circumstances of your escape from the *Essex Junr.* while under detention, would it is believed sustain yourself and your government in dissolving your parole, but as the *Essex Junr.* was suffered to proceed under the original passport though indecently detained & rudely treated the scrupulously exact and liberal conduct of the Government of the United States in despite of the injustice and illiberality which it has received from the hands of the Enemy may possibly induce the President to wave the right which the violation in this case would enable him to assert.—

The matter however is still under consideration and will be decided upon in due time.—

Your Officers will for the present and until further order can be taken remain attached to the *Essex Jr.*

Your crew will be immediately paid off upon a requisition being made upon the Agent at New York[1] for the amount of the Balance due them, which shall be remitted to him without delay.—[2]

I have this day accepted Purser Shaw's Bills for $29.000. approved by yourself.

You will proceed to join your friends at your pleasure and after having consoled them for your long absence and reposed yourself we shall be gratified with your presence here.—

The court of Enquiry will be ordered to be held either in Philada. or New York as may best suit your convenience.—[3]

I confirm the purchase of the *Essex Junr.* for account of the United States at the sum of $25000.—[4]

You will please to transmit to this Department the valuation made by the persons appointed by you for that purpose.— I am respectfully &c.

W: Jones.

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, pp. 374–75 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Navy Agent John Bullus.
2. For documentation on the payment of *Essex*'s crew, see pp. 768–72.
3. Jones ordered the court of inquiry convened at New York. See pp. 768, 769–72.
4. The prize case papers for *Atlantic*, renamed *Essex Junior,* are in DNA, RG21, Records of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, Case 10 (M928, Roll No. 1). Additional documents are printed in *ASP: Naval Affairs,* Vol. 1, pp. 388–92, 425.

Secretary of the Navy Jones to Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason

The Commissary General
of Prisoners

Navy Department
July 16th 1814

Sir

I have the honor to transmit to you the original passport granted at Valparaiso de Chili on the 13th April last by Commodore Hillyar Commander of the British Frigate *Phœbe* to the Officers & Crew of the U S Ship *Essex Junior* and to the surviving officers and Crew of the U S late ship *Essex* named in that passport as prisoners of War protecting as well the persons as the said Cartel Ship *Essex Junior* from any impediment or molestation. I shall immediately transmit to you copies of the letters received from Captain David Porter[1] and Lieut. John Downes[2] on the subject of the outrage and molestation committed by Captain Nash commanding the British Ship of War *Saturn*—upon the said Cartel from which, while under unwarrantable detention by the said Capt. Nash, Captain Porter after having declared the Cartel Violated and himself no longer bound thereby and offered his sword; made his escape in a boat though pursued and fired at by the said British Ship of War *Saturn*—

I shall exhibit to you these documents in order that the President of the U States may decide whether under the Circumstances stated, Captain Porter, and those who escaped with him in the boat, can be justly considered as prisoners of War and upon such measures as he may deem necessary to adopt in relation to the violation of said Cartel—

In the event of the brave Officers & Crew of the *Essex* being considered as prisoners of War, I pray your best efforts to restore them as speedily as possible

to the Service of their Admiring Country and in particular their heroic Commander I am very respectfully your Obt. Servt.

W Jones

LB, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 196 (M209, Roll No. 4).

1. Porter to Jones, 9 July 1814, pp. 764–65.
2. Downes to Jones, 11 July 1814, DNA, RG45, MC, 1815, No. 130 (M147, Roll No. 6).

Captain David Porter to Secretary of the Navy Jones

Chester 19th. July 1814—

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th.

You no doubt have before this received the passport given by Capt. Hillyar, as well as farther particulars from Capt. Downes of the conduct of the Captain of the *Saturn*—

Capt. Downes and the rest of the officers are of the belief that my escape, alone, was the cause of the liberation of the *Essex Junior*—

I was a prisoner on parole, the conditions on which that parole was accepted were not respected, I was consequently no longer bound, I had the right of absolving myself from my parole, did so and yielded myself a prisoner offering to return my sword, the acceptance of this was refused, I could obtain no satisfactory information as to their intentions and made my escape— Under such circumstances I hope my country will never subject me to the humiliation of an exchange, it would be the cause of more triumph to the British Naval Officers than even their victory over the *Essex*— I am willing to take on myself the risque of the consequences which might result from being again taken prisoner. I have the honor to be with great respect Your Obedient Servant

D Porter

LS, DNA, RG45, CL, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 9 (M125, Roll No. 38).

Commissary General of Prisoners John Mason to Secretary of the Navy Jones

"Office of commissary Genl. of Prisoners"
August 10th. 1814

"Sir,

"I beg leave to transmit you, herewith, copies of three letters, of the 3d. 4th. & 9th. instant, which have passed between Colo. Thomas Barclay, the British Agent for Prisoners of War & myself in relation to an exchange proposed by me, of captain Porter and the officers and crew of the United States' late Frigate *Essex*."— You will remark Sir, that the British Agent, altho' he considers, under the practice of his Government, that their paroles "are null and the officers & men at liberty to serve, in like manner as if they had not been made prisoners," declines to exchange them against British Officers and crews similarly situated: for these and other reasons, given in my letter to him of the 9th. instant, I have been instructed by the Secretary of State to declare the officers & crew of the *Essex* discharged from Parole."—

"I have therefore, the honor to announce to you that, capt. David Porter and other officers and the crew of the U States late Frigate *Essex* captured in March last, by the British Ships of War under the command of captain Hillyar, are accordingly declared discharged from their paroles taken by the said Captain Hillyar, and as free to serve, in any capacity, as if they had never been made prisoners.—"[1] "I have the honor to be with great respect, Sir, Your most obedt. Servt."

"J: Mason"

LB, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 401 (M149, Roll No. 11). This letter was enclosed in Jones to Porter, 11 Aug. 1814, for a copy of which, see DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 402 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. Vice Admiral Cochrane would later signify to Mason the Admiralty's concurrence with this judgment. Cochrane to Mason, Feb. 1815, UkENL, Alexander F. I. Cochrane Papers, MS 2349, p. 258. For Cochrane and Mason's earlier exchanges on this subject, see Cochrane to Mason, 7 Sept. 1814, and Mason to Cochrane, 27 Sept. 1814, MiU-C, David Porter Papers.

Pay, Promotions, Prize Money, and Pensions

Money was uppermost in the minds of Essex*'s surviving crew members once they arrived home. With many of the ship's company having lost all they owned after being made prisoner by the British, the condition of these men was truly desperate. Thus, they eagerly anticipated the payment of back wages and prize shares from the sale of* Essex Junior. *Relatives of* Essex *'s fallen also sought their financial due, putting forth claims for pay, prize shares, and pensions. In addition, the frigate's officers sought rewards of a different kind—promotion.*

Acting Lieutenant John M. Maury to Secretary of State Monroe

New York July 19th 1814.

Sir

The enclosed letter I recieved a few days ago, and very much regret, that it is not in my power, to present it in person. You will percieve by the General's letter[1] my motive for thus troubling you. As my situation has been peculiarly unpleasant I will relate to you the circumstances attending it which I will thank you to explain to The Honbe. Secretary of the Navy. In March 1809 I obtained a warrant as Midshipman dated 16th of January of the same year and at the same time recieved orders to join the Frigate *United States* which I did, a few days afterwards, and continued in her until June 1811 when I accepted of an offer made me by my friend Lt. Lewis[2] to accompany him on a trading voyage to the East Indies: my reason for adopting this measure was that I considered the merchant service a much better situation for a young officer to become a proficient in seamanship than on board one of our ships of war as they, in time of peace are more in port than at sea. This plan met with the approbation of the then Secretary of the Navy[3] and on your recommendation he granted me a furlough to carry it into execution. Whilst pursuing this voyage I was left at the Island of Nooaheevah. On the arrival of the

Essex at that place I was first informed of the war. I immediately offered my services to captn. Porter which were accepted and on the 28th of Octbr. 1813: I recieved his orders to Join the Frigate *Essex* where I remained until February last; when I recieved from him an appointment as acting Lieutenant on board the *Essex Junr.*.[4]

On my arrival here I found that most of the officers of my own date and many who entered the service but a short time previous to my departure; had recieved commissions or appointments to act as Lieutenants . . . May I hope sir that you will interest yourself in my favor and endeavour to procure me a commission of or near the same date of those officers' who entered the service in 1809. The voyage I have made has been an extensive one, comprising the circumnavigation of the globe; and I flatter myself that I have not been idle. Perhaps sir I ask too much of you; but I cirtainly ought to expect to rank higher than two, of the officers, late of the *Essex* who have gone on to Washington to apply for commissions neither of them have been so long in service as myself—[5] I hope sir you will excuse the liberty I have taken of troubling you with this disagreeable task and permit me to assure you that I remain with the highest respect and esteem your obt. and very humble svt.

Jn° M Maury

ALS, DNA, RG45, BC, 1814, Vol. 3, No. 27 (M148, Roll No. 13). Addressed: "To The/Honble. Jas Monroe/Secretary of State/Washington."

1. J. Minor to James Monroe, 13 July 1814, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 51 (M124, Roll No. 64). The letter is endorsed: "General Minor/of Virga."
2. William Lewis, commissioned a lieutenant on 14 March 1807, and promoted to master commandant 3 March 1815. He was lost in *Epervier* in 1815.
3. Paul Hamilton.
4. Maury was entered on *Essex*'s muster roll as a midshipman on 25 October 1813. Porter promoted him to acting lieutenant on 14 February 1814. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 689, p. 267, and entry no. 703, p. 268.
5. Secretary Jones approved Maury's appointment as acting lieutenant on 22 July 1814. On 28 April 1815, he was appointed a lieutenant with his commission dated 9 December 1814. Maury was ordered to the Lake Champlain station on 12 September 1814 and from thence to *Epervier* at Savannah on 15 October.

Members of *Essex*'s Crew to Captain David Porter

New York 20th. July 1814

Sir

We the undersigned encouraged by the noble and generous conduct we have ever experienced from you since we have had the honor of being under command, beg leave in the most respectfull manner to represent our hard case to you, being well assured that the moment you are made acquainted with it we shall meet with redress.— It is not Sir our intention to be guilty of any disrespectfull conduct towards those in authority over us, or to make any unnecessary complaints, & it gives us extreme pain to be under the necessity of intruding on the quiet you are about to enjoy with your family, and which you are so justly entitled to after your well earned Laurels, but merely to request that you will see that justice done us which we, who have in our station equally defended the honor of our Country deem ourselves entitled to.— We have now been ten

days onshore without one Cent in our pockets, except what we are obliged to borrow from our Landlords, who are now pressing for what We are due them on Account of Board, and the money they have advanced us.— We have applied to the Purser,[1] who has promised from day to day that we should be paid off; we have waited from day to day to no effect, and at last been referred to the Navy Agent[2] who amuses us with the same promisses, our patience is worn out, and we candidly confess our confidence likewise: we are men Sir, who tho' not in so high a station in life as you are, have some feelings of pride about us, and cannot bear to be dependent on strangers, when we have money due us which we have hardly and honorably earned.—! Is this the reward Sir we expected to meet from our Country, [*or*] the Conduct for men to receive who have been at all times willing to shed their blood in defence of that Countries rights,— "no; the fault is with those who have the paying of you, & I will see you righted" this we feel confident will be your answer, for we are convinced you would as soon, if not sooner suffer yourself than see those who have faught under you do so;— under this impression we respecfully make known our case to you, and request your immediate interference in our behalf.— These are the Sentiments of the whole Crew who have requested us to make them known to you.—

Wishing you every happiness, and with the greatest respect we are—Sir Your faithfull Servants

Thomas Edwards
Enoch M Midey
Adum Williams
John Wyble
James Galley
Charels Hay
James Smith

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1814, Vol. 5, No. 64 (M124, Roll No. 64). Addressed: "David Porter Esqr./Captain U.S. Navy/Chester/Pensylvania." Porter forwarded this letter to the secretary of the navy, and in response Jones wrote that the moneys for *Essex*'s crew would soon be remitted. He stated that the delay in paying off the crew was unintentional and due to bureaucratic procedure. Jones to Porter, 24 July 1814, CSmH, Charles T. Harbeck Collection, HR 187. The following day a credit of thirty thousand dollars was forwarded to Porter at New York for the pay of *Essex*'s crew. Jones to Porter, 25 July 1814, DNA, RG45, SNL, Vol. 11, p. 385 (M149, Roll No. 11).

1. John R. Shaw.
2. John Bullus, Navy Agent at New York.

Pension Certificate for Sarah Smith

William Smith[1] of New York in the state of NewYork, late a seaman acting as a Boatswain's Mate on board the United States Frigate *Essex* David Porter Esqr. Commander having been wounded in the action with the British Frigate *Phœbe* and ship *Cherub* on the 28th. day of March 1814 in the gallant defence made by that ship of which wounds he died at Valparaiso while in the line of his duty in the service of the United States, Sarah Smith widow of the said William Smith is

entitled to receive Nine and a half dollars per month from the Commissioner of Loans of the state of NewYork payable half yearly on the first day of January and first day of July in every year for the term of five years to commence on the sixteenth day of April eighteen hundred and fourteen the day of said William Smith's decease. She producing a certificate that she is and still remains the widow of said William Smith and has not since intermarried with any other person; which certificate shall be signed by one of the principle magistrates of the town or place where said widow resides. And in case of her intermarriage as aforesaid then the said pension shall be paid to the guardian of the child or children, if any there be under the age of sixteen years; of which also a certificate shall be produced to the Commission of Loans signed as aforesaid with proof of the legal apointment of the guardian; and also that the child or children were living within one month of the period of payment of the pension. In default of which proofs this pension shall cease

Given under my hand and the seal of the Navy Department this fifth day of November 1814

W Jones—

Registered Benjamin Homans
Secretary to the board of Commissioners of the Navy pension fund—

Copy, DNA, RG45, AF 4, Jan. 1811–Dec. 1827 (M625, Roll No. 4). Two documents not printed but filed with Smith's pension certificate include a receipt for fifty-seven dollars from the New York Office of Discount and Deposit and Smith's sworn statement affirming that she is the widow of William Smith.

1. William Smith shipped as a seaman in *Essex* on 25 September 1812. He was promoted to acting boatswain's mate on 1 June 1813. He died at Valparaiso on 16 April 1814. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 317, p. 259, and entry no. 612, p. 265.

James Hughes to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

Philadelphia 18th. February 1815

Sir.

I have to inform you that I have in my possession a Will & Power for to recover and act for George Martin[1] & Joseph Holly[2] late Seaman belonging to U.S. Frigate *Essex,* Captain Porter objects paying there prize Money although Knowing they left there wills & powers with Lavina Hickey[3] widow when they left Philadelphia on the Account of being indebted to her when they shipped hands in her House Lieut. Downes & Midshipman Odenheimer R.O—in 1812—

Holly was left ashore in the Boat & George Martin the Captain[4] of the English Frigate Knew him and threatened he would try him by a Court Marshall, the Purser[5] of the *Essex* disguised him and gave him Forty Dollars and sent him back in the Country at Valpairaisa and ordered him to make the best of his way to the United States—

I hope you will have the goodness to forward me an order for the recovery of their Prize Money & Wages during their time of Servitude on board the said Ship on Captain Porter or otherwise I shall consider Wills & Powers void hereafter

I beg you will have the goodness to answer this Letter informing me how to proceed in behalf of the poor widow with Children to Support and I believe her house has produced as many (Seamen) for the States as any other in America[6] I remain Sir with every Sentt. of Respect Yours

J: Hughes

Your answer addressed to James Hughes No. 27 Penn St will be gratefully recd.

LS, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1815, Vol. 2, No. 71 (M124, Roll No. 69).

1. George Martin shipped as a gunner's mate in *Essex* on 25 September 1812. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 139, p. 256. There is conflicting information in the ship's rolls as to Martin's ultimate fate. The muster roll records that he was detached at Valparaiso on 25 April 1814. The pay roll records that he deserted after the action with *Phoebe*. See entry no. 139, p. 276. The list of casualties printed in *Journal of a Cruise* numbers Martin among the missing. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, p. 465.

2. Joseph Holly or Hawley shipped as a boatswain's mate in *Essex* on 25 September 1812. The ship's muster roll records that he deserted at Santa Catarina on 24 January 1813. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 134, p. 256.

3. Hickey also tried to recover moneys owed her for boarding and clothing seamen from the U.S. brig *Vixen*. Hickey to Jones, 24 Dec. 1813, DNA, RG45, MLR, 1813, Vol. 7, No. 126 (M124, Roll No. 59), and, Jones to Hickey, 31 Dec. 1813, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 69 (M209, Roll No. 4).

4. James Hillyar.

5. John R. Shaw.

6. Secretary Crowninshield informed Hughes that David Porter was responsible for distributing the prize money and Purser Shaw the back wages owed to *Essex*'s crew. Crowninshield to Hughes, 23 Feb. 1815, DNA, RG45, MLS, Vol. 12, p. 279 (M209, Roll No. 4).

Mutiny in the Marquesas

There would be no hero's homecoming for the small detachment of men Porter left behind at Nuku Hiva in charge of several prize ships. Within five months the entire company of twenty-one men had either mutinied, been taken prisoner, or died. Among the fatalities was Midshipman William Feltus, whom Te I'i warriors killed in May of 1814. Excerpts from his journal printed below provide a glimpse into the mounting disciplinary problems the detachment's commander, Marine Lieutenant John M. Gamble, faced. Gamble's own report describes how his small band of loyal officers and men survived first a mutiny, then a native uprising, only to suffer capture by the British in the Hawaiian Islands. The unlucky marine officer and his remnant crew were to endure a hard, twelve-month captivity in enemy hands before finally gaining their freedom.[1]

1. The most complete account of Gamble's command is to be found in the 1822 edition of Porter's Journal of a Cruise. *Porter's narrative was drawn from Gamble's own journal. Porter,* Journal of a Cruise, *chapters 19–20, and, Gamble to Porter, 30 Aug. 1815, in Bowen,* Naval Monument, *pp. 123–25.*

Journal of Midshipman William W. Feltus

[Extract]

[*Nuku Hiva*] Thursday January 20th. [*1814*]

filling water At 8 P M went on board the *Sering* and found that the crew had brought off Girls contrary to Ordirs punished the men also the women and turned the Latter on shore.[1] Cloudy. . . .

[*Nuku Hiva*] Sunday March 6th. [*1814*]

At 4 PM one of the Men[2] deserted at 8 Mr. Gamble took 8 men armed and found him in an Indian house. Put him in Irons At 10 AM Gave him 3 doz Lashes and again put him in Irons Ends Warm. . . .

[*Nuku Hiva*] Friday march 18th. [*1814*]

At 4 PM finished the *Sir Andrews* Hold At 12 PM (John Welch & Martin Stanly having the first watch) the boat was missing At ½ past 12 (Sansbury & Belcher having the watch) it was found that Welch had taken the Boat oars Sail &c. with 2 prisoners (Robison [*Robertson*] & Coffin) that he took out of Irons (the former being co[*n*]fined for theft and the Latter for desertion) also Peter Swack from the *Sering*. & had gone out to Sea.[3] they took from the *Greenwich* the following articles Boat, Sail, & oars 3 Muskets & 4 doz rounds of Ball cartridges &c. a considerable quantity of the mens cloathing. From the *Sering* 5 muskets 3 ½ Barrels of powder some Boat boards A new English ensign, 2 Axes a grind stone one of the mens bags containing all his cloathing. Spy Glass. a chissel file & some Gimblets Boat Sail and 2 compasses At day light I went out side but saw nothing of the Runaways. Ends Warm the Havous tribe brought down some bread fruit—

[*Nuku Hiva*] Saturday March 19th. 1814

Warm found that the Runaways had stove Mr. Gambles blue Boat in 2 places in order that they might not be pursued by her she being the fastest pulling boat Ends Warm—[4]. . . .

[*Nuku Hiva*] Saturday May 7th. 1814

At ½ past 2 PM being on board the *Sering* with Mr. Gamble & Clapp the crew mutinied tied us & put us in the Run Bent the top Sails got under weigh by 6 PM At ½ past 8 PM the mutineers being—Morrison—Clarke—Ransport—Stiles—workman—Stanly—Robert [*George*]—Richard [*Power*]—Rob Lambris—Rob White—Carpenter—[5] Curtis—Bantom—, put Mr. Gamble Clapp & myself with Worth and Sansbury 1 cask powder & 2 muskets into an old boat—to make the best of our way in— tom—Belcher also remained on board but called out to Lieut Gamble & several others to witness that he was obliged by the mutineers to stay—[6] at about 10 PM we got on board the *G—h* where we found they had spiked all the Guns also those in the fort on shore in the morning employed carrying the Sails to the *Sir A—H* our crew consisting of 11 Souls 3 of Whom are officers, one of the men wounded and other aged—[7]

AD, PHi, Journal of Midshipman William W. Feltus.

1. Gamble was concerned that in visiting the prize ships the native islanders would learn how few men he actually had under his command, thereby inviting an attack. Thus he issued orders forbidding the visit of any natives, male or female, to the prizes. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 507–8.

2. Ordinary Seaman Isaac Coffin. Coffin was not one of *Essex*'s original complement. He had shipped in the frigate on 28 June 1813. He deserted from *Essex* the day before she departed Nuku Hiva. He was soon captured and placed in irons on board one of the prize ships, only to escape again on 6 March. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 496, 511. DNA, RG45, *Essex* muster and pay rolls, 1801–14, entry no. 639, p. 266.

3. Seaman John Welch, Seaman John Robertson, and Private Peter Swook were part of *Essex*'s original complement of men.

4. The events of 18–19 March are also described in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise*, pp. 511–12.

5. There were no mutineers by the name of Carpenter. Feltus must be referring here to James Duncan, a prisoner of war who was a cooper.

6. Of the fourteen mutineers Feltus lists, six—James Morrison, William Clarke, Lewis Ransford, William Stiles, Robert Lambries, and James Duncan—were prisoners; four—Robert George, Joseph Curtis, Richard Power, Jeremiah Workman—were former prisoners who had shipped in *Essex*; and

four—Thomas Belcher, James Bantum, Martin Stanley, and Robert White—were part of *Essex*'s original crew, although White had deserted *Essex* after a confrontation with Porter.

7. The three officers were John M. Gamble, William W. Feltus, and Benjamin Clapp. The eight enlisted men included Benjamin Bispham, Joseph Burnham, Peter Caddington, Thomas Gibbs, John Pettenger, Richard Sansbury, John Thomas, and William Worth. The events of 7–8 May are also described in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 516–20.

Captain John M. Gamble, U.S.M.C., to Secretary of the Navy Crowninshield

NEW YORK, August 28th, 1815.

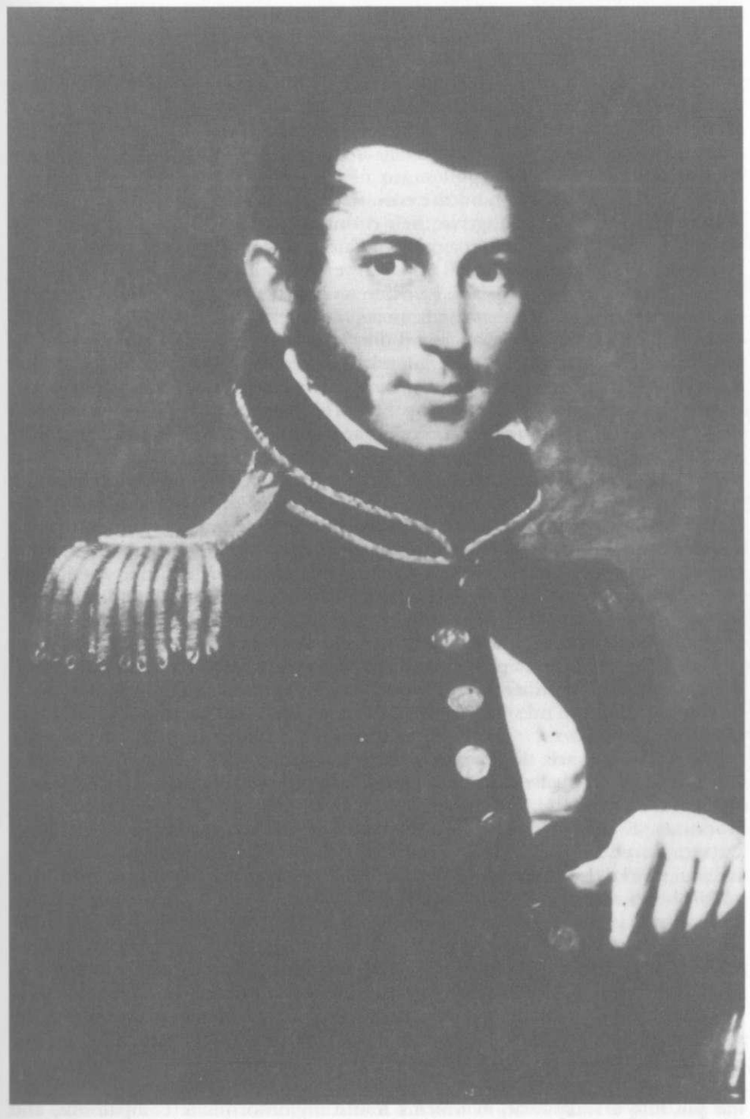
SIR,

I have the honour to inform you that on the 12th of December, 1813,[1] (the day on which the *Essex* frigate and *Essex Junior* took their departure from Nooaheevah,) I was left in Port Anna Maria Bay, with eighteen men under my command, and six prisoners of war in charge of the establishment on shore,[2] together with the prize ships *Greenwich, Seringapatam, Sir Andrew Hammond,* and *New Zealander,*[3] with orders from captain Porter to remain five and a half calendar months at that place; at the expiration of which time, should he not return or send me further instructions how to act, I was, if possible, to man two of the ships, and after taking every article of value out of the other and burning her, repair to the port of Valparaiso, where, in the event of not finding the frigate, or additional orders, I was authorized to dispose of one of the ships to the best advantage, and take all the men under my charge, as well as the prize crews of the different ships then in that port, on board of the other, and proceed to the United States.[4]

After receiving these instructions my first object was, agreeably to captain Porter's wish, to fill the *New Zealander* with oil from the other ships, and on the 28th day of December, she took her departure for the United States, with a cargo of 1950 barrels, and well found in every respect for so long a voyage.

It is with regret I inform you, that the frigate had scarcely got clear of the Marquesas, before we discovered a hostile disposition in the natives, and in a few days they became so insolent, that I found it absolutely necessary, not only for the security of the ships and property on shore, but for our personal safety, to land my men and regain by force of arms the numerous articles they had in the most daring manner stolen from the encampment; and what was of still greater importance, to prevent, if possible, the execution of threats, which might have been attended with very serious consequences to us, as duty required my men to be much separated.[5] I, however, had the satisfaction to accomplish my wish without firing a musket, and from that time lived in perfect amity with them, until the 7th day of May following, when my distressed situation had nearly placed me in their power. Before, however, mentioning the lamentable events of that and the two following days, I will give you a brief account of a few preceding occurrences, which were sources of great uneasiness:

The first was the death of John Witter, (a faithful old marine who was unfortunately drowned in the surf on the 28th of February,)[6] and the desertion of four of my men; one of them a black named Isaac Coffin, had deserted from the *Essex* the day before she left the bay, and was then a prisoner for making the second attempt.[7] They took advantage of a dark night, and left the bay in a whale boat, unobserved, (all, except the *prisoner,* having the watch on deck),



John M. Gamble

and carried off several muskets, a supply of ammunition, and many things of but little value. I was prevented from pursuing them, as they had in a measure destroyed the only remaining boat at that time seaworthy.[8]

On the 12th of April we commenced rigging the *Seringapatam,* and *Sir Andrew Hammond,* which, as I had calculated, kept the men employed until the 1st of May. All hands were then engaged in removing the remainder of the property from the *Greenwich* to the *Seringapatam,* as I began to despair of being rejoined by the frigate at that place.

The work went on well, and the men were obedient to my orders, though I discovered an evident change in their countenances which led me to suppose there was something wrong in agitation. Under that impression I caused all the muskets, ammunition, and small arms of every description, to be removed from the other ships to the *Greenwich,* (the one on board of which I lived,) as a necessary precaution against a surprise from my own men.[9]

On the 7th of May, while on board the *Seringapatam,* on duty which required my presence, I was suddenly and violently attacked by the men employed in that ship. After struggling a short time and receiving many bruizes, I was prostrated on the deck and my hands and legs tied. They then threw me on the second deck, thence dragged me into the cabin and confined me in the run. Midshipman Feltus, and acting midshipman Clapp, were in a few minutes after thrown in, tied in the same manner as myself; the scuttle was then nailed down and a sentinel placed over it. After spiking all the guns of the *Greenwich* and of the Fort, and those of the *Sir Andrew Hammond* that were loaded; plundering the ships of every thing valuable; committing many wanton depredations on shore; taking all the arms and ammunition from the *Greenwich;* sending for Robert White, who was turned ashore from the *Essex* for mutinous conduct;[10] and bending all the necessary sails; they stood out of the bay with a light wind off the land. My fellow prisoners and myself were shortly after taken out of the run and placed in the cabin, under the immediate charge of several men. I then learned the names of the mutineers, and assure you, sir, even in my truly painful situation, it afforded me no small degree of consolation, that there were no Americans among them.

The following are the names of the mutineers and prisoners of war:— Thomas Belcher, boatswain's mate, Englishman; James Bantum, negro; Martin Stanley, foreigner; Robert George, Joseph Curtis, Richard Power, and Jeremiah Workman, Englishmen, (who entered on board the *Essex* from the whaling ships captured in the Pacific Ocean,) and Robert White, mutineer.— Prisoners, William Clarke, Lewis Ransford, James Morrison, William Stiles, James Duncan, and Robert Lambries.

Shortly after getting clear of the bay, one of the sentinels, (although repeatedly cautioned against putting his finger on the trigger) fired a pistol, the contents of which passed through my left heel a little below the ancle bone.[11] As soon as the men on deck heard the report, they immediately pointed their muskets down the sky-light and were in the act of firing, but were prevented by the sentinel, who told them that the pistol was accidentally discharged.

At nine o'clock, the night dark, and the wind blowing fresh, after receiving (by request) from the mutineers a barrel of powder and three old muskets, I was put into a leaky boat, in which I found my unfortunate companions, and the only two Americans that were in the ship at the time the mutiny took place, the others being employed on board the *Greenwich,* and on shore, in putting the

arms in order, baking bread, and doing other work which required the most trusty. In this situation, after rowing at least six miles, and every person exhausted from the great exertions made to keep the boat from sinking, we reached the *Greenwich,* where I found the few remaining men anxiously looking out for me, and seriously alarmed at the conduct of the savages, who had already begun to plunder the encampment, and been informed by Wilson,[12] (a man who had lived among them for several years, and who, as I afterwards learned, was not only instrumental in promoting the mutiny, but, in my absence, plundered the *Sir Andrew Hammond*) of our defenceless situation.

Finding it impossible to comply with that part of my instructions, directing me to remain in the bay until the 27th of May, I thought it most advisable to repair to the port of Valparaiso, and with that view, all hands, assisted by George Ross and William Brudenell, (who were living on the island for the purpose of collecting sandal wood,) exerted themselves in making the necessary preparations to depart. My first object was to put the *Sir Andrew Hammond* in such a situation, that we might get under way at any moment. After which, all hands were engaged in getting the few articles of value from shore, and in endeavouring to recover the property stolen from the *Sir Andrew Hammond,* when the savages made an unprovoked and wanton attack upon us, in which I have with the deepest regret to inform you, that midshipman William Feltus, John Thomas, Thomas Gibbs, and William Brudenell, were massacred, and Peter Coddington dangerously wounded, who, with William Worth, made his escape by swimming some distance, when they were both taken out of the water by acting midshipman Clapp, and the three remaining men. Our situation at this moment was most desperate. The savages put off in every direction for the purpose of intercepting the boat and boarding the ship, but were driven back by my firing the few guns we had just before loaded with grape and cannister shot. Before the boat returned and the guns were re-loaded they made a second attempt, and afterwards repeated efforts, first to board the *Greenwich* and then the *Sir Andrew Hammond,* but were repulsed by our keeping up a constant fire. During this time several hundred were employed in pulling down the houses and plundering the encampment, whilst others were in the fort, endeavouring (assisted by Wilson, who had received several casks of powder from the mutineers) to get the spikes out of the guns. As soon as William Worth had recovered a little strength, after having been so long in the water, I sent the boat to the *Greenwich* for John Pettinger, a sick man, and some things that were indispensably necessary, with orders to burn that ship and return with all possible despatch, as our ammunition was nearly expended, and we had no other means of keeping the savages one moment out of the ship. We then bent the jib and spanker, cut the moorings, and luckily had a light breeze, which carried us clear of the bay, with only six cartridges remaining.[13]

We now found our situation most distressing, for in attempting to run the boat up she broke in two parts, and we were compelled to cut away from the bows the only remaining anchor, not being able to cast it. We mustered altogether eight souls, of whom there were one cripple confined to his bed; one man dangerously wounded; one sick; one convalescent (a feeble old man just recovering from the scurvy); and myself unable to lend any further assistance, the exertions of the day having inflamed my wound so much as to produce a violent fever; leaving midshipman Clapp and two men only capable of doing duty.[14]

In that state, destitute of charts, and of every means of getting to windward, I saw but one alternative; to run the trade winds down, and, if possible, make the Sandwich islands, in hopes of either falling in with some of the Canton ships (that being their principal place of rendezvous) or of obtaining some assistance from Tamaahmaah, king of the Windward Islands.[15] No time was lost in bending the topsails, and on the 10th of May we took our departure from Robert's Island, on the 25th of the same month made Owhyhee [*Hawaii*], and on the 30th, after suffering much, came to anchor in Whytetee [*Waikiki*] Bay, at the Island of Woahoo [*Oahu*].[16] I here found captain Winship,[17] several officers of ships, and a number of men, from whom (particularly captain W.) I received every assistance their situations could afford me. The natives, though at first surprised at our deplorable condition, and inquisitive to know the cause, of which I did not think prudent to inform them, supplied the ship with fresh meat, fruits and vegetables, partly on condition that I would take the chief man of the island and some others, with their property up to the Windward Island,[18] where I found it necessary to go (after shipping some men[19]) in order to procure from the king,[20] a supply of provisions. Thence, it was my intention to have proceeded to Valparaiso, in compliance with my instructions from captain Porter, but I was unfortunately captured on the passage by the English ship *Cherub,* of twenty guns.[21] I was some what surprised to hear captain Tucker say (when I pointed out a valuable canoe and many other articles, which I assured him was the property of the natives, and that I was merely conveying them and it from one island to the other, the weather being too boisterous at that time for them to make the passage in their canoes) that every thing found in a prize ship belonged to the captors. I thus had the mortification to see the people, from whom I had received so much kindness, sent on shore, deprived of all they had been collecting for twelve months, and were about to present to their king as a tribute.

The *Cherub* proceeded to Atooi [*Kauai*], where she captured the ship *Charon,*[22] and made many fruitless attempts to get the cargo of that ship, and of several others which had been deposited on the island under the immediate protection of the king of the Leeward Islands. She took her departure on the 15th of July, and on the 28th of November arrived at Rio de Janeiro with her prizes, touching on the passage for refreshments at Otaheite [*Tahiti*][23] and Valparaiso. During her stay at the latter place, the frigates *Britton* and *Tagus* arrived from the Marquesas, where they had been in search of the ships left under my charge.[24] On the 15th of December the prisoners were sent on shore, having received the most rigorous treatment[25] from captain Tucker during their long confinement in his ship, and the greater part of them, like the natives, left destitute of every thing, save the clothes on their backs. The men belonging to the *Essex* had little to lose, but those I shipped at Woahoo, had received in part money and goods, for one, two, and some of them three years services in the Canton ships.

On the 15th of May (by the advice of a physician who attended me,) I took my departure from Rio de Janeiro in a Swedish ship,[26] bound to Havre de Grace, leaving behind acting midshipman Benjamin Clapp and five men, having lost one soon after my arrival at that place, with the small pox. No opportunity had previously offered by which I could possibly leave that place, the English admiral[27] on that station, being determined to prevent, by every means in his power, American prisoners returning to their own country.

On the 10th instant, in latitude 47 north and longitude 18 west, I took passage on board the ship *Oliver Elsworth,* captain Roberts, 15 days from Havre de Grace, bound to New York.

I arrived here last evening, and have the honour to await, either the orders of the Navy Department or the commandant of the marine corps.[28] I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN M. GAMBLE.

Printed, Brannan, *Official Letters,* pp. 362–66. Gamble was promoted to captain on 15 June 1814. He had three other brothers in the naval service, Thomas, Peter, and Francis. Peter was killed in action on 11 September 1814 at the Battle of Lake Champlain.

1. According to Porter and Farragut, *Essex* departed Nuku Hiva on 13 December. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 495, and, Farragut, "Reminisences of Early Life," p. 748.

2. A tally of the names cited in Feltus's Journal, Gamble's letter of 28 August 1815 to Secretary Crowninshield, and Porter's *Journal of a Cruise,* gives a total of three officers, eighteen enlisted men, and six prisoners. This total does not include Robert White or Isaac Coffin who had both deserted prior to *Essex*'s departure and thus were not part of Gamble's command.

3. Before departing Nuku Hiva, Porter had placed Master's Mate John King in command of the prize ship *New Zealander* with orders to sail her and a cargo of whale oil to the United States. She was captured on her voyage to the States by H.M. frigate *Belvidera.* Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 383, 443.

4. Porter also directed Gamble to maintain friendly relations with the natives and "to introduce among them the cultivation" of various garden vegetables from seeds. Porter's rationale for leaving Gamble at Nuku Hiva was to provide a secure location for the repair of his ships in the event of a battle with the enemy. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 443.

5. Natives had killed and stolen some of the swine left behind by Porter for the use of Gamble's men. On 24 December the marine commander landed a detachment of men and marched on the natives who were responsible for the thefts. He detained two chieftains aboard *Greenwich* to insure compliance with his demands for return of the swine. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 498–502.

6. See also Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 510–11.

7. On Isaac Coffin, see Journal of Midshipman William W. Feltus, 6 and 18 Mar. 1814, p. 773.

8. The four deserters stole away on 18 March 1814. See Journal of Midshipman William W. Feltus, 18 Mar. 1814, ibid.

9. For more on Gamble's suspicions and precautions, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 515–16.

10. This incident is recounted by Farragut in "Some Reminiscences of Early Life," p. 748, and Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 442–43.

11. Surgeon's certificates describing Gamble's gunshot wound to the ankle can be found among the papers accompanying the marine officer's petition to Congress asking compensation for his role in the capture of *Seringapatam.* DNA, RG46, SEN 21A-G13.

12. Wilson was an Englishman who had lived for many years in the Marquesas Islands. He was fluent in the native language and Porter wrote glowingly of the assistance he rendered in developing good relations with the Nuku Hivan islanders. Wilson would later claim that Gamble's men had stolen property from him and that he had no hand in inciting the natives to attack the Americans. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 304, 519–20, 544.

13. The dramatic events of 7–10 May are related in greater detail in Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 516–23.

14. The eight in order of description are: John Pettenger, Peter Caddington, Richard Sansbury, Joseph Burnham, John M. Gamble, Benjamin Clapp, Benjamin Bispham, and William Worth.

15. King Tamehameha resided at Taeigh Bay on the island of Hawaii. Tamehameha oversaw the sale of naval stores and provisions to visiting ships. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 524, 525.

16. According to Porter in *Journal of a Cruise,* Gamble arrived at Hawaii on 23 May and at Waikiki Bay, Oahu, on 31 May. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 524–25.

17. American Nathaniel Winship. He had resided at Oahu for two years and offered food, stores, and advice to Gamble. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 525–27.

18. Hawaii.

19. While at Oahu, Gamble shipped nine men to serve in *Sir Andrew Hammond* for an indefinite period of time. He paid each man an advance of fifteen dollars in new iron hoops. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 525, 527.
20. Tamahamaah.
21. The capture took place on 13 June 1813. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 529–30.
22. American merchant ship *Charon,* Captain Whittemore commanding. *Charon* was captured in ballast on 18 June 1814. Whittemore and his crew shared a twelve-month captivity with Gamble and his shipmates. On 22 June Tucker sent *Charon* and *Sir Andrew Hammond* to Rio de Janeiro to be condemned in admiralty court. Acting Midshipman Clapp sailed in the former vessel to give testimony in the proceedings. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 531, 532.
23. *Cherub* arrived at Tahiti, part of the Society Islands group, on 20 August. Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* p. 537.
24. *Cherub* arrived at Valparaiso on 23 September. There Gamble was reunited with Midshipman Clapp. Gamble visited the frigate *Briton* shortly after her arrival. Her captain confirmed that Midshipman Feltus and Seamen Thomas and Gibbs had been killed by the Te I'i; but that the trader George Ross had survived. Gamble also discovered that deserter Peter Swook and his three companions had sailed safely to the Marquesan island of Tahuata. Swook had shipped on board *Briton.* For events at Valparaiso during Gamble's stay there, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 539–45.
25. For examples of Tucker's maltreatment of Gamble and his men, see Porter, *Journal of a Cruise,* pp. 532–33, 546.
26. The Swedish ship *Good Hope.*
27. Vice Admiral Manley Dixon, R.N.
28. Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Franklin Wharton.

Appendix

Report on the State of the U.S. Navy, June 1814

Secretary of the Navy Jones to President James Madison

Navy Department
June 6. 1814

Sir

In obedience to your order of the 3d. Inst. I have the honor to Report the Several documents herewith enclosed lettered from A to H containing all the information in this Department on the various Subjects of your enquiry. I am with great respect Sir your Obdt. Servt.

W Jones

LS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1 (Roll No. 16).

[Enclosure A]

United States' Naval Force on Lake Champlain.

* Ship *Saratoga*	26 Guns		—6 long 24's. and 20–32 pdr. Carronades.
* Schooner *Ticonderoga*	16 Guns		
Sloop *President*	10	"	
* " *Commodore Preble*	9	"	18 pdr. Carronades.
* 6 Galleys	each 2	"	1 long 24 pdr. and 1–32 pdr. Carronade.
4 Ditto	each 1	"	

☞ The Vessels marked thus, * entered the Lake on the 26th. Ulto. and sailed, immediately, in pursuit of the enemy.

Navy Department
June 6th. 1814.

W Jones

DS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, enclosure A (Roll No. 16).

[Enclosure B]

United States' Naval Force on Lake Ontario.

Ship *Superior*	60 Guns	—30 long 32 pd. Guns & 30–32 pd. Carronades.
" ———		Building to launch 10th. inst.—armament to be 26 long 24's. ✻
" *General Pike*		28 long 24's.—2 on pivots which enable her to fight 15 on either side
" *Madison*	22 Guns	—long 18 Pounders.
Brig *Jefferson*	22 "	—42 pd. Carronades
" *Jones*	22 "	—42 pd. Ditto
" *Sylph*	18 "	—24 pd. Ditto
" *Oneida*	16 "	—long 12 Pounders
Schooner *Governor Thompkins*	6 Guns	
" *Growler*	5 "	
" *Conquest*	3 "	
" *Pert*	3 "	
" *Julia*	2 "	
" *Asp*	2 "	
" *Ontario*	2 "	
" *Fair American*	2 "	
" *Lady of the Lake*	1 "	—long 18 pdr.
" *Raven*	1 "	
" *Mary* (Bomb Vessel.)		

✻ This vessel has been considerably enlaged since her intended armament was reported which will of course be encreased in proportion

☞ Commodore Chauncey says, that <u>all</u> the Stores will have reached Sackett's Harbour by the 10th. instant; and that, in all the month, the entire Fleet will be ready for action; provided a sufficient number of men arrive, of whom, it is believed by the Department, there will be no want; particularly if those from the Army, selected by Commodore Chauncey, shall be added.

Our Rendezvous are open in all quarters, but the Army Bounty, and Private service, preclude the hope of success.

The Crews of the *Macedonian, Erie, Ontario,* (in part,) *Congress,* and several Detachments of Recruits, have been ordered to Sackett's Harbour, forming together a large aggregate. The enemy never moves with his Fleet, on either Lake, without large Military auxiliaries; the most of their small Vessels last year were chiefly manned with Soldiers; this is known officially.

A very considerable proportion of the Prisoners, captured in the Squadron on Lake Erie, was of the Army. Our resources in Seamen are very limited, compared with the demand; and unless we can, upon any emergency, receive the aid of the Military as the enemy does, he will have a decided advantage.

We have but one common object;— the Naval Force is, at all times, ready to cooperate with the Military, and, I presume, there can be no doubt of a cheerful reciprocation.

Navy Department
June 6th. 1814

W Jones

DS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, enclosure B (Roll No. 16).

[Enclosure C]

United States' Naval Force on Lake Erie.

Ship *Detroit*	20 Guns	} In ordinary at Erie for repair.
" *Queen Charlotte*	18 "	
* Brig *Lawrence*	20 "	
* " *Niagara*	20 "	
" *Hunter*	10 "	
* " *Caledonia*	3 "	
* Schooner *Lady Prevost*	14 "	
" *Ariel*	4 "	
‡ " *Scorpion*	2 "	
" *Somers*	2 "	and 2 Swivels.
" *Tigress*	1 "	
" *Porcupine*	1 "	
" *Amelia*	1 "	
‡ " *Ohio*	1 "	

☞ Captain Sinclair, it is expected, will take with him, on the expedition to Lake Huron, those marked thus * and perhaps two of the small Vessels, probably those ‡

Navy Department
June 6th. 1814.

W Jones

DS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, enclosure C (Roll No. 16).

[Enclosure D]

A View of the British Naval force on Lake Champlain as received from Commodore Macdonough on the 30th. April 1814

1 Brig	24 Guns	20–32 & 4– 68 Pdr. Carronades
3 Galleys	each	1–68 Pdr. Carronade & 1–24 Pdr. Long Gun
2 Do.	"	1–68 Pdr. Carronade.
1 Do.		1–24 Pdr. Long Gun
2 Do.	each	1–18 Pdr. Do.
2 Do.	"	1–12 Pdr. Do.
1 Do.		1– 9 Pdr. Do.
1 Barge		1– 6 Pdr. Do.
1 Sloop		4– 4 Pdr. Do.
Sloop *Growler*	11 Guns	10–18 Pdr. Carronades & 1–18 Pdr. Columbiad
" *Eagle*	11 "	10–18 Pdr. Carronades & 1–18 Pr. Do.
5 Galleys Building on the River Sorel	——	65 Guns. exclusive of the 5 New Galleys.

Navy Department
June 6th. 1814

W Jones

DS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, enclosure D (Roll No. 16).

[Enclosure E]

State and Stations of Vessels of War of the United States, including Gun Boats, Barges, &c. on the Atlantic Frontier.

At Portsmouth N.H. ..... Captain Isaac Hull Commg. Officer.
1 Ship of 74 Guns—building, to launch in all August
Frigate *Congress* 36 Guns—in ordinary. Crew ordered to L. Ontario.
6 Gun Boats ——— in service.

" Newburyport Mass.
2 Gun Boats ——— in service.

" Boston & Charlestown Mass. .... Commodore Bainbridge Commg. Officer
1 Ship of 74 Guns ..... building: to launch in July.
Frigate *Constitution* 44 Guns ... ready for Sea.
2 Gun Boats..... in service.

" New Bedford Mass.
2 Gun Boats..... in service.

" Newport R.I. ..... Capt. O. H. Perry Commg. Officer.
7 Gun Boats..... in service.

" New London Ct.
Frigate *United States* 44 Guns, " *Macedonian* 38 " } in ordinary.
Sloop of War *Hornet* ..... ready for Sea.
2 Gun Boats..... in service.

" New York
Frigate *President* 44 Guns Capt. S. Decatur—nearly ready for Sea
Sloop of War *Alert* ..... Guard Ship.
29 Gun Boats in service, 8 Ditto in ordinary } under command of Capt. Jacob Lewis.
A Steam-Floating Battery 140 feet long, 52 feet wide to mount 28–32 Pounders } just commencing

" Philadelphia
1 Ship of 74 Guns ..... building to launch in november
Frigate *Guerriere* to mount 53 Guns Com. Rodgers nearly ready to launch
10 Gun Boats ..... in ordinary.

" New Castle Del.
9 Gun Boats, 2 Block Sloops, 1 Schooner, 5 Barges, 2 Galleys } Under command of Commodore Rodgers and manned chiefly with the crew of the *Guerriere*.

At Baltimore
Frigate *Java* to mount 53 Guns—expected to launch the 20th. Inst.
Sloop of War *Erie* } in ordinary; crews gone to Lake Ontario.
Ditto *Ontario* }
10 Barges ..... wanting men only.

Chesapeake Bay Flotilla ..... under command of Com. Barney.
2 Gun Boats
Cutter *Scorpion* 5 Guns
Schooner *Asp* 3 " } .... in service.
Pilot Boat Schooner
13 Barges

At Washington
Frigate *Columbia* to mount 53 Guns to be launched in August.
Sloop of War *Argus* ..... ready to receive a Crew.
2 Gun Boats
3 New Barges—now fitting } .... in ordinary.
3 Scows with heavy Guns

" Norfolk Va.
Frigate *Constellation* 36 Guns } .... ready for Sea.
23 Gun Boats
1 Barge } Under the command of Captain Charles Gordon.
1 Ketch a Bomb vessel
Schooner *Hornet* 8 Guns

" Wilmington N.C. Ocracock and the neighbouring Inlets.
6 Gun Boats
1 Felucca
1 Schooner *Roanoke* } ..... in service.
1 Barge

" Charleston S.C. ..... Capt. John H. Dent Commg. Officer.
Schooner *Carolina* 14 Guns—intended for New Orleans as soon as her crew shall be completed.
" *Nonsuch* 14 "
Brig *Enterprize* 14 " ..... Guard Vessel.
1 Hospital Ship
Schooner *Alligator*
1 Gun Boat } At the several Inlets.
12 Barges

" Savannah Ga.
Sloop of War *Peacock* ..... ready for Sea.
The *Troup* ..... Guard Ship

" St. Mary's Ga.
5 Gun Boats } ..... in service.
2 Barges

At New Orleans La.
Ship *Louisiana* 16 Guns
Bomb Vessel *Etna*
5 Gun Boats
1 Schooner
1 Sloop
Large Block Ship
at Tchifoncta } on the Stocks—building suspended.

Schooner *Lynx;* just launched at the Navy Yard Washington, to mount 7 Guns; intended for the New Orleans station to carry thence Ordnance and other heavy Stores.—

Navy Department
June 6th. 1814

W Jones

DS, DLC, James Madison Papers, Series 1, enclosure E (Roll No. 16).

Index

Certain aspects of the treatment of persons and vessels in this index supplement annotation in the volume.

PERSONS: The rank of military personnel, whenever ascertainable, is the highest rank attained by the individual by the end of 1815. When all references to an individual lie outside that span, the rank is the highest applicable to the person at the time to which the text refers. Vessels that civilians and naval personnel commanded during 1814 and 1815 are noted in parentheses at the end of the person's entry. The abbreviation USFS is used to distinguish those officers who served in the flotilla service and not in the U.S. Navy.

VESSELS: In most cases, vessels are identified according to their use and rig—such as *Essex,* US frigate; Industry, American merchant brig; *Earl of Moira,* HM sloop of war—according to the best information available. Since the use and rig of a vessel could vary, nomenclature used to identify vessels refers to the years 1814–15. When all references to the vessel lie outside that year, the nomenclature is that applicable to the vessel at the time to which the text refers. The names of commanders of warships for 1814–15, including privateers but not most gunboats, are noted in parentheses at the end of their vessels' entry. The names of masters of commercial vessels are so listed when they are known.

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