

“Ducit Amor Patriæ”

# DOCUMENTS

(No. 33)

Relating to the invasion of the Niagara Peninsula by the United States Army,  
commanded by General Jacob Brown,

In July and August, 1814.

Collected and Edited by  
Brigadier General E. A. Cruikshank, LL.D., F.R.S.C.

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## PREFACE

With a few exceptions the documents printed in this publication have been transcribed from letter-books formerly the property of Major General Jacob Brown of the United States Army now preserved in the Division of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The exceptions, relating to the operations of the squadron on Lake Erie, have been transcribed from the original letters in the Navy Department, Washington. General Brown's letters to the Secretary of War, dated July 6<sup>th</sup>, and August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1814, have been printed before as official reports, but were considerably altered for obvious reasons before publication. His letter to Governor Tompkins, dated August 1, 1814, has also been printed from a copy in the Tompkins Papers from which there was an omission of some consequence. The documents entitled "Memoranda of occurrences and some important facts attending the campaign on the Niagara in 1814" was known to the historian, Charles J. Ingersoll, who printed a portion of it with some verbal changes in his "Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States and Great Britain, Events of 1814" (pp. 100-5) as extracts from General Brown's Diary. The remainder of these papers with two exceptions, which are included to preserve continuity, it is believed, have never appeared in print before and will be found to throw considerable fresh light on the events of that campaign when read in conjunction with the official correspondence published in the first and second volumes of the "Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814" to which this may be considered as forming a supplement.

E. A. Cruikshank

Ottawa, 2d April, 1920.

SACKETT'S HARBOR,  
April 14, 1814.

Dear General

I arrived at this place late on the night of the 12<sup>th</sup>; the Commodore has this moment informed me that our confidential agent has just now returned from Kingston and states that the Enemy have their old Fleet all out in the stream and ready to sail the first fair wind with 3,000 men for this place. The wind is now fair and 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 and industry of the Late Command'ts and the troops.

I need not tell you that a Regt. Of Infantry, a company of Artillerists and 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 until the reinforcements could be got here.

Your friend,  
E.P. GAINES,  
Brig. Genl. Comdg

Major General Brown,  
Comdg. Near Niagara

NEAR LEWISTON,  
April 18, 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 Chauncey to beat off the Enemy should they attempt to land a force near Sackett's Harbor 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 apprehension 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 with the mounted dragoons is, I trust, on his way back. I have ordered him to move rapidly – the Recruits for the 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 the defence of his country. If you are deficient in arms take them or anything 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 your chances are enviable should the enemy presume to attack your post. I cannot believe that he has the power to bring against you 3,000 men, but this number is not alarming, considering the strength of your position.

Lieut. McChain is the bearer of this, he is ordered to forward to the Regrts. 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 delay.

With great Regard,  
Yours,  
JAC. BROWN.

Maj. General

Brig.-Genl. Gaines.  
Commdg. Sackett's Harbour.

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NEAR LEWISTON,  
April 18<sup>th</sup>, 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 received a letter at Williamsville, my Headquarters, from Genl. Gaines, dated the 14<sup>th</sup> 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 Sackett's Harbor 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 until the new ship was completed. I should have been very much gratified by receiving a letter from you showing how the great change in the relative strength of Sackett's Harbor and Kingston is to be accounted for since I 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 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 that you will not doubt that I would have been disposed to stay with you, notwithstanding your unhesitating opinion that the orders I rec'd made it my duty to march to this frontier.

The letter of General Gaines has rendered me very anxious and unhappy and I pray to God that what he appears to apprehend may not take place. All that I could do with any prospect of being useful has been done. The mounted Dragoons have been ordered to return with all possible expedition and the Recruits in the neighbourhood of Utica have been ordered to your assistance.

Genl. 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 their 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 entreat you to write me fully on this and every other subject connected with the common cause.

Yours truly,  
JAC. BROWN  
Maj. General

Commd. Chauncey,  
Sackett's Harbour.

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WILLIAMSVILLE,  
April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear General,

Induced by reasons that I have fully explained to you I leave this for Sackett's Harbour in the morning. The particular Command upon this Frontier devolves upon you during my absence. I deem it unnecessary to give you detailed instructions as you will understand the situation of the country in which you are placed and without orders will do everything for the country and for the health and honor of the forces placed under your command that can be reasonably expected for an officer with the means in your power.

That part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery not ordered to Sackett's Harbour will remain at Batavia until further orders from me, unless a case should occur to induce you to believe their aid necessary.

We have agreed that it was most prudent and military under the existing state of things to order Maj. Gardner to fall back to the Depot of provisions along the Ridge Road. You will to-morrow send him the necessary directions upon this subject. Send a confidential officer to Capt. Elliott to ascertain the precise situation of the Flotilla upon Lake Erie and of the troops near Detroit and by all the means in your power possess yourself of information relative to the enemy's force and movements.

You will open all public letters addressed to me, take copies of such as may concern your command, send by express to me the originals of all such as may be important.

You shall be regularly advised of every important occurrence coming to my knowledge that may affect your command,

Yours,

JAC. BROWN

Maj. Genl.

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Brig-General Scott.  
WILLIAMSVILLE  
April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir,

I send you enclosed copies of Letters that you may see why I proceed to Sackett's Harbour. When I wrote Genl. Gaines and Commodore Chauncey I had not concluded to proceed to that post but such is the anxious state of my mind that I cannot live upon this Frontier under the existing state of things.

Scott is here and can do all that is necessary in my absence. I hope to be at the Harbour in time to share the fate of the place.

Yours truly,

JAC. BROWN

Maj. Genl.

The snow that fell the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> inst., may delay the enemy a few days.

Hon. John Armstrong,  
Sec'y for War

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SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir,

Letters from Commodore Chauncey and Brig. Genl. Gaines made it my duty to proceed to this post. I arrived here yesterday and after having taken a short time to look around me, I am persuaded that

an attack is more to be desired than apprehended. Brig. Genl Scott commands upon the Niagara Frontier until my return; this officer has a force fully competent for any present operations in that quarter. Lieut. – Colonel Mitchell is in march for Oswego and will be there before the arrival of the supplies for Commodore Chauncey's flotilla.

Yours truly,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble secy. Of War

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOR,  
April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir,

You will; I trust, have rec'd my several letters from Batavia and Williamsville before this comes to hand.

My whole effective force upon this and the Niagara Frontier falls short of 3,500 men. Notwithstanding the high health these Troops at present enjoy, with such limited means would I be justified in again putting to hazard the honor of the army and country by commencing offensive operations? To invest Fort Niagara with a knowledge of the Enemy's force in its neighbourhood and the probability of their having the ascendancy upon Lake Ontario during the investment does not appear to be a measure contemplated in your orders, or one which you approve sere you on the spot to direct. The necessary military stores for the battering train ordered to the Niagara Frontier had not left Albany on the 15<sup>th</sup> Inst., as I learned by a letter from Colo. Jenkins and no part of it had arrived at Canandaigua, on the 21<sup>st</sup> when I passed to this post.

My several letters will have explained to you my feeling, sentiments and views with the best information it has been in my power to obtain of the enemies strength and situation. General Scott is on the Niagara Frontier with two companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Artillery, a well found field train and the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Regts of Infy. Lieut. Col. Mitchell commands at Oswego with four companies of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery.

Some recruits on the march, I understand, and will be here in the course of a few days, the enemies new ships are nearly ready and it si probable they will be out in the course of ten days.

I do not intend to leave this post again untill I receive orders from you after you are informed of my being here,

Very respectfully and truly,  
I am, dear Sir,  
Your humble servt.  
JAC. BROWN

Honble John Armstrong,  
Sec'y of War

---

SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir,

Johnson \* returned from his friends in Canada this morning, he states that the Enemy cannot have to exceed 3,000 men of the Army at Kingston, from his account I am induced to believe that they have not

that number. It would appear that the Battalion of the 41<sup>st</sup> that had been ordered up the Country some time since was recalled and that the 103<sup>rd</sup> arrived in Kingston about two weeks since. Johnson is positive that some troops moved from Kingston for the Upper Country about four days ago but I cannot be induced to believe from his statement that the number exceeds two or three hundred.

The Enemies new ship must I think be completed about the 10<sup>th</sup> instant. The Superior, Commodore Chauncey's new ship was launched this morning.

Very respectfully,  
JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong,  
Sec'y of war.

\* This was possibly William Johnson who became notorious in 1838 as "Bill Johnson, the Pirate of the Thousand Islands."

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir:

Two ships, two brigs and one schooner of the Enemies Fleet have this day appeared upon the Lake. I do not apprehend an attack upon this place. I cannot but consider an attack to be more desired than apprehended. For Oswego I am under some apprehension and have advised Colo. Mitchell accordingly.

Very respectfully,  
Yours truly,  
JAC. BROWN

Honble. Sec' y of War

---

HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
6<sup>th</sup> May, 1814.

Dear Sir:

We have good reasons to believe that an attack has been made upon Oswego, Commodore Chauncey advises me that the officer commanding the Lady of the Lake heard cannonading in that direction yesterday for three hours. I have distinctly heard the report of the cannon in the direction of Oswego from the Bay and have been at the head of Horse Island for several hours this morning. In Lieut. Col. Mitchell and his corps I place great reliance. The army will not be disgraced by this officer or his command but as the Enemies squadron is upon him with, I fear, all the force they could carry, the event of the conflict may be considered very doubtful. Commodore Chauncey has not ascertained that the Enemies new ships are out. The moment I was informed of any part of the Enemies Fleet being upon the lake an express was sent to Colo. Mitchell with the intelligence and appraising him of the danger. I rec'd from him a letter dated the 5<sup>th</sup> Inst in the morning advising me that the Enemies Fleet were in sight, there could therefore be no surprise and his full strength will be exerted.

Very Truly, yours,  
JAC. BROWN



Honble John Armstrong,  
Secy. Of War

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir.

Your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> April has come to hand and had I rec'd this communication before I left the Niagara Frontier, I cannot but say that it would have been my duty to remain. As our military and naval forces and those of the enemy ARE NOW situated I do not see that anything I can say in answer t this letter would be useful. I received a Report from Colo. Mitchell by an express which left him after the affairs of the day and night of the 6<sup>th</sup>. The Enemy with their old fleet, one new ship and some gun boats, it would appear, had been endeavouring to force Mitchell from his position. The Colonel appeared undiscouragaed and like a brave man tenacious of his own honor and devoted to the cause in which he is engaged, will do his duty. It is reported to me this morning that the Enemies sixty gun ship left Kingston yesterday. I shall know in the course of to- night the truth of this report.

Finding that letters move slow between Utica and Buffaloe, I sent for Mr. Varnum, who is here as agent for the postmaster, for the purpose of ordering the military Express mail form Utica to Buffaloe or wherever the army might be on the Niagara Frontier when he showed me a letter from Mr. Bradley, declining the allowance of Funds "deeming it unnecessary as an Armistice would probably take place" in the course of a few days. You will direct what is proper to be done in this case.

Yours,  
JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong  
Secy. Of War.

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR.  
May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir.

Oswego was taken by the Enemy on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Their whole fleet, new and old, was employed upon this Expedition. I have accounts from Kingston after the fleet sailed; advising me that 1500 men embarked. Col. Mitchell with three hundred men maintained his position for nearly two days in this unequal contest. Time was given for the militia of the Country to have been raised in Masse for his support. Colonel Mitchell and his gallant comrades deserve well of their country; some have been killed, many have bled, after every effort consistent with duty, a retreat was effected in the face of the vastly superior force of the Enemy.

The Enemies fleet passed in view of this place yesterday afternoon, apparently bound for Kingston. We have not yet learned that any force was left at Oswego. Should this be the case Col. Mitchell will with the aid of the Reinforcements that I have sent him and the Militia that have by this time joined, be able to maintain his position at the falls and save the guns and naval stores at that place. I will send you the official account of this affair the moment it can be received from Colonel Mitchell.

Maj. Orne, Asst. Inspector General, was ordered to inspect and muster the troops on the Niagara Frontier, he is now under orders to perform the same duties at this post. I regret the delay that must

necessarily result from there being but one Asst. Inspector General to my Division of the army. I suppose they think the Officers of the staff would do well to live with the army and remain on the Lines.

Gardner has reported himself to me as an Adjutant General and Roger Jones as Asst. Adjutant. General Ripley has reported himself as a Brigadier. I must be permitted to say that the Government have made some excellent selections from the Lists of Colonels for Brigadiers, better I believe could not have been made.

The envelope to Capt. Jones' notice of his appointment as Asst. Adj. Genl. Was addressed Asst. INSPECTOR Genl. This gave rise to some doubts. As Capt. Jones is one of the best young men in our army, I contended that you designed him to select which office he would hold. He utterly refused to serve as Asst. Inspector Genl. I have announced him in orders as Asst. Adj. Genl. And take him into my family.

Very respectfully,  
JAC. BROWN

Honble.  
The Sec' y of War.

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir.

The enemy abandoned Oswego the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup>; it appears that they captured eight of the Commadore Chauncey's Guns and some amount of his naval stores. Lieut. Colonel Mitchell lost the baggage of his command.

Yours respectfully,  
JAC BROWN.

Honble, John Armstrong  
Secy of War

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(Enclosure)

War Department, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 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 and open anew 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 and defeat such movements and designs. An order had been accordingly given by the Navy Department to employ the Flotilla in covering the shores of the more western lakes, in destroying the Enemy's trading establishments at St. Joseph's and recapturing Fort Michilimackinac. As however, our last advices show that the Enemy has no efficient force westward of Burlington Bay and that he has suffered the seasons of easy and rapid transportation to escape him, it is evident that he means to strengthen himself on the peninsula and to make Fort Erie, which he is now repairing the western extremity of his line of operation. Under this new state of things, it is respectfully suggested whether another (and better) use cannot be made of our Flotilla. In explaining myself it is necessary to presume that, the Garrisons of Detroit and Malden included, it will be practicable to assemble on the shores and navigable waters of Lake Erie, five thousand Regular troops and three thousand volunteers and militia and that measures have been taken to produce this effect on or before the

10<sup>th</sup> day of June next. Without, however, the aid of naval means this force will be comparatively inoperative and unnecessarily dispersed but with the aid 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. Eight or even six thousand men landed in the Bay between point Abino and Fort Erie, 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 the head of Burlington Bay cannot be resisted with effect without compelling the Enemy so to weaken his more eastern posts as to bring them within the reach of our means at Sackett's Harbour and Plattsburg.

In choosing between this object and that to which the flotilla is not destined, there need not be much, I think, if any hesitation. Our attack carried to Burlington and York interposes a barrier which completely protects Malden and Detroit, makes doubtful and hazardous the enemy's intercourse with the Western Indians, reduces Mackinaw to a possession perfectly useless, renders probable the abandonment of Fort Niagara, and takes from the enemy half his motive for continuing the conflict on Lake Ontario. On the other hand, take Mackinaw and what is gained but Mackinaw itself. If this plan should be adopted no time should be lost in countermanding the other.

I have the honor to be,  
with the highest respect,  
Your most obt. Servant,

The President.

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War Dept. 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1814

Dear General.

I have received your several letters from Batavia, Williamsville and Sackett's Harbour. The letter to the President of which the enclosed is a copy, will show what is the plan of Campaign for the Niagara and Erie frontiers.

I have seen a letter from Benedict of Ogdensburg giving a most terrific account of the landing and moving westward of ten thousand British troops along the St. Lawrence. There are old women of all ages and both sexes. This Benedict is one of them. It is by dropping ? animals of this kind and sending them to us that the British Army in Canada have done half their and prevented us from doing a tenth part of our own. Dearborn believed last March was a year that the British Army at Kingston amounted to eight thousand men. Farewell

Yours respectfully and truly,  
J. ARMSTRONG.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Sir:

You will receive herewith a copy of laws having relation to the Army, passed at the last session of Congress and of the new military Regulations which the President has approved and which in addition to

those already published, it becomes your duty to promulgate and enforce in your command. Those relating to Hospitals and to Cloathing call for the most rigid observance. Brigr. General Winder, having been exchanged, has been assigned to the important office of Chief of the Staff, the staff of your division will report to and communicate with him.

I am, Sir, with great respect,  
Your Mo. Obt. Servant  
J. ARMSTRONG

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Sir:

I have enclosed Lieut. Colonel Mitchell's official acct. of the affair at Oswego. Being well satisfied with the officer-like manner in which Colonel Mitchell executed my orders and gallant conduct so well evinced on the occasion by the troops he commanded I have thought proper to notice them in a General Order, a copy of which you will also find enclosed.

Very respectfully,  
Yours,  
JAC. BROWN

Honble, John Armstrong,

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1814.

Private.  
Dear Sir,

I send you enclosed official accounts given by Colo. Mitchell as received of the affair at Oswego that you may see as clearly as possible every occurrence. You will have the goodness to have it condensed for his sake before it goes to the public.

I know that the Enemy suffered greatly in this affair and that they have paid most severely for the little they have taken at our hands.

Very truly yours,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble. John Armstrong  
Sec' y for War

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Erie, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1814.

Sir,

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 opposite shore by which I learn they are building nothing, on any part of the 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 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 (Col. Campbell of the 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment, an intelligent 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 will wait a favourable opportunity, touch on the shore, land before daylight, and by a rapid move destroy these mills, embark the same day and proceed down. He seems full of the enterprise and if the weather favors, I am in hopes it will be accomplished, I know it is your wish to give every possible aid to the movements of armies, and as those small vessels are equipped for service, I will employ them to the best advantage. Your letter of the 27<sup>th</sup> 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 reconcile 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 be &c.

A. SINCLAIR.

The honorable William Jones,  
Secy of the Navy.

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HEAD QUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,  
May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I had the satisfaction to receive las evening your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. An Express has gone to Scott and Porter. Will endeavor that no time shall be lost on our part. Capt. Sinclair should have the proper orders from Washington, and is it improper that I should be made acquainted with the Instructions given him?

The officers commanding the Flotilla upon Lake Erie, having a single eye to the success of our Arms on the Land and the forces you mention being found and as well supplied as was the force that left Sackett's Harbour last fall, I shall consider it competent to great objects.

I intend to leave this for Buffalo within six or eight days. You have not ordered me there but I suppose you consider me as having the proper authority.

As to Benedict you will recollect that when you asked me last fall my opinion of him, I advised you that he was a well-disposed trifling body, as liable to be wrought upon as an old woman, and therefore having no qualifications for the department of intelligence. The enemy have now in both Canadas, and principally I have no doubt, near Lake Ontario, to be moved at pleasure by their Fleet.

Very respectfully yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong,  
Sec' y of War

---

U. S. SLOOP NIAGARA,  
Erie, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1814

Sir,

In my last letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 endeavor to destroy 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 Staff.

To forward these views I place under the command of Col. Campbell 3 pieces of light Artillery manned 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 destroying several valuable mills, and some Public property, with very little opposition; but I am sorry to learn that several private Houses were also destroyed, which was contrary to my wish, and to the idea I have of our policy to these 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 favorable 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 power 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 partizan officer or citizen who may, and no doubt are, in many instances, biased 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 it being made known to its fullest extent was no doubt the cause of the enemy being informed of the contemplated attack, and of their having moved several thousand barrels of flour to the Niagara Frontier just before the arrival of the 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.

I have the honor to remain &c.

A. SINCLAIR

The Honorable

William Jones, Secy. of the Navy.

HEADQUARTERS, SACKETT'S HARBOUR,

May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

My letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> will have advised you of the receipt of yours of the 7<sup>th</sup> and my intended change of position in consequence.

The Enemy's Fleet have been for some days off this Harbour. The five larger vessels are now at anchor within Stony Island. I am not advised of any increase of Force at Kingston & I do not believe that here is any cause of alarm for this place. General Gaines will be left with fifteen hundred effectives and I am sure that you believe with me that this is force sufficient for Defence. I would to God that you were at Albany or nearer to us. Letters are so long in passing from Washington.

I shall expect to hear from you and receive particular instructions upon my arrival at Buffalo.

Very respectfully,

Yours truly,

JAC. BROWN

Maj. Genl.

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I have received your letter, accompanied by Mitchell's report &c., & have made them public as you will see by the enclosed paper. The story tells well though we did lose the Fort and as I understand through Jenkins, some flour and whiskey at the village. By the way no General or other officer ever did report to me the state of Fort Oswego in relation either to the Guns or the fortification itself. If the war continues, as I think it well, this point may become important and must be attended to. Let your Engineer go there. If the old work is large, (and Mitchell says it is), let him erect within a Blockhouse which will serve both as barracks & defence, a furnace for heating Shott and a small magazine. The work itself should be constructed so as to accommodate a Garrison of 200 men, and if you have not Guns at the Harbour to spare, make a requisition upon Bomford for them.

An Asst. Adj. & Asst. Inspector General should be left with Scott, or in other words a sufficient Staff should be formed with every corps consisting of two or more regts.; of four Regts of Infantry and a detachment of Artillery with him, whose effective strength is not more than 1400,600 are reported absent and these scattered over the face of the earth. An officer from each regiment should be sent after Stragglers and absentees of all descriptions & he should be a man of much industry & perseverance.

When will your Fleet be ready to go out? Untill it is, your post cannot be weakened nor even then untill it be known that we are masters of the Lake because if not the masters the Fleet will continue to require the aid of Land Batteries to protect them. How many men will be sufficient to man yours?

Consult the Commodore in the following question & let me have your joint answers by the next mail.

If Scott can make his way to Burlington or York, with what force navel and military from Sackett's Harbour can you join him there? And when?

A position at the former of these plac4es divides the Enemy's forces and if they come out to attack you, enables you to beat them in detail. It will also give full play to the disaffection to the Inhabitants which is rising to a high pitch against the British Army in the peninsula.

I am respfy & Truly your,

JOHN ARMSTRONG

Maj. Genl. Brown

U. STATES SLOOP OF WAR NIAGARA  
Off Erie, May the 27<sup>th</sup>, 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 applears 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 Enemy's Country, Capt. Marcle has been enabled to correspond with his friends, who are favorable 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 ascertain 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 and 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 route, 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 the opinion 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 of 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 judgement 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 endeavor to be in perfect readiness, with all the means in my power, to meet an 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. Comd. Chauncey is no doubt informed on the subject; but I will, notwithstanding, give him the information as I have read it.

Our information as to the number of their Troops on the Niagara Frontier (including York) and their distribution correspond with what I last stated to you.

I have the honor to remain &c.

A. SINCLAIR

The Honorable William Jones

Secy. of the Navy

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Utica, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

General Porter has very few volunteers embodied. Genl. Swift of that command, who has been with me today, believes that they have from a thousand to twelve hundred engaged. I have ordered them to be put in motion for Buffaloe, that he may see to what they amount & have made a requisition for their necessary Camp equipage as I learned from Genl. Porter that no supplies of any kind have been provided for them & he urged this as a reason why more volunteers had not been obtained and embodied, if we are to be delayed until this force is in condition to act, much time will, I fear, be wasted. With your approval I shall not hesitate to cross, (Capt. Sinclair having rec'd the necessary orders), with four thousand regulars, but it would no doubt be desirable to have a greater force, if a greater could be promptly assembled, but I dread the delays that appear to attend all our movements. I learn from Mr. Varnum that an express will be established on the direct route from Washington to the Niagara Frontier about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. A more rapid communication is very desirable unless you are nearer to us.

Very respectfully yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong

Sec'y of War

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War Department, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 1814

Sir:

If you enter Canada, the laws of war will govern. Men found in arms or otherwise engage in the service of the Enemy will be treated as Enemies. Those behaving peaceably & following their private occupations will be treated as Friends. Private property must in all cases be held sacred; public property,



whenever found, will be seized or destroyed. Your utmost protection must be given to all, who join or evince a desire to join you.

Dr. Chapin is not to be employed nor permitted to follow the army under any pretence, if Captain Leonard comes within your reach, apprehend & put him under guard, institute a Court Martial and try him for treason, cowardice & neglect of duty. If capitally convicted, shoot him. Loomis must also be tried.

I am Sir, very respfy and truly,

Your obt. Servant,

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

P.S. Leonard is retained on the Roll of Army by special order the better to get over any difficulty in trying or in punishing him.

To Major General Brown.

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War Department, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 1814

Sir:

I received your letter announcing your intention of returning to Buffalo & requesting that instructions might meet you at Batavia. I enclose copies of three letters to Brigadier General Scott & Col. Croghan, from all which you will collect my views in relation to your operations. If you can beat the Enemy out of the Peninsula or compel him to withdraw from it & establish yourself at York, you will do well. Harrison having resigned I will push on McArthur in preparing the Western Regrs to follow you. What is your opinion of Chauncey's force? Will he be able to meet Sir James? If he is I do not despair of your taking Kingston before the Campaign ends.

I am respfy & truly yours,

JOHN ARMSTRONG

Major General Brown.

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Canandigua, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1814

Private.

Dear Sir:

I have rec'd a letter from General Scott from which I infer that he did not expect me to assume the command of the force about to enter Canada by way of Lake Erie and he gave me cause to suppose that he had adopted this erroneous opinion from a correspondence he had held with you. I cannot suppose that you would have said a word to weaken my hands or to diminish my authority with any part of the force that you had place at my command. If I should hesitate, as far as in my power, (to execute?) a plan of Campaign by me approved & where the best part of my division was destined to act, I should certainly despise myself & would not expect to be respected by those whose good opinions I am ambitious to retain.

Very respfy & truly yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong

Sec'y of War

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Canandaigua, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1814.

Dear Sir.

General Porter has embodied 110 mounted men & from 600 to 700 as Infantry, at the mouth of Genesee River, he appears to be confident, that one thousand can be assembled in the course of 10 days after his Camp Equipage arrives.

Parish & Granger were with me in company with Genl. Porter last evening. I believe fthat from four to five hundred Indian Warriors may be induced to join us; they are desired to be at Buffaloe `by the 10<sup>th</sup> inst. I hope that it may not be found necessary to wait for Militia Volunteers. I would do no act to wound the feelings of Genl. Porter in the slightest degree, if he cannot get out his volunteers in time, he can follow. I shall consider it my duty to pass into the Enemies country the moment I find at my command five thousand Regulars.

Very Respfy and truly yours,.

JAC. BROWN

Honble. John Armstrong

Sec'y of War

---

Head Quarters, Buffaloe,

June 7<sup>th</sup> 1814

Confidential.

Dear Sir.

Detachments from my division having been long engaged in the defence of the Stores destined for the flotilla a Sackett's Harbour & on this service having conducted with honor to themselves & to the country, I cannot patiently stand by & see a repu8tation so fairly earned by the gallant corps employed wrested from them. I feel the more tender upon the subject as I do know that the Navy of Lake Ontario is under great obligations to the Army for its preservation & support the last & present campaign & I have not seen in this navy a magnanimous expression of the obligation unless the expression is to be found in the surrender of a dried 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 honor of the Army on the Altar of the Idol that all Sects and parties in the Country have agreed to worship.

Believe me,

Very respectfully & truly yours,

JAC. BROWN

Besides Mitchell's Artillery & Appling's Rifle Corps. Major Lyman with three hundred & fifty Infantry was ordered upon this service & was at Oswego when the Guns and Stores passed. Lyman is now near this place.

At Buffaloe I have found all well.

Honble. John Armstrong

Sec'y of War

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War Department, 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1814.

Dear Sir:

The articles required by General Porter have been forwarded by Colonel Jenkins, excepting 200 rifles which we have not to give and a 1000 Knapsacks. Great quantities of Arms, tents, camp equipage, &c, have been passed into the hands of the Western Militia of New York and have never been returned; out of these this new corps might have been equipped if proper pains had been taken to look them up. But economy is not the order of the day. To know the exact number of these volunteers and to enable you to see more of the articles forwarded are not taken than ought to be taken, you will order them to be assembled and send your Inspector to muster the whole Corps, Officers and men, taking care that a copy of this Roll be sent immediately to the War Office. we cannot accept of half or quarter companies,



In my letter to you when speaking of the Enemy's Regular Force, I put down every man I can bring myself to believe they have. I do not intend to uderrate them as to numbers or quality. Their force in Upper Canada is principally near the shores of Lake Ontario.

At Fort Erie they have not to exceed two hundred men.

Very respfy and truly yours,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble. The Sec'y of War.

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Head Quarters, Buffalo, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> ultimo, I received last evening, it was forwarded to me from the Harbour by Genl. Gaines. After receipt of your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> ultimo, giving the plan of Campaign for the Erie and Niagara Frontier with a copy of the letter before me that I wrote you from Williamsville and the strong indication of your sentiments expressed by reference to the information received from Benedict, I do not find upon reflection that my conduct could have been approved had I remained at the Harbour. I could find no justification in my own mind for the alarm for the safety of that post. I believed it safe & I had made the necessary arrangements to secure the stores on the way for the Flotilla, under these circumstances I deemed it my duty from your orders & the indications of your sentiments to change my position with the view of executing the plan of Campaign given me. I find the force of General Drummond as follows.

The 89<sup>th</sup> at Prescott. One of the flank companies of this Regt. which was at Burlington Heights, has been ordered to Prescott, the Headquarters of the Regt.

104<sup>th</sup>, Glengarries & De Watteviilles, Kingston

41<sup>st</sup>, York

103<sup>rd</sup>, Burlington Heights

Royal Scotts, Fort George and Queenston

100<sup>th</sup>, Fort George

8<sup>th</sup>, Chippewa & Erie

Total, say five thousand effectives. I am not certain that all the companies of the 103<sup>rd</sup> are at Burlington Heights or that they have all left Kingston, but I know that four companies of this Regt. Left Kingston before I left Sackett's Harbour & that a part of this Regt and most probably the whole of it is now at the heights.

Will Commodore Chauncey deem it prudent to take troops on board his fleet until he has met & beaten him? I must heartily approve the plan indicated by you of concentrating my division at a given time & place near York or on the peninsula. This, I believe, is what any Military Chief should do, who had the command of our military and naval means as now situated. But I do not know the man under the President, who has this command. Untill Drummond is reinforced or our Fleet upon Lake Ontario captured or crippled I should consider Sackett's Harbour safe with a garrison of one thousand men. And did it rest with me, great as is the Stake, I hold upon the safety of that post, more than one thousand men should not remain under the circumstances.

Very respfy & truly yours,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble. The Sec'y of War

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Information of the Enemy  
Buffalo, June, 1814

Martin Lyons of the Royal Scotts arrived at Quebec las November, was quartered at Three Rivers during the winter, left Three Rivers the 15<sup>th</sup> of March and arrived at Kingston in April with 39 Royal Scotts and 70 or 80 of the 41<sup>st</sup>. This Detachment and about 200 Glengarries were all the troops which ahad wintered at Three Rivers. He states the force at Kingston during the stay there was as follows.

104 Regt. 500 or 600 strong

Glengarries, say 250

De Wattevies's 800 or 900

Detachment of artillery, say 100

He left Kingston in May for York where all the 41<sup>st</sup> remained with the Battalion, (500 strong)

Passed Burlington. At that time there were on the heights

2 Companies Royal Scotts

89<sup>th</sup> flank Company

100<sup>th</sup> Grenadier do.

From thence to Fort George the last of May & found at that place the force as follows:

900 Royal Scotts in Fort George

100<sup>th</sup> Regt. and 600 artillery in Fort Niagara

200 Royal Scotts at Queenston Heights

Left Fort George on the 8<sup>th</sup>. At that time, the 100<sup>th</sup> Regt, Col. Hamilton, 600 at Ft. Niagara; R. Scotts, Col. Gordon, 1,000 Ft. George & Queenston Heights; 103<sup>rd</sup> Regt. Colo. Scott, 900, B. Heights; 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 500, do & York; 8<sup>th</sup> Regt, say 600, Chippewa & Erie. Total 3,600.\*

If no force arrived from below at Kingston there would remain at that post.

104<sup>th</sup> Regt. say 600

De Watteville's 1000

Glengarries, 250

Artillery 100

1850

\* The company of the 89<sup>th</sup> that were at Burlington Heights have gone to Prescott. Lyons states that he has no knowledge of any Recruits or detachments having joined the R. Scotts this spring except the 39 men who joined at the same time with himself.

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Head Quarters, Buffalo, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I am highly gratified with the receipt of your order of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst, directing that the friendly Inhabitants of Canada should be respected in their person & property. All private property ever has been and ever will be by me respected. No such man as Dr. Chapin will, I hope, every accompany an army I have the honor to command.

Leonard and Loomis will be found and tried if within my command

A Court of Enquiry has been ordered in the case of Colonel Campbell.

Very respfy and truly yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honble Secy of War

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Head Quarters, Buffalo,  
June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

In your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Inst, I find these questions.

What is your opinion of Chauncey's force? Will he be able to meet Sir James?

To these questions I answer that I believe Chauncey's force fully competent for all the objects for which it was created, if used before the new ship the Enemy is now building upon the Lake.

I am of opinion that Sir James will not meet Chauncey. He will retire upon the appearance of the Commodore upon the Lake. If I am mistaken in this & Sir James does meet Chauncey (without his new ship now building). Sir James will be ruined.

Very respfy and truly yours,

JAC BROWN

Honble the Secy of War

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Head Quarters, Buffalo, June 17, 1814

Dear Sir:

Your letters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst, were received last Evening. Capt, Sinclair, it appears, goes with the large vessels of his Fleet into Lake Huron. I am not advised by Capt. Sinclair that any part of the naval means upon Lake Erie will be employed to attend my movement. Colonel Campbell arrived here on the 15<sup>th</sup> Inst & advised me that Capt. Sinclair informed him that he should leave upon Lake Erie five small vessels. If these vessels are left and so ordered that the forces under my command can rely upon them, we can cross. But as no provisions has been made for boats, reliance having been place upon the Fleet upon Lake Erie, our means of transportation will be very limited, so limited that, I believe, we shall find it most prudent & expeditions to cross directly from this place to commence our operations by the reduction of Fort Erie. I do not believe that this will detain us a day, even if we surround the place as I intend and secure all it contains. By taking this direction our Artillery, wagons, Horses, baggages, &c, can be passed in good order and without injury in a few Scows that we will have provided in a few days.

Having crossed at this point we should move upon Chippeway, and if in our power, secure what is there and then move upon Queenston and Fort George or Burlington Heights or take a position near Lake Ontario between these posts and expect the arrival of Chauncey as circumstances should dictate. Always bearing in mind that the contents of the British posts are of much greater importance in this contest than the posts themselves. If we can capture or render useless to the Enemy the force he has in the Peninsula, we may hope to reach Kingston in the course of the Campaign.

Very respfy & truly yours,

JAC BROWN

Honble Secretary of War

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War Department, 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1814

Sir:

This despatch is forwarded by Lieut. Frazier of the 15<sup>th</sup> Regt. Infantry. It concerns the necessary instructions both as to the objects to be attained and the means of attaining them.

1<sup>st</sup> Capt. Sinclair will go up to Detroit with apart of the Flotilla, he will there embark Lieut. Colo. Croghan and as large a number of troops as his vessels will accommodate with the necessary supplies of provisions & ammunition. He will then enter Lake Huron and proceed to Gloucester Bay where the troops will debark, attack and carry the enemy's new Establishment at Matchedash, fortify and garrison that place and open with you a communication if another part of the plan, next to be detailed, shall succeed, this effected the fleet will go on to the mouth of St. Joseph's & Mackinaw.

2<sup>nd</sup>. What remains of the Flotilla on 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

Colonel Campbell's report & other advices, it is believed the point marked "A" in the enclosed Sketches, is best adapted to the purposes & that your approach to Burlington Bay, which will be your first object, should be made by the route marked "C" as laid down in Faden's map. On reaching the heights of that place you will spare no pains to fortify the position in such way as effectually to cover your whole force, taking care to establish a small and interior work of increased strength, which will render the position tenable by a reduced force & which in particular will 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 centre of his military stations & prepared to fall upon and carry these in succession.

A Question arises here whether this Expedition should be suspended until we obtain an ascendancy on Lake Ontario and as a part of the greater plan; this Question turning on a circumstance which I shall briefly examine.

For all military operations we must begin with the belly. Our attention must therefore be first directed to the quantity of provisions on hand, to the means of transporting it and to the expedients for supply should either of these be deficient. You ought at least to be assured of one month's provisions. This you possess, but how is it to be transported! On boats to the Canada shore and afterwards by Land in wagons or on pack horses. But 5,000 men require for one month 200,00 lbs. Weight of bread & meat; calculate then the load of a two horse wagon at 1500 lbs and that of a pack horse at 250 lbs and your train will be enormous, difficult to sustain, & perhaps impossible to procure, but besides provision, you must carry a train of artillery, ammunition, medicines, Hospital Stores, Camp Kettles, tents, spare musquets, &c. Where is such a number of wagons 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 may cross the lake in transport vessels but the Secretary of the Navy does not calculate that more of these will be left by Sinclair that will be competent to transport 800 men at one trip. Hence it follows that the transportation of 5,000 men will require more than six trips, besides what may be wanting for your Artillery, your tents, provisions, wagons, Horses, &c. is it to be supposed that the enemy will remain ignorant of these movements across the Lake? Or that knowing them he 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 have conquered all difficulties, arising from Land & water transportation and that we have actually got hold of Burlington Heights, are we in a 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 maintain ourselves at Burlington for any length of time without that aid, and, if not, ought we to hazard the approach of a retreat or the disgrace of a surrender? The conclusion from all this is that though the expedition be approved, its 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 or retarding our movements by a large provision train & Burlington will be easily supplied from the 18 Mile Creek or the Genesee River, where depots have been established. Other considerations lead to the same conclusions. This course will give time to Brigdr. Genl. Porter to assemble his Corps, to General McArthur to forward the Recruits of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Regts, to those of the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, to join their Regts, to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Regts to reach their destination & for the Boats now at Detroit to be brought down to Buffalo. Commodore Chauncey says, "The Fleet will be ready in all the month of June," to which the Secretary adds two weeks for accidents, making it the 15<sup>th</sup> of July before they will be certainly on the Lake and fit for action with the Enemy. On the whole it will be seen that this expedition will be contingent and that if our Fleet on Lake Ontario be beaten or destroyed, it will not be undertaken.

To give immediate occupation to your troops and prevent them from stagnating, why not take Fort Erie and its Garrison, stated at 200 to 400 men. Land between point Abino and Erie in the night, assail the fort by land & water, push forward a Corps to seize the bridge of Chippeway and be governed by circumstances wither in stopping there or going further. Boats may follow and feed you. If the Enemy concentrate his whole force on this Line, it will not exceed 1600. But Garrisons must be left to occupy

Forts George and Niagara, whence the possibility that her will not shew in the field, 1200, with them you should not decline a contest. The issue of a successful one on our part would be to enable you to invest Fort George and to avail yourself in the most direct way of Commodore Chauncey's aid, (should he beat Yeo) in reducing that place & Fort Niagara.

I am, Sir, with great respect,  
Your most obt. servant,  
JOHN ARMSTRONG  
Major General Brown

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Headquarters, Buffalo, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

Capt. Sinclair, or Officer Commanding the Flotilla upon Lake Erie not having advised me of any intended co-operation with Army under my command & being resolved that no obstacle that it is in my power to remove shall prevent my passing into the Enemy's Country the moment I have a sufficient force collected to warrant the movement, I have sufficient force collected to warrant the movement, I have ordered Captain Camp to furnish me with water transport for two thousand men by the first day of July, by that date all the force on the march to this place of which I have any knowledge will, I hope, have joined & if my effective Regular force amounts to three thousand & Porter with his volunteers & and Indians is here, you may expect me to cross the Streight before me and endeavor not to be disgraced.

With the Regulars that marched with me from French Mills, I know that I can fight. They were then in a good state of discipline but have since greatly improved by the industry & military talents of Genl. Scott.

Very respfy & truly yours,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble. Secy. of War

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Head Quarters, Buffalo, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

When I parted from you at the Harbour, you assured me that you would communicate freely with me & give me all the information in your power. I have not received a line from you, and I 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 & manfully meet with 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 on 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 the end of Lake Erie and I intend to cross with the means the Government has 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 General 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 Regiment that the Enemy had at that post, the 103<sup>rd</sup>, has been moved to the peninsula.



Three of the Enemy's ships & three of their smaller vessels were near the mouth of the Niagara River on the 19<sup>th</sup> Inst. They, no doubt, conveyed the Stores & troops that Johnston gave an account of, from Earnestown to Fort George and Fort Niagara.

Very respfy and truly yours,

JAC BROWN

Commodore Chauncey

---

Head Quarters, Buffalo, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1814

Confidential,

Dear Sir:

The enclosed, I send you in confidence, it was written & sent off y Express on the morning f the day of its date. It will reach Chauncey to-morrow. I send it to you because I have not a thought connected with my profession that I wish to conceal from you and I desire that you should know the precise state of the relations existing between me and the naval commander upon Ontario.

Respfy & truly yours,

JAC BROWN

Honble. Sec'y of War

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U.S. Ship Superior, Sackett's Harbour, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1814

Dear General.

Your favor of the 21<sup>st</sup> 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 rec'd the whole of my Guns & Stores. The Superior is read to sail, the Mohawk is rigged & 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 co-operate with you in any Enterprise against the money, but if Sir James should pursue the policy 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 the 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, 2,000 marines, & 300 carpenters. It is said that a large reinforcement of Troops have arrived at Quebec, & I have no doubt but that it is the Enemy's intention, (if he can lead me up the Lake & induce me to weaken this post by detaching from it), to make a bold dash across in boats & attempt the destruction of this place & 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 & I think it would be unwise at this time to detach wither 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 youn informed from time to time of my movements upon the Lake.

I am much indebted to Major Appling & the brave men under his command for the protection & preservation of my Guns at Sandy Creek & bed to express to you & through you to them the high estimation in which I hold their gallantry & services. General Gaines has also on all occasions promptly rendered me every assistance in his power.

In your contemplated Enterprise may your most sanguine wishes be realized & may the God of battles preserve you & give you victory.

I have the honor to be,

With great esteem and respect,  
 Dear General,  
 Your most obt. Servant,  
 ISAAC CHAUNCEY.

Major General Brown, Commanding a Division of the Army of the U States on the Niagara Frontier,  
 Buffalo.

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Sackett's Harbour, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1814  
 Private

Dear General.

Your favor of the 21<sup>st</sup>, I rec'd yesterday & have replied to it this morning. Johnson has not been over lately. I shall send his over on the 28<sup>th</sup> & will let you know immediately after whatever information he collects on that side.

I think I shall sail on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> but I shall not leave this vicinity unless the Enemy's Fleet leads me up the Lake.

I have orders to build 15 galleys, 75 feet long and to mount two guns & to row forty oars, this force will be admirable for the St. Lawrence or to operate against Kingston, that is if we are to act offensively this summer, which I see but little prospect of.

If you joined your Division with the Brigade here, could not we carry Kingston? Present me kindly to Scott & believe me, Dear General,

Yours most faithfully,

I. CHAUNCEY.

Maj. General Brown.

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Head Quarters, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I had the satisfaction to receive last Evening, your several orders by Lieut. Frazier. You will have seen by my letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Inst. How fortunate I have been in thinking with you on the subject of the Campaign. Wind & weather permitting I intend to cross the Streight before me with the humble means I have on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of July,

I have with me Camp & Hogan of the Qr. Master Genl's Department. With such officers I can hope to find the means to transport and subsist my forces. These officers receive no compensation for the services they render, such men are scarce in the Q.M. Department and I hope you find it proper to promote them both keeping Camp senior. Hogan was with me at French Mills and at that post rendered his country important servies.

The Rear of Col. Fenton's militia arrived this morning, they shall be reported to you by the next express. I have not heard from General Porter for some time. He may have 1000 volunteer militia, but if they are in a condition to act before the 10<sup>th</sup> of July I shall be disappointed.

I have found as yet no difficulty with the Indians, say 250 are here that may be depended upon, more I understand are upon the road,

Will you have the goodness to cause all Reinforcements for my Division that are beyond my reach to march.

Very respfy & truly yours,

Jac Brown

Honble. The Secy. of War

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Naval Forces on Lake Ontario  
 Estimated by Major General Brown  
 June 1814

American.

Superior, 32 long 32 pounders; 32, 42 pounder carronades	64
Mohawk, 44 long heavy guns	44
Pike, 30 long 24 pounders	30
Jefferson, 23 42 pr. carronades	23
Jones do do do	23
Madison, 25 generally 32 pr carronades	25
Sylph, 22 long 24 prs	22
Oneida, 18 24 pr carronades	18
Lady of the Lake, one 24 pr & one 12 pr carronade	2
Total	251

British

Prince Regent, 28 long 24 pounders, 28 32 pr. carronades	56
Princess Charlotte, 22, 24 pr 22, 32 pr carronades	44
Wolf, 28, generally 32 pr carronades	28
Royal George, 24 24 pr carronades	24
Meiville, 22, 24 pr carronades	22
Earl Moira, 18 Light Guns	18
Brig. Prince Regent 12 do do	12
Sir Sidney Smith 12 do do	12
Total	216

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Buffalo, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1814

Sir:

I am directed by Maj. Genl. Brown to inform you that our Forces have effected a landing on the Canadian Shore and are now within a mile of Fort Erie.

The landing was made in fine order unattended by any material accident and our troops have as yet met with little opposition.

Very respfy your obt servant,

L. AUSTIN

A. D. CAMP

Honble, The Secretary of War.

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Head Quarters, Erie, U. Canada  
 4<sup>th</sup> July, 1814

Sir,

Enclosed is a letter from the Secretary of War. I had the pleasure of receiving a copy of your instructions from the Secretary of the Navy relative to your cooperation with the Army.

Our landing at this place was effected yesterday, without any opposition of consequence & the Fort Capitulated without firing a Gun at 6 in the Afternoon. A respectable force will be kept to Garrison it. I consider the situation most favourable for your cooperation and the Point from which I can most readily receive such assistance as may be needed.

I would wish your whole force to move down & take a position near the Fort, where the Vessels can continue with perfect safety and form a very desirable support to our rear.

Very respectfully, Sir,

Yr. Obt. Sert.

JAC BROWN

Major Genl.

Cp, Kennedy.

Erie, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Sir,

I have the honor 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 cooperate with him at the place he names.

The Tree Gun Boats, Ohio, Porcupine & Somers are 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 Lieut. Conklin, they are at Erie now and will wait my arrival.

I have the honor to be &c.

EDMD. P. KENNEDY

The Honorable William Jones,

Secy of the Navy

Head Quarters, Chippeway Plains,

July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

Please to excuse my reserve towards you. I have been engaged for our country. Fort Erie did not, as I assured you it should not, detain us a day. At Eleven o'clock at night on the 4<sup>th</sup>, I arrived at this place with the reserve, Genl. Scott with the Advance having taken up the position about noon. We made our arrangements for advancing on the morning of this day and if possible turning & taking the Enemies position east of Chippewa in rear. Major General Riall, perhaps appraised of our intentions and adhering to the military rule that it is better to give than receive the Attack, having concentrated his forces in the peninsula came from behind his curtains east of the Chippewa, prepared for Battle, about five o'clock of the fifth. We did not hesitate, before Six, his lines were broken & his forces defeated, leaving full four hundred of his men killed and wounded on the field of Battle, he was closely pressed & would have been utterly ruined had he been one mile further removed from his works, we were not prepared to carry them by a direct attack in front. The wounded of both armies must be attended to & removed to Buffalo; this will require two or three days with our limited means of water transportation. As soon as this is done, I will advance, not doubting but the gallant & accomplished soldiers I have the honor to command will break down all opposition to the shore of Ontario north of Fort George, where if Commodore Chauncey can meet us, it is well; if he cannot, this Army will trust in the smiles of providence upon our just and honorable cause and endeavor not to be disgraced. I send you the enclosed general order for publication. My detailed official account shall follow in a day or two.

Respfy, I am Dear Sir,

Your humble Servant

JAC BROWN  
 Honble  
 The Secretary of War

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Head Quarters Queenston, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir.

It is my painful duty to report to you the loss of our worthy fellow citizen, Brigadier General Swift of the Militia. His ardent gallantry led him to solicit permission to reconnoiter Fort George and capture a picket near the Fort for the purpose of obtaining information. This request was granted & the picket captured. At the moment of surrender the General was shot & as it is believed by a soldier of the Enemy who had surrendered and asked for mercy; not another gun fired.

This brave man rest in honor, the Army laments his fall & the Nation will do justice to his name and his family,

Respfy & truly yours,  
 JAC. BROWN  
 Honble,  
 The Secretary of War

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Head Quarters,  
 Queenston, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

The enclosed reports\* were made by order. I desire that the distinguished gallantry of the Corps & of the Individuals engaged in the Battle of the 5<sup>th</sup> should be well understood by you and the nation. I have ascertained that the Enemy had more regular troops engaged in this action than we had & that his loss exceeds five hundred men, I feel myself under great obligations to Capt. Kennedy for his prompt attention to my communications. He has afforded and is disposed to afford all the assistance that is in his power to render.

I am delayed here for the want of my battering Guns. I expect them by water from Sackett's Harbour.

Very respfy and truly yours,  
 JAC. BROWN

Honble  
 The Secretary of War

\* For the enclosed reports see the "Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814" Vol. 1, pages 44-7

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19<sup>th</sup> July, 1814, War Department

Dear General:

I have rec'd your letters of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>\* inst. And hasten to congratulate you on the brilliant opening you have given to your part of the campaign.

If Croghan succeeds, as I do not doubt he will, in establishing himself at Maskedash and Chauncey gives you his aid in taking Forts George & Niagara & intercepting supplies and reinforcements to Burlington & York, you will by the first day of September present a line of posts from the mouth of the Niagara to Gloucester Bay covering & quieting all westward of that line & menacing Kingston, &c, to the East. If on the other hand Chauncey should fail, you will have fought but for glory & be compelled to retrace your steps to Erie; in this deplorable Event you will be careful to re-establish the Bridges in your Route and after serving your purpose to destroy them.

If the Enemy is permitted to retain the command or even the use of the Lake, it is to be considered whether he will reinforce Fort George directly or indirectly. The latter course presents the most safety & his route will then be by the Bay of Cante to the Carrying Place and thence by land to Presqu' Isle where the means of transportation being assembled he will pass to Burlington Bay. This position will enable him to menace or attack (as circumstances may direct) your flank or Rear unless the Inhabitants of the Country are disposed to give you information, the movements may be made with little if any previous notice on your part.

The best mode of obviating difficulty of this sort would be by anticipating him, getting possession of the Heights, establishing there a post, which should hold them in check or at least under observation. Other modes I need not indicate. Present my best compliments and wishes to Generals Scott & Porter & believe me most sincerely yours.

JOHN ARMSTRONG

Maj. Genl. Brown

\* For General Brown's letter dated July 17<sup>th</sup> see the "Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814," vol 1, pp. 38-42.

Head Quarters,  
Queenston, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

When I wrote you on the 7<sup>th</sup>, preparations were making for crossing the Chippewa about 1½ miles about the enemy's works. As the country on our left was covered with thick woods, into which the Enemy did not think proper to penetrate, after the Action of the 5<sup>th</sup> we were enabled to open a road to near the Creek unperceived. During the afternoon of the 8<sup>th</sup>, our road being completed, our Materials prepared & our Artillery brought up, we promptly showed ourselves and commenced the work, in a few minutes the Enemy showed himself with his artillery on the opposite bank but our Artillery having been placed, prepared & well served, the Enemy soon retired. Leaving Generals Ripley & Porter to complete the Bridge, cross & if possible, prevent the retreat of the Enemy, I sent notice to General Scott to advance on the direct road upon Chippewa, the few boats we had moving by his right. He had moved by a previous understanding. I advanced with my Escort to examine the situation of the enemy and found Capt. Harris, who was in front reconnoitering. He advised me that the Enemy had abandoned their works & asked permission to cross & take possession. Pleased with the ardour that beamed from his countenance (an ardour that I desire to see pervade the American ranks), I granted his request. The Bridge being destroyed & no boat at hand, he plunged into the stream & swam across, his troop following him. Having gained the enemy's works & finding no object for completing the Bridge, it was left unfinished. The Army crossed in Boats during the night & early next morning. Capt. Line of the Pennsylvania militia refused to proceed and endeavored to induce his men to remain. I have ordered him to work upon the fortifications of Fort Erie during the remaining time of his service. At 10 o'clock p.m., of the 9<sup>th</sup>, the whole regular force took up their line of march for Queenston heights where we expected again to find the enemy strongly posted. General Porter was prevailed upon to remain for the defence of our Stores at Chippewa as we had not the means of transporting them at hand. The Enemy abandoned their work at Queenston Heights & retired to Forts George and Niagara upon our approach. I am anxiously looking for

Commodore Chauncey to open our communication with Lake Ontario and bring up some additional battering guns. Until he appears we shall, I fear, be condemned to inactivity unless the Enemy open themselves in the fields, when we shall not hesitate to meet him and give him Battle.

Very respfy & truly yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honble. Sec'y of War

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22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1814

War Dept.

Dear Sir.

Your public letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> and private letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> have been received. The delay and silence of Commodore are unaccountable. My letter to you fixing the 1<sup>st</sup> as the day on which he would certainly leave Sackett's Harbour & by which your movements were to be governed was written at the instance of the President who was anxious to prevent any want of co-operation between the two arms from ignorance of each others movements. There is, however, no cause of reproach to you. You have done your duty whatever may be the consequences.

Yours most respfy & truly,

JOHN ARMSTRONG

Maj. General Brown

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Erie, 22July, 1814.

Sir:

Your letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> Inst. I have before me, everything, every Regt. from Burlington & York & meeting with no opposition on Lake Ontario, transported by water troops from Kingston & even Prescott and were enabled to bring against us a force vastly superior under the command of Lieut. General Drummond & Major General Riall. They were met by us near the falls of Niagara when a most tremendous conflict ensued. The enemy disputed the ground with resolution yet were driven from every position they attempted to hold. We stormed two Batteries and took possession of all his Artillery notwithstanding his immense superiority in numbers & positions, he was completely defeated & our troops remained on the battle ground without any interruption. As, however, both Genl. Brown & Genl. Scott had received severe wounds – almost every Chief of Battalion disabled & our men quite exhausted, it was thought prudent to retire to our encampment which was done in good order & without any molestation from the enemy, our wounded having been first removed.

Maj. Genl. Riall with the A. D.C. of Lt. Genl. Drummond with about twenty other officers and two hundred men are taken prisoners.

The loss on both sides is immense but no account has yet been returned. The aid & Brigade Major of Genl. Scott are both severely wounded & Capt. Spencer, an aid of Genl. Brown, most probably is dead, having received tow balls through his body. Both Generals Brown and Scott are on this side, confined by their wounds. General Ripley commands on the other and an order has been sent to Brig. General Gaines now at the Harbour to join this army immediately.

I have, &c,

L. AUSTIN,

A.D. Camp

Hon.

The Secretary of War

Washington

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Erie, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Sir,

I have the honour of acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 19<sup>th</sup> instl & a Triplicate of your Orders of the 13<sup>th</sup>. Lieut. Conklin with the three schooners sailed on the 21<sup>st</sup> Inst. For Buffaloe, with three hundred Troops from this place, with orders to return here to be joined by the Lady Provost for Cleveland, but his not having yet arrived induces me to believe he has been detained by Genl. Brown. I wait his arrival to put in execution your last Orders.....

The Schooners Porcupine & Somers are commanded by Ship's Masters Mates, they are active, genteel young men, have been long on Station & have conducted themselves with propriety; the warrant Officers, Masters & Midshipmen are dissatisfied 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 any experience), that confidence can be placed in. Those are Mr. Conklin, Sail'g Masters Coldwell and McDonald. The latter has recd. His Warrant as Master, & beg'd me to mention that he would much rather, if it met your approbation to have a Midshipman's Warrant, believing that Masters cannot be advance in the line of promotion. I hope he is mistaken. I herewith enclose you a report from him.\* I gave him orders on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Inst. To proceed to Long Point, or its vicinity with a few volunteers and land under cover of the night for the purpose of reconnoitering the Enemy & obtaining information respecting the force there, & in what place, if any the Boats were building. He has executed his Orders promptly, & brot. Off a prisoner, who gives information that there are from 6 to 700 Militia and Regulars, at, & near Long Point and at Grand River 1200 including Indians, he gives no information of Boats, he calls himself an American, born in New York, his name is Montrose, an American Rifle & Musket was taken with him. I think that by treating him will & 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 and distillery were destroyed at the attack of Long Point by Capt. Campbell. I have the Guns of the Queen Charlotte mounted, I am going on with her out fits as fast as circumstances will admit of.

Respectfully, I have the honor to be &c.

EDMD. P. KENNEDY

The Honbl. Wm. Jones.

Secty. of the Navy, Washington

\*For Sailing Master McDonald's report see Documentary History Vol. 1. P. 114

Buffalo, 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1814

My dear Sir:

Will it not be possible for you to increase Genl. Porter's command & that promptly? I have found Genl. Porter a brave & efficient officer. In the midst of the greatest danger I have found his mind cool and collected and his judgment to be relied upon. These are rare qualifications and therefore it is that I desire that all militia force may be continued under his command. It does appear to me to be an object of great national importance as well as very important to this State that the enemy should be driven out of the peninsula and a line drawn between him and his savage Allies to extend from near York or Burlington Heights to Lake Huron if it cannot be pressed further down. If you could by any means bring out a force of from three to four thousand militia to operate with my gallant little army I do not doubt but what this object could be effected. It is in vain for the people of this country to attempt to shrink from the war in which they are engaged & if they do not arise & exert themselves at a distance from their Farms they will soon find the War brought to their firesides.

This State has suffered in reputation this war, its militia have done nothing but little & that too even after the State had been invaded.

Being resolved not to order my Army out of Canada under existing circumstances without other & further instructions from the War Department I have deemed it proper to call upon Major General Hall for a



thousand militia for the defence of this frontier. I hope you will approve the measure but if you do I am not certain the force will be formed unless stronger & more military Measures are adopted than have hitherto been, as I find the Inhabitants of this frontier more disposed to skulk from the danger that threatens them than to arise in defence of their country & her rights.

My wounds are very troublesome but not dangerous. I send you the enclosed statement of Dr. Bull for your information but not for publication \*. The Battle of the 25<sup>th</sup>, it is believed, will find but few parallels. More desperate fighting has rarely been know, I hope the nation will be satisfied with our conduct. We have endeavoured to do our duty. The official returns are not yet in but I am informed that I have lost above sixty officers killed & wounded among which first, I fear, in my Aid de-Camp, Capt. Spencer.

Very respfy

JAC BROWN

His Excellency

D.D. Tompkins

Albany

\*See Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814, Vol 1, p. 104

Barkersville, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1814

Dear Sir:

General Gaines arrived yesterday and assumed the command of the army at Fort Erie. Under his command the Army will not permit the fair fame it has acquired to be sullied. My mind is at rest & my wounds are recovering, I hope to be able to take the field again in the course of a month and in the meantime I pray you to make no arrangement or interfere with the command to which I have called Gaines, should any officer arrive senior to Gaines but junior to me, I shall order him away unless otherwise directed by you.

I cannot yet get off my back with any degree of comfort & therefore write with a pencil from my bed. I will make out and send you my official account of the battle of Niagara Falls as soon as possible within a few days certainly. My health was never better.

This army should be reinforced if possible. Two or three thousand militia under Genl. Porter could be made useful. We will endeavor not to be disgraced under any circumstances.

Yours,

JAC. BROWN

Honbl

The Secretary of War

Private

My dear General

You have behaved nobly. You have rescued the Military Character of your Country from the odium brought upon it by fools & rascals. You have put your own hors d'ensiette? & shewn abundantly what you would have effected had you been well supported from below. I am most happy that your wounds are not dangerous & that in six weeks you will be again on horseback. Scott &c., have been promoted as you requested. Be careful of yourself & accept my most affectionate regards.

JOHN ARMSTRONG,

Washington, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1814

Express to General Scott my great respect and best wishes; he is a young man of great promise.

Maj. General Brown

U.S.Ship Superior, Off Niagara.  
7<sup>th</sup> August, 1814

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 & blew up, two brigs & one schooner lay in the Niagara river. I shall leave three brigs under the of Capt. Ridgely to watch them & 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 in remaining longer absent from the lower end of the Lake, particularly as Sackett's Harbour has been left so weak. My own health is mending slowly.

I have, &c.,

Issac Chauncey

Major General Brown,

Commandg troops, &c., &c.,

Niagara Frontier.

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Judge Barkers,

On the Shore of Lake Erie, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Sir:

I will endeavour to give you a description of the Battle fought near the falls of Niagara, between the Army under my command, & the Enemy's forces in Upper Canada, under the command of Lieut. Gen'l.

Drummond. Confined as I am, and have been, since the action I fear that my account will not be so satisfactory as is desired, & that the conduct of my gallant countrymen & brother soldiers, will not be noted in a way due to their fame & the honor of their country.

On the 25<sup>th</sup>, our army lay at Chippewa. About noon, Colo. Swift who was stationed near Lewiston, advised me by express that the enemy appeared in very considerable force in Queenston and on Queenston Heights, and that four of the Enemy's fleet had arrived during the preceeding night & were lying near Ft. Niagara & that a number of Boats were in view moving up the Streight. Within a few minutes after the receipt from Capt. Denman of the Qr. Masters Department, stating that the enemy were landing at Lewiston, & of course, our baggage & stores at Schlosser & on the way to that place from below, were in danger of immediate capture.

It may be proper here to mention that having received at Queenston Heights on the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. a letter from Brigr. Genl. Gaines, dated the 20<sup>th</sup>, advising me that Commodore Chauncey's fleet remained in the harbour & the Commodore himself sick, we ceased to hope for any aid from the fleet & resolved to dispossess ourselves of all the baggage that could be spared & march for Burlington Heights. To mask our intentions & receive a small supply of provisions from Schlosser, I thought it proper to fall back upon Chippeway. These arrangements left much at hazard upon the opposite shore on the 25<sup>th</sup> and it was by me believed that if the enemy were passing up the American shore for the purpose of capturing our stores, the better way to secure them would be to move down upon the British side, as the movement would be seen & known to the Enemy.

General Scott, with the 1<sup>st</sup>. Brigade, Capt. Towson's company of artillery and all the Dragoons & mounted men were put in motion on the road towards Queenston. General Scott was ordered to report if the Enemy appeared and call for reinforcements, if he deemed additional force necessary. On his arrival at the Falls, (distant from Chippewa one & a half miles) he learned that the Enemy were in force directly in his front a narrow strip of woods interrupted the view between the two forces. General Scott immediately dispatched Major Jones, Ass. Adj. Genl. To advise me of the fact and without delay advance to meet the Enemy. By the time Major Jones returned to me, the action had commenced and before the Reserve had passed the Chippewa, it was evident that the action was close & general between the advance of the two armies. General Ripley with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, Major Hindman with his Corps of Artillery & General Porter

with his command, pressed with ardour to the scene of action, but Genl. Scott must have been in close engagement with the enemy for full an hour before this force was placed in a condition to give him support, during which time his command had most skilfully & gallantly sustained the Conflict. Upon my arrival I found that Genl. Scott had passed the wood that had obstructed his view & engaged the enemy to the left of the Queenston road, with the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Regts., the 25<sup>th</sup> under Major Jessup having been ordered to the right to be governed by circumstances Capt. Towson's company of artillery occupied the road. Apprehending that Genl. Scott's command was in some degree exhausted, & knowing that it had suffered much, I resolved to form a new line with the troops advancing to the front, so as to disengage Genl. Scott's command and hold it in reserve. With this view, I sent my A.D. Camp, Capt. Spenser, to direct Genl. Ripley (with the advancing columns) directly on the road, they having inclined to the left through some open ground in the rear of the wood behind General Scott. By this time Major Hindmand with "Capt. Biddles & Capt. Ritchie's companies of artillery were on the field. General Ripley led up his Brigade and was at first ordered to form it in a lane to the left, some distance in front of General Scott (the Enemy's Infantry having at this moment fallen back) but induced by the fire of his Artillery, advantageously posted in an eminence fronting this lane & the advice of Major McRae of the Engineers, I recalled Genl. Ripley and ordered him to advance still further on the Queenston road. Major McRae & Major Wood, both of the Corps of Engineers were now near me and Maj. McRae as senior answering to some of my enquiries, said "that the enemy held the key of the position with their artillery-to secure the Victory their artillery with the height on which it rested must be carried." Twilight had by this time passed, and altho there was a moon, the smoke and surrounding woods cast a shade over the fields in which we were engaged, that rendered it very difficult to distinguish at any considerable distance, the Hostile columns or lines. Major Macree was directed to see Genl. Ripley and cause the 21<sup>st</sup> under Colonel Miller, to prepare to storm the Heights, and carry the artillery of the enemy. On the right of this Artillery, I discovered by close inspection a line of Infantry. The 1<sup>st</sup> regt. was now ordered to face this line & amuse them with a fire, while Colonel Miller advanced upon their left flank & carried the Heights. When the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. had gained its positions, I became impatient for Colonel Miller to move, & riding towards him ordered him to advance & carry the Height. He replied with great coolness "it shall be down, Sir." At this moment the fire commenced between the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. and the enemy & to my great mortification, the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. broke & retired for some distance before they could be rallied. It is believed that Colonel Nicholas & the officers of the Regt. exerted themselves to stay their flight. Colonel Miller with the 21<sup>st</sup> advanced to his object, without reference to the conduct of other corps & with a firm & gallant countenance, carried the Height & the cannon upon it, immortalizing his own name & the Regt., that had the honor to be placed under his command. At this moment, the 23<sup>rd</sup> that had faltered, were brought up by Genl. Ripley to the support of the 21<sup>st</sup> & the enemy disappeared from the Height. The 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. was now brought up & formed upon the left of the 21<sup>st</sup>, Genl. Porter's command being upon the left of the whole.

At the moment that Colonel Miller was storming the Heights, I passed by his rear with a view of turning up Lundy's Lane to meet him, when in possession. As I approached, a line of troops was discovered formed to the north of the Queenston Road, and extending from the lane as far as the Eye could discern, at this instant a person in the road explained "There are the Yankees" pointing across the road, when as quick as thought, a fire came from whence he pointed that shook the line I observed, it was returned, and continued with great fury for a few minutes when all became silent in that quarter. I advanced with my attendants & found Major Jessup with the 25<sup>th</sup> Regt. in the middle of the road, & the line I had seen literally cut to pieces & destroyed. The first question the Maj. asked me was "Where shall I place my Regt. to be most useful." I ordered him to form upon the right of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. I have been thus particular that justice might be done to as brave a man and as enterprising an officer as this nation can boast. Major Jessup at the commencement of the engagement had been ordered by Genl. Scott to the right, he had succeeded in passing the Enemy's left flank & a detachment from his command under Capt. Ketchum had made prisoners of Maj. Genl. Riall, the Aid of Lt. General Drummond, & several other officers & privates, he had made his way through the enemy's lines with a comparatively trifling loss & for the first time, showed himself again to his own Army in the blaze of fire, have mentioned,

which cut down and defeated a very superior force of the Enemy. We had now driven the enemy from the strong ground he had selected & were in possession of the Artillery he had posted upon the Height. The 25<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, & 21<sup>st</sup>, with the detachments of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, & the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. of Inf<sup>y</sup>, with Genl. Porter's command and our artillery were forced to face him. He however having rallied his forces on having received reinforcements, shewed a strong line in our front & immediately attempted by a charge to drive us from the position we had carried & regain his Artillery. A dreadful contest ensued, our line was in no part shaken or dismayed, & the enemy were repulsed with great loss. For a few minutes after this, all was silent, when the Enemy's line was again seen in motion & advancing. Genl. Ripley then came to me, & observed "that now was the critical moment, as the Enemy were advancing in great force" & asked if Genl. Scott could not be ordered up to his support. I hesitated, as I knew that the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade had suffered much gallantly sustaining the action in its commencement & I designed to hold this Brigade in a reserve, to give the finishing blow to the Enemy at some favourable moment when we could more distinctly see our way. Diverted from this object which I have never ceased to regret, I rode to Genl. Scott & ordered him to advance. He had supplied himself with ammunition & was impatiently expecting the call. The enemy shewing himself in front upon the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade coming up, Genl. Scott led out to the charge in front of Genl. Ripley's line & driving back the enemy, formed again beyond the extreme left of this line. The last I saw of him on the field was marching near the rear of his column, in a direction that would have placed him in the rear of the Enemy's right flank. Immediately after this, the Enemy made another desperate charge to regain the Height & were again repulsed with evident loss, several of their officers, with many privates being taken prisoners.

I had observed with great pleasure, the good conduct of Genl Porter's command from the moment of their arrival on the field but during this charge, it was particularly conspicuous. Stimulated by their gallant Chief, by Maj. Wood of the Pennsylvania line, Lt. Colo. Dobbin of the N. York volunteers, and by their officers generally, as also by Major Wood of the Engineers, who was frequently near them & most deservedly enjoyed their confidence, they were precipitated directly upon the Enemy's line, & it was this corps that captured the prisoners during this charge.

Having been for some time wounded, and feeling somewhat exhausted from the loss of blood, I resolved to surrender the command to Genl. Scott, & leave the field, when upon enquiry for him, I had the misfortune to learn that he was disabled by wounds. I still continued & had the satisfaction to see the Enemy again repulsed, when I informed Major McCrae of my condition & necessity of my returning & desired him & Major Wood to give Genl. Ripley all the support in their power. On leaving the field & passing to camp, my reflections on the battle with a knowledge of our force disengaged, confirmed me in the opinion that the Victory was complete, if proper measures were promptly adopted to secure it. I saw that there were advantages under existing circumstances in the troops returning, being reorganized, & formed, & taking refreshments. They particularly required water. I saw and felt the want of this necessary article as I passed from the field, and I believed it proper for General Ripley to return to Camp, if he brought off the dead, the wounded & the Artillery, and I perceived no difficulty in doing this, as the Enemy had ceased to act against him. Not more than an hour after my arrival at my tent, I was informed that Genl. Ripley had returned with the troops in good order, not again having been fired upon on his leaving the field. I sent for him and my staff, and after having given him my reasons for the measure I was about to adopt, ordered him to place the troops in the best possible state, giving them all the refreshment necessary, to take the pickets & camp guards, & every other description of force, and appear upon the field of Battle, as day dawned & meet, & again beat the Enemy if they appeared. He made no objection to this order. I relied upon its execution, - it was not executed.

To do justice on paper, to the gallant troops, I have had the honor to command in the field, is not within the compass of my abilities. They may have done less than was expected, more might have been accomplished under an abler direction, but I find consolation in believing that no blame can attach to my forces, & that you & the Government will perceive that this Army has endeavored to do its duty, as became the soldiers of a brave and generous nation.

You have seen from this report the conspicuous gallantry & good conduct of Genl. `Scott, Genl. Porter & Col. Miller & Major Jesup. These gentlemen held conspicuous command, but the officers generally, in inferior stations, acted equally well & to the honor of my country I must say that I saw few officers during the Engagement, who did not appear to consider Reputation, as the greatest blessing. Of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, the chief, with his A.D. Camp, Lt. Worth, and his Major of Brigade, Lt. Smith, with every chief of Battalion were wounded. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade did not suffer so much, but as a Brigade, their conduct entitles them to the applause of their country. After they were formed near the Height carried by the 21<sup>st</sup> and the detachments of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, from that moment the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regts. Assumed a new character, they could not be again shaken or dismayed. Major McFarland of the 23<sup>rd</sup> nobly fell at the head of his Battalion.

Genl. Porter has immortalized his name. under his command, the militia of Pennsylvania & New York stood undismayed, amidst the hottest fire & successfully met & repulsed the Veterans of the enemy. Pennsylvania & New York should honor & reward their gallant sons. The corps of Canadian `Volunteers under the command of Colonel Wilcox, are reported to me by Genl. Porter as meriting & receiving his approbation, they acted with the Volunteers of N. York and Pennsylvania, and are entitle to participate in all th4eir honors. Capt. Towson with his company of Artillery commenced the action with Genl. Scott. I have not language to express my admiration of this officer, his subalterns & his Company. They were the first in action, the last to leave the field & in every stage of conflict, they were prepared to do their duty. Major Hindman, with Capt. Biddles & Capt. Ritchie's companies. Arrived in advance of the Reserve, and rendered every assistance that brave & ardent men could effect under similar circumstances. Capts. Biddle & Ritchie were both soon wounded, they refused to quit the field. Capt. Ritchie declared that he would never leave his piece, & true to his word, fell by its side, covered with honorable wounds. I must now speak of Major Macrae & Major Wood of the Corps of Engineers. Major Wood went to the field with the advance. Major Macrae accompanied accompanied me with the Reserve. We met Major Wood as we approached the scene of Action & from that moment, until I was compelled to retire, they were both near me, or engaged in the most important duties on the field. I flet the loss of Colonel Gardner, who had been for some days indisposed, he was however on horseback and did all in his power.

Major Jones, ever active and useful, with my aid de camp, Capt. Austin, had duties to perform that kept them frequently at some distance from me, in Majors Macrae & Wood & my gallant & much lamented Aid, Capt. Spencer, I found support. Capt. Spencer I will remember with tears of gratitude for his gallant conduct, his deeds have elevated him with his Companions in glory far above all other offerings. Majors Macrae & Wood exposed continually to the full force of the Enemy's fire had the good fortune to remain uninjured; their high military talents were exerted with great effect. To their advice & firmness, much is fairly to be ascribed. With pride and pleasure I acknowledge the services that they have rendered me & the Army – and I most earnestly recommend them to their County, as Officers worthy of the highest trust & Confidence.

The Staff of Generals Ripley & Porter were distinguished by honorable zeal & attention to duty. You have enclose a Return of our loss. Those noted as missing were, I fear, generally killed, as the Enemy having been drive, had no opportunity of taking many prisoners. A Return of the prisoners taken by us you have also enclosed.\*

(unsigned and unaddressed)

\*A comparison of this draft with the official version printed in the "Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814," Vol. I, pp. 97-101, will show that its phraseology was considerably altered before publication.

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16 August, 1814

Private.

My dear Genl.

Your letter, (in pencil), and without date, was rec'd by the 4<sup>th</sup> mail of to-day. I rejoice that your health is good, that your wounds are healing and that within a month you will be again on horseback and in command of yr Division. But a month, my friend, is under existing circumstances an age, an eternity, because within that period the campaign takes its permanent, its unchangeable character. Chauncey is now on the Lake and Yeo in port. Chauncey's ascendancy, his power to do good to us and Evil to the Enemy will in all probability be shortlived, it can but last till the new British ship is ready for service & she will be in that condition by the 20<sup>th</sup> of Sept. the conclusion from these facts is inevitable. Unless the fleet of the Enemy can be beaten or Kingston taken or Forts George and Niagara reduced before that date all your prospects of doing more than illustrating your own skill and courage and those of your division are lost. This state of things would be deplorable as regards the public interest & it becomes the duty of all and particularly of myself to secure to the campaign, if possible, to embark his two or three thousand men at Sackett's Harbour & transport them to Burlington, debark there and the heights secured, they will effect a junction with your division when the whole force will be employed in beating Drummond & reducing Forts George & Niagara. Orders have been given to execute this plan. There is nothing on the cards better for us. The only objection to the game is the evils which may befall the shores of Lake Champlain in the absence of the army & that I have weighed seriously & scrupulously. It is precisely the objection raised by Genl. Dearborn in 1813 against moving Pike's & Chandler's brigades to Sackett's Harbour. I thought then & I think now that Prevost understands his trade to well to hazard the loss of any principal post on the westward line of defence for the benefit of scattering firebrands & death among such villages as Plattsburg and Burlington. I believe too that if you are not in condition to cut your way to Montreal directly the better policy for us will be to carry the war westward. By doing so you compel the Enemy to give much of his force to the protection of his water communication. You render his subsistence more precarious & you deprive him of the benefits growing out of his commercial intercourse with Vermont. If his increased force, (concerning which much is now said & believed,) be competent to both objects, to the defence of his own posts from Montreal to Chippewa & to the invasion of our territory at the same time, it is greater than I think it. No one knows better than you the tricks he has played off on our successive commanders at different places & the effects of these on the spirit & extent of our operations. I will say nothing of Hull & Smyth. But we cannot forget that instead of revenging the wrongs that we suffered at the River Raisin, Genl. Harrison at the head of 4,000 men, burnt much of his baggage & stores & retired hastily towards Sandusky. Again after the siege of Fort Meigs to escape the wrath of a disappointed & retreating enemy, he ordered Fort Stevenson to be burnt & abandoned & when attacked, tho' within sustaining distance, & believing & declaring that it would fall, he neither moved a foot nor a finger to give it succour and why so? Because he overrated the strength of his enemy. He neither wants sense nor courage, he therefore retreated in the one case & refrained from doing anything in the other merely from a false estimate of Procter's force. General Dearborn declined attacking Kingston (and so did Chauncey), in the spring of 1813, from a belief, no doubt sincerely entertained, that the Enemy's force then at that post amounted to 8,000 men. You well know that it did not exceed 1,000. General Lewis the same year and as late as the month of July, stated the British force at that place at 16,000 men. Why did Boyd permit himself to be cooped up & daily insulted at Fort George by a force less than one third of that he commanded? He was duped.

An Art so profitably employed hitherto is not likely to be laid aside now and the less so as the pacification of Europe gives him a vast fund to draw upon and renders his reported reinforcements at least possible.

Yours faithfully,  
 JOHN ARMSTRONG  
 Maj. Genl. Brown

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General Wadsworth's  
 Genesee River,  
 August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I have been gratified by the receipt of yours of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. For this kind and cheering letter at such a moment accept the assurance of my inalterable friendship.

I have found the best of Quarters and as Mrs. Brown & the children are with me, my wounds will be well in the course of a short time. Within four weeks, I do not doubt but what I shall be fit for duty & the moment I can mount my Horse without injury I shall join my brave Companions in Arms. I hope you will be able to encrease my force so that I may be able to drive the Enemy out of the Pennisula.

Yours sincerely,  
JAC. BROWN  
Honble.  
John Armstrong

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Private

Dear General

The Brigadier Senior to Gaines will be sent to Erie. McArthur is destined to lead an Indian Expedition. Your authority is competent to call out a militia brigade. Porter will do everything with them that any other man could do & much more than any other Miliitia General of N. Y. is able to do. I have sent to Gaines all the field officers of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ret., some Artillery officers & about 80 Artillerists from Pittsburg. Among these officers I have two sons, one of whom, who was with me last year at Sackett's Harbour, is well qualified as an aid de camp. He is an excellent scholar and has a good head, understands several languages, living and dead, & writes his own with taste & correctness. He has moral qualifications of a higher character & less common among young men, viz silence & secrecy. He enters the army against my wishes but being there, it would be agreeable to me to see him under your special patronage.

Yours truly,  
JOHN ARMSTRONG

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My dear General

Your report has been received. The Government & the nation will do you justice and your army too. I send by this mail brevets for Miller, McRee & Wood. Ripley will no doubt demand a Court of Enquiry, but this cannot be given untill the campaign is over. I shall present Genl. Porter's name to the President as a Brigr. Will he accept the appointment? If it be made?

Snelling is now with you; he is an excellent officer.

Yours truly,  
JOHN ARMSTONG  
19th August, 1814  
War Dept.  
Genl. Brown

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Big-tree, Genesee River,  
August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

Having almost recovered from my wounds and being considerably unwell and somewhat reduced by confinement and the want of exercise, I intend to leave this to-morrow with a view of travelling for my health and to see a few friends in the adjoining counties. I shall not go further east than the County of Cayuga and I latter myself that within three weeks I shall be so well as to be ashamed to remain longer from the Army at Fort Erie.

I can but be very anxious for the ultimate fate of this army. If the Enemy deems it an object of the first importance to destroy this force that has given them so much trouble and cost them so much, the Reinforcements arriving from Europe will, I fear, give them the means. I doubt very much if a parallel can be found for the state of things existing upon the frontier. A gallant little Army struggling with the Enemies of their Country and devoting themselves for its Honor and its safety, left by that Country to struggle alone within sight & within hearing. I called upon General Hall for 1000 militia; after the lapse of 20 days, it is said that 300 have turned out. How long are the people of this country to be amused and disgraced by such a state of things? You must not suppose that I am desponding. The Army at Fort Erie will, I trust, be able to maintain itself in its present position and under any circumstances will, I am persuaded, do its duty, but cannot this Nation make an effort to secure the safety of this Army. Retreat, I believe, it cannot, even granting that we had the Boats necessary in the face of the Force that will most probably be kept opposed to it.

I shall be very happy to hear from you and to receive your instructions and advice and to learn what aid I am to expect.

Very Respdy

JAC. BROWN

Hon.

The Secretary of War.

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Canandiagua, Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>. 1814

Dr. Sir:

I was gratified on the 19<sup>th</sup> inst. by the receipt of yours of the 13<sup>th</sup>. Colonel Yates, your aid, will remain with us and we will try and make the most of the means the ample powers you have cloathed him with will produce.

I rejoice to learn that you have in contemplation to convene the Legislature at an early date. We have been amused and disgraced long enough. Strong measures are necessary to save the sinking honor of this Nation. We must have more of the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven infused into the laws and institutions to enable us to carry on war with honor & success, more of rewards and punishments.

The soldier of the regular Army is well paid; it is but just that the militia soldier should receive an equal reward. Let him also be punished for disobedience of orders. The Citizen of a Republic who meanly shrinks from the performance of his military duty should be deprived of the right of suffrage and excluded from office.

Your Excellency will, I hope, find it proper to brevet Brigr. Genl. Porter and continue him Chief in Command of the militia. He has done much to redeem the character of your Forces and merits the marked approbation of his country.

I have nearly recovered and expect to be so well in the course of a few days as to be ashamed to remain longer from my command. My gallant little Army has so far done its duty and been blest with the smiles of Providence but unless it can receive effective aid there is cause to be alarmed for its ultimate safety.

With great respect, I am,

Yours, &c.

JAC. BROWN

His Excellency,

D.D Tompkins

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Aurora, Cayuga County  
August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1814



Dear Sir:

Yours of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, & 19<sup>th</sup>, I have had the satisfaction to receive this morning. Previously to the receipt of these letters I had fixed upon Monday, the 28<sup>th</sup>, for commencing my march for Fort Eire. Your letters will aid my cure and I count upon being fit for duty within a few days but be this as it may, I shall join my division & expect your further orders. You plan I deem the wisest that could be devised as it offers the best chance for assailing the enemy with success, as the forces of the two Nations on the borders of Canada are now situated.

Drummond has now with him the remains of the Regts. That were in Upper Canada the last campaign except the 49<sup>th</sup>. For the remains of that Regt. he has the 103<sup>rd</sup>. that is to say he has the 8<sup>th</sup>, 41<sup>st</sup>, 89<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup>, 103<sup>rd</sup>, 104<sup>th</sup>, Royal Scotts, Canadian Fencibles, Glengaries & De Watteville's with many militia & say three hundred Indians. All these Regts were in the action of the 25<sup>th</sup> excepting the De Watteville's this Regt arrived three days after the action. The Regular troops at Kingston & Prescott are, I believe, of the late arrivals.

I am satisfied that should the naval & military means under the command of Chauncey & myself have been brought to bear upon the enemy as they ought to have been in June & July, the power of the enemy in Upper Canada would have been broken before the arrival of reinforcements.

Governor Tompkins will, I trust brevet Porter. His Excellency has sent his aid to me. Four thousand militia are called out to be commanded by Porter. I calculate from this call as some pains have been taken to alarm all parties in this country that we may possibly get two thousand men to the frontiers and possibly into Canada.

I observed your son critically at Sackett's Harbour and do not doubt but that I shall be pleased with him as an aid-de-camp. Direct him to join me without delay. I had resolved not to select an Aid until I could find an accomplished scholar that should please me.

Very respfy yours,

JAC. BROWN

Hon. The Secretary of War

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Private

Dear Sir:

If General Ripley demands a Court of Enquiry upon his conduct from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July to the 1<sup>st</sup> of August he will be ruined. I have been greatly embarrassed by the movements of this Officer upon more than one occasion. It is painful for me to say so as I have been his constant friend in the Army and given him every support consistent with duty. He is one of a few men in whom I have been disappointed.

Yours truly,

JAC. BROWN

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Hon. Secretary of War

Batavia, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1814

Dear Sir:

I intend to arrive at Williamsville this morning. I learn with great pleasure that Genl. Gaines is not so seriously wounded as was at first believed.

Porter has been engaged in getting out the militia. On my arrival at Canadaigua he pressed rapidly for Fort Erie where he, I trust, arrived last night.

Yours &c.,

JAC. BROWN

Hon. Secretary of War.

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War Department, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1814

Sir:

By your letter of August 30<sup>th</sup>, it appears that one thousand regulars may be taken from Detroit and its vicinity for immediate & temporary service. The Navy Department will give orders for a sufficient number of vessels to be in immediate readiness to take on that number of troops.

You will therefore please to consult His Excellency, Govr. Cass and embark under and efficient commander all the regular troops that can be collected & spared for that service with orders to proceed down Lake Erie without loss of time to the most convenient point of landing & report to the Comdg. General of the Left Division at or near Fort Erie. As the usefulness of this depends on the promptness of the movement, a duplicate of this letter will be sent direct to the Commanding Officer at Detroit & a Copy to the Commanding General at Fort Erie. These troops will return to the 8<sup>th</sup> Military District in time to relieve the Militia and volunteers who may garrison the posts in the upper country during their absence. Very respfy.

JAMES MONROE

Br. Gen.

Duncan McArthur.

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### **Memoranda of Occurrences and some important facts attending the Campaign on the Niagara in 1814.**

On the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, Major-General Brown authorized the Generals of Brigade to inform the Commandants of Corps that the Army would cross the straits before them as day dawned on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The arrangements for embarking and debarking and the order of attack were settled with Generals of Brigade and the Senior Engineers, (as the Commanding General believed, ) to their entire satisfaction. Our limited means of transport were divided between Generals Scott and Ripley, who were to land simultaneously at dawn of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the former below and the latter above the Fort, which they were to surround as soon as practicable. The advance below having landed, the boats were to return immediately to Black Rock and transport the residue to the army, ordnance, &c., Towards the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Ripley appeared to be very much discomposed. He then objected to the division that had been made of the transports and complained that he should not be able to cross with sufficient force, that the principal fighting would be above the fort where he was ordered to land. He had seen lights during the night and smoke during the day in that quarter for some time past. General Brown endeavored to satisfy him in vain. He tendered his resignation which was not received by General Brown, who remained inflexibly determined that the army should cross agreeably to the arrangements made as he conceived that delay might lead to disastrous consequences, the enemy might learn our intentions and the effect upon our won troops would not be to inspire confidence.

Towards the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> when General Brown supposed that all the troops the transports could carry were embarked, he proceeded from his quarters with his suite, viz. Col. Gardner, Adjutant-General, Major McRee and Wood, Engineers, and Captains Austin & Spencer, Aids de Camp, (Major Jones, Assistant Adjutant General, was assigned to General Ripley's command to observe his orders and expedite their execution). On his arrival at the beach, General Scott was embarked, and supposing that General Ripley had also embarked, as the time had expired, he ordered General Scott to put off, and the troops not embarked to commence their march to Black Rock. He then proceeded in his barge a few rods up the lake, where General Ripley was to embark his command, with the intention of ordering him to put off and was greatly disappointed in finding that only a part of his troops had embarked and that General

Ripley was not to be found in the boats, schooners or on the beach. Despairing from what he saw of getting General Ripley into action or to the landing, (should there be any opposition,) the Major General left orders that he should follow as soon as possible and then proceeded after General Scott.

When General Brown arrived on the Canada shore, he found the General Scott had landed and formed his command below the Fort agreeably to the arrangements made. At this time the boats which had conveyed this command had proceeded to Black Rock for the transportation of the troops ordered to that point, those of Ripley's Brigade, &c. It was daylight. The Major General directed General Scott to advance a battalion near the Fort to observe the movements of the Garrison as they might blow up the works and attempt an escape. Major Jessup of the 25<sup>th</sup> was put upon this duty. The Adjutant General was ordered to meet the residue of General Ripley's Brigade as they landed from Black Rock and marched them up to General Scott's right where they would receive further orders. During the execution of this order, General Brown proceeded to reconnoitre the woods in advance of General Scott's right and had the good fortune to meet with an inhabitant and his son, (a small boy,) on their way to the strait for fish. By threats and promises this man was secured as a guide and given to Col. Gardner, who was ordered to continue his march, with the command he had formed, pass General Scott's right, penetrate the woods in the rear of Fort Erie and come upon the lake shore above the Fort, there resting his right flank near the lake and extending his left so as with his and Jessup's command completely to enclose the enemy's forces. These orders were executed before General Ripley had landed at some distance above the Fort, when he was informed of the order of investment and received directions to march down, unite his brigade and relieve Col. Gardner, who returned to his staff duties. No time was lost in crossing the necessary ordnance, the positions for the batteries were selected by our Engineers, and the pieces were moving up when a flag advanced and proposed a Surrender. The terms were promptly settled. The garrison marched out and was crossed to Buffalo. It was nearly night. In the course of the evening, arrangements were made for securing Fort Erie. General Scott was ordered to march on the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> with his brigade and Captain Towson's company of artillery to secure the bridge across the Chippewa before the enemy could bring up his forces to defend that important pass.

On the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> General Scott marched. It was late in the afternoon before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade under General Ripely and the artillery under Major Hinmand could be prepared to follow; our supplies of every description were to be brought down from Buffalo. About midnight General Brown with the residue of the army joined the advance. General Brown had found the enemy strongly posted near the bridge at the mouth of the Chippewa and after feeling him, had very judiciously chosen a position for his camp behind Street's Creek. The army rested in good order.

On the 5<sup>th</sup>, as the day dawned, the enemy commenced a petty war upon our pickets. The Major General, relying upon his information as to this force, and not doubting that he was competent to meet them in the field, had no desire to show his own force. The enemy was therefore indulged and permitted to extend some of his light Troops through the woods and give us a desultory fire towards the left of our extreme line where the command of a picket was entrusted to Captain Treat, who, in the eyes of the enemy, so conducted himself as to draw down upon him the indignation of the Major General. This punishment, though severe, was just, and at the moment indispensable. It had the happiest effect upon the army.

Brigadier General Porter of the Militia had been engaged in collecting volunteers from the western part of New York. They had not jointed but he was enabled by the most zealous exertions to bring up about noon a few hundred Indian warriors and part of a Regiment of Pennsylvania militia, who had volunteered to cross from Buffalo. Immediately on his arrival he was ordered to report his troops and prepare for an attack on the enemy's light troops, who had been annoying us, and if practicable, to cut off their pickets in front of us. The order of attack was to file off to the left from the rear of our camp, make a detour through the woods so as to be concealed from the enemy, and place himself between their main camp and advanced parties. Major Wood and Major Jones of the General Staff, accompanied General Porter. The Major General having seen General Porter in full march, passed with Colonel Gardner and his aids in front of the camp to observe the effect on the enemy of Porter's movement. On his way he called

for General Scott and found he was asleep. As he required rest General Brown thought proper not to disturb him and accordingly proceeded to the plain in front of Street's, so as to induce them to follow, and thus facilitate the movement of General Porter to taking his position to their rear. A few minutes after our pickets had gained the position directed, a heavy fire commenced in the woods on the left and front of our camp and continued advancing towards the Chippewa. General Brown concluded that the enemy was advancing in force and as General Porter was too far advanced to be recalled, he resolved to support him. Riding rapidly to General Scott, he found him up, his horse before his tent, and his brigade forming for drill. After having advised him of what he had seen and the conclusion he had drawn, he ordered him to advance upon the plain toward the Chippewa and meet the enemy. General Scott rather captiously observed that he would march and drill his brigade, but that he did not believe that he should find 500 of the enemy. The order he received was most gallantly obeyed.

It appears that General Riall had ordered an attack with his whole strength; and expecting to find us unprepared, had directed his whole force of Indians and light troops to fall upon the left flank and exterior line of our camp, at the same time, that he attacked it in front with his veteran regiments. Thus General Porter and this column unexpectedly encountered each other in the woods and Porter's command, conducted itself with the greatest gallantry at the onset. He drove the enemy with great slaughter, (considering the description of the force engaged), until his Indians came to the open ground near the Chippewa, when perceiving the heavy column of British Infantry advancing and not knowing that they were supported, they were panich struck and fled in the greatest confusion. It was within ten or fifteen minutes of his observation of the enemy's movement from the front when General Brown ordered Colonel Gardner to put General Ripley in motion with the 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry to remain with him and conduct his column by the left of our camp through the skirts of the woods, and having passed the left of General Scott, to fall upon the rear of the enemy's right flank.

Capt. Ritchie had been ordered out with his company of artillery. The Major General was on the plain when Capt. Ritchie arrived and ordered him to form battery between General Scott's left and centre battalions. During this movement Genl. Porter's command was seen running out of the woods even to the centre of our camp. Majors Jones and Wood had the good fortune to return safe, and immediately mounted for duty in the main battle, the former joined General Brown about this time.

As General Ripley had not come up and Porter's command had been routed, the left battalion of General Scott's brigade, commanded by Jessup, was outflanked and greatly exposed. This was a critical moment. Captain Austin being struck by a half spent ball, which deprived him of his breath and he was supported on his horse by Captain Spencer and Majour Jones. The Major General rode up in person to Major Jessup and assured him of having a speedy support, he then hurried to the rear of Major Jessup's left flank and met Colonel Gardner, who informed him that General Ripley's command was nearly up, and in a few minutes would be able to close with the enemy. The Major General returned, but before any additional force came into action the enemy was defeated by General Scott's command. They were promptly pursued by our whole army and would have been killed or captured to a man but for the retreat afforded them in their works behind the Chippewa.

The enemy's loss was much greater than estimated by General Brown in his official account and the services of the gallant Porter and his command were undervalued at the time, great execution was done in their spirited advance upon the enemy through the wood and they certainly effected as much as could have been reasonably expected from undisciplined men.

July 5<sup>th</sup>. It was late in the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup> before the wounded of both armies could be taken care of, the dead remained on the field during the night, much of our time was engrossed on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in carrying the wounded to the hospital at Buffalo, and in burying the dead that were found in the woods and on the plains. General Brown was impatient at this delay – he was apprehensive that he could not arrive on the shore of Ontario and meet our fleet on the 10<sup>th</sup> as on examination of the enemy's works, the passage of the Chippewa bridge was deemed too hazardous and the country on the left was represented as an impracticable forest. On the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup>, General Brown secured the interest of an inhabitant

who informed him of an old timber road that led by a circuitous route from the rear of Mrs. Street's house to the conjunction of Lyon's Creek with the Chippewa.

On the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup>, Generals Brown and Porter with the Senior Engineers and Major Jones, the guide and a small guard explored this road. It was determined that it could be rendered passable for artillery in a short time, accordingly a heavy detail was immediately made for this duty and at night it was reported "practicable" for artillery.

As General Scott's command had manifested from the moment of crossing the strait the greatest degree of emulation in the promptitude with which they executed their orders as well as the gallantry with which they improved each opportunity to distinguish themselves, and on the contrary as General Ripley was tardy in the investment of Fort Erie and as his brigade had not participated in the laurels of the 5<sup>th</sup>, the Commanding General was induced to afford him this opportunity to establish the reputation of his command and was particularly anxious to diffuse throughout the ranks that stimulus to gallant achievement which is ever produced by emulous exertions, accordingly General Ripley, with his brigade, reinforced by General Porter's command, and two companies of artillery under Major Hindman, was ordered to take this road we had found, force a passage, which existed formerly near the mouth of Lyon's Creek and cross the Chippewa. We found that the enemy had erected no work for the defence of this passage and we believed that it might be approached undiscovered, as the road lay through a thick wood and the enemy had confined himself to the north side of the Chippewa after the battle of the 5<sup>th</sup>. The materials for a bridge were principally procured by taking up Barn floors, which were forwarded in waggons (with the troops) and selecting the light boats which could be transported in that manner, and it was not supposed that General Ripley would be delayed but a short time in crossing, after which he was to place himself upon the enemy's right flank and in his rear, when we should be governed by circumstances. General Ripley did not pursue that prompt and decisive course which the service he was on particularly required. The day was far spent and General Ripley continued to doubt and hesitate. The Major General advanced to the point and assumed the immediate command. The materials for the bridge were then advanced to the creek, Hindman's artillery was posted to command the opposite bank, and the enemy after a short cannonade was disconcerted and retired. It was soon reported that apprehensive we should force a passage to his rear he had abandoned his works. This proved to be the case and we found that the guns of his batteries were destroyed by breaking off the trunnions and that they were thrown into the Chippewa. The construction of the intended bridge was abandoned. General Ripley marched his command down a road running along the Creek and General Scott advanced on the main road to the bridge which the enemy had destroyed. With our boats we were enabled during the night to cross Scott's and Ripley's brigades and a part of our artillery.

July 9<sup>th</sup>. The army marched in pursuit of the enemy with the exception of General Porter's command, which was left to guard the baggage and rebuild the bridge across the Chippewa. As the enemy had a strong new work at Queenston Heights, it was expected that he would occupy this position. We were greatly surprised when at our approach he abandoned his work and fled, leaving his intrenching tools and a quantity of stores. We immediately occupied his position and advanced our column of infantry to the village of Queenston. The enemy retired to Forts George and Niagara and left the country open to us in every direction. We could march to the shore of the lake from our present position in a few hours whenever our fleet should arrive. General Brown had been induced by the Government to rely implicitly on the co-operation of the fleet in the execution of the plan of campaign presented and had experienced the greatest anxiety as to his arrival at the lake shore by the time appointed to meet Commodore Chauncey, viz, the 10<sup>th</sup> of July. In anxious expectation of the speedy arrival of the fleet, the army encamped, having every advantage of strength, health, and convenience, which the country could afford. General Porter reinforced by a detachment of New York Volunteers, and having rebuilt the bridge across the Chippewa, brought up the baggage and joined the main army on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

After remaining some days in painful suspense, we found that the original arrangements intended for our supplies could not be realized; we could draw nothing from the depots at Genesee River and Sodus without the fleet, we, therefore, were dependent for Provisions on a line of supplies from our rear.

During this halt nothing of moment occurred except the loss of General Swift of the militia. This brave officer was killed by a soldier of a picket near Fort George which he had with a few men surprised and captured. Detachments occasionally marched to the Lake Shore for forage or observation without being molested.

The Indians left us about the 20<sup>th</sup> and were crossed to Lewiston. The same day the works on Queenston Heights were blown up and the army took a position near Fort George. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, we occupied our old position on the Queenston Heights which the enemy had possessed with a few men, who were soon routed and fled. General Porter with his usual zeal pursued them and captured a few prisoners, of the number were nine officers.

On the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Major General received by express a despatch from General Gaines commanding at Sackett's Harbour with advice that our fleet were in port and the Commodore sick. In consequence of the delay of the fleet, the Major General had ordered from Sackett's Harbour all the riflemen at that post with a battering train of artillery. It was hoped that this reinforcement by coasting the southern shore of the Lake could arrive safe in some of the harbours or creeks near the head of the lake and thence be transported to the army. In this the Major General was also disappointed. Major Martin after having embarked was detained at Stoney Island under the conviction that he was in danger of being captured by the enemy's squadron. This information from General Gaines precluded all hope of co-operation from the fleet and of the timely arrival of Major Morgan. It was therefore resolved to fall back to the Chippewa and be governed by circumstances.

It was the intention of the Major General (in which all his principal officers coincided) to march upon Burlington, having first received a small supply of provisions from Schlosser and removed from the army all baggage which could possibly be dispensed with.

With this object in view the army fell back to the Chippewa on the 24<sup>th</sup>. General Scott, ever ambitious to distinguish himself and his command, was solicitous to be allowed to march for Burlington Heights with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade and expressed his wishes to that effect on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup>, he made the request in form. He appeared to be very tenacious on this subject and quite vexed that the commanding General would not divide his force. Scott honestly believed that with the troops he asked he could cover himself with additional glory and add to the fame of the army.

General Brown received about noon from Colonel Swift, who was posted at Lewiston, advice by express that the enemy had appeared in considerable force at Queenston and on its heights, that four vessels of the fleet had arrived during the preceding night and were then lying near Fort Niagara, and that a number of boats were in view moving up the strait. Within a few minutes after this intelligence, the Major General was further informed (by Captain Denman of the Quartermaster General's department) that the enemy was landing at Lewiston and that our baggage & stores at Schlosser and on their way thither were in danger of immediate capture. It was conceived that the most effective method of recalling him from this object was to put the army in motion towards Queenston. If he was in the field on the Canada side of the strait, our only business was to meet and fight him without loss of time as General Brown had almost ceased to hope for co-operation or reinforcement from any quarter. The support upon which the Major General had hitherto relied had failed to appear and the enemy having the power on the Lake could reinforce at pleasure. General Scott, with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Towson's artillery and the Dragoons and mounted men were accordingly marched on the road towards Queenston. He was particularly instructed to report if the enemy appeared and to call for assistance if that was necessary. Having command of the Dragoons he would have, it was considered the means of collecting and communication intelligence. On General Scott's arrival near 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 despatch this information but not to receive any communication in return, the General advanced upon him. Hearing the report of cannon and small arms, General Brown at once concluded that a battle had commenced between the advance of our army and that of the enemy and without waiting for information from General Scott, ordered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and all the artillery to march as rapidly as possible to his support, and directed Col. Gardner to remain and see this order executed. He then rode with his aids de-camp and Major McRae

with all speed toward the scene of action. As he approached the falls about a mile from Chippewa, he met Mr. Jones, who had accompanied General Scott, bearing a message from him, advising General Brown that he had met the enemy. From the information given by Major Jones it was concluded to order up General Porter's command & Major Jones was sent with this order. Advancing a little further, General Brown met Major Wood of the Corps of Engineers, who had also accompanied General Scott; he reported that the conflict between General Scott and the enemy was close and `desperate and urged to hurry a reinforcement. The reinforcements were now marching with all possible rapidity. The Major General was accompanied by Major Wood to the field of battle. Upon his arrival he found that General Scott had passed the wood and engaged the enemy on the Queenston road and the ground to the left of it, with the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiments and Towson's artillery. The 25<sup>th</sup> had then been detached to the right to be governed by circumstances. Believing these troops to be much exhausted, notwithstanding the good countenance they showed, and not knowing they had suffered severely in the contest, General Brown determined to form and interpose a new line with the advancing troops and disengage General Scott and hold his brigade in reserve. By this time Captain Biddle and Ritchie's column was nearly up with the right of General Scott's line. At this moment the enemy broke. General Scott's line gave a general hurrah that cheered the whole army. General Ripley was ordered to pass this line and display his column in front. The movement was commenced in obedience to the order. Majors McRae and Wood had rapidly reconnoitered the enemy and his position. McRae reported that he appeared to have taken a new position with his line and with his artillery occupied a height which gave a great advantage, it being the key of the whole position. To secure the victory, it was necessary to carry this height and seize his artillery. MacRae was ordered by the Major General to conduct General Ripley's column on the Queenston road with a view to this object and prepare the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment under Colonel Miller for this duty.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade immediately advanced on the Queenston road, General Brown with his aid-de-camp and Major Wood, passing to the left of the 2<sup>nd</sup> brigade in front of the first, approached the enemy's artillery and observed an extenden line of infantry formed for the support of his artillery. The first regiment of Infantry under the command of Lt. Col. Nicolas, which arrived that day and was attached to neither of the Brigades, but had marched to the field in rear of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, was ordered promptly to break off to the left and form a line facing the enemy on the heights with a view of drawing his fire and attracting his attention while Colonel Miller marched with the bayonet upon his left flank to carry his artillery. As the 2<sup>st</sup> Regiment conducted by Major Wood, and commanded by Lt. Col. Nicholas, approached its position, the commanding General rode to Col. Miller and ordered him to charge and carry the enemy's artillery with the bayonet. He replied in a tone of great promptness and good humor that he would try to execute the order. At this moment the first Regiment gave way under the fire of the enemy but Col. Miller, without regard to this occurrence, advanced steadily to his object and carried the height and the cannon in a style rarely equalled, never excelled. At the point of time when Colonel Miller moved, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment was on his right a little in the rear. General Ripley led this regiment, it had some severe fighting and in a degree gave way but was promptly reformed and brought up on the right of the 21<sup>st</sup> with which were connected detachments of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. General Ripley, being now with his brigade formed in line, the enemy driven from their commanding ground, had the captured cannon, nine pieces in his rear. The first Regiment having been rallied and brought into line by Lt. Col. Nicholas, on the left of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and General Porter coming up at this time, occupied with his command the extreme left. Our artillery formed on the right and between the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Regiments. Having given the order to Col. Miller to storm the heights and carry the enemy's cannon as he advanced, General Brown moved from his right flank to the rear of his left. Major Wood ;and Capt. Spencer, met him on the Queenston road; turning down that road, he passed by the rear of the 23<sup>rd</sup> regiment. The shouts of the American soldiers on the height at this moment assured him of Col. Miller's success and he hastened on, designing to turn from the Queenston road towards the place up Lundy's Lane. In the act of doing so Major Wood and Capt. Spencer, who were about a horse's length before him were nearly riding upon a body of the enemy and nothing prevented them from doing so but an officer exclaiming before them "they are the Yankees". The exclamation halted the three American officers, and upon looking down the road they saw a line of British

Infantry drawn up in front of the western fence of the road with his right resting near Lundy's Lane. The British officer had at the moment he gave this alarm, discovered Major Jessup. The Major, as has already stated, had at the commencement of the action been ordered by General Scott to take ground to his right. He had succeeded in turning the enemy's left flank, had captured General Riall and several other officers and sent them to camp, then searching his way silently towards the principal scene of action, he had brought his regiment, the 25<sup>th</sup>, after but little comparative loss up to the eastern fence of the Queenston Road, a little to the north of Lundy's Lane. The moment the British officer gave Major Jessup notice of having discovered him, Jessup ordered his command to fire. The lines could not have been more than four rods apart. The slaughter was dreadful. The enemy's line fled down the Queenston road. As the firing ceased, General Brown approached Major Jessup, advised him that Colonel Miller had carried the enemy's artillery and received information of the capture of General Riall, &c. The Major then asked him where he should form his regiment and was directed to move up Lundy's Lane and form on the right of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. The enemy rallying his broken corps and having received reinforcements was now discovered in good order and great force. The commanding General, doubting the correctness of this information and to ascertain the truth passed in front of our lines. He could no longer doubt as a more extended line than he had before seen during the engagement, was near and advancing upon us.

Captain Spencer, without a remark, put spurs to his horse, rode directly up to the advancing line, then turning towards the enemy's right, enquired in a firm and strong voice "What Regiment is that?" and was answered "The Royal Scots, Sir". General Brown and Captain Spencer then threw themselves behind our own line without loss of time and waited the attack. The enemy advanced slowly and firmly upon us; perfect silence was observed through both armies until the enemy's line approached to within from four to six rods. Our troops had loaded their pieces and the artillery was prepared, the order to fire was given and most awful was the effect. The lines closed in part before that of the enemy was broken, he then retired precipitately, the American fire following him. The field was covered with the slain, but not an enemy capable of marching was to be seen; we dressed our lines upon the ground we occupied. General Brown was not disposed to leave it in the dark, knowing it to be the best in the vicinity. His intention then was to maintain it until daybreak and be governed by circumstances.

Our gallant and accomplished foe did not give us much time for deliberation. He showed himself again within twenty minutes, apparently undismayed and in good order. General Ripley now urged the Major General to order up General Scott, who had during this time been held in reserve with his three battalions. The Major General rode in person to General Scott and ordered him to advance. That officer was prepared and expected the call. General Scott advanced toward the right of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. General Brown passed to the left to speak with General Porter and see the condition and countenance of his militia, who at that moment were thrown into some confusion by a very galling and deadly fire from the enemy; they were, however, held to their duty by the exertions of their chief, and most nobly sustained the conflict. The enemy was again repulsed from the whole line and driven out of sight.

But a short time had elapsed when he was again seen advancing in great force upon our main line.

General Scott, now on our left, had given to his column a direction which would have enabled him in a few minutes to have formed line in the rear of the enemy's right and thus to have brought him between two fires. But in a moment most unexpectedly a flank fire from a party of the enemy concealed upon his left, falling upon the centre of General Scott's command, while in open column, blasted our expectations, his column was severed in two, one part passing to the rear, the other by the right flank of platoons towards our main line. About this time General Brown received his first wound, a musket ball passing through his right thigh. A few minutes later, Captain Spencer, aid-de-camp to the Major General, received a violent blow from a ball of some description, on his left side; it did not enter, but such was its force, that it nearly unhorsed him, and in the General's own words "he began to doubt his ability to sit his horse." Meeting with his confidential friend, Major Wood, he thought proper to state to him his wounds and condition. Wood exclaimed with great emotions, "Never mind, my dear General, you are gaining the greatest victory that was ever gained for your country". "His gallant soul, says the Major General "was exclusively occupied with the battle that was then raging, if possible with redoubled fury". This was the



last desperate effort made by the enemy to regain his position and artillery, a broader display of heroism from the ranks was never exhibited. The hostile lines met in several places, and we captured many prisoners who surrendered at the point of the bayonet. Porter's volunteers, who were not excelled by regulars, were seen precipitated by their commander upon the enemy's line, which they broke and dispersed making several prisoners.

The enemy seemed to be effectually routed, they disappeared. In a conversation that occurred a few minutes afterwards between General Brown and Majors MaRae & Wood and two or three other officers, it was the unanimous belief that we had nothing more to fear from the Enemy with whom we had been contending but it appeared to be admitted by the whole that it would be judicious to retire to camp. The idea did not occur to anyone present that it would be necessary to leave behind a man or a cannon. Major McRae expressly observed that there would be no difficulty in removing the cannon by hand. Wagons had been by the previous order of the Major General provided for the wounded. General Brown, suffering severely from his wound, now moved from the field with Capt. Austin, his surviving aid-de-camp, observing to the other officers that they would remain and aid General Ripley by all the means in their power & as the General moved towards the camp, many scattered men were seen by him on the road, not a man was moving away. None seemed to be alarmed but having lost their officers, were seeking water and were either drinking or struggling for drink. This scene assured the Major General in the belief that it was proper for the army to return to camp, for the purpose of being re-organized and refreshed before moving, that being the only situation where all the scattering men could be collected and certainly arranged to their companies and battalions. An officer was accordingly sent to say to General Ripley that the army would return to camp. It being understood that the wounded men on the field and the cannon captured by the army were included.

Being supported on his horse, the Major General moved slowly to his tent. Within a few minutes from this, it was reported to him that General Ripley had returned to camp, having left the captured cannon on the field. General Ripley being immediately sent for, General Brown stated to him that there was no doubt upon his mind but that the enemy had retired and that our victory was complete; he appeared to be of the same opinion as were all the officers present. General then in strong and emphatic language ordered General Ripley to re-organize his battalions, to see that they were refreshed with whatever might be in his power to afford and put himself with all the men he could muster of every corps on the field of battle as the day dawned, there to be governed by circumstances, at all events to bring off the captured cannon. It was not believed the enemy would dare to attack him if he showed a good countenance. General Ripley left General Brown with a conviction that he would execute the order given him. He did not make the slightest objection to it, none was suggested from any quarter.

As the day approached, finding that the column had not moved, General Brown ordered his staff to go to every commanding officer of corps and ordered them to be promptly prepared to march in obedience to the order given to General Ripley, but it was sunrise before the army crossed the Chippewa. General Ripley led his troops as far as Bridgewater Mills and halting his column there, returned to the Major General and stated his objections to proceeding further. General Brown persisted when he informed the General that General Porter was also opposed to proceeding. At these words General Brown replied "Sir, You will do as you please," and had no further intercourse with him until they met at Buffalo. General Brown had entertained no doubt of the intelligence or personal bravery of General Ripley, nor had he ever expressed himself to that effect. In consequence of the events of the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> and especially on the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, his confidence in him as a commander appeared to be diminished and the General believed that he dreaded responsibility more than danger. In a word that he had a greater share of physical than moral courage. General Scott and the Major General being both severely wounded, a courier was despatched without loss of time to General Gaines ordering him on to take command of the gallant remains of the army of the Niagara.

In the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, General Brown was placed in a small skiff under the care of Capt. Austin and conveyed towards Buffalo.

The General arrived at Black Rock the evening of that day where he remained during the night. Towards the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>, he was advised that the army had fallen back in haste and was then near him on the opposite side of the strait. This movement was unexpected and greatly affected him. He was removed to Buffalo. General Ripley upon his arrival at the Ferry at Black Rock intended to have proceeded with the army to the American side of the strait but the honorable stand taken by the officers whom he consulted induced him to shrink from the intention. Majors McRae, Wood, and Towson as well as General Porter deserve particular honor for their high minded conduct on this occasion. He left the army and came to General Brown in the hope of obtaining an order from him to cross with forces; no proposition could have been more surprising to the Major General and perhaps he treated General Ripley with unjustifiable indignation and scorn. Upon General Ripley's leaving the Major General's chambers, he said below that he would not be responsible for the army if it remained in Canada and insisted that a written order should be given him. When this was communicated to the Major General he sent General Ripley the following note:

“Headquarters, Buffalo, 27<sup>th</sup> July,  
Sir:

All the sick and wounded and the surplus baggage will be immediately removed to this place. Those men who are sound and able to fight will encamp by Fort Erie so as to defend that post and at the same time hold the Ferry below until the wounded, sick and surplus baggage have crossed. You will send Major Wood or Major McRae to me immediately.

Yours respectfully,  
JACOB BROWN

Brig. General Ripley”.

Agreeably to this order the army took up a position at Erie and through Major Wood, who came to the Major General, he communicated to the Engineers his reliance upon them for the security of the army by the erection of proper defences for its camp. These gentlemen display a zeal and expressed a confidence which was inspiring to others and most praiseworthy at this trying moment. They devoted an unremitting attention not only to their particular duties but to every other object connected with the honor and safety of the army.

General Ripley continued to despond and although in command was in the habit of saying that the army could not maintain its position.

General Gaines reached the camp at Erie on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, his arrival relieved General Ripley from the responsibility he so much dreaded, gave hope to the army and reassured the commander in chief that it would be in his power to close the campaign with honor. Shortly after this General Ripley asked and obtained leave of absence to attend to his private business but he did not avail himself of it until after the memorable 15<sup>th</sup> of August. See General Gaines official Report for an account of that splendid achievement. At this time the Major General was moving about the western part of New York for the benefit of his health and with a view of infusing as much zeal as possible into the principal men so as to induce them to aid by their influence a call upon the militia which he expected His Excellency, D.D. Thompkins to make for the relief of the army on the Niagara. On the \_\_\_\_\_ of August, he met Colonel Yates, the Governor's aid, at Canandaigua, clothed with full powers to call forth such number of militia from the western Counties of the State as after advising with Major General Brown, should be thought expedient, General P.B. Porter was particularly consulted upon this occasion and it was determined to ask for 4,000 Militia and Col. Yates issued the necessary orders in the name of his Excellency to meet this call.

It could not at this time be reasonably doubted that this force would be promptly assembled and marched to the frontier.

In consequence of the severe wounds received by General Gaines the Major General hastened to the camp at Erie where he found General Miller in command General Gaines had been removed to the

hospital at Williamsville and although General Ripley had again joined the army and was the Senior officer with it, before the arrival of the Major General had he not gone upon duty.

The Major General endeavoured to see the real condition of his command and to determine with prudence the steps to be taken to preserve the remainder of his deeply suffering heroic forces.

He issued an order the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, placing General Ripley in command at Erie and returned to the New York side of the strit with the hope of expediting the movements and organization of the militia, &c., to be better situated than, he could be in a tent for the healing of his wounds and the restoration of his health which was greatly impaired.

On the evening of the next day, Colonel Wood came to the Major General and informed him as a private friend that it was not safe to leave ;the army with General Ripley, that no confidence could be reposed in him, that with such a commander the moral efficiency of the army would be lost and that as he hoped to preserve the honor of his command, he must return to camp and remain with his suffering soldiers in the face of the enemy. Col. Jones, Ass't Adjt. General came to him a few minutes after Col. Wood had gone out, of whom he made may inquiries and found that he concurred in sentiment with Col. Wood. The Major General returned with them to the camp at Erie, leaving it with General Porter to bring out and organize the Militia. This was found to be a most difficult duty. Notwithstanding the danger that menaced the country, the unprincipled partizans of oppositions were clamorous against every measure that led the people to the field, and the citizen soldier was too often willing to listen to any argument that gave him a pretext for resting quietly behind a constitution, which God and his country called upon him to advance and defend. It was soon seen that of the 4,000 militia ordered to Buffalo but a part would ever arrive even there, and but little hope could be entertained of getting any considerable number of them to face the enemy from the camp at Erie; as little reliance could be placed upon the promise succour advancing under the command of General Izard.

Major General Brown saw his danger and perceived with equal certainty that there was no escaped from it but by the heroic efforts of the men who stood by his side, they had often bled and triumphed and he believed that they would prefer to die in the blaze of their glory than live dishonored by captivity or defeat.

As the daily casualties were thinning the ranks and constant fatigue and exposure enfeebling those that escaped the fire of the enemy, the Commanding General determined without loss of time to make one great effort to save the suffering remains the force that appeared to be neglected by a country for which it had devoted itself. It should not be concealed that it appeared at this period to the army of Niagara and its chief that there was a conspiracy planned for its destruction and that this opinion, however unfounded, tended to render it more desperate.

Major General Brown gave much attention to the deserters from the enemy's camp, he examined in person all that came in, and soon became convinced that her understood the disposition, employment and arrangements of his forces. Upon the opinion thus formed, he laid his plans for the sortie which he determined to execute the moment that General P.B. Porter joined him with the expected militia reinforcements. Feeling deeply how much he was about to put to hazard, he desired the concurrence of his principal officers, and convened them for the purpose of eliciting their sentiments without fully disclosing his own. The result did not justify the General in Chief making known his determination. Form this time he acted and spoke as though he relied for safety upon the defence of his camp and to confirm this opinion in the army took measures to floor the tents and in every way to improve the condition of his forces in quarters as if they were to remain stationary for a long time. to render it certain that the enemy should be advised of what was going n within the lines of the American army, spies were sent to them in the character of deserters to give all the information they knew on the subject and to say further that General Brown could have no apprehension for the safety of his position so long as he remained in his works for their defence, but that he was alarmed for the safety of Buffalo whence he drew his subsistence; and to secure that place a call had been made on the militia for its defence.

Although it was known that the militia did not cheerfully obey the call made upon them, it was believed that from two to three thousand could be marched to Buffalo and General Brown would not permit a doubt that at least two thousand could be prevailed upon to cross to Erie.

The zeal and devotion of General P.B. Porter led him to entertain the same opinion but the result of this call of a reinforcement of 4,000 militia after all the great and patriotic efforts of their chief was that we increased our effective strength less than two thousand men, yet as these men were all volunteers and came with hearts prepared for combat, those only who understand the effect of moral power in war can estimate their importance. They were passed silently to their quarters during the nights of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of September and all possible display was made of the forces remaining upon the opposite shore, it is believed that the enemy was in utter ignorance of the movement. To confirm him in error a succession of trusty spies were sent to him up to the dawn of the day of the 17<sup>th</sup> and so little did the army under General Brown know of what were his plans for the day, even had an officer gone over to the enemy, the information that he could have given must have been favorable to the meditated enterprise as no one had been consulted but General Porter and the Engineers, Col. McRae and Major Wood.

At nine o'clock in the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup>, the General in Chief called his Assistant Adjutant General, Major Jones, and after explaining concisely his object, ordered him to see the officers named and direct them to his tent. The officers General Brown had selected to have the honor of leading commands in the 17<sup>th</sup> came, he explained to them his views and determination and enjoyed much satisfaction in seeing that his confidence had not been misplaced, they left him to prepare for the duty assigned to them the ensuing day.

At 12 o'clock the last agent was sent to the enemy in the character of a deserter and aided by disclosing all he knew in confirming him in security.

It was due to General Ripley as second in command that some explanation of the intended movement should be made to him, and with the view of doing this the Major General sent for him about 8 o'clock in the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> and fully disclosed all his arrangements for that day. General Ripley perceived that no duty was assigned to him and he neither claimed nor asked any, contenting himself with saying that the enterprise was a hopeless one and that he should be well satisfied to escape from the disgrace that in his judgement would fall upon all engaged in it, that the enemy were in the habit of looking into our camp from the tree tops along their line, they would see our movements be at their works to receive us and that inevitable ruin was impending over the American army. The Major General was much gratified to find that his second in command claimed no situation in the attack, as such claim at the moment would have been very embarrassing.

The columns moved to the positions assigned our fatigue parties progressed with their labours as usual and as the time approached for the assault, no indication was perceived of alarm or movement within the enemy's lines. General Ripley now asked and obtained the command of the reserve. The moment the enemy's works were carried, he was ordered to advance from between the bastions of old Fort Erie to the position the General in Chief had taken to see to the best advantage the movements of the line. This order was either misunderstood or disobeyed as General Ripley moved his command in a different direction and it was not until the General in Chief sent a second order by his aid-de-camp that the reserve were marched to him

For further information of the closing scenes of this campaign, read General Brown's official Account of the Sortie.

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Buffalo, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1814

Extract of a letter from General Brown to General Ripley

If the enemy do attack the probability is this will be the point being the weaker position. You will endeavor to keep yourself correctly informed of his movements and like other military men, you must be governed by circumstances. I do not believe that any circumstances will occur for many days yet to come that will endanger your post or the army under your command and in no case is the surrender of the one or

the other to be thought of . If the enemy should cross to this shore and you see a fair opportunity of striking him a successful blow, do it. If he attacks your position I expect you to ruin him.

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Estimate of British Regular Troops in Upper Canada, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1814, with a view of their distribution.

At Forts Niagara, George and Erie & at Chippewa and Queenston.

8 <sup>th</sup>	400	
41 <sup>st</sup>	350	
100 <sup>th</sup>	600	
Royal Scots	850	
Royal Artillery	150	
		2,350

At Burlington Heights and York

103 <sup>rd</sup>	800	
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At Kingston

Right Wing of De Watteville's	700	
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Glengarries	500	
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Canadian Fencibles	400	
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104 <sup>th</sup>	550	
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Squadron of Dragoons	100	
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Royal Artillery	150	
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2,400

Am't carried over		5,550
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At Prescott

89 <sup>th</sup>	500	
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Royal Artillery	50	
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550

Aggregate Rank and File		6,100
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I do not estimate the total effectives fit for the field at more than five thousand.

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Estimated strength of British regular Troops in Upper Canada, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1814 .....5,000

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> of July and the 15<sup>th</sup> of September the following Regiments arrived in Upper Canada. I estimate them as their supposed effective strength.

Left Wing of De Watteville's in the early part of July	550	
6 <sup>th</sup> , & 82 <sup>nd</sup> , in early part of August	1,250	
97 <sup>th</sup> in middle of August	557	

2,357

7,357

90 <sup>th</sup> & 37 <sup>th</sup> , last of August	1,500	
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Newfoundland Fencibles	550	
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Towards the close of August and beginning of September , the 16<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and 37<sup>th</sup> arrived and were stationed at Johnstown, Prescott and Brockvill where they still remain

Say	500	
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Total effectives		10,707
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Non effectives	1,100	
Aggregate rank and file	11,807	
From the above deduct for the Enemy's total loss in the various contests with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Division and by desertion and sickness	3,900	
The remains of the 8 <sup>th</sup> , 41 <sup>st</sup> , and 100 <sup>th</sup> sent to the Lower Province for winter quarters	600	
	4,500	
rank and file, 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 1814	7,307	
Distribution of the British regular force in Upper Canada, 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 1814		
Johnstown, Prescott & Brockvill, 16 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> , and 37 <sup>th</sup>		1,450
Royal Artillery		50
		<hr/> 1,500
Kingston		
Canadian Fencibles	400	
Newfoundland do	350	
Battalion companies, 104 <sup>th</sup>	150	
Remains of the old Regiments of the Province, Excepting 8 <sup>th</sup> , 41 <sup>st</sup> , and 100 <sup>th</sup>	1,457	
		2,707
Upon the Niagara Frontier		
6 <sup>th</sup> and 82 <sup>nd</sup>	400	
97 <sup>th</sup>	500	
90 <sup>th</sup> and 37 <sup>th</sup>	1,500	
Royal Artillery	100	
	3,100	
	7,307	

Estimate of the British regular Troops opposed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division

Major General Ryall's command upon the Niagara at York and Burlington, 1<sup>st</sup> July 1814

8 <sup>th</sup>	400
41 <sup>st</sup>	350
100 <sup>th</sup>	800
Royal Scots	850
Royal Artillery	150
103 <sup>rd</sup>	800
	3,350

Of this force he brought at least eighteen hundred men upon the plains of Chippewa.

Lt. General Drummond arrived with the following reinforcements, July 24<sup>th</sup>

89 <sup>th</sup>	500
Glengarries	500
Flank companies of the 104 <sup>th</sup> ,	
Filled up to 100 each	200
Squadron of Dragoons	100

1,300

4,650

The whole of the above force for duty was concentrated near Fort George during the day and night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of July, excepting say 700 men lost at Fort Erie and on the plains of Chippewa

700

3,950

From which deduct for those left sick and in garrison at Forts George and Niagara

500

3,450

And you have an effective force of men engaged in the battle of Niagara

Loss of the enemy 25<sup>th</sup> July 1,000

2,450

Drummond's Regular force fit for the field

26<sup>th</sup> July 2,450

July 29<sup>th</sup>, De Watteville's right and left

Wing 1100 strong joined Drummond 1,100

3,550

After the arrival of this reinforcement the enemy moved slowly and cautiously upon Fort Erie. The 15<sup>th</sup> of August in attempting to carry that place by assault, he lost not less than 1,200 men. In his official report of that affair he acknowledged the loss of 945 exclusive of De Watteville's Regt. and we have good reason to believe that this regiment did not lose less than 300 men

1,200

2,350

Toward the last of August Drummond was reinforced by the

6<sup>th</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> 1,250

in the early part of September by the 97<sup>th</sup> 557

1,807

4,157

September 17, Sortie, the enemy did not lose

Less in killed, wounded and prisoners than 1,000 men 1,000

3,157

On the 21<sup>st</sup> September, Drummond retreated with his remaining force, say three thousand one hundred men to his field works on the east bank of the Chippewa, keeping out a light party at Black Creek to watch the movements of the American army.

Lt. General Drummond's regular force fit for

The field 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1814, say 3,000

Sick in garrison, exclusive of wounded men 500

3,500

Ryall's force, 1<sup>st</sup> July 3,350

Reinforcements with Drummond 24<sup>th</sup> July 1,300

4,650

De Watteville's Regiment, 29<sup>th</sup> July 1,100

6<sup>th</sup>, 82<sup>nd</sup> & 97<sup>th</sup> 1,807

7,557

The enemy's loss by desertion was considerable. He must also have lost many men by the fire of our batteries, in affairs of pickets, and in the attack upon Buffalo. These various losses together with those

occasioned by service must I think be equal to his gain by the recovery of wounded men. This view of the subject will give his loss as follows.

Fort Erie and Chippewa	700
Falls of Niagara	1,000
Assault on Fort Erie	1,200
Sortie	1,000
	<hr/>
Force remaining upon the Niagara Frontier, 22 <sup>nd</sup> September, 1814	3,657

In this estimate it is to be understood that no account is taken of Militia or Indians in the British service and it is established that he carried with him to the battle of Niagara of this description of force at least one thousand men.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of October, the enemy's fleet sailed from Kingston with provisions and the 9<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> regiments and arrived at Fort George the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The fleet returned to Kingston in October with the wounded and sick men of the old Regiments. Another supply of provisions and military stores was put on board and the fleet sailed for the head of the lake. Upon the return of the fleet from the second cruise, the remains of the Old regiments came down for Winter Quarters. The 8<sup>th</sup>, 41<sup>st</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> were sent to the Lower Province.

Dear Sir:

I rec'd your two letters of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> from Sackett's Harbour, before this can reach you, one from me will have been rec'd which can leave you no doubt about the true construction to be given to that under which you acted, not any on the subject of what you ought to do under existing circumstances. If you left Sackett's Harbour secure, go on and drive the Enemy out of Niagara. I will offer to you a few thoughts which may not be altogether useless. A Fortress may be taken by Assault, by siege, by investment or simply by a well chosen position which threatens the supplies & the retreat of the Enemy: the first rarely fails when made in the Confidence of strength (much) superior, and by veteran officers & men. The second is an affair of calculation, more certain than the other and indeed infallible if your Engineer understands his trade, if your batteries be sufficiently formidable & well served & well sustained by your Infantry. The success of the third is more doubtful because depending more upon what your Enemy is unable or unwilling to do than upon what you do yourself, in a word by this mode you starve or you frighten your Enemy into submission, he despairs of being reinforced & therefore is justified in yielding. The fourth mode has in it some of the characters of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Some people would not readily see the difference between them. They may even say that every investment is a position. You will understand the full meaning of the distinction when I say that were you in force to cross the Niagara & occupy the passes by which the Garrison communicates with Burlington & York, you would not invest but most probably so disquiet it that it would soon abandon the fortress it now holds. This last was my winter plan, & had the Governor been able to raise his Volunteers while the ice lasted it was to be preferred to any other, but the ice is gone & no volunteers raised & we are left to do the best we can without the aid of either. What is that best? To reconnoitre well the ground, to seize that most commanding position in the night, to cover your men & raise your batteries and to mount your cannon before daybreak and as the day dawns to fill his fosse with shells and shot. You are in a country of wood and batteries are rapidly formed by means of fascines &c. If you can get earth enough to cover and consolidate them. Your Engineer is a very enterprising officer. I hope he is also a scientific one, much will depend upon him.

This is written at midnight and after a day of great labor and cannot be much lengthened with advantage. What remains of my paper I would fill up with details of information from Canada were it not probable that you may be as well if not better informed than we are on that subject. That the enemy mean to recover what they last year lost in the West is evident. Your movement is calculated to check this



policy at least & if I can make the Western Regts muster 3,000 effectives by the first day of June I shall endeavor to put it down altogether. My compliments to Genls. Gaines & Scott.

Yours truly,

JOHN ARMSTRONG

7<sup>th</sup> April, 1814

Washington

Major Genl. Brown