



SECOND SUPPLEMENT

TO

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1814.

COLONIAL DEPARTMENT.

Downing-Street, February 8, 1814.

DISPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been this day received from Lieutenant-General Sir G. Prevost, Bart. addressed to Earl Bathurst, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

Head-Quarters, Montreal,
December 12, 1813.

MY LORD,

HAVING had the honour to report to your Lordship, on the 30th of October and the 15th November last, the affairs which took place between His Majesty's forces and the American armies, led on by Major-General Hampton and Major-General Wilkinson, I have now the satisfaction to inform your Lordship, that the signal defeats experienced by the enemy on the Chateaugay River, in Lower Canada, and near Chrystler's Farm, in Upper Canada, have relieved both provinces from the pressure of the armies invading them, and have obliged the divisions of General Hampton and General Wilkinson to retire to their own territory, and seek for winter quarters, under circumstances so highly disadvantageous as to have produced in both of them discontent, desertion, and disease.

The well-timed appearance of a small regular force in General Wilkinson's front, which I had pushed forward from the Coteau de Lac to support and give confidence to the Glengarry and Stormont militia, very shortly after the severe lesson his vanity had received from the corps of observation, operated so powerfully as to induce him to commence a precipitate retreat from our shore to St. Regis, and up the Salmon River, and to abandon his avowed project, of passing his winter in Montreal.

It appears the American army, upon arriving at the French Mills, which are situated on the Salmon River, about six miles from its mouth, proceeded to dismantle their river craft and gun-boats, and to arrange on shore, round their block-house a most cumbersome train of artillery, for the preservation of which the whole of Major-General Wilkinson's infantry is retained in tents and huts, at this most inclement season of the year, until the winter roads shall be sufficiently established to enable him to retire his guns to Platsburg.

A rapid succession of severe frost, light snow and sudden thaw, to which the American army has been so long and so much exposed, has made it impossible for me to execute any enterprize against it, without risking more than my means could justify.

A division of gun-boats with a detachment of troops, which I had ordered on the 1st of this month to advance into Lake Champlain, for the purpose of molesting General Hampton's division, succeeded in burning an extensive building lately erected near Platsburg, as a depot magazine; some bateaux, together with the ammunition, provisions, and stores found in it, were either brought away or destroyed.

The severity of the weather obliged Captain Pring, of the Royal Navy, under whose command I had placed the expedition, to return to the Isle aux Noix on the 5th; in effecting which, he was obliged to cut a channel for his boats through several miles of ice. The enemy's troops were in considerable number in the vicinity of Platsburg, but no attempt was made to annoy our force employed on this occasion.

In Upper Canada a conjoint attack on Burlington Heights, planned by Major-General Harrison and

Commodore Chauncey, has been frustrated by the lateness of the season and severity of the weather.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE PREVOST.

*Head-Quarters, Montreal,
25th Nov. 1813.*

MY LORD,
I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a letter from Commodore Sir James Yeo, together with Captain Barclay's official account of the action on Lake Erie, referred to in my dispatch to your Lordship of 22d September and 8th October last. I am happy to be able to add, that Captain Barclay is recovering of his wounds, and that there is a prospect of his valuable life and services being preserved for the benefit of his country.

I have the honour to be, &c.

GEORGE PREVOST.

*The Right Honourable Earl Bathurst,
&c. &c. &c.*

*His Majesty's Ship Wolfe, at Kingston,
November 15, 1813.*

SIR,
I YESTERDAY received Captain Barclay's official statement of the ill-fated action in Lake Erie, and as your Excellency must wish to be informed of every particular, I have the honour to enclose a copy of the same; it appears to me that though His Majesty's squadron were very deficient in seamen, weight of metal, and particularly long guns, yet the greatest misfortune was the loss of every officer, particularly Captain Finnis, whose life, had it been spared, would, in my opinion, have saved the squadron.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES LUCAS YEO, Commodore.

*His Excellency Sir George Prevost, Bart.
Governor and General in Chief.*

*His Majesty's late ship, Detroit, Put-in
Bay, Lake Erie, Sept. 12, 1813.*

SIR,
THE last letter I had the honour of writing to you, dated the 6th instant, I informed you, that unless certain intimation was received of more seamen being on their way to Amherstburg, I should be obliged to sail with the squadron, deplorably manned as it was, to fight the enemy (who blockaded the port) to enable us to get supplies of provisions and stores of every description; so perfectly destitute of provisions was the post, that there was not a day's flour in store, and the crews of the squadron under my command were on half allowance of many things, and when that was done there was no more. Such were the motives which induced Major-General Proctor (whom by your instructions I was directed to consult, and whose wishes I was enjoined to execute, as far as related to the good of the country), to concur in the necessity of a battle being risked, under the many disadvantages which I laboured, and it now remains for me the most melancholy task to relate to you the unfortunate issue of that battle, as well as the many unward circumstances that led to that event.

No intelligence of seamen having arrived, I sailed, on the 9th instant, fully expecting to meet the enemy next morning, as they had been seen among the islands; nor was I mistaken: soon after daylight they were seen in motion in Put-in-Bay, the wind then at south west, and light, giving us the weather-gage. I bore up for them, in hopes of bringing them to action among the islands, but that intention was soon frustrated, by the wind suddenly shifting to the south east, which brought the enemy directly to windward.

The line was formed according to a given plan, so that each ship might be supported against the superior force of the two brigs opposed to them. About ten the enemy had cleared the islands, and immediately bore up, under easy sail, in a line abreast, each brig being also supported by the small vessels. At a quarter before twelve I commenced the action, by firing a few long guns; about a quarter past the American Commodore, also supported by two schooners, one carrying four long twelve-pounders, the other a long thirty-two and twenty-four-pounder, came to close action with the Detroit; the other brig of the enemy, apparently destined to engage the Queen Charlotte, supported in like manner by two schooners, kept so far to windward as to render the Queen Charlotte's twenty-pounder carronades useless, while she was, with the Lady Prevost, exposed to the heavy and destructive fire of the Caledonian, and four other schooners, armed with long and heavy guns, like those I have already described.

Too soon, alas! was I deprived of the services of the noble and intrepid Capt. Finnis, who soon after the commencement of the action fell, and with him fell my greatest support; soon after Lieutenant Stokes, of the Queen Charlotte, was struck senseless by a splinter, which deprived the country of his services at this very critical period.

As I perceived the Detroit had enough to contend with, without the prospect of a fresh brig, Provincial Lieutenant Irvine, who then had charge of the Queen Charlotte, behaved with great courage, but his experience was much too limited to supply the place of such an officer as Captain Finnis, hence she proved of far less assistance than I expected.

The action continued with great fury until half past two, when I perceived my opponent drop astern, and a boat passing from him to the Niagara, (which vessel was at this time perfectly fresh) the American Commodore seeing that as yet the day was against him, (his vessel having struck soon after he left her,) and also the very defenceless state of the Detroit, which ship was now a perfect wreck, principally from the raking fire of the gun-boats, and also that the Queen Charlotte was in such a situation, that I could receive very little assistance from her, and the Lady Prevost being at this time too far to leeward, from her rudder being injured, made a noble, and, alas! too successful an effort to regain it, for he bore up, and, supported by his small vessels, passed within pistol-shot, and took a raking position on our bow; nor could I prevent it, as the unfortunate situation of the Queen Charlotte prevented us from wearing; in attempting it we fell on board her; my gallant First Lieutenant Garland was now mortally wounded, and

myself so severely, that I was obliged to quit the deck. Manned as the squadron was, with not more than fifty British seamen, the rest a mixed crew of Canadians and soldiers, and who were totally unacquainted with such service, rendered the loss of officers more sensibly felt, and never in any action was the loss more severe; every officer commanding vessels, and their seconds, was either killed, or wounded so severely, as to be unable to keep the deck.

Lieutenant Buchan, in the *Lady Prevost*, behaved most nobly, and did every thing that a brave and experienced officer could do in a vessel armed with twelve-pound carronades, against vessels carrying long guns. I regret to state, that he was severely wounded. Lieutenant Signal, of the *Dover*, commanding the *Hunter*, displayed the greatest intrepidity; but his guns being small, (two, four, and six-pounders) he could be of much less service than he wished.

Every officer in the *Detroit* behaved in the most exemplary manner. Lieutenant Inglis shewed such calm intrepidity, that I was fully convinced that, on leaving the deck, I left the ship in excellent hands; and for an account of the battle after that, I refer you to his letter which he wrote me, for your information.

Mr. Hoffmeister, purser of the *Detroit*, nobly volunteered his services on deck, and behaved in a manner that reflects the highest honour on him. I regret to add, that he is very severely wounded in the knee.

Provincial Lieutenant Purvis, and the military officers, Lieutenants Garden, of the Royal Newfoundland Rangers, and O'Keefe of the 41st regiment, behaved in a manner which excited my warmest admiration; the few British seamen I had, behaved with their usual intrepidity, and as long as I was on deck the troops behaved with a calmness and courage, worthy of a more fortunate issue to their exertions.

The weather gage gave the enemy a prodigious advantage, as it enabled them not only to choose their position, but their distance also, which they did in such a manner as to prevent the carronades of the *Queen Charlotte* and *Lady Prevost*, from having much effect; while their long guns did great execution, particularly against the *Queen Charlotte*.

Captain Perry has behaved in a most humane and attentive manner, not only to myself and officers, but to all the wounded.

I trust that although unsuccessful, you will approve of the motives that induced me to sail under so many disadvantages, and that it may be hereafter proved that, under such circumstances the honour of His Majesty's flag has not been tarnished.

I inclose the list of killed and wounded.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) R. H. BARCLAY, Commander,
and late Senior Officer.

His Majesty's late Ship Detroit,
September 10, 1813.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you an account of the termination of the late unfortunate battle with the enemy's squadron.

On coming on the quarter-deck, after your being wounded, the enemy's second brig, at that time on our weather beam, shortly afterwards took a position on our weather bow, to rake us, to prevent which, in attempting to wear, to get our starboard broadside to bear upon her, a number of the guns of the larboard broadside being at this time disabled, fell on board the *Queen Charlotte*, at this time running up to leeward of us; in this situation the two ships remained for some time. As soon as we got clear of her, I ordered the *Queen Charlotte* to shoot ahead of us if possible, and attempted to back our foretop-sail to get astern, but the ship laying completely unmanageable, every brace cut away, the mizen-top-mast and gaff down, all the other masts badly wounded, not a stay left forward, hull shattered very much, a number of the guns disabled, and the enemy's squadron raking both ships ahead and astern, none of our own in a situation to support us, I was under the painful necessity of answering the enemy, to say we had struck, the *Queen Charlotte* having previously done so.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE INGLIS.

To Captain Barclay, &c, &c. &c.

A Statement of the Force of His Majesty's Squadron on Lake Erie, and that of the United States.

BRITISH SQUADRON.

Detroit—2 long twenty-four-pounders, 1 long eighteen-pounder, 6 long twelve-pounders, 8 long nine-pounders, 1 twenty-four-pounder carronade, 1 eighteen-pounder carronade.

Queen Charlotte—3 long twelve-pounders, 14 twenty-four-pounder carronades.

Lady Prevost—3 long nine-pounders, 10 twelve-pounder carronades.

Hunter—2 long six-pounders, 4 long four-pounders, 2 long two-pounders, 2 twelve-pounder carronades.

Little Belt—1 long nine-pounder, 2 long six-pounders.

Chippeway—1 long nine-pounder.

UNITED STATES SQUADRON.

Lawrence—2 long twelve-pounders, 18 thirty-two-pounder carronades.

Niagara—2 long twelve-pounders, 18 thirty-two-pounder carronades.

Caledonia—2 long twenty-four-pounders, 1 thirty-two-pounder carronades; all on pivots.

Ariel—4 long twelve-pounders; all on pivots.

Summers—1 long twenty-four-pounder, 1 thirty-two-pounder carronade; all on pivots.

Porcupine—1 long thirty-two-pounder, on a pivot.

Tigress—1 long thirty-two-pounder, on a pivot.

Scorpion—1 long thirty-two-pounder, 1 twenty-four-pounder; all on pivots.

Trip—1 long-twenty-four-pounder, on a pivot.

(A true copy.)

(Signed) R. H. BARCLAY, Commander.

A List of Killed and Wounded in His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in an Action with the American Squadron on Lake Erie, the 10th September 1813.

3 officers, 38 men, killed; 9 officers, 85 men, wounded.

Total—41 killed; 94 wounded.

Names of Officers killed and wounded.

Lieutenant James Garden, Royal Newfoundland
regiment, killed.

DETROIT.

Killed.

First Lieutenant John Garland.

Wounded.

Captain R. H. Barclay, dangerously.
J. R. Hoffmeister, purser, dangerously.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE.

Killed.

Captain Robert Finnis.

Wounded.

First Lieutenant James Stokoe, severely.
James Foster, midshipman, slightly.

LADY PREVOST.

Wounded.

Lieutenant Edward Buchan, commanding, dan-
gerously.

First Lieutenant F. Rolette, severely.

HUNTER.

Wounded.

Lieutenant George Bignall, commanding, severely.
Henry Gateshill, master's-mate, slightly.

CHIPPEWAY.

Wounded.

Master's-Mate J. Campbell, commanding, slightly.

(Signed)

R. H. BARCLAY,
Commander, and late Senior Officer.

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