

in repelling the enemy in an attack on this place. It is with the utmost reluctance I divide the squadron, and nothing but Your Excellency's pointed instructions on that head could have induced me to do it as I have a strong presentiment that Kingston is the place they will attack, particularly if they hear we have divided our force or they will take advantage of it and go up to York. These being my sentiments I request Your Excellency will explicitly make known to me your opinion as to the disposition I have made that any other arrangements may be made without delay."¹

Prevost's reply restored his full liberty of action.

"I by no means intended to prevent the free exercise of your own judgment in making such a disposition of the squadron as under all circumstances you might, on consultation with Gen'l de Rottenburg, think most advisable. I am therefore perfectly satisfied with the reasons you have given for keeping the fleet together and have the fullest confidence in your making that further disposition of it as will best promote the object, I trust, we all have in view, a successful resistance to every attempt of the enemy."²

In conclusion he expressed strong doubts whether the enemy actually intended to make an attack upon either Kingston or Montreal.

Between the 18th and 25th of October the whole of the American troops destined to take part in the expedition were concentrated upon Grenadier Island where they were organized into brigades and divisions. On the 25th General Wilkinson arrived and the movement by detachments began at French Creek, nearly opposite the proposed point of landing below Kingston, which had been selected for the final rendezvous. This was reported next day by de Rottenburg to Prevost who wrote cheerfully in reply:

"I almost covet the opportunity you are likely to have of displaying your talents. By good example and personal encouragement you will obtain from every one a zealous discharge of their respective duties I hope our squadron will deal death and destruction throughout their armada as it approaches Kingston and the gunboat division prove unsparing to those who are to attempt Gananoqui."³

On November 1, Captain Mulcaster with the brigs *Melville* and *Moir* and four gunboats, joined the schooners *Sir Sidney Smith* and *Beresford* which had been cruising for some days near the lower ends of Wolfe Island. Snow was falling so thickly that it was scarcely possible to see any distance until late in the forenoon. When a move-

¹ Yeo to Prevost, H. M. S. *Wolfe* at Kingston, Oct. 17.

² Prevost to Yeo, Montreal, Oct. 21.

³ Prevost to de Rottenburg, Oct. 29. (In cypher).