

The weakness of DeRottenburg's division prevented him from even attempting to do more than watch and harass his antagonist. When informed that the Americans had regained the superiority on Lake Ontario by the launch of new vessels, and that Yeo would be unable to co-operate in the investment of Fort George for several weeks at least, he began to fortify a position on Burlington Bay, to which he anticipated he would ultimately be obliged to retire, and to repair the roads in his rear to facilitate a retreat in an emergency. The piteous entreaties of Proctor at Detroit, menaced by overwhelming numbers, forced him to detach several companies of the 41st to his support. Their departure left him with but two weak battalions of infantry (8th and 49th), four companies of the Royal Scots and 104th, a few artillery men and militia to make head against the entire American army which still consisted of two battalions of artillery, one of dragoons, one of rifles, and ten of infantry.

Besides being almost destitute of tents, blankets, and camp furniture, many of his men were in rags and without shoes. They were ill-fed and their pay was many months in arrears. As they approached the enemy, desertions became numerous.

But the inactivity of the American army, and the arrival of the remaining companies of the first battalion of the Royal Scots and the 104th—about the middle of July,—encouraged him to throw forward his right wing to Queenston, and fix his headquarters at St. Davids. His lines then extended from lake to river, a distance of about seven miles, confining the enemy to the ground they actually occupied, and preventing them from drawing any supplies from that side of the river. He excused himself for not having employed Indians in the expeditions into New York, upon the ground that it was difficult to restrain them from the commission of acts of cruelty and indiscriminate plunder, but added, "they are daily engaged with the outposts harassing and teasing them all day long."