

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 3rd. 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 & to 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