

9. Your Commissioners have also, in accordance with their instructions, turned their attention to defensive positions which they propose should be entrenched, and in which the troops could be formed to offer battle to an invading force; they will be found described under the headings of the several military districts.

Defensive positions examined and reported upon.

The extent of the positions selected has generally been governed by the supposition that from 15,000 to 20,000 men would be available in each district on the outbreak of hostilities.

10. Your Commissioners, being convinced that the success of the military operations undertaken for the defence of Canada must depend on the naval supremacy on the lakes, strongly urge the absolute necessity of establishing that supremacy at the earliest moment after a declaration of war.

Success of military operations dependent upon naval supremacy in the lakes.

They are aware that by existing treaties no fleets can be maintained in the lakes in time of peace, but they recommend, as soon as the canal communications shall have been improved, as hereafter proposed, that iron-plated vessels, with all the armament and stores necessary, should be kept in readiness at Ottawa, or other convenient place not affected by the stipulations of the treaty, whence they could be taken into Lakes Ontario and Erie.

Iron plated vessels should be kept ready ;

During the progress of any negotiations likely to end in war, these vessels, without any breach of treaty or faith, could assemble at Gananoqui, below Kingston, for the purpose of passing into the lakes immediately war was proclaimed.

and passed up St. Lawrence as far as treaty will allow, if war is pending.

11. A portion of the St. Lawrence canals not being available after the actual commencement of hostilities, the enlargement of the Ottawa, Rideau, and Welland Canals, to an extent that will enable armoured vessels to pass through them, becomes an essential requirement in the defence of Canada.

Enlargement of Ottawa, Rideau, and Welland Canals essential.

Your Commissioners have been informed that no definite dimensions for this class of vessel, adapted for warfare on the lakes, has yet been determined on by the Admiralty, and are consequently unable to state the size the locks should be made.

12. Your Commissioners further recommend, that suitable establishments for building and repairing ships of war should be provided.

Naval establishments should be provided in each lake.

They have visited the various harbours on the lakes which may be available for ports of rendezvous, or harbours of refuge, and a list of these will be found in Appendix No. 17.

Appendix 17.

13. They recommend also that measures be adopted for raising and training naval volunteers.

Naval Volunteers should be raised.

14. In accordance with their instructions, Your Commissioners have directed their attention to the modes of attack on the province of Canada from the United States.

They are five in number, viz. :—

1st. By a naval descent on the shores of Lake Huron, at Goderich or Collingwood.

Probable modes of attack by invading forces.

2ndly. By the passage of a force across the Detroit River into the London district.

3rdly. By the passage of a force across the Niagara frontier.

4thly. By the passage of troops across the St. Lawrence from Ogdensburgh.

5thly. By several columns acting in concert between Derby Line and Huntingdon, with a view of converging on Montreal, and cutting the communication with Kingston, as well as with Quebec.

These are independent of any descents that might be made on the shores of Lake Erie and Ontario, the protection of which must be left to the navy.