

ment. Most of the American merchant vessels on Lake Ontario were blockaded at Ogdensburg. Sackett's Harbor, his principal naval station on that lake, was nearly defenceless, and had been threatened with an attack; the forces assembled on the Niagara were unprovided with artillery and necessary munitions of war. He readily assented to Baynes' proposals as far as the forces under his immediate command were concerned, as he could still continue his preparations for defence and invasion with entire freedom. But Hull was believed to be in full tide of success. It was confidently reported that he had taken Malden and was marching up the Thames. Dearborn therefore warily declined to extend the armistice to his operations.

General Van Rensselaer, who commanded the American forces on the Niagara, received the news with feelings of profound relief and satisfaction. Although refugees from Canada had assured him nearly a week before, that all the regular troops had been withdrawn from the posts opposite to meet General Hull, he still remained incredulous and apprehensive of an attack. Yet his force already exceeded two thousand men, of whom one-half were regulars. He perceived in an instant what an immense advantage might be derived from the cessation of hostilities, if the terms could be construed in such a way as to enable him to bring up troops and stores from Oswego and Sackett's Harbor by water, instead of the tedious overland route. Unless this concession were secured, the armistice would be of little immediate benefit to him. The agreement was so loosely worded as to leave this matter in doubt. His Adjutant-General was at once sent to Fort George with directions to insist on this interpretation.

Colonel Christopher Myers had been left in command there by General Brock. To garrison all the posts, he had less than three hundred men of the 41st regiment. The absentees of the flank companies of the Lincoln militia were called in and increased the number of militia in service to about four hundred. The remainder of the inhabitants were busily engaged in the harvest fields, but an additional draft of five hundred men was warned to hold itself in readiness to march to his support. The two armed vessels, *Prince Regent* and *Earl Moira*, were