

They would then be entirely influenced by their councils. It would be easy for them, aided by the councils of the British agents, to commit depredations on the scattered frontier settlements of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, &c. They would be collected from the most distant parts of their villages, where the British factors have an intercourse with them, and would become numerous. Under these circumstances, if there is a prospect of war with England, what measures are most expedient? In my mind, there can be no doubt. *Prepare a naval force on Lake Erie superiour to the British, and sufficient to preserve your communication.*

JOHN ARMSTRONG¹ TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

(*Notices of the War of 1812, by John Armstrong; New York, 1840; Vol. I, p. 237.*)

Red Hook, January 2d. 1812.

Dear Eustis—

.....

 For western defence employ western men, accustomed to the rifle and the forest, and not unacquainted with the usages and stratagems of Indian warfare. To their customary arms add a pistol and a sabre; and to ensure celerity of movement, mount them on horseback. Give them a competent leader and a good position, within striking distance of Indian villages or British settlements. Why not at Detroit, where you have a strong fortress and a detachment of artillerists? Recollect, however, that this position, far from being good, would be positively bad unless your naval means have an ascendancy on Lake Erie; because Buffalo, Erie, Cleaveland, and the two Sanduskys must be its base or source of supply. The maximum of this corps may be six battalions.

¹ John Armstrong (1758-1833), born in Pennsylvania; served in the revolution on the staff of Generals Mercer and Gates, acting as adjutant-general to the latter officer; wrote the Newburg Addresses; became Secretary of State for Pennsylvania; married a sister of Chancellor Livingston of New York, and removed to that state; United States senator, 1800-04; minister to France, 1804-11; brigadier-general in the United States army, 1812; Secretary of War, 1813; resigned in September, 1814; author of '*Notices of the War of 1812*,' 2 vols., 1840.