

From Sir George Prevost to Earl Bathurst.

Head-quarters, Plattsburgh, State of N.Y.,
My Lord, Sept. 11, 1814.

"Upon the arrival of the reinforcements from the Garonne, I lost no time in assembling three brigades on the frontier of Lower Canada, extending from the river Richelieu to the St. Lawrence, and in forming them into a division under the command of Major-General De Rottenburg, for the purpose of carrying into effect His Royal Highness the Prince Regent's commands, which had been conveyed to me by your lordship in your despatch of the 3d of June last.

"As the troops concentrated and approached the line of separation between this province and the United States, the American army abandoned its entrenched camp on the river Chazy, at Champlain; a position I immediately seized, and occupied in force on the 3d instant. The following day, the whole of the left division advanced to the village of Chazy, without meeting the least opposition from the enemy.

"On the 5th, it halted within eight miles of this place, having surmounted the difficulties created by the obstructions in the road from

the felling of trees and the removal of bridges. The next day the division moved upon Plattsburgh, in two columns, on parallel road; the right column led by Major-General Power's brigade, supported by four companies of light infantry and a demi-brigade, under Major-General Robinson; the left by Major-General Brisbane's brigade.

"The enemy's militia, supported by his regulars, attempted to impede the advance of the right column, but they were driven before it from all their positions, and the column entered Plattsburg. This rapid movement having reversed the strong position taken up by the enemy at Dead creek, it was precipitately abandoned by him, and his gun-boats alone left to defend the ford, and to prevent our restoring the bridges, which had been imperfectly destroyed—an inconvenience soon surmounted.

"Here I found the enemy in the occupation of an elevated ridge of land on the south branch (bank) of the Saranac, crowned with three strong redoubts and other field works, and block-houses armed with heavy ordnance, with their flotilla* at anchor out of gun-shot from the shore, consisting of a

To create an emulation and zeal among the officers and men in completing the works, I divided them into detachments, and placed them near the several forts; declaring in orders, that each detachment was the garrison of its own work, and bound to defend it to the last extremity. The enemy advanced cautiously and by short marches, and our soldiers worked day and night, so that by the time he made his appearance before the place we were prepared to receive him. General Izard named the principal work Fort-Moreau; and, to remind the troops of the actions of their brave countrymen, I called the redoubt on the right Fort-Brown, and that on the left Fort-Scott. Besides these three works, we had two blockhouses strongly fortified. Finding, on examining, the returns of the garrison, that our force did not exceed 1500 effective men for duty, and well informed that the enemy had as many thousands, I called on general Mooers, of the New York militia, and arranged with him plans for bringing forth the militia, *en masse*. The inhabitants of the village fled with their families and effects, except a few worthy citizens and some boys, who formed themselves into a party, received rifles, and were exceedingly useful. By the 4th of the month, general Mooers collected about 700 militia, and advanced seven miles on the Beckman-town road, to watch the motions of the enemy, and to skirmish with him as he advanced; also to obstruct the roads with fallen trees,

and to break up the bridges. On the lake-road at Dead creek bridge, I posted 200 men, under captain Sproul, of the 13th regiment, with orders to abatis the woods, to place obstructions in the road, and to fortify himself; to this party I added two field pieces. In advance of that position was lieutenant-col. Appling, with 110 riflemen, watching the movements of the enemy, and procuring intelligence. It was ascertained, that before day-light on the 6th, the enemy would advance in two columns on the two roads before mentioned, dividing at Sampson's a little below Chazy village. The column on the Beckman-town road proceeded most rapidly; the militia skirmished with his advanced parties, and except a few brave men, fell back most precipitately in the greatest disorder, notwithstanding the British troops did not deign to fire on them, except by their flankers and advanced patrols. The night previous, I ordered major Wool to advance with a detachment of 250 men to support the militia, and set them an example of firmness; also captain Leonard, of the light-artillery, was directed to proceed with two pieces to be on the ground before day; yet he did not make his appearance until eight o'clock when the enemy had approached within

* The Saratoga, 26 guns; Surprise, 20 guns; Thunderer, 16 guns; Preble, 7 guns; 10 gun-boats, 14 guns.