

ing of the flotilla and for Downie's death in attacking Prevost. Robertson, the lieutenant of the *Confiance*, who commanded the ship after Downie's death, reported that the crews had been led to expect that the American works would be stormed at the commencement of the naval action, and had been unwilling to continue the fight when the army did not co-operate. Captain Pring, the senior surviving officer of the flotilla, in his official report of the action to Sir James Yeo, referred to the earnest solicitation of Prevost for the co-operation of the squadron, and to the understanding that the works should be stormed by the troops at the same moment that the naval action began. In a separate letter to Yeo, Pring again urged that Downie made his attack on the faith of a promise that the land forces should attack simultaneously; he wrote that it had been expected by the British sailors that the enemy's gunboats would be driven from the shelter of the forts when those forts were taken; and he contended that, if the forts had been stormed, even after the naval action was over, the British flotilla could have been saved. Yeo, in sending on Pring's report to the Admiralty, expressed his opinion that Downie had been urged into action before his ship was fit for fighting. He added that he considered that there was no necessity for the British squadron to have sailed into Plattsburg bay and there fought at a disadvantage; and that, had they been successful, the success would not have assisted the troops in storming the batteries, whereas, had the batteries been first stormed, the American squadron would have been obliged to leave the bay, and the British fleet would have been given a fair chance. A few days later, after Pring had arrived on parole at Kingston and shown him the correspondence between Prevost and Downie, Yeo forwarded that correspondence to the Admiralty in a letter still more strongly worded than the last. He spoke of Downie as having been goaded on to his fate by Prevost, who seemed to have assumed the direction of the naval force; he repeated once more that it was only on the assurance that the army would attack the enemy's

Yeo's
charges
against
Prevost.