

The Admiralty was not happy to hear this news. Hall also had cancelled an order for iron work for one of the ships, from a local iron mill, so all iron work would have to come from England.²⁸ Owen approved Yeo's plan to construct a frigate at Penetanguishene, and thought it could hold the upper lakes, until he could get a better grasp of the British needs.

The other building project was at Isle aux Noix, where work was beginning on one of the three frigates that Yeo had proposed. Owen discontinued this project and turned the shipwrights over to building a dozen gunboats.²⁹ He travelled to the island to see for himself the ongoing work and the needs of the establishment.³⁰ Afterward, additional shipwrights and sail makers were sent to finish the gunboats.³¹ The gunboats were laid down during the winter and ready to receive their cannons by May. Owen asked Drummond to forward thirty-two long 24 pounders and four 68 pounder carronades, along with all the stores they required. He was told to acquire the ordnance from the Admiralty. The shipment of ordnance arrived at Quebec in July, and were forwarded immediately to Isle aux Noix.³²

With three different designs of gun boats, Owen ordered one of each be put into service and the others kept on shore, ready for use, but covered for protection. He also asked for the boom that had been placed across the river, to keep the American vessels away from Isle aux Noix, be removed and stored safely for re-installation in the event of renewed hostilities.

Another project left over from the war were the frames of a frigate and two brigs sent out from England, in 1814, for use on the lakes, idly sitting in valuable storehouse space at Montreal.³³ One set of frigate frames and iron work was moved forward, during the summer of 1814, to Kingston, becoming HMS *Psyche*. The question now was, what to do with the others? Owen's first idea was to bring them to Kingston and set them up, but not plank them.³⁴ He changed this to perhaps using them at Isle aux Noix, but confronted with the price of either endeavour he chose to order their sale. In the end, the frames of the two brigs were set up at Montreal and then sent to Halifax, while the frigate material was sold.

Captain Francis Spilsbury passed through Sackets Harbor on his return to Upper

28 Owen to Croker, 4 March 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2262, mfr. B2635, 68.

29 Owen to Croker, 25 March 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2262, mfr. B2635, 110-11; Owen to Drummond, 10 May 1815, LAC, RG 8, v. 734, mfr. C3244, 119-21.

30 Owen to Drummond, 10 May 1815, LAC, RG 8, v. 734, mfr. C3244, 119-21.

31 Baumgardt to Owen, 3 July 1815, Queens University Archive [QAB1]; Owen to Laws, 10 July 1815, QAB1.

32 Owen to Drummond, 10 July 1815, LAC, RG 8, v. 735, mfr. C3244, 54.

33 Thomas Malcomson, "HMS *Psyche*: Frigate in Frame" *Seaways' Ships in Scale* 4:6 (Nov/Dec 1993), 16-21.

34 Owen to Croker, 2 April 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2262, mfr. B2635, 126-50; Hall to Owen, 2 July 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2263, mfr. B2634; Hall to Owen, 2 July 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2263, mfr. B2635, 13; Hall to Owen, 3 July 1815, LAC, ADM 1/2263, mfr. B2635, 14; Owen to Laws, 17 July 1815, QAB1; & Owen to Dobbs, 17 July 1815, QAB1. The two brigs were named *Colibre* and *Goshawk*, the frigate was to be named *Prompte*.