

Lieut. Gansevoort and a sergeant in the United States Artillery, who happened to be on the Canadian side, were made prisoners, and the ferry boats plying across the river at Queenston and Port Erie were seized by the British troops at those places. The people of Buffalo received their first intimation of the declaration of war by witnessing the capture of a merchant schooner in the harbor by boats from Fort Erie.

The flank companies of militia marched immediately to the frontier, and were distributed along the river in taverns and farm houses. On the second day, General Brock arrived from York, with the intention of making an attack on Fort Niagara. He had then at his disposal, 400 of the 41st Regiment, and nearly 800 militia. Success was all but certain, as the garrison was weak and inefficient. His instructions, however, were to act strictly on the defensive, and he abandoned this project in the conviction that the garrison might be driven out at any time by a vigorous cannonade. Rumors of his design seem to have reached General P.B. Porter, who commanded the militia force on the other side, and he made an urgent demand for reinforcements.

"The British on the opposite side are making the most active preparations for defence," Benjamin Barton wrote from Lewiston on the 24th of June, "new troops are arriving from the Lower Province constantly, and the quantity of military stores, etc., that have arrived within these few weeks is astonishing. Vast quantities of arms and ammunition are passing up the country, no doubt to arm the Indians around the Upper Lakes, (for they have not white men enough to make use of such quantities as are passing). One-third of the militia of the Upper Province are formed into companies called flankers, and are well armed and equipped out of the King's stores, and are regularly trained one day in a week by an officer of the standing troops. A volunteer troop of horses has lately been raised and have drawn their sabers and pistols. A company of militia artillery has been raised this spring, and exercise two or three days in the week on the plains near Fort George, and practice firing and have become very expert. The noted Isaac Sweazy has within a few days received a captain's commission for the flying artillery, of which they have a number of pieces. We were yesterday informed by a respectable gentleman from that side of the river, that he was actually purchasing horses for the purpose of exercising his men. They are repairing Fort George, and building a new fort at York. A number of boats are daily employed, manned by their soldiers, plying between Fort George and Queenston, carrying stores, lime and pickets, for necessary repairs, and to cap the whole, they are making and using every argument and persuasion to induce the Indians to join them, and we are informed the Mohawks have volunteered their service. In fact, nothing appears to be left undone by their people that are necessary for their defense.

However, the Governor General seized the first opportunity of again advising his enterprising lieutenant to refrain from any offensive movements. "In the present state of politics in the United States," he said, "I consider it prudent to avoid any means which can have the least tendency to unite their people. While dissension prevails among them, their attempts on the Province will be feeble. It is therefore my wish to avoid committing any act which may even from a strained construction tend to unite the Eastern and Southern States, unless from its perpetration, we are to derive an immediate, considerable and important advantage"

Brock felt so confident at that moment of his ability to maintain his ground on the Niagara that he actually stripped Fort George of its heaviest guns for the defence of