

Wyatt also made more economical arrangements for the steamers operating on the St. Lawrence and in eastern Lake Ontario, with which he had no previous involvement. In the panic during early June, the British Army's main headquarters at Montreal had worked with Captain Hood to charter four steamers, *St. Andrew*, *Royal*, *Canada*, and *Hercules*, at the high rate of \$120 a day, and to fit the upper decks with protective iron plates, and mount guns. In late June, Hood, as an economy measure, had dismantled the armament and protective plates on *Hercules* and *Canada* and returned them to their owners, leaving *Royal* and *St. Andrew*, but still on the high charter rate.<sup>85</sup> Hood recommended purchasing at least *Royal*, which the Executive Council approved at its meeting on 17 July. Wyatt carried out discussions in Montreal with the owners of the vessels in service, as well as owners of other suitable steamers. He was able to drive down the charter rates, in the case of *Royal* from \$120 a day to \$70.<sup>86</sup> A complication was fresh intelligence of increased Fenian activity that brought General Sir John Michel, the army commander at Montreal, to recommend that Hood's force be restored to four vessels.<sup>87</sup> Hood got one additional steamer, *Hercules*, which came back on charter, the owners having agreed to a bargain rate of \$45 a day.<sup>88</sup> Wyatt, McDougall reported to the Executive Council on 1 September, had decided not to pursue purchase of *Royal*, presumably because of the reduced charter rate.<sup>89</sup>

Reinforcements had meanwhile arrived, from the UK via Halifax. The gunboats HMS *Britomart* (the name ship of the class), *Cherub*, and *Heron* entered Lake Ontario in early August. One vessel was assigned to each of lakes Ontario, Erie, and Huron. They thus augmented *Michigan* on its patrols of western waters (the vessel was too broad to pass through the Welland Canal to Lake Ontario), and *Rescue* in Lake Ontario (which, with a narrower hull, could also reach Lakes Erie and Huron).<sup>90</sup> The RN gunboats were smaller than

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reinforcements from crossing the river, and caught and arrested those who later fled back to the US. Lawrence E. Cline, *Rebels on the Niagara: The Fenian Invasion of Canada, 1866* (Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions, 2018), 116-118.

<sup>85</sup> Hood to Major General Hon. James Lindsay, 27 June 1866, RG9 1C8, vol. 8, file numbers 1-20, LAC.

<sup>86</sup> McDougall, "Memorandum on the Steamer 'Royal,'" 19 September 1866, file numbers 63-109, RG9 1C8, vol. 9, LAC.

<sup>87</sup> McDougall to Wyatt, 19 September 1866, de Horsey to Monck, 12 September 1866, Michel to de Horsey, 14 September 1866, RG9 1C8, vol. 9, file nos. 63-109, LAC.

<sup>88</sup> "Charter Party Calvin and Breck to Honble William McDougall Str. Hercules," 19 September 1866, RG9 1C8, vol. 9, file nos. 63-109, LAC.

<sup>89</sup> Executive Council minute, 1 September 1866, RG1 E1, vol. 92, pp. 131-4, LAC.

<sup>90</sup> For a detailed account see Cheryl MacDonald, *Gunboats on the Great Lakes 1866-68: The British Navy's show of force at the time of Confederation* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 2017), especially chapter 6. Monck to Hope, 23 July 1866, ADM 128/24, ff. 235-239, TNA, reel