

**James Madison to Henry Dearborn, August 9, 1812.
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
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TO HENRY DEARBORN.¹ MAD. MSS.

¹ He had been appointed Senior Major-General in the army, January 27, and assigned to the command of the northern department.

Washington, Aug. 9th 1812

Dear Sir, —The last of your favors which I have to acknowledge is that of the 3d Ult: from Boston. I am glad to find that you are again at Albany; where your presence will aid much in doing all that can be done for the reputation of the campaign. The lapse of time and the unproductiveness of the laws contemplating a regular force, and volunteers for an entire year & under federal commissions, compel us to moderate some of our expectations. It was much to have been desired that simultaneous invasions of Canada at several points, particularly in relation to Malden and Montreal, might have secured the great object of bringing all Upper Canada, and the channels communicating with the Indians, under our command; with ulterior prospects towards Quebec flattering to our arms. This systematic operation having been frustrated, it only remains to pursue the course that will diminish the disappointment as much as possible.

Hull,¹ as you will have learnt, is preparing a force for the attack of Maiden; and that he may descend towards Niagara, with greater effect and be the more secure agst Indian dangers, a reinforcement of 1,500 men is ordered which will be promptly supplied by the overflowing zeal of the detached militia of Ohio & Kentucky. We hope that your

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arrangements with Govr. Tomkins will have provided an effective co-operation for subduing the hostile force opposite ours at Niagara; and preparing the way for taking possession of the Country at the other extremity of Lake Ontario. In these events we shall have in our hand not only all the most valuable parts of the Upper province, but the important command of the Lakes. It appears that Hull was making an effort to overpower the British force on

1 William Hull, appointed to command the northwestern army, surrendered on August 16. Lake Erie, his success in which will be critically useful in several respects.

In addition to these measures, it is essential, notwithstanding the advance of the season, and the difficulties thrown in our way, that the expedition agst. Montreal should be forwarded by all the means in your power. The number of regulars that can be procured for it cannot even yet be ascertained; but it is sufficiently ascertained that an extensive auxiliary force will be wanted; and it is nearly as certain that this will not be furnished by the Volunteer Act of Feby unless a sudden ardor overcoming the objections to it, should be inspired by the vicinity of the object and the previous conquests. The last resource therefore on which we are to depend, is that portion of the detached & other Militia which may be within reach, will comply with the call, and voluntarily unite with their officers in rejecting geographical limits to their patriotism. To this resource I hope you will turn your full attention, with a view to the immediate steps proper to be taken to enable it to supply the deficit of regulars & volunteers; with respect to the latter of which as far as they are within a practicable distance, the number known here to be in readiness is very inconsiderable. From the Vermont & New Hampshire Militia favorable expectations are indulged, the State authorities being well disposed to promote the service. As to Massts. & Connecticut, even, notwithstanding the obstructions created by the Govrs it is not yet decided that the spirit of some of the detached & other corps may not give effect to your requisitions. Should an adequate force be attainable from the whole or part of the sources referred to, you will be the best judge how far a demonstration

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towards Quebec will be proper in aid of the measures agst. Montreal, which if we can take by means of any sort we shall find the means of holding. Shd. it be found impracticable to take it this campaign, will it be possible to occupy any other post that will cut off the intercourse with the Indians thro' the Ottowas river?

You will have noticed the arrival of a Dispatch vessel from the B. Govt. Nothing is disclosed from that quarter that ought in the slightest degree to slacken our military exertions.

The Secy. of State is on a visit to his farm where he will leave his family. On his return, which will take place in a few days, I propose a like respite. I find myself much worn down, and in need of an antidote to the accumulating bile of which I am sensible; and which I have never escaped in August on tide water.