

<b>Title:</b>	Instructions for the defence of Fort Niagara and the Frontier, 1814		
<b>Creator:</b>	Lt. Col. Bruyeres		
<b>Dates of Material:</b>	March 9, 1814	<b>Record Group Number:</b>	RG 769
<b>Summary of Contents:</b>	<p>A colour copy of Instructions for the Defence of Fort Niagara and the Frontier by Lieut. Col. Bruyeres, R.E., to Lieut. Gangreben, R.E. The original letter is in the National Archives—Kew (England). The letter is dated at Quebec, March 9, 1814 and concerns plans to strengthen defences on the Niagara frontier. It was written at a pivotal time during the War of 1812. The British had recently captured Fort Niagara and the Americans would soon begin a major offensive attack in Niagara in July.</p> <p>Bruyeres writes <i>“as it is possible the enemy many soon be prepared to endeavor to regain possession of Fort Niagara, and to carry on offensive operations on the whole of that Frontier I am most particularly commanded by His Excellency Sir George Prevost to direct that you will use every exertion in your power to strengthen the Works of that Fort in as efficacious and expeditious a manner as possible to resist whatever efforts may be made against the position to carry it by a <u>Coup de Main</u>. To reduce the enemy to the necessity of opening Trenches and the regular operations of a Siege will be a material point gained; but you must at the same time be well prepared to destroy the Works...on the shortest notice by explosion, should it be deemed expedient to have recourse to this measure.</i></p> <p>He continues <i>“Mississauga Point must be Fortified and occupied with every possible dispatch—also the Works at Fort George to be repaired and an intermediate Battery between Fort George and Mississauga Point to be established in conformity to the instructions left with you on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. These are essential positions to be immediately occupied with strong Batteries to act against the opposite shore. The Batteries on the Queenston Heights with the Block House, and Redoubt at Chippawa are also to be executed without delay.</i></p> <p><i>His excellency is desirous to have an immediate report of the progress that has been made, and the measures that have been adopted for the... performance of these different services, and the number of workmen that are now employed.</i></p> <p><i>You will report most particularly on the present state of Fort Niagara, and transmit to me a correct Plan of the Works and Buildings at that Fort; also a Plan of Fort George, with the American entrenchments, and the alterations that have been made to the Works of the Place. You will also transmit Plans for the proposed Works at Mississauga Point, the Battery in that vicinity, at Queenston Heights, and Chippawa, these to be accompanied by regular estimates of the expence to be incurred and requisitions...that you will</i></p>		

	<p><i>require to be forwarded from hence for the construction of all the Buildings &amp; c.</i></p> <p><i>I sincerely hope you are perfectly recovered and that the exertions you are called on to make for the defence and security of the Niagara Frontier will be rewarded by success in you undertakings. I hope to hear from you or Lieut. Yule as frequently as possible by every favorable opportunity being much interested in all your proceedings”.</i></p>
<b>Physical Description / Condition:</b>	4 pages (colour)
<b>Administrative/ Biographical Sketch:</b>	<p>Fredrich DeGaugreben (Gaugreben) was an army officer and military engineer who was stationed on the Niagara frontier in 1813 and participated in the successful assault on Fort Niagara in December of that year. He remained at the fort to help improve its defences but was later transferred to Prescott, where he remained for the rest of the war.</p> <p>Lieut.-Col. Ralph Henry Bruyeres was a military engineer who was appointed the commanding engineer in the Canadas in 1806. When war broke out with the United States in June 1812, Bruyeres concentrated on fortifying the frontier posts, including those along the Niagara frontier. He supervised repairs to Fort Niagara after it was captured by the British and then returned to Quebec, where he died a few months later.</p> <p>In December of 1813 British forces captured Fort Niagara in a night assault. The British were expecting an attack on the Niagara frontier in retaliation and planned to fortify their defences. In July 1814 the Americans began an ambitious offensive campaign in Upper Canada, hoping to seize control from Niagara to York. They captured Fort Erie on July 4, Chippawa on July 5, and proceeded to Lundy’s Lane near Niagara Falls on July 25. A bloody battle ensued and both sides suffered heavy casualties. The Americans eventually retreated to Fort Erie and ended their advance into Upper Canada.</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Brock University Archives
<b>Source Information:</b>	Courtesy of Guy St. Denis, 2021.

<b>Described by:</b>	Chantal Cameron	<b>Date:</b>	April 2022
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