

might become more cooperative. Nevertheless, Secretary Armstrong was offended by the selection.⁵

No more than 500 regulars were in the new Tenth Military District, and half of them were shut up in forts. The government therefore decided on a massive alert of 93,500 militia, and it was on Independence Day that the nearby states were notified of their quotas. Winder, however, was not permitted to call any of this horde of citizen soldiers into active service until there was imminent danger. On 12 July he received permission to call out 6,000 from Maryland, but his uncle's administration responded so sluggishly that he had no more than 250 under his control six weeks later. He had no authority over any detachment until it was organized, equipped, and formally turned over to him by the War Department. It was never known how many of the 6,000 from Maryland actually entered the service, for no reports were made.⁶

On 17 July the government gave Winder permission to call for the following additional increments: Pennsylvania 5,000, Virginia 2,000, and the District of Columbia 2,000. The troops he could legally call into federal service now totaled 15,000, but the number he actually had in the ranks never did exceed a few hundred. Naturally, Winder called for regulars, marines, and sailors. His request prompted Secretary Jones on 8 August to direct three of the navy's finest captains to repair to Washington and aid the defense there. They were John Rodgers, Oliver H. Perry, and David Porter.

As of 23 July the men who were to make up the Maryland quota had not yet even been detached. Nevertheless, General Winder summoned all of them into federal service and tried to find supplies for them. Some Maryland militia were already in state service, guarding the coast, and most of these were put on the federal payroll in lieu of the new quota which had been called for but could not seem to be raised. They continued to do as federal employees what they had done for the state.⁷

The situation in Pennsylvania was worse yet. The legislature at its last session had completely revamped the militia law, and the new law had invalidated all commissions issued under previous statutes. As a result none of the standing militia could be compelled to serve and nothing could be done to change matters until October. The governor tried to fill the state's quota with volunteers, but he could not. In effect, Pennsylvania had in the very midst of war accidentally legislated herself out of the fight for three critical months. Virginia was in better shape legally, but she too was not able to meet her quota.⁸

The facts justified President Madison and others who worried about the security of Washington. As early as 1812 Generals Prevost and

Brock had suggested to Admiral Warren the need for a diversion southward to take pressure off Canada. In November 1812 Warren had asked for a "flying army" of 3,000 men to be used at his discretion. Admiral Cockburn's harassment of the Chesapeake region grew out of this request. Cockburn's success led Admiral Warren once more to call the attention of the Lords Commissioners to Chesapeake Bay as a strategic objective for 1814. When Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane replaced Warren, he adopted as his own Warren's project for the bay area. All the while Admiral Cockburn continued the harassment with limited means. Americans of various sorts aided him. Men whose property he threatened warned him of impending attacks in return for protection, and disaffected blacks guided his detachments in the night.⁹

Back in England the means were at hand to mount a diversion in force somewhere on the Atlantic coast. For some Englishmen there was an opportunity "to retaliate upon the Americans," as the chancellor of the exchequer put it, "for the outrages they had committed." The Ministry dispatched a fleet of 12 troopships from the Garonne on 2 July 1814. On board were about 3,000 men from Wellington's army; they were commanded by Major General Robert Ross. During 25 years of commissioned service Ross, forty-eight years old in 1814, had fought the French in Egypt, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and in France proper. He had consistently displayed the dash characteristic of those generals who had risen to high command under Wellington. Earl Bathurst himself instructed him to be guided by Admiral Cochrane's plans (the point to be attacked was left to Cochrane's discretion), and by his own judgment and experience. He specified that the expedition was no more than a diversion, and that Ross must not operate very far from the coast. While afloat and during embarkation Ross was under naval command, but the admiral had been directed to consult him on all strategic decisions. It was the general's privilege to refuse to commit his troops to any operation which seemed to him "unsuitable."¹⁰

The fleet of troopships anchored off Bermuda on 24 July, where about 900 additional men came aboard. Ross now reorganized his army into three brigades commanded by Colonels William Thornton, Arthur Brooke, and Charles Malcolm. Cochrane met Ross at Bermuda and the two conferred.

Cochrane had been doing some hard thinking about strategic objectives, and had taken Fleet Captain Edward Codrington into his confidence. The two sat on deck in shirt sleeves and examined the possibilities. Cochrane had made up his mind that Chesapeake Bay