

VI — *Harrison and Procter.*

The River Raisin.

By LT.-COL. E. A. CRUIKSHANK.

(Read September 28, 1910.)

The capture of Mackinac had decided General Hull to abandon the important but isolated post at Chicago, a measure that had long been contemplated. About the first of August he prepared an order to Captain Heald, the commandant, instructing him to destroy or distribute among the neighbouring Indians all public property that he was unable to remove, to dismantle the fort and join him at Detroit, and sent it to the commanding officer at Fort Wayne to be forwarded by a trusty messenger. At the same time Captain Wm. Wells, the Indian agent at the latter post, was directed to assemble a band of friendly Indians with whom he was to proceed to Chicago and escort the garrison in its retreat. The message to Heald was delivered on August 9th and gave him the first information of the fall of Mackinac. His intention of evacuating the fort was immediately made known to the Indians who rapidly assembled to the number of several hundreds to receive their presents. They encamped on the sand hills overlooking the lake a mile or two away and their general demeanor was orderly and peaceful. The merchandise in the government store and a quantity of provisions were given to them; but the spirits and all spare arms and ammunition were destroyed, greatly to their disappointment. On the 11th Captain Wells arrived at the head of one hundred mounted Indians. Two days later Heald began his march along the sandy beach in the direction of Detroit, with his Indian escort forming an advance and rear-guard. His main body was composed of fifty-four officers and men of the 4th United States Infantry, twelve armed civilians, nine women and eighteen children, several of whom also bore arms. A small train of waggons and pack horses conveyed their baggage and provisions. Two small brass cannon were thrown into the river; but no attempt was made to destroy the fort or neighbouring houses through fear of provoking the Indians. When they rushed forward to ransack the deserted buildings they found to their intense disgust that the powder magazine had been emptied into the well and that a large number of fire-arms had been broken up and barrels of whiskey emptied on the ground. As these were precisely the articles that they most coveted, their indignation knew no bounds. A numerous party started swiftly in pursuit and after running two or three miles at full speed gained a commanding

position on the crest of the sand hills about a hundred yards to the right of the route by which the column must pass. Their actions seemed so menacing to Heald that he rashly ordered his small body of infantry to move against them and expel them at the point of the bayonet. As the Indians showed no disposition to retire the soldiers fired a volley and charged. The Indians gave way in front but closed in upon their flanks and rear, delivering a deliberate and effective fire from the cover of thickets and hollows. In the course of fifteen minutes two-thirds of Heald's men were killed or wounded, his baggage train was captured, and the survivors forced to take refuge upon a mound in the adjacent prairie where they stood desperately at bay. They were not immediately pursued; but all the wounded men who were left behind and most of the women and children captured with the waggons were mercilessly slaughtered. Captain Wells was among the killed but his band of friendly Indians abstained from the contest and finally rode out of sight. Heald was badly wounded and the total destruction of his party could have been accomplished with ease. But instead of renewing the attack, the Indians assembled and held a consultation after which they signalled to him to come forward. Heald gallantly advanced alone and was met by Blackbird, a noted Ottawa chief, accompanied by a half-breed interpreter. After shaking hands Blackbird invited him to surrender promising that the prisoners should be well treated. As further resistance was evidently hopeless, Heald agreed to this proposal with little hesitation, although still doubtful of the Indians' sincerity. Thirty-eight men, of whom twenty-six were regular soldiers, two women and twelve children had already perished. Mrs. Heald and several other persons were suffering from wounds. After being disarmed the prisoners were marched back to the Indian camp where they were apportioned among the different bands. Next day Fort Dearborn was burnt and the Indians dispersed to their respective villages. Heald and his wife were taken to the Ottawa village near the mouth of the River St. Joseph where they were allowed to reside at the house of Benoit, a French Canadian trader. A few days later many of the warriors marched away to besiege Fort Wayne and Heald took advantage of their absence to induce a Canadian to take them in his boat to Mackinac where they were kindly treated by Captain Roberts who supplied their wants and furnished them with a passage in the next vessel sailing for Detroit.¹ The earliest information received by Procter, about the 5th of September, led him to believe that only three persons had escaped death and made him tremble for the fate of the garrison of Fort Wayne, which was described as being closely invested and reduced to the last extremity. Until that moment he had no intimation that an attack upon Chicago

¹ Heald to Eustis, Oct. 23, 1812; A. B. Woodward to Procter, Oct. 8, 1812.

was contemplated nor were the Indians in that quarter considered as coming within the influence of the officers of the British Indian Department.¹ Further inquiry proved that the collision was unpremeditated and that some thirty prisoners were scattered among the Indian villages on the borders of Lake Michigan. Chief Justice Woodward then requested that special messengers should be despatched to ransom the survivors and conduct them to Mackinac or Detroit.² Procter promptly replied that the most effectual means in his power would be employed at once "for the speedy release from slavery of these unfortunate individuals and for their restoration to their friends."³ Elliott and McKee were accordingly directed to make known his wishes to the chiefs and readily secured their promise that the captives should be surrendered.⁴ Lieutenant Helm and a few others were soon brought in, but the Indians became greatly angered at the destruction of some of their villages and decided to retain the remainder as hostages for the safety of their own people who had been carried away as prisoners. When Robert Dickson visited Chicago in the following March he ascertained that seventeen soldiers, four women and some children were still prisoners among the neighbouring Indians and took instant measures for their redemption.⁵ Eventually most of them were liberated through his influence.

Every available vessel and boat was pressed into service for the transportation of the prisoners taken at Detroit; but with every effort, several weeks elapsed before the last of them were sent away. The regular troops were taken to Fort Erie on their way to Quebec and the Ohio volunteers and drafted militia were paroled and landed at Cleveland. The detachment of the 41st Regiment which had been drawn from the Niagara frontier was sent back without delay to meet the impending attack in that quarter and the militia volunteers from the counties of Lincoln, Norfolk and York returned to their homes, after doing duty as an escort to the prisoners on their way down the lake. Three hundred of the local militia were retained in service, part of whom were employed in the expedition to the River Raisin and Miami Rapids already described, while the remainder were engaged in disarming the Michigan militia, dismantling the batteries at Detroit and removing the guns and military stores to Amherstburg. The executive powers of civil governor of Michigan Territory were assumed by Colonel Procter, who appointed as Secretary for the time being, Augustus B. Woodward,

¹ Procter to Brock, Sept. 10, 1812.

² Woodward to Procter, Oct. 8, 1812.

³ Procter to Woodward, Oct. 10, 1812.

⁴ Procter to Evans, Oct. 28, 1812.

⁵ Dickson to Freer, March 16, 1813.

the former Chief Justice. All officers of the American Indian Department were superseded and collectors of customs were appointed. All other civil officers remaining at their posts within the conquered territory were continued in office by special proclamation. Persons having public property in their possession were required to deliver it up to the officers of quartermaster-general's department without delay.

On arriving at Fort Erie, Brock learned that an armistice had been concluded and at once wrote to Procter to suspend the projected expedition against Fort Wayne until further orders.¹ Eight hundred Indians took their departure from Amherstburg within a few days in high dissatisfaction in consequence. The Prophet returned to the Wabash and Tecumseh undertook a long journey to the south in the hope of regaining his health and enlisting the Cherokees and Creeks in the war. Early in September, Procter advanced with a small force to the Miami Rapids where he learned that the enemy's post at Sandusky had been abandoned, and that Chicago had been taken and Fort Wayne closely invested by the "back Indians." Colonel Elliott who had accompanied him on this expedition was disabled by illness from riding on horseback or he would have sent him forward to restrain them; but he was instructed to take all necessary measures for that purpose within his power. On the 10th of September, after his return from Detroit, he received a letter from Brock informing him of the resumption of hostilities and desiring him to send every man and gun he could spare to his assistance on the line of the Niagara. A party of Indians had come in about the same time bringing a prisoner who had been sent out from Fort Wayne to seek assistance from General Harrison.² By his account the garrison was reduced to such an extremity that Procter decided to despatch a small body of regulars and militia to assist in the siege and save the lives of the inmates. Some American prisoners to whom his determination was made known seemed much pleased and gave him full credit for his good intentions.³

Fortunately, as it happened, some unforeseen events delayed the departure of this expedition for several days. The regular troops at his disposal had been reduced to less than two hundred and fifty of all ranks and arms by the detachment of parties to serve as marines and escorts and he was consequently obliged to call out a hundred additional militiamen besides thirty horsemen to act as despatch riders and maintain his communication with the settlement on the Thames. One hundred and fifty Indians opportunely arrived from Mackinac, which with the Wyandots and other small bands that still remained at Amherst-

¹ Brock to Procter, Aug. 25, 1812.

² Letter in Boston Messenger, Dec. 4, 1812. Procter to Brock, Sept. 10, 1812.

³ Brock to Prevost, Sept. 18, 1812.

burg made up a body of about six hundred warriors. The announcement that the war would be continued put them all in the best humour and they seemed eager for active employment. Twenty artillerymen under Lieut. Troughton with a light howitzer and two small field guns, one hundred and fifty of the 41st Regiment and an equal number of the Essex militia and the whole of the Indians were accordingly detailed to march against Fort Wayne. Brevet Major Muir of the 41st was selected for the command as an officer of tried courage and discretion. Colonel Elliott and Captain Caldwell were placed in charge of the Indians. Forty-seven French Canadians from the River Raisin were engaged to drive a large herd of cattle and a train of pack-horses escorted by the Indians, many of whom were mounted on their own horses, while the artillery and infantry ascended the Miami in boats of light draught as far as they could go. The distance to be travelled exceeded two hundred miles, much of which would undoubtedly be difficult navigation owing to prolonged dry weather. These preparations detained Muir until the 16th of September, when he set sail from Amherstburg. The troops were landed at the foot of the rapids, where the tedious labour began of conveying the artillery and stores across a ten mile portage and of towing the boats up stream. Here they were joined by their supply train and a considerable body of Indians. The water in the river was unusually low and after surmounting the rapids their progress was slow and fatiguing. The Indians persistently lagged behind and gave little assistance of any kind. On the afternoon of September 26th, Muir arrived at the old Delaware town twelve miles above the site of Fort Defiance at the junction of the Au Glaize with the Miami and forty miles below Fort Wayne. Three days had been occupied in moving his boats a distance of only eight miles. The guns were landed and remounted on their carriages with the intention of advancing the remainder of the way by the Indian trail. The main body of the Indians had remained behind at Fort Defiance; but for the first time a few of their scouts had that day been induced to precede the troops a few miles. About sunset this party discovered five white men forming their camp for the night, whom they quietly surrounded and approached, stating that they were hunters on their way home. Ensign Leggett, the officer in command, informed the Indians that his party were scouts for General Winchester's army of five thousand men which had relieved Fort Wayne exactly two weeks before and was then encamped only four miles in their rear, while another body, three thousand strong, was advancing down the Au Glaize with the intention of joining Winchester at Fort Defiance when the whole force would move forward to the rapids. The Indians then declared themselves as enemies and demanded his surrender. Seeing that he was outnumbered and that

resistance was useless Leggett finally consented to accompany them to the British camp on the condition that his men were not disarmed. After proceeding together in that direction until night fell, the Indians became suspicious that their prisoners intended to escape, when they were all ruthlessly shot down and scalped. This took place so near Muir's encampment that the sound of the firing was distinctly heard by the sentries and caused a general alarm.¹ Muir at once sent off a runner with a message to summon the Indians to his support and took up a position on the high ground commanding a ford in the river. At noon next day Elliott came up with six hundred warriors and scouts were sent out to explore the woods in every direction. At nightfall, Split Log, a Wyandot chief of reputation, reported that he had gone entirely around the enemy's camp which was situated about eight miles away and was strongly fortified. He estimated their force at about 2,500 men.² Winchester's advance from Fort Wayne had been conducted with great caution in three parallel columns, a few hundred yards apart, with his supply train in the centre and an advance guard of three hundred men preceded by a screen of scouts thrown out a mile or two in front. Moving at a rate of between five and ten miles a day he invariably halted about three o'clock in the afternoon and surrounded his entire camp with a formidable breastwork of logs and brush. When it became dark large fires were built fifty paces outside his lines and smaller ones at the door of each tent.³

On the morning of the 27th much dismay was caused by the discovery of the mutilated bodies of Leggett's party and Winchester at once drew in his flanking columns and retired to his camp which he began to strengthen in expectation of an attack.⁴

Muir was already in difficulties from lack of supplies, many cattle having run away from their drivers. He had in consequence only

¹ Muir to Procter, Sept. 26, 1812; Richardson (Casselman's ed.), pp. 94-5.

² Muir to Procter, Sept. 26, 1812; Richardson, p. 95.

Brigade Major Garrard reported the strength of Winchester's brigade, Oct. 31, 1812, as follows:—

Regiments of Allen, Lewis and Scott fit for duty	1,678
'Sick' present	216
“ absent231.
	1,894
Winchester had also under his command Simrall's dragoons	300
Garrard's troop of mounted riflemen	70
	2,274

³ Letter in Federal Republican of Georgetown, D.C., Nov. 27, 1812, dated Paris, Ky., Oct. 24.

⁴ Tupper to Harrison, Oct. 12, 1812.

sufficient provisions for two days' consumption although his whole force had been put upon short allowance several days before. A party had been sent back to the rapids to procure cattle but had not yet returned. Next morning one hundred and fifty more Indians came up, increasing his force to more than a thousand men but at the same time adding to his embarrassment in providing food. Concluding that the approach of so large a force indicated an immediate intention to advance upon Detroit or Amherstburg, Muir sent off a despatch to warn Procter and boldly determined to attack Winchester on his line of march if he gave him an opportunity. Captain Caldwell and Lieut. Askin went forward to reconnoitre with sixty militia and Indians. They returned after a brisk skirmish in which they lost two men and reported that the enemy's advanced party was already within two miles. The guns were placed in a position to command the approaches to the ford and by which the Americans must cross the river, with the regulars and militia in support; but the Indians positively refused to fight at that place and Muir was obliged to retire to his boats. The guns and stores were embarked and sent away in charge of Lieut. Troughton. Muir then went to the Indian camp where a council of the chiefs was assembled to decide upon their future course. He was soon informed that they had determined to fight in the morning at some advantageous spot. An hour before daylight to his great surprise he received a message from Colonel Elliott stating that their soothsayers had been busy conjuring all night and in consequence the Mackinac and Saginaw Indians were preparing to return home at once. Assuming that he had then no alternative to an immediate retreat, Muir gave orders for his baggage and cattle to be sent off. Shortly afterwards he received a second message from Elliott informing him that the Indians had changed their minds and were determined to fight. On marching his troops to their encampment he found that they were not yet ready to move, but that small parties were going off in every direction. The chief of the Mackinac Indians came to take leave of him saying that as the Indians could not agree among themselves he would take his young men home; but he was willing that those who had horses should remain if they chose, as they could easily escape in case of a defeat. He then went away followed by most of his band. Muir observed to some of the interpreters that the number of Indians that remained seemed very small. Overhearing this a young Huron exclaimed that there would not be half as many by the time they reached the ground they had selected to fight on, which lay in the fork of the river about three miles above Fort Defiance where both their flanks would be protected by branches of the Miami. The movement was begun and Muir rode forward with Elliott to examine this position. On their return a prisoner was brought in who gave his name as

Sergeant McCoy of Scott's regiment of Kentucky volunteers. He had been wandering in the woods for four days without food. On being questioned he described Winchester's force very accurately giving the name and approximate strength of each regiment and estimating the whole to amount to three thousand, of whom four hundred were dragoons or mounted riflemen, accompanied by a six pounder and a train of seventy waggons. They were short of provisions but expected to be joined at Fort Defiance by an equal force advancing down the Au Glaize with provisions for both and four field guns.

By that time Muir had ascertained that not more than 330 Indians had remained and told Elliott that it would be madness to risk an engagement with so small a force, pointing out the danger they ran of being completely surrounded and destroyed by overwhelming numbers. Elliott replied that two of the Indian conjurers had dreamed that they would be successful that day and the warriors were fully determined to fight. Muir bade him tell them that he could not see the smallest prospect of success and must refuse to throw away the lives of his men to no purpose. Roundhead then came to him with an interpreter and urged that they might be allowed at least to justify the prediction of the conjurers by driving back the enemy's advance guard, and then retire through the woods. Muir retorted that the Indians might be able to do this but the regular troops could not exist without supplies. During the day he overtook Troughton who had been obliged to lighten his boats by the sacrifice of some stores. Indian scouts who were sent up the Au Glaize reported that they had heard cannon shots and the sound of bugles in the woods a few miles up that river, which seemed to confirm the report that an army was advancing from that direction.¹ Muir continued his retreat without molestation arriving at the head of the rapids on September 30th, and at Amherstburg on October 2nd. He reported that his men had behaved remarkably well and praised his officers for "their zeal and cheerful compliance with all orders on every occasion." As it afterwards appeared his movement was not wholly fruitless, as it materially delayed Harrison's advance upon Detroit; but the result of the expedition confirmed Procter in the conviction that he must have "an independent regular force to insure the assistance of the Indians." He strongly urged that he should be reinforced by a portion of the 41st regiment without delay. "The Indians will certainly not desert us now," he wrote; "but a respectable force is requisite to give them confidence and render them effective. The Indians hesitated some time whether they should again confide in us. They have their fears that this territory may be again ceded to the

¹ Muir to Procter, Sept. 30, 1812.

Americans and in the event of which I am confident they will look upon us as their betrayers and worst enemies.”¹

He had already received a letter from Brock approving of his movement against Fort Wayne. “But it must be explicitly understood,” he added, “that you are not to resort to offensive warfare for purposes of conquest. Your operations are to be confined to measures of defence and security. With this view, if you should have credible information of the assembling of bodies of troops to march against you, it may become necessary, to destroy the fort at Sandusky and the road that runs through it from Cleveland to the foot of the rapids. The road from the River Raisin to Detroit is perhaps in too bad a state to offer any aid to the approach of an enemy except in the winter, and if a winter campaign should be contemplated against you it is probable that magazines would be formed in Cleveland and its vicinity, of all of which you will of course inform yourself. In carrying on your operations in your quarter it is of primary importance that the confidence and good will of the Indians should be preserved and that whatsoever can tend to produce a contrary effect should be carefully avoided. I therefore most strongly urge and enjoin you acting on those principles on every occasion that may offer, inculcating them in all those under your influence and enforcing them by your example, whether in your conduct towards the Indians or what may regard them or in your language in speaking to or of them.”² He was advised never to call out the militia except in cases of urgent need and only in such numbers as might be indispensably required. A reinforcement of regular troops was promised when circumstances would permit.

During Muir’s absence the *Queen Charlotte* was directed to make a demonstration in his favour by cruising off the south shore of Lake Erie between Cleveland and Sandusky and Procter began to remove the cattle and other supplies from the eastern settlements in the Michigan territory without much ceremony. He announced his intention of leaving no provisions in that quarter for the enemy’s subsistence and that he should be made to pay dearly for every inch of tenable ground.³ He foresaw that a forward movement would not be long delayed since several undesirable persons who had been permitted to leave Detroit might be relied upon to expose the weakness of his force. The Governor General had indeed recommended the total evacuation of Detroit and the entire territory of Michigan to enable Brock to withdraw a greater number of regular troops to the Niagara frontier, but that capable

¹ Procter to Brock, Sept. 30, 1812.

² Brock to Procter, Sept. 17th.

³ Procter to Brock, Sept. 30, and Oct. 3, 1812.

commander exercised his discretion to postpone this from motives of both policy and humanity.¹

“Such a measure would most probably be followed by the total extinction of the population on that side of the river,” he wrote, “or the Indians, aware of our weakness, would only think of entering into terms with the enemy. The Indians since the Miami affair in 1793 have been extremely suspicious of our conduct; but the violent wrongs committed by the Americans on their territory have rendered it an act of policy with them to disguise their sentiments. Could they be persuaded that a peace between the belligerents would take place without admitting their claim to an extensive tract of country fraudulently usurped from them and opposing a frontier to the present unbounded views of the Americans, I am satisfied in my own mind that they would immediately compromise with the enemy. I cannot conceive a connexion so likely to lead to more awful consequences.

“If we can maintain ourselves at Niagara and keep the communication to Montreal open, the Americans can only subdue the Indians by craft, which we ought to be prepared to see exerted to the utmost. The enmity of the Indians is now at its height and it will require much management and large bribes to effect a change in their policy; but the moment they are convinced we either want the means to prosecute the war with spirit or are negotiating a separate peace, they will begin to study in what manner they can effectually deceive us.”²

When the declaration of war became known in Kentucky it received the hearty approval of the great majority of the people and most of the towns and villages were illuminated on the following night as a sign of general rejoicing. As soon as Congress adjourned, Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and recognized leader of the war-party, hurried home and exerted himself with characteristic energy to promote the organization of a volunteer force to support General Hull in the anticipated conquest of Upper Canada. He daily attended musters of militia and frequently stirred public meetings with a torrent of fiery and confident rhetoric. Shortly after his arrival at Lexington he wrote to the Secretary of State that he was actually alarmed by the enthusiasm displayed by the people of his State. Four hundred men had been enlisted for the regular army and the quota of militia detached for six months' service had been more than completed with volunteers.

“Such is the character of our society, however,” he added, “that I doubt whether many can be engaged for a longer period than six months. For that term any force whatever which our population may

¹ Prevost to Brock, Sept. 14, 1812.

² Brock to Prevost, Sept. 28, 1812.

afford, can be obtained. Engaged in agricultural pursuits, you are well aware that from about this time when the crop is either secured in the barn or laid by in the field until the commencement of spring, there is leisure for any kind of enterprize."¹

Two weeks later persistent rumours respecting the precarious situation of Detroit excited grave misgivings.

"Should Hull's army be cut off," he wrote confidentially, "the effect on the public mind would be, especially in this quarter, in the highest degree injurious. Why did he proceed with so inconsiderable a force, was the general inquiry made of me. I maintained it was sufficient. Should he meet with a disaster, the prediction of those who pronounced his army incompetent to the object will be fulfilled, and the Secretary of War, in whom already there unfortunately exists no sort of confidence, cannot shield Mr. Madison from the odium which will attend such an event."²

In public he kept up a brave show of confidence and on the very day of Hull's capitulation he addressed three regiments assembled at Georgetown, serenely predicting the speedy capture of Amherstburg and conquest of Upper Canada.³

Some time before this, Harrison, the capable and energetic Governor of the Indian Territory, had been invited by Governor Scott to attend a conference on military affairs at Frankfort and his arrival evoked a great demonstration of warlike enthusiasm. Many leading politicians had assembled there to be present at the inauguration of Isaac Shelby, a veteran soldier of the Revolution, as Scott's successor in office. Brigadier General James Winchester of Tennessee had been designated by the Secretary of War to command the forces then being organized but he had not yet arrived and was by no means popular in Kentucky. Steps were immediately taken to secure his supersession by the "hero of Tippecanoe." At the suggestion of a small caucus of influential politicians, Harrison was accordingly appointed Major-General of the Kentucky militia, thus outranking Winchester. On the day of his appointment, Clay wrote in the highest spirits to solicit the same rank for him in the army of the United States.

"If you will carry your recollections back to the age of the Crusaders and of some of the most distinguished leaders of those expeditions, you will have a picture of the enthusiasm existing in this country for the expedition to Canada and for Harrison as Commander."⁴

¹ Clay to Monroe, July 29, 1812.

² Clay to Monroe, Aug. 12, 1812.

³ Williams, *Two Campaigns in 1812*.

⁴ Clay to Monroe, Aug. 25, 1812.

The leader thus chosen was only forty years of age, active, robust and masterful. He had been governor of Indiana for a dozen years and knew the frontier and its people thoroughly. He was a most persuasive and voluble speaker and an adept in the arts of gaining and retaining personal popularity. Throughout his first campaign he wore an ordinary hunting shirt and conversed freely with all ranks. His short but fervid speeches from the top of a stump or tail of a waggon went straight to the hearts of his men and never failed to rouse them to renewed efforts. The Cabinet at this time seriously contemplated the appointment to this command of James Monroe, the Secretary of State, who was eager to display his military talents; but when their hand was thus forced by the unexpected action of Clay and his friends they could not well refuse their assent.¹

One regiment had already begun its march for Vincennes, and Harrison wrote a lengthy letter to the Secretary advocating the formation of a chain of blockhouses along the Illinois River from its mouth to Chicago as a barrier against Indian raids and the concentration of five thousand men at Fort Wayne. But while on the road to Cincinnati on August 26th he learned with dismay that both Detroit and Chicago had fallen and that Fort Wayne was closely invested. The military situation was wholly changed. Next day he crossed the Ohio with the 17th United States Infantry, the 1st and 5th Kentucky Volunteers, the 1st Kentucky riflemen, and a troop of dragoons, making a force of 2,100 men. Three other regiments of infantry volunteers, five troops of dragoons and five hundred mounted infantry were a few days' march in rear.² He described these troops as "the best material for forming an army that the world has produced," but qualified this by the statement "that no equal number of men was ever collected who knew so little of military discipline." Nearly the whole of his men were armed with rifles; but he had no sabres for his cavalry and possessed but a single field-gun. He then requested Shelby to call into service an additional body of mounted riflemen for the protection of Indiana and appealed to Meigs to support him with the entire military strength of Ohio.

He assumed control of all military affairs and put his own column in motion for Fort Wayne. At the ford of St. Mary's River he was overtaken by Johnson's regiment of mounted riflemen from Kentucky and a day later by seven hundred horsemen from Ohio, increasing his force to three thousand, of whom thirteen hundred were mounted. In fact every road intersecting his line of march was thronged with

¹ Colton, Letters of Henry Clay.

² Harrison to Eustis, Aug. 28 and 29, 1812.

unsolicited volunteers eager to join him. His movement was conducted with characteristic circumspection and vigilance and difficulties of transport delayed him; but Fort Wayne was relieved without firing a shot on September 12th. Strong columns of mounted men were then sent out in every direction to destroy all Indian villages within sixty miles. Harrison himself accompanied one of these which marched to the forks of the Wabash.¹ These villages were all deserted at their approach and few prisoners were taken. The cabins were burnt and the standing corn was cut and piled in heaps to rot. Graves were ransacked and the bones they held scattered wantonly abroad. Little was accomplished by these raids except the infliction of untold misery upon a number of wretched women and children and the consequent exasperation of the warriors who were forced to seek refuge at Amherstburg or Brownstown.

During their absence Simrall's regiment of Kentucky dragoons and a troop of mounted riflemen arrived in charge of a supply train, adding five hundred men and rendering possible a further advance. But on September 18, General Winchester came up and assumed command much to the disgust of many of the Kentuckians with whom Harrison had become a general favourite, while his successor seemed distant and supercilious. Winchester prepared to move forward to the Miami rapids and Harrison returned to Piqua with the intention of attempting a simultaneous advance with all the mounted troops he could assemble by way of St. Joseph's River to the River Raisin.² The infantry regiments of Jennings, Barbee, and Poague, in all about fifteen hundred strong, were directed to move down the Au Glaize in charge of a supply train, clearing the road and building blockhouses to protect the line of communication as they advanced. Winchester wrote confidently to Meigs that he still hoped to winter at Detroit or its immediate vicinity and asked him to push forward two regiments of Ohio Volunteers to join him at the Miami Rapids between the 10th and 15th of October, and a third to keep the road open from Piqua to Fort Defiance. On September 22, he marched from Fort Wayne with about 2,500 men, but seldom advanced more than five miles in a day. Scouting was performed by a small band of Indians led by a half-breed Shawanese chief known as Captain Logan, said to be a nephew of Tecumseh and a company of white spies under Ruddle, a veteran frontiersman.³ Apprehending an attack from Muir, Winchester crossed over to the right bank of the Miami at a little known ford and fortified his camp. Messages requesting reinforcements and supplies were sent off to Harrison and Meigs.

¹ Harrison to Meigs, Aug. 28, 1812.

² Harrison to Eustis, Sept. 11 and 18, 1812.

³ Harrison to Meigs, Sept. 22, 1812.

On September 30, he learned that Muir had retreated and moved forward to the site of Fort Defiance where he again formed an entrenched camp and awaited supplies. Nine days had been occupied in covering a distance of less than fifty miles.

On reaching Piqua, on Sept. 24th, Harrison received a letter from the Secretary of War, dated only seven days before, placing him in supreme command of the Northwestern army which, in addition to all the regular troops in the military district, would include the whole of the volunteers and detached militia from Kentucky and three thousand ordered to join him from Pennsylvania and Virginia, making a total force of more than ten thousand men. A train of artillery was being equipped at Pittsburg. With respect to the vital question of supply he was practically given unlimited authority. "Command such means as may be practicable," the Secretary wrote; "exercise your own discretion and act in all cases according to your own judgment." After having secured the frontier against Indian incursions, he was instructed to retake Detroit and advance as far into Upper Canada as he might deem prudent with a view to the permanent conquest of that Province.¹ The Secretary's next letter confirmed and even extended his authority.

"As the difficulty of obtaining supplies, particularly of provisions, through the wilderness, appears to be one of the greatest obstacles you will have to contend with, which difficulty it is well known increases as the season advances, your own judgment will enable you to determine how far it may be practicable to advance and what posts or stations it may be expedient to maintain during the winter. You are already apprised of the solicitude of the government that everything that can be done, shall be done towards recovering the ground lost and extending successful operations into Canada."²

The contractor, commissary, and all officers of the quartermaster general's department were made directly subject to his orders to enable him to act with greater freedom and vigour. In three days he had framed a plan of operations by which he hoped to concentrate the greater part of his troops at the Miami Rapids, seventy-two miles from Detroit within a month. Considerations of supply and transport as well as his instructions to protect the frontier settlements, induced him to move in three columns. The right division consisting of 250 cavalry, twenty-eight guns and two brigades of infantry detached from the militia of Pennsylvania and Virginia was to assemble at Wooster, Ohio, and thence advance by way of Upper Sandusky where it would be joined by a

¹ Atherton's Narrative, pp. 7-9.

² Eustis to Harrison, Sept. 17, 1812.

brigade of Ohio militia increasing its strength to five thousand men. Twelve hundred Ohio militia assembled at Urbana were directed to move by Hull's road, while the remainder of the Kentucky troops would join Winchester at Fort Defiance by the Au Glaize route along which they were already distributed. Upper Sandusky, Fort McArthur on Hull's road, and St. Mary on the Au Glaize, were selected as advanced bases. The purchase of two millions of rations was ordered at once for delivery at these posts, much of which was contracted for within a week as both cattle and grain were abundant in the frontier settlements of Ohio.¹ He was, however, much concerned over the pressing need of woollen clothing, watch coats and shoes, which could not be so readily procured.

Meigs, a man of exceptional zeal and energy, made every possible exertion to assist him. So successful were his efforts in assembling and equipping the militia of his State that it was estimated that twelve thousand were already under arms.² The Indians of Ohio were collected in concentration camps at Sandusky, Zanesville and Waupakoneta, where blockhouses were built for their protection and they were vigilantly guarded.

Shelby in Kentucky was equally diligent in forwarding supplies and reinforcements. Nor had popular zeal in that State at all abated.

"The capitulation of Detroit has produced no despair," Clay wrote, on September 21. "It has on the contrary wakened new enthusiasm and aroused the whole people of this State. Kentucky has at this moment from eight to ten thousand men in the field; it is not practicable to ascertain the precise number. Except our quota of the 100,000 militia, the residue is chiefly of a miscellaneous character who have turned out without pay or supplies of any kind coming with their own arms and subsistence. Parties are daily passing to the theatre of action; last night seventy lay on my farm, and they go on from a solitary individual to companies of ten, fifty and one hundred."

All ranks and classes seemed animated by the same warlike spirit. John Allen, the most eminent lawyer in the State next to Clay, Madison, the State Auditor, and not less than seven Congressmen elect, were already serving under Harrison, two or three of the latter as private soldiers. The course of events, however, would soon demonstrate that these armed mobs were liable to disperse as rapidly as they assembled.

By October 1, Harrison had succeeded in assembling three thousand men in the vicinity of St. Mary. Half of these were mounted and were formed into a brigade under command of Brigadier General Edward

¹ Eustis to Harrison, Sept. 23, 1812.

² Harrison to Eustis, Sept. 27, 1812.

Tupper of Ohio. That day he received an urgent demand from Winchester for reinforcements stating that he had come in contact with the advance of a large British and Indian force, and a letter from Erie reporting that three thousand men had left Amherstburg two weeks before with the design of attacking Fort Wayne. He also learned that Colonel Jennings had halted on his march half way down the Au Glaize and fortified his position. Greatly alarmed for Winchester's safety he determined to proceed to his support with the whole of Tupper's brigade. Riding rapidly forward with a strong escort he reached Winchester's camp near Fort Defiance on the evening of the 2nd. Continued scarcity of provisions had already caused great discontent. During the night Harrison was aroused from sleep by Colonel Allen and other officers who informed him that their men had resolved to return home and that their remonstrances had been answered with insults.¹

Next morning Tupper's brigade arrived and Harrison promptly addressed the mutineers assuring them that ample supplies would arrive during the day and that they were the advance guard of an army of ten thousand men. His appointment as Commander-in-Chief was welcomed by them with evident satisfaction and loyally accepted by Winchester himself. A reconnaissance down the river for several miles satisfied him that no immediate attack need be feared. A site for an intrenchment, which became known as Fort Winchester, was selected on the left bank of the Au Glaize near its confluence with the Miami, and Winchester was instructed to push forward a force to the deserted settlement at the foot of the rapids, to harvest several hundred acres of corn, which was considered "an object of no little importance to the future movements of the army." He was put in command of the entire left wing including the three regiments of the Kentucky volunteers and a battalion of Ohio militia employed on the road from St. Mary. Harrison then announced his intention of proceeding at once to Wooster to hasten the advance of the right division.² The term of enlistment of Johnson's regiment of mounted riflemen having nearly expired, it was allowed to return with him. The remainder of Tupper's brigade, numbering 960 of all ranks, was detailed for the expedition to the rapids taking with them eight days' provisions which nearly exhausted the entire stock of flour in store.³ But a small party of hostile Indians was still lurking in the woods who killed an unwary ranger on the opposite bank of the Miami before the march began. Many of the horses were grazing when this became known, but as soon

¹ Duncan McArthur to ———— Sept. 1812.

² Atherton, 9-10; Darnell, Journal.

³ Harrison to Winchester, Oct. 4, 1812.

as they could be caught, there was an immediate stampede in pursuit. Small bands of excited horsemen dashed through the ford in spite of their officers' efforts to detain them, and scoured the woods in every direction. When they returned their horses were too exhausted to proceed on the march that day.¹ Logan's Indian scouts after examining the trail reported that the enemy seemed to be in considerable force and they were sent forward next morning to reconnoitre the river below as far as the little rapids, a distance of fourteen miles. They came upon Muir's track and perceived that he had retired in great haste, forcing his carriages over logs and tearing up small trees by the roots. In their absence, camp rumour had persistently magnified the strength of the enemy and there were symptoms of a panic. Simrall's dragoons had received instructions to return to the frontier settlements to recruit their horses, many of Tupper's men announced their intention of going with them. On October 8th he advanced with the remainder to the Delaware village, twelve miles above the rapids, where he found an abundant supply of sweet corn; but on preparing to continue his march next morning, found that he had only two hundred men. As this number seemed too large for a reconnaissance and too small for an offensive movement he decided to return at once to Urbana by Hull's road, greatly mortified by the conduct of his troops.²

The departure of the dragoons reduced Winchester's force to less than 1,800 effectives. They had not drawn full rations for a month. They were sometimes without flour, and generally without salt. Some were barefooted, others without blankets; many had torn their clothing to rags in forcing their way through the woods. None of them was supplied with under garments of any kind. More than two hundred were disabled by sickness. Any further advance before the arrival of supplies seemed decidedly unwise. Winchester therefore contented himself for the present with the construction of a palisaded fortification enclosing about a quarter of an acre of ground with log blockhouses at the angles. Several hours daily were spent in drill. Reconnoitring parties were constantly sent out; but his white scouts seldom ventured to go very far into the woods and little reliance was placed on the reports made by the Indians. A party of men who had strolled off to gather wild plums was surprised and five of them killed. On another occasion a detachment of Garrard's mounted infantry was attacked, losing one man killed and another wounded.³

A report of Winchester's advance had reached Amherstburg on October 4th. An officer of the commissariat was then at the River

¹ Atherton, p. 12.

² Tupper to Harrison, Oct. 12, 1812; Atherton, p. 12.

³ Tupper to Harrison, Oct. 12, 1812.

Raisin engaged in collecting supplies. Procter directed Lieutenant Edward Dewar, of the Quartermaster General's Department, to protect him with a party of militia who went forward in-boats. Dewar with Roundhead and fourteen Wyandots rode from Brownstown on the Sth, and learned that a false report of the enemy's movements had been purposely raised by some of the settlers to create an alarm and give them an opportunity of stealing some of the cattle purchased by the commissary. Next day a Pottowatomic chief arrived with his band from the rapids who stated that he had seen a party of Shawanese scouts in the enemy's service at that place the day before and began a conversation with them across the river, but had been driven away by the appearance of American soldiers coming out of the woods. Some of the settlers at the River Raisin, who were armed and mounted, volunteered to accompany Dewar and the Wyandots on a reconnaissance. Arriving at the rapids at dark on the 10th they carefully examined the fords and roads before entering the settlement. Five townships had been surveyed at this place and sixty-seven families resided here before the war. But one house remained which was occupied by a French Canadian family named Beaugrand, all the rest having been burnt by the Indians. Many cattle were running wild in the woods, and there were several large fields of standing corn fully ripe. Sending two trusty scouts along Hull's road, Dewar with Roundhead and two others rode twenty-five miles up the left bank of the river. During the night he encountered a scouting party from a camp of Creeks from Florida who agreed to accompany him to Amherstburg. In the morning he was joined by a war party of Kickapoos carrying the scalp of a horse-man whom they had shot within the line of sentries at the American camp. They reported that it was occupied by about eight hundred men who were building blockhouses and were in want of provisions. On his return to the rapids, Dewar found that his men had succeeded in securing only twenty cattle out of ten times that number as they were very wild from having been shot at by the Indians; but it was estimated that eight thousand bushels of corn might be gathered. The settlements at the River Raisin had suffered greatly from the depredations of the Pottowatomies and Delawares whose villages had been destroyed. They had stolen most of the horses, wantonly killed many cattle and hogs and ravaged the fields. Still he reported that three thousand bushels of grain might be obtained. If suitable encouragement was given he believed that many of the people residing there might be induced to remove to Canada and take part in its defence. He recommended that Colonel Elliott with the whole of the Indians then at Amherstburg, numbering some eight hundred warriors, should be

sent to the rapids to subsist themselves as the stock of provisions was very low.¹

The arrival of an express with news of the victory at Queenston raised the spirits of the Indians and they readily consented to occupy this advanced position and send out parties to annoy the enemy. All of them except the Wyandots had lost their entire crop of corn by American raiding parties and were quite dependent on the commissariat. The corn and cattle at the rapids would be sufficient to maintain them for several weeks during which some portion of these necessary supplies might be secured and brought away. The Indians would have employment, the Americans would be prevented from advancing, the consumption of provisions would be lessened and time gained for the removal of the surplus produce of the Michigan Territory. Little inducement for the enemy to continue his movement would then remain. Ten days elapsed before this plan could be carried into effect. By that time only two days' provisions were left in store. A scouting party returned from the River Huron below Sandusky with a prisoner who stated that the blockhouses there were occupied by five hundred men while as many more were employed in cutting a road forward. This information clearly pointed to a converging movement upon the Miami Rapids. The opportune arrival of a speech from the Six Nations accompanied by a scalp taken at Queenston greatly animated the Indians and on October 30th, Elliott left Amherstburg with 250 Pottowatomies and Delawares embarked in two gun-boats, a small schooner and a number of batteaux, while Roundhead and the Wyandots agreed to ride on from Brownstown and join them at the rapids.² Procter complained that the Indian Department, upon which so much depended, lacked an efficient head. Although still capable at times of great exertions, Elliott was more than seventy years of age and in poor health. McKee, next in rank, was brave and influential but had ruined his constitution by habitual intemperance. His regular force was too weak to command respect and repress order among the Indians. Including two companies of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment detailed for marine duty it had never exceeded four hundred effectives.³ Captain Muir was disabled by illness and there were but six company officers serving with the detachment of the 41st. Firmly convinced that the fate of Upper Canada depended upon the maintenance of his position, Procter earnestly asked for a strong reinforcement. A single regiment, he said, would make him perfectly secure and inspire the Indians with confidence.

¹ Atherton, p. 10.

² Dewar to Colonel Macdonnell, Oct. 19, 1812.

³ Elliott to Claus, October 28, 1812; Procter to Sheaffe, Oct. 30, 1812.

The armed schooner *Lady Prevost* was instructed to cruise off Sandusky and the River Huron to create an alarm.¹

Early in November, General Tupper advanced from Urbana to Fort McArthur, where a considerable quantity of supplies had been accumulated, with a strong brigade of Ohio Volunteers and sent Hinkton's company of scouts ahead to reconnoitre by Hull's road. Arriving at the rapids on the afternoon of the 7th, Hinkton found the Indians in possession busily engaged in killing hogs and gathering corn. A white man who was seen in a corn-field stalking a flock of wild turkeys, was stealthily surrounded and taken prisoner before he could give the alarm.² He proved to be Interpreter Clark of the British Indian Department. When he was brought to Fort McArthur, Clark was significantly warned that his future treatment would depend on the truth of his statements, and he talked freely. He said that the number of Indians at the rapids, exclusive of women and children, did not exceed 250 and described the weak state of the garrisons of Amherstburg and Detroit. This information decided Tupper to make a dash forward with the object of dispersing the Indians and securing the cattle and corn. The distance was seventy-seven miles which he expected to cover in three days.³ Every man who was not afraid of fatigue was ordered to draw five days' rations and he began his march on the 10th at the head of 650 well mounted riflemen, taking with him a light field gun. An express was sent to warn Winchester of the proposed movement and invite his co-operation. Finding that the gun impeded his progress it was left behind at a blockhouse fifteen miles in advance of Fort McArthur. The road was very bad and it was the evening of the 15th before Tupper arrived at the ford of the Miami two miles above the settlement. His scouts reported that the Indians were encamped near Beaugrand's house on the opposite side of the river and their boats were moored some distance below. They were drinking and dancing and seemed unaware of his approach. He determined to cross at once, surround their camp in the dark and attack at daybreak. But the river was swollen by recent rains and the current was swift. Very few men succeeded in gaining the opposite bank, several of whom lost their rifles and others had their ammunition spoiled. They were ordered back and the attempt to cross was abandoned. When daylight returned Tupper marched his force into the clearing opposite their camp. The Indians assembled in considerable numbers and began a fire of musketry across the river while several shots were also discharged

¹ Return of November, 25 1812. Royal Artillery, 30; 41st Regiment, 256 Royal Newfoundland, 117.

² Procter to Sheaffe, Oct. 30 and Nov. 9, 1812.

³ Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio.

from a field-gun. The boats got under way down stream. Observing a body of horsemen riding in the direction of the ford with the apparent intention of threatening his line of retreat, Tupper lost no time in moving off. Some mounted Indians under the personal direction of Colonel Elliott, who was recognized by several Americans, and Split Log, the Wyandot chief, conspicuous on a white horse, crossed the river and harassed his rear guard for several miles. Four stragglers were killed and a number wounded. Hearing nothing from Winchester and finding that his provisions were nearly exhausted, Tupper was compelled to retire at full speed to Fort McArthur where his troops arrived on November 20th, half starved and completely exhausted and disheartened.¹

During the entire month of October, Winchester had remained quietly in his camp on the Au Glaize, drilling his men and waiting for the arrival of a sufficient quantity of supplies to enable him to advance. From time to time his scouts went out but returned with little information. On October 29th, however, they brought in a prisoner, one William Walker, who had lived among the Indians for thirty years and was married to a Wyandot woman. He represented himself as a deserter from the British service but was suspected of being a spy and little confidence was placed in his statements.² The lack of proper food and clothing had caused much suffering and discontent. The number of sick had greatly increased and there were several deaths daily.

On November 2nd, Winchester crossed the Miami and advanced a few miles. He fortified his camp in the usual manner and remained stationary for a week. His scouts then reported the presence of a considerable body of Indians at the rapids. Scarcity of provisions still prevented him from bringing forward the regiments in rear which would have doubled his force, but could be more readily supplied on the line of communication.³ On November 10th he advanced six miles to a position where there was plenty of timber at hand suitable for the construction of boats or sleds and again entrenched. Next day this movement was reported to Elliott, who became decidedly uneasy as the Wyandots had not yet joined him, and he urged Procter to support him with all the regular troops he could spare and some pieces of artillery.

Tupper's message stating his intention of advancing upon the rapids was not received by Winchester until the 15th, when he at once directed Colonel Lewis to march to his support with 410 picked men. Lewis had advanced eighteen miles when he was overtaken by an express

¹ Tupper to Meigs, Nov. 9th, 1812.

² Tupper to Harrison, Nov. 19, 1812; McAfee, p. 171; Armstrong, I, 63-5.

³ Atherton, p. 98; Darnell, Journal.

⁴ Atherton, 18; Darnell.

with information that Tupper had arrived at the ford but had failed to cross the river. He then sent an officer with an escort through the woods to propose to Tupper a junction of their forces at Roche de Bout, six miles above the rapids. This party returned next morning with the information that they had found Tupper's camp deserted and the bodies of two of his men scalped and stripped of their clothing. Lewis retreated without delay and on his return Winchester began to strengthen his breastworks and to build huts to shelter his men. Scouts were sent out daily who reported that the Indians continued to occupy their position until the end of November, only withdrawing when the supplies at that place were consumed or removed. The sole incident worthy of notice occurred on the 22nd, when Logan and two other Shawanese scouts encountered Interpreter Elliott with a small party of British Indians. Finding themselves outnumbered, Logan and his companions professed to have deserted the American service and asked permission to accompany Elliott to his camp. That officer, who was a son of Colonel Elliott, lately practising law at Amherstburg, seems to have been completely deceived and unwisely allowed them to retain their arms. After proceeding quietly for some distance they suddenly sprang behind trees and opened fire upon Elliott's party, wounding him and two Indians. Their fire was returned and Logan received a mortal wound but escaped to die in the American camp. Elliott's injuries also proved fatal within a day or two.¹ In the latter part of November, the roads were rendered impassable by frequent showers of rain, which, however, were not sufficient to make the Au Glaize navigable for loaded boats. The cattle driven forward for beef became so poor for lack of food that they could scarcely stand up to be slaughtered. Typhus fever continued to rage in Winchester's camp, causing many deaths. When the weather turned cold the health of his men improved and they were allowed to hunt; but scarcely a squirrel or other animal could be found in the woods, although game was usually plentiful.

On his return to St. Mary from Fort Winchester, Harrison found himself obliged to detach a battalion of Ohio militia and a regiment of Kentucky mounted riflemen to the relief of Fort Wayne, which was again threatened by the neighbouring Indians influenced by the Shawnee Prophet, who had re-established his camp upon the Tippecanoe River. He learned at the same time that not only Fort Harrison on the Wabash but distant Fort Madison on the Mississippi near St. Louis had been invested. In compliance with his requisition for troops to protect the frontier of Indiana and Illinois, Shelby had issued a proclamation inviting an unlimited number of mounted volunteers to assemble at

¹ Elliott to Ironside, Nov. 10, 1812; Elliott to St. George, Nov. 11, 1812.

Louisville on September 18th, bringing their own horses, arms, and provisions for thirty days. Four thousand horsemen responded to the call and were organized into a division of three brigades under General Hopkins. Fort Harrison was relieved by him on October 10th, and a few days later he began his march across the open prairie with the intention of destroying the Indian villages on the Wabash and Illinois. His guides lost their way and the troops speedily became dispirited and unruly. The tall dry grass caught fire through their own negligence and threatened them with a sudden and dreadful death. The air was filled with thick clouds of smoke that hid the sun. Forage and water for their horses could scarcely be found. Finally the men positively refused to advance further. Their officers confessed that they had lost all control over them and the whole force returned to Fort Harrison where Hopkins organized a smaller column which moved up the Wabash and destroyed the Prophet's town and two other deserted villages, but lost thirteen men in an ambush.¹

About the same time Colonel Russell and Governor Edwards with a mixed force of rangers and volunteers, among whom were many genuine border ruffians marched from Vincennes against the villages on Peoria Lake which they destroyed without opposition, tarnishing their success by at least one act of almost incredible barbarity. A party of horsemen, commanded by a certain Captain Judy, encountered an Indian and a squaw on the open prairie. The Indian offered to surrender but Judy replied that he had not come out to take prisoners, and shot him through the body. The Indian began chanting his death-song and shot one of the party. The remainder instantly sprang from their saddles and sheltering themselves behind their horses opened fire upon the hapless pair. The man soon fell pierced by many bullets but the woman singularly enough escaped unhurt. Her life was spared although soon afterwards these wretches killed a starving Indian child who fell into their power.² They scalped and mutilated the bodies of the slain and ransacked graves in search of plunder. Such acts naturally converted the existing hostility of the Indians into an almost insatiable passion for revenge. When the British officers attempted to restrain them they indignantly retorted:—"The way they treat our killed and the remains of those that are in their graves to the west make our people mad when they meet the Big Knives. Whenever they get any of our people into their hands they cut them like meat into small pieces."³

Another body of seven or eight hundred men composed of the First United States Infantry, a company of rangers, and two regiments of

¹ Atherton, 19.

² Davidson, History of Illinois.

³ Speech of Blackbird to Claus, July 15, 1813.

mounted volunteers from Illinois and Missouri assembled at Lower Hill near St. Louis and ascended the Illinois to Peoria Lake, the infantry being transported in flat boats protected by bullet-proof wooden shields. A large band of the Sac Nation was compelled to remove to the Missouri under the supervision of Nicholas Boilvin, an able and zealous agent of the American government, who had been instrumental in persuading a deputation of chiefs from the western nations to visit Washington during the summer. The French Canadian village at Peoria was burnt and its inhabitants removed to St. Louis under the pretext that they had supplied and assisted the hostile Indians. As usual all cornfields in the vicinity were remorselessly laid waste.¹

About the middle of October, Harrison established his headquarters at Franklinton as a central position from which he could supervise and direct the simultaneous advance of all his columns. His experience in Wayne's campaign twenty years before, determined him to employ a train of one hundred ox-teams for the transport of the artillery with his right division as they would thrive on forage found in the forest on which horses would inevitably starve. He now considered these guns as indispensable to his future success. If the fall should be very dry he still hoped to re-occupy Detroit before winter set in, but if there was much rain, he must delay his movement until the Miami River and Lake Erie were sufficiently frozen to provide a passage for his troops. Meanwhile, a position at the rapids would enable him to wage a desultory warfare against the Indians near the southern end of Lake Michigan. Learning that General Van Rensselaer was being strongly reinforced by militia from New York and Pennsylvania, he wrote to that officer strongly urging him to make a diversion in his favour.²

But a heavy fall of rain, combined with the information that most of the farms at the River Raisin had been broken up and in consequence little food for his animals could be obtained in that part of Michigan, made him far less sanguine as two loads of forage must accompany each load of provisions. Already the contractors had been dilatory in the delivery of supplies. It was believed that one of them would certainly clear a hundred thousand dollars from a single contract with the State of Ohio, and Harrison vehemently asserted that this man would rather see his army starve than permit his profits to be diminished by five hundred dollars, and he denounced one of the sub-contractors as being "as great a scoundrel as the world can produce."³ In consequence of their delinquency two regiments near Fort Jennings were already subsisting on the commissary's stores.

¹ Howard to Eustis, Oct. 13, 1812. Dickson to Freer, March 16 and 22, 1813.

² Harrison to Eustis, Oct. 23, 1812.

³ Harrison to Eustis, Oct. 23, 1812.

He finally decided to make Upper Sandusky his principal base of supply and began to organize a train of two thousand oxen and pack-horses for that line of communication. But at the same time he gave orders for the construction of boats and sleds at St. Mary, Fort Jennings, and Fort Winchester, to take advantage of a possible rise of water in the river or an early fall of snow. If absolutely necessary he still affirmed his ability to retake Detroit at any time with a flying column of fifteen hundred or two thousand men without artillery, accompanied only by a few hundred packhorses with flour and a drove of beef cattle.

As soon as the surrender of Detroit had become known to Governor Meigs he had called out two thousand militia for the defence of the north-western frontier of Ohio. As the blockhouse at Lower Sandusky had already been abandoned and destroyed, they were directed to occupy positions at Mansfield and the mouth of the Huron River and erect works of defence. One of their first acts was to make an unprovoked attack upon an Indian village near the former place, which they burnt, after shooting several of its inhabitants. They were employed in building blockhouses and cutting roads through the forest in the direction of Sandusky. This laborious duty soon became distasteful to many of them. About the middle of September General Beall wrote that he almost despaired of obtaining the quota required from his brigade, and that "the unparalleled number of deserters was truly astonishing."¹ Their working parties were occasionally annoyed by Indians, who cut off a few stragglers and carried away a prisoner to Amherstburg about the end of October, from whom Procter secured some important information. The attempt to build a direct road from Mansfield to the Miami was finally abandoned, as it was found that it would be necessary to lay a causeway of logs for a distance of fifteen miles through a continuous swamp. After a personal inspection, Harrison determined to concentrate the whole force, which had then diminished to thirteen hundred effectives, at the Huron River, and set them to work on the road along the lake to Lower Sandusky, which was not re-occupied until the middle of November. About the same time the Pennsylvania brigade, accompanied by twenty-eight guns and a baggage train of a hundred waggons, arrived at Mansfield and began to crawl forward at the rate of four or five miles a day to Upper Sandusky, whither the Virginians were also plodding through the mud from Wooster.

At last Harrison was constrained to acknowledge that it would scarcely be possible for him to advance beyond the Miami during the winter, as he considered it indispensable to accumulate at least one million rations there before moving farther. This would be sufficient

¹ Beall to Meigs, 13 Sept., 1813.

to maintain an army of ten thousand men for a hundred days. The transportation of such a supply would be a task of immense difficulty. He informed the Secretary of War that the country north of the fortieth degree of latitude was "almost a continued swamp to the lake. When the streams run favorable to your course, a small strip of better ground is generally found, but in crossing from one river to another the greater part of the way at this season is covered with water. Such is actually the case between the Sandusky and the Miami Rapids, and from the best information I could acquire whilst I was at Huron, the road over it must be causewayed at least half the way."¹

Major Hardin, who had lately returned from Fort Winchester, reported that the road between Piqua and that place was so bad that a waggon could not haul its own forage. All hope of employing mounted men must inevitably be abandoned.² Rain enough had fallen to render the roads almost impassable without making the rivers navigable. At best he could only hope to make use of water carriage for his left column as far as the Miami Rapids. He began to despair of ultimate success until he could obtain command of Lake Erie, or at least dispute its control.

Shelby was urged to prepare the public for delay by concurrence in a proposal to disband all the State troops except a sufficient number to maintain the frontier posts and furnish escorts for supply trains during the winter. But the Secretary of War flatly refused to agree to such a mortifying admission of failure, coming so close on the heels of those upon the Niagara and the frontier of Lower Canada.

Harrison, therefore, showed no relaxation in his efforts to push forward troops and stores by each of his three lines of advance, moving constantly from post to post with unflagging energy.

The unsatisfactory result of General Hopkins's movement laid open his left flank, and before sending his cavalry into winter quarters he determined to anticipate any attempt upon his line of communications by raiding parties of Indians by striking at the villages on the Mississinewa branch of the Wabash.³ It was alleged that some of their inhabitants had participated in the attack upon Fort Wayne, but the majority had certainly taken no part in the war so far. The gravest accusation that could be made against them was that they had failed to attend the council at Piqua in the latter part of August, after being warned that their absence would be construed as evidence that they had withdrawn from the protection of the United States. Early in

¹ Harrison to Eustis. McAfee, 167-8.

² McAfee, 177-8.

October several of their chiefs had visited Harrison at Franklinton fully prepared to extenuate or deny the charges against them, but when he declared he had positive proof of their guilt, they threw themselves upon the mercy of the Government and consented that five of their number should remain in his power as hostages until the decision of the President could be ascertained. A white spy had since reported that the war-party among them had quite gained the ascendant, and Harrison feared that these villages would become a rendezvous and base of operations for hostile warriors seeking an opportunity to intercept his trains on their way from St. Mary to the Miami. If they were laid waste and the corn stored up for the winter destroyed, an enemy would be unable to find any means of subsistence nearer than the Pottowatomie villages at the mouth of St. Joseph's river on Lake Michigan.¹

He detailed for this expedition Simrall's regiment of Kentucky Dragoons, Ball's squadron of the Second United States Light Dragoons, Elliott's company of the 19th United States Infantry, Alexander's volunteer riflemen and Butler's Pittsburg Volunteers, all of whom were mounted and armed with rifles. Lieut-Colonel John B. Campbell, of the 19th Infantry, a zealous young officer, was placed in command. Under pretence of returning to Kentucky for the winter this force was moved from Franklinton to Dayton, where all ranks were supplied with fresh horses. They were required to carry twelve days' provisions and a certain amount of forage, and be provided with guides. From Dayton they marched to Greenville, where the final preparations were completed. The ground was hard frozen and covered with snow. The distance yet to be travelled was about eighty miles. On the evening of the third day, when about twenty miles from their destination, it was determined to march all night and attack the nearest village at daybreak. Their approach was discovered by some mounted Indians, and although they advanced at full speed nearly all the men in the village succeeded in making their escape, leaving about forty women and children behind. In the pursuit several Indians were killed. Three small villages a few miles distant were found entirely deserted. These were at once destroyed, although one of them belonged to the band of a chief named Silver Heels, which Campbell had received special instructions to spare as undoubtedly friendly. Very little corn was found, much to his disappointment, as his horses were already suffering for want of food. So little resistance had been offered that he had lost only two men killed. But his troops were so greatly fatigued that he determined to fortify a position and encamp for the night. Outlying pickets were posted in small outworks built for their protec-

¹ Harrison to Secretary of War, 23 Oct., 1812 and Nov. 15, 1812.

tion. During the night Indians were discovered lurking about, and the camp was placed on the alert two hours before daybreak. While it was yet dark one of the pickets was surprised and driven in with the loss of its commanding officer and several men. This was followed by a general attack on the right flank and rear, during which the assailants directed much of their fire upon the horses, causing indescribable tumult and confusion. As soon as daylight returned they retired, having so roughly handled Campbell's force in the course of an hour that he abandoned his design of advancing against their principal village about twelve miles farther on and decided to return to Greenville at once. He had lost two officers and six men killed and four officers and forty-four men wounded, besides 107 horses killed and many wounded. His departure was hastened by a false report that the redoubtable Tecumseh, with several hundred warriors, was not far distant. Many men were suffering from frost-bites, and there was a danger that their provisions would be exhausted before they could obtain a fresh supply, as their movement must be necessarily slow, on account of the wounded and many dismounted men. An officer was accordingly despatched in haste to request that a reinforcement with supplies should be sent forward to meet them. During the retreat, whenever they encamped they surrounded their position with a strong breastwork, and one-third of the entire force was placed on guard. Several of the wounded died of exposure, and when at length they arrived at Greenville, fully three hundred men were found to be disabled from further duty. Of Gerrard's company, which had marched out with seventy-two effectives, only seven remained fit for service on the last day of December. Simrall's regiment was so much reduced that it was at once disbanded. The expedition had resulted in the destruction of Harrison's cavalry without inflicting any serious loss upon the Indians. He was so greatly disappointed that he undertook a special journey from Lower Sandusky to Chillicothe for the purpose of proposing to Meigs to despatch a body of Ohio troops to destroy the remaining villages. When this plan was rejected, he advised Winchester to abandon his intention of advancing to the rapids and fall back to Fort Jennings.¹ He attempted to conceal his failure by the publication of a general order announcing that Campbell's operations had been attended with complete success.

Yet the paralyzing effect of the mud had so greatly discouraged him that he broadly hinted to the Secretary of War that it might be expedient to defer any further advance until a sufficient naval force could be created to protect the movement of his supplies by the lake.

¹ Armstrong 1, 65-8; McAfee, 177-82; Atherton, 28-9.

This might be done, he said, with a comparatively small expenditure of money. He had nominally ten thousand men under his command; but of these not more than six thousand three hundred were reported fit for duty. With the most heroic efforts he had not succeeded in pushing the heads of his columns beyond Lower Sandusky, Fort Necessity and Fort Winchester. His artillery had arrived at Upper Sandusky on December 10th; but the teams drawing it, which had started in the best condition, were quite worn out. He was appalled at the loss of horses, valued at half a million dollars. Two trips from Fort McArthur to Winchester's camp absolutely destroyed a brigade of pack-horses. The road had become a continuous morass, in which the horses sank to their knees and the waggons to the hubs of their wheels. The drivers were generally the dregs of the frontier settlements, who took little care of either horses or goods. The teams were valued so high that the owners were willing to sacrifice them to obtain compensation. Many waggons were abandoned and their contents lost. No bills of lading were used, nor accounts kept with the teamsters. The loss of public stores was enormous.¹ Nothing could be more disheartening than the "imbecility and inexperience of public agents and the villainy of the contractors" upon whom his army was obliged to rely for their subsistence.² Every attempt to make use of the St. Mary and Au Glaize rivers for the conveyance of supplies had failed.

Dr. Eustis, the Secretary of War, had been forced to resign by popular clamor. Monroe, the Secretary of State, undertook to administer the affairs of that department until his successor was appointed. One of his first acts was to require Harrison "to form a clear and distinct plan as to the objects you may deem attainable, and the force necessary for the purpose, and that you communicate the same with precision to this department." He was cautioned at the same time not to promise the inhabitants of Canada anything beyond protection for their lives and property, and advised not to occupy any position which he would be unable to retain permanently.

Before he received this letter, Harrison had actually written to suggest the postponement of further military operations until April and May, by which time a respectable naval force might be created upon Lake Erie. Detroit, he said, would not be tenable unless Amherstburg was also taken. Otherwise he would be compelled to hide his army in the swamps to keep it out of range of the British artillery. Even if both these places were captured, his adversary might still retain Mackinac and St. Joseph's Island as long as the Ottawa route

¹ McAfee, 183-4; Gardinier, Examiner.

² Harrison to Secretary of War, 12 Dec., 1812.

remained open, and thus supply the Indians in that quarter. While ships were being built, he proposed to occupy a position at the Miami Rapids with fifteen hundred men, maintain a thousand more in other advanced posts, and accumulate supplies. Contrary to his wishes, Winchester had kept the bulk of his division far advanced and thus immensely increased the difficulty of supplying it. But on December 18th the prospect on the right seemed so encouraging that he wrote from Upper Sandusky to Winchester instructing him to advance to the Miami Rapids and build huts, to give the impression that he intended to winter there, and prepare a large number of sleds for a future forward movement, but giving his troops to understand that they were to be used for bringing forward supplies from the rear. A week later the miscarriage of Campbell's expedition caused him to countermand this order.

The tone of Monroe's letter obviously irritated Harrison, and he wrote a lengthy and vigorous justification of his conduct. As his former letters had contained frequent allusions to the "monstrous expenditure" incident to military operations at that season, he had construed the silence of the late Secretary of War as an intimation that cost was to be disregarded in his efforts to recover the lost territory. A thousand pack-horses were employed in supplying his right column alone. When a barrel of flour was delivered at the advanced posts it had cost the government \$120.¹ A brigade of Ohio troops had been employed in road making beyond Sandusky for a month. The brigades from Pennsylvania and Virginia were close behind. The concentration of 4,500 or 5,000 men at the Miami within two or three weeks seemed reasonably certain. A "choice detachment" from these could then be selected for a demonstration against Detroit and an actual attack upon Amherstburg by crossing the river on the ice. He prudently based his estimate of the force necessary for this enterprise not upon the present strength of the British garrison, which was reported to be almost incredibly small, as most of the Indians had dispersed to their villages, but upon the numbers that might be assembled from other quarters in time to oppose him. He knew that troops could be brought forward quickly from the Niagara frontier by the "back route" along the Thames, and he might encounter the same regulars who had fought at Queenston three months before, while he said that a mere whistle would be sufficient to recall the Indian warriors. If his force was weak, "the timid, cautious and wavering among the Canadians and Indians" would be encouraged to take the field against him, and if he was unable to carry sufficient supplies with him, he

¹ Boston Gazette, 5th March, 1813.

would be compelled to make strong detachments to escort his trains. His former experience of Indian warfare had taught him that it would be unsafe to send a detachment either to the front or rear which was not strong enough to repel the enemy's whole force. One third of his troops had already become ineffective from exposure and disease. A fine body of recruits from Ohio and Kentucky, composing the 17th and 19th regiments of United States Infantry had been nearly destroyed through want of proper clothing. A suspension of hostilities might become inevitable, and he reminded the Secretary that General Wayne after an entire summer spent in preparation, had been unable to advance more than seventy miles from the Ohio River, when he went into winter quarters, by Washington's advice.¹

Having put his right wing in motion, he had returned to Franklinton with the intention of urging forward the centre column, which seemed inert and demoralized since Tupper's return from the Miami. Lack of direct lateral communications seriously imperilled the success of his arrangements.

On December 20 the weather turned so cold that the Miami was frozen, thus putting an end to Winchester's expectations of being able to advance by water. Since the 10th he had been entirely without flour, and his men had been subsisting upon lean beef, fresh pork and hickory roots. His supply of salt had long since been exhausted. Many men were suffering acutely from want of shoes and winter clothing. Probably one hundred had died from disease, and the sight of the sufferings of between three and four hundred sick made the camp "a loathsome place."² His effective force had been thus reduced to less than sixteen hundred of all ranks. Two days later a good supply of flour, salt, and woollen clothing arrived. With undaunted resolution Winchester began building sleds and ordered forward the effective men of Jennings' regiment from the posts in rear to enable him to resume his advance. While thus employed he received Harrison's letter of the 18th, which had been brought through the woods from Sandusky by an officer conducted by Indian guides. In a week each company was provided with three sleds which might be drawn by one horse or three men. On December 29, one regiment was sent forward six miles, followed next day by the remainder of the effective men in camp. A despatch was sent to Harrison by the roundabout route of Hull's road, which, owing to stormy weather, did not reach him at Upper Sandusky until January 11th. As some of his sleds were drawn by hand, Winchester's progress was slow, seldom exceeding six miles in a day, and

¹ Harrison to the Secretary of War, 4th and 8th January, 1813; McAfee, 192-9; Dawson, 342.

² Darnell, Journal; Atherton; McAfee, 183-4.

a rapid thaw set in, during which most of the snow went away. On January 2 this was succeeded by a heavy fall of snow, which continued for two days and nights. He was then overtaken by Harrison's message countermanding his movement, which he determined to disregard. On January 4 the march was resumed, but, the snow being nearly two feet deep, horses and men rapidly gave out, and he did not reach the deserted settlement at the foot of the rapids until the 10th.¹ Here he fortified a position with a timber breastwork on the left bank of the river, where Hull's road crossed it, and began building huts and store-houses. Again a message was sent to Harrison by way of Fort McArthur, which did not reach Upper Sandusky until he had left that place. The messenger followed him to Lower Sandusky, and ultimately delivered the letter to him at the place he had started from.²

The term of enlistment of the Kentucky Volunteers would expire in February, and Harrison had requested Winchester to recruit at least a regiment from among them to serve six months longer, stating his opinion that it would be unwise to employ them in any offensive movement unless he succeeded. He soon ascertained that the hardships and privations of the campaign had so greatly dispirited the majority that little could be expected, and replied accordingly.

Camp equipage and supplies of all kinds were brought up as rapidly as possible, and a large drove of hogs ordered forward from Fort Jennings. A quantity of corn was discovered in the fields, which Winchester ordered his men to gather and use to spare his flour.

On January 11, a scouting party fell in with a few Indians, whom they pursued, and a skirmish followed in which there was some loss on either side. On the evening of the 13th, two French Canadians from the River Raisin came in with a letter from a spy named Day, who had been sent forward to that place. He wrote that a party of Indians had passed through with the information of Winchester's arrival at the Miami and had threatened to return in force and burn the village. The British were preparing to remove all the cattle and provisions of every kind, and suspected persons were being arrested and confined.

A supply of woollen underclothing had opportunely arrived from Kentucky, which made the men comfortable, and they began to regain their spirits, although the weather had again grown very cold. On January 14th, a second messenger arrived from the River Raisin soliciting protection. Winchester wrote to General Perkins, who was in command at Lower Sandusky, stating that he meditated an advance

¹ McAfee, 200-2; Atherton; Darnell.

² McAfee, 202-3.

and asking him to send forward a battalion to his support. On January 15, another French Canadian came with information that two companies of Canadian militia and a body of Indians had arrived at the River Raisin shortly before his departure and announced their intention of removing all the cattle and grain and possibly destroying the village. An Indian scout afterwards brought in a letter from Day, who wrote from Otter Creek, stating that the British force at Frenchtown consisted of forty or fifty militia and perhaps a hundred Indians, who had positive instructions to remove all the inhabitants to Amherstburg with their horses, cattle, carioles, sleds, grain and provisions of all kinds. An immediate advance might secure three thousand barrels of flour and much grain.¹

Winchester called a council of his principal officers and asked their advice. Colonel Allen at once took the lead and warmly advocated a forward movement in a speech of such force that it carried the other members with him. As they were unanimously in favour of an advance, Winchester concurred cheerfully and ordered Colonel Lewis, as the next senior officer to himself, to march next morning at the head of ten companies completed to fifty-five men each.

He had less than fifteen hundred effective men, all Kentuckians belonging to the 17th United States Infantry; 1st Kentucky, Colonel Scott; the 2nd Kentucky, Colonel Jennings; the 5th Kentucky, Colonel Lewis; and the 1st Kentucky Rifles, Colonel Allen. Most of them were strong, hardy, adventurous young men, accustomed to the use of the rifle from boyhood. In the river towns of the Mississippi a Kentuckian was dreaded far more than an Indian, and the name "Kentuck" had much the same significance as "cow-boy" in later years. They were thoroughly fearless, reckless, lawless fellows, ever ready to quarrel and fight, who boastfully described themselves as "half horse and half alligator, tipped with snapping turtle." Quiet folk were shocked by their drinking bouts, frequently ending in duels or savage fights attended by biting and gouging. Horse racing and rifle shooting were their chief amusements. Twenty years before the legislature had passed an Act making it compulsory on every white male over sixteen years of age to kill a certain number of crows and squirrels every year. Sometimes as many as two thousand squirrels were slaughtered in a single *battue*, all with the rifle. Auction sales or raffles were scarcely known. When a man announced his intention of disposing of his household goods, his neighbours turned out gun in hand. A mark was set up, a price was placed upon an article of furniture, each man paid his entrance money, and the shooting began.²

¹ Winchester Narrative; Armstrong I, 66-7; McAfee, 204; Brown.

² McMaster, History of the American People II, 575; Marshall, History of Kentucky; Ramsay, Hist. South Carolina.

These men had been in service since August 16. They had endured much privation with admirable tenacity and acquired a considerable degree of discipline. Their term of enlistment would expire in a month and they were naturally eager to perform some noble action before returning home. Allen had declared that if they failed to advance now, they would be told that "a thousand freemen are unequal to a contest with three hundred savages and slaves."¹

Lewis began his march early on the 17th, taking with him three days' provisions hauled on sleds. A few hours later Winchester received news which induced him to despatch Colonel Allen with two more companies of fifty-five men each to reinforce him. Lewis advanced twenty miles that day, crossing the bay on the ice to a little settlement on Presqu'Isle. The inhabitants came to meet him with a white flag, stating that the British had retired from Brownstown. Three hours after dark Allen overtook him. During the night a messenger came from Frenchtown with information that the number of Indians there was increasing and that Elliott was expected to march from Amherstburg next morning with many more. Lewis transmitted this to Winchester with a request for further reinforcements, but resumed his march shortly after daybreak in the hope of forestalling Elliott's arrival. He divided his force into four battalions of three companies each, under Colonel Allen, Majors Graves and Madison and Captain Ballard, that commanded by the latter being detailed as an advance guard.

Winchester had remained so long inactive that he had lulled Procter into the belief that he had gone into winter quarters. Tecumseh who was in poor health, had gone southward to rouse the Creeks and Cherokees. The Prophet had returned to the Wabash. The Indians from Saginaw, Mackinac and the borders of Lake Michigan had long since been dismissed to save provisions. The movement of a strong body of Americans up the Illinois in shot-proof boats, with the intention of building a fort near Peoria and ultimately re-occupying Chicago, had been reported. He surmised that their object was to cut off his communication with the most formidable Indians of the west by the establishment of a chain of posts. The chief Mapock, who had been active in the operations against Hull, had assembled a force to oppose them. Repeated applications from the Indians for detachments of regular troops to accompany them on expeditions had been evaded by Procter with considerable difficulty; but when they proposed the organization of a body of rangers for that particular purpose, he readily gave his approval. "A corps of that description," he wrote,

¹ Amrstrong, I, 68.

"would be, I am convinced, of the highest utility, both in restraining and directing the hostility of the Indians to the proper objects of it." It might also prove an efficient substitute for the militia, which had few good officers. He proposed the enlistment at first of a single company as an experiment, and recommended that it should be placed under Colonel William Caldwell, who possessed great influence among the Indians and had commanded a company of Butler's Rangers at the Blue Licks and Sandusky thirty years before.

With the exception of the Wyandots of the River Canard and Brownstown and some Pottowatomies and Miamis, who had been driven in by the destruction of their villages, few Indians remained in the vicinity of Amherstburg.

Procter had directed the construction of two gunboats at Chatham and laid the keel of a ship at the Amherstburg dockyard to ensure his supremacy on Lake Erie. Two blockhouses were also projected at important points. But he lacked carpenters and artificers, as well as officers and seamen to man these vessels when they were launched.

On January 13, a party of Indians came in who reported that the enemy had advanced to the foot of the Miami Rapids with a thousand men. Two days before they had encountered their scouts, of whom they had killed two and wounded several, bringing off three captured horses. Procter promptly issued orders for calling out the militia and assembling the Indians. If it became necessary to dislodge the enemy he foresaw that he must employ his whole force.¹

Two flank companies of the Essex militia, under Major Ebenezer Reynolds, accompanied by a band of Pottowatomies, were dispatched next day to break up the settlement at the River Raisin and remove the inhabitants. To enable him to maintain his position until this could be effected, he took with him a three-pounder mounted on a sled, in charge of Bombardier Kitson, of the Royal Artillery. Not unnaturally these people were very reluctant to leave their homes and sacrifice much of their property, and they bitterly resented the insolent conduct of the Indians, who killed or drove off their cattle with scant ceremony. As the Pottowatomies were constantly going and coming, their numbers fluctuated greatly, sometime rising above a hundred and sometimes falling as low as twenty.

About noon on January 18, Reynolds learned that a large body of men had been seen approaching along the lake a few miles distant, and made every effort to collect the Indians. The river was solidly frozen and presented no obstacle to an attack from the southward. Three hours later the enemy appeared in force in the skirt of the woods and

¹ Procter to Sheaffe, 13 January, 1813.

deployed into three lines in extended order on a very wide front before crossing the cleared ground, with the evident intention of enveloping his position. The field gun was brought into action, but after firing three rounds with no apparent result, it was seen that a party was crossing the river with the object of cutting off his retreat by the road. Reynolds then gave orders for the removal of the gun and retired from the village, which was occupied by the Americans with the loss of only three men wounded. Some of the inhabitants instantly armed themselves and began firing upon the retreating Indians. The pursuit was continued, with loud shouts, across a ravine and through an orchard and some cleared fields into the woods, which were obstructed with much undergrowth, furnishing excellent cover. Kitson made his escape by the road under cover of the fire of an escort of Indians. On entering the woods the foremost pursuers were soon checked, with material loss. Their eagerness and haste exposed them to the fire of unseen foes, who instantly retired and took up a fresh position, where they reloaded and again awaited their approach until close upon them, when they delivered their fire and retired again.¹ The action continued in this way until dark, when Lewis assembled his men and retired to the village. He found that he had lost twelve killed and forty-five wounded, among the latter being three captains. He acknowledged that he had made a serious mistake in allowing his troops to enter the woods at all.²

During the night Reynolds fell back to Brownstown. He reported the loss of one militiaman and three Indians killed, but did not state the number of wounded and missing. The Kentuckians asserted that they had taken twelve scalps besides one Indian and two militia prisoners. The Indians accused them of barbarously hacking to pieces one of their wounded warriors with their knives and tomahawks and of cutting strips of skin from the bodies of the slain to use as razor strops.³

Lewis sent off a despatch rider to announce his success and ask for a reinforcement to maintain his position, who travelled with such speed that he reached Winchester's camp before morning. On the 17th Winchester had written to Harrison stating that he was sending forward a force to Frenchtown to secure the flour and grain at that place and desiring support in this movement from the right wing of his army. This letter was despatched to Lower Sandusky. He now wrote again, relating the success of his movement and declaring his

¹ Atherton, 39-40.

² Lewis to Winchester, 20 January, 1813; Procter to Sheaffe; Armstrong ; Atherton, 39-40; Darnell; McAfee.

³ John Strachan, Letter to Thomas Jefferson; Blackbird to Claus, July 15, 1813. Palmer, Travels.

intention of going forward in person to maintain this advanced position. After instructing Colonel Wells to follow with six companies, numbering about 330 of all ranks, and leaving General Payne in charge of the camp with about three hundred of the least effective men, Winchester rode forward with his staff and arrived at the River Raisin on the night of January 20.

Harrison at Upper Sandusky had not received Winchester's letter of December 30th until January 11th, when he ordered a forward large drove of hogs and held his train of artillery in readiness to march. On the 16th he received a letter from General Perkins, written the day before, enclosing Winchester's letter to him asking a reinforcement of a battalion. The artillery was at once ordered forward by way of the Portage River, with an escort of three hundred infantry, as this road was sixteen miles shorter than that leading through Lower Sandusky. Supply trains were directed to follow by the same route. Harrison himself went next day to Lower Sandusky, riding so hard that the horse of his aide fell dead on their arrival there at nightfall. He learned that Cotgrove's battalion, with a field gun, was under orders to march next morning. The distance to Winchester's camp on the Miami was only thirty-six miles, but the roads were much blocked by snow-drifts. At four o'clock on the morning of the 19th Harrison received Winchester's letter of the 17th. There were still three battalions of Ohio Militia at Sandusky. Two of these were at once ordered to advance by forced marches to the Miami. Harrison and Perkins drove off in a sleigh to overtake Cotgrove. Finding that their progress was very slow, Harrison mounted his servant's horse and rode on alone. Darkness coming on, his horse became nearly mired in a swamp, where the ice gave way under him and he was obliged to dismount and make his way onward on foot. Cotgrove was then ordered to march directly on the River Raisin by crossing Miami Bay on the ice. After a few hours' sleep, Harrison pushed on to the Miami Rapids, where he arrived early on the morning of the 20th. Captain Hart, Inspector General of the district, was sent forward to inform General Winchester of the movement of troops in his rear and instruct him to hold his position at all hazards. Next day he received a letter from Winchester in which that officer said: "Advices from Brownstown and Malden all agree that the enemy is preparing to retake this place. If he effects his purpose he will pay dearly for it." A small reinforcement would make him perfectly secure, he added. The two Ohio battalions from Lower Sandusky arrived that night, and General Payne was directed to march at daybreak with the remainder of the Kentuckians to join Winchester. In no respect could Harrison be justly suspected of any slackness in his efforts to support his lieutenant, whom he had constantly treated more as an associate than as an inferior.

Winchester moved so rapidly that he arrived at the River Raisin on the night of the 20th, and Colonel Wells came up next day with his detachment, bringing tents and other camp equipage. There was little regularity in their encampment. Lewis had allowed his men to select quarters and settle down wherever they pleased. They were greatly elated by their success and seemed to forget that they had an enemy in the world.¹ Quantities of hard cider had been discovered and some men were drunk and quarrelsome. Desiring to escape the tumult created by "this parcel of dirty, noisy freemen," the General took up his quarters at the house of Peter Navarre on the right bank of the river less than three hundred yards in rear. He afterwards stated that had he not been encumbered by so many wounded men, he would have retired to the Miami, but there is nothing in his conduct or correspondence at the time to give colour to this assertion. Wells was instructed to encamp his men on the right of the village and then to select a position to be fortified and occupied by the whole force. This was done; but as some of the troops were tired and all of them excited and unruly, no attempt was made to entrench that day. Patrols were sent out in several directions. One of these reported that they had gone as far as Brownstown without seeing any sign of an enemy. Another had seen two men, whom they suspected to be British officers, ride away from a house two miles up the river. All accounts agreed that the number of regular troops at Amherstburg and Detroit was small, and that there was little danger of an attack. Captain Hart, a brother-in-law of Henry Clay, came in with the information that Harrison had established his headquarters at the camp on the Miami the day before, and that a strong reinforcement was on the march. This was publicly announced and put everybody in high spirits. Colonel Wells was sent back to hasten the movement of supplies; but in a letter to Harrison entrusted to him Winchester expressed no anxiety. Late at night a French Canadian arrived with information that a body of British and Indians three thousand strong was assembling at Brownstown. This report seemed so absurd that it was generally disbelieved by the principal officers, who were regaling "themselves with whiskey and loaf sugar."²

Frenchtown was a compactly built village of twenty dwellings, besides barns and outhouses, situated on the left bank of the river and on the right of the road leading to Brownstown, surrounded on three sides by a stout palisade of round logs split in halves and set in the ground, rising to a height of eight feet and sharpened to a point at the top. Blockhouses had been built at the angles during the sum-

¹ Atherton, 40.

² Darnell, Journal.

mer and the place put in a position to resist an attack, but Brush had partially destroyed these works before evacuating it in August.¹ The river front was entirely open. All of the buildings were constructed of hewn logs with shingle roofs, and some were clapboarded. With their gardens and orchards they covered a quadrangular space of two hundred by three hundred yards, the longest side being parallel to the river. Lewis's original command had taken up their quarters in these buildings, where they were comfortably housed. The troops brought forward by Colonel Wells, consisting mainly of men of the 17th United States Infantry and the 1st Kentucky Rifle Regiment, occupied the post of honour on the right, outside the enclosure, some being billeted in detached houses and the remainder encamped in tents. Along the river on both sides for several miles there were farm houses, forming in the whole a settlement which had a population of more than twelve hundred persons before the war began. North of the village, at a distance of about one hundred yards, a deep hollow ran parallel to the river, crossing the road to Brownstown nearly at right angles, which, with an isolated farmhouse and orchard, afforded some cover to a force attacking from that direction.

Winchester had with him then three companies of the 17th United States, three companies of the 1st Kentucky militia (Scott's regiment), one company of the 2nd Kentucky militia (Jennings), five companies of the 5th Kentucky militia (Lewis), and six companies of the 1st Kentucky Rifles (Allen), making in all a force of about 975 of all ranks, including the wounded and their medical attendants. Orders had been given to strengthen the position, but little had been done beyond cutting some loopholes in the palisades. A general feeling of security prevailed. As the weather was bitterly cold and the snow lay deep everywhere, no outlying pickets were posted and no patrols were sent out during the night.²

Procter learned that Reynolds had been driven from Frenchtown at two o'clock on the morning of the 19th. He quickly decided that there was no time to be lost in attacking the enemy at that place "with all and every description of force" within his reach. Fortunately most of the young men of the Petite Côte, were celebrating Queen Charlotte's birthday at a public hall where they were warned for service in a body. Captain James Askin's company of the 2nd Essex was detailed as the garrison of Detroit, under Major Muir, who was still enfeebled by illness. A corporal's party of the Royal Artillery and the invalids of other regular corps with the least effective men of the militia were assigned for the

¹ Williams, *Two Western Campaigns*, 25.

² Winchester's Statement; A. B. Woodward to James Monroe. 31 January, 1813.

occupation of the fort at Amhesrtburg, under Lieut-Colonel J. B. Baby. Every man considered fit for field service was marched across the river on the ice to Brownstown, where the Indians were likewise directed to assemble.

By great exertions a force of 578 of all ranks belonging to ten different corps was scraped together. Of these, 366 were regular soldiers or Provincial seamen. Three three-pounders and three small howitzers, mounted on sleds, were manned by squads of the Royal Artillery and seamen and escorted by a company of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Four weak companies of the 41st Regiment officered by four subalterns and eight sergeants, formed the backbone of this motley array under command of Captain Joseph Tallon. As inspecting field officer, Lieut-Colonel St. George superintended the movements of the militia, of whom there were eight small companies commanded by Major Reynolds.¹

There were nearly five hundred Indians, mainly Wyandots and Pottowatomies, directed by nineteen white officers headed by Elliott and Caldwell. A good number of these Indians were armed with muskets and mounted on their own horses. Before dark, Procter advanced twelve miles to Swan Creek, where he bivouacked in the open air. Two hours before dawn the march was resumed, and just as day was breaking the head of the column arrived within gunshot of the village. As the deployment began in the fields on the left of the road the drums in the American camp were heard beating the reveillé. Then three shots were fired by their sentries in rapid succession, one of which struck down a leading grenadier of the 41st. Procter has been strongly censured for not charging at once with his infantry, instead of waiting for his artillery, which actually made little impression upon the enemy's defences and gave them time to recover from their surprise. But their position was not yet precisely ascertained, and it was still so dark that the palisades with little jets of flame darting from the loopholes were at first mistaken for a line of men drawn up in front.²

Three guns were placed in position in the orchard near the hollow; the others were moved to the right of the road to enfilade the village from that direction, and were supported by a small party of Indians. The whole of the militia and the great body of Indians made a wide circuit to the left to turn that flank. In this they entirely succeeded, and rushing suddenly from their concealment, with shrill whoops upon the 17th United States Infantry, which was wholly unprotected by

¹ Staff, 3; Royal Artillery, 23; 10th Battalion Royal Veterans, 4; 41st Regiment, 244; Royal Newfoundland, 61; Marine Department, 28; 1st Essex Militia, 116; 2nd Essex Militia, 96; Commissariat, 1; Field Train, 1; Royal Engineers, 1.

² Narrative of Shadrach Byfield, 41st Regiment.

any breastwork, the men of that corps were seized with a panic and began to retire in much disorder. Winchester came up and attempted to rally them behind a fence. Two companies of riflemen sallied from the village to their support, but were soon borne away in the general flight. Lewis and Allen joined Winchester and endeavoured to form the fugitives under the shelter of the river bank, calling upon them to incline to the centre and seek refuge in the enclosure. But the pursuit was keen, and their words were unheeded. The flight was continued across the river and through a narrow farm lane leading past Navarre's house to the main road. Many fell beneath a murderous cross fire or were overtaken by fleet footed runners. Others threw away their arms and ran frantically along the road. They were headed off by mounted Indians and sought concealment in the woods. When overtaken, most of these were ruthlessly shot down. The homeless Pottowatomies slaked their thirst for revenge and spared few. Fifteen men of the 17th United States Infantry, under Lieut. Garrett, threw down their arms in a body, but were all killed, except the officer. Of that regiment, one hundred and twenty were killed and only sixty taken prisoners. The Christianized Wyandots were more merciful. Winchester with his son, a lad of sixteen, and Colonel Lewis, after a pursuit of nearly three miles, surrendered to Roundhead, who stripped the general of his richly laced uniform coat and put it on himself. Among the officers slain were Colonel Allen and Captain Simpson, a member of Congress. A wounded officer and a few men ran down towards the lake and succeeded in concealing themselves until night fell, when they made their way back to the encampment at the Miami. Others shut themselves up in detached houses or barns, where they were surrounded and eventually killed or made prisoners. In storming one of these buildings, Lieut-Colonel St. George received four severe wounds which rendered him incapable of further active service during the war.

Meanwhile, the guns in the orchard were gradually advanced across the hollow until they were within fifty yards of the palisades, without effecting a breach or making much impression. The shells from the howitzers had failed to set fire to the snow-covered houses against which they were directed. The gunners and their escort, clearly silhouetted against the snowy surface of the ground, fell fast under the opposing rifle fire. The only sergeant and one private of the Royal Artillery were killed; Lieut. Troughton and seven rank and file were wounded, Bombardier Kitson, who had behaved so well in the last action, dying of his wounds soon after. One seaman was killed and three officers and thirteen seamen were wounded. Lieut. Rolette received a charge of buckshot in the side, and a musket ball spent its force in the folds of a handkerchief he had wound about his

head to relieve the pain of a severe headache.¹ Midshipman Richardson, a boy of fourteen, lost a leg. The horse and driver of a sled bringing forward ammunition were both shot. The guns were silenced and the most advanced piece abandoned within twenty-five or thirty yards of the palisades. Some American riflemen leaped over the fence to take possession, but were driven back by the fire of the escort. Lieut. Robert Irvine then ran forward alone and, seizing the drag-rope, hauled it to a place of safety, amid a shower of bullets, receiving a severe wound in the foot. Procter witnessed this gallant act and subsequently testified his admiration in a letter of thanks, assuring him that he should lose no opportunity of suitably rewarding him.² The men who were still unhurt were so benumbed by the cold that they could scarcely work the guns. The escort had lost one-third of its number. Ensign Thomas Kerr, a gallant boy of eighteen, had fallen mortally wounded in leading an assault on a large barn occupied by the enemy's riflemen, encouraging his men with his last words to push on. Captain Tallon then formed the 41st into column of sections and made a most determined effort to force his way into the village. Every rifle that could be brought to bear, not only from the loopholes, but the windows of the houses on either flank, was directed upon them with such effect that within half an hour fifteen privates were killed and Captain Tallon, Lieut. Clemow, three sergeants and ninety-two rank and file were wounded, being nearly one-half of the entire detachment. The attack was then discontinued until the militia and Indians could be re-assembled. Exasperated by the sight of the slaughter of their comrades outside, some of the American riflemen continued to fire upon the wounded whenever they attempted to get away, and were even seen to use their knives and tomahawks upon them. This naturally excited the bitter resentment of the troops watching them from the shelter of the hollow, who became eager to retaliate.³

As the firing had nearly ceased, the defenders of the village sallied out and set fire to a barn which had been occupied by a party of Indians. Bread was distributed among them and ammunition served out.

The Indians gradually returned, some of them with bleeding scalps dangling from their saddles, others driving prisoners before them.⁴ Among these were General Winchester, Colonel Lewis and other officers, who were conducted to Colonel Procter.

The investment of the village was completed, and a party of Indians

¹ P. Bender, *Old and New Canada*.

² Troughton to Irvine, 28 January, 1813.

³ Procter to Sheaffe, 1st February, 1813; John Richardson to Charles Askin, 4th February, 1813; Byfield, *Narrative*.

⁴ Atherton, 47.

getting into the bed of the river and sheltering themselves beneath the bank, began a fire from the rear, which struck down several men. Preparations were in progress to set some of the houses on fire and thus drive out the defenders. Winchester was not unnaturally dispirited and appalled by the slaughter of so many of his men which he had already witnessed, and saw little hope for the remainder, who were completely surrounded. If their position was carried by assault, few could expect to escape death, as the Indians, and indeed the British regular troops and militia, were greatly exasperated. He asked Procter if they would be given an opportunity to surrender, and received the reply that they must decide quickly, as he intended to set the place on fire at once and could then take no responsibility for the conduct of the Indians. But he assured him that if they surrendered at discretion, without further delay, he would make every effort to protect them and the officers would be permitted to retain their swords and private property. Winchester then directed Captain Overton, his aide-de-camp, to go with a flag of truce to the commanding officer of the troops in the village and deliver an order to surrender. Procter himself, with some other officers, accompanied Overton to make sure that no time was lost and there could be no misunderstanding. Major George Madison, afterwards Governor of Kentucky, who was the senior officer, came forward to meet them attended by Brigade Major Garrard. They expressed surprise to learn that General Winchester was a prisoner and seemed reluctant to obey the order to surrender without conditions. Procter insisted that they must consent to this, as all he could promise was protection for their lives and property as far as his power extended. He seems to have given them clearly to understand that the Indians were greatly infuriated and that he was doubtful whether he could restrain them in any event. Madison returned to the village to consult his officers. He found that he had lost about forty in killed and wounded, reducing his effective force to 384 of all ranks. Major Graves, his second in command, Captain Hart and several other officers were among the wounded. The men had but two or three cartridges apiece. They were surrounded by much superior numbers. The buildings they occupied were inflammable. A retreat was impossible, and there was no hope of a reinforcement in time to save them. A decision to surrender was soon arrived at. When this was announced to the men there were the usual disorderly scenes. Cries of rage were uttered and rifles dashed furiously to the ground.¹

When Madison signified his intention of obeying Winchester's order Procter was unquestionably relieved of much anxiety. More

¹ Procter to Sheaffe, 25th January, 1813; Winchester to Secretary of War, January 26 and February 11, 1813; Atherton, 50-2; McAfee, 213, 216.

than two-fifths of his regular force had already been killed or wounded. A continuation of the contest meant further bloodshed, resulting most probably in the complete extermination of the enemy's force. Some of the Indians had already shown an inclination to kill the wounded and strip the prisoners in the most unequivocal manner. He readily assured Madison that he would endeavour to protect his sick and wounded and prevent pillage; but remarked that his own wounded were numerous and must be removed from the field first. He accordingly advised him to place such of his men as were unable to march to Amherstburg in charge of his surgeons, and a guard would be detailed to remain with them.

The prisoners had scarcely been disarmed when an Indian scout reported that he had discovered the advance guard of an American reinforcement on the road to the Miami only eight or ten miles distant. No time must be lost in sending them away and removing the wounded. He had but a single surgeon and very few sleighs. Every man that was able to walk was accordingly ordered to make the best of his way to the bivouac of the night before at Swan Creek, where a rest camp would be formed.¹

So little apprehension was felt at this time for the safety of the wounded prisoners that several of them who were slightly hurt and perfectly able to march decided to remain behind, possibly in the hope of regaining their liberty. The entire number of prisoners thus left at Frenchtown was about sixty-four, including five surgeons. Among them were Major Graves, Major Woolfolk, Winchester's secretary, and Captains Hart and Hickman. Captain Matthew Elliott, of the Indian Department, had been a classmate of Hart at Princeton College, and promised to send a sleigh next day to convey him with other wounded officers to Amherstburg. Major Reynolds, with three interpreters, remained with them as a safeguard against straggling Indians. Lieut-Colonel St. George and others whose wounds were severe and the whole of the British dead were left behind for several hours until sleighs could be secured for their removal.²

Procter had lost in all twenty-four killed and 158 wounded, being more than two-fifths of his entire white force. Among the wounded were twelve officers.³ The number of prisoners greatly exceeded that of his effective troops. Captain William Caldwell and Interpreter John Wilson, of the Indian Department, were also wounded; but the loss of the Indians seems to have been inconsiderable, probably not exceeding

¹ Byfield, Narrative; Atherton, 67.

² Coffin, 205-6.

³ See page 60.

four or five warriors killed. Not more than four hundred stands of arms and a small quantity of stores were secured, the remainder having been instantly carried off by the Indians. The first official return of prisoners dated January 25th, showed a total of thirty-three officers, twenty-seven sergeants and 435 rank and file. Winchester's official letter increased the number to thirty-five officers and 487 non-commissioned officers and men, which his return of February 11th still further augmented to thirty-seven officers and 500 N.C.O. and privates. Twenty-two officers and 375 N.C.O. and privates were returned as killed or missing.¹

¹ *Staff*.—Wounded, Lieut-Colonel St. George, severely.

Royal Artillery.—Killed, one sergeant, one gunner; wounded, Lieut. Troughton, one corporal, five gunners, one bombardier.

10th Royal Veteran Battalion.—Wounded, two privates.

41st Regiment.—Killed, fifteen privates; wounded, Captain Tallon, Lieut. Cle-mow, three sergeants, one corporal, 91 privates.

Royal Newfoundland Regiment.—Killed, one private; wounded, Ensign Kerr, three sergeants, three corporals, thirteen privates.

Marine Department.—Killed, one seaman; wounded, Lieuts. Rolette and Irvine, Midshipman Richardson, one gunner, twelve seamen.

1st Essex Militia.—Killed, two privates; wounded, Captain Mills, Lieuts. Mc-Cormick and Gordon, two sergeants and seven privates.

2nd Essex Militia.—Killed, three privates; wounded, Ensign Gouin and three privates.

Killed and missing:—

17th United States Infantry.—One surgeon, two captains, three lieutenants, two ensigns, 112 N.C.O. and privates.

1st Regiment Kentucky Militia.—One major, one captain, one surgeon's mate, one ensign, 36 N.C.O. and privates.

1st Kentucky Rifles.—One lieutenant-colonel, one surgeon, four captains, one ensign, 154 N.C.O. and privates.

5th Regiment Kentucky Militia.—One major, one captain, one lieutenant, 73 N.C.O. and privates.

Prisoners:—

17th United States Infantry.—One captain, two lieutenants, three ensigns, 54 N.C.O. and privates.

1st Kentucky Militia.—Two captains, one lieutenant, one ensign, 104 N.C.O. and privates, of whom one ensign and five privates were wounded.

1st Kentucky Rifles.—One Major, two captains, four ensigns, 133 N.C.O. and privates, of whom two ensigns and six privates were wounded.

5th Kentucky Militia.—One Lieut-Colonel, one adjutant, one quartermaster, one surgeon, one surgeon's mate, three captains, one lieutenant, four ensigns, 180 N.C.O. and privates, of whom one sergeant, three corporals and seven privates were wounded.

2nd Kentucky Militia.—One captain, twenty privates.

Brigade Staff.—One brigadier-general, one brigade inspector, one aide-de-camp, one lieutenant 17th United States Infantry.

Of those reported killed or missing, twenty-five or thirty, including three officers, made their escape to the Miami. Forty or fifty others were carried off as prisoners by the Indians, most of whom were delivered up or ransomed in the course of six months, through the efforts of the officers of that department. Quite three hundred were killed, and the small number of wounded prisoners sufficiently indicates the merciless character of the pursuit.

The worst was yet to come. During the night a number of Indians intent on plunder stealthily returned to the River Raisin. Major Reynolds and two of the interpreters had been called away and but one remained, who was unfortunately not proficient in their language. The Indians ransacked the village and found a quantity of liquor. Many of them became drunk and began to rob and insult the wounded. The interpreter and surgeons were helpless. Words were succeeded by blows, and finally these wretches killed Captains Hart and Hickman and several privates who were unable to walk and carried off the remainder with the surgeons as prisoners. Several others whose strength failed on the march were instantly butchered. Not more than half the wounded left here eventually escaped death in this manner.¹

It is, perhaps, not surprising that Procter was personally blamed for this massacre by his enemies, and indeed, he seems to have anticipated censure.

"My opinion of the enemy is not more favorable than it was from what I have seen and heard of them. They were armed with knives and tomahawks, and some of them used them. They fired at the wounded as they lay on the ground, themselves behind enclosures and in buildings. Every art, every means have been employed to prejudice and influence these misguided people against us. There have been some instances, I am sorry to say, of Indian barbarity; but the example was set by the enemy they came to seek. I know we shall be vilified, for the truth is not in them. I have not anything to accuse myself of."²

In evidence of this he enclosed an extract of letter written to him from Sandwich on January 29 by General Winchester, in which that officer said:

"You will please to be assured, sir, that I feel a high sense of gratitude for the polite attention shown to myself as well as for the humanity and kindness with which you have caused the prisoners to be treated who fell into your hands on the 22nd instant."³

The appearance of these men generally was uncouth and repellant.

¹ Am. State Papers, Military Affairs, I, 367-75; Atherton, 70-5.

² Procter to Sheaffe, 1st February, 1813.

³ Winchester to Procter, 29th January, 1813.

They were haggard and unshaven. Their clothing was tattered and dirty with many months' wear. Numbers of them still wore the grimy linen hunting frocks and trousers they had on when they marched from Kentucky in mid-summer. Blankets were wrapped about their waists to protect them from the cold and kept in place by broad leather belts, in which were suspended huge knives and tomahawks. Their long, tangled locks were covered with shabby slouched hats. Some wore leather stocks with a metal badge representing an eagle picking out the eyes of a lion. The great majority seemed sullen and dejected; but some maintained an appearance of bravado and defiance, one of whom excited peals of laughter from his captors by exclaiming in a tone of amazement, "Well! You have taken the greatest set of gamecocks that ever came from Kentuck!"¹

There were no buildings at Amherstburg adequate for the accommodation of so many prisoners, and on the night of the 23rd all but the officers were penned in a woodyard exposed to a chilling rain. If they were paroled and sent home by the route they had advanced, the poverty of his means of defence would at once be disclosed, and probably other troops upon the line of communication would be liberated to renew the attack. The Indians proposed that some of them should be offered in exchange for the Wyandots detained at Sandusky; but Procter deemed this scarcely expedient. Yet it was necessary to get rid of them immediately, as he could neither house them, feed them, nor furnish the necessary guards without great difficulty. He accordingly determined to march them overland to Niagara, to be there paroled or forwarded to Quebec. On January 25th they were marched to Sandwich, where the wounded and others declared unfit for the journey were detained and lodged in the Court-house in charge of the sheriff.²

Procter's first act on his return was to write to General Sheaffe in the most urgent terms to send him a reinforcement of at least one company of regulars to make good his loss in the action. This was done with such promptitude that the light company of the 41st met the prisoners at Oxford and arrived at Amherstburg on February 7.

Meanwhile he had learned with much alarm that a number of the inhabitants of "that depot of treachery, Detroit," had formed a plot to overpower the militia garrison and make themselves masters of the fort while he was engaged at the River Raisin. The rapidity of his movements had alone prevented the execution of this design and it became known to him soon after his return. A letter from Woodward to Monroe was intercepted, which decided Procter to remove him from

¹ Atherton, 54; Richardson, 140; Darnell, 72.

² Wm. Hands to ———

office as "an artful, designing, ambitious young man" who was endeavouring to "ingratiate himself with his own government and to court popularity." The Territory of Michigan was placed under martial law and one hundred and four of "the more suspicious and turbulent characters", among them Captain Brevoort and William Macomb, whose son was a colonel in the United States army, were ordered to proceed under military escort to Niagara. A few of these were British subjects; but the majority had actually become prisoners of war under the capitulation and had given their parole.¹ A report that Harrison had again advanced to the Miami with an overwhelming force emboldened twenty-nine of these malcontents to meet and pass a series of resolutions protesting against this order as "an unjustifiable and wanton invasion of private rights," and "a flagrant and gross violation of the third article of the capitulation." They declared their intention of maintaining a "strict and exemplary neutrality," adding that if there were any among them "whose conduct and behaviour does not strictly comport with the spirit and meaning of the preceding resolution they ought not to be screened from punishment." Woodward was requested to present these resolutions to Colonel Procter and urge him to revoke the obnoxious order. He took advantage of this opportunity to complain that some of the prisoners and some inhabitants had been killed by the Indians since the action at Frenchtown, and some houses burnt, and to propose a new convention on behalf of the residents of Detroit. He asked that a military force should be stationed there to protect the inhabitants "from slaughter, conflagration and plunder" and that they should be armed and organized for their own defence. All Indians should be prohibited from entering the region extending from the River Aux Ecorces to Grosse Point and from carrying scalps through the town. Procter was requested to name eighteen persons from whom they would choose six as hostages, while they would name eighteen from whom he might select six to act as commissioners "to apprehend all persons who should violate their neutrality or give rise to probable suspicion thereof." This agreement should then be submitted to the American commander for his ratification. Woodward cited the conventions adopted by Montgomery at Montreal and the Marquis de Bouillé at Tobago in support of his proposal. Procter was greatly enraged. He declared that Woodward's letter was "insolent" and that the resolutions were "indecent," and ordered the deportation of the suspects to be put into effect without delay. Woodward was required to name a day to substantiate his charges respecting the murder of prisoners. Many residents of Detroit were British subjects by birth, and Procter now proposed to arm for their own defence all

¹ Procter to Sheaffe, 4th February, 1813; Farmer, History of Detroit.

who were willing to take the oath of allegiance, while an oath of neutrality would be required from "confirmed citizens of the United States." His situation was still extremely precarious, as Harrison had actually advanced to the Miami and might at any time be expected to move upon Amherstburg with more thousands of troops than he had hundreds to oppose them. The Indians and militia might indeed be relied on for support as long as there was some probability of success; but a reverse would dishearten and disperse them. He had already witnessed the powerful effects of hope and fear on the minds of both. His influence over the Indians in particular, largely depended upon their estimate of his strength, and he declared that not less than an entire regiment of regular troops would be necessary to ensure the safety of the military posts and shipping.¹

He had shown conspicuous energy and decision on all occasions and there seemed little reason to suspect that he would be found wanting in future.

Woodward, who had excellent opportunities of observation and was a keen and by no means a friendly critic, wrote with unrestrained admiration:

"The operations of the British commander are marked with the same minute correctness of judgment in this instance and the same boldness of conception and execution which distinguished in the former instance his illustrious predecessor, General Brock. It is a military movement of equal and in fact of greater splendor."²

¹ Conditions proposed for a convention; Woodward to Procter, 2nd February, 1813; Procter to Sheaffe, 4th February, 1813; Procter to Baynes, 31st January, 1813; Procter to Sheaffe, 2nd February, 1813.

² Woodward to Monroe, 31st January, 1813