

into their heads to remove the troops from Fort Crawford to Fort Snelling, and abandon the former. This measure was then supposed to have been brought about on the representation of Col. Snelling of Fort Snelling, who disliked Prairie du Chien for difficulties he had with some of the principal inhabitants. During the winter there were confined in the guard-house of Fort Crawford two Winnebago Indians for some of their supposed dishonest acts; but what they were charged with, I do not now recollect. At that time, as already mentioned, our mails from St. Louis, the East and South came via Springfield to Galena, and the postmaster at Prairie du Chien sent to Galena for the mails of that place and Fort Snelling. An order would frequently arrive by steamboat countermanding a previous order for the abandonment of the fort, before the arrival of the first order by mail, and this matter continued during the summer of 1826, and until October, when a positive order arrived directing the commandant of Fort Crawford to abandon the fort, and proceed with the troops to Fort Snelling; and if he could not procure transportation, to leave the provisions, ammunition and fort in charge of some citizen.

But a few days previous to this order there had been an alarming report circulated, that the Winnebagoes were going to attack Fort Crawford, and the commandant set to work repairing the old fort, and making additional defences. During this time the positive order arrived, and the precipitancy with which the fort was abandoned during the alarm—was communicated to the Indians through the half-breeds residing at or visiting the place, which naturally caused the Winnebagoes to believe that the troops had fled through fear of them. The commandant took with him to Fort Snelling the two Winnebagoes confined in Fort Crawford, leaving behind some provisions, and all the damaged arms, with a brass swivel and a few wall pieces, in charge of John Marsh, the then Sub-Agent at this place.

The Winnebagoes, in the fall of 1826, obtained from the traders their usual credit for goods, and went to their hunting grounds;