

incided with this opinion, and he and Col. Dodge agreed to return with their commands, by way of Rock River Rapids, leaving Gen. Alexander to take the back trail.

Preparations were immediately made for proceeding. All the worn down horses that were regarded as unfit for the expedition, were sent home to the Mining country, and Maj. Stephenson's company, with himself at their head, nearly all leaving, thus reducing Col. Dodge's effective force to about one hundred and fifty; and Gen. Henry's force was also greatly reduced so that both commands did not, at this time, exceed six hundred men.—Taking Mr. Poquette with us as interpreter, and some Winnebagoes as guides, we set out, and on the third day arrived at the Rapids (now Heustisford); but, to our great surprise, found no Indians there, except some emaciated Winnebagoes, who told us that the Sauks and Foxes had moved farther up the river, to the Cranberry Lakes. We thereupon encamped for the night, posting both a double guard, and a double picket guard; dispatching, meanwhile, an express to Gen. Atkinson, borne by Adjutant Woodbridge of Dodge's battalion, and Dr. Merriman, one of Gen. Henry's adjutants, with a Winnebago for a guide. When they had proceeded about eight or nine miles, they came across one of the main trails of the enemy, plainly pointing out their route as making towards the west. They at once returned, and as they approached the camp, they were fired upon by one of the picket sentinels, and Adjutant Woodbridge was barely missed.

This new information entirely changed our plan of operations, for instead of marching up the river as we intended, we marched down it early the next morning, and at a rapid pace. The express was continued to Gen. Atkinson, by the same men selected the previous day for that service. We advanced rapidly upon the trails, which consisted of three—one main centre and two flanking trails. The first night we camped on the trail, we were literally drenched with rain; and it was with the greatest difficulty that we were enabled to make any fire by which to cook our supper. The second night we encamped on the east end of