

young snakes I may have eaten. We had collected of the mixed kinds, and eaten at least a peck a day for the last five days, and I now regretted the discovery, for they were very good. But our stomachs revolted against them for further indulgence.

I spent a few days at Green Bay, with my friend, John Lawe. In short, I so dawdled away my time that nearly all the traders had arrived, and I did not reach Mackinaw until about the tenth of June. I made a splendid return: three hundred and thirty buffalo robes, and ten packs of beaver and other furs and peltries. For the robes I was offered, by the commanding officer of the fort, ten dollars each; but I had received a circular from my equipper in Montreal, Touissant Portier, advising me not to sell before his arrival, as he would give the highest market price.

The garrison at Mackinaw was commanded by Lieut. Col. Robert McDouall,<sup>1</sup> of the Glengaries, with detachments of the Royal Veterans, the Eighty-first and Newfoundland regiments, and a sergeant's command of the Royal Artillery. Being a poor Indian trader, it was, of course, not my business to seek acquaintance with such great men as army officers. However, before the end of a week after my arrival, I was roused up one morning by a gentleman, who informed me that two men in a little bark canoe had just arrived express from Prairie du Chien, with the information that three boat loads of American soldiers had arrived there, and were building a fort at that place.

I jumped up, exclaiming, "We must go and take the fort." I dressed, and, on reaching the street, I found all astir, and alive to my views. I said: "All those who are willing to go, give me your names." By sundown, I had more than eighty volunteers, all traders' clerks and *engagés*, save one, who had large interests at stake on the Mississippi. It is true our enterprise appeared unwise, and very doubtful of success, for our private means were

<sup>1</sup> McDouall was a Scotsman, entered the British army in 1796, became a lieutenant the following year, a captain in 1804, a major, June 24th, 1813; a lieut.-col., July 29th, 1813; a colonel in 1830; and a major-general in 1841. He successfully defended Fort Mackinaw, Aug. 4, 1814, when attacked by Col. Croghan and Maj. Holmes. He died at Stranrawer, Scotland, Nov. 15th, 1848.