

CAPTURE OF FORT M'KAY, PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, IN 1814.

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With the exception of Bibaud (*Histoire du Canada, Domination Anglaise*, p. 181) none of the general histories of Canada give any account of the capture of Fort Shelby, afterwards Fort McKay, and its retention till the close of the war of 1812. The village of Prairie du Chien, beside which was the fort, is, it may be stated, on the junction of the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers, and the expedition was sent out by Col. Robert McDouall,² commanding at Michilimackinac, who gave the command to Major William McKay, with the temporary rank of lieutenant colonel. His report to Colonel McDouall, dated 27th July, 1814, and other papers are hereto annexed.

Bibaud's account, although short, is substantially correct. In Lossing's *Field Book of the War of 1812*, a paragraph of three lines states the fact of the capture, but the name of the fort, of the village, and of the officer who effected it, do not appear in the index. It is there stated that the force under McKay amounted to seven hundred men, mostly Indians (p. 851). Colonel McKay in his report gives the total number at six hundred and fifty, of whom one hundred and twenty were Michigan fencibles, Canadian volunteers and officers of the Indian department, the rest being Indians, who proved to be perfectly useless.

In the third volume of the *Wisconsin Historical Collections* is a narrative of the expedition, obtained by Lyman C. Draper from Capt. Augustin Grignon, in the spring of 1857, the narrator being then 77 years of age. The narrative differs to some extent from Colonel McKay's official report,

¹ Adapted, by special permission, from the *Report on Canadian Archives for 1887* (pp. xxvi-xxx, civ-cix), by Douglas Brymner, archivist.—ED.

² See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, ix., p. 193, note.—ED.