

After marching four or five miles northeastward, the trail of the fugitives was discovered trending to the north of west, towards the Mississippi. The country between the Wisconsin and the great river is rugged and forbidding in character; it was then unknown to whites, and Winnebago guides were almost equally unfamiliar with it. The difficulties of progress were great, swamps and turbulent rivers being freely interspersed between the steep, thickly-wooded hills. However, the fact that they were noticeably gaining on the redskins constantly spurred the troopers to great endeavors. The pathway was strewn with the corpses of dead Sacs, who had died of wounds and starvation, and there were frequent evidences that the fleeing wretches were eating the bark of trees and the sparse flesh of their fagged-out ponies to sustain life.¹

On Wednesday, the first of August, Black Hawk and his now sadly-depleted and almost famished band reached the Mississippi at a point two miles below the mouth of the Bad Axe, one of its smallest eastern tributaries, and about forty north of the Wisconsin. Here he undertook to cross; there were, however, but two or three canoes to be had, and the work was slow. One large raft, laden with women and children, was sent down the east side of the river towards Prairie du Chien, but on the way it capsized and nearly all of its occupants were drowned.

In the middle of the afternoon, the steamer "Warrior," of Prairie du Chien, used to transport army supplies, appeared on the scene with John Throckmorton as captain.² On

and some other engagements in the war, and to ignore Henry as his superior officer. Those men under Dodge, who have written about the campaign, extol the superior merits of their chief; but in Illinois pioneer reminiscences, Henry is invariably the hero of the occasion.

¹ "I started over a rugged country, to go to the Mississippi, intending to cross it, and return to my nation. Many of our people were compelled to go on foot, for want of horses, which, in consequence of their having had nothing to eat for a long time, caused our march to be very slow. At length we reached the Mississippi, having lost some of our old men and little children, who perished on the way with hunger."—*Autobiography*, p. 133.

² See Fonda's report of the "Warrior's" part in the battle, *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, v., pp. 261-264.