

EVENTS AT PRAIRIE DU CHIEN PREVIOUS TO AMERICAN OCCUPATION, 1814.

BY ALFRED EDWARD BULGER.¹

It was not until some time after war had been declared by the United States against Great Britain, that Prairie du Chien attracted the attention of the contending Powers. Situated near the confluence of the Wisconsin (or Ouisconsin, as it was then written) and the Mississippi rivers, in the heart of the Indian territory, a distance of more than five hundred miles from Michilimackinac, and about six hundred miles above St. Louis,² it was, at the period of which we write, the principal trading post on the Mississippi; the depot of the fur traders; the ancient meeting-place of the Indian tribes. The French were the first people who penetrated into this part of the Indian territory; and the spot upon which they built their post was at no great distance from the celebrated Fox village on Turkey river, which was formerly inhabited by the Reynards, or Fox Indians. The prairie on which the village was built is a beautiful elevation above the river, of several miles in length and a mile or so in width, with a picturesque range of grassy bluffs encompassing it in the rear, at the foot of which there formerly dwelt a band of Fox Indians, known as the Dogs, after whom the French named their village

¹This narrative of what took place at Prairie du Chien, just before that post was occupied by the Americans in June, 1814, is by the son of Capt. Andrew H. Bulger, British commandant on the Mississippi in 1814-15. The author is a resident of Montreal, and writes, of course, from the British point of view.—ED.

²The distance is 500.5 miles. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xi., p. 248, note.—ED.