

English trader — a picturesque character, who for several years had headquarters at Prairie du Chien, and engaged in operations extending to the sources of the Mississippi and far up the Minnesota. The expedition itself was in charge of Maj. William McKay, of the Mackinaw garrison, — the French and half-breeds being under command of their *bourgeois*, Joseph Rolette and Thomas G. Anderson, who held military commissions in the British Indian Department. The invading party went up the Fox and down the Wisconsin, receiving many recruits *en route*, until on its arrival at Prairie du Chien, July 7th, the force amounted to 650, — but of these, 500 were Indians, whom McKay reports to have "proved perfectly useless." Perhaps the only advantage of having them on the roll was the fact that had their nominal assistance not been engaged they might have sadly harassed the English while threading the Fox-Wisconsin waterways.

The story of the siege is not an exciting one, despite McKay's savage demand on Perkins to "surrender unconditionally, otherwise to defend yourself to the last man." Perkins at first refused to surrender, and there was some firing on both sides — the English having a four-pounder which had been brought along chiefly to amuse the Indians, but did effective service in driving off an American gunboat in the river. Thus left to his fate, Perkins finally surrendered on the 20th, on the promise of McKay to keep the Indians quiet — no small task this, for the savages were a howling mob, and making sad havoc with the fields and cabins of the peaceful dwellers on the prairie. The British position was weak, in view of possible attacks from below. Had Perkins held out a few days longer, it is likely that the invaders would have retired, for a detachment of troops under Lieutenant Campbell were actually on their way from St. Louis to relieve him; but he was uninformed as to the precariousness of the English position and the succor approaching him. As it was, McKay gave his prisoners their arms, and sent them down the river to their friends; while a band of Sacs, under his encourage-