

pared, ready for any emergency. A supply of gunpowder was, however, more difficult to obtain. Most of this article had to be drawn upon hand-sleds, over snow and ice, a distance of more than four hundred miles. Active measures were also adopted to secure a large quantity of Indian corn, which was to arrive from a distant settlement on the opening of navigation. But all these provisions and stores, collected from all parts of that vast country, large as they may appear, were found to be totally inadequate to supply a half of the Indians who were expected to take part in the coming campaign.

The most important point now to be decided upon was, whether it would be advisable to remain on the defensive, or meet the enemy at the mouth of Rock river, the scene of Lieut. Duncan Graham's successful encounter with the Americans on September 6, 1814. After much consideration, this latter plan was abandoned, principally owing to the fact that in the spring the Mississippi river rises at least eight feet, and boats can at that time sail up the rapids at Rock Island without any difficulty. Lieut. Keating, in command of the Mississippi Volunteer Artillery, clearly pointed out this fact, also that neither of the field guns could prevent the enemy's boats from ascending the river to Prairie du Chien. It was also shown that when the Americans were defeated in their attempt to ascend the river, the previous September, the water was very low. After due consultation with the Indian chiefs, it was determined to carry on the war in the vicinity of St. Louis, where it was known that cattle in abundance could be procured, and by this means the Americans might be kept at home to defend that place.¹

Early in the month of April, a dispatch reached Prairie du Chien from Lt. Col. McDouall, commanding at Michilimackinac, announcing the breaking up of the congress at Ghent and the consequent failure of the negotiations for peace with the Americans. "The principal cause was the

¹See Bulger's *Instructions to Interpreters*, *ante*, pp. 127-130.—ED.