

question relating to the Indians." A speech which accompanied the dispatch containing this information, was directed, by order of the commander-in-chief, to be announced in grand council to all the Western Indians. Agreeably to arrangements which had been previously made with the tribesmen, there arrived at Prairie du Chien, the first week of April, upwards of twelve hundred warriors of different tribes, fully equipped for war. Upon no other occasion in the course of the war had so choice a body of Indians been arrayed under the British flag, and a reserve of at least another thousand had engaged themselves to join the expedition when summoned to do so. At a council held at the council house, a short distance from the fort, amid all the ceremony customary on these occasions, the governor's message was made known to the Indians. At the conclusion of the speech they were also informed that it had been decided to carry on the war in the vicinity of St. Louis. In reply the head chiefs stood up, one after the other, and spoke in a highly satisfactory manner, promising their hearty support and coöperation to make the expedition a success.¹

At the period of which I write, the garrison stationed at Prairie du Chien, under the command of Captain Bulger, consisted of: "Fifty men (red coats) of the Michigan Fencibles, with one hundred and thirty Mississippi Volunteers "and upwards of forty Canadian voyageurs with a small party "of artillery men and soldiers of the line (trained as gunners) in charge of two three-pounder brass guns for field "and boat service." In the course of a day or two, everything being in readiness, strong war parties of Indians were sent on in advance down the Mississippi river to an appointed rendezvous, and the main force was on the point of proceeding to the same quarter, when on April 16 Captain Graham of the Western Indian Department arrived at Fort McKay from the advance war party, bearing a communication (delivered to him on the 10th inst. at the mouth

¹ See report of Indian council, April 18, *ante*, pp. 131-133.— Ed.