

the promise of a considerable reward upon their safe arrival—adding, that he had full confidence in the friendly professions of the Indians, from whom, as well as from the soldiers, the capture of Mackinac had been kept a profound secret.

“From this time the officers held themselves aloof, and spoke but little upon the subject, though they considered the project of Capt. Heald little short of madness. The dissatisfaction among the soldiers hourly increased, until it reached a high degree of insubordination. Upon one occasion, as Capt. Heald was conversing with Mr. Kinzie, upon the parade, he said, ‘I could not remain, even if I thought it best, for I have but a small store of provisions.’ ‘Why Captain,’ said a soldier, who stood near, forgetting all etiquette, in the excitement of the moment, ‘you have cattle enough to last the troops six months.’ ‘But,’ replied Capt. Heald, ‘I have no salt to preserve the beef with.’ ‘Then jerk it,’ said the man, ‘as the Indians do their venison.’

“The Indians now became daily more unruly. Entering the fort in defiance of the sentinels, they made their way without ceremony into the quarters of the officers. On one occasion, an Indian took up a rifle and fired it in the parlor of the commanding officer, as an expression of defiance. Some were of opinion, that this was intended, among the young men, as a signal for an attack. The old chiefs passed backward and forward, among the assembled groups, with the appearance of the most lively agitation, while the squaws rushed to and fro in great excitement, and evidently prepared for some fearful scene.

“Any further manifestation of ill-feeling was, however, suppressed for the present, and Capt. Heald, strange as it may seem, continued to entertain a conviction of his having created so amicable a disposition among the Indians, as would ensure the safety of the command, on their march to Fort Wayne.”

During this excitement amongst the Indians, a runner arrived with a message from Tecumthe, with the news of the capture of Mackinac, the defeat of Van Horne, and the retreat of Gen. Hull from Canada. He desired them to arm immediately, and intimated that he had no doubt but Hull would soon be compelled to surrender.

In this precarious condition, matters remained until the 12th of August, when a council was held with the Indians who collected from the vicinity. None of the military officers attended but Capt. Heald, though requested by him. They had been informed that it was the intention of the young chiefs to massacre them in council,