

corps, who was himself almost an invalid. The station there was described as "a square consisting merely of high cedar pickets to enclose the blockhouse and public buildings, the whole in bad repair and incapable of any defence."¹ It was armed with four very old iron six pounders, which were honey-combed and nearly useless, and six small swivels. Very few *voyageurs* had yet assembled there, as the British traders had left many of their men with their furs at other places. On the third of July, Mr. Toussaint Pothier (afterwards a member of the Legislative Council of Canada) arrived from Montreal in the capacity of agent for the Southwest Fur Company. Five days later, an express came from General Brock, at York, announcing the declaration of war and directing Roberts to attack Mackinac as soon as practicable. The *voyageurs* upon the island and from the trading stations on the mainland as far as Sault Ste. Marie were hastily assembled and organized as a small battalion of volunteers under the command of Mr. Lewis Crawford. Messengers were even sent to distant Fort William, at the head of Lake Superior, to seek the assistance of the agents of the Northwest Fur Company. They promptly responded to this summons, but arrived too late to render any service. "Those gentlemen," said Mr. Pothier, "with great alacrity came down with a strong party to co-operate, bringing to St. Marie's several carriage guns and other arms; and altho' the distance between St. Joseph's and Fort William is about 500 miles, they arrived at Michilimackinac the ninth day from the date of the express and found us in peaceable possession."

But Roberts found it quite impossible to equip his auxiliaries from the government stores, "having but forty guns in the Indian store and no gunpowder but what was required for the great guns of the garrison, and ball cartridges for his own men only, not a flint; in short the garrison was deficient of everything necessary for such an undertaking." In this dilemma he applied to Pothier who promptly threw open the storehouses of the company without hesitation, and the Northwest company's brig "Caledonia" was intercepted on her way down the lake and pressed into service. The next step was to secure the goodwill, if not the co-operation, of the powerful nation of the Ottawas, residing at L'Arbre Croche and other villages near Mackinac. Roberts stated that it was "a subject of much speculation how these people would act." In dealing with them he found a useful ally in

¹ Report of Lt.-Col. R. H. Bruyeres, R. E.