

was contemplated nor were the Indians in that quarter considered as coming within the influence of the officers of the British Indian Department.¹ Further inquiry proved that the collision was unpremeditated and that some thirty prisoners were scattered among the Indian villages on the borders of Lake Michigan. Chief Justice Woodward then requested that special messengers should be despatched to ransom the survivors and conduct them to Mackinac or Detroit. Procter promptly replied that the most effectual means in his power would be employed at once "for the speedy release from slavery of these unfortunate individuals and for their restoration to their friends."² Elliott and McKee were accordingly directed to make known his wishes to the chiefs and readily secured their promise that the captives should be surrendered.³ Lieutenant Helm and a few others were soon brought in, but the Indians became greatly angered at the destruction of some of their villages and decided to retain the remainder as hostages for the safety of their own people who had been carried away as prisoners. When Robert Dickson visited Chicago in the following March he ascertained that seventeen soldiers, four women and some children were still prisoners among the neighbouring Indians and took instant measures for their redemption.⁴ Eventually most of them were liberated through his influence.

Every available vessel and boat was pressed into service for the transportation of the prisoners taken at Detroit; but with every effort, several weeks elapsed before the last of them were sent away. The regular troops were taken to Fort Erie on their way to Quebec and the Ohio volunteers and drafted militia were paroled and landed at Cleveland. The detachment of the 41st Regiment which had been drawn from the Niagara frontier was sent back without delay to meet the impending attack in that quarter and the militia volunteers from the counties of Lincoln, Norfolk and York returned to their homes, after doing duty as an escort to the prisoners on their way down the lake. Three hundred of the local militia were retained in service, part of whom were employed in the expedition to the River Raisin and Miami Rapids already described, while the remainder were engaged in disarming the Michigan militia, dismantling the batteries at Detroit and removing the guns and military stores to Amherstburg. The executive powers of civil governor of Michigan Territory were assumed by Colonel Procter, who appointed as Secretary for the time being, Augustus B. Woodward,

¹ Procter to Brock, Sept. 10, 1812.

² Woodward to Procter, Oct. 8, 1812.

³ Procter to Woodward, Oct. 10, 1812.

⁴ Procter to Evans, Oct. 28, 1812.

⁵ Dickson to Freer, March 16, 1813.