



**Suffering & Defeat of the Northwestern Army
under General Winchester: Massacre of the
prisoners: Sixteen Months Imprisonment of the
writer and others with the Indians and British in
the War of 1812**

William Atherton

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This book was printed in 1842 and has been out of print since that time. It is a first person narrative of what happened to him and the North Western Army of the United States in the War of 1812. It speaks of the brutality of the Indians and the British. The greater part of this short narrative was written years ago. At that time it was intended for publication. But for several years past the writer had declined ever letting it come before the world; and had it not been for the solicitations of friends, it is highly probable this intention would never have been changed. But relying upon the opinion of those whom he believed to be well qualified to judge of it, and believing them to be sincere in their expression of opinion, I have consented to let it go and take its chance before the public. It was found difficult to give such an account of that part of the campaign which it was thought to be most important, without commencing as far back as the departure of the army from Kentucky. This part of the history has, however, been passed over very rapidly, perhaps rather too much so to make it at all satisfactory. The writer is aware that he has omitted much which would have added to the interest of this little history; but he has not leisure to go over it again. History has given us an account of the sufferings of the North-Western Army only in general terms, but nowhere, so far as I have been able to learn, has there been given a particular detail of the sufferings and privations of that detachment of the army. I think it proper that the rising generation should know what their fathers suffered, and how they acted in the hour of danger; that they sustained the double character of "Americans and Kentuckians." This narrative has been made as concise as I could conveniently make it, and on that account, perhaps, the writer has not said all that might, and that should have been said. But it is hoped that what has been said will be sufficient to give the youthful reader some idea of what that "Spartan band" were called to endure. To the old men of our country these things, perhaps, will not be new. With regard to the massacre at Raisin, the writer has related nothing but what he saw. What is said in reference to the brave Hart and Hickman, he witnessed with his own eyes. It may be thought that I have been a little too severe in what I have said of British officers. Should any think so, all I have to say is, had they seen and felt what we did there would have been no difference of opinion. By some it will be thought strange to find the savages, in point of feeling and humanity, placed above the British — but the truth ought always to be told. One thing the writer regrets, and that is his being compelled so frequently to speak of himself. But he found it impossible to give a full narration without it. Nothing is aimed at but a plain unvarnished statement of facts, a sober description of scenes, in the principal part of which the writer himself an actor.

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