

Early Times and Events in Wisconsin

By James H. Lockwood

At the request of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, through their Corresponding Secretary, I shall attempt to give some reminiscences of the early history of Wisconsin, and more especially of the western portion of it. I feel much distrust in my ability to do justice to the subject, as writing for the public eye has never been, thus far in life, any part of my employment or ambition; and yet, in my unpretending way, I feel willing to contribute my reminiscences of early times for the archives of a Society which I regard as having commenced, with commendable zeal, a noble and important work. Very likely I may appear egotistical in many instances, and too prolix in others; but the discriminating reader can make all due allowances, and the future historian can sift the wheat from the chaff.

I was born in the town of Peru, Clinton county, N. Y., Dec. 7th, 1793—and as the sequel will show, I have lived in the woods the most of my days. My father was a farmer, to which occupation I was raised until past the age of sixteen years. When I was between two and three years old, my father's house in Peru took fire, and almost everything he possessed of a moveable character, was consumed. He sold his farm, and about this period removed to the town of Jay, in the adjoining county of Essex, where he owned or obtained land. Here he made improvements, and had good buildings, an orchard, and every thing comfortable about

him, when, about 1803, he got the Ohio fever. He sold his farm at a great sacrifice; but before he collected the money for it, he met a gentleman who had just returned from Ohio, who stated that though lands were cheap, and they could raise large crops of grain and flocks of cattle with little labor, yet many of the settlers were obliged to go twenty or thirty miles to mill, and there was no market for their fine cattle and rich harvests, and that a farmer with a comfortable home was better off in the cold and unproductive region of Northern New York, than in the fertile plains of Ohio without a market. These considerations dissuaded my father from removing to Ohio, and in March, 1805, he settled in Champlain, Clinton county, N. Y., where he purchased a farm, with a log dwelling and forty acres of improvement.

Living thus on the frontiers, and removing from place to place, my educational advantages were very limited. But after moving to Champlain, the nearest school was at the village of Chazy, two and a half miles distant, whither I went pretty regularly for two or three winters. In that day and in a new country, to be able to read, write, and cypher as far as the Rule of Three, was considered sufficient qualifications to teach a common school. I was ambitious to obtain a good education, and relaxed no efforts to be punctual in my attendance, although the distance was great, and traveling through the deep snow was often very laborious. I read with avidity every book that chance threw in my way, or which I could obtain by borrowing in the neighborhood.

In the summer of 1808, I boarded at Champlain Village, and attended the school taught by the late Dr. William Beaumont, who was then a student of medicine. Under his tuition I greatly improved myself in grammar, geography, &c., but at that early day I never saw a school atlas. Opportunities for attending better schools increased and I continued alternately on the farm and at school until I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, when I engaged in the study of law. I, however, concluded, that from deficient early education and my native diffidence, I

should never make a great lawyer, and my ambition protesting against a second or third rate position, I abandoned the law as I then supposed, forever, and sought and obtained a situation as a merchant's clerk.

The merchant who employed me, became the sutler to the Light Artillery Regiment then commanded by Col. Wm. Fenwick, and formed a part of Gen. Izard's army. This force commenced its march from Plattsburgh to the West, in August, 1814; and my employer having some business to transact in Plattsburgh, before his departure, sent me on to attend to the suttling business, and I continued with the regiment until the campaign on the Niagara was over, and the troops retired into winter-quarters near Buffalo. In November my employer arrived, and taking offense at some of his acts, I demanded a settlement, and left him. I then engaged myself to a man named Fuller, sutler for Maj. Ball's two companies of dragoons, then cantoned near Avon, N. Y., on the Genesee River, where I remained doing little or nothing during the winter, as the dragoons, for some reason, were not paid off.

In April, 1815, I received a letter from the late Lewis Rouse* of Green Bay, a townsman of mine, dated at Buffalo, stating that he had obtained the suttling of the Consolidated Rifle Regiment, and desired my assistance. Having no need of my services, I left Mr. Fuller, and repaired to Buffalo, and the stage which conveyed me carried flying colors announcing the news of peace.

Those of the troops enlisted for the war, were now discharged, and those enlisted for five years retained; of the latter was the Rifle Regiment, then understood to have been ordered to Detroit. As I had conducted Mr. Rouse's business principally, he wished

* Judge Rouse was a native of Rouse's Point, on Lake Champlain, and settled at Green Bay about 1824. He was Judge of the North-west Judicial District while Wisconsin yet formed a part of Michigan Territory. He was a man of prominence in his day, and possessed many kind and gentlemanly qualities. He died suddenly at his residence, in Manitowoc, April 18th, 1855, at the age of 63 years. His sudden death was probably caused by apoplexy, as he was of plethoric habit, and weighed over three hundred pounds.

me to go with him, and desiring to see the country, I accepted his invitation. The troops having left Buffalo about the first of June, we sailed from that place on the 15th of that month, in the schooner *Lady of the Lake*, said to have been the best vessel then on the Lakes, and arrived at Detroit on or about the 10th of July. Here we found that the regiment had been ordered to Mackinaw.

Detroit was then an old French village, with the houses mostly covered with bark. Waiting here a few days for a vessel on which to proceed to Mackinaw, we engaged passage about the 15th of July, on a crazy old schooner commanded by Capt. Pearson, bound for Drummond's Island, with pork and hard bread for the British troops then stationed at that place. On board the vessel as a passenger was Ramsay Crooks, since so distinguished among the Rocky Mountain traders, then on his way to Mackinaw to receive the property of the South-West Fur Company which had been recently purchased by John Jacob Astor of New York.* We found this crazy old vessel without any convenience of table, furniture or provisions. Mr. Crooks had come passenger on her from Buffalo, and the captain had promised him that he would lay in ample supplies at Detroit, but just as we had got under way from the latter port, Mr. Crooks went into the cabin and as-

* In 1783, several of the principal merchants of Montreal entered into a partnership to prosecute the fur-trade, and, in 1787, united with a rival company, and thus arose the famous *North-West Company*, which, for many years, held lordly sway over the immense region in Canada and beyond the Great Western Lakes. Several years later a new association of British merchants formed the *Mackinaw Company*, having their chief factory or depot at Mackinaw; and their field of operations was south of their great rivals—sailing forth their light perogues and bark canoes, by Green Bay, the Fox and Wisconsin rivers to the Mississippi, and thence down that stream to all its tributaries. In 1809, Mr. Astor organized the *American Fur Company*—he alone constituting the company; and, in 1811, in connection with certain partners of the *North-West Company*, and others, he bought out the *Mackinaw Company*, and merged that and his *American Fur Company* into a new association, called the *South-West Company*. By this arrangement Mr. Astor became proprietor of one-half of all the interests which the *Mackinaw Company* had in the Indian country within the United States; and it was understood, that the whole, at the expiration of five years, was to pass into his hands, on condition that the *American*, or *South-West Company* would not trade within the British dominions. The War of 1812 suspended the association; and after the war it was entirely dissolved—Congress having passed a law prohibiting British fur-traders from prosecuting their enterprises within the territories of the United States. Thus we find Mr. Crooks, in 1815, closing up the affairs of the *South-West Company*, preliminary to enlarged individual enterprise on the part of Mr. Astor.

certained that the captain had failed to fulfill his engagement; and immediately he took the skiff, went ashore and purchased dishes, knives, forks, spoons, and provisions, and we proceeded on our voyage. We were becalmed about ten days on the St. Clair River and Flats, during which we went on shore and bought a sheep, which helped along with the rusty pork and hard bread. At that time, I had seen very little of hardships, and I suffered much from such fare as hard bread and rusty pork.

We were almost a month from Detroit to Drummond's Island, where we found a trader named Lacroix, with a boat bound to Mackinaw, and with him we engaged our passage. No provisions could be had at Drummond's Island so we were obliged to depend on the *voyageurs'* kettle of corn soup, a new kind of fare to me; and, I believe, I ate but a few mouthfuls from Drummond's Island to Mackinaw. We were two days reaching Mackinaw, where we arrived on the morning of the 15th of August. Once there and recruited, we had a new source of anxiety, in daily expecting the arrival of the paymaster until the close of navigation; and then I had to content myself as well as I could, until the ensuing spring of 1816. At the request of some of the inhabitants, I concluded to open a school, as it would keep me from idleness; if my scholars did not learn much English, I concluded I should stand a chance of acquiring some French—thus acting out the Yankee character of adapting one's self to circumstances. And thus I spent the winter.

During the winter of 1815-16, Congress passed an act excluding foreigners from participating in the Indian trade within the limits of the United States or its Territories. This was then supposed to have been done through the influence of Mr. Astor, and upon the purchase of the property of the *South West Company*, the American Fur Company re-appeared under the auspices of Mr. Astor—the headquarters of which were at Mackinaw.

Although Congress had passed a law excluding foreigners from the Indian country, it was found that the trade could not

be carried on without their aid, as most of the clerks, interpreters and boatmen were foreigners; and, in the summer of 1816, the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States issued orders to the Indian Agents on this frontier to license foreigners as interpreters and boatmen, on their giving bond with large penalties for their good conduct in the Indian country. Thus the British traders who wanted to get into the Indian country had only to employ an American to whom the goods were invoiced, and the license taken in his name, and the trader went as interpreter until they were beyond the Indian agencies, when the trader assumed the control of his property, and carried on his business as usual.

During the summer of 1816, it was projected to establish a United States fort at Green Bay; and, in July of that year, Col. John Miller, then Colonel of the 3rd regiment U. S. Infantry, was ordered on that service, and soon chartering three vessels, embarked three or four companies of rifle-men and infantry with some artillery. Among the vessels was the *Washington*, the largest of the fleet, commanded by Capt. Dobbins, on board of which vessel was the Commandant. I had that year engaged myself as a clerk to some traders, to take charge of an outfit or trading establishment near the head of the St. Peters River, and the Colonel apprehending difficulty from the Indians in landing at Green Bay, proposed to take the goods of several boats in the vessel, and tow the boats, and use them, if necessary, in landing, and then return them to their owners.

Accordingly Augustin Grignon, myself and a French clerk by the name of Chappin embarked on board the *Washington*, Mr. Grignon and Chappin acting in some measure as pilots. During the night of the second or third day out from Mackinaw, the other two vessels became separated from the *Washington*, and arriving in the vicinity of what is now called Washington Island and Harbor, and learning from Mr. Grignon that there was a good harbor, Col. Miller ordered the *Washington* to put in there to

wait for her consorts. We remained there nearly two days, during which time the officers and passengers rambled over the Island, and finally, in honor of our vessel, supposed to be the first one that had entered the harbor, we gave its name to Washington Island and Harbor, which they have ever since retained. Finding the other vessels had got into Green Bay ahead of us, and had found a harbor at Vermillion Island, and were waiting for us, we proceeded up the Bay, and arrived at Green Bay settlement about two days after, when the troops landed without the anticipated opposition from the Indians.

This was the month of July, 1816. Green Bay and Prairie du Chien were then the only settlements in what is now the State of Wisconsin, if we except Solomon Juneau's trading house at Milwaukee;* and they could not well be called settlements according to the American idea of settling and improving a country.

Green Bay was a kind of traders' depot for the trade of that Bay, the Fox and upper part of Wisconsin rivers, which were considered dependents of it.

There then resided at Green Bay as a trader John Lawe, and four or five of the Grignons. Augustin Grignon resided and traded at the Little Kaukalin. Those traders who pretended to make Green Bay their home, resided generally but a small portion of the year there, as most of them wintered in the Indian country, and generally spent two or three months of the summer at Mackinaw. The traders of Green Bay mostly married, after the Indian manner, women of the Menomonee tribe, there being no white women in the country. I saw at this time but one woman in the settlement that pretended to be white, and she had

* So far as Mr. Juneau's name is concerned, this needs a slight correction. Traders were at Milwaukee as early as 1762; and, about 1815, Jacques Vaux, who had been preceded by one Lafromboise and J. B. Beaubien, commenced wintering there as a trader, and it was not till 1818, that Solomon Juneau went there, erected a permanent dwelling, and on the 14th of September in that year became the first actual settler of the place. See Hon. M. L. Martin's Historical Address before the Wis. Hist. Society, and vol. I, pp. 35, 134, of the Society's *Collections*. In a former note, reference was had to the remote Wisconsin settlement, such as it was, at La Pointe, Lake Superior.

accidentally been brought there at an early day, but her history, however, I do not now recollect. There were at Green Bay some forty or fifty Canadians of French extraction who pretended to cultivate the soil; but they were generally old worn out *voyageurs* or boatmen, who having become unfit for the hardships of the Indian trade, had taken wives, generally of the Menomonee tribe, and settled down on a piece of land. As the land did not cost anything, all they had to do was, to take up a piece not claimed by any other person, and fence and cultivate it. But they had generally been so long in the Indian trade that they had, to a great extent, lost the little knowledge they had acquired of farming in Canada so that they were poor cultivators of the soil, although they raised considerable wheat, barley, peas, &c. Green Bay was at that time a part of the territory of Indiana, of which the seat of government was at Vincennes, which was also the county town of the county to which Green Bay was attached—between four and five hundred miles distant by the tedious and circuitous route of that day.

There was an old Frenchman at Green Bay of the name of Charles Reaume, who could read and write a little, that acted as Justice of the Peace. He had been commissioned under George III, when Great Britain held jurisdiction over the country, and after it was given up to the American Government and attached to Indiana, he had been commissioned by Governor Harrison,* and being thus doubly armed with commissions, he acted under either, as he found most convenient. The laws under which he acted were those of Paris† and the customs of the Indian traders of Green Bay. He was very arbitrary in his decisions.

The county seat was so distant and difficult of access, that if a

*Before Judge Lockwood's narrative came to hand, Col. Ebenezer Childs, who knew Judge Reaume well, informed the writer of this note, that Reaume received his commission as Justice from Gov. Harrison, of Indiana Territory, which was probably not long after the organization of that Territory in 1801, from which till 1813, Gen. Harrison continued uninterruptedly its Governor. L. C. D.

†The code *Coutume de Paris*, the law of France, which governed Canada, and all the territory of the North West while under the French dominion. L. C. D.

person felt himself aggrieved, he preferred suffering injustice to going to the expense of an appeal; so that practically, Reaume's court was the Supreme Court of the country. He took care not to decide against any of the traders who were able to bear the expense of an appeal; in fact the traders made use of him to hold their men in subjection, but never submitted to him any difficulty between themselves. These were left to the arbitration of other traders. It was said of him, that a bottle of spirits was the best witness that could be introduced into his court, and that after the decision of a case, the losing party producing the above witness, had been granted a new trial or re-hearing, and a reversal of the former decision obtained. For misdemeanor he sentenced the culprit to labor a certain number of days on his farm, or cut and split a certain number of rails for him. I have read the narrative of James W. Biddle, of Pittsburgh, whom I knew at the time, and the anecdotes related by him of Judge Reaume were current at that day, together with many others that would not look well in print.

During my stay at Green Bay waiting the arrival of my employers, one of their "engagees" or boatmen had left their employ and engaged himself to an American concerned in suttlng for the troops, and I went to Judge Reaume, stating the case to him, asked him what the law was on that subject, and what could be done. He answered me in his broken English: "*I'll—make—de—man—go—back—to—his—duty.*" "But," I again asked, "what is the law on the subject?" He answered, "*de—law—is—I'll—make—de—man—go—back—to—his—duty.*" I reiterated my inquiry, "Judge Reaume, is there no law on the subject?" He replied with a feeling of conscious dignity, "*We—are—accustomed—to—make—de—men—go—back—to—their—bourgeois.*" Finding Judge Reaume had no law except his own precedents and the customs of Green Bay, and not believing that American citizens would submit to, and obey the process of his old jack-knife, or the customs of the Green Bay Indian traders,

I concluded to leave the matter until the arrival of my employers, and let them proceed before Judge Reaume, if they thought proper.*

The Indian trade carried on at that day for the Mississippi and Missouri and their tributaries was from Mackinaw. Until 1816, goods came mostly from Montreal, in batteaux or canoes, mostly by the Mackinaw, or its successor, the South West Company, or by some private traders. But early in 1815, Mr. Astor purchased out the interest of the South West Company at Mackinaw and its dependencies, and in August, of that year, Ramsay Crooks, as already mentioned, went to Mackinaw as agent for Mr. Astor, to complete the arrangements. In the spring of 1816, the goods of the American Fur Company were imported to New York and thence brought by way of the Lakes to Mackinaw. During

Of Judge Reaume, we have learned some additional facts from Hon. Solomon Juneau, and with reference to his death and burial, from P. G. Grignon, through Hon. E. S. Baird, and also from Col. E. Childs. He was born about the year 1752, at La Prairie, nearly opposite Montreal, of a prominent and respectable family. As mentioned in a note to the 1st vol. of the Wis. Hist. Soc. Colls., we early find him at Detroit, and in the service of the British Indian department, as a captain, and was among the prisoners taken by the gallant Col. George Rogers Clark at the capture of Vincennes, in February, 1779, and taking the oath of neutrality, was permitted to return to Detroit. In 1780, he settled at Green Bay, and appears to have been, in a small way, and a part of the time, engaged in the Indian trade. His first commission of Justice of the Peace he probably derived from the British authorities at Detroit, before the surrender of that post to the American government in 1796, and he subsequently received a similar commission from Gov. Harrison of the Indiana Territory. In 1816 and '17, he made his home with John Laws at Green Bay; and, in 1818, he was appointed by Gov. Cass of Michigan Territory, one of the Associate Justices of the court for Brown county, and the same year, he removed to Little Kaukaun, about ten miles above Green Bay, and there sold liquor to the Indians, not unfrequently drinking freely with them, and sharing in their frays, as well as in blackened eyes and bruises. There he died alone, in the spring of 1832, for he was found dead in his cabin. He was about seventy years of age. His friends at Green Bay had his remains conveyed there, and buried in the old Catholic burial place, which was in the present plat of Astor; but the bodies interred there were subsequently removed to the present burying ground. No tablet marks his grave. He was never married.

In this volume and its predecessor, several anecdotes illustrating Judge Reaume's primitive mode of administering justice, have been given; to which we add the following, from the interesting work of Mrs. Kinzie: "There was an old Frenchman at 'the Bay,' named Reaume, excessively ignorant and grasping, although otherwise tolerably good-natured. This man was appointed Justice of the Peace. Two men once appeared before him, the one as plaintiff, the other as defendant. The Justice listened patiently to the complaint of the one, and the defense of the other; then rising, with dignity, he pronounced his decision: 'You are both wrong. You, Bois-ver, to the plaintiff, you bring me one load of hay; and you, Cray, to the defendant, you bring me one load of wood; and now the matter is settled.' It does not appear that any exceptions were taken to

that spring, several Montreal traders arriving at Mackinaw with Indian goods, probably not aware of the law of Congress prohibiting British subjects from trading within the American territories, now took advantage of the order of the Secretary of the Treasury, and sent their goods into the Indian country, under the nominal direction of a hired American clerk, to whom the goods were invoiced, and who took the license in his name and gave proper bonds with security to the traders who owned them, who went along, ostensibly as interpreters, until the boat passed all the American forts and agencies, when they assumed the ownership, and proceeded as usual in their business—these clerks' bonds were considered as a mere formality to evade the law, and were worth so much brown paper, and no more.

In the spring of 1817, the American Fur Company brought a large number of American clerks from Montreal and the United States, some of whom made good Indian traders and are yet in the country, but nearly one-half of them were found not qualified for the business, and in the following spring many of them were discharged from Mackinaw, which was then the grand depot of the Indian trade.

The American Fur Company, as had been the practice of the Mackinaw and South West companies, made their outfits to Lake Superior, to the Mississippi, the head of St. Peters, and the Missouri. The boats for the Mississippi and Missouri trade passed through the north end of Lake Michigan from Mackinaw, thence through Green Bay to the settlement of that name; thence up the Fox River to the Little Kankalin, where they made a portage of about three-fourths of a mile. Augustin Grignon had a trading house at this point, and kept teams to transport the goods and furs (the men taking the boats empty up or down the rapids, as the case might be), for which he charged about twenty cents per 100 pounds. The boats then proceeded to Grand Chute, where the men made another portage of the goods or furs, and passed the boat over the Grand Chute empty. Thence they proceeded

to the rapids at the lower end of Winnebago Lake, where they usually made half loads over the rapids into the lake. Thence they proceeded upward to where the Fox River enters the lake, thence up Fox River through Puckawa Lake, and Lac de Bœuf, or Buffalo Lake, and some smaller lakes to the Portage of Wisconsin, where a man by the name of Roy resided, who kept teams and hauled goods, furs and boats across the Portage of one and one-fourth miles from the Fox to the Wisconsin River, for which he charged forty cents per 100 pounds, and ten dollars for each boat.

The boats then went down the Wisconsin to its mouth, and thence up the Mississippi about three miles to Prairie du Chien; the traders of the Lower Mississippi and Missouri never going down without a short stop at Prairie du Chien, where they generally spent some days in conviviality, dinners, dancing, &c. Tradition says that many years since, when there were many wintering traders in both the Upper and Lower Mississippi, it was the custom of every trader visiting Prairie du Chien, to leave in store a keg of eight or nine gallons of good wine for convivial purposes when they should again meet in the spring, on which occasions they would have great dinner parties, and, as is the English custom, drink largely. But when I came into the country, there were but few of the old traders remaining, and the storing of wine at Prairie du Chien had become almost obsolete, although the traders were then well supplied with wine, and that of the best kind, of which they made very free use. It was then thought that a clerk in charge of an outfit must have his keg of wine, but after the American Fur Company got fairly initiated into the trade, they abolished the custom of furnishing their clerks with this luxury at the expense of the outfit. As I have already said, the Indian trade of the Mississippi and Missouri and their tributaries was carried on from Mackinaw as the grand depot of the trade of the North-West.

The traders and their clerks were then the aristocracy of the country; and to a Yankee at first sight, presented a singular state

of society. To see gentlemen selecting wives of the nut-brown natives, and raising children of mixed blood, the traders and clerks living in as much luxury as the resources of the country would admit, and the *engagees* or boatmen living upon soup made of hulled corn with barely tallow enough to season it, devoid of salt, unless they purchased it themselves at a high price—all this to an American was a novel mode of living, and appeared to be hard fare; but to a person acquainted with the habits of life of the Canadian peasantry, it would not look so much out of the way, as they live mostly on pea soup, seasoned with a piece of pork boiled down to grease; seldom eating pork except in the form of grease that seasons their soup. With this soup, and a piece of coarse bread, their meals were made; hence the change from pea soup to corn is not so great, or the fare much worse than that which they had been accustomed to, as the corn is more substantial than peas, not being so flatulent. These men engaged in Canada generally for five years for Mackinaw and its dependencies, transferable like cattle to any one who wanted them, at generally about 500 livres a year, or in our currency, about \$83.33; furnished with a yearly equipment or outfit of two cotton shirts, one three point or triangular blanket, a portage collar, and one pair of beef shoes; being obliged, in the Indian country, to purchase their moccasins, tobacco, pipes, and other necessaries, at the price the trader saw fit to charge for them. Generally at the end of five years, these poor *voyageurs* were in debt from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars, and could not leave the country until they had paid their indebtedness; and the policy of the traders was, to keep as many of them in the country as they could; and to this end they allowed and encouraged their *engagees* to get in debt during the five years, which of necessity required them to remain.

These new hands were by the old *voyageurs* called in derision, *mangeurs de lard*—*pork-eaters*—as on leaving Montreal, and on the route to Mackinaw, they were fed on pork, hard bread, and pea-soup while the old *voyageurs* in the Indian country ate corn-

soup, and such other food as could conveniently be procured.* These *mangeurs de lard* were brought at considerable expense and trouble from Montreal and other parts of Canada, frequently deserting after they had received some advance in money and their equipment. Hence it was the object of the traders to keep as many of the old *voyageurs* in the country as they could, and they generally permitted the *mangeurs de lard* to get largely in debt, as they could not leave the country and get back into Canada, except by the return boats or canoes which brought the goods, and they would not take them back if they were in debt anywhere in the country, which could be easily ascertained from the traders at Mackinaw. But if a man was prudent enough to save his wages, he could obtain passage, as he was not longer wanted in the country.

The engagements of the men at Montreal were made in the strongest language; they bound themselves not to leave the duties assigned them by their employers or assigns either by day or night, under the penalty of forfeiting their wages; to take charge of and safely keep the property put into their trust, and to give notice of any portending evil against their employers or their interests that should come to their knowledge. It was the practice of the traders, when anything was stolen from the goods during the voyage, whether on the boat or on shore, to charge the boat's crew with a good round price for it, and if anything not indispensable was accidentally left on shore at the encampment, they did not return for it, but charged it to the crew, as it was understood to be their duty, not the employer's, to see that every thing was on board the boat. These people in the Indian country became inured to great hardships and privations, and prided themselves upon the distance they could travel per day, and the small quantity of provisions they could subsist on while traveling, and the number of days they could go without food. They are very easily governed by

*The experienced *voyageurs* are called *hivernans* or *winterers*, according to Snelling's work on the North-West. L. C. D.

a person who understands something of their nature and disposition, but their *bourgeois* or employer must be what they consider a gentleman, or superior to themselves, as they never feel much respect for a man who has, from an *engagee*, risen to the rank of a clerk.

The traders in this country, at the time I came into it, were a singular compound; they were honest as far as they gave their word of honor to be relied upon; and, in their business transactions between themselves, seldom gave or took notes for balances or assumptions. It rarely happened that one of them was found who did not fulfill his promises; but when trading in the Indian country, any advantage that could be taken of each other in a transaction, was not only considered lawful—such as trading each other's credit—but an indication of tact and cleverness in business. Two traders having spent the winter in the same neighborhood, and thus taken every advantage they could of each other, would meet in the spring at Prairie du Chien, and amicably settle all difficulties over a glass of wine.

There was not, at the time I came to Prairie du Chien, any Indian corn raised there. The traders for the Upper Mississippi, had to send down, for their corn which they used, to the Sauks and the Foxes at Rock Island, and trade with them for it. It is believed that the first field of corn raised at Prairie du Chien was by Thomas McNair, an American, who had married a French girl and settled down to farming.

The farmers of Prairie du Chien appeared to be a more thrifty and industrious people than those of Green Bay; they raised a large quantity of small grain, such as wheat, barley, oats, peas, and also some potatoes and onions. Every two or three farmers united and had a horse flouring-mill—the stones being cut from the granite rock found in the country. There they ground their wheat, and sifted the flour by hand. The surplus flour was sold to the Indian traders for goods, or exchanged with the Indians for venison, ducks, and geese, or dressed deer-skins, as there was no money

in circulation in the country. Any purchase made was payable in goods from the traders or flour from the inhabitants.

The manner in which the traders dealt with the farmers was this; to let the farmer set his price on anything that he had to sell, without grumbling or saying anything about its being high, as it was payable in goods; the trader charging his price for the goods—so each party got all he asked, and neither had cause for complaint, but of course the trader was not the loser by the transaction. Mr. Michael Brisbois related to me a transaction which took place between himself and a farmer by the name of Pierre Lariviere. This Lariviere was ambitious to pass with his neighbors for the best farmer in the country, and went to Mr. Brisbois to see what he was paying for flour, which I think was then six dollars per 100 lbs; but Lariviere desirous of the opportunity of boasting to his neighbors that he had gotten more for his flour than they did, expressed a wish that Mr. Brisbois would pay him more than the market value for his flour, which Mr. Brisbois told him he could not do. "Oh," said Mr. Lariviere, "you can make it up by charging more for the goods with which you pay me;" and so they closed the bargain, not to Mr. Brisbois loss. The prices compared somewhat like this: When flour was worth \$8.00 per 100 lbs., hyson or young hyson tea was worth \$8.00 per pound; if flour was worth only \$6.00, tea would remain the same price, when the farmer got \$8.00 per bushel for onions, and \$1.00 per dozen for eggs, he paid the above price for tea. The women of Prairie du Chien, mostly daughters of the Indian traders, had been raised in the habit of drinking a great deal of tea in the Indian country, where other beverage for children could not be procured, and it thus became from long habit with them almost a necessary of life, and they would make any sacrifice to obtain their favorite beverage. When eggs were worth \$1.00 per dozen, rosin soap was worth \$1.00 per pound, and calico that at this date, would be sold at Prairie du Chien from 20 to 25 cts. per yard, was then sold at \$2.00 per yard; clay pipes at

40 cts. each, and common tobacco at about \$2.00 per pound. So much flour was made at Prairie du Chien at this time, that in 1820 Joseph Rolette contracted with the Government for supplying the two companies of troops at Fort Crawford with it, they preferring the coarse flour of the Prairie which was sweet, to the fine flour transported in keel-boats in the long voyage from Pittsburgh, which would be sour on its arrival.

Prairie du Chien is generally spoken of as an old settled town. It is true that the Indians inhabited it many years since; and about the year 1737 the French established a trading post there, and built a stockade around their buildings to protect them from the Indians, and from that day until a few years since it continued to be a trading and military post, and occasionally a worn out *voyageur* got married, and settled down on a piece of land. But what advantages were these old trading posts to the settlement and development of the country—such as Detroit, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Vincennes, St. Louis and St. Charles? All these places remained stationary for many years, until the Americans emigrated to them, and took hold of them with their enterprise, when they at once improved, and most of them became places of business and importance.

Indian traders, as a class, possess no enterprise, at least none that is of any advantage to the settlement and improvement of a country. They are enterprising in going into the unexplored Indian country to traffic, and collect furs and peltries; but I have never seen a man who made money in the Indian trade, apply it to the ordinary improvements that foster and encourage the growth of a country—they have made money in a certain routine of business, with which they are acquainted, and fear to invest it in some other business with which they are not familiar. Such has been the case with Prairie du Chien, so long noted as a trading post and garrison.

The land about Prairie du Chien was not purchased from the Indians; and none surveyed, except the private claims on the

Prairie, for many years after the Government took possession of it as a military post. There were not, until 1835, any Americans that emigrated to the Prairie for settlement; and even then, as the country about was not in market, very few came.

In the winter of 1818-19, Illinois was admitted as a State into the Union, and all that part of the country formerly belonging to the territories of Indiana and Illinois was attached to Michigan, then under the governorship of Gen. Lewis Cass. In the spring of 1819, he set off the county of Brown, including all the country East of a North and South line running through the Portage of Wisconsin to the Illinois line; and at the same time, set off the county of Crawford, including all the country West and South of the aforesaid line to the Missouri line, including what is now the State of Iowa and Territory of Minnesota.

Governor Cass sent blank commissions for the different officers of the counties, to be filled up by the inhabitants. These had been sent by Lieut. Col. Leavenworth, then on his way, with the Fifth Regiment of U. S. Infantry, to occupy Forts Crawford and Armstrong, and to build a fort at the mouth of St. Peters. Nicholas Boilvin, Esq., was appointed to administer the oath to the officers of Crawford county. Two companies of the regiment were sent to Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, under command of Brevet Major Mastin, and two companies to Fort Crawford under Major Muhlenberg. Shortly after receiving the blank commissions, the principal inhabitants assembled at the house of Nicholas Boilvin, Esq., and then the difficulty was to find persons sufficiently acquainted with the business to fill the offices and perform the duties. Finally John W. Johnson, the U. S. factor, was selected as the Chief Justice of the County Court. I was solicited to take the office of Associate Justice, or Judge of Probate, but being then young, and appearing much younger than I really was, and knowing very little about the proceedings of courts, and thinking that I had neither the practice nor dignity to hold a judicial office, and that I should probably make myself ridiculous,

I declined either of the judgeships, but accepted the office of Justice of the Peace. I had not then decided to make Prairie du Chien my future home, having hitherto spent my winters near the head of St. Peter's River, in the Indian trade; but in the fall of 1819 I took up my permanent residence at Prairie du Chien.

John W. Johnson was a man of good sense and judgment, but had from quite a young man held the appointment of U. S. factor, and resided in the Indian country where he could obtain but little knowledge of the proceedings of courts or the ordinary transactions of civilized life. The commissions of Associate Justices were filled up with the names of Michael Brisbois* and Francis Boutchillier, both of whom from boyhood had been in the Indian country and had very little opportunity of witnessing proceedings at courts. Wilfred Owens was appointed Judge of Probate, and Nicholas Boilvin and John W. Johnson and myself Justices of the Peace; John S. Findley clerk of the Court; John P. Gates Register of Probate, which also included the recording of deeds, and Thomas McNair was appointed Sheriff. It should be remembered, that all these officers had to enter upon the duties of their several offices without forms to refer to or precedents of proceedings, and it can astonish no person that the records of that day are without much form. Such was the organization of the county of Crawford, and I think that the materials in Brown were not much better, although several Americans by that time had settled at Green Bay.

At the session of Congress of 1819-20, an act was passed to take testimony relative to the private land claims at Sault St. Marys, Mackinaw, Green Bay and Prairie du Chien, that were reserved to subjects of the British government under Jay's Treaty; and in the fall of 1820, commissioners were dispatched to the different places to take testimony. A Mr. Lee came to Prairie du Chien. The most of those claims at Prairie du Chien were

* Instead of Mr. Brisbois, Hon. M. L. Martin, in the appendix to his Address before the Historical Society, gives the name of Nicholas Boilvin. L. C. D.

found to come under Jay's Treaty, but there were several that wanted a year or more of coming under it. These facts being reported to Congress, they at a subsequent session passed an act giving to every settler who was in possession of land at the date of the declaration of war in 1812 against Great Britain, and who had continued to submit to the laws of the U. S., the lands he claimed. It is a matter of history, that the British took Mackinaw and subjected its dependencies to their government, including all the aforementioned places, and the most part of these claimants were ignorant Canadians and supposed themselves British subjects, not aware that if they did not within a year choose, as stipulated in the treaty, to continue British subjects, they became American citizens; and when the British government took military possession of the country during the war of 1812-15, the military officers in command considered them as British subjects, and ordered them to do military duty as militia. They were a conquered people, and feeling that they owed no allegiance to the United States, took up arms in obedience to the orders of the British officers. There were some among them intelligent enough to know their position, but had they claimed to be American citizens and refused to take up arms, surrounded as they were by hostile Indians, they would not have been safe—especially as the British officers did not believe in a British subject expatriating himself, and of course there was no law of the United States in the conquered country to submit to. Notwithstanding all these circumstances being known to the officers of the army stationed at Sault St. Marys under Major Cutler, they got up a remonstrance to the Government, representing these people as traitors; in consequence of which the patents were delayed, to the great annoyance and sometimes to the great injury of the claimants.

Sometime in the year 1820,* Wilfred Owens of Prairie du Chien, then connected in business with the late Gov. McNair, of

*It was in 1818. Constant A. Andrews, who appears to have been from Pennsylvania, and was interested in the Carver claim, wrote from Prairie du Chien, Feb. 1, 1819, to Rev. Dr. Samuel Peters:—"I am now building a saw-mill in company with Batelle, on Yellow River, under a permission

Missouri, furnished the capital, and associated with two other men by the name of Andrews and Dixon, built a saw-mill on Black River, and commenced sawing lumber; but before they had done much business the mill was burned, supposed to have been set on fire by the Winnebagoes, who had then lately taken possession of that country, and claimed it as their own. The mill was not rebuilt, owing to the declared hostility of the Winnebagoes to it.

In the year 1820-21, the country authorities of Crawford erected a jail in the old village of Prairie du Chien in the rear of village lot No. 17 of that village, made of hewn oak logs of about one foot square; the house was about 25 by 16 feet, and divided by the same kind of logs into a debtors' and criminals' apartments.*

There is a tract of land nearly opposite the old village of Prairie du Chien in Iowa, which was granted by the Spanish Lieut. Governor of Louisiana to one Basil Girard, and running through it, was a small stream or brook usually called Girard's Creek; but, in 1823, the commandant of Fort Crawford had a party of men detailed to cultivate a public garden on the old farm of Girard, on said creek, and Martin Scott, then a Lieutenant of the fifth infantry, and stationed at Fort Crawford, was directed to superintend the party. Fond of shooting, and a great shot generally, he took his dogs and gun every morning, got into his little hunting canoe, and spent the day in shooting wood-

obtained from the commanding officer. * * * For my own part, I apprehend no difficulty, if you obtain permission from the Secretary of War, and can make them [the Indians] some presents." On the 10th Nov., 1819, Mr. Andrews writes to Dr. Peters, from "Falls Black River: On the 2d day of November I set a saw-mill a running, not much inferior to any in the United States. * * * The mill is about thirty or forty miles east of Lake Pepin. The Sioux very willingly gave us permission to come here. There were seven chiefs in council—Lefoy not there; the seven gave us five years; Lefoy came back after, and gave it forever. I am very much pleased with my situation. I was obliged, on account of iron, to go to the Prairie once, but was overjoyed on my arrival back, and now regret to leave sight of the mill. * * * Here I am happy to live—here I am willing to die." See Am. State Papers, Public Lands, IV., p. 22.

L. C. D.

*At this old log jail, a sergeant of the first regiment of U. S. Infantry was hung, in 1823, for shooting Lieut. McKinzie of the same regiment; and in 1832 or 1834, a soldier of that regiment was executed there for shooting Sergeant Coffin in the new Fort Crawford. The old jail was burnt in 1834.

J. H. L.

cocks which were plenty in the marshes about there, and returning in the evening would boast of the number that had bled that day. After a while he gave the creek the name of *Bloody Run*, which name it still bears. The name generally suggests to strangers the idea of some bloody battle having been fought there, and I have been frequently questioned as to the tradition relative to it, and a few years since the editor of our village paper had somewhere picked up the same romantic idea, and published a long traditionary account of a bloody battle pretended to have been fought there years ago. But the creek is indebted for its name to the hunting exploits of Major Martin Scott, when a lieutenant, and stationed at Fort Crawford.*

On the 16th of September, 1816, I arrived at Prairie du Chien, a traders' village of between twenty-five and thirty houses, situated on the banks of the Mississippi, on what, in high water, is an island. The houses were built by planting posts upright in the ground with grooves in them, so that the sides could be filled in with split timber or round poles, and then plastered over with clay, and white-washed with a white earth found in the vicinity, and then covered with bark, or clap-boards riven from oak.

This village, now called the old village of Prairie du Chien, was designated by Lyons as the main village, as it was so at the time he surveyed the private land claims of Prairie du Chien.— Tradition says the place took its name from an Indian Chief of the Fox tribe by the name of Chien, or *Dog*, who had a village somewhere on the Prairie near where Fort Crawford now stands.— Chien or *Dog* is a favorite name among the Indians of the North-West.

* Scott, at this date, was a young man, and had been but a few years in the army. He was a native of Bennington, Vermont, and was educated at West Point. In his youth, he was famous among the sharpshooters of the Green Mountains, never shooting game in the body, but, at whatever height or distance, always striking the head. He would drive a nail into a board part way with a hammer, and then, taking the farthest distance at which his eye could distinctly see it, drive it home with his unerring bullet. He served with distinction in the Mexican war under Gen. Scott, and at nearly the close of that brilliant campaign, Brevet Lieut. Col. Martin Scott was killed at the sanguinary battle of Moline del Rey, Sept. 8th, 1847. He had seen much hard service, and always conducted himself with great skill, caution and intrepidity, and was respected and beloved for his integrity of character, and for his great kindness and benevolence of heart.

There were on the Prairie about forty farms cultivated along under the bluffs where the soil was first rate, and enclosed in one common field, and the boundaries generally between them marked by a road that afforded them ingress and egress to their fields; the plantations running from the bluffs to the Mississippi, or to the slough of St. Freole, and from three to five arpents wide. The owners did not generally live immediately on their farms, but clustered together in little villages near their front, and were much the same description of inhabitants as those of Green Bay, except that there were a number of families of French extraction, entirely unmixed with the natives, who came from the French villages of Illinois. The farmers' wives instead of being of the Indian tribes about, were generally of the mixed blood.— They were living in Arcadian simplicity, spending a great part of their time in fishing, hunting, horse racing or trotting, or in dancing and drinking. They had little or no ambition for progress and improvement, or in any way bettering their condition, provided their necessities were supplied, and they could often collect together and dance and frolic. With these wants gratified, they were perfectly satisfied to continue in the same routine and habits of their forefathers before them. They had no aristocracy among them except the traders, who were regarded as a privileged class.

It was said, that about 1809 or 1810, a trader, an Irishman by birth, of the name of Campbell, was appointed by the U. S. government sub-Indian agent at Prairie du Chien, and by the Governor of the Territory of Illinois a Justice of the Peace. The currency of Prairie du Chien was at that time flour, and Campbell charged for celebrating the rites of matrimony 100 pounds of flour, and for dissolving it 200 pounds, alleging that when people wanted to get unmarried, they would willingly give double what they would originally to form the matrimonial connection.

In speaking of the courts of justice of the country, and of their county seats, Mr. Briabois related to me, that sometime previous to the war of 1812, he and Mr. Campbell had a dispute about a heifer that was worth at the time perhaps eight dollars; and as

each believed it to be his property, they applied to the lawyer at Cahokia to assist them in finding out who was the real owner.— The mode of traveling in those days was in a canoe, manned with six or eight men to paddle, and taking with them some flour, tea and sugar for the bourgeois; and some hulled corn and deer tallow, enough to season the soup for the men, depending upon shooting game by the way, or buying wild fowl or venison from the Indians. The parties litigant were obliged to take their witnesses with them, paying them for their time and expenses, from their departure until their return home. The parties were also obliged to take a bundle of beaver skins, and dispose of them at St. Louis to pay the expenses of lawyers, &c; and the lawyers, as usual, were disposed to oblige the parties by putting over the case from time to time, and the parties continued the suit in this manner until it had cost them about fifteen hundred dollars each, when they took it out of court and settled it. But which retained the heifer, if I ever heard, I do not now recollect.

The *coutume de Paris* so far prevailed in this country generally, that a part of the ceremony of marriage was the entering into a contract in writing, generally giving, if no issue, the property to the survivor; and if they desired to be divorced, they went together before the magistrate and made known their wishes, and he, in their presence, tore up the marriage contract and according to the custom of the country, they were then divorced. I was once present at Judge Abbott's at Mackinaw when a couple presented themselves before him, and were divorced in this manner. When the laws of Michigan were first introduced at Prairie du Chien, it was with difficulty that the Justice of the Peace could persuade them that a written contract was not necessary, and some of them believed that because the contract of marriage gave the property to the survivor, that they were not obliged to pay the debts which the deceased owed at the time of his death.

There was an instance of this at Prairie du Chien. A man by the name of Jean Marie Querie dit Lamouche, who had been

married by contract, died without issue, leaving a widow, some personal property and a good farm, but was indebted to Joseph Rolette about \$300 which his widow refused to pay, alleging that the contract of marriage gave her all the property; nor could she be convinced to the contrary, until I had brought a suit against her and obtained a judgment.

When I arrived at Prairie du Chien, there were four companies of riflemen under command of Brevet Major Morgan, building the old fort, which was constructed by placing the walls of the quarters and store houses on the lines, the highest outside, and the slope of the roof descending within the fort; with block-houses at two corners, and large pickets at the others, so as entirely to enclose the fort. John W. Johnson, a gentleman from Maryland, was U. S. Factor, with a certain Mr. Belt as assistant and bookkeeper, and John P. Gates as interpreter. Col. Alexander McNair, late Governor of Missouri, had the suttlings of the fort, and his nephew, Thomas McNair, and John L. Findley, were the clerks in his employ, and had charge of the business.

There were then of the old traders residing at Prairie du Chien Joseph Rolette, Michael Brisbois, Francis Bouthillier and Jean Baptiste Farribault, all Canadians of French extraction, except Francis Bouthillier who was from France, and Nicholas Boilvin, who was Indian agent, and held the commission of Justice of the Peace under the government of Illinois Territory, whence he came.

At this time at Prairie du Chien the events of the war of 1812 in that quarter, were fresh in the minds of every one. I learned that in the spring or summer of 1814, the U. S. Government sent boats, made bullet proof, under a Captain Yeiser, who was in command of the boats, and a company of U. S. troops, under Lieut. Perkins, to take and retain possession of Prairie du Chien. Perkins built a stockade on a large mound, on which Col. Doussan's house now stands, and Capt. Yeiser remained on board the

boats, where most of the ammunition and provisions were stored, as there was no room for them within the stockade.

Soon after the breaking out of the war, when the American officers in garrison at Mackinaw, and the citizens of that place were yet ignorant of the commencement of hostilities, but apprehensive that war had been declared, some traders were despatched to the old British post and settlement of St. Josephs, on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, for intelligence. As none of the traders returned, remaining absent so much longer than was deemed necessary, it naturally enough excited the suspicions of the commanding officer and the principal citizens of Mackinaw. Under the circumstances, a council was held, at which it was determined that immediate information must be had from St. Josephs, and the question then was, who could go there and not be suspected of being a spy. After looking around and finding none qualified to go, the late Michael Dousman, of Mackinaw, said that he had an outfit in Lake Superior that ought, by that time, to be at St. Josephs, and he thought that he could go there and look after his property without being suspected. Accordingly he volunteered his services, and late in the afternoon he left Mackinaw for St. Josephs in a canoe. About dark, at Goose Island, fifteen miles from Mackinaw, he met the British troops on their way to that place, who took him prisoner, but released him on his parole that he would go back to Mackinaw, and not give the garrison any information of what he had seen, but collect the citizens together at the old still-house on the southern side of the island, where a guard would be immediately sent to protect them from the Indians. This promise Mr. Dousman faithfully performed, and was probably the cause of saving many an innocent family from being brutally murdered by the savages. The British arrived, planted their cannon during the night, and in the morning sent in to the commanding officer a copy of the declaration of war, with a demand for him to surrender, which he complied with.

The traders in the British interest, resorting to Mackinaw as the British head-quarters of the North-West, learning of the Ameri-

can occupation of Prairie du Chien in 1814 and anticipating, that so long as this force should remain there, they would be cut off from the trade of Prairie du Chien, its dependencies, and the Sioux country, at once set on foot an expedition for the re-capture of that place. The British officers and traders accordingly fitted out an expedition under the command of Col. McKay, of the Indian department, an old trader; and under him were, a sergeant of artillery with a brass six pounder, and three or four volunteer companies of the Canadian *voyageurs*, commanded by traders and officered by their clerks, all dressed in red coats, with probably one hundred Indians officered by half-breeds.* Having made a secret march they arrived on the Prairie without being expected, and made the best display of red coats and Indians that they could. They made a formidable show, and the Americans not knowing of what materials they were composed, and supposing that they were all British regulars, appeared to have been panic-struck. The sergeant had brought his field piece so well to bear that he hit one of the boats, I believe the one Yeiser was in. During this time the troops and Indians had made a move towards the fort, but keeping out of gun shot. On the boat being hit, Capt. Yeiser had the cable cut, and swung round down the river, ordering the others to do the same, carrying with them the provisions and ammunition of the garrison. After the boats had gone, Col. McKay summoned the fort to surrender, and having neither provisions nor ammunition they had no other alternative, and accordingly surrendered. The British took and kept possession of Prairie du Chien until peace, in 1815, thus opening the Indian trade to the traders at Mackinaw. The inhabitants of Prairie du Chien being British subjects, were ordered into service by the British government to do duty in the garrison during the war. The British sergeant of artillery for hitting the keel-boat, was promoted by his government.

Of the persons spoken of as resident traders of Prairie du Chien,

*There were at least a thousand Indians under Col. McKay, as stated in the accounts of the time, and not less than three pieces of light artillery. L. C. D.

Joseph Rolette, in connection with the Indian trade, carried on farming, after the fashion of the country, pretty extensively. Michael Brisbois, besides being a trader, carried on the business of baking, and farming to some extent, receiving of the inhabitants 100 pounds of flour and giving in return tickets for fifty loaves of bread, and these tickets made a convenient change to buy trifles of the Indians with. None of the inhabitants pretended to make their own bread, but depended entirely upon the bake-house. Jean Baptiste Farribault did something in the line of Indian trade, and carried on a small farm, but soon after left the Prairie to reside on the St. Peters River.*

Among the other inhabitants of notoriety at that time, was a Mrs. Menard, of mixed African and white blood. She came from some one of the French villages below, and was then married to Charles Menard, a Canadian of French extraction. She had been married twice previously, first to a man by the name of Du Chouquette, by whom she had two sons, one of whom was in the employ of Mr. Astor in that unfortunate expedition of his sent in 1810 by sea and across the continent to the mouth of the Columbia River, now Oregon Territory. Her next husband was named Gagnier, by whom she had three sons and three daughters. After Gagnier's death she married Charles Menard, by whom she had three sons and two daughters. She was generally called by the inhabitants Aunt Mary Ann, and was a person of consequence among them, being midwife, and the only person pretending to a knowledge of the healing art. Until a fort was erected at Prairie du Chien, and a surgeon arrived there with the troops, she was sent for by the sick, and attended them as regularly as a physician, and charged fees therefor, giving them, as she expressed it, "device and yarb drink." She was an excellent nurse, and even after there were regular surgeons of the army stationed at Fort Crawford, Mary Ann continued to practice among the in-

*We learn from the *Annals of the Minnesota Historical Society*, that as early as 1805, Farribault encamped opposite Mendota, Minnesota, trading with the Indians; and, in 1812, he formed one of the constituent members of the Columbia Fur Company, of Minnesota. From the *American State Papers*, he appears to have removed to the St. Peters, in 1819.—
L. C. D.

habitants. Whether they employed her because they had more faith in her skill, or because they could pay her with more ease, as she took her pay in the produce of the country, but was not very modest in her charges, I cannot with certainty state; and frequently after the army physician had attended a patient a long time, who perhaps for want of good nursing could not be cured, Mary Ann would take the patient home with her, and by the force of good nursing and "yarb drink" restore him to health, so that we frequently joked the physician about Mary Ann's superior skill in the healing art. There are at this time many of her descendants residing at Prairie du Chien, who are generally as industrious and orderly inhabitants as any others.

Mr. Campbell, of whom I have previously made mention as Indian Agent and Justice of the Peace, had passed to his long home before I came to the country, and I found a Canadian of French extraction by the name of Nicholas Boivin clothed with the dignified office of Sub-Agent and Justice of the Peace. He had about the same amount of education as Judge Reaume of Green Bay, previously spoken of, and about the same idea of justice, and was nearly as arbitrary. His law library consisted of a single volume of old statutes of the North Western Territory, one of Illinois, and one of the Missouri Territory; but in deciding cases he paid no attention to the statute, but decided according to his own idea of right and wrong.*

* Col. Boivin's trio volumes formed probably the first law library in Wisconsin, except perhaps Judge Reaume's single volume of Blackstone; one of which is now, by the courtesy of Judge Lockwood among the collections of the Wis. Hist. Society. He did not probably often consult them, if we may judge from his off-hand manner of administering justice as related by Mrs. Kinzie in her *Wau-Bun*: "Col. Boivin's office was just without the walls of the fort at Prairie du Chien, and it was much the fashion among the officers to lounge in there of a morning, to find sport for an idle hour, and to take a glass of brandy and water with the old gentleman, which he called taking a little 'quelque-chose.' A soldier, named Fry, had been accused of stealing and killing a calf belonging to M. Rolette, and the constable, a bricklayer of the name of Bell, had been dispatched to arrest the culprit and bring him to trial. While the gentlemen were making their customary morning visit to the Justice, a noise was heard in the entry, and a knock at the door.

'Come in,' cried the old gentleman, rising and walking toward the door. Bell—Here, sir, I have brought Fry to you, as you ordered.

Justice—Fry, you great rascal! What for you kill M. Rolette's calf?

Fry—I did not kill M. Rolette's calf.

Justice—(Shaking his fist) You lie, you great rascal! Bell, take him to jail. Come gentlemen, come, let us take a little *quelque-chose*."

L. C. D.

Col. Alexander McNair of St. Louis, had, as already mentioned, for his clerks in the suttling business, his nephew Thomas McNair, afterwards captain of the militia, and John L. Findley.— But Thomas McNair shortly afterwards married a daughter of Mr. Curtois, a respectable farmer of French descent, and Findley married a Miss Hurtleese, a half-sister of Mrs. Rolette, and a quarter blood of the Sioux nation. Upon learning these transactions of his clerks, Col. McNair naturally concluded that they were attending more to their own pleasure than to his matters, and sent a man, by the name of Wilfred Owens, a Kentuckian, to whom he gave an interest in the business, and discharged McNair, afterwards captain of the militia, and John L. Findley.—

McNair went to farming. Findley went to Mackinaw, and procured, by the assistance of Mr. Rolette, a small assortment of goods, and attempted to trade at Prairie du Chien; but as there was then no money in circulation, except what little came from the few troops stationed at the fort, and goods were then selling very high at Mackinaw, he did not succeed in business, and before the close of the year turned over to Mr. Rolette his stock and assets towards the payment of the purchase, which was made of Messrs. Berthelotte and Rolette.

In the spring of 1817, a Roman Catholic Priest from St. Louis called Pere Priere, visited Prairie du Chien. He was the first that had been there for many years, and perhaps since the settlement, and organized the Roman Catholic Church, and disturbed some of the domestic arrangements of the inhabitants. He found several women who had left their husbands and were living with other men; these he made by the terror of his church to return and ask pardon of their husbands, and to be taken back by them, which they of course could not refuse.

Brevet General Smythe, the Colonel of the Rifle Regiment, who came to Prairie du Chien to erect Fort Crawford in 1816, had arrived in June, and selected the mound where the stockade had been built, and the ground in front, to include the most thick-

ly inhabited part of the village. The ground thus selected encroached upon the ancient burying ground of the Prairie, so that the inhabitants were obliged to remove their dead to another place.

During the winter of 1816 or early in the spring of 1817, Lieut. Col. Talbot Chambers arrived at Fort Crawford, and assumed the command, and the houses in the village being an obstruction to the garrison, in the spring of 1817, he ordered those houses in front and about the fort to be taken down by their owners, and removed to the lower end of the village, where he pretended to give them lots. When Gen. Smythe first arrived at Prairie du Chien, he arrested Michael Brisbois then the most prominent citizen of the Prairie, and placed him under a guard of soldiers for several days, charging him with treason, for having taken up arms against the United States. After keeping him in duress for several days, he was sent on board of a boat under a guard to St. Louis, Gen. Smythe refusing to let Mrs. Brisbois send her husband a package of beaver to raise money in St. Louis to pay his expenses. The guard took him to St. Louis and landed him on the levee, where they left him, not having delivered him over to the civil authorities, or instituted any proceedings against him, but left him there without money or means to return home. But Mr. Brisbois was known in St. Louis, at least by reputation, and readily found friends who assisted him to return home. During his absence the commandant, who I believe was Lieut. Col. Hamilton, ordered Mrs. Brisbois and family out of her house, and took possession of it in which to spread the contractor's flour to dry; and also took possession of Mr. Brisbois' bake-house, with about two hundred cords of dry oven wood, which was used by the commissary or contractor, for which aggressions and injuries Mr. Brisbois received no compensation.

Although in a time of peace, and our Government had received the country by treaty stipulation, the officers of the army treated the inhabitants as a conquered people, and the commandants as

sumed all the authority of governors of a conquered country, arraigning and trying the citizens by courts-martial, and sentencing them to ignominious punishments. This was more particularly the case under the reign of Col. Chambers, who was a brave soldier in the field, but a weak man and not qualified for a commandant, as he was generally governed by some favorite officer or officers, who not being responsible for the outrage committed by their superior, would induce him to do acts to gratify their whims or prejudices.

Charles Menard, the husband of the notable Mary Ann, was arrested, having been charged with selling whiskey to the soldiers. He was brought about five miles from his residence under a guard, tried by a court-martial, whipped, and with a bottle hung to his neck, marched through the streets, with music playing the *Rogue's March* after him. Menard protested that he had not sold liquor to the soldiers, but that they had asked him for it, and that he refused to let them have any, as he did not keep liquor for sale.

And during Col. Chambers' reign, for some alleged immoral conduct he banished Joseph Rolette to an island, about seven miles above Prairie du Chien, where he obliged him to pass the winter, but in the spring permitted him to return to the village to attend to his business, as his outfits were coming in from the Indian country.

Mr. Brisbois informed me that he had resided in Prairie du Chien about thirty years;* and there was an old Scotchman by the name of James Aird,† connected with the company by which I was first employed in the Indian trade, who generally wintered

*Mr. Brisbois, in 1820, gave evidence before Mr. Lee, the government commissioner, that he had been thirty-nine years in the country, and was then sixty years of age; and this would give the year 1781 as the year of his coming to Prairie du Chien. L. C. D.

†Mr. Aird was from Mackinaw, and was a worthy man and enterprising trader. His field of operations was mainly with the Sioux or Dakotas, in what is now Iowa and Minnesota. On the return of Lewis and Clark's expedition in 1806, they met Mr. Aird with two trading boats above the Big Sioux River, on the Missouri; and in their Journal they speak of him as "a very friendly and liberal gentleman." In 1812, he had a trading post at Mendota. L. C. D.

among the Sioux Indians, and had been a trader about forty years. There was also another man by the name of Duncan Graham, who had been engaged in the Indian trade about the same length of time, and was captain in the British Indian Department during the war, from whom I obtained considerable information of the Indian country, and of the earlier days of Prairie du Chien.

Prairie du Chien was, at this time, an important post for Indian trade, and was considered by the Indians as neutral ground, where different tribes, although at war might visit in safety; but if hostile, they had to beware of being caught in the neighborhood, going or returning. Yet I never heard of any hostile movement on the Prairie after they had safely arrived.

The factories which John W. Johnson had charge of, were established by an act of Congress previous to the war of 1812, for the humane purpose of preventing the British traders from extortions on the Indians, and of counteracting British influence over them, which they exercised through the traders. But unfortunately they had the contrary effect, and through the bad management of the traders, the Government of the United States was made to appear contemptible in the eyes of the Indians. The idea was then prevalent in the U. S., that the most sleazy and cheap goods were what the Indians wanted, whereas the blankets furnished by the British traders, although of coarse wool, were thick and substantial, and so were the cloths and calicoes, while those furnished by the Americans were greatly inferior. It was many years before Mr. Astor, with all his wealth and sagacity, could obtain in England suitable blankets and cloths for the Indian trade, and also the proper guns. There was, at that time, an Indian gun manufactured in England, called the North West gun, of simple, plain and strong construction, and it was understood that the manufacture of blankets, cloths and guns was so much under the influence of the North West Fur Company, that an American could not procure the genuine article, and hence the goods furnished by the factors were all of an inferior article, except

tobacco; and the British traders took especial pains when they happened to have a poor article, to call it American. They had been furnished for many years with their tobacco from Albany, an inferior article, made into carrots of from two to three pounds; and when the American tobacco in plugs, and of a tolerable good quality, was introduced among them, they admitted that it was the best.

When I first came to the country, it was the practice of the old traders and interpreters to call any inferior article of goods American, and to speak to the Indians in a contemptuous manner of the Americans and their goods, and the goods which they brought into the country but too generally warranted this reproach. But after Mr. Astor had purchased out the South-West Company and established the American Fur Company, he succeeded in getting suitable kinds of goods for the Indians, except at first the North-West Indian gun. He attempted to introduce an imitation of them, manufactured in Holland, but it did not succeed, as the Indians soon detected the difference.

At that time there were generally collected at Prairie du Chien by the traders and U. S. factors, about three hundred packs of one hundred pounds each of furs and peltries, mostly fine furs. Of the different Indian tribes that visited and traded more or less at Prairie du Chien, there were the Menomonees from Green Bay, who frequently wintered on the Mississippi; the Chippewas, who resided on the head waters of the Chippewa and Black rivers; the Foxes, who had a large village where Cassville now stands, called Pensah—i. e. Turkey; the Sauks, who resided about Galena and Dubuque; the Winnebagoes, who resided on the Wisconsin River; the Iowas, who then had a village on the Upper Iowa River; Wabashaw's band of Sioux, who resided on a beautiful Prairie on the Iowa side of the Mississippi, about one hundred and twenty miles above Prairie du Chien, with occasionally a Kickapoo and Pottawattamie.

The Sauks and Foxes brought from Galena a considerable quan-

tity of lead, moulded in the earth, in bars about two feet long, and from six to eight inches wide, and from two to four inches thick, being something of an oval form, and thickest in the middle, and generally thinning to the edge, and weighing from thirty to forty pounds. It was not an uncommon thing to see a Fox Indian arrive at Prairie du Chien with a hand sled, loaded with twenty or thirty wild turkies for sale, as they were very plenty about Cassville, and occasionally there were some killed opposite Prairie du Chien.

About the year 1822, a man by the name of Hardin Perkins, from Kentucky, came to Prairie du Chien for the purpose of building a saw-mill in the Indian country, and obtained permission from Major Taliaferro, then agent for the Sioux Indians, with the consent of the Indians, to erect a saw-mill on their land on the Chippewa River and tributaries; but Perkins not having the capital to carry out his project, or sufficient influence to obtain the permission of the Indians to erect this mill, solicited Joseph Rolette and myself to join him, which we did, and contracted with Wabashaw's band of Sioux, who claimed the Chippewa River country, for the privilege of erecting a mill and cutting timber for it, paying them about \$1,000 per year in goods, and furnished Perkins the necessary means for the purpose; and he was to take charge of and conduct the business. He proceeded to Menomonee River, a tributary of the Chippewa, and on a small stream running into the Menomonee, about twenty miles from its mouth, erected a saw-mill and had it so near done that he expected to commence sawing in a very few days, when one of those sudden freshets to which hilly countries are subject, came upon him and swept away the dam, mill and appendages, and Perkins returned to Prairie du Chien with his family and hands, having suffered during his residence there considerable from fear of the Chippewa Indians who resided near, and sometimes visited the mill builders.

Col. Snelling, who commanded at Fort Snelling, had frequently

since Perkins and his men commenced operations, threatened to send a force and destroy the mill, saying the Indian Agent had no authority to give permission to build mills in the Indian country. The parties being pretty well convinced of the fact, and that Col. Snelling had malice enough to carry out his threat, if for nothing else but to punish Mr. Rolette, with whom he had some difficulty, concluded not to rebuild, until they could be authorized by some better authority, supposing then that the Secretary of War had that power; and Mr. Rolette and myself made up our minds to pocket the loss, and let Perkins off with the loss of the few articles he had furnished and his services, which amounted to about fifteen hundred dollars. It proved a bad speculation to all parties. The annuity we agreed to pay the Indians for the privilege of building the mill and cutting timber, being stopped during the time there was no work on the mill, the Indians insisted upon its payment, and enquired the reason we did not go on with the work. We were obliged to tell them that their Great Father would not allow us to do so. They said they had given us permission, and that the country was theirs, and their Great Father had no right to say anything about it.

In the fall of 1829, returning from St. Louis, I met at Galena Major John Biddle of Detroit, who had then been elected our delegate to Congress from Michigan, and enquired what he could do for me, or the people of Prairie du Chien at Washington. I then related to him the situation in which I and Mr. Rolette were placed with regard to the mill and annuities to the Indians. He told me that when I got home, if I would address him at Washington, stating our case, that he would attend to it. I wrote to him a full statement of the case and difficulties, and Major Biddle obtained for us from the Secretary of War permission to erect mills, &c., provided we contracted with the Indians through the Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien.

We renewed our contract with the Indians, through their agents, and in May, 1830, sent a mill-wright who was also a partner, a su-

perintendent, carpenter and blacksmith, with laborers, provisions, teams, and tools, to erect a mill on the Chippewa River or its tributaries. The mill-wright selected the site of the old dam of Perkins for his dam, and built the mill on the Menomonee River, and dug a canal across a point of land from the small stream to the mill. The hands we were obliged to employ were mostly Canadians, and we engaged the wife of one of them, a Menomonee half breed, as cook for the hands. Few Americans can manage the Canadian *voyageurs* to advantage. They suppose that they must be treated with the same familiarity as American laborers, and reason them into doing their duty; but this is not the proper treatment. The *voyageur* has been so long accustomed to look upon his employer as his superior, and to be treated by him as his inferior, that so soon as he is treated as American hands expect to be treated by their employer, they at once conceive a contempt for him, and become mutinous. Such was the case with our superintendent, and he proved not be qualified to superintend any kind of men or business, and all the hands looked upon him with contempt.

Three or four Chippewas came to them and the Menomonee half breed woman, she being the only one that understood the Chippewa language, and told them that if they did not leave there they would kill them all. This was about night-fall, and the superintendent was so much alarmed that at dark he got into a canoe with one man, as much frightened as himself, and went down in the night over the rapids, that were difficult to navigate even in the day time, leaving orders with the men to load the provisions, tools, &c., into the boat, and to start in the morning down the Chippewa River near to its mouth, which they did, driving the oxen by land. The superintendent, whose name was Armstrong, arrived at the Prairie evidently much alarmed, and gave me a terrible account of his escape; and not until he had been at the Prairie some considerable time did he inform me that he had ordered all the men to leave the mill, and that they were probably

on their way down. I was then satisfied that my presence was required there, unless I intended to abandon the mill; and it being in the hot weather of August, I did not feel much inclined to make a voyage in a canoe exposed to the sun, but from the materials we had to deal with, I saw at once that it was necessary.

I had a canoe manned with a half breed Winnebago, who spoke Chippewa, and together with Armstrong and the Frenchman who had come down with him, put out at once, taking in my canoe provisions enough for myself and crew to reach the mill. We had proceeded about forty miles up the Mississippi, when early in the morning at a sand-bar, in the middle of a channel, and about one fourth of a mile from the shore, I met a canoe with a Menomonee half-breed and a large athletic Ohioan by the name of Hartwell, whom I had never seen before. Armstrong had engaged him as carpenter, and taken him to the mill without my having seen him, or knowing his name. I asked them where they were going, and they said to the Prairie. I said, "no!—you must return with me." I knew that the half-breed would obey without difficulty, but Hartwell said he was going to the Prairie, and I knew in order to take all of them back, I must take these back as I met them. Hartwell was a strong man and armed with a rifle, but I said to him, "this canoe at least is mine, and does not go to the Prairie; you can take your choice, either to go back, or to remain on this sand-bar."

He concluded to go back, and for fear that they might give me the slip, I got into the canoe with them and we proceeded up the river about ten miles farther, where we met all the Canadians with the half-breed Menomonee woman, when we all put ashore. I told them that they must go back to the mill, which they refused to do. I soon discovered, as I had suspected, that the woman was the leader of the party, and I bribed her to go back. She consented, and the others followed her example. She and her husband were in a large canoe, not half finished, which would go hard up stream. From the manner of her consenting so readily

to return, I suspected that she intended as soon as they could lag a little behind, and get some point between me and them, to slip down the stream, which I afterwards learned was really their intention; to prevent which, I told them, as they were weak-handed, and had a heavy canoe, that I would embark with them and help them paddle. I paddled all day, and made a good day's work up stream, and encamped in a channel of the river opposite to Wabashaw's Prairie.

The men had only taken provisions enough to last them to the Prairie, and it was soon seen that my stock would not be sufficient for the additional months until we reached the boat. In camp at night one of the men named Francis La Pointe, a native of Prairie du Chien, and well acquainted with the customs of the Indians, told me that it was but a short distance across the country to the Chippewa, where the boat then was; and proposed to go there, take a canoe and meet us with provisions, which I requested him to do. He accordingly after breakfast borrowed a gun, took some crackers in his pocket, and started across, while we proceeded up the channel along under the bluffs for about five miles to where the canoes cross the Mississippi to the western side. Just as we were about putting off from the shore, La Pointe came running down the hill hallooing "Indians!" The canoes were all putting out into the river, but I ordered the canoe that I was in to put to shore, and take the man in, confiding, at the time, in his statement.

La Pointe had on, when he started, two cotton shirts, and when he returned one of the shirts was nearly cut from him, and several stabs through the other. He had thrown away all his ammunition and his hat, and stated that after crossing the hill and getting into a ravine of tall grass, that five Chippewa Indians suddenly surrounded him, took away his powder, shot and provisions, cut his hat and shirt all to pieces, called him a dog, and would have taken his gun had he not begged hard to retain it, telling them that it was not his. He told so probable a story of what would

naturally be the conduct of a war party of Indians, that I at first believed him, but we stopped shortly after for dinner, and although the men pretended to be much afraid of the Indians, I discovered something in their conduct that satisfied me, that it was a hoax. They proposed to turn back to Prairie du Chien for fear of the Indians, but I told them that I was never in the habit of turning back through fear, until I saw there was really danger, and that I did not require them to run any risk which I would not myself freely share.

We finally proceeded on quietly until near the mouth of Rivierie AuBleuf or Buffalo River, when Armstrong and the man who came down with him, who were actually in great fear, as they were not in the secret of the plot, discovered an Indian on the bluffs below its mouth, or imagined they did, and gave the alarm of "Chippewa!" But we met some Sioux at the foot of the bluffs, and they said that it could not be Chippewas, as they had the day before been hunting over there and thought it probable that some of their people might still be hunting there. So we proceeded to a point opposite to the mouth of the Chippewa River, and encamped for the night.

So much had been said about danger from the Chippewas, that I began to believe there was something in it, and must confess that the next morning I entered the narrow mouth of the Chippewa, fringed with bushes, with some fear that some Indian might be hid, and fire upon us without giving notice of his presence; but once in, the feeling of fear wore off, and we proceeded on with little to eat until about 10 o'clock, when we came to a Menomonee lodge, where we found a great deal of venison, and a quantity stuck up around the fire cooking, to which we did ample justice. We then proceeded about ten miles up the river, where we found the boat and three Americans who had remained with it. But they refused, as well as the Canadians to go back to the mill under the superintendence of Armstrong; and from all accounts of the men, as well as from what I had seen of him, I was

satisfied that he was not calculated to conduct such a business, and I concluded that the best way to get rid of him, was to purchase him out, even if I had to give more than he was justly entitled. His fear of the Chippewas was such, that he did not wish to return. He owed me about five hundred dollars, which would not be worth much if he left the mill; yet, to get rid of him, I gave him that, and took a quit claim of all his claims upon the mill, and let him have a small canoe in which he descended the river.

My people agreed to go back to the mill, provided I would get the Menomonees to go up the river with us, but I had no interpreter in whom I could confide, as my half breed Winnebago had joined his comrades, the Canadians, against me. So I sent down for the Menomonees at the lodge we had passed, to come and go with us; but presume that the half-breed Menomonee woman had instructed them how to act; for although I offered them a high price, they pretended to be afraid of the Chippewas, which I was satisfied was not the case, and declined to go, unless another band who were hunting on the Chippewa, above the mouth of the Menomonee River, would go with them. So I sent an Indian for them and proceeded on with my boat, and encamped on a sand-bar opposite the Menomonee River, and waited for the Indians until about noon the next day, when they arrived, but did not want to go into the Menomonee, expressing their fears of the Chippewas. I offered them a keg of powder, a bar of lead, and promised, when they next came to Prairie du Chien, to give them a keg of whiskey; but they still declined going, reiterating their apprehensions, which I was satisfied were feigned for the occasion, and that they were but playing their part as instructed by the half-breed woman. Believing such to be the case, I ordered the men to put the things in the boat, telling them that I was not afraid of the Chippewas, and should go to the mill. Upon this, some of the Canadians showed a disposition to mutiny, but I had made up my mind to go, and knock down the leader with a club; and force them to accompany me. How I should have succeeded

I do not know, but at that moment the Indians finding that I was determined to go without them, said they would go, and we proceeded up the Menomonee River about nine miles, where we encamped.

The Winnebago and Menomonee half breeds unloaded one of the canoes and said there was a lake near there, and that they would go and shoot elk; but in about an hour they returned, apparently much alarmed, and said they saw tracks of Indians around the lake. But the Menomonees who had agreed to go with us fearing to loose their promised pay if we went back, said that the tracks were not Chippewas but Menomonees, as some of their people had been there that day hunting. The next day we proceeded on up the river without any thing of note until we reached the mill, except occasionally seeing a Chippewa in imagination.

There was among the carpenters of my party a discharged soldier of the name of Holmes, who was a better mill-wright than Armstrong, and upon whom, as I afterwards learned, Armstrong had depended to build the mill. I then made a bargain with Isaac Saunders, one of the carpenters Armstrong had taken up, giving him an interest in the mill to superintend it, and engaged Holmes by the day to build the mill. There had been very little work done during the summer, and they did not get the mill ready to commence sawing until March, 1831; and by the 1st of June following, had sawed about 100,000 feet of lumber. It was impossible at that time at Prairie du Chien to get any other hands than Canadians, except occasionally a discharged soldier; and among the Americans that were at the mill, there was not one who knew how to construct a raft.

The Canadian manner of rafting had been to lay two floats of timber about ten inches square, and raft the boards on them, and they rafted our lumber in that way; but when they had completed the raft, they found there was not water enough to float it, the water being very low that spring. As many of the men's time

would be out in May, I went up with another set of hands to supply the places of those that would come away with the raft. But on arriving there, I found the water very low, and the Canadians declared that the lumber could not be rafted out of the river. It appeared that we would have to wait for a rise of water; and having a double set of hands, I concluded to build another mill, on a stream about one mile from the other. I set the hands to work getting out timber for the dam, mill, &c.

The Canadians who had first gone there, and went back with me against their will, and whose times were about expiring, were still disposed to be mutinous, and declared their intention of not waiting for a rise of water to get the timber out, and of leaving as soon as their time should expire. I told them that they could not leave until they took down the lumber; that I would pay them for their time, and that they could not get provisions to go unless they took it by force, and that, I did not think, would be very safe for them to attempt while I was there, and if they cut a pine tree to make a canoe of, I would have them prosecuted and imprisoned—and, as a Canadian is much afraid of a jail, they concluded to continue their work.

During the time I was contriving how this lumber was to be got to the mouth of the Menomonee, and talking with Holmes one day about it, he told me he had somewhere seen lumber rafted over rapids by laying one sawed board or slab lapping about half its length upon another, after the manner of shingling, and thus repeat and combine until the raft or crib should be formed; and that it would hang together in passing over any rapids. Upon this hint I caused a crib to be made, but the men said it would drown any one who would be fool-hardy enough to take it over the rapids. I waited till the following Sunday, when the men would be idle, and then told two of the hands that if they would take that crib to the mouth of the Menomonee, I would pay them one dollar each. They did so without accident, and returned by land before night, and reported that the lumber could be taken

down in that way without any difficulty. The men now went to work and rafted it; got it nearly all to the mouth of the river, when about the 1st of June, it commenced raining, and continued most of the time very hard for a fortnight. The stream on which our dam was, rose in about twelve hours something like twelve feet, and the Menomonee River about the same, carrying away the dam, and sweeping the loose made cribs of lumber from their moorings, and scattered the lumber over the bottoms of the Menomonee and Chippewa rivers. About fifty thousand feet of this lumber was afterwards recovered in a damaged state, at a great expense, and taken to St. Louis and sold at a reduced price. Such were some of the difficulties attending the early attempts at lumbering in this country. The only hands that could be employed were the Canadian *souageurs*; they could row a boat well, or run a raft, but that was about the extent of their knowledge of lumbering. Occasionally you could pick up a discharged soldier that had some knowledge of the business, and these were the materials that pioneer saw-mill proprietors had to use, and manage as best they could.

Shortly after this, Daniel Whitney, of Green Bay, obtained from the Secretary of War a similar permit to that granted to Mr. Rolette and myself, and built a mill upon the Upper Wisconsin.

Of all the foreigners that came to this country, the Canadians of French extraction seemed to have the least idea of the privileges of American citizenship. It appeared almost impossible to instil into their minds anything of the independence of self-government, and this was not confined entirely to the uneducated, but would apply more or less to the partially educated classes. They do not consider it a privilege to vote for the officers who are to govern them; and consider it only desirable to use the elective franchise in order to gratify some friend who has asked them to vote for himself or his candidate; and when so requested, they are too polite to refuse, unless a previous promise had been made to some other.

I have lived among this people upwards of thirty years, and have taken considerable interest in elections, and frequently asked the people to vote for the candidate that I supported, and recollect but a solitary instance, in all that time, where a man had the independence to refuse my request. It was amusing after the county of Crawford was organized, and an election was to take place for a delegate to Congress from Michigan, to see these people about election time. It so happened that Joseph Rolette and myself influenced about an equal number of voters, and as we generally supported different candidates, these people would meet, and talk among themselves about the election, asking each other who they were going to vote for? The answer invariably was, "*Je va vote pour Mons. Rolette;*" or "*Je va vote pour Mons. Lockwood;*" the names of the opposing candidates never being mentioned, and very seldom known—a rather amusing circumstance.

In the spring of the year 1824, a delegate to Congress was to be elected for Michigan; and Michigan, like all other portions of the Union, had several patriotic men who desired to sacrifice themselves to the service of their country. Among the numerous candidates, Mr. Rolette and I each selected one for our support, and solicited the votes of the Canadians for our respective candidates. Among the voters was a respectable and industrious farmer living in the lower end of Prairie du Chien, by the name of Barrette, whose vote had been solicited both by Mr. Rolette and myself; but Barrette being engaged in getting in his spring crop of grain, and thinking if he went to the election he would offend one or the other of us, which he wished to avoid, concluded it would be wisest to remain at home, and work on his farm. Mr. Rolette's idea of the elective franchise was such, that he believed that every man was bound to vote, and, moreover that he should do it precisely in accordance with his leader's wishes, without exercising any judgment whatever of his own. Mr. Rolette being a Canadian by birth, of French extraction, and although an educated man, considered himself insulted by Bar-

rette's not coming to the election and voting for his candidate, and declared that he would be revenged on him.

There was a law at that time in Michigan preventing stud horses from running at large when over eighteen months of age, under a penalty of ten dollars for each offence, "if willingly or wilfully at large." At this time the water was high in the Mississippi, and the old village of Prairie du Chien was an island. One morning shortly after the election, Mr. Rolette with his men brought me two horses of the aforesaid description, and hitched them before my door. I was then a Justice of the Peace. Rolette entered my house under considerable apparent excitement, saying, he had brought me two horses that were running at large contrary to law. I answered him, that I did not want the horses, nor was I going to take charge of them. Mr. Rolette then asked, as they were at large contrary to law, what was to be done? I answered, that I would have nothing to do with the horses, and should not take charge of them; but if he wished to make a complaint against their owners, I was bound to take notice of it. Mr. Rolette then concluded to make such complaint against Barrette, the owner of one of the horses, and let the other off, as he had no pique to gratify in his case. Process was accordingly issued against Barrette, and soon returned served. On the day of trial, a man by the name of Perkins, heretofore spoken of, seeing that the suit was brought by an apparently wealthy man to oppress a poor one, volunteered his services to assist in defending him, and on calling the case the defendant demanded a jury. The Legislature of Michigan had some two or three years before this reduced the jury before a Justice of the Peace to six, and the year preceding this trial, they had repealed that law, without any saving clause. Under these circumstances, I decided that the repeal of the law revived the old one of twelve jurors, and accordingly had a jury of that number summoned and sworn. It so happened that there were some Americans on the jury, and as the trial proceeded, the defendant admitted that his horse was at large, but not "willingly or wilfully," and proved that his horse was old, and had been worked

down very poor in the spring, and that when he was through with his work and wished to turn him out on the Prairie, to save himself from the penalty of the law, he had taken him to be castrated to the only man on the Prairie that pretended to perform such operations. But he declined doing so, saying that the horse was too poor and weak to live through it, and that he had better turn him out on the Prairie to rest and recruit a few days, as he could do no harm. Under his testimony, the jury brought in a verdict for defendant, stating that Barrette's horse was neither "wilfully nor willingly" at large, contrary to law.

After this Barrette, by advice of his friend, brought suit against Mr. Rolette, before N. Boivin, Esq., another Justice of the Peace, for trespass, and swimming his horse across the slough of St. Ferole, and had another jury, who gave Barrette five dollars damages and costs, which mortified Mr. Rolette very much. He did not care so much about the money, as he did about attempting to punish a Canadian farmer for disobeying his wishes, and to have that farmer beat him.

In the fall of 1818, a severe fight took place on the prairie between Lac Traverse and the head waters of the Mississippi, under something like the following circumstances, as related to me immediately after by some Indians who had participated in the action. I was then at my wintering station near Lac qui Parle, on the St. Peters. During the summer a Yankton chief, who generally resided near Lac Traverse, called by the French the Grand Sierure, had met with some Chippewas, with whom he had smoked the pipe of peace, and after the council had broken up, and the Chippewas were wending their way, as they supposed, safely to their homes, when a party of the Grand Sierure's band followed them and killed some of the men, and took one woman prisoner. Upon this, eleven young Chippewas armed, provisioned, and provided with moccasins, and started for the Sioux country, declaring that they would not return until they had avenged the insult and outrage. They travelled in the Sioux country about a month

without falling in with any Sioux, and were apparently on their way home, when on the prairie between Lac Traverse and the head waters of the Mississippi, they discovered a large camp of Sioux of about five hundred lodges. As they were in the neighborhood of the camp, they were discovered by some Sioux on horseback, who immediately gave notice to the camp. The Chippewas finding that they were discovered, and that their fate was sealed, sent one of their number home to carry tidings of their probable destruction, and the other ten got into a copse of timber and brush on the prairie, and commenced throwing up breast works by digging holes with their knives and hands,* determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible, knowing that there was not the remotest hope for their escape.

In a short time the warriors from the Sioux camp surrounded them, and, it would appear, made the attack without much order or system, and fought something like the militia in the Black Hawk war at the attack near Kellogg's, where each one attacked and fought on his own account without orders. To show their bravery, the Sioux would approach the entrenched Chippewas singly, but from the covert and deadly fire of the Chippewas, they were sure to fall. They continued to fight in this way, until about seventy of the Sioux were killed or wounded, when one of the Sioux war chiefs cried out, that the enemy were killing them in detail, and directed a general onset, when they all in a body rushed upon the Chippewas with knives and tomahawks; and, after a severe struggle, overpowered and exterminated them, wounding in the melee many of their own people. The brave Chippewas had exhausted their ammunition, and now fell a sacrifice to superior numbers. Thus perished ten as intrepid warriors as ever entered the battle field. The eleventh pursued his way, and carried to his people the news of the probable fate of the others. The Sioux exulted in their mournful victory, which was purchased at the cost of the lives of between seventy and eighty of their warriors.

* This digging holes was a common mode of defense for a weak party.— See Pike's Expeditions, Phila. edition, 1810, p. 19; and Branson's Sketch of Crawford County, in Vol. 1, Wis. Agr. Trans. L. C. D.

If scalps are taken after the fall of the leaves from the trees, it is usual for the Indians to continue the scalp dance over them until the appearance of the leaves again, when the scalps are buried with considerable ceremony; and if scalps are taken after the putting out of the leaves, they continue to dance until their fall in the autumn.

In the year 1828, General Joseph M. Street was appointed Indian agent at Prairie du Chien, and arrived alone in the fall of that year to assume the duties of his office; and, in the winter, returned to Illinois and brought his family to Prairie du Chien in the spring of the following year, being the first family who settled in Prairie du Chien that made a profession of religion of the Protestant faith of any of the different sects.

In 1880, a man by the name of Coe, who claimed to be a minister of the Presbyterian church, and missionary to the Indians, passed through the country, and remained over Sunday at Prairie du Chien, and made an attempt at preaching; but he was a very illiterate man, and not over stocked with good sense. I must here relate an anecdote of this man. He made several trips to the upper Indian country, and on one occasion took passage on a keel boat, and arrived within about thirty miles of Fort Snelling on Saturday night; and as the boat would start early in the morning, and he would not travel on the Sabbath, he went on shore without provisions, and encamped over Sunday, and on Monday made his way to Fort Snelling, hungry and nearly exhausted. Sometime in the year 1832, a student of divinity, of the Cumberland Presbyterian sect, came here and taught school for about six months, and on Sundays attempted to preach.

In some of the treaties with the Winnebagoes,* provision had

*At the treaty of Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, of which Gen. Scott and Gov. Reynolds were the commissioners, concluded Sept. 15, 1832, in part consideration for a claim of land, it was stipulated that the General Government should, for a term of twenty-seven years, maintain a school at or near Prairie du Chien for the education and support of such Winnebago children as should be voluntarily sent to it, to be conducted by two or more teachers, and at an annual cost not to exceed the sum of three thousand dollars.

been made for an Indian school near Prairie du Chien, and in the year 1833, the Rev. David Lowry, of the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination, came to the place as superintendent of said Indian school, but it was about a year thereafter before suitable buildings were erected on the Yellow River in Iowa, and Mr. Lowry remained at Prairie du Chien, and preached on Sundays; and during this time, collected those professing religion of the different denominations into a society. In the fall of 1835, the Rev. Alfred Brunson visited Prairie du Chien, and returned home the same autumn; and in the spring of 1836, he came back with his family, as superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Mission of the Upper Mississippi and Lake Superior. He purchased a farm and built a house, the materials for which he brought with him from Meadville, Pa., and continued for several years laboring in his missionary capacity. He several times visited the missions on the Upper Mississippi, and when at the Prairie, preached and formed a Methodist society. In the year 1836, the Rev. Mr. Caddle, of the Episcopal church, came to the Prairie as a missionary, but was shortly after appointed chaplain to Fort Crawford, in which capacity he continued until 1841, when feeling, as he expressed it, that he was not in his proper place preaching to soldiers, who went to hear him more from compulsion than anything else, he resigned his chaplaincy, and again entered the missionary service in another part of the Territory. Mr. Caddle, while chaplain of the fort, formed a church of the few communicants of the Prairie, and the officers and ladies of the fort, which he called Trinity, but was obliged for most of the church officers to elect non-communicants.

I must not omit to mention another of the early American settlers. In 1833, the quarter-master of Fort Crawford advertised in Galena for proposals for a contract to furnish the fort with a year's supply of wood. Ezekiel Tainter and a man by the name of Reed, got the contract, and came here and supplied the first contract together, at the end of which Mr. Reed left the country. Mr. Tainter remained, and continued for several years to take

the wood contract, together with that for supplying the fort with beef; and at this business, which he well understood, in connection with the cultivation of a farm on the bluff where he cut his wood, he made money quite fast, as he was industrious and saving. He sent for his family, which he had left in the state of New York, and paid off some old scores that he had previously been unable to do, and had some money left for which he had no immediate use. Notwithstanding he knew nothing about merchandizing, he concluded as he expressed it, "that the merchants were coining money, and that he would have a hand in;" and borrowing some means in addition to his own, went to St. Louis and purchased a small stock of goods, which, as might be expected, were not very judiciously selected for the market. During this time his brother Gorham arrived by his assistance, whom he took into partnership; but knowing as little about mercantile affairs as his brother, the business was not very well conducted. Both had large families to support, and it appears that they kept no account of expenses, or of what each took from the store. If one wanted an article, the other took something else to balance it. They continued business for about two years, when they took an account of stock, and found a deficiency of about three thousand dollars, for which they could not account; and as goods to this amount had been taken from the store without keeping any account of them, it did not at first occur to their minds that their families had consumed them. This satisfied Mr. Tainter that money was not so easily gained by merchandizing as he had supposed, and he returned to farming, and is now a resident and worthy citizen of the county.

In the year 1842, the Rev. Mr. Stephens, of the Presbyterian church, who had been on a missionary service somewhere in the Indian country, came as a missionary of that denomination, formed a church, and continued here two or three years. There being too few members of his church to supply the means of support with the stipend he received from the Missionary Society he left

for some other part of the Territory, since which time the Methodists have supplied the place regularly with preachers, and occasionally a transient clergyman of some other denomination visits us and preaches. Rev. Alfred Brunson since his residence at Prairie du Chien, has probably taken more interest than any other person in it, to develop the resources of the country, having at different times visited most parts of Western and Northern Wisconsin, and has written and published several articles on the subject, well calculated to attract attention to this part of the country.

Of the old inhabitants found at the Prairie on my arrival here, John W. Johnson, the factor and Chief Justice of the county court, was in 1832, relieved of his duties as factor, by the winding up of the factory system of Indian trade, when he removed to St. Louis, where he died a few years since. Francis Bouthillier, one of the Associate Justices of the county court, moved to Galena, near which place he died in 1833 or 1834.

Wilfred Owens ended his days in 1831 by cutting his throat in a fit of mental derangement;* and John L. Findley, the first clerk of the court, went, in 1821, in company with a Frenchman by the name of Depouse, and a Canadian named Barrette, up the Mississippi in a canoe on some business. On their arrival at Lac Pepin, near the mouth of the Chippewa, they met with a war party of Chippewas looking for Sioux Indians, and the whites being probably overcharged with whiskey, of which they were all exceedingly fond, a quarrel ensued, as was afterwards learned from the Chippewas. Barrette, who had been lumbering on the Black River the previous winter, recognized in one of the Indians of the war party, one whom he believed had formerly stolen his horse; and being of rather a pugnacious disposition, and proba-

*The following notice of Mr. Owens' death, we find in the *Detroit Gazette*, Oct. 5th, 1831: "Died at Prairie du Chien, on the 23d of August last, Mr. Wilfred Owens, merchant. He committed suicide by cutting an artery of his arm, and his throat, in the presence of two of his friends, and was supposed to be insane. Mr. Owens was Judge of Probate, and Associate Justice, in the county of Crawford, and a very respectable member of society."

bly surcharged with whiskey, imprudently charged the Indian with the theft. Upon which a quarrel ensued, which ended in the Indians murdering the whole party, and plundering them of their goods, provisions, &c.

John P. Gates, the first Register of the Probate, on the closing of the factory, went to Carondelet, Missouri, where he was drowned a few years since. Thomas McNair, the first Sheriff of the county, moved down to Fever River near Galena, about 1830, and, as I learned, died a few years since in some part of Illinois. Nicholas Boivin died on a keel boat on his way to St. Louis, about the summer of 1824. Joseph Rolette* died at Prairie du Chien in 1841.

While our county court was still in existence, a district court

* Mrs. Kinzie relates in her *Wau-Bun* the following capital story of M. Rolette. The scene was on Lake Winnebago, where M. Rolette was engaged with a trading-boat, when he met another boat on which were his employees, directly from Prairie du Chien. "Of course, after an absence of some weeks from home, the meeting on these lonely waters, and the exchanging of news was an occasion of great excitement. The boats were stopped—earnest greetings interchanged—question followed question.

"*Eh! bien*"—enquired M. Rolette, "have they finished the new house?"

"*Qui, Monsieur.*"

"*Et tu cheminee, fumet-elle?*" (Does the chimney smoke?)

"*Non, Monsieur.*"

"And the harvest—how is that?"

"Very fine, indeed."

"Is the mill at work?"

"Yes, plenty of water."

"How is Whip?" (His favorite horse.)

"Oh! Whip is first rate."

Everything, in short, about the store, the farm, the business of various descriptions being satisfactorily gone over, there was no occasion for farther delay. It was time to proceed.

"*Eh! bien—adieu! bon voyage!*"

"*Arrachez—mes gens!*" (Go ahead, men!)

Then suddenly—"*Arretez—arretez!*" (Stop! stop!)

"*Comment se portent Madame Rolette et les enfants?*" (How are Mrs. Rolette and the children?)

Mrs. Kinzie also gives us another glimpse of M. Rolette's character. The Indians, she says, called him *Ah-kay-zamp-ee-tah*, or *Five More*—because as they said, let them offer what number of skins they might, in bartering for an article, his terms were invariably "five more."

"Upon one occasion," continues Mrs. Kinzie, "a lady remarked to him, 'Oh, M. Rolette, I would not be engaged in the Indian trade; it seems to me a system of cheating the poor Indians.'

'Let me tell you, madame,' replied he with great *naïveté*, 'it is not so easy a thing to cheat the Indians as you imagine. I have tried it these twenty years, and have never succeeded!'

L. C. D.

was established, in 1823,* comprising the counties of Mackinaw, Brown and Crawford, and an additional Judge appointed, in the person of James Duane Doty, a young lawyer of Detroit, then only about twenty-three years of age. He had come to Prairie du Chien in the fall of 1823, for the purpose of making it his residence, and remained until after the following May term of his court. Soon after arriving at Prairie du Chien, and finding our mail matter came up on keel-boats, or by military express sent occasionally for the special purpose to Clarksville, Missouri, a village about one hundred miles above St. Louis, and the then nearest post office, Judge Doty made application to the Post Office Department for the establishment of a post office at Prairie du Chien, which was granted, and he was appointed post-master, with the privilege of expending the proceeds of the office for carrying the mail. The receipts for postage, together with contributions from the principal inhabitants, and officers of the garrison, enabled him to send Jean B. Loyer, an old *voyageur*, one trip to Clarksville during the winter, for which he was paid thirty dollars. When Judge Doty arrived to enter upon his duties as Judge, he brought me a commission as clerk of his court for Crawford county, which I declined to accept.

As there were then no attorneys here, and Judge Doty learning that I had at one time studied law, and had relinquished the profession for mercantile pursuits, suggested that I had better resume the practice of law, and kindly tendered me the use of his

* It is stated in Mr. Baird's Address, that it was at the 1823-24 session of Congress, that the new judicial district was established. It was done at the previous session, when an act was passed to provide for the appointment of "an additional Judge for the Territory of Michigan," and jurisdiction was given to the courts held by him over the counties of Mackinaw, Brown and Crawford, which included all of Michigan not in the Peninsula, the new State of Wisconsin, and the country north of St. Croix River and east of the Mississippi to latitude 49—now under the government of Minnesota. In the winter or spring of 1823, James D. Doty was appointed by President Monroe, the additional Judge. At the session of 1823-24, Congress changed the tenure of office of the Judges of Michigan from "good behavior" to the term of four years, and Judge Doty's reappointment was announced in *Niles's Register* of Feb. 28, 1824. The first term of Judge Doty's court was held at Mackinaw, in July, 1823.

Seeing a discrepancy in dates in regard to this matter between Mr. Baird and Judge Lockwood, Judge Doty was referred to, to set the matter right, who has furnished the facts in this note.

library and any instructions I might require, in order to refresh my studies. Not being extensively engaged in business at this time, I availed myself of Judge Doty's suggestions, library and instructions, and studied hard all the following winter and spring; and, although I had obtained considerable knowledge of law, I was entirely ignorant of the practice of courts, except what I learned from old English authors on that subject. I commenced the practice of the profession, and attended the courts of Brown and Mackinaw, and found no attorneys in Brown; but at Mackinaw found a man by the name of Rex Robinson, who had studied law in the State of New York, but had abandoned it, and come to Mackinaw to try his luck in the Indian Trade; and a man by the name of Lee, who hailed from Ohio, and claimed to be a lawyer, but whose greatest qualification was his impudence; and Henry S. Baird, then quite a young man, just commencing the practice, and whom I considered the best lawyer among us.

Until the year 1824, it was believed that a steamboat could not come up to Prairie du Chien over the Des Moines and Rock river rapids. But in the spring of that year, David G. Bates, who had for several years been engaged in running keel boats on the Upper Mississippi, the water then being at a good stage in the river, brought to Prairie du Chien a very small boat called the *Putnam*. She was one of the smallest class of boats that run on the Ohio in a low stage of water. Capt. Bates proceeded to Fort Snelling with his boat. In June following, boats of a much larger class came over the rapids, and went to Fort Snelling with supplies for the troops. Since then the river from St. Louis to Fort Snelling has been navigated by steamboats, increasing every year in size and convenience.

During the winter of 1823-24, Judge Doty concluded to change his residence from Prairie du Chien to Green Bay, and resigned his office as post-master, and recommended me for the vacancy; and I was appointed, with the same power and authority that he had. I applied during the summer of 1824, and got a post-office

established at Galena, and Ezekiel Lockwood appointed post-master; also an office at Rock Island with Lee Davenport post-master; the proceeds of both offices to be applied by me to defraying the expenses of conveying the mail from Prairie du Chien, via Galena and Rock Island, to Clarksville, Mo. The increased fund by this new arrangement, enabled me to send the mail twice during the winter to Clarksville, and thus the postal arrangements remained until the close of 1825, when a post route was extended from Springfield, Ill., to Galena; and on the first of January, 1826, John D. Winters, the contractor, arrived at Galena with the first mail sent through by this arrangement, the office at Prairie du Chien continuing to send to Galena for her mail at her own expense, until the fall of 1826, when Dr. Addison Philleo, who had obtained the contract to Prairie du Chien, sent through the mail.

In the summer of 1825, a grand council or treaty was held at Prairie du Chien with the different tribes of Indians. Gov. Cass of Michigan, and Gen. Clark, superintendent of Indian Affairs for Missouri and dependencies, were appointed commissioners on the part of the United States. The Indian tribes represented were the Sioux, Sauks, Foxes, Chippewas, Winnebagoes, Menomonees, and Iowas. Some of the Indians from up the Missouri were expected, but did not come. The professed object of this treaty was to make a general and lasting peace between these tribes, and also to settle the boundaries between them respectively. After I understood the object of the treaty, I asked Gov. Cass what good he thought would result from it. He shrugged up his shoulders, and smiling said, that they would have it so at Washington. They made the treaty of perpetual peace, and settled the boundaries between the different tribes, which resulted in the U. States sending a corps of surveyors, and surveying the boundaries at great expense, and perhaps keeping the Indians at peace until they were ready to go to war again.

In the winter of 1825-26, the wise men at Washington took it

into their heads to remove the troops from Fort Crawford to Fort Snelling, and abandon the former. This measure was then supposed to have been brought about on the representation of Col. Snelling of Fort Snelling, who disliked Prairie du Chien for difficulties he had with some of the principal inhabitants. During the winter there were confined in the guard-house of Fort Crawford two Winnebago Indians for some of their supposed dishonest acts; but what they were charged with, I do not now recollect. At that time, as already mentioned, our mails from St. Louis, the East and South came via Springfield to Galena, and the postmaster at Prairie du Chien sent to Galena for the mails of that place and Fort Snelling. An order would frequently arrive by steamboat countermanding a previous order for the abandonment of the fort, before the arrival of the first order by mail, and this matter continued during the summer of 1826, and until October, when a positive order arrived directing the commandant of Fort Crawford to abandon the fort, and proceed with the troops to Fort Snelling; and if he could not procure transportation, to leave the provisions, ammunition and fort in charge of some citizen.

But a few days previous to this order there had been an alarming report circulated, that the Winnebagoes were going to attack Fort Crawford, and the commandant set to work repairing the old fort, and making additional defences. During this time the positive order arrived, and the precipitancy with which the fort was abandoned during the alarm—was communicated to the Indians through the half-breeds residing at or visiting the place, which naturally caused the Winnebagoes to believe that the troops had fled through fear of them. The commandant took with him to Fort Snelling the two Winnebagoes confined in Fort Crawford, leaving behind some provisions, and all the damaged arms, with a brass swivel and a few wall pieces, in charge of John Marsh, the then Sub-Agent at this place.

The Winnebagoes, in the fall of 1826, obtained from the traders their usual credit for goods, and went to their hunting grounds;

but early in the winter a report became current among the traders, that the Winnebagoes had heard a rumor that the Americans and English were going to war in the spring; and hence they were holding councils to decide upon the course they should adopt, hunting barely enough to obtain what they wanted to subsist upon in the mean time.

Mr. M. Brisbois said to me several times during the winter, that he feared some outrages from the Winnebagoes in the spring, as from all he could gather they were bent on war, which I ought to have believed, as Mr. Brisbois had been among them engaged in trade over forty years. But I thought it impossible that the Winnebagoes, surrounded as they were by Americans, and troops in the country, should for a moment seriously entertain such an idea. I supposed it a false alarm, and gave myself very little uneasiness about it; but in the spring, when they returned from their hunts, I found that they paid much worse than usual, although they were not celebrated for much punctuality or honesty in paying their debts. It was a general custom with the traders, when an Indian paid his debts in the spring pretty well, on his leaving, to let him have a little ammunition, either as a present, or on credit. A Winnebago by the name of Wah-nah-peck-ah, had taken a credit from me, and paid me but a small part of it in the spring; and when I reproached him, he was disposed to be impudent about it; and when his party were about going, he applied to me as usual for ammunition for the summer, and insisted upon having some, but I told him if he had behaved well, and paid me his credit better, that I would have given him some, but that he had behaved so bad that I would not give him any, and he went away in a surly mood.

A man by the name of Methode, I think, a half-breed of some of the tribes of the North, had arrived here, sometime in the summer of 1826, with his wife, and, I think, five children; and, sometime in March of 1827, he went with his family up the Yellow or Painted Rock Creek, about twelve miles above

the Prairie, on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River, to make sugar. The sugar season being over, and he not returning, and hearing nothing from him, a party of his friends went to look for him, and found his camp consumed, and himself, wife and children burned nearly to cinders, and she at the time *enciente*. They were so crisped and cindered that it was impossible to determine whether they had been murdered and then burned, or whether their camp had accidentally caught on fire and consumed them. It was generally believed that the Winnebagoes had murdered and burnt them, and Red Bird was suspected to have been concerned in it; but I am more inclined to think, that if murdered by Indians, it was done by some Fox war party searching for Sioux.

In the spring of this year, 1827, while a Chippewa chief called Hole-in-the-Day, with a part of his band, visited Fort Snelling on business with the Government, and while under the guns of the fort, a Sioux warrior shot one of the Chippewas. The Sioux was arrested by the troops, and confined in the guard-house. The Chippewas requested Col. Snelling to deliver the Sioux to them, to be dealt with after their manner; to which he agreed, provided they would give him a chance to run for his life. To this they acceded. The Sioux was sent outside of the fort, where the Chippewas were armed with tomahawks and war clubs. He was to be allowed a fair start, and at a signal started, and one of the swiftest of the Chippewas armed with a club and tomahawk after him, to overtake and kill him if he could, which he soon effected, as the Sioux did not run fast, and when overtaken made no resistance. The Winnebagoes hearing a rumor of this, got the news among them that the two Winnebagoes confined there had been executed.

During the summer of 1826, I built the first framed house that was erected in Prairie du Chien. I sent men to the Black River, and got the timber for the frame and the shingles, and had the plank and boards sawed by hand, and brought them down to the Prairie. But then I had no carpenter or joiner, there being none at Prairie du Chien. I went on board of a keel boat that had

landed, and enquired if there was a carpenter and joiner on board, on which a ragged, dirty looking man said that he professed to be such, and having before seen quite as unprepossessing fellows turn out much better than appearances indicated, I agreed with him at \$1.50 per day and board. I built on the site near Fort Crawford, now occupied by what is called the commanding officer's house. My house was of the following description: a cellar-kitchen, 30 by 26 feet, with a frame on it of the same size, two stories high, with a wing 16 by 20, on the south side, one story, which I used for a retail store. There was a hall through the south end of the two story part, the whole length of the house, with stairs from the cellar-kitchen up into the hall, and stairs from the hall to the upper story. The north end of the house was divided—the front part about 14 by 16 feet, into a parlor or sitting room; a chimney in the center of the north end, and a bed-room in the back part about 14 feet square; a door leading from the hall to the bed-room, and one to the sitting-room, and a door by the side of the chimney from the bed-room to the sitting-room, and a door from the hall into the wing or store. This house I afterwards sold to the Government, with the land on which the fort now stands. It was good enough for General Taylor and family while he commanded here; but as soon as General Brooke was in command, he got an appropriation from Congress to repair the house, and had it all torn down except a part of the cellar wall, and built the one which is there at present, at a cost of about \$7,000.

During the spring of 1827, the reports about the Winnebagoes bore rather a threatening aspect; but, as I said before, situated as they were I did not believe they would commit any depredations. Under this belief, and having urgent business in New York to purchase my goods, I started for that city on the 25th of June; it then took about six months to go and return. Mine was the only purely American family at the Prairie, after the garrison left. There was Thomas McNair, who had married a French girl of the Prairie, and John Marsh, the Sub Indian Agent, who had no family, and there were besides three or four Americans who had been

discharged from the army. Without apprehension of danger from the Indians, I left my family, which consisted of Mrs. Lockwood, and her brother, a young man of between sixteen and seventeen years of age, who was clerk in charge of the store, and a servant girl belonging to one of the tribes of New York civilized Indians settled near Green Bay.

I started to go by way of Green Bay and the Lakes for New York, in a boat up the Wisconsin, and down the Fox River to Green Bay; thence in a vessel to Buffalo, and down the canal to Albany, and thence by steamboat to New York City. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the first day's journey up the Wisconsin, I came to an island where were sitting three Winnebagoes smoking, the oldest called Wah-nah-peck-ah, who had a credit of me the fall previous, and had paid but little of it in the spring; the other two were young men not known to me by name. They had some venison hanging on a pole and we stopped to purchase it. As I stepped on shore, I discovered an appearance of cold reserve unusual in Indians in such meetings, and as I went up to them, I said '*bon jour*,' the usual French salutation, which they generally understood; but Wah-nah-peck-ah said that he would not say '*bon jour*,' to me. Upon which I took hold of his hand and shook it, asking him why he would not say *bon jour* to me? He enquired what the news was. I told him I had no news. He told me that the Winnebagoes confined at Fort Snelling had been killed. I assured him that it was not true, that I had seen a person lately from that fort, who told me of the death of the Sioux, but that the Winnebagoes were alive. He then gave me to understand that if such was the case, it was well; but if the Winnebagoes were killed, they would avenge it. I succeeded in purchasing the venison, giving them some powder in exchange, and as I was about to step on board of my boat, Wah-nah-peck-ah wanted some whiskey, knowing that we always carried some for our men. I directed one of the men to give them each a drink, which Wah-nah-peck-ah refused, and taking up his cup that he had by him, he showed by signs that he wanted it filled; and be-

lieving that the Indians were seeking some pretense for a quarrel as an excuse for doing mischief, I thought it most prudent under the circumstances to comply.

There were among the boats' crew some old *voyageurs*, well acquainted with Indian manners and customs, who, from the conduct of these Indians, became alarmed. We, however, embarked, watching the Indians, each of whom stood on the bank with his gun in his hand. As it was late in the day, we proceeded a few miles up the river and encamped for the night. As soon as the boat left the island, the three Indians each got into his hunting canoe, and the two young Indians came up on either side opposite the bow of the boat, and continued thus up the river until we encamped, while Wah-nah-peck-ah kept four or five rods behind the boat. They encamped with us and commenced running and playing with the men on the sand beach; and after a little, the young Indians proposed to go hunting deer by candle light, and asked me to give them some candles to hunt with, which I did, with some ammunition, and they promised to return with venison in the morning. After they had gone, Wah-nah-peck-ah proposed also to go hunting, and begged some candles and ammunition, but remained in camp over night. Morning came, but the young Indians did not return, and I saw no more of them. In the morning, after Wah-nah-peck-ah had begged something more, he started, pretending to go down the river, and went, as we supposed; but about an hour afterward, as we were passing on the right of the upper end of the island on which we had encamped, I saw Wah-nah-peck-ah coming up on the left. He looked very surly, and we exchanged no words, but we were all satisfied that he was seeking some good opportunity to shoot me, and from the singular conduct of the Indians, I and my men were considerably alarmed. But about 9 o'clock in the morning, meeting a band of Indians from the Portage of Wisconsin, who appeared to be glad to see me, and said they were going to Prairie du Chien, my fears with those of men were somewhat allayed. I wrote with my pencil a hasty

line to my wife, which the Indians promised to deliver, but they never did, as they did not go there.

This day, the 28th of June, we proceed up the Wisconsin without seeing any Indians until we came near Prairie du Baie, when an Indian, alone in a hunting canoe, came out of some nook and approached us. He was sullen, and we could get no talk out of him. We landed on Prairie du Baie, and he stopped also; and, a few moments thereafter, a canoe of Menomonees arrived from Prairie du Chien, bringing a brief note from John Marsh, saying the Winnebagoes had murdered a man of mixed French and negro blood, named Rijeste Gagnier, and Solomon Lipcap, and for me, for God's sake, to return. I immediately got into the canoe with the Menomonees, and directed my men to proceed to the Portage, and if I did not overtake them, to go on to Green Bay. I proceeded down the river with the Menomonees, and when we had descended to the neighborhood where we had fallen in with the Indians the day before, we met Wah-nah-peck-ah coming up in his hunting canoe alone, having with him his two guns. He enquired if I was going to the Prairie? I told him I was. He then told me that the whiskey at the Prairie was shut up, but did not tell me of the murders, and asked me that should he come to the Prairie, whether I would let him have some whiskey? I told him I certainly would, if he brought some furs, not wishing then to make any explanation, or to enter into any argument with him.

About this time, we heard back of an island, and on the southern shore of the Wisconsin, the Winnebagoes singing their war songs and dancing, with which I was familiar; and so well satisfied was I that Wah-nah-peck-ah was only seeking a favorable opportunity to shoot me, that if I had had a gun where he met us, I believe that I should have shot him. After talking with him, the Menomonees moved down the river, and arrived at the mouth of the Wisconsin about dark, without seeing any more Winnebagoes. It was so dark that the Menomonees thought that we had beter stop until morning, and we accordingly crawled into

the bushes without a fire, and fought mosquitoes all night, and the next morning, the 27th, proceeded to the Prairie. I went to my house and found it vacant, and went to the old village where I found my family, and most of the inhabitants of the Prairie, assembled at the house of Jean Brunet, who kept a tavern. Mr. Brunet had a quantity of square timber about him, and the people proposed building breast-works with it.

I learned on my arrival at the Prairie, that on the preceding day, the 26th, Red Bird (who, when dressed, always wore a *red coat*, and called himself English), went to my house, with two other Indians, and entering the cellar-kitchen, loaded their guns in the presence of the servant girl, and went up through the hall into Mrs. Lockwood's bed-room, where she was sitting alone. The moment the Indians entered her room, she believed they came to kill her, and immediately passed into and through the parlor, and crossed the hall into the store to her brother, where she found Duncan Graham, who had been in the country about forty years as a trader, and was known by all the Indians as an Englishman. He had been a captain in the British Indian Department during the war of 1812, and a part of the time was commandant at Prairie du Chien. The Indians followed Mrs. Lockwood into the store, and Mr. Graham by some means induced them to leave the house.

They then proceeded to McNair's Coulee, about two miles from the village, at the lower end of Prairie du Chien, where lived Rjeste Gagnier, son of the noted Mary Ann, heretofore mentioned; his wife was a mixed blood of French and Sioux extraction, with two children; and living with him was an old discharged American soldier by the name of Solomon Lipcap. The Winnebagoes commenced a quarrel with Gagnier, and finally shot him, I believe in the house. Lipcap, at work hoeing in the garden near the house, they also shot. During the confusion, Mrs. Gagnier seized a gun, got out at a back window with her boy about three years old on her back, and proceeded to the vil-

lage with the startling news. The cowardly Indians followed her a part of the way, but dared not attack her. On her arrival at the village, a party went to the scene of murder, and found and brought away the dead, and the daughter of Mr. Gagnier, about one year old whom the mother in her fright had forgotten. The Indians had scalped her, and inflicted a severe wound in her neck, and left her for dead, and had thrown her under the bed, but she was found to be still alive. She got well, and arriving at womanhood got married, and has raised a family of children; she is yet alive, and her eldest daughter was but recently married.

The people had decided not to occupy the old fort, as a report had been circulated, that the Indians had said they intended to burn it if the inhabitants should take refuge there. During the day of the 27th, the people occupied themselves in making some breast-works of the timber about Mr. Brunet's tavern getting the swivel and wall pieces from the fort, and the condemned muskets and repairing them, and concluded they would defend themselves, each commanding, none obeying, but every one giving his opinion freely.

About sunset one of the two keel-boats arrived that had a few days previously gone to Fort Snelling with supplies for the garrison, having on board a dead Indian, two dead men of the crew, and four wounded. The dead and wounded of the crew were inhabitants of Prairie du Chien, who had shipped on the up-bound trip. They reported that they had been attacked the evening before, about sunset, by the Winnebago Indians,* near the mouth of the Bad Ax River, and the boat received about five hundred shots, judging from the marks on its bow and sides. The Indians

*Ex-Governor Reynolds, of Illinois, in his recent interesting volume of *his Life and Times*, thus states the immediate cause of this attack, and which, if true, exhibits the boatmen and *voyageurs* in no enviable light: That somewhere above Prairie du Chien on their upward trip, they stopped at a large camp of Winnebago Indians, gave them liquor freely and got them drunk, when they forced six or seven squaws, stupefied with liquor, on board the boats, for *corrupt and brutal purposes*, and kept them during their voyage to Fort Snelling, and on their return. When the Winnebago Indians became sober, and fully conscious of the injury done them, they mustered all their forces, amounting to several hundred, and attacked the foremost of the descending boats in which their squaws were confined.

were mostly on an island on the west of the channel, near to which the boat had to pass, and the wind blowing strong from the east, drifted the boat towards the shore, where the Indians were, as the steering-oar had been abandoned by the steersman. During this time, two of the Indians succeeded in getting on board of the boat. One of them mounted the roof, and fired in from the fore part; but he was soon shot, and fell off into the river. The other Indian took the steering-oar, and endeavored to steer the boat to the island. He was also shot, and brought down in the boat where he fell. During all this time the Indians kept up a hot fire. The boat was fast drifting towards a sand-bar near the shore, and they would all have been murdered had it not been for the brave, resolute conduct of an old sailor on board, called Saucy Jack (his surname I do not remember), who, during the hottest of the fire, jumped over at the bow, and pushed the boat off, and where he must have stood, the boat was literally covered with ball marks, so that his escape seemed a miracle.* They also reported that early the day before the attack, they were lashed to the other boat drifting, and that they had grounded on a sand-bar and separated, since which time they had not seen or heard anything of the other boat, and thought probably that it had fallen into the hands of the Indians.

This created an additional alarm among the inhabitants. The same evening my boat returned, the men becoming too much alarmed to proceed. That night sentinels were posted by the inhabitants within the breast-works, who saw, in imagination, a great many Indians prowling about in the darkness; and in the morning there was a great variety of opinion, as to what was the best to be done for the safety of the place, and appearances betokened a great deal of uneasiness in the minds of all classes.

*Gov. Reynolds adds, that Saucy Jack, as he was called, was a sailor by profession on the lakes and ocean, and had been in many battles with the British during the War of 1812-15; he was large and strong, and possessed the courage of an African lion, and seizing a piece of the setting pole of the boat which was about four feet long, and had on the end a piece of iron, which made it a more weighty and formidable weapon, he used it with great effect when the Indians attempted to board the boat, knocking them back into the river as fast as they approached. Such an instance of signal heroism is enough to render any man famous, and we should be glad to learn more of Saucy Jack's history. L. C. D.

On the morning of the 28th, I slept rather late, owing to the fatigue of the preceding day. My brother-in-law awakened me, and told me the people had got into some difficulty, and that they wished me to come out, and see if I could not settle it. I went out on the gallery, and enquired what the difficulty was; and heard the various plans and projects of defence proposed by different persons. Some objected to staying in the village, and protecting the property of the villagers, while theirs, outside the village, was equally exposed to the pillage of the Indians. Others were for remaining and fortifying where they were, and others still urged the repairing of the old fort. As the eminence on which my house stood overlooked the most of the Prairie, some were for concentrating our people there, and fortifying it. After hearing these different projects, I addressed them something as follows: "As to your fortifying my house, you can do so, if it is thought best, but I do not wish you to go there to protect it; I have abandoned it, and if the Indians burn it, so be it; but there is one thing, if we intend to protect ourselves from the Indians, we must keep together and some one must command."

Some one then nominated me as commander, but I said, "No, I would not attempt to command you, but here is Thomas McNair, who holds from the governor a commission of captain over the militia of this place, and has a right to command; if you will agree to obey him implicitly, I will set the example of obedience to his orders, and will, in that case, furnish you with powder and lead so long as you want to shoot (I being the only person having those articles in the place); but unless you agree to obey McNair, I will put my family and goods into my boats and go down the river, as I will not risk myself with a mob, under no control."—Upon this they immediately agreed to acknowledge Mr. McNair as commander, and I was satisfied that he would take advice upon all measures undertaken. Joseph Brisbois was lieutenant, and Jean Brunet was ensign, both duly commissioned by the governor. Captain McNair ordered a move of all the families, goods,

with the old guns, to the fort, and it was near sunset before we had all got moved there.

About that time we discovered the skiff of the other keel-boat coming around the point of an island near Yellow River, about three miles distant; but we could not discover whether they were white men or Indians in the canoe, and of course it created an alarm, but in a few moments thereafter, the keel-boat hove in sight, and the alarm ceased. It soon arrived, reporting that they had received a few shots in passing the places where the other boat had been attacked, but had received no injury. On this boat Joseph Snelling, son of Col. Snelling, returned to Prairie du Chien. Joseph Snelling and myself acted as supernumeraries under Captain McNair. The government of Fort Crawford was conducted by a council of the Captain and those who acted under him. It was immediately resolved to repair the old fort as well as possible for defence, and the fort and block-house were put in as good order as circumstances and materials would admit. Dirt was thrown up two or three feet high around the bottom logs of the fort, which were rotten and dry, and would easily ignite. Joseph Snelling was put in command of one of the block-houses, and Jean Brunet of the other, with a few picked men in each, who were trained to the use of the swivel and wall pieces that were found and mounted therein; and a number of barrels were placed around the quarters filled with water, with orders in case of an attack to cover the roof of the buildings with blankets, &c., and to keep them wet. All the blacksmiths were put in requisition to repair the condemned muskets found in the fort, and mustering our force, we found of men and women about ninety that could handle a musket in case of an attack.

The next day after taking possession of the fort, J. B. Loyer, an old *voyageur*, was engaged to cross the Mississippi and go back through the country, now the State of Iowa, to inform Col. Snelling, commanding Fort Snelling, of our situation. For this service Loyer was promised fifty dollars, and furnished with a horse

to ride and provisions, and Duncan Graham was engaged to accompany him, for which he was to receive twenty dollars, provisions and a horse to ride; and for these payments, I became personally responsible.

Governor Cass, who had come to Butte des Morts, on the Fox River, to hold a treaty with the Winnebagoes, learning from rumor that there was dissatisfaction among them, started in his canoe, and arrived at Prairie du Chien on the morning of the fourth of July. He ordered the company of militia into the service of the United States, and appointed me quarter-master and commissary, with the request that I would use my own funds for the supply of the department, and that he would see it refunded; and, furthermore, assumed the debt for ammunition and provisions already advanced, and also the expenses of the express to Fort Snelling, and directed me to issue to the troops a keel-boat load of flour, that I had previously receipted for to one of the agents of the contractors for Fort Snelling, who feared to go farther with it.

After these arrangements had been made, Gov. Cass proceeded in his canoe to Galena, and raised a volunteer company under the late Col. Abner Fields as captain, and assigned him the command of Fort Crawford. Lieutenant Martin Thomas of the U. S. ordnance department, and then stationed at the arsenal near St. Louis, who happened to be at Galena, came up and mustered the two companies of the militia into the service of the United States; and contracted with Phineas Black, of the village of Louisiana, in Missouri, whom he found at Galena, for a quantity of pork which was sent up by the boat that brought the volunteer company. Gov. Cass proceeded from Galena to St. Louis to confer with General Atkinson, then in command of Jefferson Barracks, and of the western military department. This resulted in Gen. Atkinson's moving up the Mississippi with the disposable force under his command at Jefferson Barracks. During this time, Col. Snelling came down the Mississippi, with two companies of the

fifth regiment of U. S. Infantry, and assumed the command of Fort Crawford, and soon after discharged the Galena volunteer company, as they could not well be brought under military discipline. But the Prairie du Chien company was retained in service until some time in the month of August, for which service, through the fault of some one, they never received any pay.

During this time General Atkinson arrived with the troops from Jefferson Barracks, having on his way up dispatched a volunteer force under General Dodge from Galena, to proceed by land to the Portage of Wisconsin. When General Atkinson with great difficulty, owing to the low state of the water in the Wisconsin, arrived at the Portage, he met old gray-headed Day-kan-ray with his band, who finding himself surrounded by the volunteers in the rear, and General Atkinson's force of regulars in front, and a company of volunteers from Green Bay, concluded to disclaim any unfriendly feelings towards the United States, and disavowed any connection with the murders on the Mississippi. Gen. Atkinson, on these assurances of Day-kan-ray, returned, but ordered the occupation of Fort Crawford by two companies of troops. Notwithstanding these murders of our citizens and movements of troops, the wise men at Washington, with about as much judgment as they generally decide upon Indian affairs, decided that this was not an Indian war.

After the people had taken possession of the fort, and before the arrival of General Cass, Indians were seen in the village, and a guard was sent out to take them and bring them to the fort. They made no resistance, but surrendered themselves, and were brought to the guard-house. One proved to be the famous Red Bird, who headed the party that murdered Gagnier and Lipap; another was Wah-nah-peck-ah, the Indian I had met up the Wisconsin River, and whose conduct had so much alarmed me and my men; the other was a young Indian whose name I do not recollect. There being no charge of crime against Wah-nah-peck-ah and the young Indian, after the United States troops were sta-

tioned at Fort Crawford, they were discharged; and Red Bird was retained in the guard-house, where he died before he was tried for the murder of Gagnier and Lipcap.

The first Sunday-school established in the place was by my first wife, Mrs. Julianna Lockwood. Mrs. Lockwood was raised among the Presbyterians or Congregationalists of New England, and early imbibed the strong prejudices of those people against the Roman Catholics, but afterwards, having lived in Canada two or three years, and having become intimately acquainted with several ladies of that faith, who were apparently good, pious people, she concluded that there were good and bad among all sects or denominations calling themselves Christians, and her early prejudices in a great measure wore off. We were married in the summer of the year 1824, and came to Prairie du Chien in the autumn. There was not at that time any church or meeting to attend on Sunday. Even the Roman Catholics had a priest visit them only occasionally, and Mrs. Lockwood having been accustomed to see the children collected in Sunday-schools, and seeing a large number playing about the streets on the Sabbath, concluded it would be doing them a good service to gather them into a Sunday-school, and proposed to Miss Crawford, a young lady raised in the place, who spoke English and French fluently, and who had a good common education, to assist her. To this she agreed at once, and they influenced Dr. Edwin James,* surgeon of the U. S. army, then stationed at Fort Crawford, and John H. Kinzie, Esq., formerly of Chicago, then quite a young man, in the employment of the American Fur Company at Prairie du Chien, to assist them. They collected the children and commenced their school in the spring of 1825, and continued it until the winter following, but not without opposition. As this measure did not originate with Mr. Rolette, he felt bound to oppose it. He took what he thought would be the most effectual mode of

*Dr. James accompanied Maj. Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains of 1819-20, of which he wrote a Narrative, published in 1823, in three volumes; and, in 1830, appeared Tanner's Indian Narrative, of which he was the editor. L. C. D.

suppressing it, by going to the mothers of the children who attended the school, and representing to them that it was the design to make Protestants of the children. To counteract Mr. Rolette, they introduced and taught the children the Roman Catholic catechism, finding nothing to their minds very objectionable in it; and, as I said before, they continued their school until winter, during which time Dr. James was ordered to some other post. In the spring of 1826, my wife and myself went to New York; Miss Crawford accompanied us as far as Mackinaw, where she remained until she was married. Mr. Kinzie went also to Mackinaw, during which time he received an appointment in the Indian department under Gov. Cass, and went to Detroit to reside. The Sunday-school was not again resumed, nor was one again attempted in the place until about 1830, when the members of the different religious denominations united in forming the Union Sunday-school. This continued a few years, until the Methodists becoming by far the most numerous class, assumed the management of it, since which time they have claimed it as a Methodist Sunday-school.

When the fifth regiment of U. S. Infantry came into the country in 1819, and established their head-quarters at the mouth of the St. Peter's River, they brought with them a man by the name of John Marsh, a graduate of some Eastern college, as teacher of the post school at head-quarters. He appeared to have great fondness for the Sioux Indians, and was endowed with the faculty of acquiring languages with great facility; he soon learned the Sioux language, so that he spoke it with as great ease as they did themselves. Getting tired of teaching an army school, he came down to Prairie du Chien in 1826, and went over to Green Bay, and either went to Detroit, or somewhere met Gov. Cass, who was much interested in getting Indian information, traditions, anecdotes, tales, &c. He employed Marsh by the month for that purpose, and procured for him the appointment of Sub-Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien, and appointed him Justice of the Peace for the county of Crawford.

Some of his decisions were almost equal to those of Judge Reaume of Green Bay. He was in the practice of taking notes for collection, and issuing process on them. Some person sent him a note to collect from Green Bay against Benjamin Roy. Now there were two men in the country of that name, one resided at the Portage of Wisconsin, and the other was in the employ of the American Fur Company at Prairie du Chien. Neither of them could write his name. The note was signed with a mark, and witnessed by a man who wrote his name, and the witness had gone into the Black River country to winter. Marsh, believing that the Roy that was here was the man, issued process and had him brought before him, but he denied any knowledge of the note; but Marsh, satisfied that he was the person who gave it, rendered judgment against him for the amount, and said he would examine the witness when he came down in the spring. Col. Dousman hearing of this decision, went to Marsh and told him that if he proceeded any farther in the case, he would report him to Gov. Cass. That ended the proceeding.

In 1830, a party of Sauks and Foxes killed some Sioux, on or about the head-waters of Red Cedar River, in the now State of Iowa; and, the same season, a band of Fox Indians, who resided about where Dubuque now is, had occasion to visit Prairie du Chien on business with the Agent, whom they had previously informed that they would arrive on a certain day. An Indian named the Kettle was their chief. It was generally believed that John Marsh gave the Sioux information of the coming of the Foxes, and of the time they were expected; and on the morning of the day appointed for the arrival of the Foxes at Prairie du Chien, a small war party of young Sioux made their appearance here, and joined by a few of the Menomonee young men, proceeded down the Mississippi to the lower end of the Prairie du Pierreaux, some twelve or fifteen miles below Prairie du Chien, where a narrow channel of the Mississippi runs close to that end of the prairie, fringed with small trees, bushes and grass. They knew the custom of the Indians in going up stream to avail themselves

of all such side channels, as there was less current in them than in the broad river; and secreting themselves among the bushes, trees and grass, awaited their unsuspecting victims. When the Foxes came within point blank shot, they all fired upon them, killing their chief Kettle and several others. The Foxes finding their chief killed, returned down the river to carry the news of their misfortunes to the tribe, while the Sioux and Menomonees returned home with the tidings of their victory, and to dance over it. They passed through Prairie du Chien, and remained a short time here, but for some unaccountable reason, no notice whatever was taken of it.

The signs of several war parties of the Foxes were reported to have been seen on the opposite side of the river during the year; but they effected nothing until sometime, I think, in June, 1831, when a considerable number of Menomonees had collected at Prairie du Chien, and encamped on an island near the eastern shore of the Mississippi, about one-fourth of a mile from the old Fort Crawford. They had obtained whiskey enough for all to get socially drunk upon—and it is rare to find a Menomonee who will not get drunk when he has a chance; and they had carried their revels far into the night, until men, women and children were beastly drunk. About two hours before day, a Fox war party, that had been watching their movements, fell upon them in that helpless state, and killed about thirty of them. By this time, some of the more sober of them were aroused, and commenced firing upon the Foxes, who fled down the river, pursued a short distance by the Menomonees.

Thomas P. Burnett, the Sub-Indian Agent, was sleeping with me in my store, and it being very warm weather, we had made a bed of blankets on the counter, when about two hours before daylight, we were awakened by the cries of a Menomonee woman at the store door. We let her in, when she told us of the disaster to the Menomonees. Mr. Burnett took my horse and went to inform General Street, the Indian Agent, who lived about four

miles above this, and who arrived about day-light, and gave the first information to the fort. Although there had been a great firing of guns and hallooming among the Indians, the sentinels had reported nothing of it to the officers; but on hearing of the affair, the commandant immediately dispatched a company of men in boats after the Foxes, but they did not overtake them. The Government demanded of the Sauks to deliver up the perpetrators of this deed. The Foxes fled to the Sauks, and their chief, Kettle, being dead, they remained among and amalgamated with them, and have not since continued a separate nation or tribe. I have always believed this to be the origin of the Black Hawk war.—There were, I suppose, other causes of discontent, but I believe that this transaction was the immediate cause of the movements of Black Hawk.

In 1830, the present Fort Crawford was commenced, and, in 1831, it was occupied with a part of the troops, leaving the sick in the old hospital, and the surgeon in the old fort. The fort, I think, was finished in 1832. In 1833, the authorities of Crawford county concluded to build a court house and jail, and commenced raising funds by increasing the taxes; and, in 1836, constructed a stone building of sufficient size to have on the ground floor a room each for criminals and debtors, and two rooms for the jailer, with a court room and two jury rooms on the second floor. The taxable inhabitants then in the county were confined to the Prairie. We were then attached to Michigan Territory, and so well were our county affairs managed, that the taxes were not raised more than five mills on a dollar to pay for this improvement; and this was the first court house erected in Wisconsin.

Sometime in 1827 or 1828, the Chief Justice of the county and one of the Associate Justices having removed away, I presume application was made to Governor Cass—I do not know how it was, as I was absent from the last of July, 1827, to the summer of 1829; and Joseph Roletté was appointed Chief Justice, and Jean Brunet, Associate Justice. When Thomas P. Burnett ar-

rived here, in 1830, he found the court so different from what he had been accustomed to, that he at once decided that he could not practice before one organized as ours then was, and made representations of their proceedings to the Governor, reporting some decisions, and sending a petition requesting their removal, and the appointment of General Joseph M. Street* as Chief Justice, and myself and Hercules L. Donsman as Associates. These removals and appointments were accordingly made. Mr. Michael Brisbois, the other Associate Judge, became blind in 1829, and, I believe, died in 1837, and by his son, at his request, was buried on a prominent bluff back of Prairie du Chien.

Joseph Rolette, of whom I have so often spoken, was a Canadian by birth, of French extraction, and an educated man. He told me he was educated for the Roman Catholic church, but not liking the profession, he quit it and served a regular apprenticeship to mercantile business, and, about the year 1804, came to Prairie du Chien in business connection with Mr. Cameron,† an old Indian trader who usually resided at Lac-qui-Parle on the St. Peter's River. Mr. Rolette superintended the business at the Prairie, and kept the books of the concern; wintering occasionally at, and in the vicinity of Lake Pepin, and returning to Prairie du Chien early in the spring, to take advantage of the spring trade of the Indians visiting here. Mr. Rolette was an active merchant and trader, and I suppose would be called a clever merchant; that is, he was active in taking every advantage of his neighbor for making money, without regard to the morality of the transaction. Although he was active in business, and

*Gen. Street migrated from Richmond, Va., in the winter of 1806-08, to Frankfort, Ky., where he soon engaged in the publication of the *Western World*, and for several years took a conspicuous part in the gladiatorial field of Kentucky politics. Appointed, in 1828, to the Indian Agency at Prairie du Chien, he was there during the Black Hawk War, and that captured chief was surrendered to him by One-Eyed Day-Kau-ray and party; and he died on the Des Moines River, Iowa, while Agent for the Sauks and Foxes, May 5th, 1840, at about the age of sixty years.

L. C. D.

†From the *Annals of the Minnesota Historical Society*, we learn that Cameron had his trading post towards the sources of the Minnesota; that he was a shrewd and daring Scotchman, and died in 1811; and the spot where he was buried, on the Upper Minnesota, is known to this day as *Cameron's Grave*. Murdoch Cameron left behind him a name of much celebrity in the North-West.

L. C. D.

used every exertion to make money, it was not with the miserly disposition of hoarding it, for he was equally liberal in scattering it. Among many bad qualities of a citizen, Mr. Rolette yet possessed many redeeming traits. He was hospitable and generous, and liberal to the poor, and where a man had met with loss by accident, he was generally one of the first to afford relief; and, for an Indian trader, he had considerable enterprise for the prosperity and improvement of the country. I believe that he introduced the first swine into the country, but am not sure that such is the fact; I know that he introduced the first sheep, and that he was much imposed on in its purchase. He bargained with an American below this on the Mississippi, to deliver him a certain number of ewes at the Prairie. The man brought the number of sheep, and told him they were according to contract, and Mr. Rolette, knowing very little about sheep, counted them and directed his man to take them to his farm, and pay for them agreeable to contract, and after a while some one examined them, and found that instead of ewes, they were nearly all wethers.

About 1840, a man by the name of Manhan, who was a tanner and currier, came to this place, and proposed to set up his business here, but not having the necessary means, Mr. Rolette advanced them to him; but it turned out a poor adventure. I must here relate an anecdote of Rolette. His ambition was always to be ahead of me in everything. I think that some time in 1828, I mentioned to some person that I thought a distillery would do well at the Prairie, and that I would introduce some rye; and if I could induce the French to raise it on the front of their farms that were sandy, I would build a distillery, but wished to get the rye growing first. Mr. Rolette, hearing of my suggestion, concluded at once that he would build a distillery; and in going to Mackinaw, he fell in with a man by the name of Curtis, who had been a captain in the army, and had been cashiered by court-martial, and being without means of support, was ready for almost anything. He persuaded Mr. Rolette that he was a

scientific man and could do almost anything, and especially was well acquainted with distilling. Mr. Rolette engaged him, and brought him to the Prairie, in 1824; but as the distillery was not yet built, Mr. Rolette employed him as a teacher in his family, for which he was very well qualified. During this time Mr. Rolette ordered and received the coppers and other apparatus for his distillery. For some reason, the building of the distillery was delayed until the spring of 1828, when a man by the name of Giasson, a Canadian by birth, clerk of our circuit court, and fond of a joke, told Mr. Rolette one day, that I had said that I would make him build a distillery; that I had only to say that I was going to build one, and he would be certain to immediately do so. It was not true that I had ever said so to Giasson, but Mr. Rolette soon after sent his coppers and other apparatus to St. Louis, and nothing more was heard of the distillery.

It was so well understood that Mr. Rolette would oppose any measure that he did not introduce, that when I wished to carry out any object without opposition, that I considered for the public good, I would get some person to go to Mr. Rolette and tell him that I was going to introduce such a measure, and I would soon after hear that Mr. Rolette was going to do the same thing. I would of course second him and we would get along without any difficulty. Mr. Rolette was evidently the first man of this little village when he came to the country, and some may say that in representing his foibles, I have maliciously taken advantage of him, as he cannot now answer for himself. As we were for several years opposing candidates for the rank and consideration of the first man of our little village, and were rival Indian traders, I have introduced our respective names only when necessary to elucidate the events in the history of the region of *Prairie du Chien*.

Col. Hercules L. Dousman came to the Prairie in the autumn of 1827, in the employ of the American Fur Company, and has ever since steadily pursued what he appeared to have most taste

for, the accumulation of wealth, until at this time he is considered very wealthy.

In speaking of the early settlers, and their marriage connections, I should perhaps explain a little. In the absence of religious instructions, and it becoming so common to see the Indians use so little ceremony about marriage, the idea of a verbal matrimonial contract became familiar to the early French settlers, and they generally believed that such a contract of marriage was valid without any other ceremony. Many of the women, married in this way, believed, in their simplicity and ignorance, that they were as lawfully the wives of the men they lived with, as though they had been married with all the ceremony and solemnity possible. A woman of Prairie du Chien, respectable in her class, told me that she was attending a ball in the place, and that a trader, who resided on the Lower Mississippi, had his canoe loaded to leave as soon as the ball was over, proposed to marry her; and as he was a trader and ranked above her, she was pleased with the offer, and as his canoe was in waiting, he would not delay for further ceremony. She stepped from the ball-room on board his canoe, and went with him down the Mississippi, and they lived together three or four years, and she had two children by him. She assured me that she then believed herself as much the wife of this man as if she had been married with all the ceremony of the most civilized communities, and was not convinced to the contrary, until he unfeelingly abandoned her and married another; and from her manner of relating it, I believed her sincere.

In 1816, at the time of my advent to Wisconsin, the Menomonees inhabited the country about Green Bay, and their women occasionally married Winnebagoes, but not often. The Menomonees are a quiet and peaceful race, well disposed, and have always, since their acquaintance, been friendly to the whites. Tomah, the acting chief of the nation, was highly spoken of by all the traders as a great and good man. It was related to me by some of the traders at that period, I believe it was Judge Lawe, that at

the time of the general combination of the Indians under Pontiac, in 1763, for the destruction of all English in the western country, the Menomonees under their Chief Tomah, went to the officer in command of the British fort at Green Bay, consisting of about twenty men, and informed him of the plot for their destruction, in common with other garrisons, but if he would abandon the fort, and he and his men surrender up their arms that he, Tomah, and his people would conduct them safely to Montreal. The officers and men yielded up their arms to Tomah, except Sergeant Nobles, who declared that he would never surrender his gun to an Indian, and was finally allowed to retain it. All were safely conveyed in canoes to Montreal; and Sergeant Nobles, for his fearless conduct, though he could not be promoted, having a family, was favored with a discharge, and engaging in his trade of a shoemaker, eventually became wealthy. But as I see no special mention made of it in Lieutenant Gorrell's Journal of those times, published in the first volume of Collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society, I conclude there must be some mistake about it.*

The principal villages of the Winnebagoes were at the lower and upper end of the lake of that name, with an occasional lodge along the Fox River. At the season that traders generally passed the Portage of Wisconsin, they would find old grey headed Day-

*This tradition, judging from Gorrell's Journal and Parkman's History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac, cannot be regarded as reliable. It is certain that Lieut. Gorrell and his men made no surrender of themselves or arms, and that the Menomonees and others, conducted them to the village of L'Arbre Croche, in the region of Mackinaw; whence the Menomonees returned to Green Bay. But this tradition serves to confirm us in the belief, that Tomah or Carron was much older than represented by the inscription on his tomb stone, and that he was a man of consequence during the border wars of 1755 to 1763. In Gorrell's Journal, referring to the events of 18th May, 1763, he speaks thus: "The Chiefs [of the Menomonees] were much displeased at Carroy's getting a present from Mr. Goddard of a fine suit of embroidered clothes. This Carroy was much thought of by the French." This refers undoubtedly to the noble Tomah or Carron; and we hope hereafter to be able to prepare, for some future volume of the Society's Collections, a more extended and detailed account of his life and character than has yet been given. What was recorded of him in our last year's Report and Collections, excited general interest in the history of this brave and generous chief. His nobleness and generosity of character reflect real honor on the Indian race, and on the Menomonees especially; and it should be the pride and pleasure of our Historical Society to spare no pains to search out and garner up every fact extant, illustrative of the career of so truly great and worthy a Wisconsin chieftain. L. C. D.

Kau-ray at the portage with his band. Their village was a short distance from there up the Wisconsin, and the Winnebagoes had villages up the Menominee [?] and on the Baraboo rivers, and several small ones along down the Wisconsin to near its mouth. They were estimated at that time by the traders best acquainted with them, to be about nine hundred warriors strong. Of the Day-Kau-rays, there were four or five brothers, who were all influential men in the nation, and I knew one sister who had a family of children by a trader named Lecuyer, who had married her after the Indian manner. Tradition says that their father was a French trader, who during the time the French had possession of the country, married a Winnebago woman, the daughter of the principal chief of the nation, by whom he had these sons and daughter; that at the time the country was taken possession of by the English, he abandoned them, and they were raised among the Indians, and being the descendants of a chief on the mother's side, when arrived at manhood they assumed the dignity of their rank by inheritance. They were generally good Indians, and frequently urged their claims to the friendship of the whites, by saying they were themselves half white.*

I suppose that having been so long among the Indians, it will be expected that I should give some account of their manners, customs, religious ceremonies, &c.; but of the Indians who inhabit Wisconsin, I can say very little. The Indians who visit a trading post like Prairie du Chien, are generally seen in their worst state, and I always had such a dislike to the Winnebagoes, that I never sought to learn their language, or much of their customs or ceremonies. The Indians with whom I am most familiar are the Sioux, with whom I spent three winters in their own country, where I saw many Indians who had never seen any

*Mrs. Kinzie conveys the idea, that they boasted of a remote cross of French blood in some former generation; that they possessed remarkably handsome features, and their mother was living as late as 1831, then supposed to be over one hundred years of age. Mrs. Kinzie designates one of the Day-Kau-rays as a "grand old chief"—the same doubtless, mentioned by Judge Lockwood; and another, his very antipodes, was not inappropriately called *Rascal* Day-Kau-Ray; and the One-Eyed Day-Kau-Ray was distinguished for the part he took in the capture of Black Hawk.

white men, except occasionally a trader. But none of the Sioux have ever resided within the limits of our State, although they were at one time included within the Territory of Wisconsin, when what is now Iowa and Minnesota formed a part of that Territory. Of them I will endeavor to give some account.

And, firstly, of their marriages. When a young Indian desires to marry, he invites his relatives, who are near or in camp, to a feast, and informs them that he wishes a certain girl for his wife. If they are in favor of the match, they immediately collect goods and suitable articles for a present to the relations of the desired one. One gives a gun, another a blanket, and another a kettle or horse, as they may happen to possess at the time. When the collection is completed, some of the relatives carry the presents to the lodge of the father of the young woman; one of them expressing in song the object for which they are intended, and leave the things at the door and retire. If the father is favorably disposed to the match, he invites all his relatives that are near to a feast, and when assembled, if they conclude to give the girl in marriage to the young man, each takes of the articles such as he can return in kind; for instance, if one can return a gun, horse, kettle, blanket or other articles, he takes such an article; and presents in this way are made up by the relatives of the desired bride, generally of the same kind of articles they have received, and taken, together with herself, to the lodge of the young man with singing, &c. After which she returns again to the lodge of her father, where they usually reside, the son-in-law hunting for the father-in-law until about the time the oldest child can walk, after which he generally gets a lodge for himself. A small apartment is partitioned off in the lodge of the father-in-law for the young couple. The young man generally during the day is out hunting, and seldom visits the lodge of his bride until the others have gone to sleep, when he crawls into the lodge. There is no familiarity between the parents of the bride and their son-in-law. If he is ever in their presence, he appears ashamed, and seldom speaks to them. If he wants to communicate to them, it is done through

his wife; and if he happens to be in a trader's house, and either father or mother-in-law enters, he generally retires. Such is Sioux etiquette between these relations.

Of births. As soon as a child is born, the mother goes into the water, and stands in it over her waist, and bathes herself for some considerable length of time. If in winter, she has a hole cut in the ice, through which she enters and bathes.

Deaths and burials. When a person dies, the body is decorated in all of his or her finery, and four forks or crotches are cut and stuck in the ground, upon which a scaffold is made, and the deceased wrapped in a newly painted buffalo skin or new blanket, and laid thereon with some ceremony. If the death takes place at a trader's house in the fall before they go to their hunt, an old woman, a relative of the deceased, is left there to feed and cry over the dead during the absence of the others. She usually goes about dark in the evening with a dish of provisions, and sits down under the scaffold, and commences crying and howling, with loud lamentations, and calling upon the Great Spirit something as follows: *Wah-kaw-tong-gaw, oh she mendok* (naming the deceased) with other cries, which mean—Great Spirit, have mercy on the deceased, &c. This doleful noise is very unpleasant, and after continuing it for about an hour, she leaves the dish of food under the scaffold, and returns to the lodge, and the dogs or wolves eat the provisions, when the Indians suppose the dead eat them. The corpse is left in this manner until nothing remains but the bones, when they are collected and carried to their village. At one time at my house in St. Peters, an Indian of some note, who had four grown daughters, had a death in his family, and he named four young men to build the scaffold and put the corpse thereon, and when concluded, he rewarded each with one of his daughters for a wife.

When a death happens in a family, no matter how well they are clothed, the good clothes are stripped off and given away, and the worst old leather rags substituted in their place, bearnear-

ing their hair, hands and face with dirt, leaving the hair uncombed to mat with the dirt, gashing their legs and arms, and leaving them to get well without the least attention. Some of them carry their grief so far as to raise the skin of their arms and pierce holes with their knives, and put pegs through. They continue their mourning about a year, although by giving a feast and performing certain ceremonies they can be relieved from their mourning in a much less time.

Religious superstitions, &c. Wawkaw, in their language, signifies a spirit or spiritual. The French have interpreted or rendered it medicine, but the Indians call the Great Spirit or God Waw-kaw-tong-gaw, the latter part signifying *great*. The devil they call Waw-kaw-she-coh, the latter part signifying *bad*. It is difficult to get an Indian to talk on the subject of his religious belief, but my interpreter, who was a half breed, informed me that they believe, that the great Good Spirit resides in a beautiful country of good hunting ground, and where there is everything in abundance that an Indian can desire, even a plurality of beautiful wives. But to get there, they must be good Indians in this world, and perform all their duties well as hunters, warriors, &c.; that on the way to this happy land, there is a deep gulf to pass, with a very narrow way to cross it, and that only the good can successfully pass over; that the bad, in attempting to pass, fall off into the gulf, and wander about in a starving condition. They are very particular in performing their religious rites by feasts, sacrifices, &c. The first fruits gathered are set apart for the purpose of a spiritual or holy feast; the first corn or wild rice of the season, the first duck or goose killed when they appear in the spring, are all reserved for the feast; at which those Indians only who are entitled to wear the badge of having slain an enemy, are invited. The women, and those who have never taken the scalp of a foe, no matter how hungry, are never invited to participate. You will see boys of sixteen or eighteen years of age at the feast, while old gray-headed men are excluded with the women,

and looked upon as old women, which is a term of great reproach among them. We cannot then wonder, that the Indian tribes are so constantly at war, as it is the only thing that gives them fame and consequence among themselves. I was told of a tradition of the Sioux, that in ancient times a man could not get a wife until he had killed an enemy. The mother trains her sons to believe that revenge upon their enemies is a cardinal virtue, and this advice and admonition are constantly instilled into their minds.

From early infancy they believe in minor evil spirits, and in ghosts who operate upon, and influence them. While sleeping in a camp of Indians in the night, you will frequently be awakened by the firing of guns, and enquiring the cause you will be told they are shooting the dead that trouble them. Over-loading their stomachs, as they often do, they are no doubt frequently troubled with the night-mare, and imagine that they are attacked by a ghost, and get up and shoot at their supposed intruder. They have also their doctors and astrologers, who are well paid for their services. When a person is sick, they send for a doctor, who gets his pay in advance. He then commences shaking over the sick his gourd, which has in it some beads to make it rattle, until he finds out what is the matter with his patient, which he generally discovers is, that some beast, fish or bird has got into the body of the patient, which by shaking his rattle, singing and other necromancy, he causes to depart. Previously to driving out the unwelcome intruder, he cuts its figure or likeness out of birch bark, and places it in front of the door of the lodge, with two young men situated so to fire at it from different directions at a given signal, who generally blow it into pieces. If this operates upon the mind of the patient so that he recovers, it is well; if not, there is some mistake about it—the animal was not killed, or some evil spirit operates against him. So they try it over again, and probably continue to do so for months, until the patient recovers or dies; in which latter case, they have always good reasons to show why the patient did not recover.

They have some few specifics, which they sometimes administer, but their art consists mostly in necromancy. They cure wounds generally sooner than most surgeons, because they suck them, and thus keep them clean from all matter. It is also the business of the doctor to suck clean any old sore that he undertakes to cure, no matter how filthy or disgusting, even venereal disorders and sore eyes; I have seen the doctor pretend by sucking to draw from sore eyes small bits of straw, &c.; and, according to their theory, as in most other complaints, some animal, bird, fish or reptile has inflicted the disease.

The father-in-law of my interpreter, was an Indian doctor among the Sioux. I recollect hearing the old man the most part of a day singing and shaking his gourd-rattle in his lodge; after which he came into the house, and sat down looking very serious and thoughtful. His son, over thirty years of age, had sore eyes, and he was endeavoring to effect a cure. He said, that nearly thirty years before, when his son was a very small boy, he had fastened a pin to a stick, and was amusing himself one day spearing minnows, and that he thus pricked one with his pin-spear; and that it was strange that the fish, after so long a time, should come to seek revenge on his son's eyes.

Their sooth-sayer or spiritual man after sweating alone in a small lodge and singing, pretends to foretell events, as when certain friends will arrive, or when the buffalo will come into that neighborhood, or when some other expected event will happen, and should it fail they will explain it by saying, that the little spirit lied to them, an image of which each one of these jugglers carries in his holy or medicine bag. An Indian in a pious fit hangs on a tree a beaver or otter skin, bear or dressed deer skin, for a sacrifice to the Great Spirit, which remains there until destroyed, or until some other Indian passes that way, wants and takes it, leaving a piece of tobacco in place thereof, which he may lawfully do. On the Prairie are often found isolated granite rocks, which, from their isolated and scattered appearance are considered

holy, and every Indian who passes them, either paints them with vermillion, or leaves a piece of tobacco as a tribute to the Great Spirit. Hence the great number of places in this country, where the Sioux were accustomed to pass, that bear the name of Painted Rock.

I have frequently been told by French *voyageurs*, traders, and interpreters, of the ceremonies performed by some juggler, in going into his little holy lodge, to consult with the Great Spirit. After having fasted awhile, he strips himself naked, and goes into the lodge alone; and soon after entering, the poles of the lodge commence shaking violently, and those without hear two or three distinct voices within. After this has continued about two or three hours, the juggler comes out of the lodge in a high state of perspiration; during the time of the ceremonies in the lodge, the jingling of bells and other musical instruments is heard, as though they were attached to poles of the tent or lodge, and my informers generally believed that the Indians had communications with the Devil. It so happened, that I never witnessed one of these scenes.

The Sioux have a feast which is calculated, in their estimation, to preserve their women from all illicit connections. It is after this manner: The young Indians, like some young white men, are in the practice of vaunting of having gained some advantage over some frail one of their tribe. When a woman, either married or single, learns that she has been slandered in this way, she selects a spot, clears away the bushes and rubbish, builds a fire, puts the kettle on, makes a circle around it, and near one end of the fire, places a stone painted with vermillion; and when everything is properly prepared, she sends the crier of the camp around to give notice of it. He performs this duty by going through the camp, singing in as loud a voice as he possibly can, that such a woman, announcing her name, will give her feast that day, stating the name or object of the feast, and inviting all to attend. All the women of the camp are usually present on

such occasions; if any one is absent, it is strongly suspected that she dare not come, for fear of being exposed. When assembled on the ground, the hostess of the feast heads the ring formed by the women, and marches around until she reaches the painted stone, which she touches reverently, thereby solemnly protesting her innocence.

Some Indian, the while, stands on some slight elevation, and harangues the young men, telling them if any of these women are unworthy to partake of this feast of the virtuous, to fail not to expose them. The young men pride themselves upon every exposure it is in their power to make; so that a woman who is unworthy dare not be present, unless she happens certainly to know that her guilty paramour is so far away that he cannot be there. If a woman, not worthy to partake of the feast is so bold as to venture there, the Indian who says she is not worthy, goes and takes her by the arm, and leads her out, asking her before the whole assemblage, if she does not remember such a time and place, which he specifies. It is thought that they seldom falsely accuse, as they believe that if they do so, the Great Spirit would be angry and visit them with some dire calamity.

Their feasts. With Indians, a man who gives a feast is popular and well spoken of, and has plenty of pretended friends, precisely as with the white man who often gives good dinner and other parties. They have their holy or sacred feasts, where the guests know, when they are invited, of what they are to partake; and as they pride themselves upon the quantity they can eat, each carries with him the sized dish which he supposes he can eat full. The master of the feast, not eating himself, serves the others, singing and shaking his gourd-rattle all the time. Nothing of this food must fall to the ground. Each guest's dish is filled, and he must eat it himself, or pay some one else to eat it for him; and frequently in attempting to devour what has been put in their dish, they eat until they vomit it back again into the dish, as nothing is allowed to fall upon the ground, and some one must be

hired to eat it for them. They have been known to gormandize to that extent, that on leaving the feast they have fallen down dead; but even then, the survivors will not admit that it was over-eating that killed them. After the feast is over, the dishes and kettle are carefully wiped out with grass or evergreen boughs. They accustom their sons, when children, to eat a great deal, and frequently stuff them, when very young, with raccoon oil, to expand their stomachs, and often boast of their feats in eating.

The dog feast. The Sioux Indians, and I believe it is true of all others, consider that the greatest compliment they can pay a stranger, is to give him a dog feast. And this intended compliment constitutes the burthen of the speech of the giver of the feast, or the master of ceremonies. The traders are generally invited to these feasts. I have tasted dog meat; it is like pork, only it has a sweeter taste; those who can get over the prejudice against such meat, become very fond of it, but my prejudice was too strong ever to be able to relish it.

I think the Indians understand the art of flattery as well as any people in the world. When I concluded to enter into business for myself, there were several Indians of influence from about the mouth of the St. Peters River, and of the Gens de Feuille or Leaf Nation from the Little Rapids on the St. Peters, who had wintered in my neighborhood, and came to my house in the spring. I agreed with these Indians to meet me at my wintering house in the fall, with as many of their tribes as they could persuade to come up, that I would have a large cargo of goods, and would fit them out to go across to the head of the Mississippi to hunt. According to agreement, I met them in the fall, with two Mackinaw boat loads of goods, and found on my arrival, about three thousand Indians of the Yankton, Sissiton, Gens de Lac, Gens de Feuille and other Sioux bands, encamped about it, and they received me with a grand salute, each man having a gun, firing with ball over the boat, so that we could hear the

balls whistle nearer than was agreeable to us. They had prepared several lodges together, so as to make one great lodge of at least twenty feet, across the middle of which they had made a wall of dried buffalo meat,* and had made a dog feast, to which they invited me. The customary speech on such occasions was made, as usual; saying that this feast was designed as the greatest compliment they could pay me, and then added: Your Father must be a great man to send out one so young as you, with so many goods, and we hope you will be very charitable, and furnish us with plenty of clothing to keep ourselves, women and children warm, and with plenty of ammunition with which to hunt, etc. To all of which I replied, that unfortunately my father was a poor man, and I was a poor boy, and that I had got these goods on credit to supply their wants, and that unless they hunted well and loaded my boat with furs, I should not be able to pay for these goods, and get more to come back again; but that I would furnish them with clothing to keep them warm, and with arms, traps and ammunition to keep them from starving, and hoped they would hunt well and pay me, so that I could get more goods and continue to trade with them. I took to my house the meat presented, and made them payment in suitable presents of ammunition, etc.†

An Indian thinks it politeness to eat everything that is set before him, and when traders are invited to a feast, what they do not eat, they generally carry home with them in the dish and give it to their men, and send back the dish with a piece of tobacco in it.

*The manner of drying the buffalo meat is this: They take each side and the belly, and cut and spread them out thin, so that they will thoroughly dry through; when fully extended, this makes a sheet of about the size of a deer skin, and when dried they fold them up as they do their deer skins, and pack them into bundles. J. H. L.

†It is proverbial, with all acquainted with the Indians, that to receive presents from them is by far the most expensive way of obtaining their desirable commodities, as the trader not only has to pay back the full value of the articles, but also something clever in addition for the compliment of the present. It is not uncommon for a Yankton chief to make a present to the trader of all the buffalo robes he brings, and after he has received in return all they are really worth, together with something for the compliment, he remembers a great many little articles, naming them, of which he is in want; and if not gratified, he is offended, or pretends to be so. Though it is, in Indian etiquette, an insult to refuse a present, I have often done so, and advised the Indian that he had better trade in the usual way. J. H. L.

I have seen generous ladies residing in the neighborhood of the Indian country, when visited by Indians, set food before them and keep renewing the supply, and wondering at the Indians eating so much, whereas they considered themselves bound in politeness to eat all that was set before them.

When Indians become too old and infirm to travel, they build a fire near water, and giving them some provisions and generally a small kettle, leave them to take care of themselves. Many children from exposure and learning them to be great eaters, die in infancy. The practice of leaving the aged to die, applies more particularly to migratory bands on the plains. Indians living about lakes and rivers, where they have canoes, I do not think ever expose them thus, at least I never heard of an instance.

You never see a Sioux Indian, if he is in company, smoke alone. The pipe is lighted and he takes a whiff or two himself, and passes it to his neighbor, always passing it around with the sun. When several are assembled together, you will see a number of pipes going the rounds in the same manner. Their principal subjects of conversation at these times, are their wars, feasts, hunting and their women. A man may have as many wives as he can maintain among the Yanktons; the more he has, the better he is off, as they can dress and prepare the more buffalo robes for market. If an Indian marries the eldest daughter, he is entitled to take the others, as they come to maturity, for wives. But those who do not live in the buffalo range, content themselves generally with two, and many of them with one. I knew one Yankton chief who had six.

When the Sioux women have their *menses*, they are looked upon as unholy and unclean, and are not allowed to remain in the lodge with the family, but are obliged to build a small lodge outside of the other, and remain alone during the time of its continuance, fed in a dish by one of the family, and not allowed, during the time, to enter the family lodge, or touch anything, except the dish in which their food is handed to them, until the

menstrual discharges cease, and they are washed up. When a maiden arrives at womanhood, and has made her first out-of-door lodge, the public crier goes through the camp or village, and announces the fact in a loud song.

The Sioux have secret societies, something like freemasonry, but they admit women to membership. They meet in a lodge, which is guarded on the outside from prying curiosity, by one of their members. In this lodge they perform their ceremonies. Any person wishing to join them, makes the application through one of the members, and is then on probation for about a year. If they are bad, they must reform. If, at the end of that period, no objection is made, he is generally admitted; and, I was told, that they have signs by which Indians of that fraternity of different bands know each other. Either after or before their meeting, I do not remember which, they assemble and have a holy dance, which is called by the French, *la danse de la grande medecine*, as the French translate all their spiritual or juggling proceedings into medicine. At this dance, among other ceremonies, after dancing and singing awhile, one of their number takes a garnished sag, usually made from the otter, and runs at the different members, making some noise, and they generally fall down or over, pretending that it is the effect of spirits from the bag, and lay prostrate for a moment or so, and then rise again, and join in the dance. This dance is generally continued till late in the night.

The amusements of the men are shooting at a mark, or playing at the game of ball, called by the French, *le jeu de crosee*. This is usually played in the summer on some large prairie,* with a stick about two and a half or three feet long, with a small hoop on one end, crossed with net-work of thongs of leather, making a sort of sac, in which they frequently catch the ball. How they count, or their boundaries, I have forgotten. The women amuse themselves by playing at what is termed the dish-play, which is

*Prairie La Crosee took its name from this game being frequently played there.
J. H. L.

performed by having the pits or stones of plums marked on one side with hieroglyphics, and put into a dish, shook up, and turned out, and the marked ones turning up, count. They are so fond of gambling at this play, that they will sometimes continue at it for several days without cessation, and until one or the other has lost everything that she can put up for a stake. Women well clothed, having lost everything else, have been known to strip off their good clothes, and gamble them away, and put on old rags. The men also frequently play at this game, and to the same excess as the women. The men also have another game, called the shoe-play, which is generally played by two parties of four each. Four moccasins are placed between the parties on the floor, and the side that gets the first winnings, hides a piece of wood in one of the moccasins, by running his hand into each of them, in the presence of the others, when one of the opposite party searches for it; if he finds it in the first moccasin that he examines, he loses a certain number, I think ten; but if he finds it in the second or third, it counts twenty for his side, and if in the fourth, a less number. The game tallies at one hundred. They play at this game sometimes as long as they can raise anything to wager.

Indians generally in a state of nature, have no word or gesture of salutation. Those acquainted with the customs of white people, sometimes make use of the French salutation of *bon jour*, on meeting a white man, but seldom on meeting another Indian. I was struck with the meeting of some Sioux Indians the first year I was in their country. When the attack was made on Prairie du Chien under Col. McKay, a son of the Yankton chief called Le Grand Sierure, happened to be there with the Agent, N. Boilvin, Esq., and embarked on board the keel-boats under command of Captain Yeiser, and went to St. Louis with him, where he was obliged to remain until the war was over; and, in 1816 had got as far back as Prairie du Chien, and as we were then going into his country, we took him into the boat with us.—When we arrived in the neighborhood of Lac-qui-Parle, on a cold morning about the first of December, I was awakened from sleep,

and told that there were some Indians on the shore who had made a fire. We disembarked and breakfasted there, and found that the Indians were four Yanktons, the uncles of the young Indian with us. They had come across the country to meet their nephew, who had been absent two and a half years, and previous to their hearing that he was on his way home, they supposed he was dead. The uncles had made a fire and commenced smoking, when the young Indian walked from the boat to where they were, without saying a word to them, or they to him. The lighted pipe was handed to him, when he smoked; and after it had passed around two or three times, they commenced talking slowly, and the conversation at length became general among them.

In almost every Indian camp, they have what is called the soldier's lodge, where the men of consideration of the village assemble to smoke, and talk over the affairs of the nation. An Indian of consideration arriving from another camp, usually goes to this lodge; but if a young man, and not of sufficient distinction to go there, he stands about among the lodges until some one sees that he is a stranger, and invites him to his lodge. On entering, the pipe is handed to him, and after smoking a few whiffs, something is set before him to eat. After he has eaten awhile, conversation is commenced, but no questions are asked previous to his having smoked and eaten. It was sometime before I could learn so much of Indian politeness as to make no inquiry of an Indian arriving, until after the smoking and eating had been attended to. At first I commenced talking to them before this important preliminary, and always found them sulky and obstinate about entering into conversation.

My interpreter, Frenier, told me that some years previous to the war of 1812, that he resided at the same place where we were then wintering, in the employ of Mr. Cameron; that Cameron had credited a band of Indians to go on the head waters of some of the streams that empty into the waters of Mississippi in the direction of the Red River of the North; and, that in the month

of February, an Indian runner came from the hunting ground, and informed Cameron that the Indians were so loaded with furs and peltries, that they could not bring them, and suggested to him to send his men to assist them. He sent Frenier with some ten men, in company with the Indian, to the camp. After they had traveled some three or four days, they were overtaken by one of those sudden snow storms that are so frequent in those vast prairies in that high latitude. They are often so sudden, and give so little warning of their approach, that you may set out on a prairie on as beautiful a sun-shiny morning as you ever saw in winter, and before noon be enveloped in one of these storms; the snow so fine and thick that you cannot see a rod before you. On this occasion, as Frenier's party could not see any wood or timber, they concluded their safest plan was to stop where they were. Wrapping themselves snugly in their blankets, they all laid down and let the snow cover them, except the Indian, who, having purchased several blankets from the trader, wrapped himself in them, and staid on top of the snow until the storm was over, which lasted three days, when he discovered that it was not more than one fourth of a mile to a point of wood, whither he repaired and kindled a fire. He then made use of a pole, poking through the deep snow, where he recollected to have seen the men lay down, and found them all alive and uninjured, except one man a little frost bitten on the hip.

In 1816, and for years previous, the Yanktons were in the practice of making up war parties and going into the Spanish territory, for the purpose of stealing choice horses and mules. When on a march from place to place, there are warriors on duty to regulate the march according to rules promulgated before their departure; and, if any one infringes on these rules, he is punished by having his gun broken, his dog or horse killed, his lodge cut, or causing him to suffer a penalty in some manner. The chief, or leader of the party, is not exempt from these regulations. Any act of this kind performed by warriors on duty is not revenged,

as they did it in performance of inflexible regulations; but any affront of an individual in his private capacity, is sure to be revenged sooner or later, and the avenger is always known, as it would not be any satisfaction to him if he could not enjoy the credit of it. An instance came under my observation. It is usual for the trader to take to his post as many guns as there are good hunters, who will probably pay for them. These are generally at first distributed to those for whom he may particularly intend them, before he commences giving out other articles. One year, in distributing the guns, my interpreter overlooked a good hunter, while some other not so good a hunter got the gun. This mortified the good hunter, and that night he killed the horse of every man who had received a gun, and it was known the next morning who had done it, and what was the cause. It is common to revenge an insult or injury by killing the offender's horse or dog, and there are in this way, a great many horses killed every year among the Sioux. And they not only revenge insults or injuries among themselves, but, as the late Col. Robert Dickson, in conversation with me on the subject, expressed it, "*they revenge upon their enemies the acts of the Almighty*;" for when a chief or man of distinction dies, they commence singing the war song, and raise a war party to revenge his death upon their natural enemies, as well as to appease the troubled manes of the departed.

It is a prevalent opinion among persons not acquainted with Indian customs and polity, that they, like white people, have a king or great chief over all; but such, so far as I am acquainted, is not the case with any Indians in the North West or South West. The government of their tribes or bands is patriarchal. The chiefs, as with politicians who obtain office, are the greatest slaves among them. They get the honor without independence, not being able to do any act of their own will, without first looking to see if it will be popular. If a chief buys a good gun, and one of his young men takes a fancy to it, and expresses a wish for it, it is given to him; if not, probably the chief's horse would pay the forfeit. These bands are generally thus originated: When a

man has five or six sons and several daughters, taking his family he leaves the large band, forms a new camp or settlement, and acts the patriarch or chief; his sons and daughters marrying, bring their wives and husbands to his band, and frequently a brother-in-law accompanies him and remains. Thus the new band multiplies from natural increase and accessions, until it becomes large and respectable. In case of the death of the father, the eldest son assumes the duties of chief, if old enough; if not, one of the brothers of the deceased assumes the office. The chief uses no authority, but advises, and if popular, his advice is followed; if not, each one judges and acts for himself. The only arbitrary authority exercised among Indians, is by the war chief when on the war path, which, I am told, is then absolute. The warriors, when on duty, never correct their children, except by advice, and if they are obstinate and pugnacious, it is laughed at, and looked upon as a sign of bravery.

There was, when I first visited the country, a band of Indians who had their village on a prairie on the west bank of the Mississippi, where the village of Winona, which means *the eldest daughter*, now stands, about one hundred and twenty miles above Prairie du Chien. The chief was called Wa-ba-shaw; he was a very sensible Indian, and was truly one of nature's nobleman.* Although only chief of his band, he had great

*The name of Wa-ba-shaw, the great Sioux chief, will long live in history. He was induced to join the fortunes of the British in the War of 1812-15, and fought at the siege of Fort Meigs and elsewhere. When peace took place, the Indians were left by their employers in a wretched condition, and, as a consequence, their spirits were broken. Gen. Cass has preserved a speech of Wa-ba-shaw's, at Drummond's Island, in 1815, when, Col. McDowell, the British commandant of that post, laid a few presents before him. It is touchingly pathetic and eloquent:

"My father," said he to Col. McDowell, "what is this I see before me? A few knives and blankets. Is this all you promised us at the beginning of the war? Where are those promises you made us at Michilimackinac, and sent to our villages on the Mississippi? You told us you would never let fall the hatchet until the Americans were driven beyond the mountains; that our British father would never make peace without consulting his red children. Has that come to pass? We never knew of this peace. We are now told that it was made by our great father beyond the water, without the knowledge of his war-chiefs; that it is your duty to obey his orders. What is this to us? Will these paltry presents pay for the men we have lost, both in battle and on the road? Will they soothe the feelings of our friends? Will they make good your promises to us? For myself, I am an old man. I have lived long, and always found the means of supporting myself, and I can do so still."

influence with the other chiefs. Above Winona was another large band of Indians, who had their village on the west bank of the Mississippi, where the Presbyterian mission now is, a few miles below St. Paul, whose chief was called Little Crow; a man of good sense, and generally considered a good Indian. There was another small band who had their village at Mendota, which signifies *the meeting of the waters*,* whose chief was called Black Dog. He was not a man of much consequence. There was also another small band who had their village a short distance above, whose chief was Ponechon, a man of little note. Where the village of Shakopee now is, was an Indian village, whose chief bore that name, which simply means *six*; he possessed a good intellect, but was not popular among the traders, as he was considered very dishonest. At the little Rapids was another village, called by the French *Gens de Feuille*, or Leaf People. The name of their chief I do not recollect. There was a village of the Sissitons at the Rocher Blanc; above which, I remember no others. The Sissiton and Yankton bands seldom made any regular villages, as they roved from place to place, encamping temporarily for the purpose of hunting, and that mostly among the buffaloes.

Under the most unfavorable auspices have I written these reminiscences. With ill health, suffering a great part of the time with rheumatism and bad eyesight, bordering almost on blindness, I have not been able to prepare this narrative to my own satisfaction, and, I fear, not to the satisfaction of the Society. I have no doubt omitted many things that might have been interesting, but never having kept a journal or notes of events, I was obliged to depend upon memory; and frequently when writing, and having, by a train of reflection, recalled past events to mind, either my rheumatism or my eyes would admonish me that it was time to cease from my labors, and before I could re-commence, I would probably forget the thread of my narrative. Nor have I

*Some of the tribes of the North West give to Mendota the significance of *large* or *great*.
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been able to review what I have written. Learning that the Rev. Alfred Brunson had been invited to write a history of Crawford county, and that he intends to comply with the request, I have purposely omitted saying any thing of the events of the county since he settled therein, believing that he will be able to do the subject more justice than I could, even were I in better health than I am, and had all my faculties about me.