

## THE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATION OF THE NAMES OF THE RIVERS AND STREAMS OF CLAYTON COUNTY.

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When time shall have thrown around the remembrance of the early settlers of Iowa, its impenetrable veil of forgetfulness, when other generations shall appear, and look out upon the natural and enduring scenery of the State, there will be inquiring minds then as now, that will seek to discover the origin and the interpretation of the names of our rivers, creeks, runs, brooks, branches and streams. And, should the antiquarian of that future period, while searching for information of this kind among the thrown-aside and mouldy volumes of some haunted attic chamber, accidentally discover this number of the ANNALS OF IOWA, he will acquire from a perusal of its pages, a knowledge of the origin and the interpretation of the names of the water-courses of so much of the State as is located in the County of Clayton, which we proceed to give by commencing at the north-east corner of the county, with what is known as "*Bloody-Run.*" This stream is about nine miles in length, flowing in nearly an eastern direction, and emptying into the Mississippi at North McGregor. The origin of its name is as follows: Lieutenant Martin Scott of the 5th United States Infantry, who was stationed from 1821 until 1826 at Fort Crawford, in Wisconsin, directly opposite the mouth of Bloody-Run, was not only a great sportsman, but was regarded as the best hunting shot in the country, by both the white and the Indian hunter. This stream and the country adjacent to it, was his favorite hunting ground, particularly at that season of the year when the deer were mossier in the water. Before leaving the fort to cross the river, he would often observe in a jocular manner, "I am going to make the *blood run* to-day over on my hunting ground." From this circumstance, the officers and soldiers at the fort bestowed upon the stream the name of "*Bloody-Run,*" which it still retains. Lieut. Scott,

who was stationed at Fort Snelling in Minnesota, for some time previous to the Mexican war, often when recounting his hunting adventures on Bloody-Run, spoke of the stream receiving its name in the manner we have given. He was a brave and gallant officer, and was killed at the battle of *Molino Del Rey*.

About six miles southward from McGregor, flowing in a south-easterly direction, the "*Sny Magill*" discharges its waters into a slough of the Mississippi, after winding through the country a distance of seven miles. This stream takes its name from the slough into which it empties, which was originally called by the French voyageurs "*Chinaille a Magill*," which in English would express Magill's channel or slough. Donald Magill, a Scotchman, and an Indian trader, built a trading house upon the bank of this slough near the mouth of the "*Sny Magill*" in the year 1814, where for several years he carried on a trade with the Sac and Musquaquee Indians. The Spaniards called this slough "*The Sny Magill*," and the inland stream that emptys into it, has taken and preserved the name. This stream is often improperly called the *Sly Magill*. Magill died at St. Louis about the year 1820.

Farther down the Mississippi, about six miles below the town of Clayton, "*Buck Creek*," after flowing a distance of nine miles in a south-easterly direction, discharges its waters also into a slough of the Mississippi. This stream received its name from William Grant in 1837. Grant was an Englishman by birth, and a millwright by trade, and while exploring the creek in search of a mill-site for Robert Hatfield, who afterwards built a mill and located upon the stream, he discovered and killed a large doe while mossier in the waters of the creek, and from this circumstance called the stream *Doe Creek*, but soon after he killed a large buck that was standing at bay against a wolf that had driven him into the creek, when the men working upon the mill suggested to him that as the buck was the larger animal, the stream ought to be called *Buck Creek*, which he adopted, and conveyed the

name of Doe Creek to a small tributary near by. Grant was an ingenious mechanic, a hunter, and a bachelor, and was never more delighted than when engaged in the trapping of otter along the creek. The capture of one of these animals, always furnished him with a hunters yarn, which of a winter's evening would often stretch itself out far away towards the midnight hour. He was much respected, and died upon the creek that he had named.

About three miles below this stream, "*Miners' Creek*" discharges its waters into the Mississippi, within the corporate limits of the town of Guttenberg. About five hundred thousand pounds of lead ore has been raised upon this stream, where mining operations are still being carried on. The discovery of lead ore here, was made by Neham Dudley in 1835. The stream received its name from Daniel Justice, who erected upon it the first cabin and engaged in mining. Soon after Mr. Justice had become permanently located and bestowed upon the stream the name of "*Miners Creek*," John Murry, a rival miner, also located upon the creek, and not being upon friendly terms with Mr. Justice, endeavored to have the stream called *Coon Creek*, and for a time it was known by both names, when, the parties meeting at Prairie Laporte, under the influence of liquor, agreed to settle the controversy by a fight. Mr. Justice proving to be the victor, "*Miners' Creek*" was at once recognized as the permanent name of the stream. Mr. Justice died at Denver City a few years since.

About six miles below the town of Guttenberg, Turkey River discharges its waters into the main channel of the Mississippi nearly opposite the town of Cassville, Wisconsin. This river is about ninety miles in length, flowing by trunk and tributary through the counties of Howard, Winneshiek, Chickasaw, Fayette and Clayton. From the earliest acquaintance of the white trader with the different Indian tribes of the upper Mississippi, this river was recognized as being in the possession and occupancy of the *Saw-kee* and *Mus-qua-*

kee Indians, until the year 1832, when it passed into the possession of the United States by the treaty of Rock Island. In the treaty relations of the government of the United States with these united tribes, they are called "*Sac and Foxes*," which is not their national name. The *Saw-kee* does not call himself *Sac*, but *Saw kee*; the word *Sac* has no meaning in their language, while *Saw-kee* signifies "the man with the red badge or emblem," red being a national or favorite color in the adornment of their persons. The Hebrews of Biblical history, placed ashes upon the head when mourning for the dead. The *Saw-kee* during the period of mourning for the dead, covers his head with red clay, or clay colored red. *Mus-qua-kee* means the man with the yellow badge, or emblem. These tribes could formerly be readily distinguished by the color of the adornments of their person.

The name of "*Fox*," by which the *Mus-qua-kee* is more generally known, originated as follows: James Marquette, the Jesuit chief of a French missionary post at Green Bay, in June 1673, started from that station in search of the Mississippi River, being accompanied by a roving French gentleman in search of adventure, by the name of *Joliet*, together with five French voyageurs, and two Indian guides. While ascending the rapid current of Fox River with his companions in bark canoes, he found the shores of that stream inhabited by a numerous tribe of Indians calling themselves *Mus-qua-kees*, and the adroitness of these Indians in stealing from our worthy missionary articles of small value, prompted him to bestow upon them the name "*Reynors*," from which circumstance the river acquired the name of the "*Rio-Reynor*," and is so recorded upon the French and Spanish maps of that day. The country afterwards falling into the possession of the English, the name "*Reynor*" assumed its English translation, which is *Fox*, and now without further digression, we resume the design of this article, by saying that the name of Turkey River in the *Saw-kee* and *Mus-qua-kee* language is "*Pe-na-kun-sebo*." "*Pe-na*," turkey; "*sebo*," river.

The Winnebagoes who came upon the river from the Wisconsin after the white man had begun to settle upon it, were aware of its name in the Saw-kee language, which they translated into their own language and called it "*Ce Ce Carrah-ne-pish.*" "*Ce Ce Carrah,*" a turkey; "*ne-pish,*" river or water. At the time the white man came upon the river in 1834, it abounded with game of every kind peculiar to the country; so numerous were the wild turkey, they were often shot from the cabin door.

A short distance below the mouth of Turkey River, "*Panther Creek*" unites its waters with the Mississippi. This stream received its name from the following hunting incident. Addison Sherill, who resided in Dubuque County near Sherill's mounds, having discovered in his barn yard one morning in the fall of 1835, the track of a panther in the snow that had fallen during the night, he immediately mounted his horse and putting his dogs upon the trail gave pursuit. The dogs, after a chase of several miles, came up with the animal on this stream, where Sherill shot and killed him. Sherill, who is now dead, was known to the early settlers of Dubuque County, not only as a great hunter, but as a master marksman with the rifle. In the spring of 1834, we saw him at the town of Peru, in Dubuque County, agree to shoot with his rifle at a grain of coffee thirty times at the distance of twenty yards, and was to receive a dollar as often as he hit it, and pay one as often as he missed it. In the thirty shots he hit the coffee grain twenty-seven times, consecutively. The loss of the three last shots was attributed by his friends to some liquor at the bottom of a jug.

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