

## THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI IN 1840

By O. E. KLINGAMAN\*

From 1820 to 1840 was an interesting period in our history; it dealt with national life in stirring ways. The war of 1812-15 united the country and taught the value of the west. Had it not been for Perry's victory the entire country west of the Alleghanies and north of the Ohio might have been in Britain's hands today. The Indians on the Rock river in Illinois, joining a few British, defeated American detachments on two occasions on the Mississippi river near the present sites of Davenport and Rock Island. One of these skirmishes was on the western shore of the river. The closing battle of this war at New Orleans made Andrew Jackson the popular hero of the west and paved his way to the presidency. Emigration from Europe was stimulated by the peace following the war. Westward migration rolled in streams into the "Old Northwest" region, and was ready to cross the Father of Waters into territory north of Missouri, forbidden to the white man because it was then reserved to the Indians.

In 1820 Ohio had a larger population than Massachusetts (about 600,000), though seventeen years earlier it had but 50,000. Indiana in 1830 had 341,000 and Illinois had 161,000, even with large tribes of Indians still within her borders. The west was being settled.

The growth of the country from 1820 to 1840 in population was remarkable. From a population in round numbers of ten millions in 1820 we grew to seventeen millions in 1840. Small wonder then that the federal gov-

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\*Orie Erb Klingaman, deceased, served as Curator of the Iowa Historical department April 1, 1937—March 15, 1939. The manuscript for this article was among the documents left by him in the files of THE ANNALS office. It is an interesting review of the experiences of a young Ohioan, who kept a journal of a journey in 1840 down the Ohio river from Cincinnati to the Mississippi, and up that river along Iowa Territory, as far as the Falls of Saint Anthony. But he does not identify the writer of the journal, other than to say that "he returned the next year to one of those river towns he had visited and spent a long and useful life therein."—Editor.

ernment garrisoned Fort Armstrong, Fort Crawford and Fort Snelling afresh, for these forts along the Mississippi were protection for the Indians against the whites!

Following Jackson's election to the presidency came a new Indian Policy—the removal of the Indians east of the Mississippi to new lands west of the great river. Creeks and Cherokees and others in the south-east went to war, were crushed and removed to Indian Territory. In 1832 an attempt was made to remove the Sac and Fox Indians from their villages, which stood at the point where the beautiful Rock river joins the Mississippi. The war-chief of these tribes was Black Hawk, an experienced warrior who had been with the British in the war of 1812-15 on the Detroit frontier. Denouncing the Indian treaty of 1804 as unjust and unfair, whereby the lands in Illinois were to be given up and the tribes removed to what is now Iowa, he raised a war party in 1832 to resist expulsion. Not all the Sacs and Foxes went to war: Keokuk's band was restrained by his famous speech:

“I will lead you upon the war-path but upon this condition: that we first put our wives and children, our aged and infirm, gently to sleep in that slumber which knows no waking this side of the spirit land, and then carefully and tenderly lay their bodies away by the side of our sacred dead, from whence their freed spirits shall depart on the long journey to the happy home in the land of dreams. This sacrifice is demanded of us by the very love we owe those dear ones. Our every feeling of humanity tells us we cannot take them with us, and dare not leave them behind us.”

The result was a short Indian war, during which Black Hawk was captured and most of his band including women and children were killed. On September 27, 1832, the Indians agreed to remove to the west side of the river and sell to the Federal government title to lands extending fifty miles west of the river. Thus northern Illinois, eastern Iowa and southern Wisconsin were op-

ened to peaceable settlement. The garrison at Fort Armstrong on Rock Island, between what is now the cities of Davenport and Rock Island, was withdrawn in 1836, though those at Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien and Fort Snelling at the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi remained to prevent war among Indian tribes west of the river in Minnesota.

#### SETTLEMENT OF AREA STIMULATED

Steamboat traffic on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers stimulated the settlement of the states touching these rivers. Schemes for internal improvements in all states, especially those west of the Alleghanies went forward, constantly. The idea of building canals in every state in order to hurry crops to market was uppermost everywhere. In Illinois the project was to build a canal from the Chicago river westward to the junction of the Fox and the Illinois (the present site of Ottawa), in order to connect Lake Michigan with navigable waters of the Illinois, thus insuring low cost transportation from the lake to the gulf. It is interesting to note that in 1932, one hundred years later, the canalization of the Illinois river was actually under way, and that the entire dream of the Illinois pioneers would be realized. Furthermore, a railroad was projected on paper, from the Hudson river in the vicinity of New York to the Mississippi at the junction of the Rock river. This railroad never materialized, but 1840 saw work being done on a railroad—the Illinois Central—from the lead mines at Galena, Illinois, to New Orleans. Building railroads to the Mississippi was to be postponed for a few years, the railroad actually crossing into Iowa at Davenport opposite the “mouth of the Rock” in 1856, on a wooden bridge, the first to span the mighty river. This bridge was built despite the protests of the steamboat interests who saw in it the beginning of their doom. Its destruction and subsequent litigation, in which Abraham Lincoln appeared as one of the attorneys for the railroad company, is a matter of record.

The "new deal" made famous in the campaign of 1932 was a weapon used by Andrew Jackson as president (1829-1837). Disliking the United States Bank, he created a "new deal" in finance by refusing to recharter the bank, withdrawing the federal deposits, and depositing these funds in banks of his own choosing. These banks loaned the funds rapidly; wild speculation in raw lands in the middle west followed with disastrous results. Those who are interested now in farm relief from mortgages might read the history of the panic of 1837 with profit. As a result the west was in bad financial condition, and in 1840 this panic was to be the means of defeating Martin Van Buren, Jackson's successor, who was a candidate for re-election. No political platforms were adopted in those days. Van Buren ran (or stood) on his record which, passed in review now, was marked by many creditable performances. His opponent was William Henry Harrison, nominated by the Whigs. Harrison was chosen because of his popularity in the west. A chance statement in an eastern paper about Harrison's log-cabin and barrel of hard cider, furnished the Whigs with a slogan which, with the eloquence of Clay and Webster, was to sweep Van Buren into oblivion and Harrison into the White House, thus giving more publicity to the west.

Not all "new deals" of this period were confined to politics. One, at least, appeared in religion by the rise of the Mormons, and their selection in 1839 of a new home, Nauvoo, Illinois, on the Mississippi. Here they built their temple on a high hill, a pretentious building for its time and place, commanding a fine view up and down the river. They were driven from this point in 1846; in the most remarkable exodus ever undertaken by an American people, they crossed the prairies, deserts and mountains of the west to settle on Mexican soil, the "Promised Land" of Utah.

## THE LURE OF THE WEST

The west was an ever absorbing topic of conversation. Men in the forested east wondered "what a prairie was like", how people maintained themselves, what were the chances of getting rich. It was safe to travel for the Indians had been removed; so why not go to see this country about which so much had been said? Thus migration and settlement for some, mere travel for others. Some who travelled were keen observers and wrote journals or kept diaries for future use.

A young man from Ohio was one of those who travelled to the west, and at the request of his friends he wrote a journal, which was the daily record of a trip in 1840 up the Mississippi river as far as the "Falls of St. Anthony." He was a Whig and had seen some of his patrimony vanish in the panic of 1837. So while the trip was planned wholly for pleasure, he intended to see what the new country might hold for him. Being well acquainted with city life in Cincinnati and with farm conditions in the state of Ohio he was eager to see what life in other parts might be. He began his trip at Cincinnati by embarking on a steamboat which would carry him down the Ohio to its mouth, thence up the Mississippi to St. Louis. The boat got under way late in the afternoon of a June day, and he found himself at Louisville early the next morning. In his journal he commented on two things; the market house, different from the one in Cincinnati because it had one side reserved for meat, and the other side reserved for vegetables; and the large number of lottery offices which confronted him at every corner.

Proceeding down the Ohio, he was impressed with the scenery but not with the towns. Eager to know how people lived in the new land, he took advantage of every opportunity to go ashore and get acquainted with the settlers. On one occasion as the steamboat stopped "to wood" (as he termed it) on the Kentucky shore, he visited a log cabin and commented upon the poverty of its

occupants because they had "neither butter-milk nor hard cider." Steamboats proceeded leisurely in those days for he wrote that he sailed about fifteen miles an hour descending the Ohio, though in ascending the Mississippi the speed dropped to eight miles an hour.

He found that the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers at their mouths were about as wide as the Ohio at low water, and the Ohio, fifty miles above its mouth, fully as wide as the Mississippi.

On the morning of June 11, he arrived at the mouth of the Ohio at Cairo where he enjoyed the beautiful view of the three states of Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois which touch at this point. Cairo was then known as the "City Under the Water", though it contained but a dozen houses. Here his steamboat started up the Mississippi for St. Louis.

#### POLITICAL ENTHUSIASM RAN HIGH

On June 12, he landed at Chester, Illinois, a town of only five or six houses. He gleefully records that every person in the town was a Whig except one. Politics was the first thing mentioned upon arriving at a town, and so far he found that nearly every one in the west was a Whig. A vote of the passengers was taken while coming down the Ohio and sixty-seven were found to be Whigs, while eleven confessed to being Democrats or Loco's as they were then termed.

Being an ardent Whig, the journalist was of course, a great admirer of William Henry Harrison. One of his fellow passengers was a personal friend of Harrison's and insisted that if the whole world knew Harrison as well as he did, the world would love him as well.

This was a campaign of personalities, great oratory and many political rallies. The east, the south and the west were in fever heat politically; small wonder then that the travellers on the western rivers were interested in politics.

He arrived in St. Louis on June 13. The city did not then impress him. He wrote that the St. Louis hotel was the principal building, covering almost an entire square, being a four-story building which had nearly five hundred rooms.

The houses on the wharf were built chiefly of stone. Lottery offices were as plentiful there as they were in Louisville, and nearly every shanty had a placard stuck on the door announcing sales of lottery tickets with prizes as high as \$20,000.00. He deplored the tendency of every one in the city to make money, saying that every dwelling house had a sign announcing boarding, washing, ironing, spruce beer, or something else for sale. He complained about prices which he claimed were exorbitant, forgetting that currency here was depreciated and that even "small change" was of foreign coinage, as the English shilling and Spanish "bits" and "pics". Inquiring about board and room, he was told that genteel boarding houses charged from \$70.00 to \$90.00 a month. Upon leaving the city he was outraged at being charged "twenty-five cents by a negro" who carried his trunk from one boat to another, and because it cost him a "bit" to have his "shoes blacked".

On Sunday, June 14, he left St. Louis having been fortunate enough to find a steamboat sailing for Fort Snelling at the mouth of the Minnesota river. That afternoon he noted the attempts being made by the Federal government to improve navigation on the river by pulling snags. Two snag-boats were seen and he was told that one of the carried a chain weighing 78,000 pounds, and even though it was enormous it was frequently broken. His steamer moved slowly, the boat making about four miles an hour, partly because of the current and partly because the boat had a "keel-boat in tow." Late that evening while the steamer stopped "to wood", a cold rain fell, making the passengers uncomfortable.

At three in the afternoon the next day, he was anchored at Clarkesville, Missouri, where a poll of its voters

showed them all to be Harrisonians. One of his companions claimed that all Missourians were Whigs because Harrison was the best governor Missouri ever had. Alas for fame! An inquiry was made and no inhabitant was found who knew that Harrison had ever been governor of Missouri. Later in the afternoon he landed at Louisiana, Missouri, "a town of about 600 inhabitants, mostly Whigs." Hannibal, later made famous by Mark Twain, was passed in the night. Next morning found him at Quincy, Illinois, where he records that the "Quincy House is as fine as the Cincinnati hotel." The town was new with from 2,000 to 3,000 inhabitants. For some reason he failed to record their political preferences; perhaps the Whigs were in the minority. He does note that the other passengers fished while the steamer was anchored, in a few minutes hauling out about a dozen catfish each, one about two feet long.

During the forenoon of June 17, he saw that the willows were giving way to the cottonwood along the river, though he had difficulty in distinguishing it from the poplar at long range. He observed that the cottonwood groves commenced with trees ten feet in height and gradually increased in size till they "reached upwards of fifty feet." Though high sycamores, whose great trunks were objects of comment by other travellers, were then growing on the river bottoms he failed to see them, or if he did, he thought them nothing new.

#### FIRST SIGHT OF INDIANS

At "Keokuk, Iowa Territory", he was at the foot of the lower rapids which were to be negotiated by transferring the steamer's freight to keel boats. At this village, named for the successor to Black Hawk, he saw Indians for the first time, as one or two families were living there. A large Indian brought a trunk on his shoulders to the steamer. Here he picked up "some fine pieces of quartz" which were in reality goedes, but he complained about their scarcity due to the eagerness with which they were collected and sent east. Ninety years

later these geodes were again of commercial value being eagerly sought for ornamental rock gardens. Things do not change so much after all. Did not Thoreau say "Things do not change; we change"? Here also he saw his first specimen of the prickly ash, taking pains to describe it minutely. Keokuk was small with log cabins prevailing. These log cabins contained for him a great attraction as he had seen more pretty girls in Keokuk, small as it was, than in any other town since leaving the Queen City.

June 18 found him at Burlington, then the capitol of Iowa Territory; however arrangements were then being made to remove the capitol to Iowa City. He was surprised to find that the city had 1,300 inhabitants though it was only four or five years old. He had another surprise when he inquired as to the volume of business done in such a new country, and was told that "one dry goods house here sold \$100,000 worth of dry goods annually"; a statement he afterwards verified.

In the suburbs stood an Indian village which was a great curiosity to him. Part of the Fox tribe was living there. The chief who was a large well-built man, wore a silver medal about three inches in diameter, upon which was engraved "The City of Boston to Kis-ku-kish, Chief of the Foxes." This indicates that Kis-ku-kish was one of the party of Indians who had been taken east to show them the large cities and to teach them the futility of warring with the whites who were so numerous.

Above Burlington, the steamer stopped at New Boston, which the journalist derided, but he added "with all its faults it possesses one retrieving virtue—every person in it is a Whig."

In the evening of June 18 he had his first view of the prairie, "that distinctive feature of the west". For miles in one extended view smooth as the water, was to be seen the tall prairie grass. "A breeze arising, the undulation of the grass was similar to the waves on the

river." The next day at Bloomington, Iowa (now Muscatine), he remarked to a fellow voyager upon the difficulty of describing a scene and a soil so unsurpassing lovely as the Iowa prairie farms. "Observe", replied the other, "that nature did her utmost."

#### INSPIRED BY THE SCENERY

He arrived at the Upper Rapids at the foot of Rock Island at noon on June 19. Here he was inspired by the scenery, saying it would require all the skill of a Hogarth to transfer it to canvas and do it justice. He saw before him on the Illinois side, the town of Stephenson (now Rock Island), and immediately in front, Fort Armstrong on the island. Stephenson had a large two-story handsome brick courthouse, which had five pillars in front giving it an imposing appearance. Because of water power in the near vicinity, he predicted that a great manufacturing center would spring up here, a prediction which was later fulfilled. Davenport was regularly laid out with streets running from the river; they were as wide as Broadway in Cincinnati or as the boasted streets of Dayton. The sidewalks were of good width, and the streets were planted with shade trees. The houses were all brick or frame, while the city lots were large and neatly fenced with boards. All these combined rendered it the most beautiful town on the western rivers. Moreover, there was a large four-story brick hotel being finished which was kept by a former Ohioan, or Buckeye. The town had been laid out but two years, yet it had already attracted to it a number of former citizens of Cincinnati, some of whom he knew.

He described Fort Armstrong, then vacated, as standing on a high bluff over which the block houses projected and that underneath the fort was a natural cave. Black Hawk in his autobiography says: "In my early life I spent many happy days on this island. A good spirit had charge of it, who lived in a cave in the rocks immediately under the place where the fort now stands and has often been seen by our people. He was white, with

large wings like a swan's, but ten times larger. We were particular not to make much noise in that part of the island which he inhabited for fear of disturbing him. But the noise of the fort has since driven him away, and no doubt a *bad spirit* has taken his place!" The fort was composed of three block houses, together with the habitations of the officers and soldiers. Rock Island was, he thought, appropriately named as the whole island consists of a solid bed of limestone rock.

Savannah, Illinois, appealed to his sense of beauty because the houses were of "frame", mostly two-storied, painted white and surrounded by shade trees. June 20 brought a diversion to the passengers for at "two in the afternoon the boat entered a slough of the Mississippi and in a few minutes we found ourselves in Fever river, about as large as Licking river, Kentucky, leading to Galena. The scenery is superb."

Galena had from 1500 to 2000 inhabitants, but the situation of the town made it appear much more populous. It was built upon the sides of a high hill; had but two streets and these paralleled the river; the sidewalks were narrow, permitting only two persons to walk abreast. The lower street was then called Main street, and was the street upon which most of the business was transacted. The upper street was at a level about twenty feet higher. The two were connected by a single flight of wooden steps. The hotel and dwelling houses were on this street. Back of the town rose high hills covered with timber. The great industry was mining lead.

The following day was Sunday, for him a day of rest and prayer, though it was spent on the great river. The day was rainy but at evening a magnificent sunset burst upon his vision. "All powers of description would fail in giving a faint idea of its splendor. The pen of inspiration alone could do it justice. The wildest dreams of the most fanciful imagination could not form anything so surpassingly lovely. One of its beauties formed the strongest optical delusion I ever beheld; for a long time

we could not distinguish whether what we viewed was the clouds, or the scenes reflecting upon the waters of the Mississippi. Silver cloud begirt with crimson and surrounded with burnished gold floated through a sea of liquid fire. We stood upon the deck and in wonder looked *down* upon a sunset. The river and the cloud mingled and seemingly formed one vast sheet of brilliant water."

He was then in that region of the upper Mississippi justly famous for its scenery. He observed that there was "now no bottom land on either side. These hills are high, covered and crowned with trees, with an occasional rock rising like some frowning battlement from amongst the green shrubs." His vivid imagination saw fancied resemblance to ancient castles in the high, ivy-covered, turreted rock.

#### THE VISIT AT PRAIRIE DU CHIEN

Later he came "in view of a grand and picturesque scene, the hills and vales, bluffs and prairies, the houses and fort that formed the famous town of Prairie du Chien. Immediately after landing every one visited Fort Crawford which was a block of two-story buildings built round a square containing about two acres." These houses fronted on the square; each had a fine porch giving it an imposing appearance. The Stars and Stripes waved from the top of a high flagstaff erected in the center of this square. Everything connected with the fort was neat and clean; the fort itself had just been freshly white-washed. Many of the passengers remarked that soldier's life spent in such surroundings would be ideal.

Prairie du Chien was a town built upon a prairie, and had about 130 houses scattered over an extent of two or three miles. It was divided by a slough of the Mississippi which was crossed by a single bridge. The houses were both frame and log, and offended the eye of the journalist because they were painted a dingy yellow with the roofs stained red.

The inhabitants were chiefly French and Indian mixture, although a number of European nationalities were represented. The town was full of Indians, mostly Winnebagoes and Menominees. Their dress differed from the dress of the Sacs and Foxes observed down the river at Burlington. Here the breechcloth and blanket served to screen the nakedness of the warrior, although the squaws were clothed in "pantaloons, upper dress, and a blanket used as a shawl." He was surprised to see the resemblance to the "African cast of countenance" shown by the Winnebagoes. Visiting their encampment he found that their wigwams were constructed of plaited or woven mats, and that they resembled "in shape the mud huts of the Hottentots." Near one of these wigwams he saw two Winnebago graves. The grave was formed like an oblong mound; clapboards were then driven slanting over the verge so as to meet over the center of the grave. Green saplings with the top branches growing, were then planted in such a manner as to form a square around the graves.

The people of Prairie du Chien owned the most beautiful horses he had ever seen. They were considered valuable, being of the Canadian breed and capable of enduring great fatigue. A common horse commanded a price of \$300.00, while the better horses were not for sale. Here he saw for the first time Indians on horseback and found that "they sat erect and ride without stirrups, appearing very skilful in the management of their ponies."

#### LOST OPPORTUNITY OF VISITING CAMP

An unpleasant episode occurred at Prairie du Chien. The captain of the steamboat refused to proceed to Fort Snelling, saying that the freight he had for that post would not pay the cost of the trip, but that he would make the trip if the passengers would each pay an additional sum. As they had already paid the passage money there was a long and animated discussion ending in the passengers paying the amount demanded although there

was much feeling over it. So the journey up the river was resumed on the following morning. About ten miles up the river he saw an encampment of about 3,400 Winnebagoes who were waiting for the federal government to pay their annuities. The captain refused to stop and so an opportunity to visit a large Indian encampment was lost.

However, the beauty of the scenery which he described as being "of majestic grandeur" consoled him. He saw hills following hills in regular succession till they were lost in the far distance. Treeless and covered with a velvet carpet of green, these hills towering several hundred feet in elevation kept him enthralled. After several attempts to describe the scenery he gave up, but at Lynxville, Wisconsin Territory, he was moved to make one more attempt.

"So often have I attempted and failed to convey the idea of the beauty of the scenery that I thought I should not again make the effort, but I shall strive to tell of one hill now before me. For the space of 200 feet of the elevation, I gaze upon a bed of flowers of every hue, from the splendid Orange lily, so luxuriant in color, to the humble Gromwell of yellow tint, and the pretty Lupines of variegated hue. Above these, stupendous rocks rear their summits and rugged peaks some 300 feet in the air." Later he wrote, "The hills of the Upper Mississippi are different from those upon the Ohio. If upon the latter stream we see a hill bereft of trees, invariably it is rugged and stony, but here we see the highest hills without a tree or shrub, yet clothed with rich, luxuriant green."

On the evening of June 22, he passed the village of the Sioux chief, Wabasha, where the warriors were holding a war dance, but he had no opportunity of visiting the village. Earlier in the evening when the steamboat stopped for wood, he visited a Menominee Indian hut and found a man smoking "kinnikinick—the inner bark

of the yellow willow, scraped and coarsely pulverized, having a bitter astringent taste, but when smoked, analogous to tobacco."

#### SAW INDIANS IN WAR DRESS

The next morning the steamer stopped for wood opposite the village of the Sioux chief, Red Wing, where a great war dance was in progress; the warriors having erected a pole, were dancing about it, contorting their countenances made hideous with paint, and uttering piercing yells. Through this means of excitement they were arousing their passions to war with the Chippewas, the latter having killed two Sioux whose bodies had just been brought to the village. After the dance which began at dawn and lasted until seven o'clock in the morning, the braves and squaws crossed to where the steamboat was "wooding", crowding upon the boat in such numbers as to almost take it by storm. These Sioux Indians were the most hideous he had beheld. Their breasts, arms, faces even to their eyelids and lips were daubed with ochre in the most uncouth and horrible manner. Their hair was plaited and strung full of beads, feathers, stuffed birds, thimbles, bear claws, etc., for, being dressed preparatory to the great war dance, they had decorated themselves with all their ornaments. The dresses of this portion of this band of Sioux were not uniform, some being clothed in a full Indian dress, others with only a breechcloth and blanket. The squaws were clamoring for whiskey, offering money for it, though only small amounts. Their town consisted of fifteen or twenty thatched wooden houses with a few wigwams interspersed.

A few minutes before the boat left the Indians retired, saluting the passengers with the war whoop or yell, that cry so piercing and heart-rending to the early settlers of our country; filing off in the meantime through the bushes, their top knots and gewgaws waving as far as they could be seen. He wrote that the Indian war whoop was not made, as generally asserted, by strik-

ing the hand upon the mouth, but by screaming through the partially closed hand; neither did the Indians paint their bodies black when going to war, but as near the color of the leaves as possible for the great object was to elude the vigilance of the enemy.

In the afternoon he passed another village of the Sioux where he observed the manner of burying their dead. This band buried theirs in the tops of trees. A rude coffin was formed and suspended by poles to trees, where it was to remain till destroyed. Not having heard of this strange custom of the natives, he had to see the feat before he would believe it.

#### ARRIVAL AT DESTINATION

He arrived at St. Peters, or the Fur Company's establishment as it was usually known, about three o'clock in the afternoon being two weeks within an hour and nearly within the minute, "allowing for latitude and longitude," since he left Cincinnati. The boat was welcomed by a crowd of natives of every hue, size and hideousness. The town of St. Peter's consisted of two or three stone buildings belonging to the fur company, and a few temporary wigwams constructed of elk skins. The stone houses had walls from two to three feet thick and were well equipped with lightning rods. Upon inquiry he found that the country was subject to thunder storms. The wigwams were made by the elk skins being drawn over the poles leaving an aperture in the apex for the escape of smoke; at night this opening was always closed. "The Sioux follow the Franklin system of retiring to rest soon, and rising early. As previously mentioned the Sioux have declared war against the Chippewa for killing two of their warriors, while engaged laudably in collecting pipe stone."

About a hundred miles from St. Peter's is a cavern known as the "Pipe Stone Cave", from whence the Indians obtained all the red stone of which their pipes were manufactured. All nations of Indians resorted to this place; it was considered "Great Medicine" and a

neutral ground to the natives. This red stone, he was told, was held sacred, which accounted for two things: the importance attached to those treaties at which the pipe of peace was smoked, and the great difficulty with which a white man secured one of these pipes from the Indians. The Sioux warriors were assembling in great numbers and on the morning that the passengers were at the Falls of St. Anthony, they united in a great war dance. The Sioux were in constant fear of attack from the Chippewas and so kept sentinels always on the alert. During the night while the Indians were asleep, one of the passengers gently raised the skin that closed the doorway of a wigwam so that he might look in; so light was the slumber of the warriors that in a moment every one was upon his feet with the deep guttural "Ugh". It is needless to say that the white was upon his feet quickly and used them to good advantage.

#### BARTERING WITH THE INDIANS

These Sioux were a lazy and treacherous tribe of Indians, having but few ornaments and unwilling to dispose of them. An old brave offered to sell his pipe for seventy-five cents. The money being advanced, the Indian scanned it a while then returned it, and wanted a dollar. This was given, it was soon returned however with the statement that he would sell it for four dollars. So in all their dealing these Indians invariably refused the first price and desired a second, never selling unless for many times the value of the article.

He wrote that these Sioux were tall and well built but had a great variety of features ranging from "those of the coarse, broad African, to the fine delicate European." The passengers went to the trading houses at the fort looking for ornaments but found none. Mr. Sibley, of the fur company learning of the desire of a prominent passenger to possess a pipe-stone pipe, presented him with one, the only one obtained on the trip. Shortly after this the party returned to the steamboat.

A large barge, with seating accommodations for forty persons, and manned by six bargemen, was sent by Mr. Sibley to convey the travellers to Fort Snelling. When all had embarked the bargemen rowed them to the shore, rowing to the tune of the waterman's song sung in French, a language that sounded strange in the "wilder-ness". Disembarking they ascended the road leading to the entrance of the fort where they were welcomed by Major Plimpton, then in command.

Our journalist walked out on the balcony of Major Plimpton's house, which formed a part of the fort, and was amazed at the beautiful view. At his feet rolled the Mississippi, this being the narrowest point between St. Anthony's Fall and New Orleans. At his right flowed the St. Peter's and upon either side of it stretched beautiful prairies as far as the eye could see. The town of St. Peter's, the Indian encampment, the slough, the Mississippi were all before him in an extended landscape. What a scene for an artist!

In the evening he and a companion strolled across the prairie and were surprised to find gooseberries and strawberries growing wild in abundance. They also noted several large granite bowlders, one of which was about twelve feet square which they estimated would weight at least ten tons. "A rare place to find a rock of that immensity." The presence of granite bowlders of various sizes scattered over this prairie region was the subject of comment by other writers. It must be recalled that in 1837 Agassiz advanced the theory of "continental glaciation" now universally accepted, but he did not fully announce it until 1840, the year this journal was written.

#### VIEWING ST. ANTHONY'S FALLS

The next morning at half-past seven Major Plimpton had the conveyances ready to take the group to the Falls of St. Anthony. These conveyances were two baggage wagons driven by soldiers. The distance from Fort Snelling to the falls by the wagon road was about eight miles,

the road passing through a prairie "variegated with the most beautiful flowers among which were the rich orange lily in profusion, Fleur-de-lis, Pleurisy root, Gromwell, Yarrow, Sweet William and many others. There were no trees except a few stunted black oaks not more than ten feet high." They turned aside to see the "Little Falls which are formed by a creek that originates in Lake Harriet falling over a precipice about sixty feet. 'Tis a beautiful sight, the spray rising forms a rich and lovely rainbow. The scenery around this falls is prettier and more picturesque than that of St. Anthony but sinks into insignificance when we compare its grandeur and majesty."

They arrived at St. Anthony's Falls at nine in the morning. Leaving the wagons at a house near the falls, they walked to the river and gazed upon the object of their journey—The Falls of St. Anthony. He writes, "Through the perversity of 'Capt. Lafitte', as unaccommodating a commander as plies a boat in western waters, we did not remain a sufficient length of time to obtain a full view of both sides of the fall, although what we did see was entirely satisfactory."

He believed that the falls would become a great resort, "superseding fashionable watering places." Fine as his imagination was he could not vision this as the future location of the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the latter destined to be larger than his beloved Cincinnati.

#### STARTED UPON RETURN TRIP

He arrived at the boat about 12:30 p. m. and by the middle of the afternoon had begun his homeward journey, arriving at Prairie du Chien, 300 miles down the river, twenty-six hours later. An interesting sight to him on this return trip was a fleet of about a hundred Indian canoes whose "oarsmen" were Winnebago squaws. He saw the warriors travelling on horseback, thus avoiding the labor on the river.

Commenting on the speed the steamer made coming down stream, he was informed that her engine was out

of repair, that the wheel frequently failed to work when the engine was running full speed, but no repairs were to be made until the steamer reached St. Louis.

Again it rained at Galena where the boat stopped to take a large shipment of lead from the mines. He was "destined always to associate Galena with mud. St. Louis with dust, and St. Peter's with mosquitoes!"

At Davenport he was told that the hotel he visited on his trip up the river would soon be finished at a cost of \$30,000.00. As the town had about 500 people, he felt that the owner was an optimist.

Burlington was reached on Sunday afternoon. He recorded that the Sac and Fox Indians had a skirmish with the Sioux and killed three of them a few days earlier, and that preparations were then being made to have a treaty of peace between these tribes signed, because the Sioux were ready to engage the Chippewas on the upper part of the river and that peace with the Sacs and Fox tribe could easily be arranged.

The evening of June 30 found him back at St. Louis, where he at once transferred his baggage to a steamer sailing for Cincinnati the next day. He again visited the town and found it contained many handsome buildings; and that the people were really hospitable; all in all he was pleased with the city though avowing he would "settle down in Cincinnati, his beloved city."

In less than an hour after leaving St. Louis, he was passing Jefferson Barracks, where Black Hawk, after being captured, was taken by Jefferson Davis, then a lieutenant in the army stationed at Fort Crawford. Politics was the chief item of discussion among the passengers; finally a poll taken resulted in Van Buren being the choice of twenty-eight and Harrison thirty-seven.

July 3 found him at a small village on the Kentucky shore where a Whig rally was in progress. He found most of the voters were Whigs. They had erected four tall poles from which floated Whig flags inscribed with

the names of Harrison and Tyler. A log cabin had been erected on the wharf and the American flag floated from a pole nearby. A barbecue upon a neighboring hill furnished food for all. The steamboat was duly anchored and the passengers disembarked to aid the celebration. A band of music led the advance to the log-cabin where two barrels of "hard cider were turned upon end", and the "heads knocked in". The crowd gathered round and drank heartily to the health of the "Hero of Tippecanoe." A blacksmith's anvil had been perforated to serve the purpose of a cannon thus adding to the noise. Across the river in Indiana, Democrats favoring the administration were flying a small flag in favor of Van Buren; most of them, however, crossed to Kentucky to join the revels of the Whigs. Political debates ran high; the lie was passed repeatedly, but the parties were kept from coming to blows.

He had an opportunity to spend an hour in Louisville on July 4, and revised his opinion of it also. He found it had some residences equal to the best in Cincinnati, and that the "Court House, now building, is of polished limestone; a vast edifice, very handsome."

Later in the day he stopped at Madison, Indiana. A crowd was assembled here to be taken across the river where the 4th of July celebration was a barbecue in the Kentucky woods. This crowd was being ferried across the Ohio in a barge, with cushioned seats, capable of seating twenty-five persons. The crew consisted of five young men, dressed in "blue cloth caps, blue coats and white pants."

Sunday, July 5, found him home in the Queen City, where he repeated "that he would settle down here for life." But the prairie had laid a spell upon him and the lure of the great river was strong. He returned the next year to one of those Mississippi river towns he had visited and spent a long and useful life therein.

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