

## Recollections of the city and people of St. Paul, 1843-1898 /

**RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CITY AND PEOPLE OF ST. PAUL, 1843–1898. BY  
AUGUST L. LARPEN TEUR.**

“There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will.”

I am requested by our worthy Secretary to make some remarks upon the early settlement of our beloved state and the city of St. Paul in particular, for your edification. I shall endeavor to do so in as simple and interesting a manner as I am capable of, under the circumstances. In my early days the benefits of a classical education were not easily acquired, and not within the reach of everyone, as to-day; hence, you will pardon me if my tale unfold incoherently. As a plea for my undertaking to perform this, my duty, I, as well as every other old, settler, owe it to posterity;

The development of the great Northwest was not due alone to the graduates of the Harvards, Yales, Princetons, or William and Marys, but largely to the noble and sturdy class of pioneers, the *coureurs des bois*, the Indian traders. 'Twas they who first penetrated these vast forests and plains, and by their traffic with the natives soon paved the way for large cities like Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and St. Paul, to be built upon their once “happy hunting grounds.” These traders were brave men, many of them men of refinement, choosing this vocation because it brought them close to nature and nature's God. Few but us old settlers can realize the worldly paradise we had here, and no one better than we can understand the reluctance with which the Indians left it.

Before civilization desecrated it, I may say, it was a land flowing with milk and, honey. We had game of all kinds

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\* Read at the monthly meeting of the Executive Council, September 12, 1898.

364 right at our door, and were not circumscribed by game laws; fish of every variety abounded in our many lakes; and a day's ride from where we stand would bring us into buffalo herds. Some great inland seas, and other lakes of less magnitude, but all containing pure, limpid water, shone forth with the reflection of the sun, like so many diadems in the crown of some fairy queen. When Father Hennepin made his report to Louis XIV ("le Grand Roi," as he was called), the king dubbed him "le Grand Mentour" (the big liar). He could not believe such a country could exist, and the good friar had not half told all there was, or that could be said about it. And little did I think, when a boy in Maryland, studying my geography in a Baltimore county schoolhouse, that I would ever see the Falls of St. Anthony. Nor was it my intention, when I left home, to come in this direction; hence, I have adopted the above text. The part which I took in the formation of our state and city was purely accidental. Some of our most worthy and honored citizens came here for a purpose, as governors, judges, etc.; but I came here for "romance alone," to take of nature all she had to give and give nothing in return. This idea came to me from circumstances which I shall treat upon later on.

### **KINDRED, AND MIGRATION TO ST. PAUL.**

My grandfather was a great admirer of Napoleon, and one of his strong adherents, a member of the National Guard, and, after Waterloo, he could not be contented with a Bourbon dynasty. Therefore, in 1816, he packed his grip and came to America, and settled near Baltimore. His family consisted of three boys and one girl. My father was the eldest. His name was Louis. The second was Eugene, who became a worthy citizen of this state and died in 1877, loved and respected by all who knew him. The youngest was named Charles, and of him I shall speak later.

My father married a Miss Simmons, of Mount Washington, Baltimore county. Her father was a drummer in the war of 1812, and was what was called "an Old Defender," a society

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that has now become extinct. They were among those who defended the city of Baltimore from the invasion of the British, and killed their General Ross at the battle of North Point.

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When I was about six years old, my mother died, leaving myself and an only brother. We were taken to our grandfather's, and with him I made my future home. Grandmother, before dying, enjoined my grandfather to care for and have me in his keeping, and truly the good man did, and for years we were inseparable.

My uncle Charles, the youngest of the family, being rather of a romantic disposition and not well disposed to manual labor, embraced the first opportunity to gratify his ambition. A friend of our family, Colonel Johnson, had for some time been an Indian agent at St. Louis for the Sacs and Foxes, and for various tribes along the Missouri. He came to Baltimore for the purpose of receiving his portion of an estate that had been left him. A part of that portion consisted of twenty-five negroes. In course of conversation with grandfather, Col. Johnson said he would like Charles, my uncle, to accompany him out west as far as St. Louis. Here was Charles' opportunity, and he embraced it at once, his father being willing. This was in 1828. His autobiography is now in the hands of the publisher, Francis P. Harper, of New York, as edited by Dr. Elliott Cones, of Washington City, from his diary, which, when published, I shall be pleased to present to this historical Society.

Charles Larpenteur had been in the West about eight years, five of which had been spent in the Indian country, when he made us his first visit. I was then a lad going to school. He brought with him a variety of Indian curiosities, among which were complete suits of an Indian chief and his squaw, all trimmed with beads and the quills of the fretful porcupine. The squaw's dress just fitted me, and he dressed me up for exhibition to our friends; and he, as the great chief, would give the war whoop, and go through their various antics, much to our edification. From that moment, I made up my mind that I would see and realize some of this, and traverse the vast plains, of which he gave us such glowing accounts.

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We were still suffering from the effects of the panic of 1837, and in 1841 my uncle Eugene, who was occupying the old homestead, the "Pimlico farm," made up his mind that he would go west, upon the solicitation of his brother Charles. 366 Thereupon I got the consent of my grandfather to accompany him as far as St. Louis. We came from Baltimore to Harrisburg, Penn., by rail and canal, and also by canal to Hollidaysburg; crossed the Allegheny mountains, descending an inclined plain to Johnstown; travelled from Johnstown to Pittsburg by canal; and thence down the Ohio river by boat to Cairo, and up the Mississippi river to St. Louis, Mo., reaching the latter point about October first. My intention was to remain in St. Louis during the winter, and go up into the Indian country on the upper Missouri with my uncle Charles in the following spring, as we then expected him down in charge of a fleet of Mackinaw boats loaded with their winter's catch of furs. But, as fate would have it, the company sent him the other way among the Blackfoot Indians, toward the headwaters of the Yellowstone river and the great Park, which then was unknown, but today is recognized as one of our most precious national treasures.

This vast country was owned by various tribes of Indians, and California had not yet been ceded to the United States government by Mexico. All traders had to receive a license permitting them to trade, or even to travel or hunt, within these territories. The country was full of game of all kinds, and the Indians lived "like gods." The buffalo roamed in their midst without fear, as if placed there by a bountiful Providence for their special benefit. The fur trade was of vast importance; and, as the Hudson Bay Company, of British America, often encroached upon this territory, American traders kept close to the line in opposition to them. My uncle Charles' services being very valuable to the company, he was induced to remain in the country. Therefore, the fleet of the American Fur Company arrived in St. Louis in the spring of 1843 without him, as it did the spring previous, and I abandoned for that season again the hope of reaching the plains of the upper Missouri. In the meantime, I remained in the family of my uncle Eugene, and assisted him in his vocation. The spring following his arrival he leased about five acres of ground upon which there was a comfortable little house, situated on Chouteau avenue, near Chouteau's pond,

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for the purpose of market gardening; and the two years I remained with him our crops were simply immense. But 367 we could get nothing for them. There was no money. The few dollars he had brought with him from the East he had placed in the hands of a friend, who afterwards failed, producing a crisis; and two years later, with the remnant of the wreck, he returned to Baltimore, and to the old homestead, Pimlico, where he remained until he came to St. Paul in 1849.

By the treaty proclaimed June 15th, 1838, the Sioux Indians, comprising the bands of Wabasha, Red Wing, Kaposia, Black Dog, Lake Calhoun, Shakopee, and Good Road, ceded to the United States government all their lands east of the Mississippi river, thus opening up this country to settlement. No longer was any license required to trade with the Indians. The country was free to all. Quite a number of persons became engaged along the St. Croix river in lumbering, and others in trading with Indians for furs.

In the spring of 1843 a friend of ours, Mr. William Hartshorn, whose business was buying furs, made a trip up the Mississippi river as far as Fort Snelling. Previous to this, a mission had been established, by the Reverend Father Galtier, in 1841, some six miles below Fort Snelling, and dedicated to St. Paul. Around this mission a few families of refugees from Fort Garry and employees of the Fur Company had settled, among whom were Benjamin and Pierre Gervais, Joseph Rondo, Pierre Bottineau, Abraham Perry,, Vital Guerin,\* Scott Campbell, Francois Morin, Menock Dyerly, James R. Clewett, Sergeant Richard W. Mortimer, and Edward Phalen. The only accessible landing for boats was near this mission chapel of St. Paul, in consequence of the high bluffs between that point and the fort, and hence the vicinity of the mission became the site of our beautiful city, and its name was given for the patron saint of the chapel.

\* Mr. Guerin's first name has been often misspelled Vetel, in accordance with its pronunciation.

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When my friend reached this point, a gentleman boarded the boat and joined the party for the fort. This was Mr. Henry Jackson, who with his wife had located here the fall previous. He had traded with the Indians, and had accumulated quite a quantity of furs. These Mr. Hartshorn bought, and at the same time formed a copartnership with Mr. Jackson. Returning to St. Louis, and buying an outfit for the firm, he called upon me, giving me a history of his venture and intentions for his future trade in this new and but little known Indian country. He said there were half-breeds from the British American districts who visited St. Paul for the purpose of trade and all spoke French, and as I spoke that language he would like my services. Here was my opportunity. I had a chance at last presented me to see a live Indian; and, being tired of waiting for a place in the Missouri country, I engaged myself to this firm for an indefinite period at eight dollars per month and expenses. I was glad to get anything. A man's services had scarcely any value at all, and what he produced about the same. Oats sold for six cents per bushel; dressed hogs at one and a half cents per pound; and porter-house steak at five cents per pound, with all the liver you desired thrown in. St. Louis county and city orders were selling at forty cents on the dollar. Such was the state of things at that time.

Having made the needed purchases, and consummated our engagement, I left St. Louis on the steamer Iowa with an outfit, September 1st, 1843. At Galena, one of the most important points between St. Louis and Fort Snelling, in consequence of its great lead mines, which were at that period attracting as many prospectors as California at a later day, we reshipped all our outfit on board the Steamer Otter. Capt. Scribe Harris was in command, and Capt. Thomas Owens was clerk and supercargo. We reached our destination here September 15th, 1843, just fourteen days after our departure from St. Louis. This was considered quite a quick trip. Just think of the difference in time now. The Otter was a small sidewheel steamer, propelled by a single engine. She had a very loud voice, and you could hear her escape for miles.

### **POPULATION AND TRADE IN 1843.**

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Upon my arrival, I found my employer's partner, Mr. Henry Jackson, and his estimable wife, with whom I was soon made to feel at home, and for many years I was pleased to look upon her as a mother and friend. Society was crude, but pure and devoid of affectation. The white population, taken all together at that date, in the vast territory that now includes the great state of Minnesota, the two Dakotas, parts of Wisconsin and Iowa, and all the country across the 369 Missouri river to the Pacific coast, did not exceed three hundred. To-day we count them by the millions. The Indian and the buffalo have disappeared and given place to habits of civilization, with its railroads, electric cars, rules of etiquette, and conventional customs. We found this country new. We were beyond the bounds of civilization, beyond the frontier. The former we enjoy to-day with all its advantages; but the latter, the frontier, where is it ? Can any man tell? It has disappeared forever.

Our trade was with the natives, and with them I became exceedingly interested. I acquired in a very short time sufficient knowledge of their language to get along nicely with them in their trade, and in a couple of years became quite proficient. In fact, I was obliged immediately to study up the language, because I needed to use it as soon as the fur season commenced, which was in November. All furs are considered in their prime at that season; mink, otter and coon, in particular. I was usually sent out to their hunting grounds with various articles for trading, and I would pick up a good many muskrat skins that others knew little about. The country abounded in game, and I soon became an expert in the chase.

Competition was great in those days. One had to keep on the alert, for the American Fur Company regarded the fur trade as exclusively their own, and when Louis Robert, James W. Simpson, and Hartshorn & Jackson, came upon the scene, they were looked upon as intruders. I remember on one occasion, it was a Christmas eve, we were all enjoying ourselves at citizen Robert's; I believe it was on the occasion of the celebration of the marriage of his niece to Mr. Simpson. About ten o'clock I withdrew, having my train already

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loaded, and started out with Scott Campbell as my interpreter, and Ackawasta as my guide. We reached Little Canada about midnight, and camped by the side of that beautiful lake, with nothing but a Mackinaw blanket for my covering. Old Scott Campbell was very fond of his nips, and he and the old Indian were having a jolly good time, while I was attending to the domestic affairs necessary for our comfort. Having felled a good-sized oak tree, preparatory to making our camp fire, old man Campbell rose up in order to help me, when he stumbled 24 370 over the log and fell head foremost into three feet of snow, and before I could dig him out I thought he would smother.

I had not been long in the country before it became necessary that I should have an Indian name. One day, "Techa," Old Bets' brother, came into the store, and being quite a wag, from some act of mine, he baptized me "Wamduska," the serpent, and by that name I have been known from St. Paul to the British line and wherever there was a Dakota Indian. I soon learned to speak their language fluently, and have always retained their confidence and good will.

The Indians then received their annuities with commendable regularity, and for many days after the yearly payment the old traders and their visitors would enjoy to their hearts' content a lively game of poker, and a stranger who would happen to come around was sure to be amused. Such old fellows as Donald McDonald, William A. Aitkin, and some others, the names of whom I have now forgotten, could entertain the most adept, and give them a percentage besides. On one occasion, I remember one of my employers about the Christmas holidays thought he would make a trip up among these traders, because, having sold more goods for cash than was desirable, and having no use for the money until spring, he wished to invest it in buying some of their furs for cash. Taking a friend along, he remained away about ten days, returning without money or furs. He said that upon their arrival, they found it impossible to invest their cash in furs. The traders would not sell. Their returning home without furs and without money was accounted for by the statement that on their way down, just a little above Anoka, while they were on the river, the ice gave way and they were precipitated into the water and lost the saddle-bags



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containing their money and came near losing their lives besides. They resolved to go back at once, after procuring rakes and other tools, in hopes that they might be able to recover the saddle-bags and the money. Next morning bright and early they started back, taking me along. We reached "Anoka Sippi" (Rum river) about camping time, but, a thaw having come on, in the morning we could not cross the river. The snow had nearly all gone, hence we were obliged to return without further search for that money bag. 'Twas just as well, for although I was 371 not a very bright boy, and had many things yet to learn, 'twas just as I had surmised. The company's money got into a hole before it reached that in the Mississippi river. Oh, these old traders were a jolly set, and whenever you came in contact with them they always left you something to remember them by.

The old firm dissolved shortly after that, and divided their stock, Mr. Hartshorn removing his post to a place situated where the Central Police station is to-day, on Third street at the head of Hill street. This house was built of hewn logs by Sergeant Mortimer, and contained three rooms, a bedroom at one end, a store room at the other, and a living room, which served both as kitchen and parlor, in the center, with a huge fireplace in one corner, built of stone and topped off with a flour barrel.

### **MARRIAGE, AND OUR PIONEER STORE AND HOME.**

Before this dissolution took place, in the year 1845 I married my wife, the sister of the late Bartlett Presley. She came up from St. Louis for that purpose, as this was to be our future home, and I had not the means to make the trip to St. Louis to bring her up. You see it was economy to have her come and have the hymeneal knot tied here, and also showed a good example to our friends hereabout. Mr. Hartshorn's family being still in St. Louis, it became very convenient for him to have us take charge of his domestic as well as his commercial affairs, and hence the situation accommodated us all along the line. We would have been put to considerable inconvenience had Mr. Hartshorn not been able to avail himself of this location.

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Sergeant Mortimer having died, Mrs. Mortimer was left a widow with four or five children. About this time William Evans, an old soldier and acquaintance of the Mortimers, whose time had expired, having received an honorable discharge, took a claim on what is now called Dayton's Bluff. They became engaged. Henry Jackson being at the time a justice of peace, they presented themselves before him to have the nuptial service performed. From some cause or other, he declined to do it, saying he did not feel that he had authority to perform the ceremony, but he would draw up a contract binding them to have the rite performed as soon as it could be legally done. The contract was drawn and duly signed, and as Mr. and Mrs. Evans could not occupy both places, they elected to take for their home Dayton's Bluff. Thus Mr. Hartshorn got the original Mortimer claim. Mr. and Mrs. Evans lived happily a number of years on the bluff, when they sold their claim to Mr. Lyman Dayton, after which they moved to Cottage Grove, and in that vicinity have both gone to their reward.

Moving into our new quarters, we soon began to make our little home as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Many times it became very monotonous and lonesome for this young wife. The nearest neighbors we had were Mrs. John R. Irvine on the south, Scott Campbell on the east, and, in order after these, the families of Vital Guerin, Benjamin Gervais, James W. Simpson, then a bachelor, and, finally, on the extreme edge of the bluff, on the corner of Jackson and Bench streets, were Henry Jackson and his estimable wife. Mr. and Mrs. Irvine were our nearest and most congenial neighbors. My wife was accustomed to spend much of her leisure time with them, their house being in sight and within a stone's throw of ours.

At times it used to be very lively about the shop, that is, during the fur season, when sometimes we would have so many Indians lying about the floor you could scarcely move around without stepping on one. We always had to keep them over night and feed them besides. Trading was mostly done at night anyway, as they did not like to pass the fur

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company's place of business at Mendota when they could be seen, for some of them were owing the company. Oh! the Indian is human, and don't you forget it!

Let me say right here, we owe a debt of gratitude to the wives and mothers of the old settlers and pioneers of Minnesota. It is to them that many of us owe the blessings we now enjoy in this North Star State. Many of them left the comforts of home, and friends, loving mothers and doting fathers, to follow us adventurers into an unknown land, and how well they have done their part! Many of us would have fallen by the wayside, but by their prayers and helping hands they have bidden us rise again, and thus we were enabled to face 373 the stern realities of life. Such were the wives of the old settlers, and to them is due all praise for the benefits we are all enjoying here to-day.

To one of these I may say I am indebted for being able to be with you this evening. It was a dark and dismal night. My wife had retired. I was about closing up. There were yet a few embers aglow in the fireplace, when a knock was heard at the door. We were alone. I opened the door, when an Indian came in, seating himself by the fire. I was in hopes that after he had warmed himself he would get up and go away. I entertained him as well as I could, but he became very abusive, and before I could think he drew his knife and was in the act of making a plunge at me, when my wife in her white sleeping gown appeared in the door, thus diverting his attention, which gave me the opportunity of grabbing his hand in which he held the knife, and disarming him. I was his equal then. I left him a fit subject for the cemetery, and threw him over the bluff. Next morning he crawled up and came into the house, and I assisted him to perform his ablutions and gave him a good breakfast. We parted friends, and were friends ever thereafter. Such scenes as these were not infrequent to wives and mothers of the pioneers of Minnesota.

On another occasion, by appointment, my mother and my sister and her husband met me in St. Louis on their way to Minnesota to make it their future home. I had been there purchasing my spring stock, and had shipped all aboard the steamer Excelsior, commanded by Capt. James Ward. We reached home, all well, and with nothing out of

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the usual course of things happening. The next morning after our arrival, my brother-in-law was helping to open a crate of crockery ware. which stood in the stock in front of my store, and my mother and sister were standing upon the porch, when a baud of Ojibway Indians, coming down Jackson street, made an attack upon some Sioux Indians, shooting into Forbes' store, and killing one squaw, the sister of Old Bets. You all know Isaac P. Wright. He is a particular friend of mine, but I must say that, in his zeal and enthusiasm, he sometimes deviates from veracity. In an article which he wrote giving a description of this affair, he says: "At the time of the at tack, A. L. Larpenteur was opening a crate of crockery ware 374 and had his hands full of plates and dishes; he was so frightened that he let them fall out of his hands, and they broke all to pieces." Now, you all know it was Wright that was frightened, and not Larpenteur.

Going into the house, my sister "roasted" me to a turn for bringing them here to be scalped, and for some time they were hard to be conciliated. Finally, like Claude Melnotte with Pauline Deschappelles, I located them on the bank of Lake Como, where they still reside.

### **HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE OJIBWAY AND SIOUX.**

In the spring of 1842, the year before I came here, a war party of Ojibway Indians made an attack upon Little Crow's band of Sioux at Kaposia, close south of St. Paul, killing some eighteen or twenty of their best soldiers. They came from the St. Croix, and early in the morning of the attack they secreted their men in ambush along the coulie just below the present fish hatchery, where the old poor farm used to be. From there at early dawn, they started two scouts to make a demonstration on the village. Before they reached the site of the village, however, they came upon Francis Gammel's house. Two Sioux squaws were hoeing potatoes, a little patch of which they had in the yard. They shot and scalped the poor women, and from this an alarm was given. The Sioux on the village side, west of the Mississippi, immediately started as many as they could in pursuit. The scouts kept in sight, but at sufficient distance to be out of danger, and thus led the Sioux completely into

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the ambush, when the fight began, and eighteen of the Sioux fell at the first fire. Quite a number of the Ojibways were killed outright, and some of the wounded were dispatched afterwards by the women who followed in the rear. Old Bets told me that she dismembered one. He was a tough fellow, and, her hatchet being dull, she had a deal of hard work before she could accomplish her object satisfactorily.

Three years previous to this attack, two Ojibways, hiding in ambush, near Lake Harriet, had killed a Sioux, immediately after many hundred, Ojibways, having smoked the pipe of peace with the assembled Sioux at Fort Snelling, had departed northward by two routes for their homes. The Ojibways 375 were, therefore, pursued and overtaken by the Sioux, their hereditary enemies, and two battles were fought, one in the valley of the Rum river and the other at Stillwater, on the ground where now stands our state penitentiary. Mrs. Carli, still living, the sister of the late Joseph E. Brown, told me the last time I saw her, not long ago, that she saw the Stillwater battle. The Sioux were victorious in both those battles, and, having taken many scalps, returned in triumph.

In the attack against Kaposia, old Bets' brother "Techa," called Jim, lost his leg. It was broken below the knee and hung by a fragment. He took his knife and cut it off himself, and thus became his own surgeon. It healed, and the year following, when I became acquainted with him, he had made himself a wooden leg of the most improved style. He was known to the later settlers as "Peg-Leg Jim." Old Bets' oldest son, Taopi, who long afterward, in 1862, aided to save white settlers from massacre, and became one of General Sibley's most trusty scouts, was also wounded in this fight, whence he received this name (Taopi, the Wounded). For a long time, even after I came here, the excitement in regard to this raid by the Ojibways was the topic of almost every day's conversation, and an Ojibway Indian was supposed to be hidden behind every bush.

### **THE JACKSON HOTEL, WITH AN ANECDOTE.**

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The Northwestern territory began about this time to attract more or less attention from tourists, and Henry Jackson was obliged to furnish to them shelter and accommodation such as he could afford from the scanty means he had at hand. His hospitality soon became known, and there were at all times some guests stopping at his caravansary. About this time there were several permanent boarders stopping with him: W. G. Carter, a cousin; Thomas Sloan, a stockman; and W. Renfro, a Virginian, a good fellow, who had wandered out west to get rid of society. There was also a Mr. Joseph Hall, a native of Wilmington, Delaware, a carpenter by trade. These boarders, with the balance of us, constituted the regular household of the Jackson Hotel.

This man Hall, poor fellow, was about half-witted, and very fond of the society of ladies. He spent all his earnings, 376 on the arrival of every boat, and on other occasions, for sweetmeats and delicacies with which to treat them, all of which was very nice and commendable in him, of course; but, as there must be always some bitter with the sweet, our friend Renfro, being considerable of a wag, thought we must have a little fun at poor Hall's expense. Consequently, calling him aside one day, he said: "Yesterday, while taking my usual walk out on the road leading into the interior, I met a couple of nice girls. They inquired of me if I knew Mr. Joseph Hall. I told them I did. They told me they were about getting up a suprise party for Michel LeClaire, and that they would require your assistance, that they would be pleased to meet you here about dusk to-morrow evening, in order to make the necessary preliminary arrangement, and that you should be sure to bring a friend along."

This road coincided nearly with the course of Jackson street. It extended out beyond the Dawson residence, and thence on toward the Rice lakes, being an old road of the Indians, used by them in going out to their hunting ground every fall. From the description of the girls, Hall knew them at once. Everything being arranged, the following evening four fellows started out arrayed in war paint, blanket, and gun loaded to the muzzle with blank cartridges. No. 1, Henry Jackson. was stationed, in ambush, on the extreme

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outpost; No. 2, William G. Carter, was stationed about 200 yards this way; No. 3, Thomas Sloan, was stationed about 200 yards farther in; No. 4, Mr. Blank, was stationed nearer in, farthest from the enemy. At the proper time, Mr. Renfro, with Mr. Hall, came along, earnestly engaged in conversation, passing the concealed pickets all right, to the extreme outpost, precisely where the girls were to be. All at once, Jackson rose up out of the brusk, articulating some Ojibway word, blanket over his shoulder, and fired his piece. Renfro fell to the ground, at the same time saying "Hall, save yourself; I am killed." The poor fellow issued a yell of distress and started on a canter, reaching outpost No. 2, when a salute was given him, and another quickly from No. 3, and, as he rushed past, before you could think, No. 4 gave him the coup de grace. Such yelling and running was never seen nor heard of 377 since. He made his way to what was known later as the Baptist hill. An Ojibway half-breed, Mr. Pierre Bottineau, lived there, and at that very time a ball was going on at his house. Mr. Hall made his way there and gave them a history of his woes, saying that he was taking a walk with his friend Renfro, when at a certain point of the road they were fired upon by Ojibway Indians, that his friend was killed, and that he escaped by a miracle.

The ball was broken up for awhile, and some of the male portion started out to investigate, taking Hall along. They could find nothing, and thought they would go over to Jackson's and see what they could learn there. They entered his store, which was also the bar room, sitting room and everything else, when lo and behold, the dead man was sitting on the counter smoking his pipe, with the other fellows alongside of him, apparently unconscious of what had happened with our neighbors. It soon became apparent that a good joke had been played on someone, and for a time the half-breeds were a little disposed to take a more serious view of the situation. But someone suggested that we throw oil upon the troubled waters, and the demijohn was passed around. All then adjourned to the domicile of neighbor Bottineau, and the ball went on again, with renewed energy, until the next morning.

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Poor Hall became a victim of the Sioux outbreak, as I have since learned; and in regard to Renfro we must record that the poor fellow's career ended not less unhappily. He was a gentleman of refinement, but, unfortunately, became too fond of his cups, and I believe that for that reason he came out here to try to overcome this habit. But it was the worst place he could have come to. Edward Phelan, or Phalen, from whom lake Phalen derived its name, had his shack not far from where the palatial residence of William Hamm now stands; and when Renfro would have one of his spells come upon him, he would hie himself off to Phelan's, and there remain until he recovered. On one of these occasions he rose in the night and slipped away from Phelan's with nothing on but his drawers. It was in winter, with snow on the ground, and Phelan gave us the alarm the next morning. It having snowed a little during the night, he could not track him. Hence, 378 when he came in and told us of the circumstance, we all started out for a systematic search. I found him lying at full length, frozen stiff, not far from where is situated to-day the Van Slyke Court. We buried him at the head of Jackson street. May his soul rest in peace. He was a good fellow, of a kind disposition, but a victim to a morbid appetite. A lesson—but, alas, learned too late by many.

### **FIRST SURVEYS AND LAND CLAIMS.**

In 1847 we laid out the original town plat of St. Paul, having to send to Prairie du Chien for a surveyor, Mr. Ira B. Brunson, for that purpose. The plat contained about a half mile square, bounded by Wacouta, Eighth and St. Peter streets, and the river to the point of beginning. The present Jackson street was the only accessible way to the river. and it was very steep. We drew our goods up on a sled, a forked tree with a piece bolted across the end, the stem used for the tongue, such as the farmers in Maryland and Pennsylvania used to draw rock out of their fields. With this implement Mr. Vital Guerin hauled up all our goods from the landing with his yoke of oxen. A barrel of whisky or flour made a good load. Such was Jackson street when I first saw it. From this date our city began to be known by the outside world, and immigrants began to come in.



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The United States government soon subdivided the lands, and a land office was established at St. Croix Falls. We were all in Wisconsin yet, and General H. H. Sibley, Capt. Louis Robert and myself were selected by the inhabitants of the town to enter all these lands upon which the original plat was laid out, as well as lands adjoining, and then to re-convey to the various parties interested their respective pieces. We were all called squatters. Many lots had been sold, and after title had been obtained from the government, it was necessary to re-convey and perfect these titles, all of which was subsequently satisfactorily done. We anticipated some trouble at the land sale from speculators, who usually attend these sales for the purpose of outbidding the settlers. To provide against a contingency of this kind, and to protect the rights of the boys, we provided ourselves with a brigade of old fellows, 379 some dozen or more, and they carefully guarded our tents while we went to attend the sales. General Samuel Leech was the receiver, Col. C. S. Whitney the register, and B. W. Lott the crier. All being ready, the business began. There were quite a number of bidders. When our pieces were called, we bid them in, and everything passed off in good shape; but I assure you, gentlemen, had any poor fellow attempted to put his finger in our pie, he would have heard something drop.

### **ORGANIZATION AND GROWTH OF MINNESOTA TERRITORY.**

On our return from the land sale, we held a convention at Stillwater. The State of Wisconsin had previously been organized, and left us with a portion of her territory. At that convention we petitioned Congress to grant us a territorial organization. Our prayers were heard, and Gen. H. H. Sibley, after a hard fight, was admitted as our delegate, and the Territory of Minnesota was organized. From that date immigration poured in upon us from all quarters.

I have seen sixteen large steamers lying at our levee at one time. One day I counted sixty carpenters' tool chests being unloaded from the beats then in port. The rush then for this new Eldorado was nearly like the great tide of goldseekers who went to California during

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the same years, from 1849 onward. Some learned wisdom, and stayed with us: others left for other parts. Many valuable and influential citizens came into the territory at this time. Our agricultural resources began to develop, and we were soon becoming self-sustaining, and it was not necessary any longer to import all our food. Trade with the settlers began to be of as much importance nearly as with the Indians, and we were obliged to diversify our stocks. An occasional silk dress was required, or a fashionable bonnet.

### **EXPERIENCES OF THE EARLY TRADERS.**

In the spring of 1848, William Hartshorn had sold out his interest to his clerks, D. B. Freeman, Augustus J. Freeman, A. L. Larpenteur, and William H. Randall, Jr., who formed the firm of Freeman, Larpenteur & Co. We removed our stock into our new building, begun by Mr. Hartshorn, and 380 finished by the new firm. This was situated on the corner of Jackson and Second streets. The building was used later by William Constans, and finally came into the hands of the Milwaukee railroad company, and was used by them for a baggage room until torn down. When it was built this was the first building on this side of Prairie du Chien. We kept our dry goods in the second story, the groceries in the basement. A nice convenient platform for the second story was reached by huge steps, and steps ascended also to the top of the bluff at Bench street, leading up town past the Central House and uniting with Third street at Wabasha.

Before I proceed any farther, a little circumstance presents itself to my mind, which perhaps right here is as good a place to mention as I may find. One of my partners, Mr. A. J. Freeman, had rather an aggressive disposition; if there was anything going on, he was sure to be in it. One morning I was in our office, quietly attending to my business. Freeman was behind the counter waiting upon some customers, when lo and behold, the Hon. William D. Phillips, a notorious attorney at law, came into the store, and, before you could think, he had a pistol out of his pocket and pointing at Freeman's breast, saying at the same time, "Retract, or I will put a hole through you." In an instant, I picked up a fire poker and flew between them, saying, "Up with that pistol, or I'll brain you." The pistol went up,

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and peace was: proclaimed. The pistol was one of those single-barreled shooting irons of the Derringer style. and was loaded to the muzzle. I remember now seeing the piper wad sticking out. Our attorney left here shortly after that, and I think removed to Washington, D. C.

In the spring of 1849 St. Paul began to assume cosmopolitan importance. James M. Goodhue came among us with his oracle, The Pioneer. I have in my scrap-book the veritable first number stricken off. The office was just above us, and in C. P. V. Lull's shop. Its date was Saturday, April 28th, 1849. I find, upon looking over the directory therein contained of the business and professional houses and firms, that but few are left.

I would like to record here the names and firms and different advertisements of that day. They were up and doing, 381 but it would require too much space and time. One, for instance: "Horse Mantua-Maker, A. R. French, on Third street, in St. Paul, is prepared to make and furnish Saddles, Harness, &c." Freeman, Larpenteur & Co. were wholesaling, and carried stock to suit the trade, quality and quantity, viz., 50 barrels of old rectified whisky, 20 barrels of sugar-house molasses, 15 boxes of cheese, etc., etc. Readers don't see that they dealt in flour. Perhaps that was taken for granted. However, be that as it may, we did our share, and our future seemed sublime.

The Winnebago Indians had been moved to Long Prairie the year before, and that event brought a deal of new business into the country. I had been accustomed to making trips every winter, and as soon as the sleighing became good I suggested to our firm that we load a couple of teams and make the rounds. I expected nothing different but that I should be selected to go; but Mr. A. J. Freeman thought it best that he should go, because he knew Gen. J. E. Fletcher, the agent, Sylvanus B. Lowry, the interpreter, and Charles Rice and N. Myrick, Jim Beatty, Marsh, and White, etc., all right. We selected a nice assortment of just such goods as we supposed would be wanted, and started my boy off in good shape with two teams. He reached Long Prairie in due time, sold all his stock, amounting to about \$1,500, had a good time with these friendly traders, was well entertained (as no

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one knows better how to entertain than one of these old Italian traders), and started on his way home without a cent! He had fallen into the hands of the Philistines, and they had fleeced him. Arriving at Swan River, he stopped over night, and a streak of luck struck him, and he left for home in the morning with \$1,200 of money. So, upon his return, in footing up the cash, he could not account for \$300, all of which we charged up to "suspense" account.

A few weeks later, I told the firm, it being a little dull, that I thought I would take a trip and see what I could do. I picked out a nice assortment of goods, such as I deemed would be wanted about that time, and started with two teams, driving one myself. I reached Long Prairie in due time, put up my teams, was treated royally by the agent, Gen. Fletcher, 382 and others; sold a portion of my goods, and made arrangements for leaving early the next morning. During the evening I made several visits, and found all very much interested in making the time pass off agreeably for me. Finding that I did not take, one of my friends said to me, "Why, you are not like your partner; he left \$1,500 with the boys when he was up here." I then began to get upon the track of the shortage, and on my way back, at Swan River, I learned of his "luck," and concluded that, had there been more money in the pot, he might have made his shortage good. So, when I returned, I called Mr. Freeman to one side and told him to charge his private account with the shortage of \$300, as I had found out all about it; and in the following fall and early winter the firm of Freeman, Larpenteur & Co. ceased to exist. I sold it out to John Randall & Co., of New York; and, one of the Freemans having died, A. J. took his portion and opened a place of business at Rice Creek, and in about one year he closed that out, removed east, and died. I agreed to remain with the new firm until spring, and did so.

In the meantime I had made arrangements to build me a store on the lot adjoining my little dwelling, on the corner of Jackson and Third streets. This was the second frame house built in St. Paul. The first, which had burned down, was built by Captain Louis Robert, a little earlier. The lot above referred to was what subsequently became lot 14, block 26, St. Paul Proper, which I bought of David Faribault, as a claim, for \$62.50 in a horse trade. The

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building now occupying it is known as the Hale Block. I had a horse which Mr. Faribault wanted. He had a 140-foot claim at this point. My price for the horse was \$80; the price of his claim was \$125. He urged me to take the whole claim and pay him the balance when convenient, but I dared not then assume such an obligation. Consequently, I only took half of the lot and trusted him for the balance, \$17.50, and I believe I was two years in collecting it, if at all.

I built my palatial dwelling upon this lot, which afterwards became the "Hotel Wild Hunter" ("Zum Wilden Jäger"). The work was done by Aaron Foster (who married one of the widow Mortimer's girls), J. Warren Woodbury, and Jesse H. 383 Pomroy. The latter is still alive and with us; the other two are dead. The painting was done by James McBoal, one of the best and laziest mortals that ever lived.

### **RELATIVES COME TO ST. PAUL.**

Times had not improved much in St. Louis and the West, and my uncle Eugene, whom I left in that city, being discouraged by losing what little money he possessed, returned to Baltimore in 1845, and took charge again of the old Pimlico farm. My grandfather who was then beginning to feel the weight of years upon him, welcomed him back. My uncle was a thorough agriculturist, and as I had had eighteen years' experience myself in that vocation, when the agricultural advantages here began to develop, I wrote to him, giving my opinion and advising him to come out here and locate upon some of these lands while they were cheap, and that I had selected a tract which he could have if he wished.

He showed my letter to my grandfather, who said: "You have been west once, and came back disappointed. Drop the idea, and I will deed you one-half of this farm." He said, "Father, if you deed me half of this farm to-day, I will sell it to-morrow; I am going West where that boy is just as soon as I can raise the money to go with." "Well, if that is your intention, advertise the place, we will sell it, and I will go with you." The place was sold. This was the spring of 1849. The cholera was very bad that year all over the West,

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and especially in St. Louis. While transferring from one boat to another in St. Louis, my grandfather met some old acquaint. ante upon the levee, and this good friend was careful in admonishing my poor old grandfather, telling him not by any means to go up into the city, as they were dying at the rate of five hundred a day. The good old man, having been suffering for years from chronic diarrhea, fell down on the pavement and had to be carried on board the boat. He never arose again. He managed to live, however, until he reached St. Paul, when he died on the third day, fully conscious to the last. We buried him, not having a cemetery at that time, at the head of Jackson street, near Tenth street. In course 384 of time, Jackson street was to be graded. We removed his remains to a cemetery back of St. Joseph's Academy. Afterward, when Iglehart street was opened and graded, his remains had to be removed again, and now they lie in peace, we hope, in Calvary cemetery. Thus we had the gratification, at least, of paying a portion of the debt we owed to that good old soul for the care of me when left without a mother.

Shortly after the obsequies I took my uncle to view the country for the purpose of selecting a location. I showed him the tract which I had selected as one which suited me. That was the present Kittsondale or Midway, as it is called today. It suited him. He developed it and made a garden of the spot. Upon it he reared his family, all respectable citizens, and both he and his good wife have long since gone to their reward. "Requiescant in pace."

### **TREATIES WITH THE SIOUX.**

The lands east of the Mississippi, obtained of the Sioux Indians by the treaty of 1837 and opened for settlement, were being taken up so fast that it became necessary for the government, through the urgency of the settlers and speculators, to acquire the lands on the west side. Hence the treaty of Mendota, August 5th, 1851. Although the previous treaty had been made and duly signed, it was not satisfactory. The Indians claimed that when ceding their lands in 1837, east of the Mississippi river, they had retained the privilege of hunting upon these lands for fifty years, or during good behavior, all of which I fully believe to be true, neither party thinking then that it would be unsafe to make such an

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agreement. No one would have thought that before the expiration of that time the territory would contain more than a million inhabitants and have a valuation of several hundred million dollars of taxable property.

The Mendota treaty became an absolute necessity. By that treaty, and by the slightly earlier treaty of Traverse des Sioux, made July 23d, 1851, the several Sioux bands of southern Minnesota ceded to the government nearly all their lands in this state west of the Mississippi river, and were removed to reservations on the upper part of the Minnesota river. Two 385 agencies were established, one about eight miles below the mouth of the Redwood river, and the other on the Yellow Medicine river. There being more or less dissatisfaction among these Indians, when, the Civil War broke out, it took but little to kindle the fire of rebellion among them. The massacre of 1862 took place, and history is replete with its consequences.

### **TRADE WITH THE FAR NORTHWEST.**

After the removal of the Indians from Mendota in the year 1852, Their direct trade with St. Paul ceased; but it always remained the headquarters for outfitting traders for the various adjacent tribes. This trade extended even into Manitoba, and in that direction was of great importance. It was no uncommon sight to see from a thousand to fifteen hundred carts encamped around "Larpenteur's lake," in the western part of our present city area, loaded with buffalo robes, furs of all descriptions, dressed skins, moccasins, buffalo tongues and pemican. The latter commodity was dried buffalo meat pounded and put up in 100-pound sacks, for their winter use. It was their chief supply of food, and was husbanded with the same care by these old hunters as a farmer gives to his corn. A failure in the gathering of this crop of buffalo meat by the hunters, sometimes caused by the buffalo being scarce, or driven in other directions, was as serious a matter to the inhabitants as the destruction of a farmer's wheat crop by hail storm. A voyageur, when sent out by the traders, was seldom given anything else to subsist upon but a hunk of this pemican for his daily ration. And in conversation with these old voyageurs, many of them old employees of the Hudson

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Bay Company, I have been told that their daily rations often were no more nor less than one load of powder and ball per day, and that, being in a country where game was in abundance, they seldom went without a meal. These traders would reach here about the first of June, having left Fort Garry, now Winnipeg, as soon as the grass had grown sufficiently for their cattle to feed upon; and, in returning, they would get back about the middle of September. 25

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### **GAME, AND ITS DECREASE.**

Game was plentiful in those days. A poor man even with an old flint-lock gun and black powder could decorate his table once in a while with a duck, goose, or a piece of venison; but to-day, alas, where are we drifting? All are preserves. The Island pass, the Rondo pass, the Baldwin pass, all are fenced in and belong to the powers. The poor man is not in it any more. We, who have been piling abuses upon our cousins across the big pond, are we not getting there, too? The consequences are rapidly being felt. To me, it matters but little. My race is nearly run. But I cannot help looking back, and comparing the difference in the times; we had the cream, you are fighting for the skimmings. Oh, could you but realize the days your ancestors enjoyed upon these grounds you are now preserving, when Sibley, Faribault, Robert and, Larpenteur were taking an evening shoot at the Island pass, when Louis Robert would cry out at every falling duck, "Hie, hie, don't shoot! That's mine!" Then there was fun all along the line. It didn't matter much anyway. There was enough for all, and for the Indians besides. There was sport then; 'tis labor now.

### **STEAMBOAT TRAVEL, FREIGHTING, AND ADVENTURES.**

Not having any railroad communication in those days, when all traffic depended upon the river, we sometimes ran down to Galena or Dubuque in the autumn to "stock up," because once the navigation closed we were in for all winter. Getting goods up by sleighs was rather expensive. In the fall of 1856 I found I needed a few more goods to carry



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me through the winter. Consequently, I ran down to Galena, bought what I needed, and found Capt. Louis Robert in port on his way up from St. Louis with his 'boat, "The Greek Slave." I had shipped my goods upon his boat, and was all ready for home, when, behold, the crew struck. His engineer, Bill Davis, who was his nephew, was all right; his pilot, George Nicholas, one of the oldest and best on the river, was all right. Monti, the mate, an old veteran of the Mexican war, was all right also, but the others of the crew wanted guaranties that, in case of a freeze-up, they would be returned to their homes free of expense.

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Here was a dilemma. The captain wished to reach St. Paul with his boat so as to lay her up there all winter. It was then about the first of November. Something had to be done. Outside of the parties above named, only one cabin boy and the chambermaid remained. She called the boy to her, saying "Tom, go up town, tell Mike to come down at once and be steward of this boat, and if he refuses, tell him the first time I meet him I will cut his throat from ear to ear." Mike came down. With what we could pick up we started out for St. Paul, reached Dubuque all right, had a barge in tow when we started, and took on another at Guttenberg, also some cattle. The crew getting pretty well used up, the second morning out found us on a bar about five miles below Winona. There we lay until about four o'clock in the afternoon. Working all day, the pilot, engineer, mate and captain all exhausted, I began to believe and think we were planted on that bar for the winter.

Picking up courage, I stepped to the captain and addressed him thus: "Captain, you are sick, and need help. Give me your overshoes and overcoat and command of this boat, and I will see her through to St. Paul." The captain made a complete resignation. He said, "Larpenteur, take her." The man, as well as his crew, was exhausted, and had lost self-control. I put the captain to bed, took charge of the boat, set my spars, kept what I got, and with capstan and a few revolutions on the starboard wheel she yielded, and, from the time I took the boat, in a half hour I was at Winona. I told the boys to be patient. Seven miles above was Fountain City. It was yet light, and we would make that point, when I would

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put them to bed. We reached that point while yet twilight. I made all I could spare turn in, telling them that I would have them waked up at midnight, thus giving them about six hours' sleep.

A barge was to be left at this point, upon which there were some cattle. They were to be put upon the boat. All things being ready, I began the transfer of my cattle. The poor things had been abused, and were afraid for their lives, but all went well enough in transferring except an old bull. 388 He had been pounded over the head till he scarcely dared to move one way or the other. However, he was finally induced to step upon the staging, and there he stood neither willing to go one way nor the other. Finally I told one of the men to bring me some ear corn. I gave him one ear and patted him at the same time on the head and shoulder and offered him another ear, at the same time commanding the men to keep perfectly quiet. He approached that ear and took it, and with about four ears of corn I landed my refractory bull aboard of my boat, amid the cheers of my deck hands, thus showing that kind acts are appreciated and have their reward by a dumb animal as well as a human being.

I had all on board then turn in except the watchman. At midnight, all refreshed, I had steam ready, some hot coffee and lunch, called every man to his post, and stood on the hurricane deck the balance of that night. We landed in Stillwater about three o'clock the following afternoon. I had a horse on board of the boat and a saddle, and an idea struck me that I could reach St. Paul quicker on horseback than by boat, so I called the captain up. That was about twenty-four hours from the time I had put him to bed, and he was sleeping yet. I awoke him, delivered my charge back to him again, took my horse, and near the setting of the sun was at home with my family. The boat got in next morning and laid off for all winter.

In taking a retrospective view of those times, it makes one feel sad. What has become of those palatial steamers, the masters of which trod their decks with pride, in the knowledge of their ability to meet all responsibilities? Then the pilot—why, he was looked upon as

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endowed with supernatural powers! Indeed, it would seem so; for in those days there were no beacon lights around the bends. as to-day; all he had to guide him was instinct, and it was a pleasure to see such men as Wash Highs, Billy Cupps, Pleasant Cormack, Pete Lindall, John King, George Nicholas, and others, handle the wheel of a dark night. What has become of all this? Our poor Mississippi river, are you going to dry up? It makes 389 one who has seen her drain the product of this great valley from the Falls of St. Anthony to the balizes that guide the pilot coming in from the sea, feel that he has lost a friend.

In those days, you boarded a steamer in St. Paul for St. Louis, for instance. The cost of passage, including meals, was \$10. You were four days making the trip, giving you plenty of time to get acquainted with your fellow passengers, and a wholesome rest from your arduous labors, if you had any, besides the recreation. To-day, how is it? You have scarcely time to recognize any one on board but the conductor, and we are driven at such lightning speed that many of us are landed in an insane asylum, and the word is "get out of the way or you will be run over."

The masters of our steamers in those days, were every one of them a Dewey or a Schley. There were few strikes in those days. The malcontents, if any there were, were afraid. They would say "If we kick, why, the old man will take the wheel or the engine himself, for he can run it as well as I can." Hence, they would put up with the ills they had rather than, to fly to those they knew not of. These captains when treading their decks were the envy of us all, and with pleasant recollections we refer back to our friend and fellow old settler, Capt. Russell Blakeley, of the "Dr. Franklin," whom we still have with us; Capt. D. S. Harris, of the "War Eagle;" Capt. Orren Smith, of the "Nominee;" Capt. James Ward, of the "Excelsior;" Tom Rhodes, of the "Metropolitan;" Capt. Dick Gray, of the "Denmark." with calliope attachments; and John Atchison, the captain of the "Highland Mary."

I was on board when Capt. John Atchison died. I happened to be in St. Louis in the spring of 1849. I had completed my purchases and shipped all my goods on board of his boat, which was to leave in the morning. I was stopping at the Virginia Hotel. About eight o'clock

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in the evening, I was sitting in the rotunda of the hotel, when Capt. John came in. I asked him about the time of leaving; he said, "Early in the morning." I told him I was ready, having shipped all my goods, and would be with him. He said to me, "Larpenteur. I feel a little lonesome; come on board now." I settled 390 my bill, and, after we had walked down to the boat together, I drank a mint julep and smoked a cigar with him. Both of us retired in apparent good health as ever, about eleven o'clock. At four o'clock the following morning he was dead. Cholera was very fatal that season. His brother, Pierce Atchison, brought the boat up. I could enumerate many of these old Mississippi river steamboat captains whose memory it is a pleasure to recall. All of them were noble, generous men, and they all did their part in developing the resources of the great Northwest.

One I had almost forgotten, Captain Monfort, renowned for the Indian flute. Did anyone board his boat and possess the least bit of curiosity, he was sure to, remember his Indian flute. It was an instrument about one foot long, decorated with Indian hieroglyphics and filled with flour, and when played upon it would fill the operator's eyes and face full, to his utter amazement and to the gratification of the initiated. Some would take the joke philosophically, and settle the question at the bar. Others, a little more sensitive, would not fare so well. But there was scarcely a trip in which the Indian flute of Capt. Monfort failed to get in its work.

### **VINDICATION AND EULOGY OF THE PIONEERS.**

Now, rather than to prolong this paper unduly, I shall attempt to conclude, and will say that I am now drawing near my fourscore years of age, fifty-five of which have been passed near this spot. Fifty-five years in the life of a man is a very long time, but in the life of a country or state is but like a grain of sand upon the sea shore. What history has been written in this short space of time! Nothing equals it in the annals of the world. And, did each of us, as we pass along the rugged ways of life, make a note of current events, what an aid that would be to the future historian. Alas, we think of these things when too late. Of all the actors who were on the stage here, fifty-five years ago, there are none remaining.

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They have all gone. They were not bad men. They took their toddy as I do to-day from off my sideboard, while others deem it best to to be taken in their cellars.

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Some historians write up Pierre Parrant, my old friend, as a very wicked man. I knew him well, and have to take issue with them. The only offense I could charge him with, if it could be called an offense, was that he sold whisky. Well, tell me who didn't. His word in a deal was as good as any other man's, whose word was good at all.

Edward Phelan (or Phalen) was one of those simple, plain, uneducated Irishmen; he stood six feet two in his stocking feet; he had been discharged honorably from the United States service, about the same time with Sergeant Mortimer. Phelan and another similarly discharged soldier, Sergeant John Hays, made claims together and built their shanty about where the electric power house is located on Hill street. One morning in September, 1839, Hays was missing. The body was recovered in the river near Carver's Cave. Phelan was arrested, taken to Prairie du Chien, there remained in prison for over six months, was tried and acquitted. He never killed Hays; the Indians have told me since that Hays was not killed by Phelan. They always spoke to me as though they knew who did kill him. After Phelan returned, he attempted to take possession of his claim, but other parties had jumped it, and he drifted lower down and took a claim and built his shanty not far from where the palatial residence of Mr. William Harem now stands. Old Phelan was human. He took his toddy, too, but he would not injure a hair of your head, while I knew him.

They are at rest now. It matters not what the present generation has to say about these fellows. They had their faults, but are we perfect to-day, that we can: go back and criticise with impunity the lives of these old pioneers, who have been the forerunners and helped us on the way to the blessings we enjoy here? I say, No. Bury their imperfections with them in their graves; keep their virtues in memory green like the sward above them.

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Of a later period. I am happy to see yet with us a few of those blessed spirits whom the world would be lonesome without. Here are Nathan Myrick, Capt. Russell Blakeley, John D. Ludden, W. P. Murray, S. P. Folsom, Alexander Ramsey, and some few others; but, as they are still in the flesh, 392 I dare not express my sentiments regarding them and what I think of them, for fear there might be some exceptions taken. After they have retired from the sphere of action, it will be time enough then.

Before concluding, however, I will except one, you, Alexander Ramsey, our Aleck. Minnesota owes you much. You took her while in her swaddling clothes. By your wisdom and sagacity you nursed her to maturity, and then again you were called to care for her, in the nation's greatest need. By your wise and prudent judgment of men and measures, you failed not to call into your counsels the best men for your lieutenants, as demonstrated in the selection of that Christian gentleman, the poor man's friend, Gen. H. H. Sibley, capable, and honorable; and hence your administration has ever been successful. Minnesota has honored you, sir, 'tis true, but no more than you have honored her. You have always been willing to advise and confer with your constituents, and hence always will be one of us.

Your successor was somewhat different, although we all liked Willis A. Gorman. He had some peculiarities. Well, who has not? He insulted me on my first introduction to him, on the day of his arrival, when the boat landed at the foot of Jackson street, with the new governor and retinue on board. I was, like all the others, interested in seeing him come ashore, and was standing on the corner of the Merchants' Hotel, opposite to my store, when the governor came along, escorted by Col. J. J. Noah and Morton Wilkinson. Approaching me, Wilkinson said, "Governor, allow me to introduce to you Mr. A. L. Larpenteur, an old Indian trader; he is perfectly familiar with the Indians, and speaks their language; his acquaintance may be of some benefit to you?" "How do you do, sir? I came here purposely to look after these Indian traders; shall see to them, sir." I thought the new governor was a scorcher, and thus the matter rested. In the course of a very short

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time a delegation of Indians, with Little Crow at their head, called upon the governor. Their interpreter was out of town. The governor addressed a very polite note to me, requesting me to come up to the capitol, as the Indians wished to have a talk with him. I respectfully returned his note. at the same time 393 reminding him of his remark on the corner by the Merchants' Hotel. Little Crow came after me, and at his request I went, and the New governor saw that man needs his fellow man, and that we are each othe's keepers. We were always friends thereafter, as this little episode brought us nearer together.

Gen. H. H. Sibley was an Indian trader. Notwithstanding, when the Indian outbreak took place, you did not hesitate to call him to your aid. In so doing, the high character and integrity in which he was held by the Indians showed subsequently that you made no mistake. Had he precipitated the attack at Camp Release, as poor Custer did at Big Horn, the ninety-one hostages held by the hostile Indians would have been butchered. But, by diplomacy, the lives of all of them were saved and the hostiles were captured, without losing a man. Which of the two was the better general? 'Tis not for me in this article to say.

Minnesota, the gem of the constellation of states! I have followed your progress from infancy to maturity. I have seen you when you had to be fed as a suckling child, and ere my earthly career has closed you have contributed largely to the support of others; your hidden resources have all been developed since I saw you first. Little did I think, when stepping off the steamer Otter, September 15th, 1843, that to-day your new executive mansion would be built upon land bought by me from the government at \$1.25 per acre. And again, while in pursuit of my vocation, camping with Hole-in-the-Day, the elder, at Watab, I remember casting my eyes upon those great outcrops of rock lying there, of no earthly value apparently. Yet there was a gold mine in them., and I have to-day been permitted to see specimens of this rock, artistically hewn and polished, form a part of the material out of which our capitol building is being built. It is a pleasure to me to note that our little family bickerings were finally laid at rest last July 27th, 1898, with the laying of the corner-stone of that building; but let me add, in conclusion thereto, that those who opposed the meager appropriation granted will regret their act. Within the lifetime of some

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of them, the state of Minnesota will contain three millions of inhabitants, and this building, large and capacious as it appears for the present needs, will 394 require an annex, as with our new United States postoffice building to-day.

Old settlers and, fellow contemporaries, I cannot close this already too long paper, without expressing my gratification and pride, though one of the humblest among you, in being placed in your midst as one of the old settlers and pioneers of Minnesota. The brightest legacy I can leave my children is that their father was one of those who founded and helped to develop the resources of this great state. No state in our Union had a better class of men to begin its existence with. They were men of energy and intelligence,— God-fearing men, hence successful. In 1843 I found the territory of the present states of Minnesota and the two Dakotas having, if we include the soldiers at Fort Snelling, only about two hundred white inhabitants. To-day, I see these states with over two millions of people. Is it beyond the bounds of probability to say that seven years hence, “Our Minnesota” will have two millions herself? I think not.

Our climate is unsurpassed anywhere, and our winters are becoming milder every year. Those of us who passed our early days in the Middle States remember only too well the mud of early spring and late autumns, and icicles three feet long hanging from the roofs of our houses. We have none of that here. Our roads are simply perfect all the time. I look back with regret at the loss of the good sleigh rides we had here in the days of “Auld Lang Syne,” which recollection at times makes us old men almost wish we were boys again.

My dear friends of this present generation, whenever you meet one of these old settlers and pioneers of the frontier, tottering toward the grave, throw the mantle of charity over him; overlook his imperfections, and remember that it was he who blazed the trees, marking out the path which made it possible for you to enjoy the blessings you possess here in the great and glorious State of Minnesota to-day.