1837. 1847. 1894.

A REMINISCENT HISTORY

OF THE

VILLAGE AND TOWN OF LAKE MILLS,

JEFFERSON COUNTY,

EMBRACED IN A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS, FROM 1837 TO 1847, AND WHILE WISCONSIN WAS A TERRITORY.

BY

ELISHA W. KEYES.

"All of which I saw,
And part of which I was."

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE PEOPLE OF LAKE MILLS.

ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen of Lake Mills: To fill up the gap from 1837 to 1894 would require fifty-seven years and those years would only measure the time since my father's family settled here in 1837. To commence at the beginning of this period with a backward look from today; to carefully scan the succeeding ten years, bringing to the fore from that long buried past, the facts, incidents and prominent figures of that early settlement, would seem to be a draft upon one's memory that could not be honored. Yet, knowing myself and the tenacity of my memory, from those boyhood days, I know that it is clear, and

"True as the needle to the pole,
Or as the dial to the sun."

From the storehouse of that memory, I have brought forth the facts and reminiscences embodied in this address. Fiction is given no place and nothing is credited to the imagination. I only fear you may set down as trifling and uninteresting, so much that is necessarily personal to myself in many of the incidents herein related. But, being dear to me, I submit them to your kindly interest.

I remember when a boy in Vermont my father procured an old-fashioned atlas, with the apparently unsettled northwest territory traced upon it, and calling my older brothers to him, pointed with his forefinger on the map to that portion of the territory which began along the southern point of Lake Michigan, and extending therefrom in a northwesterly direction. He pointed to the mouth of the Milwaukee river, and, said he, "Boys, there's where we want to go; that country offers splendid inducements for settlers. There," said he, "must be water powers and timber."

At this time I was but seven years of age, still I remember the deep interest I took in the conversation, and the impression

that it made upon my mind. Following this discussion about locality, in the year 1836, my father wended his way thither, going to Milwaukee and later to Jefferson county, finally making claims to lands in that portion of the county afterwards known as Lake Mills, though the land was not then in the market. Having made up his mind to settle at that point, he communicated with my mother, then resident with her children at Northfield, Vermont, and arranged that the family should start for the country that had just been organized into Wisconsin territory.

In pursuance of this determination, on the second day of May, 1837, the family, consisting of my mother and brothers, Abel and Oliver, and sister Katharine and myself, started in wagons, with a few household goods, for Burlington upon Lake Champlain; thence by steamboat to Whitehall in New York, and from that point by canal. Near Utica, my father, coming from the west, met us upon the way and guided us to our new home. Embarking at Buffalo upon the steamer Bunker Hill, after a very pleasant voyage, with scarcely a ripple upon the lake, we landed in Detroit.

From Detroit we traveled in covered wagons along the swampy roads of Michigan, and through Northern Indiana to Chicago. After dragging our wagons through the muddy streets of that embryo city, little dreaming that some of us would live to see it contain nearly two million people, we started on our winding way for Milwaukee. The road was muddy and the country almost wholly unsettled. In the heavy timber between Racine and Milwaukee, and nearer to the latter city, we became stuck in the mud and were obliged to remain all night, waiting for daylight to extricate ourselves. In the morning we proceeded on our way, and finally, in the afternoon of the 17th day of June, 1837, we emerged from the heavy timber upon the banks of the Milwaukee river at what was then known as Walker's Point.

We remained in Milwaukee until autumn, occupying a frame building, two stories with basement, on the northeast corner of Oneida and Broadway. This house had been constructed by my father at a place called Navarino on Green Bay, and shipped to Milwaukee where it was put up. Its location at that time

was really in the woods. There were no buildings in front of it to the river, and but one between it and Wisconsin street. After we became settled I attended school at the old court-house taught by Eli Bates, and between our house and the court house the bush was so thick that I frequently became lost, until I had thoroughly learned the way.

Milwaukee was then but a village of a few hundred inhabitants, yet it was the largest and most important point, if I remember rightly, in all the vast expanse of country west of Milwaukee. For some years after, it was thought that Milwaukee was more likely to become the great city of the west than Chicago, but subsequently the railroads turned the tide in favor of the latter city.

The year before, which was in the summer of 1836, my father had visited the country now known as Jefferson county, and made claim to about a section of land, now comprising Lake Mills village and its surroundings. He was very anxious to move his family to that point. Therefore, in the latter part of September, we were on the move again to reach, what was then pictured to us to be, "The Promised Land."

We left Milwaukee with two teams, one of which was a wagon drawn by oxen, containing our household goods and the women of the party, who could not well walk over the rough and muddy roads. We passed through Prairieville, now Waukesha, which place had only one or two log houses, and across Summit Prairie through Oconomowoc until we struck the woods, through which we traveled until we reached the present site of the city of Watertown. At a place in the heavy timber, not far from the Rock river known as Sacias, we were overtaken by a heavy rainstorm, and we had to search for the best shelter we could find. In a clearing near at hand we found a shanty with the body made of small logs, and with the roof partly covered with split timber. Into this we all huddled, and after partaking of the last of our provisions waited for the morning, which finally came and found us thoroughly wet from the storm. We gathered ourselves together, formed anew the procession, and started with the two wagons for Watertown, not very far ahead, at which place we arrived in the afternoon. All we saw at this place was a dam across the river, partially constructed, and the foundation for a sawmill

with two shanties not far away. We crossed the river, passing on to our objective point, and at about a mile or so distant, in open country, we reached a log house occupied by the family of Timothy Johnson, where we stayed all night.

The next day was to finish our journey, and while the distance was only about twelve miles, we knew it would be a great undertaking to reach our destination by nightfall. After making the best time we could during the day, we reached the ford at a place now known as Milford, just as the sun was declining in the west, and we ferried across the river in a boat constructed of two Indian canoes, bottomed with split bass wood planks, upon which the wagons rested, the horses and cattle fording the stream.

After crossing the river we started through the oak openings with no road, not even an Indian trail, seeing no human being, not even a shanty, until after dark when we struck the present site of Lake Mills where, near the lake, after crossing the slough, on the property now owned by Gherika Bros., we found a floorless shanty shingled with a hay stack. Our horses and oxen were picketed in the best manner possible for the night, and some of our household goods were unloaded from the wagons. We were entirely out of everything to eat, and we were certain to go supperless to bed unless something could be cooked. The sheet iron cook stove was placed upon its legs upon the ground, and a fire started. The program was to make some biscuits and boil the tea-kettle for a cup of tea, and that was to be our supper. A fire was started in the stove but it would not burn. There was no draft. The smoke issued from it in every direction. It commanded our best efforts to make it perform its duty, but it would not. We were nearly discouraged. Our party had gathered around it watching with deep solicitude the result. All the ingenious devices we could think of were applied to it to make it work, and we were all giving up the effort in despair. My father said, "We will try two things more, and if they fail we will give it up." The first was to set some hay on fire and thrust it into the pipe hole, which was low down, to dry out the dampness, which, he thought, might have gathered there from being so long exposed to the rain during our journey. This was done. No change in the stove. The next and last move was to put up a long stretch of

pipe pointing towards the stars, at least, twelve feet. When the pipe was erected, new fuel was applied, and soon the stove was singing away right merrily with a splendid draft that made our hearts glad for we knew it meant a supper for a hungry party. Soon the cakes were mixed and baked, the tea-kettle boiled and tea was made, and we sat around upon the ground partaking of our supper, very thankful that it had been vouchsafed to us.

After supper, with darkness having set in all around us, my father found another most difficult problem to solve. The question was, "Where were we all to sleep?" It must be in some manner beneath the shelter of the hay stack that topped the shanty. Across one end of the same my father gathered away the chips and chunks and limbs and old musty hay, supplying in their places hay of a better quality over which were spread some blankets, and one large resting place was provided. When it was ready we all gathered around and went to bed in the following order. Next to the logs was placed my brother Abel; next to him Mr. George Farmer; then came his wife and my sister Kate; then my youngest brother Oliver, and next in order was myself; and when we were all packed in snugly my father took the outside, and his place came mainly upon the ground with nothing between. I will state here that Mr. George Farmer and wife accompanied us from Milwaukee, and that my mother left us in the Watertown woods in order to lighten our load, and went to Aztalan in company with other travelers.

While we were occupants of the shanty, we had some rather interesting times and varied experiences. From the south, toward Illinois, my father had secured a yoke of oxen for labor, and a cow had followed them in, which animal was designed for food. As we had no feed for her, it became necessary that she should be dispatched and made into beef. So one bright morning all hands were called together to participate in the slaughter. We had corraled the animal in the bush, in fact surrounded her, and George Farmer with his rifle was to be the executioner. The cow was as wild as a deer, and seemed to anticipate what was in store for her. It was some time before an opportunity was presented for a shot. The rifle went off with a loud report, and away went the cow—over the hills and out of sight. We all rushed after and surrounded her again. All

were very much excited. Soon another shot was made—aimed at her head by George Farmer, the marksman, though not a farmer. The cow shook her head and away she went again. This was very discouraging. My father became alarmed. He thought we were going to lose our hold upon the animal. The time came when there was another opportunity for the rifle to be brought into play. My father shouted to Farmer at the top of his voice, saying, "Shoot again. If you can't hit her in the head this time, shoot her in the paunch." The rifle sounded again and the cow came down, and an ax finished the final effort. This occurred a little way from our shanty and the dressing took place where the cow fell. We had made sure of our beef. We did not wish it to become food for the wolves. We wanted it ourselves. It was brought in and protected as fully as possible, but that night a drove of gray wolves surrounded the shanty. The smell of blood had sharpened their appetites, and portions of the animal had been seized by them and dragged quite a distance, but we all rallied to save it from loss.

The next night it was arranged to lie in wait for the savage brutes. No sleep for us that night. Volney Foster, who joined us, was posted in a secure place armed with a rifle. As the night progressed the howling of the wolves was heard, and some of them approached within a few feet of the shanty. Soon the report of the rifle rang out loud and clear and a big, gray wolf fell pierced with a rifle ball through his body. Though not dead my father finished his career with a blow upon the head with an ax.

We occupied this primitive habitation for a number of weeks, but it was necessary for us to have a better place than this to live in during the winter; therefore, my father proceeded at once to construct a log house upon the site now occupied by W. H. Raynes' dwelling. It was built and ready for occupancy before the cold weather came. In this house we lived for several years. We had very little, if any, furniture to furnish the house with after it was finished. Only a few of the most essential articles could be moved from the eastern home. No chairs, no tables, no bedsteads, nothing hardly but the old traditional feather bed, and a meager lot of crockery for the table. I remember very well the manner of construction of our log house. Logs were rolled one upon the other, crossing at the ends and

interlocked together and between the logs we put wedges of split oak, filling the chinks in with mud from the bank. The floors were made from plank split from oak, and the shingles were turned out in the same manner. The table, which we used for many years, was made of oak, and the chairs were simply three-legged stools with plank to cover the three legs. Old settlers have a keen recollection of them.

In the end of our log house was an old-fashioned chimney, with a hole cut through the end for the stone work, with the chimney extending to the top of the roof, built of split oak and mud. It was several years after this log house was constructed before a frame house was erected in any part of the county. After the saw mill commenced operations and we could saw boards for building purposes, a frame addition of one room and chamber was built on the north end of our log house. It was a great addition and was appreciated very highly. The old land marks, the log houses, have now almost wholly disappeared, and with the old pioneers will soon have returned to dust.

My father had selected this site upon the stream near the lake with the intention of constructing a saw mill and a grist mill there. The former was built and in running order in '39, and the grist mill in '42. All his efforts during this period, and under the most discouraging circumstances, were devoted to the construction of the mills, which, I think, were about the first, if not the first built in Jefferson county.

The early settlers of Lake Mills and Jefferson county were all men of small means. They had but little money. Many of them found it difficult to furnish bread for their families during the time the ground was being cleared and broken in order to produce a crop. At the time, and for several years subsequent, provisions were very high, and the market the early settlers had was Milwaukee, some fifty or more miles distant, with the roads almost impassable. I remember that in the spring of '38, we had gotten out of provisions, and my father started for Milwaukee for some flour and pork. The weather was bad and the roads almost impassable. After an absence of over three weeks, during which time the family was very much alarmed for his safety, he returned, having spent all his money, with just one barrel of flour. This was nearly all loaned out in

a short time to the settlers, who had not even money enough for their necessary wants.

A kindly and fraternal feeling prevailed most emphatically among all the early settlers. There was no fighting, no wrangling. They all agreed and were desirous of helping one another in whatever they had on hand to do. If one had a barrel of flour and a little pork, he most cheerfully loaned a portion of it to his neighbor, and thus some families were enabled to subsist that otherwise would certainly have gone hungry.

It hardly seems possible in this day of plenty to realize the condition of things which then existed. There was a time when the settlers in the vicinty of Lake Mills and Aztalan really suffered from hunger. They were apprehensive that they and their families might starve to death. A meeting was held one Sunday in a log house at Aztalan occupied by Capt. Thomas Brayton, where the settlers came together and considered this difficult problem, which had become to them a serious one, that is, what they were to do for something to eat. At this meeting the oxen in the settlement, which were about the only beasts of burden, were counted up and an estimate made as to how long the band of settlers could subsist upon them in case they should be reduced to that extremity. The question was most carefully and prayerfully considered by the men and women who were present at that meeting. I have seen my father with his head bowed low upon his hands in deep thought and meditation, and when my mother attempted to arouse him by the inquiry, "Joseph, what is the matter?" he would lift up his head and say, "Olive, I know not where we are to get provisions to live upon much longer."

I recollect one instance, which I shall never forget, when we were entirely out of provisions of every kind, and my father started in the afternoon for Capt. Brayton's at Aztalan to see if he could not borrow a few pounds of flour. The sun went down, and he had not yet returned. Darkness came, and my mother and the children were much worried for fear some accident had befallen him. He had gone on horseback, leaving one horse in the stable. About nine o'clock we heard the neighing of a horse in the distance, which was answered by its mate in the stable, and shortly afterward my father emerged from the opening across the creek, and soon reached the door, lead-

ing his horse, and from the open door and by the light of the fire, which shone through it, we saw something had happened to him. He was wet and muddy, and held in his arms a little bag or bundle. His first remark to my mother was, "Olive, we are ruined." He proceeded to relate that upon his homeward way in crossing the Big Slough, about midway between the two places, his horse had stumbled upon the floating logs, and thrown him and the bag of flour he carried into the mud and mire, where the horse and rider and flour remained until he succeeded in extricating himself. He then grasped the bag of flour and carried it to dry land, the horse following. Thence he wended his way homeward. The flour had been soaked in the muddy water of the slough, and he had reason to think that it was entirely destroyed; but my mother, who always took a hopeful view of things, endeavored to comfort him by saying that perhaps it was not so bad as he expected. The horse was put in the log stable, and the bag of flour brought in and laid upon the floor, and my father and mother and us children gathered around the bag as the strings were unfastened waiting in eager expectancy for the result. As the top of the bag was opened, sure enough, so it appeared, the muddy water had done its work, but soon the dough cracked open, and inside there appeared good dry flour. The end of the bag was turned backward, and the dry flour taken out. After this had been secured, then the dough, the result of the mixture of the marsh water with the flour, was carefully scraped off and sacredly preserved and eaten by the family. For a little while we had two kinds of bread upon the table, that made of the mixture I have spoken of for the children, and the better quality for the older people, but the children did not complain. We were satisfied with it because it would appease our hunger.

The early settlers were not good hunters nor expert fishermen. They had to learn these arts by practice. In those days there were no breach loading guns. If a settler could get hold of an old flint-lock fusee from the Indians for a little barter and use that for his gun, he was doing exceedingly well. It was a long time before any white man proved himself alert enough to shoot a deer. It was said that a disease known as the "Buck Fever" rendered their aim so unsteady that they failed to bring down such game, although the woods were filled with it. There

were deer in great abundance, prairie chickens, partridges, ducks and geese. At that time there were no quails nor rabbits for the reason, as I supposed, that the wolves and foxes destroyed them. The streams were full of fish. One of the most useful and substantial articles of diet for the early settler was the "sucker," which was found in great abundance in the lake and in the Crawfish river, and in the springtime could be obtained by the wagon load. Reaching the lake here late in the fall, we, of course, did not "catch on" to the ways of the fish, but the following spring, which was in '38, the great wealth of our lake was most singularly unfolded to us. Our log house was but a few rods from the bank of the stream. A little way from the house was the stable and near this stable was a small dam that had been constructed across the creek that flowed from the lake, to raise the water on a level with the bank so the horses could drink more easily. It was springtime. The snow had gone, but the ice was not all out of the lake, and the water in the creek was singing merrily as it proceeded on its way. Just at sundown one day, my brother Oliver and myself went to water the horses at this rise of the water above the dam, where they were in the habit of drinking. In looking into the stream we discovered that its bottom was literally covered with very large fish. I called out to my older brother Abe to come there and see what it meant. He at once took in the situation, and ran to the stable and came back with a pitch fork, when he commenced pitching out the fish. Very soon my father was called and put in an appearance, and we all pitchforked those "suckers" until late in the evening, not stopping until we had secured, at least, a barrel full. It was with great satisfaction that my father remarked to my mother, "Now, we are all right. There is no more danger of starving when we can get plenty of fish, and the indications are that the supply will be fully equal to the demand." As soon as we got fairly started in the fish business, we had fish for breakfast and fish for dinner and fish for supper, and, in fact, fish all the time.

There was a young, green fellow, a sort of a Pennsylvania Dutchman, who had wandered west, working for my father. He was possessed of an enormous appetite, and he also seemed possessed of great courage, for he never feared that he might choke himself with fishbones. The rest of us were a little care-

ful upon that point and looked over our fish with care, but Laurence Becker had a knack of eating fish that double discounted ours, and it was frequently said that he could shovel fish in at one side of his mouth, and the bones would fly out at the other. His skill in this respect was certainly wonderful, and my statements in regard to it are not in the least exaggerated. After mentioning this circumstance a number of years ago at a meeting of the old settlers in Fort Atkinson, an old pioneer, whose name I have forgotten, but who resided in the southeastern part of Jefferson county, said, "Keyes, you have told the truth about Becker. He was the almightiest eater I ever knew. He used to work for me before he went to your father's, and after he had eaten us out of house and home, we let him slide." All of the old settlers will remember that it was a common remark that they had so long a time been restricted to a fish diet that they did not make an attempt for months to change their shirts, the fishbones sticking through and preventing such an operation.

It is true that at this time we occasionally got hold of a little of what was called "Hoosier Pork," which rooted its way up from southern Illinois. The pork, it was said, was made from a class of hogs whose snouts were so long they could reach through the fence and root up the third row of potatoes. The pork was so poor and lean that we had to catch fish and save fat enough from the latter to fry the pork in. With this pork and the fish and the corn bread, which for a long period of time constituted our diet, we managed to get along.

An old settler in our log house was heard complaining of his fare. He said he had nothing to eat but corn cake and "jerked pork." In answer to an inquiry as to what kind of food "jerked pork" was, he replied, that it was a piece of pork tied firmly to one end of a strong string with the other end of the string nailed securely to the center of the oaken table. The pork was passed around and swallowed by each person to grease his throat, and was jerked back for further use.

As I said it was a long time before the settlers learned the knack of procuring game, either venison or wild fowl in much quantity. In this age of luxury and plenty, when one scarcely goes hungry, or certainly needs not, it would seem very strange if the father of a family who, as the members of his household

gathered around the table, should be obliged to divide up the food in so many equal parts, and say to each one, "This is as much as you can have and no more;" but in those early times it was frequently practiced. Many times have I known it to be done by my father in his family.

The first settlers in Jefferson county were American-born. The great tide of foreign emigration, which since that time has set in so strongly westward, had not then begun, and it was a number of years after the first settlers came to Jefferson county before the foregn-born sought homes here. The first settlement was of Germans near Jefferson in '42, and the first German girl I ever saw was engaged in my father's family as a domestic. She was a girl of good birth and education, who came there and was willing to work in order to learn the English language, and when she acquired that she returned to her home near Jefferson. That was a period before hired girls had become an institution. There were no girls who sought employment of this character, and if there were any in the settlement who were willing to assist their neighbors in domestic matters, they were the daughters of American parents, and not ashamed to work out. About this time or, perhaps, a little later, the Norwegians began to settle in eastern Dane county.

Before the establishment of stores for general trade, the settlers bought their supplies of dry goods and knick-knacks mostly of peddlers, and this class of dealers was quite numerous at that time, appearing at every house. The two Cooper boys, Horace and Lucius, were early in that business, and must have started out in the year 1840. They finally opened a small store at Aztalan, and in 1844 they moved their goods to Lake Mills. These two young men were active and energetic, enured to hardship and possessed of untiring energy; and they pushed their business with great success.

One of the earliest marriages in Lake Mills was that of Horace Cooper and Julia Wiliams, early in 1845. At that time there was not in the village any person authorized to tie the knot. To meet the emergency a boy was started for Aztalan with two horses, riding one and leading the other. He quickly returned with Justice Joel Gardner riding the extra horse, and very soon the ceremony was performed.

There was another peddler who plied his vocation here for a

while, during the earliest years, by the name of Alvinza Hayward, but he soon became tired of this business, and, marrying Charity Hathaway, one of a large family of daughters who resided across the river at Milford, he started for California where he now resides, and where he has since been visited by a few of the old residents of this region. His career there was successful, and he became a many millionaire. At one time the girl Charity, afterwards his wife, was a member of our family, in the capacity of general assistant at house work at so much per week.

Payne and Byington were the first general dealers to open a store in this village, which must have been in '39 or '40. They were followed afterwards by the Cooper boys, and Codwise & Fleury.

At the period of which I write Wisconsin territory might be said to be full of Indians. They were to be found and seen in almost every portion of it. They were the orignal settlers and occupants of these beautiful lands. The smoke of their wigwams could be noticed in many directions. They were a happy, healthy and stalwart race. They had not then become demoralized from their intercourse with their white neighbors. The lake here and its surroundings was one of their best hunting grounds, and crossing the creek where the bridge now is, was their trail as they came from the northeast to hunt along the southern shores of the lake, and it was almost an every day occurrence for them to return, passing our log house, going to the northeast, laden with venison and other game, and they were always ready for barter of some kind. What they desired most was whiskey. A drink of whisky would buy a saddle of venison or any other article they possessed, even to their last rifle, but all decent settlers always refrained from dealing out this fire-water to them, because when intoxicated they were ugly and dangerous.

I remember one afternoon in '38, when my mother was alone in the log house with the younger children, my father and my older brother Abe being absent, a band of Indians loaded down with game came from the south end of the lake and stopped in the yard in front of the log house, and their leading Indian entered the room. Seeing upon the shelves several vials filled with medicine, he commenced a search through the bottles for

whiskey. A taste or two of their contents satisfied him so that he wanted no more, and he gave it up. It was washing day. A big tin pan stood upon the table containing wet clothes. An old Indian wanted to buy the pan. A trade was struck up between him and my mother, and for the pan he gave a quarter of venison. My mother happened to think that possibly an old calico shirt, which was up the ladder in the chamber, might suit him; so it was obtained, and when he cast his eye over it, it evidently pleased him. He went out to his pack and brought in a saddle of venison, put it on the table, snatched the shirt and put it under his blanket, evidently afraid that the trade would not be consummated. My mother with great firmness ordered him to pull it out and put it upon the table which he did, angry and mumbling in his Indian tongue. After he had done this, she said, "All right; now, we swap," and he took his shirt and tin pan, and very soon the band passed out of sight in the openings.

A band of Indians dressed in their war paint once gave me a terrible fright. We were surprised in the forenoon of a day by a visitor at our house, and my mother when she came to take an account of stock found that she had neither tea nor coffee for dinner. So it was decided that I should go to the nearest neighbor, which was one of the Atwoods, about a mile and a half distant, to see if I could borrow a small quantity of one of these articles. When about a half a mile from the house I espied in the path before me a dozen or more of Indians. As they had also seen me, it was of no use to retreat; therefore, I made up my mind to go ahead. As I came in sight of these stalwart fellows, I noticed they had formed some plan in reference to myself, and they soon commenced trying to pull me off the pony I was riding, jabbering and insisting it was their pony, but I stuck to the animal thinking they had no serious intention of doing me any injury. After a while I broke away from them and put the pony to the top of his speed. One of the Indians on foot chased me quite a distance, being able to outrun my pony, and when he got within shooting distance he would drop upon one knee, take aim and pretend to fire, but only flashing the powder in the pan of his unloaded flint-lock rifle. It was enough, however, to frighten me almost to death. Finally he got tired of the fun, and I proceeded on my way and

borrowed enough coffee for a drawing. On returning home I found the Indians. My brother asked the leading Indian what their intentions were regarding me. He answered saying, "We only wanted to frighten the little papoose."

It was an old saying that you could not tame an Indian, and I remember an early effort in that direction which was a dismal failure. The family of Mr. Armine Pickett discovered a young Indian about twenty years old, who appeared to be a good subject for the white man to try his taming process upon. He was known as "Indian John," and was domiciled in Mr. Pickett's family for some time, working upon the farm and performing the usual services of a laboring man, and he seemed quite handy. He lived in the house, ate with the family, slept in a bed and seemd to take naturally to the habits and practices of his white brother. One winter he attended the district school as a companion to his white brother, James Pickett. He sat in the school house during the school hours, and pretended to study. He seemed to be desirous of learning something from books, but he was a dull, stupid fellow, and made but little progress during his winter attendance at school. He was more interested with the slate and pencil than study. Still he was kindly, and all of us boys took a great interest in him, and he participated in all our sports and games. When the school was out and the spring had come, the general opinion was freely expressed that the wildness of Indian John was out of him; that in reality he was tamed, and that he would continue to be like a white man and live with them, but one day John turned up missing. He left unexpectedly to his friends, and the place to which he had gone was unknown. He had made no sign of discontent. As it were, he walked out in the darkness and was lost to sight. Some apprehension was felt about him,—that he had been foully dealt with. Several weeks elapsed before any tidings came of John, and it came in this manner. He reported himself. One bright sunny afternoon from out of the oak openings there came an Indian with a squaw walking behind him. As they approached nearer to the log house and to the mill they attracted close attention, and when within hailing distance the familiar features of Indian John were recognized, but he was no longer a white man. He was dressed in the garb of his race; his face was striped in various colors of paint; the

quills of the eagle were tied in his hair; his buckskin suit was rich and gaudy—in the best style of his tribe. A beautiful young Indian woman was his companion, and in answer to an inquiry as to who she was, he replied, saying, "My squaw." So it was and turned out to be, that he had deserted his white friends, and returned to his native wildness. John had learned to speak and understand the English language very well. On his first meeting with Mr. Pickett after his return, Mr. P. said to him, "John, where in the world have you been all this time?" John pulled his blanket a little closer around him and replied, "Mr. Pickett, I no understand English any more." And ever afterwards he wholly refrained from speaking English if he could avoid it.

His Indian name was Ma-shook-e-nicker. He had taken unto himself a wife from his tribe, and he wanted no more to do with the manners and customs of the white people. Nevertheless for quite a while he remained a favorite with those who had known him under other circumstances, but after a short time Indian John and his squaw drifted away, following their tribe to some other locality, and they were forgotten.

The Indians of those early days were well off, by which I mean they were well dressed, with the best guns made, owners of Indian ponies, even quite droves of them, and you could hardly find an Indian but had Mexican dollars stowed away somewhere on his person, saved up from payments made by the government, to be used and invested by them in something that might especially please their fancy. And when they traveled from point to point through the country, it was not generally on foot, but on the backs of their ponies with other ponies laden down with camp equipments and other articles. I remember well that Mr. George Farmer had been compelled to use some of his specie, which he had carefully laid away to pay for his land when it came in market, and he was wondering how he could make up the deficit, when one day an Indian came along with several Mexican dollars, which he exchanged with Mr. Farmer for some brass buttons and other trinkets probably not worth twenty-five cents.

There was an old Indian chief named See-sink-e-ter, who was quite prominent in the councils of his tribe, and well known to all the old settlers. He attracted a good deal of attention, yet

he was an Indian of an ugly temper, especially when he was under the influence of whiskey and many settlers were afraid of him. There was a companion piece to old Chief See-sink-e-ter, a squaw of uncertain age, called Nich-e-nacker, and reputed to be a widow. Judging from her glibness of tongue, she must have outrivaled any white woman in the scolding business, as she would make the braves and papooses of her tribe "get up and dust" whenever she sounded her notes, in that shrill and piercing manner, characteristic of the Indian when speaking in a loud and excited tone of voice; but if there was any one thing in the world that the poor old girl had a weakness for, it was whiskey. She loved it with an affection almost unprecedented, and she made it a point to get beastly intoxicated whenever she could secure enough of the "scud-a-wa-ba" or firewater to accomplish that purpose. It was lamentable that she should by her conduct set such a poor example to the dusky maids and matrons of her tribe, but old "Nish" was so firmly set in her way in reference to this enjoyment that modern prohibition, if closely applied to her case, would never have accomplished her reform.

If you should at this period be traveling through a lonesome piece of woods, and you should discover a human body poised in a treetop, it would undoubtedly startle you exceedingly; but that was the custom, at the time I speak of, during the depth of winter for the Indians to dispose of their dead, by suspending the body in the branches of the trees, high up from the earth, carefully wrapped up and securely fastened there to remain undisturbed until the frost should have disappeared in the spring so that the body could be consigned to the ground. This was the Indian custom in such cases and was generally observed.

The Winnebagoes, at this time, under the treaty, really had no right to remain in the vicinity, but still they lingered. They hated to leave the land of their fathers. They refused to go. In the summer of 1841 a company of United States Dragoons, about one hundred strong, passed through Jefferson county, camping one night on the lake near the mills, and gathering up all the Indians they could find. Such a well equipped military force appeared very formidable indeed. Success attended their mission, and a large number of Indians were removed, although

they soon returned to their old haunts. After several similar removals the matter was given up, and the Indians permitted to remain wherever they pleased so long as there was no special complaint made by the settlers against them.

For a number of years the present limits of Jefferson county contained as many Indians as white people, although the whites were swiftly gaining on them in numbers. The Indians generally were peaceable and well disposed, although in those early days there was a good deal of apprehension on the part of the settlers, the most serious of which was an occurrence very early. The Indian settlements were mainly in the woods on the east bank of the Crawfish, extending from its junction with the Rock at Jefferson to about ten miles above Milford. Word passed through the settlements from house to house that there might be trouble with the Indians; that a young Indian, the son of a chief, had suddenly disappeared from his wigwam and hunting grounds. His absence could not be accounted for. It was charged by his tribe that he had been murdered by the white man. This, of course, was most vigorously denied, because no grounds for it existed, and no trouble was known between the two races which would provoke such a result. Nevertheless the settlers of the townships of Lake Mills, Aztalan, Jefferson and Milford felt it incumbent upon themselves to take some action in the matter. The murdered Indian was last seen in the heavy timber between Aztalan and Jefferson engaged in hunting; therefore a most thorough search was instituted in that vicinity for some evidence of his disappearance, and the people of the several townships turned out en masse, and formed a line between the Crawfish and Rock rivers, moving forward cautiously and examining every point. Before reaching the junction of the two rivers, the body of the Indian was found. He had been shot through the head. His own rifle lay by his side. The manner of his death was in great doubt. It could not be determined whether he had been fired upon from ambush and brutally murdered, had committed suicide, or had met with an accidental death. So much doubt was involved in the matter, that his Indian relatives and friends became quieted, as they could not charge with any reason, that the death of the Indian had been caused by the bullet of a white man. Still I remember very well that the impression prevailed very strongly

among the settlers that a certain white man, a hunter by occupation, who about that time disappeared, was the man responsible for the death of the Indian.

A few years previous a white land hunter had been murdered near Johnson's Creek. Vigorous effort was made by Gov. Dodge of the territory to arrest and punish the murderers, and an old Indian chief and his son were arrested, charged with the crime, and during the period of the summer of '37 that I attended school at the old court house at Milwaukee, these two were confined in the jail. The old Indian was sullen and uncommunicative, although during their confinement both had learned to speak the English language quite well. But John, so called, the son, became well acquainted with the school children, and was a great favorite with them. Many hours have I spent at the grated window in communication with him, and almost daily my luncheon was shared with him. When the time for our departure to the Rock river country came, John was affected to tears, and in his broken English he struggled to say, "I so sorry you go; you so good to me. I never see you more."

Very soon thereafter Gov. Dodge came to the conclusion that there was so much doubt about their guilt that he ordered them set at liberty, and the old chief and his son resumed their tribal relations somewhere in the interior of the territory, but ever afterwards kept shy of the white settlement.

Only five years before our settlement in Lake Mills had the Black Hawk war been concluded. Black Hawk and his band were pursued through this section of the territory by regular troops, by volunteers, and by friendly Indians in greater numbers than he possessed. His stronghold was at the head of Lake Koshkonong. Two young girls, named Rachel and Sylvia Hall, who had been stolen by Black Hawk and his band from their parents near Ottawa, Illinois, were ransomed by the payment of $2,000, by some friendly Winnebagoes, who represented the Indian agent at Galena. In this pursuit Black Hawk's line of flight was from Lake Koskonong towards Whitewater through Bark River woods, where he crossed the river not far from Jefferson Junction, and then went on westward through Lake Mills to Cottage Grove and Madison to the Wisconsin river, where the battle occurred, and where the destruction of his band was made almost complete.

Very soon after the first settlement of the village an interest sprang up among the residents for the establishment of a school. The first school I attended was taught by Mrs. J. F. Ostrander, at Aztalan, in the summer of '38, and I used to walk the distance most of the time on barefoot. It was then thought to be quite a task, but the necessity of attendance was so apparent that I fulfilled my part of the programme without complaint. My father finally concluded that there should be a school nearer home, so as soon as the saw mill was completed and the lumber for building purposes could be procured, he built a schoolhouse at his own expense, and hired a teacher to teach the school, who was Miss Rosey Catlin of Cottage Grove. She boarded in our family, and my father paid her salary. This was the first school, and was not very large, only about a dozen scholars, and was taught in the summer of 1839. The next school we had was taught by Miss Nancy Atwood, now Mrs. Daniel Wood, who is living and is one of the few pioneer women of Lake Mills who are spared to us today. I remember this lady with a regard almost akin to love. She was a most successful teacher, and the children of her school all loved her with a sincere affection. She possessed the happy faculty of enkindling in the minds of her pupils a strong desire to learn, and they were always obedient to her. There was about her, as I remember, an ease and dignity that well befitted the school-room. As I look back through the years, I can find no recollection of my school life that was so pleasurable to me as the time I attended Miss Nancy Atwood's school in this village. I always flattered myself that I was a great favorite of hers. She seemed to take extra pains with me in helping me out of difficulties in my studies, and especially in my ideas of the art of composition, and if I am not mistaken, and I think I am not, some of those compositions of mine prepared at that early day were not wholly original with me, but were in a great measure inspired by her. Nevertheless the instruction was valuable. Miss Atwood taught three terms, commencing in the summer of 1840.

The school succeeding the one taught by Miss Atwood was a winter school, and was taught by a gentleman. The first one, I think, by Mr. Birdsall, in the same old wooden schoolhouse. After a while the district was organized and a brick schoolhouse constructed, and more dignity attached to the school. In

those early days the schoolmaster always boarded around. That is, all the families that sent children to school, in proportion to the number sent, boarded the school teacher. The boys cut the wood and took turns in building the fire, and this practice prevailed until the village had grown, and it became necessary to put on more style.

For a short time Lake Mills had a seminary. It was taught by two gentlemen, brothers-in-law, named S. W. Munn and Henry Mixer. It was an object of great interest and very successful as long as it continued. It was well supported by the people with a goodly number of students. The manner of its location in Lake Mills was as follows:

During the time I was a farmer boy upon the Phillip's place, at about noontime one day a man drove into the yard with a peddler's cart, and inquired if he could feed the horse, get some dinner, and pay for it in goods. I answered that I reckoned he could. His horse was put in the stable, and he sat down to dinner with the family. In conversation with him we learned he was looking for a place to establish a select school. I suggested Lake Mills as probably the best point in the state. He seemed pleased with the suggestion, and investigated the matter as fully as he could during his brief stay with us. He left, promising to communicate with me further, which he did very soon. The result was an agreement to open a seminary at Lake Mills, and at an appointed time I met the two gentlemen with their families in Milwaukee, where they had landed from a steamer, and brought them and their household goods to this place. That fall the school was fairly started —in '48—but only maintained an existence for one year when it was closed, and the parties left the place. Mr. S. W. Munn, the principal, was afterward a resident of Joliet in Illinois, a member of the state's senate and a very prominent citizen.

As the settlement increased, and there became resident of Lake Mills a number of families with children, more interest was created in the school question. This territory had been a portion of the Aztalan district, and in the opinion of the settlers the time had come when it should be divided, and Lake Mills and its proper surroundings be organized into a separate school district. Therefore notice was given on the fifth day of June, 1841, that there would be a meeting of the regular voters for

the purpose of organization. On the twelfth day of June in said year, a meeting was held in the old school district No. 3, which included Aztalan, for the purpose of organizing the Lake Mills district. Joseph Keyes was chosen moderator; Lester Atwood, clerk; Issac Atwood, collector; Joseph Keyes, Armine Pickett and Wm. S. Wadwell were chosen trustees for one year. The only business transacted was the election of these officers. At a meeting held in said district on November 12th, 1841, it was voted to raise $42.00 to support three months school, and $15.00 was appropriated to buy a stove and pipe. At a third meeting of the district held April 12th, 1842, it was voted to have sixteen weeks summer school; and at a meeting of the district held February 22nd, 1844, it was voted to raise $200.00 toward building a new schoolhouse, and Benjamin Salts and A. J. Waterbury were appointed a committee to select the site. Work was commenced upon the building in the early spring of that year, and the work continued, with frequent intervals, and was finally finished and ready for occupancy in the year 1845.

The male teachers employed by the district for the winter school in the old and new schoolhouse were Albert Birdsall, H. W. Barnes, J. F. Johnson and Mr. Goodrich, who formerly taught in Aztalan, S. A. Roys, P. B. Pease, and one other whose name I cannot recall. The old schoolhouse stood on Madison St., second building from the corner of Main, northwest. I think the main body of the building is in existence yet, having formed intimate relations with a more modern structure. At that time it was a building of great general interest. The rear end of the building contained a board shelf standing out from the wall at a proper slope, and in front were benches made of slabs resting upon posts fastened into large auger holes. Toward the front there were several rows of these kind of seats, each about twelve feet long. The style of these desks and benches was not very attractive, nevertheless they served their purpose well. This old schoolhouse was used for church purposes until the new brick schoolhouse was completed in 1845. I think the first school was held in this schoolhouse in the summer of 1839.

The settlers of Lake Mills were men of high character, honest and moral men, and while there were no churches, no conven-

iences for the people to gather together and listen to the word of God, still there was a strong feeling on the subject, and whenever a volunteer preacher was to be had a notice was given of a meeting on some Sunday, and the people would gather there to worship in an earnest manner. Services were held and sermons preached to the people by itinerant preachers long before there was any church organization in the village. I cannot forbear to mention that class of noble men who followed the pioneers soon after their first settlement in Lake Mills and Jefferson county. I have reference to that class of men known as the Methodist circuit riders. Where they came from one hardly knew, but they were earnest men of God determined to carry the gospel into the wilderness, and our log house was hardly ready for occupancy before one of them appeared at our door asking shelter and the privilege to hold services therein, which was granted. I remember one, Elder Halstead by name, who came there tired and hungry asking for something to eat. My mother had nothing in the house but enough buckwheat flour to make one batch of cakes, which she prepared for him and which he ate. I shall never cease to have respect for that class of men, and shall always cherish their memory.

Methodist meetings were frequently held in our log house, and in due time a Methodist Church society was organized. The Methodists were the first denomination who received recognition on the part of the settlers, and it was quite a while before any other society put in an appearance. The Methodist minister of those early days went at his work in a direct and forcible way. He struck from the shoulder. He preached the gospel and that alone. There were no side issues. The Bible was his text book, his guide and his friend.

The Rev. Washington Philo, an Episcopalian missionary stationed at Madison, used to come frequently to Lake Mills, and hold services on a Sunday in our log house. He was a kindly man, and was fully impressed with the idea that he was accomplishing very much in the service of his Master. On one occasion when he was making a trip from Madison to this place he met with a serious mishap. In passing over the corduroy road this side of Deerfield, he got off of his horse to walk. The horse passed along quietly at first, but being a little

thirsty and seeing water in the marsh at the end of the logs, proposed to have a drink, and the result was that in a few moments he was inextricably caught in the mire past all help of being gotten out by the Elder. The reverend gentleman footed it to Lake Mills, and in the middle of the night our family was aroused by the loud halloo of some one in trouble. It was quickly responded to by my father and the mill hands. When it was learned that the horse of the Elder was mired in the marsh, a party was made up and proceeded to the scene of the mishap, and speedily succeeded in pulling the hourse out upon the corduroy and leading him into more comfortable quarters. The Elder recovered from his accident none the worse for it and held services as usual. On one occasion when he arrived at our house, my father and mother were absent. We gathered around the supper table, but no one of the party seemed to understand the proprieties of the situation to the extent of asking the Elder to pronounce a blessing, so the Elder thought he would do it on his own account. He had just raised his hands and dropped his head to proceed when Mr. Byington, one of our boarders, unwittingly passed him the plate of bread. The Elder was equal to the emergency. He opened his eyes, threw back his head, dropped his hand upon a slice of bread, and the invocation contemplated was lost to the party assembled at the supper table.

There was another itinerant who preached very frequently in the old schoolhouse prior to '43, and that was the Rev. E. Slingerland of Sun Prairie of the Dutch Reform Church. He was a very interesting man in conversation and a very good preacher, and we all liked him exceedingly and encouraged his coming although he was a masterful eater, and diminished our supply of eatables in a manner very satisfactory to himself.

Another, a Baptist minister by the name of Matthews, was an early pioneer in the cause at this period of time, and made frequent trips through this section of the country, stopping at our house. He was not popular. He was called a "crank" or rather a fanatic as, I think, at that early time the word "crank" had not been coined for general use. He was a great anti-slavery agitator, and the majority of the people being against the agitation of the slavery question at that time, he was looked upon with disfavor, and frequently had to run the gauntlet of

rotten eggs, but he was an earnest and sincere man, an Englishman by birth, and was entitled to receive better treatment than was often times dealt out to him.

As I said all the ministers put up at our house, so it became my duty to take care of their horses, and it seemed rather hard when the oats were scarce and high that they should be consumed by the horses of these travelers, and I must confess that sometimes I got out of all patience with the business. But generally we were honest with the minister and his horse. He paid nothing for his own fare, and never anything for the horse, not even a shilling to the hostler. I remember one instance when a minister stopped at our house, and I put his old white horse in the barn and gave him some hay. The horse was poor, tired and hungry and, really, he excited my pity. Marsh hay had not proved very nourishing to the animal, and I really felt moved to give the old creature a full measure of oats. To that end I talked the matter over with my bother Abe. We looked at the horse, considered the matter, and finally decided that as a matter of Christian duty a peck of oats should go into the manger and into the horse, and it went. I have heard a good deal about casting bread upon the waters and that it would return after many days, but I really do not now remember whether Abe and I ever got our credit for that peck of oats, but it is probable we have although we have no special record of it.

There was a desire on the part of all to improve the church music, and, therefore, after a while a singing school was organized, taught by Dr. Merriman, and all the young of both sexes were quite prompt in their attendance, and manifested a great deal of interest in the instruction. At that time the Methodists held meetings in the schoolhouse in the afternoon and the Congregationalists in the forenoon, and one choir sang for both. P. B. Pease was the leader. On one occasion Rev. Mr. Seward, the Congregational minister, gave out the hymn and the choir sang it well, as they thought, putting into its rendition all the unction they possessed. When the reverend gentleman gave out the second hymn during the services, he remarked to the choir, "If you cannot sing this better than you did the first one, you had better not sing it at all." Of course the choir thus sat down upon by the reverend gentleman went into a state of

collapse. I presume there are a number here in Lake Mills who still remember Mr. Seward and his peculiarities; that he wanted everything done in his own way and no diversions. While hardly knowing one tune from another, he claimed to be a musical critic.

The Rev. O. P. Clinton, Congregational minister and missionary, preached in Aztalan and Lake Mills from '43 to '46. He was succeeded by the Rev. E. D. Seward in April, 1846, with the church organization dating in the following year. The Methodist ministers and circuit riders were the first ones to put in an appearance in the village, which continued to grow and prosper from the time the first sermon was preached.

The utmost friendliness and good feeling prevailed among all the (?) early settlers. Any note of trouble, any sound of alarm, any call for assistance, no matter what it might be was responded to with alacrity. The settler was ready any moment to divide with his neighbor his last pound of flour and his last piece of pork. If there was any sickness in the neighborhood, every possible assistance was rendered by all. It has always seemed to me that there was more Christian charity manifested toward all in those early days than has appeared at any time since. Social gatherings of the settlers in the log cabins were very frequent, and the women visited back and forth with one another at regular intervals. The same kindly feeling was seen in the intercourse of the younger people of the families—the boys and girls—and as soon as civilization, so to speak, had advanced far enough, a regular ball was announced to come off at the Lake Mills House in this village. Cards of invitation were issued. While rather young I was invited, and my mother insisted that I was big enough to go, and that I should invite a girl and take my place in line with those who were older. As I remember I was a timid lad, and it required a good deal of courage to (what seemed to me at that time a terrible ordeal) invite a girl to go to the ball with me, but with the help of my good mother it was made easy. I consulted her and was governed by her advice. I said to her I should like to invite Olive Pickett, if she thought she would not give me the mitten. She replied that that was just the thing for me to to, so I kind of gently consulted Olive on the subject, but she replied that my brother Abe had already spoken to her about the matter. I at

once reported this condition of things to my mother, and she at once flared up indignantly and said Abe should do no such thing, and thereupon she "knocked him out in the first round," and Olive was duly booked to be my partner at the ball. The tickets required us to put in an appearance at the Lake Mills House at two o'clock in the afternoon. So I started out early after dinner with the best horse and buggy I could procure, visited the Pickett family around the lake about three miles away, secured my partner and reached the Lake Mills House at three o'clock, the first one on the job. I managed to get through the exercises of the evening without any discredit to myself, and was most successfully sustained in so doing by the beautiful, black-eyed, little girl who was my partner. Ladies and gentlemen, I have the pleasure of introducing her to you at this time, and which I now do—Mrs. Olive Pickett Wood.

To facilitate traveling when on visiting excursions, my mother and her friends rode in an ox cart, which was a vehicle with wheels sawed from the end of a large oaken log with the box set upon the axle between the wheels, and a long pole to which the yoked oxen were hitched. This was considered to be a first class conveyance, and I was the driver and conductor on many a joyful occasion as the more distant families were visited, and when we came to a smooth stretch of road our oxen would trot as quickly and as easily as a fancy pair of roadsters today. I felt proud of my position as driver of that ox cart.

Those of the settlers who became domiciled in the fall of 1837 were prepared in the spring of 1838 to spade or break up a patch of ground, and to plant potatoes and other vegetables to a small extent. The product, though meager, was of great assistance.

At first there was very little sickness, but as the land became broken and otherwise improved, fevers, particularly ague and fever, prevailed very generally, and I presume there is not an old settler living in Jefferson county who has not had some terrible experience with the "shakes" which he will never forget. The change from the east to the west was a striking one in many respects. The climate was different; the water and food also were different. I remember there was one trouble from which nearly all the old settlers suffered, and which was at-

tributed to a variety of causes. It was a disease that was never known to prove fatal, though it was very annoying and frequently productive of a good deal of profanity, but it had to be endured as patiently as possible, for there were no means discovered to cure it. It really had to wear itself out. I allude to that old affliction which the settlers cannot certainly have forgotten known as "prairie itch." It was very amusing at times to see a whole family out around a log house, leaning against the butt ends of the logs scratching first one shoulder and then the other, touching points that could not be easily reached with the hands. One of the mills hands, whom we had at work for us, was afflicted with this disease most savagely. He said he never was so happy and felt so well in his life as he did when he stood before a rousing fire at night-time, and could scratch at his leisure without let or hindrance.

In those early days dogs were reasonably plenty and cats correspondingly scarce. Our old dog was named "Watch" and her best point was to sound the alarm by a vigorous bark whenever any one approached the place in night or day, and it was the practice when the dog barked for every one to run to the door to see who was coming. Watch was a great enemy of the Indians, and frequently had to be chained up to prevent her attacking every one in sight.

A good cat was worth a five dollar bill. It is true that there were not many mice in the country at that time, perhaps none except a few who had found a quiet corner in some box of goods, and thus been brought to the west. Still the women could not be perfectly happy unless they had a cat. I remember the great interest that centered around the first one we possessed, which was a beautiful animal, and there was great strife between the members of the household to see who should have the cat for a sleeping companion. In the cold weather the fur of the cat was very comfortable.

In the winter of '37-'38, a young topographical engineer, who surveyed and superintended the construction of the road from Madison to Milwaukee by way of Lake Mills, was a member of our family, and while there spent a good deal of his time in making maps of his surveys of the road. He became very much attached to this cat, and he would catch it in his arms in the early evening and go up the ladder to bed among the first, so

he could monopolize the cat. This man afterwards, as the years rolled on, became well known throughout the country. He was a general in the army of the Union during the war of the Rebellion, and afterwards a prominent federal officer in Chicago. I allude to the late Gen. J. D. Webster.

The first celebration of our national anniversary in Lake Mills and Jefferson county, was on the Fourth day of July A. D. 1839. It was held in the grove, a little west and south of our log house, on the ground now occupied by Haskin's Hotel. This event occurred fifty-five years ago the coming Fourth of July. It seems a long time, and it is, and though then a boy of not many years, the events of that day are as indelibly traced upon the tablets of my memory as though they occurred but yesterday. The old pioneers with their families assembled from miles around. The bright sun shone upon them in unclouded splendor, and the smiles of Heaven welcomed them. With hearts full of gratitude to God, they entered upon the duties of that day. Fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, gathered in from that stretch of beautiful land between this lake set here in the gentle hills and the Crawfish river, a few miles away. They came from their log cabins, sparsely dotting the rich landscape of those earlier years. They came, some in wagons and some in carts drawn by faithful oxen, and some on foot. The lad and the lassie could have been seen emerging from the bright green foliage of the oaks, the sunbeams dancing in their pathway, both riding upon the same horse. From out of the wilds they came, following the footprints of the wild deer, and the trails of the Indian hunters.

What grand inspiration moved with one accord those few settlers of that year long ago! It was high and holy patriotism, love of country, a desire to do honor to the Nation's birthday in a manner befiting their means and number. They were noble types of American citizenship. From their homes in old New England and the east, they had brought with them the principles of undying liberty. Their mission was to found an empire in the rich places of the distant west to be forever consecrated to freedom. There was no ringing of bells, no strains of soul-stirring music to enliven that scene, but yet, many of the formalities of later years were carefully observed. There was an invocation to the Most High by the chaplain, the

reading of the Declaration of Independence, the delivery of the oration, the march and procession, and last, thought not least, the dinner in the grove beneath the overhanging branches of the trees.

The officers of the day were as follows: President, Capt. Joseph Keyes; Chaplain, Rev. Mr. Pillsbury; Reader of the Declaration, Nathaniel F. Hyer; Orator, J. F. Ostrander; Committee of Arrangements, Capt. Joseph Keyes, James Payne and John Starkweather; Committee of Ordinance, Nelson P. Hawks; on Music, James Babcock and James Williams.

Among those I remember to haveb een present with their families were: George Hebard, James Manville, James Payne, David Hyer, B. Ingraham, H. L. Foster, Thos. Brayton, Benjamin Nute, George Lamphere, Reuben Keene, Silas Styles, Walter S. Hyer, Hugh Briggs, Jno. Atwood, E. L. Atwood, Capt. Robert Masters, Royal Tyler, R. M. Nevins, J. F. Ostrander, Capt. Joseph Keyes, George Farmer, Nelson P. Hawks. There were present also: J. D. Waterbury and sister, Mrs. Babcock, Charles Brayton, Louise Brayton and Antoinette Brayton (children of Jeremiah L. Brayton), two Misses Landtz, Harvey Foster, Volney Foster, Hopstil Foster, Mrs. Zilpah Brown, Miss Nancy Atwood and sister, Theron Plumb, Samuel Hosley, Stephen Hawks, George Hyer, William Brayton, James Brayton, Alfred Brayton, George Hayden, James Babcock, Jno. Starkweather, James Williams, N. F. Hyer.

The music of the occasion was a fife and a fiddle, which led the procession in its line of march. Mr. James Williams piped the shrill notes of the fife, and Mr. James Babcock manipulated the fiddle to the satisfaction of all. The gun used for the salutes was an anvil from the shop, and it performed most excellent work. The dinner table was laden with the best the neighborhood afforded, the contributions of those who sat down to it. At one end was a roast pig, with head and tail erect; at the other end a large piece of a similar animal, but of maturer age. A sprinkling of "green sass," and various other et ceteras filled up the intervening space. No ardent spirits were used or needed to awaken enthusiasm; a few lemons had been provided for the after dinner exercises of the toasts, but when sought for they were found to have mysteriously disappeared, having been stolen and sucked dry by a lawless fellow, who was

in the employ of Royal Tyler. Perhaps I ought to say in extenuation of his offense, that he divided a few of them with the boys. The banner of freedom, emblem of our liberties, which gayly floated over them on that memorable day, was, unlike the star spangled banner, immortalized by the poet Key. It was improvised out of a red shawl with blue stripes, and with a red cotton handkerchief figured with white stars, pinned on one corner. The shawl was furnished by a good mother present, and the cotton wipe was ransacked from a coat pocket in the crowd. This poor substitute for a national flag was raised upon a tamarack pole, from the top of which it gloriously waved all day. At its close it had to be cut down to restore to the owners the handkerchief and the shawl.

The table was spread, and the exerises of the day were held on the ridge south of the old mill, a little south and west of my father's log house, which stood upon the present site of Miles Millard's former residence. There were no other buildings here except the saw mill, which was about that time completed.

Two of the early settlers, Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Brayton, failed to grace the festivities of the occasion with their presence, and for what seemed to them a good reason. It was rumored, yet untruly, that Mr. James Payne, one of the committee of arrangements, had procured from Milwaukee some brandy to be drank at the celebration. The strong temperance principles of the good deacon and his plucky wife could not countenance such a proceeding, and so they stayed home. I doubt not that in later years they felt proud of the position they assumed in favor of total abstinence.

There was one incident of the day in which I was personally concerned. I was not expected to take a very important part in the exercises, and I was considered too young to march in the procession with a girl, and not old enough to eat at the first table; but as the sequel proved, and unexpectedly to myself, I did both. With the other lads I was marching the line of march, outside of and independent of its regularity; at this moment, a critical one to me, one of the committee of arrangements, a stalwart bachelor, who had upon his arm a beautiful young lady, with a younger sister tugging at his disengaged hand, in a tone of authority called me to him. Innocent of surprise or sudden ambush, and expecting only some trivial com-

mand, I obeyed the summons. His fingers clutched my arm, and in the twinkling of an eye I was formed into the line with the little trembling miss, not too young to blush, as a clinging attachment. The jeers and laughter of my playmates at my sudden transposition from a boy sovereign on the Fourth to such dignified associations seem to be ringing in my ears today. The column soon halted at the refreshment table, and I was seated with the rest awaiting results with many apprehensions. Soon I espied my good mother examining the table arranging to place some extra seats. If I was discovered I feared an explosion that boded me no good. I shrank into as small space as I possibly could, but there was no escape; the firmness of her presence was overwhelming; her large, blue eye was set searchingly upon me. Although there by compulsion, still I felt guilty of violating the proprieties of the occasion by my presence. With outstretched arm and finger pointed full upon me, my mother exclaimed, "Elisha, what are you doing there? Get right up and out as soon as you can." I was preparing to "get" when the author of my embarrassment came to the rescue by calling the attention of my indignant mother to the timid maiden by my side. With quick wit she took in the situation and retiring in good order, she said, "If that don't beat all; who would have thought it!"

The little lady who was my companion on that not uneventful day was Miss Antoinette Brayton, youngest daughter of the late Jeremiah L. Brayton, then residing upon the river bank, not far below Aztalan. Afterwards, as the years rolled on, she grew into a beautiful woman and became the esteemed wife of one of Wisconsin's earliest pioneers, Hon. I. W. Bird of Jefferson, but now, with many of her early associates she sleeps the sleep that knows no waking.

This celebration of the anniversary of our national independence was, I think, the first ever held in the present limits of Jefferson county, and was, therefore, a notable occasion. There was a very general turnout of the settlers easterly from this place, including the present towns of Milford, Aztalan and Jefferson, there being no settlement west of here. Still there were less than a hundred present, all told, men, woman and children.

In Lake Mills and also in other places in Jefferson county, there were organizations of the settlers into clubs for the pur-

pose of protecting each other in their rights to the claims they made upon government land, which was not then in the market. These organizations were strong, in fact, they were composed of the entire body of settlers, and no person dared with impunity attempt to interfere with the rights of the settlers so far as their claims to their land was concerned. Still there was such an operation known as "jumping a claim" in cases where there had been an abandonment, and where it became apparent the land had not been selected and claimed in good faith. But these difficulties were generally met in an amicable manner. If any one had been bold enough to assert a claim to another's land, not sustained by the rules of the club, he would have been driven out of the settlement. Thereupon under the rules and practices of this organization, a man could claim what land he thought he wanted, providing he was the first man upon it, built his shanty, and declared his intentions as to the number of forties and quarter sections that he wanted for his own purposes. Without the powerful influence of these organizations, and the concentration of public sentiment caused by them, there would doubtless have been a good deal of trouble and difficulty growing out of the question involved. The first land in Lake Mills and vicinity was offered for sale at the government land office in Milwaukee in the winter of '39, and all those desiring to purchase or make good the title to their claim had to be on hand with the money to perfect their titles. At that time my father made purchase of the land about Lake Mills, nearly a section in all. There was very little trouble at the land office; no interfering with what might be called vested rights. Every man asserted his claim and was permitted to bid off the land, and obtain the title to the same.

Aztalan or "The Ancient City" as it was sometimes called, claimed a little seniority over Lake Mills; that the latter should be subordinated to the former, and, therefore, a good deal of rivalry existed between the two places after they had fairly started on the road to prosperity and growth. There were two roads from Aztalan to the head of the lake, one by Lake Mills, and the other by Royal Tyler's, on the east, leaving out this place. It is a fact that Aztalan people exercised all their influence with travelers to induce them to go by the Tyler road. "It is so much better," they said, "and so much nearer." To

meet this objection my father cut out the road four rods wide from Lake Mills clear to Ostrander Prairie, and built bridges and improved it generally, doing it all at his own expense. James Payne was the postmaster of Aztalan, and for several years in succession my father made efforts to secure the establishment of a postoffice at Lake Mills, but was not successful. Finally he made one grand effort. He went out to Madison and secured the endorsement upon his petition of nearly all the officials of the territory, including the legislature. Thus he finally accomplished the object desired, and a postoffice was established at Lake Mills, October 9th, 1844, and my father appointed postmaster. His assistant postmaster was E. W. Keyes.

Bitter feeling existed for some time between the two places and the two postoffices. My father religiously believed that the mail matter for Lake Mills was detained or destroyed at the Aztalan postoffice, and for a long time the mail for Lake Mills was diverted at Milwaukee, and came in via Madison.

At one of our Fourth of July celebrations the liberty pole, which had been raised for independence day, was bored through with an auger the night before, and felled to the ground. Of course, this act of vandalism was laid at the doors of our neighbors of "The Ancient City."

To come back for a moment to the old saw mill with its saw propelled by an old-fashioned flutter wheel. During its time it accomplished a great work, and sawed a large amount of most excellent lumber. Logs were drawn to the mill from a distance around of, at least, ten miles. Rock river woods supplied a large quantity of the best material, such as black walnut, butternut, ash, cherry, poplar, bass wood and oak, and not a little tamarack from nearer by. Logs were drawn in from that point of land between the Crawfish and Rock river, near Jefferson. A good deal of the lumber that went into the construction of the old territorial capitol was sawed by this mill. For a long time after the mill went into operation, the logs drawn there by its patrons were sawed into lumber for one half the logs produced. When matters had become a little more promising, my father adopted a more liberal rule, and sawed the logs for one third of the boards. As soon as the logs were converted into lumber and the same had become seasoned, then it was that

the settlers commenced building barns, outhouses, dwellings for themselves, and frequently additions to their log houses. One cold winter night, soon after the mill had been completed and was in operation, the family were awakened by the roaring of water. My father and his mill hands were aroused, and went forth to discover what the trouble was. It was found that the dam under the grist mill flume had become undermined, and that the water was rushing through with great velocity, carrying the timber and gravel the length of the grist mill race, and filling the foundation of the grist mill full of gravel and other debris. It was at once apparent that no effort would stop the rush of the water, and, therefore, the men proceeded to the outlet of the lake, and hastily constructed a dam across its mouth, which, of course, accomplished the desired object, and when the water had run out of the pond, the damage could be ascertained and repaired. This was a great discouragement to my father, and it took some time and considerable expense to repair the damage caused; still he went forward with that courage which always characterized all of his movements, and in a few weeks the saw mill was in running order again.

The first postoffice established in the county was that of Jefferson on April 1st, 1837, and N. F. Hyer was appointed postmaster. Although the office was called Jefferson, it was located and its business transacted at Aztalan. On July 31st, 1839, the name of the office was changed to Aztalan, and James Payne appointed postmaster. At the same time a new office was created at Jefferson taking that name, and Enoch G. Darling appointed postmaster. An office was established at Watertown August 15th, 1837, and William M. Dennis appointed postmaster. At Fort Atkinson on July 5th, 1839, and Dwight Foster appointed postmaster. At Lake Mills October 9th, 1844, and Joseph Keyes appointed postmaster. As will be seen these six offices were the first established in Jefferson county, as the records of the postoffice department at Washington will show. At that time postoffices did not increase as rapidly as they have since then.

The first office of Jefferson was opened for business before there was any regular mail service to supply it, and any one responsible, making the trip to Milwaukee had the opportunity

of carrying the mail in his coat pockets or tied up in a bundle, and the mail only came semi-occasionally.

When the question arose, as it did very early in the history of this settlement, as to what the name of the town should be, there was a good deal of interest manifested, and quite a diversity of opinion. My father decided that the place should be called Lake Mills—something that was local and something that was characteristic of the place, "For," said he, "there is the lake and here are the mills therefore, let us call the place Lake Mills." The first settlers favored this name, but there was a crop of Young America that came in later that opposed it, and they insisted that the place should be called New Boston or Boston. At one time it looked as if possibly that name might prevail, but Mr. Armine Pickett and others of the first settlers took the matter in hand and the result was that the boys and young men were backed off the course, and finally the name of Lake Mills was adopted without opposition. All finally concluded it was the best thing to do.

There had only been one town organization for the four townships, Aztalan, Milford, Lake Mills and Waterloo, but the time had arrived when there should be a separation, and to that effect a law was passed by the territorial legislature in words as follows:

An act to divide the town of Aztalan and establish the town of Lake Mills. Be it enacted by the council and the house of representatives of the territory of Wisconsin.

Section I. That all of that part of the town of Aztalan, comprised in townships number seven and eight in range number thirteen in the county of Jefferson, be, and the same is hereby set off into a separate town by the name of Lake Mills, which town shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges which other towns by law are entitled to. The first election in said town shall be holden at the house of Morgan L. Bartlett, on the second Tuesday of April next.

Section II. This act shall take effect from and after its passage. Approved, February 22nd, 1845.

The election was held on the second Tuesday of April following, as provided by said act. There were two tickets in the field, and a good deal of interest was manifested in the result. The one called the Union ticket, without regard to party, was

triumphant by a good majority. Over one hundred votes were cast.

There being no printing press the tickets had to be written, and I remember well my time during the entire day was occupied in writing Union tickets. I became very much interested in the election, and when the result was ascertained I started from the Bartlett house on a run towards the mills, shouting at the top of my voice, "The Union ticket is elected to a man." This was my first experience in an election, and although not a voter by several years, perhaps the taste I then got of it laid the foundation for a long association with politics in after time.

The following town officers were elected: for supervisors, Joseph Keyes, chairman, Miles Millard and John Twining; for school commissioners, Donald Stewart, H. W. Barnes, A. E. Hayes; road commissioners, Kelly Atwood, Daniel Wood, Elisha Crosby; for assessor, Moses Bartlett; for town clerk, Walter B. Sloan; for treasurer, Edward Abbe; for constable, Josiah Drew; for collector and constable, M. L. Bartlett; for justices of the peace, James H. Ostrander, Armine Pickett, E. R. Colton.

It was voted to raise sixty dollars for school purposes; that the town officers be paid seventy-five cents per day for services, when engaged in the performance of their duties; that the clerk be paid the annual salary of twelve dollars; that one hundred dollars be raised for the expenses of the town for the ensuing year. James Williams, Abram Vanderpool and A. P. Waterbury were duly elected path-masters. Afterwards, on division of the property jointly owned by the two townships, consisting of books and records and a map of the town, it was agreed that Aztalan should take the books and records, and Lake Mills the map.

On May 8th, 1847, the two townships of Lake Mills and Waterloo were separated, and the latter town organized a government of its own. A division of the property and effects was made, Lake Mills keeping the books, records and map of the town, and a cow bought for the use of the poor, and paying to Waterloo the sum of $7.94 in full settlement of all accounts. Thus all relations between the two townships were closed, and each passed on its career independent and alone, with its territory of six miles square, and its organization of town officers.

I regret somewhat the records do not show in some particular and interesting manner how the cow kept for the benefit of the poor was made useful to that unfortunate class of people. It is not probable that the animal was milked by the town officers and the milk divided, or that butter was made and served up in small parcels. It may be, however, that the cow was farmed out; that one poor person or family may have kept her for a day or more, and then passed her along to another. There must be some mystification about this cow business, as I do not remember that there were any poor existing at that time in Lake Mills or vicinity, and I do not think there were any to be found. Still the record on the subject stands out in bold relief that a cow was bought for the use of the poor; but I will not pursue the inquiry further. I hope the cow was a good one and gave satisfaction.

The plat of Lake Mills village was surveyed in the summer of 1842, and the village thereby, as the saying is, was laid out, and lots were offered for sale. The plat was filed in the office of the register of deeds, August 18th, of that year.

There were no dwellings constructed in the village, except the one occupied by my father's family, until after the saw mill was completed, as there could not be procured lumber for building purposes before that period, and the first house built was by William Wardwell, and occupied by his family.

The people of Lake Mills, being more energetic and enterprising than their neighbors, and being constantly on the alert for some object that would advance its growth and prosperity and attract the settlers to the place, early came to the conclusion that the organization of a brass band would play a very prominent part to this end. The project was started and earnestly advocated. Without delay a band was organized and by subscription enough money raised to buy the instruments, which occurred in 1844-45. Public interest upon the subject was very much excited, and the people could hardly wait for the coming of the instruments, which had been duly ordered from the east. One afternoon when I was at work near our house with my father, in casting my eye towards the mills, I saw the tall form of Miles Millard moving toward us with astonishing rapidity. It was apparent there was something up, and something more than ordinary was impelling his locomotion. When within

hearing distance he shouted at the top of is voice, "Captain, the horns have come, and the circus is coming." It was true that a team from Milwaukee had brought the band instruments, and that he had learned from a messenger that the circus—the first one that visited the territory—was to pitch its tent and give an exhibition upon our village green. These were great events. There had been much rivalry between Jefferson, Aztalan and Lake Mills as to which should secure the circus and Lake Mills was the winner, and we enjoyed the circus at our very doors. It was a great sight to see "Yankee Robinson," the strong man, bend the iron bar by striking it upon his arm, and to receive the heavy blows of an iron hammer upon an anvil poised upon his breast, but then I am not going to tell you about all the performances although I could do so, the most of them at least.

The following named parties were members of the band on its first organization: J. F. Johnston, leader; Elijah Faville, Thos. Burdick, Peter Lang, Simon S. Keyes, Abel Keyes, Oliver A. Keyes, Peter Millard, Edward Abbe, Lyman Fargo, Hoyt and William Wilt. The band was a great success and always in good demand. It was the first organization of the kind in the central part of the territory, and maintained its existence until '49, when the California gold fever dispersed its members.

The family of John Atwood was one of the first that settled here—a large family of sons and daughters. Of the sons there were Kelly, Isaac, Elihu L., who was a member of the first constitutional convention, and Gordon; the daughters, Mary Ann, who became the wife of M. L. Bartlett, Nancy, now Mrs. Daniel Wood, and another who became Mrs. J. Gaus. The Atwood boys became prominent and influential citizens. I remember one cold winter night, when the dogs were barking, there sounded from the oak openings a loud halloo. My father dressed himself, and going to the door answered it. Very soon a man appeared to arouse the household. He said that old Uncle John Atwood was lost; it was feared that he might have been frozen to death, and he must be found and cared for. He was the oldest man in the neighborhood. He had gone out in the daytime and wandered too far, and could not retrace his steps. A general search was instituted, and after a while he was found and returned to his log cabin home. He had the

discretion on finding a haystack, a mile or more away, to stick to it until he heard the calls of those in search. I know it created quite an excitement at the time for fear he was lost and frozen to death.

Another family was that of Miles Millard, consisting of three sons, Peter, James and George, and one daughter, Sarah, now Mrs. Fred Seaver. The Millards came here in '43, and succeeded my father in the ownership of the mills, the village site and adjacent land. Mr. Millard, though not one of the first settlers, was one of the best.

The Plumb family came here early, and consisted of Joab Plumb, the father, Charles, Theron, Thomas D. and John, brothers, and three daughters, Caroline, Nancy and Mary. It was a very highly esteemed family. Theron came in '37; the others a little later.

The Favilles were a numerous family, and commenced coming in '44, consisting of John Faville, father, and sons, Elijah, Dr. John, Alpheus, Stephen and William, and two daughters, Mrs. Eldridge Gary and Mrs. Cole. They were all persons of great worth, and occupied prominent positions in the early society, and although not residents of the village, they were always closely identified with it. Elijah Faville, a bachelor when he settled in Lake Mills, married soon after and became the happy father of twin boys, and in this event he added much to the pride of the family name, and to the fame of Lake Mills as being the birth place of John and Henry Faville—two eloquent and distinguished divines, whose names today are familiar in Wisconsin as household words, and who have been successful in the ministry in a pre-eminent degree.

The family of Armine Pickett came here in October, 1840, and consisted of three children, two sons and one daughter, James G., and the daughter, Olive, but the name of the other boy I do not remember. With them came the families of Aldrich, Williams and Everson, and their coming was quite an event to the early settlers. As the grand cavalcade passed by the Phillips' place and along the road towards the mills and our log house, it presented quite a formidable appearance. There were a number of covered wagons, double teams, single wagons, mostly drawn by oxen, and the number of men, women and children made an encouraging outlook for increase in population. In

the procession, sandwiched in between the wagons, could be seen hogs, sheep and cattle. Mr. Pickett drove in a flock of sheep and some fine Berkshire hogs and a number of cows. This arrival was of great interest to the people of the village. Mr. Pickett had previously purchased his land northwest of the lake, upon which he settled and made extensive improvements, but becoming uneasy he finally sold out his farm and moved to Winnebago county in the year '46. This sturdy old pioneer deserves more than a passing notice. He presented a striking appearance, and was modeled after the form of Daniel Webster. Every one had the utmost confidence in him. His word was law and his opinions were respected by every one. Being a man of good ability and undoubted honesty, he naturally became one of the most influential of the early settlers, and he filled many town offices, always with credit to himself. He represented a portion of Winnebago county in the legislature in 1869. There was general regret on his leaving for another location.

While speaking in words of praise of Armine Pickett, the merits of his wife should not be forgotten. A fitting tribute should be paid to her for her energy and industry in that early period. And she is entitled to the credit of inaugurating the first co-operative cheese manufactory in the territory and in the whole country in 1841. The inspiration of this work was wholly her own, and she carried it out most successfully, aided by her husband and son, James G. Full mention of this enterprise has within the last year been made in the leading papers of the country. More should be known of this woman, the wife of one of our earliest pioneers, and the dairymen of today should revere her memory, but of such material were made the wives of the early settlers.

The son, James G., now residing upon the old homestead at Pickett Station, is a chip of the old block. He was my earliest playmate and schoolfellow. Together we hunted and hallooed through the woods skirting yonder lake; we caught fish from its clear and shining depths; we bathed in its limpid waters, and when not engaged in labor or in sports, we were in school together trying to improve to the best advantage the meager opportunities afforded to obtain an education. The daughter, Olive, is now Mrs. Harmon Wood of this village.

There was another family that came a little later, still they are entitled to be classed among the early settlers. I mean the Fargo boys who came in '45. There was Lyman, the elder, Enoch, Lorenzo and Robert, the younger, familiarly known at that early day and since then, at least so far as I am concerned, as "Bob." They were all hustlers, although Bob was most too young at that time to hustle, except among the girls. Lyman and Enoch with D. R. Shailer opened a general store, and continued business for a number of years. These boys when they first came here by their good clothes and fine appearance created quite a sensation. They came later from the paths of civilization than most of the settlers, therefore, as the saying is, "They were up and dressed on all occasions." They were all splendid business men, and their coming was of great advantage to the village as they were among the foremost in any enterprise that would redound to its advantage.

These half dozen prominent families are now very much scattered and gone; some to other homes, but most of them to that "bourne from which no traveler returns." But very few, if any, representatives of these families I have mentioned, are remaining here at this time. Of the Fargos there is Lorenzo and Robert and numerous descendants, and some of the Favilles.

Of course it could hardly be expected that I should remember the names of all the old settlers, but the most of them, I think, I can. Among these are to be found the names of John Atwood, Kelly Atwood, E. L. Atwood, Gordon Atwood, Isaac Atwood, Royal Tyler, Armine Pickett, James G. Pickett, Benj. Salts, Ed. Salts, Alanson Farmer, Geo. Farmer, Sam. Hosley, Volney Foster, James Frost, S. C. Rice, John Starkweather, Eschyllus Masters, Ed. Baldwin, H. H. Sedgwick, (seven of the last named above worked for my father in the mills), Andrew Waterbury, Horace Cooper, Lucius Cooper, Miles Millard, Peter Millard, James Millard, Riley Millard, George Payne, J. L. Byington, Philander Everson, William Wardwell, Isaac Wardwell, E. J. Williams, W. D. Bragg, John H. Edgerton, Jake Ganze, John Chambers, Theron Plumb, Thos. D. Plumb, Charles Plumb, John Plumb, F. A. Seaver, Homer Cook, Dr. E. M. Joslin, George W. Bishop, George Hebbard, William Hebbard, Geo. P. Hebbard, Lucius Hebbard, H. C. Codwise, Edw. Abbe, Henry Abbe, John Fleury, Col. T. J. Carmichael, Enoch Harvey, El-

dridge Cary, Daniel Wood, Walter B. Sloan, Harmon Wood, Mark Kilbourne, D. H. Nash, D. Stewart, Hiram Briggs, Silas Briggs, Enoch Fargo, Lyman Fargo, Lorenzo Fargo, Robert Fargo. Of the Faville family there was John, the father, Elijah, Dr. John, Jr., Alpheus, Stephen, William, Mrs. Cary and Mrs. Cole, daughters; E. R. Colton, James Williams, H. W. Bronson, D. Duff, Dea. Cutler, Truman Hoyt, Thos. Dancy, M. L. Bartlett.

In those early days every log house was a tavern, or, in other words, no one was turned away who wished a meal of victuals or a chance to stay over night. Our log house, being on the line of travel between Madison and Milwaukee, a stop for dinner or over night was the practice, and we were obliged to entertain a good many people during the year.

As I look back to that period, I can see passing in review many of the prominent people of the territory. They had been guests of the Keyes' log tavern, and, having been such, they had impressed themselves indelibly upon my memory. In this connection I could give the names of a large proportion of the first settlers who became identified with the early history of the territory and state; but I will only mention a few, as follows: James Duane Doty and Henry Dodge, delegates in congress, and governors of the territory; Morgan L. Martin and John H. Tweedy, delegates in congress; A. J. Irwin, territorial judge; William A. Prentiss, George H. Walker, I. P. Walker, J. E. Arnold, H. N. Wells, Daniel Wells, Jr., Don A. J. Upham, Hans Crocker, Alexander Mitchell, Charles H. Larkin, A. D. Smith, Andrew E. Elmore, S. Park Coon, Edward G. Ryan, and Solomon Juneau, of Milwaukee, Lucius I. Barber, William M. Dennis, Patrick Rogan, and many others of Jefferson county. C. C. and C. L. Sholes, John H. Roundtree, Adam E. Ray, Moses M. Strong, from other parts of the territory. Simeon Mills Darwin Clark, Philo Dunning, Ebenezer Brigham, George P. Deleplaine, Elisha Burdick, Alexander L. Collins, Lafayette Kellogg, John P. Sheldon, John Catlin, Seth M. Vanbergen, of Madison.

I well remember the family of Gen. Henry Dodge, stopping at our house at different times, including the sons, Augustus, Henry and the daughter, Virginia, a beautiful girl fresh in her teens. It was a great event to me to listen to the recital of

early times as all were gathered of an evening around a blazing fire of oak, which stretched nearly across one end of the log house, although oftentimes my room was considered better than my company, and I was sent up the ladder to bed.

There was also a stage route, and there was a relay of horses at our place. Gen. Simeon Mills, of Madison, had one of the first contracts for carrying mail between Madison and Milwaukee, and extra horses for his route were cared for in our log stable. Leaving Madison in the morning the stage stopped at our house and changed horses and got dinner, and, in returning from Milwaukee, the distance was so calculated as to do the same thing again. For several years after our settlement at Lake Mills, my father declined to receive a cent for the entertainment of travelers, but after awhile he got tired of this, and we used to charge twenty-five cents for dinner.

I remember one, a foot traveler, came to our log house and applied to my father for entertainment over night. It was granted. He had supper, lodging and breakfast, and when he came to leave he asked my father what his bill was, and my father answered, "Not anything." He said he was much obliged. During the evening he had related the circumstance of finding a small package on the road containing about a half a pound of shot, and I was hoping that there would be some turn in the tide of affairs that would give me the shot, and when my father gave him his keep over night I thought he might have given me the few shot, which, perhaps, were worth five cents, but he failed to do so, and the last I saw of this generous traveler was as he disappeared through the oak openings on his tramp to Madison.

At this early time a custom prevailed which has long since been abolished. It was when the shoemaker came to the house with his kit of tools in the fall of the year, and stayed as one of the family until he had made up boots and shoes for all of those in need of them. My father thought this the most economical way of supplying his family with these needed articles. Benjamin Baldwin, of Aztalan, afterwards quite a prominent settler, was the shoemaker who sat upon his bench and hammered his last in our log house. My father furnished the stock, and Baldwin worked by the day.

The name of Roswell Pickett was very familiar to the old set-

tlers. He was a capitalist and came west as one of the earliest to enter government lands, and if he found a settler who did not have money enough to purchase his quarter section of land, which required $200, Mr. Pickett would make the entry in his own name, and give the settler back a contract that on receipt of $400 in four years he would convey the land to the settler. Very many availed themselves of this arrangement as it was the best that could be done, thereby saving their land for them, and giving them four years time to do it in. The records of the land office at Milwaukee and the register's office in this county will show that Mr. Pickett purchased more land than any other person in this section of the territory.

In the spring of '38, not being possessed of a breaking plow, we spaded up quite a patch of ground and planted a garden, which was a great help to us. A little later in the season my father procured oxen and a plow from some neighbors, and broke up some of the rich sod towards the low ground and planted potatoes. Of course we did not get a very large crop from the first planting in the new ground, still they turned out reasonably well. In the fall as my brother Oliver, Abel and myself were digging these potatoes, we saw a flock of seven wild geese fly over the lake and settle down into a pond of water about half way to the Tyler place. Abe said if we boys would work right lively, he would take the rifle and go through the oak openings, and see if he could not shoot a goose. We readily acquiesced and he started out. In a little while we heard the report of the gun, and saw five geese flying back to the lake. We could not realize that he had killed two geese at one shot with the rifle, but such was the fact. Soon he called to us from the oaks, and we went to the pond and fished out the geese.

In the early history of the mills the pond was full to the top of the dam, and created quite a large overflow of water extending over the marshes north and south of the dam. These marshes were full of ducks and geese, and fish in their season, affording fine spearing for fish from a boat, and fine shooting of ducks and geese. The muskrat was also there in force, and I devoted a good deal of my time to him, as a muskrat skin was worth six pence, which to me in those days was a good deal of money. I caught them in traps and speared them through their

houses during the icy time, and shot them from the shore in the early evening when they were on the swim. In those days times were hard and money scarce, and every boy was expected to do something for himself. I was a trapper of wolves and foxes, and was quite successful. A fox skin brought a dollar and a wolf's half that money.

The earliest plan we had for catching fish was in the construction of a dam across the stream with the water flowing over into a large rack made of bass wood bark. The pickerel and suckers ran out of the lake in the night time, the flow of the water carrying them over the dam and into the rack, the water dropping through and leaving the fish high and dry. All we had to do in the morning was to go down and pick them up in baskets full.

At that time it was no uncommon thing to see many kinds of game such as wolves, deer and foxes within range of vision from our log house. While hunting at one time my brother Abe captured a young fawn. It was brought home, and very soon became very tame and thoroughly domesticated, and he stayed with us until he became a large animal of his kind, with wide spreading horns. We kept upon his neck a red band to distinguish him from his kind, but one day poor Dick started away, (and he had become a great rambler), down towards the Crawfish, just beyond the farm now known as Earl's, and some one took advantage of his confidence and shot him. We felt very indignant, but this would not bring Dick back to us.

He was very mischievous and at times quite ugly. It was almost impossible to keep him out of the house, as the latch string to open the door from the outside was within reach of his mouth, and he would get a good hold of the string, raise the bar, and walk into the house and help himself to anything he could find. In the summer time, if the window was raised, he would jump through on to the floor, if there were no other means of ingress within his reach. I remember one time I was husking corn in the field, and sitting down by a shock. Dick was my companion, and seemed to be enjoying himself in his own way, and minding his own business. All at once he approached and made a springing jump on top of me, and one of his forelegs found its way down my back inside of my shirt from my neck, tearing open the collar, and leaving a stripe

upon my back, which the boys said looked very much like a zebra's.

In '44 Lake Mills received quite an accession in the person of Col. Thos. J. Carmichael, an educated and accomplished Scotchman, who selected a location at the head of the lake, and stocked it quite largely with sheep, intending to make a sheep farm of the place, and to test the question whether sheep raising and wool growing would prove to be profitable. He was very liberal and enterprising in everything tending to the growth and prosperity of the village. He contributed to the purchase of the band instruments, and one of its first tunes was played in his honor, but his career suddenly came to an end, as he was most unfortunately killed in an accident in the winter of '48.

In one of the earliest years of our settlement here on one sunny afternoon in the month of May, 1840, we noticed a stalwart stranger emerging from the oak openings, coming towards the house upon the marsh road. His coming had been announced by the barking of the watch dog. He seemd to be feeling his way along very carefully, and gazing forward with apparent interest which denoted him to be unfamiliar with the neighborhood. He finally reached our log house and asked for accommodation, and wanted to know what prospect there was for finding work. He made his home with us for a while, and then secured land north of the village upon which he made his home. Being a bachelor, he was anxious to find a wife, and his efforts in that direction were warmly seconded by the numerous friends and acquaintances he had made. In Oakland he sought his fate, and there secured his bride in 1843. On his return with her after the wedding, passing by the mill in his winter rig with its jingling bells, he was cheered by us all to the echo. The name of the person I here describe is Alansan Farmer. He was the first one of our young bachelors to wed, and at that time they were quite numerous. He is still a living representative of the early pioneers.

I cannot forbear calling attention to a prominent character, who was well known, revered and loved by the early settlers. I refer to Aunt Zilpah Brown, wife of the proprietor of Brown's mills, which was so long in construction upon this stream, away down towards Milford. She was a good mother in Israel, and

she was the nurse, comforter and friend to all of her sex who were sick. If the truth should be told, she was the first to take in arms many of the early born of Lake Mills and vicinity.

The first child born in Lake Mills was a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. George Farmer in '39, and though living miles away Aunt Zilpah was present at its birth. After rounding out many years, and with a crown of glory resting upon her, Aunt Zilpah, the beloved of all the old settlers and their families, was gathered to her rest.

In 1847-48 the telegraph line was constructed between Milwaukee and Madison by the way of Whitewater, Janesville, Fort Atkinson, Jefferson and Lake Mills. It touched all these places with a view to receiving aid from the settlers in its building. It was thought that the telegraph would add very much to the importance of our village, and with that in view not a little aid was furnished, but after all it did not add much to our prestige.

I will mention the fact that in '39 a steamboat was built and launched at Aztalan under the manipulation of Nelson P. Hawks. It was claimed then that Aztalan would be the head of navigation upon the Rock river and its branches, and great advantages to the place was thought would follow the enterprise. The launching of the boat was a great event and called forth a large concourse of settlers, all watching with eager anxiety the moment when the boat should start for the placid surface of the Crawfish. When all was ready Sam. C. Rice, a mechanic who had previously worked for my father, struck the blow which unloosened the fastenings, and the boat slid gently and gracefully into the water amid the loud huzzas of the strong-voiced men and women present. With great difficulty the boat was floated down the Crawfish into the Rock and into the Mississippi, but its passage demonstrated the fact that the Rock and its tributaries were better adapted to be dammed for mill purposes than to be kept for the use of steamboat navigation. The boat was christened the N. P. Hawks, and never returned to its original moorings at Aztalan. Its name afterwards was changed to the Enterprise, and after a short and precarious existence, it succumbed to the elements.

After the saw mill was finished and put in running order, it was kept at work night and day with relays of hands. It was

not long before I had learned its control, and minus the heavy lifting I could manufacture lumber in good style. Commencing first to manage the mill when the men were at meals, many thousand feet of lumber were turned out of the mill under my manipulation. On completion of the grist mill (and I will remark here that in those days a mill was called a grist mill because it was a place where the farmers brought their grist to be ground, and such a business as manufacturing flour largely for other markets was then unknown) I was transferred to the occupation of miller for a short time. Very soon after the completion of the grist mill negotiations for the sale of the whole property were entered into by my father with Miles Millard, and a bargain was soon consummated. All the members of the family, except my father, opposed the sale. We wanted to let well enough alone. We understood the business then in hand, but my father, who was a restless man, fond of change and who always had his own way, argued that it would be so much better for us all to retire to the land which he would reserve, now constituting the Phillips' place, and start a splendid farm. We did so and in the spring of '43 we left the log house and the mills, the scene of so much labor and anxiety to us all, and moved on to the land out of which we were to make a farm. My father built a small house for temporary use, and immediately commenced the construction of the main house and barn, and in the fall of that year we moved into the new house. That summer in the little house across the road from the main residence, my sister Emily was born, and later in the season my grandfather, Abel Keyes, a man of seventy years and over, was stricken with chills and fever, and yielded up his life.

In the early spring following, quite extensive preparations were being made for a double wedding, which was to be celebrated on May 1st, 1844, and which occurred at that time. My brother, Abel, and Miss Mary Cutler, and my sister, Katharine, and George Hyer, of Madison, were the contracting parties. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. O. P. Clinton, Congregational clergyman and missionary. On that 1st day of May, over fifty years ago, which was ushered in with a clear sky and a bright and shining sun, a large company of friends and neighbors assembled to witness the ceremony, which took place at twelve o'clock noon. For several days previous thereto, the

best cooks in the neighborhood were engaged in the preparation of the mammoth loaves of wedding cake and the supplies for the wedding dinner. This double wedding at that period was considered a great event, and was generally attended. The event was signalized by a party arriving from Madison, consisting of Philo Dunning, Darwin Clark, Seth Van Bergen and others, accompanied with ladies. They came in one of Frink & Walker's four-horse stage coaches, and it was thought that they came in grand style. The trip was made by the way of Sun Prairie and Hanchetville, the road through Deerfield being the poorer one, and besides having in its line too much corduroy over the marshes. After the ceremony, the wedding dinner, and a look about the village, a ball was held in the evening at the Lake Mills house, which lasted until the light of the next morning shone upon the earth, after which the Madison party started for home. A half a century has moved the world since that wedding morn when the Madison stage coach, with its joyous party, swept around the head of the lake, down the hill on Madison street, and turned the corner with a sweeping curve to Bartlett's tavern, where upon its broad piazza its passengers were unloaded. The villagers were there in goodly numbers to welcome its arrival. From out of the stage coach stepped Philo (Dunning), and Darwin (Clark), and Seth (Van Bergen), the three youngest of the Madison boys, and they were noble specimens of young manhood, inspired with health, and hope, and happiness, and with that energy and courage which characterized the early pioneers, enabling them to turn aside, as occasion presented, from the sober realities of pioneer life to enjoy the fun and frolic of the wedding days of their friends and associates thirty miles away.

I can see them now as I saw them then, and their joyous voices seem to be yet ringing in my ears. I see them today but they are old boys now, and, although time's busy fingers have made their impress upon them, still their hearts are young, and when talking of this wedding of the long ago, those days seem to come back and with smiles and hearty laughter they are boys again.

And now one word of the boys, then known as Philo, Darwin and Seth. God has been good to them, in that long span of life. Few of the old pioneers have been so highly favored. Their

retrospect of early and later days cannot fail to afford them peace and contentment. A talk with them would recall many incidents of that occasion, which I have not time here to repeat. They would tell you how the stage coach became stuck in the mud; how it had to be pryed out with rails, and how the young ladies were carried to a place of safety while this work was going on. While there may be quite a difference in the conduct of a wedding occurring fifty years ago, and a similar event at the present time, still I imagine that all, old and young, enjoyed such an event then, with greater satisfaction, than those occurring now are enjoyed.

Having become domiciled upon the farm, we started out for its improvement. Land was broken for cultivation, and in the winter tamarack poles were procured from across the lake to fence it. Very soon after my father became tired of farming, and he left the farm in charge of myself and mother, and brother Oliver, while he and my brother Abel went to the Koshkonong, in Dane county, and indulged in their favorite work of mills and village building, settling at a point on the Koshkonong afterwards named Cambridge, where they built mills and started the village. Tiring of that venture after several years of experience in it, my father turned his thoughts back to Lake Mills, and proposed to sell the farm and move to the Fox river country. A long and earnest protest by my mother and myself was entered against selling the homestead. It had become very dear to us; we had farmed it quite extensively; we had it in a good state of cultivation for those days; it was well stocked; the orchard was just coming into bearing fruit, and my mother had been quite successful in butter and cheese making, and although the work was hard still we were all happy and contented. It was then the ambition of my life to become a farmer. I had no wish or thought of anything different, and as my father had always promised that the farm should eventually be mine. It was gratified in contemplation of such ownership, but it had to go; and in '49 it was sold to the Philips' brothers. Possession was given to the family and we moved to Menasha. The sale of the farm destroyed all my hopes and aspirations for a farmer's life, and in '50 I turned my footsteps toward Madison, where I have resided ever since.

A roll call of the first settlers of Lake Mills would awaken

but few responses. Not one of the old original pioneers, who brought their families to this place, is left, and few of their descendants are to be found within the borders of this township. Most of the latter, moved by that spirit which animated their sires, have continued the westward march, and now are scattered throughout the newer states of the union. The ravages of time have removed all of the heads of families I have mentioned, and the grim reaper has also been busy with the children. How many are there in this large audience who were children living here during the six years between '37 and '43. You know but little of those who were here before you. A half century has obliterated nearly all knowledge of them. The surviving children of the first settlers are now men of three score years and more, and of this narrow class no one other than myself, with memory illumined, could draw aside the curtain and present the picture as given you, with the earliest views of scenes and incidents occurring here long before most of you were born.

A few words about the Keyes family, the first settlers here, and I have done. In 1836 my father, Joseph Keyes, as I have stated, made claim to the beautiful land surrounding you. He was the first white man to assert ownership of the lake and land about you in opposition to the Indian. Abel Keyes, his father, my gradfather, and my oldest brother, Simon S., came from Vermont soon after, and were among the earliest settlers. The two latter are now sleeping in yonder cemetery. The surviving children of Joseph and Olive Keyes, my parents, are Abel, Oliver, myself and sister, Emily, now Mrs. H. D. Fisher. My father was a man of great courage and tremendous energy. The obstacles in his pathway were overcome with a force invincible. He belonged to that class of pioneers who were strong and hopeful in their noble manhood, the founders of a great state, the landmarks of its mighty progress; the impress of their works shall last forever.

In paying a heartfelt tribute to the memory of my mother, I will include the wives of all the old settlers. With an abiding faith, with a courage that never faltered, inspired by the fortitude of a true Christian, they were fit to be ordained of God as the life companions of the old pioneers. In sickness and

in health, in sunshine and in storm, fulfilling every obligation, they stood forth among the noblest of their sex.

Joseph and Olive Keyes, the founders of Lake Mills, have years since passed to their reward. They are laid to rest near Lake Winnebago within sound of the rushing waters of Fox river, and, as the water flows on, it will sing a requiem to their memory as long as time shall last.