

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE FUR TRADE AND FUR TRADERS AMONG THE OJIBWAYS FROM THE FORMATION OF THE NORTHWEST COMPANY IN 1787 TO 1834.

Origin of the Northwest Fur Company—Departments of their trade in the Ojibway country—Depot at Grand Portage—Yearly meetings of the partners—Names of the original partners—Sir Alex. McKenzie—He forms the X. Y. Company, and opposes the Northwest—The two companies join issues—Opposition of the Hudson's Bay Co.—Bloody struggle between the two rival companies—Northwest becomes merged in the Hudson's Bay Co.—Names of their Ojibway traders—Astor's American Fur Co.—Amount of their outfits in 1818—Policy of their trade—Names of their principal traders—W. A. Aitkin—Lyman W. Warren—Names, motives, and conduct of the American traders.

AMONG the first traders who pushed their enterprise to the villages of the Ojibways on Lake Superior, after France had ceded the Canadas to Great Britain, the names of Alexander Henry and the Cadottes appear most conspicuous. The Northwest Fur Company was not formed till the year 1787. It originated in the following manner:—

Three or four rival traders, or small companies, had proceeded from Montreal and Quebec, and located trading posts on the north coast of Lake Superior, about the mouth of Pigeon River, up which stream they sent outfits to the "Bois Fort" and Muskego Ojibways, and then to the Kenisteno and Assineboines of Red River. The rivalry between these different traders became extremely bitter, and at last resulted in the murder of Waddon, who was shot in cold blood, within his trading house, at Grand Portage. This outrage brought the most sensible portion of the traders to their senses, and they immediately made efforts to compromise their difficulties, and to join their interests into one. These efforts resulted in the formation of the