

to the rapids at the lower end of Winnebago Lake, where they usually made half loads over the rapids into the lake. Thence they proceeded upward to where the Fox River enters the lake, thence up Fox River through Puckawa Lake, and Lac de Bœuf, or Buffalo Lake, and some smaller lakes to the Portage of Wisconsin, where a man by the name of Roy resided, who kept teams and hauled goods, furs and boats across the Portage of one and one-fourth miles from the Fox to the Wisconsin River, for which he charged forty cents per 100 pounds, and ten dollars for each boat.

The boats then went down the Wisconsin to its mouth, and thence up the Mississippi about three miles to Prairie du Chien; the traders of the Lower Mississippi and Missouri never going down without a short stop at Prairie du Chien, where they generally spent some days in conviviality, dinners, dancing, &c. Tradition says that many years since, when there were many wintering traders in both the Upper and Lower Mississippi, it was the custom of every trader visiting Prairie du Chien, to leave in store a keg of eight or nine gallons of good wine for convivial purposes when they should again meet in the spring, on which occasions they would have great dinner parties, and, as is the English custom, drink largely. But when I came into the country, there were but few of the old traders remaining, and the storing of wine at Prairie du Chien had become almost obsolete, although the traders were then well supplied with wine, and that of the best kind, of which they made very free use. It was then thought that a clerk in charge of an outfit must have his keg of wine, but after the American Fur Company got fairly initiated into the trade, they abolished the custom of furnishing their clerks with this luxury at the expense of the outfit. As I have already said, the Indian trade of the Mississippi and Missouri and their tributaries was carried on from Mackinaw as the grand depot of the trade of the North-West.

The traders and their clerks were then the aristocracy of the country; and to a Yankee at first sight, presented a singular state