

Prairie, for many years after the Government took possession of it as a military post. There were not, until 1835, any Americans that emigrated to the Prairie for settlement; and even then, as the country about was not in market, very few came.

In the winter of 1818-19, Illinois was admitted as a State into the Union, and all that part of the country formerly belonging to the territories of Indiana and Illinois was attached to Michigan, then under the governorship of Gen. Lewis Cass. In the spring of 1819, he set off the county of Brown, including all the country East of a North and South line running through the Portage of Wisconsin to the Illinois line; and at the same time, set off the county of Crawford, including all the country West and South of the aforesaid line to the Missouri line, including what is now the State of Iowa and Territory of Minnesota.

Governor Cass sent blank commissions for the different officers of the counties, to be filled up by the inhabitants. These had been sent by Lieut. Col. Leavenworth, then on his way, with the Fifth Regiment of U. S. Infantry, to occupy Forts Crawford and Armstrong, and to build a fort at the mouth of St. Peters. Nicholas Boilvin, Esq., was appointed to administer the oath to the officers of Crawford county. Two companies of the regiment were sent to Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, under command of Brevet Major Mastin, and two companies to Fort Crawford under Major Muhlenberg. Shortly after receiving the blank commissions, the principal inhabitants assembled at the house of Nicholas Boilvin, Esq., and then the difficulty was to find persons sufficiently acquainted with the business to fill the offices and perform the duties. Finally John W. Johnson, the U. S. factor, was selected as the Chief Justice of the County Court. I was solicited to take the office of Associate Justice, or Judge of Probate, but being then young, and appearing much younger than I really was, and knowing very little about the proceedings of courts, and thinking that I had neither the practice nor dignity to hold a judicial office, and that I should probably make myself ridiculous,