

each believed it to be his property, they applied to the lawyer at Cahokia to assist them in finding out who was the real owner.—The mode of traveling in those days was in a canoe, manned with six or eight men to paddle, and taking with them some flour, tea and sugar for the bourgeois; and some hulled corn and deer tallow, enough to season the soup for the men, depending upon shooting game by the way, or buying wild fowl or venison from the Indians. The parties litigant were obliged to take their witnesses with them, paying them for their time and expenses, from their departure until their return home. The parties were also obliged to take a bundle of beaver skins, and dispose of them at St. Louis to pay the expenses of lawyers, &c; and the lawyers, as usual, were disposed to oblige the parties by putting over the case from time to time, and the parties continued the suit in this manner until it had cost them about fifteen hundred dollars each, when they took it out of court and settled it. But which retained the heifer, if I ever heard, I do not now recollect.

The *coutume de Paris* so far prevailed in this country generally, that a part of the ceremony of marriage was the entering into a contract in writing, generally giving, if no issue, the property to the survivor; and if they desired to be divorced, they went together before the magistrate and made known their wishes, and he, in their presence, tore up the marriage contract and according to the custom of the country, they were then divorced. I was once present at Judge Abbott's at Mackinaw when a couple presented themselves before him, and were divorced in this manner. When the laws of Michigan were first introduced at Prairie du Chien, it was with difficulty that the Justice of the Peace could persuade them that a written contract was not necessary, and some of them believed that because the contract of marriage gave the property to the survivor, that they were not obliged to pay the debts which the deceased owed at the time of his death.

There was an instance of this at Prairie du Chien. A man by the name of Jean Marie Querie dit Lamouche, who had been