

since Perkins and his men commenced operations, threatened to send a force and destroy the mill, saying the Indian Agent had no authority to give permission to build mills in the Indian country. The parties being pretty well convinced of the fact, and that Col. Snelling had malice enough to carry out his threat, if for nothing else but to punish Mr. Rolette, with whom he had some difficulty, concluded not to rebuild, until they could be authorized by some better authority, supposing then that the Secretary of War had that power; and Mr. Rolette and myself made up our minds to pocket the loss, and let Perkins off with the loss of the few articles he had furnished and his services, which amounted to about fifteen hundred dollars. It proved a bad speculation to all parties. The annuity we agreed to pay the Indians for the privilege of building the mill and cutting timber, being stopped during the time there was no work on the mill, the Indians insisted upon its payment, and enquired the reason we did not go on with the work. We were obliged to tell them that their Great Father would not allow us to do so. They said they had given us permission, and that the country was theirs, and their Great Father had no right to say anything about it.

In the fall of 1829, returning from St. Louis, I met at Galena Major John Biddle of Detroit, who had then been elected our delegate to Congress from Michigan, and enquired what he could do for me, or the people of Prairie du Chien at Washington. I then related to him the situation in which I and Mr. Rolette were placed with regard to the mill and annuities to the Indians. He told me that when I got home, if I would address him at Washington, stating our case, that he would attend to it. I wrote to him a full statement of the case and difficulties, and Major Biddle obtained for us from the Secretary of War permission to erect mills, &c., provided we contracted with the Indians through the Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien.

We renewed our contract with the Indians, through their agents, and in May, 1830, sent a mill-wright who was also a partner, a su-