

where Clarksville now stands, on the western bank of the Mississippi, a party of Indians came and killed the entire family of one O'Neil, about three miles above Clarksville, while O'Neil himself was employed with his neighbors in erecting the stockade. In company with O'Neil and others, I hastened to the scene of murder, and found all killed, scalped, and horribly mangled. One of the children, about a year and a half old, was found literally baked in a large metal bake-kettle or Dutch oven, with a cover on; and, as there were no marks of the knife or tomahawk on the body, the child must have been put in alive to suffer this horrible death; the oil or fat in the bottom of the kettle was nearly two inches deep.

I went to St. Louis in company with Ira Cottle, to see Gov. Clark, and ascertain whether war had been actually declared. This must have been sometime in June, but the news of the declaration of war against Great Britain had not yet reached there. On our return, I was strongly urged by the people to act as a spy or scout on the frontier, as I was possessed of great bodily activity, and it was well known that I had seen much woods experience. I consented to act in this capacity on the frontiers of St. Charles county, never thinking or troubling myself about any pecuniary recompense, and was only anxious to render the distressed people a useful service. I immediately entered alone upon this duty, sometimes mounted, and sometimes on foot, and carefully watching the river, above the settlements, to discover whether any Indians had landed, and sometimes to follow their trails, learn their destination, and report to the settlements.

Upon my advice, several of the weaker stockades were abandoned for twenty or thirty miles around, and concentrated at a place near the mouth of Cuivre or Copper River, at or near the present village of Monroe; and there a large number of us, perhaps some sixty or seventy persons, were some two or three weeks employed in the erection of a fort. We named it in honor of the patriotic governor, Benjamin Howard, and between twenty and thirty families were soon safely lodged in *Fort Howard*.