

of the young squaw, to whom he would make liberal compensation; and by making a permanent marriage, the trader's business would be increased. When the trader renewed his engagement for his squaw wife for two or three years in succession, he generally then kept her for life.

I remained a few weeks in Prairie du Chien, and then returned without molestation to St. Louis taking down a few skins and hides, but the trip was unprofitable. I learned, while at Prairie du Chien, that the people there had chiefly depended upon the traders bringing flour and other supplies from Mackinaw, but their remoteness from the older settlements, would now render it necessary to engage in farming, and raise large crops of wheat, and that arrangements were then making for that purpose. I thought it would be a good locality for a grist-mill, and promised the people that I would erect one, for which there was sufficient water-power at Fisher's Coulee, four miles above Prairie du Chien. This promise was gratifying to them, as they had no mode of grinding except sometimes to hitch a horse to a sweep, and grind on a small scale with a band and small stone—hence called a band-mill.

About June, 1816, I returned to Prairie du Chien with a large boat, and full load of merchandise and provisions, I then being but a common carrier for others. The post at Rock Island was then occupied, and commanded by Maj. Willoughby Morgan; this post was commenced the previous year. On this visit, I believe, I found a detachment of U. S. troops arrived at Prairie du Chien shortly before me; perhaps from fifty to one hundred and fifty in number, but I have forgotten the name of the commanding officer. Their arrival was very unwelcome to the settlement generally. They were occupying and repairing the old fort, on the bank of the river, at the upper part of the town.

Having discharged my load, I descended to Fever River, as I had orders from St. Louis merchants to bring down lead from the traders in payment for goods they had purchased there. Reach-