

ing a point then known as Kettle Chief's Prairie,* some little distance below where Cassville now is, perhaps fifteen or eighteen miles, I there met the traders upon whom I had the orders, and some two or three thousand Indians congregated, holding a sort of jubilee just after their corn-planting, swigging whiskey, and invoking the blessing of the Great Spirit upon their crop. The traders requested me to go down to the mouth of the Fever River, and there await their sending the lead down; they were very anxious that I should take it down to St. Louis for them, and they had it piled up at the very spot where Galena now is. This I refused, as I could not consent to wait so long, and asked to go up with my boat. This request the Indians refused, saying that "the Americans must not see their lead mines," as they were particularly suspicious of Americans, but did not cherish the same feelings towards Frenchmen, with whom they had been so long connected and associated. Speaking, as I did, the French as fluently as I did the English, the traders declared to the Indians that I was a Frenchman, and all my boatmen, which was true, were French *voyageurs*; the Indians, with very little persuasion, consented that I might go to their smelting establishments.

About two hundred Indians jumped upon my boat, while others followed in canoes, and we pushed on to the spot. There was no Indian town there, but several encampments, and no trading establishment. There were at least twenty furnaces in the immediate neighborhood; and the lead was run into *plaques* or *plats*, or *flats*, of about seventy pounds each. These *flats* were formed by smelting the mineral in a small walled hole, in which the fuel and mineral were mingled, and the liquid lead run out, in front, into a hole scooped in the earth, so that a bowl-shaped mass of lead was formed therein. The squaws dug the mineral, and carried it in sacks on their heads to the smelting places. I loaded seventy tons of lead in my boat, and still left much at the fur-

*Probably named after the Fox chief Kettle, who was killed, in 1830, by a war party of Sioux and Menomonees, as related by Judge Lockwood—Vide, p. 170, 171, of this volume. L. C. D.