

ever, instead of being detrimental, was a benefit to him, because being resolved to succeed in his profession, the sharp rubbing he received from his elder brethren at the bar, served to nerve him up to greater effort to meet, and if possible to vanquish those legal Goliaths; and by availing himself of the points they raised, and the authorities they cited against him, when they changed sides on similar cases, he was able to hurl back at them their own thunder, now made his own by adoption. By these means, added to untiring application, he gained considerable eminence for a young man in a short space of time, so that for two years he filled the responsible place of district attorney.

At this time the contest for the Presidency was pending between John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. In this, Mr. Burnett espoused the cause of the latter, and it seems that he was so active a partizan of that cause, that it brought him into favorable notice and fraternal feelings with such men as Col. R. M. Johnson, Thos. Marshall, W. T. Barry, N. Davis and others of the same school, who were his fast friends at Washington, and aided him in his future enterprises in that direction, when, in accordance with the spirit of the successful party, he sought a portion of the "spoils" in the shape of an office.

The difficulties, however, attending the distribution of political favors, where there are so many more applicants than there are offices to fill, prevented his succeeding according to his wishes. From a letter to him from Mr. Barry, it seems that he sought a clerkship in Washington, but was informed not only that the places were filled, but that the salary, a thousand dollars, would not pay the expenses of a married man, and he was advised to accept of an office on the frontier, where, though the salary was less, the expenses were so much lower as to make it more profitable; and further the prospect of rising to some higher place on the frontier was so much greater in a new country than at the Capital, as to make it preferable to the other. He was accordingly appointed sub-Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien, October 15th, 1829, under the agency of the late Gen. J. M. Street.