

width at its narrowest point, has an irregular undulating surface, though of easy and accessible grades in all directions. The centre Park, or that one on which the Capitol stands, is an almost level plateau, elevated seventy feet above the lakes, and contains about fifteen acres. Nature has studded it with thrifty forest trees—art has tastefully adorned it with gravelled walks and gas lamps! The grounds, without the park, gradually descend, and again with gentle ascents form numerous elevations, varying in altitude from thirty to one hundred and twenty-five feet, affording many desirable sites for villas. University Park, containing over fifty acres, is the most prominent of these elevations, and from the college buildings, situate at the highest point, and from many other prominences and public and private observatories, a view of the city, its public buildings, and its numerous princely mansions, equalling in magnificence those of our Eastern cities—justly entitling Madison to the provincial cognomen of *Palatial City*—the sparkling lakes, skirted with every variety of scenery, the bluffs, the capes, the coves, the prairies, the ravines, the groves, the meadows, and the vision-encompassed luxuriance of the husbandman, is sublime beyond comparison. In truth, the grandeur of the scenery of the “Four Lake Country” is equalled only by that part of Hilges’ Panorama of the Creation and Deluge, representing the Garden of Eden, with its life like crystal lakes and floral verdure; and those who have feasted upon that imaginative picture only can fancy the beauties hereabouts.

In the summer of 1836, with a comrade, I camped at the head of Mendota or Fourth Lake, within six miles of the spot where the Capitol now stands, at which time there was not within twenty miles of that point a single white inhabitant, and none within the present limits of Dane county, an area of twelve hundred and forty square miles, excepting Col. E. Brigham, at the Blue Mounds, and those of his household. Contrast the present with the condition of the country nearly twenty years ago, when the Indian and the deer, unmolested, roamed the forest and the plain, and you behold the county of Dane with over thirty-seven thousand enlight-