

Early History of Kenosha

By M. Frank

The history of the western country during the memorable period of 1836, also a few years immediately preceding that time, is proverbial for adventurers and enterprises, many of them partaking of extravagance and wild speculation. The Great West, its boundless natural resources, and its many advantages for the speedy acquirement of wealth, at that period, more than ever before, became a subject of absorbing attention, throughout the Middle and Eastern States.

In the month of December, in the year 1834, a gentleman in the town of Hannibal, Oswego county, N. Y., invited a number of guests to an entertainment at his residence. At the supper-table, the West, its beautiful prairies, productive soil and bright skies, became the engrossing theme of conversation. The enthusiasm of the party rapidly increased, as each of the leading spirits present rehearsed the glowing descriptions of travelers, who had explored the country west of the Great Lakes. During the evening, the party mutually resolved upon a plan, to organize an association to settle a colony in the West, in which those becoming members should be aids to each other, and mutually share profits and losses in the enterprise. To strengthen the undertaking, and carry the purposes of the originators into effectual operation, it was

*I have avoided, in this history of Kenosha, repeating incidents and facts given in Rev. J. Lothrop's paper, published in the 2d Vol. of the Society's Collections, except such as are absolutely necessary to preserve a chain of events.