

perhaps, walk to my destruction. So I determined to walk about, feeling carefully with my feet for the path; but, as people generally do when they become confused, I went the wrong way, and soon found by my steps that I was going down hill. I, therefore, lay down on my stomach, to get at the level of the ground, placing my head up hill, intending to work myself along in that way until I could get into a thicket, and there remain until morning. I got on the path, however, before I found a thicket. My house was soon found; and this was my last visit after night-fall. On examining my trail the next morning, I found I had been within six feet of the precipice, which, had I reached it, must have proved fatal to me. I had a good season's trade, during this winter of [1802-1803], and had plenty of venison, wild fowls, and wild or native potatoes to eat, but awful human brutes to deal with.

My short sojourn at Prairie des Chiens, the rendezvous of the Mississippi traders, presented but little variation; and our journeying from and to Mackinaw only differed in this respect—that in the summers the rivers were low and sluggish, and, in returning to Mackinaw, we could not make more than from three to ten miles a day in ascending the Ouisconsin.

Having had enough of the Lower Mississippi, I would not try it over again. *Minnawack* (or Millwackie) was offered to me for a trading-post, and I went among the Kickapoos. About a quarter of a mile from the entrance of the river, I observed a nice green and level spot. There I landed, and pitched my tent, towards the close of 1803; and, in a short time, we had a three-room house over our heads—no upstairs; but all the timbers above the floor exposed to view. The river here is, perhaps, sixty yards wide. On the opposite side were two traders—Le Claire, and La Fromboise—who had been settled there several years, and each had two or three relatives, or other hangers on, which formed quite a society of its kind. I had bought a horse, and considered it my duty to ride over the plains, and pick up skins from the scattered Indian camps.

My neighbors had been very kind, and I made up my mind to exercise my best endeavors in the cooking line, and tender them