

a rare feast on Christmas day, which was now near at hand. On Christmas eve my invitations were extended to my friends. I had secured the fattest raccoon the Indians could tree; and defied any one to procure a fatter one, for there was no lean about it. Towards sunset, I set my cook to chop any quantity of venison for stuffing. My raccoon was unusually large, weighing about thirty-two pounds, requiring a large quantity of stuffing to fill it out plump. In the meantime, I had the pepper in a piece of deer skin, pounding it into pulverized form, cutting up onions, and a little cedar leaves, to give my viand a pleasant taste. No coonship's body, I am sure, was ever so cram-full before. About eight o'clock, it was stitched up, and ready for placing on the spit early the next morning. Then where should it be placed for safety during the night to prevent it from freezing? Of course by the fire. I went to bed, and my mind was on the raccoon subject all night. But what was my mortification, when I got up at daylight to hang my coon up to roast, to find it putrid and stinking. Oh, misery! sympathize with me for my lost labor, and with my friends for their lost dinner. I had no cook book. So ended my second attempt at cooking. Of course, I went without my dinner, and got laughed at by my half-famished friends.

The Indians—Pottawotamies—in this locality, were docile, and easily managed; and doing a fair trade, I remained here three years, frequently going on horseback to Chicago, a distance of sixty [eighty-five] miles; but the route was a hard-sand beach; and having a fleet pony, and a cool breeze from the lake, the distance was soon overcome without fatigue to my young bones.

During my second year at Minnawack, or Millwackie [1804–1805], Captain Whistler with his company of American soldiers, came to take possession of Chicago. At this time there were no buildings there except a few dilapidated log huts, covered with bark. Captain Whistler had selected one of these as a temporary, though miserable residence for his family, his offices and men being under canvas. On being informed of his arrival, I felt it my duty to pay my respects to the authority so much required in the country.

On the morrow I mounted *Keegakah*, or Swift-Goer, and the