

rest until his destination was reached. The severity of the trial of strength seems almost incredible, for in addition to the mail-bag, weighing usually from fifty to sixty pounds, the carrier had the necessary supply of provisions to pack on his back. There were two or three other men engaged in this arduous service; but none, it is believed, suffered greater hardships than Hardwick, and yet, after nearly seventeen years¹ of this severe and continued labor, exposed to all changes of weather, he lived to the remarkable age of eighty-eight years.

Of the Americans who came to the country on its first occupation by the authorities of our government in 1816, perhaps none more readily became "at home," and conformed to the mode of life common to the native French and mixed blood than Hardwick. These natives were a peculiar people, with few vices, improvident like their Indian neighbors, spending much of their time in social gatherings, racing upon the ice, and other amusements. There was, it is said, in 1817, a series of theatrical entertainments at the house of Col. Ducharme, who resided at "Shantytown," near "Camp Smith," then occupied by the troops.

¹Of this period he carried the mail seven consecutive winters commencing in 1817. Mrs. Bella French, in her *History of Brown County*, relates some interesting particulars of a trip he made from Green Bay to Detroit, in 1821. He camped one night where Michigan City, Indiana, now is, using his bag of provisions for a pillow. He dreamed during the night that he was rolling down hill, and, awaking suddenly, found that a large black wolf was making off with his bag of supplies. He shot the wolf and regained his important store of provisions. The *Green Bay Advocate* says it was a large black bear that committed this depredation, and that, sending a bullet through him for his temerity, Hardwick sold his pelt for seven dollars to a trader. He had permission to remain in Detroit until the opening of the lakes: but, after he had been there a short time, he began to pine for a look at a Green Bay girl, whose heart beat responsive to his own, and he made up his mind to return on foot. So, back through the deep snow and trackless wilderness, he trudged all the weary way from Detroit to Green Bay—a distance of nearly five hundred miles—just for a look at the "girl he left behind him." The girl became his wife—how could she help it after such a manifestation of devotion?

The *Green Bay Advocate* adds, that in some of these trips, he would go by way of Fond du Lac, and sometimes by Manitowoc, according to the depth of the snow.