

whites, was anything but advantageous to the former, while many of the dealings of the Government with the Indians, threatened to embroil the frontier in an Indian war.

Besides the Indian Agency, and being a military post, there was located here the head-quarters of the American Fur Company. This Company was organized by John Jacob Astor, in the year 1809 and if memory serves me right, Joseph Rolette was the principal agent at this place when I arrived in 1828; and H. L. Dousman, who had come on the year previous, was also in the employ of the Company. Of Rolette I could relate a host of anecdotes, but space and other motives forbid. I will state, however, that his influence was considerable, his will arbitrary, and his word law. He held sway over the French inhabitants and *voyageurs*, which if not really tyrannical, was exacting in its requirements. At the fire over the Slough, when the Company's buildings were burned, a powder magazine, filled with powder, stood in close proximity to the fire. This magazine was in eminent danger from the heat and flying cinders; and to prevent a terrible explosion, it was necessary to remove the powder. Rolette taking in everything at a glance, saw need of immediate action, and thereupon ordered all those in his employ, to save the powder. And although it was almost as much as life was worth, they dared not disobey that mandate, and rushing in they seized the powder kegs, and carried them through the fire and smoke down to the river. This incident shows his influence over the people, who feared him worse than they did death.

The Mississippi River, when I came here, was at a stage of water $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet higher than it had been known before, or has occurred during any subsequent rise. It was in June, and the site of the village was an island. To this same island, made so by too high water, was then restricted all that bore the name of Prairie Du Chien. On the east of the Slough, in the year 1828, there were only five houses; the one built by J. H. Lockwood, afterwards occupied by Colonel Z. Taylor, north of the present Fort; one other where Union Block now