

heavy rifle around his head. Aroused by the disturbance, the officer of the day, Lieut. Mackenzie,* came out of his quarters at the further end of the long parade, and calling to the Corporal of the guard, told him to "Take that fellow to the guard house." Hardly had the order escaped his lips, when Reneka observed him, and instantly poising his rifle, shot Mackenzie through the brain. It was a long shot, but a deadly one. In making it, Reneka had killed his bosom friend. He was arrested and confined in the guard-house, and when he became sane and learned he had killed his best friend, no words of mine can picture the heart-rending agony of remorse that seized him. But he was delivered over to the civil authorities, convicted of murder, and sentenced to be hung, and brought back here to be executed. The gallows was erected over the Slough, and the day of execution arrived. I did not go to see him hung, but it is said he made an affecting speech to his comrades, warning them against strong drink. He showed up his own case in the strongest light, and described the grief of his mother when she should hear of her boy's disgrace. Many an old veteran shed tears when Reneka was swung off into eternity. But his was not an isolated instance, where youth, talent, hope—all were sacrificed to King Alcohol. The army and early history present a multitude of such victims; even now, none are exempt from the baneful effects of the curse—every individual feels, or has felt, personally or socially, its injurious influence.

For some years before 1828-29, little advancement or change had been going on in the appearance of Prairie Du Chien. Soon after the Indian difficulties of 1827 were adjusted, emigration increased, and settlers began to arrive bringing with them seeds of progress. From that period the eastern emigrants commenced gathering at this point, the population increased, improvement began and prospered, until we now enjoy the blessings of the electric telegraph, railroads and reliable

*JOHN MACKENZIE was a native of North Carolina, graduated at West Point, and entered the army in 1819 as Second Lieutenant: promoted to First Lieutenant, November, 1822, and killed as stated in the text, Sept. 26, 1828.