

No. 9

Bloody Run is so called, from an incident of backwoods' life, which I will relate as it was told me, by a person who was born in these parts, and who is now living in Prairie Du Chien. The name applies to a large ravine or valley, on the west side of the Mississippi, in Iowa, opposite Prairie Du Chien, and one mile north of McGregor. A stream of pure, cool spring water, clear as a crystal, and thickly skirted with a growth of timber, meanders along through the valley, over its pebbly bottom towards the Mississippi, into which it flows. This stream winds between high wood-covered bluffs that bound the valley on either side; and at a distance of more than seven miles from its mouth, it furnishes power to run Spalding & Marsh's mill.

In that season of the year when vegetation and verdure are at their height, a picturesque sight is presented to the tourist, as he winds his way along the stream through the valley of Bloody Run. The lover of nature has never imagined a wilder, more beautiful place than was Bloody Run, when I was there in 1834. No wonder that Martin Scott chose this as his favorite hunting-ground. His true sportsman instinct led him to this place, to watch for the red deer as it came down from the bluff at mid-day, to slake its thirst, and cool its panting sides in the crystal waters of the Run. Here it was, his brag gun dealt death among the wood-cock, wood-duck and pheasants, that were very abundant in the valley; and here, too, transpired a scene of blood-shed that gave to this beautiful spot its ominous name.

There is scarcely a stream, point, bluff, wood, coulee or cave in the West, but has attached to it some associations that are alone peculiarly historical; and as I possessed a natural curiosity to learn the derivation of names that to me seemed peculiar, my probings have often brought to light, mines of legendary lore and antique history.

It was years ago before the English were guided to and captured Prairie Du Chien, and before the traitorous guide hid