

No. 10

It was in 1839, while in the Monomonee Pineries, that desirous of returning to Prairie Du Chien, I looked around for the means of doing so. I pitched upon a plan that few would think of in this age of progress, when a very few hours suffice to perform the journey, that then occupied as many days. But there was no conveniences of travel on the Upper Mississippi then; a passage in a high-pressure steamboat, such as was the *Science*, could not be counted on with any certainty. I got a large Mackinaw boat, rigged an awning, and placed my family and what few worldly goods I possessed in it, and made the trip from the mills on Monomonee River to the Prairie.

We had a pleasant trip, sailing and floating down the river; and were I to give a minute sketch of it, you might think it interesting; but as I am anxious to give an account of things in general rather than a personal history, I will merely notice one incident of our journey, which occurred before our safe arrival at Prairie Du Chien.

Our boat was thirty feet in length and the awning extended over a space of fifteen feet in the centre, beneath which was placed our goods, provisions and bedding, at the same time affording shelter for my wife and children, from the rain and night damps. In the stern I had reserved a space to work the steering oar, while in the bow was a stove where my wife cooked our food and such game as I shot. With all the exposure of that trip, I look back at the time thus spent as among the pleasantest of my life.

One day while the boat was floating lazily down with the current, opposite Trempealeau Mountain, my attention was called to an animal, pointed out by my wife. It was on a long, narrow bar or point of an island just below us, and appeared to be playing with some object, unconscious of our approach. I was not long in discovering that it was a large panther, and made up my mind to shoot it, for at that time I had never killed one. So telling my wife to take the oar and direct the