

## Green Bay and the Frontier, 1763-65

---

The following letters, written by Edmond Moran and Lieut. James Gorrell, the former of whom was a trader at Green Bay, when the latter abandoned the fort at that place, in June, 1763; together with a brief letter from John Clark, at Cumberland, Maryland, all relating to the frontier trade and difficulties of that period, and never before published.

Moran's first letter, written at Green Bay, is so faded towards its close, that it is impossible to decipher or restore some portions of it; but the sense is probably fairly conveyed by the aid of words in brackets.

These old documents were long preserved by the Shelby family, in Kentucky—Capt. Evan Shelby referred to, having been the father of Gov. Isaac Shelby; and though they impart no important or detailed facts, yet as they relate to an interesting period of Wisconsin and frontier history, concerning which documents and reliable information are scarce, it is deemed advisable to publish them entire.

It is possible that the trader, Edmond Moran, may have descended from Capt. Moran, or Marin, the early commandant at Green Bay, who so distinguished himself against the Sauks and Foxes in 1730. But this is only suppositious. He was furnished with goods by the large mercantile establishment of Capt. Evan Shelby and Capt. Samuel Postlethwaite, of Frederick County, Maryland, who were largely engaged in supplying goods for the Indian trade. It is natural to suppose, that Moran, having some knowledge of Green Bay, proposed to take a stock of goods there as a promising trading point; and this design was carried into effect apparently in the early part of 1762. It must have been a very respectable stock, amounting after a year's sales to £1,440, Pennsylvania currency—between six and seven thousand dollars in value; and among the sales, as shown by Gorrell's Journal, published in the Society's first volume of *Collections*, were goods amounting to £935, 12s. 2d, sold to Lieut. Gorrell for presents to the Indians.

The very day, June 15th, 1763, that Mr. Moran was to have started from the Bay to Detroit, bearing dispatches from Lieut. Gorrell to Major Gladwyn, intelligence was received from Capt. Ethrington of the capture of Mackinaw, and directing the abandonment of Fort Edward Augustus; when all his unsold goods were seized and appropriated by the Indians, Moran and the other traders then retired with Gorrell's party first to Mackinaw, and then down the Lakes.

It would seem probable, as a portion of the goods lost by Shelby & Postlethwaite on the Monongahela, by the Indian outbreak of 1763, was re-imbursed by the British Government, thus tacitly acknowledging the justice of the claim, that the loss at Green Bay was also subsequently made good. We