

He had a great incentive to learn to pronounce the language; it was that he might *preach to the whites*. He had several sermons which he had endeavored to copy from old manuscripts of his forefathers, the Williamses; but in which there occurred words and passages which he could not make out, and so he had left blanks. These sermons he called on me to decipher and complete, and then to help him in the pronunciation. Weeks and months were spent in this manner; at last he mastered two to that extent, he thought fit to try them in public. Later he preached them several times before the garrison at Green Bay; after which several others were prepared in a similar manner—always from the old manuscripts—never did he attempt a composition of his own. Of these old manuscript sermons of the Williamses and other New England ministers, he had at least a barrel.

He kept me at this task of learning him to pronounce English, and to get some knowledge of the language, more or less for the whole three years and a half that I was with him. The painful tedium of the thing did not consist in the labor, irksome as it was, but in the almost total lack of progress and improvement.

Besides these daily exercises of pronouncing English, one of the services required of me was to assist him in his correspondence. He had a mass of unanswered letters, besides others to write himself. He had attempted some of the answers, but sensible of deficiencies, and fearing blunders, he had held them, and now it was my business to render his attempts into intelligible English, which, when I had done, he carefully copied out. This business of bringing up his correspondence to date, occupied us several months. Never after that, till I left him, did he send off a letter of the most simple kind till I had corrected the language. After I left him, he took into his employ a discharged soldier, at Green Bay, a tolerably fair English scholar, named Weightman,*

* Mrs. French, in her *History of Brown County*, states that "the private secretary of Eleazer Williams, F. J. Woutman, who had done all his employers' writing for many years, was drowned in the fall of 1853 and his body was not recovered until sometime in 1854."