

only learning that our extensive pine forest was a myth, and that our anticipated lumber speculation was a failure.

On the west side of the Wisconsin, we saw no signs of the white man, except the abandoned trading posts above mentioned. And no signs of the Indians, except canoes covered up on the bend of the river.

The history of the occupation and settlement of a new country always carries with it an interest according to the nature of the incidents and circumstances attending those events; and more particularly is this interest manifested by those who succeed the early pioneer. The privations and hardships, and even the dangers met with by the early settlers, tend in after years to heighten that interest, and call the mind back to those early times. And it is a matter of regret that the actors in those days and times thought the events of so little importance, that they have been suffered to pass almost entirely from the mind; and we can at the present day, only here and there pick up a circumstance worthy of notice.

In preparing a sketch of the early settlement of the county, dependence, of course, has to be placed upon information derived in the main from the friends and neighbors remaining with us. The writer having been a resident of the county for more than a quarter of a century, and more or less acquainted with the territory embraced within the limits of the county since 1842, can of course state many facts and circumstances from his own knowledge; and, although some of the minor details may not be entirely accurate, yet the names, dates and facts are as nearly correct as the memory of the narrator can place them.

The earliest settler, for even a temporary purpose, within the present limits of the county, of whom I can learn, was Provonsal, the father of Frank Provonsal, killed a few years since by Bill Dandy, an Indian. The elder Provonsal built, and for some years occupied, a trading-post near the bank of the Wisconsin River, about two miles above the Pet-en-Well rock, in the present town of Armenia. Here Frank was born, and lived off and on until he was six or eight years old. At a later date, about the year 1836, his father built and occupied for a short time a trading-post on the Lemonweir, near the present residence of Mr. Peter Arntz.