

sion of his business, which led him to travel throughout all the vast region of the Northwest. With a trading-post at Mackinaw, he penetrated every part of the country where Frenchmen and Indians were to be found, for the purpose of extending the trade of his establishments. He visited the Maumee and the Wabash countries, traversed the Upper Lakes, and the Mississippi River from the Falls of St. Anthony to the mouth of the Ohio. About the year 1770 he visited Green Bay and Prairie du Chien, those two old towns which figure so conspicuously in your history. In 1793, he made the trip from St. Louis to Montreal in a canoe, up the Mississippi River to the Wisconsin, then by the Wisconsin to Green Bay, thence to Mackinaw, and from there down the lakes to Montreal; a wonderful trip, and one hard to conceive of at this day.

Leaving the country of the Great Lakes in 1774, Charles Gratiot turned his attention to what was then known as the "Illinois country," and set up establishments at Cahokia and Kaskaskia, where he engaged in business enterprises, and had a large commerce with the white and Indian population throughout that whole country. It was when George Rogers Clark invaded the country, that he stepped forward and gave to him all he had of influence and fortune in the cause of the American Revolution. Of this epoch and of Charles Gratiot, Gov. Reynolds, in his *Pioneer History of Illinois*, says:

"It is known to all, that Clark had scarcely received any means from Virginia to conquer and retain the Illinois country. The army commanded by Clark was in a starving and destitute condition, and had to rely for support on the resources of the country. They remained in the Illinois and Wabash country for several years, and were supported by the inhabitants during that time. The French people were too poor to give away their subsistence, and the support of the army fell upon Gratiot and Vigo for most of the above crisis. If the supplies had not been given by Gratiot and others, the great and glorious campaign of Clark must have failed for the time being. But the generous heart of Gratiot came to the rescue, and he paid and became account-