

The most important and dangerous mission confided to Col. Gratiot was the one with which he was intrusted by Gen. Atkinson, who was in command of all the force employed against the Indians at the time. He deemed it important that an effort for some accommodation with the Indians should be made through the Prophet, who was the right arm of Black Hawk. To that end he had recourse to the good offices of Col. Gratiot as the only man who would dare to undertake the mission. Gen. Atkinson prepared a letter to the hostile chief to be taken to the Prophet by his commissioner, Col. Gratiot. The village of the Prophet was situated on the beautiful Rock River in what is now Whiteside County, Ill. There is now on the site of the Prophet's village a beautiful and flourishing little town, bearing the name of Prophet's Town. I had in my possession, when in Paris, an original painting of the Prophet, by Catlin. I had represented Whiteside County in Congress for six years, and had there many valued friends. It occurred to me that a copy of this painting would be considered by the people of Whiteside County a valuable and interesting souvenir of the great chief whose home had, in by-gone days, so long been in their county. I therefore had recourse to the gifted pencil of Healy to make a copy to present to Whiteside County. That being accomplished in the most admirable manner, I made the presentation, accompanied by an address, at Morrison, the county-seat, in the fall of 1878, and as connected with Col. Gratiot, I venture to embrace in this paper what I said of this incident:

"It was the circumstance of the good relations and the high respect in which Col. Gratiot was held by all the Indian tribes of the Northwest, that after the breaking out of the war, he was deputy by the military authorities to visit the Prophet at his village, Prophet's Town, in the interest of peace, and with a view to some accommodation that might spare the inhabitants the horrors of a warfare with savages. He bore a letter from Gen. Atkinson, who was in command at Fort Armstrong. This was an important though dangerous mission. Col. Gratiot took with him his secretary and several Winnebago chiefs, all his fast friends, and all on