

1685, just above the mouth of the Wisconsin, according to Franquelin and D'Anville, or just below, according to La Potherie." And he also says "that Dr. Neill, one of the very ablest historical investigators in the Northwest, locates Perrot's establishment of 1685, at Prairie du Chien."

Just what Dr. Neill does mean is not entirely clear. What he says is this: "It [Franquelin's map] also marks where the first party of Perrot wintered above Black River, and the first trading-post at Prairie du Chien, called, in compliment to Perrot's baptismal name, 'Fort St. Nicholas.'"¹ If, however, he really means what Dr. Draper thinks he does, it is because he has not studied La Potherie on the subject of that fort as closely and carefully as Prof. Butler.²

There is another reason why Fort St. Nicholas must have been below the mouth of the Wisconsin. La Potherie tells us how far it was above the lead mine Perrot discovered—twenty French leagues—forty-eight English miles. Now, Perrot's lead mine, it is well known, was at the site of the present city of Dubuque, Iowa, and that city is sixty miles below Prairie du Chien. Fort St. Nicholas was, therefore, not only some distance *below* the mouth of the Wisconsin, but an Indian tradition says it was on the west side of the Mississippi, in what is now the State of Iowa; and the topography of the valley would seem to confirm this tradition; for it would be difficult to find on the east side such an advantageous situation as is described by La Potherie, immediately below the mouth of the Wisconsin.

But there are physical reasons why Fort St. Nicholas was not above the Wisconsin. A broad prairie extends from that stream up the Mississippi, on the east side, for nearly eight miles. Portions of this prairie are sometimes submerged; and, along the river, in no one place is it but little if any above high-water mark. It certainly does not in the least answer to the advantageous site of Fort St. Nicholas as so particularly described by La Potherie.

¹ Neill's *History of Minnesota*, p. 779.

² On Jefferys' map in Neill's *History*—the same map cited by Prof. Butler—Ft. Nicholas is clearly *below* the mouth of the Wisconsin.