

primarily to gain information about the old French fort, but to adjust the land claims of the settlers; and the inquiry about the old fort was merely a secondary consideration, if even so much as that. He evidently refers to the old fort and its apparent antiquity, as evidence that an early settlement had naturally grown up around it; and he adverts to it briefly in his report, as embodying the indefinite ideas of the ancient people concerning the period of its establishment. Mr. Brisbois, therefore, in his separate statement, did not deem it necessary to repeat what he had, apparently, already communicated to Col. Lee, and which he invariably spoke of to his son, the late Col. B. W. Brisbois, as "the old French fort."

Nor does Dennis Curtois, who settled at Prairie du Chien in 1791, repeat in his deposition, anything he may have related to Col. Lee about the origin of the old fort, but adds: "According to the best information he had been able to obtain from the tradition of the inhabitants at Prairie des Chien, the old French fort was burned during the second year of the Revolutionary War." This plainly implies, that some "inhabitants" were there when Capt. Long made his visit in 1780; and, having witnessed his operations, could narrate the story of the burning. The old fort, at this period, may have had but a single log-house remaining; and this appears from the statements of Long, Curtois, and B. W. Brisbois' tradition from his father, to have been burned by Long's party, not in the second year of the Revolutionary War, as Curtois erroneously supposed, but in June, 1780, when Long was sent there with a party to convey to Mackinaw the packs of traders' furs deposited there under the protection of Capt. Langlade, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Spaniards of St. Louis, or of the Americans at Cahokia.

There are some historical references that go to strengthen the statements of Judge Robertson, Col. Lee, Brisbois, and others. While Gen. St. Clair was governor of the Northwest Territory, he reported to President Washington, in 1790, the condition of the extensive region over which he was called to administer; and stated of Prairie du Chien,