

Sketch of Andrew Proudfit

By Breese J. Stevens

The Proudfit family was of Scotch descent, and strict Scotch Presbyterians in religious belief. Andrew Proudfit's grandfather, after whom he was named, was one of five brothers who emigrated from Scotland, and, for a time, he was a physician at Troy, New York; but later, he retired to what became the family home at Argyle, Washington County, New York. His grandmother, Mary Lyttle, was the first white woman born in the town of Salem, in that county, of whom it was said, that "she went with two horses, during the Revolutionary War, with six bushels of wheat, as her gift toward supplying the army." His father, James Proudfit, was a merchant, first at Troy, New York, and then at Argyle, and died leaving Andrew a lad of fourteen years, the support of his mother, Maria J. Proudfit, and the head of his family. His uncle, Dr. William Proudfit, died in Milwaukee, in 1843, one of the earliest and most learned physicians of the country.

Andrew Proudfit was born on the 3d of August, 1820, at Argyle, where he received the usual common school education until his fourteenth year, when his mother depending on his support, he became a clerk in the store of an uncle. In June, 1842, when twenty-two years of age, with his mother, sister, and younger brother, he removed to Wisconsin, taking up a farm in Brookfield, in what was then Milwaukee, now Waukesha County. After devoting two years of labor in clearing off the heavy timber, he employed others to work the farm, while he engaged himself as book-keeper and salesman in the general business firm of Shepard & Bonnell, in Milwaukee, where he continued for two years. Removing, in 1846, to Delafield, Waukesha County,