

Perrot's Post at Trempealeau, vol. x, 366-68

Since the paper on the *Early French Forts in Western Wisconsin* was printed, a little fact having some possible relation to Perrot's post at Trempealeau, has come to light. B. F. Heuston, Esq., of Winona, and G. W. Squires, of Trempealeau, state, that guided by Paul and Antoine Grignon, step-sons of James Reed, who came to the Trempealeau locality when boys, a spot was pointed out where are some remains of a former fort or residence, located on the right of way of the Chicago, Burlington & Northern Railroad, mostly on the upper side, just east of a cluster of ancient mounds, near Mr. Brady's residence, something more than a mile above the Trempealeau station, and about a mile and a half above the business center of the town. These remains are on a sandy terrace, two or three feet above the railroad grade, some fifteen feet above the river level, and perhaps an eighth of a mile from the present course of the river. It is within three or four rods of a slough, which must formerly have rendered the locality approachable by boats and canoes; but is now so filled as to obstruct a water passage, except in high stages of the river. A short distance to the west is a very wild, romantic, rocky gorge, in which there is a small flow of water a portion of the year, which accumulates in natural basins, furnishing an adequate supply of water.

Paul Grignon, the elder of the brothers, and part Winnebago, said his step-father, James Reed, had noticed these stone-heap remains, but had no knowledge or tradition of their origin. There is, however, some lingering tradition of there having been a trading-post in that region at some former remote period. Of these low stone heaps or tumuli, three are on the southern side of the railroad, and five on the northern side. They are grouped, amid rank vegetation, within the space of a few rods square. Northward of these tumuli, is a still larger one, yet unexplored, composed of larger stones, and on higher ground, a few paces beyond the railroad right of way. The stones of which these heaps are made, are mostly sandstone, with some limestone, of different strata, generally flat, and of moveable size, and appear to be above the original surface, and mostly taken from a rocky knoll close by.

The earth from one of the group of five was removed to a depth of some six inches when a perfect and well-defined fireplace and hearth were disclosed, laid with flagstones on the surface of the natural earth, in clay mortar, in which a liberal amount of grass was intermixed, to increase its cohesive properties, as indicated by the grooves or impressions observable in the clay. The fireplace was found to be five and a half feet wide, and two feet in depth; the hearth seven and a half feet long, with a width of two feet or more, in front of the fireplace. The south portion of the back wall of the fireplace was destroyed in the excavation, but the original form was unmistakably indicated. On this hearth and fireplace rested about an inch and a half of pure ashes;