

then occupied by St. Cyr, and before him by Rowan. It was laid out not only on paper, but on *terra firma*, by the surveyors of M. L. Martin and Col. W. B. Slaughter. But, as it turned out, all investors there were laid out too, and that so cold and stiff that they never rose again. The earth hath bubbles as the water hath, and Four Lake City was of them—the baseless fabric of a vision.

In the autumn of 1836, Doty proceeded to commence a city on the land of which he had acquired control. For this purpose he was on the ground early in October. He brought little baggage except a green shawl and a shot-gun. He was, however, accompanied by a surveyor with chain and compass. The twain—a modern Romulus and Remus—were assisted in the day and lodged at night by the half-breed St. Cyr. In the course of three days they had completed all the meanders and measurements that were necessary for drawing the plat of the embryo city—a site which Doty began at once to talk of to his engineer as bound by manifest destiny to become the Wisconsin capital.

As soon as meager field-notes had been finished at the Four Lakes, Doty hurried sixty miles west to Belmont, where the Territorial legislature was already in session. His plan of a capital—borrowed in some particulars from that of Washington—and embodying all the characteristic features of Madison today, was soon in readiness. Every hamlet in Wisconsin was its own first choice for the metropolis, as every Greek officer voted for himself as having done the best service against Xerxes; and the claims of a dozen sites, not yet settled at all, were urged by land speculators, of whom Doty was chief. He came off conqueror over all competitors. His success was largely due to his “one man power,” or absolute control over all the acres he would have the legislators delight to honor. When he took them up into the mount of temptation, showing them corner lots with the glory of them, and saying, “All these things will I give you!” it was well known that his were not the promises of the Father of Lies. His chain of title was perfect, and his title deeds beyond suspicion, needing no warranty.