

## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JEAN NICOLET.

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Before giving a list of the different works which, to a greater or less extent, make mention of the first white man who, in 1634, visited the territory now constituting the State of Wisconsin, it is proper to state that some knowledge had been gained of the country. What the extent of this information was, and how it came to the ears of civilized men, will be briefly mentioned as preliminary to naming the sources from which material can be drawn concerning John Nicolet, the explorer, to whom reference has just been made.

Early in the seventeenth century, French settlements were scattered along the wooded shores of the river St. Lawrence, in Canada. To the westward of these, upon the Ottawa river, Lake Huron and Georgian bay, were living several Indian nations. Between them and the French settlers, there soon sprang up commercial relations; besides, it was not long before missionaries of the Roman Catholic church began to labor with some of them. Travelers, too, made extended journeys into their country.

These settlers, missionaries and travelers gathered from the savages not only accounts of countries adjacent to their own, but of regions more remote. They heard from them of a great lake beyond Lake Huron, at the outlet of which was a considerable rapid: this vast body of fresh water was Lake Superior. And they also got reports of a much smaller lake called by the Indians who spoke of it, "Winnipegou": this was Winnebago lake. A river ran through this lake — the present Fox river; but the stream was known to the Indians east by the same name as the lake.

As early as 1615, a nation of Indians had been heard of, called the Mascoutins. These savages were frequently at