

never forget. The change from east to west was a striking one in many respects. The climate was different, the water and the food were very different. I know there was one trouble from which nearly all of the old settlers suffered, which was attributed to a variety of causes. It was a disease that was never known to prove fatal, though it was very annoying and frequently productive of a good deal of profanity; but it had to be endured as patiently as possible, for, as I remember, there were no means ever discovered to cure it. It really had to wear itself out. I allude to that old affliction which the old settlers certainly cannot have forgotten, known as prairie itch. It was very amusing at times to see a whole family out, around a log house, leaning against the butt ends of the logs, scratching first one shoulder and then the other, reaching points that they could not easily touch with their hands. One mill-hand whom we had at work for us, had this thing lay hold of him most savagely. He said he never was so happy, never felt so well in his life, as he did when he stood before a rousing fire at night time and could scratch.

In those early days, dogs were reasonably plenty and cats correspondingly scarce. A good cat was worth a five-dollar bill. It is true there were not many mice in the country at that time; perhaps none, except a few that had found a quiet corner in some box of goods, and thus been brought from the east. Still, the women could not be perfectly happy unless they had a cat. I remember the great interest which centered around the first one we possessed, which was a beautiful animal, and there was great strife between the members of the household to see who should have the cat for a sleeping companion. In the cold weather, the fur of the cat was very comfortable.

In the winter of 1838-39, a young topographical engineer, who surveyed the road from Madison to Milwaukee by way of Lake Mills, was a member of our family, and while there he spent a good deal of his time making maps of his surveys of the road. He became very much attached to this cat, and he would catch it in his arms in the early evening and go up the ladder to bed among the first, so that he could