

shelves of his large private library, now the property of this Society, were, besides a still greater mass of loose papers, a hundred and fifty portly volumes of manuscripts, the greater part made up of wholly original matter, nearly all of it as yet unpublished, covering the entire history of the fight for the Northwest, from 1742, the date of the first skirmish with the Indians in the Virginia valley, to 1813-14, when Tecumseh was killed and the Creeks were defeated.¹

A few only of these unique documents can be noted in the time allotted me. The earliest manuscripts in the Draper collection are some documents concerning McDowell's fight in the Virginia valley, in 1742, just mentioned. There is also George Rogers Clark's original manuscript narrative of his famous expedition to Kaskaskia and Vincennes in 1778, a volume of some two hundred and twenty-five pages. The earliest original manuscript diary in the collection is one kept by Captain William Preston, who commanded a company under Lewis during the Sandy Creek expedition in West Virginia, in 1756. There are several diaries on the Point Pleasant campaign in West Virginia in 1774. Numerous diaries relate to Kentucky—one of them kept by George Rogers Clark in 1776, and another by Colonel William Fleming during an early trip to the "dark and bloody ground." Some diaries on St. Clair's and Wayne's campaigns are of especial interest. But the foregoing are merely sample treasures. As the old frontier heroes were not noted for keeping diaries, the great number and remarkable character of the rich material among the Draper manuscripts strongly illustrate to all those who have essayed collections of this sort, his arduous labors of a life-time.

In 1841, while in the midst of his chosen task, Draper

¹ He himself computed, in 1857, that his material comprised "some 10,000 foolscap pages of notes of the recollections of warrior-pioneers, either written by themselves, or taken down from their own lips; and well-nigh 5,000 pages more of original manuscript journals, memorandum books, and old letters written by nearly all the leading border heroes of the West."