

the Committee of the Privy Council on Trade and Plantations, dated September 1, 1794.

"The trade to the Northwest," Simcoe remarked, "is carried on by a powerful and enterprising company. The trade from Mackinac which is the general place of deposit on Lake Huron to the Rivers which flow into the Mississippi is of the utmost importance. It would be of great advantage if a British factory could be established on the west bank of the Mississippi opposite the mouth of the Ouisconsin. The lands of the Indians might be purchased by the Crown and annual presents to the value of £500 delivered at Mackinac. The factory to have no monopoly, their advantage to result from the distribution of presents. Intercourse with Kentucky by this means might have the effect of turning their trade towards Canada."

A letter from Robert Dickson to the Hon. Robert Hamilton of Queenston, describing the usual routes of trade between Mackinac and the Mississippi, dated at Mackinac, the fourteenth of July, 1793, probably written at Simcoe's request, was enclosed.

It is not certain whether Dickson was then trading on his own account or had become a partner in the Northwest Company, but it is evident that he was already regarded as an authority on the subject and familiar with the country.

"The communication between Mackinac and the Mississippi," he stated, "is carried on by two routes, the one by Chicago, the other by the Fox and Ouisconsin rivers, the latter is preferred on account of the shortness of the carrying-place. Leaving this place, the navigation is difficult for the course lies on the north side, owing to shoals, until the Traverse at the entrance of the bay is reached. The land is poor and barren on the north side of the Lake until near LaBaye where the soil is excellent and the seasons are early. Here it has long been settled from Canada by people who sow a little grain and have about 100 cattle which run in the woods.

At the Falls of the Fox River there is a portage of three-quarters of a mile. The Indians here raise Indian