

canoes at several trips took up the provision and baggage. This is a rapid fall of 22 ft. 10 inches according to Col. Gratiot. From the head of the foot of the fall there are 5 Islands—3 large and two small. The rapid is run with an empty canoe in less than 5 minutes. Below, the river is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile wide. The rapid extends rather more than half way across. It affords a beautiful prospect when approached on the river below.

At the foot of the rapid immense quantities of Whitefish are taken and of a superior quality—their flavor is delicious. They are the chief food of the inhabitants & indians of the place during the year.

The inhabitants are Frenchmen chiefly, married to *squaws* by whom they have families. There are 8 or 10 houses. On the British shore are several good farms, the settlers appear to be industrious. At the foot of the rapids and the commencement of the portage on the British side the North West company have a large & extensive establishment. This portage is much better than that on the American. The traders resident here have always exercised great influence over the Indians of our country. They consider it (and very justly) the key of communication into the upper country, and hence have greatly opposed the establishment of a post at the Saut.¹ Our Government at present seems to entertain the same view of it. On the 16th inst. a council was held by Gov. Cass with the chiefs who claim the land around the Saut. They are of the Chippeway Nation. By virtue of a grant made to the French Govt. when this country was owned by France, which grant, among many others, was confirmed by the Treaty of Grenville, does our Govt. claim the fee of a

¹ Schoolcraft says (pp. 76, 77) that the village of St. Mary's consisted of "fifteen or twenty buildings of all sorts," and that "the principal buildings and outhouses were those of Mr. John Johnson, and the group formerly occupied by the Northwest Company. Most of the French habitations stood in the midst of picketed lots. There were about forty or fifty lodges, or two hundred Chippewas, fifty or sixty of whom were warriors." — Ed.