

The Wisconsin and Illinois Indians were visited in 1634 by Nicolet,¹ who doubtless was the first to teach them the use of gunpowder. Radisson and Groseilliers followed in 1658-59, and heard of lead mines among the Bœuf Sioux, apparently in the neighborhood of Dubuque.²

In 1673, Joliet and Marquette, when stopping with their voyageurs at the Indian town of Kaskaskia, on returning from the Lower Mississippi, must again have given the Illinois an example of the use of fire-arms and the utility of lead—if, indeed, this tribe had not already had some traffic in the ore with wandering traders and *coureurs des bois* operating at the head of the Mississippi River or of Lake Michigan, of whose presence in the region we catch faint glimpses in the earliest records of exploration.³

The journals of Marquette and La Hontan (1689) speak of the mineral wealth of the Upper Mississippi country; but they appear never to have seen the mines themselves, and, misunderstanding their informants, concluded that the deposits were of gold, silver, and copper. Hennepin's map of 1687⁴ has a lead mine located in the neighborhood of where Galena now is, showing that he had definite information regarding it. Joutel, who was in the country as early as 1687, says⁵ that "travelers who have been at the upper part of the Mississippi affirm that they have found mines of very good lead there."

¹ See Butterfield's *History of the Discovery of the Northwest by Jean Nicolet, in 1634* (Cincinnati, 1881).

² *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xi., p. 93.

³ "There cannot be a doubt that many of the French voyageurs besides M. Perrot and the Du l'Huts had explored a large part of the country * * * at a very early day, but of their adventures we have no account, because they were not sufficiently educated to record them. We have occasionally incidental allusions in public documents, in works on geography, and in memoirs, which prove this to have been the case."—Mills, *Report on the Boundaries of the Province of Ontario* (Ottawa, 1877), p. 6.

⁴ Breese, *Early History of Illinois*; and Winchell, *Geological Survey of Minnesota, Final Report*.

⁵ Joutel, *Journal* (1713).