

The first printed reference we have, to the tower, is by Henry Merrell, whose business took him to Fort Winnebago in April, 1834. He became well acquainted with Daniel Whitney, and speaks of his sawmill on the Wisconsin, his stores at the portage, and the shot-tower at Helena.<sup>1</sup>

August 30, 1835, the place was visited by George W. Featherstonhaugh, an English geologist then traveling in the United States, and the following is from his interesting account of the establishment: "At 9 A. M. we reached a shot-tower belonging to Mr. Whitney, on the left bank of the river, and landed there to breakfast. Mr. Whitney had entrusted to my care a large bag of silver money, with some other funds he wished to remit to his nephew and agent there. I had been very reluctant to receive it, \* \* \* but he had shown me so much obliging zeal in my service, that, upon his pressing me with some urgency a short time before my departure, I consented; and the treasure being put into the middle of one of my carpet-bags, which contained some heavy fossils, was embarked. \* \* \* As soon as the canoe was fastened to the shore, I told L'Amirant to shoulder the sack, and away we trudged with it to the agent's house, to which the name of Helena had been given, where I delivered my charge and took a receipt. Mr. Whitney's nephew<sup>2</sup> and his wife received me civilly, and insisted upon entertaining me with breakfast, which when I had dispatched, I went to see what they called the shot-tower, where lead brought from the lead district of Wisconsin, not many miles off, is cast into shot of various sizes."<sup>3</sup>

In the summer of 1835, Benjamin L. Webb, the agent, was the means of securing a substantial reënforcement to the workmen at the tower. John Wilson had been sent out by the Portage Canal Company with a party of sixty men to dig a canal across the portage of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers. He brought his wife and children with him, and the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, vii., p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel M. Whitney, — so I am told by J. T. Kingston, of Mauston.

<sup>3</sup> *Canoe Voyage up the Minnay Sotor*, i., pp. 196-99.