

## A METHODIST CIRCUIT RIDER'S HORSEBACK TOUR FROM PENNSYLVANIA TO WISCONSIN, 1835.

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BY ALFRED BRUNSON, D. D.<sup>1</sup>

*Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> 1835.* Having made preparations, I left my family, in Meadville, Pa. and an endearing circle of friends & acquaintances, to go on a Mission to the Indians on the Upper Mississippi, accompanied by Wellington Weigley. Bro. Weigley was one of the young men whom I had introduced into the Ministry, having employed him one year before he was admitted on trial, & he being his 2<sup>d</sup> year on trial at this time.

I took the thills from my one horse wagon, and putting a tongue to it, we attached both our horses, took our saddles, bridles, saddle-bags &c. all which made but a light load. He designed to accompany me to the Illinois conf. to which

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Brunson, D. D., author of this journal, is said to have been "the first Methodist minister who set foot on the soil north of the Wisconsin River." He was born in Danbury, Conn., February 9, 1793. Seven years later the family moved to Sing Sing, N. Y., where the father was drowned in 1806; the mother returned to Danbury with her seven children, and apprenticed Alfred to a shoemaker. But being an inveterate reader, although with little scholastic training, ambition grew in him, and while still a cobbler he studied law. In 1809, having become "awakened" at a Methodist revival, he was licensed as an exhorter. In 1811 he was married, and settled on an Ohio farm. Two years later he entered the army for a year, and was at the taking of Malden and the retaking of Detroit. Returning home, he was, in 1815, licensed to preach, and had long labored successfully in Ohio and Pennsylvania, when he felt called to become a missionary to the Indians on the Upper Mississippi River; and the interesting journal herewith presented is a record of his overland horseback tour from Meadville, Pa., to his new location at Prairie du Chien, Wis. Upon arrival, he was made presiding elder and Indian missionary of a dis-