

Gilbert, Prairie du Chien. This good brother & his wife were methodists in Kentucky, but there being no church of their own in the place, they had joined the Cumberland Presbyterians, under the Ministry of the Rev. David Lowry.¹ As I announced my name & business at the gate Bro. Gilbert & his wife met me with a smile, & welcomed me to their dwelling. I had some fears on the road, as to the reception I should meet with, not knowing the changes that time might have produced, but these fears soon vanished, when I was hailed as the messenger of God.

This Prairie was settled by the French traders more than a century ago. The settlers have mixed with the Indians, till about one fourth of them are of mixed blood. They are * * * the most of [them] ignorent as their savage neighbors, & no more improved in any way, except in their dress, they live in a poor kind of houses, & some of them make some little essay at farming. A small portion of them are wealthy, educated for business, & hold a respectable standing in the world: but *professing* no more religion than the others.

The Prairie is 9 miles long & varying from one to two miles in width. It lies on the east of the Mississippi River, & north of the mouth of the Wisconsin. The high bluffs which rise and bound it on the east are 3 or 400 feet high, covered mostly with Prairie grass, having a little timber & on their peaks or points presenting cragged precipices of rock peculiar to the mineral country.

The Settlement extends the whole length of the Prairie, & congress has granted to each original settler a patent for his claim, or settlement right. About midway, north & south, is the village, which contains perhaps 100 houses of all discriptions. The whole French & mixed population are about 600, the American 200 & the garrison contains 250 men, but their wives and children, & other attendents amount to about 150 more: making the population of the place, including all discriptions about 1200. The garrison

¹See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xii, p. 405, *note*, for biographical sketch of Lowry.—Ed.