

town is located on a sand Prairie adjoining the hill but is of difficult access from the river, on account of the Ponds & Sloughs (slues) which abound in the Upper Mississippi, on the west bank of which this town is situated. It contains about 600 inhabitants: the most of them foreigners \* \* \* & forming the roughest & wickedest class of people I ever saw. The lead mines in its neighborhood are of the wealthiest character, and have given independent fortunes to some of the most degraded men of our species. Wealth in such hands only afford the means of grater wickedness. The lands were not in market & the only claim to it consisted of occupancy & consequently conflicting claims for valuable mineral ground frequently occurred which were oftner settled by the *might* of the parties than the decisions of law. A few weeks before my arrival at this place one [of] our valuable brethren was shot dead at a mineral hole, while contending for his right, by two men, father & son by the name of Smith. They were committed to prison & indicted for the murder, the father as the principal & the son as accessory, but the settlement of the country being far ahead of the tardy movements of the government in extending the laws & the jurisdiction of the courts to it, it was found that the courts had no jurisdiction over the case & the prisnors were discharged. The people, however, feeling indignant at the offender, called a public meeting to try [the] Smiths in the true *democratic* form, & but for his escape would have hung him, as they had done one of similar character before. Smith, however, returned to the mines in the ensuing winter, & a brother of Massey who was murdered shot him down in the streets in Galena in open day, & then made his escape, no one careing to pursue him under the circumstances of the case. Not long after the younger Smith appeared in Dubuque & a maiden sister of Massey shot him in a store & would have killed him, but for his pocket book against which the ball of her pistol struck. Shooting & dirking were so common, however, that little notice was taken of it, unless death ensued; nor even then, if it was considered justifiable homeside.