

I was informed the thunder I heard was the drumming made by the cock pheasant, to call around him his female companions.

After breakfast we started to visit William S. Hamilton¹ at Fort Hamilton or Hamilton's Diggings, now called Wiota, Henry Gratiot accompanying us. Passing through some fine timber lands, and then over more rolling prairies, we reached Fort Hamilton by a circuitous route, towards evening, and found Hamilton at home. Although I did not expect to find a solid, strong, imposing structure, such as I had seen on the Rhine, nor a residence such as a colonel commanding a fort might be expected to occupy, yet I confess I had all romance taken out of me when I found the fort consisted of two small log cabins, connected with each other by an open area, covered by clapboards.

The temporary defenses which had been erected during the Black Hawk War, a short time previous, had been removed, and nothing remained that would particularly remind one of scenes of blood and murder. The doors had no bolts or locks but simply a latch-string hanging out; the single opening in each cabin, intended for a window, had, if I remember rightly, no glass. The furniture corresponded with the building: a rude bedstead with some blankets and buffalo robes for bedding, an oaken table, some wooden stools, and a few shelves filled with books, among which a fine quarto edition of the works of Voltaire, printed in Paris, attracted my particular attention. The colonel had been a French scholar, but his long residence in the Far West, and his settlement at this place since 1828, together with his busy life as a smelter, left him no time to cultivate literary tastes; yet he was still able to carry on a conversation in French on ordinary topics with me. I had picked up sufficient English to help out when we both were embarrassed. I forgot to mention that Henry Gratiot and James G. Soulard both spoke the French language per-

¹ See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xii, p. 270, for sketch of Col. William Stephen Hamilton.—Ed.