

It was about September 15 when I finished this work, and commenced to explore the country lying between Madison and the head of Lake Winnebago, a distance of about sixty-five miles, through an unknown and uninhabited region. Governor Doty and his associates were anxious to avoid the long detour via Fort Winnebago, to reach the capital from the north, and engaged me to examine the country along the most direct route between those points, and report on the feasibility of opening a wagon road across the intervening country. Accordingly, I purchased an Indian pony, and placing my saddle-bags, blankets, and provisions on his back, struck out with my two assistants. We took a northeasterly course, and soon reached the open prairie, which was dotted here and there with groves of burr oak, in the distance resembling cultivated orchards. The country through which we passed was chiefly a high, rolling prairie, having a rich soil, covered with rank vegetation, but destitute of living streams. A long, hot summer had dried up the sloughs and the few water-courses that crossed our path, and we suffered severely from thirst. The first night out, we camped in a thicket of hazel bushes, and after dark moistened our parched throats with dew gathered from the leaves. Our provisions, consisting of rusty pork and hard tack, were bad enough, but the best then to be had in Madison; finding nothing better than stagnant water to drink, only added to our discomfort.

On the afternoon of the second day, having reached the vicinity of Fox Lake, I was taken violently ill, and for a few hours doubted whether I should ever get up again; but towards noon of the next day, I mounted my horse, and taking a westerly course, after six or eight hours travel we reached Fort Winnebago just at night fall. Here I found a hearty welcome in the comfortable quarters of Lieut. William Root¹ (a son of Gen. Erastus Root, of New York) and all needful attention and restoratives; but lacking strength to continue the work in hand, the next day I sent my two men with the horse to Green Bay, there to await my ar-

¹ Of the 5th Regiment.—ED.