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1766-67: TRAVELS IN WISCONSIN

[Summary of the journey of Jonathan Carver in Wisconsin, from *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America in the years 1766, 1767 and 1768* (London, 1778)⁹², pp. 17-180.]

[Jonathan Carver⁹³ left Boston in June, 1766. Going westward via Albany and Niagara, he made his way to Michilimackinac, which he reached some time in August, soon after

such rank in the British Indian service; but nothing has as yet been found in contemporary documents to show that he had at this time entered the English service. Possibly the title is used by courtesy, because of his rank in the French Canadian army.—Ed.

⁹²Few books of travel have had a more astonishing popularity than this. In his "Jonathan Carver," in Parkman Club *Papers* (Milwaukee, 1896), John G. Gregory enumerates twenty-one editions, with translations into German, French, and Dutch. The first (or 1778) edition, and that of 1781, with additional notes on the author, are bibliographical rarities. The popularity of the work really rested upon a slender basis of value. Travellers following in his footsteps within the region described by Carver, noted his faults and his errors (for instance, see Peter Pond's journal, *post*). Indeed, the latter portion of the work, describing Indian customs and manners, has clearly been proven to be but a medley of selections from the writings of Lahontan, Hennepin, Charlevoix, and Adair—see E. G. Bourne, "The Travels of Jonathan Carver," in *American Historical Review*, xi, pp. 287-302. Dr. Bourne concludes that Carver, who was an ignorant man, quite incapable of writing such a book, fell into the hands of booksellers in London, and from his journals (possibly something in form like those of his fellow-colonist, Peter Pond, *post*) some literary hack drew up the *Travels* in the form in which we have them. Carver's book is really of comparatively little worth, save where corroborated by other and more reliable testimony. But as the work has so long been famous, is so frequently alluded to by Western writers, and is the first record we possess of an English traveller in these regions, we publish a summary; this should, however, be carefully compared with Pond's account of a journey over much the same path, seven years later.—Ed.

⁹³Of material for a biography of Jonathan Carver, but little exists that may be counted trustworthy. See article by Professor Bourne, cited in preceding note. The traveller was apparently born in Connecticut, and married there in 1746—his birth could hardly have been at the accepted date (1732). Instead of being as he claims, educated