EARLY DAYS OF PEORIA AND CHICAGO

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BY

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EARLY DAYS OF PEORIA AND CHICAGO.

It was long ago said that one of two things only can justify the attempt of any author to deal anew with annals already well known; either the writer must be confident he can tell his story in better form than his predecessors, or he must believe himself able to add new and valuable facts. It is, however, with no thought that I can do either of these that I venture to appear before this intelligent audience; but having recently been engaged in the compilation of a history of my own county which brought to light many incidents closely associating Chicago and Peoria, as villages almost contemporaneous in their origin, it occurred to me that it might serve a useful purpose to collect these incidents for preservation in a more condensed form for the use of this society. And while the incidents I shall relate may, in view of the vast amount of historical matter stowed away in your archives, seem at present of little importance, yet as the rills when collected together make the river, so every little scrap of information regarding its formative period, although gleaned from the rural districts, may in time contribute its mite to the great volume of the history of this mighty metropolis.

From time immemorial the Illinois River has been the natural highway between the great lakes and the Mississippi River. This fact has kept the region about Chicago and that around Lake Peoria in very close relationship with each other. Long before any considerable white population had become domiciled at Chicago there existed on the west bank of Lake Pimiteoui or Lake Peoria a village which had attained unto such a degree of commercial importance as to be regarded one of the chief marts of trade in the Mississippi valley; sending a portion of its products by the hands of voyageurs by way of the Chicago River, thence down the great lakes to the cities located on the St. Lawrence River. It had a fort, one or two churches, a horse-mill, a wine-press, and numerous trading houses, while, near by, its inhabitants had their little farms, where they raised wheat, corn, beef and pork, more
than they needed. A portion of their surplus produce and possibly the larger portion, went by the Illinois River to the settlements on the lower Mississippi. This village had grown out of an admixture of French traders and trappers with the Indians, until in the course of time the French element had become predominant, and it had become known as the French Village of Peoria. For a period during the Revolutionary War it was almost wholly abandoned, and upon the return of the inhabitants after peace was restored they took up their residences at a new village called La Ville de Maillet, which had been planted about half a league below at the foot of the lake. The new enterprise had been started about the year 1778, by one Jean Baptiste Maillet, who as early as 1766 is known to have been a resident of the older village. At the old village there had been an ancient fort, supposed by some to have been erected in the times of La Salle and Tom but which had fallen into decay and had been burned by the Indians a few years before. During the Revolutionary War fort had been erected at the new village, but it had had short history, for about the year 1778 or 1779 it had been destroyed by a detachment of soldiers sent from Fort Mackinac by way of Chicago by De Peyster, the commandant. This was to prevent its becoming a rallying point for the “Virginia Long Knives,” who had but recently subdued the territory.

Chicago had not as yet attained unto any importance as a village, although it also had had a fort supposed to have been erected by the French at some early period. Yet the Chicago River even at these early times furnished the gateway by which Peorians maintained commercial relations, in a small way, with the merchants and traders of the east, who in exchange for their furs, peltries, honey, beeswax, wheat, corn, wine and salt pork brought to the great Mississippi valley such kinds of merchandise were suitable for the aborigines, the French traders, trappers and voyageurs, their wives and (possibly) half-breed children.

The first authoritative recognition of the relative importance of the two places is probably that found in the treaty of Greenville, concluded in August, 1795, wherein, from the great desire of the Indians to provide for the accommodation of the people of the United States, and for that convenience of intercourse which should be hereafter...
ficial to both the high contracting parties, the Indians ceded to the United States sixteen posts or stations forming a chain from Detroit to the mouth of the Illinois River by way of the great lakes. One of these posts consisted of a piece of land six miles square at the mouth of the Chicago river, emptying into the southwest end of Lake Michigan, where a fort had formerly stood; another consisted of a piece of land six miles square at “Old Peoria’s Fort and Village,” near the south end of the Illinois Lake on the said Illinois River. It was further provided that the Indian tribes would allow the people of the United States a free passage by land and water, as one or the other should be found convenient, through their country along the chain of posts therein mentioned, particular reference being made to the route from the mouth of the Chicago River to the commencement of the portage between that river and the Illinois, and down the latter to the Mississippi where the last post was located.

A few years after the close of the Revolutionary War, by several resolutions and acts of Congress, each person who had professed himself a citizen of the United States, or one of them, on or before the year 1783, and had made improvements upon lands, or who had been the head of a family at that time, should receive a donation of four hundred acres of land. A commission was afterwards appointed to receive proof of such claims, who under various names continued to act in that capacity until the year 1815. Among many others there was one who, by the name of Poinstable, Point au Sable, or Point de Saible, made proof that both before and after the year 1783 he had resided at Peoria, that he was the head of a family and that he had improved a small farm of about thirty acres situated between the old Fort and Village and La Ville de Maillet as early as the year 1780. He was therefore reported as being entitled to two tracts of four hundred acres each. He must also have proved his citizenship, else he could not have claimed the land. The printed report fails to show the number of persons constituting his family, or what relationship they bore to him. This man was afterwards found at Chicago, where he has attained unto some celebrity as its first European inhabitant. He must have been a man of some versatility of character, for being of the African race, he could easily adapt himself to his present environments. Being a native
of San Domingo, he was by nationality a Spaniard; as an inhabitant of a French village, he had adopted a French name and possibly passed as a French negro; when occasion presented itself, he became an American citizen, as if reports be true would, if he could, have become a Pot wattamie chief. At what time he made his appearance in Chicago is a point upon which writers differ, some putting it before 1780, at which time he is proved to have been at Peoria, and some at a later date. In May, 1790, or before, Hugh Heyward (a copy of whose journal is in the possession of this society), made a trip to the Illinois country, reaching the Chicago River on the 10th of that month, where he found Point de Saible living on the sands. His journal of the day following he says: "Slept at Point Sables with the canoes and began to hull corn and bake bread; arranged everything for the next morning, bought the canots (canoes) at Point Sables and took his porog; paid him with 13 yds 4-4 cotton." According to the account Point de Saible must have been a trader, selling farm produce to the voyageurs and purchasing dry goods from them in return. The prices seem to have been better in those days than on the Board of Trade of to-day, even in times of a corner in wheat or pork.

Heyward proceeded on his journey by way of the portage and the Illinois River to Peoria, where he found a few Frenchmen living among the Indians, one of whom was Captain May, doubtless Jean Baptiste Maillet, whose name in French is said to have a sound much resembling May or Mai. He had derived his title as Captain from having had command of a company of French militiamen raised at Peoria during or after the war, for which service he was afterwards awarded a donation of one hundred acres of land.

The name approaches so near that of Le Mai, with succeeded Point de Saible at Chicago, as to raise the probability of some relationship existing between the two. As there appear to have been more than one of the Maille family, it is not beyond the reach of probability that the Mai of Chicago may also have sprung from a family living at old Peoria, where the name appears as early as 1761.

Another prominent citizen of La Ville de Maitel was Thomas Forsyth, a half brother, and at one time, partner.
in business with John Kinzie, who is looked upon as the real founder of Chicago. In the Indian troubles preceding and during the early stages of the war of 1812 he was the Government Agent at Peoria, and was the secret and confidential adviser of Governor Edwards in his dealings with the Indians at and about Peoria Lake. After the massacre of the garrison of Fort Dearborn, Thomas Forsyth, assisted by Black Partridge and other friendly Indians, rendered valuable services in rescuing Lieutenant Helm from his captivity. In the month of October, following, and probably at the very time he was rendering this assistance, Governor Edwards led an expedition across the prairies from Camp Russell, near Edwardsville, to the head of Lake Peoria, and there destroyed Black Partridge's village. As part of the same expedition, one Captain Thomas E. Craig, with a force of men, ascended the Illinois River by boats to Peoria, and there, mistaking the reserved attitude of Forsyth and the Frenchmen for one of hostility to the Government, in a very brutal and wanton manner, destroyed about one-half of the village and carried away captive Forsyth and all the inhabitants that were found. Forsyth afterwards rendered valuable service as Agent of the Government among the Indians on the upper Mississippi, and still later took up his residence in St. Louis, where he continued to reside during the remainder of his life, and where his descendants may yet be found among the most respected citizens of that city.

During the summer of the year 1813, a second expedition was sent against the Indians about Peoria, which resulted in the destruction by the Indians of what had been left of La Ville de Maillet, and the erection upon its site of an American fort, called Fort Clark, the third, if not the fourth, fort erected at that place. From that time for many years the place was called Fort Clark, and the country around it was called the Fort Clark Country.

Another person of note who, before as well as after its destruction, was a resident of La Ville de Maillet, was Antoine des Champs, who for many years was the trusted agent of the American Fur Company. He is first found exercising the duties of the office of Justice of the Peace of the Indiana Territory at Peoria in the year 1802. He had been educated for the priesthood, but refusing to be ordained, had engaged himself to a Mr. Sara, a fur trader of St. Louis, and had devoted many years of his life to that
trade on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. A deed for land is yet extant wherein Jean Baptiste Maillet conveyed to Isaac Darneille, the gallant attorney whom Governor Reynolds has immortalized, his two donations of four hundred acres each adjoining the village where they both lived, which deed was proved before Antoine des Champs as Justice of the Peace. As there was in its later years no priest at the village, he was often called upon as Justice of the Peace to perform the marriage ceremony, which held good until the newly-married couple should have gone to Chokia, or some other southern settlement, to partake of the communion, at which time the holy sacrament of marriage would be solemnized by the priest before the celebration of the communion. About the year 1818 Antoine des Champs entered the service of the American Fur Company, and was placed in charge of the Illinois brigade of outfit. Being about to take a trip to St. Louis to purchase tobacco and other supplies for distribution among the traders on the Illinois River, he took with him Gurdon S. Hubbard, of Chicago, who was then a youth of sixteen years. On this trip he established several trading posts along the river, one of which was located at what is known as Wesley City, about three miles below the city of Peoria. This locality had for many years been called Opa, supposed to be from au pied, the French word for the foot of the outlet of the lake. As it was the first trading post established in this vicinity since the destruction of La Ville des Maillet, it may not be out of place to quote what Mr. Hub bard says of it in his auto-biography:

“Our next post,” he says, “was located about thirty miles below Lake Peoria, and about sixty miles from Bureau, and was placed in charge of old Mr. Beason, a venerable man who had long been a trader on the river, and who was well and favorably known by the Indians. This we called Opa Post.

“As we rounded the point of the lake above Peoria we discovered that old Fort Clark was on fire, and upon reaching it we found Indians, to the number of about two hundred, engaged in a war dance. They were hideously painted and had scalps on their spears and sashes, which they had taken from Americans during the war with Great Britain, from 1812 to 1815.” While des Champs was holding an interview with the Indians away from the boat, Hub bard was grossly insulted by a young brave, who came near costing one or the other of them his life.
Having completed their business at St. Louis, des Champs and his party started on their return about the 20th day of November, 1818, and after stopping at Opa Post, reached Bureau Station, opposite the present city of Hennepin, about the middle of December. Remaining there until the middle of March, 1819, they started for Mackinac, where they arrived in the month of May. It was while they were on this return journey, and on April 15, 1819, the first permanent American settlers arrived at Fort Clark, now the city of Peoria. The first two of the party of seven came on horseback, the others by boat. Arriving at Fort Clark, a deserter from Fort Dearborn came, gliding by in his canoe. Taking passage with him, one of the first arrivals accompanied him until he met with the remainder of his own party, with whom he returned to the fort.

The individual cases already mentioned were but the harbingers of the great populations which were soon to flow in and take possession of the broad prairie lands and waterways of Illinois, now the abodes of millions of industrious, frugal and intelligent people. Looking backwards from our present point of view, one might suppose the roots of our civil institutions were to be found in the Eastern States, from which so large a percentage of the present population of this great city have immigrated. It requires but a moment's reflection, however, to become convinced that for this branch of our history we must look southward.

About the time when the first American settlers came to Fort Clark, as the locality was then called, Illinois was admitted into the Union of the States. It would be useless to follow the course of events which first included both Peoria and Chicago within the county of "Illinois" under the Government of Virginia, the county of "St. Clair" under the Indiana Territory, or the county of "Madison" under the Illinois Territory, for, although the sites of these cities were located within those counties at one time or another, yet, inasmuch as there were few people here to enjoy the benefits or be subject to the restrictions of civil government, it could make little difference whether or not there existed any civil government. It may be noted, however, that upon the organization of the Illinois Territory, in 1809, Antoine des Champs, of Peoria, was reappointed Justice of the Peace of St. Clair County.
By Act of the Legislature of 1821, the county of Pike was erected out of and embracing all the territory lying west and north of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers, extending to the Wisconsin State line. For the two years during which Peoria and Chicago were under the jurisdiction of Pike County, the following persons held the respective offices, namely: Abram Buck, Judge of the Probate Court, commissioned February 12, 1821, resigned and was succeeded February 15, 1823, by William Ross, at the time of the organization of Fulton County. At an election held April 20, 1821, Leonard Ross, John Shaw and William Ward were elected County Commissioners, Bigelow C. Fenton, Sheriff, and Daniel Whipple, Coroner. At the general election held August 5, 1822, James Sibley, David Dalton and Ossian M. Ross were elected County Commissioners, Leonard Ross, Sheriff, and Daniel Whipple, Coroner. During the same period the following named persons were appointed and received commissions as Justices of the Peace of the new county: Abner Eads, of Peoria; John Shaw, Daniel Whipple, William Ross, Henry Tupper, Leonard Ross, William Ward, who were commissioned at the organization of the county, February 3, 1821; Ebenezer Smith, Stephen Dewey, commissioned May 26, 1821; John Bolter, on November 29, 1821; Charles B. Rouse, January 22, 1822, and Amos Barcroft, May 22, 1822. These men wielded civil jurisdiction over that vast territory embracing one-third of the State, but as yet, so far as known, Chicago had no representative in the civil government, and Peoria had but one, in the person of Abner Eads, one of her first settlers.

It is a matter of importance to notice at this point that by this same Legislature of 1821, the county of Sangamon was erected, embracing within its boundaries all the territory north of its present boundaries and between the Third Principal Meridian and the Illinois River, a portion of which afterwards became attached to the county of Peoria.

By an Act of the Legislature of January 23, 1823, the county of Fulton was carved out of the county of Pike, with boundaries somewhat larger than its present limits, but it was provided that all the rest and residue of the attached county of Pike lying east of the Fourth Principal Meridian should be attached to and be a part of said county of Fulton, until otherwise disposed of by the General Assembly.
This attachment brought all the territory north of Fulton County and east of the Fourth Principal Meridian, and north and west of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers, within the jurisdiction of Fulton County, all west of the Fourth Principal Meridian remaining attached to Pike County as before. Hugh R. Coulter was appointed Judge of the Probate Court, and, at an election held near the site of the present city of Lewiston, on April 14, 1823, John Moffatt David W. Barnes and Thomas R. Covell were chosen County Commissioners, Abner Eads, of Peoria, Sheriff, and William Clark, Coroner. These were succeeded in August, 1824, by James Gardner, James Barnes and David W. Barnes, as County Commissioners, Ossian M. Ross, Sheriff, and Joseph Moffatt, Coroner. At the organization of the county, January 23, 1823, John Hamlin, of Peoria, Samuel Fulton, Stephen Chase, Hugh R. Coulter, on June 17, 1823, Amhurst C. Hanson and William Eads, and on December 2, 1823, John Kinzie, of Chicago, were appointed and commissioned as Justices of the Peace. John Kinzie seems to have been the first civil officer in Chicago. By these men were our local affairs administered during the period that both Peoria and Chicago were under the jurisdiction of Fulton County.

During this period some personal incidents worthy of notice, as illustrative of the times, transpired. In 1823 one Elijah Wentworth, formerly of the State of Maine, came to Fulton County and settled near where Lewiston now is. He had three sons, Hiram, Elijah and George, and four daughters, Lucy, Eliza (Polly), Sophia and Susan. The father was a shoemaker, his sons farmers, while his wife and daughters carried on an extensive business in the manufacture of buckskin gloves and mittens, and buckeye and straw hats, with which they supplied not only the local market, but sold gloves and hats at Peoria, Springfield and other distant markets.

Among the earliest settlers of Fort Clark were David W. Barnes, before mentioned as an office-holder, and two brothers, named Charles and Theodore Sargent, who all took up their residences near the present city of Canton. When Theodore got ready for a wife, he sought an interview with Dame Wentworth, and having made known the object of his visit, as he himself related it, "The old lady looked me over with the air of a judge of the article she wanted and began her catechism by asking me what I fol-
lowed, my age, and where I was from. I told her I was twenty-nine years old, and had been five years a soldier, and thought I could manage a wife; that I was from Barnes settlement, was opening a farm, and wanted a gal to help me pull through the start. The old lady shook her head and informed me that I would not suit her gals, as she had made up her mind they would marry store-keepers. I told her that if that was the case, I reckoned her gals would not suit me, as I wanted one that could pull with me at the start." He then went off and married Rachel Brown, the ceremony being performed by his friend Barnes as County Commissioner, which is the only instance met with of a marriage ceremony being performed by an incumbent of that office.

Piqued at the treatment their friend Sargent had received, the young men of the neighborhood formed a conspiracy against Dame Wentworth, and as there was a man named Clark who occasionally came through the country on horseback, peddling needles, thread and other small wares in a sack, dividing his stock into equal portions and balancing it over his saddle, it was determined to put him upon the scent of the Wentworth girls. The suggestion was to his taste, and having visited the mother and informed her that he resided in Peoria, and sold goods for a livelihood, the bargain was struck, and he soon afterwards married the daughter Polly. It is possible that the name Eliza is erroneously given above, for it appears from the records of Fulton County that on February 22, 1825, William C. Clark and Polly Wentworth were united in marriage by Ossian M. Ross, a Justice of the Peace, while the name of Mary Clark appears as a member of one of the early Methodist classes of Peoria, where William Clark appears to have been a man of some prominence, he having been elected Coroner at the first election of Fulton County.

In 1827 Mr. Wentworth and his family (except Hiram and the married daughter) moved to Chicago. They left Lewistown with two two-horse wagons, stopped over night at the house of Ossian M. Ross, near Canton, after which they saw no white people until they reached Peoria, none from Peoria to Ottawa, and none from Ottawa to Chicago. Being devout Methodists, they helped in the organization of churches of that denomination both in Fulton County and in Chicago, where doubtless their names may be found.
among the pioneer settlers. Elijah Wentworth afterwards related that when he reached Chicago there were not more than ten or twelve families residing there, outside the garrison at Fort Dearborn. He located on an eighty-acre tract about four miles from the lake to avoid the swamps. His daughters bought deer skins from the Indians, and resumed the manufacture of gloves and mittens. This was probably the pioneer manufactory of hats, gloves and mittens at Chicago.

Early in the year 1823, William S. Hamilton, a son of the distinguished statesman, Alexander Hamilton, a lawyer by profession, but who could be surveyor, cattle driver, or miner for lead ore as occasion required, had taken a contract to supply Fort Howard, at Green Bay, with beef cattle. John Hamlin, who had come to Peoria about two years before that time, and who had been appointed Justice of the Peace of Fulton County, accompanied him. On their way they stopped at Chicago and arrived at their destination, at Green Bay, on the second day of July. Returning they reached Chicago about the 20th day of the same month. By that time a marriage license had been procured from the Clerk of the County Commissioners' Court of Fulton County, authorizing the solemnization of marriage between Alexander Wolcott, Jr., and Miss Ellen Marion Kinzie, of Chicago. There being no resident Justice of the Peace and no minister of the Gospel, not even a chaplain at the fort, Mr. Hamlin was called upon to perform the ceremony, which seems to have been the first marriage solemnized within the bounds of the present city of Chicago, and so far as the records show, the first to be solemnized within the new county of Fulton.

At the same time, Mr. Hamlin entered the employment of the American Fur Company, and after serving them a year on the Kankakee and Iroquois Rivers, established a trading post of that company at Peoria.

Anticipating somewhat the order of events, it may be here stated that the records of Peoria County show that on August 18, 1825, Samuel Miller and Elizabeth Kinzie were united in marriage by John Kinzie, a Justice of the Peace, who by this time had been commissioned as Justice of the Peace of Peoria County.

In May, 1879, Major General David Hunter, who married Maria Kinzie, relates that he was married at Chicago, having had to send a soldier one hundred and sixty miles
on foot to Peoria to procure a license. A license procured with so much effort was certainly worthy of preservation, and it may have been stowed away as a souvenir of the happy event, but so far the records of Peoria County fail to disclose that such a license was ever issued, or if issued, that it was ever returned by an officiating officer or clergyman. Evidence of such marriage is, however, not wanting, for in the possession of Mrs. Nelly Kinzie Gordon, a granddaughter of John Kinzie, and wife of General Gordon, of Savannah, Georgia, is a newspaper clipping which reads as follows: “Married—At Chicago, on 18th September, 1829, by Alexander Doyle, Esq., Lieut. David Hunter, of the U. S. Army, to Miss Maria Indiana Kinzie, of Chicago.” The records show that Alexander Doyle was at that time a Justice of the Peace of Peoria County.

During the two years that Chicago and Peoria were under the jurisdiction of Fulton County, not many events of a public nature worthy of note at this place occurred. Elections were held, but so far as known no polls were opened at Chicago. In the great contest over the slavery question in 1824, Fulton County gave sixty-five votes against the pro-slavery convention to five in its favor, the anti-slave cause being championed by Ossian M. Ross and the noted Methodist missionary, Peter Cartwright. Daniel P. Cook was elected Representative in Congress from the State at large, Thomas Carlin, afterwards Governor, State Senator from the counties of Green, Pike, Morgan and Fulton, Nicholas Hanson, Representative from the counties of Pike and Fulton, but having resigned before the expiration of his term of office, he was succeeded by Levi Roberts, of Pike County.

The Legislature elected at that time wrought important changes in the political status of both Peoria and Chicago, to fully understand which it becomes necessary to refer to some other portions of the State. By Act of January 13, 1825, Schuyler, Adams, Hancock, Warren and Mercer Counties were erected out of the territory still belonging to Pike County, and Knox, Henry and Putnam out of that belonging to Fulton County. By another Act of the same date, Peoria County, with its present boundaries, was erected out of territory in the vicinity of Fort Clark, still belonging to Fulton County. Knox County embraced a territory twenty-four miles wide, between the Fourth Principal Meridian and the east line of Range four
east, and between the north line of Township eight north and the north line of Township number twelve north of the base line. Henry County embraced a strip of territory of the same width as Knox County, and extending to the Wisconsin State line. Warren County embraced all the territory now constituting the counties of Warren and Henderson, while Mercer County embraced all the territory north of Warren and west of Knox and Henry Counties to the Mississippi River. Putnam County embraced all the territory formerly belonging to Fulton County lying north of Peoria County and east of Henry, namely, all the territory west and north of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers and east of Range four east of the Fourth Principal Meridian, with the exception of that set apart to the County of Peoria. In addition to the territory now constituting Peoria County, there were attached to it for county purposes all that part of Sangamon County north of Township number twenty north of the base line and west of the Third Principal Meridian, and all that tract of country north of Peoria County and of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers, while Warren and Mercer were for a time attached to Schuyler for county purposes, Knox and Henry still remaining attached to Fulton.

That portion of Sangamon which was attached to Peoria County embraced the three northern tiers of townships of what is now Mason County, the northern tier of Logan County, the western tier of McLean County, all of Tazewell County, about two-thirds of Woodford County, about one-half of Marshall County, and all of the present County of Putnam, except about one township lying to the northwest of the Illinois River. A glance at any sectional map will show the extent of this jurisdiction north and west of the two rivers named.

By an Act of the Legislature of 1826, the County of McDonough was formed out of the territory that seems to have been overlooked in the legislation of 1825, and by the same Act the counties of Warren and Mercer were attached to Peoria for county purposes, leaving the counties of Knox and Henry still attached to Fulton County. It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose, as some do, that Knox County and the territory north of it were ever attached to Peoria County for county purposes. On the contrary, the County Commissioners' Court, in laying out roads, were careful not to attempt the exercise of jurisdiction over
that territory. With this exception the jurisdiction of Peoria County extended from near the present city of Havana, in Mason County, to the Mississippi River, some distance below Burlington, and thence over all the territory north and west of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers, as well as that portion of Sangamon County just mentioned.

The Act creating the county of Peoria was approved on January 13, 1825, and between that day and the 18th of the same month Norman Hyde was by vote of the two houses of the Legislature elected Judge of the Probate Court, and Thomas Camlin, George Ash, John Phillips, Stephen French, Nathan Dillon, Isaac Perkins, Jacob Wilson, Joseph Moffatt, Austin Crocker and John Kinzie were appointed Justices of the Peace. On the seventh day of March, 1825, the first election in the new county was held in the house of William Eads, at Peoria, at which time Samuel Fulton was elected Sheriff, William Phillips, Coroner, and William Holland, Nathan Dillon and Joseph Smith, County Commissioners. On the day following the County Commissioners' Court convened and set the wheels of government of the new county in motion. Norman Hyde, although holding a commission as Judge of the Probate Court, was appointed Clerk of the County Commissioners' Court, which position he continued to hold until June 4, when he assumed the duties of the office of Judge of the Probate Court.

By the Act creating the county, the county seat had been located on the northeast quarter of Section nine in Township eight, north of the base line of Range eight east of the Fourth Principal Meridian. This quarter section was then public land, but the right to so locate the county was claimed under an Act of Congress passed at some prior date. In securing the title the Commissioners met with unexpected objections from the officers of the land office for three alleged reasons: First, that being a fractional section it was not subject to entry; second, certain French claims granted by an Act of Congress of March 4, 1823, growing out of the destruction of La Ville de Mailet by Captain Craig, were supposed to occupy a portion of that quarter; third, James Latham, formerly Probate Judge of Sangamon County, had set up a conflicting claim under a private entry. Thereupon ensued a legal contest lasting for nine years, which was ended, so far as the land office was concerned, by an Act of Congress, confirming the title
in the county subject to the French claims, and as to Lath-
am by a subsequent compromise with his heirs.

For six years after the organization of Peoria County
the territory now embraced within the county of Cook, with
its great metropolis, together with the territory now form-
ing many other counties, with their teeming populations,
their cities and towns, was subject to the jurisdiction of
Peoria County.

At first, however, the business of the county was not
transacted on the quarter section designated in the forma-
tive Act as the county seat, but on an adjoining fractional
quarter, now known as Bigelow & Underhill's addition to
Peoria. The sessions of the County Commissioners' Court,
as well as of the Circuit Court, were first held in the house
of one Joseph Ogee (Ozier), which enjoyed the reputa-
tion of being the best house in the village, it being con-
structed of hewn instead of round logs. It was located just
below the ferry, which then occupied the site of the pres-
ent lower wagon road bridge, and probably between that
and the bridge of the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad
at Walnut street. Afterwards the Beeson house, which
may have been the same as that of Ogee, was used as the
court house for a year or more, but neither of these was
owned by the county. On March 3, 1829, John Hamlin
sold to the county for $75 a log house, built by Simon
Crozier, and formerly occupied by him as a store. It is
described as being fourteen feet square, with a cellar or
basement, probably opening upon the river. This con-
tinued to be the Court House so long as Chicago re-
mained united with Peoria County. It was also used for
other public purposes, such as religious meetings, and
probably as a school-house. It was then in a bad state
of repair, and required to be fitted up for public purposes.
At the June term of the County Commissioners' Court,
1829, it was ordered that the lower story be used as a jail.
At the September term, 1830, it was ordered that it be
plastered in the joints, weather boarded and a window with
glass be put in the river side, and a plank floor be laid
loose on the joists above. At the June term, 1831, further
improvements were ordered, to consist of a desk of walnut
plank, six by three and one-half feet and four and one-half
feet high, four benches, two fourteen feet long or the length
of the room, and two six feet long, one and one-half inches
thick, with an additional strip or piece where the legs
should be put in, the three hewn logs missing from the lower room to be put in place, that is, replaced by a door cheek, a door to be made of inch plank, the hinges, padlock and staples to be furnished by the workmen; also two benches for the table.

Dr. Enoch Cross, who was one of the organizers of a church which held its meetings in this Court House in 1834, thus describes it: "We found the Court House not quite up to our notions of so dignified a structure. It was a log building, some fifteen feet square, standing on the low bank of Lake Peoria, on one side of which was a raised platform for the judge, and its seats for lawyers and jurors were formed out of logs split in halves, and the split side turned up and raised from the floor by wooden pegs. It was there, in that humble room, and from that rude pulpit, that the early members of your church gladly assembled to listen to the Word, though dispensed to them from uncultured lips. Much that was then of deep interest to me has faded from memory. But one of our preachers I distinctly recollect. He was an Englishman and a Methodist. If he did not agree with Paul in the doctrine of 'predestination,' in practice he did harmonize with that apostle in not being a burden to the church. Six days in the week he labored with his own hands, not at tent making, but at shoe making, and when the holy Sabbath came, his work bench was placed at one side of the judge's seat, and hammer and lapstone, with other implements of his trade, were neatly covered over with his leathern apron, while he, having donned a clerical black coat and a white necktie, stood before us ready to feed his little flock, which did not often number more than eight or ten, unless we reckon the flock of sheep and lambs that took shelter from the heat in the basement or cellar kitchen under the Court House floor, or the prairie mice, which, to the great delight of the children, held high carnival between the logs. Some of us were lovers of sacred song, but such music as we then made would not now be considered very artistic, yet it was full of devotion and sincere worship, though its melody was sometimes a little disturbed by the plaintive bleating of the sheep and lambs beneath our feet." Other chroniclers say that the hotel accommodations being meagre, the jurors were in the habit of bringing their blankets with them and sleeping on the Court House floor.

Imagine, if you will, with what dignity the rotund
form of John York Sawyer filled the space behind that walnut desk, or the elegant and gentlemanly Samuel D. Lockwood or Richard M. Young gave their charges to jurors sitting on puncheon benches supported by wooden pegs with the bark on, or with what urbane sedateness Sidney Breese or Stephen T. Logan there listened to the arguments of James Turney, Benjamin Mills or William S. Hamilton, in a room fourteen feet square, with one glass window and a loose plank floor overhead. Yet here it was that law pure and simple was administered for this vast territory.

The first term of the Circuit Court was held by the Hon. John York Sawyer, commencing November 14, 1825, John Dixon being Clerk, Samuel Fulton, Sheriff, and James Turney, Attorney General. The grand jury was drawn from a territory extending from Fox River to the Mackinaw, in what is now Tazewell County. The most important trial was that of No-ma-que, an Indian, who was tried for the murder of a Frenchman named Perre Landre—William S. Hamilton appearing as his counsel No-ma-que was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, but the judgment was reversed by the Supreme Court, and No-ma-que escaped and was subsequently killed at the battle of Sycamore Creek in the Black Hawk war. The next term of court was held in November, 1826, one year after the first, and was again presided over by Judge Sawyer.

From the May term, 1827, until the October term, 1828, the court was held by Judge Lockwood, and after him, so long as Chicago remained under the jurisdiction of Peoria County, by Judge Young.

Although Norman Hyde held his commission as Judge of the Probate Court from the 18th day of January, 1825, he did not assume the duties of that office until the fourth day of June of the same year, there being in all probability no business to transact. The court was opened for the first time on the sixth day of June, but was immediately adjourned for want of business until the next term. And similar adjournments were taken until September 30, when the first estate of a deceased person was presented for administration. It was that of Joseph O’Brien, presumed to be of Peoria. Eighteen months afterwards, when his estate was closed, it showed a balance of $416.31 for distribution. On December 5 of that year the first will was presented for probate. It was that of Isaac Remsden, Jr.,
presumed to be of Mackinaw Point. It had been executed in Newton Township, Muskinggum County, Ohio, on May 13, 1825. Mr. Remsden's residence in Peoria County must therefore have been a very brief one.

On the 24th day of April, 1826, an entry appears which brings the early history of Chicago into close touch with that of Peoria. Alexander Wolcott, Jr., appeared and made proof of the death of John Crafts, of Chicago, manager of the business of the American Fur Company. There being no next of kin in the State, Wolcott had received authority to administer from Craft's heirs in Massachusetts. Letters of administration were granted Wolcott on a bond of $3,000, with John Kinzie, of Chicago, and James Latham, of Peoria, as sureties. The estate was valued by John Kinzie and Billy Caldwell, appraisers, at $9,006.51; the sale bill amounted to $504.01. On April 28, 1828, Alexander Wolcott closed up the estate, charging himself, among other things, with an item of $2,500 received from the American Fur Company for Craft's share of the profits on the Chicago outfit for the year 1825-6, according to the award of Thomas Adis Emmett, Esq., arbitrator in the case; and after taking credit, among other things, for an account of the American Fur Company against the estate for $784, one to John Kinzie for $87.58, and one to Gurdon S. Hubbard for $22, he had left a balance of $1,456.25, which was duly distributed.

It appears that John Crafts was never married. His father had died leaving a widow and daughter Esther, the mother and sister of John Crafts. The widow had been married a second time to Samuel Mead, by whom she had had several children. The papers authorizing Wolcott to administer upon the estate were executed in December, 1825, and January, 1826, and stated that Crafts had died during the past summer, the exact date not given. The brothers and sisters were then all of age and several of them married. John Craft's mother was then the wife of Ebenezer Morse, both of them residing at Walpole, New Hampshire. The brothers and sisters of the half blood were Hannah, wife of Phineas Henderson, of Chesterfield; Caroline, unmarried; Nancy, wife of Ephraim Holland, both of them of Walpole; Samuel O. and Harriet Mead, unmarried, both of Boston, Massachusetts.

On the same day that he closed up the estate of John Crafts, Alexander Wolcott, Jr., made proof of the
death of John Kinzie, of Chicago, which had occurred on January 6, 1828, and obtained letters upon his estate under bond of $3,000, with John B. Beaubien and James Kinzie as sureties. On the 19th day of May, 1828, the appraisement bill was filed, which showed that it had been made on April 22, by Alexander Doyle and J. B. Beaubien, sworn to before R. A. Kinzie, Clerk, and that the personal effects amounted to $805.40. The sale bill dated April 28, certified by R. A. Kinzie, Clerk, amounted to $254.87½.

On the 12th day of October, 1829, it was ordered that Alexander Wolcott, administrator of the estate of John Kinzie, give the notice required by law of the settlement of the estate. On the 17th day of December, 1830, came John B. Beaubien and proved the death of Francis La Framboise, of Chicago, and obtained letters of administration under bond of $3,000, with David Hunter, of Chicago, and John Hamlin, of Peoria, as sureties. And on the same day came David Hunter and proved the death of Alexander Wolcott, administrator of the estate of John Kinzie, and obtained letters of administration de bonis non upon Kinzie’s estate; the bond in this case being $3,000, with Beaubien and Hamlin as sureties. On May 20, 1831, David Hunter filed his report of the estate of John Kinzie, showing the following: Money received from Mr. Hamlin, $19.00; from R. A. Kinzie, $185.00; from Mrs. Wolcott, $486.25; and from I. N. Bailie, rent, $50.00; total, $740.25. There was due the estate from the American Fur Company $2,190.12, with interest at five per cent. per annum from May 12, 1828, which was reported as a good claim. This is the last entry that appears concerning the estate of John Kinzie. No orders appear to have been then taken in the estate of Alexander Wolcott. It was administered in the Probate Court of Cook County.*

Alexander Wolcott. It was probably administered in the Probate Court of Putnam County.

Norman Hyde, the judge of this court, died in office during the year 1832. He was a young man of varied attainments, he having been Clerk of the County Commissioners’ Court, school teacher, Judge of the Probate Court, and Postmaster all in one year, and subsequently county

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*During the reading of this paper Hon. James B. Bradwell stated that the last will and testament of Dr. Alexander Wolcott was the first to be admitted to probate in Cook County; that he had personally examined the records before they were destroyed by the great fire and had found the fact as stated.
surveyor. He surveyed mining claims in the lead mine region, and possibly town lots in Chicago.

Those who have perused that charming book, "Wau-bun," will not have forgotten the story of the snow-bound travelers at the house of William S. Hamilton, the same person I have frequently mentioned, nor will those familiar with the history of the Black Hawk war have failed to notice that John Dixon and Joseph Ogee, herein so frequently mentioned, are the same that established the ferry on Rock River, or that John Dixon is the same who was the founder of the flourishing city of Dixon. Nor will the readers of "Wau-bun" have failed to notice the tenderness with which the gifted authoress has written of Sister Margaret and of her young son Edwin, and perhaps their wonder has been excited to know whether or not Margaret was then a widow, and if so, when and where her husband, Lieutenant Helm, had died. Histories of Chicago, possibly out of consideration of the good name of a brave soldier, possibly for want of information upon the subject, have heretofore failed to disclose the real situation. The mystery is, in part at least, solved by the records of the Circuit Court of Peoria County, where it appears that on October 12, 1829, Margaret Helm obtained a divorce from her husband, Lenai T. Helm, for a cause not specified in the decree, but if her petition was proved true in all respects, however brave a soldier Lieutenant Helm may have been, yet, as a husband, he had not been any more exemplary than some other husbands of whom we read. The summons was sent to Clay County, Illinois, and was personally served upon the defendant. The most interesting part of the decree is that the complainant was given the exclusive charge, custody and control of the person of her son, Edwin Helm, until he should arrive at the age of twenty-one years; that she should hold in her own right all the money, property, reservation or interest that may have been stipulated, granted or ceded to her as one of the heirs of John Kinzie, deceased, in the late treaty made by the Government of the United States with Ottawa, Chippewa, Pottawattamie and other tribes of Indians, as a part of her alimony to be allowed her of the estate of the said defendant, other alimony to be awarded from time to time as the court might order. The treaty referred to was probably that of Prairie du Chien, concluded in July, 1829, but probably not ratified until the January following. Al-
though not a lineal descendant of John Kinzie, Margaret Helm had been brought up in his family, and seems to have been treated by her half brothers and sisters as one of the family, and had been named in the treaty as one of his heirs.

In their early days Peoria and Chicago were closely allied in the political affairs of the State and nation. At the first State election after the admission of Illinois into the Union, Daniel P. Cook was elected Representative in Congress from the State at large, George Cadwell was elected State Senator, and John Howard, Abraham Prickett and Captain Samuel Whitesides were elected Representatives from Madison County, which then included the sites of the future cities of Peoria and Chicago. At the second election, which occurred in 1820, Daniel P. Cook was re-elected to Congress, George Cadwell to the Senate and Joseph Borough, Nathaniel Buckmaster and William Otwell to the House of Representatives. The Legislature elected at that time erected the county of Pike, attached it to Green County as a Senatorial District, and gave it one Representative in the house by itself. At the next election, in 1822, Daniel P. Cook was re-elected to Congress, George Cadwell State Senator from Greene and Pike Counties, and Nicholas Hanson was elected Representative from Pike County, but was thrown out in favor of John Shaw, by whose vote the submission of the calling of a pro-slavery convention was affected.

The Legislature elected at that time erected the county of Fulton out of the county of Pike. The counties of Greene, Morgan, Pike and Fulton were given one Senator, and the counties of Fulton and Pike one Representative. In the exciting election which followed, Fulton County, which then embraced the sites of Peoria and Chicago, sixty-five votes were cast against the pro-slavery convention and only five in its favor. But so far as known no votes were received from either of those two cities upon that momentous question. Daniel P. Cook was re-elected to Congress, Thomas Carlin (afterwards Governor) was chosen State Senator from Greene, Pike, Morgan and Fulton Counties, Nicholas Hanson was re-elected Representative from Pike and Fulton Counties. Hanson having resigned before the expiration of his term, was succeeded by Levi Roberts, of Pike County. It was the Legislature elected at this time that erected the county of Peoria and
subdivided the whole northern part of the State into prospective counties. Although it had been provided in the Act establishing the county that it should vote with Sangamon in the choice of Senators and Representatives, yet at a special session of the Legislature, begun on January 2, 1826, and before any elections could have been held under the former act, it was enacted that the counties of Pike, Fulton, Adams, Morgan, Schuyler and Peoria should form a district, and that this large territory, embracing about one-third of the State, should have one Senator and one Representative (Knox and Henry still being attached to Fulton, while Warren and Mercer were still attached and voted with Peoria).

At the December term, 1825, of the County Commissioners' Court, the county of Peoria, including the attached territory, was divided into three election precincts as follows: The Chicago Precinct to contain all that part of the country east of the mouth of the La Page River, where it empties its waters into the Aux Plain; the elections to be held at the Agency House or “Cobweb Hall,” and Abner (Alexander) Wolcott, John Kinzie and J. B. Beaubien to be judges at all general and special elections.

Peoria Precinct to contain all that tract of country north and west of the Illinois River and (east of the river?) north of Township twenty-four and west of the Third Principal Meridian, the elections to be held at the Clerk's office, and Stephen French, Abner Eads and John Phillips to be judges.

Mackinaw Precinct to contain the residue of the county, the elections to be held at the house of Jesse Dillon, Isaac Perkins, William Eads and Thomas Dillon to be judges.

At the March term, 1826, another precinct was formed, called the Fox River Precinct, containing all that district of country north of the Senachewein Creek and the River Des Page, the elections to be held at the house of Jesse Walker, near the junction of the Illinois and Fox Rivers, Aaron Hawley, Henry Allen and James Walker to be judges.

At the June term, 1826, another precinct, known as the Fever River Precinct, was formed out of the counties of Warren and Mercer, the elections to be held at the house of Dr. Garland. This precinct embraced the lead mine district about Galena, where the population was rapidly increasing.
At the June term, 1827, a new election precinct was created, called La Salle Precinct, embracing all the territory north of the south line of Township ten north and south and west of Sand River, elections to be held at the house of Elias P. Avery.

In the year 1827 the county of Jo Daviess was formed out of the northern part of Mercer County, thus cutting off from the jurisdiction of Peoria County the populous territory about the lead mines, which no longer continued to vote with Peoria County.

At the September term, 1828, a new precinct, called the Henderson Precinct, was formed out of what was left of Warren and Mercer Counties.

The original returns of the first election held at Chicago have not been discovered, but the records tell us who acted as election officers, for, at the September term, 1826, of the County Commissioners' Court, it was ordered that John Kinzie, John B. Beaubien and B. Caldwell, Judges, and Archibald Clybourn, Clerk, be each paid $1.00; that John K. Clark be paid $16 for returning the polls, and that John Kinzie be paid $1.50 for a ballot box for the election held in the month of August preceding. This doubtless was Chicago's first ballot-box. No returns were made from the Fox River Precinct. Thirty-one votes were cast at Chicago, two hundred and two at Galena, fifty-one at Mackinaw and eighty-one at Peoria—369 in all, of which the Fever River or Lead Mine District cast more than one-half. Chicago, however, made a good showing for a city so young in years. Although Dr. Wolcott had been appointed one of the judges, in his absence his place was ably filled by Billy Caldwell, while Archibald Clybourn, with great ability, recorded the thirty-one votes cast on that occasion.

Archibald Job, of Morgan County, was elected Senator from Pike, Fulton, Adams, Morgan, Peoria and Schuyler Counties; Henry P. Ross was elected to the lower house from the counties of Pike, Adams, Schuyler, Fulton and Peoria.

The year 1828 was prolific in elections in Chicago, there being still extant the returns of four elections held that year as follows: May 11, for Constables; August 4, for Representatives in Congress and the State Legislature; August 20, for Justices and Constables; November 3, for Electors for President and Vice-President of the United
States; and it is remarkable with what unanimity the good citizens of Chicago voted on all local tickets. At the election on May 11, John B. Beaubien and Alexander Doyle, Judges, James Kinzie and Stephen Mack, Clerks, were sworn in by Alexander Wolcott, Justice of the Peace; while Alexander Wolcott, the third Judge, was sworn in before John B. Beaubien, also Justice of the Peace. The election was held at the Agency House. There were nine votes cast, unanimously for Daniel Hunter and Henly Clybourn as Constables. This is the oldest election return from Chicago Precinct yet discovered. The voters were Alexander Wolcott, Jr., Jno. B. Beaubien, James Kinzie, Samuel Johnson, Stephen Mack, Archibald Caldwell, Joseph Bronski, Antoine Oilimet and Joseph La Frambois.

At the general election held on August 4, John B. Beaubien and James Kinzie, as Judges, and Alexander Doyle and Henly Clybourn, as Clerks, were sworn in by Alexander Wolcott, Judge of Election, and Alexander Wolcott, Judge, was sworn in by John B. Beaubien, also a Judge of Election. The election was held at the Agency House, and there were thirty-three votes cast unanimously for George Forquer for Congress, Henry J. Ross for State Senator, Ossian M. Ross for Representative in the Legislature, Orin Hamlin for Sheriff, George Sharp, Isaac Egman and Francis Thomas for County Commissioners, and Resolved Cleveland for Coroner, none of whom resided north of the present county of Peoria.

At the election held August 29, James Kinzie and Alexander Doyle, Judges, were sworn in by John B. Beaubien, Judge of Election, and John B. Beaubien, Judge, Archibald Clybourn and Willard Scott, Clerks, were sworn in by Alexander Doyle, one of the Judges. The election was held at the Agency House. There were thirty-three votes cast, of which Alexander Doyle received twenty and A. Clybourn thirteen for the office of Justice of the Peace, and Henly Clybourn thirty-three, and Daniel Hunter twenty-six votes for the office of Constable.

The first Presidential election at Chicago was held at the house of John B. Beaubien, on the third day of November, 1828. Norman Hyde and Alexander Wolcott, Judges, were sworn in by John B. Beaubien, the third Judge, while he in turn, together with Orin Hamlin and Archibald Clybourn, Clerks, was sworn in by Alexander Wolcott, as Judge. There were forty votes cast for electors of
President and Vice-President, of which Elijah Iles, Samuel H. Thompson and George Webb, the John Quincy Adams ticket, had each twenty-six, and John Taylor, A. M. Houston and Richard M. Young, the Andrew Jackson ticket, had each fourteen votes. What appears to be a singular feature of this election is that Norman Hyde, Judge of the Probate Court, and Orin Hamlin, Sheriff, both of Peoria, should have been officers and voted at Chicago. All these election returns were duly certified and forwarded to the Clerk, by what means of conveyance we are not informed.

There were no printed forms in use to keep the election officers from going astray, but these returns are each written upon the two inside pages of a sheet of foolscap and follow with strictness the forms prescribed by law.

It might be of interest to analyze the votes of the other precincts, but this has been done elsewhere by the writer hereof. For the entire county the vote stood for the Jackson ticket—Young, 41; Houston, 43; Taylor, 46. For the Adams ticket—Iles, 91; Thompson, 93; Webb, 78. The Peoria Precinct divided its 81 votes as follows: For the Jackson ticket—Young, 27; Houston, 29; Taylor, 29. And for the Adams ticket—Iles, 51; Thompson, 54; Webb, 52. Jo Daviess County having in the meantime (1827) been set off, the large vote of the Fever River country had ceased to be counted with Peoria. At the August election Joseph Duncan was elected to Congress over George Forquer; Henry J. Ross, of Pike County, was elected State Senator; John Turney, of Pike, for Representative; Orin Hamlin for Sheriff.

No special interest centers upon the election of 1830, which was the last election at which Chicago voted as part of Peoria County. The original returns of that election have not been discovered.

Cook County, however, for some time was connected with Peoria, Putnam, La Salle and Jo Davies Counties in a Representative district, during which time Chicagoleans had the pleasure of voting for John Hamlin, of Peoria, as a member of the lower house, while Peorians, with equal pleasure, voted for General James M. Strode, of Cook, the gifted orator of the Black Hawk war, for Senator.

Leaving the field of politics and recurring to matters more local and domestic, we find the attention of the County Commissioners of Peoria County early engaged in establishing communication with the rest of the world by
means of roads and ferries. Having first laid out roads to the east, west and south, they at their June term, 1826, appointed John Barker, George Harland and Samuel Fulton to locate a road from the ferry at Peoria by the nearest and best way to the Third Principal Meridian (the eastern limit of their jurisdiction), and in a direction to strike the big salt spring opposite the mouth of the Fox River, the present site of South Ottawa. This left a gap of about eighteen miles to be filled by some other county. Two ferry licenses were granted, one at the Narrows, three miles above Peoria, to Isaac Waters, John Phillips and David Matthews; the other to Jesse Walker, the noted missionary, at the mouth of the Fox River to the spring. The inference is almost irresistible from this fact that the road must have been continuous from Peoria to the big spring, where it crossed the river by Walker's ferry and continued on towards Chicago, although it had not yet been laid out by the Commissioners. At the September term of the same year, the viewers made their report, and thus was laid out the first road leading from Peoria in the direction of Chicago.

By Act of the Legislature of January 12, 1833, Lewis Bigelow, of Peoria, John M. Gay, of Putnam, James B. Campbell, of La Salle, and James Walker, of Cook County, were appointed Commissioners to lay out a State road from Peoria to the mouth of Fox River, and thence to Chicago. This road must have followed very nearly the route of that laid out by the Commissioners of Peoria County. It went by way of Hanover (now Metamora), Magnolia and Union Grove to Ottawa, thence to Chicago.

At the June term, 1828, the County Commissioners established a general scale of ferry charges for the entire county. At the September term of that year the ferry license of Jesse Walker, at the mouth of Fox River, was renewed. At the March term, 1829, among others, a license was granted to Archibald Clybourn and Samuel Miller to keep a ferry across the Chicago River at the lower forks near Wolf Point, crossing the river below the north-east branch, and to land on either side of both branches, to suit the convenience of all persons wishing to cross. This was probably the first public ferry at Chicago, and probably laid the foundation of the market in poultry and dairy products, which still, by right of prescription, occupies that locality.
At the June term, 1830, a license was granted to William See (another missionary) to keep a ferry across the Callimink (Calumet) at the head of Lake Michigan. At the same time it was ordered that the ferries under their jurisdiction should be taxed for the ensuing year as follows: William Haines (Pekin), $4.00; William Eads (Wesley City), $2.00; John L. Bogardus (Peoria), $10.00; Matthews and Chandler (Narrows, above Peoria), $2.00; Miller and Scott (Hennepin), $2.00; James Adams (Little Vermilion), $2.00; Clybourn and Miller (Chicago), $2.00; William See (Chicago), $2.00. The Peoria ferry must have had five times the business of either of those at Chicago.

The only other State road from Chicago to Peoria was laid out in 1836, which went from Chicago by way of Peru to Boyd's Grove, where it united with the State road from Peoria to Galena, following the same to Peoria.

The difficulties and dangers accompanying trade and travel in those early days may be illustrated by a very few incidents. Farmers were accustomed to haul their grain, pork and other products from Peoria to Chicago by wagon, and there to purchase lumber for their houses, salt for their pork and supplies for their families. Those doing business on the river transported their pork, furs, peltries and other products by Mackinaw boats and canoes, making the portage between the DesPlaines and Chicago Rivers by land. While in the fur business at Peoria, John Hamlin conceived the bold idea of shipping his pork by keel-boat a portion of the distance, the remainder by Mackinaw boat to Chicago. Packing his pork in a keel boat and his furs in a Mackinaw boat, he proceeded to the mouth of the Des Plaines, where he unloaded his keel-boat and built a depot for his pork, leaving the same in charge of some boatmen, while he went through with his Mackinaw boat by way of Summit and Mud Lake to the Chicago River and arrived safely at Chicago with his furs. He then returned and brought his pork through in the same way, thus establishing a continuous waterway for trade between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi Valley.

Transportation by land was attended by perils of another character. There is in existence a complaint made on September 1, 1829, before Alexander Doyle, a Justice of the Peace of Peoria County, residing at Chicago, by one Peter Lamsett, that having in the month of June preceding been employed by one Frederick Countryman to haul some
whiskey from Chicago to his house, say three barrels for Countryman and a half barrel of sixteen gallons for one Vermitt, and when about a mile this side of the River Du Page he met an Indian named Half-day, who demanded a dram, but was refused on the ground the whiskey did not belong to the driver, but to an American. They then parted, but two or three miles farther along he was overtaken by Half-day and two other Indians, one a young man well painted, and the third dressed in a soldier’s big coat. They drew their knives and with force seized one of Countryman’s barrels and poured out a large camp kettle full and made some attempts to stab the driver. When about three miles from the River Au Sable he was overtaken by the same young Indian and the one with the big coat with two others, who ordered him to stop or they would kill him and his cattle (doubtless meaning his team of oxen). They then took one of Countryman’s barrels out of the wagon and filled their keg, spilling a considerable quantity in so doing, the whole quantity taken and wasted being about ten or eleven gallons. The Indians were supposed to be Pottawattamies.

Private travel was performed on foot or on horseback, the missionaries, judges and lawyers generally adopting the latter method. At what time stage-coaches were introduced between Peoria and Chicago does not appear to be definitely known. Steamboats were introduced on the Illinois River about the year 1832, and soon afterwards attracted the travel from the lake region to the Mississippi to that route and rendered necessary some efficient means of transportation by land.

My paper may well stop at the year 1831, when Chicago ceased to be under the jurisdiction of Peoria County and came under that of Putnam and new conditions began to prevail. From that time until the year 1848, both Peoria and Chicago continued to thrive principally on great expectations. The great internal improvement project arose and fell—at one time raising to their highest pitch the hopes of both villages, only to be crushed by its disastrous failure. Of all the gigantic enterprises then contemplated the Illinois and Michigan Canal is the only survivor. The completion of this great public work brought Peoria and Chicago into new relations with each other and vastly stimulated the growth of each. This was accomplished on May 24, 1848, and was the occasion of great rejoicing at both
places. Railroad communication was established between Peoria and Chicago on November 9, 1854, when the first passenger train came from Chicago by way of the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad to Bureau Junction, thence by the Peoria & Bureau Valley Railroad to Peoria. Before that time, however, a road had been chartered and partly built from Peoria to Oquawka with a branch to Burlington, known as the Peoria & Oquawka Railroad. This branch was finished from Galesburg to Burlington in March, 1855, and having become united with the Central Military Tract Road and other roads leading from Chicago in the direction of Quincy, became the connecting link of railroads out of which grew the great Chicago, Burlington & Quincy system.

The Peoria & Oquawka road was completed through from Peoria to Galesburg by February 1, 1857, and its eastern extension to the Chicago & Alton at Chenoa about the same date, thus giving Peoria three railroad routes to Chicago. Communication between the two cities can now be had by every railroad leading from Chicago to the South and Southwest. Formerly near neighbors, distant from each other by only four to six days' travel, they are now still near neighbors, distant from each other by only so many hours.

A century has elapsed since John Kinzie settled in Chicago. Within that century Chicago, by reason of its natural advantages, has grown to be one of the greatest cities in the world. Fifty years ago its population was not one-half that which Peoria has to-day, while Peoria had not over one-eighth of its present number. What the twentieth century has in store for each of them who can foretell? The time was when Peoria had sixteen hundred landings at her dock per year. When the deep waterway shall have been completed and vessels of large tonnage shall have begun to ply between the Great Lakes and the Gulf, she may again have as many or more, and internal commerce by water may become as important a factor in the growth of cities and towns, and the development of the country, as is that by the sea and the Great Lakes at the present time. In the completion of this great work both Chicago and Peoria are mutually interested, and from it each of these cities will reap a corresponding benefit.