

## EARLY HISTORY



HE early history of Fond du Lac county, Wisconsin, while linked closely with that of other counties in this section of the state, has an identity of its own to which there is a growing interest attached with each passing year.

Attracted here by the fertile lands, much of which was covered with dense forests and which abounded with streams and lakes and countless springs the early settlers, confronted by all the hardships and privations known to pioneer life, builded well the foundation for agricultural, commercial and civic progress of the most aggressive type. On this foundation municipalities have risen, diversified industries have been developed and a prosperous community, one that in point of stability and enterprise ranks second to none in the state, is the result.

Bound together by a common tie of early day hardships endured, and early day pleasures enjoyed together, the surviving Fond du Lac county pioneers some years ago formed an organization known as The Old Settlers' Club. It has been the custom of this society since its inception to hold annual picnics and at the most recent of these, the one held in 1911, it was decided that it might be well to have some of the principal events in which they had participated in the early days, written into permanent records. It was further decided to embellish these bits of pioneer history with illustrations including portraits of many who had been prominently identified with the early history of Fond du Lac county. As a part of this work group photographs were taken. The first group included those pioneers who were 85 years old and older; the second group comprised those who were 78 years old and older, while the third group comprised those who had been residents of Fond du Lac county for 63 years or more.

In addition to these portraits of pioneers there have been included in the Historical Album here presented, portraits of members of the younger generation, those who are actively engaged at the present time in building upon the foundation which had been so well prepared for them.

In the preparation of this volume it has been the purpose to place it at the disposal not only of members of the Old Settlers' Club, but within the reach of the public at a nominal price, one which merely covers the cost of production. As a result it is hoped that a copy may find its way into every home in Fond du Lac county and that many may reach friends and former residents of the county.

Owing to the limitations of space the biographical matter is necessarily limited to a brief statement of facts and a mere mention of the most important events in the lives of those persons whose portraits are shown.

### WHENCE THE NAME FOND DU LAC.

The name Fond du Lac is compounded of three French words, which, being literally translated, read thus:—"the bottom of the lake." But this is by no means their signification, when applied to this county in Wisconsin. It is an idiom of the French language to call the end of a river, a street, or a lake, remote from the speaker, the *fond*, or bottom—regardless of its altitude. The French traders who visited this country during its nameless infancy, came in from Canada by way of the lakes, and referred to this locality as the *fond*—or further end of Lake Winnebago; hence Fond du Lac; the same name being applied to the western extremity of Lake Superior for the same reason. The name was afterward given to the river which flows into the "further end" of Winnebago—and then in due course of time to the county, the village and the city itself.

### SOME OF THE EARLY TRADERS.

The first trading post for traffic with the Indians, within what are now the confines of Fond du Lac county, and of which a reliable record is preserved, was established in 1787, at the forks of the Fond du Lac river by Jacob Franks, of Green Bay. In 1819 Peter B. Grignon, also from Green Bay, passed a winter at a trading post on the West Branch, the cellar of whose shanty was plainly to be seen when the first permanent settler arrived in 1836.