For four or five years after his first arrival here, Mr. Van Akin was much engaged in raising log cabins for settlers who had recently arrived, and for others who needed them. In those early times the neighbors used to put bells on their stock and turn them loose in the morning to browse in the forest, taking note which way they went, so as to know what direction to pursue in order to find and bring them home in the evening. Sometimes they would wander away from one to three or four miles, and when they chanced to be near together, browsing, the sound of their bells in the clear air, gave out a medley of music that was peculiarly pleasant to the pioneer. If the cattle chanced to be out after dark there was danger from the wolves, which were sure to be prowling about in the neighborhood.

From the pioneer start which Mr. Van Akin and two or three others gave, that section of Wayne county has been steadily settled and improved till it has become well populated, is filled with good houses and barns, and good husbandry; is well accommodated with roads and cross-roads, including plank roads, and even railroads, with schoolhouses and churches, and till it in fact ranks among the best cultivated and most thrifty sections of the State. There are few of the yeomanry of that neighborhood who are not well-to-do in the world, and who are not in independent circumstances.

The following persons were early and contemporaneous settlers with Mr. Van Akin in Nankin and its vicinity, all of whom are dead: Marcus Swift, William Osborn, James Kipp, Isaac Perrin, Abraham Perrin, Wm. Minchley, William Brazington, Joseph Kingsley, Norton Noble, John Norris, Walter Norris, Matthew Quirck, Samuel Dimick, Thomas Dickinson, Josiah Mason, John Palmer, James Palmer, William Strait, Zachariah Strait, Rev. —— Gordon, Andrew L. Stevens, James Ferguson, Harcourt Ferguson, and others.

The following early settlers of the same neighborhood are now (at the writing of this paper, May, 1872,) in the land of the living: James Abbot, Glode D. Chubb, John B. Wallace, Abel Patchen, Ammon Brown, Jacob Reed, Robert Reed, Adam Reed, Josiah Smith, Reuben Brown, William Smith, Barnabas C. Bunnell, John Ingraham, Benjamin Marshal, Daniel Strait, Mathias Strait, Charles Strait, Andrew Montgomery, James Stewart, Robert Stewart, John Luthers, Robert Luthers, Thomas Luthers, John Stringer, James Stringer, Franklin Stringer, William Bills, Friend Perrin, Calvin Cheney, —— Winchester, and others.

Mr. Van Akin, since his settlement in Nankin, has held several town offices and several military commissions of different ranks, from corporal up to brigadier general. He has been a man of industry and frugality, and now, in his decline of life, he finds himself in comfortable circumstances.

NOTE.—I notice on Belden & Co.'s map of Nankin, the name is L. A. Van Aiken.—J. C. H. *

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CHARLES CHRISTOPHER TROWBRIDGE

BY HON. JAMES V. CAMPBELL

Read June 13, 1883, at the annual meeting State Pioneer Society

I have been desired to prepare for the Pioneer Society a sketch of the life and career of Charles C. Trowbridge, who died on the 3d of April, 1883. He was, so far as I know, the oldest business resident of the State, not a native of Michigan, except the Hon. John Owen, whose coming into the Territory

*See appendix

was at about the same time or a little earlier. As a pioneer among pioneers, therefore, it would be very proper to commemorate him, had he not possessed those stronger and surer claims to honored remembrance which attend on a pure and wise character of remarkable usefulness, and held in honor throughout the whole community.

Charles Christopher Trowbridge was born in Albany, New York, on the 29th day of December, 1800. He was the youngest of six children, and his father, Luther Trowbridge, died in February, 1802. This gentleman, who was a native of Farmingham, Mass., was, in 1775, when the revolution broke out, a law student in the office of his kinsman, Edmund Trowbridge, a judge of the court of King's Bench, and a loyalist, who was nevertheless held in such personal esteem, as not to be molested for his principles. The young man, however, was an earnest "rebel," and fought as a volunteer in the battle of Lexington. At the early age of seventeen, he received an ensign's commission in the Massachusetts line, and continued in the service until the peace, when he retired with the rank of Brevet Captain and Quartermaster. Young as he was, he was a veteran in service. He was in Arnold's expedition up the Kennebec, in the fall of 1775, and was at Saratoga when Burgoyne was defeated. He was in Sullivan's expedition that was set on foot after the massacre of Wyoming. He was stationed at West Point when Washington had his quarters there, and his wife, then a very youthful matron, recalled in after years the good humored way in which the stately general did the honors with his battered camp equipage, polished till he claimed it might pass for silver.

After the war was over, Captain Trowbridge settled at Albany, where his wife (who was Miss Elizabeth Tillman), had relatives. Here he was engaged in various enterprises, and was interested in some land purchases. He held various offices by appointment of the governor and council, and was on pleasant terms with the public men of the time. Among his personal friends were Mr. Van Rensselaer, the patroon, Elkanah Watson, Abraham Van Vechten, and Chancellor Kent. The latter, in after years, meeting the subject of this sketch, referred with interest to his old friendship, and told anecdotes of shooting expeditions on Patroon Creek, where Captain Trowbridge won credit as a marksman with a little gun with a dog's head carved on the stock, which had been given him by a French officer during his campaigns. This gun is still in the possession of the family.

Upon the father's death the children were scattered. General Selah Matthews, long known as a distinguished leader of the Rochester bar, was at that time living at Elmira, and he took into his family Stephen V. R. Trowbridge, and in due time set about preparing him for the bar. A very early marriage made him seek other means of support. In 1813 a visit with his mother to see this brother led to an important result in shaping the career of our friend. Major Horatio Ross, then living at Owego, but having considerable branch stores at Athens, in Pennsylvania, and Elmira, offered to take Charles and bring him up as a merchant. Indentures were executed accordingly, whereby, in the old fashioned phrases that had come down from the English, the lad of twelve agreed not to violate the duties of his station, and the master agreed to support and train him in business, and pay him what was a liberal compensation, increasing yearly. This excellent man was faithful to his promises, and Mr. Trowbridge owed much of his thorough business habits to the teaching of his friendly employer. The first year was

spent at Elmira. The next year he was taken into the family of Major Ross, at Owego, where he was cherished with parental tenderness. The business troubles that succeeded soon after the peace of 1815, ultimately ruined Major Ross' business, and he turned out all his assets to his creditors, who, admiring his uprightness, made over to him a considerable amount of accounts, and left him his homestead. The veteran, in his declining years, when Mr. Trowbridge, though young, was in the fair way to prosperity in Detroit, wrote cheerfully that his revolutionary pension and his moderate salary in the clerk's office at Owego supplied all his wants.

The creditors put the property into the hands of Mr. Trowbridge, who was then not quite eighteen years old, and he closed up the business. He went down the Susequehanna with salt, gypsum, and lumber, and disposed of them in Pennsylvania, and came back with the proceeds. In 1819, William A. Ely, of Owego, sent him a supercargo to Havre de Grace and Baltimore, and he returned through the country unharmed, carrying all the proceeds of his voyage in bank notes upon his person.

In after life he referred to two peculiarities in which that period differed very much from the present. One was the great responsibilities laid upon boys and young men. The other was the absence of any sense of danger in carrying money about in the country. On one occasion, when only fourteen years old, he was sent by Major Ross to Newburgh, a distance of one hundred and forty miles, on horseback, to procure the discount of a note for $4,000. He went alone, and not only brought the money, but when the note matured, traveled over the same road again with funds to meet it.

After the return from Baltimore, he was put in temporary charge of the stock in trade of Gen. Goodrich, a merchant lately deceased. But at this time he was turning his eyes to the future, and reflecting on the place where he should fix his home. He was offered by Mr. Ely a share in his business as partner. But he preferred going westward. His first purpose was to go to New Orleans, but his friends opposed it. He was finally induced to prefer Michigan, by the favorable report of a young friend who preceded him.

Having indicated this preference, some of his friends through the intervention of Rev. John Monteith, then a missionary and teacher in Detroit, secured for him an appointment under Major Thomas Rowland, who having served meritoriously in the army during the war, had settled in Detroit, and was then United States marshal, clerk of the courts, justice of the peace, trustee of the city, and exercising many functions. Major Rowland was a gentleman of culture, of sterling character, and during his whole life much esteemed. He took Mr. Trowbridge at once into his own family, made him deputy in both his offices, and paid him as liberally as business would warrant.

In August, 1819, Mr. Trowbridge started for his destination and went to Buffalo, having as fellow travelers for a portion of the distance, three well known Detroit merchants, Tunis S. Wendell, John Palmer, and James Byrne. Just as he left, he received by the hands of one of his former associates under Maj. Ross,—Felix Hinchman (father of our fellow-citizens, Guy and Joseph Hinchman), a very earnest letter of recommendation to all good people, signed by four of the principal citizens of Owego. This unsolicited testimonal was very cheering, and it remained among his most valued papers at his death.

As Buffalo then had no harbor, the steamer Walk-in-the-Water, which was

then the only steam vessel on Lake Erie, made her port at Black Rock. He secured passage in her, and at the appointed time the vessel slowly went up the river to Lake Erie, aided by what was familiarly called the "horned breeze,"—being towed up by twenty pairs of stout oxen. Once in the lake she made her own way, and in due time landed at Detroit.

The little frontier post, with a very small English speaking population, had a society which was somewhat remarkable for its refinement, and for its entire freedom from stiffness and ostentation. Economy was not despised, and every door was open to any young man who was personally worthy. The military element, which was then very large, included a good many officers, who then, or afterwards were distinguished. Among them were General Alexander Macomb, Major John Biddle, Major Henry Stanton, Major Daniel Baker, Major Stockton, Captain Henry Whiting, Captain John Garland, Dr. Zina Pitcher, and Lieutenant James Watson Webb. The last is the only survivor. The only person now known to be living who was associated with Mr. Trowbridge in any of his office work, is the Rev. Voltaire Spalding, now a venerable Episcopal clergyman of the western diocese of Michigan, who was then city clerk of Detroit.

During the first year there was not much work to be done in Major Rowland's office, but Mr. Trowbridge made himself a master of all the legal formalities, and a few years ago he expressed his gratification at finding that the methods he introduced in Wayne county have been adhered to substantially ever since. Major Rowland was much attached to him, and procured from New York a full supply of legal treatises, and urged him to turn his attention to legal studies. But he had relatives whom he desired to aid in their struggles to equip themselves, and he preferred to do all that came within his reach in the shape of remunerative employment, to interrupting his work.

During the winter of 1819-20 preparations were going on somewhat confidentially for an expedition among the Indians to remove some difficulties. During the war of 1812 the British had obtained great influence over the Indians, and had kept it up since the peace by generous presents and flattering treatment. The result was coldness and in some cases a feeling of hostility to the Americans, among the Upper Lake and Mississippi Indians. The purpose of this expedition was partly scientific, to explore the sources of the Mississippi, but chiefly to impress upon the tribes the power of the United States, and to induce them to become friendly. Major Rowland, knowing of the project, asked Mr. Trowbridge if he would like to join the expedition. He answered very emphatically that he would rather black boots than miss it. The major thereupon interceded with Gen. Cass, who very kindly sent for Mr. Trowbridge and was so pleased with him that he made him a clerk and assistant topographer, and when the expedition started took him into his own canoe, and made him his personal companion during the four months which were consumed in the long voyage of four thousand four hundred miles. This was Mr. Trowbridge's first intimate knowledge of Gen. Cass, who became and continued during all his life his affectionate and devoted friend, and on his death entrusted him with an important duty concerning his estate.

The expedition started May 24, 1820. Mr. Schoolcraft published a full account of it, which is well known. Attached to the corps, among other men of note, was James Duane Doty, then a young man, but afterwards con-

spicuous in the history of Michigan and of the west, between whom and Mr. Trowbridge there was always a close intimacy. Before reaching the Sault de Ste. Marie, a small detachment of soldiers was added to the company. At the Sault, the signs of hostility were apparent, and while most of the chiefs had been mollified and quieted by the influence of Mrs. Johnston, an Indian lady, who was wife of the principal trader, there was one chief of high rank who was savage and vindictive, and disposed to stir up trouble. He had his camp with numerous well-armed warriors, but a few score rods from that of Gen. Cass, and he made no secret of his determination to oppose the American movement, although the wiser leaders of the tribes counseled discretion. He finally raised the British flag over his camp. Gen. Cass accompanied only by an interpreter, walked over to the place where the flag was flying, and tore it down, and tramped on it, announcing that it could not be raised on American soil. The small body of Americans, numbering only sixty-six, including the whole company, stood firmly to their arms, expecting an attack. But the enemy was for a time stupefied by the cool daring of the general, and before mischief could be done, the other chiefs interfered and prevented it. In the end the tribes gave up lands for military purposes at the Sault, and the general had no further trouble in that region. During the long journey interviews and arrangements were had with all of the tribes on the upper lakes and in their vicinity, and satisfactory relations established.

This journey was made throughout in bark canoes, which Gen. Cass always preferred to such other vessels as were to be found about the lakes at that time. The arrangements were all made with a view to economy of space, and to the nature of the country through which they were to pass. The experience of the traders had made them well acquainted with the best method of provisioning their crews, and while at this time it was customary to furnish some salted meat and biscuit, a chief item was still dried corn, once the *voyageurs'* only rations, supplemented by a little fat meat, and such fish and chance game as could be found on the way.

It might be imagined by those who are ignorant of the early western ways that these canoe voyages led to the temporary abandonment of civilized habits. But no mistake could be greater. The canoe had been found the best and most commodious vehicle for all the vicissitudes of this remote voyaging, and the flotillas were often commanded or accompanied in the colonial days by gentlemen of the old noblesse, who were always elegant and punctilious, or by the Scotch fur traders who always enforced discipline and respect.

The expedition of 1820 was partly in the interests of science, and the gentlemen who composed it were all sooner or later men of mark and eminence in civil or military life. Mr. Trowbridge has left a description of Gen. Cass' traveling habits which is not only interesting in itself, but valuable as throwing light on the character of that distinguished leader.

"Gen. Cass at one time made a four months' trip of four thousand five hundred miles, at another one of three months and fifteen hundred miles, and at another one of two months and a thousand miles, in these frail vessels, coasting all the upper lakes and descending the Mississippi from its extreme source to the mouth of the River Ohio, and all without any serious accident. The General always carried a well selected though necessarily a small library, and in his own canoe, when the weather permitted, some young member of the party was called upon to read aloud during a part of the forenoon.

"Some might think this a monotonous way of traveling, and no doubt it would be so now, when anything less than five hundred miles in twenty-four hours is called a waste of time; but it was not so. The *chanson de voyage* in setting out in the morning and approaching the camp ground in the evening, under the graceful folds of our national flag, the bustle of pitching tents, cooking supper, fighting mosquitoes, gumming the canoes, and the long stories of adventure told around the camp fire by one of the old *voyageurs* selected as *conteur des coutes* made the time pass cheerily. Besides, it was the custom of the country. * * * As to the evening camp-fire proper of General Cass, it was always enlivened by some literary or scientific discussion, generally started by the general, and carried on by some of the savans in his suite."

On his return, Mr. Trowbridge was sent with Col. Beaufait, a well-known citizen of Detroit who was then an Indian interpreter, to make a payment to the Saginaw Indians. The silver for this purpose was carried on pack horses, without an escort, and the journey took five days, during which the little party camped out every night without fear of robbery or molestation.

After this time while continuing deputy clerk, he began to act as private secretary and amanuensis to Gen. Cass, and in that capacity wrote down from his dictation, not only his public documents and communications, but some of his literary contributions to the North American Review and other publications. He was also employed in some positions of great responsibility.

In 1821 the Ogdens of New York having obtained the State's reversionary interest in considerable tracts occupied by the six nations, they desired if possible to induce the Indians to remove westward and vacate their territory. The secretary of war, Mr. Calhoun, favored the project, if feasible, and Mr. Trowbridge was appointed agent to accompany the chiefs and representatives of the tribes to Green Bay, and negotiate with the Winnebagoes and Menominees for the purchase of suitable lands. That place was chosen with the expectation, as Mr. Calhoun said in his instructions, that "they would no more be disturbed by the advancing wave of civilization." On this occasion the New York Indians were represented, among others, by the Rev. Eleazar Williams, a gentleman, as then understood, of French and Indian parentage, of portly presence, but not impressing the world then as having any claims on the throne of France. The "Dauphin" theory was later, and is not much regarded by his old acquaintances in the west, although possibly a Bourbon out of business may not necessarily be very majestic.

A treaty was made which was not entirely satisfactory to either side, but a portion of the Oneidas and Stockbridge tribes, and a few others removed to the lands purchased near Green Bay, and Mr. Williams himself settled there.

During his residence in Michigan, Mr. Trowbridge, who was already an accurate French scholar, and familiar also with the Canadian—which was the older form of the French language,—had become pretty well acquainted with the Chippewa dialect, and had spent the considerable leisure which is always enforced during Indian negotiations, in studying the variations in tribal dialects, and the customs and traditions of the Indians. On his return from Green Bay, he was given a post in the local Indian department as assistant secretary (Major Forsyth being secretary) and accountant, and soon after was also made interpreter. These employments added to his salary as deputy of Major Rowland, gave him what was then considered a very good income, and enabled him to make some savings. About this time he was also made secretary

of the Board of Regents of the university, with a salary of sixty dollars. This office was chiefly valuable to him by bringing him into familiar relations with the most prominent and cultivated gentlemen in the town, who were afterwards his personal and intimate friends. Among these were Father Richard, the vicar general of the Catholic diocese, Gen. Charles Larned, Judge Leib, Col. Henry J. Hunt, Major Abraham Edwards, afterwards of Kalamazoo, Austin E. Wing, Major Biddle, and others.

In 1822, in consequence of a treaty of the previous year with the Ottawas, Chippewas, and Pottawattomies, whereby they ceded large tracts in southern and western Michigan, it became necessary to fix upon the places where the government should locate teachers, blacksmiths, and other persons in the service of the tribes, and Mr. Trowbridge was appointed to make these selections, and sent to get advice from General Tipton at Fort Wayne, and Dr. Wolcott at Chicago (who represented the tribes at the agencies), after which he was to meet Col. Gabriel Godfroy at Bertrand's (near Niles), and proceed to make the designations.

He left Detroit with Mr. Lindsay (who was going to Chicago on government business) and they were escorted on horseback to Maumee by a well known character known as *Baron le borgne* (or one-eyed), who then acted as mail carrier between Detroit and Sandusky, carrying all the mail in his saddlebags. There were no bridges over most of the streams, but the horses were used to such travel. Leaving Baron at Maumee, they followed the streams to Fort Wayne and then to Chicago, which Mr. Trowbridge had not before visited. That place then consisted of a small stockaded fort, and four houses, one (and perhaps all) of logs, two occupied by John Kinzie, and Col. Beaubien, and the other two belonging to the Indian department. One vessel a year visited the place, and took supplies, and brought away furs and peltries. Most of the travel, therefore, was on horseback, and the usual time between Chicago and Detroit was ten days. This excursion occupied six weeks, during which on one occasion, by reason of an unexpected delay, they got entirely out of provisions, and on reaching a hospitable wigwam, during the green corn season, the mistress of the mansion set before them a cake made of pounded green corn and whortleberries, of which they ate abundantly to their subsequent discomfort.

The present generation can have little comprehension of the condition of the country and the difficulties of travel in those days. When Mr. Trowbridge, as deputy marshal, aided in taking the census of 1820, the white population of the whole country, which now includes Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and the entire region westward to the Missouri river, was less than ten thousand. The only road with any resemblance to even the worst of our new roads, ran along the river above and below Detroit to the Maumee. None of the streams away from this road were bridged at all. The country was much wetter than since it was cleared up, and most of it was heavily wooded. Indian trails were tolerably well defined on the chief lines of Indian travel from post to post, and these were generally followed as far as possible. The journeys across the country were performed on horseback; the horses most commonly used being French and Indian ponies, that were sure-footed and tough, and easily fed by the grass and browsing they found along the way. There were no inns anywhere, and the only habitations met with were an occasional trading-house, and the wigwams of the natives which sometimes furnished food, but seldom lodging. Experienced travelers took

no tents, carried no extra baggage, and few provisions. Each man carried a hatchet, a tin cup, and a stout knife. A full supply of tea was indispensable to comfort, but wine and spirits were mostly eschewed. When the company was large enough to have common cooking utensils, the tea was made strong and boiled in a camp kettle in large quantities. If the traveler was solitary, or had but one or two companions, his capacious tin cup served for a teapot. His staple food, when his first stock of provisions ran out, was the never failing dried corn. A favorite method of preparing this for use on the journey was to pound it up fine and mix it with maple sugar—the mixture being called *praline*, a name now usually confined to almonds coated with sugar. This was made into a gruel or porridge which was quite nutritious. By such temperate ways and laborious training was built up that hale constitution which made our friend's eye as clear, and his hand as steady at over four score years as in his youth. He thus describes his home journey from Chicago:

"On my return from Chicago, I met at St. Joseph, Col. Gabriel Godfroy, an aged but vigorous French gentleman, a Indian sub-agent and interpreter, who acted as guide for the remainder of our journey. We carried in our saddle bags a little provision, among which was a small bag of *praline*. This was not the sugared almond, but parched corn, pounded and mixed with maple sugar, and in the absence of other food it formed our *pièce de résistance*. We had no tent. Each had one blanket. Before sundown we spancelled our horses—that is, we fastened their legs together with a small leather strap, pulled the grass stuffing out of the bells suspended at their necks, and allowed them to graze at will. A horse tethered in this manner has little disposition to roam far, because he must lift both fore legs at once, which is an awkward and fatiguing motion, and therefore so long as the traveler can hear the bell, he is certain of catching the animal without trouble. But it is a well known fact, that after a little while horses thus treated become fond of the camp, and seldom stray far away. * * * Our fire being made, we had our cup of tea, prepared in our tin drinking cups, and disposed ourselves to rest, choosing a dry spot of earth, and taking our saddles for pillows. We were several weeks out in this tour, and enjoyed it greatly."

In 1823 he was sent to Green Bay to take temporary charge of the Indian agency during the sickness of Commodore Brevoort, who was then agent. He improved this opportunity to make further studies in the languages of the Menominees and Winnebagoes, the former being in affinity with the Chippewas, and the latter though peculiar, being harsh and gutteral like the Iroquois.

His first visit to New York City was with Major Forsyth, in 1823, to obtain and bring back $20,000 in silver, to make payments to the Indians. They crossed Lake Erie in the Superior—successor to the Walk-in-the-Water—and went through to Albany in the Pioneer line of stages, going down the Hudson River by steamer. While they were in New York the celebrated race between Eclipse and Sir Henry came off, attended by prominent citizens from all parts of the country. They obtained an extra stage very strongly built to carry their 1200 weight of silver, being only fearful of break downs. On the return steamer to Albany Mr. Trowbridge met Chancellor Kent, and the Patroon, who were very courteous to him and told him many anecdotes of their old acquaintance with his father.

In December, 1823, he was employed in a very congenial occupation. Gen. Cass, who had always himself been a close student of Indian affairs, had become particularly interested in some discussions concerning their original relations to each other, and the character and resemblances of their customs and languages. A correspondence between Mr. Duponaeau and the Moravian missionary, Heckewelder, on these subjects, had drawn the attention of scholars to them, and had caused some controversy. This region being regarded as well calculated to furnish reliable data, Gen. Cass applied to the Secretary of War, Mr. Calhoun, for leave to employ a suitable person to pursue these inquiries, agreeing to meet the expense out of the ordinary agency appropriations. Having obtained the Secretary's consent, Mr. Trowbridge was selected for the work, and in December he set out for White river to spend the winter with William Conner, a Delaware interpreter and agent, who lived about eighteen miles from the new town of Indianapolis. Conner had been brought up in intimacy with the Delawares, his father having been captured by them in early life, and having afterwards settled near Mount Clemens, with the Moravians, who brought the christian Delawares there towards the close of the Revolution, and built the village of New Gnadenhutten, on the Clinton (then Huron) river.

Although the Conners lived detached from the Indians, they were always held in high esteem by them, as men of probity, and the three brothers, William, Henry (known as Wabishkindibe, or White Head), and James, were all valued and reliable interpreters among the Michigan and other northwestern tribes. Mr. Conner not only possessed much knowledge himself, but he aided Mr. Trowbridge in getting information from the Indian chiefs in that vicinity. Among these was an old chief known as Captain Pipe, who had not been very friendly to the Moravians, and had been stirred up against them, but who gave valuable testimony in their favor to the Commandant at Detroit, Col. DePeyster, when Zeisberger and others were brought there as prisoners. Captain Pipe and some of his head men remained three months with Mr. Trowbridge, at Mr. Conner's, and gave him much valuable information. The Miami chiefs, Le Gros and Richardville, also enabled him to secure a great many interesting particulars of history and tradition, as well as of language, although Le Gros was very suspicious, and for a long time took refuge in the Indian equivalent for *non mi ricordo*, to Mr. Trowbridge's amusement as well as annoyance. The pleasant manner of the inquirer seems to have been more efficacious than the cross-examination of counsel in the Queen's case, and the result was a large mass of very important data communicated through Gen. Cass to the Government, and probably appropriated without credit by some of those amiable gentlemen who have built up a linguistic reputation on other men's labors. It is to be hoped that Mr. Trowbridge's share in this work may be rescued and credited to him.

Among other facts illustrating the times, he reported that wheat could be bought at Conner's for twenty-five cents per bushel, and corn at ten, and that the Indians brought in turkeys all through the winter at six cents apiece.

On returning from this profitable winter's work, he employed himself at Gen. Cass' request, in visiting the old French people, and taking down their recitals of events during Pontiac's war on the settlements. Quite a number still survived who were old enough to have distinct recollections of those events. Among those whose narratives he preserved, were Mr. Peltier, grandfather of Chief Justice Charles W. Whipple, Charles Gouin, ancestor of the

sailor of that name, killed on the Kearsarge in her fight with the Alabama; Madam Meloche, who had just settled as a bride in the house on Bloody Run by which the battle was fought; Jacques Parent, from whose family the run (Parent's Creek) was named, and Gabriel St. Aubin, a very respectable French gentleman, who lived not far off. The narrative of Major Thompson Maxwell, originally of Starke's company of rangers, was also taken down, but was found to contain more hearsay than knowledge of the siege, as the old soldier's memory was somewhat confused. These narratives were subsequently communicated to Mr. Parkman, and aided that distinguished author materially in the preparation of his admirable and fascinating history.

During this same year, 1824, he was sent to Fort Wayne to make further investigations among the Miamis. He had already done something among the Wyandottes, who disputed with the Miamis precedence of settlement in this region. He relates concerning the Wyandottes that "Their interpreter, Sam Saunders, in order to convey his idea of antiquity, used to designate their ancestors as their fore old great grandfathers before 'em."

In 1825 he went on horseback with Gen. Cass to Wapaghkonetta (Wapockanata), through a wet and difficult country, to treat with the Senecas for their removal beyond the Mississippi. On their return they took a long canoe voyage by Mackinaw and Green Bay to Prairie du Chien, where Gen. Cass and Gen. William Clark (the celebrated explorer), held a treaty with the Sacs, Winnebagoes, Chippewas, and Sioux, who, as he expressed it "had been scalping each other for years." The treaty council was held under the guns of the fort, with two thousand warriors gathered near by to insure the keeping of the peace. Here he first met Captain Martin Scott, the infallible marksman. After the treaty, General Cass and Mr. Trowbridge accompanied General Clark in their canoe to St. Louis, and returned by the Ohio river, visiting Cincinnati to enjoy a meeting with Judge Burnet and General Harrison.

About this time Mr. Trowbridge was made sub-agent, retaining his former position as interpreter and accountant. But he was about to enter upon a new employment, in which he was perhaps better known to the community for a long period than in any of his other occupations. And he gave up his place under Major Rowland, and all of his Indian employments, except that of accountant, in which Gen. Cass found him indispensable. In 1825 the immigration from the east began to increase more rapidly than before, as the Erie Canal, just completed, furnished better means of travel and transportation across New York. Banking facilities were entirely lacking in the Territory, the Bank of Detroit incorporated during the early days of Hull's administration, having been disapproved by Congress, and having had no successor. The Bank of Michigan was now established, and in this year its capital was largely increased, and Mr. Trowbridge was made its cashier. He continued connected with it as cashier or president, except for an interval from 1836 to 1839, until the bank was finally closed in the troubled times of 1843. This bank was opened in a small brick building, said to have been originally built for the Bank of Detroit. It stood immediately opposite the Indian council house, on Jefferson avenue, at the northwest corner of Randolph street.

Having thus become settled down in a permanent position, he prepared to assume the responsibilities of a householder, and in 1826 was married to Miss Catherine Whipple Sibley, the eldest daughter of Judge Solomon Sibley, then a justice of the supreme court, and previously attorney general and delegate to congress. Judge Sibley was one of the early settlers at Marietta,

Ohio, where a number of distinguished citizens of New England and other eastern States had formed the nucleus of the Northwest Territory, and took a decisive part in shaping its fortunes. Judge Sibley was the earliest American settler in Detroit after it was given up by the British in 1796, and he represented this region in the legislature of that Territory, and was afterwards a member of the upper council of that body. He was a man of learning and wisdom, as well as of great intellectual ability, and his influence in public matters and socially was very valuable. His wife was a daughter of Colonel Ebenezer Sproat of the revolutionary army, who held office by appointment of Gen. Washington in the Northwest Territory, and was a man of sterling worth. Mrs. Sproat was a daughter of Commodore Abraham Whipple, who did the first sea service during the revolution under commission from Rhode Island, and who accompanied his daughter to her new home in Ohio, which she only left to spend her last years with Mr. Sibley in Detroit. This is not the place to dwell upon the family history of Mr. Trowbridge. His marriage was in all respects a fortunate one, and after living with his wife in love and happiness for more than half a century they left behind them the memory of a home that was singularly attractive, and of a married life that was a pattern of domestic virtue and harmony.

It is not often, in this changing region, that a family live out their whole family life in one home. Mr. Trowbridge built his house at what was then regarded as a considerable distance from the town, and off of any opened street, although on the line where it was expected Jefferson avenue would some day be laid out. In order to reach it, he was compelled to pass down Randolph street to the river, and follow up the river road till he reached the Farm Alley, which was then the only means of approach to what is now comparatively central property. In this house, added to from time to time, but not otherwise changed, he spent more than fifty-six years of his life.

In 1831, General Cass was appointed secretary of war, and was very anxious to have Mr. Trowbridge as his chief clerk, and even told him that his acceptance of that position would determine his own doubts about taking that office. The temptation of the great increase of income he would secure by this appointment, and his personal attachment and obligations to the general were very strong inducements, but he finally concluded that an independent private station was preferable to any uncertain public employment, and he determined to remain in Detroit. When the general went to Washington, he left in Mr. Trowbridge's custody an open letter to whomsoever might be his successor, recommending all of the gentlemen employed in his service to the favorable consideration and good offices of the future governor, in terms of affection and kindness. What changes were made the writer is not informed. But Mr. Trowbridge, although no longer in such employment, was an intimate friend and adviser of Governor Porter, was with him in his last sickness, and supported him in his arms when he died.

In 1833, Mr. Trowbridge, with Samuel Hubbard, Pliny Cutler, and Edmund Munroe of Boston, engaged in extensive land purchases, and among their other possessions was the site of the village of Allegan, which they laid out, and in which he long retained an interest. He was interested during the next few years in many other enterprises, and was one of the original purchasers of the Cass Front in Detroit, from which he and most of the other purchasers were finally released, on terms which he declares very

emphatically were not only just, but liberal. He left this testimony as a matter of no more than justice to the memory of General Cass.

His earliest religious connection was with the First Protestant Society, which was originally composed of protestants of various denominations, the numbers not being such at first as to warrant separate congregations. After his marriage he cast in his lot with St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, where he became at once an active and useful member and officer. He continued to act as vestryman or warden until 1845, when the increasing numbers made it necessary to organize a new parish which was named Christ Church, in which he was senior warden until his death. His interest in religious matters was great and devoted, and while his modesty was remarkable he was during life a conspicuous and influential leader in the church, and as wise in his counsels as munificent in his gifts and sacrifices. In 1832 a diocese was organized in which he became a member of the standing committee, (which is the principal permanent agency in each diocese) and he continued by annual re-election to be such a member until he died. He was also elected a member of every general convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States from 1835, and actually attended most of the sessions.

He was not afflicted by any extreme desire for public office. The only political offices he ever held were those of alderman of Detroit in 1833, and mayor in 1834. During this period he rendered essential service to the city by tracing out and securing the remnants of a fund derived from the grant of the Detroit Military Reserve to the city. The fund thus saved was put into the old city hall building, and secured its completion. The early months of his mayoralty were burdened by the cares occasioned by the visitation of the cholera. When this had passed away, he resigned his mayoralty and deposited in the city treasury the penalty then imposed for declining such duties. It is not unworthy of remark that this is the solitary instance to be found in our municipal history of the payment of such a penalty. In 1837 he was nominated by the whigs as governor of the State, and was defeated by only 237 majority for Stevens T. Mason, who, as acting governor of the Territory and governor of the young State, had excited considerable enthusiasm by his spirited course in vindicating boundary rights, and whose party was in power. Mr. Trowbridge never allowed any further use of his name as a candidate for political station, though always holding and expressing decided views. He was a whig until the republican party was organized, and was thereafter a republican.

In 1842, the pressure of business labors and anxieties wore out his strength, and for several months he was obliged to give up all occupation. His health, after a long interval, was gradually restored, and he was during most of his subsequent life, hale and vigorous. He took charge in 1844 of the Michigan State Bank, of which he was president until its final winding up in 1853. He then became secretary and treasurer, and afterwards president of the Oakland and Ottawa Railroad Company, and its successors, the Detroit and Milwaukee Railway Company, and continued in charge until its further reörganization. He has also been manager or director of various minor undertakings. He was one of the directors of the Detroit and St. Joseph Railroad Company,—the corporation that began the Central Railroad and ran it until the State purchased it.

His constant business engagements did not prevent his coöperation in those enterprises and undertakings in which there is no pecuniary profit, and where the work that is done is of general importance. He took a lively interest in everything which was calculated to promote intellectual, moral, and religious culture. He was one of the founders of the Historical and Algic Societies. He was a member and officer of various bible and missionary societies. He was a regent of the university, and took part also in the promotion of local schools and seminaries. He was president of the Board of Public Charities. His close business habits, his sound judgment, and his wonderful memory combined to make him a coveted agent in those places which should be filled with the best men, and which fortunately for the community, few but good men are willing to take.

He did not retire from active pursuits until he had reached an age when few are capable of following them, and then he did not retire into idleness. His services in procuring the erection and completion of the soldiers' monument, deserves special mention. As usual in such matters, there is always a sum to be made up at the close of the subscription list, which is more difficult to raise than all the rest. He devoted himself with singular zeal and perseverance, not only to the building of the monument in its imperfect shape, but to securing its final completion by the addition of all the statues first contemplated. He found more work than most men could perform, in looking after the interests of persons who had been fortunate enough to secure his kind offices, and in administering charitable and religious trusts. He was always attentive to the poor. He always found time to receive kindly and entertain cheerfully the numerous visitors who sought information or help from him. His long experience, and his systematic researches had given him a minute familiarity with the history of this region, and he was very liberal in imparting his knowledge, and in aiding the researches of others. He was a ready writer, and was fond of noting down such matters as interested him. He had the uncommon gift of a very accurate verbal memory, which enabled him to preserve the language, as well as the substance of conversations and interviews. His disposition was gentle and affectionate, with great candor and frankness. People in trouble or perplexity, were continually applying to him for advice and sympathy, and he never turned away his face from any one who sought a hearing.

And so it was, by universal approval, that in the evening of his days he received such a testimonial of the love and admiration of his fellow citizens, as few living men receive who have spent their lives in quiet. On his birthday, at the end of his 82d year, the 29th of December, 1882, as many guests as the Russell house could readily provide for, met at a banquet in his honor. They were from all parts of Michigan, and from other States, and they were, with scarcely an exception, personal friends of many years. The company included many of the French inhabitants of the ancient stock, and adopted citizens of other nationalities, as well as natives. It included distinguished soldiers and citizens, honored in public and in private life. And letters of congratulation came in from other parts of the Union, from men famous in civic and military station, who had, at some time in their lives, enjoyed his friendship, and appreciated it. The words written, and the words spoken on that occasion were the honest expression of gratitude and admiration for a man who was recognized as a living blessing to the community in

which he had spent more than three-score years of an upright, pure, and noble manhood.

From that deserved ovation he retired modestly and quietly into the ordinary course of his daily pursuits. His cheerful energy never abated, and his industry never slackened, until the final summons came. A few days of illness, from which his great age gave him no sufficient vigor to rally, and he gently yielded, and passed with clear vision into the better world.

Such a life is its own best eulogy. His living presence was a delight to all who knew him, and his influence will continue in the many good works and institutions that owe their strength and success to his generosity and wisdom. The community that cherishes his memory will always be the better for his part in it. A commonwealth that had its foundations laid by such citizens should be enduring.

THE LIFE OF MRS. ELIZA SHELDON BAGG

BY LEVI BISHOP

Paper read before the Detroit Pioneer Society, April 21, 1876

The lady was born at New Hartford, Oneida County, New York, on the twenty-second day of February, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety-six. The twenty-second of February is a patriotic day, and her family and friends have often, in pleasantry, accepted the popular celebration of that day as intended for her instead of Washington.

Her father's name was James Sheldon. He was from Providence, Rhode Island. He was a large, tall man, and he commanded a company of volunteer grenadiers in the continental line of the patriot army of the revolutionary war. Her mother's name was Mary Cheesbrough Lord. Her native place was Norwich, Connecticut. The ancestors of the family on both sides were from England.

Mrs. Bagg was first cousin to the late Thomas C. Sheldon, Dr. Randall S. Rice, the first Mrs. Dr. Pitcher and Mrs. Sheldon McKnight, all of whom were formerly well known in Detroit. Mr. John P. Sheldon, who conducted a paper at an early day in Detroit, was also her first cousin. Mr. Chas. A. Sheldon, who is now prominently connected with the mercantile marine of Detroit, is a nephew of Mrs. Bagg, from whom also, standing in *loco parentis*, he received a large part of his culture in his years of childhood.

Mrs. Bagg had five brothers and four sisters. One of her brothers, James Sheldon, went to Buffalo soon after that hamlet was burned by the enemy in the war of 1812. Buffalo was but a small village when he went there to reside. Mr. Sheldon followed the profession of the law, and afterwards became a judge of good repute and standing. He continued to reside in Buffalo, and saw that place grow up to a great city. He died in 1832. Mr. Alexander J. Sheldon was a brother of the above named and of Mrs. Bagg. This gentleman will be remembered as the one who contributed a valuable paper to this society on the Indian mounds of Kalamazoo. He died highly respected, at Buffalo, in March or April of the present year, 1876.

Mrs. Bagg had three brothers who served in the war of 1812, and one of them held the rank of captain. These all received an honorable discharge from the service of the United States.