

Milwaukee ought to be notified. I will undertake to write him. . . . I am anxious to no longer have charge of these men. . . . Otherwise I must always be among them, studying them and examining them, resisting them, and altering them by the grace of God. But the work is hard — it would be easier to work a miracle and raise the dead than to convert drunkards. But one cannot always choose, and one must endure opposition.

#### SUPPLIES FOR THE NICOLLET EXPEDITION OF 1838

On June 18, 1838, a "hot and muggy" day, a picturesque caravan left Traverse des Sioux, westward bound. It was the Nicollet expedition, which was sent to the Northwest by the United States government to explore and map the vast region between the upper Mississippi and the Missouri. The leader of the party was the French explorer, Joseph N. Nicollet, and his assistant was John C. Frémont, then an unknown young lieutenant. Among the Nicollet Papers in the Library of Congress is an account in the explorer's own handwriting of the departure from Traverse des Sioux a hundred years ago this month. He and Frémont, he records, rode "in the wagon of Joseph Rainville and his wife," bringing "up the rear of the train to superintend the march." In front they could see "8 voyageurs, each at the head of his heavily loaded cart," led by La Framboise "with his wife and Eugene in the Barouche." Many of the supplies carried in the eight carts doubtless were obtained in the East. Evidence that others were purchased at the post operated by Henry H. Sibley for the American Fur Company at New Hope, or Mendota, is presented herewith. The following list appears under date of June 8, 1838, in a daybook kept by Sibley at Mendota, and now among his papers in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

B. L. H.

## SIBLEY DAYBOOK, June 8, 1838

## NICOLLET EXPL[ORING] EXPEDITION

- To [1 Hair Trunk (no key)]<sup>1</sup>  
 " 8 lbs Tobacco à 20 cts  
 " 14 lbs N.O. Sugar 20 cts  
 " 3 prs 3 pt Blkts à \$10:  
 " 1 " 2 p " " 9.  
 " 12 Bushels Corn à 1.50  
 " 6 Bags to contain à 2/.  
 " 4 Bbls Flour à \$11  
 " 3 Pork à \$22.  
 " 1 Large Kettle for men \$3  
 " 6 3 feet Goo[d]s \$9.75  
 " 1 Crow Bar  
 " 3 Drills & 1 Hammer \$3  
 " 1 Axe, 1 yd Cotton  
 1 Hatchet  
 " 1 Paid for making musquito Bar 12/.  
 Empty Bags, 12. ruled Foolscap paper  
 1 Patent Gimlet 1/6

## THE "JOHN B. ALLEY," A PIONEER LOCOMOTIVE\*

A sheaf of old letters on deposit in the Baker Library of Harvard University gives a glimpse of an early type of locomotive which in a real sense epitomizes the pioneer stage of both American locomotive engineering and American business. The time was 1868. The railroad concerned was the Hastings and Dakota, a short road reaching westward from the Mississippi in Minnesota. The correspondence was between William Le Duc, a local promoter who was president of the road, Oakes Ames, shovel manufacturer, capitalist, and Congressman of Boston, and John B. Alley,

<sup>1</sup> The item enclosed in brackets is crossed out in the original.

\*Reprinted from the *Bulletin* of the Business Historical Society, 10: 78-80 (November, 1936). Photostatic copies of the letters from which Dr. Larson quotes are now available in the manuscript division of the Minnesota Historical Society. *Ed.*



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