HARRISON REED'S RESIDENCE.
The First House in Neenah Occupied by a White Family.

See page 47.
FIFTH CHAPTER.

INCIDENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE ARRIVAL AND RESIDENCE OF HARRISON REED—WHO WERE HERE ON HIS ARRIVAL—
HIS WAGON THE FIRST TO CROSS THE FOX RIVER AT OSHKOSH
—PROCURED A POST OFFICE, AND NAMED IT NEENAH, IN 1844
—SIMON QUATERMAS THE FIRST MAIL-CARRIER—BUILDS THE
FIRST BARGE, THE "GROWLER"—HIS DAUGHTER, NINA, THE
FIRST WHITE CHILD BORN IN NEENAH.

HARRISON REED moved to Neenah in the winter of 1843-4,* coming from Fond du Lac on the ice. On his arrival he found Peter Pendleton, a "squatter," living in the block house on the lake shore, into which Mr. Reed moved, and where he lived for about eighteen years. There all his children, save the eldest, were born, and there two were buried. During the year 1844 Mr. Reed was comparatively alone,

*The facts and incidents related in the following chapter were furnished us by Mr. Reed himself, now a resident of Jacksonville, Florida, and engaged in the publication of a magazine called the SEMI-TROPICAL. Mr. Reed left Neenah during the early years of the war, and at the close of the rebellion went to Florida, where he afterward secured high political influence and position, being at one time Governor of the State. Strange at it may seem for a man who at one time considered himself the sole owner of the entire village, and who was so instrumental in shaping the course of all matters in the early days, Mr. Reed does not own a foot of ground of all his original possessions, and has no property interest where he once braved the dangers of frontier life to make a home for himself and family. A marked example of the waywardness of fortune, and the ups and downs in the whirligig of life.
there being but four or five traders to keep him company, and the Indians, of which, in those days, there were hundreds. Smith Moore, an Indian trader from Green Bay, was here, also a Col. Tuller and Robert Irwin, who lived in the block house on the Point, where they were trading with the Indians on Reed's arrival. Colwell, a white trader, also lived with a band of Indians on the west shore of the lower lake. Moore afterward purchased lands, and built a house about one mile west of the present city, now standing and owned by Rev. Mr. Freeman. Moore is described as a man of ability and great force of character, and had he lived would doubtless made quite a mark in the local history of the place, but he died about 1853, from small pox, contracted while visiting an Indian payment near the present town of Poygan. Irwin and Tuller never settled here. Reed cut out the first road between Neenah and Oshkosh. Gill Brooks, then a new comer near Oshkosh, and a man employed by Reed, assisted in the work, while Mrs. Reed followed them through with a buggy. Reed's wagon was the first double wagon to cross the Fox river at Oshkosh, being ferried over on an old scow owned by Robert Grignon, at what is now Algoma. Mr. Reed secured the establishment of a post office in 1844, and called it "Neenah." The office was then kept at his own house, and the mail could be carried in his hat. Simon Quatermas was the first mail-carrier, and it is said that on his first trip to Oshkosh, in attempting to go down the lake shore, he got lost in the big swamp and nearly drowned his horse. At that time the lands all through back of Mansur's were considered an impassable swamp, and Smith Moore, in order to compel the mail to be brought around by the "trail" on the "ridge"
and thus pass his place, so represented it to the Department.

In those days the travel was mainly by boat in summer, and on the ice during the winter. Harrison Reed constructed the first scow or barge on the lake. It was built in 1844 by Colwell, a white trader, on the lake shore near Reed’s house, where she was launched. She was forty-five feet long and was named the “Growler,” and was in use for many years. A daughter of Harrison Reed’s born in August, 1846, was the first white child born in Neenah. She was christened “Nina” in consequence, that being a near approach to the name of the place.

Reed printed the first newspaper in Neenah, an account of which may be found elsewhere.

The first attempt at a regular religious service was at Harrison Reed’s house in 1845, the preacher being a Methodist on his way to Green Bay. Only five or six persons were present at the time.