SEVENTH CHAPTER.

1846—First Year of Actual Settlement—Quite a Number Arrive in This Year and Take Up Lands—First Birth—First Marriage, and First Death—Marriage Under the Council Tree.

With the exception of George H. Mansur, Horham P. Vining and George Harlow are, of the present residents of the city, the earliest bona fide settlers, they having come here on the 28th day of August, 1845, Harrison Reed and Mansur then being the only white men on the ground, Gov. Doty coming shortly after and commencing work upon his house, which to-day is standing, one of the most historic and striking relics of the early days, it being a prominent feature of Roberts’ famous Summer Resort, the large hotel being erected on the lands formerly owned by the governor, and near the old log house.

It would appear that Rev. O. P. Clinton, both directly and indirectly, had much to do with attracting attention and immigration to this section in its earliest days. He it was who secured a purchaser for Mr. Reed in the person of Harvey Jones, and afterward through eastern friends of his, and more particularly through his letters and reports to the Board of Home Missions, which were published many were attracted to this section as Mr. Clin-
ton described it in most glowing colors, his truthfulness and good judgment, however, having been amply verified by subsequent events.

In the spring of 1846 quite a number of settlers arrived and began taking up lands. One large party were directed here by Loyal H. Jones and Perine Yale, who met them near Watertown while on their way to Waukesha after their first visit of inspection to Neenah. Jones urged the party to go to the Rapids, and gave them such a glowing description of the country that they decided to do so.

This party was composed of the following familiar names, nearly all of whom are now residents of the adjoining towns: W. H. Scott, A. Jenkins, Salem T. Holbrook, D. C. Darrow, Alex Murray, and Wm. M. Stewart. The Huxley’s also came in that year, as did Jas. Ladd, Jud. Thompson, Ben. Strong, Mr. Wheatly, Deacon Mitchell, Albert Brien, H. Conrad and others.

The records of the land office show that quite a number entered lands in this year, though it is the first year in which any actual settlement can be dated. As has been noted, several persons arrived in the fall or winter of the year preceding, but too late to locate or take up lands, and indeed they were not in market until in ’46.

THE FIRST WHITE CHILD

Nina, a daughter of Harrison Reed’s, born in August, 1846, was the first white child born in Neenah. Quite a demonstration was had over this auspicious event, every pioneer feeling an interest in so important a matter. The child was born in the old block house on the lake shore, at the upper end of what is now Wisconsin avenue, and was christened “Nina.”

A. D. Clinton, son of Rev. O. P. Clinton, was born in
October of this year, and was the first male child born in Neenah. The old block house on the Point, which stood near the "Council Tree," was his birth place, Mr. and Mrs. Clinton residing there at the time.

**The First Marriage.**

The first marriage in Neenah occurred in May, 1846, in the old block house near the "Council Tree," John F. Johnston and Miss Jeanette Finch being the contracting parties. This was an exceedingly important occasion, and nearly every white person in the settlement attended the wedding. Rev. O. P. Clinton was the officiating clergyman. The Point was also the scene of another early day marriage, Henry Finch and Miss Brien being married on the Fourth of July, 1847, under the spreading branches of the "Council Tree" Mr. Clinton performed this ceremony also.

**The First Deaths.**

In this year occurred the first death, Stephen Hartwell suddenly dying in September. Hartwell had been summoned to the east, and though quite sick, was on the point of departure, having left his cabin and goods in charge of Vining, and intending to leave for Fond du Lac in a boat, he went to the block house on the Point, from whence he was to start. While there he was taken very ill, and died within a day or two.

A Dane named Johnson was sick at the time, and died the following night, and the next day two out of the small company then here, lay dead. They both died of fever and ague, in an aggravated form, and no doubt largely for the want of proper care and nourishment. Ira Baird was also sick at the time, and gave out as he, with a few others, were carrying the body of Hartwell to the spot which they had selected for his in-
terment, and was left behind under a tree. Hartwell and Johnson were both buried on what is now the Neff farm, and not far from the Indian mounds. Gov. Doty and G. P. Vining were masters of the ceremonies. Doty was the orator of the occasion, and delivered an eloquent eulogy over the bodies of the unfortunate men who had thus yielded up their lives while endeavoring to find a home in the woods and wilds of the west. This event cast a gloom over the spirits of the few persons remaining at the village, which required some time to dispel.

FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

The first religious services held in due form in Neenah, occurred in the spring of 1846, Rev. O. P. Clinton officiating, and were held in the block house near the Council Tree, where Mr. Clinton then resided. The following is a correct list of those present, and this record of the first congregation assembled in Neenah for worship will prove of especial interest. The following persons were in attendance: Gov. J. D. Doty and wife, and their housekeeper, Miss Emily Elliot, Harrison Reed and wife, and his aunt, a Mrs. Griswold, Thos. Burdick, John F. Johnston, Henry Finch, Jeanette Finch, and Mr. and Mrs. Clinton, making twelve in all.