

**HISTORY OF GRAND
RAPIDS: WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

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History of Grand Rapids: With Biographical Sketches by Chas. Richard Tuttle

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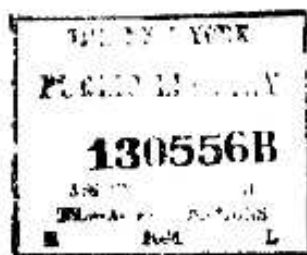
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

BY

CHAS. RICHARD TUTTLE

AUTHOR "ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF MICHIGAN."

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P R E F A C E . .

My labors in connection with the "History of Michigan" have forcibly suggested the propriety of editing a series of small volumes, embracing, separately, the histories of the principal cities of the Northwest. There is very much valuable and interesting narrative connected with the early settlement of this country which cannot well be embraced in a general history of the State or States, and yet this history, or these local traditions should be preserved.

It will no doubt be a pleasing entertainment for the readers of Grand Rapids and Kent county to go back to the early days of Michigan civilization, when the first footprints of the white man were made on the valley of the Grand River, and then to follow the interesting events in the history of the place, in a pleasant style of narrative, down to the present time. The treaties between the Americans and the savages, the midnight massacres, the bloody deeds of Indian treachery, the romance of pioneer life, the thrilling tales of adventure and escape, the legends of the savages and lastly, the great resources and rapid development of

Brookside Book Shop 3 June 1941

the city,—all these combine to render the narrative pleasing to the reader and valuable to the family library.

In conclusion, the publishers desire to tender their thanks to the proprietors of the *Grand Rapids Democrat* and especially to the men employed in the book department of their printing house, for the pains-taking care and mechanical skill displayed in carrying this work through to completion; and also to the press of Grand Rapids for their favorable comments.

CHARLES R. TUTTLE.

Detroit, Jan. 1874.

HISTORY OF GRAND RAPIDS.

CHAPTER I.

INDIAN VILLAGES OF THE OWASHTENONG—THEIR APPEARANCE AND CONDITION IN 1760—A GRAND WAR COUNCIL—SPEECH OF PONTIAC—DEPARTURE OF THE WARRIORS FOR THE SEIGE OF DETROIT.

OWASHTENONG, or the rapids of the Grand River, was, for many years, the center of savage intercourse in north-western Michigan. A densely populated village of the Ottawas was located on the west side of the river, about a quarter of a mile below the rapids, and is spoken of in various works on the Indian tribes of the Northwest, as having reached its greatest strength and influence about the year 1760. At this period the settlement is said to have been the home of some three thousands souls, although it is not probable that so large a number resided there permanently.

JAS. A. COLYER,

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GRAND RAPIDS, - MICHIGAN.

At a later period there were several Indian villages in the vicinity of the rapids—one of the Chippewas, one of the Pottawattamies, and another of a mixed population of various tribes. The Chippewas who came to settle here were of that portion of this nation who became, at this period, a part of the great Indian confederation organized under the influence of Pontiac, the Ottawa chief.

It is not our purpose here to enter into a complete detail of the important events in the history of these Indian villages, but the reader will, no doubt, be entertained with a brief notice of their condition and customs at that period at which our narrative commences.

The life of the Indians in this vicinity, though utterly void of those many phases which vary the routine of civilized existence, was one of considerable excitement. The chase, the war path, the dance, the festival, the game of hazard, the race of political ambition, all had their votaries. When the assembled sachems had resolved on assisting the great Pontiac in the siege of Detroit, in 1761, and when, from their great council-house of bark in the Valley of the Owashtenong, their

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deputies had gone forth to invite other warriors to arms, then all along the banks of the Grand River, a thousand war-like hearts caught up the summons with savage enthusiasm.

With feasting and praying, and consulting dreams and omens; with invoking the war-god, and dancing the frantic war dance, the warriors sought to insure the triumph of their arms in the contest to which they had been summoned.

We will stop here to look in upon the great war council held in the valley of the Grand River, at the village of the Ottawas, in the spring of 1761, at which Pontiac himself was present. The great Ottawa chief came with his squaws and children, and was received by the sachems with tokens of their greatest reverence for this powerful warrior. Band after band came straggling in from every side, until the valley for nearly a mile was dotted with their slender wigwams. Here were idle warriors, smoking and laughing in groups, or beguiling the lazy hours with gambling, with feasting, or with doubtful stories of their own exploits. Here and there could be seen youthful gallants, brilliant with all the foppery of beads, feathers and hawks' bills, but held, as yet, in light esteem, since they had slain no enemy, and taken no scalp; young damsels, radiant with bear's oil and vermilion, and accomplished in all the arts of forest coquetry. The scene was also enlivened by troops of children, with small, black, mischevous eyes, roaming along the outskirts of the woods.

The council took place early in April. On that morning, several old men, known as the heralds of the camp, passed to and fro among the lodges calling the warriors,