

# GRIM RELICS OF A BIG BATTLE.

**Recent Excavations at Owosso Call Attention to a Remarkable Event.**

**How the Fealty of the "Wild Rose of the Flint" Led to the Clashing of Hostile Indian Bands, Each Led by a White Man—Subsequent Litigation That Threatened Half the Title of Flint.**

Recent excavations on the summit of Flint at Hopkins' lake are making Owosso, Mich., recalled one of the most and most sensational events in the history of central Michigan. The results of excavation, which were made at one time, threatened half of the title in the city of Flint, and resulted in a series of litigation.

The discovery was that of the Flint River Indians, under Jacob Smith, and another chief of the Chippewas led by that chief and eccentric character of the early history of the northwest, Bolton, founder of a famous trading post. The battle was a direct result of the treaty of Saginaw, concluded in September, 1825, by Gen. Lewis Cass, governor of the territory of Michigan, with the chiefs and warriors of the Chippewas tribe of the lower country.

The only title that the grant bears of the old battle ground remained a mystery, but careful research has shown that the site of the battle was not only a battle ground, but a place where the bodies of the slain had been buried in by the Indians, and the mangled masses of decaying human flesh have stained the earth a dark red.

With the discovery, reminiscences of the old struggle in the wilderness were revived, and so recent was the litigation that affected the title of Flint that the citizens of three counties are hearing their again with recent the result.

Three quarters of a century ago, all that part of country lying between the Saginaw valley on the north, the Grand river on the southeast, and westward from the spot far into the country of the Upper and Lower Michigan rivers, was the hunting ground of the Chippewas and Potawatomi. It was a wilderness, a country of dense forests and timbered with small prairie, except in places where the Indians, with their bows and arrows, were first penetrated by white explorers they found it occupied only by bands of Chippewas, and mixed with a few Ottawa and still fewer Potawatomi, which latter two had become allied by marriage or otherwise with the dominant Chippewas.

The complications referred to above all came of old Jacob Smith's lucky landing. And of his attention for his beautiful half-breed daughter, the Mokitchewon, the "wild rose" of the Flint river valley.

The Treaty of Saginaw.

In the early months of 1825 Jacob Smith, with his Indians on the right bank of the Flint, near the old bridge crossing known as "Griffin's Crossing," which was the first settlement within the country, it was not made as usual for the purpose of obtaining and settling the country as he had for some time the title in certain lands reserved to him by the Treaty of Saginaw.



A SCENE ON THE FLINT RIVER. On the right shore opposite the rock stood the log cabin of Jacob Smith. The figures so prominently in the foreground are covered in this article.

The lovely daughter of Jacob Smith, Mokitchewon, reduced with his warriors to the vicinity of the Chippewas, where now stands the city of Owosso. She, around the shores of Hopkins' lake, was fought the last great Indian battle in the history of this section of the northwest. Again defeated, the brigade stole away with his few remaining warriors and began a series of depredations which culminated in his being arrested by the proper authorities and imprisoned in the old Detroit jail, where he remained for several months. Feeling assured from his past conduct that he need expect no mercy or lenity from the hands of those he had so often outraged, and that his death was certain, he anticipated the law by taking poison.

Thus ended the fierce feud between the Indian allies of the two nations and the associate Huron. But a quarter of a century later the dispute was destined to make its reappearance in a long and bitter struggle in the courts.

Article third of the treaty of Saginaw says: "There shall be reserved for each of the persons herein mentioned, and their heirs, which persons are all Indians by descent, the following tracts of land," and after making a number of reservations, proceeds as follows: "For the use of the Nokoshuk, Metawadene, Mokitchewon, Nondasheman, Potawatomi, Anokashuk, Okobokik, Kitchichewon, Saginaw, Anokashuk and Tachewogon, each 50 acres of land, to be located at and near the 'Grand Traversed' (now the principal street of Flint) of the Flint river in such manner as the president of the United States may direct."

Now the Litigation Arises.

To the "Wild Rose" was assigned, Sec. No. 3. A few years later it was found that there were two persons claiming the name Mokitchewon and the stone-axe section; both females, both of Indian descent, and both half-

breed, their fathers being Indians and their mothers white men. One was the daughter of Jacob Smith, the other the daughter of Archibald Lyons, another trader who was prominent with his name at the treaty of Saginaw. Such was the origin of the first suit, which culminated in the first circuit, February, 1850, in a complete triumph for the local Mokitchewon.

For the following 20 years the growing city of Flint was a hotbed of contention. The title to those properties disposed of by their Indian possessors were constantly threatened by the city of Flint and it was not until after the year that all claims were substantially adjusted by the law.

The recent excavations at Owosso have revealed a site in the northwest corner that part of the country formerly owned by the hostile allies of Smith and Bolton, and the memories of the older settlers have become revived with many interesting legends of Mokitchewon, the "wild rose" of the Flint.

**J. O. CURWOOD.**

**Proceeding by steam.**

Steam plowing, though much practiced in England, has met with comparatively little favor on this side of the water. One steam plowmaker has, however, worked at the problem until they have met the various requirements. An immense plow was recently shipped to Honolulu. It is a complicated affair. Four hundred yards of iron rope (steel) are included—two four-foot wide balancing plows, each cutting a furrow 18 inches deep and 16 inches wide—a portable water tank, steam at high pressure. The winding drum is five feet in diameter, spanned under the boiler between the front and rear wheels. The speed of the wire rope is from 200 to 300 feet a minute and the dead pull is as much as 10,000 pounds. The affair has a locomotive look and weighs 25 tons.

## THE STOLEN BOTTLE



The complications referred to above all came of old Jacob Smith's lucky landing. And of his attention for his beautiful half-breed daughter, the Mokitchewon, the "wild rose" of the Flint river valley.

