

From THE GALESVILLE TRANSCRIPT, JUNE 8, 1860

A RIDE OVER THE BLUFFS TO ARCADIA

□Last Saturday, we, a company of four, rode over the dividing ridge to the sheltering and beautiful valley of Trempealeau. The air was cool and bracing and we rode through the extensive groves west of Galesville, acres of bright oaks offered their delights to every sense. After leaving the wood we came out upon the open prairie, bordered on the left by the bluffs of the Mississippi, blue in the distance and on the west by those rising less remote. Looking to the northwest we noticed a depression in the outline of the bluffs and we were told this was Whistlers Pass □. Upon reaching its summit, we looked up into two scenes. The soft, rolling prairie sparkled with groves of trees and skirted with bluffs, was behind us, while before us lay a perfect confusion of rough steep bluffs thrown into every imaginable shape. Just at this juncture, we met a cold northwest blast and felt as if leaving the temperate for the frigid zone. It seemed as if Nature had become weary of its frugality and had lavishly set in the bluffs in extravagant profusion until she came to Trempealeau Valley where she again applied the rules of symmetry and order, surrounding the plain in three sides with lofty ridges, but leaving it open on the north into Black River valley. We were never more charmed with the first aspect of a town, Arcadia, then with this unless we except our own beloved Galesville. It improved upon acquaintance for after two days sojourn with its hospitable and energetic citizens, we felt that Arcadia was worthy of an increasing friendship. The spirit of beauty which hovers about the tops of their noble hills has been largely imbibed by its inhabitants. It impresses itself upon whatever they do. We found that even a log schoolhouse might be made to yield to the sense of the beautiful. They have one which is so neat and possesses such a perfect correspondence of parts that it attracts the admiration of everyone. It stands in the midst of a grass-plot neatly enclosed with a fence. Inside it is decorated with rich evergreen, a remembrance of their last winters teacher. A bouquet of rich colored flowers exquisitely arranged standing on the desk, reminded us of her, who this summer daily lightens the tasks of the young minds who are toiling up the rugged ascent of intellectual attainment. Excelsior, is the motto of the citizens of Arcadia and they are intending that a new frame schoolhouse shall soon grace their village. Ample water power is afforded by the Trempealeau River which winds near the town and an enterprising citizen is now engaged in constructing a large grist mill. May that unity of feeling and action which now gives such force to their undertakings be long characteristic of the citizens of Arcadia !We left them in a golden flood of western sunlight and lifting ourselves over the tops of the mountains looking down in some places from our narrow foot-hold, almost on the summit of some towering bluff into the vale hundreds of feet below, knowing that a slight turn or an unwary step of the ponies would plunge us into the depths below. The danger, however, lent intensity to our appreciation of the beauties of the meadows and table lands, which stretched out beneath us.

As we drew nearer home, the creek again began to make its appearance with its dark battalions of tamarack trees from which the stream takes name, stationed along its banks. It appeared and then disappeared several times until we finally left it, and reached home inspired with new thoughts and purposes and more lively aspirations.L.B.F.