

western Railway Company. His situation in that early day is described as follows in Wheeler's "Chronicles of Milwaukee," published in 1861: "The year 1836 saw the settlement on the high road to prosperity. Settlers broke ground on either side of the river. Several, more courageous than the rest, planted themselves in the center of the marsh which is now the Third Ward; among their number was a German named Bleyer, who, like a Robinson Crusoe, looked out from his cabin on the water and felt undoubtedly very dubious about a city ever springing out of the bottomless mud with which he was surrounded. The gentleman yet lives on the same lot, which he bought of Juneau, now encircled with good solid ground, and a populous ward. He has raised a family of boys, all of the sturdy western stamp, and one, Mr. Louis Bleyer, is foreman of the office where this book was published, the first child of German parents born in this city."

Mr. Bleyer passed from among the living on the 16th of August, 1878, and received the customary funeral honors of the Old Settlers' Club, of which he was a member. In regard to his life and death, the following appeared in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on the day succeeding that of his death: "The German pioneers of the city have lost another of their number by the demise of Henry Bleyer, at his homestead in the Third Ward, yesterday afternoon. The deceased was born in 1804, near Goettingen, Hanover, Germany, and emigrated in 1832, first stopping in Buffalo and then settling in Detroit. After his marriage in 1836, having heard of the delightful situation of Milwaukee, he visited the place to satisfy himself that it was all that it had been represented to be. The village offered such inducements that he settled here in the following year, 1837, locating where he has ever since resided, on Jackson street, a few doors above Huron. Poor in purse, but rich in purpose, he labored in season and out of season to support his large family, and finally retired on a competency fairly earned by the sweat of his brow, since he, like most of his countrymen, preferred the slow and sure dollar to the chances of tens by investment in real estate."

GARRET VLIET, descended from Daniel Van Vliet, who emigrated with his brother William from Holland to New Brunswick, N. J., shortly before the Revolutionary War, was born January 10, 1790. His father, Jesper, was the fourth son of Daniel, and married Polly Black, the couple having six children—four sons and two daughters. Before the family had grown up, but after the birth of Garret, Mr. Vliet moved into Pennsylvania, near Wilkesbarre. That part of the State was then a very new and wild country, abounding in game—especially deer and bear—on which the early settlers were largely dependent for subsistence. A few enterprising men were venturing into the country to convert its magnificent pine timber into merchandise and money, but few or none dreamed of the immense wealth that lay embowelled in its mountains. Here, and under these circumstances, Garret Vliet grew to manhood, with but the few privileges of frontier life, in a rugged, heavily timbered country. He early became a hunter, and many were the stories of hunter life which he recounted in after years. Being for a short time a soldier of the United States, in the last war with Great Britain, he started with a company of sharpshooters for Baltimore, about the time of the British raid upon Washington. They were detained at Philadelphia for its protection. Notwithstanding the poverty of his advantages he had acquired a moderate education, and had learned the theory and practice of land surveying, in which he afterwards became an adept, and was employed for a time in the survey of the "Holland Purchase," in the State of New York.

About the year 1818 Mr. Vliet left his old home and pushed West, stopping the first Winter in eastern Ohio. The next year, pursuing his journey, he went down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi to St. Louis. There were but few steamers on the rivers at that time, and he made the trip on a "keel boat," which was propelled by rowing, poling and towing. Spending only a few months in that region, and being detained at Cape Girardeau several weeks by severe illness, he returned by the same kind of conveyance to the Miami country, not far from Cincinnati. Here he subsequently married Rebecca Frazey. Five children—John Black, Jesper, Oscar, William and Abram—were born to them, three of whom, the first and the last two, are still living. Oscar died in infancy, and Jesper at Milwaukee, in October, 1865.

Soon after his return to Ohio, the canal system of that State was organized, and Garret Vliet was employed in the construction of the Miami Canal. Thus he became acquainted with Micajah T. Williams, Chief of the Canal Commissioners of the State, Byron Kilbourn, Increase A. Lapham and Samuel Farrer, and formed friendships which lasted through life. In 1870 he visited Mr. Farrer at his home in Dayton, Ohio—the two not having met before in forty years. On being announced, he was met at the door by Mr. Farrer, who was still in the employ of the State of Ohio, as Chief Engineer, with the greeting, "Why, you have grown old, too!" and they proceeded to recall the incidents of fifty years ago. Both shed tears, in which their single auditor joined from pure sympathy.

After the completion of the canal he took charge of the four locks at Lockland, ten miles from Cincinnati, and afterwards was elected and reelected surveyor of Hamilton County, which office he held when first coming to Wisconsin. In the Spring of 1835 he came, with Byron Kilbourn, to that part of the Northwest Territory now known as Wisconsin, and proceeded with him to Green Bay, where they attended the land sales. Mr. Kilbourn having acquired a considerable quantity of land on the west side of the river at Milwaukee, Mr. Vliet came from Green Bay and laid out a portion of it into town lots, afterwards returning to Green Bay and making a careful examination of the water-power along Fox River, with the view of purchasing some part of it. He concluded, however, that there was too much of it for any portion to become immediately valuable,