

DANIEL MARSAC<sup>1</sup>

BY JOHN S. HOOKER

The subject of this sketch in 1828, through the kindness and influence of his uncle George Campau came to the mouth of Flat River (Quab-ah-quash-a), where he erected a small log cabin on the south bank of Grand River (O-wash-te-nong, see-bee). There he opened a trading post, his only customers, of course, were the Indians, as he was the only white man for miles around. He made his home with the chief (Wab-win-de-go). He was well liked by all the tribe and was a welcome guest in all their homes. Although but a mere boy he was a man of commanding appearance, tall, straight as a reed and an all-round athlete which in the eyes of the Indians went far in constituting a perfect man.

It was quite natural that the dusky maidens should look upon the young man with favor, but of all others Je-nute, the daughter of one of the under-chiefs, was most pleasing to him. She was truly a most beautiful and wonderful girl, notwithstanding her parentage. It is said, (in story) that he made many protestations of love and propositions to take her among his people and provide for her a home worthy the queen she was, to all of which she turned a deaf ear. However she did not deny or attempt to conceal her admiration of his noble qualities, but would not listen to leaving her people, claiming that she was a child of nature and of the forest.

As time passed young Marsac found it necessary to have a home of his own. His trade increased and it became necessary to have assistants. After much persuasion he induced Je-nute to come to his home as his wife and they were married after the rites and ceremonies of the Ottawa tribe. For several years they lived happily in their little home which he had made most comfortable. She proved all that a true and loving wife could. To them was born one child, a girl. When little Marie came to be eight or nine years old Mr. Marsac insisted that the child should be sent to Detroit among his relatives, to be educated. This nearly broke the mother's heart. This child was the idol of the whole tribe and was truly beautiful. Notwithstanding the opposition, he took her to Detroit where she only remained a short time when she

<sup>1</sup>*St. Anne's Church Records of Detroit*, give Daniel Marsac's birth January 25, 1812, baptized January 26, 1812. He was the son of René Marsac and Eulalie Gouin.

was taken sick and died.<sup>2</sup> Only a short time after this Mr. Marsac went to Detroit and married a woman<sup>2</sup> of his own nationality and brought her to his home at Flat River. This was the crushing blow to Je-nute. The story is very pathetic, but I will simply say that she left and went among her people and died at an early age.

After Mr. Marsac's second marriage he did not prosper as well and his habits were not exemplary. He, in a measure, ceased trading with the Indians and turned his attention more to farming. He sold, or traded, his land on the south side of Grand River and bought on the north side a fractional eighty acre lot where he platted a portion of it and gave it the name of Dansville. This is now a part of that portion of Lowell laying east of Flat River.

In November, 1846 he sold to C. S. Hooker nine acres of this land for the purpose of building a flouring mill. Very soon after this he sold the remainder to one Abel Avery. Marsac and his family moved to Monroe, where they lived for several years and he engaged in farming. From there he moved to Georgetown, Ottawa County, where he again took up farming for several years. His next and final move was to Grand Rapids where he remained sometime. Just before his death he went to Port Sheldon and died there at the age of sixty-eight years.

By his second wife, he had eleven children, only two of whom are now living.