

The original record-book kept by Col. Todd during his residence in the County of Illinois has been preserved to our time by the merest chance. In November, 1879, a visitor at Kaskaskia learned that the old documents formerly kept there had been removed to the neighboring town of Chester, when it became the county-seat of Randolph County, Illinois. Upon inquiry at the latter place, he was informed that several chests of these papers had stood for years in the hall of the court-house, until the greater part of their contents had been lost or destroyed. A small box had been filled with those that remained a few years before, and placed in one of the rooms of the building. These also had disappeared, and it was finally ascertained that they had been distributed among the different offices to be used as kindling, and all had been burned except one old book, which was found in a receptacle for fuel in the county-clerk's apartment. And this upon examination proved to be Col. John Todd's Record-Book, which subsequently, by vote of the commissioners of Randolph County, was deposited with the Chicago Historical Society for safe-keeping. Its contents are of sufficient interest and value, in connection with the early history of Illinois, to justify its publication in full in this volume. And in connection with it, such letters of Col. John Todd and those associated with him as could be found in the Canadian and Virginian archives are also published herein.*

* Authorities:—Reynolds' "Pioneer History of Illinois," second edition; John Mason Brown's "Address at the Centennial Commemoration of the Battle of the Blue Licks"; and letters from John Mason Brown and William Wirt Henry.