

## THE NAMING OF FLOYD COUNTY.

Hon. P. M. Casady, a resident of Des Moines at the date of this publication, was a State Senator in the year 1850, and at the regular session at Iowa City, commencing on the second day of December, a member of the committee on New Counties. On the eleventh day of that month he introduced "Senate File No. 5, a bill for an act to establish new counties, and defining their boundaries." Of the consideration and final passage of this bill—under the provisions of which no less than fifty counties in the western half of the State were named and their boundaries defined, Mr. Casady presented an interesting account in a paper read before the Pioneer Law-Makers Association of Iowa at the Biennial Re-Union held in Des Moines, February 14th and 15th, 1894. An abstract of Mr. Casady's paper was copied on pp. 195-202 of this volume of THE ANNALS. In this he sets forth that Floyd County received its name in memory of William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, of the State of New York, though it had been suggested that the present county of Woodbury should receive the same name in honor of Sergeant Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clarke Expedition, who died near Sioux City, August 20, 1804. His statement seemed clear and sufficient, but a great degree of interest having recently arisen in relation to Sergeant Floyd, the question of the naming of the present county which bears that name came again under discussion. There seemed to be four claimants for the honor, viz: William Floyd the Signer, Sergeant Charles Floyd, John B. Floyd the Confederate General, and one William Floyd, a civil engineer, who lived in Sioux City long ago.

The matter thus appearing to be in much confusion, Prof. Elliott Coues, of Washington, D. C., who has edited the Journal of Sergeant Floyd for publication, wrote to a

friend in Des Moines to learn, if possible, the exact truth in regard to it. In compliance with this request Mr. Casady made the following statement:

"It was at first in contemplation to name the present county of Woodbury in honor of Sergeant Charles Floyd, and that territory was so designated in the original bill, which I introduced. But this was not agreed to, and the Indian name, Wahnkaw, was substituted for that of Floyd. The county bore the name, Wahnkaw, three years, when it was changed to Woodbury, as it stands to-day. Later on in the session the present county of Floyd was so named in honor of William Floyd, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence from the State of New York. This I am certain was done at the suggestion of some member of the House of Representatives who had come from the Empire State. There was a disagreement over some section or sections of the bill, and it went to a committee of conference, undergoing first and last considerable discussion upon several of the suggested names."

In this State there are no stenographic reports of the debates and discussions in the Legislature, and the early Journals of the House and Senate are very meager. Much of the general consideration of the measure occurred in committee of the whole of which no records whatever were kept. John B. Floyd, was then a young man and unknown. So was Floyd, the civil engineer. Neither of these men were mentioned in that connection. There is no positive written or printed contemporary record of this matter in existence. We take Judge Casady's recollection to be final and conclusive, and accept it the more willingly because we heard him make the same statement many years ago. Much confusion has arisen over the subject through the lapse of years, and from the similarity of names, but we have no doubt Mr. Casady sets forth the exact truth. Hon. George G. Wright, Ex-Chief Justice of our Supreme Court, and Ex-United States Senator, was still living in Des Moines (1895) when this matter was again investigated. He was a State Senator with Judge Casady in 1850. While his more immediate attention was given to other subjects of legislation, he strongly supported the statement of Mr. Casady, expressing himself as having no doubt of its absolute correctness. These facts were carefully put together and sent to Dr. Coues, upon receipt of which, he

wrote as follows to his friend who had looked the matter up: "Thank you very much for the information about the naming of Floyd County. The evidence you present is conclusive, and I shall consider it final."

In all probability, therefore, these facts will be incorporated in Dr. Coues editorial notes, and so be accepted, forever ending a controversy which might be protracted but for the evidence of those two clear-headed witnesses—Messrs. P. M. Casady and George G. Wright of Des Moines.

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### THE INCEPTION OF IOWA RAILROADS.

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The Rev. William Salter, D. D., of Burlington, has sent many interesting documents to our Historical Department, but none more so than the following letter by Gov. and United States Senator James W. Grimes. In the year 1852 there was not a mile of railroad in the State of Iowa. In fact, none even reached the eastern bank of the Mississippi until two years later. The legislature had convened at Iowa City, on the 6th day of December, 1852. The representatives from Des Moines County, in the House of Representatives, were James W. Grimes, Justus Clark, W. Seymour and J. Wilson Williams. Gen. Augustus Cæsar Dodge was one of our United States Senators, and at his post of duty at Washington. During the third week of the session Mr. Grimes wrote Gen. Dodge on railroad questions, as follows:

HOUSE OF REP'S, IOWA CITY, Dec. 24, '52.

DEAR SIR:—I have supposed that you might desire some information in relation to the present condition of railroad matters in this city. You may obtain information from other sources, and if so you will pardon me for troubling you. The project of a road from Dubuque to Keokuk is entirely dead. It has only twenty-one friends in the House to forty-two against it, and the disproportion is about the same in the Senate. Memorials passed are for three roads;

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