

Iowa People and Events . . .

An Iowan at Singapore

Seeking to vindicate the diplomatic record of a former Des Moines citizen one time connected with a local banking institution, inquiry has been made of various sources of public information concerning Adolphus C. Studer, who was said to reside in the capital city in 1872, when appointed American consul in Singapore. Search for his records or papers was instituted by James W. Gould, Box 485, Glendora, California, who recently has discovered some documents in European archives which are claimed will vindicate Studer's acts that had been criticised, to which is hoped to add similar evidence from his private papers.

While in official station at Singapore, Studer conducted a significant piece of diplomacy, upon which historians since have adversely commented, involving him in the struggle for freedom of the Indonesians, with whom he sympathized and sought to befriend.

HAD RETURNED TO DES MOINES

Former Curator Ora Williams of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives states that Studer had been engaged in banking in Des Moines with the B. F. Allen institution of that period, and recently when in Des Moines said:

"I well recall that along about 1886 Mr. Studer came into the office of the *Iowa State Register* and met me. He asked if we had any news about him from Washington. We did not then, but later a dispatch came saying Consul Studer, of Iowa, had been appointed consul at Barmen, Germany.

"When he read the dispatch, he asked me where Barmen was. We looked it up on the map and found it to be a fine city on a navigable river. He accepted the transfer. He told me he was slightly deaf, which he

thought was due to the intense heat at Singapore. Therefore, he had asked for transfer elsewhere in the service; also he wanted a good place to educate his children. He remained at Barmen until January 27, 1893, when reappointed consul at Singapore, remaining there only until March, 1894."

STUDER A CIVIL WAR VETERAN

War records in the Iowa Department of History and Archives reveal that Mr. Studer was an officer in the Union army in the Civil war, enlisting from Des Moines and commissioned September 25, 1861, first lieutenant of B company of the Fifteenth Iowa Infantry; was wounded at the battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862; promoted to captain May 24, 1862; resigned at Memphis, Tennessee, January 18, 1863 and appointed captain of the Eighteenth Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps; made Brevet Major of U.S. Volunteers March 13, 1865, and mustered out of army service July 31, 1866.

He had served as general superintendent of education in Louisiana prior to appointment by President Grant as U.S. consul at Singapore, India.

AGGRESSIVE SERVICE AS U.S. CONSUL

The foregoing information was supplied to Mr. Gould who had given additional information as to Mr. Studer's life as follows:

ADOLPHUS GUSTAVE STUDER was born in Bern Canton, Switzerland, where his father continued to live until at least 1871 when he visited the son. He was working in a bank in Des Moines when appointed U. S. Consul at Singapore on May 23, 1871, and had been naturalized as an American citizen before that. Travelling via Europe, he arrived in Singapore on Sept. 17, 1871. It was there in 1872 that he was contacted by envoys from the independent Indonesian kingdom of Atjeh who wanted American aid against impending Dutch aggression. Although he very properly made no promises and forwarded the request to the Department of State, in 1873 a Dutch spy falsely accused him of making a treaty with Atjeh for which the Dutch made strong protests to the U. S. government. Studer was strongly rebuked despite his innocence and historians have continued to repeat the erroneous story of Studer's actions.

Actually the event was used by the Dutch as an excuse to

invade the kingdom of Atjeh in 1873. These freedom loving people fought off the first Dutch attack with great heroism, and continued to resist until 1908. Parts of Atjeh never were conquered, and even after World War II Atjeh was the only area not reoccupied by the Dutch. In 1949, Atjeh became part of the Independent Republic of Indonesia, and in September, 1953, according to the papers, was resisting a Communist-inclined government in its old freedom-loving tradition.

Studer thus played a key role in the history of the Atjehese. True to the American tradition of liberty, he sympathized with their struggles but found his hands tied by the intrigues of foreign powers and our own ignorance of South-east Asia. He continued on at his post in Singapore for a number of years. His later life is unknown to me, but I intend to publish full details in my book on American Interests in Sumatra. Anyone who can add further information is kindly requested to contact me.

Arch McFarlane, the Imperishable

A most unique and happy event took place at Waterloo, Iowa, last December 8, when a remarkable testimonial dinner was given by friends of State Representative Arch McFarlane, at which more than 350 admirers from over the state sat down with him.

The event had been suggested by his friend Burton E. Sweet, of Waverly, himself a Pioneer Lawmaker and recent president of the state association of that group, which had elected McFarlane to that position succeeding Sweet.

The legislative service of McFarlane has covered a longer period than that of any other Iowan, having begun in 1915 as a member from Blackhawk county in the Thirty-sixth General Assembly. During the intervening years he has served almost constantly in the legislature, either as representative, senator or lieutenant governor and presiding officer of both the house and the senate, the most versatile experience of any man ever in an Iowa legislature.

A program of addresses complimentary to the guest of the evening was indulged in and he was toasted in

superlative terms of admiration and approbation, predictions being made that he would yet either go to the congress of the United States or the Iowa senate. Subsequent events indicate that McFarlane will settle for the latter promotion.

In response to the call for his acknowledgments the evening's guest responded as follows:

As I sat here, in bewildered silence, during the foregoing program, listening to the eloquent speeches, and the lavish compliments which you have heaped upon me, I felt very much like the hill-billy, who, upon his first visit to Coney Island, explored the hall of mirrors. As he looked at himself, from one mirror to the other, and saw therein a figure, enlarged in one, diminished in another, in all sorts of grotesque shapes and grimaces, he pondered for a moment and frantically exclaimed—"THAT AIN'T ME."

It is a real joy to have so many of my loyal friends here to celebrate this occasion, but it is not without its tinge of sorrow, due to the fact that so many have remarked, and even written to me, that they were surprised to know that I used to be so good looking. Well, that reminds me of a little ditty which a friend of mine sent to me recently:

"When I was young, in velvet suit,
With collar nice and starchy,
With long and curly brunette hair,
They used to call me 'Archie.'

But now my locks have grown so few,
I really am appalled,
The friends who greet me nowadays,
All call me 'Archi-bald.' "

Needless to say, I am deeply complimented, of course, by the presence here of so many of life-long friends and associates. I would gladly pay tribute to them individually, if time and words were adequate. But I do want to say a word of appreciation to the citizens of Black Hawk county, each and every one, who have consistently supported me for so many years. If it were not for my friends here in this county, and the confidence which they have placed in me, my career as a public servant would have terminated long ago.

I also want to express my appreciation to those loyal friends who have sponsored this wonderful meeting, and who worked so diligently for its success.

While I realize that it was brought about through the combined efforts of many individuals, I do want to personally thank the Hon. Burton E. Sweet, who represented Bremer

county so well, in the Iowa legislature, and also the Third district of Iowa in congress, for his inauguration and active participation in arranging for this event. In my opinion, Burton E. Sweet is one of the really true Pioneer Lawmakers of Iowa, and I hope that He who guides the destinies of the world, will grant to him and his good wife, many more years of health and happiness.

If you will pardon a brief reminiscence, which I realize is a tell-tale sign of old age, I am mindful of the fact that many of you here tonight have seen Waterloo, and our great State of Iowa, develop, I might say, from infancy. When I embarked upon my legislative career, back in 1914, I was young, only twenty-nine years of age, inexperienced, and as I realize now, very daring. At that time, the population of Black Hawk county was recorded as 44,865. The population of Waterloo was approximately 26,000, and Cedar Falls was about 5,000. Today, the population of the county is well over 100,000; of Waterloo, 65,000; and Cedar Falls is over 15,000. So we have seen within that era, a scattering village become a metropolis. We have seen a state of almost virgin prairie develop into a commonwealth, unequalled, I believe, by any similar area upon the face of the globe. We have seen the passing from the pioneer state of candles and kerosene lamps, to the atomic age. We have seen the introduction into our every day life, conveniences which then seemed possible only to the fantastic dreamer. We have lived to stand upon the threshold of a new era, which will be a period which contrasts with the old Stone Age at the dawn of civilization; the Bronze Age in which mankind first began to utilize metal, and the Iron Age from which we are, perhaps, emerging. To me, this new era is a wondrous age. Future generations, perhaps, will see far greater changes in the everyday life of mankind than we have experienced, as we have only scratched the surface of our potentialities.

Speaking of improvements, our way of life has changed considerably since my early days in the legislature. At that time, we had very few telephones, and needless to say, no radios or television, and even the automobile had not come into general use. We had no paved highways, and I made all my early trips to and from the legislature on the Great Western train, leaving here at 5:30 in the evening, and if we were lucky, we arrived in Des Moines at 9:30, often on the same night! Other legislators from Northeastern Iowa traveled the same route, and I must confess that I acquired considerable knowledge regarding the intricacies of lawmaking in the club car of that old Great Western train.

Despite all the changes in our mode of living, human nature has not changed, and I must say again that words are

inadequate to express my appreciation of the warm friendship which is so evident here tonight. I notice the announcement of this event depicts me as a "Friend of everybody." I should like to consider that I am a friend of everybody. I would not place myself in the same category as the elderly gentleman who declared that he did not have an enemy in the world. When he was queried as to how such a remarkable situation had developed, he explained, "I just outlived them all." I assure you that if I have any enemies, and I probably have my share, their feeling of enmity is not reciprocated.

We have passed a long way from the earlier periods of civilization, when every man's hand was against every other man who was not of his immediate clan or tribe, and I am confident that man is rapidly learning to understand himself. I believe that every year we are coming closer to the standard of the Declaration of Independence, which states that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We have not yet attained that ideal, even here in the United States, but we have come a great deal closer to it than any other people in the entire history of nations. Our liberty still holds the torch for the peoples of the earth, and will continue to do so.

Many of us here tonight have lived long enough to realize that a great many of the things we were sure we knew all about when we were younger, just aren't that way at all. We learn a great deal by our years of experience, but of one thing I am convinced, and that is, that life is worth living, despite all of its sorrows and disappointments, as long as we can be of service to our fellowmen, and that the passage of time, on the whole, makes for better things for all of us, if only we make the most of our opportunities.

I presume that I should make a comment or two upon the nature of our government, state and local, the subject to which I have devoted a great deal of my life work and effort. During my period of service, I have seen the state appropriations increase from less than nine million dollars per year, to approximately one hundred and twenty-two million. I have seen a comparatively small business develop into a vast enterprise, and during my legislative career I have heard unlimited debate, both commending and condemning the functions of our government, but I wish to go on record right now in stating that in our conduct of public affairs, in Iowa, during the years in which I have participated, in some degree, to our legislative program, our government has steadily improved, both in efficiency and integrity. Government is not merely a matter of constitution and laws. It must con-

tain certain other basic principles. A Godless government cannot permanently survive. That sentiment is clearly expressed by one of our earlier poets:

"In vain we call old notions fudge,
And bend our conscience to our dealing,
The Ten Commandments will not budge,
And stealing will continue stealing."

I believe that here in Iowa we have held true to the ancient landmarks, and that we shall not remove them. We are seeing in this generation a sample of ruthless lack of humanity, and the disregard of human rights that have become evident in the operations of the Communist government of Soviet Russia. I consider it my sacred duty, in the few years that remain for me, to do everything that I can to impress upon my fellow men that our government, national, state and local, must continue to be based upon the time-honored standards of religion and morality, as exemplified by our forefathers.

The season from Thanksgiving to Christmas is the time when Americans give life to the highest individual qualities of goodwill, and resolve to do a better job. Today, as never before, if we could put these qualities into national action, it would set America on a new road to hope and happiness.

And now, I must say that there is nothing that I can offer, either by word or deed, to express my profound appreciation of this wonderful evening. Many of you have come a long distance from your homes to do me honor, and I hope you will understand, in a small measure, the sincerity of my feelings in saying to each and every one of you, "God watch over thee and me, until we meet again!"

Dodge's Rock Island Survey

An interesting comment by General Dodge upon the original survey he made for the M. & M. railroad, which came to be known as the Rock Island railroad line, shows a route through Shelby county down Mosquito valley to Council Bluffs. When Sen. Ed. S. White of Harlan wrote his excellent "History of Shelby County" in 1915, Dodge contributed reminiscences of his experiences there, which appear on pages 135-139, Part I. This is of present interest in connection with the recent improvement in shortening its line west from Atlantic mentioned in the January issue of the ANNALS.

The portion of General Dodge's statement giving details of his line of survey is as follows:

The maps of my original survey, which was of the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, now the Rock Island, are on file, I suppose, in the office of the Rock Island Railroad in Chicago. If you have an early map of Iowa, made in the fifties or sixties, you will find my line marked upon it; however, if you have a sectional map of Iowa, showing the streams, I can mark the line on it passing through Shelby county.

My line followed the Raccoon to the Beaver, following out the Beaver to its head into a prong of the Middle river, following it west, and crossing the divide into Troublesome. Crossing the Troublesome, it entered the eastern prong of Indian creek, following that and crossed the Indian, following out a small branch of it and across the east fork of the west Nishnabotna in township seventy-nine, crossing at the forks where Harlan now stands, going due west to near the head of the Mosquito, and thence down the Mosquito to Council Bluffs.

The sectional maps issued by the Iowa railroad commission in 1892, and from then on, give the streams so clearly that it is easy to mark the course of the survey. Upon these lines the land grant was selected.

About 1865, when I was in the army, the Rock Island road engineers made a survey west of Des Moines, and the chief engineer, Mr. Johnson, thought they discovered a shorter and better route by leaving the Raccoon river and following down the Turkey to Atlantic, and then crossing all the streams that I avoided, making very heavy work, and striking the Mosquito near Neola, following my line into the Bluffs.

This was outside of our land grant and was a serious mistake, which the Rock Island people soon discovered, but too late to rectify it. The original plan was for the old Mississippi & Missouri Railroad to build from Davenport as near due west as possible, and the second line was to go from Muscatine due west to the Bluffs, occupying the country that the present line does from Atlantic west.

This second line was built to Oskaloosa and discontinued there. The stopping of the building of the Muscatine line at Oskaloosa, the changing of the Mississippi and Missouri line down Turkey creek, immediately put in danger the land grant, which they came very near losing. It took new action by Congress too, for them to obtain the land grant. It was unjust to the people who had settled along my original line, as the land grant west of the Raccoon river was entirely off the line that the Rock Island built.

In recent comment Senator White states that the word "Mosquito" (creek and valley) is a corruption of the original Indian word Musketo, which means "a treeless plain." He had found the Indian word in a very early Shelby county newspaper and wrote to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington to ascertain the correct meaning of the word. It is interesting that while the Nishnabotna rivers running through Shelby county are lined with native timber, the Musketo valley is very largely devoid of timber.

The Triumph of Evil

All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.—Edmund Burke.

The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.—Plato.

If this nation is ever destroyed, it will be from within, not from without.—Lincoln.

Consistency has never been a mark of stupidity. If the diplomats who have mishandled our relations with Russia were merely stupid, they would occasionally make a mistake in our favor.—James Forrestal.

The English-speaking peoples, through their unwisdom, carelessness and good nature, allowed the wicked to rearm. The Great Democracies triumphed, and so were able to resume the follies which had so nearly cost them their lives.—Churchill.

Executive Council Once Census Board

The Iowa Executive Council, as now known in the state government setup, was once designated as the State Census board. William H. Fleming, secretary to seven Iowa governors and once deputy secretary of state, tells of this in his article, "The Autobiography of a Private Secretary," in the Annals, Vol. XV, p. 11, in relating the growth of detail work in the office of Secretary Ed. Wright, then secretary of the board, the state census report then being an important state document.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.