gressman from Iowa, and a prominent Iowa politician—since a General; Col. Nicholas Greuisel, of the 36th Illinois Infantry, an old and able soldier; and also the subsequently promoted Generals, Cyrus Bussey and T. I. McKenny, of Iowa; W. P. Benton, of Indiana; George E. Waring, of Missouri; and Powell Clayton, of Kansas.

## HISTORY OF DAVIS COUNTY, IOWA.

CHAPTER IV. [Continued from page 658.]

## PRINTING PRESS.

It has been said 'that Printing Presses, Pulpits and Petticoats are the three great levers that govern the world. This we have no disposition to dispute, even if we doubted its truth, for all good citizens (and we claim to be one among that class, if not one of them,) must admit that without the ladies there would be but little use for pulpits, as there would be wanting one of the greatest attractions usually found at the churches; and without pulpits there would be a want of religion and morality. But as it is our purpose merely to give a brief sketch of the history of the Press in our town, it must not be expected of us to remark further upon the Pulpit, or to enlarge upon the influence, the sunny smiles, and tender affections of the better half of creation which has been cast about the rugged pathway of the sterner sex of Davis during his onward course to fame and to glory. The influence of the Press upon every branch of trade, every profession, and even the morals of the people, is too well known and understood to require a single remark in this connection. But the Printer, that "chap" who makes the newspaper, we are inclined to think is a more singular fellow then he is generally thought to be. It is true that many people are aware that he lives without eating, and that he never wears out any clothes, for they have been regular subscrib rs for years, and have never paid him a single cent for the paper. But it is not only in this particular that the printer is a curious being, for he may have a Bank and any quantity of Quoins, and at the same time be unable to pay for a dish of oysters, or fill his pipe with Billy Bowlegs' best. In times of peace as well as war, he is in the habit of daily using a Shooting stick, and at the same time may not have seen a cannon, gun or pistol for a score of years. But to be brief—the printer moves the lever that moves the world, but we are frank to acknowledge (being one ourself,) that he is as far from moving the globe, as a pig with his snout under a gopher hill-But to the point.

It was in the spring of 1854, perhaps about the first of May, as old Bill Shakespeare would say,

"When daisies pied, and violets blue, And lady-smocks all silver white, And cuckoo buds of yellow hue, Do paint the meadows with delight,"

that the first press and necessary fixtures for printing a newspaper, were landed at our town. It was an old, rickety, half worn affair, that had changed hands and localities many times before it made its first impression in our State. At one time, in the city of Cincinnati, it had the honor of supplying the folks of that locality with a Police Gazette.. At another time, as we have the impression, it was under the control of certain students in the State University, at Bloomington, Indiana and from its general appearance, we came to the conclusion that it had been a traveler and had seen service. Well, some weeks after its arrival, say on Saturday, May 13, 1854, the first number of the "Western Gazette, printed and published by George W. Johnson, proprietor, at the north-west corner of the public square, over the store of Manning & Horn," made its appearance. It was printed on a sheet 22x32 inches, folio, with six columns to the page. "Terms for one year, if paid in advance, \$1,25; in three months, \$1,50, six months, \$1,75; if not paid till the year expires, \$2,00." The appearance of the first number was hailed as the advent of a new era in

the history of our place. At that time, Keosaugua, Fairfield and Ottumwa each had a paper, and our folks thought we had been behind our neighbors up to this hour, but now we felt defiant, and if we met a citizen from Appanoose, or any other county that had no paper, we looked upon him as hailing from some benighted region, and entertained an inward contempt for all such counties. In fact we felt good, and early on the morning of the first publication day, many of our citizens assembled at the office for the double purpose of seeing the masheen go, and to get the news. Among other of our enterprising citizens, the present accommodating host of the "Martin House," then high sheriff of the county, was an anxious looker-on, and managed to become the possessor of the first paper printed in the county. In a boasting manner he informed us that he had "the first paper run through the mill," which we managed to procure from him without his knowledge or consent, by making an exchange with a copy we had; and we now have that same first number carefully preserved.

Mr. Johnson's name stood at the head of the editorial column, in large bold face type, as editor; but the two principal editorials of that number—"Our Course," and "The Hairy Nation," were from the pen of the Hon. D. P. Palmer, whose experience in editing, (in another State,) and his long residence in Iowa, suggested him as the most suitable person for the task.

In politics the *Gazette* was Democratic, and the first number contained the names of the Democratic candidates for Governor and State offices. It also contained the celebrated "Ashbaugh correspondence" (which didn't elect him to Congress,) and the announcement of the marriage of Mr. John W. Vanhook and Miss Sarah Ann Cobb.

The second number of the paper was issued on Saturday, June 3, 1854, by J. Kister and G. W. Johnson, editors, publishers and proprietors. In assuming his new position, Mr. Kister says, "This is a new business to me, and I shall be under the necessity of asking all reasonable indulgence for errors which may be the result of inexperience. \* \* \* I have yielded

a reluctant assent to aid in permanently establishing a newspaper in this county, and in promoting the dissemination of Democratic principles." This firm edited and published the Democratic principles." This firm edited and published the Gazette six weeks, when, on Saturday, July 22, the eighth number of the paper was issued by Kister & Pollard. Mr-Pollard makes his bow to the readers of the paper in this wise: "We hazard nothing in saying that by the necessary industry and energy in our business that we can make our paper as interesting to our patrons as any other paper of the same size in the State." The Gazette, as before stated, contained twenty-four columns, but this number contained only six columns of reading matter, besides the Honorable John L. Ashbaugh's address to the votors of the First Congressional District the reading matter, besides the *Honorable* John L. Ashbaugh's address to the voters of the First Congressional District; the publication of which, he roundly asserted, cost him a spring's calf. But the lack of reading matter is apologized for by the new editor in these words: "We ask the indulgence of our friends for two or three weeks. By that time we will have an additional amount of type that will enable us to fill our columns, designed for general intelligence, with reading matter, instead of having to double our advertisements in order to fill our paper." Messrs. Kister & Pollard did some better then their predecessors—they kept the paper going seven weeks, or thereabout, and on Saturday, Sept. 16, 1854, the fifteenth number of the Western Gazette was published by "James Pollard, editor and proprietor."

By this time nearly everybody had become satisfied that the printing business was the most lucrative in the county. Men were making fortunes by it in a few weeks—becoming as rich

"As is the ooze and bottom of the sea,
With sunken wreck and sumless treasuries,"

and therefore, on Saturday, Oct. 14, the eighteenth number of the paper was served up to its numerous patrons by "Pollard & Dickerhoff, editors and proprietors." In assuming in part the editorial control of the paper, Dr. Dickerhoff says, "His connection with the paper will not change its general course heretofore indicated, which, in this association it may

be proper to concisely repeat. Politically it will advocate radically Democratic principles, without reference to any party expediency that may conflict therewith. \* \* \* As I enter upon the experiment of ascending the tripod, I extend the hand of good fellowship to the brethren of the press." This firm "put their shoulders to the wheel," and by energy, industry, &c., completed the volume "in the course of human events," and on the 14th day of July, in the year of grace, 1855, issued the first number of the second volume, which proved to be the last of the Western Gazette.

Thus, one year's publication of a newspaper in the town of Bloomfield, was completed in one year, two months and one day-having had, during the time, five distinct and separate firms, to wit:—George W. Johnson, one week: Kister & Johnson, six weeks; Kister & Pollard, seven weeks; James Pollard, three weeks; and Pollard & Dickerhoff, five months. As before remarked, the first number of the second year of the Gazette was its last; and on Saturday, July 21, 1855, the Western Radiator made its appearance in the place of the Gazette. Dr. A. J. Dickerhoff was editor, publisher and proprietor, and C. P. Ober, printer. The paper had quite a change made in the heading. With your permission, we will here copy it: After the title of the paper is the following:-"Happiness and prosperity depend on virtue and intelligence: Independent and unexclusive in politics; and devoted especially to morality, literature, agriculture, local interests and general intelligence." In an article "to the public," the editor tells us all this means this: Politics cannot be entirely ignored. and therefore the Radiator will be Democratic but unexclusive! In another article in the same number the editor says. "We think it certain that no paper can be sustained here except it be supported without distinction of party. The proprietors of the Gazette became convinced that if continued in its partisan character, it would not be supported by a sufficient number of the party opposed to it in politics to be sustained. All, then, that remained that could be done was to cease publication; remove the office to another locality, or publish a paper of the independent and unexclusive character, which we this week present to you." This paper "run in the ground" at the twelfth number, on a half sheet, on the 3d day of November, 1855; having lived three months and twelve cays. During its lifetime its patrons received eleven papers and a half. In the last number the editor says: "With this No. terminates our connection with the Radiator, having sold it to Mr. Ober became the owner of the press and fixtures, and Dr. Dickerhoff retired from the tripod with a pocket full of rocks and a flea in his ear. (This last we guess at from an article that appears in the first number of Mr. Ober's paper, over the signature of Mr. D.) We don't know how his pockets became filled with rocks, but guess the flea was put in his ear by some rather caustic remarks of the editor of a little paper at that time published in Memphis, Mo., under the caption "Bloomfield Beast and his Scab."

Up to this time we had been furnished with good Democratic and unexclusive doctrine, ably stated by editors and correspondents But now that the several parties heretofore connected with the press in our town, had amassed a competence; not to say a fortune, by running the mersheen, and had retired; and since the office had passed into the hands of one who had seen "Sam," by the aid of a "dark lantern," there was to be a change. There was not only to be a change in proprietors and in the form of the paper, but also in the tone of the press.

There was to be a different ring in the jingle of what should hereafter emanate from the press of Davis. Well, things began to work, and on the 17th day of November, 1855, the first number of the new paper was issued. It was the "TRUE FLAG," edited and published by Chambers P. Ober, Esq. It appeared in quarto form, on a sheet a little larger than that on which its illustrious predecessors had been printed. The motto placed immediately under the heading of the paper was, "The night is past, the day is dawning, and the future is ours." Im-

mediately under the editorial head was this motto: "Pitch in!" In his salutatory the editor says: "Our aim will be to pursue a fair and independent course, unawed by demagogues, and uncontrolled by clique influence. \* \* \* \* Politically, we will advocate such measures of National and State policy as we may think best calculated to advance the interests of the majority. \* \* \* We will endeavor to give our readers the very latest news-political, commercial, literary and general—rail road and steamboat disasters, riots, mobs. murders, and marriages; but will not puff small men, one horse shows, humbug lecturers, or quack medicines." Although Mr. Ober's name stood at the mast head as editor; it has been asserted by those who had an opportunity to know something of the matter, that he was never known to write an article for the paper of more than six lines. The following article which we copy entire, is said to be the only one he ever wrote:

"FGREAT EXCITEMENT.—A dutchman on a horse, and a know-nothing on a packsaddle, all arrayed in a fine suit of "Black Hawk," parading the streets of Bloomfield on Sunday—the Mayor interferes, &c.—Exit dutchman and know-nothing in a huff."

This article was drawn from Mr. Ober just after he and Mr. Cohen, a dutch jew, had been imbibing rather freely some of Ol's best Black-hawk sod-corn whisky; and emerging from the house by way of the back door; the dutchman attempted to mount his horse with the help of the editor, but the girth giving way, the two bipeds and the saddle were heard to "drap" under the horse, in a heap together, while the horse very stupidly walked over them. This disgusted the editor, who attempted to knock Mr. Cohen down with the saddle. Mr. Cohen managed to mount his steed, while Mr. Ober, with great force, attempted to inflict him with a blow from the sadble, but missing his mark, came to the sod—hence his remark "A dutchman on a horse, and a know-nothing on a pack-saddle."

The Hon. S. G. McAchran managed the political department of the Flag, and he and his friends edited that part of the paper during its publication. By the liberal use of his friends, the proprietor kept his paper running (with occasional stoppages) until the 28th day of June, 1856, when, at the twenty seventh number it closed its eyes in peace.

In the second number of the Flag, the name of Albert Pike, of Arkansas, was hoisted as a candidate for the Presidency, subject to the decision of the National Convention of the American party. Mr. Pike was our choice at that time, and at our suggestion his name was proposed. The Flag contained a short sketch of Mr. Pike's public services, and a eulogy upon his public and private life. His name remained at the head of the paper until the nomination of Mr. Fillmore, when it entered into his support with considerable energy and ability.

On the 12th of April, 1856, Mr. Ober changed the name of his paper, and from that time to its end, it was "Ober's True Flag." But as before intimated, it will be seen that the paper under the control of this proprietor, lasted seven months and eleven days, during which time the owner lost more than an entire month—having printed only twenty-seven weekly papers. The Flag contains the proceedings of the celebrated "Fishical Meeting," in relation to the Lake Superior fisheries, and the Fishical Association organized by Dr. C. C. Green at Superior City, Wisconsin, and many other matters of equal importance to us as a people.

It was in June, when "refulgent summer comes in pride of youth, attended by sultry hours," that the office again changed hands. Mr. Ober sold, and Elder J. B. Bowen was the purchaser. By the way Elder Bowen was a minister of the gospel—a teacher in that branch or subdivision of the christian world, denominated by our friend Martin Snoddy, as Stillhouse Baptists. As a matter of course, he was a consistent Democrat of the Jeffersonian school. Immediately upon his purchase, the Elder issued an address "to the Democratic par-

ty of the counties of Appanoose, Wayne, Wapello and Davis," calling upon "every whole-souled Democrat to subscribe for at least four copies" of his forthcoming journal, which he assured them would cost but "the trifling sum of \$1,50 per copy, in advance." Time rolled on, and on Saturday, July 12th, 1856, the first number of the "Bloomfield Union and Davis County Democrat," edited by J. B. Bowen, (who was also publisher and proprietor,) made its appearance. It was also a quarto, and printed on a sheet the same size of Ober's True Flag. The editor selected for a motto, "Constitution of Iowa and the Union." Whether the last part of the motto was intended to mean the Bloomfield Union or the Union of the States we are unable to say. In his salutatory, the editor says, "We make no high pretensions, no presumptions of that kind dare we make, sensible of our infirmites of every kind, bodily and mentally-our literature is limited, our intellect not quick or extensive. But when we cease to feel an increasing, glowing pride in making our paper the pride of our friends and its editor, or cease to make it more and more useful to the city of Bloomfield, the choice place of our abode, in advancing the dearest interests of our hearts, next to God's commands, look for a better family paper, more worthy of your favor." The editor of the Union advocated Democracy with marked ability in his first number, and had a bright future looming up in the distance. But suddenly next week, just as the Elder had put the first side of the second number to press, the high Sheriff, by virtue of a writ of replevin in favor of S. G. McAchran, seized the whole establishment, including a number of half printed Unions, thereby preventing the further publication of a sound Democratic paper of great promise! (The cause of the replevin suit was this: At the time of the purchase of the office of Mr. Dickerhoff by Mr. Ober, Mr. McAchran and others had become surety to Mr. Dickerhoff for the purchase price, and as well as we remember, Mr. Ober had given his securities some kind of lien on the office. When he sold to Mr. Bowen, he made no provision for paying Mr. Dickerhoff,

or releasing his securities. In order therefore, to protect themselves against loss as far as possible, the office was seized for the benefit of Mr. McAchran and the other sureties of Mr. Ober.) The principal editorials in the Elder's half sheet related to our county canvass, and were written by Hon. I. Kister. Mr. Kister is untiring during all political times and seasons, and in consequence of the dullness of the editor's intellect, as he has expressed himself, the duties of editor had devolved upon Mr. Kister that week.

After a hard struggle, Mr. Bowen left our town with a sad heart. When he had reached the mouth of the lane at the north west corner of the town, he seated himself in the corner of the fence, and taking his shoes from his feet, he shook and brushed the dust from them as a testimony against this people.

The Sheriff delivered the press and fixtures to the plaintiff in the replevin suit about the 24th, and on the 26th day of July, 1856, the Iowa Flag appeared. It was a quarto, the same size as the True Flag and the Union, and the first number was got up in short notice by the aid of a small army of typos, who volunteered their services to put it up for the proprietor. Mr. C. P. Ober having carried away the letter from which his paper was headed, the title of the Iowa Flag was set in large, rough, unsightly wood letter, which made an impression when viewed at a little distance, very like the tracks of a yearling calf in a lettuce bed. The motto of the Flag was short, but comprehensive: "Our Country." It was published by W. G. Ward, and edited by W. G. Ward & Co.,—principally by the Co. Although Mr. Ward's name appeared in the paper, he had no interest in the concern, whatever, but was the foreman of the office, and received wages for his labor. Hon. S. G. McAchrah had the entire control of the financial department, which he managed for the benefit of Mr. Ober's sureties, we suppose. It was edited by Mr. McAchran and the writer of this sketch, and supported the American candidates of the County, State, and National tickets of that party. It proved not be a paying institution, and on the 13th of De-

cember, 1856, at the twentieth number, the second *Flag* ceased to make its appearance. The paper lived four months and seventeen days—a very respectable age for a newspaper in Davis county at that particular period.

Here the press in Davis came to a stand still for a long time. There seemed to be no one ambitious to engage in the publishing business. At length, however, on the 10th day of April, 1857, Mr. William G. Ward issued the first number of Ward's Own, a folio, on a sheet 16 by 22 inches. At the head of the paper, in hold face caps stood this motto: "Ward Knows," and immediately under the heading, in prominently large letters is these words: "Circulation, one thousand!" The head of Ward's Own was in the same letter of the Iova Flag, and its general appearance reminded the reader of a small cat-fish—the head being about as large as the balance of the paper. His terms of subscription were, "One copy three months, twenty-five cents. No deduction for clubs." Mr. Ward having printed thirteen numbers of his paper, on the 9th day of July he enlarged his Own to a sheet of 18 by 28 inches. On this size he continued its publication to the end of one year, and published the fifty-second number on the 15th day of April, 1858, having lost but a few days during the year.

Mr. Ward having been rather successful in the publishing business, in order to meet the growing demands of the community, he determined to enlarge his paper to the full size of the press upon which it was printed. Accordingly, on the 6th day of May, 1858, the first number of the second year of Ward's Own made its appearance on a sheet 22 by 32 inches, "and considerably improved in other respects, at the low price of one dollar a year, in advance." Up to this time the paper had not taken sides with any political party, and in the first number of the second year, we find the editor saying: "Ward's Own will not take sides with any political party, but as heretofore, will speak the sentiments of the editor on such subjects as may be brought before the public," &c., &c. We would here remark that the entire control of this paper

up to this time, and in fact to the middle of July 1858, both financially and editorially, was under the supervision of Mr. Ward, alone. The editorials, however, were principally written by us, but at the editor's suggestions, and strictly in accordance with his views, and not our own. Mr. Ward did the principal part of the work in the office himself, and therefore had but little time to prepare articles for his paper.

On Thursday, July 1, 1858, the first number of the Democratic Clarion was issued at our town. The Clarion, however, had been published at Council Bluffs, and the first number issued here was the 38th number of its first year's publication. It was a folio in form, and printed on a sheet 24 by 36 inches, having seven columns to the page. The Clarion was published by A. P. Bentley, proprietor, and edited by A. P. Bentley and Amos Steckel. In their salutatory the editors say "they believe the people of Davis county are both willing and able to sustain a newspaper in addition to the one already here, and that in politics, the Clarion will continue to be democratic." The first number issued here was noticed in Ward's Own as follows:

"The Democratic Clarion, formerly published at Council Bluffs, has been removed to this place, and is now under the editorial control of Messrs. Bentley & Steckel. The first number made its appearance on last Thursday. It is a neat paper, and the editors evince both taste and ability in its mechanical and editorial departments."

The Clarion continued to be issued on Thursdays, and Ward's Own on Saturdays, and seemed to get along quite smoothly for two weeks or thereabouts. Finally, however, the Clerk of the District Court, Mr. Cook, got into a "muss" with Mr. Ward, and Mr. Cook being a democrat, he and his political friends published statements in the Clarion to which Mr. Ward took exceptions. This difference finally grew into a regular newspaper war. Immediately after the appearance of the Clarion, and before the "war" had commenced, we find Mr. Ward calling for help. He says, "Our circula-

tion is still increasing, but owing to a falling off in legal advertising, we must add considerably to our present number of subscribers to make Ward's Own a paying institution. \*

\* \* It is true we have a much larger circulation than any other paper ever published in our county, but in saying so, we wish our friends to bear in mind that it requires more patronage to sustain a paper than any of our predecessors ever had—they all died for want of support—we wish to live." So matters proceeded until about the middle of July, when the outside pressure became too great for him, and Mr. Ward run up the republican ticket.

The editors of the *Clarion* make no mention of Mr. Ward's change, but in the next number of that paper after the change, we find some four or five correspondents giving an airing to the suberabundance of their knowledge of matters and things in general, and *Ward's Own* in particular. Upon the change of the character of this paper, we ceased to write much for it, and S. G. McAchran and J. M. Newcomb, Esqs., prepared nearly all the political matter for it until the office changed hands.

At the earnest solicitations of some of the leading republicans of this place, whose hearty co-operation and aid we were promised, we made a purchase. So Ward's Own went out on the 28th day of August 1858, at the fifteenth number of the second year's publication—he having been one year four months and eighteen days in the business. And on the 4th day of September, the first number of the Davis County Index, edited and published by the writer of this sketch. made its appearance. The Index was printed in folio form and on a sheet 22 by 32 inches, at one dollar a year. In assuming the editorial management of the paper, we very modestly closed our remarks as follows: "We have no promises to make in assuming the responsibility, farther than to say that we will work for the good of the people, as we understand it—calculating meanwhile, that we are one of them." By the time we assumed the control of the Index, the newspaper war had assumed a more dangerous aspect than Elder Bowen's conflict, and the next number of the *Clarion*, after we bought the office, contained the following rather cool notice:

"A Change.—G. W. Ward has disposed of his whole printing establishment to Hosea B. Horn, Esq., who is now publishing the *Davis County Index*. The politics of the paper remains as shifted by the last change of the late proprietor."

As soon as we had purchased the office, the aid promised us by prominent republicans was not forthcoming, and we at once saw that if the paper was kept up, it must be at a sacrifice, which we had no inclination to make. We therefore immediately announced the office for sale. Having received an offer, and running short of stock, on the 6th day of November 1858, we published the last number of the Index—having published nine numbers of the paper and several extras, in two months and two days. We selected for our motto, that of our State, which is, "Our liberties we prize, our rights we will maintain," which we did to the best of our ability, during our short, but somewhat boisterous newspaper career. About the first of December we sold the office to parties in Sigourney, Keokuk County, and soon thereafter, the old concern that had seen so much service in so many places, was removed from our county.

Thus, this press, during its stay in our town, had seven different papers printed on it, to-wit: The Gazette, the Radiator, the True Flag, the Bloomfield Union, the Iowa Flag, Ward's Own and the Index. These seven papers had eleven distinct and separate proprietors, either as individuals or firms, to-wit: The Gazette had five, the others one each.

But to return. The *Democratic Clarion* continued to be published on Thursdays until July 21st, when the publication day was changed to Wednesday. It completed the first year of its publication at our town on the 22d day of June 1859, without a change either of editor or proprietors. From

an editorial in a number during the year, we make the following extract:

"We have not missed the issues a single week during the year just closing. \* \* \* We have spent a year, but have not realized that pecuniary profit which the same investment has brought, perhaps, to other pursuits. \* \* \* Overhau. the Clarion for the past year, and you find not one line that has asked you for money."

How well the "Clarion" was sustained, we are unable to say, but it is a remarkable fact that the proprietor managed to keep the *mersheen* going a whole year without dunning his patrons through the columns of his paper—a very rare occurrence in country offices.

[Concluded in next Number.]

## COL. JOHN O. WILDS.

John Q. Wilds was born at Fort Littleton, Pennsylvania, October 24th, 1822. His ancestors, who were among the earliest settlers in the Keystone State, belonged to the old line whig school of politics. When seven years of age, death deprived him of the counsel and advice of a kind and indulgent This threw him, comparatively, upon his own resources, and he was tossed like a foot-ball upon the world's great highway, to battle with the stern realities of life. Although unable to obtain a classic education, he secured for himself by perseverance and hard study, a general knowledge of the common English branches, which, combined with sound judgment and good business tact, was the talisman of his success in after life. His earlier years were spent as a tiller of the soil—one of the most honorable and independent avocations in which man can embark. From 1850 to 1854, he was engaged successfully in mercantile pursuits at his native town. But he soon became restless. "No pentup Utica" like the crowded cities of the east afforded charms

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