

week of Oct. 4th, conducted by I. H. Bunn, of Cedar Falls; Sigourney, first Convention of Keokuk county, week of Dec. 21st, conducted by H. S. Perkins; Knoxville, third Annual Convention of Marion conducted by the same.

Considering that this is, comparatively, a new section of the country these Conventions have all been attended with an encouraging degree of success.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION OF IOWA.

BY HAWKINS TAYLOR, WASHINGTON CITY.

When the Territory of Wisconsin was organized, in 1836, almost one-half of the population of the Territory was in the counties of Des Moines and Dubuque, west of the Mississippi. In Governor Dodge's proclamation ordering an election for a delegate to Congress and members of the Legislature, he gave Des Moines county three members of the Council and Dubuque three, and Des Moine six members of the House and Dubuque five, being six of the thirteen members of the Council, and eleven of the twenty-five members of the House west of the Mississippi. At that election party politics had little influence on the voters, the election turning on the local and personal popularity of the individual candidate. Almost every settlement had a town of its own, and a new county mapped out that made their town the center, and that *must* be the county seat. Nothing as they felt was needed but to elect the right sort of men to the Legislature. Burlington elected Kinnie then, as "Flint Hills" was the first point settled west of the river, and was the principal town in the southern part of the Territory. At that time more than half of the population of Des Moines county of that day was inside of the boundaries of the present Des Moines county. That fact,

and the multiplicity of candidates on the Des Moines river and other parts of the county, resulted in the election of all the Councilmen and three of the members of the House in and near Burlington.

Col. Ingraham was a farmer, an old ex-member of the Virginia Legislature, a man of character and ability. Jeremiah Smith, farmer and merchant; the wealthiest man in the county at that time, and a whole-souled, generous man of the largest enterprise. But whisky finally gained the victory over him, as it has done in all of its conflicts; yet there are plenty of noble, valient men come in so noble a State as Iowa, still fighting the same unequal battle,—a battle in which there can be no honor or credit, but always disgrace, and death if the battle is long enough continued; Maj. I. B. Teas, a lawyer of more ability than energy, to the council, and Shepherd Leffen, a lawyer of ability, and a man of high character, who had also been a member of the Virginia Legislature several times. Dr. G. W. Teas, of Augusta, then and now, I believe, a Methodist preacher. The Doctor has done a good many things, but was always a man of decided ability, and earnest in what he did. During the session of the Legislature in the winter of 1837 and 1838 he took offense at the action of some of the brethren in the Legislature, and smarting under the supposed insult, he published in the Burlington *Gazette*:—

“Be it known from shore to shore,
That I'm a Methodist no more.

G. W. TEAS.”

A few years later he again joined the church, and went to preaching in good, square, hard earnest, when some one had it published:—

“Know ye from Georgia down to Maine,
That I'm a Methodist again.”

And he has been faithful and true since.

David Chance, a Campbellite preacher, as rough as a bear, but a man of ability, and great activity and earnestness.

John Rig, a farmer near Fort Madison, also a Campbellite, and when he joined the church he was baptized face the foremost, saying that he never did any thing backwards. Dr. Reynolds, of Bloomington (now Muscatine), and Dr. W. L. Judkins, of Mount Pleasant, were the members of the House.

This Legislature met at Belmont, a town owned by John Atchinsons, of Galena, Ill., a relation of the Governor. The town, what there was of it, was made for that purpose, and died at the end of the session, with none but Atchinson to mourn its loss. The people of what is Iowa now wanted the Legislature convened at Dubuque, and there was much ill feeling against the Governor at the appointment of Belmont. There probably never was a Legislature met at any place with poorer accommodations than this Legislature had at Belmont. The position of the locality of the seat of government for the Territory was the all absorbing question with the Legislature.

J. Duane Doty, who could stand anything but being the Governor of the Mormons (that killed him), represented the interests of Madison, the present capital of Wisconsin, then a wild wilderness, barely mapped out on paper. Doty supplied himself with a full stock of buffalo robes, and went around camping with the members, and making them as comfortable as he could, until he organized a sufficient vote in the Legislature to make Madison the permanent capital, and Burlington the temporary capital, and carried the project through the Legislature, much to the disgust of Dubuque. The winter was a cold, dreary one, and Doty, with his buffalo robes, had been a real blessing to the members, and he also accommodated them with town lots in the new, wild, uninhabited town of Madison. Lots were then plenty, no doubt. Each of the Des Moines county members came home the owner of from twelve to forty. Other officials got what they wanted. Lots were then very plenty and cheap in the Territory.

In accordance with the pledge given by the members from Des Moines county conditional on the establishment of the

temporary seat of government at Burlington, Jerry Smith built a very suitable building on Front or Water street, near where Sunderland's mills were afterwards built. The building at that day cost Iowa eight or ten thousand dollars, and was well adapted to the wants of the Legislature, which met in Burlington the 1st of Nov., 1837. At that time there were no railroads; the entire carrying trade was by water or wagon, and both were expensive. Early in the fall of 1837 the river filled with floating ice, but it was late in the season before the ice blocked so as to stop navigation. The result was, that each thaw would bring boats up from below until late in December. At that day steamboats wintered where they froze up along the shore. Some winters there would be a dozen or more frozen up between St. Louis and Galena. There was then great rivalry among steamboat men, in their boats being the first to Galena in the spring. A little after dark a boat came in one night, and before she had made fast at shore some one on board sung out that a mob at Alton had killed the "Abolitionist, Lovejoy," and destroyed his press. To this announcement there was a cheer of joy sent up from the crowd on shore, in which almost all joined, and no man then in that crowd would have dared to condemn that mob. There were many, and probably a majority present who condemned the act of the mob, but the *rough pro-slavery sentiments* of the day over-awed all opposition. 11/6/1

That same night, a few hours later, the new capitol took fire and burned down. There was no insurance on the building. The government afterwards paid, or meant to pay the owner for the building, but Jeremiah Smith, the uncle of the owner, went to the Treasury Department and signed his own name, and also the name of the owner of the building, and drew the ten thousand dollar draft, endorsed it, and got the money on it and kept it. I believe it was sharp practice, but he only signed his own name, as he truly stated.

After the fire the House of Representatives met over the

store of Webber & Remy, and the Council in a small building near by.

The winter was long and cold, and the Secretary ran out of money and had to send a sleigh to Milwaukee for funds; in the meantime he borrowed seven or ten thousand dollars of John S. David. John was salt agent for the Kanawha Salt Company, at that time, and salt had sold as high as seven dollars per bushel the winter before, making the owners of salt rich, if they had salt enough. Fitzpatrick & Co., of Fort Madison, had all the salt there was below Skunk River, and farmers along the Des Moines River would club together and send forty, fifty, and sixty miles for salt, and then pay seven dollars per bushel for it. Very little salt was used in mush that winter, I can tell you. The ice that winter could justly be charged with putting a high tariff on salt. It was not Fitzpatrick & Co., for they were both free trade democrats. This was worse than the present tariff.

The Legislature the winter before had established the counties of Lee, Henry, VanBuren, Slaughter (now Washington), Louisa, Cedar, and Muscatine, out of Des Moines, and located the county seat of Lee at Fort Madison, VanBuren at Farmington, Henry at Mt. Pleasant, Louisa at Wapello, and Muscatine at Bloomington (now Muscatine). During this session there were active delegations at Burlington, asking for a change of county lines and county seats in almost every county in the Territory. West Point in Lee was represented; and each town in Van Buren county, from Farmington up to Black Hawk, had representatives on hand that could promise that their town was the *very spot* for the county seat, and there was at least half-a-dozen more towns then than now on the river, in that distance. E. Cook was there urging the location of the county seat of Scott at Rockingham; and Captain Clark, of Buffalo, was there urging the division of the county, and making one county seat at Buffalo, and the other at Winfield, above Davenport; and I will say here that I think there was about as much talk with the outsiders, then

and there, at that day, as there is now at this great capital. A fourpence at that time, was more than a gold piece is now with operators. There had then been no great war to expand the people's mind. It was understood even then, at that day of integrity, that a consideration would help to grease the wheels of a county seat, and make them roll easier. A bill was finally passed changing the county seat of Van Buren to Rochester, the county seat of Muscatine county to Geneva, and some other changes almost as bad. The bill was so bad that Governor Dodge vetoed it, and the speculation failed, but not without some good, square, tall swearing. During the consideration of the Scott county subject and county seat bill, Quigley, a member from Dubuque had Captain Clark, of Buffalo, in that county, arrested and brought before the bar of the House for contempt. Clark was one of the Governor's captains in the Black Hawk war, a first class fighter, and a great pet with the Governor, and Quigley was not. When the Governor heard of the arrest he was wroth in the extreme, and I have never heard a finer specimen of clear, square, Anglo-Saxon swearing in my life than came from the Governor; it was never excelled by General J. B. Brown I think, and that is saying all that can be said in its favor to an old settler. Clark was honorably discharged. Old Governor Dodge was too honest a man not to be a christian, I am sure; he knew nothing of deceit or deception, but he always used Saxon language when in earnest.

During the fall of 1837 the subject of dividing the Territory was agitated. The following notice was posted in Lee county. Henry Enos, a lawyer at Fort Madison was the author:

COUNTY MEETING.

A County Meeting will be held at the house of C. L. Cope, in the town of Fort Madison, on Saturday, the fourteenth of October, next, at one o'clock, P. M., for the purpose of choosing three delegates to meet in Convention at Burlington on the first Monday of November, next, to take into consideration the expediency of petitioning Congress for a

division of the Territory of Wisconsin, and the organization of a separate Territorial Government west of the Mississippi. Also the attempt making by the State of Missouri to extend her northern boundary line, and to call the attention of Congress to the necessity of granting pre-emption laws to actual settlers, and for other purposes.

Dated September 23d, 1837.

In pursuance of that notice, Henry Enos, Philip Viele (I think), and Hawkins Taylor were appointed delegates. The Convention met at the time and place named, the attendance was very full, and the action of the Convention harmonious. They asked Congress to organize a Territory west of the Mississippi; to give the settlers a pre-emption right to their lands, which then meant give them two years' credit in paying for these lands; no one then thought of asking free lands, as now; and also that the boundary question between Missouri and Wisconsin be settled. The Legislature, then in session, united in the same general petition. In answer, Congress that winter organized the Territory of Iowa, to date from May 3d, 1838.

To-day I met my old friend Judge Kilpatrick of Mt. Pleasant. As we always do, when we meet, we talked over *old times in Iowa*. I said "what a contrast between then and now." "Yes, a great change, but is it for the better?" said the Judge; "at that time every body's door latch string was out; no need of locks and bolts to keep rogues or your neighbors from coming in. If you wanted your neighbor's assistance you got it and paid it in kind when they needed your assistance. If you wanted to visit your friends back in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, or Kentucky, you put all of your family in your wagon, took your dog and gun and started, and when your visit was ended you came back, and your main expense was ferriage. If you wanted to go and attend to business off from home, you got on your pony and went, at an expense of about fifty cents per day; and when you stopped over night you got something to eat that was fit to eat. Now, if a man were to start off on a visit to any of these States with his

family by wagon, he would be put in an Insane Asylum ; and if you travel you must travel like lightning, and if you get anything to eat you must get it running, and pay four prices for what you get, besides running the risk of its making you sick."

I leave the reader to answer the Judge. I think my feelings are with him, but the thing has now got too big for us old fogies; we can't remedy it; Young America has got possession. But the innovation on the good old-fashioned singing of that day is beyond endurance. If I was a young man, and the man could be found that first invented these hieroglyphical crooked marks that people look at and squeal at now, in place of making christian music, such as the good old Zion tunes of that day, it would not go well with him. I think that I should make him squeal and toot the balance of his days to bats and mice, as an audience. I tell you I would walk a long way to attend one of those old-fashioned camp meetings and hear the good old Zion songs sang as then.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF
NORTH-WESTERN IOWA.

BY N. LEVERING, GREENWOOD, MISSOURI.

(Continued from page 362.)

On the 15th day of April, 1857, a party of real estate agents, residents of Sioux City, consisting of C. E. Hedges, J. W. Bosler, S. Montgomery, and N. Levering, accompanied by R. Stafford, who acted in the capacity of teamster and

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.