

labors. He was a soldier who carried his musket in the Union army during the civil war. It is due to his memory that he should be known as the founder of the Iowa Soldiers' Home at Marshalltown, for he drew the bill which provided for its establishment and successfully engineered its enactment into a law. The erection and opening of the magnificent public library in Burlington, resulted from his liberal use of his own means and his untiring and well directed efforts in that behalf. In like manner he was the founder of the magnificent park which by unanimous public assent bears his name. He had rendered much assistance in the establishment of the Historical Department of Iowa, and gave time and money to the development of historic art in our State.

This is but a partial enumeration of Philip M. Crapo's good works, and he was formulating plans for others which in due time would have become known to his fellow citizens of Burlington and the State at large. Elsewhere in this number we copy tributes to the memory of this illustrious man from the pens of those who knew him in public and private life and as neighbor and friend.

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#### NEW COURT HOUSE AT DECORAH.

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On Saturday, August 22, 1903, the corner stone of a new and commodious court house was laid at Decorah, the capital of Winneshiek county, to replace the first one, which was erected in 1857-8. The occasion was a memorable one in the annals of that populous and flourishing county. The orator of the day was Hon. Sidney Foster, of Des Moines. Among the items deposited in the corner stone was a History of Winneshiek County, filling several columns. This was especially prepared for this purpose by Hon. A. K. Bailey, the well-known editor of *The Decorah Republican*, who.

served a term in the State Senate, 1890-92. He styles his article "A condensed history of the first things of Winneshiek," specifying "four facts that do not appear in the printed histories." These are—

(1) That Winneshiek county was born February 20, 1847, or four years prior to the heretofore accepted date.

(2) That in the order of births it ranks as the forty-fourth in the Iowa sisterhood of counties.

(3) Locates the "Neutral Ground," of which territory Winneshiek county was the heart, and defines its borders, as had not been done; also explains in what respect it was neutral ground when occupied by the Winnebago tribe of Indians.

(4) Brings out some facts about Fort Atkinson that are interesting if not important.

In Vol. 4, pp. 448-53, of *THE ANNALS OF IOWA*, Col. W. H. Carter of the Regular Army, gives an account of "the establishment, occupation, and abandonment of old Fort Atkinson," his materials having been compiled from the records of the Adjutant-General's office. Mr. Bailey's "new facts" are both interesting and historically important. We copy them in full:

There is but one historic spot in Winneshiek county, viz: Fort Atkinson. The fort was named after General Atkinson, a hero of the Black Hawk war. It consisted of an open square somewhat larger than an acre. Barracks were located on each of the four sides; gun or block houses were on the northeast and southwest corners, and a powder house on the southeast corner. It was on a lovely spot overlooking the valley of a branch of the Turkey river. Its erection was begun in June, 1840, and it was built at a cost of \$90,000. The buildings were of stone, from material mostly prepared at Fort Crawford, near Prairie du Chien, and the construction of a military road between the two forts added considerably to the ultimate cost. This roadway ran along the ridge dividing the valleys of the Turkey on the south side and Iowa and Yellow rivers on the north side. From this fact came the term Military Ridge, or Military road, in common use for upward of fifty years.

The purpose of the fort was to keep peace in the "Neutral Ground" and protect the Winnebagoes in the possession of the same. When completed the fort was occupied by one company of infantry and one of cavalry. With the removal of the Indians in 1847-8, the fort was abandoned, and remained in the hands of a custodian for several years.

In January, 1848, the General Assembly memorialized Congress to donate to the State the site of the fort, together with two sections of land

adjoining, for the purpose of establishing an agricultural college, the same to be a branch of the State University. The memorial said "the location was in one of the finest agricultural portions of the State, and will soon be surrounded by a dense population." This memorial proved of no avail.

Three years later, i. e., in 1851, the General Assembly by a joint resolution, asked Congress to donate the site of the fort (together with all lands attached) to the State of Iowa for a State Normal, Manual Training and Military Institute. This, too, was a fruitless appeal.

In 1853 the site was sold at auction for \$3,521, and a considerable portion of the material was used to build up a new Fort Atkinson in the valley where a railway line had been laid that is now known as the Iowa & Dakota division of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway.

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### PORTRAITS OF GOVERNOR CHAMBERS.

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We have heretofore alluded to the doubt cast upon the authenticity of an engraved portrait of Maj. John Chambers, second Governor of Iowa Territory, which we published facing page 432, Vol. I, of this periodical. It appeared as one of the illustrations of a biographical sketch by Hon. William Penn Clarke. The descendants of the Governor, some of whom reside in Louisville, Ky., and others in Cincinnati, O., have never been willing to accept it as his portrait. The engraving came to our notice with every indication of authenticity. Copies had long been offered for sale in catalogues of engraved portraits by an eminent house in New York City, as that of "Governor John Chambers, of Iowa". It was also brought to our attention by a distinguished gentleman, now deceased, who was a personal acquaintance of Governor Chambers while he resided in Iowa Territory. Recently, we have received further letters from surviving members of the family of Governor Chambers who seem to discredit the idea that this by any possibility could have been his portrait. They state, as a matter quite well understood by themselves, that this engraving is a portrait of "John Chambers of New York," who was long ago a Judge of one of the higher courts of that state. The portrait is a mezzotint which was engraved by H. S.

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