

## UNPUBLISHED MESSAGE BY GOV. LUCAS.

*To the Honorable the Council and House of Representatives of the Legislative Assembly:*

GENTLEMEN:—Having convened in pursuance of a special legislative act, of the 15th of January last, I conceived it to be my duty to lay before you such information, and to suggest for your consideration such subjects as may be required by the public interests to occupy your attention during your session.

By the 5th Section of "An Act to provide for the erection of a penitentiary and establish and regulate prison discipline for the same," approved, January 25, 1839, it was made the duty of the Governor to draw from the treasury of the United States, the sum of twenty thousand dollars, appropriated for the erection of Public buildings in the Territory of Iowa, by an act of Congress, approved July 7, 1838, and to pay the sum over to the superintendent to be used by him for the purchase of materials and pay of workmen and labor necessary to erect said buildings.

The whole of this appropriation has been drawn from estimates furnished by the superintendent, approved by the directors; and I presume it has been judiciously expended by them. I have not been officially informed as to the condition of the above work or the situation of the convicts that have been sentenced to the penitentiary; but presume the director will lay the whole facts specifically before you, during your session; which, in all probability, will require some immediate legislative action. I, therefore, respectfully invite your attention to this subject.

By the 4th Section of the "Act supplementary to an act to locate the seat of government of the Territory of Iowa, and for other purposes," approved 21st of January, 1839, it was made the duty of the Governor to draw from the treasury of the United States the sum of twenty thousand dollars, appropriated by Congress, in the 13th Section of the Organic

Law, approved June 12, 1838, to be applied by the Governor and Legislative Assembly to defray the expenses of erecting public buildings at the seat of government.

On an estimate furnished by the commissioner of public buildings, dated March 16, 1840, a requisition was made on the treasurer of the United States for the sum of fourteen thousand six hundred and forty dollars, which sum was received in a draft on the receiver of public monies at this place, made payable to my order. On the receipt of this draft, I endorsed it to Thornton Bayless, the treasurer of the Territory, who drew the money from the receiver, and paid it over to the acting commissioner of public buildings on proper vouchers produced by him.

On the 8th of June last, an estimate was forwarded me by the commissioner for the sum of five thousand three hundred and sixty dollars, being the balance of the appropriation of twenty thousand dollars.

This estimate was immediately forwarded to the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States with a requisition for a draft on the State Bank of Missouri or the receiver of public monies at this place. The draft on the last requisition has not yet been received. When received, it will be immediately paid into the hands of the treasurer of the Territory to be paid over to the acting commissioner of public buildings, on the production of proper vouchers by him. Thus, the whole of the funds appropriated by Congress for the erection of public buildings in this Territory, amounting to forty thousand dollars have been drawn for.

The appropriation of twenty thousand dollars, that has been applied to the erection of public buildings at the seat of government, with the aid of the funds that may be obtained from the sale of lots in the city of Iowa [Iowa City], if judiciously managed, will in my opinion be amply sufficient to complete the public building in accordance with the plan adopted by the commissioner and leave a surplus to be applied to other improvements. But to avail ourselves of all the advantages to be derived from the sale of lots in the city plat, it appears to me that the laws that relate to

the sale of said lots should be revised. I, therefore, respectfully suggest to the consideration of the Legislative Assembly the passing of a law fixing an average minimum price upon the lots, say from two to three hundred dollars per lot, and to authorize the commissioner to appropriate the aggregate sum of the whole number of lots by fixing upon each lot a specified price, grading the same in proportion to the relative and real value of each individual lot, so as not to reduce the aggregate sum of the whole below the aggregate minimum price fixed in the law. After having the lots thus valued, I would suggest the propriety of authorizing a public sale, when there might be a fair competition among purchasers—and after such sale to authorize the acting commissioner to sell at private sale under proper regulations all lots at the fixed price, that might not have been sold at the public sale. This method would, in my opinion, be an accommodation to individuals who might wish to procure lots for improvement. It would guard against individual speculations, and secure to the Territory all the benefit resulting from the public expenditures in the city. I would also respectfully suggest to the consideration of the Legislative Assembly a revision of the laws relative to the execution of title deeds to lots in Iowa City. It seems to me the more convenient method would be to require the certificate of final payment, signed by the acting commissioner to be filed in the office of the secretary of the Territory, and that on such certificate being filed, the secretary of the Territory should make out a deed under the seal of the Territory, to be signed by the executive and countersigned by the secretary, and that the original certificate should be filed in the secretary's office and a record of all deeds of conveyance kept therein.

On a visit to Iowa City on the 4th inst., I was much gratified to see the extensive improvements that have been made in that place within the last year. The basement story of the capitol is nearly completed, and in justice to the acting commissioner as well as the gentlemen who performed the work, I must say that so far as the work has progressed, it was done in the most substantial and workmanlike manner;

but, I learn that owing to the difficulty in procuring stone of sufficient size for cutting, it has been thought advisable by the commissioners to change the plan first contemplated of building the house of cut stone, and they have adopted another plan that will be less expensive, more expeditious and of equal utility, the particulars of which will be explained to you in detail by the commissioners, in their report that will be by them submitted to you.

I perceive by the Journals of Congress that a bill was reported by the committee on Territories, to the House of Representatives early in the session to enable the people of the Territory of Iowa to form a constitution and state government, and for the admission of such State into the Union. This bill was reported in connection with a bill extending the same privilege to Middle and West Florida. I have not yet learned the fate of these bills, but presume they will both pass together, and probably at the present session of Congress. I therefore suggest to the Legislative Assembly, the expediency of providing by law for the taking the sense of the people of this Territory on the subject of a convention at the ensuing annual election. It appears to me that there can be no objection to submitting this subject to the people for their consideration, as an expression of public opinion thereon through the ballot box would enable the ensuing Legislative Assembly to act understandingly, and in accordance with the expressed will of the people on this important subject.

I regret that I have not been able to procure a statement of the number of inhabitants of the Territory. The marshal of the United States informs me that the returns of the counties have not all been received by him, but they may be expected in a few days.

As far as I have heard we have doubtless doubled our population within the last two years, and we have now in the Territory many more inhabitants than will be contained in the official enumeration which was confined to the first of June—and before the necessary preliminary measures to prepare the way for an admission into the Union, I have no

doubt that our population will be sufficiently numerous to justify us in claiming our rank among the independent States.

That harmony may prevail in your deliberations and all your efforts be directed to the promotion of the public good; is the sincere wish of your obedient servant,

ROBERT LUCAS.

BURLINGTON, IOWA, July 14, 1840.

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ARRIVAL EXTRAORDINARY!—We this week announce an event which in our judgment is of more importance than any that has happened since our city has had an existence. On the 20th instant our citizens were surprised by hearing the puffing of an approaching steamer. We need not speak of the astonishment caused by such unusual sounds—sounds which were for the first time heard on our peaceful river—nor of the many conjectures which were started as to the source from whence they proceeded. Our doubts were soon dispelled by the glorious reality, as the *Steamer Ripple* for the first time came dashing up the Iowa and landed at the ferry, which henceforth is only to be known by the more appropriate name of the Steamboat Landing. The hearty cheers which hailed the arrival, and the warm welcome which the captain, crew and passengers received from our citizens, showed that they appreciated the enterprise and determination which had originated and successfully carried out such an undertaking.—*Standard, Iowa City, June 24, 1841.*

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