

No TV?---and They Were Entertained

THE GREAT BUFFALO HUNT, KEOKUK DISPATCH, THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1855.

Tuesday Morning. It was just at the rising of the sun, on that delightful morning, long to be remembered, that we saw the early pedestrians looking with wonder and amazement upon the fine show-bill posters, in colors, cemented to the massive walls about town. They gazed, and gazed still, to fully understand what was meant.

About this time, a young, fat, good-looking lad called at our door and said, "Sir, will you have the goodness to please to come out and read what's on the wall for me?"—We gratified the boy and read "The Great Buffalo Hunt, on Friday April 6, in Galland's Slash, commencing at one o'clock P.M."

Early in the afternoon, we found in the streets of Keokuk, a perfect mass of moving beings all excitement—onward, onward, to unknown scenes—to the adventures of the wild exploits of western enterprise. Soon we beheld an immense band of brass instruments, thirty-four in number, drawn in an iron wagon, by sixteen cream colored horses. Following this grand display was an immense Buffalo, decked in the most brilliant manner, with all kinds of mottoes, flags and blankets. Following this fine animal was a most gigantic man, carrying a flag upon a staff thirty feet long. On this flag was inscribed, "This day a hunt of ten, wild, savage Buffaloes, by twenty of the best blooded men in Lee County— follow the *wonder*."

This procession passed up and down the many long, and densely crowded streets for hours, when it was directed to Galland's Slash. During this time, the to be celebrated twenty were in grand council. They finally agreed that they would fight with javelins upon open field, and they cast lots on whom should fall the honor of first entering the amphitheater. The lot, as usual fell upon poor Jonah; all were satisfied that providence directed the chance for a better Matador never drew an arm.

During this time, the ten wild beasts, fearfully made from hunger and thirst, were let out from their hitherto hidden place within an old stone house; as they approached the outer walls, the band of chosen spirits, clothed with mighty muscles,

Jonah at their head, met them with a bold front. The beasts at first stopped, raised their heads, turned and looked upon each other, then rolled up their small, round, but piercing eyes, then gnashed their massive teeth, then began to thrust their horns into the ground, lick and paw the earth. At this time our gallant chief, Jonah, met them; he sprang at the foremost with mighty violence, but in an instant was disarmed by a blow from another Buffalo; it was then the fight began, it was long and desperate. Now the victory seemed to be for the gallant twenty, then it seemed for the ferocious ten; finally the herd began to fall one by one, until all but one fell victims of superior intelligence; but at the same time the chosen Gladiators were nearly all stricken to earth by the terrible conflict. This one was not to be thus slain; he defied all the power of earth to spill his noble blood.

Finally the Council had a pow-wow, when it was agreed that the never failing rifle must be used; whereupon another trial of chance was had, and the lot fell upon our most worthy friend, Dr. Hughes. This too, was most gratifying for he is the most certain at a long shot of any man that ever pulled a trigger, the Dr. called for his old long shot—he laid it to his brawny cheek and on the sight he dropped that clear eye, when of a sudden the Buffalo leaped from the ground and bounded forth to meet the dangerous foe, when that fatal, elastic finger caught a cramp and away went the ball, down went the Buffalo and the multitude shouted for joy. All the women in town are cooking *Buffalo Beef* and the men are wondering how it will taste. Who caught the weasel?

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A BUFFALO HUNT—DR. HUGHES AHEAD, KEOKUK DISPATCH, APRIL 12, 1855

Our citizens were wonderfully excited on Friday at the sight of a large Buffalo in our city. The hunter had real sport in capturing this *Prince of Prairies*. He will weigh near a thousand pounds, and his meat is now exposed for sale at the Butcher's stall at twenty-five cents per pound. The Dr., we are told killed him the first shot, and as a prize for being foremost in the fight, the Dr. got the hide and is now preparing it for the Museum at the Medical College.

It is a rare thing to see a stranger from the wild herd ven-

ture into the very heart of civilization; there must be some foul play in this. I wonder if he is a *Know Nothing*, and down on foreigners.

The Iowa Star, August 12, 1849. Balloon Ascension—Victor Varda made another balloon ascension yesterday afternoon, hanging by the heels, from Bauxhall Garden. There was quite a crowd to witness his extraordinary performances. He made a beautiful ascension, meeting with no accident, rising in the air about the height of half a mile still hanging by the heels, when he recovered a more natural position, and moved towards the North river, which he crossed. He finally brought up in a tree at the Elsian Fields, Hoboken, breaking and damaging the balloon, but doing no bodily hurt to himself. Better luck next time.—*New York Tribune*.

Des Moines Valley Whig, June 21, 1854.—Balloon Ascension—Mr. Wise went up in a balloon from Crystal Palace on the 9th. It was a rough day, and finding himself going with great speed towards the ocean, he thought best to come down on the run. We give Mr. Wise's own description of his descent:

When I got below the clouds again I saw Flushing a little eastward. The descent now became rapid and the strong wind blow admonished me of a rough landing. In another moment my grapple hook took effect. The jar broke some of the rigging, the grapple ripped up the sod, and the balloon bounded several hundred yards. Next the car was dashed forcibly into a ravine, and bolted me out. I held onto the outside. The ballast being also thrown out, gave the balloon increased power. She rose the length of the rope, while I was hanging fast to the car. In a moment the grapple again ripped up the sod, and, seeing my predicament—that of being hauled up, with the moral certainty that I could not secure myself to the car long—I made the fearful plunge of at least 40 feet into the soft meadow, knocking out one of my teeth and slightly bruising my jaw.

Mr. Wise returned to the Palace in the evening, and reported proceedings to a great crowd.

The balloon, we suppose, was in mid-air, and the aeronaut may thank his stars for being thrown out.

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