

**SKETCHES AND INCIDENTS RELATING TO THE SETTLEMENT OF  
LOUISA COUNTY.**

BY WM. L. TOOLE, TOOLESBOROUGH.

Prior to the first settlement of the county by the whites the Sac and Fox Indians occupied the land comprising it. The war with those Indians in 1832 resulted in a treaty with them and sale of their land in the county, excepting a reserve along the Iowa river of ten miles in width, which reserve was sold and vacated by them in October, 1836. All the better land and desirable points of this reserve, had been previously selected, and some actually occupied before the sale.

The first occupancy of the district now Louisa County, was in 1835, at and near the mouth of the Iowa river, and near the ancient mounds and fort; also near the Indian villages of Keokuk, Wapello, and Black-Hawk. Among the early settlers hereabouts, we had the names of Harrison, Creighton, Deihl, Toole, McCleary, Thornton, Parsons, Benson and Shuck, and soon afterwards, Hook, Halé, Guest, Crow, Isett, Bell, Bird and Judge Springer. Those first named and others, like many of the first settlers of Iowa, impelled by that pioneering spirit known only to Americans, forsook friends and comforts and located themselves here near the wigwams of those celebrated Indian chiefs, and where hundreds of Indians could often be seen engaged in their several savage sports and occupations of hunting, fishing, carousing, &c., they became acquainted with, and frequently in company with the old chief Black-Hawk, who was usually attired in citizen's dress. This appeared to be his favorite spot, in fact was then called Black-Hawk.

In this location, as in others, great strife and contention was kept up here in those early days, through conflicting interest in claims or the encroachments of unprincipled adventurers. Cabins were burned, torn down or unroofed, and the lives of

persons frequently in jeopardy in consequence of these contentions for claims. At one time in 1836, contending parties numbering some twenty or thirty on each side met near here on a disputed piece of land, armed with guns, pistols, knives, &c., intending to decide the right of possession by a battle, the victors to be the possessors. Fortunately, however, a worthy and peaceable old gentleman, Mr. E. Hook, with some two or three other persons, friendly with both parties, appeared on the battle-ground, and by their influence prevented a commencement of the conflict, otherwise blood would have been shed on this occasion, and perhaps lives lost. Serious difficulties like this often occurred in regard to ownership of claims, and sometimes occurrences or cases in regard to claims occurred which were more amusing than serious. One I will state wherein a defeated party, through our claim-law or regulations refused to leave or give possession of a cabin thereon, and the successful party with a few friends kindly took the opposing individual out of the cabin and carried him from the premises, notwithstanding his struggling, kicking and threatening, greatly to the amusement of the lookers-on, but he finally made a virtue of necessity and submitted to our claim laws, and was protected afterward himself by these claim laws in a claim difficulty.

These difficulties continued more or less until the public sale of land by the Government. Just previous to the public sale all disputes and difficulties concerning claims were amicably arranged, and the settlers entered into a league for common protection and opposition to speculators, then secured their claims and went on prospering and making comfortable homes. The county then increased rapidly in population by emigrants mostly from the Western States, attracted here by the richness of the soil, supply of timber and grass land.

Towns then began to show themselves on the Iowa river, and among the number Wapello, our county seat, was commenced on the site of the old chief Wapello's village, but had a very slow growth for several years. The first court held there was in a log cabin, and the shade of an elm the jurors'

rooms. Many amusing scenes and incidents occurred at and during the first few terms of court held there.

In those days we also had our amusing scenes in justices' courts, and in the performance of duties of their officers. The justices and officers considered it their duty to deal out justice according to their understanding of justice and law, regardless of acts of Michigan or Wisconsin legislatures, contending that they did not suit our locality or the cases here coming up; and as our justices and constables were generally robust and active, and disposed to enforce the law with muscular arguments, their decisions were usually submitted to. Therefore if a judgment was for bacon, bacon it must be, otherwise the defendant would have his meat tub visited by the officer; and if for meal, the meal tub would suffer. Or, if these officers on any occasion deemed it necessary to quiet disturbers of the peace, and too much time be required for a process, they would enforce justice by force of their muscular arms, and sometimes the wife, the sons, or nearest relations would aid in quieting these disturbances or enforcing justice, when necessary, considering themselves deputies by relationship. We had, also, our troubles in securing supplies of food in those days. A trip to mill, requiring a week or more time, was no uncommon thing, having to wait at the mill until those ahead should have their grists ground according to time of coming, unless you were a particular friend or favorite of the miller. Want of mail facilities was provoking—weeks being required, instead of days, for receipt of mail matter, and in some cases these delays produced losses and much confusion. Many more scenes and incidents of early times in this part of our county could be given, but the recital would not be interesting to your readers in other counties.

Wapello has increased and improved since then and become quite an important trading point, with the prospect of a continued improvement through its railroad projects. We have several towns now in our county, viz: Grandview, Columbus City, Toolesborough, Morning Sun, Port Louisa and

Wapello. We have one railroad passing through the county, one now being made, and two others projected, which together with the Iowa running through the county and Massosopo for its front, Louisa County must soon be ranked among the most flourishing counties of the State of Iowa.

There are several small streams in the county, all emptying into the Iowa river, having no important origin, however, and are as follows, viz: Long Creek and Short Creek, are not very far apart, and were thus named because one is much longer than the other. Otter Creek was so named because of the number of otters found along its course by the first settlers; Goose Creek so named, because of the number of wild geese found along its course; Indian Creek so named, because it was a favorite stream of the Indians; Yankee Creek, because the first settlers near it were called Yankees, and Smith Creek, from Smith the first settler near it. And while on the origin of names of streams, and Mississippi and Missouri being the eastern and western boundaries of our State, permit me to digress and give what I have learned to be the origin of the names of these two great rivers. The Indian names for them before the French saw them, for the Mississippi was Masso-sepo,—Masso (big or large,) and sepo (river,) or big river, being more appropriate and with a meaning than as corrupted by the French, and without any meaning. And their name for the Missouri was Masso-reah-sepo, Masso (big,) reah (yellow,) sepo (river,) or big yellow river, also more appropriate and with a meaning, than as corrupted by the French, and without any origin or meaning.

It is conceded that the name Iowa arose in this way: Many years ago, and before any Indians had fixed their homes in what is now Iowa, some Indians in search of a new home, encamped on the high bluff of the Iowa river near its mouth, and where those ancient mounds are, and being much pleased with the location and country around it—in their native dialect exclaimed—Iowa, Iowa, Iowa, (beautiful, beautiful, beautiful,) hence the name of Iowa to the river, and to those Indians, a remnant of which tribe are now in Kansas.

Another company of Indians afterward, on the same errand, in search of a new home, ascending the Iowa river in their canoes, at some point that they were pleased with, made a similar exclamation, adding, "This is the place for us!" And still another band or tribe, with similar exclamation, continued the name to the river, and so on by Black-Hawk, Keokuk, Wapello, and Poweshiek, each of whom had their villages on the banks of the Iowa river, up to 1836. And the ancient mounds and fort on this high bluff of the Iowa near its mouth, shows that this was a favorite location by the ancients who made these mounds. Black-Hawk made his home mostly near these mounds, and partly in Keokuk's village, about two miles further up the Iowa river. Wapello had his village about ten miles further up the Iowa, and the next village or trading point was at the junction of the Iowa and Nec-a-tosh, (Cedar river,) and still further up the Iowa river was the village of Chief Poweshiek, and up the Nec-a-tosh or Cedar river in our county, and near the county line, was a favorite sugar-making ground or camping place of the Indians. These Indian villages were held and occupied until late in 1836, and excepting Poweshiek were on the reserve of ten miles in width, beginning near Keokuk's village and extended up the Iowa river and valley forty miles. And at the present time there are some three or four towns on its banks in our county, thus all going to show that the Iowa river and its valleys has been favorite ground of the ancients, of the Indians, and of the Hawk-Eyes.

An Indian trail from Poweshiek village to Wapello village, thence to village of Chief Keokuk, thence down the Iowa on north side, and near those ancient mounds to the Masso-sepo, show that it was their regular thoroughfare. And on this trail the warriors of those villages passed to the Masso-sepo with their ponies, and across it to upper sand-banks, (New Boston,) some going in canoes down the Iowa, taking their arms, ammunition, &c., preparatory for their war of 1832. Part of said trail near here was plainly seen for years afterwards.

Previous to any occupancy of Iowa by the whites, it was known as Indian territory, and under the government of Missouri territory, and began with a different organization at time of the treaty with Black-Hawk in 1832, when a strip or belt of country was secured about fifty miles wide, and extending from Missouri to the then neutral ground opposite Prairie du Chien, but was not occupied by the whites until 1835, and then included in and governed by the laws of Michigan territory, and divided into two counties—Dubuque and Des Moines, by legislature of said territory, and so continued until Michigan became a State, and the territory of Wisconsin organized. Black-Hawk purchase as then called, then became a part of, and subject to the laws of Wisconsin, the legislature of which territory in its session at Belmont, Wis., in 1836, subdivided Dubuque and Des Moines Counties into nine counties, giving their names, &c. Said legislature gave the name Louisa to our county, through the influence of members thereof, who were formerly of Virginia, in honor of Louisa County, Virginia, and contrary to the wishes of, or consultation with the citizens thereof, who would have preferred the name of Washington, Jefferson or Monroe. Some agitated the proposition of a change of name then, and some are still dissatisfied with the name, and desirous of a change, which wish may yet get into shape, and the subject be properly brought before the legislature.

This first purchase of land from the Indians became known as the Black-Hawk purchase, and so called or known until organized into Iowa territory.

It was during the time that it was known as Black-Hawk purchase, that its inhabitants obtained the name of Hawk-Eyes, and having no objections to be so distinguished, and to perpetuate the name a creek was named Hawk-Eye, also a post office so named, and a newspaper so named, and as our State extended its limits this name Hawk-Eye went with it, so that all the citizens of Iowa are now called Hawk-Eyes.

The citizens of Black-Hawk purchase soon became tired of

Wisconsin rule, and desirous of a separate territorial government, which desire soon got into form; meetings were held at different points in each county, at which meetings names would be suggested for the proposed new territory; among which were Washington, Jefferson and Iowa. The people finally resolved to have a convention on the subject to ask congress for a separate organization. Consequently delegates were properly elected for that purpose from each county to meet in convention in Burlington, composed mostly of those who afterwards became members of our first territorial legislature, whose names can be seen on page 450 of the ANNALS.

The delegates selected by the people for the convention met in Burlington in October, 1837, were properly organized, and decided upon asking congress for a separate territorial government. Several names for the territory were presented, the most prominent among which were Washington, Jefferson and Iowa. And after considerable debating, skill, log-rolling, &c., Iowa was decided upon for the name of the future territory. A memorial or petition in due form was adopted by the convention asking congress to pass an act at its next session to establish the territory of Iowa.

The memorial was properly presented and favorably received by congress, and an act passed establishing the territory of Iowa. And on the third day of July, 1838, Black-Hawk purchase became a separate organized territory under the name of Iowa, and in a few years became the State of Iowa, showing most remarkable and speedy strides from occupancy by Indians, buffalo and elk, to a populous, enterprising and flourishing State of the Union.

It is probable the annals of history has no record of so remarkable and rapid progress as here shown, or with equal intelligence, industry and enterprise. And when we reflect upon its manufacturing interests, its vast resources, commercial and agricultural, fertility of soil, and with its navigable streams and railroads, the constant influx of emigrants from almost every country and clime, and from nearly every State of the Union, we can not but admit, and exclaim, great is Iowa!

The ancient mounds and fort referred to, are on the high bluff overlooking the Iowa river, and about two miles from its mouth. Three of these mounds, as is usual wherever found, are larger than the others. In all of them that have been opened for curiosity or when improving the adjoining grounds, the mouldering remains of human skeletons are found, which rapidly decompose on exposure to the air. And to judge from the size of the bones, the persons of the bodies deposited in those mounds, were of a size and race larger than the people of the present day. The fort or ground enclosed by an embankment is near the mounds, and four or five feet high in 1835 and '36, and appeared to have been the work of a civilized people. It was an irregular circle with eight projecting angles equi-distant, and so arranged, if it was a fort, to have enabled the besieged or occupants to command or rake the outside of every portion of the walls, and to expose the besieging party to a cross fire from within whatever should be the point of attack.

In and about it were found various kinds of tools made of a hard brown stone, also pieces of earthenware in great abundance, and in excavations near by, digging cellars, wells, &c., pieces of wood, and pieces of burned wood, coal, &c., were found.

I will not trouble your readers with any lengthy opinions in relation to the origin of these mounds, places of worship, or forts, here or elsewhere, or of the people who constructed them, as it has been done, and can be done by persons better qualified for the task than myself. But it may truly be said that the discovery of them has been a loss by being discovered, by the destruction of the various articles therein found; some valuable specimens of statuary being broken to pieces to discover what kind of stone or material it was made of. In one case it is said a bust representing a man holding a bowl with a fish in it, constructed of a kind of very fine stone or marble. I say it is truly to be regretted that such depredation and destruction of them throughout the country has been permitted, and of places where solemn and



impressive rites and ceremonies have so often been performed, and the bard, the orator, and the teacher of good has so often been heard. No historian has, or can give us the names of the great chieftians whose ashes are disturbed in those mounds. No poet's song handed down to us in which their exploits are recorded, nor history has not and cannot inform us who were their priests, their orators, their ablest statesmen or their greatest warriors; yet we are satisfied that the great and the good were among them, and that this destruction of the evidences thereof should not be permitted.

It is said that these mounds, altars, forts or tumula of different kinds found in Europe, Asia and America, are similar in the mode of construction, and similar articles found therein. This similarity of those ancient works almost all over the world, indicates that all men sprung from one common origin. And that these ancients were occupants of America for a very long time, appears evident from these ancient works.

It is noticeable that in Europe and Asia as well as in America, these ancient works are usually found near a river or some prominent location, and that they were a very numerous people in America is evident from the immense number of their mounds and burial places between the Atlantic and Pacific ocean, containing millions upon millions of skeletons. And for the support of such a great population, the inhabitants must have been generally engaged in agriculture, occupying the country back from the river, and those ancient works for that purpose, and that their dwellings were mostly of wood or tents, otherwise the ruins of their habitations would be found in this great country.

Hearths and fire-places are sometimes found in excavating the earth, resembling the hearths and fire-places of first settlers in the west. Around them are found shells, bones of animals and pieces of earthen-ware, and in the mounds near by human bones and skeletons are found. It is supposed that from the depth of these remains of chimneys and fire-places below the present surface of the earth, and on which on their discovery, was trees as old and as large as the trees

of forests, we must conclude that thousands of years have elapsed since these hearths were deserted, and the wells near by have ceased to allay the thirst of the wearied. Although shovels, spades, axes, and other tools made of iron, have not been found near these ancient works, yet it is supposed by some of the searchers into antiquities, that tools made of iron were then used, and that by lying on or under the earth during all this long period, they have become oxydized and wasted away by rusting.

In conclusion I will say that the antiquities of our country deserve and should receive the attention of all historians.

[To be continued.]

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### INCIDENTS OF PRISON LIFE IN 1862.

BY E. M. VAN DUZEE,

LATE MAJOR TWELFTH IOWA INFANTRY.

On the 6th and 7th days of April, 1862, at Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., there was fought one of the bloodiest as well as most decisive battles of the late war of rebellion. Forts Henry and Donelson, the former situated on the Tennessee river and the latter on the Cumberland, just below the little town of Dover, had fallen. These with other important victories won for the Union cause had filled all loyal hearts with joy, and in an equal degree plunged the rebels into gloom. They were saved from despondency by the characteristic self-sufficiency of their leaders, in whom were united the personal courage of the brave, and an intenser fanaticism than that they affected to despise in their northern adversaries. To repair their ill-fortune and recover by a brilliant success the prestige they had lost by defeat, the rebels had concentrated the flower of their army under their most skillful generals at Corinth, Miss., for a movement against our army upon the Tennessee river. Almost the entire force of Union troops that participated in the capture of Donelson, had been transferred to the Tennessee river, and on board steamers transported to Pittsburg Landing, at which point the first troops

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