

the river. He sold it to Henry C. Morehead, at an early day, and removed to the prairie, near where the town of Blue Grass now is, where he opened another large farm that now belongs to his heirs. He was elected, in February, 1838, one of the County Commissioners, it being the first election ever held for officers under the county organization. He also filled other places of responsibility and trust. Being fond of travel and adventure, he frequently took excursions into the interior of Iowa, while it was yet in possession of the Indians, seeming to forget all business cares and enjoy very much the solitude and loveliness of our western wilds. In the spring of 1850, he crossed the plains to California and returned by way of the Isthmus that fall. The following summer, he again set forth for California, by the overland route, in company with a son and a married daughter, whose husband was in California. His health had been for years somewhat impaired and his constitution broken. On Green river, in the Great Basin of the Rocky Mountains, he sickened and died, and his bones are left to moulder in the cheerless desert, with no lasting monument to point the weary pilgrim to his lonely grave.

(CHAPTER III.

ROCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP.

In ascending the river from Buffalo, we next enter upon Rockingham township, the settlement of which began simultaneously with that of Le Clair, Princeton and the Groves. This township, comprising the bluffs of the Mississippi, is somewhat broken, and was formerly covered with heavy timber. The bottom lands that are above overflow, are excellent farming lands. The settlement was begun at Rockingham in the fall of 1835. Col. John Sullivan, of Zanesville, Ohio, James and Adrian H. Davenport, Henry W. Higgins, and others, purchased the claim that had been made upon the present site of Rockingham, which is directly opposite the mouth of Rock river.

Like many other places selected in those days for town sites, Rockingham "possessed many advantages," the most prominent

of which was, that it would command the trade of Rock river, which, at that time, was supposed to be navigable. It was laid off into lots, in the spring of 1836. Its location upon the banks of the Mississippi, with Rock river on the opposite side, was well drawn, and lithograph maps made and circulated in eastern cities, and presented a picture of much beauty. For a while, it was a place of considerable importance. Emigrants, unacquainted with the annual overflow of the Mississippi, were deceived. To the eye, in low water, all was beautiful, and many a settler felt happy in finding so delightful a home in the West. But, with the rise of the river, its vast sloughs were filled, and the embryo city became an island. All communication with the bluff was cut off by a slough running back of the town near the bluffs, so deep, it is said, that keel boats had often navigated it with heavy loads. The first overflow was considered an "uncommon occurrence." The second, a thing that might "never happen again," and unknown to the "oldest inhabitants."

In March, 1834, Adrian H. Davenport made a claim on Credit Island. This Island, containing nearly four hundred acres, belongs to Scott county, it being on the Iowa side of the channel of the Mississippi, and lies just above the mouth of Rock river, and a little above the town of Rockingham. The early French traders had a trading post on this island, and credit was here first given to the Indians, hence the name, "Credit Island," was given to it. Soon after the settlement of Mr. Davenport upon this Island, he was joined by his father, Marmaduke Davenport, who had been Indian Agent at Rock Island. This Island was purchased from Government by Mr. Davenport, and is now owned by J. H. Jenny, of this city. On the 14th of August, 1834, Mr. Davenport had a son born, which was the second white male child born in the county, unless one of Levi Chamberlain's of Pleasant Valley be the second. This child of Mr. Davenport died while young. The Davenports, in the selection and location of Rockingham, became proprietors, and were dry goods and grocery merchants, for many years.

In 1850, A. H. Davenport and his father removed to Le Claire, where his father died in 1852, much respected for his many social and Christian virtues. Adrian H., his son, while living at Rockingham, in 1838, received the appointment from Gov. Lucas, of Sheriff of Scott and Clinton counties, Clinton being attached to

Scott for judicial purposes. This office he retained for twelve years, and filled it with great fidelity and acceptance to the people. He was ever a Democrat, a man of untiring energy of character and of moral worth. By his removal to Le Claire, in 1850, he not only secured to himself an ample fortune, but probably did more for the building up of that beautiful and enterprising city, than any other man in it. He was, in 1860, Mayor of the city of Le Claire, and will be more immediately identified, when we come to speak of this part of our county.

James Davenport, his uncle, and the one more particularly interested in the laying out of the town of Rockingham, removed from that place, in 1848, to Shullsburgh, Wisconsin, about fourteen miles from Galena, where he has been largely engaged in mining. Not only has he been successful in his new employment, and secured to himself ample stores of this world's goods, but has made himself useful in trying to arrest the progress of intemperance among the miners; employing none but sober and industrious men, and by precept and example, teaching with humility, the pure principles of Christianity, before which irreligion and vice have very much diminished.

The first of August, 1836, Col. Sullivan returned from Zanesville with his family, and some emigrants, for settlement. The town, on the first of May of this year, contained two log cabins, one being occupied by A. H. Davenport and his family, and the other by a Mr. Foster. Mr. Sullivan brought with him a small stock of goods, and removing his store from Stephenson, where he had been trading for a year, he erected a small building and soon opened a dry goods and grocery store. In the fall and winter of 1836, Rockingham contained some thirteen houses, and about one hundred inhabitants, among whom were Col. Sullivan and family, the Davenport families, Millington and Franklin Easley, Capt. John Coleman and brothers, Wm. Lingo, Messrs. Mountain and Cale, John Willis, S. S. Brown, Henry C. Morehead, David Sullivan, Ethereal and J. M. Camp, William White, Wm. Dutro, H. W. Higgins, Cornelius Harold, Richard Harrison, Jas. B. McCoy and E. H. Shepherd. Dr. E. S. Barrows located here, in the fall of 1836. He was the first practicing physician located on the Iowa side of the river, between Burlington and Du Buque. For many years his practice extended over a large extent of country, embracing Clinton, Cedar and Muscatine counties. In 1843, he removed

to Davenport, and continued his practice until, a few years since, he retired, to enjoy in quiet the fruits of his early labor. He has ever stood at the head of his profession, and has been President of the "Iowa State Medical Society."

Of the early settlers of Rockingham, many are still inhabitants of Scott county. Some have died, and many settled in other portions of the State. We should like to speak more in detail of the early trials and difficulties through which they passed; of their joys and sorrows; of disappointed hopes; and be allowed to follow each in his fortunes since the days of old Rockingham. But the limits of this work will not allow. There is, however, one truthful remark that may be written. No village of the "Far West," at that day, could boast of a better class of citizens, or those of whom she could be more proud, than Rockingham, both on account of their high toned moral character, their social and friendly qualities, and for their kind and liberal attentions to the sick and to the stranger. Many a wanderer from the home circle, has been made to know this, when laid upon a sick bed in a far western village, he has found the kindly tones and skillful hands of woman, in his sick room, and had at the same time substantial proof that he was not forgotten by the "sterner sex."

A large hotel was erected by the proprietors in 1836, and kept for several years by H. W. Higgins, and was one of the best public houses west of the Mississippi river. It is still standing, and occupied by W. D. Westlake, Esq. Capt. John Coleman still lives in this fallen city, the last of the first settlers. In the spring of 1837, two more dry goods stores were opened, one by the Davenports, and one by John S. Sheller & Co.

During the years of 1835, 1836 and 1837, a few settlers made claims back from the river, along under the bluffs and on the edge of the prairie. Among these were David Sullivan, in 1835, immediately back of Rockingham, under the bluff. His farm extended to the bottom lands. Rufus Ricker also settled, the same year, and Rev. Enoch Mead, in the winter of 1837. The Hon. James Grant opened a large farm in 1838, upon the edge of the prairie at a little grove, called at that time, "Picayune Grove." He enclosed three hundred and twenty acres, much of which he put under cultivation. He introduced the first blooded stock into the county, if not into the State, and did much for the agricultural interests of the county at that early day. The stock introduced

by Judge Grant, at that time, has been of immense value to our county, the fruits of which may be seen in the herds of many of our best farmers.

Among those who settled on the bluffs and on the edge of the prairie, were Lewis Ringlesby, Esq., E. W. H. Winfield, John Wilson, more particularly known as "Wildcat Wilson," from having often, as he said, "whipt his weight in wildcats," and John Friday, who broke the first ground upon the bluffs, seven acres for himself and four for Mr. Winfield.

Flour, in the winter of 1836, was from \$16 to \$20 per barrel; corn meal \$1.75 per bushel, and no meat of any kind for sale at any price, except deer, turkey and other wild game, of which there was plenty, at that day, in the timber lands of the bluff.

John W. Brown, Wm. Vantuyt and John Burnsides, also, made claims or purchased them on Ma-ka-tai me-she-kia-kiah-Sepo, or Black Hawk Creek, just above Rockingham, in 1836. John Wilson obtained, that fall, two bushels of seed wheat from John Dunn, who had settled in Allen's Grove, which seed he had brought from Ohio. Mr. Winfield sowed the wheat that fall, and cut the crop the following year with a sickle. Such were the beginnings in agriculture by the settlers of 1836.

At this early day, business of all kinds was dull, and the inhabitants sought pleasure and pastime in hunting and fishing. Enormous specimens of the finny tribe were taken, and to the new comer, were objects of surprise and curiosity. Cat fish were taken, weighing from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy-five pounds. I caught a species of the pike called the Muskelunge, in Sugar creek, which empties into Cedar river, in June, 1837, that weighed thirty five and a half pounds, and measured five and a half feet long. The same summer, E. W. H. Winfield caught a cat fish in the Mississippi, at Rockingham, that weighed one hundred and seventy pounds. Having hauled it up in front of the hotel, it was soon surrounded with spectators. A little daughter of H. W. Higgins having caught a sight of the monster fish through the crowd, as it lay floundering on the ground, and not knowing exactly what it was, or the exact cause of the excitement, started off upon the run, exclaiming, "There, now, if I don't go and tell my Pa, they have killed our old sow." The river and the forest furnished ample sport as well as food for the early settler. Venison was often purchased for two and three cents per

pound. Wild turkeys, for twenty-five to fifty cents, and prairie chickens were so plentiful that they were generally given away by the sportsmen.

In the summer of 1837, a steam saw and flouring mill was erected by Capt. Sullivan, it being the first of the kind built in Scott county, or upon this side of the Mississippi, between Burlington and Du Buque. A Methodist church was organized in 1836, and in the fall of 1837, the Rev. Enoch Mead gathered a small church of the Presbyterian order. In 1840, the Rev. Zachariah Goldsmith, an Episcopalian, organized a church. All congregations worshipped, by turns, in a small church building erected by common subscription. It was also used as a school house. In 1833, Rockingham contained forty-five houses, including stores and work-shops, and, in 1839, there were four dry goods and three grocery stores, besides a drug store and some whisky shops. Mechanics of nearly all trades had settled there, but the financial state of things at that date was so low that but little was done in the way of trade.

Scott county was organized, and named, after Gen. Winfield Scott, at the session of the Legislature of Wisconsin Territory, which met at Burlington in December, 1837. The same act provided for holding an election for the county seat on the third Monday of February, 1838. Rockingham and Davenport being the only points to be voted for, the polls were to be opened at the Rockingham House, in Rockingham, and the Davenport Hotel, in Davenport, and at the house of E. Parkhurst, in the town of Parkhurst, now Le Claire. This same legislative act also provided for an election to be held, two weeks after the county seat election, for choice of county officers, at which last election, Rockingham elected her candidates. The commissioners were B. F. Pike, Alfred Carter and A. W. Campbell, with E. Cook for County Clerk.

The great importance of the county seat election is apparent. The fortunate town in the election was to become important from having the seat of justice. Great preparations were made for a spirited contest. The matter had been before the Legislature, and an attempt was made to locate it by that body, but a scheme of bribery and corruption among some of its members was brought to light, and an act then passed to leave it to the people. The leading men in the contest upon the Rockingham side were Col.

Sullivan, the Messrs. Davenport, Dr. E. S. Barrows, G. B. Sargent, J. S. Shiller, J. C. Higginson, W. Barrows, H. W. Higgins, Wm. Vantyl, O. G. McLain, Fitzpatrick, Phipps, Shepherd and others besides many that were non-residents of the town, who lent their influence and time upon the occasion. Davenport had her Le Claire, Col. Davenport and sons, Judge Mitchell, James Mackintosh and brother, D. C. Eldridge, John Owens, and a host of others, men of means, talent and influence.

Rockingham, in this first election, if conducted on fair principles, had no cause to fear the result. She had no need of resorting to unfair means to gain the election. The Southern part of the county, at that time, was the most densely populated. She could poll more votes than Davenport, besides which the Le Claire township, at the head of the rapids, took sides with Rockingham, expecting at some future time to effect an alteration in the county lines on the North, so as to make Le Claire more central, and, of course, it was policy to vote for the most Southern point in the election.

The returns of the election were to be made to Gov. Dodge, of Wisconsin, we then belonging to that Territory. The act specified that the place having the largest number of votes, should be declared the county seat, and that it should be the duty of the Governor upon such return being made, to issue his proclamation accordingly. Davenport, well knowing her weakness and want of "material aid," entered into a contract with a man by the name of Bellows, from Du Buque, to furnish voters at so much per head, board, whisky and lodging to be furnished by the party requiring service.

The day of election came, and with it came also the importation of voters by the "Bellows Express." They were from Du Buque and Snake Diggings, eleven sleigh loads of the most wretched looking rowdies and vagabonds that had ever appeared in the streets of Davenport. They were the dregs of the mining districts of that early day; filled with impudence and profanity, soaked in whisky and done up in rags. Illinois contributed largely by vote for Davenport. There was no use in challenging such a crowd of corruption, for they hardly knew the meaning of the word perjury. So they were permitted to vote unmolested. Rockingham at this election, whatever she may have done afterwards, observed a strict, honest and impartial method of voting. There

was no necessity for a resort to intrigue. She knew her strength and had it within herself. The election being over, the Du Buque delegation of miners returned home, having drunk ten barrels of whisky and cost the contracting parties over three thousand dollars in cash!

Davenport polled a majority of votes. The rejoicing was most enthusiastic. Bonfires and illuminations were exhibited, and the result was considered a great and final triumph. But while these rejoicings were going on in Davenport, Dr. E. S. Barrows and John C. Higginson were on their way to Mineral Point, Wisconsin, to see Gov. Dodge, with documents sufficient to prove the frauds that had been perpetrated at Davenport. Upon this exposure the Governor refused to issue his certificate of election.

Thus things remained, until the Legislature met in June, at Burlington, at which time they passed an act for another election for the county seat, between Davenport and Rockingham, to be held in the following August. This act more particularly defined the manner in which the election should be carried on, and voters were required to have a residence of sixty days. The returns of this election were to be made by County Commissioner's Clerk, E. Cook, Esq., to the Sheriff of Du Buque county, and he was to count the votes in the presence of the County Commissioners of that county. The place having the greatest number of votes was to be entered on the books of the Commissioners, and such place to become the seat of justice.

At this election, Rockingham feeling rather sore under the treatment at the last election, laid aside all conscientious scruples in relation to the whole matter, and chose to fight the enemy in their own way, well knowing that act, by its wording, did not require legal votes. The campaign opened with vigor. The note of preparation was sounded, and contending parties summoned to the field. The county was canvassed, and the unstable and wavering were brought into the ranks on one or the other side. Building lots were proffered and accepted for influence and for votes, in both places. Col. Sullivan employed many extra hands around his mill just about that time. The struggle was harder than before, and the corruptions much greater, though carried on in a different manner. The day of election came. The officers appointed to attend the polls, were either not sworn at all, or sworn illegally, so that in case of defeat, a plea might be setup for a new election.

The ballot box was stuffed. Illegal voting in various ways was permitted. Non-residents of Scott county swore they were "old settlers," while the poll-books and ballot box showed a list of names that no human tongue was ever found to answer to.

A great mystery seemed to hang over the Rockingham polls. They had been watched by the Davenport party, and yet when the ballot box was emptied of its contents, it showed most astonishing results. The committee sent down from Davenport to watch the polls, could never explain where all the votes came from! The names in the box and on the poll-books agreed, but the great difficulty seemed to be, that the settlement did not warrant such a tremendous vote. This, however, was afterwards explained as being in strict conformity with the oath taken by some of the Judges or Clerks of the election, which was, that they should "to the best of their ability, see that votes enough were polled to elect Rockingham the County Seat."

The election being over, the returns were made to the Sheriff of Du Buque county, and counted in the presence of the Commissioners, as provided in the Act, when a majority was found for Rockingham. The Commissioners, for some cause, failed to make the entry upon their records, as required by the Act, but, during the week, took the liberty of "purging the polls," throwing out a sufficient number of votes to give Davenport the majority by two votes. One of the votes thus thrown out, was that of John W. Brown, who settled on Black Hawk creek in 1835, and was still living there.

By this proceeding, Davenport was declared the county seat. Whereupon the Rockingham party made application to the Supreme Court for a Mandamus, directed to the County Commissioners of Du Buque county, requiring them to make the proper entry upon their records of the election in Scott county, in accordance with the act of the Legislature.

On the final hearing of the case, the Court decided that they had no original jurisdiction over the case, but at the request of the parties, the case having been fully argued upon its merits, the Court examined the whole question and gave an opinion, the effect of which was, that Rockingham was the county seat.

The Legislature being then in session at Burlington, passed an Act for another election. At this election there were two other points added to Davenport and Rockingham, as aspirants for the

county seat. One was the "Geographical centre," now Sloperville and the other was a quarter section of land at the mouth of Duck creek, called "Winfield." Before the election, the Geographical centre was dropped. Davenport and Rockingham then commenced offering town lots, and money for the use of the county, in case the county seat should be located on their ground. Thousands of dollars and donations of lots and land were made, and bonds given to secure it to the county, in case of the selection of the point desired by either party. But at length Rockingham withdrew her claims upon condition that Davenport would build, free of expense to the county, a Court-House and Jail, similar to those in Rock Island, which she entered into bonds to do, and the election was left for decision between Davenport and the "Duck Creek cornfield," as it was called.

The Commissioners elected by the Rockingham party issued an order for a contract to build a Jail in Rockingham, as will be seen by the following notice, published in the *Iowa Sun*, of May 12th, 1840:

Notice to Contractors.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received by the Board of Commissioners of Scott county, for building a JAIL in the town of Rockingham, until the first day of July next, on which day the proposals will be opened and the contract let.

A plan and specifications may be seen by calling on John H. Sullivan, Esq., Commissioner to superintend the erection.

Proposals to be endorsed: "Proposals for erecting a Jail in Scott county," and directed to "John H. Sullivan, Esq., Commissioner to superintend the erection of a Jail in Rockingham."

By order of the Board of Commissioners of Scott county.

ROCKINGHAM, May 12, 1840.

EBENEZER COOK, Clerk.

Davenport gained the election, built the public buildings free of all cost to the county, according to her contract, and thus terminated one of the most exciting questions that had ever disturbed the quiet of our peaceful community.

The battle was long and spirited. The contending parties withdrew from the bloodless field with happy triumph, each having out-generaled the other, and found that even when a victory was won, the laurels are not always sure. A peace treaty was held at the Rockingham Hotel in the winter of 1840, where the most prominent actors in the past scenes met as mutual friends, and buried the hatchet forever, ratifying the treaty, as it was called, by a grand ball, where more than forty couples mingled in the

dance and seemed to forget at once all the strife and bickerings of the past, and seal their friendship anew, with earnest and willing hearts.

During the whole of this controversy, singular as it may appear, the utmost good feeling and gentlemanly conduct prevailed. No personal feuds grew out of it, and, to this day, it is often the source of much merriment among the old settlers; and is looked upon only as the freaks and follies of a frontier life.

Rockingham was settled by a class of people noted for their social and friendly virtues. Nowhere in the West was there a more open-hearted and generous people. In sickness, of which there was much at an early day, all had sympathy and attention, and the most cordial good feeling prevailed throughout the whole community. They were united in every good work and enterprise, and always ready to kindly act.

A Ferry was established across the Mississippi river in the Spring of 1837, connecting with a State road up the South side of Rock River, which brought much travel on that route.

In 1815, the town began to decline. Many of the inhabitants left, and settled in other parts of the country, some in the city of Davenport. At present Rockingham is a deserted village, having but three or four families left in it, the buildings having been moved into the country for farm houses, or to Davenport for dwellings.

CHAPTER IV.

DAVENPORT TOWNSHIP.

This township, like Rockingham, has bluff lands that are somewhat broken near the river, until we reach a point three miles above the city of Davenport, where it opens out into a beautiful prairie called Pleasant Valley. The bluff, or timber line, between the river and prairie is from one to two miles wide, and was formerly well wooded.

By the "bluffs" of the Mississippi river, we do not mean here that they are an abrupt or perpendicular ascent, but a gentle rise from the river or bottom lands; not so steep but roads may be con-

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