

ARTICLE II.  
HISTORY OF SCOTT COUNTY, IOWA.

BY WILLARD BARROWS, ESQUIRE, OF DAVENPORT.

MEMOIR BY THE EDITOR.

WILLARD BARROWS, Esq., the writer of the following history, was born at Munson, Massachusetts, in 1806. He received a thorough education in the Common Schools and Academies of New England. In 1827, he settled in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, where he taught school for several years; and was married in 1832. Selecting the pursuit of engineering and surveying, he engaged in a contract with the Government to finish the surveys of the Choctaw Indian Purchase, in the cypress swamps and cane-brakes on the Yo-zoo and Sunflower rivers, in the region where the North-western army and navy of the United States have lately operated. By the sudden rise of the Mississippi river, which overflowed all the country except the ridges, his party were cut off from all inhabitants and supplies, during the winter of 1836-7, reducing them to short allowance, and even to the fruit of the persimmon tree and the flesh of the opossum for food. All other animals fled, except that a hawk or an owl was occasionally killed. About the first of March, the flood so far subsided, that they went by canoes to Vicksburg and Natches; and he proceeded to Jackson, Mississippi, to report there to the Surveyor General.

In 1837, he was occupied in the first surveys of Iowa by the Government, and spent the winter on the Wapsipinicon river. And in July, 1838, he settled with his family in Rockingham, five miles below Davenport.

In 1840, Mr. Barrows surveyed the Islands of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Rock river to Quincy, Illinois. In 1841-2, the public surveys being suspended, he engaged in farming, and held the office of Justice of the Peace, of Postmaster and Notary Public, at Rockingham, in which he continued till 1843, when he entered upon the survey of the Kickapoo country, North of the Wisconsin river. There the Winnebago Indians stole the provisions of the party, and he was compelled to go to Prairie Du Chien for supplies. On his return, his way was obstructed by prostrate timber hurled in every direction by a terrific tornado, through which, with the help of indolent Indians, he was able to cut a passage only two and a half miles in two days. Forced to send his provisions up the Kickapoo by the Indians in canoes, he followed on by land, till they were past the track of the whirlwind. The supplies were landed and the Indians dismissed. He then carried the provisions a half mile and concealed them. The next day, early, he took a

bag of flour and a little pork on a single pack-horse, and hastened to relieve his men, as fast as he could, through the wilderness, over the "Sugar loaves of Wisconsin," as the region is called, where Col. Atchison, in 1832, in pursuit of Blackhawk and his Indian warriors, was obliged to leave his wagons and baggage with the loss of many horses. On the fourth day, he came upon one starving man of his party; and, after refreshing him, he pressed on to the camp, where the rest, neglecting to rescue themselves when they were able, and supposing him to be murdered by the Indians, were sunken in despair. Cheered by his arrival, and strengthened with food, they all started for the depot of provisions on the Kickapoo, and reached the place, to find them all stolen again by the Indians. The only means of saving their lives, then, was to ascend the Kickapoo to a ford, and thence go to Prairie Du Chien. On the third day after, they reached a settlement, where they stayed a week and recruited; and when arrived at Prairie Du Chien, they found many articles of their clothing in the liquor shops, that the Root Indians had stolen and sold. Their horses had previously been scattered during the tornado, so that the party had been compelled to eat their two dogs, at the camp, making soup of the bones and nettles, and boiling part of their harness, for food, instead of horse-flesh.

Afterwards, Mr. Barrows traversed Northern Iowa, then in possession of the Indian tribes, with a view to a knowledge of the region. He visited the Mission School, then at Fort Atchison, where he got a passport over that section of the country from Rev. Mr. Lowrey, then in charge of the Mission.

"Barrows' New Map of Iowa, with Notes", was published in 1854, by Doolittle & Munson, Cincinnati; and it was considered of so much importance that the Legislature of Iowa ordered copies of it for the members of both Houses, and also for the State officers. This work, together with letters published in the Davenport *Democrat*, from California, whither he went in 1850, by the overland route, enduring almost incredible hardships, and returning by Mexico and Cuba, and also some communications for the press of a scientific character, constitute, along with the history that here follows, the chief literary productions of Mr. Barrows, all descriptive of new parts of our country.

At intervals, Mr. Barrows has turned his attention to land business, with success. His suburban residence and grounds are conspicuous to every person passing in the cars, South-west of Davenport, where he enjoys the fruits of his past activity and enterprise.

In person, as is indicated by his portrait in this number, Mr. Barrows is full and portly. In manners, he is courteous and genial. As a Christian, "the highest style of man," he is charitable and discreet. And, to use the words of the author of "Davenport, Past and Present," to which the reader is referred for fuller particulars, and from which these are drawn; "may many years yet be his portion, as happy and pleasant as his early life has been laborious and active."

INTRODUCTION.

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In compliance with a formal request of the Curators of the State Historical Society, I have undertaken the task of writing a full history of Scott county, Iowa; or more particularly, facts and incidents connected with its early history. A residence of twenty-five years in this county has given me an opportunity for observation, and a knowledge of the proper sources from which to obtain information.

Much care has been taken to gather information from the early settlers of the county; and a hearty response has come up from some parts. In many instances, difference of opinion has arisen as to dates and circumstances. In such cases, I have generally taken the decision of the majority.

It might be supposed that our existence as a county is so brief, not twenty-eight years, that the incidents connected with its settlement and growth would be fresh in the minds of all. Such may be the case with much of our history, while some important facts are lost. The early settler seldom finds time, if he has the ability, to record passing events, save in the memory. The unparalleled rapidity with which the West has marched forward to greatness and power, is a sufficient excuse for the pioneer historian, when he fails, through want of facts, to give a full and perfect account of his first struggles. The early emigrant to a new county finds that all his time and energies are required to provide even for the necessities of life; the rude cabin must be raised, for a temporary abode at least; the virgin soil must be broken up and fenced, and numberless little requisites for the comfort of himself or family, crowd upon his attention, so that the new beginner is most emphatically his own "hewer of wood, and drawer of water."

In collecting the material for this work, the author has often been doubly repaid for his labor in the pleasant meetings he has had with many an "old settler," from whom the whirl and bustle of life had separated him for years. Such reunions are sweet and profitable, and these hardy sons of toil, meeting after many years of separation, like old soldiers, retire to some

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shady nook, there recount the scenes through which they have passed, and "fight their battles o'er again." Although the trials and hardships of the pioneers of Scott county may not compare with the early settlement of Kentucky, Ohio, or some other Western States, yet there are many incidents connected with its early history that are worthy of record, and should be gathered before they pass beyond our reach.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL REMARKS.

The County of Scott being situated on the Mississippi River, and having a water front of some thirty-five miles upon its South and Eastern boundary, has many natural advantages not found in more inland counties. Upon the North it is bounded by the Wau-bessa-pinnecon Se-po, which in the Indian language signifies "the place of white potatoes." The name is derived from the two Indian words "Waubessa," white or swan like, and "Pinne-ac," a potato; Se-po being the Indian name for river. The river was probably so named from the fact of great quantities of the wild artichoke being found in that region.

This stream is some ten or twelve rods wide, with a swift clear current, and its banks generally skirted with timber. Its bottom lands are from a half to a mile or two wide, and are subject to annual overflow, affording great pasturage for stock, not being in general dry enough for cultivation. The Western boundary of the county is upon rich rolling prairie extending along the fifth principal meridian, separating it from the counties of Cedar and Muscatine.

There is much in the early history of this country to interest and excite the antiquarian and lover of research. Long before the discovery of the Great River by Marquette and Joliet, on the 17th of June, 1673, tradition tells us that the spot of ground

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