

marked in the mill before rafting. Stone worked one day and had the ague the next, when Richman, who had it, but on alternate days, took his place, which was a great accommodation to their business.

One of the most noted places of resort was Tiley Smalley's blacksmith shop. It was the gymnasium of the town. Here the Hon. Ralph P. Lowe, his law partner, John G. Deshler, Michael Greene, Ozra Phelps, "Pap Matthews," (Hiram Matthews) Reuben Warren and a dozen others of less muscular ability, met to test their strength in wrestling, jumping, lifting and other tests of strength. One could not pass the shop, that stood near where Dillaway's store now stands, without finding from six to twelve either engaged in such tests of strength or listening to some story from "Pap Matthews," who was an expert in this line.

EARLY SETTLERS.

WHERE AND HOW THEY LIVED BEFORE 1840.

BY J. P. WALTON.

Read before the Muscatine Academy of Science Monday evening, Dec. 6, 1880.

IN the spring of 1838, when the Ishnoppé, or Indian, took his final departure, the white settler, called by the Indian "Chemockeman," had made quite a stride toward the development of this part of the Black Hawk Purchase. Within a radius of a dozen miles of Bloomington, now Muscatine, at least six or eight promising towns were started. At the mouth of Pine Creek the town of Montpelier was located. It had the first post-office in this county. Letters received at this office were directed; Iowa Post-office, Black Hawk Purchase, Wisconsin Territory, and nearly all had twenty-five cents postage charged against them. Montpelier had a grocery store, and, like all the groceries of that day, whisky was one of the most important articles, tobacco next, and with salt, coffee, sugar and molasses the store was first-class.

The Montpelier was owned by Major Gordon or Benjamin Nye, or perhaps both. It was finally closed when Gordon and Nye got into a difficulty. Mr. Nye stabbed Major Gordon quite critically with a small pocket-knife. While the Major was laid up with his wounds the clerk sold out the stock of goods, closed the store and came to Bloomington. The matter soon got into the courts.

The closing of that store closed the prospects of the town of Montpelier. This town of Montpelier was probably the first one laid out in the county. It originated with Mr. Benjamin Nye, who was a man of integrity but also a very passionate man. Mr. Nye, like all other merchants of his time, had to go to St. Louis for his goods. A present resident of our city was going up the river on a steamboat which stopped at the mouth of Pine Creek to put off Mr. Nye and his goods. After the goods were landed Mr. Nye got into a difficulty with the clerk of the boat, and picking up a bar of iron made an attack on him with the determination of killing him. The clerk ran for the boat and Nye after him. The clerk reached his office first and secured his gun, when the race turned the other way. Nye was driven from the boat and the plank drawn in, when the boat shoved off and went on its way. Mr. Nye was the first man that sold "Yankee clocks" in this county, and the clock that can be purchased at this time for two dollars, sold then for from \$20 to \$30. We are not sure that Mr. Nye ever run a peddling wagon, but he had a clock depot long after he quit the mercantile business. Mr. Nye was probably the second settler in Muscatine county, having landed at the mouth of Pine Creek in 1834, Err and Lot Thornton being the first, a few months earlier. Mr. Nye finally closed his earthly career in an encounter with his son-in-law in 1852.

The town of Fairport, then called Salem, numbered four or five buildings. It held a doubtful identity for several years until the pottery business was started. It is now a thrifty village, manufacturing many dollars worth of stoneware annu-

ally, most of which finds its way up the river on boats and barges. We have been informed that this town was first laid out by Alfred Lyon & Co. in 1836.

Wyoming was located about three-quarters of a mile farther down the river and like its rival, Salem, contained several buildings. The principal man of the town was Major Sherfey. He kept a grocery store with the usual commodities, whiskey, tobacco and salt, and perhaps a few of the other substantial. The day before "New Years" the boys called on him for a treat, the Major declining; the following morning he found one of his buildings on the ice of the river with his grocery sign placed on it. The Major tried his utmost to get his neighbors to help him replace it, but they were inflexible, and nothing short of a jug of whiskey would induce them to help, so the Major brought out the jug, and the boys kept "New Years" in good shape, undoing all their mischief, and had a good time generally, all on one gallon of whiskey. The Major did not remain in the mercantile business much longer but removed to his farm in Sweetland township, where he remained until his death. With his removal the town commenced its decline. The last time we visited the place we happened to meet an old settler and his wife in the road and just in front of the place the following colloquy ensued: "Where did Wyoming stand?" "Why, up there by those trees." "It was quite a town, was'nt it?" "Oh yes, it had a half a dozen buildings and quite a large tavern (turning to his wife)—we went there to have our dances." "Who kept the tavern?" "Dr. Coval." There is now a field of corn where the hotel and store stood.

The town of Geneva was situated three miles up the river, where Col. Hare's farm is now located. This town was laid out in the spring or summer of 1837, by Dr. Eli Reynolds and John Lawson. Dr. Reynolds lived in a double log cabin on the bank of the river near the sulphur spring. In the summer of 1837, Harvey Gillett purchased an interest in the town and commenced to build two hewed log houses, one for him-

self and the other for his brother Addison. In the fall when he got his house under roof he started to New York after his family, which consisted of a wife and six or more girls, all under the age of thirteen years. One could scarcely expect to find a family more unfitted to emigrate to so new a country. Mrs. Gillett and family had lived for a long time in the best of New York society. Her relatives were among the most noted commercial houses of that city. She did not possess that happy habit of making the most of her circumstances; on the contrary, was disposed to find fault where the opposite would suit better, and a sufficient opportunity was offered, during the winter of 1837 and '38. It was said that when the boat landed late in November, 1837, within a few rods and in full sight of their future home, Mrs. Gillett asked of her liege lord: "Where is our new home?" "Over behind the hill," was the reply. One can scarcely imagine her surprise upon entering their new house, a simple hewed log cabin, without chinking or daubing, doors, windows, chimney or floors. Mr. Gillett while on his way up the river on the boat had secured the services of a Yankee carpenter, who soon made the building inhabitable. Mr. Gillett's family stayed in the west something over a year and returned to New York and never came west again. Mr. Gillett, after marrying a second wife, settled near Lisbon, Linn county, in this State, and may yet be living for aught we know.

The town of Geneva had a steam saw-mill. It was situated at the mouth of the creek where Col. Hare now quarries limestone. It was owned by Col. John Vannatta and Dr. Eli Reynolds. This mill after passing through several hands (Henry Funck, of our city, once had an interest in it), was taken down and removed to this place and used for a barrel manufactory by Coe & Wells. Geneva had its grocery store, having whiskey and tobacco, without salt. It was kept by James Davis, the high sheriff of the county. In the front of the grocery we saw the first school meeting ever held in this

county. Early in July, 1838, the neighbors to the number of a dozen or so convened and unanimously concluded to build a log school-house that would answer for other meetings, and the location seemed to be the only difficulty. Mr. Weir Long, the oldest man of the number, was of the opinion that it should be located in as "centerable a place as possible." However, the meeting adjourned without building the school-house, and it still remains unbuilt.

Dr. Reynolds, the two Gilletts, James Davis, Addison, Reynolds, Amos and Asa Walton and the engineer, Mr. Smith, boarding at Dr. Reynolds', composed the men of the town. As the post-office, which was the residence of the postmaster, was one of the somewhat public buildings of the place, let us describe it. It was a round log cabin, about 14x16 feet in the clear, having the openings between the logs filled with pieces or chunks of wood and daubed with the black mud of the river bottom. The chimney was made of split sticks and daubed with the same kind of mud. The roof was covered with split clapboards, four feet long, resting on ribs or bearing poles. The clapboards butted against eave poles and were fastened down with weight-poles. The door was made of split clapboards pinned to wooden hinges and fastened with a pin. The floor was laid with puncheons, made by splitting logs and hewing one side. For a window, an opening was left between the logs near the door which was stuffed with a coat or blanket during the night or when the weather was cold. When this opening and the door were closed all the light that entered the room came down the chimney. Not more than half of the buildings in Geneva had glass in them; paper made transparent by oiling was often used as a substitute.

You will perceive from the terms that log-cabin architecture had advanced to quite an art. The bedsteads had one post each, set a proper distance from the corner of the room, with poles extending to the end and side of the room, and were covered with clapboards on which the bed was spread,

and it was no uncommon thing to find two inches of snow over the entire bed in the morning after a stormy night. On one of these beds we enjoyed our periodical earthquake, a shake with the ague. This post-office, like the town, is a thing of the past. About this time the town of Moscow was laid out by Dr. Charles Drury and Silas Webster. This and an old Indian town, near what is now known as Saulsbury Ford, comprised the frontier towns of our west and north when the city of Muscatine, then called Bloomington, was laid out. It was without doubt the roughest and most densely timbered portion of our county. The court-house square contained more than one hundred large oak trees. These hills were known by the river men as Grindstone Bluffs, from its yellow sandstone that was frequently used for grindstones.

Bloomington undoubtedly had the first house that was built in the county, and it could hardly be called a settler's cabin. It was simply an Indian trading-house, owned by Col. George Davenport and managed by Mr. Farnum. This trading-house was located near the mouth of Pappoose Creek. Here allow me to speak about the origin of the name. Hon. S. C. Hastings, now of California, informed us that the name Pappoose Creek was applied to the small stream emptying into the river near the foot of Sycamore street, from the number of Indian children belonging to the parties encamped on its banks. Hence we conclude that in early days, as at present, this locality was represented by young folks. The name of Bloomington was changed by an order of court in 1849. The manner in which it was done we learned from Hon. T. S. Parvin, now of Iowa City, which was as follows: The citizens of Bloomington, having long felt the necessity of a change of name and having got up several petitions to the legislature for a change, were always foiled. John Vanatta, who laid out the town, named it Bloomington after his old Indiana town of that name, and disliked to have it changed. So he would invariably get up remonstrances against a change of name and circulate them

among his country friends. The remonstrances always prevented a change. One day while court was in session, Judge Grant asked Stephen Whicher and T. S. Parvin why they did not get the court to change the name of the town. He said the constitution gave the power to the court, and expressed his willingness to make a change, if a petition was presented. Parvin asked how many signatures would be necessary; "only one," was the reply. Stephen Whicher wrote the petition and Whicher and Parvin signed it. A few others came into the court-room and signed it, making about six names in all. The Judge ordered the sheriff to call court, which being done, Whicher presented the petition. The court ordered the clerk to make a record that the petition was granted and that the town of Bloomington should hereafter be called Muscatine, Mr. Whicher always spelling the name with a *q*.

Before closing, we must make a brief mention of those two long forgotten towns, Albany and Troy. The former was situated on Muscatine Island, just above the county line on the river bank. The other on the lower part of the farm now occupied by John W. Walton. The traditional history of these two "Edens" runs as follows: Two adventurous Yankees happened to step off of a steanboat that had stopped for wood, and concluded to each lay out a town for himself, hoping that they would some day rival their namesakes in the State of New York. After staking off their cities, the river commenced to rise, and they soon found portions of their cities under water. They then took the first boat and left for parts unknown, leaving nothing but their village legs to mark the places of their disappointment.

The towns of Edgington, Illinois City, and Drury's Landing, were our neighbors on the other side of the river. Drury's Landing was a place of considerable importance for the first twenty-five years after civilization reached the Mississippi. Almost the entire traffic was done by steamboats on the river, and Drury's Landing being the only landing between New

Boston and Rock Island, a distance of about sixty miles, made it one of the principal shipping points. The story of its origin is about as follows: Captain Laferty, an old steamboat captain, discovered the landing, or, if not, at least he observed its natural locality for business, and related it to his partners. The four parties, Captain Laferty, W. C. Townsley, S. R. and Isaiah Drury, took the claim, cleared out the brush, and built a house.

In 1838 Reynolds and W. A. Drury kept a very creditable store, and cut steamboat wood in the winter. We have seen more than one thousand cords of wood in a pile at the landing. This wood was cut on the island, on government lands, in the winter, and hauled on the ice, which never failed to supply a good bridge for hauling in those early years. The price for cutting was "three bits" (thirty-seven and one-half cents), per cord, and one "bit" for hauling, making the wood cost on the bank fifty cents per cord, and it sold for one dollar and a quarter.

The Drurys handled the grain, packed the pork, and did the business of those early times in a very satisfactory manner. Knowing their advantage, not wishing or neglecting to invite competition at a proper time, their more energetic rivals at Bloomington got the business. Some years after, about the time coal was discovered, an attempt was made to recover the lost prestige, but being surrounded by a class of people that rarely built school-houses or towns, and being near the advent of the iron horse, which took the business from the rivers, the attempt was a failure. We are of the opinion that had Drury's Landing been owned and surrounded by thrifty Yankees in its early days, a city as large as Warsaw, Quincy, or Alton, would have been the result.

The town of Illinois City is still in existence and has some mercantile life. It was originally laid out by Coleman and Clump.

The early settler had many inconveniences to contend with. When Mr. Gillett landed at Geneva with his family as we

have before stated, his house was unfinished. He wanted lumber for floors, doors and other inside work. The nearest lumber yard was at St. Louis, and to get lumber from there after the 20th of November was out of the question. He went across the river to Drury's mill, situated at Copperas Creek, secured some lumber and had it hauled to Drury's Landing. It had to be boated across the river. They took two log canoes, placed them eight or ten feet apart, and laid the lumber across the canoes. Addison Gillett was in the stern of one canoe and Amos Walton in the other to paddle them across the river. When they got about midway the wind commenced to blow. It soon filled their canoes with water. They were in rather a critical position, as neither could swim, with water above their waists, almost as cold as ice could make it, and nothing visible above the waves but a small portion of their lumber. However, their raft as it was then, did not separate; they plied their paddles as best they could and succeeded in making a landing on one of the small islands at the foot of Geneva Island.

Two years later lumber had become more abundant, as we had mills which did sawing in several places.

Nye's mill on Pine Creek, Long's mill on Sweetland, Warfield's mill on Mad Creek, and the Geneva steam saw-mill, made most of the lumber. Breadstuffs were quite an item. Drury's mill was the first to do any grinding and Nye's mill was next. These were the only mills within twenty miles of this place that could grind meal. There was a steam grist mill at Rockingham, a long extinct town situated about six miles this side of Davenport. During the dry portions of the season the settler was put to a hard pass for flour or meal, and many times we have grated corn on a tin grater to make bread. While the meal was excellent, the work was hard. We think it would take an hour to prepare enough meal for a supper for four or five persons. We were better situated than some of our neighbors; having the postoffice, we were of course

on good terms with the stage driver. Many a sack of meal and flour we have persuaded him to bring down from Rockingham or Davenport during the dry seasons of '39 and '40, but as soon as it was known that Walton had a sack of meal the Burdetts, Gilberts and Berkshires would send and *borrow a portion; at least three-fourths of the sack was loaned out. It was of course returned, but frequently after the fall rains and the mills had started up.

Late in one of these falls, when there had been but little rain, Mr. Samuel Gilbert and a young man of our acquaintance started for Nye's mill, on Pine Creek, with an ox team and a load of grain to be ground. They got to the mill just before dark. The mill was running but was full of grists; in fact more than a week's steady grinding was in the mill. Mr. Patterson, the miller, did not object to their leaving their grist, but refused to grind it until their turn came. They put their grist in the mill, fed their team, took in their bedding and prepared to camp in the mill. When supper was ready the miller was invited to share. The miller concluded he would, and after having a good supper and washing it down out of a bottle that Mr. Gilbert had taken the precaution to take along, he felt in better humor. He began to be quite sleepy, as he had set up most of the previous night. Mr. Gilbert persuaded him that he had better go to bed, Gilbert volunteering to run the mill during the night in his place, all of which he agreed to by turning in. Mr. Gilbert also turned in—his grain in the hopper. Mr. Patterson got a good night's sleep and our friends got their grinding done ready to start home in the morning.

During the summer of '39 or '40 Judge Williams put up a horse-mill out on his farm, four or five miles west of this city.

We recollect taking a bushel of corn on the back of an Indian pony and going eight miles to this mill. We paid 12½ cents for the privilege of grinding. Our pony was small, and the mill ran quite hard, and ground slow, so it took all day to

go to the mill, do the grinding and get back. We had to furnish the corn, power, pay $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents toll and do our own grinding. It was nevertheless the easiest way we had of getting bread.

There was another inconvenience that the pioneers of this county had to contend with that does not exist in any new country at this time. The lands had to be purchased at not less than \$200 in gold for a quarter section. Now the emigrant simply takes his claim and files the notice in the land office, which will protect him from five to seven years. At the end of that, he proves his claim, pays \$10 and gets his deed.

Almost all the money that the settler brought with him was for the purchase of land. Very little money was in circulation previous to the land sales in the fall or early winter of 1838, and after those sales until the second run of emigration, which began in the spring of 1842, there was really no money in circulation. The farmer sold his grain to the merchants and took "store pay." Corn was worth ten cents per bushel, and wheat from thirty to forty cents. No money was paid; this "store pay" currency did most of the business until 1850.

The old settlers, previous to 1840, were, a great portion, squatters, who had for several generations lived on the frontier. They had started from Virginia, settled in Kentucky, squatted in southern Ohio and along the Wabash, then again in Illinois and on the Black Hawk Purchase, and by the year 1842, many of the first squatters had left, never to be known again in eastern Iowa. These people had quite a contempt for the Yankee. They were afraid of his wooden nutmegs. They had just as little sympathy for him as they have now for the Chinaman in San Francisco. The Yankee could shake himself to death with the ague for all they cared.

The circumstances of the times compelled the settlers to be notably hospitable. Every man's cabin was a hotel, and if a man could find a cabin he was sure of a part of its best ac-

commodations, and generally without price. Among these squatters was a man by the name of Christopher Burns, who came here in 1837, and left about 1842. He was a man of fine stature, a model of great physical strength, and weighed about two hundred and twenty pounds without an extra pound of flesh. He could out-lift, out-jump, and out-wrestle any man in the county, and but few days passed at a time when he had not mauled some one. He was the bully and tyrant of the county, fond of whisky, though rarely drinking to excess. He seldom had any but counterfeit money. Rumor always placed him as one of a gang of horse-thieves which infested the country. His name was so notorious that but few dared to say no to him. He could always borrow all he wanted, never repaying anything, and if the loaner ventured to ask for return, he frequently got knocked down. He would go into the store, if he saw any of his neighbors, and generally accost them thus: "Your time to treat." They almost invariably did the treating. Murder was not very frightful to him. It was reported that he met an Indian above Mad Creek, near where the powder magazines now stand, and made some request of the Indian which was declined. Burns deliberately shot him. His remains were found some days after mostly eaten by the wolves. Mr. Burns moved to the Missouri settlement, and within a year was shot by another settler, who was never disturbed by the law or people.

Other towns may have come into existence, for on a map published in 1851 we find the town of Iowa, situated on the river just above the mouth of Pine Creek. The town of Springfield was located near where the first Cedar bridge was built. The town of Lucas was placed on the other side of Cedar River, near Tice's ferry. The fourth of this kind of paper towns was located somewhere between the present towns of Atalissa and West Liberty. Its name was Hudson. We do not know but that it was the birthplace of our genial young townsman, John Hudson; if not, we are of the opinion that

these towns had only an existence on the map, for we have no recollection of ever hearing of them. There was another town that had an existence, although of a later date, which we should not forget. This town, Winoga, was laid out by Hon. J. Scott Richman on Muscatine Island, some six miles west of Muscatine, along the Southwestern Railroad. The Judge staked out the town when the railroad was first built, and in order to give it a start, built two dwelling-houses about 1859 or 1860. The residents of the Island got a levee law passed by the legislature allowing a tax of twenty cents an acre and fifty cents a town lot to be levied for the building of a levee. The Judge had a large number of town lots laid out, and not having succeeded in selling any, vacated his town and paid his tax by the acre. He sold his buildings and concluded that town making did not always pay.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

COLLEGES IN IOWA.

IOWA COLLEGE is situated at Grinnell, Poweshiek county. It is the outgrowth of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism in Iowa. The first effort for a college in the Territory was begun at Denmark, Iowa, at the home of Rev. Asa Turner, formerly the acting Presbyterian pastor at Quincy, Illinois. but, in 1844, the new apostle of Congregationalism settled in Iowa, surrounded with the Andover band. It was on the plan of Dr. Stiles F. Ely, of Philadelphia, to enter land and build a town and College upon it. Rev. Asa Turner, Jr., was appointed agent, went to Boston, and was there dissuaded from this attempt by the prospect of help from "The College Aid Society," just then organized.

In June, 1846, it was decided, conditionally, to locate the College at Davenport, if the people there would raise \$1,500 and furnish ground for a site. David W. Kilbourne, of Keokuk (then at Montrose), an agent of Indian Reservation lands, purchased by Marsh, Lee & Delevan, visited Davenport and persuaded Mr. Antoine Le Claire, the old Indian interpreter of the United States government, to donate from his township a site, which subsequently became valuable, and constituted more than half the property of the Institution in its early origin. It was sold and a new site obtained, which, also, with a new college edifice of considerable excellence, was sold out to the Episcopal Bishop, Lee.

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